

Some Tips on Titling Your Critical Analysis Essay

In the discipline of English, formulating an effective title for your essay matters for few reasons:

- A good “working” title helps you to focus your ideas during the writing of the essay.
- A good title suggests to your reader (teacher) right away that you have a clear thesis.
- A good title can help another researcher locate your essay in a database if it were published. S/he would only need to key in the relevant search terms to get a “hit.”

Features of a Good Title

- A good title is specific and precise
- A good title will include the SUBJECT and FOCUS of your essay.

The SUBJECT can be the literary work and/or author that your essay deals with.

The FOCUS can be the specific centre of interest of your essay
(for instance, a concentration on the analysis of specific literary devices or elements).

Some Possible Formulas to Try:

- List your FOCUS followed by the SUBJECT:

Fill in the blanks: _____ in _____
(FOCUS) (name the author and literary work)

e.g.: Darkness and Light in Anne Caston’s Narrative Poem “Anatomy”
e.g.: Metaphor and Biblical Symbolism in Anne Caston’s “Anatomy”
e.g.: The Role of the Fool in Shakespeare’s Early Plays

- Use a colon (:) to link the SUBJECT and FOCUS

e.g.: Anne Caston’s “Anatomy”: An Archetypal Journey

- Use a quotation (from the literary work or some other relevant source) and a colon

e.g.: Approaching “the edge of *knowing*”: Anne Caston’s “Anatomy”
e.g.: “[F]earful symmetry”: Expressive Metrical Shifts in “The Tyger”

A Selection of Titles of Student Essays on Anne Caston's "Anatomy" and T.R. Hummer's "The Rural Carrier Stops to Kill a Nine-Foot Cottonmouth"

The purpose of an essay title is to indicate the **subject** and **focus** of the essay so that your reader can tell at a glance what the essay is about. As well, if the essay gets published, another researcher can locate the essay title in a database (Proquest, etc.). The title should name the author and/or the title of the text under consideration in the essay, and provide a sense of the essay's focus. It is a good idea to give your essay a "working title" to remind you of your focus (thesis) while drafting the paper. For example, if, in this term paper, you focus on an examination of a specific theme or on symbolism or on the poet's treatment of a specific archetype (initiation), you should indicate in your essay's title that focus.

Rate the titles below in terms of their effectiveness in giving you a sense of the essay's subject and focus. Is it VERY EFFECTIVE, JUST OKAY or INEFFECTIVE? If you can't tell what poem the essay is supposed to be about, that is a clue that the title is an ineffective one. Be aware of the conventions for capitalization and punctuation in titles.

How to Become a Healer

Anne Caston's "Anatomy": Critical Analysis

The Dissection of Anne Caston's "Anatomy"

Growth

Evil Invasion

The Explication of the "Rural Carrier and the Snake"

Accepting Life, Accepting Death

Life and Death Reality

The Significance of Structure and Imagery in "Anatomy"

Accepting Death in "Anatomy"

Crossing Over

The Analysis of "The Rural Carrier Stops to Kill a Nine-Foot Cottonmouth" by T.R. Hummer

Suffering on all Fronts

The Anatomy of Turning Points

The theme of light versus darkness, representative of character development in the poem, Anatomy by Anne Caston.

Dealing with Death

Birth, Life & Death

The Rural Carrier Stops to Kill Himself

Just a Cadaver

The Rural Carrier Stop to Kill a Nine-foot Cottonmouth By T.R. Hummer

Till Death do Us Part

The Evil Inside "The Rural Carrier"

Accepting Death Through Experience

The sudden confession of a sudden evil act: a way to purge and mature.

The Consequences of Blind Faith In "The Rural Carrier Stops to Kill a Nine-Foot Cottonmouth"

An Analysis of T.R. Hummer's "The Rural Carrier Stops to Kill a Nine-Foot Cottonmouth"

The Anatomy of Anna Caston's "Anatomy"

Mutated feelings about Death

Finding Light in All the Dark

Literary Devices

Racism and Guilt in T.R. Hummer's "The Rural Carrier Stops to Kill a Nine-Foot Cottonmouth"

"Seeing Life Through Death"

The Cycle of Life and Death
Evil and Violence
The Eye of the Beholder
The Loss of Innocence Broadens One's Horizons
The Danger of Thoughtless Hate
So Close to Death
"Anatomy": An Emotional Journey
A Study of Life Through Anne Caston's "Anatomy:"

