Mrs. Burke

C.P. English 10

Research Paper

**Steps 1 & 2 – Topic and Thesis Statement:**

Your topic is the author you are writing about and key words about the author. For example, if you choose Harriet Beecher Stowe as your author, your **topic + key words would be: Stowe’s novel, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, had an influence on the cause of the Civil War**. Then a possible simple **thesis statement** from that could be: **Harriet Beecher Stowe’s novel, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin,* was a catalyst for the start of Civil War.**

A thesis statement states the topic of your research and gives it a purpose by stating exactly what you are going to prove. In other words, you are telling the reader not only ***what*** you are writing about, but you are also answering the question – **“S*o, what about it*?**”! You are giving a purpose to your writing; you are giving the reader a reason to read you research. The thesis statement is an assertion that you must defend. You will do so by coming to a conclusion about your initial research and then articulating that conclusion in your paper with the aid of research to support your conclusion. You are saying, “This is what I believe about this topic, but I am not the only one who believes this. These experts agree with me as well.” You may also disagree with experts, but you must be able to clearly express your disagreement. Using the topic of Stowe’s influence on the Civil War, you could say in your thesis statement that Stowe’s novel actually ignited the Civil War, which ultimately ended slavery, permanently impacting our society.

Here is a short list of American authors. Feel free to go beyond this list:

Maya Angelou

James Baldwin

Ambrose Bierce

Anne Bradstreet

Truman Capote

Orson Scott Card

Kate Chopin

Sandra Cisneros

Steven Crane

Walter Dean Myers

Emily Dickinson

Ralph Waldo Emerson

William Faulkner

F. Scott Fitzgerald

Ben Franklin

Robert Frost

Lorraine Hansberry

Nathaniel Hawthorne

S. E. Hinton

Langston Hughes

Washington Irving

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Stephen King

Harper Lee

Ursula LeGuin

Jack London

Arthur Miller

Joyce Carol Oates

Tim O’Brien

Flannery O’Connor

Sylvia Plath

Edgar Allan Poe

J.D. Salinger

John Steinbeck

Amy Tan

Henry David Thoreau

Mark Twain

Kurt Vonnegut

Alice Walker

Phillis Wheatley

Walt Whitman