

Instructor Guide for Developing a Working Thesis

(SPARK >> Pulling It Together >> Writing Strategies)

NOTE: This resource is not itself a worksheet but rather provides guidance.

Skills Addressed

- developing a thesis statement by:
 - understanding what a working thesis is
 - generating a working thesis
 - understanding the recursive nature of the writing process

Suggested Uses

- Independent student use:** Ask/suggest that students read resource on their own and decide for themselves when/if/how they will use resource
- Instructor-led Discussion:** Devote lecture/tutorial time to describing the resource, its purposes and uses, and/or incorporate description and use of resource into broader discussion focusing on building the skills the resource targets
- Small Group Discussion:** Use to stimulate informal class/tutorial discussion, and/or small group discussion

Feedback / Evaluation Options

- Personal reflection and/or self-assessment**
- Informally, in small group discussion:** Assign to students to complete for sharing and discussion in small groups
 - Tip: Ask students to compare their working thesis statements and to discuss the arguments they intend to use.
- Peer Evaluation:** Assign to students to complete independently, for more formal peer evaluation
- Instructor Evaluation:** Assign to students to complete independently, or as one stage of a larger assignment, and hand in for formal instructor evaluation
- Tracking Completion without Evaluating:** Assign to students to complete resource independently (on an ongoing basis, or at specific, appropriate times during the course), then hand in to instructor to track completion without assigning a specific grade to any individual completed resource

Potential Customization

Use the resource in conjunction with a discussion of the kinds of questions asked in your discipline, and the general approaches used to address these questions. Encourage students to use theories and findings from your discipline to suggest possible responses to such questions. Students need time to research and think about their topic in order to productively modify and improve their working thesis statements. Time for feedback and guidance here pays off later through better essays.