

# Five Questions to Strengthen Your Thesis Statement

YOUR THESIS STATEMENT HERE:

## 01. Does my thesis directly relate to the assignment?

### Assignment question:

Which theorist do you believe was most influential in shaping modern ideas about child development?

### Does not answer the question:

Vygotsky, Piaget, and Erikson have all had an important influence in shaping modern ideas about child development.

### Answers the question:

Among the many child development theorists, Vygotsky has been the most influential in shaping modern ideas about child development because he developed the concept of the “zone of proximal development.”

## 02. Have I identified a specific topic? (is it manageable?)

### Not specific enough:

Free trade agreements have served Canada well.

### More specific:

The North American Free Trade Agreement should be considered a success for Canada because it has created jobs, increased foreign investment, and lowered prices of everyday goods.

## 03. Is it actually an argument? (Could someone disagree with me?)

### Not arguable (no one would disagree):

Watson and Crick discovered the structure of DNA in the 1950s.

### Arguable:

Although Watson and Crick discovered the structure of DNA, the largely uncredited contributions of scientist Rosalind Franklin were crucial to their success.

## 04. Does it answer the “so what” question?

### Not clear why the argument matters:

Shoplifting is wrong.

### (So what? Why should we care?)

### Importance of the argument is clear:

Shoplifting has negative economic effects, not only for retailers, but also for innocent consumers.

### (We should care because of the economic impact on retailers and consumers).

## 05. Have I indicated, either within the thesis or in a nearby sentence, what the organization of the paper will be?

### Thesis with no preview of organization:

This essay argues that the risks of privatizing Ontario’s public sector services outweigh the benefits.

### Thesis with preview of organization:

This essay argues that the risks of privatizing Ontario’s public sector services outweigh the benefits. Specifically, I will show how private corporations do not always act in the public interest, how privatization could limit the power of the province and municipalities, and how privatization could lead to a decline in service quality and efficiency.