Crafting a Thesis Statement

For different types of essays

Much academic writing in college takes the form of an expository or persuasive essay. These are papers whose purpose is to explain a concept, show the relationship between a cause and effect, compare and/or contrast ideas, move a reader to take action, or analyze an author’s writing style.

In order to introduce the reader of an essay to the writer’s main purpose, it is common formatting to craft a THESIS STATEMENT that identifies that clear purpose and place it in the introductory paragraph or close to the beginning of the essay.

The thesis statement is crafted differently, depending on the purpose of the essay. Often, it contains FORECASTING, or listing of several main ideas that will be developed in the body of the paper. The forecasting sentence or sentences can also follow the thesis statement.

# EXPOSITORY (Explanation) thesis:

The circulatory system is one of the most important and complex organ systems in the human body. It involves the heart, blood vessels, blood, lymph, and the lymphatic vessels and glands.(Note the forecasting elements in the second sentence.)

# **CAUSE AND EFFECT thesis:**

The state requirement for high school students to pass standardized tests in order to graduate has resulted in protests from parents and students, a curriculum that fails to engage students, and an unfair representation of student abilities*.* (Note the verb phrase “has resulted in” to show effect and three main ideas listed that will be developed in the body of the paper.)

# **COMPARE/CONTRAST thesis:**

The similar political, economic, and social conditions in the 18th Century made the French Revolution and the American Revolution especially unforgettable.

# **PERSUASIVE/ARGUMENTATIVE thesis:**

*People* ***need to be******educate****d about the serious, man-made problem of water pollution, which harms the health of humans and animals, destroys the environment, and causes an enormous economic burden on governments.*

*Roe v Wade* ***should be******federally codified*** *in order to preserve a woman’s right to choose what is best for her body, protect healthcare professionals from prosecution, and eliminate costly and time-consuming legislation.*

Note the verb phrases “need to be educated” and “should be federally codified” to indicate the change called for.

# **RHETORICAL ANALYSIS thesis:**

*Sherman Alexie uses figurative language, repetition, and irony to effectively send the message that with perseverance and support from others one can achieve one’s goals.* (Note: This type of thesis is different than the others in that it focuses on the author’s writing techniques and strategies rather than the topic about which they write. It identifies the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the author, as well as the message they mean to convey. Additionally, the forecasting elements tend to be the listed rhetorical strategies of the author.)