



JUST WHAT *ARE* YOU SAYING?

**Constructing More Effective Thesis
Statements and Making Better Arguments**



Workshop Assessment

Directions: Read and evaluate each of the following thesis statements. Write “E” to indicate that the statement is **effective**. Write “I” to indicate that the statement is **ineffective**.

1. High levels of alcohol consumptions has detrimental effects on personal health, weight, weight gain, heart disease, and liver complications.
2. Reading develops a child’s mind.
3. High levels of alcohol consumption is bad for you
4. Reading develops a child’s mind by fostering comprehension skills, increasing vocabulary skills, and exposing them to new world that they may not otherwise encounter.
5. Cats are great pets because they are fluffy.
6. Everyone should add exercise to their daily morning routine because it not only keeps the body at a healthy weight, but also reduces the risk of high blood pressure

The Thesis Statement



- Think of an introduction as a kind of summary of your essay, a presentation of your essay in its entirety.
- Every essay must have a thesis, which is an argument or opinion on a specific topic.
- A thesis is the unifying idea behind an essay.
- The thesis will usually be located within the introduction and must have two parts: topic(s) and view.

In Your Thesis Statement....

1. Stay focused!
 - Broad statements often need to be narrowed to give you (and your audience) direction and purpose.
2. Address a debatable topic.
 - In other words, another writer could construct a counter argument.



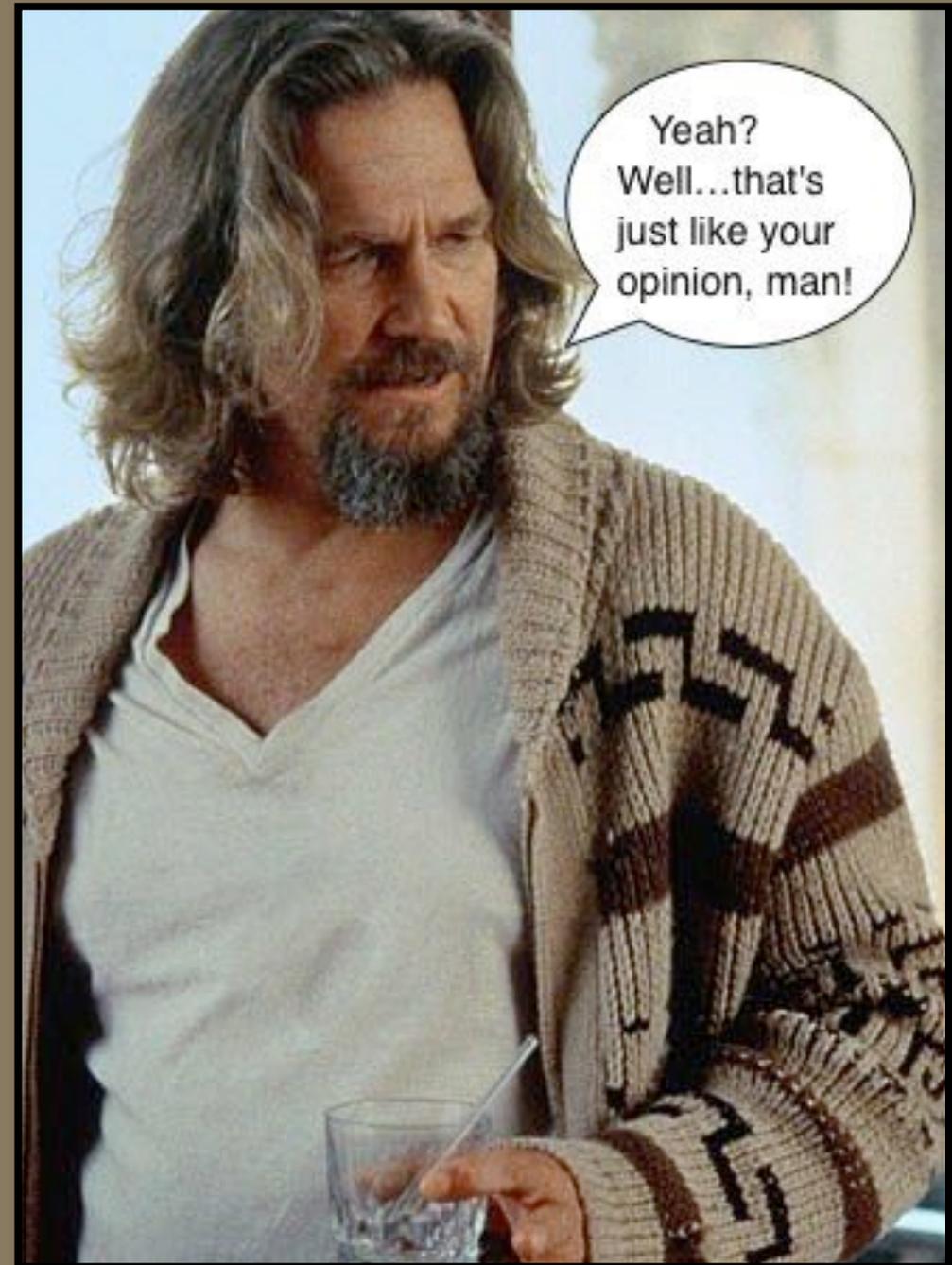
In Your Thesis Statement...

