**Choice Poetry Thesis Construction Guide**

**1. In one simple sentence, what is your thesis?**

*Remember, a thesis takes a stand and is not wishy-washy; first you have to get your “preliminary thesis” before you make the sentence more complex and add the plan of development later.*

**2. What is the single most important OPERATIVE word in your thesis?**

*Operative words might be: useful, legitimatizes, effective, efficient, etc. You want to explain the how or why of what you are asserting. What is the relationship? You should already have looked into possible synonyms and selected the best one. The operative word is often the verb.*

**3. Define your operative word as many ways as you can using a dictionary. Include the 3 best and most appropriate definitions for your paper/subject matter. Oxford English Dictionary (**[**http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/**](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/)**) is especially awesome. Lexpedia could also be a good starting point for similar words.** *Look at derivations and similar words. If your operative word is “useful,” then also look at “use.”*

**4. Research Background: Explain background of your research topic. What major arguments, details, or information have you gleaned from your research, so far? What major conclusions do your sources reach?**

**5. Research Background: What argument, detail, observation, or distinction is the existing research missing? What is a small (or big) piece that is lacking? How will you fill that gap with your analysis? How are you adding to, or disagreeing with, your sources? YOU MUST HAVE SOMETHING NEW TO ADD TO THE DISCUSSION OF YOUR TOPIC.**

**6. What is the measure of your thesis that you will use to prove your point?**

These build on your definitions. For example, if you say that the violence in the *Hunger Games* has been successful for revolutionaries, first you define success. Then you look at what are measures or definition of success. Less fighting? More revolutions? These will form evidence to support your analysis in the body paragraphs.