

Discover your Position:

Thesis Development for Visual Learners



Mountain climbers often become disoriented in snowstorms, lost in high winds, and turned around. Sometimes, it is not clear in which direction the summit lies, so they must take care to find out exactly where they are. They often know how far they have traveled, but they could be miles off course, and they need to know which direction to go.

To do this, mountain-climbers use a method called triangulation. They calculate the distance from camp, and estimate their distance from two other known locations, such as the tops of neighboring mountains. They can then “triangulate” their position, relative to the other places. It takes at least three points to precisely calculate location.

Finding out your position and your direction when you write an essay is just as important. In English, authors often use a similar method for arguing their opinions; they use three main points to support their position. Most importantly, as with the mountain, these points must be very different from each other in order to give an essay a position and direction. Make a list of twelve things you would like to discuss. Then put them into categories (for example, concepts, values, and events) by similarity. You may only find two categories and have to look for a third, which is the key to having a direction for your essay to go.

