

# Creating a Thesis Statement

## **What is a thesis?**

According to *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*: A position or proposition that a person advances and offers to maintain by argument

**Simply said: A clear and concise way to state and support your opinion on a specific topic.**

# The thesis Statement Asks

- What will your essay be about?
- What is the main idea of your essay?
- What idea or concept do you want to introduce to your reader?

# Thesis Sentence

- Focuses and directs the essay
- Is usually one sentence
- Can be found in the introduction (usually the last line)
- Your opinion + support
- Is a statement NOT A QUESTION!!!
- Is a position that can be argued

# A thesis sentence **NEVER**

- **Announces itself:** "I'm going to talk about . . ."
- **Personalizes:** "I think . . ." or "I believe . . ."
- **Questions:** "Is English hard to learn?"
- **Uses unclear language:** "It seems..."

# Thesis Statements in a Formal Essay

- Contain a **topic** (main idea of what you are writing about)
- Contain an **opinion (position)** about the topic (what your attitude is toward the topic)

# Important Parts of your Thesis Statement

- **Writer's purpose**: Your particular position
- **Author Credentials**:
  - Author
  - Genre of literary work
  - Title of literary work
- **Subtopics**: 3 supporting examples

# Developing a Thesis

Look back over your notes for patterns of questions or ideas that interest you.

## Pitfalls:

- Avoid choosing too many ideas or an idea that is too complicated to easily cover or support.
- Avoid choosing an idea that you cannot support.

# Writing a thesis: Step 1

**What is your question or idea?**

In the movie *The Little Mermaid*,  
why does the character of Ariel  
makes many sacrifices?



## Step 2

Take a position on your topic.

In the movie *The Little Mermaid*, the character of Ariel sacrifices her identity for love.

# Step 3

**Explain why/how. What are your main arguments?**

1. Gives up her ability to talk/sing
2. Is willing to leave her mermaid family behind
3. Makes physical changes, such as losing her tail, to match the image of her Prince.

Now combine them:

In the movie *The Little Mermaid*, the character of Ariel sacrifices her identity for the love of her prince by giving up her voice, abandoning her family, and physically altering her body.

# A Working Thesis

## What is a working thesis?

- During the process of writing, you may discover new information or think of a new idea while you are composing your essay.
- You may also find that your examples or support are leading you in a different, or more specific, direction.
- Therefore, it is ok that your thesis statement be able to **adapt**. Make sure that your paper is proving your thesis statement. You may find that your thesis will end up changing over time.