

Thesis Litmus Test AP Literature & Composition

- ✓ Does it answer the question?
- ✓ Can you prove it?
- ✓ Can you use several meaningful examples of text? (quot.) “The Poignant Passage”
- ✓ Will those examples function on TWO levels?
 - Technique (literary device) **diction
 - Language
- ✓ Can you use everything available to you - historical, cultural, biographical backgrounds - to develop your discussion of setting, conflict, and language?

Sample Thesis Statements

Prompt: How does the setting of *The Awakening* contribute to the overall meaning that Chopin sought to convey?

The novel’s setting revealed the destructive conflict between the human cravings for community and independence.

Kate Chopin uses the setting of *The Awakening* to convince readers that the need for independence leads to destruction.

The setting, mainly the time period, characterization and the use of Creole society, help forward the central idea that women should be allowed to make decisions and choices in their lives the same as men.

Chopin uses the setting of TA to convey the overall meaning that a reckless break from society may precede destruction.

Chopin uses the values of society and different stages of Edna’s life to portray the freedom and independence that Edna long’s for.

Prompt: In Kate Chopin’s *The Awakening*, protagonist Edna Pontellier is said to possess “that outward existence which conforms, the inward life which questions.” Discuss how this tension between outward conformity and inward questioning contributes to the overall meaning of the work.

The tension illustrates one of Chopin’s main thematic ideas that the obligation to conform to society infringes on personal identity.

In TA, the tension between conformity and questioning convey the theme of inward struggle for identity and validation through the use of conflict, moral, and tone, showing the pessimistic view of conformity to be right and questioning to be wrong.

Edna’s desires and of freedom and independence collide with society’s’ demands of submission and dependency, creating a conflict that will tear her apart.