3. Pick a side

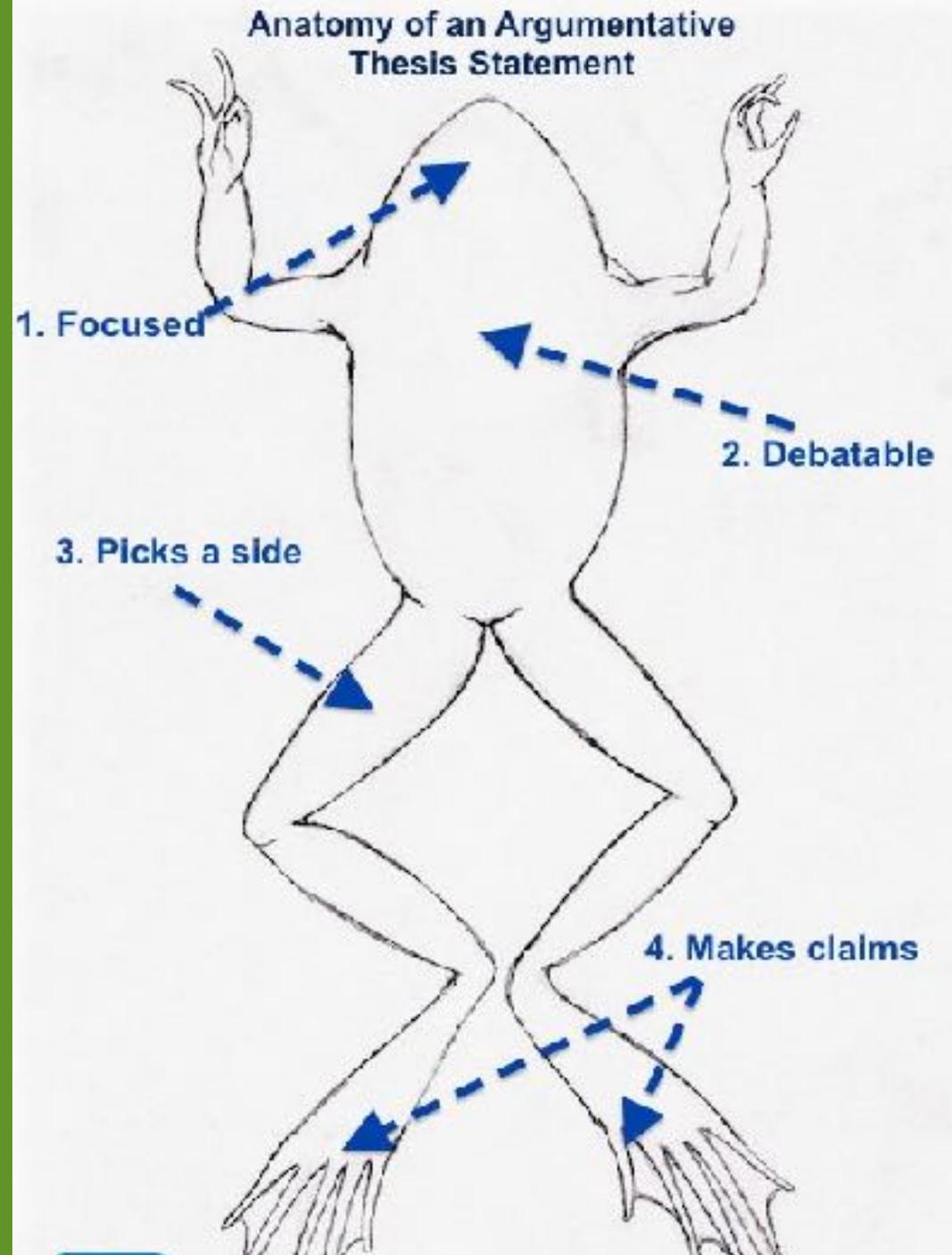
- Reflect your angle through your thesis statement.

