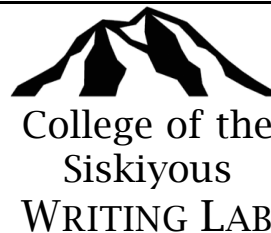


STEP NUMBER THREE: THESIS STATEMENT



INTRODUCTION: The third step is to write a preliminary thesis statement.

A thesis statement proposes an idea, the central idea that you will be exploring in your paper. It does not just state the facts; it also takes a position on the facts. A thesis statement includes an idea, opinion, or theory which the paper will defend or question. Note how the following two thesis statements include a clear position. Further, the order of points in the thesis statements (in bold text) will help structure the logical development of the entire paper.

- *Thesis example one:* "Cigarette smoking in public buildings must be banned because it poses a **health hazard to the non-smoker, damages public buildings,** and is a **violation of Americans' constitutional right to life.**"
- *Thesis example two:* "Shay's Rebellion was a **poorly planned** and **unnecessary revolt** that **hurt the cause it proposed to help.**"

Your next step is to write a preliminary thesis statement. Note that as you do your actual research, you will likely modify or change the thesis to reflect new information. If you feel you do not yet know enough about the topic to even write a preliminary thesis, try to locate an article on EBSCOhost or the Internet that provides an overview of the topic. If you are ready to write a preliminary thesis now, do so below.

Examine your thesis statement: Is the statement reasonable?

Considering the required length of the paper, will you be able to adequately support the thesis you have selected? How many main points will you attempt to cover? A typical five to seven-page paper usually covers three or four main points. A ten-page paper usually covers four or five main points. If you are at all unsure about your thesis, now is the time to visit the COS Writing Lab for guidance.