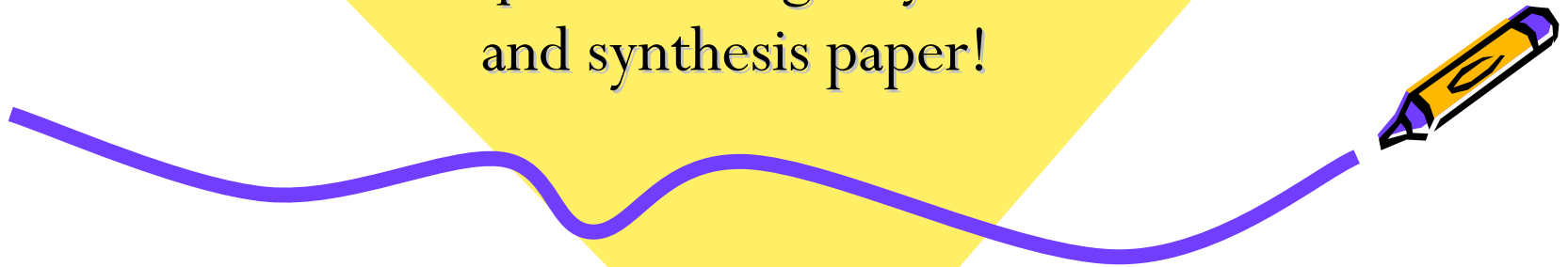




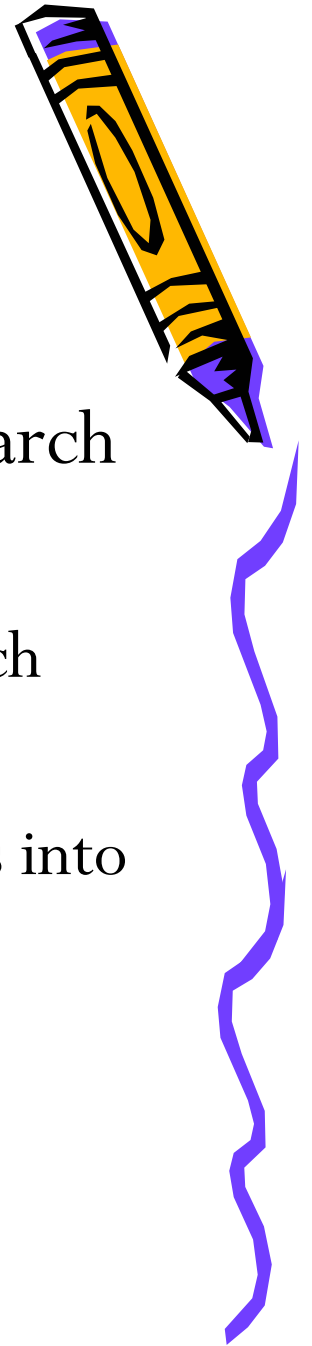
Crafting your Thesis Statement

The first step in creating a dynamic outline and synthesis paper!



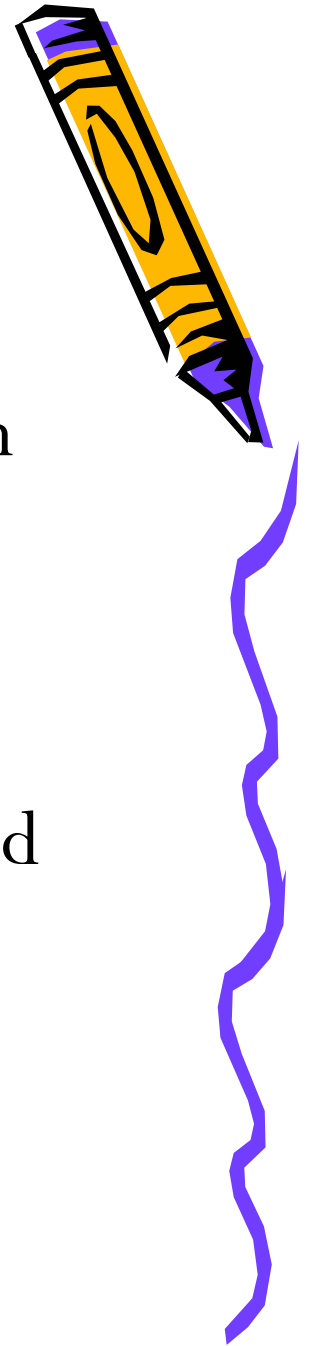
You have been asked to think about the following...

- Make a list of the major themes of your research topic.
 - Do you have enough sources to fully explain each theme?
 - Start thinking about how to merge these themes into a thesis statement...
- A good thesis makes a good outline. A good outline makes a good paper.



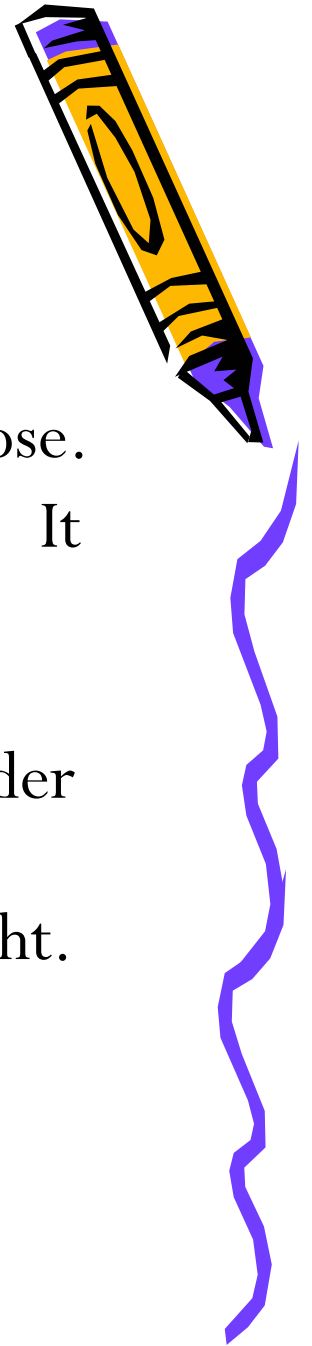
Why do you need a thesis statement?

- To distinguish between a thoughtful research endeavor and a “regurgitation of facts.”
- To declare what you believe and what you intend to prove.
- To distill your ideas into one or more focused sentences.
- To organize and guide your argument



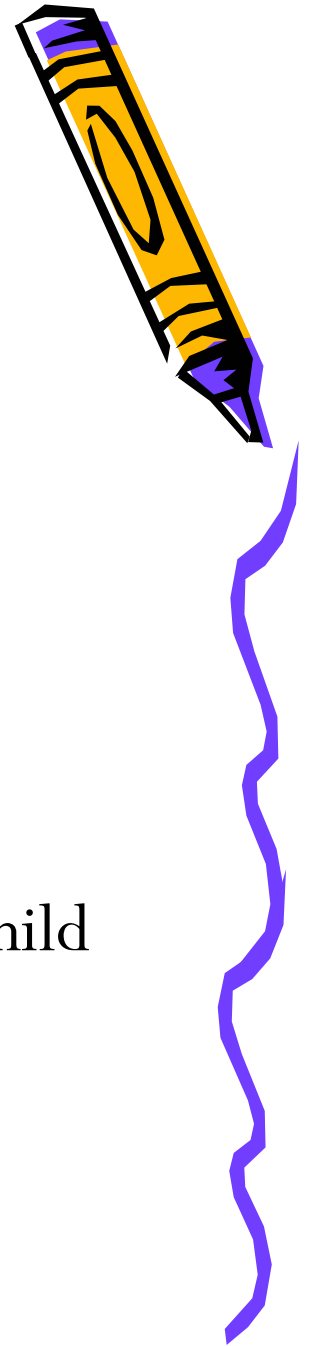
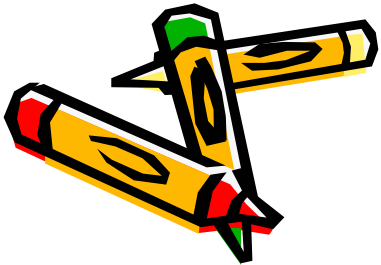
Thesis Statements:

- Take a position that others might challenge or oppose.
- Narrow the subject to a manageable, specific topic. It is neither too broad, nor too narrow.
- Pass the “So What?” or “Who Cares?” test.
- Pass the “How?” and “Why?” tests – inspires the reader to want to know more.
- Provide readers with a guide to your train of thought.



