

WRITING A THESIS STATEMENT

A thesis statement is **ONE** sentence in the opening statement of an academic essay which states the main idea of the research. The basic formula for a thesis statement is:

_____ + _____ = Thesis

So, in general, the thesis of an academic essay is the main topic of the essay paired with the writer's position on that topic.

What makes a thesis statement important?

- a. A thesis statement helps you:
 1. start drafting
 2. stay focused
 3. narrow your subject
 4. have a point of reference to guide your paper
- b. A thesis statement serves three purposes:
 1. gives a preview to the audience of what the project will discuss
 2. presents the categories that will be used to organize the project
 3. introduces the order in which the categories will be presented

What is a GOOD thesis statement:

1. A good thesis statement is short and simple: it should be no longer than one sentence, regardless of essay length.

Good thesis: *Success is a result of doing the right things consistently.*

Bad thesis: *In a world full of success gurus and books about success, it becomes ever so more important to delineate the one trait that ultimately determines success: doing the right things consistently.*
2. A good thesis statement is limited to one main idea.

Good thesis: *The key to successful dieting is focusing on a specific goal.*

Bad thesis: *The key to successful dieting is focusing on a specific goal, which is also the key to successfully running a business and coaching a football team.*
3. A good thesis statement is a declarative sentence with no qualifiers (*in my opinion, I think, might, maybe, perhaps, etc.*):

Good thesis: *Lebron James' ability to score, pass, and rebound make him the league's most valuable player.*

Bad thesis: *Lebron James' ability to score, pass, and rebound just might make him the league's most valuable player.*

THESIS STATEMENT WORKSHEET

*This worksheet is an exercise to help you **IDENTIFY, CREATE, and CORRECT** thesis statements so that you can use them effectively in your own academic essay.*

Identification

Take a look at the passages below. In each paragraph, highlight the sentence you believe to be the thesis.

1. There is new cause for concern for parents who think they are feeding their young children safe and healthy foods. A new lawsuit claims the Environmental Protection Agency is allowing unacceptably high levels of pesticides in some foods favored by children. Massachusetts joins Connecticut, New Jersey and New York in alleging everything from grapes to oranges to potatoes contains pesticide residues that are excessive for children. The EPA is being accused of not setting child safe pesticide limits as required by the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996. "These safety standards exist. They've existed since 1996. They need to be enforced. We do need to have these levels set and ideally they'll be set at 10 times the safety standards so that they will protect kids," said Massachusetts Assistant Attorney General Alice Moore.
2. While California has been the state most prone to serious earthquakes in recent years, there are many other fault zones in other areas of the United States. For example, geologists and seismologists have predicted a 97 percent chance of a major earthquake in the New Madrid seismic zone of the central United States (including Arkansas, Missouri, Tennessee, and Kentucky) between now and the year 2035. While earthquakes with the power of the one that hit the greater Los Angeles area in January 1994 are fairly rare, less severe earthquakes can interrupt your normal living patterns and cause substantial injury.

Create

Add your opinion to the following topics to create your own thesis statements.

3. Topic: Pesticides used for controlling pests which can damage crops.

Thesis: _____

4. Topic: Air pollution caused by fossil fuel emissions.

Thesis: _____

5. Topic: Rainforest depletion caused by logging.

Thesis: _____

Correct

Take a look at the following thesis statements and re-write them correctly on the lines below.

Remember that a complete thesis statement must have the topic and also state the author's position on that topic.

6. Air pollution is caused in part by fossil fuel emissions, which are given off by gasoline burning vehicles.

This thesis is incorrect because: _____

A correct thesis might be: _____
