

English 9

*Agamemnon* theme paper

Getting started

You have thought about one of several themes prominent in the text:

Revenge/the futility of blood justice

Consequences of war

Gender roles and norms

Fate and the role of the gods

Moral ambiguity

Now, what claim do you make about the theme? That is, what is the text doing with the theme: is it exposing a problem, questioning a norm, reenforcing tradition, etc.?

Begin by stating your claim as a sentence.

Then, how does the text fulfill your claim? Ideally, you should find three main ways the text fulfills the claim. List them, along with relevant passages so that you are sure that your main points are more or less commensurate with each other in importance and in their ability to be demonstrated.

We will work in class to compose our thesis statements. In general, a thesis statement should be concise, impersonal, arguable, and exigent.

Concise: Brief and to the point.

Impersonal: Not reliant on opinion (“I think,” “It seems to me”) but supportable by evidence

Arguable: Not arrived at by summary or by the pointing out of a single fact, but controversial enough to be argued.

Exigent: Not a hollow academic exercise but an argument with something important at stake.

We will talk in class extensively about the spooling out of the paper itself and expectations for introductory paragraphs, topic sentences, blending and passages, concluding, and so on.