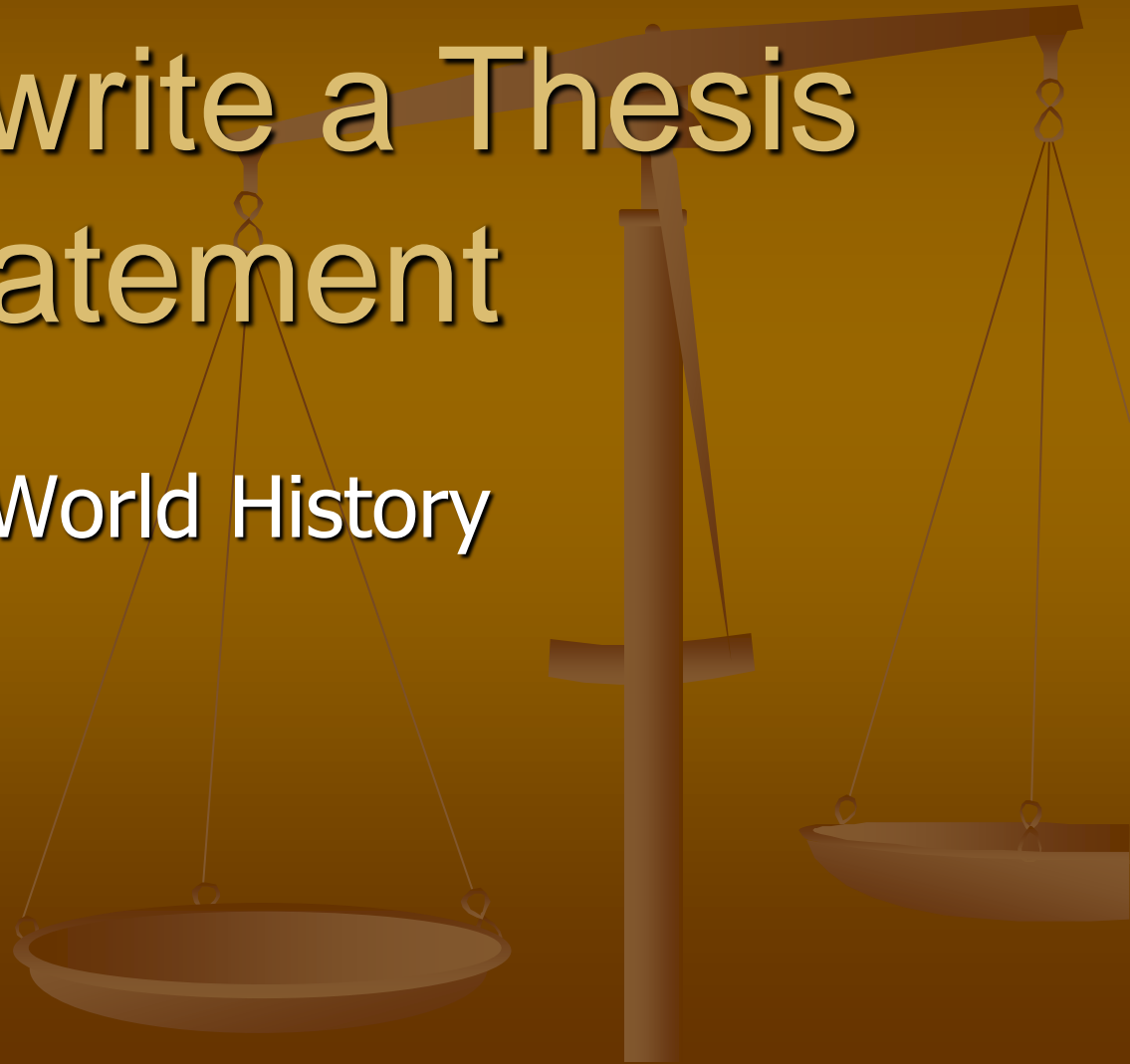
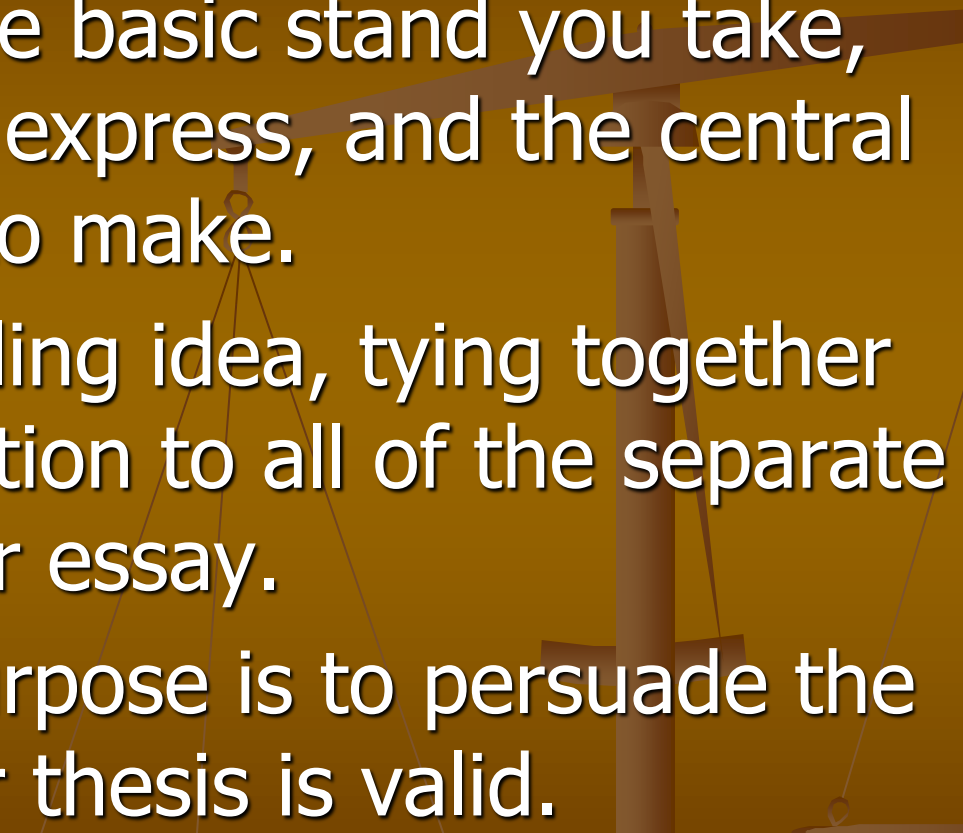


