HANDOUT: COMPARING THESIS STATEMENTS

Sharing thesis statements with students—both good and bad—can help them understand the characteristics they should be striving for in their own work. Share the following thesis statements with your students on the chalkboard or overhead. Ask them to brainstorm possible problems or positive characteristics of each. Keep in mind that even the "Good" statements are a work in progress!

Needs Improvement	Better	Good
The Minneapolis trucker's strike took place in the 1930s. • *Do more than state a fact.* • *What is the theme connection?*	The Minneapolis truckers' strike took place in the 1930s. The employees took responsibility for gaining their right to unionize through the strike. • *So what? Needs to discuss the outcome and significance of his actions in history.*	During the ongoing struggle between businesses and labor in Minnesota in the 1930s, a strike by truck drivers broke out when employers refused to recognize their newly formed Teamsters Union. The summer of 1934 was marked by sporadic violence between strikers and the police. Governor Floyd B. Olson took on the responsibility to end the fighting and used the National Guard to force negotiations between the Teamsters and business leaders. The union finally won their demands and the strike represented a turning point in labor history and the struggle to establish and protect workers' rights. • *Has a theme connection, discusses significance*
The use of chemical warfare during World War I was wrong. • *This is more of a philosophical statement than a thesis statement.* • *More than just stating that it was right or wrong – what was the impact of the use of chemical weapons in history?*	The introduction of chemical warfare during World War I was a revolution in warfare. It prompted countries to use new tactics and develop new equipment. • *Needs a theme connection.* • *Move beyond just technology. What are some of the more significant impacts of this topic?*	Chemical weapons first saw widespread use in World War I. Although indiscriminate, countries justified the use of these weapons under the right of a nation to defend itself in wartime. The harm to combatants and civilians, as well as negative public reaction, eventually led to the Geneva Protocol in 1925. This agreement banned the use of these weapons, but responsibility for enforcing this treaty is controversial and chemical weapons remain an international problem. • *Has a theme connection, discusses significance*
Miranda v. Arizona made sure that people know their rights when they are arrested. Without Miranda rights, there would be a lot more police brutality. • *Be careful of "what if" history. We can't prove with evidence what "might have happened."*	The Supreme Court decision, Miranda v. Arizona, ruled that it was the responsibility of arresting officers to inform the accused of their rights to an attorney and against self-incrimination. • *So what? Needs to discuss the impact that the Supreme Court decision had on police, accused, etc.*	The 1966 Supreme Court decision, *Miranda v. Arizona*, ruled that it was the responsibility of arresting officers to inform the accused of their rights to an attorney and against self-incrimination. This case redefined the rights of citizens arrested by police and changed law enforcement operating procedures across the United States. • *Has a theme connection, discusses significance*
During the 1919 World Series, eight players were accused of throwing games. Decide for yourself if they were guilty or innocent! • *Come to a conclusion.* • *So what? What impact did this have for baseball?*	During the 1919 World Series, eight players were accused of throwing games, resulting in the appointment of a baseball commissioner. • *What is your theme connection?*	During the 1919 World Series, eight players were accused of intentionally losing games. The resulting scandal and public's loss of confidence in the game resulted in the appointment of a commissioner with the responsibility to regulate the game and the right to ban players. • *Has a theme connection, discusses significance*