

SMARTHINKING's E-structor Response Form

(Your marked-up essay is below this form.)

HOW THIS WORKS: Your tutor has written overview comments about your essay in the form below. Your tutor has also embedded comments [in bold and in brackets] throughout your essay. Thank you for choosing SMARTHINKING's OWL; best wishes with revising your paper!

*Strengths of the essay:

Hi Ellen! Welcome back to Smarthinking. My name is Stacy, and I'll be working with you on your writing today. You've got a good start here, Ellen. In this draft, you include some of the reasons why Chekhov decided to write the way he does, as in this sentence: Chekhov does accomplish this realm when Anna and Gurov are at the embankment as Gurov kisses Anna... Keep up the good work!

*Ellen 218683 has requested that you respond to the Content Development:

Ellen, when you revise this, remember that you need to focus on Chekhov and his theories about writing. Remember that the reader may not know those theories, so you're going to want to explain them. What does Chekhov believe writing should do?

You have a couple of different possibilities for organizing and developing your paper. You can pick the three or four "rules" you're going to discuss, and you can have the first part of your paper discuss Chekhov's theories, explaining what those rules are. Then in the second part of the paper you can show how he violates his own theories in this particular short story. You'd want to give examples about each of the "rules" you described in the first part of the paper by looking at some of his writing. How does he write? Why does he write that way? Alternatively, you can discuss a "rule" and follow that with an example of how Chekhov violates (or doesn't violate) that particular theory. For example, you mention that he uses a lot of description. Does this follow a "rule" or violate that "rule?" Why? You can ask yourself a similar question for each part of your essay.

Either mode of organization and development would work. Your goals for developing your content are to make sure that you 1) explain the theories to the reader and 2) link those theories to the story you're discussing. In other words, you'll need to do the following for each body paragraph in your essay:

- State a claim: What is Chekhov's theory about writing? Why does he believe this?
- Give an example: Where does Chekhov show that theory?
- Explain how the example proves your claim.

Introduction/Conclusion:

I like your opening sentence where you quote Chekhov about good writing. That's the perfect start for your discussion! What you also need is an introduction that explains that Chekhov had certain theories about what made writing effective. Then you could end that introduction with your thesis statement—that while he might have expressed those theories in (wherever you find the theories), he didn't follow through and use them when writing (whatever story you're looking at in the paper). This kind of introduction will set up the context for the discussion you're going to have about whether or not Chekhov actually follows his own theories. You have to first tell the reader that he wrote the theories. Then you can show how he does or doesn't follow them.

You'll also want to include a conclusion—but I know this isn't finished, so I assume you'll include that. When you're drafting the conclusion, you might ask yourself how Chekov's theories affect all writers. What can we learn from Chekov, Ellen?

***Ellen 218682 has requested that you respond to the Sentence Structure:**

You will want to work on revising some of your sentences after you've got your ideas down on paper. I'll point out a few things for you now, and then we can work on fine-tuning when you've submitted your next draft.

Let's look at an example from your essay:

I agree with Chekhov, as a reader I want read a short story that pulls me in, fills my mind with vivid imaginations, and words that hold my interest.

First, this sentence is a comma splice. There are two independent clauses, and you've joined them with only a comma. If you take out the comma, you'll see that you could insert a period, and you would have two complete sentences. That's always a good test for a comma splice. You can only use a comma to join two independent clauses if you also use a coordinating conjunction in between the two clauses. There are only seven of those in English, so you shouldn't have trouble spotting that construction. Just remember FANBOYS, and you'll know the coordinating conjunctions: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so. We have a good section in our online handbook to help you with comma splices, and I urge you to read that when you're ready to start the editing of this paper. You can access the handbook from the link at the bottom of this form.

Let's look at another part of this sentence:

...as a reader I want read a short story that **pulls** me in, **fills** my mind with vivid imaginations, and **words** that hold my interest.

I've underlined the three coordinate elements so you can see them quickly. Notice you have verbs beginning the first two constructions (pulls/fills). Your third element, however, starts with a noun. That means you're not using parallel structure. I have the same problem in this sentence:

I like swimming, hiking, and to read a book.

That's a shorter sentence so it's easier to hear the problem. I need to make my last element an "ing" construction to fit with the first two. Notice the difference:

I like swimming, hiking, and reading a book.

You'll want to revise your sentence so that you're using parallel structure, and you'll want to look carefully for any other sentences where you might have a similar problem.

