Thesis Statements

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What is a thesis statement?

- A thesis statement is the main idea of an essay.
- It tells the reader how you will interpret the significance of the matter under discussion.
- Directly answers the question asked of you.
- Makes a claim that is supported in the essay, and one that others can argue.

SO

- The thesis statement explains to a reader the main idea of the essay, and the writer’s opinion on that idea.
Characteristics

• ONE sentence
• In the introductory paragraph of an essay
• A claim that can be argued
Avoid the following:

- The first person (I believe, In my opinion, etc.)
- Unclear language (It seems, etc.)
- Attempting two topics at once (even if they seem related). Pick one and stick with it.
- Stating a fact - A thesis is something you plan to make an argument about.
A thesis statement should:

- Contain a **topic** (main idea of what you are writing about)
- Contain an **opinion** about the topic (what your attitude is toward the topic)
Check your thesis statement

Ask yourself the following:

1. Do I answer the question?
2. Have I taken a position that others might challenge or oppose?
3. Is my thesis statement specific enough?
4. Does my essay support my thesis?
A thesis statement should not be:

- Too broad
- Too wordy
- Too general
- A fact
Take out a piece of notebook paper and number from 1 to 4.

On the following slide decide whether the sentence is a good or bad thesis statement.
Good or Bad?

1. Many people do not like to watch violent horror movies.

2. Today’s movies do not have the emotional impact of the classic horror movies of the 1940’s.

3. Rap music is the best music ever.

4. Although many people find rap music offensive, it has had a positive impact on today’s youth.

5. This paper will address the characteristics of a good corporate manager.

6. The drive to succeed is what makes for an effective manager, however, it can also make the leader domineering and therefore ineffective.
Tips

- Introduce your thesis statement with a phrase such as ‘This essay will argue…’ or ‘This essay argues…’

- Paraphrasing the assignment question can help ensure that you are answering it.
Reference

This PowerPoint Presentation is an adaptation of the following:

Thank you!

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