

Writing and Tutorial Center

Drafting a Strong Thesis Statement

The very core of your paper, a thesis statement is the primary idea or claim that the rest of your writing is built around. It does more than just introduce a topic, it's the argument or insight you're highlighting, and lets your reader know which direction you'll be taking the following paragraphs, like a roadmap.

As a general rule, the thesis statement itself should not be a *question*, but rather how you seek to *answer* a question. Try to distill it down to a single, concise sentence (near the end of your introduction) that presents a specific claim or argument, one you'll realistically be able to explore in depth. Avoid being overly broad or vague, although simply writing an objective statement of fact doesn't invite very insightful discussion either. In the thesis statement you'll need to suggest how you'll be supporting your claim with evidence or logical reasoning.

While there's no single formula for a thesis statement that applies to every situation, one helpful way to get started is:

OBSERVATION

Something you've noticed or identified

+

ANALYSIS

What you think your observations show or mean

+

SIGNIFICANCE

Why that interpretation is important

EXAMPLES

In *La barbería* (1942), Cundo Bermúdez restructures the idea of *cubanidad* (Cuban identity) around a glorification of middle-class mulatos within fantastical genre spaces, provoking continuous tensions between reality and imagination.

Adolescents exposed to chronic social media use show increased symptoms of anxiety and depression, suggesting a direct link between digital consumption patterns and declining mental health.

Morrison redefines the concept of motherhood through the lens of slavery in *Beloved*, suggesting that maternal love can become both redemptive and destructive when shaped by historical trauma.

Don't be afraid to start messy! Draft a "working thesis" and refine it as your ideas become clearer. Chances are you'll need to revisit it after writing your body paragraphs anyway, once your arguments solidify and you experiment with how you want to articulate them.

Avoid using words like "interesting" or "good"—they're so vague and subjective that don't really *mean* anything. How is anyone supposed to argue against that? It's a classic case of "because I said so."

As you write the rest of your paper, make sure each of your body paragraphs begins with a clear topic sentence which ties back to your core thesis statement *and* indicates how you'll be exploring a unique facet of that argument. If you're struggling to connect a later paragraph back, ask yourself if it's a little too off topic or if your original thesis statement needs to be revised.

SOURCES

Hacker, Diana and Nancy Sommers, *A Writer's Reference* (8th Edition), Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015.

"[Writing and Critical Thinking Through Literature](#)" from LibreText Commons.