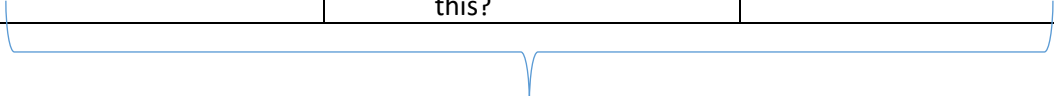


ESSAY TOPICS:

If an essay topic is provided, awesome – you can go right to generating a thesis. However, if you are responsible for developing your own topic, there's some thought involved in the process. Here's a way to help narrow the process down:

SOURCE OF IDEAS	CONNECTING	REFLECTING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Events • Social Issues • Experiences • Movies, Songs, Novels • Relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this make me feel? • What does this remind me of? • How are these things alike? • How does my experience relate to this? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why does this matter to me? • Why did I respond to this the way that I did? • Why would this matter to other people?


CONSIDER PURPOSE & AUDIENCE**A strong essay topic is:**

- Something you are passionate about – or at the very least – interested in
- Something you're already knowledgeable about or that you can research in a reasonable amount of time
- Narrow enough to address adequately in an essay
- Broad enough that you can write an entire essay on it

THESIS STATEMENTS:

Once your topic is narrowed down, you need a thesis statement. Will it be **implicit** or **explicit**? It's always good idea to consider your thesis as it is the heart of your essay.

STRONG THESIS STATEMENTS:	WEAK THESIS STATEMENTS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a stand or make a claim that could be reasonably disputed • Has one main idea expressed clearly and precisely • Clearly indicates the evidence the essay will provide to support it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask a question • Simply state a fact • Just describe your subject or the essay's intention • Don't have a "so what" connection

EXAMPLES OF THESIS STATEMENTS:

ORIGINAL THESIS STATEMENT	WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?	STRONGER THESIS STATEMENT
In this essay I will write about carbon emissions.		
Smartphones such as the iPhone have revolutionized how we communicate.		
From cartoons in the morning to adventure shows at night, there is too much violence on television.		

SOME TIPS:

Consider the following statement:

The economic situation is bad.

Such weak thesis statements (broad noun, weak verb, vague modifier) can be put to the test for revision.

Try a specific noun: The tax policies (of the current administration) [instead of “the economic situation”]

Pick an active verb: threaten to reduce (the tax burden on the middle class) [much better than “is”]

Choose a specific modifier: by sacrificing education and health-care programs for everyone. [much more specific than “bad”]

Two strategies can help you write your way into a better thesis:

1. **Specify**—Replace the overly abstract terms—terms such as positive and negative (or similar and different)—with something specific; name something that is positive and something that is negative instead.
2. **Subordinate**—Rank one of the two items in the pairing underneath the other. When you subordinate, you put the most important, pressing, or revealing side of the comparison in what is known as the main clause and the less important side in what is known as the subordinate clause, introducing it with a word such as although.