Analytical Text Response

Strategies: Written analytical responses.

In a written analytical response you are usually writing an essay in response to a topic. You might be asked a direct question about a character or theem in the novel, or you might be given a quotation about or from the novel and asked to discuss it or give your opinion about an aspect of it.

Here is an effective approach to writing such a response:

1. Read the topic carefully and underline the key terms that you will need to address in your response. Make sure you use your dictionary to check on the meaning of terms with which you are unfamiliar.
2. Rewrite the topic in your own words to make sure you have understood it.
3. Brainstorm ideas about the topic, jotting down, in point form, evidence from the text that can be used to illustrate it.
4. Group together ideas that have something in common. These groups will become your paragraphs.
5. Give each paragraph a topic sentence; that is, a sentence saying what the paragraph will be about. List the evidence from the book that you will use to support your point of view.
6. Write your introduction. Make sure that it includes reference to the topic (in your own words, not the exact words of the topic) and an indication of your point of view.
7. Organise the paragraphs so that they proceed logically, making certain that each paragraph relates directly to the topic.
8. Write your response.
9. Read it over when you have finished. Edit and proofread. Editing should include improving your vocabulary, increasing fluency and making sure that you have analysed the topic and presented a view on it. Remember that just retelling the story is not an analysis.