

Exercise walk-through

Developing a literary thesis statement ■ 9.6

eXercise

You must be able to

- state what a thesis expresses and requires
- explain the difficulty of a chosen-text essay
- state what the CED does not require
- make a thesis answer the prompt rather than the novel

Method — The requirement

An interpretation of a literary text requiring defense through textual evidence and a line of reasoning, explained through commentary.

Method — The chosen-text difficulty

When you choose the text, you arrive knowing it well — and the risk is writing what you know about the novel instead of what the prompt asked.

Method — What is not required

No list of points, elements or evidence.

Method — Answering the prompt

The thesis must contain the prompt's own terms, redescribed as a claim about this text. If the thesis could stand unchanged under a different prompt, it is answering the novel and not the question.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

State what a thesis expresses and requires.

Solution 2.1

Worked steps

an interpretation of a literary text **B1** requiring defense through textual evidence and a line of reasoning explained by commentary **B1**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 2 marks

Explain the difficulty of a chosen-text essay.

Solution 2.2

Method: The chosen-text difficulty

Worked steps

the writer knows the chosen text well **B1**, so the risk is writing what they know rather than what the prompt asked **B1**.

Practice 2.3 ■ 2 marks

The thesis must answer the prompt.

(a) State the test.

(b) State what the thesis must contain.

Solution 2.3

Method: Answering the prompt

Worked steps

- (a) ask whether the thesis could stand unchanged under a different prompt **B2**.
- (b) the prompt's own terms, redescribed as a claim about this text **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

A thesis that could stand unchanged under a different prompt is answering

A the novel, not the question

B the question

C both

D neither

Solution 3.1

Method: Answering the prompt

A the novel, not the question



B the question

C both

D neither

Worked steps

A. the novel.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

In a chosen-text essay the risk is writing

A what you know about the novel

B too little

C about the wrong book

D without evidence

Solution 3.2

Method: The chosen-text difficulty

A what you know about the novel



B too little

C about the wrong book

D without evidence

Worked steps

A. what you know about the novel.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

A student's thesis is a strong claim about a novel and does not use the prompt's terms.

- (a) State the problem.
- (b) Explain the fix.

Solution 3.3

Method: Answering the prompt

Worked steps

(a) it may be a good claim about the wrong question **B1**. (b) rewrite it so the prompt's terms appear as part of the claim **B1**, keeping the interpretation but pointing it at what was asked **B1**.