

# Thesis Statements

# OVERVIEW

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## What Is a Thesis Statement?

A thesis statement is the position, topic, or main point of the paper. It's a sentence that answers the questions about your topic. Many types of papers, such as argumentative papers, position papers, and literature reviews, need a thesis statement because it helps the reader understand your main idea/position. It also helps you, the writer, stay on track as you write your paper.

# Thesis Statements

# DEFINITION

## A Thesis Statement IS

- As clear, concise, and specific as possible
- An answer to the questions about your topic
- Rational and supported by genuine facts

## A Thesis Statement is NOT

- Broad or vague
- An outline of the paper
- A question
- An opinion

## Creating a Thesis Statement

- 1. Select a topic:** Disney princesses
- 2. Figure out what's significant about your topic:** Disney movies are becoming more feminist and Disney princesses are becoming more independent and hardworking.
- 3. Ask yourself a "how" or "why" question about your topic:** How have Disney's princesses changed throughout the years? Why has Disney made its movies more feminist?
- 4. Answer your previous question(s):** Older princesses' problems were solved once they married their princes, whereas recent princesses tend to save themselves and challenge gender norms. Disney movies follow the mindset of society.

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# Examples

## Examples of a Good Thesis Statement

Disney movies have made strides in promoting feminist values by featuring strong and independent female characters who transcend patriarchal expectations.

Disney has made steps in promoting feminist values through its portrayal of strong female characters, but its history of gender stereotyping is problematic.

Although Disney has made strides in promoting feminist values through its portrayal of strong female characters, it still has much work to do.

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# Practice

## Step 1: Topic

Write down your topic.  
Example: book banning

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## Step 2: Narrow Your Topic

What's significant about your topic?

Example: removing books from  
school libraries and/or curriculum

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# Practice

## **Step 3: Ask "How" or "Why" Questions About Your Topic**

This helps narrow your topic even further.

Example: Why should/shouldn't certain books be banned?

How do people determine whether a book is appropriate for students?

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# Practice

## Step 4: Answer Your "How" or "Why" Questions

Make sure you take a position/stance on your topic.

Example: Certain books shouldn't be banned because it denies students' ability to reflect on and empathize with certain topics such as graphic violence or racial discrimination.

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# Practice

## Step 5: List Your Thesis Statement Options

Make a list of what you think would be good thesis statements for your topic.  
When you're finished, circle which one you think is the best.