

42.232 Reading reaction: *The Shining*, parts one and two

Responses have two functions: The first is to serve as a check that you are engaging in the course work and to give me a way to evaluate your performance in light of the course goals. The second, and, perhaps, more immediately important function is to jump-start our discussion by having you organize your thoughts before it's time to speak in class!

FORMAT One paragraph or several, roughly one page, double-spaced. Type your reaction. Follow my style sheet.

CONTENT As an effective horror novel, *The Shining* has a long opening which precedes its main action. King uses this time to acquaint us with the characters and to start to develop the thematic threads that he will pursue throughout the book. Isolate and **identify a THEME** that you see developing in these opening sections of the novel. Drawing on key evidence that illustrates the thematic interpretation you make in your thesis, explain in detail how King uses literary conventions, devices and methods to express the thematic content you identified in your thesis. This novel presents many themes and examples you might choose to explore, so **select your topic strategically. Provide a clear, interpretive, and analytical thesis** to show how what you have noticed serves a specific thematic expression in the film. (This might mean revising the thesis last!) Make sure you are exacting in your observations and use of vocabulary, and that you are concrete and explicit in showing how your examples support your thesis. Remember: **argue rather than summarize!**

GRADING Responses will be graded with a number (1-5), based on a few simple criteria: A five will demonstrate analytical insight and sophistication of observation; a focused, coherent, analytical main point; detailed evidence or specific examples; explicit explanation of the significance of the evidence presented; and clarity and correctness in its prose. Good responses will demonstrate your ability to identify and articulate the uses of some basic filmmaking techniques using appropriate vocabulary. **Passing responses will exclude plot synopsis, and will be carefully edited, as is standard in proper academic writing.** Please use the guidelines from the style sheet for this course when you're writing, formatting, editing, and proofreading your response. Please check the syllabus for rules on plagiarism, revision, and late work.

This reaction is due on **Thursday, October 23**. I will not accept late responses. If you need help or clarification, just ask!