

THESIS (SPEED) WORKSHOP

(Just in case you haven't found that Holy Grail of a thesis quite yet.)

Thesis Development

- This should be messy.
- Play around with word order.
- Try out different adjectives.
- “Over write” and then sculpt your words into what you want to say.
- The next part is timed, so get your pen or pencil ready!
You will begin on the lined side of your card.

1. If you had 30 seconds to sell your speaker's rhetorical strengths, what would you say? This can be a list or a sentence. (And you literally have 30 seconds...)

- Write this in the top 1/3 of the lined side of your index card.

2. Create an overall SOAPS-Tone statement. Write this on the second third of the lined side of the card.

- **Speaker:** the individual or collective voice of the text
- **Occasion:** the event or catalyst causing the writing of the text to occur
- **Audience:** the group of readers to whom the piece is directed
- **Purpose:** the reason behind the text
- **Subject:** the general topic and/or main idea
- **Tone:** the attitude of the author

Do not list the names of the speeches you are analyzing in your thesis; focus on the speaker.

This will be MESSY. Feel free to jot down multiple options.

3. Now, shift your SOAPS-Tone information into something close to this pattern on the bottom third of the lined side of the card.

In (title of work), (author/persona/speaker) uses (rhetorical devices, mode, appeals, etc.) to (action verb - show, reveal, explore, portray, convey, emphasize, suggest, etc.)

(direct object - theme, tone, purpose - the SO WHAT? WHY DO WE CARE??).

4. Based on what you've put on the lines, flip the card over, and write a strong thesis statement.

Swap your card with the person sitting across from you.

- Review his/her card and add your thoughts to the thesis statement. Write on the card – cross things out, draw lines from one part to another – do what you need to do to make it better.
- Things to consider:
 - Would you understand what this paper is going to be about? If not, note your confusion.
 - Can you think of stronger adjectives and verbs to make the sentence more powerful? If so, add them above or under the words.
 - Are there parts that this person should keep? Let them know which parts work.

Now, swap with someone else in the group. Repeat the process below.

- Review his/her card and add your thoughts to the thesis statement. Write on the card – cross things out, draw lines from one part to another – do what you need to do to make it better.
- Things to consider:
 - Would you understand what this paper is going to be about? If not, note your confusion.
 - Can you think of stronger adjectives and verbs to make the sentence more powerful? If so, add them above or under the words.
 - Are there parts that this person should keep? Let them know which parts work.

And now....

- Review the feedback from your peers.
- Make every word count! Prioritize! Maximize!

- And now decide who has the best thesis statement at your table. Why is this one the best?