

Different Types of Thesis Statements

GENERAL TIPS

- A thesis statement should be specific, but not over-simplify your topic or position.
- Although thesis statements should be as short as possible, two sentence thesis statements are okay.
- It's normal to revise your thesis statement throughout the writing process.

GENERAL CONSTRUCTION

OPINION + EVIDENCE + **ORGANIZATION** = THESIS STATEMENT

TYPES

1. Argumentative

- In an argumentative essay, you make a claim about a topic and support your claim with reasons and evidence.
 - Note: This is the most common type of paper you will write as an undergraduate
- Common kinds of claims: opinions, policy proposals, evaluations, a cause-and-effect statement, or an interpretation.
- These claims are always statements people could disagree with because your aim is to convince your readers of your position with your reasons and evidence.

Thesis Structure:

1. *Your claim/assertion*
2. The reasons/evidence to support this claim (or categories of analysis)
3. **The order in which you'll present your reasons and evidence**

Examples:

- *Tutors should not write essays for their students because the students will not benefit or grow as writers from this form of assistance since the **students do not learn how to identify and fix their mistakes by themselves.***
- *The public would benefit from additional legislation limiting gun ownership because such legislation will reduce the number of casualties from suicides, domestic abuse, and mass shootings.*

2. Analytical

- Analytical papers break down ideas or issues into component parts and present this breakdown/evaluation to your audience.
- Analytical essays may also evaluate an issue or idea, where the idea comes from, and its pros and cons.

Thesis Structure:

1. *What you're analyzing (topic)*
2. The specific categories of your analysis
3. **The order in which you will be presenting your analysis**

Examples:

- An analysis of *Hamlet's supernatural occurrences* reveals that the setting of Denmark is characterized by its possession and demise under the otherworldly as seen through the **imagery and interactions of Hamlet with the ghost of King Hamlet and Yorick's skull.**
- *The increased obesity rate of poor Americans* directly correlates to economic factors, including a low minimum wage, the overpricing of healthy produce, the increased availability of inexpensive fast food, and a lack of time and money to buy and prepare healthier options.

3. Explanatory/Expository

- Explanatory papers explain an idea/topic/concept to an audience.
- Generally, explanatory papers do not want you to make any kind of argumentative claim about your topic. Rather, you should merely explain it.
 - Avoid using strong language or making judgments about the topic.

Thesis Structure:

1. *What is going to be explained (topic)*
2. The categories used to organize your explanation (how you divide up the topic)
3. **The order in which you are presenting your categories**

Examples:

- The *process of writing an essay* includes **brainstorming, outlining, and writing drafts.**
- *The experiment* consisted of **collecting *apis mellifera* beehives infected with varroa destructor mites, treating half of the hives with formic acid, and monitoring the differences between the treated and untreated hives.**
- *The Columbian Exchange changed the New World and the Old World* by **exchanging diseases, food products, and technology.**
 - Note: this is explanatory rather than argumentative because it is not making a value judgement on whether the exchange was good or bad. The essay that follows would merely explain the exchange.

REFERENCES & ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *Techniques of College Writing: The Thesis Statement and Beyond.* Kathleen Moore and Susie Cassel. (Available at Rivera Library)
- “Tips and Examples for Writing Thesis Statements”
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/the_writing_process/thesis_statement_tips.html
- “Crafting a Thesis for an Expository Essay”
http://teacher.scholastic.com/writeit/cavalcade/pdf/feb2004/p36-37_thesis_exp_essay.pdf