

# Writing Your Own Thesis Statement 09.26.05

Use approaches that work logically with your topic. For example, if your topic is a current social problem, consider predicting consequences and offering a solution to a problem. If your topic concerns one of the sciences, consider pointing out a cause-and-effect relationship or claiming to have discovered information about which readers know little.

- **Predict consequences** - The high tech innovation of three dimensional virtual reality will make present video technologically obsolete.
- **Claim that a problem exists about which readers are unaware** - The number of repeat offenders in prisons could be cut in half if more prisoners could pursue college degrees while incarcerated.
- **Claim to have discovered information about which readers know little** - In the days before the Food and Drug Administration, some manufacturers knowingly sold lethal over-the-counter medicines, diet pills, and beauty aids.
- **Point out a cause-and-effect relationship** – Ozone layer depletion will increase the incidences of skin cancer.
- **Draw a historical (or other) parallel** – The same factors that led people to explore the globe will lead them to explore outer space.
- **Assert a conclusion (which you will justify in the body of your paper)** – Drive, not talent, creates success in the arts.
- **Offer a solution to a problem** – A high protein diet will best enable the overweight to lose pounds successfully.

Is your approach valid? Ask yourself two questions:

1. What test can I construct to evaluate my premise?
2. How much confidence do I have in the test?

## Thesis Statements – The Bad vs. the Good

- **The Bad...obvious...use of 2nd person**
  - The kind of gasoline you put into your tank will affect how your car runs.
- **The Good – very specific, very detailed, 3rd person, takes a stand**
  - The use of premium gas once every four fill ups will increase the efficiency and add years to the life of a car.
- **The Bad...obvious**
  - People disagree as to the best method to quit smoking.
- **The Good – very specific, very detailed, takes a stand**
  - Psychotherapy provides the safest and most efficient way to quit smoking.
- **The Bad...obvious**
  - Pollution negatively affects health.
- **The Good – very specific, very detailed, takes a stand**
  - Pollution caused by exhaust fumes is the pollutant which causes the greatest danger to human health.