



# Thesis and Conclusions

Thesis writing may seem intimidating, but it doesn't have to be! A good thesis can actually make writing your essay way easier.

## What is a thesis?

Writing a “thesis-driven essay” implies that you are making an argument, or that you're trying to prove a point. The thesis is the solid statement of the argument that your essay will make. A thesis can appear in the form of a single sentence, or in a couple sentences. It is the part of your essay that explains what you're trying to say, or the point you're trying to prove.

EXAMPLE: *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is a social commentary on racism, which points out that racism only exists in the mind.

## So how do you write a thesis?

A good thesis can really make your paper awesome, but writing one is sometimes challenging. Just remember that your thesis should:

1. Explain what what you're going to argue.
  - a. What are you trying to prove?
  - b. Are there specific points to your argument? If yes, then what are they?
2. Be refutable.
  - a. When someone reads your thesis, they should instantly be able to argue against it. If your thesis isn't arguable, then it's not a thesis, but a statement of fact or observation. NOT A THESIS: *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is a novel about rafting down a river.
3. Have sustenance.
  - a. A good thesis probably can't be completely explained in a single paragraph.
  - b. A strong thesis has layers of complexity that take time to explain and more importantly, prove.

## Some helpful formats:

If you're having trouble creating a thesis, try these formulas to get you started:

1. (BLANK) is true because (REASON #1), (REASON #2), and (REASON #3). Each of these “reasons” then becomes a body paragraph.
2. (BLANK) is (BLANK) as is evidenced by (TEXTUAL EVIDENCE).
3. Scholars argue that (BLANK), but the (text/article, etc.) actually says (BLANK) based on (my approach to the text).

What is perhaps even more difficult than writing a thesis is writing a conclusion.

### **Conclusions can do a couple of things:**

- Summarize the arguments.
- Restate and expand the thesis (NEVER copy and paste your thesis into the concluding paragraph).
- Explain why the argument presented is important/why the argument presented enhances our understanding of the topic.
- Add something new to the overall argument without adding another point of contention. This means that the conclusion can include new info, but not necessarily another point to be argued.

### **Having trouble getting started with your conclusions?**

- Try starting with a restatement of your thesis, just as a foundation, and see where you go from there.
- Glance over your essay again and see what you haven't said yet. Are there any loose ends that need to be tied up?

### **REMEMBER!**

- The conclusion does not have to be ridiculously long! You're just ending the essay, not starting a new one.
- The conclusion is not a rewrite of the entire essay.
- Conclusions don't have to be super complex. The complex part should be your thesis, or your argument.
- Think BIG PICTURE. The conclusion shouldn't focus on the finer points of your argument, but rather your argument as a whole.
- Think of it this way: the conclusion exists so that your essay doesn't abruptly end with a body paragraph. Remember the standard essay format:

- Introduction (thesis)
- Body Paragraph 1
- Body Paragraph 2
- Body Paragraph 3
- Conclusion