How to write a Thesis Statement

AP World History

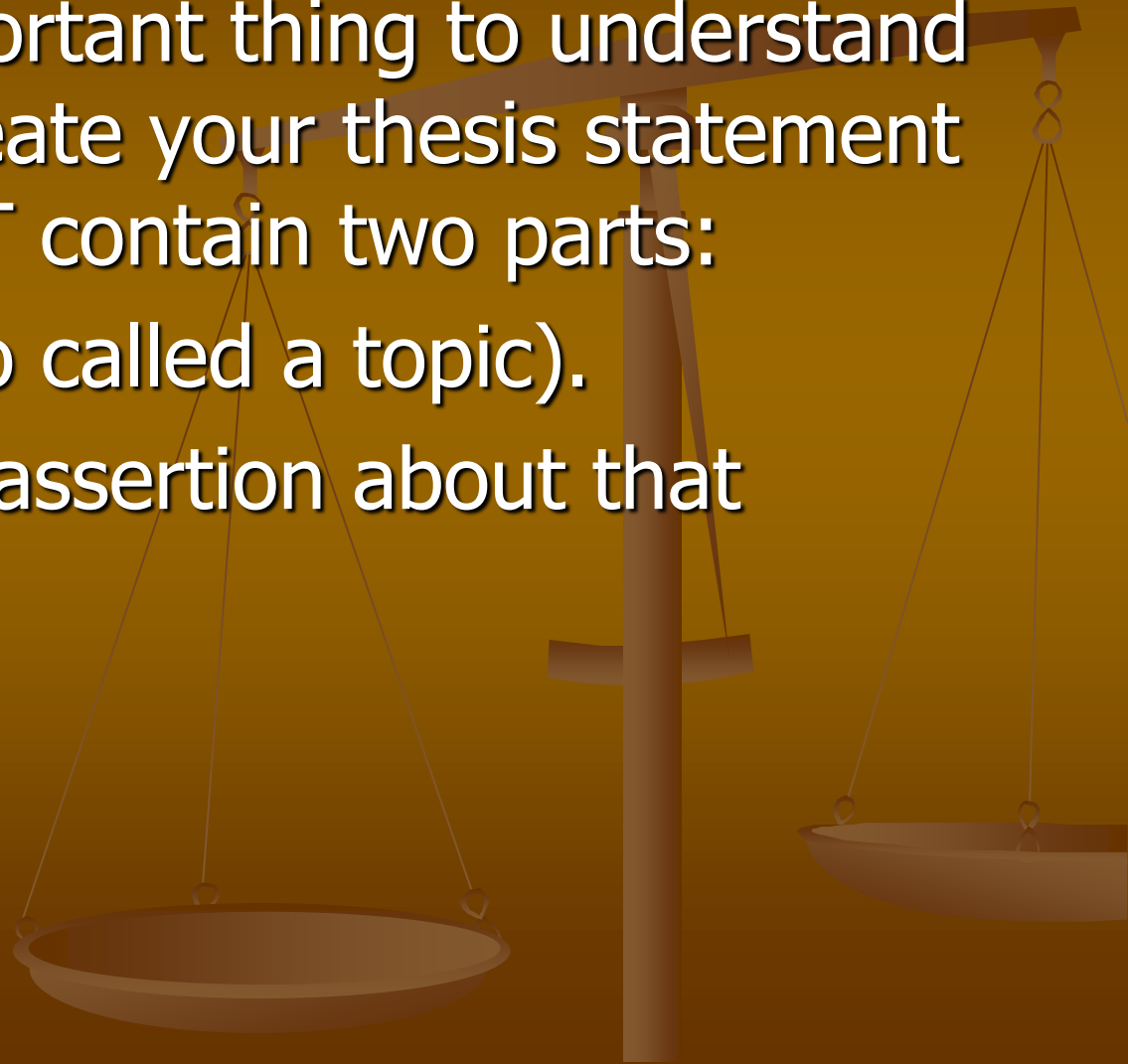


What is it?

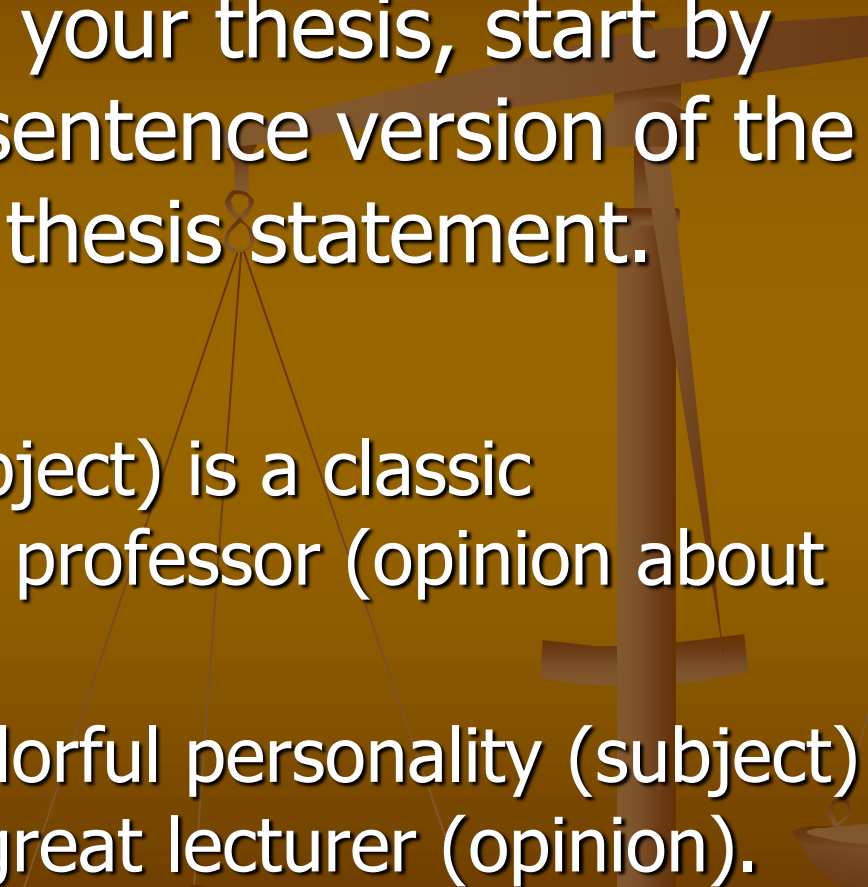
- Your thesis is the basic stand you take, the opinion you express, and the central point you wish to make.
 - It's your controlling idea, tying together and giving direction to all of the separate elements in your essay.
 - Your primary purpose is to persuade the reader that your thesis is valid.
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Most Important to Remember