4. Support and defend your statements with claims.

- Topic sentences act as mini-theses and make claims. Facts and evidence support those claims and often answer the “why,” “how,” and other questions.



Before we construct a thesis statement, let's dissect a few of them!



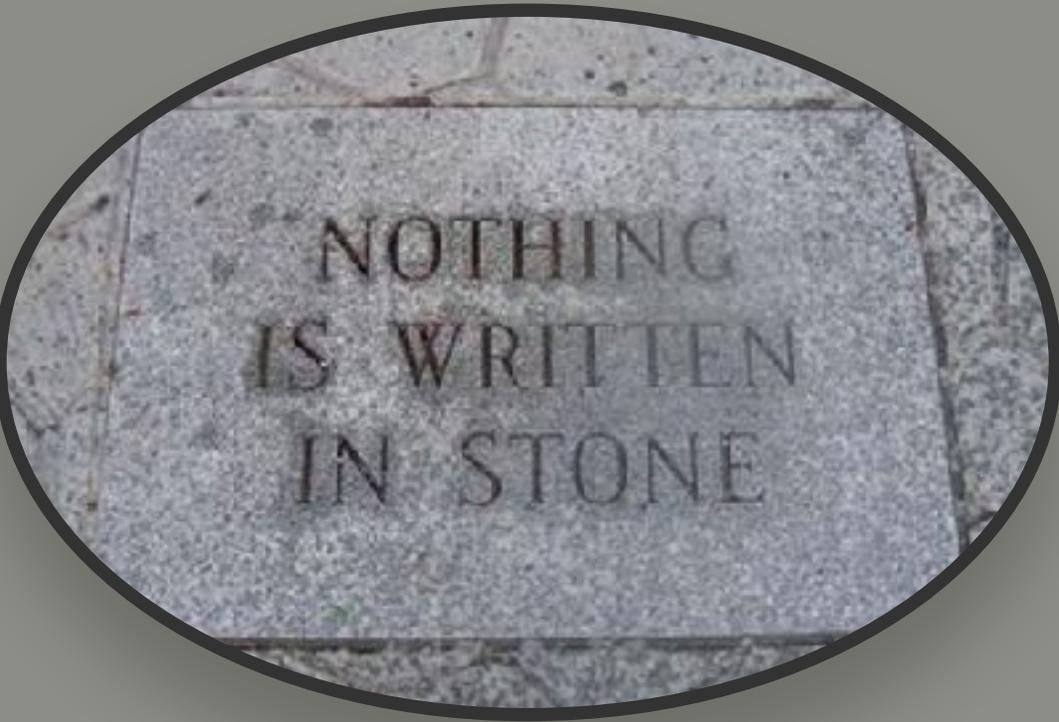
Why Mars ?



