

For each pair of sentences below, select the one that you think would make the more effective thesis in the introductory paragraph of a short essay (approximately 400 to 600 words). Keep in mind that an effective thesis statement should be sharply focused and specific, not just a general statement of fact.

When you're done, you may want to discuss your answers with your classmates, and then compare your responses with the suggested answers on page two. Be ready to defend your choices. Because these thesis statements appear outside the context of complete essays, *all* responses are judgment calls, not absolute certainties.

1. (a) *The Hunger Games* is a science fiction adventure film based on the novel of the same name by Suzanne Collins.  
(b) *The Hunger Games* is a morality tale about the dangers of a political system that is dominated by the wealthy.
2. (a) There is no question that cell phones have changed our lives in a very big way.  
(b) While cell phones provide freedom and mobility, they can also become a leash, compelling users to answer them anywhere and at any time.
3. (a) Finding a job is never easy, but it can be especially hard when the economy is still feeling the effects of a recession and employers are reluctant to hire new workers.  
(b) College students looking for part-time work should begin their search by taking advantage of job-finding resources on campus.
4. (a) For the past three decades, coconut oil has been unjustly criticized as an artery-clogging saturated fat.  
(b) Cooking oil is plant, animal, or synthetic fat that is used in frying, baking, and other types of cooking.
5. (a) There have been over 200 movies about Count Dracula, most of them only very loosely based on the novel published by Bram Stoker in 1897.  
(b) Despite its title, *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, a film directed by Francis Ford Coppola, takes considerable liberties with Stoker's novel.
6. (a) There are several steps that teachers can take to encourage academic integrity and curtail cheating in their classes.  
(b) There is an epidemic of cheating in America's schools and colleges, and there are no easy solutions to this problem.
7. (a) J. Robert Oppenheimer, the American physicist who directed the building of the first atomic bombs during World War II, had technical, moral, and political reasons for opposing the development of the hydrogen bomb.  
(b) J. Robert Oppenheimer, often referred to as "the father of the atomic bomb," was born in New York City in 1904.
8. (a) The iPad has revolutionized the mobile-computing landscape and created a huge profit stream for Apple.

(b) The iPad, with its relatively large high-definition screen, has helped to revitalize the comic book industry.

9. (a) Like other addictive behaviors, internet addiction may have serious negative consequences, including academic failure, job loss, and a breakdown in personal relationships.

(b) Drug and alcohol addiction is a major problem in the world today, and many people suffer from it.

10. (a) When I was a child I used to visit my grandmother in Moline every Sunday.

(b) Every Sunday we visited my grandmother, who lived in a tiny house that was undeniably haunted.

11. (a) The bicycle was introduced in the nineteenth century and rapidly grew into a worldwide phenomenon.

(b) In several ways, bicycles today are better than they were 100 or even 50 years ago.

12. (a) Although many varieties of beans belong in a healthy diet, among the most nutritious are black beans, kidney beans, chickpeas, and pinto beans.

(b) Although beans are generally good for you, some kinds of raw beans can be dangerous if they're not well cooked.