**The Thesis Statement: What It Is and Is Not**

A Thesis Statement is NOT…

* **A statement of what is already generally known.**

“George Washington broke barriers as a founding father.”

* **A catch-all.**

“Since the beginning of time, there have been religious conflicts.”

* **A grandiose claim.**

“The Great Depression was the worst economic disaster in human history.”

* **A counter factual (what-if statement).**

“If Hitler had not been defeated, he would have conquered the United States.”

A Thesis Statement IS…

* **A hypothesis**

Just like a hypothesis, a thesis statement makes a claim that can be proven or disproven with data and evidence.

* **The “SO-WHAT”**

The “so-what” factor informs the audience why the topic is significant in history.

* **Falsifiable**

Thesis statements, like hypotheses, have to have the possibility of being refuted.

* **Supported by primary and secondary sources.**

All thesis statements must be proven with primary sources. Secondary sources are used to help interpret primary sources.

Using this information, identify why the following are not thesis statements, or are very weak thesis statements:

1. “During the Revolutionary War, the Founding Fathers changed the world.”

What is wrong with this statement? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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2. “Rachel Carson wrote *Silent Spring*  in 1962.”

What is wrong with this statement? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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3. “The Ku Klux Klan ruled Colorado in the 1920s.”

What is wrong with this statement? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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4. “The United States was the first country to go to the moon.”

What is wrong with this statement? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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5. “Oskar Schindler saved Jews during the Holocaust.”

What is wrong with this statement? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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