Improve your claim:

1. Make sure you have made a complex **observation**.

Your complex **observation** of a less-than-obvious component of the text might be one or a combination of any of the following possibilities:

1. The causes of behavior of one or more characters
2. The internal motivation behind a character’s behavior
3. The external/environmental/societal circumstances that influence a character’s behavior
4. The effects of the behavior of one or more characters
5. An interesting internal conflict and the obvious and not-so-obvious reasons for the conflict
6. An external conflict between two people or groups of people and the reasons for the conflict
7. A character’s or characters’ illusions or distorted belief system and why these illusions exist
8. Characters who oppress and the reasons for such oppression
9. Characters who are oppressed and the ways they survive/do not survive such oppression
10. Societal attitudes or historical circumstances that affect characters’ individual attitudes/self-esteem/agency
11. Make a statement in which you articulate with very specific textual references the observation you have made.

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1. **Now, interpret**!! Analyze your complex observation. What **interpretation** can you make about your observation? Do textual clues allow you to see surprising connections between the specific causes or specific effects that

you have observed? Do you believe that the connections you have uncovered reveal interesting and surprising ideas that illuminate the meaning of the text?

1. Write your interpretation of your observation in a clear, focused statement or short paragraph. Make sure that your claim—with your observation and interpretation—is clear, specific, and focused.
2. Do NOT write generalities that you, yourself, don’t FULLY grasp or understand.
You must be very, very, very clear. Your thesis must say exactly what you intend to prove in your paper. NOTE: Anyone should be able to read your claim and know just what your paper will do.
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3. Create a **logic chart** of your essay in the space below.
4. At the top of your logic outline, write you claim.
5. Next, break apart your claim into “thesis pieces” and decide how you will organize each “piece.”
6. Then, using boxes and arrows, write/draw in chart form the logical progression of textual support you will provide—step-by-step—to prove your claim.