

Line of Reasoning Brainstorming Sheet

Prompt:

Thesis (Overarching Claim):

Subclaim #1 (include literary devices):

Subclaim #2 (include literary devices):

(Optional) **Subclaim #3** (include literary devices):

Conclusion: (Reiterates thesis and ends claim)

Line of Reasoning Brainstorming Sheet

Prompt: Carefully read P.K. Page’s 1943 poem “The Landlady.” Then, in a well-organized essay, analyze the speaker’s complex portrayal of the landlady. You may wish to consider such elements as imagery, selection of detail, and tone.

Thesis (Overarching Claim): The speaker in P.K. Page’s portrays the complexities of the landlady’s prying curiosity and loneliness due to a lack of understanding of her tenants’ lives.

Subclaim #1 (include literary devices): Nosiness – She pries because she is desperate to know more about them.

- “Unlocks their keyholes with the wire of sight” (14)
- Metaphors drive her depiction as being overly watchful
 - “her camera eye” (4)
 - “ticklish ears” (7)
 - “palm the dreadful riddle of their skulls” (31)
- “Trembles to know the traffic of their brains” (18-19)

Subclaim #2 (include literary devices): Loneliness – She is lonely because they don’t pay attention to her.

- “The craving silence swallowing her speech” (3) (personification)
- “Because of her their lives become exact” (5)
 - It’s like she’s thinking, “I do everything for you but you still don’t know who I am”
- “Wonders when they are quiet” (17)

(Optional) **Subclaim #3** (include literary devices): She is nosy because she’s lonely, but she is lonely because she’s nosy. The more she pries, the more they stay away from her. This feeds into her bitterness.

- Juxtaposition/Paradox drives many lines (“silence swallowing her speech,” “Yet knows them better than their closest friends,” “Their photographs are theirs and hers”)
- Jealousy and loneliness has transformed into bitterness so that she actually hopes for the worst
- “Like a lover must know all, all, all” (29)

Conclusion: (Reiterates thesis and ends claim)

Loneliness and nosiness work together to drive the tension in the landlady, alienating her from her tenants. If she was only nosy but not lonely there wouldn’t be sympathy, but the added loneliness makes her a more complex and sympathetic character.