# 211 Revision essay 2

Introductions

Organization

Arguments

## Thesis statements and Topic Sentences

**Draft Thesis**

Jiles’ references to family, small animals, and matches express her anger towards gender inequality.

**Revised Thesis**

Jiles’ references to family, small animals, and matches show a girl rejecting the gender inequality of home life and getting ready to march.

**Draft Topic Sentence**

By questioning her position as a woman in her family, Jiles reveals her anger towards gender inequality.

**Revised Topic Sentence**

In the speaker’s questioning of her domestic role, Jiles reveals her frustration with gender inequality.

**Draft Topic Sentence**

Jiles’ anger is also revealed through her and her aunt’s position inside the home.

**Revised Topic Sentence**

Jiles’ frustration is also revealed through the speaker’s and her aunt’s position inside the home.

**Draft Topic Sentence**

References to small animals also express Jiles’ anger towards gender inequality.

**Revised Topic Sentence**

In addition to questioning the family, references to small animals express Jiles’ anger towards gender inequality.

**Draft Topic Sentence**

Matches symbolize the fury Jiles feels towards the inequalities women face.

**Revised Topic Sentence**

Finally, the matches of the title captures the fury Jiles feels about the inequalities facing women.

Introductions

Ancient Rome. Everything seems to be marble, and classical thought seems to be at its height. Everyone is intelligent, mature, and thoughtful, right? Is Julius Caesar running around spouting the latest wisdom and political theory? Wrong. Ancient Rome is a hot mess. Yes there were beautiful structures, but the people in them didn’t always act with the dignity implied in their marble effigies. Caligula tried to give his horse the highest elected position in government and Nero burned Rome to the ground to rebuild it as he wished. Truth be told, Ancient Rome was not that different from modern day America. Nepotism is still rampant, thankfully without horses, and political parties tear down all that has been established to recreate it however they wish. There are even similarities in the citizens. People whined and cried when they could not marry their true love and citizens worked hard to party harder, just as they do today. Citizens must deal with the same drama from their personal lives that modern people must deal with—betrayal, heartache, and misery. It makes sense, then, that the people turned to poets to mirror their own feelings, just as people do today. Poets have always had something to say about love, or lack thereof. In Ancient Rome, Gaius Valerius Catullus was writing about his own experiences with the emotion. In one of his poems, now numbered 83, he writes bitterly of an encounter with his ex-lover, Lesbia, and her husband. The reader may identify with the speaker in the unpleasant moment of seeing someone you love with another or his callow reactions to that very moment. Catullus’ immaturity is seen through his name-calling, harsh diction, and desire to cause heartache.

Struck with Fury: Jiles’ Anger Towards Gender Inequality in “Paper Matches”

Imagine a young woman in the 1960s: she’s faced with two choices. Choice one involves embracing the traditional suburban role of husband, home, and two and half kids. Her life will form a routine involving shopping, cooking, cleaning, and child care. In short, she can accept her role as a domesticated woman. Choice two involves taking it to the streets. Instead of accepting the status quo she can join the millions of other women who marched, burned their bras, and shook off the role of house-slave. Instead of standing in line at a grocery, she can embrace her anger and march on Washington, ERA sign in hand. But before choosing to conform or resist, she has to grow up and make sense of the world around them. This growth is on display in Paulette Jiles’ poem “Paper Matches,” which smolders with a “quiet anger” as the speaker realizes the inequities facing women (Mansbridge). Jiles’ references to family, small animals, and matches show a girl rejecting the gender inequality of home life and getting ready to march.

Sample paragraphs

Catullus’ immaturity is seen through his name-calling, harsh diction, and desire to cause heartache.

Name-calling is, at its core, a childish method of dealing with someone. At any given playground, there will be children attempting to deal with their frustration by lashing their anger out through the only semi-excusable offence their underdeveloped brains can understand: using humiliating names. Rather than dealing with his own feelings, Catullus is attempting to derogate Lesbia’s husband by calling him a “jackass” (3). In the poem, the husband has done nothing to the speaker besides find his misery “amusing” (2). This does not seem to be cause for insulting the husband—he has done no physical or true emotional distress to Catullus. The description of Lesbia’s husband as a “fatuous person” also illustrates the juvenility of the speaker. A child would just as easily call someone they dislike stupid or silly (2). A mature adult would have handled the situation better. If an adult heard that someone took enjoyment in his suffering, he would simply brush it off, chalk it up to personal difference, or he might take small offense after all. However, a mature adult would not insult the other with a silly name like horse or camel; he would more likely insult the other on a deeper, more personal level. Children have yet to develop the skills, or comprehension, for anything deeper than surface level insults. Either Catullus’ does not know the husband well enough to hate him for anything other than his relationship with Lesbia, or he simply does not have the ability to think of a better, more pertinent insult. Both instances imply that he is not thinking on a deeper level. Catullus’ need to put down someone else to feel better about his current situation is incredibly similar to that of a playground bully. His insults of “jackass” and “fatuous person” are juvenile, and show the level of maturity he was bringing into his relationship with Lesbia.

This paragraph works because . . .

* The writer frames the argument by providing a background context to help reader understand the argument
* Uses “real-life” contrasts
* Ties up the argument at the end with a concluding sentence: without it, as Ms. Esposito noted, it wouldn’t work.

By questioning her position as a woman in her family, Jiles reveals her anger towards gender inequality. In the American 40’s and 50’s, women were expected to be exceptional housekeepers. Tending to children, tidying, and preparing meals were duties women were expected to complete without argument. While many women take joy in caring for a home and family, being forced to do so is unfair and degrading. The speaker of “Paper Matches” became angry because of her assigned role when she noticed the unequal treatment of her female family members. The poem begins with the speaker’s observation of her family’s dynamic – she states “My aunts washed dishes while the uncles squirted each other on the lawn with garden hoses” (1). Her aunt’s roles are similar to that of a maid, while “the uncles” play merrily outside. Stating “my aunts” but “the uncles” exposes the divide Jiles felt as woman compared to the men of her family, revealing the inequality’s she already begun to experience at home (1). Using “the” rather than “my” exposes the level of resentment Jiles has towards her own family members because of their privilege as males (1). Jiles’ resentment and anger indicates the level of inequality she faced in her own home; a level high enough to warrant the separation of herself from the males in her family.

Jiles’ anger is also revealed through her and her aunt’s position inside the home. While washing dishes with her aunts and observing her uncles play outside with hoses, the speaker asked "why are we in here... and they are out there" (3). Her questioning - especially her observation of “the uncle’s” freedom to play outside while she had to work - reveals the speaker’s anger growing in regards to her entrapment indoors (1). Because women were expected to care for their family’s home, they did not have the luxury to go outside, play in the sun, and relax in their own dwelling. They had to constantly work to keep their home pristine – or face judgment from friends, family, and society in general. Jiles’ questioning of her forced position inside reveals her annoyance towards her uncles, as their freedom to play outside emphasizes how unfair the expectation for women to constantly work indoors was. Later, the speaker’s "Aunt Hetty" expressed that "that’s the way it is," suggesting her acceptance of her repressed role (5). The speaker regarded her aunt as "the shriveled up one," which supports the idea that the speaker believes her aunt has been defeated by her oppression, and has come to accept it (6). The speaker does not accept her aunts answer as she compares her own “rages” to that of a small animal, proving that her role in her family causes her anger because of the inequalities she faces in it. The speaker's anger towards gender inequality is revealed through her own unequal treatment in her family.