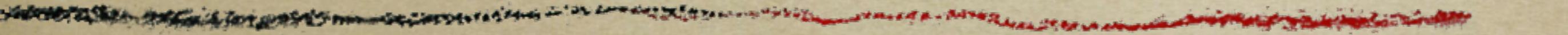


Writing an Essay



A Good Thesis...

- *Clear*
- *Arguable*
- *Provable*
- *Specific*

Clear

Don't beat around the bush or try and sound smart. Just get to the point.

Awk *and Confusing*

The reason that the French Revolution was important is because it was the event that basically changed the European political landscape from a monarch with absolute authority, which was given to him by God, to a limited and completely different idea of how government was actually formed, through social contract.

Wordy

Clear

Don't beat around the bush or try and sound smart. Just get to the point.

After the French Revolution, no monarch in Europe could argue that their power came from God.

Monarchs were limited by the consent of the governed.

Awk and Confusing

The reason that the French Revolution was important is because it was the event that basically changed the European political landscape from a monarch with absolute authority, which was given to him by God, to a limited and completely different idea of how government was actually formed, through social contract.

Wordy

Clear

Don't beat around the bush or try and sound smart. Just get to the point.

Vague

“Politics and religion in Ancient Egypt had a connection to each other.”

Vague

Influenced How?
“Political change was influenced by religious ideas as well as change.”

What kind of change?

Awkward Confusing

The political nature of Ancient Egypt was strongly influenced by the religious ramifications of certain changes that occurred throughout.

vague

Clear

Don't beat around the bush or try and sound smart. Just get to the point.

“Religious turmoil resulted in the decline of the 2nd, 5th and 18th dynasties of Egypt.”

“Political turmoil was the cause of the transformation from polytheism to monotheism.”

Vague

“Politics and religion in Ancient Egypt had a connection to each other.”

Vague

Influenced How?
“Political change was influenced by religious ideas as well as change.”

What kind of change?

Awful and Confusing

The political nature of Ancient Egypt was strongly influenced by the religious ramifications of certain changes that occurred throughout.

vague

Arguable

If it is not controversial then there is no point in writing it.

The Catholic Church transformed from a religious institution to a political institution by connecting with strong medieval kings and then capitalizing on the political fragmentation of Medieval feudalism.

The Romans built a large Empire.

So what?

M.C.P.

After Charlemagne, Europe entered into feudalism.

(Make Clear Point)

The papacy was very influential in Medieval Europe.

And...?

Arguable

If it is not controversial then there is no point in writing it.

The Catholic Church transformed from a religious institution to a political institution by connecting with strong medieval kings and then capitalizing on the political fragmentation of Medieval feudalism.

Main point to prove throughout

1st Sub-point; must connect to main point

2nd Sub-point; must connect to main point

The Romans built a large Empire.

So what?

M.C.P.

After Charlemagne, Europe entered into feudalism.

(Make Clear Point)

The papacy was very influential in Medieval Europe.

And...?

Provable

Don't just present an argument, prove your position is correct.

Africa will never be more altered than it was when Europe began trading for slaves.

If Europe had not explored Africa then the African slave trade would never have existed

**Can not prove
"What if"**

Europeans treated the Africans as sub-human and unworthy of basic rights.

Too vague to prove. All of the people?

Provable

Don't just present an argument, prove your position is correct.

The plantation economy mixed with the existing slave trade in Africa created the damaging columbian trade.

...which eventually led to racism to justify the inequality of life.

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Provable

Don't just present an argument, prove your position is correct.

*There will **never** be a revolution as dramatic as the French Revolution.*

If the revolutionaries would not have executed Louis, then the revolution would have ended in 1792

**Can not prove
“What if”**

The people of France in 1789 demanded a new constitution built on enlightenment ideas.

Too vague to prove. All of the people?

Provable

Don't just present an argument, prove your position is correct.

Louis execution was a symbol that tradition was no longer an accepted way of life, and the Revolution, sparked by the enlightenment rationality, became radical.

There will never be a revolution as dramatic as the French Revolution.

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**Can not prove
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Too vague to prove. All of the people?

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Don't just present an argument, prove your position is correct.

Europe will never be as politically united as it was under the Roman Empire.

If Charles Martel had lost the Battle of Tours, Europe would have become Islamic and the Catholic Church would not have been as powerful

**Can not prove
“What if”**

Christendom was a result of the political ambitions of Popes.

**Too vague to prove.
All the Popes?**

Provable

Don't just present an argument, prove your position is correct.

Martel's victory at the Battle of Tours coupled with the political fragmentation of Western Europe during feudalism, opened the door for ambitious Popes to grab political influence.

Europe will never be as politically united as it was under the Roman Empire.

If Charles Martel had lost the Battle of Tours, Europe would have become Islamic and the Catholic Church would not have been as powerful.

**Can not prove
"What if"**

Christendom was a result of the political ambitions of Popes.

