***WRITING LITERARY THEORY ESSAYS:***

**Sample Thesis Statements**

**Feminist Theory**

Mariam is oppressed socially in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007) because Rasheed believes he is the ultimate head of the household, placing him is a superior position.

Tess becomes the “other” in *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* (1892), placing her on the outside of society simply because she lacks in a male-dominated society.

Tess plays the role of the “good girl,” in *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* (1892), allowing herself to be a victim of patriarchal ideology.

Dante’s quest to find the “right path” is largely based on Beatrice, the woman he loves and believes is pure.

**Marxist Theory**

Macbeth believes he can only be happy if he is King of Scotland.

Rasheed’s life is largely controlled by the Taliban’s enforcement of Sharia Law, which he uses to control his home life.

Tess is only able to survive if she does whatever it takes to keep her family alive.

Dante’s *Inferno* (1265) could be considered a critique of organized Catholicism.

**Psychoanalytic Theory**

Mariam’s unhappy marriage to Rasheed is a subconscious repression of her disappointing relationship with her father.

*Oedipus the King* demonstrates how Oedipus’ behavior is rooted in the repression of unconscious desires.

Mariam denies and displaces her repressed guilt over the death of Nana, creating an impossible relationship with Laila.

Water is a major symbol in Joseph Turner’s *The Slave Ship* (1830) that creates a theme of redemption and rebirth.