Discuss the these pros and cons
of these sentences as thesis
statements:

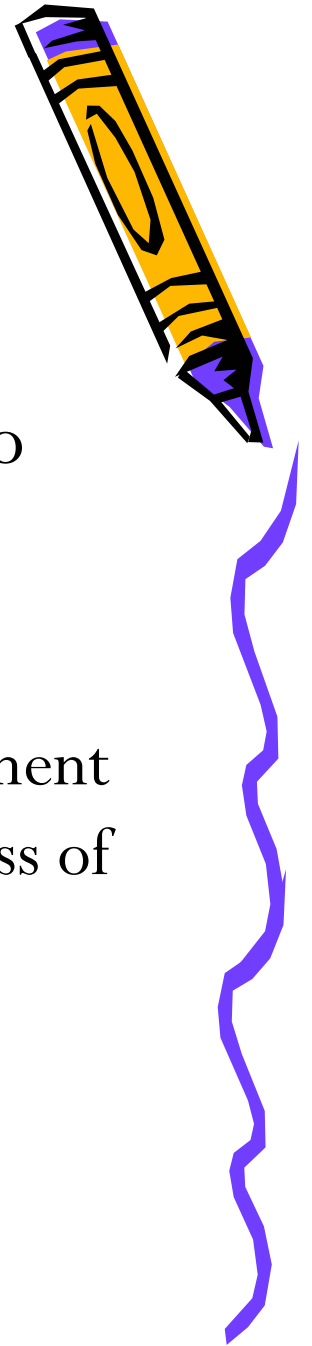
- No Child Left Behind legislation has challenged teachers in many ways.
- President Bush designed No Child Left Behind legislation in order to raise minority test scores.
- Teachers' attempts to meet the goals set by No Child Left Behind legislation have yielded unexpectedly negative as well as positive results.



Why are these “bad” thesis statements?

There are many positive and negative aspects to the Banana Herb Tea Supplement.

- Doesn't take a stand!
- **Better**... “Because the Banana Herb Tea Supplement promotes rapid weight loss that results in the loss of muscle and lean body mass, it poses a potential danger to consumers.”



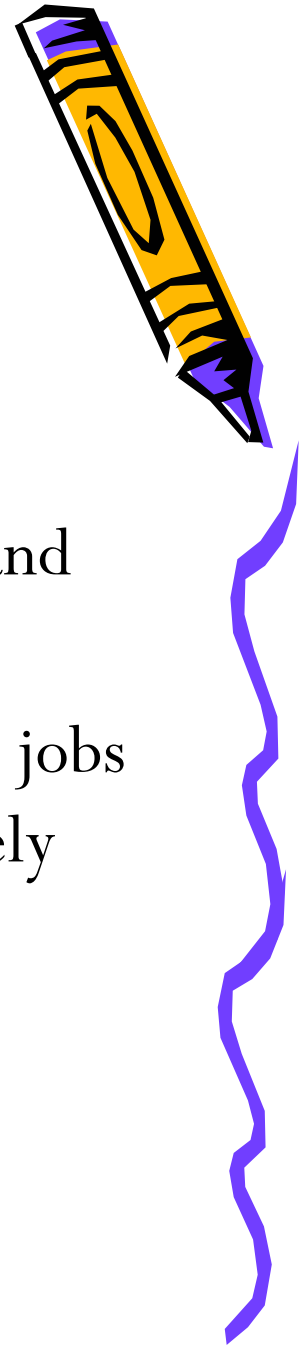
Why are these “bad” thesis statements?

- Companies need to exploit the marketing potential of the Internet, and web pages can provide both advertising and customer support.
 - Is the paper about marketing on the internet or web pages?
 - **Better...** “Because the Internet is filled with tremendous marketing potential, companies should exploit this potential by using web pages that offer both advertising and customer support.”



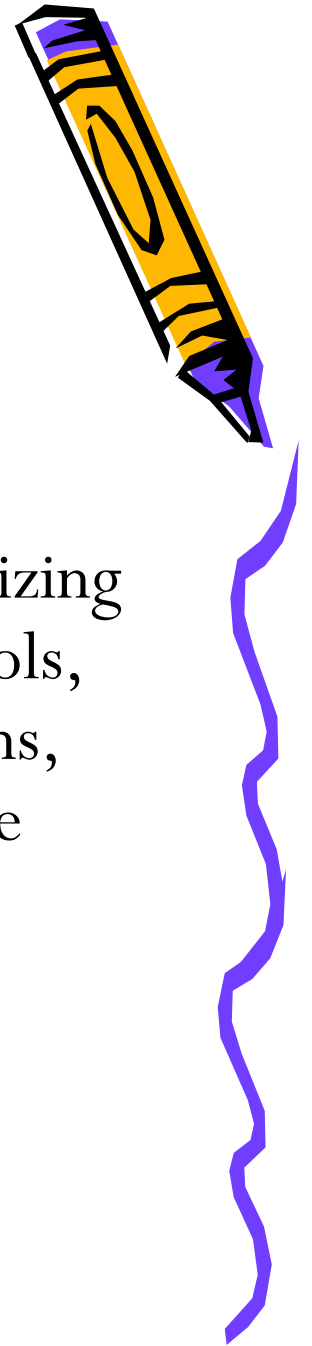
Why are these “bad” thesis statements?

