

FOUR STEPS TO WRITING A THESIS

Have you already worked on general topic exploration using a prewriting, brainstorming activity?

A thesis is usually written *after* this step.

Note: There are different kinds of thesis statements depending on the writer's purpose.

This worksheet is designed for a "say it and list it out" thesis with a three-paragraph essay map.

ELEMENTS OF A GOOD THESIS	EXAMPLE 1	EXAMPLE 2	Your Thesis for Practice
1. TOPIC: A single, narrow subject (concept, main idea)	Too broad: <i>Movies set in WWII</i> Better: <u><i>The Pianist</i></u>	Too broad: <i>Ways that people eat</i> Better: <i>Eating at home</i>	
2. WRITER'S ATTITUDE/ CONTROLLING IDEA: conveys purpose, opinion, point, and/or feeling.	<u><i>The Pianist</i></u> is an exceptional movie.	People should eat at home more often.	
3. SUB-TOPICS for body paragraphs (Essay Map)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>superb acting</i> ✓ <i>beautiful music</i> ✓ <i>realistic portrayal of Nazi aggression in WWII</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>saving money</i> ✓ <i>eating healthy</i> ✓ <i>bonding with family</i> 	
4. THESIS: combine all the elements together.	While there are hundreds of movies set in WWII, <u><i>The Pianist</i></u> is exceptional because it has superb acting, beautiful music, and a realistic portrayal of Nazi aggression.	People enjoy eating out, but the fact is that saving money, eating healthy, and bonding with family are all quality reasons why people should eat at home more often.	

Things to remember when writing a thesis statement:

- A thesis is not: written as a question, too broad or too narrow, an announcement, a simple sentence.
- A thesis does not: repeat the title of the essay, contain more than one topic, use informal and vague words or phrases.

MORE PRACTICE

- **STEP ONE: Identify your topic.**
Too broad? Can you narrow the topic without making it too narrow?

- **STEP TWO: Combine the topic with your controlling idea/writer's attitude.**

- **STEP THREE: What three sub-topics do you want to discuss or explain about the main topic?**
Write these in parallel phrases.

✓

✓

✓

- **STEP FOUR: Now draft your thesis by combining Steps 1 - 3 into a well-structured, descriptive sentence.** *This final step may take a few drafts.*