- The most important thing to understand before you create your thesis statement is that it **MUST** contain two parts:
 1. A subject (also called a topic).
 2. An opinion or assertion about that subject.

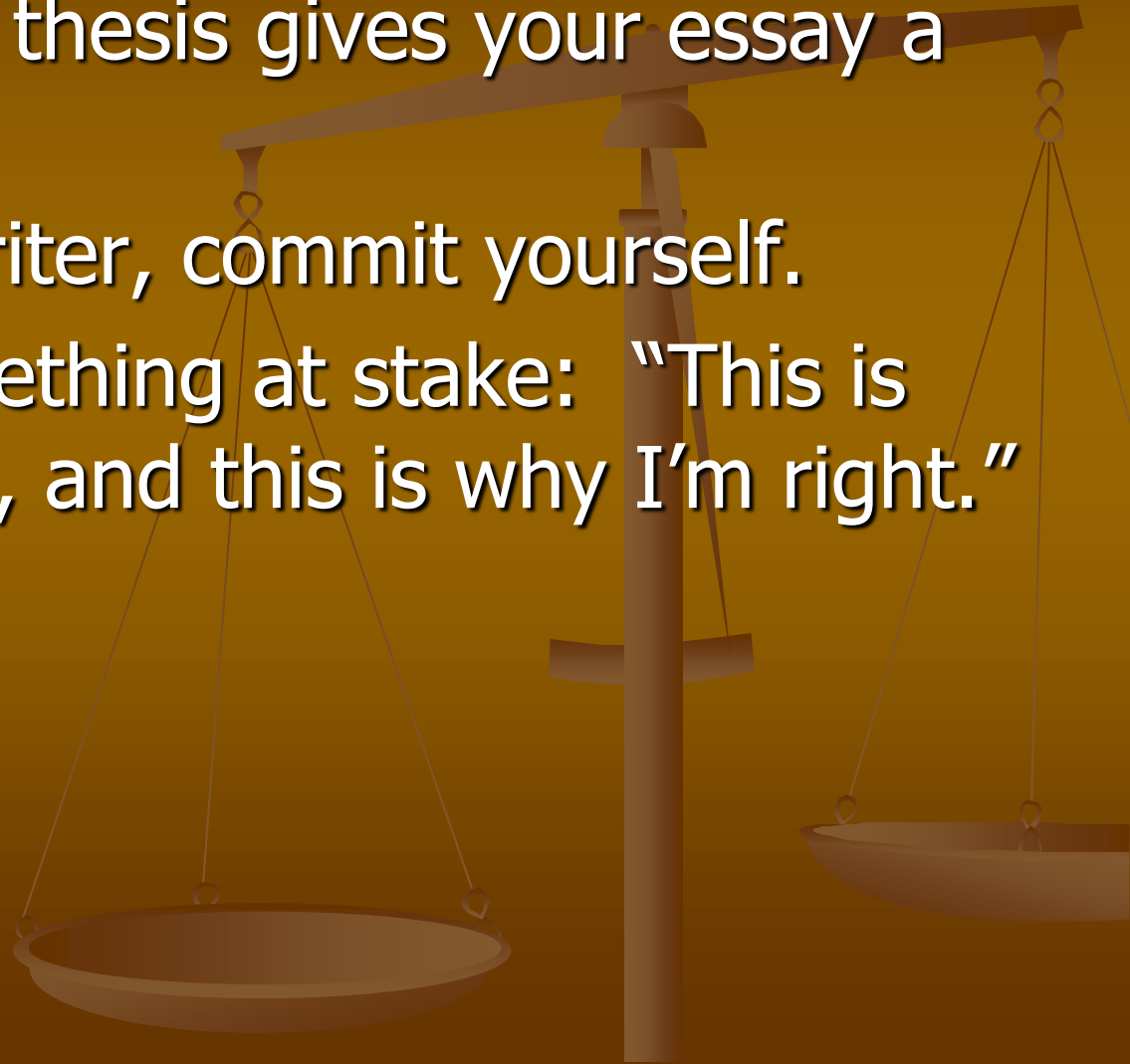


Getting Started

- When defining your thesis, start by writing a one-sentence version of the thesis called a thesis statement.
 - For example:
 1. Mr. Smith (subject) is a classic absentminded professor (opinion about subject).
 2. Mr. Smith's colorful personality (subject) makes him a great lecturer (opinion).
- 

