Advanced Reading

and Writing

**Theme Papers**

**A Theme Paper Is…**

* An argument about what the author says in the book (it’s interpretive)
* An argument about one particular thing the author says in the book
* An argument about what the author says about that one particular thing
* An argument that uses plenty of specific quotes and references to the text to prove itself
* An extensive and thorough argument (think in terms of pages)
* An argument that includes an introduction (a paragraph which gives the context of your theme) and a conclusion (a paragraph which summarizes and concludes the theme)

**A Theme Paper Is NOT…**

* A book report
* A summary of the entire book
* An essay explaining your own beliefs
* A discussion of whether or not you liked the book
* A sermon—Don’t talk directly to your reader

**Guidelines:**

* Use a proper heading on the first page
* Double-space
* Use a standard font and standard size
* Make sure you eliminate all errors in grammar and spelling
* Cite all quotes and direct references (MLA format)
  + “…be proud of the colour of their hair” (312).
  + …and compares the young man to a hunting dog (371).