



## Thesis (and Focus) Statements

Your thesis statement is a sentence or two defining your position on an issue as clearly, precisely and confidently as possible. You can think of your thesis statement as an argument that you will be attempting to demonstrate throughout the rest of your essay. Any sentence not pertaining to your thesis in some way could be deleted and it would make your essay better.

Here are some great resources with tips on writing thesis statements:

<http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop/writers/tips/thesis/>

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/545/01/>

Other tips:

- What you think may be your “thesis statement” may actually be a “focus statement”. Focus statements do not claim a position in an argument, but rather “focus” on one subject or area to explore. If your professor asks your essay to be thesis-driven, then you will need to turn this into a defined position.
- Sometimes we change our minds by the time we finish our drafts, this is common. When this occurs it is important to **change your thesis** to match the arguments that you have presented.
- Your thesis should be debatable. This means that it must be able to be argued. To test this, think if there could be another position on the same subject. For example, “Human beings need oxygen to survive” would not be a strong thesis statement because it is not arguable, it is a fact.
- To tighten up your thesis, take a look at your topic sentences. Could they all be tied into your thesis statement in some way? If so, change your thesis statement to match the topic sentences you discuss in your essay.