



# Thesis Statements

## A-State Online Writing Center

### **Why does your essay need a thesis statement?**

A thesis statement simplifies your main argument points and how you will support those points into one or two sentences within your introduction paragraph. You are trying to convince your audience to agree with your researched argument(s), and your thesis introduces said arguments to your audience.

By providing readers with a simplified summary of your main arguments, they have an outline or guide in place to understand the context of your research and analysis. Thesis statements also enable you as an author to have a primary focal point or points to always circle back to when writing.

### **How to construct a thesis statement**

#### **When choosing your topic**

Look for relationships between your outside research and your dissection of the piece of literature, film, case study, article, etc. you are analyzing.

#### **When assigned a topic**

When assigned an essay topic, your thesis statement serves as your argument to the topic posed. In other words, you, as a writer, must take a stance based on your research and answer the assignment accordingly. The thesis should provide focus to your essay with a definitive argument concerning the topic.

For instance, you can receive an assignment such as “Write an essay detailing how the author uses a particular narrative technique to convey historical and/or emotional truths.” What this assignment is asking of you is to analyze if the novel delves into these subjects from the narrators’ perspective and how. By breaking down the assignment into a query format, you can then ask yourself how you would answer the question based on your understanding of the text and the research you conduct.

#### **What to avoid**

Avoid stating well-known facts and/or opinions, which are not research-based arguments. Ultimately, they do not contribute to the overall academic discussion of the topic at hand. You are not trying to provide a summary of facts or state how you feel regarding the topic; you are presenting supported arguments that reframe the broader understanding of the topic.

For example, the following presents as a weak thesis statement:

“Julie Otsuka’s *The Buddha in the Attic* is gripping from beginning to end because of how the novel intersects social issues from the narrators’ perspectives chapter to chapter.”

While you are providing a stance, you are not giving readers a supported argument that contributes to scholarly conversations; you are stating an opinion.

A well-rounded thesis statement:

“Julie Otsuka’s *The Buddha in the Attic* employs a collective narrative voice to unite individual voices, using fragmented sentences to convey another face to the group’s oppression, pain, joy, and sorrow. By inserting subjectivity into this historical period, Otsuka merges her research with a compelling emotional perspective to further cement the plights of these women and humanize them.”

By taking a specific, supported stance regarding the topic at hand, your reader understands the outline of the essay they are about to read.

**Works Consulted:**

<https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/thesis-statements/>

<https://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/developing-thesis>

<https://wts.indiana.edu/writing-guides/how-to-write-a-thesis-statement.html>