Thesis or Position?

Sort social studies thesis statements by their purpose.

USG.P.4.1 "Summarize and paraphrase, integrate evidence, and cite sources to create written products, research projects, and presentations for multiple purposes related to social studies content. Compose informative essays and written products..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

INFORMATIVE THESIS

An informative thesis names a topic and previews what a written product will explain. It does not ask the reader to support a position.

The Northwest Ordinance set rules for governing territories and admitting new states.

ARGUMENTATIVE CLAIM

An argumentative claim takes a position that a reader could reasonably oppose. It often recommends a change and gives a reason.

Mayors must expand public park hours to give workers more access to recreation.

1 SORT

8 items

For each numbered statement, circle INFORM or ARGUE, then choose one item from each category and explain which words helped you decide.

1.	1. The census counts residents every ten years and helps determine seats in the U.S. House.	INFORM ARGUE
2.	2. States should allow eligible voters to register on Election Day to reduce missed voting opportunities.	INFORM ARGUE
3.	3. School boards should reserve time for student comments at every public meeting so students can voice concerns.	INFORM ARGUE
4.	4. The Supreme Court hears appeals and decides cases about federal law.	INFORM ARGUE
5.	5. Committees and floor votes are two parts of the federal lawmaking process.	INFORM ARGUE
6.	6. Local governments can provide services such as trash collection and road maintenance.	INFORM ARGUE
7.	7. Congress should require disaster aid applications in more languages to help residents access relief.	INFORM ARGUE
8.	8. The First Amendment protects speech, religion, the press, assembly, and petitions to the government.	INFORM ARGUE

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one new informative thesis and one new argumentative claim about two different government topics.

INFORM _____

ARGUE _____

CHALLENGE

Write two sentences about one new government topic: first an informative thesis, then an argumentative claim that recommends a change on that topic.

ANSWER KEY

Thesis or Position?

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	1. The census counts residents every ten years and helps determine seats in the U.S. House.	**INFORM**	It explains two functions of the census without taking a position.
2	2. States should allow eligible voters to register on Election Day to reduce missed voting opportunities.	**ARGUE**	It recommends a policy change and gives a reason.
3	3. School boards should reserve time for student comments at every public meeting so students can voice concerns.	**ARGUE**	It recommends a debatable change to meeting procedures.
4	4. The Supreme Court hears appeals and decides cases about federal law.	**INFORM**	It describes the Court's work without recommending a change.
5	5. Committees and floor votes are two parts of the federal lawmaking process.	**INFORM**	It identifies parts of a process without taking a position.
6	6. Local governments can provide services such as trash collection and road maintenance.	**INFORM**	It describes possible local government services.
7	7. Congress should require disaster aid applications in more languages to help residents access relief.	**ARGUE**	It proposes a debatable requirement and gives a reason.
8	8. The First Amendment protects speech, religion, the press, assembly, and petitions to the government.	**INFORM**	It explains constitutional protections without taking a position.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **INFORM**: The executive branch carries out federal laws through agencies and departments.
- **ARGUE**: The federal government should fund more rural broadband projects to improve access to online services.

Challenge: The Freedom of Information Act lets people request federal records and sets rules for agency responses. Federal agencies should have shorter deadlines for answering records requests to improve public access to government information.

For Part 2, accept explanations that identify a factual topic or process in an INFORM item and a debatable recommendation in an ARGUE item. For Part 3, check that each thesis fits its category and that the challenge uses the same topic in both sentences.