

# Thesis Statement Development Worksheet

A step-by-step worksheet to turn topic ideas into clear, specific, and arguable thesis statements students can actually use. Follow the steps, test the result with the checklist, and use the guided templates and examples to finish strong.

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## 1 — Start with the prompt and topic

**Essay Prompt / Topic:**

→ \_\_\_\_\_

**Purpose (inform, analyze, argue, compare):**

→ \_\_\_\_\_

**Audience (teacher, general reader, specialist):**

→ \_\_\_\_\_

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## 2 — Narrow and focus the topic

**Broad topic:**

→ \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrower focus (time period, case, group, aspect):**

→ \_\_\_\_\_

**Specific angle or question you want to answer:**

→ \_\_\_\_\_

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## 3 — Decide the claim type

Choose which kind of thesis fits your assignment:

- **Analytical:** Breaks a topic into parts and explains.
- **Argumentative (persuasive):** Takes a position and defends it.
- **Explanatory (expository):** Explains how/why without heavy persuasion.

Mark one: ☐ Analytical ☐ Argumentative ☐ Explanatory

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## 4 — Gather the core evidence that supports your angle

**Key evidence or reasons (list 2–4):**

1. → \_\_\_\_\_
2. → \_\_\_\_\_
3. → \_\_\_\_\_
4. → \_\_\_\_\_

Use these to ensure the thesis is supportable.

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## 5 — Draft a working thesis (fill-in-the-blank templates)

**Argumentative template:**

*Because [reason 1] and [reason 2], [topic] should/does [claim].*

→ \_\_\_\_\_

**Analytical template:**

*An analysis of [topic] shows that [main finding], because [supporting reason].*

→ \_\_\_\_\_

**Explanatory template:**

*[Topic] can be understood by examining [aspect 1] and [aspect 2], which reveal [insight].*

→ \_\_\_\_\_

Write your working thesis:

→ \_\_\_\_\_

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## 6 — Add nuance: scope and limits

**Specify scope (time frame, cases, population):**

→ \_\_\_\_\_

**Acknowledge a counterpoint (brief):**

→ \_\_\_\_\_

Refine thesis to include scope/limit and, if appropriate, nod to counterargument:

→ \_\_\_\_\_

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## 7 — Thesis checklist (use to test and revise)

A strong thesis should:

- ☐ Be a clear sentence (not a question)
- ☐ State a specific claim or insight (not vague)
- ☐ Be arguable (someone could reasonably disagree)
- ☐ Be supportable with 2–4 main pieces of evidence you listed
- ☐ Show scope/limits so it's manageable within word count
- ☐ Match the assignment's purpose (analytical vs. argumentative vs. explanatory)

If any box is unchecked, revise.

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## 8 — Quick revision prompts

- Replace vague words (good, important, interesting) with specific terms.
  - Change passive phrasing into active claim language.
  - Tighten scope: add dates, groups, or conditions if too broad.
  - Ensure it isn't merely factual or a statement of topic (it must take a position or show specific insight).
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## 9 — Examples (for reference)

### **Argumentative (example):**

Because rising house prices in coastal cities displace long-term residents and weaken local economies, municipal zoning reform that increases middle-income housing supply is essential to maintain community stability.

### **Analytical (example):**

An analysis of three recent documentary films reveals that filmmakers use archival sound, close-up interviews, and layered voiceover to shape audience empathy toward complex historical figures.

### **Explanatory (example):**

The decline in pollinator populations can be explained by pesticide use and habitat loss, which together reduce both food availability and nesting sites for native species.

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## 10 — Final version & submission

**Final thesis (single clear sentence):**

→ \_\_\_\_\_

**Evidence you will use to support it (2–4 bullet points):**

→ \_\_\_\_\_

→ \_\_\_\_\_

→ \_\_\_\_\_

Use this final thesis as the anchor for your outline and topic sentences.