**MARS IS A PLACE
WE CAN SETTLE**

- Eating fast food is bad and should be avoided.
- There are high numbers of homeless people living in Berkeley, California.
- Secondhand smoke is bad and can cause heart disease and cancer; therefore, smoking should be outlawed in public places, but outlawing smoking is unfair to smokers so maybe non-smokers can just hold their breath or wear masks around smokers instead.
- Humans should relocate to Mars.

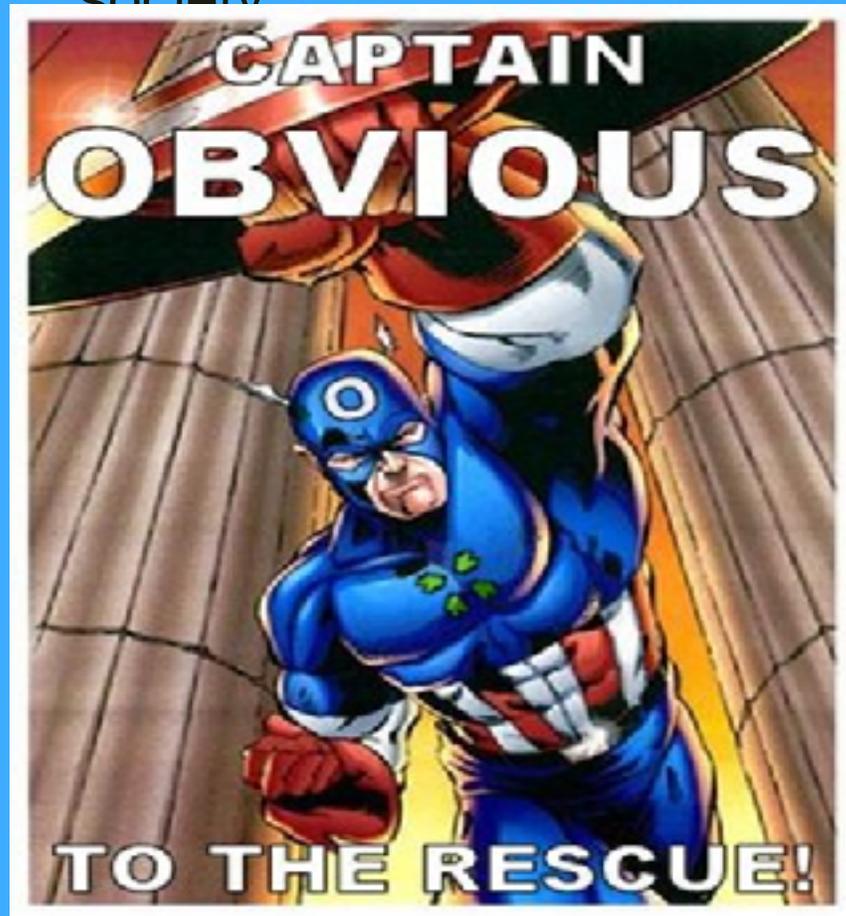
Working Thesis



- Americans should eliminate the regular consumption of fast food because the fast food diet leads to preventable and expensive health issues, such as diabetes, obesity, and heart disease.
- Homeless people in Berkeley should be given access to services, such as regular food donations, public restrooms, and camping facilities, because it would improve life for all inhabitants of the city.
- Secondhand smoke is just as harmful as smoking and leads to a higher prevalence of cancer and heart disease. What's worse, people who inhale secondhand smoke are doing so without consent. For this reason, smoking in any public place should be banned.
- It is too late to save earth; therefore, humans should immediately set a date for their relocation to Mars where, with proper planning, they can avoid issues of famine, war, and global warming.

