



What is a Thesis Statement?

A thesis statement is a one- or two-sentence condensation of the argument or analysis of an essay. It is usually placed at the beginning of a work to tell the reader what to expect in the body of the paper.

Why Should Your Paper Contain a Thesis Statement?

- a thesis statement allows you to better organize and develop your argument
- it provides a reader with a "guide" to your paper
- it allows you to really clarify your ideas

You can think of your thesis statement as an answer to the question that your paper addresses. A strong thesis statement takes some sort of a stand, it suggests that a discussion of that stand is justified, it is specific, and it contains one main idea. For example, if your assignment is to write a paper on the structure of family using your own family as an example, you might come up with the following thesis statement:

My family is an extended family.

This is a weak thesis because it just states an observation. A strong thesis statement would be more specific, and would suggest a discussion by being somewhat controversial:

While most American families would view blood-relation marriage as a threat to the nuclear family structure, many Iranian families, like my own, believe that these marriages help reinforce kinship ties in an extended family.

How to Generate a Thesis Statement if the Topic is Assigned.

Your first step is to word the assignment as a single question. For example, if your assignment is "Biotechnology: an everyday application of genetic engineering", turn the topic into a question like, "What is the impact of biotechnology on our everyday lives?" Once you have chosen the question, compose one or two sentences answering it.

Q. What is the impact of biotechnology on our everyday lives?

A. Most people underestimate the impact of biotechnology on their everyday lives.
or

A. Biotechnology is a global experiment that is jeopardizing our lives.

How to Generate a Thesis Statement if the Topic is not Assigned.

Your first task will be to come up with a question you would like to answer. Your thesis statement needs to answer a question about the issue you'd like to explore. In this situation, your job is to figure out what question you'd like to write about.

1. Brainstorm the topic.

For example, for a Business course, you may want to focus on a specific aspect of global commerce. Start out with a simple statement like this: **Globalization.**



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This fragment isn't a thesis statement, it simply indicates a general subject. Furthermore, your reader doesn't know what you want to say about the globalization. Your next step will be to narrow the topic

2. Narrow the topic.

After reading about the topic you may conclude that globalization deals mainly with consumers. You change your thesis to look like this: **Globalization and consumers.**

This fragment not only announces your subject, but it focuses on one aspect of globalization: the consumer. You should note that this fragment is not a thesis statement because your reader doesn't know your conclusions on the topic.

3. Take a position on the topic.

After reflecting on the topic a little while longer, you decide that what you really want to say about this topic is that globalization benefits consumers. You revise your thesis statement to look like this: **Globalization benefits consumers.**

This statement asserts your position, but it is still vague.

4. Use specific language.

You decide to explain what you mean by *excellence*, so you write:

Globalization benefits consumers by providing a wider range of goods at lower prices.

This statement is specific, but it isn't a thesis. It merely reports a fact instead of making an assertion.

5. Make an assertion based on clearly stated support.

Research your topic further, and look for support for your statement. You may end up changing your mind on your original statement! You finally revise your thesis statement one more time to look like this:

While globalization benefits some consumers by providing a wider range of goods at lower prices, it also has wide-reaching detrimental implications on global society as a whole by increasing income inequalities between nations.

Notice how the thesis answers the question, "What are the benefits and the detrimental effects of globalization?" When you started thinking about the paper, you may not have had a specific question in mind, but as you became more involved in the topic, your ideas became more specific. Your thesis changed to reflect your new insights!

6. Write your paper!

Your paper should support your thesis statement by arguing for it and providing support for the fact that while some consumers benefit from globalization in also has detrimental implications on the world by increasing income inequalities among nations. Your thesis statement should be clearly stated within the first paragraph or two of the body of the paper.

Based on: http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/thesis_statement.shtml

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