

## Revising for Significant Analysis

### Transforming Objective Facts to Arguable Stances:

FACT: Marx contended that wage labor exploited, alienated, and degraded workers.

OPINION: Marx's needs-powers spiral resembles in many instances Aristotle's view that social hierarchies develop organically.

### Making Absolute Statements into Specific, Qualified Positions:

#### **ABSOLUTE**

#### **QUALIFIED**

All, Every

Many, most, some, numerous, countless, a majority

None/no

Few, not many, a small number, hardly any, a minority

Always

Often, frequently, commonly, for a long time, usually, sometimes,

Never

Rarely, infrequently, sporadically, seldom

Certainly

Probably, possibly

Impossible

Unlikely, improbable, doubtful

### Considering Alternative Claims:

Although X..., Y...

Even though X..., Y...

In spite of X..., Y...

X...; however...

### Improving Weak Thesis Example:<sup>1</sup>

*The economic situation is bad.*

Such weak thesis statements (broad noun, weak verb, vague modifier) can be put to the test for revision:

**Try a specific noun:** The tax policies (of the current administration) [instead of "the economic situation"]

**Pick an active verb:** threaten to reduce (the tax burden on the middle class) [much better than "is"]

**Choose a specific modifier:** by sacrificing education and health-care programs for everyone. [much more specific than "bad"]

### 3 strategies to help you write your way into a better thesis:

**Specify:** Replace the overly abstract terms—terms such as positive and negative (or similar and different)—with something specific; name something that is positive and something that is negative instead. Raise specific issues for the essay to explore.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: <http://create.arizona.edu/content/weak-thesis-statements-recognizing-and-fixing-them>

**Complicate:** see more than one point of view on your subject. Avoid conventional wisdom unless you can qualify it or introduce a fresh perspective on it. Find some avenue of INQUIRY—a question about the facts or an issue raised by them. Make an assertion with which it would be possible for readers to disagree.

**Subordinate:** Rank one of the two items in the pairing underneath the other. When you subordinate, you put the most important, pressing, or revealing side of the comparison in what is known as the main clause and the less important side in what is known as the subordinate clause, introducing it with a word such as although.

**Group Thesis Revising:**

*Attempt rewrites including qualifiers, and expanded forms recognizing alternative claims (e.g. with an although clause). In doing so, consider whether the thesis:*

- Takes a stand & is arguable/contestable
- Evaluates something
- States its position clearly & exactly
- Is sufficiently narrow for a 7-8 page paper

***Flawed Theses***

1. Violent revolutions have had both positive and negative results for man.
  
2. Lenin's critique of democracy is correct; parliaments are only a tool of the bourgeoisie.
  
3. There should be no restrictions on the Second Amendment.
  
4. This paper will address the characteristics of a good democratic system.
  
5. Students have developed a variety of techniques to conceal inadequate study from their instructors and they often get away with it.