

Writing a Thesis Statement

What is a thesis statement?

A thesis is...

- Usually one sentence located in the first paragraph or section of your paper
- A roadmap for the rest of the paper; it tells the reader where the paper is going
- Directly related to your research question or prompt
 - The reader should be able to infer your research question by reading your thesis
- A statement of your claim
- Specific, clear, and concise

How do I write a thesis statement?

- Before you write a thesis statement, make sure you understand the prompt
 - Collect and organize information to help form a strong argument, stance, or area of inquiry
- Start with a working thesis statement
 - It is important to have a thesis before writing the rest of your paper because it will focus your writing; if you decide to go a different direction, you can always revise or change your thesis
- Use active language to make your thesis clear and accessible
- Ask a friend or colleague to read your paper
 - See if they can pick out your thesis
 - If they cannot, you may want to strengthen the wording to make it stand out

Examples of a Strong Thesis:

With lifestyle diseases such as obesity becoming more prevalent at younger ages, schools should remove vending machines as a means of mitigating easy access to processed foods.

...is more specific than...

Schools should remove vending machines to lower lifestyle disease rates in children.

This study assesses how increased technology use, particularly use of personal devices such as phones and laptops, influences the attention span of adolescent students.

...uses more active language than...

The attention span of adolescents may be influenced by all of their technology use, so this study will explore if these factors are related.

