Getting Specific: Toning your Thesis Statement

A topic your History teachers gave you will control what direction your paper will take. After initial research, it’s time will form your thesis statement. *A thesis statement includes your topic plus your point of view in arguing, analyzing or explaining the question you have asked.*

Example:

**TOPIC**: Monastic life in the Middle Ages

**QUESTION**: What role did the clergy play in everyday life in the Middle Ages?

**INITIAL THESIS**: During the Middle Ages, only the clergy could read and write.

**PROBLEM**!
- This statement has NO analysis. There is NO argument being made.
- Why does it matter that they could read and write?
- What difference does this make in everyday life?

**STRONGER THESIS**: The clergy in the Middle Ages made important contributions to society, especially in educating a largely illiterate population.

**WHY THIS WORKS**: This thesis statement is arguable. It argues that the literacy of clergy made it possible for the general population to become educated.

What’s the problem here? Look at your current these and see if it has any problems.

**TOPIC**: ____________________________

**QUESTION**: ____________________________

**INITIAL THESIS**: ___________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

**PROBLEM(s)**! ____________________________

Gaining strength: Draft a new thesis statement that tries to address the above problems.

**STRONGER THESIS**: ____________________________

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**WHY THIS WORKS**: ____________________________