

How to Write a Thesis Statement in 3 Easy Steps!

A *Thesis Statement* is one or two sentences found at the end of your introduction that briefly express the main idea of your paper and answer any questions about your topic. The thesis statement unifies the ideas of your paper and provides direction for the development of your argument.

Step 1:

Write down your main point. This should be one idea that answers all the questions in the assignment and it should be specific and focused. A simple way to write a thesis is to think of it as an equation:

what you plan to argue + how you plan to argue it = Thesis Statement

Step 2:

If a reader can say "how?" or "why?" or "so what?" after reading your thesis, you need to alter your thesis so that it answers those questions.

Step 3:

Does the rest of your essay support your thesis? Sometimes you can write your whole essay and realize that it has nothing to do with the thesis that you wrote earlier. That's okay. You either have to change your whole paper to fit your thesis, or modify your thesis to fit your paper. As long as you have a strong, cohesive essay in the end, it doesn't matter what order you write things in.

Example 1:

Horror movies.

This is too vague. What about horror movies?

Many people object today's violent horror movies.

Why? What do they object to? Why should we care?

Despite their high-tech special effects, today's violent horror movies do not convey the creative use of cinematography or the emotional impact that we saw in the classic horror films of the 1940s and 1950s.

This is good because tells the reader that you plan to address the differences between modern and classic horror films by looking at the cinematography and the emotional impact of various movies.

Example 2:

Shakespeare's plays are great.

Why are they great? What plays are great?

Shakespeare's *Midsummer's Night Dream* is his greatest play because it is so complicated.

This is better, but how is it complicated? Why does that make it so great?

The success of the last scene in *Midsummer Night's Dream* comes from subtle linguistic and theatrical references to Elizabeth's position as queen.

This is good because it gives specific details as to how the play is complicated, and why this is such a success.