**The Three-Pronged Thesis Statement:**

All essays should contain a thesis statement in the introductory paragraph. The thesis statement should let the reader know what argument the paper will make, or what focus the paper will have. The thesis should ideally be one sentence, and should include all of the major topics discussed in the paper. Generally the thesis should be the last sentence of your introductory paragraph, and should serve as a roadmap for the rest of your essay.

The simplest thesis statement is the three-pronged thesis. Essentially in your thesis you present an argument with three main supporting ideas, and then….

Paragraph 1: Explains thesis idea #1

Paragraph 2: Explains thesis idea #2

Paragraph 3: Explains thesis idea #3

Concluding paragraph: reinforces and restates the thesis (using different words)

Example #1:

Mac computers are evidently superior to P.C. computers, because they are more user friendly, they have a wider array of customizing options, and they are more technologically advanced.

From this thesis statement, the reader can infer that your first paragraph will be about how macs are more user friendly, the second paragraph will be about customizing options, and the third paragraph will be about technological advancements; all of these paragraphs will try to prove that macs are better than P.C.s

Example #2:

The government needs to react immediately to the environmental crisis, because ice caps are rapidly melting causing the sea level to rise, species are going extinct leading to a loss of biodiversity, and global warming is now attributed to the death of millions yearly.

Paragraph 1: ice caps are quickly melting which will lead to further problems

Paragraph 2: species are going extinct, which leads to a lack of biodiversity

Paragraph 3: global warming is now costing human lives

Conclusion: The government must act now.

**The Compare and Contrast Thesis:**

Here is where things get a little bit tricky. Compare and contrast thesis statements are a little bit harder to develop. Try to come up with three major points/categories of comparison, ie one major similarity, and two differences. Often times it’s good to begin with words like: although, whereas, or while.

Example #1:

Although Katniss and Harry Potter are similar in that they are both heroic figures, their struggles are very different, because Harry is fighting against one evil man and his followers, and Katniss is forced to fight against her own peers.

Paragraph 1: discusses how both characters are heroic

Paragraph 2: Harry is fighting against Voldemort and the death eaters

Paragraph 3: Katniss is fighting against her own peers (which is different than fighting one evil man)

Conclusion: Both are heroic, but both must overcome different obstacles.

Example #2:

Although the story “Blue Boots,” and “A Tell-Tale Heart” differ in regards to setting and theme, they are united by a similar mood.

Paragraph 1: discusses the difference in setting between the two stories

Paragraph 2: discusses the difference in theme between the two stories

Paragraph 3: discusses the similarity in mood between the two stories

Example #3:

Homer Simpson, and Peter Griffen are ultimately more similar than different, because they are both middle-aged men with low-income jobs, they both have a family of three to support, and both appear to be unintelligent.

Paragraph 1: Although their jobs are different, both are low-income (making them more similar)

Paragraph 2: Although their family composition is different, both have a family of three to support

Paragraph 3: Both appear to be unintelligent, although both may have intellectual moments

Conclusion: Evidently Peter Griffen and Homer Simpson are different characters, however, their similarities are more significant than their differences.

**EXERCISE:**

Write a thesis statement for each of the following compare and contrast statements

1. Compare and contrast cats and dogs:

Thesis:

Paragraph 1:

Paragraph 2:

Paragraph 3:

Conclusion:

1. Compare and contrast flip flops to running shoes:

Thesis:

Paragraph 1:

Paragraph 2:

Paragraph 3:

Conclusion:

1. Compare and contrast Canada and America:

Thesis:

Paragraph 1:

Paragraph 2:

Paragraph 3:

Conclusion: