

Thesis Statements

Defining Thesis Statement:

A thesis statement is a sentence that states your topic about to be discussed (expository) or expresses the writer's position/opinion on a particular subject (persuasive). It is reasonable for the reader of a thesis statement to assume that it will be supported by details/evidence.

Location for Thesis Statement:

A thesis statement usually appears at the beginning of an essay (in the first paragraph).

Note: Do NOT just reword the prompt. DO answer the questions of the prompt in the thesis.

Expository Thesis Statement:

In order to write an expository **thesis** statement you must have:

- 1) **a subject** (some specific topic that will address the needs of the prompt.)
- 2) **main ideas** (about that subject that can be discussed using specific details and examples)
- 3) **defines "who, what, when, where, or how"**

Sample prompt:

Write about an important event that changed our society. Be sure to explain how it changed.

Sample thesis template:

Topic (that addresses prompt) _____ **verb** (required by prompt) _____ (idea 1)
_____, (idea 2) _____, **and** (idea 3) _____.

Sample thesis: *The attack of the twin towers forever changed America's once invincible reputation by showing the world that any country can be targeted and vulnerable to terrorist attacks.*

Persuasive Thesis Statement:

In order to write a persuasive **thesis** statement you must have:

- 1) **a clearly stated position** (your belief on the issue discussed in the prompt.)
- 2) **reasons** (arguments that support your position)
- 3) **defines "why"**

Sample prompt:

Write an essay stating your position on the issue of whether or not public schools should require uniforms.

Sample thesis template:

(My position from the choices above) _____ **because** (reason 1) _____, (reason 2)
_____, **and** (reason 3) _____.

Sample thesis: *School uniforms, a standard feature in most Catholic schools, should be adopted by public schools in order to eliminate classroom distractions, level socio-economic groups, and deter gang influences within public schools.*

Thesis Statement: How to Evaluate

The following provides characteristics that indicate the four levels of thesis statements. The stronger your thesis statement is, the stronger your essay will be.

Levels	Description	Examples
1 Very Limited	A thesis statement that leaves the reader confused about exactly what you're going to explain or argue.	L1-There are both good and bad aspects of having fine arts programs in high school.

	It's like watching a 3-D movie without the 3-D glasses.	L1-Bullying is scary and needs to be stopped, but there is really nothing schools can do about it. L1-Overall the book I read was pretty good, but had some parts that were really boring.
2 Basic	A thesis statement that lacks clarity , but has a topic that you want to explain. Level two is not good.	L2: There are too many good aspects within fine arts to not have them in schools. L2: Bullying is scary and needs to be stopped. L2: This is a book I'd recommend to friends.
3 Satisfactory	A thesis statement that has a higher level of sophistication , but is either too large in scope or too obvious .	L3: Fine arts are an integral part of the school system and make students successful. L3: The bullying epidemic has reached to scary new heights and programs must be put in place to stop it. L3: The books use of characterization, setting, funny situations, suspense, and fast action makes it well worth reading.
4 Accomplished	It introduces the focus and purpose of the entire paper without announcing it. It hooks the reader. It plants questions in the readers' mind. It is usually the last sentence of the first paragraph. It has urgency.	L4: Fine arts programs should be protected by schools because they inspire in students a creativity and passion few other programs can supply. L4: In order to rid our schools of the epidemic of bullying, it is the job of both students and teachers to construct plans of education and rule enforcement to ensure student safety. L4: Despite some brief areas of sluggishness, this book supplied me with enough suspense and characterization I would happily recommend it to my friends.

WEAK THESIS: *Centennial may have its share of problems, but I think it is a great high school.*

STRONG THESIS: *There are many different aspects of a high school that go into its success or failure, but the blood that pumps the heart of a school is the spirit of the students and staff.*

WEAK Thesis: *Junior high school and high school are both fun for many reasons, some of which are the same and some different.*

STRONG THESIS: *High school is superior to junior high school because the freedom given to the students allows them to grow into productive citizens in the future.*