

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

INSANITY --

Insanity is a mental illness of such a severe nature that a person cannot distinguish fantasy from reality, cannot manage his/her own affairs, or is subject to uncontrollable impulsive behavior. In criminal cases, a plea of "not guilty by reason of insanity" will require a trial on the issue of the defendant's insanity (or sanity) at the time the crime was committed.

In this context, "not guilty" does not mean the person did not commit the criminal act for which he or she is charged. It means that when the person committed the crime, he or she could not tell right from wrong or could not control his or her behavior because of severe mental defect or illness. Such a person, the law holds, should not be held criminally responsible for his or her behavior.

Source: USLegal.com

Directions: Look back at your group charts. Consider which pieces of evidence are the strongest pieces of evidence. Write in the chart below the three strongest pieces of evidence for not guilty by reason of insanity, and the three strongest pieces of evidence for guilty of murder.

INSANITY

MURDER

EVALUATE

After looking at the strongest evidence, do you believe the narrator to be guilty of murder, or not guilty by reason of insanity? Explain your answer below.

CREATE YOUR THESIS

A thesis statement is one sentence that clearly states the writer's opinion. Consider your beliefs about the murder. Write a thesis statement that gives your opinion.

- DO NOT USE WORDS like "I believe" or "I think." We know it is your opinion, because you are the writer! Instead, make a strong statement.