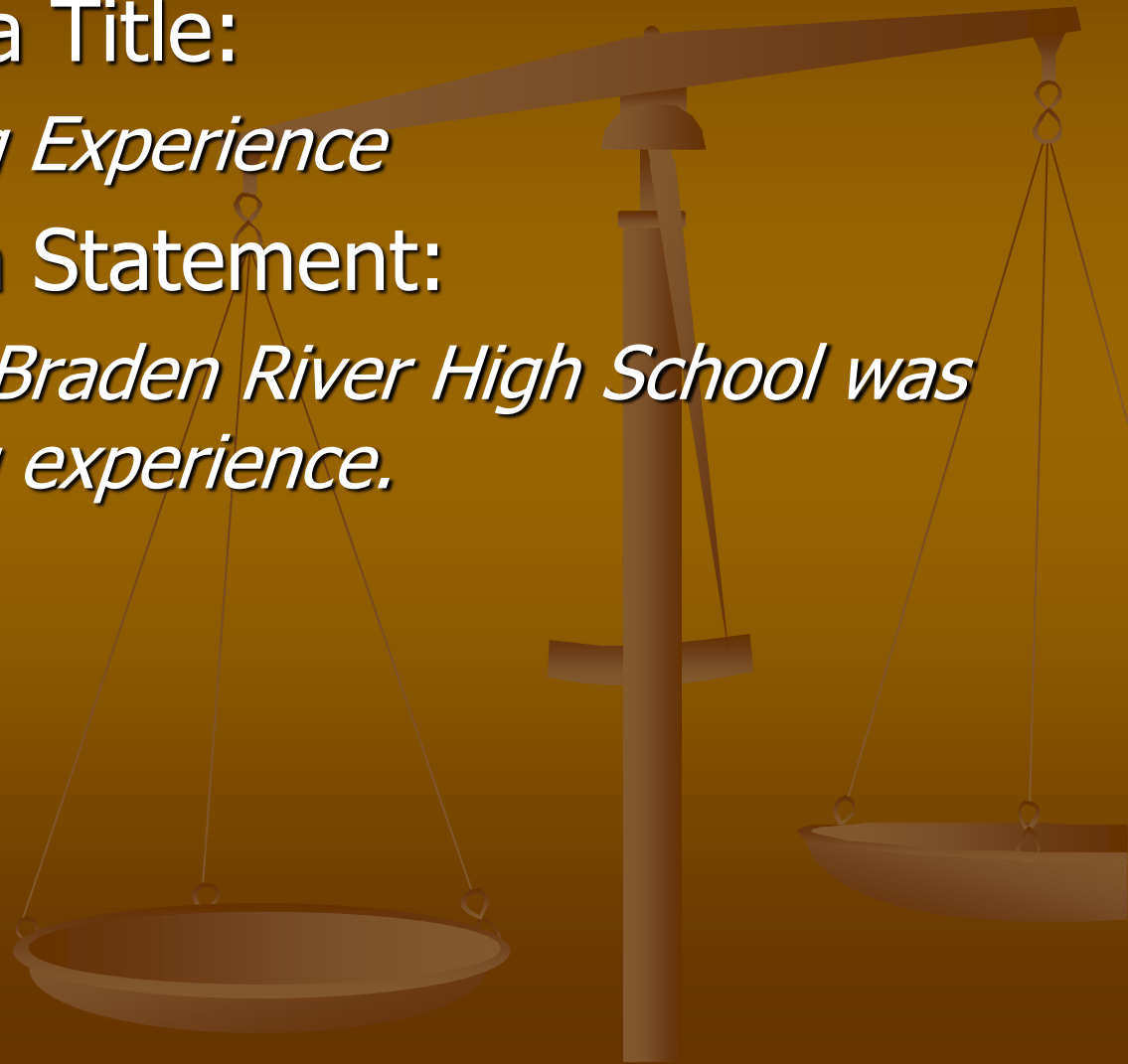
Getting Started

- Writing with a thesis gives your essay a focus.
- You, as the writer, commit yourself.
- You have something at stake: “This is what I believe, and this is why I’m right.”



A Thesis is not...

- A Thesis is not a Title:
 - *An Enlightening Experience*
- It needs to be a Statement:
 - *My first day at Braden River High School was an enlightening experience.*



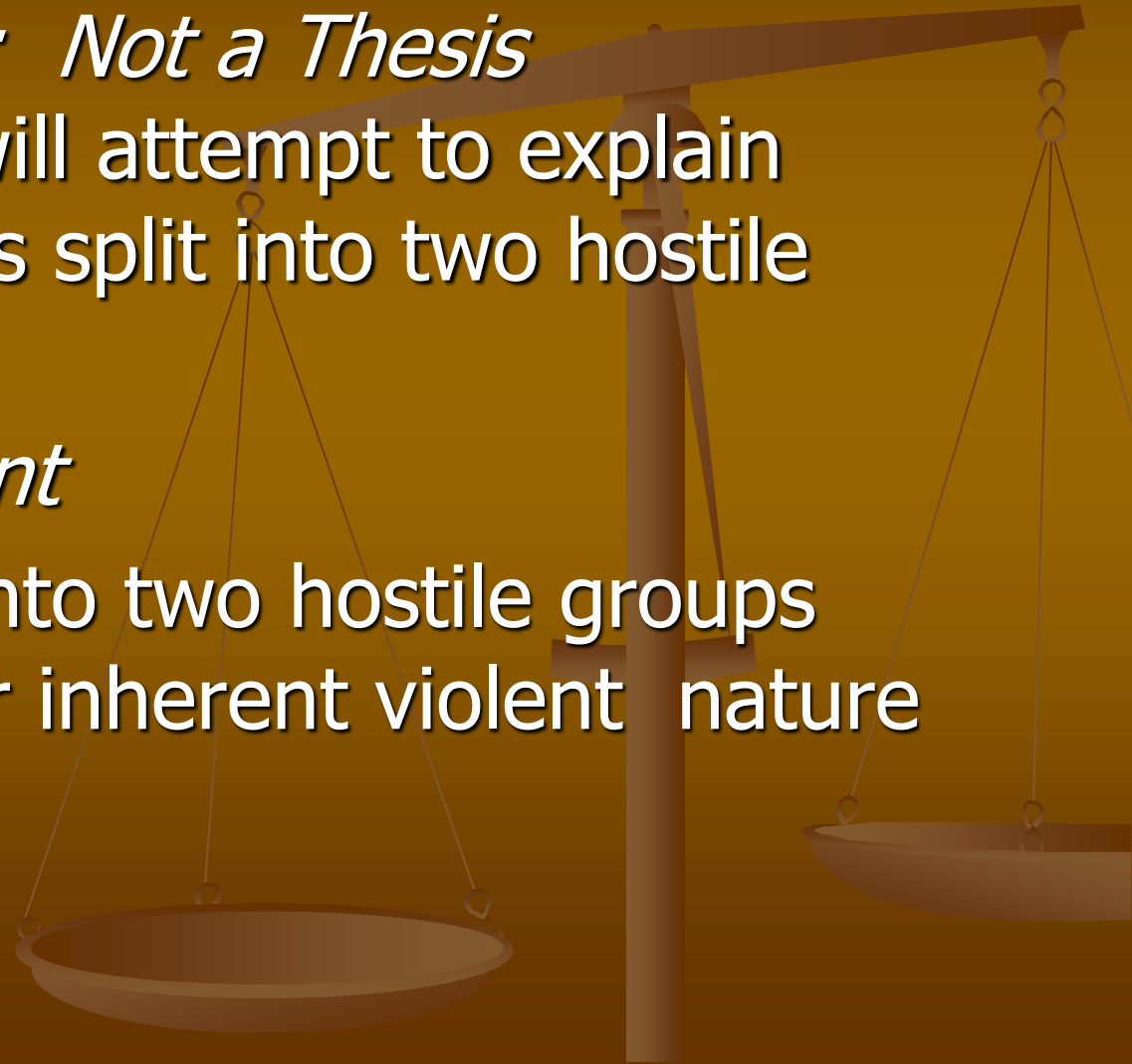
- A Thesis is not an Announcement of the Subject

