

### **EXAMPLE SHORT INFORMATIVE THEME (Six Paragraphs)**

**Prompt:** Choose a concept, and write a short multi-paragraph theme defining it, based on your research. Please include the characteristics always, sometimes, and never present in the concept as well as examples. Be sure to have at least five paragraphs in your theme. Include in-text citations where needed and a reference list. Use the APA style.

TITLE OF PAPER: Drones: What Defines Them?

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### Drones: What Defines Them?

Drones have a relatively long history of existence, especially in the military. In the early 1900s, in fact, they were used for target practice during the training of military personnel (“Unmanned,” 2014). Since then, they have evolved into sophisticated flying machines. Today, they come in a variety of forms and have a variety of uses. However, to understand drones, one must begin by understanding the characteristics that are always, sometimes, and never present in them. Then their uses and examples can be explored to understand their place in today’s world.

To begin, drones can be primarily defined by four characteristics that are always present. First and foremost, drones are mechanical vehicles. A vehicle can be defined as something that carries items. Second, they are aircraft. In other words, they travel through the air after they are launched. Thus, they must be strong enough to carry some sort of equipment or technology through the air. Third, a pilot is not present inside a drone; it is unmanned. In other words, a drone must have equipment that enables it to maneuver through the air without a pilot on board. Fourth, the flight of a drone is controlled in some way. It does not just wander around aimlessly in the air or travel at the whim of the wind.

With regard to the characteristics that are sometimes present in drones, these characteristics relate to their control, their size, and their expendability. With regard to their control, sometimes drones are controlled remotely by a pilot on the ground or in another vehicle. Sometimes they are piloted by a pilot on the ground through the use of a satellite that is orbiting the Earth. Alternatively, drones sometimes have autonomous control. Autonomous control means that they are programmed to do certain activities and only those activities without direction or interference from a human. In order for this to happen, they have to have sophisticated computer equipment on board that provides signals about where to go and what to

do. Additionally, sometimes drones are so small they can fit in a person's hand. Alternatively, they can be as large as an airplane. Their size often dictates what they can do and how much they can carry. Interestingly, sometimes drones can be expendable; that is, they do not necessarily need to be retrieved. Most often, though, they are recoverable so that they can be used again.

Logically, then, because of the characteristics that are always and sometimes present in drones, some characteristics are never present. Obviously, they never carry human pilots. If this were the case, they would be called "airplanes." Moreover, drones never drift around without a purpose or a piloted direction. If this were the case, they might be called "kites" or "balloons." Furthermore, drones do not spend much time traveling on the ground. They are launched into the air, and they land when their trip is complete. If they were to spend all their time on the ground, they might be called "cars" or "all-terrain vehicles."

Because of the unique characteristics that are and are not present in drones, they can be used for a variety of purposes. In civilian life, drones that carry cameras are being used in a variety of professions to photograph crops, search for missing people, make films, count wildlife, watch for forest fires, catch illegal hunters, photograph celebrities, film sporting events, and measure landslides. They are also being used to deliver packages by stores and online companies. First responders use them to find and communicate with accident victims. Example drones used in civilian life include the Aerovision Fulmar, developed by Aerovision for finding fish for fishermen ("Aerovision Fulmar," 2014), and the Arch Aerial Drone, developed by Arch Aerial for taking photographs ("Drones," 2014). In military life, drones are being used to carry and drop bombs and to kill enemy combatants. They are used to deliver supplies and medical equipment. They are also being used to take photos of enemy positions and to find the enemy in difficult terrain. Example drones used by the military are the RQ-7 Shadow, which can deliver 20 pounds

of medical supplies to front-line troops (“Shadow 200,” 2014), and the AeroVironment Wasp III, which is used for surveillance (“UAS Wasp,” 2014).

In conclusion, drones are a special type of unmanned mechanized vehicle which typically can be launched into the air, complete a certain task, and land in a recoverable state. Sometimes, they are piloted by remote control, and sometimes they pilot themselves. They can be very small or quite large, depending on the equipment that they carry to complete their tasks. Their tasks vary, and they can be used for civilian or military purposes. Because of their usefulness, their forms and tasks have grown exponentially over the last century such that they have invaded so many professions and have become so much a part of life that lawmakers are starting to make laws to govern their use and the amount of space they take up in the sky.

### References

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