

As your study form, you will no doubt start noticing how the different formal elements interact within the frame of the story: note that the summary of plot you just read in the section on historical context already starts to frame our analysis of the specific elements that shape the paragraph. We isolate formal elements through analysis, but ultimately we need to understand how they work together. As we examine a passage, we can choose to focus our observations on any formal element that stands out. For example, if we attend to the diction of the passage, we start to notice how word choice creates effects, particularly fresh word choice.

	<p>activity of the Roaring Twenties flapper scene while also suggesting that there is underlying pain or injury undermining all the fun and partying.</p>

Continuing our study of specific formal choices, we might next consider how imagery works.

<p>as they waited, and voices sang, and there was laughter from unheard jokes, and lighted cigarettes outlined unintelligible</p>	<p>The imagery suggests distance and estrangement. Nick does not see people</p>
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of a formal element and the effect it produces its *thematic significance*. We interpret themes as we begin to notice patterns in the forms and the effects we have analyzed. For instance, we can elaborate upon the diction analysis we completed earlier.

	conveys the hectic activity of the Roaring Twenties flapper scene while also suggesting that there is underlying pain or injury undermining all the fun and partying that occurs.	The idea of pain in the midst of celebration permeates the whole novel, which may be a characteristic of life in post WWI America that Nick is highlighting; even the protagonist of the novel, Gatsby, throws enormous parties but suffers inwardly because Daisy, his love, does not attend them and does not love him because of them.

Notice that in the meaning box, we observed that the mood of the narrator may be related to historical influences. We can analyze the imagery similarly.

together in the taxis as they waited, and voices sang, and there was laughter from unheard jokes, and lighted cigarettes outlined unintelligible gestures	The imagery suggests distance and estrangement. Nick does not see people leaning together; he sees Moreover, there is laughter, but he does not hear the jokes. Cigarettes are the source of light, and they are dim and distant enough that Nick cannot understand the gestures they outline.	Throughout the novel, people only know one another as shapes, and they only get to know one another dimly. There is an impersonal nature to all of the relationships in the novel, as further analysis of key friendships and love relationships reveals.

Notice that in the meaning box for the imagery analysis, we have encountered a pattern, which could guide us as we continue to analyze the text to build the literary analysis essay.

Return to the formal elements and their effects as analyzed in the second activity. How does each effect produce meaning in the text? How do the effects produce your experience of the text as a reader? What ideas does the text seem to promote through the effects of its form?

The following paragraph employs observations on form, effect, and meaning to provide a unified analysis of the passage of the novel that we have been studying. Using the observations that you have gathered by working through this handout, write your own explication paragraph for your literary analysis essay. Discuss it with your tutor to find its strengths as well as its weaknesses.

As Nick finds himself walking alone in the street, his profound loneliness is manifested through his narration. Consider his description of strangers out with their
leaned together in the taxis as they waited, and voices sang, and there was laughter from
unheard jokes, and lighted cigarettes outlined unintelligible ge
diction suggest distance and estrangement, for Nick uses the word *forms*, which denotes shapes
and conveys a feeling of disconnect, rather than the word *people*. The cigarettes, the source of
light, are dim and distant enough that Nick cannot understand the gestures that they outline,
which again suggests inefficient communication, a disconnect.
by separation and broken communication, as his short-lived romantic involvement with Jordan
Baker illustrates. And, of course, Nick also sees that brokenness in both D
Gatsby and his marriage to Tom.