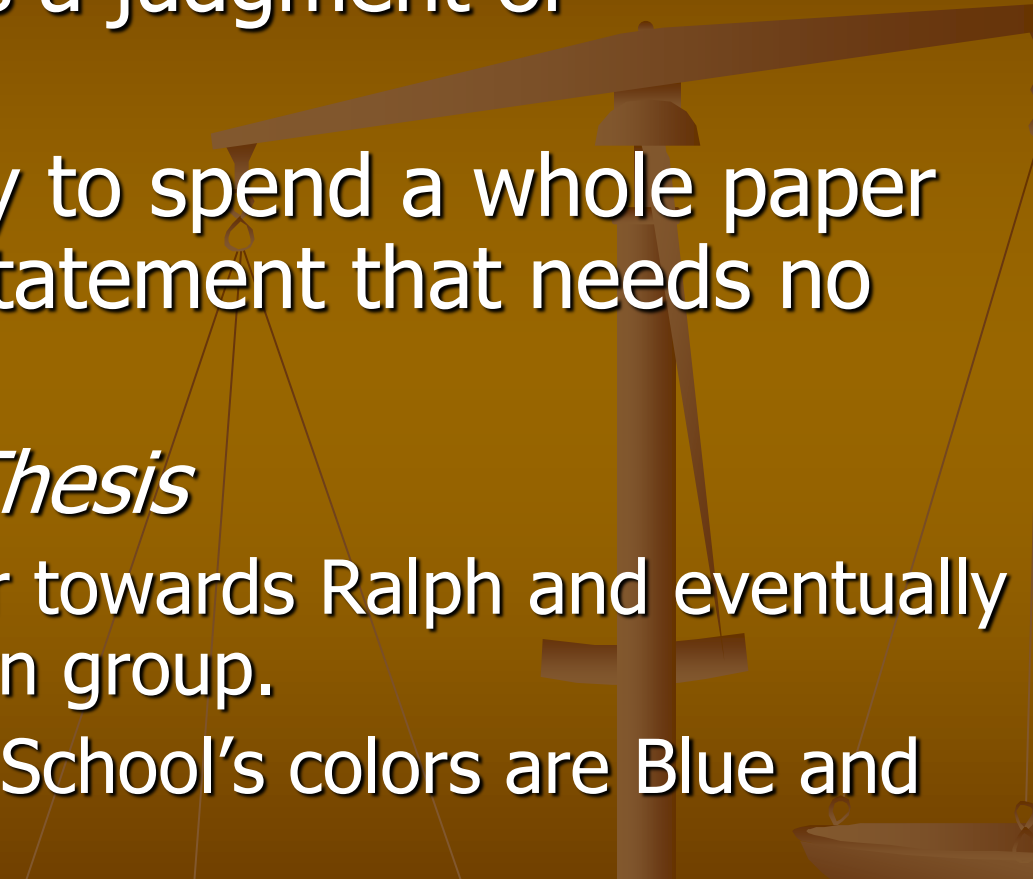
- *Announcement: Not a Thesis*

This paper will attempt to explain why the boys split into two hostile groups.

