Directions: Use the following as a guideline for your short form. Please type your response. Handwritten short forms will receive no credit. Please address the following sections:

Title:
Author:
Original Date of Publication:

Main Characters (a clear, concise, description of each): Focus on how the author presents their personality. Use at least two quotations per character for support.

Minor Characters (a clear, concise, description of each): Again, focus on how the author presents their personality. Use at least two quotations for support per character. Only include those minor characters who are essential to the meaning of the work as a whole.

Main Setting(s) (a clear, concise, description of each): What role does the setting play in the novel—how does it affect characters, plot, tone, etc. Use relevant quotations to support your inferences. Remember, setting is much more than merely time and place. Please include time span of the novel as well.

One Paragraph Plot Summary:

Two or Three Symbols or Motifs: Provide at least one relevant quotations to support each. Explain its reference and importance. What is the symbol/motifs purpose.

Two or Three Sentences on Style: Figurative Language or lack there of—Give examples (quotations) and characterize the style in general with a comment on how style affects the meaning.

Two Sentences on Dominant Themes/Issues/Philosophies Present in the Work: Include five short quotations typical of the work. Include speaker and occasion for each quotation (who is speaking and at what point in the novel is it said) and explain the significance of each—Why are these quotations important and how do they exemplify the work?

Theme Statement: After reading the novel and reviewing your notes, write a one to two sentence statement of theme.
Example 1
Thesis: For Vivian Bearing this reexamination produced results that she was not content with, and led her to one of the most extraordinary transformations the literary world has ever seen.

Paragraph: At the beginning of the play Vivian describes herself as tough, demanding, and uncompromising individual. She goes on to say that she has never been one to run away from a challenge. She is accurate in this assessment but even though she battled her cancer head-on, the challenge still shook her to her core. At the beginning of her fight, Vivian won’t admit to anyone, including herself, that she has a vulnerable side. She treats her cancer so casually that even though the audience knows it could be fatal they still believe Vivian is okay.

NOTES

Example 2
Thesis: Shakespeare manages to give these internal events the sense of excitement suspense and climax usually associated with external action through guilty hallucinations that represented the murders they have committed. This represents the theme of how ambition drives Macbeth to do evil things that are outside of his nature.

Paragraph: The murders that Macbeth and Lady Macbeth commit are both out of their natures. Had their nature been to murder and lie, they would not go insane from them and be driven to hallucinate. Lady Macbeth has to urge herself to commit these actions, and wishes that she may “unsex” herself, so that she may be blessed with the cruelty of man. This cruelty is outside of her nature, so she hallucinates. Lady Macbeth also speaks of Macbeth’s nature, saying that she fears it as “It is too full o’ th’ milk of human kindness.” Macbeth can also not see this cruelty within himself, although he sees himself commit it. He wishes that his mind and hand would be disattatched, so that the “eye wink at the hand, yet let that be which the eye fears, when it is done, to see” (p. 28). He fears that his kind nature may not be able to deal with the atrocities that ambition may force him to commit.

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Example 3
Thesis:
What we hide from will inevitably lead to our death, and our death always occurs when we avoid our child-like state of mind. Sometimes, as Vivian learns, the most complex questions are answered by the simplest remarks.

Paragraph:
When Vivian is young, her father gives her a book about soporific bunnies; her first lesson about life. When Vivian is about to die, her friend and only visitor while in the hospital is E.M. Ashford, a fellow colleague, who teaches Vivian her last lesson by reading her a book about a runaway bunny. Vivian is the bunny, and cannot run away from her life and death. Vivian realizes this, and in doing so decides that if she dies, she does not want the doctors to resuscitate her. Just as life is a cycle, Vivian learns her first and last lessons through a bunny story.

NOTES

Example 4
Thesis:
Katie is conflicted by David’s challenging moral conduct and her familiar role as a doctor, mother, and wife. This relates to the work as a whole because the conflict is caused by different values, showing the non-existence of universal morality.

