

# Crafting a Thesis Statement

## What is a thesis statement?

- A sentence that contains the focus of your essay and outlines what it will be about.
- Appears at, or near, the end of the introductory paragraph.
- A thesis should answer research questions and take a position that needs to be argued and supported. Make sure your position is debatable by considering other possible viewpoints and answers to your research question.

## A thesis statement has 2 parts:

1. Statement of the topic
  - The death penalty...
  - Black holes...
  - Rosa Parks...
2. The point of the essay
  - ...is both cruel and ineffective.
  - ...can teach scientists about how the universe works.
  - ...was the most influential person of the civil rights movement.

## What to avoid when writing a thesis statement:

- Simply stating the topic or just stating a fact.
- Statements such as, "In my opinion," "I think." "This paper will discuss" ...
- Questions- it is a statement and not a question.

Be direct and specific to make sure your readers clearly know your position on the topic.

## Examples of bad and good thesis statements:

*Bad:* This paper will discuss influential George Washington.

*Good:* George Washington was the most influential person of the history of the United States because of his morals and humble nature.

*Bad:* Pollution is bad for the environment.

*Good:* At least twenty-five percent of the federal budget should be spent on limiting pollution.

*Bad:* The War of 1812 occurred before the Civil War.

*Good:* The War of 1812 set into motion the main events that caused the Civil War.