

WHAT IS A THESIS STATEMENT?

A thesis statement tells a reader what the paper will explain, analyze, or argue. It can summarize the essay's main focus and identify its supporting points.

It contains the following elements:

- A preview of what your essay is about,
- Why it is being written,
- How its points will be established,
- A guide for the reader to anticipate what to expect from the essay, from beginning to end,
- A statement of intent and purpose,
- A single sentence at the end of the introductory paragraph,
- Is clear, strong, and easy to find.

To create a thesis statement, consider the following:

- What is the assignment asking you to do?
- Are you to describe or explain something?
- Are you to compare the advantages or disadvantages of a topic?
- Are you to argue or persuade an opinion?
- Are you to analyze a position?

A strong thesis statement makes (some or all of) the following points:

- Provides an argumentative (arguable) assertion about a topic, and takes a stance,
- States the conclusions reached about a topic,
- Defines the scope, purpose, and direction of the paper,
- Stays focused and specific enough to be supported within the guidelines of the paper,
- Identifies the relationships between the pieces of evidence being used to support the thesis statement.
- Anticipates and refutes counter arguments or evidence.

A thesis statement is NOT:

- Just a statement of fact or observation
- The announcement of a subject, or a title
- Too broad to be supported
- Too vague, general or wandering
- A sentence several with just one point
- A sentence to which the reader would respond: so what or who cares
- An incomplete sentence
- A restatement of the assignment question without providing more information
- A counter argument or lacking evidence

REMEMBER: A thesis statement needs to be restated in the conclusion to remind readers of the points you set out to establish.