

Modern European History

European Exploration

Activity Guidelines

Introduction

You will now expand on the research you have completed to write an outline for an essay that answers the following question:

What are the three most important contributions this explorer made to the Age of Exploration?

A Thesis Statement

Remember, a thesis statement:

tells the reader how you will interpret the significance of the subject matter under discussion.

is a road map for the essay; it tells the reader what to expect from the rest of the essay.

directly answers the question asked; a thesis is an *interpretation* of a subject, not the subject itself.

is a statement that someone could disagree with.

is a sentence somewhere in your introduction (first paragraph) that presents your argument to the reader.

When creating your thesis, ask yourself the following:

Does my thesis actually answer the question as asked?

Re-reading the question after creating your thesis can help you fix an argument that misses the focus of the question.

Have I taken a position that others might challenge or oppose?

If your thesis simply states facts that no one would, or even could, disagree with, it's possible that you are simply providing a summary, rather than making an argument.

Is my thesis statement broad enough?

Thesis statements that are too specific often do not have a strong argument because it is difficult to add supporting details.

Essay Outline Format

Your thesis statement:

Now write an outline for this basic thesis statement:

Argument #1: _____

Evidence #1: _____

Evidence #2: _____

Argument #2: _____

Evidence #1: _____

Evidence #2: _____

Argument #3: _____

Evidence #1: _____

Evidence #2: _____

Now write your introductory paragraph; underline your thoroughly developed thesis.
