**A thesis statement:**

* tells the reader how you will interpret the significance of the subject matter under discussion.
* is a road map for the paper; in other words, it tells the reader what to expect from the rest of the paper.
* directly answers the question asked of you. A thesis is an interpretation of a question or subject, not the subject itself. The subject, or topic, of an essay might be World War II or Moby Dick; a thesis must then offer a way to understand the war or the novel.
* makes a claim that others might dispute.
* is usually a single sentence somewhere in your first paragraph that presents your argument to the reader. The rest of the paper, the body of the essay, gathers and organizes evidence that will persuade the reader of the logic of your interpretation.

The North and South fought the Civil War for many reasons, some of which were the same and some different.

While both sides fought the Civil War over the issue of slavery, the North fought for moral reasons while the South fought to preserve its own institutions

While both Northerners and Southerners believed they fought against tyranny and oppression, Northerners focused on the oppression of slaves while Southerners defended their own right to self-government.

Mark Twain’sHuckleberry Finnis a great American novel.

InHuckleberry Finn, Mark Twain develops a contrast between life on the river and life on the shore.

Through its contrasting river and shore scenes, Twain’sHuckleberry Finnsuggests that to find the true expression of American democratic ideals, one must leave “civilized” society and go back to nature.