

## **Sample Thesis Statements and Accompanying Sub-Questions**

**Question #5: Does the United States have a history of sending people to jail for violent crimes they did not commit?**

**Possible Thesis:** The United States has a remarkable history of convicting and incarcerating innocent people.

### **Sub-Questions:**

1. Define remarkable. Is the rate of incarcerating innocent people different in other countries?
2. What is the US rate of convicting and incarcerating innocent people?
3. During which years?
4. How do we learn that someone was actually innocent after they had been proven by a jury to be guilty?
5. What is the process that leads to a conviction?
6. At what stage in this process is someone who is innocent likely to be undermined?
7. What is the US doing to solve this problem?

**Question #8: Are men or women more likely to receive a fair trial?**

**Possible Thesis:** Women are more likely than men to receive a fair trial.

### **Sub-questions:**

1. What constitutes a "fair" trial?
2. Is this true nationwide, or are there differences between and among the states?
3. Is this true in civil court? Criminal court? Both?
4. Has this always been true, or are there periods in American history where this has not been true?
5. What are the reasons for this discrepancy?
6. At what stages in the judicial process does the unfairness emerge?

**Possible Thesis:** Men are more likely than women to be convicted of crimes they did not commit.

### **Sub-Questions:**

1. In what states is this true?
2. During what period of history is this true? Was there a time when women were more likely than men to be convicted of crimes they did not commit?
3. How many people have been convicted of crimes that DNA evidence has later shown they did not commit?
4. How many of those people are men and how many are women?
5. Why are men more likely than women to be convicted? What are at least three of the reasons?
6. At what stages in the judicial process does the apparent unfairness emerge?