

## **Process: Writers' Workshop: Minilesson—Leads**

1. Tell students: We will adopt a standard structure for leads which you should use unless you feel fully comfortable on your own.
2. Introduce models from past student essays. Ask students what makes them effective.
3. Explicitly show them the Lead structure (the first page listed below).
4. Have them re-write (or write) their leads and theses for the current essay based on this style. They will do it on overhead strips and put them up for critique.

## **How to Write an Essay Lead:**

*If you have struggled at all with Lead Writing, here is a simple formula you can follow:*

**Sentence 1:** Restate the top statement from the question in slightly changed words.

**Sentence 2-4:** Give a very basic summary of the book you are writing on (with a slant based on what your thesis will be).

**Sentence 5:** Transitional sentence into the thesis if needed.

**Sentence 6:** Thesis

## **Leads from the Senior Class when they took the MCAS.**

### **The question was:**

## **WRITING PROMPT**

The protagonist is the main character in a work of literature who often changes in some important way by the end of the work.

From a work of literature you have read in or out of school, select a protagonist who changes in some important way by the end of the work. In a well-developed composition, identify the protagonist, and explain why the protagonist changes in some important way by the end of the work.

### **Example one:**

The protagonist is the main character in a work of literature who changes in crucial ways over the course of the work. In Breath Boom, a play written by

Kia Carthron, the main character Prix is the protagonist. Throughout the play, Prix was known to be a leader of a girl gang with a high reputation. She received a lot of respect from everyone who know who she was. Her hard core attitude had many people scared but a few things happened in her life and she had to make a change.

Then the THESIS....

**Example two:**

People change to better themselves and their lives. Some people make important changes for the people around them. In the piece of literature Breath Boom, the author tells a story of a notorious girl gang in Brooklyn, New York. The protagonist Prix is the head of this girl gang. The play shows the viewer the struggles of a girl gang and the struggles necessary to get out.

Then the THESIS...

**Example three:**

Often the protagonist in a piece of literature has not choice but to change. The play Breath Boom, written by Kia Carthron, is about a young woman named Prix who lives in New York City and is in a gang along with a number of other girls. Prix is a very tough, hard, and strong-minded young woman around her friends, but not at home. Prix lives with her mother and her mother's boyfriend and hardly communicates at home because for 12 years she has been sexually abused. Everything about Prix life is filled with struggle. Ultimately Prix had no choice but to change. Then the THESIS...

**My model:**

(1) Many great works of literature involve a conflict between the protagonist and the society in which he lives. (2) Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is a novel about the Igbo people in Africa just as colonization is beginning. (3) Okonkwo, the protagonist, is a man dominated by fear of weakness. (4) Partly because of his efforts to prove to himself that he is not

weak, Okonkwo opposes the entry of colonial missionaries into his people's culture. (5) The result is a conflict between Okonkwo and his society. (6) In Achebe's novel, Okonkwo enters into a conflict with the European missionary colonizers of his society and, unable to oppose them and change his people's views, ends up committing suicide.