

## Thesis Statements

The thesis statement focuses the essay by stating the main idea of the paper. A thesis is often only one sentence in length, though it may be longer for some assignments, and is found at the end of the introduction paragraph. The rest of the essay gathers and organizes evidence that will persuade the reader of the logic of your interpretation.

### A thesis statement:

- Has a distinct standpoint on a subject and identifies the topic.
- Is a road map for the paper; in other words, it tells the reader what to expect from the rest of the essay.
- Is never a question but is often the answer to a question.
- Makes a claim about a topic and justifies this claim with specific evidence.
- Includes specific, objective language.

### Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Know your essay's type.	Announce the thesis, e.g. "This paper will discuss....," "In this essay....," "This essay will..."
Make a debatable claim.	Announce yourself, e.g. "I am going to prove that....," "My paper will..."
Be specific.	Ask a question.
	Leave your reader asking "How?" or "Why?"

## Formulating a Thesis Statement

You should come up with an initial thesis, sometimes called a working thesis, early in the writing process. As soon as you have decided on your essay topic, you need to work out what you want to say about it—a clear thesis will give your essay direction and structure.

### Step 1: Start with a Question

What would you like to find out or decide about your topic?

### Step 2: Write Your Initial Answer

After some initial research, you can formulate a tentative answer to this question. At this stage, it should guide the process of researching and writing.

### Step 3: Develop Your Answer

Consider why this is your answer and how you will convince your reader to agree with you.

## Types of Thesis Statements

### Expository Thesis Statement

In an expository essay, you will aim to explain the facts of a topic. Your thesis does not have to give a strong opinion, but it should clearly state the central point you want to make about the topic and mention the key aspects that you will explain.

**Example:** Although Aaliyah and Beyonce are frequently compared, there are clear distinctions in their chart history, performance style, and music techniques.

### Analytical Thesis Statement

In an essay that involves analyzing text, your thesis needs to mention the specific aspect that you will focus on and state what insight it gives us into the text's meaning or purpose.

**Example:** In the music video "This Is America," Childish Gambino illustrates how gun violence, police brutality, and black on black crime is prevalent yet overlooked in America.

### Argumentative Thesis Statement

In an argumentative essay, your thesis should take a strong position. Your aim in the essay is to convince your reader of this thesis based on evidence and logical reasoning.

**Example:** Colorism in the African American community constitutes a form of race-based discrimination and is prevalent when analyzing slavery, economic privileges, and entertainment.

**Example:** When weighing all factors, an electric vehicle is the best option for a new car buyer when compared to non-electric options.

## Thesis Statement Checklist

