

Tips for Writers

Testing Your Thesis

If...	Then....
Your proposed thesis does no more than repeat the topic you are writing about	→ It is <i>not</i> a thesis
Your proposed thesis poses a question without suggesting an answer	→ It is <i>not</i> a thesis
Your proposed thesis merely articulates a fact or series of facts	→ It is <i>not</i> a thesis
Your proposed thesis simply reflects a personal belief or preference	→ It is <i>not</i> a thesis

BUT

If...	Then....
Your proposed thesis: --suggests an answer to a question you have posed as a result of your reading <i>and</i> --it is specific rather than general <i>and</i> --it is debatable (that is, it asserts a conclusion with which a reader might disagree), <i>and</i> --can be supported by evidence from the sources	→ It is a thesis

Does your paper do this?

- ✓ **Asks** a clear question, state a clear problem, or present a clear thesis statement
- ✓ **Describes** both sources
- ✓ **Answers** the question or **supports** the thesis using evidence from the sources
- ✓ **Concludes** by summarizing your argument and how the chosen documents support your thesis

Does your paper have these?

- ✓ Title
- ✓ At least 5 pages in length
- ✓ Page numbers
- ✓ Correct Chicago-Style footnotes
- ✓ 2 primary source documents
- ✓ A thesis that meets the checklist criteria on the back of this sheet

Did you do this before printing?

- ✓ Read the paper out loud
- ✓ Add page numbers
- ✓ Run spell-check