

Middle School Template PDF – Detailed Guide

Overview

For **Grades 6–8** (ages 11–14), this template builds on elementary foundations with greater structure, analytical depth, and formal expectations. Students learn to balance summary with analysis, use textual evidence, and write for an academic audience.

Template Structure

1. Introduction (100–125 words)

Purpose: Hook the reader, present book details, and state a clear thesis.

Structure:

- **Hook (1–2 sentences):** Use a question, quote, or interesting fact.

Example: “What does it take to survive in a dystopian world where love is forbidden?”

- **Bibliographic info (1 sentence):** Author, title, year, genre.

Example: “Lois Lowry’s 1993 novel *The Giver* presents a seemingly perfect society with dark secrets.”

- **Context (1–2 sentences):** Briefly set up the premise.

Example: “It follows Jonas, a boy chosen to receive memories of the past in a colorless, controlled community.”

- **Thesis (1–2 sentences):** Preview your evaluation.

Example: “While the novel powerfully explores themes of memory and freedom, its pacing slows in the middle sections, affecting overall momentum.”

2. Summary (100–150 words)

Purpose: Provide a concise, spoiler-free overview.

Structure:

- **Paragraph 1:** Genre, setting, main character, central conflict.

Example: “*The Giver* is a dystopian novel set in a controlled community where emotions and choices are eliminated. Jonas is selected as the Receiver of Memories, learning about pain, color, and love from the Giver. His growing awareness clashes with his society’s rules, leading to a critical decision.”

- **Keep it brief:** No subplots or minor characters unless essential.

3. Evaluation Paragraphs (3 paragraphs, 350–450 words total)

Each paragraph should follow the TEEAC structure:

- **Topic Sentence** – Make a claim.
- **Explanation** – Clarify your claim.
- **Evidence** – Provide a quote or example.
- **Analysis** – Explain how evidence supports your claim.
- **Connection** – Link back to thesis or overall argument.

Paragraph 1: Strength – Themes

Example:

“Lowry’s exploration of memory and emotion is the novel’s greatest strength. She uses the Giver’s transmissions to show how memories shape humanity. For example, when Jonas receives the memory of sledding, he feels joy for the first time (p. 81). This scene highlights what his society has lost—the capacity for genuine experience. Such moments deepen the novel’s philosophical impact.”

Paragraph 2: Strength – Character Development

Example:

“Jonas’s transformation from obedient to rebellious is convincingly portrayed. His questions grow sharper as he receives more memories...”

Paragraph 3: Weakness – Pacing

Example:

“However, the novel’s middle section lingers too long on Jonas’s training, slowing narrative drive...”

4. Recommendation (75–100 words)

Purpose: Identify target audience and give a balanced final take.

Structure:

- Overall judgment
- Who would enjoy it (and why)
- Who might not enjoy it
- Comparative context (optional)

Example:

“*The Giver* is ideal for readers interested in thought-provoking dystopian fiction. Fans of *Hunger Games* or *Divergent* will appreciate its critique of control. Those seeking fast-paced action may find sections slow. Still, its thematic depth makes it a memorable read for middle-grade audiences.”

5. Conclusion (75–100 words)

Purpose: Reinforce your thesis without repeating it word-for-word.

Structure:

- Restate your overall judgment
- Summarize key points briefly
- End with a lasting thought

Example:

“In conclusion, *The Giver* remains a landmark in young adult literature for its bold themes and emotional resonance. Despite some pacing issues, its message about memory and choice stays with readers long after the final page.”

Formatting for Middle School

- **Font:** Times New Roman 12pt or Arial 11pt
- **Spacing:** Double-spaced
- **Margins:** 1 inch
- **Header:** Name, teacher, course, date (left-aligned)
- **Title:** Centered, not bolded
- **Citations:** Page numbers in parentheses after quotes
- **Word Count:** 500–800 words total

Skill Development Focus

- Using textual evidence
- Writing clear topic sentences
- Balancing praise and critique

- Avoiding retelling
- Formal tone and structure