

TEACHING PROPOSITIONS WORKSHEET

A teaching proposition is the result of your research and will guide the scope of your lesson. Unless you have a clear teaching proposition you will not have a clear and understandable lesson. Your lesson is likely to ramble and confuse or simply be a series of activities. A proposition statement has three sections, “WHAT,” “HOW,” and “WHY.” The three phrases fit together to form a single sentence. The Proposition Statement is always framed in the positive.

WHAT – the “what” section of the proposition is a statement of what you are defining or considering. It is usually declarative. It focuses on what it is you want participants/students to understand. What is it you want them to consider?

HOW – the “how” is an action statement. It is the way in which the “what” comes about. How do you know the truth of your “what?” The “how” is always connected and in service to the “what.” This phrase of the proposition is preceded by

- through
- by
- in which
- through which

WHY – the “why” phrase is the compelling reason for the “what.” It answers the question, “why should we understand the what?” The “why” is always related to and supports the “what.” This phrase of the proposition is preceded by

- so that
- in order to
- because.

The order in which the proposition is written can be in any order (w/w/h; w/h/w; h/w/w.) Sometimes your **WHAT** will come first, followed by your **WHY** and then your **HOW**. Other times your **WHY** will be first followed by your **HOW** and then your **WHAT**. Occasionally, the order will be rearranged as determined by the content and style of your lesson. You can always switch them around as your lesson takes shape.

When writing a teaching proposition, you begin with the notes you took in your research. It is often helpful to list all the possible **WHAT** phrases in a column. Then, list all the ways in which the “what” can be achieved – the **HOWs**. Then, list all the **WHYs** – the compelling reason to understand the understand the **WHAT**. Once you have your columns with ideas, start putting together one what, one how and one why until your sentence says exactly the idea you are trying to communicate. Remember – sometimes the temptation will be to have who “whys” or two “hows.” When that happens, see if one of them could be turned into a **WHAT** or a **HOW**.

Here are some examples...

FAITH

| WHATs | HOWs | WHYs |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faith is a gift from God • Faith is believing and trusting • Faith is seeking understanding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In which we are sustained • Through which we have strength • By the power of the Holy Spirit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So that we are sustained in life • Because God is benevolent • In order to have a firm and certain knowledge of God's grace |

Final Proposition: **Faith is a gift of God made know to us by the power of the Holy Spirit so that we have the firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence towards us.**

WHO GOD IS/A Mighty Fortress is Our God

| WHATs | HOWs | WHYs |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is our fortress • God never fails us • God is constant | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In which we are sustained • Through God's grace • By God's might | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So that we can get through life's troubles • Because we need God to help us • In order to be sustained in difficult times |

Final Proposition: **God is our never-failing fortress through the grace and might of Jesus Christ in order to be sustained in life's troubled times.**

WHO GOD IS/A Mighty Fortress is Our God

| WHATs | HOWs | WHYs |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is strength • God is a bulwark • God is a refuge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through which we are sustained • By the sacrifice of Jesus • In which we are enfolded | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • so that we are sustained in life and death • in order to experience grade • because God shelters us |

Final Proposition: **God is the strength in which we are sustained in troubled times because we are enfolded into the shelter of Divine grace.**

Important to keep in mind – do not use the same main word twice in a sentence. For example, if you use Christian in your **WHAT** and are tempted to use it again in your **WHY**, use “followers of Jesus” or “disciples” instead. A thesaurus will become a helpful companion. As you grow in your ability to write academically, you will want to resist “over using” words. This means, don't use the same main word more than once in a sentence and no more than twice in a paragraph. It may be easier to write in your natural style and then go back to make changes. Remember- Thesaurus, thesaurus, thesaurus.