**STAAR Persuasive Essay Model**

*Prompt: Write an essay stating your position on whether it is ever justifiable to break the law.*

Throughout history, there are men and women we hail as heroes who were jailed for challenging injustice and knowingly breaking the law. People like these prove that it can be justifiable to break the law. In fact, the law should be broken if it was created to oppress.

For example, according to the Nazi regime during World War II, it was illegal to harbor Jews who were hiding from persecution. However, many families chose to break this law, risking their lives to protect innocent people from being deported to concentration camps. Lois Lowry’s novel, Number the Stars, illustrates this acceptable rebellion. In the story, the protagonist, Annemarie, and her family ally themselves with the Danish Resistance, a group dedicated to fighting against the injustice of the Nazi party. Annemarie’s family harbors a Jewish family and eventually aid in their escape from occupied Denmark. Because of people like Annemarie and her willingness to break the law, many Jews were able to escape the methodical genocide plaguing the continent.

Unfortunately, Nazi-era Europe was not the only time and place unjust laws were created. Prior to the Civil War in the United States, thousands of Africans were shipped over and held against their will, forced into slavery. Abolitionists like Harriet Tubman fought against the laws that held these innocent people captive. Using the Underground Railroad, a network of homes used to smuggle escaped slaves into northern territory, Tubman was able to save the lives of over 50 people. It took courage for her to break the law, but if she had not, injustice would have prevailed.

Citizens hope that their government would legislate for the good of the people. However, when the law is unjust, it is made to be broken.

**ANNOTATION GUIDE**

Underline the thesis statement

Write the total number of sentences next to each paragraph

next to transitions

Circle proper nouns

\*\*\* next to rebuttals

next to any sentences that connect back to the thesis