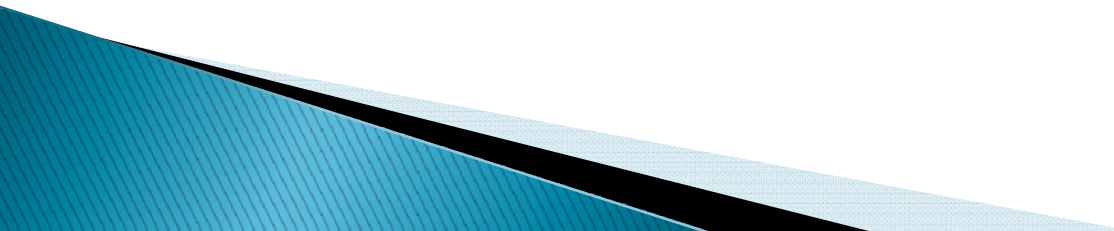


# The Thesis Statement

Created by the OSU-Lima Writing Center



# So what *is* a thesis?

- ▶ A thesis is the main idea of an essay in academic writing.
    - A thesis should summarize what is going to be discussed in the essay.
    - A thesis should take a stand on a subject, open a debate, or present something insightful.
    - A thesis should be narrow and specific.
- 

▶ Here's what you **DO NOT** want to do with your thesis:

- Simply state a general idea.
  - Pizza is good.
- Merely offer a broad and/ or vague sentence.
  - OSU is a good school.
- Awkwardly declare your thesis.
  - My thesis is that dogs are better than cats.

You want your thesis to be specific, narrow, and to let your reader know what will be discussed in your essay.

- ▶ A statement: OSU is a good school.
  
- ▶ A thesis statement: Although many colleges and universities offer exceptional educational opportunities in Northwest Ohio, The Ohio State University at Lima's individualized attention, student success rate, and award-winning faculty make it the number one higher academic institution in the region.