- World hunger has many causes and effects.
 - “World hunger” can’t be discussed in 10 pages and this is too vague.
 - **Better**... “Hunger persists in Appalachia because jobs are scarce and farming in the infertile soil is rarely profitable.”



Rank these thesis statements:

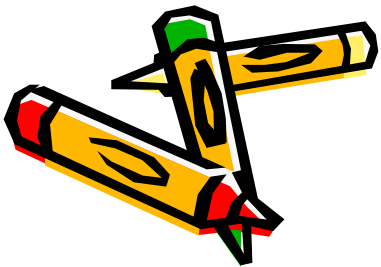
- The federal government broke many treaties with Native Americans.
- The history of Native Americans is a sad history.
- By confiscating Native American land, institutionalizing Native American children in English language schools, and reducing Native Americans to tourist attractions, the federal government irrevocably damaged a once thriving culture.



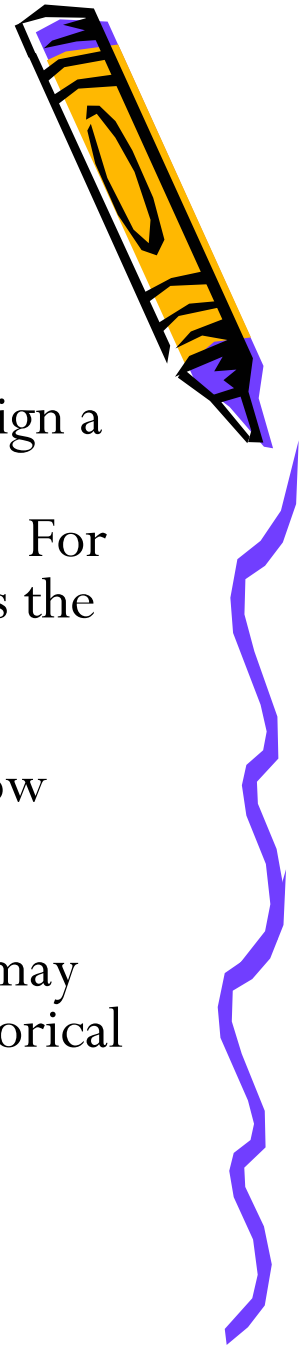
Rank these thesis statements:



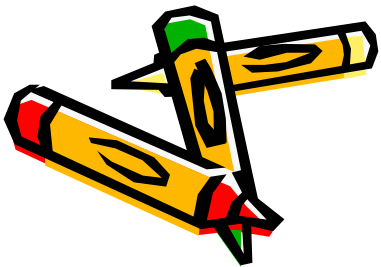
- The North and South fought the Civil War for many reasons, some of which were the same and some different.
- Although both Northerners and Southerners believed they fought against tyranny, Northerners focused on the oppression of slaves, whereas Southerners defended their own rights to property and self-government.



Sample Opening Paragraph and Thesis Statement



Names matter. One of the most creative acts possible is to assign a name to something or someone. Most religions and mythological systems emphasize the importance of naming. For example, The Christian Bible, begins, “In the beginning was the Word....” This paper will explore how personal and family names affect individuals’ emotional well-being, academic success, and economic opportunities. It will also discuss how names are affected by migration and shifting tastes based on influences such as media, historical events, and cultural proficiency. Finally, it will predict how naming behaviors may change in the near and far future if current cultural and historical trends continue.



How could this become an outline?

Now, take the themes you generated about your topic and begin to write a thesis statement.

- Ask yourself if your preliminary thesis passes the following tests?
 - Inspire the reader to ask “How” or “Why.”
 - Avoids statements that the reader will react to with, “No kidding,” or “Who cares?”
 - Avoids general or extreme words/phrases?
 - Leads the reader logically to subtopics.
 - Can be answered in less than 15 pages.

