



## Beginning and Ending your Paper

Thesis statements and the discussion section

Extracted from  
<http://www.brunel.ac.uk/~bustcfj/bola/study/skills9.html>,  
Study Skills Tips from <http://nutsandbolts.washcoll.edu/structure.html>,  
<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wowbr/handouts/thesis.html>,  
[http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl\\_thesis.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl_thesis.html)  
and  
*Urban Learners, Serious About College Success*, by Rubie M. Malone, 2003, pgs. 87-109.

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## Thesis Statement

- Assertion statement
- Usually one sentence long (subject and verb please!)
- Not a fragment!
- Best to begin your outline
- Outline, then highlights the main topics and subtopics
- Clear, concise statement of your position

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## How do I put it together?

- 1. [Identify a topic](#)
- 2. [Decide on the main point from topic](#)
- 3. [Put together a draft thesis statement](#)
- 4. [Refine and polish draft thesis statement](#)
- 5. [Complete the final thesis statement](#)

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### Thesis Statement

- You will defend this in your paper
- Should argue a position
- Not summarize information
- Should reflect full scope of your argument
- Shouldn't be too broad or too narrow
- Ask yourself how?, why? Questions before writing the statement

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### Thesis Statement

- You must be able to support your statement, be aware of your research findings
- Must be obvious for the reader
- Reader should be able to easily pick out the thesis statement
- Your statement can be personal not just professor's view, but be careful!

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### Thesis Statement

- Declares the position you are taking in your paper so it alerts the reader
- Sets up the way the paper will be organized
- Points to the conclusion that you will end with
- May be helpful to rewrite it after the paper is finished

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## Thesis Statement

- is a road map for the paper
- directly answers the question asked of you. A thesis is an interpretation/or a point of view of a question or subject.
- It should help to explain.
- Is persuasive
- Requires thought and reflection
- May need to be adjusted later on

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## Thesis Statement

- Consider brainstorming with a friend to make your sentence more successful
- Talk out loud
- Put phrases on note cards and then string the thoughts together with verbs
- Ask yourself if you have the evidence that you need to answer/support your assertion

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## Types of Thesis Statements

from OWL at Purdue University  
[http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gj\\_thesis.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gj_thesis.html)

- “Analytical
- In an analytical paper, you are breaking down an issue or an idea into its component parts, evaluating the issue or idea, and presenting this breakdown and evaluation to your audience. An analytical thesis statement will explain:
  - what you are analyzing
  - the parts of your analysis
  - the order in which you will be presenting your analysis
- Example: An analysis of barn owl flight behavior reveals two kinds of flight patterns: patterns related to hunting prey and patterns related to courtship. “

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## Types of Thesis Statements

- “A reader who encountered that thesis in a paper would expect an explanation of the analysis of barn owl flight behavior, and then an explanation of the two kinds of flight patterns.”
- Questions to ask yourself when writing an analytical thesis statement:
  - What did I analyze?
  - What did I discover in my analysis?
  - How can I categorize my discoveries?
  - In what order should I present my discoveries?”
- [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl\\_thesis.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl_thesis.html)

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## Types of Thesis Statements

- **Expository (Explanatory) Thesis Statements**
- In an expository paper, you are explaining something to your audience. An expository thesis statement will tell your audience:
  - what you are going to explain to them
  - the categories you are using to organize your explanation
  - the order in which you will be presenting your categories
- Example: The lifestyles of barn owls include hunting for insects and animals, building nests, and raising their young.
- [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl\\_thesis.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl_thesis.html)

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## Types of Thesis Statements

- **“Expository (Explanatory) Thesis Statements**
- A reader who encountered that thesis would expect the paper to explain how barn owls hunt for insects, build nests, and raise young.
- Questions to ask yourself when writing an expository thesis statement:
  - What am I trying to explain?
  - How can I categorize my explanation into different parts?
  - In what order should I present the different parts of my explanation?”
- [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl\\_thesis.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl_thesis.html)

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## Types of Thesis Statements

- **“Argumentative Thesis Statements**
- In an argumentative paper, you are making a claim about a topic and justifying this claim with reasons and evidence. This claim could be an opinion, a policy proposal, an evaluation, a cause-and-effect statement, or an interpretation. However, this claim must be a statement that people could possibly disagree with, because the goal of your paper is to convince your audience that your claim is true based on your presentation of your reasons and evidence.”

● [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl\\_thesis.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl_thesis.html)

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## Types of Thesis Statements

- **“Argumentative Thesis Statements**
- An argumentative thesis statement will tell your audience:
  - your claim or assertion
  - the reasons/evidence that support this claim
  - the order in which you will be presenting your reasons and evidence
- Example: Barn owls' nests should not be eliminated from barns because barn owls help farmers by eliminating insect and rodent pests.”

● [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl\\_thesis.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl_thesis.html)

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## Types of Thesis Statements

- **“Argumentative Thesis Statements**
- A reader who encountered this thesis would expect to be presented with an argument and evidence that farmers should not get rid of barn owls when they find them nesting in their barns.
- Questions to ask yourself when writing an argumentative thesis statement:
  - What is my claim or assertion?
  - What are the reasons I have to support my claim or assertion?
  - In what order should I present my reasons?”

● [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl\\_thesis.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl_thesis.html)

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## Conclusion or Discussion

- Did you answer and support your thesis statement?
- Did you wander?
- Is your evidence clearly stated and appropriate to your thesis statement?
- Is the purpose behind the assignment clear to the reader?
- Did your assignment include a personal observation as well as an interpretation?

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## Conclusion or Discussion

- When writing:
  - Consider how the thesis statement is important
  - How is it original?
  - What have I contributed to this topic? (through research, my opinion etc.?)
  - What conclusions can I make from the research that I found?
  - Could I be wrong, is there another point of view?

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## Conclusion or Discussion

- When writing:
  - Did I get enough evidence to make a good case for my thesis, or do I need more?
  - Is there any other conclusions that I can draw about other related topics that might be of interest to the reader?
  - If your professor wants you to compare and contrast, have you done so?
  - Review the assignment and make sure your conclusion supports the purpose of the paper.

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