

Writing a Strong Thesis Statement

What is a thesis statement?

“The thesis statement is similar to the topic sentence in that it expresses an attitude, opinion, or idea about a topic; however, the thesis statement is broader and presents the controlling idea for the entire essay. In fact, each developmental paragraph should have a topic sentence and a controlling idea that echoes or relates to the controlling idea in the thesis statement” (Smalley et al., 2012).

Points to Remember When Writing a Thesis Statement

1. It should be clear and specific.
2. It should be a complete sentence.

Examples

Not a thesis statement: *My fear of the dark.* (This is incomplete statement/a fragment)

A thesis statement: *My fear of the dark has made my life miserable.*

3. It should not be written as a question.
4. Do not announce the topic in your thesis statement. It should include an opinion, attitude, or idea.

Examples

Not a thesis statement: *I am going to discuss the effects of radiation.* (This is announcement of topic)

A thesis statement: *The effects of radiation are often unpredictable.*

5. Avoid expressing facts in a thesis statement. Instead, include an opinion that someone could agree or disagree with. Remember that you will explain or prove your opinion in the body of your essay.

Examples

Not a thesis statement: *Cows produces milk.* (This is a fact)

A thesis statement: *The milk cows produce is not always fit for human consumption.*

6. Focus on one idea only in your thesis statement to maintain unity and coherence in your essay.

Examples

Not a thesis statement: *Going to college in the Midwest is fun, and I have found that living in a Suburb is the best way to live while at college.* (It expresses more than one idea)

A thesis statement: *Going to college in the Midwest can be fun.*

7. It is recommended to place the thesis statement at the end of the introductory paragraph.

Reference

Smalley, R. L., Ruetten, M. K., & Kozyrev, J. R. (2012). *Refining composition skills rhetoric and grammar*. Heinle & Heinle.