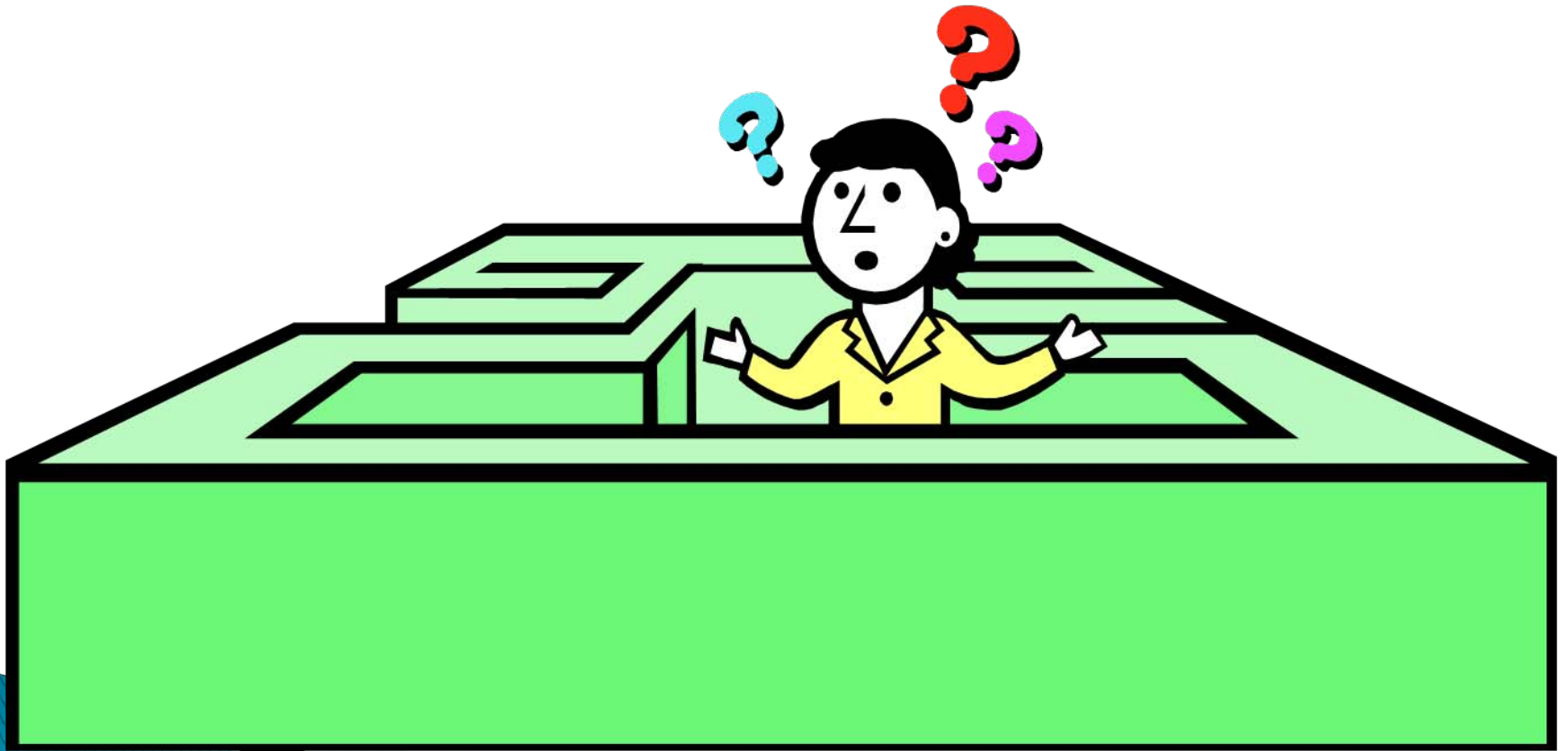


- ▶ **A statement**: Anna Morgan is not a hero.
  
- ▶ **A thesis statement**: An anti-hero at best, Anna Morgan is a parasitic creature, morally twisted by desires left unfulfilled and continually likened by Rhys to a vampire, rather than a hero.

This example was taken from an essay by Kyle Blackston, OSU-Lima Student



# Where do I put my thesis?



- ▶ In most cases the thesis statement will appear in the first or second paragraphs, often at the end the first paragraph.
- ▶ There are, however, cases when the thesis will appear in other sections of the paper, and cases where the thesis will be implied rather than stated directly.

FOR EXAMPLE....



If the intention of the modernist movement was to shock society at the core, then Eugene O'Neill's expressionist play *The Emperor Jones*, written in 1920, was a bolt of lightning that shook the theatre world at its very foundation. It is well documented that the play was notable for being one of the first American theatre productions to cast black actors, something on which Eugene O'Neill insisted. However, many scholars and critics argue over the meaning of the title black character Brutus Jones and what truth Eugene O'Neill was trying to uncover about race issues. **By examining the life of O'Neill, the expressionistic qualities of the play, and the conventions that O'Neill challenged, one can see that O'Neill was using the play as a way to prove that race is only relevant to one's given circumstance. *The Emperor Jones* by Eugene O'Neill challenges the 1920's American hegemonic myth of the African-American man to argue that race does not determine the content of a person's character, or one's ability to learn.**

\*This example was taken from an essay written by Jered Slusher, OSU-Lima Student.

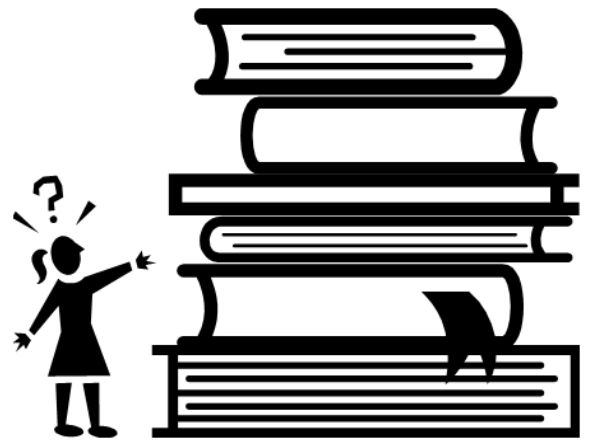
J.K. Rowling intentionally emphasizes the clichéd notion that love presents the ultimate resolution to evil, but some blatant inconsistencies exist that challenge her overwhelming, optimistic theme of love. The Potter series strongly reeks with the concept of love being almighty and powerful to the extent that the reader, at some point, hastens to plug her nose (figuratively, of course). Love remains a complex emotion packed with meanings, intentions, and repercussions. **The reader must realize that even though Rowling overtly stresses the positive aspects of love, the series contains covert, yet unmistakable negative connotations concerning unintended consequences of relationships.**

