



TIPS FOR THESIS STATEMENTS

A thesis statement is the main idea of your paper. It is the “message” that you are conveying to the reader about your chosen topic. **Often, a thesis statement is expressed in one sentence at the end of the first paragraph of your paper.** When you write your thesis statement, keep these tips in mind:

1. Determine what kind of paper you are writing.

- An **analytical** paper breaks down an issue or an idea into its component parts, evaluates the issue or idea, and presents this breakdown and evaluation to the audience.
- An **expository** (explanatory) paper explains something to the audience.
- An **argumentative** paper makes a claim about a topic and justifies this claim with specific evidence. The claim could be an opinion, a policy proposal, an evaluation, a cause-and-effect statement, or an interpretation. The goal of the argumentative paper is to convince the audience that the claim is true based on the evidence provided.

If you are writing a text which does not fall under these three categories (ex. a narrative), a thesis statement somewhere in the first paragraph could still be helpful to your reader.

2. **Your thesis statement should be specific**—it should cover only what you will discuss in your paper and should be supported by your body paragraphs with specific supporting details (i.e. evidence, examples, explanations).
3. **Your topic may change as you write, so you may need to revise your thesis statement to reflect exactly what you have discussed in the paper.**

EXAMPLES:

ANALYTICAL PAPER	EXPOSITORY/EXPLANATORY PAPER	ARGUMENTATIVE PAPER
<p>Thesis statement:</p> <p>An analysis of the advertising campaigns of tobacco companies reveals that the cigarette industry relies heavily upon dominant patriarchal attitudes for its continued success.</p> <p>Paragraphs that follow should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss the marketing strategies of cigarette manufacturers • explain how these strategies use and reinforce traditional notions of masculinity to sell cigarettes 	<p>Thesis statement:</p> <p>Hobbies are means for people to maintain physical and mental well-being.</p> <p>Paragraphs that follow should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • define hobbies • give examples of hobbies • explain how these activities help sustain physical and mental health 	<p>Thesis statement:</p> <p>High school graduates should be required to take a year off to pursue community service projects before entering college in order to increase their maturity and global awareness.</p> <p>Paragraphs that follow should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present arguments and give evidences to support the main claim that students should pursue community projects before entering college



Writing & Research Center

We're here to help you succeed.