

After thinking/gathering all details:

Come up with a thesis statement—what are you going to prove?

Here are some examples to use as models for your thesis:

Even though life in internment camps was rough, it was not nearly as bad as being in a concentration camp.

Man's treatment of fellow humans caused great suffering in both internment and concentration camps.

People overcame great obstacles while facing injustices in both internment and concentration camps in WWII.

Emotional and even physical suffering was the reality of those placed unjustly in camps during WWII.

Your thesis statement will end your introductory paragraph.

How should you begin your introduction? WITH A HOOK!

A hook needs to capture someone's attention; it can be a quote, a shocking detail, an anecdote, a description...

Here are some examples:

"The camp looked as though it had been through an epidemic: empty and dead. Only a few 'well-dressed' inmates were wandering between the blocks" (Wiesel 47).

Eating food like Vienna sausages from a can....thinking maybe breakfast would be pancakes with soy sauce...

scouring the camp for blades of grass and discarded potato peels...or not eating at all for three days.

"Now our cubicle looked as if a great laundry bag had exploded and then been sprayed with fine dust. A skin of sand covered the floor" (excerpt from *Farewell to Manzanar* in *The Language of Literature* 609).

Now you will need to write the introduction that ties together the hook with the thesis statement. After the hook in this literary essay, you will need a TAG (title of the works, authors, genre (in this case they are memoirs)). It would be best to give the settings/time frame of the memoirs and the place where the events took place. You will then need two or three sentences that bring together logically those ideas. Then you need your thesis statement.

Sample TAG sentence: In the memoirs *Farewell to Manzanar* by Jeanne Wakatsuki-Houston and *Night* by Elie Wiesel, vivid descriptions of day to day life of imprisonment are detailed.

Next, you will need to decide which subtopics you will use that will help prove your thesis. Each subtopic you choose or group of subtopics you choose will each be a paragraph. Each needs to start with a topic sentence that is the main idea of that paragraph. It will then be followed with the specific details which need to be cited as shown above. A connection of comparison/contrast needs to be made between the two memoirs. This is where you will use appropriate transitions. Each body paragraph needs to have a concluding sentence that wraps up that idea and introduces the next.

Sample:

Food was an issue in both concentration camps and internment camps. For victims of the Holocaust, lack of food was the primary issue. They were given "in the mornings: black coffee. At midday: soup" (Wiesel 43). That and a piece of bread was the only nourishment prisoners received, and in some cases "days without food or water" (Wiesel 95). For California internment camp victims in Manzanar, food was provided, but it was not what people had eaten all their lives, such as the mixture of sweet and salty foods that were served in the mess halls. "Few of us could eat such a mixture" according to Jeanne (excerpt from *Farewell to Manzanar* in *The Language of Literature* 607). Jeanne and her siblings even joked that they would be served for breakfast "probably hotcakes with soy sauce" (excerpt from *Farewell to Manzanar* in *The Language of Literature* 610); however, there was no joking about the lack of food in concentration camps. The only joking was when desperate prisoners "took out [our] spoons and ate the snow off our neighbor's back. A mouthful of bread and a spoonful of snow. The SS men who were watching were greatly amused by the spectacle" (Wiesel 96). It is hard to imagine what it would be like to struggle on a daily basis to find something edible to eat or to eat at all.

Once the body paragraphs are done, you need a conclusion. This should be where you comment on the details, reaffirming the idea in the thesis statement that you are proving.

Example: By reading these memoirs, we realize that life is not perfect all the time. We can begin to value the freedoms that we have today and learn that we must stand up for one another when rights are taken away. These moving real-life accounts serve both as memories of past historical events and warnings of what can happen if people are not given their rights of freedom.