**How to draft an analytical thesis statement**

[MUSIC PLAYING]

So you've analyzed the text and you're ready to focus your thoughts. Time to craft an analytical thesis statement, a sentence or two that answers your interpretive question and presents your position. Your thesis statement draws readers in by giving a glimpse of what to expect from the essay. You'll fill in the details later.

Let's say you're writing an essay about this environmental ad. Before you draft a thesis, you've got to read a text or ad several times, making observations and noting details. Then start with an interpretive question, a question about the meaning of one or more of the authors' or creators' choices, a question that can just be answered with facts.

If you're an active reader, you've probably got a ton of interesting questions. That's great, but for your thesis, you're going to focus on one. The key is which question will help you explore what you find most interesting, surprising, or puzzling about the text?

Let's say you've chosen this as your interpretive question. Now, your thesis statement needs to answer this question. As a first step, write down your simplest answer to the question. That does answer the question, and it does present a debatable position, but it isn't very specific or interesting and may just lead to a bland list of reasons why the ad doesn't work.

Try a second draft where you add some more engaging language. This draft is already more interesting because you've suggested that the ad is at least partially working. It also has the beginning of an argument about ads needing to motivate viewers.

Now, try taking it a step further. Hit readers with this thesis statement and they'll expect something complex and interesting, more than just the ad works or the ad doesn't work. Readers will now look forward to a balanced analysis of the purpose and effectiveness of emotional appeal by the ad's creator.

Let's be clear. You aren't saying everything there is to be said about this ad. That's not what an analytical thesis statement is. You're choosing one angle-- the use of emotional appeal-- and judging the success of the text through that lens.

Just remember to ask a thoughtful interpretive question that draws out the meaning of a text and helps you focus on something puzzling or surprising. Present your position in a statement that's debatable, not just a fact or a description, and give your reader a preview of your reasoning and the path you plan to take in your essay. When you draft a strong thesis statement, you capture your reader's attention and help them anticipate how you will develop the thesis into an essay.