Summary of Next Steps:

- Concentrate on content first.
- Make sure you clearly establish the theories you're going to discuss.
- Be sure the reader sees how the example you use violates or doesn't violate the theory you're discussing.
- Work on comma splices when you're ready to edit.

This isn't everything you'll need to address, but you should be able to work on your revision with these suggestions. If you would like to submit another draft of this after you've made your changes, we'll be happy to take another look at it for you. Thanks for using Smarthinking. I hope we see you here again! Stacy

Find additional resources in SMARTHINKING's online library:

You can find more information about writing, grammar, and usage in SMARTHINKING's student handbooks. You can visit the [SMARTHINKING Writer's Handbook](#) or the [SMARTHINKING ESOL \(English for speakers of other languages\) Writer's Handbook](#).

Please look for more comments in your essay below. Thank you for visiting SMARTHINKING. We encourage you to submit future essays.

As Chekhov says to Maxim Gorky, "good writing should be grasped at one – in a second" (1632). I agree with Chekhov, as a reader I want read a short story that pulls me in, fills my mind with vivid imaginations, and words that hold my interest. In Chekhov's "The Lady with the Little Dog" his choice of descriptive words in his paragraphs makes it hard to keep the focus on which subject he is describing. Just as Chekhov states "You have so many such terms that the reader's mind finds it a task to concentrate on them, and soon grows tired" (1632). I feel Chekhov did not always refer to the technique in writing the short story in the "The Lady with the Little Dog". **[Which technique are you referring to here?]**

While Chekhov's character, Gurov is describing his wife, he explains she has "dark brown eyebrows, erect, imposing, dignified, and a thinking person". Here I loose sight of what she may look like because he starts off with a physical feature, but ends up speaking of how she acts. **[That's a great observation!]** Further on, Chekhov starts to describe how Gurov's wife isn't "too bright, narrow-

minded, graceless, was afraid of her long ago, and disliked being at home” making me feel clusterphobic while my thoughts are trying to picture a person being all of those things at one time (299). In Chekhov’s descriptions of his characters, I perceive he goes into too much details pulling the reader away from his real intent, acquainting us to the character. **[This is probably a very important point you’re making here, so you will want a bit more development. Perhaps this sentence would work well as the topic sentence for the paragraph.]**

Chekhov’s opinion on describing Nature how it “should be very brief and have a character of relevance”, so when the readers visualizes the setting, you feel as if you are there (1631). Chekhov does accomplish this realm when Anna and Gurov are at the embankment as Gurov kisses Anna and she is afraid that “someone might see them, the heat, the smell of the sea, and the constant flashing before their eyes of idle, smartly dressed, well-fed people, seemed to transform him”, makes me feel as if I’m a bystander watching the two entwining themselves in each others’ arms (304).

In Chekhov’s letter to Aleksey S. Suvorin he points out how he chooses to introduce subjectivity, “the image becomes blurred and the story will not be as compact as all short stories ought to be”, therefore Chekhov makes the reader fill in the “elements that are lacking” (1632). **[This is a comma splice. Using the information above, how can you fix it?]** For example, when Gurov goes up to her hotel room, she feels uncomfortable and begins to feel guilty. **[Watch your pronouns; “her” in this sentence refers to Gurov.]** Next, Gurov slowly kisses

Anna and they begin to laugh. The next paragraph skips what possible happens after they begin kissing as it states “Later, when they went out” expresses an open suggestion where the reader fills in the elements that were lacking (303). This example is best expressing how the reader is to know that Gurov and Anna are having an affair, even though we only are led into the scenes where they kiss. At the end of the story we are to conclude what will happen to the characters in the last sentence when Chekhov invites us into their thoughts; “and the solution would be found, and then a new, beautiful life would begin; and it was clear to both of them that the end was still far, far off, and that the most complicated and difficult part was just beginning” (310). **[It’s great that you’re using an example from the text, but how does this demonstrate that Chekov is either following or not following a “rule?”]**

In Chekhov’s letter to Gorky he writes how he “cross[es] out a host of terms qualifying nouns and verbs” (1631). For instance, Gurov’s love for Anna shows through his thoughts of how he sees her when he is “sitting beside the young woman, who look [s] so beautiful in the dawn, appeas[ing] and enchant[ing] by the view of this magical décor – sea, mountains, clouds, the open sky” (303). Here I see how Gurov is expressing his emotions and comparing the beauty of Anna to the beauty of the world without having to completely describe Anna with just nouns and verbs. **[You’re reflecting on the passage you selected, and that’s a great way to help explain how Chekov writes. Nice work!]**