

**Using Aristotle's Topics
To Discover a Working Thesis**

Name _____

Your Topic _____



To what larger class does _____ belong?



What makes _____ unique in its class?



What characteristics does _____ share with others?



What makes _____ different from others?



What makes _____ happen?



What came before _____?



What came after _____?



What precedents or influences led to _____?



What future is indicated by past evidence _____?



What claims do authorities make about _____?



Who has experienced _____?



What documented research give insight on _____?



What is commonly accepted about _____?



What established principles are true, challenged, or changed by _____?



What instances can you find that help define or are defined by _____?

Using Modern Tagmemics To Discover a Working Thesis

Name _____

Your Topic _____



How is your topic a thing in itself? What elements are essential its definition?



How is your topic a thing defined by context, class, or role?



How is your topic a thing changing over time?

Example of Aristotle's Topics with Emily Dickinson as the topic

GENUS	Emily Dickinson was female poet.
SPECIES	Dickinson was reclusive, her style terse.
SIMILARITY	Intellectual style like Bradstreet.
DIFFERENCE	Did not share Bradstreet's Puritan view.
CAUSE / EFFECT	Dickinson's style led to Modern verse.
ANTECEDENT	Donne wrote conceits like Dickinson's.
CONSEQUENCE	e.e. cummings has terse style like D's.
PAST	Dickinson published few works herself.
FUTURE	Her poetry gained popularity, may be eclipsed by later women poets.
AUTHORITY	Dickinson is clear voice of her time.
TESTIMONIAL	Dickinson's poetry is personal as it was not intended to be published.
STATISTICS	Research on her life, letters shed's light on poetry.
MAXIMS	She is viewed as a recluse.
LAWS	D's poetry challenges view of women.
EXAMPLES	Poems: "I Heard a Fly Buzz," "Prairie"

Example of Modern Tagmemics with Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* as the example

Particle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Male Caucasian American Regionalist Author Humorist Folksy
Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gives view of 1880s, South U.S. region Texts are controversial Presents dialect Presents a view on race Presents American perspective Post Emancipation America
Wave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Popular in his time and today Interpreted as "racist text" in later 20th Century "Racist" interpretation as a misinterpretation Southern U.S. has modernized, making this a period text