**Class Notes for Thesis Lesson**

*As you read and unpack your topic and its resources, look for the following:*

* Interesting contrast or comparisons or patterns emerging in the information.
* Is there something about the topic that surprises you?
* Do you encounter ideas that make you wonder why?
* Something an expert says makes you respond “No way! That can’t be right!” or “Yes, absolutely. I agree.”

*Here are some helpful examples of brainstorming a thesis:*

* Select a topic: television violence and children
* Ask an interesting question: What are the effects of television violence on children?
* Revise the question into a thesis: Violence on television increases aggressive behavior in preschool children.
* Remember, this argument is your “preliminary” or “working” thesis. As you read you may discover evidence that may affect your stance. It is OK to revise your thesis!

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*Here are some things to keep in mind when writing a thesis statement.*

* It should use clear, strong language;
* The reader should know what your entire essay will be about by just reading your thesis statement
* Use specific language--NOT "some people say," "most people think," "experts believe,"
* "Usually," "sometimes," "at least," and "some of the time"
* It will never be a question, and it will always be a complete sentence
* It will mention the problem and your position, what does a thesis do?

For the writer, the working thesis statement:

* Serves as a planning tool.
* Helps the writer determine the paper's focus.
* Becomes a reference point for all topic sentences in support of the argument.
* Anticipates questions about the topic.

For the reader, the thesis statement:

* Serves as a "map" to follow through the paper.
* Keeps the reader focused on the argument
* Engages the reader in the argument.
* Offers enough detail for the reader to grasp the argument.

The following are examples of thesis statements:

* Alexander Hamilton was a great leader because he assured the financial security of the
* United States.
* George Washington was called the Father of our country because without him, the

colonists would have lost.

* The Revolution and the new republic would have torn itself apart with political rivalries.
* Mark Twain's childhood experiences on the Mississippi River inspired him to write

Huckleberry Finn.

* In fighting for the New Deal, Roosevelt showed the same characteristic he showed in

fighting his disability--- determination.

Helpful Tips:

* Write your thesis statement in the Thesis Builder website. Consult it at all times while you are creating your argumentative essay. This will help you stay focused.
* Remember that a thesis statement is not an indisputable fact (i.e. the earth is round) or a personal opinion (i.e. country music is horrible). Activity Directions: Using your topic, fill in the questions asked to begin brainstorming for your thesis statement. A sample is done for you.

SAMPLES:

What's the topic you want to research?

WILLIAM WALLACE

What's your main opinion on this topic?

HE WAS A HERO TO SCOTLAND

What's the strongest argument supporting your opinion?

HE NEVER GAVE UP THE FIGHT

What's a second good argument that supports your opinion?

HE DIED AS A MARTYR

What's the main argument against your opinion?

HE COMMITTED VIOLENT ACTS

What's a possible title for your research project/essay?

WILLIAM WALLACE, MYTH OR MARTYR?

Possible thesis statement:

EVEN THOUGH HE COMMITTED VIOLENT ACTS, WILLIAM WALLACE WAS A HERO TO SCOTLAND BECAUSE HE DIED AS A MARTYR AND HE NEVER GAVE UP THE FIGHT.