



Step 3: Writing a Thesis Statement

This worksheet will help you draft a solid thesis statement. Remember, the thesis holds your paper together and guides your research, so be sure it says exactly what you mean. The spaces below are provided for you to write notes; you may also use additional paper.

- 1) What is a thesis statement? What has your instructor said about the thesis statement for this assignment? Has he or she provided a model for you to follow? Write down what you know so far about thesis statements. (For a detailed definition and examples of various types of thesis statements, see section C1-c of *A Writer's Reference*. You may also refer to the textbook for your class for thesis statement models that represent various types of arguments.)

- 2) Does a thesis statement have to be only one sentence? Does your handbook give a rule for this? What does your instructor say about the length and position of the thesis statement for this assignment?

- 3) Write out the question you want your paper to answer. It may be helpful to think of this in the same way you think of solving a math problem. Your paper should be “solving” something. This will be your **research question**.
Example: Do unrealistic media images that depict women as impossibly slender, tan, and fashionable cause young girls to develop anorexia?

- 4) In this paper, are you taking a position on a topic? If so, what is your position? What are the reasons behind your position?



5) Would your audience be convinced by these reasons? (Look at your answers concerning audience on your Step 1 and Step 2 worksheets). If not, how could you make your reasoning more convincing?

6) Now, combine your position and your reasons to answer your research question in a thesis statement.

Example: While the media's portrayal of women as tall, thin, and glamorous does have some effect on young girls' perceptions of their own bodies, research shows that parental influence and peer pressure are also important factors.

7) Show your statements to another person. Which one makes the most sense? Which do you like best? Choose one or write another one here. Keep in mind, you may need to reword your thesis as you plan and draft your paper, and that's okay! Just be sure all the parts of the paper clearly tie back into the thesis statement.