

SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT THE THESIS STATEMENT

The thesis controls the paper. It is the central idea which the whole paper depends on. It's like the control paddle on a marionette – without that paddle, Pinocchio would never move. Ask yourself, “What is it I want to prove or say? What is the one idea my whole paper is about?” Make sure that point is very clear in your thesis.

A thesis must be assertive. Consider the following sentences:

Six million babies are aborted each year.

Abortion is morally wrong.

Anyone who has an abortion should be executed.

Which is an effective thesis? Number two is best because it is assertive. You have to keep balance between sentences that are too factual or too absurd. Your thesis should be original, yet supportable.

A thesis must be narrow but not too narrow. Keep the assignment and the page length requirements in mind. You want to cover the assignment without filling the paper with unnecessary information. Consider the assignment to write 3-5 pages about your high school years. Which thesis is best?

High school was a great time in my life.

The team's great trial was that we only had one football for the whole team to practice with.

Mrs. Palmer, my creative writing teacher, inspired me to write well.

You could write a book about #1, and a paragraph on #2. Number 3 is narrow enough for 3-5 pages.

The thesis indicates organization. The order of the items in your thesis should be the order in which they appear in your paper. Here is an example of a thesis statement:

Although some would find the extreme weather unbearable, I enjoy the rural setting and friendly people of my Kansas hometown.

The rest of the paper should follow the order outlined in the thesis.

1. *unbearable weather*
support

2. *two enjoyable points*
rural setting
support
friendly people
support

Remember:

- Let your thesis control the paper.
- Write an assertive thesis statement.