*Topic sentence connects to previous paragraph, uses language from research question, mentions the author and a literary idea and asserts an opinion as though it is fact.*

The empowerment of the female, explored through characteristics, is more subtly but no less importantly conveyed through Tolkien’s Elves. That is not to say they are female or of ambiguous sexuality; rather, they possess more feminine principles than masculine, and are thus a characteristically feminine race. They are united by their serene beauty and are associated with music, laughter, spirituality and wisdom. Elvish femininity is most conspicuous in their soft, musical language, with its high frequency of liquid sounds. Note the assonance in ‘*Elen sila lumen omentielvo’* (Tolkien 79). The ‘en’ sound is soft and languid, the high proportion of vowels welding the sounds together so that the words run off the tongue. Similarly, the Elves are associated with onomatopoeic words such as ‘sighing’ and ‘whispering.’ Dwarves, Men and Orcs are, in contrast, masculine races; this too is conveyed through language, theirs being harsh and guttural, as in ‘Baruk Khazad! Khazad aimenu! (Tolkien 1106). The author invokes the characteristics of a beautiful woman, in portraying spoken Elvish as a language that bewitches the listener: “He stood still enchanted, while the sweet syllables of the Elvish song fell like clear jewels of blended word and melody” (Tolkien 232). The diction employed here, ‘sweet syllables,’ ‘clear jewels,’ and ‘melody,’ is soft, suggesting femininity – a contrast to the rough, masculine ‘slaying songs’ of Rohan (Tolkiien 943). Plainly then, Tolkien intends readers to associate the Elves, a strong and proud race, with feminine principles, which strongly suggests empowerment of the female in The Lord of the Rings.

*Quotations, almost always less than 10 words in length, are incorporated seamlessly into the essayist’s sentences, often without colons or other weak introductions.*

*Writer is judging, evaluating, asserting, suggesting and interpreting throughout the paragraph in such a way that these opinions sound like fact.*

*Note that sometimes, for variety, analysis happens first and an example is provided later to avoid a rigid “proof-then-explanation” pattern.*

*Concluding sentence echoes the topic sentence, using language from the RQ, but sums up the argument presented rather than introducing it as the topic sentence does*

*Quotations are cited using MLA format, with close quotation mark” ( author’s name page number) and then a period.*

*Sentences after the topic sentence are a combination of quotation and analysis, with some literary language/terminology added to acknowledge the fact that the essay is a study of literature.*