# How to Write a Forecast Thesis Statement

<http://www.roanestate.edu/owl/Thesis-Statements.html>

No matter what type of writing that you do, whether you are writing an essay in a nursing class or an essay for a literature class, it has a main topic. In college level writing, most professors agree that this topic should be expressed in a thesis sentence. The thesis is a very important part of an essay because it summarizes what you have in mind for this essay and guides the reader in reading your essay accurately.

**What a thesis *IS:***

* It is a claim (not a fact) that can be supported by a reason or reasons;
* It directly answers the question of the assignment;
* It is a statement that unifies the paper by stating the writer's most important or significant point regarding the topic;
* It is usually one sentence that does not discuss many topics;
* It forecasts the content and order of the essay;
* It is placed most often in the beginning of the essay, preferably towards the end of the introduction, but at least within the first or second paragraph; and
* It is sometimes – but rarely – implied rather than stated outright.

**Developing Your Thesis**

Now that we know what a strong thesis statement is, we can begin to craft one of our own. Most effective thesis statements often answer these three questions:

* What is the essay’s subject?
* What is the main idea that will be discussed about the topic?
* What is the evidence or support that will be used to support the main idea?

Let’s suppose that I want to write an essay about playing sports. I might begin with a sentence like this:

Playing sports is really good for people.

This is a good start because it does express my position without announcing it; unfortunately, it is vague and general and therefore ineffective. It is not all that exciting for my reader, and it leaves my audience too many unanswered questions. ***WHY*** is playing sports good for people? ***HOW*** does playing sports benefit people? ***WHICH*** people benefit from playing sports? Asking questions about the topic is a great way to find more specific information to include in my thesis.

Let’s suppose now that after asking these questions, I’ve decided I want to narrow my topic into children and sports. I might next have a thesis like this:

Playing sports is really good for children.

Now my thesis is more specific, but I still haven’t really answered the ***WHY*** and ***HOW*** questions. Maybe I think that playing sports helps children develop better cooperation skills, better coordination, and better overall health. I might have a thesis that ends up like this:

Playing sports is beneficial for children because it helps them develop better cooperation skills, better coordination, and better overall health.

Notice that I have beefed up my vocabulary a bit by changing “really good” to “beneficial.” For help with specific vocabulary, check out the [Using Precise Language](http://www.roanestate.edu/owl/PreciseLanguage.html) page.

Notice that I also now have the three major elements of a thesis statement:

1) A ***subject***: playing sports

2) A ***main idea***: playing sports is beneficial for children

3) ***Support*** or ***Evidence***: better cooperation, better coordination, and better overall health.

Most effective thesis statements contain this type of structure, often called an action plan or plan of development. This is such an effective type of thesis because it clearly tells the reader what is going to be discussed; it also helps the writer stay focused and organized. How can you now use this pattern to create an effective thesis statement?

Remember, this is not the only type of effective thesis statement, but using this pattern is helpful if you are having difficulty creating your thesis and staying organized in your writing.

**What a thesis is *NOT*:**

* A thesis is not an announcement.

Example: I am going to tell you the importance of ABC.

I don’t need the announcement element of this thesis. I can simply write, “The importance of ABC is XYZ.”

* A thesis is not introduced by an opinion phrase such as *I think, I feel, I believe*.

Example: I feel that good hygiene begins with the basics of effective hand-washing.

I don’t need to write that “I feel” this because if I am writing it, then chances are that I feel it, right?

* A thesis is not a statement of fact.

Example: George Will writes about economic equality in the United States.

Discussing a statement of fact is extremely difficult. How will I continue the discussion of something that cannot be disputed? It can easily be proven that George Will did in fact write about equality in the United States, so I don’t really have a strong position because it is simply a fact.

* A thesis is not a question.

Example: What makes a photograph so significant?

Remember, a thesis states your position on your topic. A question cannot state anything because it is not a statement. A question is a great lead in to a thesis, but it can’t be the thesis.

* A thesis is not a quote.

Example 5: George Will writes, “Economic equality is good for the United States.”

This quote tells us George Will’s position, but it does not clearly express my position. It therefore can’t be my thesis.