Paragraph:
After David’s spiritual transformation, Katie learns that she cannot stand the new view he has taken on life. His meeting with Good News changed David into a radical and naturally good person. Soon, Katie becomes an outsider in her own home because of her traditional thoughts. Conflict occurs because David tries to fix huge world problems, while Katie does her part by practicing medicine and making others feel better. David and Good News convince their neighbors to take in homeless children, which they believe might get the kids on track. However, Katie uses traditional logic and predicts unfortunate outcomes. She is accused of pre-judging the homeless, but ends up being correct. The good deeds that David and Good News try to do are too big for them, but they accuse Katie of not doing enough of her share. Both teams work towards a better future, but are conflicted through their opposing values.

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Example 5
Thesis:
In The Handmaid’s Tale, Margaret Atwood puts us in a peculiar world, completely different from the one we live in, to force the reader to see the hardships women are going through and establish the idea that the oppressed must never accept such injustice.

Paragraph:
In the very first page of the novel, Atwood puts the reader in a whole new world where there are Guardians, Angels, Handmaids, Commanders, and many other unusual names for certain kinds of people. By doing so, Atwood forces the reader to compare this society to our own. If overlooked, one can say that the Gilead society is in no ways a reflection of our very own society, however, if one analyzes it closely, one can see that Margaret Atwood is taking the situation of women in our society today and putting it in a radical society, so in a sense, the situation of the oppressed women in Gilead is no different than that of women today. But accomplishing this, Atwood is able to show how women feel and how easily it is for them to accept such oppression as something that is necessary, and, because Atwood believes this should not be so, she adds characters and quotes that tell women never to accept such treatment.

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Example 6
Thesis:
It is only as Vivian’s physical state declines that she is able to see that forging connections with others is what is truly valuable, although many are so blinded by personal ambitions that they are unable to realize it.

Paragraph:
Finally, Jason Posner, Vivian’s primary physician, greatly helps Vivian to come to her conclusion about the value of companionship. Jason is an exact replica of her pre-cancer self-driven, research oriented, and unable to see the significance of relating to others. Initially, Vivian makes no comment to the audience about Jason’s lack of personability, but as the play progresses she expresses to the audience how she wishes he cared more about her, a patient and a person, than the statistical research her case is providing him. In a way she has to see herself from the outside to realize how her obsession with understanding literature had kept her from catering to one of her innate human necessities—companionship.

NOTES
Example 7
Thesis:
In the midst of hiding their burdened pasts the women accept the oppressive lives they must lead. However, when the women come to terms with their secrets they are able to break free from their abusive husbands and unfulfilling lives. Their journey through accepting their pasts relates to the novels greater theme of coping during times of oppression.

Paragraph:
Miriam is born a harmani (a bastard). In Afghanistan’s strict Muslim society, this is an unforgivable sin. To save face, Miriam’s father Jalil isolated Miriam and her mother from society. Living in a hut far from civilization, Miriam is constantly taunted by her mother who ridicules her for being a harmani. When Miriam’s mother commits suicide she is left alone with no social skills and no confidence. Jalil quickly marries Miriam off to save his legitamite family from disgrace. When she begins her new life as a wife she must face society for the first time. When she goes into town she finds that she is horrified by the people around her. She hides behind her burka, nervous that everyone who sees her knows she is a harmani. Because of her insecurities caused by her past, Miriam gladly accepts the oppressive state Afghanistan is in. Through being hidden behind cloth, and being expected to stay at home, Miriam escapes societal judgement and finds a means of keeping her past hidden.

NOTES
Example 1
Thesis:
Bronte tells the story of Heathcliff and Catherine through the couple’s psychological events that ultimately shows Bronte’s idea of love growing stronger over time.

Paragraph:
Catherine and Heathcliff’s journey starts all the way back to their childhood. After Catherine’s father dies, Heathcliff and Catherine lean on one another for support, giving birth to their overall passionate relationship. Nelly, the narrator, describes the children’s bond: “the little souls were comforting each other with better thoughts than I could have hit on: no person in the world ever pictured heaven so beautifully as they did” (38).

Example 2
Thesis:
Naomi, Obasan, and Mother each exemplify the different ways all people cope with tragic events or memories in their past, and the grief and suffering that they experience as a result of avoiding it.

