

WRITING
Ashline

Writer's Name

Reviewer's Name

PEER REVIEW WORKSHOP FOR INTERPRETIVE-ANALYTIC ESSAY

Please exchange papers with a partner and read his or her paper carefully. Underline the thesis and topic sentences. Honestly answer the following questions as carefully as you can and do so holistically rather than individually.

1. Does the title arouse interest and forecast the problem to be addressed? How might the author improve the title?

=> I like your title. When people analyze a story, they have a tendency of focusing on the plot of the story and deciding their title based on the plot. (I am not the exception here.) However, you mainly dealt with the 'elements' of the story and your title reveals that. In the aspect of 'forecast', your title is just perfect. You clearly stated about the way horror stories frighten people and how those tactics are applied to the "Long Distance Call". Also, since you concentrated on the elements not plot, your thesis itself is not typical and accordingly your title is not that trite. At least for me, your title aroused pretty much interest.

If you are not satisfactory with your title since Ashline asked students to be clever (not to just summarize the whole essay), you can give it another try. You can introduce (describe) this short story as exemplary or classic example of horror story.

Plus, there is a minor grammatical error. Check it out.

2. How does the introduction capture your interest, explain the question to be addressed, and suggest why it is both problematic and significant?

=> From my point of view, your title and introduction is quite good. I'll mention it again later, but well-organized structure is the biggest strength of your essay. Not starting right away with the short story itself but mentioning general features of horror genre was appropriate strategy.

However, to be clearer and to make readers understand your essay more efficiently, you need to add one forecasting sentence. (8) For example, like "Proper horror stories usually start with frightening setting, develop gradually and have characters that fulfill their roles."

Your introduction also fulfills the second and third condition.

3. Does the introduction conclude with the writer's thesis? Is the thesis surprising? How might the author improve the introduction?

=> As I mentioned, your structure is really good. A little expression problems that I'll write down for the last question of this sheet are found but not that major problem. Your thesis is not 'surprising' but not typical so it's fine.

4. How has the writer shown that his or her thesis is in conflict with alternative interpretations or views potentially held by other members of our class?

=> You did not mention any possible arguments of other students. "majority thinks this way, but I think~", "others might think this way, but I ~" sort of sentence has quite strong impact on readers so you'd better think about this question. I have some points against your interpretation so you can read it through and use it.

5. How is the essay organized? Does the writer helpfully forecast the whole, place points before particulars, use transitions, and follow the old/new contract as explained in Chapter 18?

How might the author improve or clarify the organization?

=> Structure is really well organized and clear. Also I can see that you tried to make coherence among paragraphs (repeating key word of previous paragraph) and it worked out pretty well. Summary for whole essay in the conclusion part was fine too since you well explained main points while not repeating the same words.

If I should point out one problem, your conclusion did not make intense impression. There was nothing new. You just stated what you said previously. I understand that you chose to write this way since that is your thesis but readers expect more particularly for the conclusion. How about adding some personal opinions about what makes “Long Distance Call” a qualified horror story while not ruining your coherence?

About the old/new contract. In 2nd paragraph, you firstly mentioned the setting of the story which readers already know (old) and then talked about possibility of readers recollecting their memories (your opinion and also new). Likewise, it seems like you followed old/new contract quite well throughout the essay.

6. Where does the author quote from the story (or use paraphrase or other specific references to the text)? How are each of the author’s points grounded in the text? What passages not cited might better support the argument? What recommendations do you have for improving the author’s use of supporting details?

=> You did not quote much so I cannot find any problem here.

There are some accuracy problems. (at least from my point of view. Just recheck it!)

⑮ I can clearly imagine that Miss Keene’s room is not disorderly or filled with lots of stuffs. However, your basis for saying ‘empty’ is quite exaggerated. Did narrator say there are only window, bed and telephone? No. There is a lamp in Miss Keene’s bed room. Assuming from the word ‘dish’ or ‘breakfast dishes’, she apparently has kitchen or at least necessary kitchen tools. There is a scene of Nurse Phillips snoring in the front room and answering from living room so we can imagine there is at least a chair or sofa.

⑰ ‘living by the cemetery’? I’m really doubtful about your point. Miss Finch said the call is coming from ‘edge of the town’ which is cemetery and from her line (tone), we can assume that it is not so near from Miss Keene’s house. Additionally, the title is “Long Distance Call”. The long distance can mean life and death but I think it is misinterpretation to say Miss Keene is living by the cemetery.

7. Where do you disagree with the author’s analysis? What aspects of the story are left unexplained? What does not fit?

⑱ From my point of view, this sentence is not necessary and also looks a little bit unnatural. Even without this sentence, your paragraph would not have any problem. It seems like you think the main reason of Miss Keene’s lack of communication and exchange is the ‘environment’. I partly acknowledge it (it apparently has some influence) but the most important thing is, Miss Keene is old and lonely lady with feeble and crippled body. The fact that Nurse Phillips is not with her 24-hour-a-day cannot be a sufficient reason for disconnection.

⑳ I cannot agree with you about ‘relaxed or nervous repeatedly’. The way I see it, readers are nervous throughout the entire story. I agree that this story is slow-paced and gradually-developed. (Your finding of gradual development from the content of phone calls was impressive) In most cases, writers use fast-paced plot to describe the urgent situation. The unusual feature of “Long Distance Call” is that it is obviously slow-paced but still gives tension. I think it is because of the detailed description of nervous and terrified feelings

of infirm protagonist. Also, you obviously stated in your essay that readers can be soaked into the story because of the gradual development. Doesn't that mean readers become more and more nervous, not being nervous and relaxed in turn?

②⑥ Do you see climax and ending as same thing? Well, this is really short story so it is hard to classify the plot I thought the climax part was last conversation between Miss Keene and Miss Finch, you know, the moment of shocking truth.

