

## Thesis Statements

A thesis statement is a short, one-sentence summary of the essay, like a final conclusion, which names the essay's subject and lists your main ideas, without developing them. Even though it is "like" a final concluding sentence, in English essay-writing, it is actually found in your essay's introduction, at the very end of your introduction. It is considered the most important sentence of your entire essay, so getting it right matters.

For this course, it is obligatory that every essay you write ends with a thesis statement. But a good thesis statement makes any text much easier to read, so you should use them not just for this course, but for every text you write from now on, in any language, for any purpose, forever.

Here is how you would write a thesis statement for a **traditional research essay**:

- is in one sentence, at the end of your introduction (it's the last sentence)
- gives the *topic* of your essay (for example, "bees")
- your point of view about that topic (for example, "need to be protected more")
- Often mentions the essay's main ideas, kind of like a plan (for example, "from agricultural chemicals and urban development")
- Example:  
*"Bees need to be protected more from agricultural chemicals and urban development."*

For a **personal essay**, this is usually adapted to the following:

- States your reason for wanting to have a better life (for example, "to be a better dad")
- Mentions the two aspects of your life that you will reflect on to accomplish that goal (for example, "attain financial peace" and "improve my work-life balance.")
- Example:  
*"To become a better dad, I will take work on reducing my financial instability and improve my work-life balance."*

Tip: Thesis statements are never perfect after the first draft. Possibly more than any other part of the essay, they need to be revised and reworked until you're satisfied with it. One good tip is that when you are finished writing your essay, you should go back to review and edit your thesis one more time. Often, you will find that now that you've finished writing your essay, your ideas have become clearer, so you can make your thesis statement even more specific.

**Exercise 1** In small groups, identify the **problems** with the following thesis statements.

1. Problems in life often lead to personal growth.
2. There is a quality that I possess which is the key to having more happiness in my everyday life and progressing as a student.

3. To become a better student athlete, I need to really focus.
4. My problems with anxiety started when I entered high school and found myself without my old friends.
5. How did joining a sports team affect my health and my social life? This is what this essay will examine.