Argumentative Essay for *To Kill a Mockingbird*

**What kind of an essay will you be writing?**

This is an argumentative essay in which the writer chooses to defend one side of an issue. While defending your chosen stance, you will also examine different perspectives on the issue by discussing the complications of the issue (counter arguments).

**How does this type of essay develop an effective argument?**

The writer addresses one argument against his or her position, in addition to supporting his/her position. As a result, an opponent who holds the opposition’s position will not be able to argue that the writer has not considered the opposition’s point of view.

**Your essay MUST do the following:**

* Develop a clear argument using support from the novel.
* Address and/or refute the opposing side of your argument.

**Choose from the thesis statements listed below:**

1. Despite drawbacks for his own family, Atticus was wise to defend Tom Robinson.
2. While prejudicial behavior gave some residents of Maycomb a sense of comfortable superiority, it actually limited their ability to develop fully as human beings.
3. While Atticus works hard to develop a relationship with his children, in many other ways he fails as a parent.
4. While Atticus may make some mistakes as a parent, overall he is an admirable father.
5. While many characters in *To Kill a Mockingbird* find their power in cowardly clinging to the beliefs of a group, the novel ultimately illustrates that one individual who acts with integrity possesses greater power.
6. Even though Scout’s narration is often faulty or inaccurate, her innocence often allows readers to see the events and characters in the novel more clearly.
7. Despite Aunt Alexandra’s respected status in Maycomb, she struggles with character flaws involving racial and social prejudice.
8. While religion is important to most of the residents of Maycomb, the novel illustrates that zealous believers are often hypocrites who do more harm than good.
9. Although Scout’s formal schooling is disappointing, she learns many valuable lessons from real life.
10. Although many characters in *To Kill a Mockingbird* base their self-worth on the social status of their family of origin, the truth is that the most admirable people in the novel “were people who did the best they could with the sense they had.”
11. Create your own thesis and get it **approved by me**.

Essay Elements:

12 point Times New Roman

Double Spaced

Follow MLA format

Essay should be five paragraphs

Introduction containing background information and then a strong thesis

Body paragraphs containing support for the thesis pulled directly from the novel.

Conclusion to wrap up ideas and bring your ideas from the body paragraphs together.

Key Transitions

Admittedly

And

Assuredly

But

Certainly

Clearly, then

Consequently

Even so

Furthermore

Granted

In addition

In fact

Indeed

It is true that

Moreover

Nevertheless

No doubt

Nobody denies

Obviously

Of course

On the other hand

Still

The fact remains

On the other hand

Still

The fact remains

Therefore

Thus

To be sure

True   
Undoubtedly

Unquestionably

Yet

Sample portion of an argumentative essay

…Although many would argue that Dill’s character could easily be removed from *To Kill a Mockingbird*, his presence actually plays a major role in conveying the novel’s themes.

It is true that the reader has very little information on Dill’s family or upbringing. The reader can only gather small pieces of information about Dill’s family life in Meridian, Mississippi from his brief conversations with Scout. However, it is specifically those short conversations that help to demonstrate the novel’s theme of the importance of family and role models. After Dill runs away from home and hides in the Finch house under Scout’s bed, he confides in the Scout that his parents “’just wasn’t interested in [him]’” (Lee 143). Scout, having been raised in a loving home by an attentive father cannot understand his situation. She comments, “This was the weirdest reason for flight I had ever heard” (143). Scout is so used to the attentive parenting that she receives from Atticus and Calpurnia that Dill’s running away makes no sense to her. She later tells Dill, “’….You don’t want ‘em around you all the time…’” (143). Dill disagrees.

(This paragraph continues with further examples and explanation…)

Note: Each body paragraph must use at least one quote!