**What is a claim/thesis?**

Claim/Thesis = TOPIC +OPINION+WHY/BECAUSE/SO WHAT

The “so what” is the overall reason for your opinion; it is NOT a list of reasons.

A good essay is driven by a guiding argument; that is the claim/thesis statement.

**What does the claim/thesis do?**

In one sentence (or two) it:

1. states the writer’s position (attitude or opinion about the given topic).

2. provides both the writer and reader with direction, or purpose, for the paper.

**A claim/thesis must be a statement that you can defend; it must be debatable.**

Here is an example of a claim/thesis statement:

**Deerfield High School is the best school on the North Shore because of its outstanding students.**

The **topic** is:

The **opinion** is:

The **because/why/so what** is:

Work through the questions identifying claims/ thesis statements. For each of the statements, identify if it is a complete claim/thesis statement. If the sentence is missing a part, revise it to make a complete thesis.

1. *The Bean Trees* is Barbara Kingsolver’s best novel*.*

*2.* Taylor is the strongest character in the book because she faces several challenges and is willing to take risks to help others.

3. Mattie is like a mother to Taylor.

4. Lou Ann’s timidity is a result of her fear of being wrong.

Now, you’re on your own. Work to craft a claim/thesis statement for the following question:

**Who is the most complex character in the book? Why?**

**After crafting your claim, complete the following steps:**

1. Highlight the topic in yellow.
2. Highlight the opinion in green.
3. Highlight the because/why so what in blue.
4. Title your document: Claim Practice Your Last Name
5. Save the document in your folder for English class.