From Working to Revised

- Pollution is bad for the environment.
- Drug use is a problem in society.



Effective examples

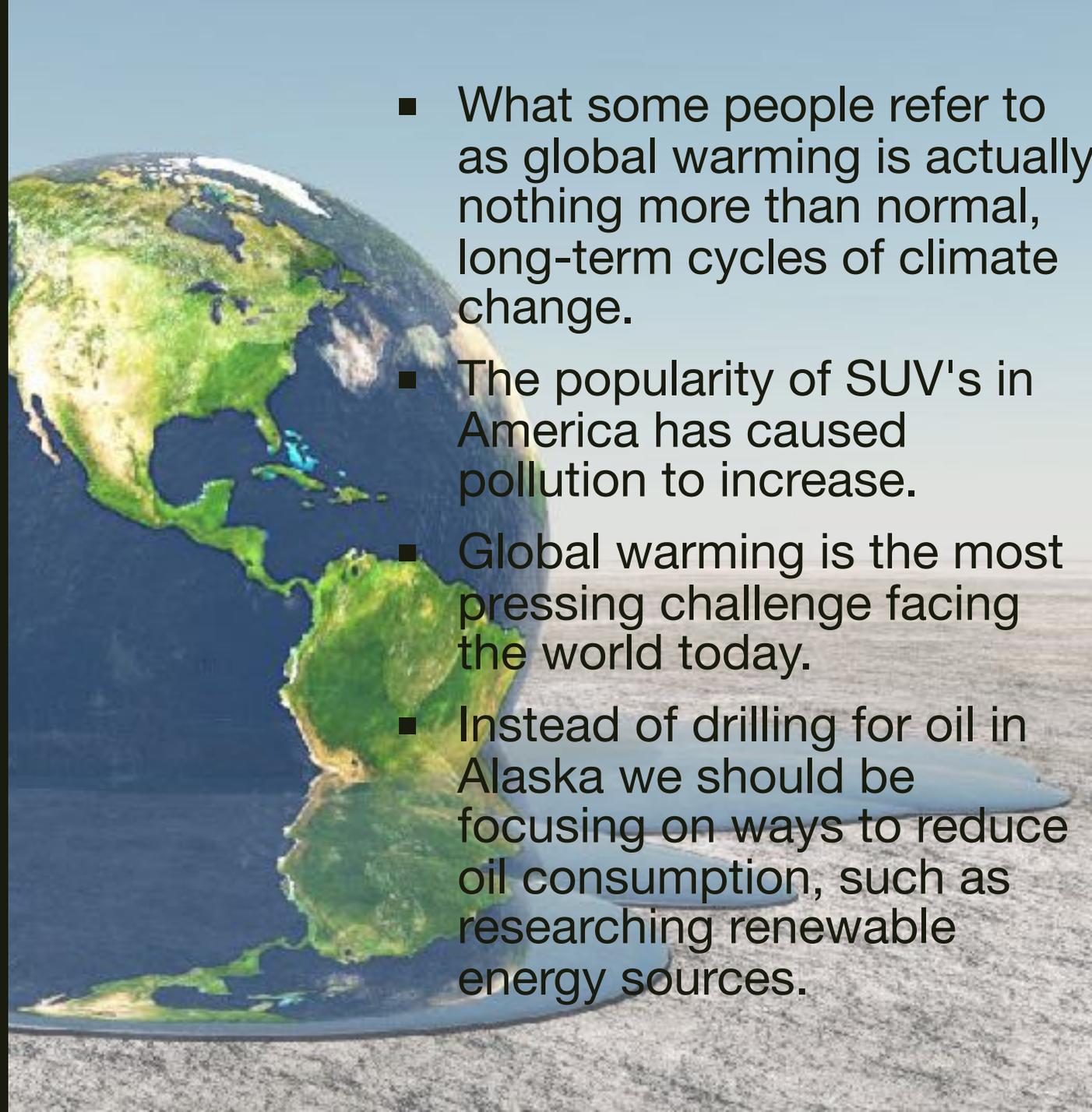
- At least 25 percent of the federal budget should be spent on limiting pollution.
- America's anti-pollution efforts should focus on privately owned cars.
- Illegal drug use is detrimental because it encourages gang violence.

