

## Tier 2.0: *The Haunting of Hill House* and “The Lottery”

Shirley Jackson Author Study (Suspense and Horror)

Essay Prompt (10.25.23)

You’ve read a variety of texts and authors exploring the genre of horror. *The Haunting of Hill House* is a masterful novel by Shirley Jackson that builds up suspense in immensely skillful ways to explore a more supernatural horror. Her short story “The Lottery” is also a work of horror (though in a less traditional sense) and suspense.

In a multi-paragraph essay, complete with introduction and conclusion paragraphs, examine how Jackson builds suspense *and* how she develops horror in both *The Haunting of Hill House* and “The Lottery.” Use both summary and textual evidence/quotes from both texts to show her development of suspense and horror throughout the works.

You might consider (though not required) applying Hitchcock’s “Let ‘Em Play God” essay to the stories, evaluating the extent to which Jackson builds suspense in the Hitchcockian manner. You can show and argue that Jackson very much, only somewhat, or does not at all build suspense in the way that Hitchcock says to do it. Depending on your assessment (if you *don’t* believe she does follow his prescription), you might also argue that her way is superior or inferior.

Another consideration: *The Haunting of Hill House* makes frequent use of allusions. You might choose to keep track of the following allusions as you read the novel: the books that Dr. Montague talks about reading and Eleanor’s recurring song that she sings. Research these individual allusions and try to determine why they would be intentionally included and what purpose or role they might serve (how they might help build suspense or the horror). You can keep track of these in your annotated journal, which is further described below. Again, this is not required, but you might find it helpful in discussing how she helps develop horror.

Your introduction and conclusion paragraphs must each contain an effective thesis, and each body paragraph must begin with an effective topic sentence. Also be sure to double-space your essay, use a standard font (Times New Roman or Ariel) and size (11 or 12), avoid first person, and correctly format your paragraphs.

As you read each of Jackson’s stories, you’ll keep a sort of annotated “journal” for both the novel and the short story. The annotated journal for the novel will be broken down by chapters, and each chapter will include a few things: **1)** your thoughts, questions, reactions (what you like/don’t like), and connections you make (to other stories, music, movies, life) as you read, **2)** where you notice that Jackson is creating suspense and/or elements of horror, and **3)** a brief 2-3 sentence plot summary at the end of each chapter. Because “The Lottery” is just a short story, your journal for that will include all of the above elements but will not be divided into sections; instead, treat it like a single chapter, with one 2-3 sentence plot summary at the end of the journal.

After you finish journaling, you’ll complete three different pre-writing worksheets to help assist you in building each of your paragraphs for the essay.

Introduction

Structure

- Begins on effective hook, and smoothly transitions to thesis (5 pts)
- Begins with a hook and transitions to thesis (4 pts)
- Major concerns with intro structure (3 pts)

STR \_\_\_\_\_

Thesis

- Present effective thesis (5 pts)
- Present but thesis has minor flaws (4 pts)
- Present but thesis has major flaws (3 pts)

THS \_\_\_\_\_

Body Paragraph I

Topic sentence

- Effective (3 pts)
- Minor issues/concerns (2 pts)
- Major issues/ineffective focus ( 1pt)

T.S. \_\_\_\_\_

Support

- Thorough; good use of quotes; well explained (12 pts)
- Ample; adequate explanation (10 pts)
- Some gaps in support/explanation; unclear relationship b/w support and t.s. (8 pts)
- Very underdeveloped; not enough or inadequate quotes; no explanation (7 pts)
- Incomplete or off topic (6 pts)

SPT \_\_\_\_\_

Restatement of Topic Sentence

- Effective (3 pts)
- Minor issues/concerns (2 pts)
- Major issues/ineffective focus ( 1pt)

T.S.R. \_\_\_\_\_

Body Paragraph II

Topic sentence

- Effective (3 pts)
- Minor issues/concerns (2 pts)
- Major issues/ineffective focus ( 1pt)

T.S. \_\_\_\_\_

Support

- Thorough; good use of quotes; well explained (12 pts)
- Ample; adequate explanation (10 pts)
- Some gaps in support/explanation; unclear relationship b/w support and t.s. (8 pts)
- Very underdeveloped; not enough or inadequate quotes; no explanation (7 pts)
- Incomplete or off topic (6 pts)

SPT \_\_\_\_\_

Restatement of Topic Sentence

- Effective (3 pts)
- Minor issues/concerns (2 pts)
- Major issues/ineffective focus ( 1pt)

T.S.R. \_\_\_\_\_

Conclusion

Structure

- Begins on thesis, and smoothly transitions to effective clincher (5 pts)
- Begins with a thesis and transitions to clincher (4 pts)
- Major concerns with conclusion structure (3 pts)

STR \_\_\_\_\_

Thesis

- Present effective thesis (5 pts)
- Present but thesis has minor flaws (4 pts)
- Present but thesis has major flaws (3 pts)

THS \_\_\_\_\_

General

Citations

- All quotes cited and handled correctly (5 pts)
- Minor errors (4 pts)
- Major errors (3 pts)

CIT \_\_\_\_\_

Formality

- No first person used in essay (4 pts)
- One or two instances of first person used (3 pts)
- Three or four instances of first person used (2 pt)
- Five or more instances of first person (1 pt)

FML \_\_\_\_\_

Format

- Font, font size, margins and paragraphing all correct (5 pts)
- Minor issue in font, font size, margins and paragraphing (3 pts)
- Major issues in font size, margins and paragraphing (1 pt)

FMT \_\_\_\_\_

TTL \_\_\_\_\_/70