

THESIS STATEMENTS: PART 1

A thesis statement articulates an informed opinion based on objective, scholarly research. It answers the assignment prompt or research question in a single sentence and is composed of two parts: **a claim** and **an organizing principle**.

TIP: Thesis statements typically appear as the last sentence of the introductory paragraph. However, shorter assignments may begin with the thesis statement in order to conserve space and word count.

COMPONENTS OF A THESIS STATEMENT

1. **The Claim**—This part of the thesis statement directly responds to the assignment prompt and answers the research question. This answer will be a defensible statement.
2. **The Organizing Principle**—The list of reasons that support your claim that appears in the second half of your thesis statement. This part of your thesis provides the organization for your body paragraphs.

CRAFTING A THESIS STATEMENT

Although academic writing typically requires a more complex line of thinking, the following example illustrates the process of crafting a thesis statement:

Assignment Prompt: Compare and contrast waffles and pancakes.

Proposed Research Question: Do consumers prefer waffles or pancakes? (Note: The research question includes the target audience “consumers,” which helps make your claim direct and specific.)

Thesis statement (which answers the research question):

Consumers prefer waffles to pancakes because of their density, texture, and flavor.

(Claim)

(Organizing Principle)

Note: For more examples of academic thesis statements, see “Thesis Statements: Part 2.” For further information on the organizing principle, see our resource entitled “Consistent Language and Key Terms.”

PRACTICE NOW