

NOTE:

The following is a Sample Preliminary Outline. Notice that the thesis statement is usually presented in one sentence. However, it may be combined with what is sometimes called a Preview Sentence, which states how the writer will prove the thesis statement.

SAMPLE OUTLINE

Topic: How can Huck and Abigail start out similarly, but end up so different?

Thesis: Although neither has any familial support, Huck and Abigail follow two different paths; while Huck begins to show compassion, Abigail continues to show few ethics and horrible life choices.

I. Introduction

- A. Intro Strategy
- B. Background about Huck and Abigail's' Life Style
- C. List/ Mention all main points
 - 1. Similar- Compassion for others
 - 2. Different-Knowledge of right from wrong
 - 4. Different-Journey/character development

E. Thesis

II Main Point One: Compassion

- A. Huck does not care about anyone else
- B. How Abigail shows no compassion

III. Main Point Two: Knowledge of right from wrong

- A. Do their mangled families have any influence
- B. Both do not have parents/good parents/ no positive role models

IV. Main Point Three: Journey/ Character Development

- A. How far they have come throughout literary work
- B. Huck has changed
- C. Abigail hasn't changed

V. Conclusion

- A. Reword thesis
- B. Works
 - 1. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
 - 2. *The Crucible*
- C. Main Points
 - 1. Similar- Compassion for others
 - 2. Different-Knowledge of right from wrong
 - 3. Different-Journey/character development
- D. Draw Conclusions

SAMPLE FINAL OUTLINE (EXCERPT)

Comparing the Characters Huckleberry Finn and Abigail Williams

I. Introduction

A. Intro Strategy- informal definition of compassion

B. Background Information

1. Talk about Abigail's' early years
2. Talk about Huck's early years

C. Literary Works

1. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, by Mark Twain
2. *The Crucible*, by Arthur Miller

D. List/ Mention all main points

1. Similar- Compassion for others
2. Different-Knowledge of right from wrong
4. Different-Journey/character development

E. Thesis: Therefore, Huck changes his lifestyle and begins to exhibit compassion for those he cares about; Abigail, however, continues to live without compassion, making destructive life choices.

II. Main Point One: Compassion

A. Topic Sentence- about knowing what love and compassion really mean

B. Huck makes himself his priority

1. Primary quote (Twain 62-63)
2. Explanation- he wants to have fun regardless of others

C. Abigail's lack of compassion

1. She ignores other's requests
 - a. Primary quote (Miller 120)
 - b. Explanation- she ignores others
2. demented sense of love
 - a. Secondary quote (Sova)
 - b. Explanation- hurts others because she doesn't know anything else

D. Closing Sentence

III. Main Point Two: ...

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