

Although invention is key throughout the process, invention is not general wandering. Better ideas come when writers dig in their intellectual heels.

For more related common thesis problems, see Chapter 8: Making Arguments, page 254.

Revising Your Thesis

Write out responses to these questions: *Am I afraid of ongoing invention? Why? Am I afraid of commitment? Why?* Then discuss your responses with a group of classmates:

1. How many people in your group have a fear of, or resistance to, ongoing invention or commitment?
 - What reasons do group members give for their fear of, or resistance to, ongoing invention? (What caused their fear or resistance?)
 - What reasons do group members give for their fear of, or resistance to, commitment? (What caused it?)
2. Discuss how each group member arrived at his or her thesis for this chapter's essay. Which group members might have committed to a rigid thesis too early? Choose an Invention Question from earlier in the chapter that they should explore further for ongoing invention.
3. Help group members who have trouble committing to one idea focus their statement. Choose an Invention Question they should explore to help narrow and deepen their thoughts.

Rhetorical Tools

Remember that you are not simply explaining a cause. You are arguing that a particular cause (or set of causes) could be responsible for a phenomenon, and you also are arguing that your understanding of the cause/effect relationship is worth considering. Therefore, consider the support strategies of argument (from Chapter 8: Making Arguments), and use the following questions to develop support for your thesis:

- How can I illustrate the relationship between the cause and the effect? (What line of reasoning can I use?)
- Does a historical event or figure help to show the cause?
- Can I allude to a similar phenomenon (with a similar cause) to support my point?
- Does a literary work (novel, poem, drama) or popular culture text (movie, television program, song) support my point?
- How do other writers discuss this cause?
- Does something in nature (in animal or plant life) support my point?