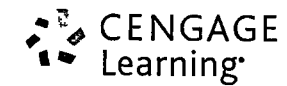


WRITING ANALYTICALLY

SEVENTH EDITION

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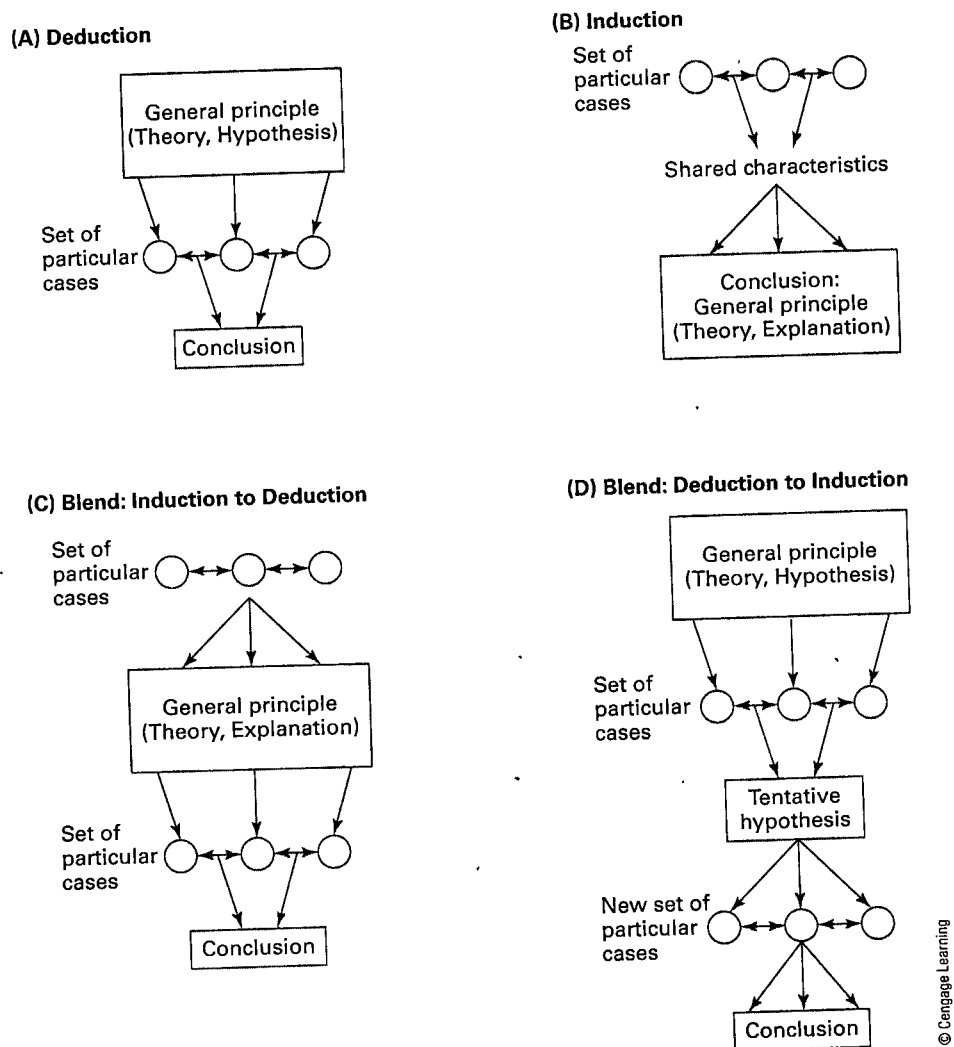


FIGURE 4.3 Deduction and Induction. Deduction (A) uses particular cases to exemplify general principles and analyze their implications. Induction (B) constructs general principles from the analysis of particular cases. In practice, analytical thinking and writing blend deduction and induction and start either with particular cases (C) or a general principle (D)

Nevertheless, the primary claim of an inductive paper is generally deemed credible if a writer can demonstrate that the theory is based on a reasonably sized sampling of representative instances. Obviously, a child who arrives at the claim that all orange food tastes bad on the basis of squash and carrots has not based that theory on an adequate sampling of available evidence.

