

# Before You Write

- What is the main topic?
- What is your task?
- Who is your audience?

# The Writing Process

- Read and examine primary and secondary sources to identify facts, inferences, and main ideas, and their application to the task.
- Critically read your work and enlist the support of peers to help revise and edit your initial draft.

# The Thesis

Is the main idea or argument that you will prove with evidence. It is the central point of your paper.

### Simple rules for writing thesis statements:

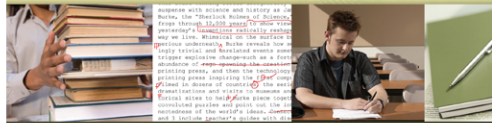
Based upon what you know about the sources, which side do you feel has stronger evidence and therefore can make a better case? Choose that side even if both sides make some good points.

### The thesis statement should:

- Directly respond to the question or prompt—all of it
- Be concise (no more than three sentences)
- Give the reader a clear sense of the case you make and the key pieces of evidence you will use
- Be in the first paragraph of your paper
- Be clear enough so that someone who does not know anything about the topic could identify the thesis
- Sophisticated thesis statements should allude to or mention the opposing argument while clearly indicating a different point of view and argument.



- What are you trying to achieve?
- What is your plan for achieving your goal?



- Frame a thesis and organize your evidence.
- Develop sound explanations to bring out the significance of your thesis and evidence.
- Polish your work and complete a final draft.

# Evidence

Refers to the materials and texts that form the basis of historical conclusions and judgments—your proof.



### Questions to consider about the evidence you use:

- Is your evidence reliable?
- Does your evidence relate to your thesis?
- Does your evidence support your thesis?
- Is your evidence a fact or an opinion?
- How convincing is your evidence?

# Explanations

Refers to what you do with the evidence you have selected. To be convincing, you must analyze and explain your evidence to bring out its meaning and significance.



### A few sentence starters to help you write explanations include:

- This shows that...
- This was important because...
- As a result...
- This proves that...
- This led to...
- The consequences of this were...
- This means that...
- This was significant because...

# Revising

Refers to everything you do to change and improve your writing. Revising can make the difference between average and excellent writing.

### Questions to consider when revising:

- Did you meet or exceed the expectations of the task and rubric?
- Does your paper sound like an encyclopedia, or does your own voice come out?
- Did you avoid using "I" or "you" and slang phrases or clichés?
- Is your thesis clear and well-supported throughout your paper?
- Is your evidence clear, convincing, and connected to your claim?
- Do your explanations interpret and bring out the meaning and significance of your evidence?
- Does your conclusion connect to the thesis, as well as to the larger picture (history, society, current events)?
- Did you vary the first word of your topic sentences?
- Did you vary your sentence lengths?
- Could someone who does not know about history understand your paper, or would they be confused?
- Did you correctly follow rules of spelling, punctuation, and formatting?