# **Thesis Statements: The COPE Method**

## *Learning Objectives*

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

* explain the definition of a thesis statement.
* explain how to create an effective thesis statement.

1. **Understanding The COPE Method**

* A thesis statement identifies the topic and main idea of a piece of writing (Bullock et al. 77).
* The thesis statement: makes the central claim of the essay and sets the stage for the essay’s supporting details.

Step #1: Compose a claim about your topic.

Step #2: Check to make sure that your claim is opposable.

*Questions to consider*:

* Who would disagree with my central claim?
* What are alternatives to my central claim?
* Why might someone disagree with my central claim?

Step #3: Check to make sure that your claim is provable.

*Questions to consider*:

* Can I locate evidence to support my central claim?
* Is my central claim too broad?
* Is my central claim too narrow?

Step #4: Check to make sure that your claim is explicit.

*Questions to consider*:

* Is my central claim clear?
* Is my central claim expressed in clear, unambiguous language?
* Would any reader wonder what a word in my central claim means?