

## A Thesis is not the Whole Essay.

A thesis statement is one sentence that expresses the main idea.

### **What an Effective Thesis Contains**

An effective thesis is restricted and deals with bite-sized issues rather than issues that would take a whole lifetime to discuss intelligently. A more restricted thesis lends itself to a tighter and more complete argument.

#### **Example:**

*Not restricted enough: People are too selfish.*

*Improved: Human selfishness is seen at its worst during rush hour.*

## A Thesis Must be Unified

A thesis must express one major idea about the subject. For tight organization, an essay depends upon all details working to support one idea.

Example:

**Not Unified:** Detective stories are not a high form of literature; but people have always been fascinated by them, and many fine writers have experimented with them.

**Improved:** Detective stories appeal to the basic human desire for thrills.

## A Good Thesis is Specific

Word choice is key when writing an effective thesis statement. Make sure that the thesis does not imply any ambiguity. Be careful to select words that are not dull, vague, or unclear.

#### **Example:**

*Ambiguous: Drug addiction is a big problem.*

*Improved: Drug addiction has caused a huge increase in violent crime.*

**Note:** Writers may also extend the thesis statement by forecasting (listing) the major points that will be presented in the paper. A forecasting thesis is an excellent strategy to prepare the reader for a series of issues which will be discussed in that exact order.

#### **Example:**

*Hemingway's war stories helped create a new prose style by employing <sup>1</sup>dialogue, <sup>2</sup>shorter sentences, and <sup>3</sup>strong Anglo-Saxon words.*