

Term: “Insightful”

Definition: Clear, critical and complex ideas that are outside of the scope of class discussion. These ideas are “new” to the student and demonstrate a strong depth of understanding with particular sensitivity to nuances and/or alternative readings within the text / content.

Example

“In “Ozamandias” and “The Second Coming,” Percy Shelley and William Yeats seek to illuminate and define the world around them by exploring the struggle between order and chaos, yet both ultimately come to very different conclusions... Yet not only do Shelley and Yeats reach very different conclusions, but there is almost no overlap in the ways both poets use poetic form and artistry to communicate meaning.”

Analysis: The statement is also nuanced in the sense it makes a small but important distinction between how the poets are similar and different -- i.e., they both illuminate and define the world around them *by* a common theme (the struggle between order and chaos), *yet* they use different poetic forms in different ways to express their meanings *and* come to different conclusions. These statements are insightful because this level of nuance was clearly not discussed in class; this author is going above and beyond and incorporating “new” ideas into their paper.

Non-Example

“Creon most closely fits with Aristotle’s definition of a tragic hero because of his mistakes, his pride, his great downfall, and his suffering.”

Analysis: This thesis statement lists the exact criterion that Creon fits, it does not hint at any nuance of analysis that explains why Creon, as opposed to other characters, particularly fits the definition. The criterion listed are stock, pre-determined criterion and do not demonstrate any thinking outside of the core of class discussion.