How to Write a Thesis Statement

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http://khe2.adobeconnect.com/p4vwauox4u3/
What is a thesis statement?

A thesis statement…
- is the sentence that states the main idea of a writing assignment.
- helps control the ideas within the paper.
- is not merely a topic.
- often reflects an opinion or judgment that a writer has made about a reading or personal experience.
Elements of a Good Thesis Statement

Clarity
Understandability
Simplicity
Relevancy
Location, Location, Location

The thesis statement is a road map for your essay.

Essay

Introduction
Thesis statement
Body paragraph #1
Body paragraph #2
Body paragraph #3
Where does a thesis statement go?
In the introduction (usually at the end)

Gain the reader’s interest with an interesting fact or illustration that makes the topic clear. Narrow the topic with background information or context to show that it is important and relevant to your reader. **Assert the claim about the topic that you want the reader to understand or believe.**

Most academic readers expect the thesis to go at the end of the introduction. In a short academic essay, one to ten pages, the introduction is usually one paragraph long, and the thesis statement is the last sentence of it. This is not a rule, just a guideline for nonfiction, academic essays. This is because in academic writing you want your ideas to progress logically to both anticipate and answer the reader’s questions as you develop your ideas. In the beginning of a paper, a reader will be asking “What is this paper about?” “Why should I care?” and “What’s the point?” So the introduction will therefore begin with a catchy fact or example to gain the reader’s attention and make the topic clear. Then you'll want to provide some context or background information to define the particular issue or aspect of the topic that is important or relevant to you and your reader, and then you assert your claim about that issue, and this claim is the thesis: the statement that expresses what is true or happening in regards to the issue or what should be believed or done.
about it depending on the purpose of the paper. If your purpose is to inform, for example, your goal would be to help the reader understand the issue. If your purpose is to persuade, your goal would be to sway the reader to believe something about the issue and possibly do something about it.
Informative Thesis Statement

• Reports information
• Objective, analytical
• Not persuasive or evaluative
• States something exists, is true, or is happening

Now that we know the important characteristics of a thesis and how to arrive at a working thesis, let’s look at some examples. If your purpose is to write informatively, you are going to be reporting your information objectively. While you do want to analyze the topic and report it in a new and interesting way, when writing to inform, you aren’t to express any bias toward the topic or state what you think should happen or evaluate its effectiveness. You are essentially presenting an issue or perhaps a problem just to tell about it so the reader understands it better. Your thesis would therefore make a claim asserting that something is true or so about your topic, or you could claim that something has happened or is happening.
Informative Thesis: Examples

Here are a couple examples:

The effect of television violence on ratings has varied from decade to decade and depends on what society at large views as acceptable in each era.

Governments of the United States and Great Britain are tackling the issue of childhood obesity in different ways according to the established traditions of their health care systems.

This thesis claims that something is happening. It’s asserting that the effect of something depends on something else.

Governments of the United States and Great Britain are tackling the issue of childhood obesity in different ways according to the established traditions of their health care systems.

This claim also states that something is happening. It’s asserting that two governments are addressing the same problem but differently.
If your purpose is to write persuasively, you are going to be presenting your information so that readers are swayed to see things your way or accept your position as a valid one even if they hold an opposing viewpoint. You still have to be objective in your tone and use logic and research to support your reasoning, but in a persuasive essay, you do want to make your stance on the issue clear, so your thesis will therefore state that something should, must, ought to, or needs to happen or be done or thought of in a certain way.
Persuasive Thesis: Examples

Here are a couple examples:

College athletes perform a valuable service for their schools and should be paid for their performance.

Photojournalists in war zones should always be embedded with military troops for their own protection.
Three-Point Thesis

• The topic or issue

• The writer’s stance on the topic.

• Plan of development

Sometimes you will be asked to write a three-point thesis. This type of thesis statement goes one step further and not only identifies the topic and makes a claim about it, but it also provides a plan of development by listing the supporting points that will be discussed in the paper.
Three-Point Thesis: Examples

Here are a couple examples:

*The parents of children with a genetic predisposition towards obesity can help their children avoid obesity* by controlling the children’s diet, providing regular exercise, and promoting a healthy lifestyle.

*Instead of expelling students who bully, high school administrators should help reduce instances of bullying* by instituting a zero-tolerance policy for fighting, holding alternative dispute resolution classes, and establishing a teen court program.
Types of Thesis Statements

• Analytical/Analysis

- By examining Martin Luther King’s use of logos in “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” specifically, examples of historical analogies to Old Testament Prophets, St. Paul and Jesus, and the American Revolution, we can better understand King’s claims and why his “Letter” is considered a classic argument.
Questions and Review

A thesis statement
- expresses the main idea,
- comes at the end of the introduction,
- involves prewriting and research to write,
- makes an informative or persuasive claim,
- and may provide an organizational plan.

To review, a thesis statement expresses the main idea of a paper. It comes at the end of the introduction. It involves prewriting and preliminary research to write, and you might want to modify it as you write your paper too. You want to be clear about your assignment regarding the type of thesis to create, but it will either be informative or persuasive, and it can also provide an organizational plan for the
essay by including the topics that support your thesis and what will be discussed in the body of the paper.
For more writing support, connect with the KUWC’s newly redesigned public webpage. You can actually Google and find this page. This is also a great way for you to stay connected to the KUWC through our blog and Twitter. Many of our resources are here as well.
Come visit the Academic Support Center. We can be found under the My Studies tab, then under Academic Support Center.
On the main Academic Support Center page, you will see the links to each center’s services and resources. Please update the text below to reflect your center’s services.

For the Writing Center, these include Live Tutoring, Paper Review Service, the Writing Reference Library, Citation Guidelines, Workshops, English Language Learner, and Fundamental writing help. Notice, you can access the Kaplan Guide to Successful Writing on the right hand side in both print and audio form.
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