



The Betty East Tutoring Center at Victoria College

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Thesis Statements

Your thesis statement combines the purpose, audience, and topic of your project into one sentence. This sentence is the foundational building block for the rest of your paper. Every paragraph in your paper will need to tie back to this one sentence, so it is very important to get it right.

Brainstorm

The thesis includes the main idea, your attitude toward the idea, and the purpose of your paper. Your thesis cannot be a statement of fact, such as “Wives and husbands always assume marital roles.” Example:

Audience	Other English students and your English professor
Purpose	To inform the audience
Main Idea and Your Attitude	The marital roles adopted by wives and husbands are determined as much by their individual social networks as by their family history or personal values.

Now, try to brainstorm in this chart using your own topic:

Audience	
Purpose	
Main Idea and Your Attitude	

Examples of other audiences could be people in Victoria, people of Texas, college students, millennials, etc.

An example of another purpose could be to persuade your audience to agree with your opinion. For example, you could try to persuade your audience that gender roles are old fashioned.

Now, ask yourself the following questions and write down your answers:

What is the point of my research?	
What do I want this paper to accomplish?	
Can I tell my reader anything new or different?	
Do I have a solution to a problem?	

Finally, make a list of things about your topic that you would like to discuss in detail:

Writing the Thesis:

What the Thesis Statement is For:

Your thesis statement will be a combination of your audience, purpose, and topic. It informs the audience on what to expect from your paper. You will also use your thesis to keep from wandering off topic as you write.

When to Write the Thesis:

Your first draft of your thesis statement should be written immediately after your initial research is complete. That way, you have something to focus on as you do further research and begin writing your paper. Just like you will have more than one draft of your paper before submitting it, you will probably go through multiple thesis statements. You may even change the thesis as you write your paper or once it is complete in order to more accurately represent the focus of your paper.

Where the Thesis Goes:

The thesis will appear in your introductory paragraph as a preview to what your paper will discuss. Then, the thesis will reappear in your concluding paragraph to summarize your paper.

Characteristics of Good Thesis Statements:

Focused:

The thesis statement focuses on the appropriate purpose, audience, and length of the paper. In other words, the thesis statement is neither too broad nor too narrow.

Opinionated:

The thesis asserts a supportable opinion, not a fact.

Assertive:

The thesis statement clearly defines your opinion on the topic.

United:

The thesis ties together all of the ideas found in your paper.

Stated:

The thesis statement is a statement, not a question.

Final thought: If you have combined the main idea you wish to communicate, your attitude toward this idea, and the purpose of your paper into a statement that you can support with research in the body of your paper, you are on your way to a great thesis.