

## 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)	<p>Too broad: <i>Movies set in WWII</i></p> <p>Better: <u>The Pianist</u></p>	<p>Too broad: <i>Ways that people eat</i></p> <p>Better: <i>Eating at home</i></p>	
2. WRITER'S ATTITUDE/ CONTROLLING IDEA: conveys purpose, opinion, point, and/or feeling.	<i>The Pianist</i> is an exceptional movie.	<i>People should eat at home more often.</i>	
3. SUB-TOPICS for body paragraphs (Essay Map)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ superb acting</li> <li>✓ beautiful music</li> <li>✓ realistic portrayal of Nazi aggression in WWII</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ saving money</li> <li>✓ eating healthy</li> <li>✓ bonding with family</li> </ul>	
4. THESIS: combine all the elements together.	<p><i>While there are hundreds of movies set in WWII,</i></p> <p><u><i>The Pianist</i></u> is exceptional because it has superb acting, beautiful music, and a realistic portrayal of Nazi aggression.</p>	<p><i>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.</i></p>	

**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.*

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- **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.*