**The Thesis Statement**

The **thesis statement** identifies the topic and main point of a piece of writing, giving readers an idea of what the text will cover. It is most often found in the introductory paragraph and is then supported throughout the paper with examples, research (quotations, summaries, and paraphrases), data, etc.

**A thesis statement has to:**

* be a statement and not a question
* be a complete sentence
* argue a point of view
* be specific
* focus on a single idea
* be the core of the paper.

Some questions that can help a writer to focus a thesis statement:

What is my subject?

What is my point of view about that subject?

What position do I want to argue?

There are many possible thesis statements, not one single “right” one.

**Examples**

**Subject:** Violence on college campuses.

**Point of view:** Violence can be reduced by increasing campus events to build community.

**Possible Thesis Statement:** The prevalence of violence on college campuses can be reduced by

building a greater sense of community through increasing campus events and activities.

**Subject**: Smoking and teenagers.

**Point of view**: Teenagers who watch their siblings smoke are more likely to mimic that behavior.

**Possible Thesis Statement**: Teenagers are more likely to smoke if their siblings do, due to the sense

of normalcy that is created by witnessing such behavior.

**Subject: The** importance of recycling.

**Point of view**: Recycling will have a positive impact on the county landfill.

**Possible Thesis Statement**: Mandatory recycling will lessen the overflow at the county landfill.

**Subject:** The political climate in Washington is negative.

**Point of view**: The political parties in Washington are not civil to one another, seeing each other as enemies.

**Possible Thesis Statement:** The political climate in Washington is not conducive to civility, because Democrats and Republicans regard members of the other party as enemies.

After writing, it is essential to go back to be sure the thesis statement and essay are aligned with one another: making the same argument.