Induction is a process aimed at forming theories about the meaning of things. The scientific method, for example, uses induction to evolve explanations for observed phenomenon such as the higher incidence of heart attacks among men than women. The proposed explanation (general principle) is then tested deductively according to the pattern: if theory X is true, then such-and-such should follow. If the particular results predicted by the theory do not occur when the theory is put to the test, the scientist knows that something is wrong with his or her induction. A deductive premise is only as good as the inductive reasoning that produced it in the first place. (See, in Chapter 6, our discussion of a student essay on the meaning of Velázquez's painting, *Las Meninas*, for an example of how inductive reasoning works in the writing process.)

As these examples show, in most cases induction and deduction operate in tandem (see Figure 4.3, C and D). The aim of analysis is usually to test (deductively) the validity of a hypothetical conclusion or to generate (inductively) a theory that might plausibly explain a given set of data. Analysis moves between the particular and the general, regardless of which comes first.

"1 on 10" and "10 on 1"

We use the terms 1 on 10 and 10 on 1 for deduction and induction, because these terms make it easy to visualize what in practice writers actually do when they use these thought processes. In 1 on 10, our term for deduction, a writer attaches the same claim (1) to a number of pieces of evidence. (The "10" stands for a series of examples, as shown in Figure 4.4). In 10 on 1, our term for induction, the writer makes a series of observations (arbitrarily, "10") about a single example (the "1"; see Figure 4.5). We now will talk about each of these in turn.

DOING 1 ON 10

To get started on 1 on 10, you need, of course, a 1—a claim that you think usefully illuminates the pieces of evidence you are looking at. You can arrive at this claim by searching for patterns of repetition in the evidence (see THE

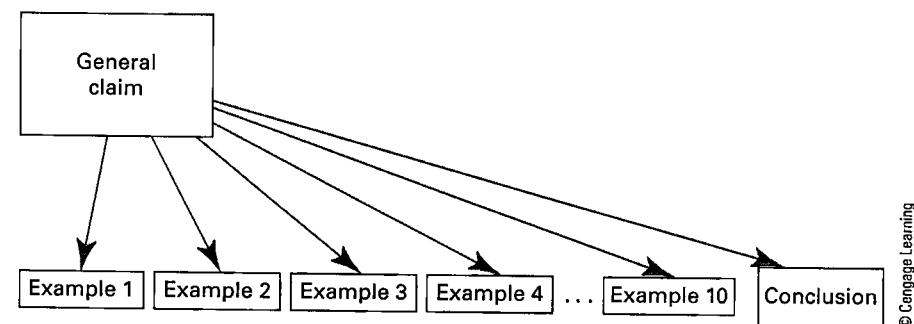


FIGURE 4.4 DOING 1 ON 10: 1 Claim, 10 Pieces of Evidence (in which 10 stands arbitrarily for any number of examples)

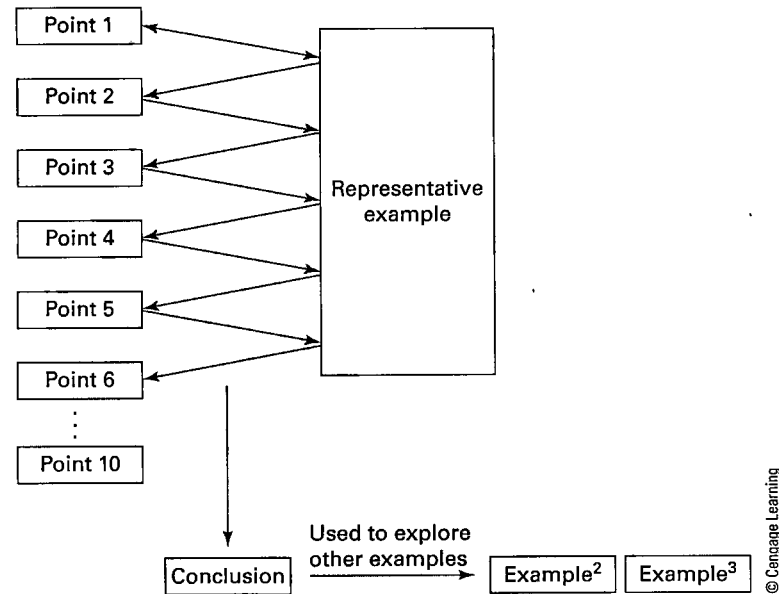


FIGURE 4.5
DOING 10 ON 1. The pattern of 10 on 1 (in which “10” stands arbitrarily for any number of points) successively develops a series of points about a single representative example. Its analysis of evidence is in depth

METHOD in Chapter 1). The primary reason you are looking at a number of examples is to determine if there is sufficient evidence to make the claim. The pieces of evidence will in effect be united by the claim. If, for example, you discover that revolutionary movements at different historical moments and geographical locales produce similar kinds of violence, you would be able to demonstrate that there is a generalizable model for organizing and understanding the evidence—a model that provides a way of seeing a vast amount of information.

