

Working Thesis Planning Guide

Purpose: Although your paper may in its early stages, you can begin planning your thesis statement now. The first draft of your thesis statement is known as a “working thesis”—it works for now to get your paper started, and you can revise it as your paper develops. For later assignments, you can follow the same planning steps to create a working thesis.

Directions:

- 1) Read “The Thesis Statement” handout.
- 2) Consider the handout and your assignment guidelines as you answer the following questions.

Working Thesis Questions:

1). According to your handout, creating a thesis statement begins with a broad idea or topic. Some assignments may provide the broad idea for you, but others will require you to generate your own. **In the space below write the broad idea(s) specified by the assignment or that you have selected based on the assignment guidelines.**

Broad Idea or Topic: _____

Next, the handout indicates that research can help you develop your broad idea or topic into something more focused. Likewise, your assignment probably gives you some idea of how to focus your idea. Think about what you have learned from research and/or what the assignment suggests in terms of focus. **In the space below, fill in the part of the broad idea or topic on which you will focus.**

More Focused Idea(s) or Topic(s): _____

2) The thesis handout suggests that you continue to develop your thesis topic by drawing some sort of connection. Similarly, your assignment probably tells you what kind of connection you need to draw. For example, do you need to analyze the idea in some way? Compare or contrast it? Connect it to another topic? **In the space below, fill in the type of connection the assignment asks you to draw.**

Type of Connection: _____

In the space below, give a brief but specific explanation of how you can draw that type of connection with your topic. You don’t need to get into the details, but you should provide a clear overview.

3). The thesis handout suggests you might need to do more research and make more connections for a longer paper. However, for most papers, you can go ahead and draft a working thesis that you can revise later based on research you do or additional connections you want to draw. **So, go ahead and draft your working thesis statement in the space provided.**

Tips and Guidelines:

- Try to make your working thesis one sentence. Thesis statements should rarely be longer than one sentence.
 - You can revise your working thesis later to include research or other connections.
 - Your working thesis should reference the topic/idea you've selected, the kind of connection you're making, and the explanation you provided in #2 above.
 - The thesis handout recommends a thesis only cover one idea. Although you might mention two topics or multiple facets of a single topic, you should still have a single overarching point.
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Remaining Flexible:

Now that you have a working thesis, you can begin crafting your introduction and the rest of your paper. But, according to your thesis handout, good thesis statements remain flexible, so here are some ways to do that as you continue writing:

- Add, subtract, or change ideas if needed
- Draw a different connection
- Revise based on research
- Make your explanation from #2 more or less detailed to fit the scope of your paper.