

Thesis Statements

The heart and soul of any history day project is the thesis statement. It is the fundamental point you wish to make. Building them requires time and effort. When building one remember the general guidelines:

- **Keep it short.** Thesis statements should hover between 40-60 words. Too short, and there's not enough information to explain the argument. Too long, and too many details have been included. Plus, if the students are creating an exhibit, and they only have 500 student-composed words to use, it doesn't make sense to use up 100 of those words on just the thesis.
- **Include all five W's.** The thesis is the first thing the viewer reads, so we should know immediately the who-what-where-when, and also the why-is-this-important.
- **Include the theme words.** Judges and teachers need to know how the topic relates to the theme, especially if the topic is obscure, extremely narrow, or isn't immediately clear in its connection to the theme words.
- **Leave facts out, put arguments in.** We don't need to see every detail of the topic in the thesis. Leave those for the project itself. What we need to see in the thesis is the student's argument, or the point he/she is trying to make.
- **Write, revise, research, revise.** Students should not use the first draft of their thesis statement, but instead should revise based on feedback, go back to their research or conduct new research to make sure the thesis is accurate, and then revise once more.

See the full article here: <http://education.mnhs.org/historyday/news/blog/short-sweet-and-point-thesis-statements>