Paragraph:
Naomi is forced to face her past after her uncle’s death, when she has to take care of her Obasan. She recalls life in the interment camps, being molested by Old Man Gower, and her mother leaving when she was a child. Naomi suffers throughout the book wishing she could have lived a better, “normal” childhood, much like Amir does in The Kite Runner, by Khaled Hosseini. After she uncovers the truth, she releases her grief, which “is not fit for human habitation” (295) and finds love.
Example 3
Thesis:
It is only as Vivian’s physical state declines that she is able to see that forging connections with others is what is truly valuable, although many are so blinded by personal ambitions that they are unable to realize it.

Paragraph:
Finally, Jason Posner, Vivian’s primary physician, greatly helps Vivian to come to her conclusion about the value of companionship. Jason is an exact replica of her pre-cancer self-driven, research oriented, and unable to see the significance of relating to others. Initially, Vivian makes no comment to the audience about Jason’s lack of personability, but as the play progresses she expresses to the audience how she wishes he cared more about her, a patient and a person, than the statistical research her case is providing him. In a way she has to see herself from the outside to realize how her obsession with understanding literature had kept her from catering to one of her innate human necessities—companionship.

NOTES

Example 4
Thesis:
In Isak Dinesen’s book Out of Africa, the narrator works side by side on her coffee farm in Africa with the natives; however contrasting qualities in the traits of the races, the working natives an the land owning European, leaves the narrator unknowingly away from her wish for equality to feeling more of a superiority.

Paragraph:
All of the narrator’s native friends were very important to her until she would get a visitor. She saw them as an escape because at the farm she “had been on the farm longing to get away, and they [her friends] came back” (213). It is not as though as she forgot about her native friends during these visits, in fact she loved when they interacted with them, but you always saw her prefer to be with her visitors and send her natives away with duties and tasks to complete.

NOTES
Example 5
Thesis:
Through Reuben’s experience, Lief Enger shows us as readers that miracles do exist and there is a sense of fairness in a world where good people get punished if we can manage to keep faith that miracles are possible.

Paragraph:
From the time he was born, Reuben is plagued with bad lungs and almost didn’t survive his first minutes of life. His struggle with asthma continues throughout his childhood and causes him to feel resentment towards God, who he has been taught is a worker of miracles and is fair, yet he cannot understand how he can be cursed with such a severe physical weakness if this is true.

NOTES

Example 6
Thesis:
Because Jane was raised not knowing and experiencing what true love was, this past experience causes her to act irrationally at first when confronted with the topic, and forces her to find a balance between a self-destructing love, and a good kind of love.

Paragraph:
When Jane is first confronted by love, she acts irrationally. Jane begins to love her schoolmate, Helen Burns, and her teacher, Miss temple, after she is sent to Lowood Institution for boarding school. Even though she has left the hall where she was raised (Gateshead), her past experiences of isolation are still strongly etched into her brain. Because of these feelings she acts irrationally in telling Helen Burns that “I would willingly submit to have the bone of my arm broken, or to let a bull toss me, or to stand behind a kicking horse, and let it dash its hoof at my chest” (62). Jane says these things because she would rather die than live “if others [didn’t] love me” (62). Helen replies to Jane in saying that Jane “thinks too much of the love of human beings” (62). But how can Jane not think so much of their love when she has not yet had a taste of what it truly is?

NOTES
Example 7

Thesis:

In Wharton’s “Ethan Frome”, the protagonist (Ethan) struggles in his consciousness of guilt and passion of the decision he has to make whether to obey society’s codes and morals or to break free and indulge in his passion, showing that man never seems to be content when they listen to society and doing what’s “right”, not what they really want and only by overcoming the conditions of society can one truly receive their desires, and find happiness.

Paragraph:

While his heart and soul lies with Mattie, Ethan feels compelled to stay and take care of his sickly wife. He cannot bear to leave her in her condition alone with the debt of the Frome farm. He is responsible for Zeena because he asked her to marry him; a vow and kinship that stay with them forever. Yet, he feels like his life is a tragic and bitter waste as he continues his life with Zeena. Mattie is his passion and desires; he truly loves her but in the codes of society, it is morally and emotionally wrong to leave your spouse. It is adultery. Ethan is torn between doing what he wants and doing what’s “right.” In both cases he can’t have what he wants and needs at the same time. While he wants Mattie, he needs the security and reputation from Zeena.

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