The search for a claim that enables the deductive way of seeing necessarily involves focusing on similarity rather than difference. If a writer in reading the biblical book of Exodus focuses broadly on the difficulties of faith, she could formulate a principle that might be used deductively to reveal the unity in the book: that again and again the Israelites get into trouble whenever their faith in God falters.

Similarly, when scientists test a theory by seeing how well it explains certain phenomena, they are operating deductively. They use the theory—the “1”—to call attention to and explain what otherwise might have seemed entirely disconnected pieces of evidence. This is what is exciting about deduction at its best—it’s revealing. It highlights a pattern in a body of evidence that, before the revelation of pattern, just seemed a collection of data.

Organizing Papers Using 1 on 10

1. Either start with a preexisting claim or generate a claim by using THE METHOD OF NOTICE & FOCUS to find a revealing pattern or tendency in your evidence. (See Chapter 1.)
2. As you move through the evidence, look for data that corroborate your claim.
3. Formulate your reasons for saying that each piece of evidence supports the overarching claim.
4. Work out how the separate parts of your data connect.
5. Revise and enrich the implications of your claim (the 1) on the basis of the series of examples (the 10) you’ve presented.

A Potential Problem with 1 on 10: Mere Demonstration

The single biggest potential problem in 1 on 10 papers is that the form lends itself so easily to superficial thinking. This is true in part because when the time comes to compose a formal paper, it is very common for writers to panic, and abandon the wealth of data and ideas they have accumulated in the exploratory writing stage, telling themselves, “Now I better have my one idea and be able to prove to everybody that I’m right.” Out goes careful attention to detail. Out goes any evidence that doesn’t fit. Instead of analysis, they substitute the kind of paper we call a *demonstration*. That is, they cite evidence to prove that a generalization is generally true. The problem with the demonstration lies with its too limited notions of what a thesis and evidence can do in a piece of analytical thinking.

The 1 on 10 demonstration, as opposed to a more productive deductive analysis, results from a mistaken assumption about the function of evidence: that it exists only to demonstrate the validity of (corroborate) a claim. Beyond corroborating claims, evidence should serve to test and develop them. A writer who makes a single and usually very general claim (“History repeats itself,” “Exercise is good for you,” and so forth) and then proceeds to affix it to ten examples is likely to produce a list, not a piece of developed thinking.

DOING 10 ON 1: Saying More About Less

The phrase “10 on 1” is the term the book uses to describe inductive ways of proceeding in a piece of writing. Rather than looking at the whole, you are looking in depth at a part that you think is representative of the whole. Note that 10 on 1 is a deliberate inversion of 1 on 10, so that the “1” now stands for a single, rich, and representative example, and the “10” stands for the various observations that you are able to make about it. To return to the Exodus example, a writer who wished to explore the dynamics of failed faith might make his “1” the episode of the golden calf in chapter 32: 1–35. He might isolate key repetitions and strands, and actively raise questions. Why, for example, does Moses burn the idol, grind it to powder, scatter it on water, and make the Israelites drink it?

DOING 10 ON 1 will lead you to draw out as much meaning as possible from your best example—a case of narrowing the focus and then analyzing in depth. Eventually you will move from this key example to others that usefully extend and qualify your point, but first you need to let analysis of your representative example produce more thinking. In Exodus 35, for example, failed faith provokes anger (arguably, the key repetition in the chapter) and eventual bloodshed. Before a writer could see these three terms as a pattern in the text, he'd need to study other instances of failed faith in this book of the Bible.

The practice of DOING 10 ON 1 remedies the major problem writers have when they do 1 ON 10: simply attaching a host of examples to an obvious and overly general claim, with little or no analysis. DOING 10 ON 1 requires writers to explore the evidence, not just generalize about it.

You can use 10 ON 1 to accomplish various ends: (1) to locate the range of possible meanings your evidence suggests, (2) to make you less inclined to cling to your first claim, (3) to open the way for you to discover the complexity of your subject, and (4) to slow down the rush to generalization and thus help to ensure that when you arrive at a working thesis, it will be more specific and better able to account for your evidence.

