







English 10 • Research Paper • Additional Tips on Writing Thesis Statements

More Brilliance from the Purdue OWL

FIRST, YOU MUST DETERMINE what kind of paper you are writing...

-  AN **ANALYTICAL** paper breaks down an issue or an idea into its component parts, evaluates the issue or idea, and presents this breakdown and evaluation to the audience.
-  AN **EXPOSITORY** (explanatory) paper explains something to the audience.
-  AN **ARGUMENTATIVE** paper makes a claim about a topic and justifies this claim with specific evidence. The claim could be an opinion, a policy proposal, an evaluation, a cause-and-effect statement, or an interpretation. The goal of the argumentative paper is to convince the audience that the claim is true based on the evidence provided.

NOTE: If you are writing a text which does not fall under these three categories (i.e. a narrative, etc.), a thesis statement somewhere in the first paragraph could still be helpful to your reader.

-  Your thesis statement should be **SPECIFIC**—it should cover *only* what you will discuss in your paper and should be supported with specific evidence.
-  The thesis statement almost always appears at the end of the first paragraph of a paper.
-  Your specific topic may change as you write, so you may need to revise your thesis statement to reflect *exactly* what you have discussed in the paper.

Thesis Statement Examples

Example of an **analytical** thesis statement:

An analysis of the college admission process reveals one challenge facing counselors: accepting students with high test scores or students with strong extracurricular backgrounds.

The paper that follows this thesis statement should then:

- explain the analysis of the college admission process
- explain the challenge facing admissions counselors

Example of an **expository** (*explanatory*) thesis statement:

The life of the typical college student is characterized by time spent studying, attending class, and socializing with peers.

The paper that follows this thesis statement should then:

- explain how students spend their time studying, attending class, and socializing with peers

Example of an **argumentative** thesis statement:

High school graduates should be required to take a year off to pursue community service projects before entering college in order to increase their maturity and global awareness.

The paper that follows this thesis statement should then:

- present an argument and give evidence to support the claim that students should pursue community projects before entering college.