



Thesis Statement Writing Guide

Craft a Clear, Arguable, and Compelling Thesis

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What Makes a Strong Thesis Statement?

A thesis statement is the central claim of your dissertation or academic paper. It tells the reader exactly what you are arguing, why it matters, and how you will support it. A strong thesis is specific, arguable, and written in a single, focused sentence.

| Quality | What It Means |
|-------------|---|
| Specific | It focuses on a clearly defined topic – not a broad subject area. |
| Arguable | It makes a claim that can be supported or challenged with evidence. |
| Focused | It avoids trying to address too many ideas at once. |
| Significant | It answers the question: Why does this matter? |
| Supportable | It can be backed by research, data, or scholarly analysis. |

The Thesis Formula



Weak vs. Strong Examples

| | |
|---------------|---|
| WEAK | Social media affects teenagers. <i>Too broad. No argument or significance.</i> |
| STRONG | Excessive social media use among adolescents correlates with increased rates of anxiety and depression, suggesting that digital wellness education must become a priority in secondary school curricula. <i>Specific, arguable, and significant.</i> |
| WEAK | Welfare policy has changed over time. <i>Descriptive, not argumentative.</i> |

STRO
NG

Federal welfare reform legislation since 1996 has disproportionately burdened Black single mothers by imposing work requirements that ignore structural barriers to employment.

Takes a clear, defensible position with named stakeholders.

Build Your Own Thesis – Worksheet

My research topic is:

The specific problem or gap I am addressing:

My central argument or claim:

Why this matters (significance):

My draft thesis statement:

Revised thesis after feedback: