

# Writing Thesis Statements

## What is a thesis statement?

- A sentence or two (generally in the introduction of the paper) that establishes the main argument, analysis, or rhetorical purpose of the paper.

## Why are thesis statements important?

- condenses the argument for the reader
- clarifies the organization of the paper
- acts as a “guide” for the rest of the paper

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## How to write a strong thesis statement:

1. Determine the purpose of the paper:
  - **analytical**: breaks down an issue or idea into component parts, evaluates these parts, and presents the breakdown and evaluation to an audience
  - **expository**: explains something to the audience
  - **argumentative**: makes a justifiable claim and tries to convince the audience that the claim is true through evidence-based arguments
2. Answers a question:
  - What is the subject you are writing about (what is it and why are you writing about it)?
  - What is the main idea of the paper (what are you focusing on)?
  - What is the purpose of the paper?

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Strong Thesis	Weak Thesis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• asserts a specific and focused claim that can be supported with evidence<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ types of evidence: research studies, statistics, textual or experiential examples, and/or anecdotal evidence</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• unclear about main point, subjective, and/or vague</li></ul>
“In <i>The Tempest</i> , Caliban represents the ‘Other,’ Miranda and Ferdinand represent the restoration of the social order, and Prospero represents literary creativity.”	“ <i>The Tempest</i> is a great play with a lot of symbolism.”