

MINILESSON: TURNING AN MCAS QUESTION INTO A LEAD AND THESIS

Note 1: This technique does not mean you don't have to think—it doesn't give you a thesis, it just shows you the way towards phrasing it.

Note 2: This is a low level trick if you are having trouble thinking about how to form a lead and thesis. As you become stronger writers you will move beyond this and form your own insightful leads.

Note 3: This does not work for all questions.

Example 1: WRITING ASSIGNMENT

In literature as in life, people can make choices and must live with the consequences of those choices.

From a work of literature you have read in or out of school, select a character who makes a choice. In a well-developed composition, identify the character's choice and explain what happens as a result of this choice.

Lead and Thesis structure:

All human beings have the ability to make choices. Similarly, all human beings must live with the consequences of the choices that they make. In (AUTHOR)'s (*BOOK TITLE*), (CHARACTER NAME) chooses to (CHOICE) and as a result (CONSEQUENCE).

Example 2: WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Often in works of literature, there are characters—other than the main character—whose presence in the work is essential.

From a work of literature you have read in or out of school, select a character, other than the main character, who plays a key role. In a well-developed composition, identify the character and explain why this character is important.

Lead and Thesis structure:

Characters other than the protagonist are often essential to the plot development and overall meaning of great works of literature. In (AUTHOR)'s (*BOOK TITLE*), the character (CHARACTER'S NAME) is essential because (WHAT MAKES HIM/HER ESSENTIAL).

Example 3: WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Conflict and resolution is a key aspect of many works of literature.

From a work of literature you have read in or out of school, identify a major conflict. In a well-developed composition, discuss how this conflict is resolved.

Lead and Thesis structure:

Without conflict, literature fails to grab the reader's attention. Without resolution, works of literature leave the reader feeling that something is unfinished. In (AUTHOR)'s (*BOOK TITLE*), a conflict between (DESCRIBE THE CONFLICT BRIEFLY) is resolved when (DESCRIBE THE RESOLUTION BRIEFLY)

**YOUR TURN:
WRITING ASSIGNMENT**

In literature as in life, teacher-student relationships are an essential way in which wisdom and knowledge is passed down through generations.

From a work of literature you have read in or out of school, identify a teacher-student relationship. In a well-developed Composition, discuss how this relationship allows wisdom and knowledge to be passed down.

Lead and Thesis structure: