



# 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