**Controlling Ideas**

*A controlling idea is the same as a "thesis statement" of an essay. It's called a "controlling idea" by the Regents because this opening statement should "control" the rest of your writing.*

*On Part 2 of the Midterm, you will be asked to compare 2 texts to a common topic and write a controlling idea paragraph. These tips can be used, however, for any essay writing to create a control*

What Makes A Good Controlling Idea?

* Relevant to the essay topic/question
* Contains only 1 main idea
* Can be proven with details from each text
* Reflects the main idea of the paragraph/essay
* Makes a definite statement (no "I think"/if)
* Be simple and specific.
* Mention the common topic in the controlling idea sentence.

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|  | **Three Steps to Writing a Controlling Idea:**  (1) Identify the topic. On the Midterm Exam, you will be given the topic. Check the directions to see what your topic is.  (2) Turn the topic into a question, "What does (Text 1) and (Text 2) both say/show/tell us about \_\_\_\_ (the topic)?"  (3) Your answer will be your controlling idea, but be sure you can back it up with evidence from the text/s. If not, start over! |

Sample Template for the Controlling Idea Paragraph:

*In your paragraph, include at least 6 sentences:*

#1: State your controlling idea sentence that reflects the main idea about your topic as shown in *BOTH* texts. Include titles and authors of both texts if possible.   
#2: State how text one connects to the topic  
#3: Explain a specific example or quote from text one to support your connection  
#4: State how text two connects to the topic  
#5: Explain a specific example or quote from text two to support your connection  
#6: Concluding sentence: restate your controlling idea