

Reading Exercise 4: Identifying the Thesis

Spring 2019

In some essays, it can be relatively easy to determine the thesis statement. The author usually aims to make it obvious. In other essays, it can be substantially harder. But even so, the author usually gives some clue as to what the main argument is.

Answer the following questions:

1. When you do your pre-read, sketch what you think the thesis is on the basis of your pre-read.
2. Identify the main argument that author gives once you've done the reading carefully. What is it? Copy down the sentence (or few) where the author makes this apparent.
3. How did you know?
4. Did it differ at all from your first guess?