



Step 3: Thinking About a Thesis

The Writing Center

This worksheet will help you draft a solid thesis statement. Remember, the thesis holds your paper together, so be sure it says exactly what you mean!

1. What is a thesis statement? Hint – look up the definition in your handbook.
2. Does a thesis have to be only one sentence? Does your handbook give a rule for this? Does it make sense to cram everything into one sentence?
3. Write out the question you want your paper to answer. It may be helpful to think of this like solving a math problem. For instance, what is 126 divided by 3.4? Your paper should be solving for something. This will be your **research question**. (Example: Is the media to blame for today's impossibly slender, tan, and hip ideal female image?)
4. In this paper, are you taking a position on a topic? If so, what is your position?

Why do you feel that way? What are the reasons behind your position?

5. Would your audience be convinced by those reasons? (Look at your answers on the Step 1 worksheet). 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. (Example: While the media does have some effect on females' body image, research shows that parents and peer pressure are also important factors.) You may want to write a few versions of this.

a.

b.

c.

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/or draft your paper. That's okay! Just be sure all the parts of the paper clearly relate to the thesis.