Organizing Papers Using 10 on 1

1. Use THE METHOD OF NOTICE & FOCUS to find a revealing pattern or tendency in your evidence. (See Chapter 1.)
2. Select a representative example.
3. Do 10 ON 1 to produce an in-depth analysis of your example.
4. Test your results in similar cases.

A Potential Problem with 10 on 1: Not Demonstrating the Representativeness of Your Example

Focusing on your single best example has the advantage of economy, cutting to the heart of the subject, but it runs the risk that the example you select might not in fact be representative. You need to demonstrate its representativeness overtly. This means showing that your example is part of a larger pattern of similar evidence and not just an isolated instance. To establish that pattern it is useful to do 1 ON 10—locating ten examples that share a trait—as a preliminary step and then select one of these for in-depth analysis.

In terms of logic, the problem of generalizing from too little and unrepresentative evidence is known as an unwarranted inductive leap. The writer leaps from one or two instances to a broad claim about an entire class or category. Just because you see an economics professor and a biology professor wearing corduroy jackets, for example, you would not want to leap to the conclusion that all professors wear corduroy jackets. Most of the time, unwarranted leaps result from making too large a claim and avoiding examples that might contradict it.

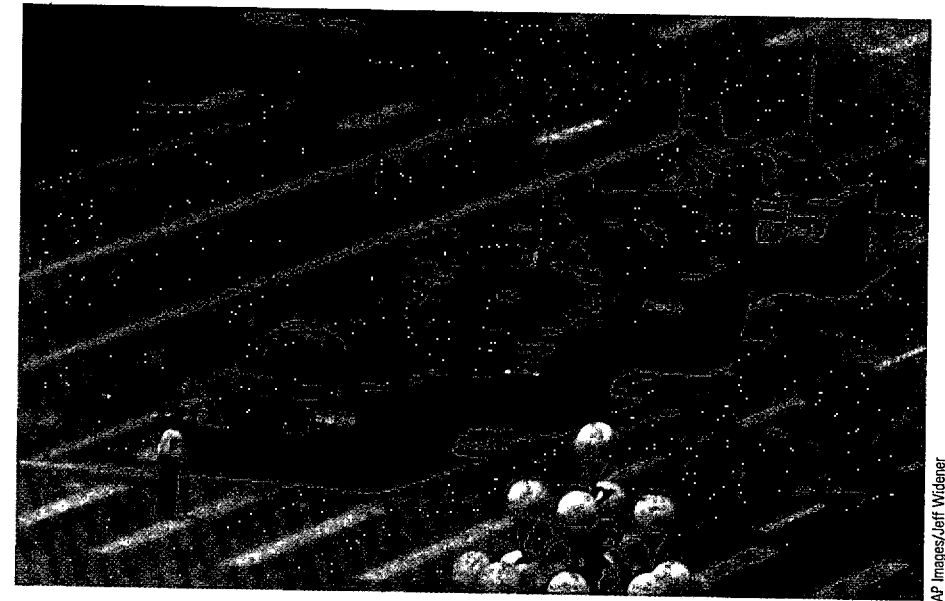


FIGURE 4.6
Tiananmen Square, Beijing, 1989

DOING 10 ON 1: A Brief Example (Tiananmen Square) Note how the writer of the following discussion of the people's revolt in China in 1989 sets up his analysis. He first explains how his chosen example—a classic photograph (shown in Figure 4.6) from the media coverage of the event—illuminates his larger subject. The image is of a Chinese man in a white shirt who temporarily halted a line of tanks on their way to quell a demonstration in Tiananmen Square in Beijing.

The tank image provided a miniature, simplified version of a larger, more complex revolution. The conflict between man and tank embodied the same tension found in the conflict between student demonstrators and the Peoples' Army. The man in the white shirt, like the students, displayed courage, defiance, and rebellious individuality in the face of power. Initially, the peaceful revolution succeeded: the state allowed the students to protest; likewise, the tank spared the man's life. Empowered, the students' demands for democracy grew louder. Likewise, the man boldly jumped onto the tank and addressed the soldiers. The state's formerly unshakable dominance appeared weak next to the strength of the individual. However, the state asserted its power: the Peoples' Army marched into the square, and the tanks roared past the man into Beijing.

