

While searching for public resonance, writers might find not only public resonance but new angles on the topic. For example, if Jack's exploration of public resonance raises ideas about pop culture and social engagement, these discoveries could lead Jack to think about social networking and then about Facebook and its relationship (or similarity) to cults.

ACTIVITY

1. Present your ideas to a small group of peers, explaining the phenomenon's cause and its public resonance. Ask group members how the phenomenon affects their lives.
2. Explain how the group discussion helped you discover and develop ideas regarding public resonance and the topic in general. What new ideas emerged, and how might they help shape your essay?

Thesis

The kind of writing done in this chapter is both analytical and argumentative. Each author offers an analysis of the topic and an argument for his or her understanding of the cause. Each has a thesis that focuses on the causes or set of causes most responsible for the phenomenon. As you consider your main point, examine all possible avenues. (You may even begin writing and drafting before your ideas take shape.) Your thesis might do any of the following:

- Argue for a particular cause.

Professional sports have gotten more violent because of the intensity of sports coverage in the media.

- Argue that several factors equally cause the phenomenon.

Writing proficiency among American high school students continues to diminish because of a broader cultural disinterest in reading and a fundamental misunderstanding of language.

- Argue against an apparent cause or widely held belief and for a less obvious or more complicated cause.

People drive gas-guzzlers not because they are selfish and insensitive but because they are uneducated about their real choices.

The music industry is losing profits not because college kids are insatiable thieves but because the industry has not evolved with the listening habits of the new generation.

As you consider your topic, decide on your emphasis: Will it be important to thoroughly describe several causes or to focus on one?

Evolution of a Thesis

Your main idea may not come into focus immediately. Notice how Jack's thesis evolves from his initial thoughts into a sophisticated point.