Creating Your Thesis

Your paper should try to say something big about the play. What does Shakespeare appear to be teaching us?

Shakespeare uses _______________________________ (specific details) _______________________________ in order to (the big picture) _______________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

OR

Shakespeare emphasizes (the big picture) ________________________________ by (specific details) ________________________________

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__________________________________________________________________________________________

Example:

*Romeo and Juliet*, by William Shakespeare, is often called “The greatest love story ever told.” One of the major questions presented in the play is whether Romeo and Juliet are truly in love, or simply infatuated with each other. By examination of the text, it becomes clear that Shakespeare uses the other romantic relationships in the play to show by comparison that Romeo and Juliet are truly in love.

Another template:

By looking at ________________________________, we can see ________________________________ (something most readers don’t see) ________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

This is important because...

Examples:

By looking at the way Shylock asks questions in Act 1, Scene 3, we can see that Shakespeare is rejecting the idea that religion leads people to act morally.

By looking at the images Bassanio first uses to describe Portia, we can see that for Bassanio, love for people and love of money are inseparable. This is important because…