The image appeals to American ideology. The man in the white shirt personifies the strength of the American individual. His rugged courage draws on contemporary heroes such as Rambo. His defiant gestures resemble the demonstrations of Martin Luther King Jr. and his followers. American history predisposes us to identify strongly

VOICES FROM ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Recognizing Your Thesis: A History Professor Speaks

The thesis usually is that point of departure from the surfaces of evidence to the underlying significance, or problems, a given set of sources reveal to the reader and writer. In most cases, the thesis is best positioned up front, so that the writer's audience has a sense of what lies ahead and why it is worth reading on. I say "usually" and "in most cases" because the hard and fast rule should not take precedence over the inspirational manner in which a thesis can be presented. But the inspiration is not to be sought after at the price of the thesis itself. It is my experience, in fact, that if inspiration strikes, one only realizes it after the fact.

Recognizing a thesis can be extremely difficult. It can often be a lot easier to talk "about" what one is writing, than to say succinctly what the thrust of one's discussion is. I sometimes ask students to draw a line at the end of a paper after they have finished it off, and then write one, at most two sentences, stating what they most want to tell their readers. My comment on that postscript frequently is: "Great statement of your thesis. Just move it up to your first paragraph."

—ELLEN POTEET, PROFESSOR OF HISTORY

How to Word Thesis Statements

The wording and syntax (sentence structure) of thesis statements have shaping force in the way a paper develops. Some thesis shapes are more effective than others. Here in condensed form is the advice offered in the upcoming discussion of thesis shapes:

- A productive thesis usually contains *tension*, the balance of this against that.
- Effective thesis statements often begin with a grammatically subordinate idea that will get outweighed by a more pressing claim: "Although X appears to account for Z, Y accounts for it better."
- A less effective thesis shape is the list.
- Active verbs and specific nouns produce strong thesis statements.

Put X in Tension with Y

One of the best and most common ways of bringing the thesis into focus is by pitting one possible point of view against another. Good ideas usually take place with the aid of some kind of back pressure, by which we mean that the idea takes shape by pushing against another way of seeing things. This is not the same as setting out to overturn and completely refute one idea in favor of another. In good thesis statements both ideas have some validity, but the forward momentum of the thesis comes from playing the preferred idea off the other one.

Look at the following two thesis statements. Notice that there is tension in each, which results from the defining pressure of one idea against another potentially viable idea.

- It may not seem like it, but "Nice Pants" is as radical a campaign as the original Dockers series.
- If opponents of cosmetic surgery are too quick to dismiss those who claim great psychological benefits, proponents are far too willing to dismiss those who raise concerns. Cosmetic surgery might make individual people happier, but in the aggregate it makes life worse for everyone.

In the first thesis sentence, the primary idea is that the new advertising campaign for Dockers trousers is radical. The back pressure against which this idea takes shape is that this new campaign may not seem radical. The writer will demonstrate the truth of both of these claims, rather than overturning one and then championing the other.

The same can be said of the parts of the second thesis statement. One part of the thesis makes claims for the benefits of cosmetic surgery. The forward momentum of the thesis statement comes from the back pressure of this idea against the idea that cosmetic surgery will also make life worse for everyone. Notice that the thesis statement does not simply say, "Cosmetic surgery is bad." The writer's job will be to demonstrate that the potential harm of cosmetic surgery outweighs the benefits, but the benefits won't just be dismissed. Both ideas are to some extent true. Neither idea, in other words, is "a straw man"—the somewhat deceptive argumentative practice of setting up a dummy position solely because it is easy to knock down. A straw man does not strengthen a thesis statement because it fails to provide genuine back pressure.

TRY THIS 6.1: Spotting the Tension in Good Thesis Statements

Find the tension in each of the following thesis statements. Decide which of the ideas is primary—the one you think the writer plans to support. Then locate the claim or claims in the thesis against which this primary claim will take shape.

1. Emphasis on the self in the history of modern thought may be an exaggeration, but the consequences of this vision of a self set apart have surely been felt in every field of inquiry.
2. We may join with the modern builders in justifying the violence of means—the sculptor's hammer and chisel—by appealing to ends that serve the greater good. Yet too often modern planners and engineers would justify the creative destruction of habitat as necessary for doubtful utopias.
3. The derogation of middlebrow, in short, has gone much too far. It's time to bring middlebrow out of its cultural closet, to hail its emollient properties, to trumpet its mending virtues. For middlebrow not only entertains, but also educates—pleasurably training us to appreciate high art.

