



# Thesis Statements

A thesis statement is a one or two-sentence summary of the central argument or point that you will be making in your essay, research paper, or other written work. It usually appears at the end of the first paragraph of a paper, serving as the roadmap and guiding the reader on what to expect from the rest of your paper.

## General Tips

- A thesis statement generally consists of two parts: your topic, followed by the analysis, explanation(s), or assertion(s) that you're making about the topic.
- A thesis statement must be supported with reasons and evidence.
- A strong statement should be clear and concise, specific, arguable, and relevant.
- As you write and revise your paper, it's okay to change your thesis statement – sometimes you don't discover what you really want to say about a topic until you've started (or finished) writing! Just make sure that your final thesis statement accurately reflects the main idea in your paper.

## Create Thesis Statements

### Expository (Explanatory) Thesis Statements

An expository paper explains something to the reader. An expository thesis statement explains:

1. What you are going to explain
2. The categories you are using to organize your explanation
3. The order in which you will be presenting your categories

*Example:* The primary habits of barn owls include hunting for insects and animals, building nests, and raising their young.

### Analytical Thesis Statements

An analytical paper breaks down an issue or an idea into its component parts and evaluates the issue or idea for the reader. An analytical thesis statement explains:

1. What the paper will analyze
2. The parts of your analysis the reader should expect
3. The order in which the analysis will be presented

*Example:* An analysis of barn owl flight behavior reveals two kinds of flight patterns: patterns related to hunting prey and patterns related to courtship.

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## Argumentative Thesis Statements

An argumentative paper makes a claim about a topic and justifies this claim with reasons and evidence. This claim can be an opinion, a policy proposal, an evaluation, a cause-and-effect statement, or an interpretation.

An argumentative thesis statement tells your reader:

1. The claim or assertion
2. The reasons/evidence that support this claim
3. The order in which you will be presenting your reasons and evidence

*Example:* Barn owls' nests should not be eliminated from barns because barn owls help farmers by eliminating insect and rodent pests.

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