**Too vague to prove.
All the Popes?**

Specific

Do not be vague.

Vague

During the Scientific Revolution, the worldview of Europe began to transform.

Transition from what to what?

Vague

Isaac Newton's work was the culmination of centuries of work that led to a new view of the world.

Are you going to talk about all of the ideas that helped Newton in one paper?

Specific

Do not be vague.

Vague

During the Scientific Revolution, the worldview of Europe began to transform.

Transition from what to what?

Vague

Isaac Newton's work was the culmination of centuries of work that led to a new view of the world.

Are you going to talk about all of the ideas that helped Newton in one paper?

Newton built his ideas on Kepler, Galileo, and others and created an idea of mechanical universe.

Better, but can it be more specific?

Specific

Do not be vague.

Newton's laws of motion presented a mechanical universe which was a necessary component of the industrial revolution of the late 18th century and the religious idea of Deism.

Vague

During the Scientific Revolution, the worldview of Europe began to transform.

Transition from what to what?

Vague

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Are you going to talk about all of the ideas that helped Newton in one paper?

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Specific

Don't be vague

“Religious turmoil resulted in the decline of the 2nd, 5th and 18th dynasties of Egypt.”

“Political turmoil was the cause of the transformation from polytheism to monotheism.”

Vague

“Politics and religion in Ancient Egypt had a connection to each other.”

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Influenced How?
“Political change was influenced by religious ideas as well as change.”

What kind of change?

Awkward Confusing

The political nature of Ancient Egypt was strongly influenced by the religious ramifications of certain changes that occurred throughout.

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Statements in an Essay

- Opinions

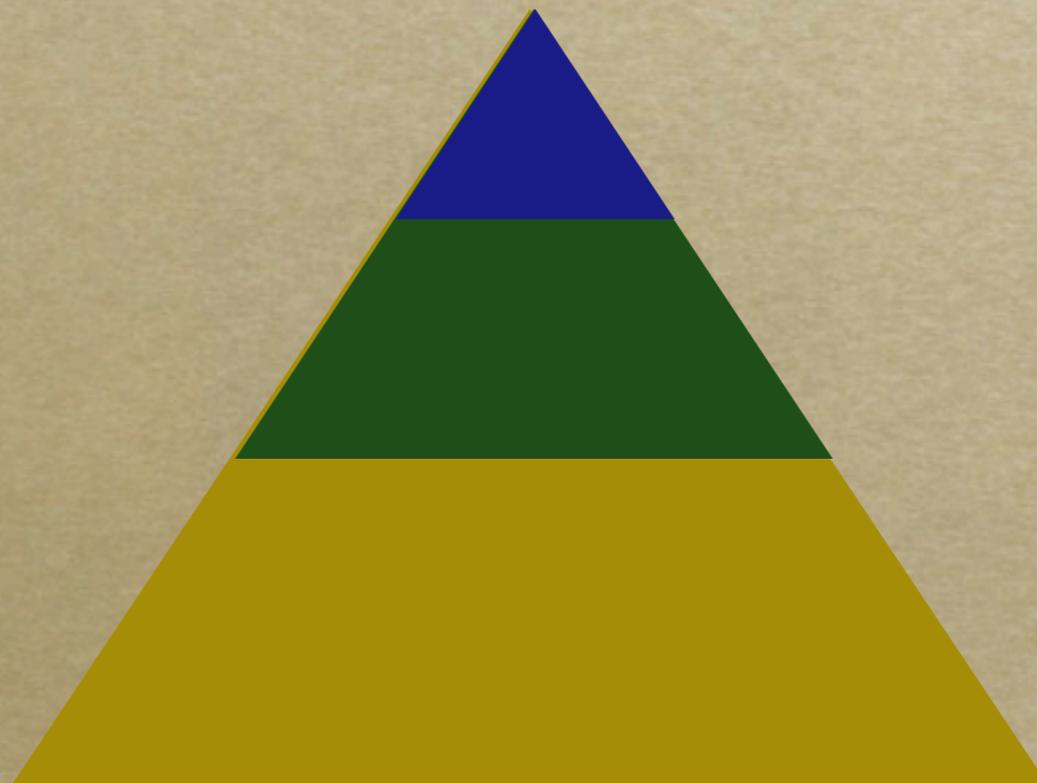
- *My point*

- Explanations/Analysis

- *Clarification of relevance*

- Facts

- *Undisputed history*



Facts

Galileo died in 1542.

Copernicus's *De Revolutionibus* contradicted the established Ptolemaic view of the universe.

The Scientific Revolution was a dramatic and sudden paradigm shift in the way way that science was done.

Undisputed History

Not questioned by historians.

Not undisputed

There was no such thing as the scientific revolution; the period from Copernicus to Isaac Newton was a gradual transition that began long before Copernicus.

Facts

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Because you are contradicting an established idea, it is not "undisputed" and therefore, is an opinion not a fact.

