

Building a Thesis Statement

A thesis statement is a short summary of the argument or purpose of your essay. It quickly lets your reader know what your paper is about and tells them what to expect.

In an academic paper, your thesis statement should clearly and concisely indicate...

- The purpose of your paper (what do you intend to demonstrate/argue)
- The main ideas you will discuss
- The order in which you will discuss them

The Formula for a Strong Thesis Statement

A good thesis statement includes **3** elements...

- 1) a **TOPIC** (narrowed to a manageable form based on the essay requirements)
- 2) a **CLAIM** or **ARGUMENT**
- 3) the **REASONS** or **EXPLANATIONS** for the claim/argument

TOPIC + CLAIM + REASONS = Thesis Statement

Example:

TOPIC:

Social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram...

TOPIC + CLAIM/ARGUMENT:

Social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram are harmful to university student's mental health...

TOPIC + CLAIM/ARGUMENT + REASONS:

Social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram are harmful to university student's mental health due to addictive content, development of parasocial relationships, and disruption of natural focus.

Use a Thesis Statement Template

1. Create a simple starter phrase:

In this paper, I will argue/show that _____

2. Replace starter phrase with:

An examination of _____ will show that _____

An analysis of _____ will show that _____

A comparison between _____ and _____ reveals _____

An examination of _____ using _____ (theory, framework, perspective) illustrates _____

3. Identify vague wording and replace with more precise wording

Example: Students, children, women, good, bad, effective, current, etc...

- 'Students' is too vague. Does it mean Kindergarten students, High School students, University students?

Example:

1. Create a simple starter phrase:

In this paper, I will argue/show that social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram are harmful to student mental health due to addictive content, development of parasocial relationships, and disruption of natural focus.

2. Replace starter phrase with:

A statistical analysis of social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram **will show that** these platforms are harmful to student mental health due to addictive content, development of parasocial relationships, and disruption of natural focus.

3. Identify vague wording and replace with more precise wording

A statistical analysis of social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram **will show that** these platforms are harmful to **student** mental health due to addictive content, development of parasocial relationships, and disruption of natural focus.

- The words "student" is too vague. Let's replace it...

A statistical analysis of social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram **will show that** these platforms are harmful to **university student** mental health due to addictive content, development of parasocial relationships, and disruption of natural focus.