

## 12th Thesis Statement Lesson

**Objective:** Create two strong thesis statements for your paper – one for the introduction and one for the conclusion.

### Rule 1: Your statement must make a claim:

- Consider whether your claim is persuasive or informative
- Consider your desired tone – positive, negative, or imperative
- Consider directing an appeal to a target audience
- Decide if you want to include a counterclaim

#### For two points: Make a claim

- At this point, there is no need to shoot for perfection. You will refine your writing as you edit. You just want to get the main concept communicated along with a general tone

**Example:** The southern states believed Jefferson Davis was the best person to lead their military effort

**Your claim for your topic:** [Insert your claim here]

### Rule 2: Your statement must include reasons why/supportive elements to the claim:

**For two points:** Collect each important fact that interests you from your research (refer to your topic reflection assignment or scan articles that you found during week one for ideas). Save your work - these elements will become the details and sub-details for your outline later on!

#### Example:

- Attended West Point
- Served in the Blackhawk War and noted for his kind treatment of Chief Blackhawk
- 1845 served Mississippi in House of Representatives but soon resigned to fight in the Mexican War where he had great success
- Refused military promotion in order to serve in the U.S. Senate
- Appointed as Secretary of War in 1853 where he had great success
- Voiced opinions for states' rights
- Withdrew from the senate when Mississippi seceded from the Union

#### Your facts:

[Insert your facts here]

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confederate Congress elected him as President of the Confederacy</li> <li>• Initially popular but soon changed, he was impatient, he awarded positions of power to undeserving people, and he was chronically ill</li> <li>• The confederates suffered many defeats at the end of the war and he was captured and imprisoned for 2 years and charged with treason</li> <li>• He was never tried or convicted of treason</li> <li>• After release, his family traveled in Europe before returning to the US for a significant amount of time</li> <li>• He refused to request an official pardon and, therefore, could not return to the Senate</li> </ul>	
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**For two points:** categorize your notes using a color-coding system and identify a heading or descriptor for each color. An ideal number of categories is three.

<p><b>Example:</b></p> <p>Orange category - military career</p> <p>Pink category - political career</p> <p>Green category - Presidency</p> <p>Yellow category - loss</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attended West Point</li> <li>• Served in the Blackhawk War and noted for his kind treatment of Chief Blackhawk</li> <li>• 1845 served Mississippi in House of Representatives but soon resigned to fight in the Mexican War where he had great success</li> <li>• Refused military promotion in order to serve in the U.S. Senate</li> <li>• Appointed as Secretary of War in 1853 where he had great success</li> <li>• Voiced opinions for states' rights</li> <li>• Withdrew from the senate when Mississippi seceded from the Union</li> <li>• Confederate Congress elected him as President of the Confederacy</li> <li>• Initially popular but soon changed, he</li> </ul>	<p><b>Your notes:</b></p> <p><b>[Color-code your facts here and name each color-coded category. Shoot for about 3 categories]</b></p>
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<p>was impatient, he awarded positions of power to undeserving people, and he was chronically ill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The confederates suffered many defeats at the end of the war and he was captured and imprisoned for 2 years and charged with treason</li> <li>• He was never tried or convicted of treason</li> <li>• After release, his family traveled in Europe before returning to the US for a significant amount of time</li> <li>• He refused to request an official pardon and, therefore, could not return to the Senate</li> </ul>	
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**For two points:** Paste your claim and add your categories to develop one sentence. Underline your claim and color-code your main points. This will be a very “crude” first draft.

- If you need help, use [transition words](#) to connect categories in order to create a complete sentence.

**Example draft 1:** The southern states believed Jefferson Davis was the best person to lead their military effort based upon his great military and political experience, he was chosen to serve as president of the confederacy but in the end, suffered a great loss.

**Your draft 1:** [First copy and paste your claim here and then follow it with your category names as keywords within the rest of the sentence]

### Rule 3: Main topics must be unique and researchable

- At this point, you may want to take time to look around for specific articles that match each subtopic/category. Use the keyword for your topic overall and add on a keyword for your subtopic as you search quality databases (for instance, this person would conduct a Google search on “Jefferson Davis military political experience” and another “Jefferson Davis presidency” and another, “Jefferson Davis war loss,”. Do this for all three subtopics to ensure that you will find adequate information for each.
- If you can’t find supportive articles for each topic, just adjust your thesis statement, make new topics, and test them.
- Be cautious of one subtopic being too similar to another. In some cases, this is acceptable because the similarity creates a bridge. For example, Jefferson Davis’ early political career will lead nicely in a research paper to transition into the next focus area which will be his service as president of the Confederacy. You will want to make sure that similar categories are able to be well-defined such as with this example. However, if you have created categories where you will end up discussing the same exact content, you will want to come up with new categories.

#### Rule 4: The first draft is almost never the best draft

**For two points:** Identify the main point “feeling keywords” - at least two feeling words for each heading

<b>Example:</b> Military/political - ambitious, idealistic Presidency - power, influence, responsibility Loss - frustration, defeat	<b>Your feeling words:</b> [Consider how each category impacts people and their feelings. How would you feel?]
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**For two points:** Select a few of your feeling words and add them to your thesis statement. This will further develop your “crude” first rough draft of your thesis statement. This is draft #2.

<b>Example draft 2:</b> The southern states believed Jefferson Davis to be the best person to lead the Confederacy due to his ambitious military and political background; as a result, he was elected President but his power and influence ended in frustration as the south ultimately suffered a great loss.
<b>Your draft 2:</b> [Copy and paste your first thesis statement here and add feeling words to the sentence. You won't need to add all of the feeling words, just 2-3.]

**For six points:** Take the best of what you have written and work on refining the statement.

- Maybe by making it more concise, or one draft might incorporate some feeling words while another draft might incorporate others, you may want to rearrange the order of the sentence, etc.
- Play around with different versions without worrying about which one is better than another.
- Note how the example draft 5 utilizes much stronger language and how that impacts the feel of the statement and heightens the readers' excitement to continue reading. You want your thesis to hold ferocity and use words that catch the readers' attention.

<b>Example draft 3:</b> Due to his ambitious military and political background, the southern states believed Jefferson Davis to be the best person to lead the Confederacy; he was elected President but his power and influence ultimately ended in frustration as the south suffered a great loss.
<b>Example draft 4:</b> Believed to be the best person to lead the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis relied upon his military and political background to serve as President, however, his power and influence ultimately ended in defeat after the south suffered an irreversible loss.
<b>Example draft 5:</b> While an experienced military and political leader, Jefferson Davis was a poor President who was criticized for his flawed command of the Confederate States throughout the American Civil War; as a result of his fatal mistakes, the south lost and he was ultimately charged with treason.
<b>Your draft 3:</b> [Copy and paste your 2nd thesis statement here and attempt a new

version]

**Your draft 4:** [Copy and paste your 3rd thesis statement here and attempt a new version]

**Your draft 5:** [Copy and paste your 4th thesis statement here and attempt a new version]

**For two points:** Pick your best drafts for your introduction and conclusion.

**Your introduction thesis statement:** [Copy and paste your favorite thesis statement here. Please underline it after you paste it]

**Your conclusion thesis statement:** [Copy and paste your second favorite thesis statement here. Please underline it after you paste it]

Keep in mind that you can edit your final thesis statement later

[Thesis statement slideshow](#)