
THESIS STATEMENTS

Thesis statements are meant to show the main idea that is going to be discussed throughout your paper. Thesis statements help keep your paper on track as you write and help the reader explore your argument.

Components of a Thesis Statement:

- It is a statement and cannot be a question.
- It takes a position and is more than a statement of fact.
- It is clear and concise and avoids being too broad or vague.
- It usually comes near the end of the first paragraph, but not always.

Thesis statements are used to answer the question of the paper's topic. For example:

- Topic: Comparing restaurants
- Questions raised: Which restaurant serves the best food? Which one is the cheapest? How does the customer service compare between various establishments?

All paper topics are going to raise some questions. Your job, as a writer, is to create a thesis statement that answers these questions. Remember that when you answer these questions, you should try to adhere to the components listed above.

It is a Statement:

We call it a thesis statement because we use it to make a statement or claim. In order to help the reader remain interested and understand the topic, we avoid phrasing the thesis as a question.

- Question: Is Café Rio the best restaurant?
- Statement: Café Rio is the best restaurant because...

Notice that while the above statement isn't a question, it also isn't a claim. It doesn't take a position. In other words, it still isn't an effective thesis statement because it has not made any sort of value judgement.

It Takes a Position:

Thesis statements cannot just be statements of fact; they need to have a value judgement about that fact. This judgement will be what you're arguing.

- Statement of Fact: Café Rio serves burritos because...
- Value Judgement: Café Rio is the best restaurant because...

It is Clear and Concise

We want our thesis statements to be clear and concise, not broad and vague. If we do not make ourselves clear, our readers will have a hard time understanding our claims. In order to create a specific thesis statement, brainstorm reasons why your thesis statement is true. These reasons will then become the main points of your paper and can help create a specific thesis.

- Broad Statement: Café Rio is the best restaurant because their food is good.
- Clear Statement: Café Rio is the best restaurant because they use fresh produce, have friendly service, and reasonable prices.

Remember, the body of your entire essay is working to develop and support the thesis you give at the beginning. If your paper seems to be taking a different direction, you need to make a decision—change your thesis statement, or change the direction of your paper.