

Critical Concepts 8.1B Literary Writing Lesson Plans

Turning Graphic Organizers into Writing Responses

Each of the sample responses models turning our graphic organizers into complete paragraph responses

Prompt:

Choose one of the excerpts. What does the text say explicitly, and what inference can you make? Cite the **strongest textual evidence** to support your analysis, and explain why this evidence is most powerful.

Analysis/Claim – what the text says explicitly + what I infer

Evidence (direct quote) – strongest quotes from the text

Explanation – how the evidence proves the analysis

Closing Insight – deeper or universal meaning

I Do – *Les Misérables* (Victor Hugo)

In this excerpt, Jean Valjean is torn between protecting himself and saving another man, and I can infer that he struggles with the cost of truth versus self-preservation. Hugo writes, *"If I remain silent, I am damned at heart. If I speak, I am condemned in the eyes of men."* Later, Valjean reflects, *"That innocent man will suffer in my place."* These passages prove that Valjean feels trapped between morality and survival, showing both his fear and his sense of justice. The strongest evidence reveals that his struggle is not just personal but symbolic of humanity's larger battle between selfishness and sacrifice.

We Do – *Why the Dog Hates the Cat* (Norman Hinsdale Pittman)

The story explicitly shows the cat failing to protect the dog's bag, and I can infer that this betrayal explains the lasting conflict between cats and dogs. The narrator says, *"The cat promised faithfully to guard the bag, but when night fell, he curled up and went to sleep."* The fable concludes, *"From that day on, the dog chased the cat wherever he saw him."* These details make it clear that the dog sees the cat as untrustworthy, and that this broken trust becomes the foundation of their rivalry. The strongest evidence is the final line, because it transforms a single mistake into a myth that explains why the feud endures across time.

You Do with Partner – *Joe Lambert's Ferry* (Anonymous)

Joe is never directly called a hero, but I can infer that he represents selflessness and duty because of his actions at the ferry. The passage states, *"Though the river was high and the current fierce, Joe rowed without hesitation."* Another line explains, *"He asked no payment from*

those too poor to give." These quotes show not only his courage but also his compassion, revealing that his service was motivated by principle, not reward. The strongest evidence elevates Joe into a symbol of communal safety, teaching that true leadership comes through sacrifice and care for others.

You Do Independently – A Christmas Carol (Charles Dickens)

Scrooge explicitly sees himself as a lonely child, and I can infer that this memory stirs regret and compassion within him, beginning his transformation. Dickens writes, *"A solitary child, neglected by his friends, is left there still."* The narration then adds, *"And Scrooge said he knew it. And he sobbed."* These details prove that Scrooge not only remembers his past but also feels pain and sorrow for it in the present, showing growth in his hardened heart. The strongest evidence is his emotional reaction, which shows that true change begins when we confront the wounds of our past with honesty and empathy.