Thesis Shapes: Subordination Versus Listing

The tension between ideas in a thesis statement is often reflected in the statement's grammatical structure. Thesis statements often combine two possible claims into one formulation, with the primary claim in the main clause and the qualifying or limiting or opposing claim in a subordinate clause: "Although X appears to account for Z, Y accounts for it better." You can more or less guarantee your thesis will possess the necessary tension by starting your thesis statement with the word "Although" or with the phrase "While it seems that . . ." or with the "yes, but" or "if x, nonetheless y" formulation. (See Chapter 10 on subordination.)

The advantage of this subordinate construction (and the reason that so many theses are set up this way) is that the subordinated idea helps you to define your own position by giving you something to define it against. The subordinate clause of a thesis helps you to demonstrate that there is, in fact, an issue involved—that is, more than one possible explanation for the evidence you are considering.

The order of clauses in a thesis statement often predicts the shape of the paper, guiding both the writer and the reader. A thesis that begins with a subordinate clause ("Although X . . .") usually leads to a paper in which the first part deals with the claims for X and then moves to fuller embrace of Y.

A less effective thesis shape that can also predict the shape of a paper is the list. This is the shape of five-paragraph form: the writer lists three points and then devotes a paragraph to each. But the list does not specify the connections among its various components, and, as a result, the writer is less inclined to explore the relationship among ideas.

How to Revise Weak Thesis Statements: Make the Verbs Active and the Nouns Specific

Weak thesis statements can be quickly identified by their word choice and syntax (sentence structure). Take, for example, the thesis statement "There are many similarities and differences between the Carolingian and Burgundian Renaissances." This thesis relies mostly on nouns rather than verbs; the nouns announce a broad heading, but the verb doesn't do anything with or to the nouns. In grammatical terms, such thesis statements don't predicate (affirm or assert something about the subject of a proposition). Instead, they rely on anemic verbs like *is* or *are*, which function as equal signs that link general nouns with general adjectives rather than specify more complex relationships.

Replacing *is* or *are* with stronger verbs usually causes you to rank ideas in some order of importance, to assert some conceptual relation among them, and to advance some sort of claim. Thus, we could revise the weak thesis above as "The differences between the Carolingian and Burgundian Renaissances outweigh the similarities." While this reformulation remains quite general, it at least begins to direct the writer along a more particular line of argument.

In sum, the best way to remedy the problem of the overly broad thesis is to move toward specificity in word choice, in sentence structure, and in idea. If you find yourself writing "The economic situation is bad," consider revising it to "The tax policies of the current administration threaten to reduce the tax burden on the middle class by sacrificing education and health care programs for everyone."

Here's the problem/solution in schematic form:

Broad Noun	+ Weak Verb	+ Vague, Evaluative Modifier
The economic situation	is	bad
Specific Noun	+ Active Verb	+ Specific Modifier
(The) tax policies (of the current administration)	threaten to reduce (the tax burden on the middle class)	by sacrificing education and health care programs for everyone

By eliminating the weak thesis formula—broad noun plus *is* plus vague evaluative adjective—a writer is compelled to qualify, or define carefully, each of the terms in the original proposition, arriving at a more particular and conceptually rich assertion.

Is It Okay to Phrase a Thesis as a Question?

The answer is yes and no. Phrasing a thesis as a question makes it more difficult for both the writer and the reader to be sure of the direction the paper will take, because a question doesn't make an overt claim. Questions, however, can clearly imply claims. And many writers, especially in the early, exploratory stages of drafting, will begin with a question.

As a general rule, use thesis questions cautiously, particularly in final drafts. While a thesis question often functions well to spark your thinking, it can allow you to evade the responsibility of making some kind of claim. Especially in the drafting stage, a question posed overtly can provide focus, but only if you then answer it with what could become a first statement of thesis—a working thesis.

VOICES FROM ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Getting Beyond the All-Purpose Thesis: A Dance Professor Speaks

Not so good thesis/question: "What were Humphrey's and Weidman's reasons behind the setting of *With My Red Fires*, and of what importance were the set and costume design to the piece as a whole?"

Good thesis: "While Graham and Wigman seem different, their ideas on inner expression (specifically subjectivism versus objectivism) and the incorporation of their respective countries' surge of nationalism bring them much closer than they appear."

What I like about the good thesis is that it moves beyond the standard "they are different, but alike" (which can be said about anything) to actually tell the reader what