

Thesis Statements

- A thesis statement is clear, concise, and goes beyond fact—it becomes an idea that needs to be supported with opinion and evidence.
- It defines your position on a topic or subject. It should also be potentially interesting to your intended audience.
- A thesis statement usually appears toward the end of the introduction. (This may vary according to discipline, however.)
- It makes a point about your essay's topic.
- Once stated, the thesis becomes the driving force behind any essay.

If you're having trouble coming up with a thesis, try asking yourself genuine, difficult questions about the topic. Find an especially interesting question and then state your response in a sentence. This new sentence could be a workable thesis.

Another approach is to think of a strong statement about the subject that begins with the words, "I believe that..." Write that sentence and then take the words "I believe that" out of the sentence. This new sentence could also be a workable thesis.

For the writer, the thesis statement serves as a planning tool for the essay. It also helps the writer determine the essay's real focus. For the reader, the thesis statement serves as a "map" to guide the reader through the paper. It also prepares the reader to read. Finally, it keeps the reader focused on the main idea of the essay and creates a reason to keep reading—to discover the support behind the thesis.