Essay Discussion Section

(donot use the term “body” even if the textbooks do): figure 3-5 ¶’s

Now you are ready to discuss three-to-five different aspects (ideas) of your Th/s in the Discussion section (about 60-70% of the essay). Figure a new ¶ to begin each such aspect (idea, not fact), and each aspect—called the topic sentence (t/s)—stated as a reason or method in the ¶’s first sentence. Remember that a t/s cannot be a plot detail or any other fact, but must be an idea. Don’t mix reasons with methods in the t/s’s although o.k. to mix them later in the ¶. Reason means ”Why?” Method means ”In what ways?” or ”How?”

Each reason or method, called the topic sentence (t/s), is a complex sentence statement of idea, not fact, and will become the first sentence of its Discussion ¶. The rest of the ¶ will give reasoning and facts to support/explain the t/s and, at this level, you can even mix in the approaches that you didn’t use in the t/s.

Example of a Th/s: [Despite the many personal, natural, and social obstacles, the anti-hero Phoenix faces them all with heroic character traits of perseverance, courage, moral insight, and responsibility.]

(using methods: “In what ways does Phoenix show heroic character traits of perseverance, courage, moral insight, and responsibility?”

(1st t/s) By refusing to give in to her various personal obstacles, Ph. shows extraordinary perseverance.

(2nd t/s) Besides her personal obstacles, Ph. does not allow her fear of dangerous real and imaginary natural enemies to destroy her courage.

(3rd t/s) Ph.’s moral insight, like her perseverance and courage, is revealed even when she straddles a thin moral line.

(4th t/s) Possibly most important of her four major heroic character traits is her sense of responsibility that grows out of her love for her grandson.

Note: for smooth coh (coherence), use trans (transitions: language that smoothly connects a prior thought to an upcoming one) throughout your essay: within sentences, between sentences and between ¶’s. In the four examples, above, the trans terms are underlined. One good way to use trans. is for a t/s to remind the readers of the main idea in the preceding ones, as above.

Note 2: remember the “one-MC(main clause)-only” requirement: although both Th/s and t/s’s can have SC’s (subordinate clauses) and phrases, unlike ordinary sentences they must not have more than one MC (main clause); otherwise, the readers might become confused as to the main point.

Language Evidence: since all meanings come from the particular language chosen by the author, it is highly desirable to quote that language as evidence in your Discussion ¶’s (always enclose it in quotation marks). Quote the fewest possible words in any one section; usually, only one or two are necessary.
since they hold the key to the meaning of an entire line or passage (you can always briefly summarize the rest of the words). Immediately after the quotation, add the page number in parens (parentheses): this page number is so important that if you ever omit it, within a month all your hair and teeth may fall out!