Even more effective...

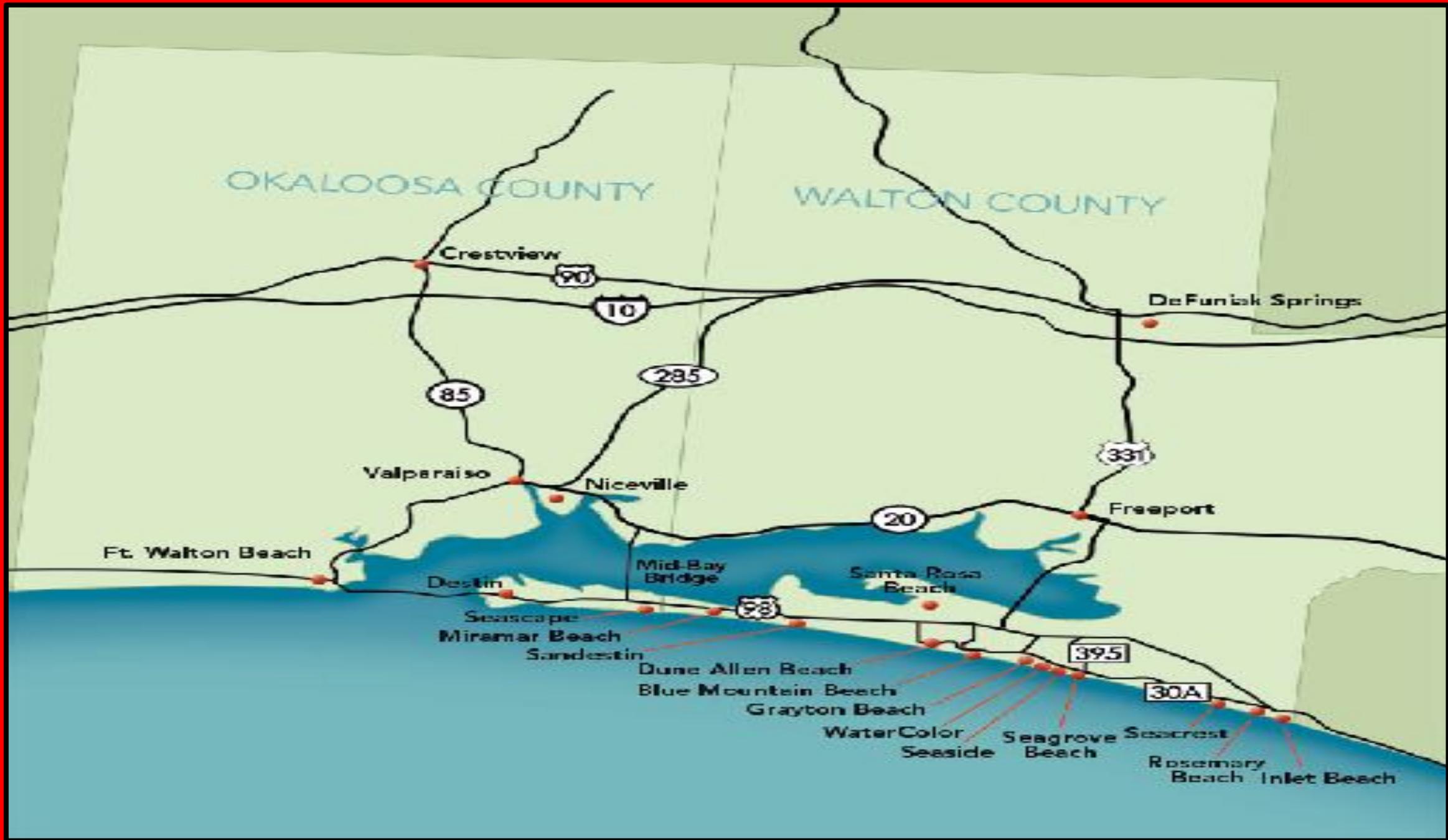
- At least 25 percent of the federal budget should be spent on helping upgrade business to clean technologies, researching renewable energy sources, and planting more trees in order to control or eliminate pollution.
- America's anti-pollution efforts should focus on privately owned cars because it would allow most citizens to contribute to national efforts and care about the outcome.