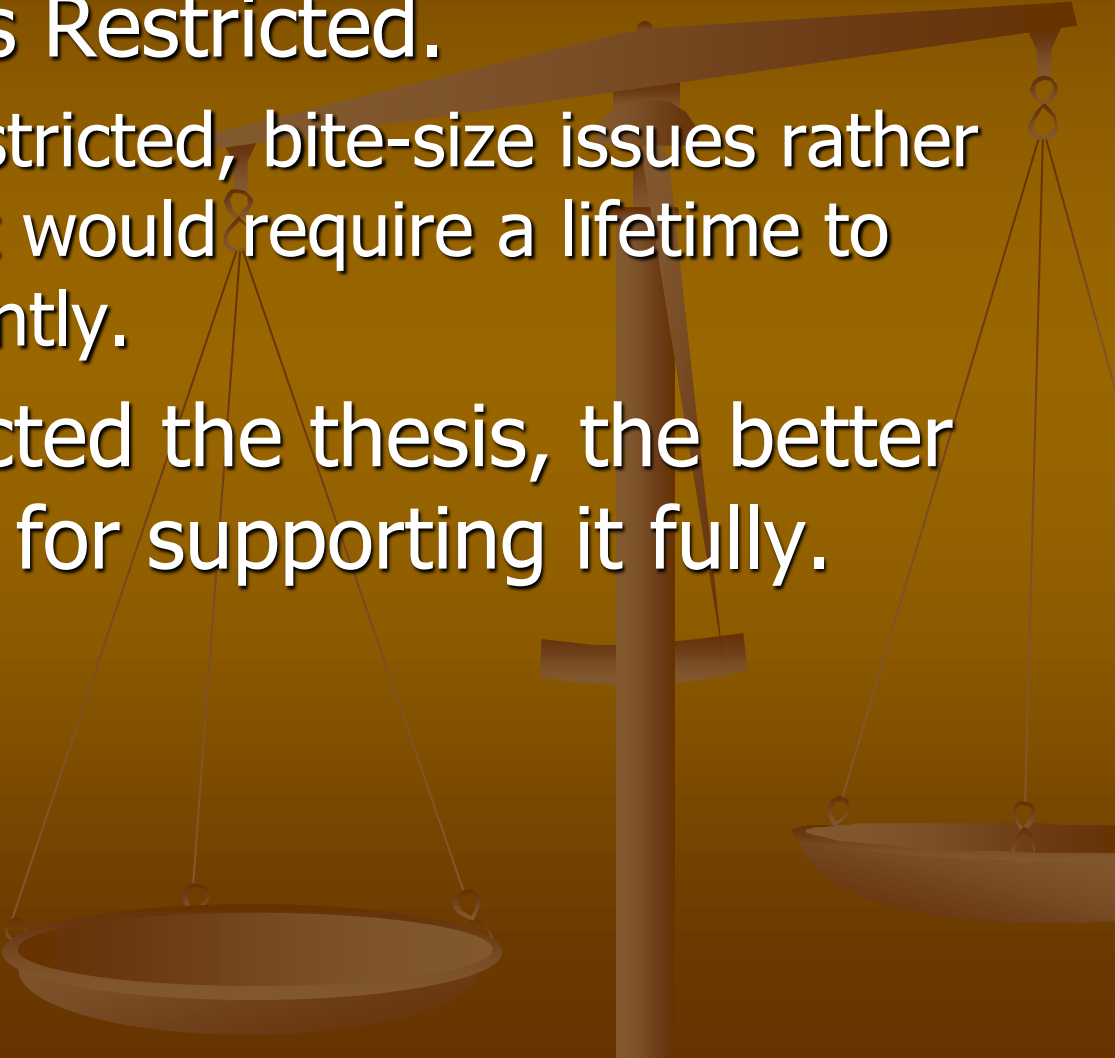
- *Thesis Statement*

- The boys split into two hostile groups because of their inherent violent nature



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- A Thesis Statement is Not a Statement of Absolute Fact
 - A thesis makes a judgment or interpretation.
 - There's no way to spend a whole paper supporting a statement that needs no support.
 - *Fact: Not a Thesis*
 1. Jack felt anger towards Ralph and eventually formed his own group.
 2. Bellevue High School's colors are Blue and Gold.

What a Good Thesis Is

- A Good Thesis is Restricted.
 - It deals with restricted, bite-size issues rather than issues that would require a lifetime to discuss intelligently.
 - The more restricted the thesis, the better the chances are for supporting it fully.
- 

Examples

Example #1

■ Poor Statement

- The boys are either mean or savage.

■ Better Statement

- Roger's actions represent the basic cruelty inherent in every human being.

