

Thesis Statements--Junior English Research Paper

Now that you have decided on a general research topic, narrowed your topic to a working thesis idea, and you have examined some preliminary sources, you need to establish your controlling idea or **thesis statement**; this is the central thought that you want to develop in your paper. This sheet will serve as a guide in helping you write a solid thesis for your paper.

General Approaches for the Research Paper Thesis:

- ❖ You may prove whether or not the novel is an accurate or inaccurate account of your chosen social issue.
- ❖ You may explain how your chosen novel makes a powerful statement about an issue.
- ❖ You may persuade the reader to change his/her attitude regarding a particular issue after using your novel to explain and analyze the issue.
- ❖ You may come up with your own unique approach

Thesis Requirements:

1. The thesis statement must contain the title(s) of your book(s) + your chosen social issue.
2. The thesis may be either persuasive or expository.
3. The thesis must include a so what? or a societal connection.
4. The thesis needs to be proven in the paper and well supported with evidence from your chosen book, interview, + research.

Sample Thesis Statements:

I Know this Much is True is an accurate account of the far reaching effects mental illness has on families, which teaches society to be accepting and open to helping people understand and cope with the disease.

Although I Know This Much is True explores the social structure found in mental institutions, it negatively romanticizes institutional life, creating an unrealistic image of what goes on in these institutions, which is a disservice to the modern mental health profession.

The novel, White Oleander accurately and painfully shows the psychological effects parental abuse has on a child, teaching society of the lasting emotional scars and detrimental effects of an abusive childhood on a young adult trying make sense of the world..

Alice Walker's novel Possessing the Secret of Joy shows the lasting damage mutilation has on women and illustrates that people in society must learn to love and accept their natural selves in order to find true happiness and peace.

The novels The Sky Fisherman and Winterkill give insightful portrayals of the struggles of Native American families in today's society which are similar to all modern families' struggles, yet are unique because of racial and historical issues.

The Poisonwood Bible and The Chosen are both stories of children growing up in rigidly religious families, and portray the shift we see today in young people not adopting the traditional religion of their families, an issue that can bring discord and family dissension.

Your turn!

By next class session, you will need to TYPE your working thesis statement following all of the requirements above. (See example below) Remember that the research you are finding, along with the information in your novel, must be able to support your thesis statement. Later next week, you will be coming up with the subpoints you will use in your final paper to support this thesis statement, so you may want to think about that as you are formulating your statement.

Follow the steps below to help you formulate your thesis:

Book: Huck Finn

Chosen social issue + narrowed thesis idea: Subtle racism and how it negatively affects relationships

Societal connection: Society needs to learn more about identifying subtle racism and overcoming it

Through Huck Finn's voice in The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Twain raises the issue of the difficulty of having true friendship across racial lines in a society plagued by racism, suggesting the importance of society today learning more about subtle racism and overcoming it.