Thesis Statements

** Overall design notes: **White background.**

All typed text should be in a blue, serif font unless otherwise described in the script.

When handwriting appears, it should be in cursive. A variety of colors can be used. Any specifics noted in 3rd column.

Visuals in the middle column are provided as examples only, unless otherwise noted.

Narration/voiceover	Visual	Visual explained
Cengage theme music	CENGAGE Learning	Screen 1: Cengage Learning logo Hold logo for 5 seconds
Theme music continues.	**Thesis Statements**	Screen 2: Title shot, in **blue type**.
A thesis statement explains the topic of your essay. It also tells readers your position on that topic. If you don't have a strong thesis, you risk confusing your readers.	**Thesis Statements** Topic introduction Position statement	Screen 3: Title shot, in **blue type**. When the narrator says, "A thesis statement explains the topic," the words "Topic introduction" appear on screen in **blue type**. When narrator says, "your position on that topic," the words "Position statement" appear on screen in **blue type**.

A ship needs a captain to give it direction. Without a captain, a ship may drift off-course and run aground. But a good captain steers a ship safely to its destination. Likewise, a strong thesis keeps your essay on course to its conclusion.	 	Screen 4: When narrator says, "a ship may drift off-course and run aground," show image of ship running aground. When narrator says, "But a good captain…," show image of captain at the helm of ship.
How do you create a strong thesis statement?	**How do you create a strong thesis statement?**	Screen 5: Words type onto screen in **blue type** as narrator says the words.
First, you must identify your topic. Your professor might assign a topic by creating a prompt for you to answer. For example, <pause briefly while words appear on screen> "Does our	**Finding a Topic** **Prompt:** Does our need to document everything in video or image format prevent us from living in the	Screen 6: Title shot, in **blue type**. When the narrator says "by creating a prompt for you to answer," the word "Prompt", and the question type onto screen in **blue type**.
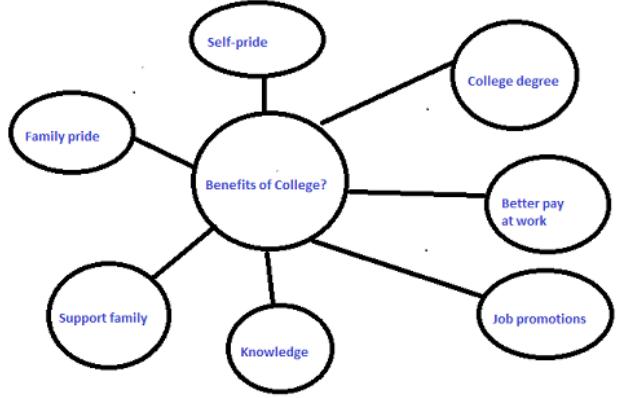
need to document everything in video or image format prevent us from living in the moment?"	moment?	
Or your professor might ask you to write about a broad topic, such as <pause briefly while words appear on screen> "Write an essay about the state of civil rights today in the United States." Your professor might ask you to choose your own topic as well. For example, <pause briefly while words appear on screen> "Write a proposal argument about how you would solve a specific issue in today's society."	# Finding a Topic **Broad topic:** Write an essay about the state of civil rights today in the United States. **Choose your own topic:** Write a proposal argument about how you would solve a specific issue in today's society.	Screen 7; Title shot, in **blue type**. When narrator says "a broad topic," the words "Broad topic:" and the topic sentence type onto the screen in **blue type**. When narrator says, "choose your own topic," the words "Choose your own topic:" and the topic sentence type onto the screen in **blue type**.
Here are some tips to generate ideas for a broad topic or your own topic. The first is freewriting. For 10 to 15 minutes, write down everything you can think of that relates to your topic. Don't worry about perfect sentences. For example, <Pause for a few moments as sentences type onto screen>	# Generating Ideas: Freewriting What are the benefits of college? When I was a kid nobody I knew went to college. They all just worked, some more than one job and barely making ends meet. My mom, she was a housekeeper during the day and worked at the diner at night. My dad was a mechanic and a truck driver, so was my uncle and cousin. If	Screen 8; Title shot, in **blue type**. When narrator says, "write down everything you can think of," the sentences type onto the screen in **blue type**.

"What are the benefits of college? When I was a kid nobody I knew went to college. They all just worked, some more than one job and barely making ends meet. My mom, she was a housekeeper during the day and worked at the diner at night. My dad was a mechanic and a truck driver, so was my uncle and cousin. If they had gone to college times wouldn't have been so tough.",	they had gone to college times woudn't have been so tough.	
You can use clustering to see how your thoughts relate to a main idea. First, draw a circle in the center of your paper. Next, write your topic in the circle. Finally, draw lines out to other circles that hold supporting ideas.	**Generating Ideas: Clustering** Self-pride · College degree · Family pride · Benefits of College? · Better pay at work · Support family · Knowledge · Job promotions	Screen 9: Title shot, in **blue type**. When narrator says, "First draw a circle," a circle should appear in the center of the screen. When the narrator says, "Next, write your topic…" the words "Benefits of College?" type into the circle in **blue type**. When the narrator says, "Finally, draw lines…" each line plus connected circle should appear one after the other on screen, with text inside circles in **blue type**.
You can try brainstorming by jotting down all of the ideas you can think of that relate to your topic.	**Generating Ideas: Brainstorming** What are the benefits of college? College degree Better pay at work Job promotions	Screen 10: Title shot, in **blue type**. When narrator says, "by jotting down all of the ideas…" the question "What are the benefits of college?" appears on screen in **blue type**. Next, each phrase should appear on screen below the question, one after the other.

