

Descriptive Thesis Statements Assignment

Name: _____

Due Date: _____

In Chapter 1 of *The Endless Steppe*, Esther Hautzig previews several important themes that she will explore throughout the book including how the people and places of our childhood have a lasting impact on us and the importance of family.

For this assignment, you will brainstorm, complete a thesis development worksheet, and write a working thesis statement for each of the three descriptive essay prompts below. The first one we will start together in class.

1. *“My father – called Tata, the Polish for papa – was my most favorite person in the world, a secret I thought I ought to keep from Mama” (Hautzig 3). Choose an important person from your own life to describe. What attributes make this person exceptional or significant?*
2. *“Our garden was the center of my world, the place above all others where I wished to remain forever” (Hautzig 1). Describe a special place from your own childhood. What did it look, sound, and feel like? What makes it unforgettable or unique?*
3. *“[P]eople were always rushing in and out of each other’s apartments to borrow things, to gossip, to boast a bit or complain a bit, or to tell the latest family joke. It was a great, exuberant, busy, loving family, and heaven for an only child” (Hautzig 2). Reflect on a general time or specific event when you were surrounded by family members or loved ones. Then, describe how a family can make an event special or memorable. (holidays, sports, vacations)*

Reminder: a descriptive thesis statement expresses what you want your reader to feel or experience about your topic: the person, place, or event that you are describing.

A descriptive thesis statement should:

- Be 1 complete sentence that gives direction and focus to your topic.
- Include 3 prongs. (i.e. controlling ideas, main details, or points of discussion)
- Be specific enough to narrow your topic, yet broad enough to be able to write 3 full paragraphs about it. (You will use one of these thesis statements for your first essay!)
- Contain strong words and descriptive language.
- Not contain universals, superlatives, or hyperbole.
- Not use “be” verbs.
- Not use 1st or 2nd person pronouns. (I, me, my, you, yours, we, us, our, etc.)
- Not use contractions.
- Use proper grammar and punctuation.

Submission: Staple together this signed assignment sheet, all 3 thesis development worksheets, and any extra brainstorming pages that you created.

I have proofread my student’s work and verify that s/he has followed all directions and developed three thesis statements that meet all requirements as shown on the checklist above.

Parent: _____

Date: _____

Develop a Working Thesis Statement

Name: _____

Essay Type: Descriptive

Essay Prompt #1: Important Person

First, on a piece of paper or the back of this sheet spend 10-15 minutes brainstorming using the CLUSTER CHART method.

Examine your brainstorming sheet. Look for a good overall topic & purpose of your essay.
Summarize the topic in a few key words or a short sentence below.

Look at your brainstorming sheet again and identify 4-5 possible controlling ideas (prongs) that support your main topic. **List these prongs the left column below.**

Prongs	Evidence
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Now, add specific points of evidence in the right column above that support each controlling idea.

You can use key words or short phrases. Possible evidence may include:

- Examples – specific instances that illustrate your point
- Personal Experience – something that has happened to you
- Description – word pictures that bring your idea to life
- Anecdote – a story that relates to your point
- Analogy – a comparison of something

Then, choose and circle the three controlling ideas have the highest quality evidence.

Finally, write a working thesis statement with your main topic and 3 controlling ideas.

(Double check that your thesis statement meets all of the checklist requirements on page 1.)

Develop a Working Thesis Statement

Name: _____

Essay Type: Descriptive

Essay Prompt #2: Special Place

First, on a piece of paper or the back of this sheet spend 10-15 minutes brainstorming using the ASK AND ANSWER QUESTIONS method. (list of questions available on Weebly)

Examine your brainstorming sheet. Look for a good overall topic & purpose of your essay.
Summarize the topic in a few key words or a short sentence below.

Look at your brainstorming sheet again and identify 4-5 possible controlling ideas (prongs) that support your main topic. **List these prongs the left column below.**

Prongs	Evidence
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Now, add specific points of evidence in the right column above that support each controlling idea.

You can use key words or short phrases. Possible evidence may include:

- Examples – specific instances that illustrate your point
- Personal Experience – something that has happened to you
- Description – word pictures that bring your idea to life
- Anecdote – a story that relates to your point
- Analogy – a comparison of something

Then, choose and circle the three controlling ideas have the highest quality evidence.

Finally, write a working thesis statement with your main topic and 3 controlling ideas.

(Double check that your thesis statement meets all of the checklist requirements on page 1.)

Develop a Working Thesis Statement

Name: _____

Essay Type: Descriptive

Essay Prompt #3: Influence of Family

First, on a piece of paper or the back of this sheet spend 10-15 minutes brainstorming using the FREEWRITING method.

Examine your brainstorming sheet. Look for a good overall topic & purpose of your essay. **Summarize the topic in a few key words or a short sentence below.**

Look at your brainstorming sheet again and identify 4-5 possible controlling ideas (prongs) that support your main topic. **List these prongs the left column below.**

Prongs	Evidence
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Now, add specific points of evidence in the right column above that support each controlling idea. You can use key words or short phrases. Possible evidence may include:

- Examples – specific instances that illustrate your point
- Personal Experience – something that has happened to you
- Description – word pictures that bring your idea to life
- Anecdote – a story that relates to your point
- Analogy – a comparison of something

Then, choose and circle the three controlling ideas have the highest quality evidence.

Finally, write a working thesis statement with your main topic and 3 controlling ideas.

(Double check that your thesis statement meets all of the checklist requirements on page 1.)