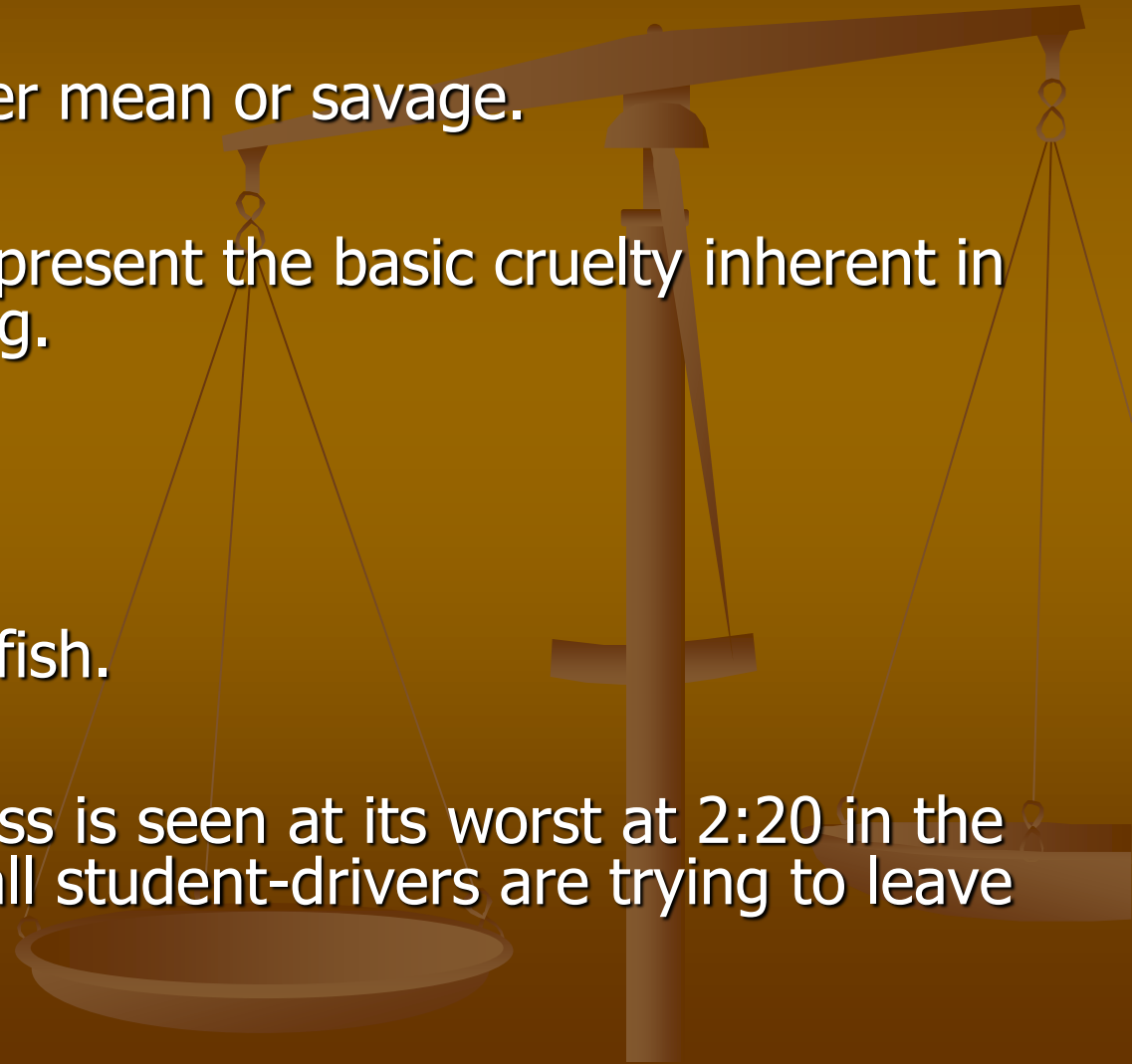
Example #2

■ Poor Statement

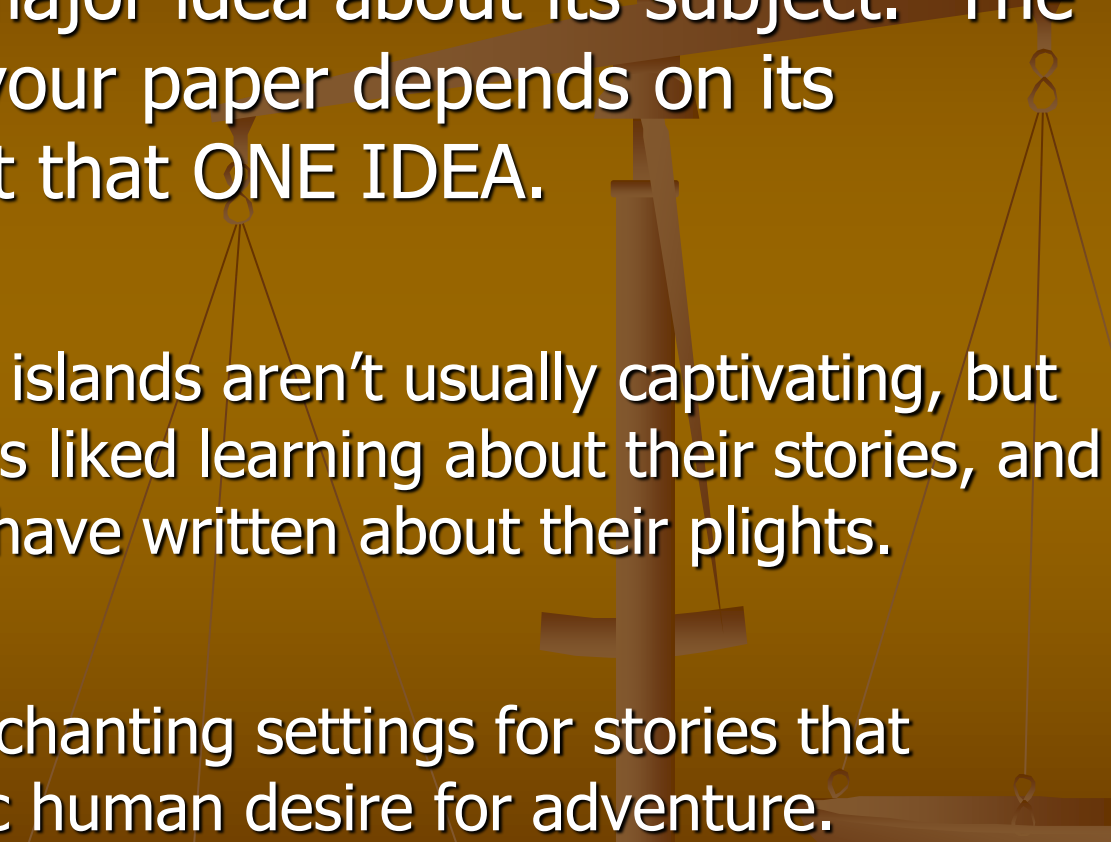
- People are too selfish.

■ Better Statement

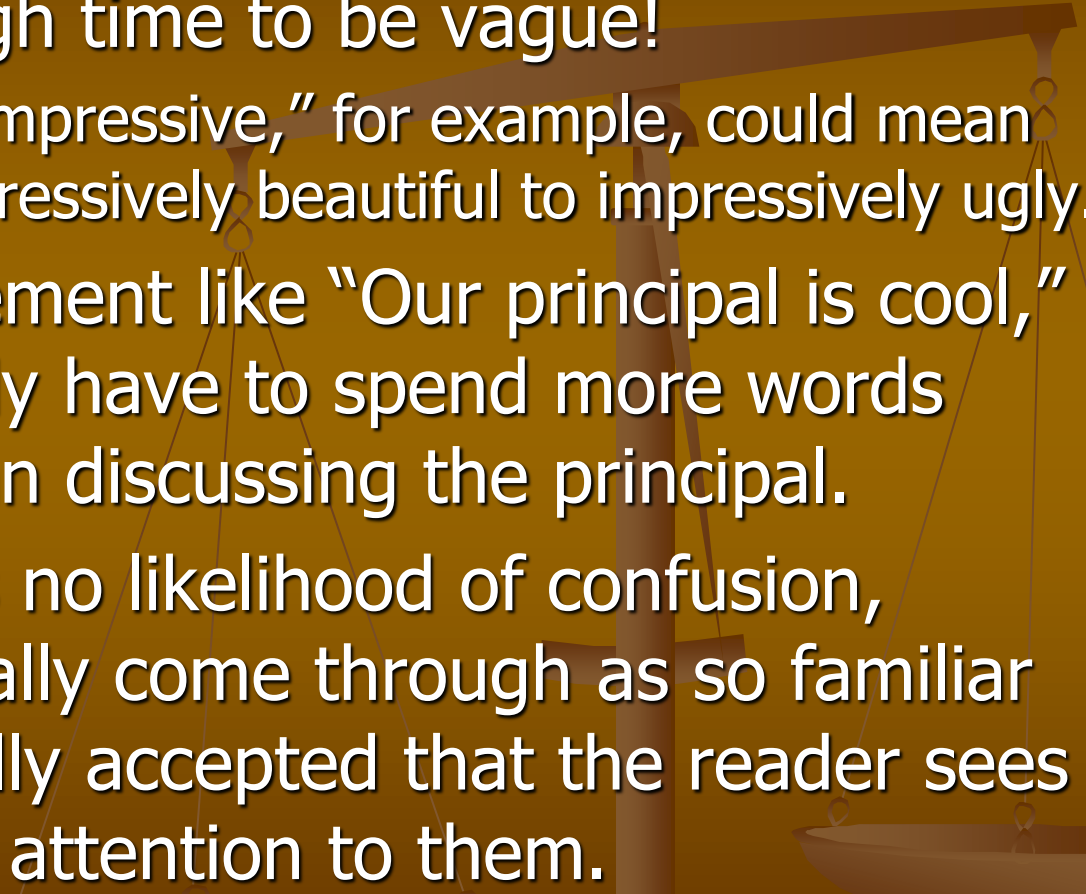
- Teenage selfishness is seen at its worst at 2:20 in the afternoon, when all student-drivers are trying to leave the parking lot.



