

## Writing Centre

### THESIS DEVELOPMENT

#### *What is a thesis statement?*

In terms of writing a paper, a thesis statement declares what you believe and what you intend to prove. It provides the reader with a map to guide him/her through your work and it clearly asserts your own conclusion based on the evidence found.

#### *Attributes of a good thesis:*

- It is specific and focused. A strong thesis proves a point without discussing everything about your topic in that sentence.
- It tackles a subject that could be adequately covered in your paper.
- It **avoids** vague language such as "it seems".
- It **avoids** the first person. ("I believe," "In my opinion")
- It should be a relevant topic in which people could possibly have a different opinion.

#### *Basic thesis:*

**Specific topic + Attitude/Angle/Argument = Thesis**

**What you plan to argue + How you plan to argue it = Thesis**

#### *Questions to ask yourself before writing a thesis statement:*

- ◆ What should the reader do/feel/believe about my topic?
- ◆ Who are the major players on both sides and how did they contribute to the topic?
- ◆ What was the impact of the issue on outside parties?



- ◆ Was the person/topic justified, defensible, warranted?
- ◆ Why did this happen? Why did it succeed? Why did it fail?
- ◆ What are three/four/five reasons for us to believe in the subject?



*Examples of a good thesis:*

Although Mr. Smith may have believed 'X' issue, the real causes were 'Y' and 'Z'.

Historians generally list six reasons as the cause for this issue, but among this list are four reasons that are valid and two that are not.

The causes of the Civil War were economic, social, and political.

Often dismissed because it is animated, 'The Simpsons' treats the issue of ethnicity more powerfully than did the critically praised 'All In The Family'.

Although many parents of teens struggling with body image may blame television models and other such stars, these body issues and their disorders stem back to their daughters' younger days of pigtails and Barbies.

Sources:

"Thesis Generator."(n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.sdst.org/shs/library/thesisgenerator.html>

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