

Analytical Paragraph Outline Model

Topic Sentence: From the moment Brady Parks is first introduced to the reader as the narrator, it is clear his burden of guilt is heavy.

Context: At this point, the reader knows nothing about his character except that he begins the story with a question to himself.

Evidence: The narration starts, "After all this time, I still ask myself: Was it my fault?" (Cummings 1).

Significant words/phrases and their meaning: As Brady questions himself, the reader can sense his guilt, even though at this point in the story the reason for that guilt has not yet been explained. The fact that he "still" asks himself if it was his "fault" shows that this is something which weighs heavily on his conscience. By adding, "after all this time," Brady infers that this is not something that just happened but that he has perhaps had time to process it and "still" struggles with the part he played.

Connection of meaning to topic sentence: By questioning of himself over time, Brady reveals the heavy burden of guilt he carries with him.

Analytical Paragraph Outline Model

Topic Sentence: In her short story, “Charles” author Shirley Jackson uses foreshadowing to allow the reader to see clues missed by parents who refuse to acknowledge the bad behavior of their own child.

Context: Laurie comes home from kindergarten every day eager to tell his parents about the bad things Charles did that day.

Evidence: Laurie says, “‘The teacher spanked a boy today, though,’ addressing his bread and butter” (Jackson 11)

Significant words/phrases and their meaning: When Laurie tells his parents the details of Charles’ bad deed, he is “addressing his bread and butter” because he cannot make eye contact with them. He is looking down at his food because he knows he is lying and does not want his parents to find out that he is making up the lie. His parents do not even seem to notice that he neglects to look at them while he is speaking.

Connection of meaning to topic sentence: Laurie’s parents fail to see the hint that their own child is lying to them, which could also clue them into the fact that Laurie is Charles, but they are too interested in stories of Charles to notice the actions (and avoidance) of their son Laurie. They accept his lie, or refuse to see it as it is, because they do not want to accept the fact that their own child is poorly behaved and it’s likely due to their shortcomings as parents.
