Mrs. Kern's Writing Do's and Don'ts for English Essays

ALWAYS, ALWAYS: The Do's of Writing an English Essay:

✓ Use evidence from the text. Evidence can come in the form of direct quotes and specific examples of plot events.

✓ Cite your evidence!

✓ Explain your evidence. Why is it important? What does it prove? Make the connections explicit for your reader.

✓ Introduce your evidence or your quote.

✓ Underline titles of novels. Titles of short stories, poems, essays, and plays should be put in quotation marks.

NEVER, EVER: The Don’ts of Writing and English Essay:

✓ Summarize the book. Assume your reader (me) has read it already. Only include plot events that relate to your thesis.

✓ Give me your opinion of the book. Keep your personal judgments out of your essay. You can write a good essay regardless of whether or not you enjoyed the book.

✓ Introduce a quote with “The quote I really like...” Or “The quote that proves my thesis is...”.