Types of Claims

- **Fact or Definition**: These claims argue about what the definition of something is or whether something is a settled fact.
- **Cause and Effect**: These claims argue that one person, thing, or event caused another thing or event to occur.
- **Value**: These are claims made of what something is worth, whether we value it or not, how we would rate or categorize something
- **Solutions or Policies**: These are claims that argue for or against a certain solution or policy approach to a problem.



- What some people refer to as global warming is actually nothing more than normal, long-term cycles of climate change.
- The popularity of SUV's in America has caused pollution to increase.
- Global warming is the most pressing challenge facing the world today.
- Instead of drilling for oil in Alaska we should be focusing on ways to reduce oil consumption, such as researching renewable energy sources.



OKALOOSA COUNTY

WALTON COUNTY

Crestview

90

10

DeFuniak Springs

85

285

Valparaiso

Niceville

331

Freeport

Ft. Walton Beach

20

Destin

Mid-Bay Bridge

Santa Rosa Beach

78

Seascapes

Miramar Beach

Sandestin

Dune Allen Beach

Blue Mountain Beach

Grayton Beach

WaterColor

Seaside

Seagrove Beach

Seacrest

Rosemary Beach

Inlet Beach

395

30A

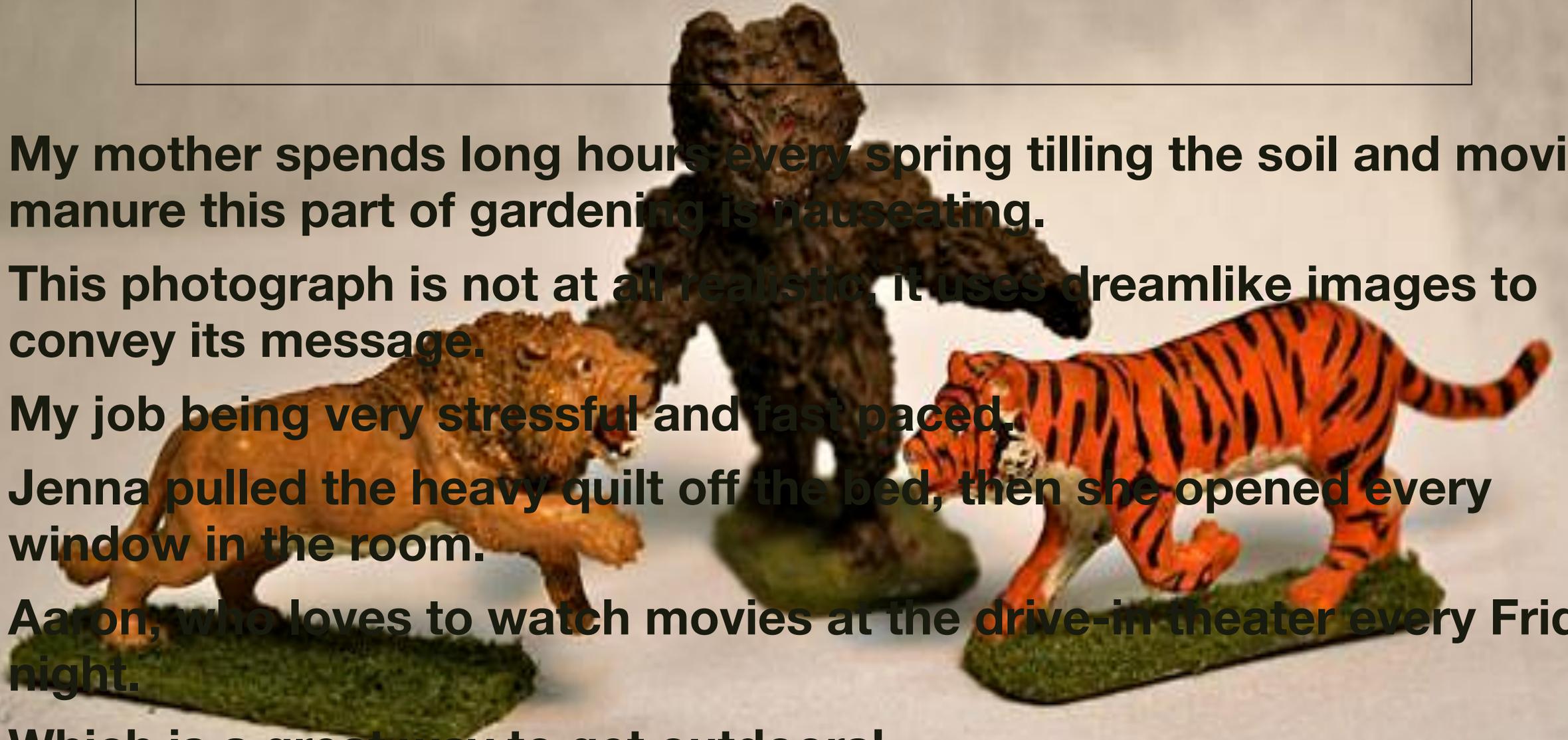


SAY IT WITH STYLE—

Improve Your Writing By Avoiding
Common Grammatical Errors

Fragments, Comma Splices, and Run-Ons—Oh, My!

- My mother spends long hours every spring tilling the soil and moving manure this part of gardening is nauseating.
- This photograph is not at all realistic, it uses dreamlike images to convey its message.
- My job being very stressful and fast paced.
- Jenna pulled the heavy quilt off the bed, then she opened every window in the room.