\*This example was taken from an essay written by Lynsey Kamine, OSU-Lima Student.





Where do I begin?



## STEP ONE: TOPIC

- ▶ First, decide on your topic . . . or perhaps a topic has been assigned by your professor.

ExampleTopic: Sarah Orne Jewett's  
short story "A White Heron"

## STEP TWO: BRAINSTORM

- ▶ After a topic has been selected, brainstorm for ideas. For example:
  - The story depicts common opinions/ views of the unimportance of children in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
    - Children aren't important (especially girls).
    - No real societal role until adulthood
  - The story discredits these stereotypes.
    - Children are important, innocent and pure.

## STEP THREE: CREATE A THESIS

- ▶ Here is an example of transforming the brainstorming ideas into a thesis statement:

**Sarah Orne Jewett shows in “A White Heron” that children are innocent, honest and pure; it is not until the transformation from childhood to adulthood begins that this purity in children is compromised and challenged.**

This example was taken from an essay by Victoria Gonzalez, OSU–Lima student.

## Now put your thesis statement in your opening paragraph!

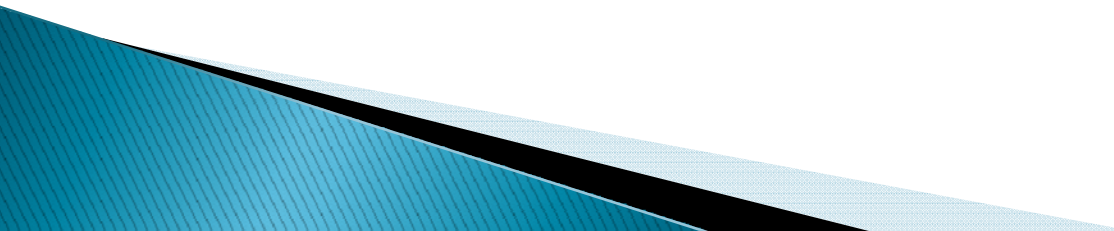
### For Example:

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, children, particularly female children, were often considered unimportant members of society who had no real role in society until adulthood was reached. **Sarah Orne Jewett, however, challenges these assumptions. In “A White Heron” she shows that children are innocent, honest and pure; it is not until the transformation from childhood to adulthood begins that this purity in children is compromised and challenged.**

This example was taken from an essay by Victoria Gonzalez, OSU–Lima Student



# Refining your thesis

- ▶ Keep in mind that you may need to revise your thesis once you begin drafting your essay.
  - ▶ You need to be sure that your thesis reflects the content of your essay. You may find that your ideas or opinions might change as you begin drafting your essay.
- 

# Another Example Thesis

Aphasia can occur due to a direct CVA in Broca's or Wernicke's language areas in the brain, or it can occur due to a CVA in the motor cortex of the brain, which will cause paresis (decreased sensation and movement) or paralysis in the muscles involved with speech (O'Sullivan 331). **No matter what the cause of the aphasia, it will have significant effect on a patient's quality of life because it will alter his or her ability to communicate with and understand the communication of others.**

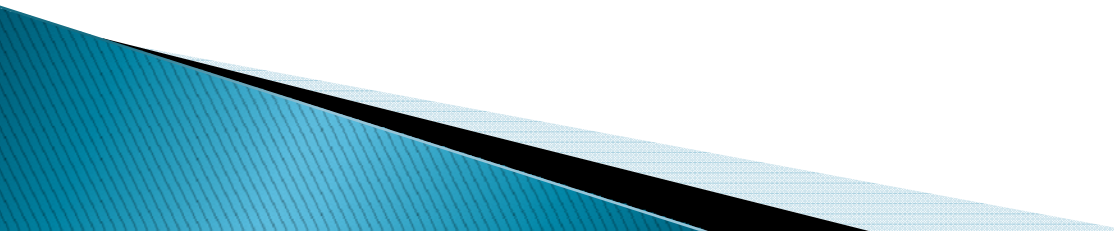
This example was taken from an essay by Lynette Ingle, OSU-Lima Student

I have my thesis!



