

Response Paper Rubric

	Excellent (9-10)	Competent (7-8)	Minimal
Thesis	Makes an effective argument, clearly stated at the beginning	Contains a thesis but can be more relevant or more clearly stated	Lacks a thesis
Analysis	Coherent and successfully support the thesis	Support the thesis but can be more effective	Lacks analysis; only plot summary
Quotes	Always contains 2 or more quotations	Often contains quotations from the readings	Seldom contains quotes
Language, Mechanics	Minimal or no language and mechanical problems	A few but no serious language and mechanical problems	With many language and mechanical problems

Writing Tips:

1. Before writing, make an outline

Making an outline is a simple but very helpful exercise.

Decide what you want to write about. Make an outline including your thesis and each paragraph that you plan to write in support of the thesis. If you cannot clearly articulate the thesis at this stage, that's OK. You can always come back to refine the thesis when the draft is done.

2. Focus

This is a very short paper. There is no need for general statements (e.g., about the situation of Chinese women in general), long background introductions, or plot summaries. If some of these are really necessary, make them as part of your analysis in the body of the paper. Begin with the topic/character/story you are going to talk about, and introduce the thesis. Then everything that follows should be in support of that thesis.

3. Thesis/central argument

Make sure you have a central argument and a defined thesis statement in the first paragraph. Your task is to persuade your readers (friends, classmates, and instructor who have read the story) of your point of view. "After a brief introduction of your topic, you state your point of view on the topic directly and often in one sentence. This sentence is the thesis statement, and it serves as a summary of the argument you'll make in the rest of your paper." (see more from <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/thesis-statements/> for more tips on thesis statements)

4. Quotations

Integrate the quotes into your own text. Do not let the voice of the quote interrupt your voice abruptly. Considering this is a very short paper, avoid using very long quotes. When you really need to use long quotes, explain why this quote is relevant to your analysis. Do not expect the stand-alone quote to speak for you.

5. Revision

After finishing the first draft, read through the paper to check whether the progress of the analysis is coherent, and whether your analysis is all relevant and in support of your argument. Make adjustments where needed. Shorten passages that are unnecessarily lengthy, and expand on points that are important but not clear.

6. Proof-reading

Reading your own paper aloud helps you to pick out grammatical and mechanical problems. If you can find friends who can help you to do that it is also good; they can usually find problems that you yourself tend to overlook. But beware of the rules of our Honor Code. It is OK to find help proof-reading and copy-editing. It is not OK if this help goes beyond the line: the paper needs to be written by you based on your own ideas.

7. Note about Chinese authors' names: the Family name (last name in English) of a Chinese author usually goes in front of their given name. For instance: in the name Shen Congwen, Shen is his family name. Reference to this author should be either Shen Congwen or Shen, NOT Congwen.

8. For the title of short stories and articles, use quotation marks: “ ” (e.g. “When I was in Xia Village”). Use *italics* for book titles, film titles, or play titles (e.g. *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*).