

Thesis Practice

Part Two

DEVELOPING A CLEAR THESIS

Finding a proper balance between a general and specific main idea can be very challenging when you create a thesis statement. A good thesis statement should not be too long, but it should be specific. Usually a good thesis statement is 15 to 30 words. You want to make sure that in your attempt to create a good thesis that your thesis statement is not too broad and lacks focus and scope. Also, you want to make sure that your attempt to be specific that you do not create a thesis that is too narrow.

Here is an example of a general statement that can become a good thesis statement.

Topic: Problems in the Environment

General Idea

Thesis

Better Thesis

Cars destroy the environment

Motor emissions cause
bad things to happen to

Emissions tests are crucial if
we want to preserve air quality our air.

WRITING A CLEAR THESIS STATEMENT

When you develop a thesis statement, you must make sure that the words you use are free from ambiguity. Oftentimes, students think they are writing a thesis statement that is very clear, but use vague words that are not very specific. Here is an example of a thesis that lacks clarity due to vague word usage:

Violence on television causes people to behave badly.

The underlined words are very vague. There are many types of violence, many categories of people and the idea of "bad" might have different meanings depending upon who you ask. You do not want your reader to try to find out what you mean in the body paragraphs. If the purpose of the introduction seeks to catch the reader's interest, then the introduction is not the place to write vague, unclear and confusing statements.

A way to revise this thesis is to use specific words that create detail for the reader. Using action words, sensory details, or finding a more specific way to describe what you mean can be very helpful to create proper clarity for a good thesis statement.

Assignment:

Part One

Directions: Write a thesis statement by filling in an opinion for the topic given to you.

Example: Students who study four hours a day will find that they will receive more passing grades than failing grades in college.

1. If the HFCC College Bookstore were open on Saturday_____.
2. After school programs for children_____.
3. Universal healthcare_____.
4. Raising the minimum wage_____.

Part Two

Directions: Create a thesis statement for the following essay topics. Remember to be specific!

1. Lowering College Tuition
2. Finding a Cure for AIDS
3. Violence in Cartoons
4. Getting an Education
5. Writing an Essay

Part Three

Directions: Revise the following thesis statements by providing clarity for the underlined vague words. You may find that you must rewrite the entire sentence for clarity.

1. Finals week can be stressful for everyone.
2. Children have ways of making their parents proud of their achievements.
3. Parties thrown late at night can get people in trouble.
4. People who are in love understand how to give the right gift for special times of the

year.

5. Good music makes people feel good.

Part Four

Choose two of your revised thesis statements from Part Three and create an introduction for each thesis statement.

Part Five

Revise the following thesis statements by eliminating slang, clichés and/or sentence errors.

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1. The politicians in America are getting on people's nerves with all of the scandals, bickering and finger-pointing that they see on television.
2. Most teenagers when they don't listen to their parents end up being another statistic in our society this is not a good thing because we don't need more drama in our world.
3. Most relationships are doomed from the start if both people in the relationship do not establish a friendship.
4. The banks have ripped off the American people with their shady credit card interest rates.
5. Terrorism is a concept that has most people in the world totally paranoid about who and what is considered a terrorist.
6. Today's technology pushes the envelope in regard to how humans can better access their world.