**What is a thesis statement?**

Every paper you write should have a main point, a main idea, or central message. The argument(s) you make in your paper should reflect this main idea. The sentence that captures your position on this main idea is what we call a thesis statement.

**How long does it need to be?**

A thesis statement focuses your ideas into one or two sentences. It should present the topic of your paper and also make a comment about your position in relation to the topic. Your thesis statement should tell your reader what the paper is about and also help guide your writing and keep your argument focused.

**Where is your thesis statement?**

You should provide a thesis early in your essay -- in the introduction, usually the last sentence in your paragraph.

**Tip**: In order to write a successful thesis statement:

* Avoid burying a great thesis statement in the middle of a paragraph or late in the paper.
* Be as clear and as specific as possible; avoid vague words.
* Indicate the point of your paper but avoid sentence structures like, “The point of my paper is…”

#### Does your thesis include a comment about your position on the issue at hand?

The thesis statement should do more than merely announce the topic; it must reveal what position you will take in relation to that topic, how you plan to analyze/evaluate the subject or the issue. In short, instead of merely stating a general fact or resorting to a simplistic pro/con statement, you must decide what it is you have to say.