Now what do I do?

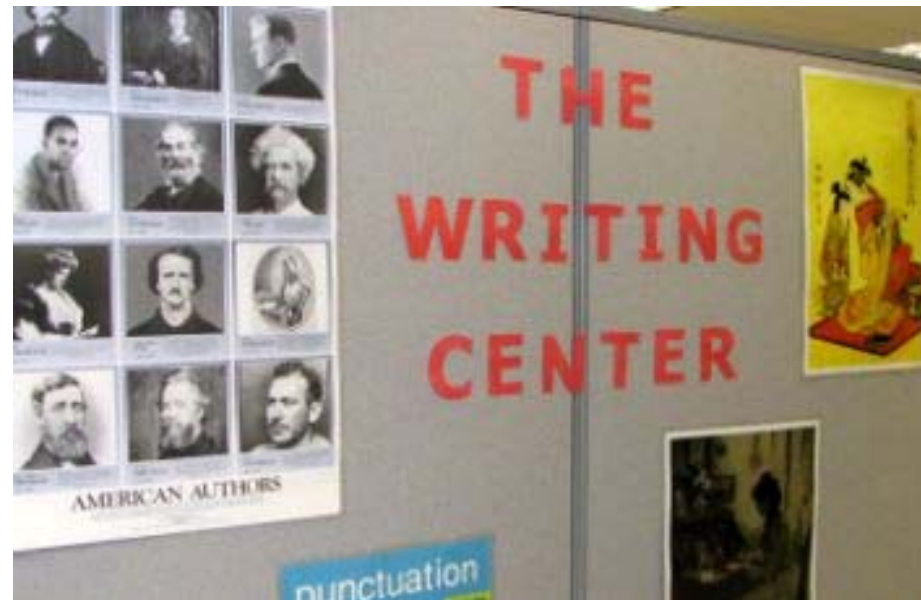
# SUPPORT IT!

- ▶ It's not enough in academic essays to simply state a viewpoint; you need to support it with evidence. Of course, how you support that thesis will differ from discipline to discipline.
    - For a literature essay, you may be asked to offer close reading of texts and, perhaps, researched information from critical essays.
    - For a scientific report, you may be asked to acquire and include research data.
    - In all cases, it is important to pay close attention to the requirements of the assignment.
- 

# If you're still not sure about your thesis, ask for help!

- ▶ If you need any help with your thesis statement (or with any other stage of the writing process) go to the Writing Center!
  - We're location in room 310 in Galvin Hall.

The Writing Center would like to thank Jered Slusher and Victoria Gonzalez for creating this Presentation!



# Works Cited

Blackston, Kyle. "Anna Morgan: Rhys's Souciant on a *Voyage in the Dark*." *The Hog Creek Review* (2009). 24 Sept. 2009. Web.

Gonzalez, Victoria. "Childhood Innocence." 2008. Print.

Inle, Lynette. "Affects of Cerebrovascular Accident on Speech Production and Reception." *The Hog Creek Review* (2009). 24 Sept. 2009. Web.

Kamine, Lynsey. "Love at Its Worst." *The Hog Creek Review* (2009). 24 Sept. 2009. Web.

Literacy Education Online. *Thesis Statement*. St. Cloud State University. 7 July 2004. Web.

Slusher, Jered. "Emperor Jones." *The Hog Creek Review* (2008). 13 Aug. 2009. Web.

The Owl at Purdue. *Creating a Thesis Statement*. Purdue University. 13 Aug. 2009. Web.