- Aaron, who loves to watch movies at the drive-in theater every Friday night.
- Which is a great way to get outdoors!





Wordiness—
Say More With
Less!

“Count words, and
make them count.”
—Me

“Don’t count words;
make words
count.” — Dr.
Stephen “Britches”
Calatrello

Due to the
fact that

The bear
is brown in
color.

A new stage
is necessary
for the
theater

Exactly the
same

At this
point in
time

In the
possession
of....

Take into
consideration....

I submitted an
application for
the job.

Terrible
tragedy

Any and all
individuals

In the event
that....

1. I was late because my alarm clock didn't go off we were out of milk and the school bus had a flat tire.

2. Oregano parsley and sage are three types of spices used in Italian cooking.

3. I took a flashlight, my shoes a pocket knife and a deck of cards on the camping trip.

4. With a quick powerful leap the stuntman bounded over the burning balcony.

5. Although many people work from home most Americans commute to work.

6. When two groups disagreed over the use of the land the court system decided on the outcome.

7. All of the students studied for the test and everyone did well.

8. Bob brought charcoal and matches but he forgot to bring the grill.

10. Beam me up Scottie.

11. No you may not eat the pudding that fell on the floor.

12. My father a cowboy farmer living in Wyoming began tap dancing lessons last week and has become popular at the nightclubs.

13. Tim's brother who loves trout fishing arrived last week with his wife and new baby.

14. It was however a memorable experience.

15. Dear John

I am leaving you and I am taking the dog.

Love

Susie



Commonly Confused Words

- accept/except
- affect/effect
- compliment/complement
- sight/cite/site
- fewer/less
- there/they're/their
- mischievous

