

PREDICTABLE SCENARIOS

Here are some groups of thesis statements with reasons that illustrate predictable problems as well as exemplars.

You can use these to support students in noticing these types of problems as well as for small group work, conferring, homework, etc. Groups 1 and 2 show boxes and bullets (thesis statements and reasons).

GROUP #1

My mom is my best friend.

- My mom is my best friend when she buys me things.
- My mom is my best friend when I have a good time with her.
- My mom is my best friend when she listens to me.

It's hard for young girls to be tall.

- It's hard for young girls to be tall because you get teased.
- It's hard for young girls to be tall because people make fun of you.
- It's hard for young girls to be tall because you develop a poor body image.

New York is the best city to raise a dog.

- New York is the best city to raise a dog because they get to be very social.
- New York is the best city to raise a dog because they can play with other dogs.
- New York is the best city to raise a dog because it helps you to meet new people.

You'll notice that the reasons in each of these sets are overlapping. You might use them to involve students in identifying the ways in which the reasons are overlapping and help them develop reasons which are distinct.

GROUP #2

My mom is my best friend.

- My mom is my best friend because she buys me things.
- My mom is my best friend when I am at home.
- My mom is my best friend now that I am older.

You'll notice that these reasons are not parallel and you can use these to support students in noticing this predictable problem. You might have students revise these reasons so that they are parallel.

It's hard for young girls to be tall.

- It's hard for young girls to be tall in elementary school.
- It's hard for young girls to be tall because people tease you.
- It's hard for young girls to be tall because you can't find dresses to fit you.

New York is the best city to have a dog.

- New York is the best city to have a dog because you can take them for walks in the park.
- New York is the best city to have a dog when they meet other dogs.
- New York is the best city to have a dog when you're a child.

You'll notice that these two scenarios include reasons that are not parallel and are overlapping. You can use these to support students in seeing how to create parallel, different reasons and you might involve students in revising these sets of reasons so that they are parallel and distinct. Groups 3 and 4 are thesis statements on a student's notebook page.

GROUP #3

My mom is old.

Some dogs are golden retrievers.

Some young girls are tall.

You will notice that each of these thesis statements are actually facts and you can use these to support students in seeing the difference. You might have students try to change these into thesis statements such as "Golden retrievers are the best kind of dog!"

GROUP #4

Sometimes my mom helps me.

It's sort of hard to be tall.

I think dogs are kinda fun.

You'll notice that these box-and-bullet thesis statements are wishy-washy and not decisive. You can use these to support student in noticing how to create a bold opinion statement and you might involve them in revising these.

GROUP #5**My mom is my best friend.**

- When she buys me things
- When she plays games with me
- When she listens to me

It's hard for young girls to be tall.

- Because you get teased
- Because it's hard to find pants that fit
- Because you develop a poor body image

New York is the best city to raise a dog.

- Because there are lots of places to run around
- Because there are other dogs they can play with
- Because it helps you to meet new people

You'll notice that these sets of thesis statements and reasons work well. You can use them to provide examples to students of the kind of plan that will lead to a successful essay.