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The Scientific Revolution was a dramatic and sudden paradigm shift in the way way that science was done.

Facts

Undisputed History

Not questioned by historians.

Not undisputed

The idea of “feudalism” is far too simplistic to be considered the socio-political structure of the middle ages.

Because you are contradicting an established idea, it is not “undisputed” and therefore, is an opinion not a fact.

Charlemagne died in 814.

Ankhaton changed Egyptian religion to a monotheistic one that worshiped Aton.

Feudalism was the socio-economic and political system of the middle ages.

Opinion

An idea that is not well established but one which the writer wishes to become accepted.

Explanation/Analysis

Showing how the factual evidence is related to, and proves the thesis/opinion(s).

Because religion and political influence was so intertwined in Ancient Egypt, major religious changes were often more of a result of political struggles.

The growing political influence of the priests of Amun perhaps motivated Ankhaton to transition Egypt to the monotheistic worship of Aton.

Feudalism was a result of Charlemagne's governmental structure being left to the hands of weak leaders.

Because Louis the Pious was more concerned with religious practices than retaining the strength of the central government, after Charlemagne's death in 814 the nobility began to exercise their own political influence and created local independent governments.

Making strong sentences

Passive Voice

The spread of Islam into Western Europe was stopped in 732.

The spread of Islam into Western Europe was stopped in 732 by Charles Martel and the Franks.

Active Voice

In 732, Charles Martel and the Franks stopped the spread of Islam into Western Europe.

Making strong sentences

Passive Voice

The spread of Islam into Western Europe was stopped in 732.

By whom?

The spread of Islam into Western Europe was stopped in 732 by Charles Martel and the Franks.

Who is doing the action?

Active Voice

In 732, Charles Martel and the Franks stopped the spread of Islam into Western Europe.

Making strong sentences

Awkward and Confusing

The reason that the Frankish empire began to collapse was because the leaders, like Charlemagne and Clovis, became weak like Louis the Pious and so feudalism began.

Making strong sentences

Awkward and Confusing

The reason that the Frankish empire began to collapse was because the leaders, like Charlemagne and Clovis, became weak like Louis the Pious and so feudalism began.

Strong leadership personalities, like Clovis and Charlemagne, held the fragile structure of the Frankish empire together.

Feudalism resulted from local nobles becoming more politically independent at the expense of weak leaders such as Louis the Pious.

Making strong sentences

Wordiness

The reason that Alexander VI is important is because he represents the moral corruption of the papacy that was prevalent during the renaissance.

Making strong sentences

Wordiness

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Alexander VI represents the moral corruption of the renaissance papacy.

Making strong sentences

Wordiness

~~The reason that Alexander VI is important is because~~ he represents the moral corruption of the papacy that was prevalent during the renaissance.

epitomizes.
Alexander VI ~~represents~~ the moral corruption of the renaissance papacy.

Making strong sentences

Wordiness

The reason that religion was so important was because there was a connection between religion and the Political structure of the medieval world.

In the medieval world, politics and religion were connected.

Making strong sentences

Wordiness

~~*The reason that religion was so important was because there was a connection between religion and the Political structure of the medieval world.*~~

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Making strong sentences

Wordiness

~~The reason that religion was so important was because there was a connection between religion and the Political structure of the medieval world.~~

~~In the medieval world, politics and religion were connected.~~
intertwined.

Making strong sentences

Specificity

~~The reason that Alexander VI is important is because he represents the moral corruption of the papacy that was prevalent during the renaissance.~~

epitomizes.
~~Alexander VI represents the moral corruption of the renaissance papacy.~~

Political ambitions drove Alexander VI to compromise morality.

Making strong sentences

Specificity

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Be specific

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What compromises

Making strong sentences

Specificity

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Be specific

Political ambitions drove Alexander VI to compromise morality.

What compromises

Alexander's desire to make the Borgia family prosper over the powerful Italian families drove him to use his daughter as a political pawn.

Making strong sentences

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Making strong sentences

Specificity

~~The reason that religion was so important was because there was a connection between religion and the Political structure of the medieval world.~~

In the medieval world Politics and religion were ~~connected~~ intertwined.

Political ambitions drove the church to accept various doctrines.

Making strong sentences

Specificity

~~The reason that religion was so important was because there was a connection between religion and the Political structure of the medieval world.~~

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Political ambitions drove the church to accept various doctrines.

Which doctrines?

Making strong sentences

Specificity

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Be specific

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Which doctrines?

Leo IX's desire to remove hereditary succession of church positions drove the Church to ban marriage for all clergy.

Making strong sentences

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Which doctrines?

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Making strong sentences

What do you want to emphasize?

*Edward's support **was rooted** in the acknowledgement of national allegiance rather than the support of a local lord.*

*The people of England **began to support** Edward I instead of supporting local lords.*

*Edward I **gained support** by promoting the national consciousness at the expense of feudal loyalty.*