

Voyant Analysis Essay

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Artifact type: Assignment

Developed for: Lower-level undergraduate literature course for non-majors, fulfills humanities requirement for USF students

Audience: Non-majors in humanities course

Time required: One class session of 45-60 minutes to demonstrate tool and explain its use in literary analysis, outside work (varies per student)

Method and tool: Text analysis with Voyant

Description:

This project is highly adaptable for multiple disciplines and purposes. I have successfully used it as a final project option, and in my summer online course, I am incorporating it as the digital literary project requirement (new for the Lit 2000 course at USF) early in the summer session. The purpose of this project in the literature class is to provide students with the opportunity to perform literary analysis supported by quantitative data. Assessment of this assignment occurs via a rubric, provided to the students ahead of time. I have now offered this assignment for the second semester in a row as a final project option, and only a few students per semester have chosen it as I believe that they are intimidated by the technology. However, during this summer session, the assignment is a requirement for the students. I have already received feedback from the students via an online reflection post after completing the assignment, and they appreciate that they can perform quantitative analysis as related to literature. This is especially engaging for STEM students, who make up the majority of this class for non-majors.

Supporting materials:

Assignment with embedded link to online tutorial, rubric, several student samples

Voyant Analysis Essay

In this project, you will use Voyant Tools to analyze the most common words in a text or texts. In your essay, choose 3-5 of the words and create an argument about how those words are important to the text, shape its meaning, reveal information about characters, create themes, etc. You must refer to specific passages, quotes, and evidence from the story in your exploration of each of the words. Your essay must be a well-developed, thesis-driven, argumentative piece. You do not need outside research for this essay. Your analysis should be driven by your reading of the text(s). Think about the following questions:

- What do your selected words show about plot/character/theme/point of view/setting? What do they reveal about one or more of those aspects?
- How do these words contribute to the deeper meaning of the text?
- How do these words connect to the overarching themes we've been studying all semester?

Here's how a paragraph for this essay might look:

One of the most common words in *Dubliners* is the word "room." Overall, this appears 120 times in the short story collection. The word "room" connects to the themes of loneliness, isolation, and paralysis, which are prominent in James Joyce's work. Throughout *Dubliners*, there are many examples of characters sitting alone in a room observing the outside world rather than participating in it. (Insert several quotes and examples from the text here, and explain each example). Therefore, the prominence of the word "room" in *Dubliners* reveals the importance of the themes of loneliness, isolation, and paralysis.

NOTE: Do NOT contact me for technical assistance with Voyant. There are several user guides online for you to consult with technical issues and learning the tool.

Click [here](#) for Ms. Ricketts' online tutorial on the basic functions of Voyant as related to this project.

Voyant Analysis Requirements

- Length: 1,500 words
- MLA format, including Works Cited page (you will only be citing the book, but you still need a Works Cited page)
- 12 pt Times New Roman font
- Submit to Canvas by the due date

Lit 2000 Final Project: Voyant Tools Analysis Essay Rubric

Total points: 100

Categories	Mastering	Above Average	Developing	Below Average
Analysis: 30 total points	<p>27-30 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Author chooses 2-3 words and explains each choice -Original, thorough analysis of each word -Detailed explanation and development of the relationship between the words and one or more of the following: plot, character, theme, point of view, setting, wider topics, etc. 	<p>25-27 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Author chooses 2-3 words, choices somewhat explained -Adequate analysis of ideas -Adequate explanation and development of the relationship between the words and one or more of the following: plot, character, theme, point of view, setting, wider topics, etc 	<p>21-24 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Author chooses 1-2 words, choices minimally explained -Inadequate analysis of ideas -Inadequate explanation and development of relationship between the words and one or more of the following: plot, character, theme, point of view, setting, wider topics, etc 	<p>0-20 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Author chooses 0-1 words, choices not explained -Minimal to no analysis of ideas -Minimal to no explanation and development between the words and one or more of the following: plot, character, theme, point of view, setting, wider topics, etc
Evidence: 30 total points	<p>27-30 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Examples are smoothly incorporated into the essay -Examples are clearly related to each of the chosen words -Examples from the text thoroughly explained -Sufficient evidence from the text related to each of the chosen words 	<p>25-27 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Examples are incorporated into the essay -Examples are related to the each of the chosen words -Examples from the text adequately explained -Adequate evidence from the text related to each of the chosen words 	<p>21-24 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Examples are not well incorporated into the essay -Examples are somewhat related to each of the chosen words -Examples from the text inadequately explained -Inadequate evidence from the text related to 	<p>0-20 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Examples are dropped into the essay with little or no introduction/follow up -Examples are minimally or completely unrelated to the thesis statement -Examples from the minimally or not explained

			each of the chosen words	-Little or no evidence from the text
Organization: 20 total points	<p>19-20 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Clearly distinguished introduction, body, and conclusion -Topic sentences explicitly support the thesis and clearly outline each body paragraph -Transitions explicitly demonstrate the relationship between ideas and supporting points -Logical progression of supporting points -Meets required word count 	<p>17-18 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Introduction, body, and conclusion -Topic sentences mostly support the thesis and outline each body paragraph -Transitions mostly demonstrate the relationship between ideas and supporting ideas -Mostly logical progression of supporting points -Slightly below or above required word count 	<p>14-16 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Inadequate distinction between introduction, body, and conclusion -Topic sentences inadequately support the thesis and inadequately outline each body paragraph -Transitions inadequately demonstrate the relationship between ideas and supporting points -Supporting points somewhat logical -Significantly below or above required word count 	<p>0-13 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Little or no distinction between introduction, body, and conclusion -Topic sentences either not present or they do not support the thesis and outline each body paragraph -Transitions either not present or do not demonstrate the relationship between ideas and supporting points -Supporting points not logically organized -Far below or above required word count
Format: 10 total points	<p>9-10 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Thorough compliance with MLA standards, including Works Cited page, in-text citations, heading, etc. -In-text citations consistently and correctly used with examples from the text 	<p>8 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Mostly thorough compliance with MLA standards, including Works Cited page, in-text citations, heading, etc. -In-text citations used mostly consistently and 	<p>7 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Inconsistent compliance with MLA standards, including Works Cited page, in-text citations, heading, etc. -In-text citations inconsistently and somewhat incorrectly 	<p>0-6 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Minimal to no compliance with MLA standards, including Works Cited page, in-text citations, heading, etc. -In-text citations minimally or not used

	-Consistent compliance with required assignment format: Times New Roman, 12 pt font, double-spaced, 1 inch margins	correctly with examples from the text -Mostly consistent compliance with required assignment format: Times New Roman, 12 pt font, double-spaced, 1 inch margins	used with examples from the text -Inconsistent compliance with required assignment format: Times New Roman, 12 pt font, double-spaced, 1 inch margins	with examples from the text -Minimal or no compliance with required assignment format: Times New Roman, 12 pt font, double-spaced, 1 inch margins
Style/Grammar: 10 total points	9-10 points -Correct grammar and punctuation -Effective word choice, vocabulary, and sentence structure: no slang, polished/professional language	8 points -Mostly correct grammar and punctuation -Appropriate word choice, vocabulary, and sentence structure: no slang, mostly appropriate polished/ professional language	7 points -Considerable grammar and punctuation errors -Somewhat inappropriate word choice, vocabulary, and sentence structure: some slang, inappropriate/unprofessional language	0-6 points -Consistent grammar and punctuation errors -Completely inappropriate word choice, vocabulary, and sentence structure: consistent use of slang, inappropriate/unprofessional language