

# Developing Your Thesis

by Sophia Tutorial



## WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn about crafting the thesis statement for your speech. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Developing Your Thesis
2. The Thesis Statement
3. Arriving at Your Thesis
4. Playing Devil's Advocate

## 1. Developing Your Thesis

In some circumstances, you will most likely be arguing some kind of point or message in your speech.

The main argument of your speech - the main point you want your audience to understand - is the thesis of your speech.

## 2. The Thesis Statement

In any opinion piece, written or spoken, the main argument - the **thesis statement** - comes at the beginning.

You want your audience to know right away the point you are trying to make.

It is important to remember that your thesis statement only addresses one main issue; the ways in which you choose to support your thesis add complexity and depth to your speech.



### TERM TO KNOW

#### Thesis Statement

A thesis statement summarizes a speech's argument in one to three sentences.

## 3. Arriving at Your Thesis

When composing your thesis statement, consider and answer the following questions:

- How do you feel about your topic?
- How does your audience generally feel about your topic?
- What do you want your audience to feel or believe about your topic?
- What other opinions have been said/written about your topic?
- Are you arguing for or against your topic?
- What social issues factor into your topic?
- What is your topic's influence on the individual, a particular community or society as a whole?

As you begin to answer these questions, start thinking about ways you want to support your thesis with compelling, persuasive examples.

## 4. Playing Devil's Advocate

No matter how you choose to argue your point, it is important to take a step back and play devil's advocate; that is, take a look at your argument from that of the opposing viewpoint.

By considering all sides of your argument, you will bolster your case by preparing for all possible objections and **rebuttals** to the claims you intend to make in your speech.



### TERM TO KNOW

#### Rebut

To deny the truth of something, especially by presenting arguments that disprove it.



### SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that the main argument of your speech is your **thesis statement**: What case are you trying to make? If you are arguing for or against a certain idea, belief, or topic, you must provide compelling evidence to support your position. After **arriving at your thesis**, consider potential arguments, questions, or concerns someone with an opposing viewpoint may have. **Playing devil's advocate** actually helps you **develop a more robust thesis**.

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### TERMS TO KNOW

#### Rebut

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#### Thesis Statement

A thesis statement summarizes a speech's argument in one to three sentences.

