

STEP 1: Topic Development → Thesis Question → Thesis Statement

1. Topic Selection & Topic Assignment
2. Thesis Question(s) around specific topic
3. Begin research to streamline and focus your thesis question
4. The answer to the thesis question = **Thesis Statement**

Your thesis statement is the central argument of your essay. It must be concise and well written.

Criteria for a Good Thesis (Oklahoma State University Writing Center)

- A thesis statement should be argumentative (debatable) and function as a one-two sentence condensation of your paper's primary claim (or argument).
- A thesis statement also allows you to state the primary reasons behind your paper's argument early in the paper. **Give three supporting points.** In the introduction, you're going to give a preview of the reasons that you'll write about in your paper.
- The thesis statement is usually a single sentence somewhere in your first paragraph that presents your argument to the reader. The rest of the paper, the body of the essay, gathers and organizes evidence that will persuade the reader of the logic of your interpretation.
- A thesis statement is not a "duh" statement, such as "Many people died during World War II." A good thesis statement makes an argument that has not been over-discussed or is undisputed.
- A thesis statement should include specific and pointed language as opposed to unclear or unsure wording. Avoid words such as "kind of," "arguably," "somewhat," etc. "King Henry II was *both* a good and bad ruler because..." **Take a clear position.**
- Thesis statements that are too vague often do not have a strong argument. If your thesis contains words like "good" or "successful," see if you could be more specific: *why* is something "good"; *what specifically* makes something "successful"?

Subject: The Best Place for the Perfect Family Vacation

Focused Topic: Yosemite

Three Major Points: recreational activities, pleasant location, economical lodging

Thesis Statement: *While there are many other choices for family travel, the best place for the perfect family vacation is Yosemite because of the fun recreational activities, the beautiful scenery in a pleasant location, and the economical lodging available.*

STEP 2: Note Cards & Source Information

- ❖ 30 minimum using EasyBib Premium for electronic notes by end of project
- ❖ 5 minimum sources, not including textbook and general encyclopedias

STEP 3: Paper Outline

Outline = way of organizing your main points into the introduction, supporting points, and conclusion to make it easier for you to construct your paper, paragraph by paragraph

- ❖ Minimum of **12 in-text citations** from outside source materials, excluding your textbook, that support your thesis, is required.

STEP 4: Write Rough Draft

Believe or not, most of the work has now been done, and this is the easiest part. If you've done a good job on your research, you will probably have more difficulty trying to pare things down!

- ❖ Using your notes and outline, write a **ROUGH DRAFT** of your paper
- ❖ Type and print out two copies for **Peer Editing**

STEP 5: Final Draft

Revise rough draft(s) and finish paper.

- ❖ Using the comments and feedback provided by your peers (and by me, if applicable), revise your rough draft and finish writing your paper. *Careful proofreading is absolutely critical.*
- ❖ Upload to Turnitin.com and submit clean, proofread, hardcopy to me.