

Thesis Statement Tips

1. Determine what kind of paper you are writing:

- An **analytical** paper breaks down an issue or an idea into its component parts, evaluates the issue or idea, and presents this breakdown and evaluation to the audience.
- An **expository** (explanatory) paper explains something to the audience.
- An **argumentative** paper makes a claim about a topic and justifies this claim with specific evidence. The claim could be an opinion, a policy proposal, an evaluation, a cause-and-effect statement, or an interpretation. The goal of the argumentative paper is to convince the audience that the claim is true based on the evidence provided.

2. Your thesis statement should be specific—it should cover only what you will discuss in your paper and should be supported with specific evidence.

3. The thesis statement usually appears at the end of the first paragraph of a paper.

4. Your topic may change as you write, so you may need to revise your thesis statement to reflect exactly what you have discussed in the paper.

Example of an analytical thesis statement:

An analysis of the college admission process reveals two principal problems facing counselors: accepting students with high test scores or students with strong extracurricular backgrounds.

The paper that follows should explain the analysis of the college admission process and the two problems facing admissions counselors.

Example of an expository (explanatory) thesis statement:

The life of the typical college student is characterized by time spent studying, attending class, and socializing with peers.

The paper that follows should explain how students spend their time studying, attending class, and socializing with peers.

Example of an argumentative thesis statement:

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.

The paper that follows should present an argument and give evidence to support the claim that students should pursue community projects before entering college.

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