



Easy Steps to a Great Thesis

A thesis statement is...



- ❧ **The answer to a question that you have posed**
- ❧ **The solution for a problem you have identified**
- ❧ **A statement that takes a position on a debatable topic**

General Tips **About Thesis Statements**



- ❧ **A statement that contains the essay's topic and point(s)**
- ❧ Gives the reader a sense of what the essay will be about
- ❧ Usually comes at the end of the introduction
- ❧ Most thesis statements are only one sentence
- ❧ Must be a complete sentence
- ❧ **Everything in the essay must support the thesis.**
- ❧ Introduction paragraph should follow this format:
 - ❧ Attention getter (commonly known as a “hook”)
 - ❧ Introduce the topic
 - ❧ State the thesis

What are the Roles of a Thesis?



1. It can assert an argument, explain a topic, and/or analyze an issue.
2. **It is specific in presenting the writer's position.**
3. It limits both scope and topic of the paper.
4. **It captures the reader's interest and focuses that interest on the topic.**

Kinds of Thesis Statements: Persuasive*



- An persuasive paper makes a claim based on opinion, evaluation, or interpretation about a topic and proves this claim with specific evidence.
- **Persuasive thesis example:** 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.

*If you have been asked to *argue a point* or *choose a side* on an issue, this is likely the type of thesis you will use.

Kinds of Thesis Statements: Analytical*

- An analytical paper ~~breaks~~ the topic down into parts, examines each part, and determines how each part relates to the whole topic.
- **Analytical thesis example:** An analysis of the college admission process reveals one challenge facing counselors: accepting students with high test scores or students with strong extracurricular backgrounds.

*If you have been asked to *analyze* a topic, issue, or reading, this is the type of thesis you should use.

Kinds of Thesis Statements: Expository*

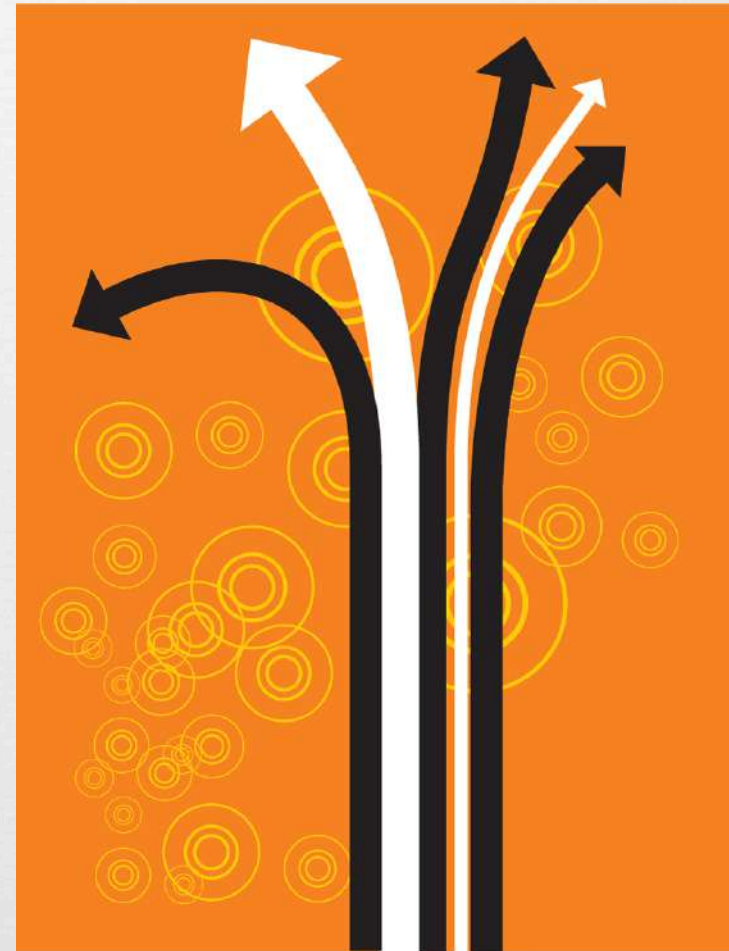
- An expository (~~explanatory~~) paper explains something to the audience.
- **Expository thesis example:** The life of the typical college student is characterized by time spent studying, attending class, and socializing with peers.

*If you have been asked to *narrate* a story or *explain* a process, this is likely the type of thesis you will use.

Ways of Constructing Thesis Statements: The List (Essay Map)



- ☞ Contains essay's topic, point, and three supporting reasons
- ☞ Example: "To reduce the number of highway fatalities [topic and point], our country needs [purpose=persuasive] to enforce the national law that designates twenty-one as the legal minimum age to drink, set up check points on major holidays, and take away licenses from convicted drunk drivers [three reasons]."



Ways of Constructing Thesis Statements: The Umbrella



- ❧ Contains essay's topic, point, and alludes to reasons why the reader should believe you.
- ❧ Do not directly state the supporting reasons, but instead allude to them.
- ❧ Example: "Although thought to be humane and necessary, animal testing [topic] for medical and cosmetic purposes does not live up to it's promises [point and reasons]."
- ❧ Do NOT use language like, "There are many reasons people don't like chocolate ice cream."

Thesis Don'ts

- ❧ **Announce your thesis:** “In this essay, I am going to tell you about Mt. SAC college and why you should go there.”
- ❧ **Confuse your reader:** Just make sure that the topic and point are clear.
- ❧ **Cannot be a fact:** Doesn't allow you to prove anything because it's already factual.
- ❧ **Don't be vague:** Words like “good,” “bad,” “right,” and “wrong,” don't convey specific meaning.
- ❧ **Cannot be a question:** “Don't you think animal testing is inhumane?”
 - ❧ Does not give the point of the paper.
 - ❧ Leaves it open for readers to fill in the blank.



Creating a Thesis Statement

1. Determine essay's topic (what you're talking about)

Example: Pixar's film *Up*

2. Determine what kind of paper you are writing and what kind of thesis statement you need to use: analytical, persuasive, or expository.

Example: Persuasive=It's not really a "kid" movie.

3. Determine the way you will construct your thesis: list or umbrella?

4. Put it all together!

Example: Pixar's most recent film, *Up*, should not be considered a "kid" movie because its character conflicts and main theme of loss are too complex for children to understand.

Directed Learning Activity



- 🌀 Now complete the exercises in the thesis creation worksheet. You will be peer-editing your thesis.