Essay Topics

*Directions*:

You will write an essay of 3-4 pages on the topic of your choice from the options below. Please underline your thesis statement in your first paragraph, and make sure that the body of your essay clearly argues for the thesis. It is important that you provide quotations and specific details from the novel as evidence that supports your thesis. You may use outside scholarly sources, but it is not required. Use MLA citations throughout your essay. Refer to my teacher website, [www.englishwithmsjauregui.weebly.com](http://www.englishwithmsjauregui.weebly.com), under the “Useful Links” tab for help on MLA formatting. Please use Times New Roman font, size 12, and double space your paper. You are not required to provide a cover page, but may do so if you wish; however, your cover page will not count towards the 3-4 pages required. You may contact me if you have additional questions.

*Topics:*

1. In chapter 6 of *The Awakening*, Kate Chopin writes: “The voice of the sea is seductive; never ceasing, whispering, clamoring, murmuring, inviting the soul to wander for a spell in abysses of solitude. The touch of the sea is sensuous, enfolding the body in its soft embrace.” These words reappear in Chapter 39, as Edna prepares to enter the water for the last time. What is the significance of these passages? How do they bring together some of the novel’s major themes?

2. Throughout the novel, Edna feels caught between the way others see her and the way she sees herself. Identify several moments in which this struggle is apparent. How does the text portray Edna’s growing awareness of these contradicting views?

3. How does *The Awakening* speak to the roles of women and the conventions of literature at the end of the 19th century?

4. How did society norms during the 18th, 19th, and 20th century affect the way women were viewed and treated? Make connections to *The Awakening* and discuss traditional attitudes about the role of women in society during that time and how it compares to today’s society.

5. Write your own topic. Clear it with me before you begin writing your essay.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| CATEGORY | **4 - Above Standards** | **3 - Meets Standards** | **2 - Approaching Standards** | **1 - Below Standards** |
| **Focus or Thesis Statement** | The thesis statement names the topic of the essay and outlines the main points to be discussed. | The thesis statement names the topic of the essay. | The thesis statement outlines some or all of the main points to be discussed but does not name the topic. | The thesis statement does not name the topic AND does not preview what will be discussed. |
| **Evidence and Examples** | All of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position. | Most of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position. | At least one of the pieces of evidence and examples is relevant and has an explanation that shows how that piece of evidence supports the author's position. | Evidence and examples are NOT relevant AND/OR are not explained. |
| **Closing paragraph** | The conclusion is strong and leaves the reader solidly understanding the writer's position. Effective restatement of the position statement begins the closing paragraph. | The conclusion is recognizable. The author's position is restated within the first two sentences of the closing paragraph. | The author's position is restated within the closing paragraph, but not near the beginning. | There is no conclusion - the paper just ends. |
| **Grammar & Spelling** | Author makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content. | Author makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content. | Author makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content. | Author makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content. |
| **Sentence Structure** | All sentences are well-constructed with varied structure. | Most sentences are well-constructed and there is some varied sentence structure in the essay. | Most sentences are well constructed, but there is no variation is structure. | Most sentences are not well-constructed or varied. |
| **Capitalization & Punctuation** | Author makes no errors in capitalization or punctuation, so the essay is exceptionally easy to read. | Author makes 1-2 errors in capitalization or punctuation, but the essay is still easy to read. | Author makes a few errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the reader's attention and interrupt the flow. |  |