



# Thesis Statements

## What is a thesis statement?

- The claim that you want to make about your topic. What you plan to argue and how you are going to do that.
- Answers the questions: What are you trying to prove? What is significant or important about your claim?
- It is not a topic or fact; rather, it is an arguable claim.

## What makes a good thesis statement?

- Specific and clear. Has a definable and arguable claim.
- Only covers what you will discuss in your paper.
- Is concise and uses a powerful, active verb.

## How do I write a thesis statement?

- Read the assignment's directions. Determine the kind of paper you are writing and make sure your thesis statement/argument fulfills the assignment's requirements.
- Once you have a topic (or if assigned one), ask yourself "What are the questions that arise for me about this topic?"
- Anticipate counterarguments to help you refine your thesis and think of the arguments you will need later in your paper.
- You often won't have a final draft of your thesis the first time. As you do research and your topic evolves, make sure you revise it to fit what your paper actually says.
- Often the last sentence of your introductory paragraph/s.

## Sources and Resources

[owl.purdue.edu](http://owl.purdue.edu)

[writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu](http://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu)

## Examples of weaker vs. stronger thesis statements

**Weaker:** In the U.S., mega-churches are thriving while more traditional churches are shrinking.

**Stronger:** Although overall church attendance has declined in recent years, mega-churches continue to grow in membership because their worship styles and ministries appeal to a consumeristic society.

**Weaker:** "Daughter Zion" is an important metaphor for understanding God and women.

**Stronger:** The phrase "Daughter Zion" merges gender and space in a metaphor that carries both positive and negative portraits of Yahweh and ancient and modern women.

**Weaker:** Congregations that authentically follow Jesus will work to bring about the Kindom of God here and now.

**Stronger:** A congregation that authentically follows Jesus will reacquaint itself with the truly radical Jesus and the people who he identified with, form relational partnerships with marginalized community members and the agencies that serve them, and fight institutional injustice and racism as a way of bringing about the KIndom of God here in this time and place.