

Sample Introductions: “The Necklace”

Below are two introductions to a literary analysis paper on “The Necklace.” The prompt is Are Madame Loisel’s ten years of poverty and labor a result of fate, or of her own actions and character? Therefore, the thesis answer to the prompt is the last sentence of the introduction paragraph. I’ve made those bold.

As with your introduction to “The Most Dangerous Game” analysis, you must include the name of the short story and its author. Unlike that one, your introduction now has to be longer. And, its purpose is to draw your reader in, make her (me!) want to keep reading your essay.

Example 1

When people lose a borrowed item, through their own carelessness or by accident, it is their responsibility to replace it. This is the situation that Madame Loisel faces in Guy de Maupassant’s “The Necklace.” Like Cinderella, Mathilde is surprised by an invitation to a ball, and also like the fairy tale character, she loses an expensive piece of jewelry. Unlike Cinderella, though, Mathilde and her husband lie to cover up their carelessness. However, in trying to do what is right, Madame Loisel is destroyed by a cruel trick of fate. **Clearly, Mathilde’s downward spiral is due not to her own actions or character, but to fate.**

Example 2

It is human nature to blame others when things go wrong. However, most people accept responsibility for their actions. Ideally, they apologize – “I’m so sorry, but I you’re your necklace! I will replace it.” Mathilde Loisel of Guy de Maupassant’s short story “The Necklace” faces ten years of poverty and ruin because she is greedy, self-centered, and unable to see her own faults. **Madame Loisel’s weakness of character, specifically her selfish nature, causes her to waste ten years living the life she loathed.**