

Critical Reading: Short Fiction

Name _____ Title _____
Author(s) _____ Place of Publication _____

This assignment is designed to help you think about each section of the text (e.g., article, podcast, video) individually, and to consider how each contributes to the overall text. **Please answer the questions below for each section, and then fill out the accompanying bubble sheet with a summary of each section in each bubble. After completing the bubble, you will write a one paragraph summary of the text, followed by a 1-3 sentence thesis statement.**

First, preview the text. Take a close look at the first page or section, examine the title and the introductory paragraph or section, then read the topic sentence of each paragraph or first minutes if it is an audio or video text.

As you skim the rest of the text, pay attention to the opening paragraphs, dialogue, subheadings, and words that you have never seen or heard before. Define those words in the margins here.

Your preview will save you time when it comes to analyzing the text later on. When you are finished previewing the text, answer the following questions:

Look up the author on Google. Summarize what you learned about the author from Google. What evidence do you see that tells you this is a credible writer? Biographical notes?

What do you think this short fiction is about based on the title?

What do you think the central purpose or theme of this short fiction will be? What might you learn?

What questions do you have about the title that you hope the short fiction will answer?

Next you will read the article section by section of a narrative plot structure and answer the questions as you go.

Section 1: Exposition

Summarize what you learned in this section:

How might this relate to the central purpose or theme of the short fiction?

What textual evidence did the writer(s) present to illustrate their main points?

Section 2: Rising Action

Summarize what you learned in this section:

How might this relate to the central purpose or theme of the short fiction?

What textual evidence did the writer(s) present to illustrate their main points?

Section 3: Climax

Summarize what you learned in this section:

How might this relate to the central purpose or theme of the short fiction?

What evidence did the writer(s) present to illustrate their main points?

Section 4: Falling Action

Summarize what you learned in this section:

How might this relate to the central purpose or theme of the short fiction?

What textual evidence did the writer(s) present to illustrate their main points?

Section 5: Resolution

Summarize what you learned in this section:

How might this relate to the central purpose or theme of the short fiction?

What evidence did the writer(s) present to illustrate their main points?

Conclusion

What do you think the writers wanted you to conclude from this short fiction and why do you think this was their intention?

What did you learn from this short fiction that differed from your original expectations?

You will now use your notes from each section to fill in the bubble chart on the following page.

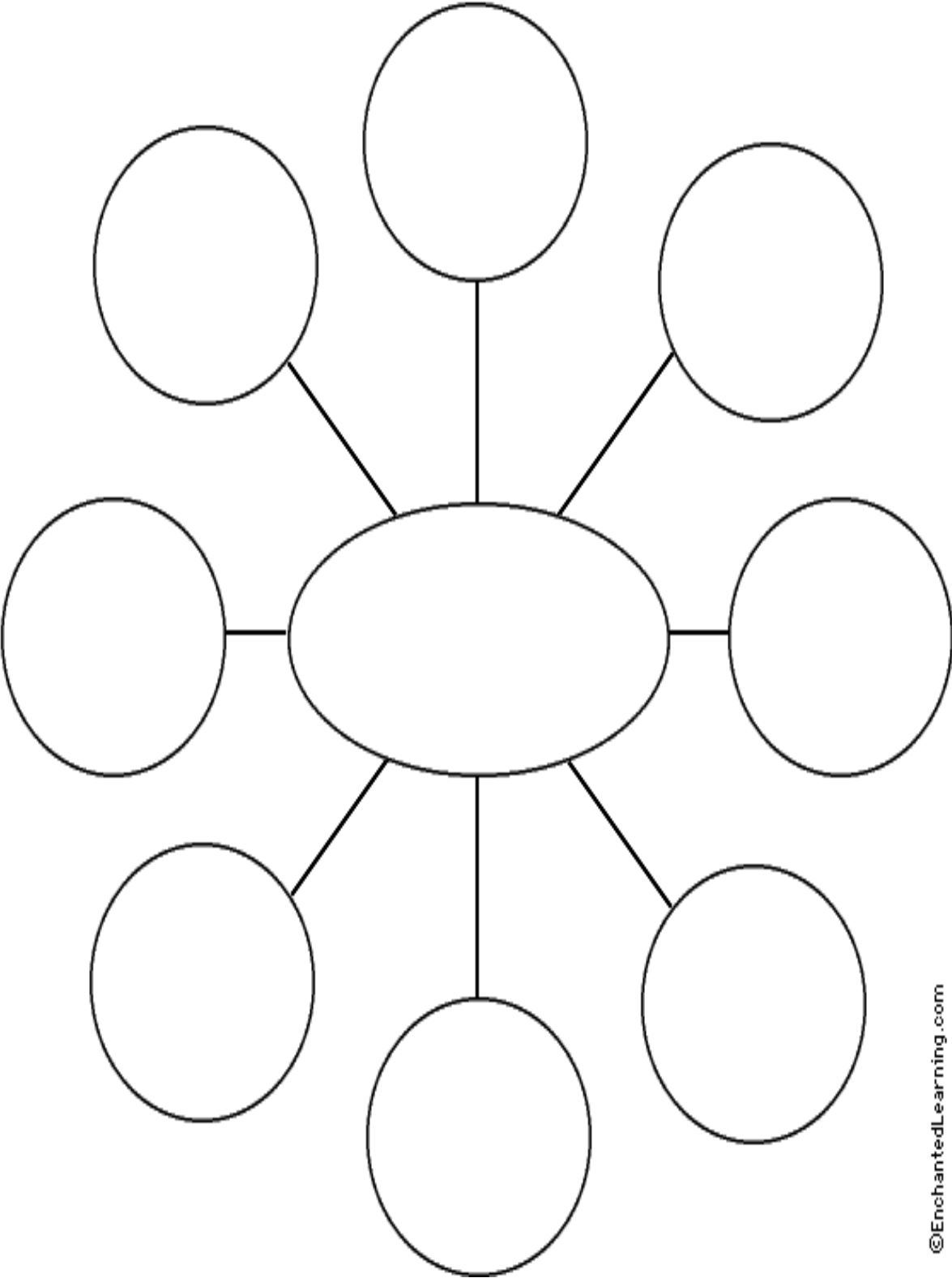
Fill out the chart by writing the **main point(s)** (not the examples or small details) of each section in a corresponding bubble.

You will then write the **main idea** of the entire text in the middle bubble.

Next, review the entire bubble chart in order to write a clear, comprehensive **one paragraph summary** of the novel. This should not focus on listing small details, or covering all of the plot points, but should cover the **main ideas** so that a student who did not read the novel would understand the gist, the purpose, and any other larger meaning the author(s) intended.

Finally, condense your **summary** into one clear **thesis statement** (try to do this in just one or two sentences) that explains the purpose of the text.

Complete the bubble chart below first, then write your summary and thesis statement on the following page.



Final Summary:

Thesis statement (1-3 sentences):