

Millersville University  
THE WRITING CENTER

# Thesis Statements



# Thesis Statements

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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. Why does a paper need one? Because it helps the reader understand your main idea/position.

It also helps you, the writer, stay on track as you write your paper.

Some papers that have thesis statements are:

- Argumentative Papers
- Position Papers
- Literature Reviews

# Thesis Statements

# Definition

## A Thesis Statement IS

- Clear, concise, and specific as possible
- Answering 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: a. Disney movies becoming more feminist b. Princesses being 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 their 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.

# Thesis Statements

# Examples

## Examples of a Good Thesis Statement

**Disney movies have made strides in promoting feminist values through their portrayal of 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.**

## Thesis Statements

# Practice

## Step 1: Topic

Write out your topic. For example: Book banning

## Step 2: Narrow Your Topic

What's significant about your topic? For example: removing books from school libraries and/or curriculum



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

This helps narrow your topic even further.

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

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

## Step 4: Answer Your “How” or “Why” Questions

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

For example: Certain books shouldn't be banned because it denies students' ability to reflect and empathize with certain topics such as graphic violence and/or sexual themes.

## 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 what you think is the best one.

# For More Information

## Make An Appointment With the Writing Center

Make an appointment through Starfish  or send an email to the Writing Center and a tutor will be in touch

 writing.center@millersville.edu

 <https://www.millersville.edu/enwl/writing-center/>

 McNairy Library, Room 106

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