



How to Write a Thesis Statement

WE ARE

WRITING TUTORS

What is a Thesis Statement?

- The main idea of the essay
- Contains an element of opinion or an argument
- It's not a fact, but something that needs to be proven
- **Must** be a complete sentence
- Should contain some of the same words from the assignment question
- Found at the end of the introduction paragraph



Thesis or Fact?

Are the statements below a thesis or a fact?

1. In Canada, kindergarten is not compulsory. **FACT**
2. Children should begin learning to read in kindergarten. **THESIS**
3. Putting a child into kindergarten before he or she is physically or emotionally ready can have several unfortunate effects on a child. **THESIS**
4. In some European countries, children do not begin formal schooling until the age of seven or eight. **FACT**

Title, Thesis, or Fact?

Are the statements below a title, a thesis, or a fact?

1. The personal interview is the most important step in the employment process **THESIS**
2. Looking for a job **TITLE**
3. Sixty percent of all jobs are obtained through newspaper advertisements **FACT**
4. The best time to learn a second language is in grade school **THESIS**
5. The importance of learning a second language **TITLE**

Writing Thesis Statements from Essay Questions

1. Should the government support young artists?

The government should support young artists through funding.

2. What is the value of being able to speak two languages in Canada?

Canadians who speak two languages gain valuable employment.

3. Is it harmful or beneficial to adopt a child from one culture and raise that child in another culture?

It is beneficial for an adopted child to be raised in a new culture.

Writing Thesis Statements from Essay Questions (continued)

4. In what ways can the government discourage people from drinking and driving?

The government can discourage drinking and driving through public education.

5. Are some forms of advertising harmful, and if so, should harmful advertising be banned?

All forms of advertisements are acceptable, and there should not be bans placed on advertising.

The Focused Topic

Your thesis statement should focus on a specific part of the topic.

Bad example: Grades for exams are unfair

This is too broad. What grades? Why are they unfair?

Good example: Course grades based solely on exams don't accurately show a student's knowledge of the material.

This tells us specifically why exam grades are unfair

Examples of a Good Thesis: Persuasive Essay

A thesis for a persuasive essay contains an opinion or argument that needs to be proven.

The **should** statement uses should to clearly show your position.

For example: “High school students should wear uniforms”.

The **position** statement doesn't use should, but shows your position.

For example: “Uniforms are essential for high school students”.

How do I develop my thesis statement?

Include the **main points** that will be discussed in the essay.

The points should be listed in the same order as they appear in the body paragraphs.

For example:

“High school students should wear uniforms because they **eliminate status**, **raise students’ expectations of themselves**, and **deter crime and improve students’ safety**”.

“Uniforms are essential for high school students as they **eliminate status between students**, **raise students’ expectations of themselves**, and **deter crime and improve students’ safety**”.

Parallelism

When you develop your thesis, it has to be parallel.

What does parallel mean?

It means all parts of the sentence are grammatically equal.

INCORRECT: “Uniforms are essential for high school students as they eliminate status between students and students’ safety is improved”.

Verb

Noun

→ Why is it incorrect?

The first point starts with a verb and the second point starts with a noun. Both points have to start with the same part of speech.

CORRECT: “Uniforms are essential for high school students as they eliminate status between students and improve students’ safety”.

Verb

Noun

Verb

Noun

Review your Thesis

Ask yourself:

- Is the thesis statement a single sentence?
- Is the topic broad or narrow enough?
- Are the three supporting points different from each other?
- Are the three main points parallel?

What to Avoid

1. Clichéd openings → “In today’s society...”
2. Announcements → “In this essay, I will discuss...”
3. Too many details