**To Kill a Mockingbird Essay Preparation**

Preparing Thesis Statements and MLA Citations while Analyzing the Novel

**Directions:** As you begin this assignment you should be near completing the novel and have a firm understanding of the characters, plot, theme(s), symbolism, and insights. Answer the questions and prompts listed below. Remember that *all references* to information stated in the text must be *cited in MLA format*. Reference the OWL Purdue site and/or handouts for examples of MLA format if necessary. If you encounter any difficulties, remember the empowerment of asking for help and earning that “Ah-ha!” moment.

**Goals:**
1) Establish an argument using interpretation and inference skills.
2) Support the claims by finding proof (quotes) within the text.
3) Demonstrate capability of thesis statement writing.
4) Practice MLA citation criterion.
5) Implement research skills.
6) Confirm a connection between fiction and non-fiction texts.

**Step One:**

Which prompt topic (see below) do you plan to analyze? _____________________________

- **Prompt:** The topics listed below, addressed in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, apply not only to the fictitious novel, but to reality as well. Select one of the topics and explore how it is prevalent in the novel, history, and contemporary society.

- **Topics:**
  - Prejudice
  - Growing Up
  - Courage
  - Internal Conflict
  - External Conflict
  - Education
  - Lady
  - Background
  - Trash
  - Boundaries
  - Point of View
  - Battles & Weapons
Step Two:

Brainstorm a list/explanation of why you choose to analyze the topic listed above. The more thorough the list/explanation, the easier it will be to complete the entire assignment. Try to avoid lead-ins such as, “I choose this topic because”. Steer clear of first and second person pronouns.

_________________________________________________

_________________________________________________

_________________________________________________

_________________________________________________

_________________________________________________

_________________________________________________

Step Three:

Use the novel, a historical example, and a contemporary example, to find six quotes that support your claim. Write them in MLA format. Do not forget to cite your sources.

Body Paragraph 1 (Argument One for Thesis): NOVEL Topic____________________________________

1. ______________________________________________________________________________________

2. ______________________________________________________________________________________

• Citation of novel for Works Cited page:

   ______________________________________________________________________________________

   ______________________________________________________________________________________

   ______________________________________________________________________________________

Body Paragraph 2 (Argument Two from Thesis): HISTORICAL Topic____________________________________

3. ______________________________________________________________________________________

   ______________________________________________________________________________________

   ______________________________________________________________________________________

   ______________________________________________________________________________________
Step Four:

Create a thesis statement that identifies the piece of literature and its author, states the argument as it pertains to the prompt, and provides explanation of how the topic is evident in the novel, history, and contemporary society.

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
Review your thesis statement and your *To Kill a Mockingbird* prompt worksheet to determine the argument(s) for each paragraph. For example, the first paragraph may argue a claim of prejudice or what makes the character a lady. Then, find two examples of value oriented quotes and implement those for the evidence. Utilize the quotes from the “Essay Preparation” prompt worksheet. Create analysis that explains the significance, connection, and importance of the facts in accordance with the claim or argument of the paragraph. Make sure your work is legible.

**BODY**

A. Main Point (Ingredients of a Body Paragraph) – Each Body Paragraph needs an claim/argument. Make your decision in accordance with the facts on your *TKAM* “Essay Preparation” prompt worksheet.
   1. (TS) Topic Sentence - Introduce main point of paragraph; limits paragraph to only that topic.
   2. (E) Evidence - Examples from the text that are illuminative and provide proof for your topic. Remember to use MLA format.
   3. (A) Analysis – Explanation, inference, insight, and details. These originate from your mind.
   4. (CS) Concluding Sentence – Closes current paragraph and transition to next paragraph.

B. Order (Recipe of a Body Paragraph) – Each Body Paragraph must include a *minimum* of (1) Topic Sentence, (2) Evidence, (4) Analysis, and (1) Concluding Sentence.
   1. Basic Sequence – TS, E, A, A, E, A, A, CS
   2. Increasing Flow – You may include additional sentences anywhere after the TS and before the CS. For example, your order may be: TS, extra sentence, E, A, A, extra sentence, E, A, A, two extra sentences, CS.

C. Mark It Up (Garnishing a Body Paragraph) – Underline the sentences using the color code below.
   1. TS and CS in green, E’s in yellow, A’s in red, and extra in blue.

Body Paragraph 1, 2, or 3 (circle one). Submit to Turnitin.com by ________________.