

## Lesson 1: The Tin Forest



In the literary essay you explore your thoughts about a great story and evaluate what captured your imagination, sharing these discoveries with your readers. This essay is your opportunity to communicate your big idea about the overall message of the story. The literary essay blueprint will allow you to explore the important themes of the story by *weighing out* your thesis topics through sub-ideas that are woven together with examples and quotations.

Read *The Tin Forest*, by Helen Ward:

Describe the old man.

The old man is lonely because he lives by himself. The old man is also determined to make things better for himself and he does.

Describe the old man's predicament.

The old man's predicament is that his dream is to live in a breathtaking and lively forest but lives in a barren land full of garbage.

What sparks the old man's imagination?

The thing that sparks the old man's imagination is a broken piece of metal that looks like a flower. So he thinks that he could build a forest made of metal.

What sparks your imagination?

What sparks my imagination is reading books. Books spark my imagination by making adventures <sup>come</sup> alive in my head.

Use a dictionary to define:

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environment

the whole complex of factors as soil, climate, and living things that influence the form and the ability to survive of a plant or animal or ecological community to leave something undone or unattended especially through carelessness

desolate

Deserted

imagination

a creation of the mind

creativity

to break into being

hope

to desire with expectation of fulfillment

Read *The Tin Forest* again:

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Complete the story map on the following page. Refer back to Story Mapping on page 16 for help.

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**Climax:**

The moment of greatest intensity in the story

The bird is sadly gone  
the next morning and  
the old man becomes  
depressed.

**Rising Action:**

Story points that move towards the climax

The old man  
builds a forest  
made of tin and  
a bird comes  
for the night.

**Falling Action:**

Story points that move towards the resolution

The old man  
makes a wish  
for the bird to  
come back.

**START HERE! Exposition:**

One sentence summary of story's main conflict or problem

The problem is that  
the old man wants  
to live in a lively  
forest, but instead  
lives in a land  
filled by trash.

**Resolution:**

What happens after the conflict is resolved

The bird finally  
comes back the  
next morning and  
drops a seed that  
plants a forest.

**Themes Discovered:**

The story's big ideas

there is hope,  
perseverance, and  
imagination.

Answer the following questions:

**Science fiction** is a story that is possible within the context of the laws of science, but entirely made up. Describe how this story might be *scientifically* possible?

This story might be scientifically possible because it might be possible for there to be a junkyard of tin and metal, and it might be possible for a bird to drop a seed and over time a whole forest would appear.

Albert Einstein believed, "Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere." What do you think he meant?

I think he meant that logic will only get your mind to certain places, but imagination can take your mind much further than logic.

What do you think this story teaches about life?

I think it teaches to always have hope and to go after what you want.

What **themes** do you discover in *The Tin Forest*? Why are they significant?

The themes I discovered are, hope, determination, and imagination. Hope is significant because if the old man didn't have hope he never would have made the forest and kept going once the bird left. Determination because if he wasn't determined to have his dream he never would have built the forest. Imagination because if he didn't have imagination he wouldn't have wanted to live in a forest or build a forest.