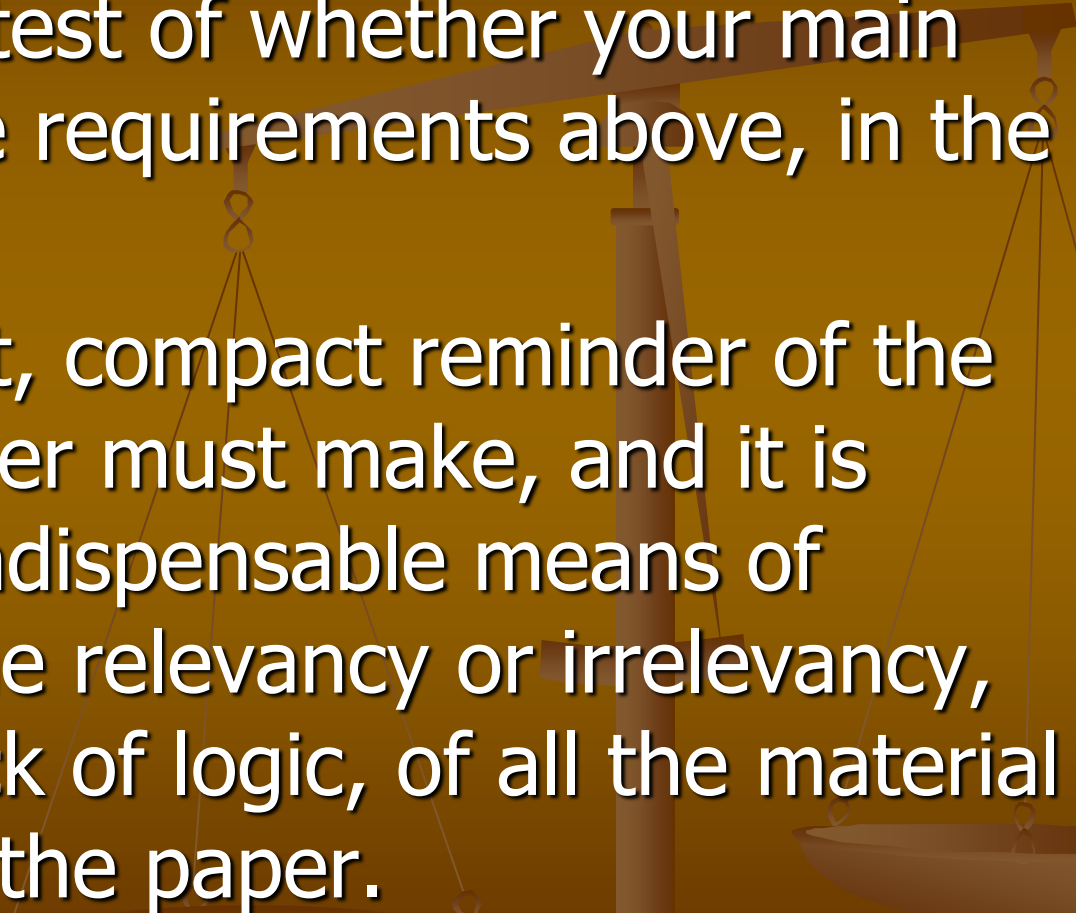
A Good Thesis is Unified.

- It expresses one major idea about its subject. The tight structure of your paper depends on its working to support that ONE IDEA.
 - POOR:
 - People trapped on islands aren't usually captivating, but people have always liked learning about their stories, and many fine writers have written about their plights.
 - BETTER:
 - Islands provide enchanting settings for stories that appeal to the basic human desire for adventure.
- 

A Good Thesis is Specific

- There is not enough time to be vague!
 - “The new gym is impressive,” for example, could mean anything from impressively beautiful to impressively ugly.
 - With a thesis statement like “Our principal is cool,” you would probably have to spend more words defining “cool” than discussing the principal.
 - Even when there’s no likelihood of confusion, vague ideas normally come through as so familiar or dull or universally accepted that the reader sees no point in paying attention to them.
- 

The thesis statement has Two Main Values

1. It serves as a test of whether your main idea meets the requirements above, in the question.
 2. It is a constant, compact reminder of the point your paper must make, and it is therefore an indispensable means of determining the relevancy or irrelevancy, the logic or lack of logic, of all the material that goes into the paper.
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Checklist for deciding if your thesis is effective.

- The thesis statement presents an opinion that is sufficiently limited.
 - The thesis statement answers “So What” by saying something meaningful.
 - The thesis statement presents an arguable statement which can be supported and is worth exploring.
 - The thesis statement answers all parts of the question or prompt.
 - The thesis statement asserts a single idea. (No more than one!)
 - The thesis statement is located at the beginning of the paper.
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