Essay writing practice

Topic: **Interpretation of symbols** present in a story.

Novel under analysis: Frankenstein, by Mary Shelley.

Example:

Mary Shelley used several symbols in her famous novel Frankenstein in an interesting way. Let´s analyse and comment on three of those symbols by providing evidence and making reference to the incidents of the story.

First, LIGHT stands for the acquisition of new knowledge, for intellectual illumination. On a stormy night, Victor, a fifteen-year-old boy at the time, witnessed how a lightning bolt burnt down an oak tree. That incredible sight inspired Victor´s mind and he developed an interest in the uses and power of electricity. I quote: “My life changed by lightning striking a tree,” (page17). Thereof he had a strong desire for learning. Later we read that Victor thought: “ The light of knowledge would shine onto the world,” (page 26).

Another interesting example is the time when the Monster began its life in the forest. It had no understanding of its own identity or of the world around him and we read: “I sat in the shade…away from the light of the sun…” (page 54). We interpret that in the absence of light there is absence of knowledge.

Explanations. Notice the following:

* After the introductory paragraph, the symbol is explicitly mentioned at the beginning of the sentence and what follows is an explanation of the traditional sense of interpretation of such a symbol.
* Then, the student writer describes a narrative fragment in which the symbol appears.
* Next, the student writer explains the significance of the symbol in direct relation to the events of the story. In this particular case, he/she shows what happens to the protagonist´s mind, thus demonstrating the symbolic relations.
* After that, the student writer uses quotations and indicates the page numbers to further support his/her explanation solidly.
* Last, the student uses a second fragment of the story to expand on the symbolic interpretation of light.

This is the type of writing strategy that you are advised to imitate to succeed in your essay writing.