## Lesson - Writing the AP Rhetorical Analysis Thesis, Part I

**Standard**

* Students should be able to analyze and interpret samples of good writing, identifying and explaining an author’s use of rhetorical strategies and techniques**.**
* apply effective strategies and techniques in their own writing;
* create and sustain arguments based on readings, research and/or personal experience;
* write for a variety of purposes;
* produce expository, analytical and argumentative compositions that introduce a complex central idea and develop it with appropriate evidence drawn from primary and/or secondary sources, cogent explanations and clear transitions;

**Text**

* AP reading selections (included in student exercises)

**Skills Learned**

1. Definition of a thesis
2. Template for writing rhetorical analysis thesis
3. Definition of major argument, minor argument, tactic, and purpose

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| **Lecture Bullet Points** |
| **Writing the AP Thesis: Recap**   * We learned that a thesis is an argument – it defines the central point you are making AND * The order in which you make it. * We also learned that a thesis deals in ABSTRACT terms. * **“The moral of *Romeo and Juliet* is that Juliet and Romeo should not have killed themselves” is NOT a thesis. Too specific, too concrete. No abstract words besides “moral.”** * ***The moral of R and J is that impulsiveness leads to tragedy* IS a thesis.**   **TRANSITION**   * In the AP rhetorical analysis essay, the thesis comes first. * It’s the first sentence your reader reads and judges you by. * The essay can often be won or lost in that first sentence. * We will teach you the Ultimate in Cool AP Thesis Sentences today.   **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**  **The AP Thesis: Four Parts**  **Basic template:**  **Although [minor argument the author makes in the beginning], the author uses [tactic] to communicate the idea that [major argument the author makes by the end] in order to persuade his audience to [purpose].**  **Or more basically…**   * + 1. **Minor argument + purpose**     2. **Major argument + purpose**   C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft Office\MEDIA\OFFICE14\Lines\BD10289_.gif  **Why The AP Thesis is Important**   * It answers all rhetorical analysis questions, regardless of the specifics of that question. * It should be the FIRST SENTENCE your reader ever reads. * It is a complex sentence and therefore allows you to express a complex idea * Two ideas (major and minor) in tension with each other * Sophisticated sentence structure = Better AP grade * Gives you a game plan and a framework for discussing all rhetorical analysis questions.   C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft Office\MEDIA\OFFICE14\Lines\BD10289_.gif |

### Student Exercise – Thesis for Tyrion Lannister

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**Text**

* AP reading selections (included in student exercises)

**Skills Learned**

1. Definition of a thesis
2. Template for writing rhetorical analysis thesis
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| **Lecture Bullet Points** |
| **Writing the AP Thesis: Recap**   * We learned an AP thesis is crucial because it’s the first sentence. * Sets up the order in which you will write * Sets up a minor argument the author uses in the beginning and a major one in the end, and states his purpose.   **Transition**  Problem many students face is “Where do I begin?”  We’re going to teach the “Divide and Conquer” strategy for textual analysis today.  C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft Office\MEDIA\OFFICE14\Lines\BD10289_.gif  **Divide and Conquer Strategy**   * As you read, you will see there are natural “breaks” in a text – places the author shifts gears, shifts tactics, shifts tone, shifts emphasis. * When we read the text we’ll read today, every time we see a “shift” like this, we will draw a line. * That line represents a shift from one argument to another – and usually a shift from one kind of ethical appeal to another. * Since your AP thesis will lay out the author’s arguments IN THE ORDER THEY APPEAR, it’s important to look at that order and be able to define it.   C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft Office\MEDIA\OFFICE14\Lines\BD10289_.gif  **Example**  *“Don’t fight for your king, don’t fight for his kingdoms, don’t fight for honor, don’t fight for glory, don’t fight for riches because you won’t get any. This is your city Stannis means to sack, your gate he’s ramming. If he gets in, it will be your houses he burns, your gold he steals, your women he will assault. Those are brave men knocking at our door. Let’s go kill them!”*  Let’s take the above speech as an example. We’ve seen it before.   1. Draw at least one line in this speech. Put the line at the place you think Tyrion Lannister is “shifting gears” or changing tone, tactics, strategy, focus, et cetera. 2. Why did you put the line there and not somewhere else? 3. What would you call or label tactic #1, to the left of the line? Using the word “because,” explain why you are calling this tactic by this label. 4. What would you call or label tactic #2, to the right of the line? Using the word “because,” explain why you are calling this tactic by this label. 5. What rhetorical appeal (pathos, ethos, logos) is being used on the right? The left? Don’t forget to NAME the emotion, NAME the common value, and NAME the logical/linguistic tactic. 6. For EACH segment, explain the following:    1. Explain WHY Tyrion chose that tactic – why would he try this approach?    2. Explain WHY he shifted to a different tactic. Why was the previous tactic not effective, or why did he need to say idea #1 before he could express or get to idea #2   C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft Office\MEDIA\OFFICE14\Lines\BD10289_.gif  **Questions You Might Ask**  One questions to always ask is, “WHY.” Why did the author change tactics?  The answer is always, “Because the first tactic wasn’t working,” OR ALSO “Because the first tactic has served its purpose.   1. Sometimes, you need to do step 1 before 2. You can’t pour cake batter into the pan without mixing it first. 2. Sometimes, you try a tactic and it doesn’t pan out. The audience will be lost unless you shift gears. 3. With Tyrion’s speech, what was it? Why does he shift gears?   C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft Office\MEDIA\OFFICE14\Lines\BD10289_.gif  **Student Practice**   1. Write just the “although” portion of the AP thesis here.   Although [minor argument in the beginning], the speaker, Tyrion Lannister, uses [tactic]…  Check for comprehension. FOCUS ON WHETHER THIS IS AN ARGUMENT.   1. Now write the rest of it.   Check for comprehension. FOCUS ON WHETHER THIS IS AN ARGUMENT. |