



Writing Effective Thesis Statements

Four Components of Effective Thesis Statements

1. **Subject**—the topic you will address
2. **Purpose**—the goal of the text (to inform, persuade, express)
3. **Claim**—your specific assertion, the point you intend to make
4. **Specific language**—words that clearly state your subject, purpose, and claim
 - Avoid vague words such as “good,” “bad,” “things,” etc.
 - Avoid all-encompassing words such as “everyone,” “nobody,” “all,” etc.

Examples of Effective Thesis Statements

- With its flashing images, Gatorade obviously tries to sell sports drinks, but the commercial does more than flash persuasion. The Gatorade commercial acts as a coach to subconsciously prepare its audience, specifically young athletes, to tackle an athletic event.
- Throughout the article, Philip R. Reilly uses a variety of pathos, ethos, and logos appeals in order to make the reader question his or her own understandings of certain scientific issues, such as gene mapping and genetically modified foods.
- In its advertisement, “Olay” manipulates text and image to create the belief that there is hope for women to appear 29 once again.
- Tanning beds may be thought of as a quick and easy way to look better, but in reality tanning beds are exceptionally harmful and may cause damaging long-term effects to the body.
- Ayn Rand uses her novel *We the Living* to inform readers of the suffering Russian citizens endured under Communism. Through *We the Living* readers can see a clear picture of the difficult conditions of living under Communism.
- For Goths, the concept of individuality is so important to members that they encourage people to be themselves and scorn labels, but at the same time, they contradict their ideas of individuality through the way they act and dress.

Different disciplines have different expectations for thesis statements, so it is best to read examples specific to the kind of text you are writing and your field of study.

Eight Characteristics of Ineffective Thesis Statements

1. **Too broad** Since the dawn of time the United States of America has undergone many changes.
2. **Factual** The triathlon was first included in the summer Olympics in 2000.
3. **Vague** Bloomsburg University is an exciting place.
4. **Rambling & unfocused** Given the history of complaints lodged against Campus Property Management, it is only fair, at least in my opinion, that a full and complete investigation be launched to provide clear proof that the aforementioned company is either guilty, innocent, or both.
5. **Obvious** Crossing campus streets is dangerous when streets are congested and cars are speeding.
6. **A question** Why do universities require standardized tests?
7. **Generic** Successful baseball players are talented and skillful.
8. **Not provable** President Bush cares little for the drug addicts of the world.