WRITING EFFECTIVE THESIS STATEMENTS

WHAT IS A THESIS?

The thesis is the central point or argument of an essay. The thesis statement, in one or two sentences, expresses that central point or argument.

A good thesis statement is **NOT a statement of fact:**

✖"Canada is a constitutional monarchy with a federal system of parliamentary government."

It is also **NOT a statement of intent:**

✖ "This essay will examine the settings in *Jane Eyre* in order to discuss the theme of orphanhood."

A good thesis statement is a statement of position that requires the evidence in the body of the essay for support.

THREE MODELS OF THESIS STATEMENTS

1. **The simple statement of position**

   "As a democracy, Canada offers only limited rights and privileges to its citizens."
   "In Jane Eyre, the settings function primarily to support the theme of orphanhood."

2. **The roadmap thesis statement** includes supporting points in the order they will appear:

   "Canada offers only limited rights and privileges to its citizens because of the persistence of a class structure and limited accessibility to both the political process and higher education."

   "In Jane Eyre, the settings function primarily to support the theme of orphanhood by emphasizing Jane's alienation, loneliness, and poverty."

3. **The complex thesis statement** can accommodate two sides of an issue.

   "Although Canada affords its citizens many democratic rights and privileges, those rights and privileges are limited by the persistence of a class structure and limited accessibility to both the political process and higher education."

   "Canada affords its citizens many democratic rights and privileges. However, those rights and privileges are limited by the persistence of a class structure and limited accessibility to both the political process and higher education."

   "Although the settings in Jane Eyre can be seen to place the novel in the Victorian gothic tradition, they serve primarily to support the theme of orphanhood by emphasizing Jane's alienation, loneliness, and poverty."