②⑦ You keep saying the appearance of the unknown man is surprising and shocking but literally, the man did not appear yet. We can assume that unknown man will come to Miss Keene's house but story has open closure and did not clearly mention it. To be precise, you should say "The unknown man calls Miss Keene instead of appointed mechanic showing up." Also ②⑨ is related.

* about reversal : I don't see the ending of the story as reversal. This means, I am also against all of your supporting statements for reversal. Obviously, the ending was dramatic and intense. However, it left strong impression because of a lingering last line and great fear of Miss Keene not because of unexpected call from unknown man instead of a mechanic. First of all, it is not at all 'unexpected' or surprising because readers know this man will not disappear easily. Secondly, Miss Finch called Miss Keene and delivered the report on behalf of mechanic so it is not strange for mechanic not to show up in the doorway.

Additionally, as you said, the story gradually develops and readers become more and more focused. This means, readers become increasingly nervous along with the tension of Miss Keene. Readers have seen the man want to know the location of protagonist and want to talk to her so whatever he is going to do to her, we can guess he will come. I'm sure most readers would have imagined one of the two endings; the villagers finding dead body of the man or the man coming to visit Miss Keene. The statement that Miss Keene and readers could never expected this ending is quite implausible.

This leads to **. I am against your point about reversal so I am also against your view about the role of characters. The placid attitude of Nurse Phillips and Miss Finch never relaxed Miss Keene. The first conversation with Miss Finch gave conviction to Elva Keene about bad connection but it was only one time. Miss Keene argues over and over about nurse being wrong and she gives appeal about nobody taking serious consideration into her trouble. From my point of view, the role of two supporting characters is neither assisting the dramatic reversal nor relaxing the tension of readers and Miss Keene but to make Miss Keene's position poorer and miserable.

By the way, (③②) you said in body part that 'they allow the readers to loosen their tension and it leads to dramatic reversal.' You are losing consistency in your statement.

You have no paragraph for "plot". You have an interpretation on "style of plot development" but it is not about entire story of this story. You have enough pages left, so you'd better add one since this issue leads to ②⑤. You didn't suggest your way of classification, so the border of introduction, rising action, climax, falling action and ending is really vague.

8. Summarize the essay strengths and weaknesses.

Essay Strengths	Essay Weaknesses
Structure (well-organized, topic sentence is good enough)	A few accuracy problems
Clear sentences (not so long, not hard to understand)	No paragraph for plot
Coherence (the way you connected	Some points are controversial
	Weak conclusion

paragraphs is impressive)	
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9. Suggestions for revision.

I checked some grammatical errors directly on your paper, so I am going to suggest some minor opinions about the expressions.

- ① 'Provided that' means 'If' but it seems not natural in this sentence since obviously, the purpose of a horror story is to frighten people. I think what you are trying to say is 'Considering (that)'.
- ② Actually most (I think I can even say 'all') of shocking stories have dark and scary settings. So 'most' would be more proper than 'The most'.
- ③ For me, 'contains' doesn't really match 'atmosphere'. 'setting in remote place with terrifyingly dark atmosphere' something like this seems more natural. By the way I used the word 'remote' instead of 'limited' referring to other paragraph of your essay describing the environment Miss Keene lives because from my point of view, limited thing is Miss Keene's physical condition rather than the environment itself.
- ④ This one is related with the third point since both of them are in the same sentence. Remote environment keeps the protagonist from 'getting proper help or having a sufficient ability to cope with difficulties' would be better. Actually the environment doesn't keep the character from 'coping behavior' itself, does it?
- ⑤ 'difficult atmosphere' seems really awkward.
- ⑥ Realistically, showing important moments at once is quite impossible. Assuming from rest of your essay, I think you mean 'important clues'.
- ⑦ I like your expression 'sink in' but phrase like 'completely sink in the plot' seems better than 'entirely'. I referred to your thesis that readers can be more focused and sympathize with characters by gradual development of the story.
- ⑧ 'what would happen next' or 'how story would continue' looks better.
- ⑩ Word 'faithful' fits for living subjects, so 'appropriate' kind of words will be more suitable. Also, 'natural goal' is not that natural so how about 'ultimate goal'? You said it is 'basic' goal of the horror stories so...
- ⑪ I think you should mention writer's name at least once.
- ⑫ 'stormy weather and the protagonist Miss Keene's dark room' would be better. Word 'storming' has a little different meaning (from your intention) and Miss Keene's dark room is repeatedly described in the story.
- ⑬ This point can be irrelevant since you are talking about readers not a character in the story. However, if you want to make comparison or application, it is much more efficient to use same condition. It is obviously stated in the story that the incident happened in 'October' and it is not 'summer'. You can just say 'night' (it seems natural enough) or 'stormy night'.
- ⑭ To match the verb 'is heard' you'd better change 'phone call' to 'sound of a telephone ring'.
- ⑮ 'seems to be located' would be more appropriate.
- ⑰ Since you mentioned 'unknown', the 'mysterious' phone call looks better in this sentence.
- ⑱ I think 'effect of the setting' can explain your main point of previous paragraph better.
- ⑳ 'approach' cannot be 'seen' at 'call'. This one is really awkward expression. I cannot think of any clever alternatives; "could be found from" is all I've got so far.

- ②③ 'continuing' doesn't seem right in this place. 'progressive' is a synonym of 'gradual'.
- ②④ 'happen' or 'occur' is better.
- ②⑧ 'calm' characters? I think it is not the best word to express your intention.
- ③⑩ 'hair-raising' is adjective. You need noun here.
- ③① To be precise, you discussed the style of plot development not the plot. You should add a paragraph for the plot anyways...