



Creating a Thesis

A thesis is a writer's comment about a topic. Often, it is an answer to a question. It limits and focuses a topic in order to make it manageable for both the writer and the reader. The specificity of this question and its answer (your thesis) will depend on the length of the paper. A three page paper requires the focus to be significantly narrower than a twelve page paper.

Beware:

- Do not make your topic too broad if it is a short essay.
- Do not promise to discuss too much if there is not enough space.

Examples:

Sometimes the thesis statement includes an outline of the main arguments. However, sometimes writers choose to separate the thesis statement and the arguments into two separate sentences.

Topic: The Avro Arrow Project

Question: Did Prime Minister John Diefenbaker make the right decision when he cancelled the Avro Arrow project?

Thesis: Prime Minister John Diefenbaker was right to cancel the Avro Arrow project because the planes were too costly, unneeded within Canada, and unwanted by the international market.

Topic: Symbolism in the book *Mysterious People*

Question: What is the significance of the clothing the characters wear in *Mysterious People*?

Thesis: In Jamie Anderson's *Mysterious People*, the colour of each character's clothing represents their individual personalities. The mysterious Jack Palmer dresses all in black, the temperamental Diana Schmaltz wears a red dress, and the weepy Alex Fletcher wears a coat of blue.

Remember: Be sure to include a clear thesis statement in your introduction! This gives your reader a sense of direction early in the paper. Try to avoid burying a great thesis statement in the middle of a paragraph or late in the paper.