

Written and Oral Communication
The Help* and *To Kill a Mockingbird

Name:

Synthesis Paper

Objective: Analyze how one common theme develops in two different fictional works (one book and one movie version of a book).

Step I) Choose a theme topic (circle one): isolation/ prejudice/ justice/ loss of innocence/ levels of society/ Courage/ multiple perspectives—viewing the world through someone else’s eyes

Step II) Create a thematic message, what the writer is saying ABOUT the theme topic. What **truth about life** do they reveal through the characters, settings, conflicts, symbols, actions, and outcomes? For example, what do you think the works show about courage? What kind of courage do the characters show? What happens as a result? (For example—It takes small acts of courage from ordinary people to change the world).

Your thematic message:

Step III) Look in *To Kill a Mockingbird* and your ICEings and find 2 different passages that build the theme. Note them below by page number and quotation/paraphrase:

- **First Passage:**

- **Second Passage:**

Step IV) Think back to *The Help* and identify 2 different scenes that build the theme. Explain what happens in the scene, where, and with whom:

- **First Scene**

- **Second Scene**

Step V) Writing the Introduction (ACTS)

Imagine your introduction as a funnel that starts off wide and narrows to a small opening (your thesis).

The first part of the introduction is called the **ATTENTION GETTER**. Remember that the attention getter should be original, specific, accurate, relevant, and useful.

- It can be a general statement about your theme topic (Acting with courage often involves taking a risk)
- A contrast to a commonly held belief (Although many people associate courage with some grand act, a small act of courage can have a major impact on the world).
- A brief story from your personal experience or someone else's experience (In 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama, a black seamstress boarded a city bus to ride home after a long day's work. When the bus began filling up, the driver ordered her to give up her seat to a white passenger and stand in the back. She refused. Her small act of courage led to a bus boycott by all blacks in Montgomery, a boycott that revealed the power of the black community to fight against unjust laws.)

The second part of the introduction, the **CONTEXT**, links the opener to the thesis by narrowing the scope of discussion and providing information to aid in understanding the upcoming thesis. Introduce the works and authors, important characters and events that relate specifically to your thesis. Be sure to use transition words so the context flows from the attention getter! (Ex—In *To Kill a Mockingbird*, by Harper Lee, Atticus Finch is a lawyer in the racially segregated town of Maycomb. He decides to defend a black man against a rape charge, even though he knows that taking the case puts himself and his children at risk. In the movie, *The Help*, based on a book by Kathleen Stockett, the main character, Skeeter Phelan, returns from college to her racially segregated Mississippi town. She decides to tell the real stories of the black maids who work for the white families in town, alienating herself from her friends and family and risking her own safety.)

Now, you will present your **THESIS** - the main idea that will be supported by every sentence you write from now on. It should be one, complete

sentence. (Example—In both works the authors illustrate how small acts of courage by ordinary people have the ability to change the world.

Thesis: _____

Step VI) ICE-ings for TKM

#1

- **Introduce what is happening in this scene, where, who is involved or speaking and to whom, and why:**

- **Transition and direct quotation:**

- **Explain how this supports your thesis to be true**

#2

- **Introduce what is happening in this scene, where, who is involved or speaking and to whom, and why:**