	Family pride Self-pride Support family Knowledge	
You can also ask yourself questions to generate ideas. You can try reporters' questions, which start with "Who, What, When, Why, Where, How"? For example, <Pause briefly while sentence appears on screen.> "*Who* <pronounce: emphasize *Who*> do I know who has gone to college?" <Pause briefly while sentence appears on screen.> "*What* <pronounce: emphasize *What*> made them decide to attend college?" <Pause briefly while sentence appears on screen.> "*When* <pronounce: emphasize *When*> in their life did they decide to attend college?" You can also try more general questions and brainstorm answers.	**Generating Ideas: Asking Questions** Reporters' Questions Who do I know who has gone to college? What made them decide to attend college? When in their life did they decide to attend college? General Questions What am I interested in? What would I like to see improved or changed? Have I learned something really interesting lately?	Screen 11: Title shot, in **blue type**. When the narrator says, "You can use reporters' questions," the subhead "Reporters' Questions" should appear on the screen in **blue type**. Each reporter question should type onto screen as narrator reads it. The first word should be orange and the rest should be in **blue type**. When the narrator says, "You can also try more general questions," the subhead "General Questions" should appear on the screen in **blue type**. Each general question should type onto screen as narrator reads it.

For example,		
<Pause briefly while sentence appears on screen.>		
"What am I interested in?"		
<Pause briefly while sentence appears on screen.>		
"What would I like to see improved or changed?"		
<Pause briefly while sentence appears on screen.>		
"Have I learned something really interesting lately?"		
After you find your topic, you'll need to narrow it to a manageable size.		Screen 12: Title shot, in **blue type**.
But being too narrow can leave you with little to write about. For example,	**Narrowing Your Topic**	When the narrator says, "But being too narrow can leave you with little to write about," thesis that is too narrow types onto screen in **blue type**.
<Pause briefly as narrow thesis appears on screen>		
"College and how it helps my career at the bank"	**Too narrow:** College and how it helps my career at the bank	
This topic is too specific to the writer. Little can be added to make it a full essay.		

But being too broad can also be a problem. For example, <Pause briefly as broad thesis appears on screen> "College and success in a person's personal and professional lives" This topic is too vague. *How* <pronounce: emphasize *How*> will college help someone's personal and professional lives? Which parts will benefit and why?	**Narrowing Your Topic** **Too broad:** College and success in a person's personal and professional lives	Screen 13: Title shot, in **blue type**. When the narrator says, "But being too broad can also be a problem," thesis that is too broad types onto screen in **blue type**.
To narrow a broad topic, take the ideas you generated and look for possible subtopics to discuss. For example, <Pause briefly as broad topic appears on screen> You can narrow the broad topic "Benefits of college"	**Narrowing Your Topic** **Broad topic:** Benefits of college **Narrowed topic:** The positive effects of college on an individual's personal and professional lives **Subtopics:**	Screen 14: Title shot, in **blue type**. When the narrator says, "To narrow a broad topic, take the ideas you generated," broad topic, narrowed topic, and subtopics should appear on screen, one after the other, in **blue type**.

<Pause briefly as narrowed topic appears on screen> to "The positive effects of college on an individual's personal and professional lives" <Pause briefly as subtopics appear on screen> Your subtopics could be personal growth, career advancement, and financial freedom.	**Personal growth** **Career advancement** **Financial freedom**	
Now you're almost ready to write your thesis statement. But first, you need to know what question your essay will answer. And you must know what your answer to this question will be. Research may help you develop your opinion. Once you have an answer, you can write it in thesis form. For example, your question could be <Pause while question appears on screen> "How does college benefit an individual's personal and professional lives?" And your thesis statement could be <Pause while question appears on screen>	**Developing an Opinion** How does college benefit an individual's personal and professional lives? Attending college is the most effective way a person can benefit personally and professionally, by providing opportunities for personal growth, career advancement, and financial freedom.	Screen 15: Title shot, in **blue type**. When the narrator says, "For example, your question could be," the question "How does college benefit an individual's personal and professional lives?" appears on screen in **blue type**. When the narrator says, "And your thesis statement could be," the thesis statement "Attending college will benefit a person by providing opportunities for emotional and intellectual growth, career advancement, and the ability to live comfortably within his or her financial means" appears on screen in **blue type**.

"Attending college is the most effective way a person can benefit personally and professionally, by providing opportunities for personal growth, career advancement, and financial freedom." Remember that a thesis statement should be arguable. Avoid statements that express opinions most people would share.		
With a strong thesis statement, your essay is more likely to stay on course. Like a ship's captain, the thesis guides you to your destination smoothly.	**Thesis Statements** 	Screen 16: Title shot, in **blue type**. When the narrator says, "Like a ship's captain," the image of the captain from Screen 4 reappears on screen.