

Writing a Thesis Statement



“An effective thesis statement tells readers specifically what you plan to write about in your paper. A thesis statement usually takes a stand or expresses a specific feeling or feature of your project”

What’s your point?

Every NHD project must make a point as well as inform. The point you make can be called the thesis statement. A thesis statement is not the same as a topic. Your thesis statement explains what you believe to be the impact and significance of your project.

Your thesis statement will explain what you believe your research project can prove or support with appropriate facts and details. It can be written in 1-2 sentences.

A specific subject + A particular stand, feature, or connection = An effective thesis statement



Your thesis statement is like a lighthouse.... because it will guide you along the way.

Development of Thesis statements:

Example of the Thinking Process involved:

History Day Theme	Rights and Responsibilities
Basic Interest area	Civil War
Narrowed subject	Battle of Fort Sumter
Working thesis statement	The battle of Fort Sumter was an declaration by the South that state’s rights were paramount over federal demands
Final thesis statement	The course of the American Civil War was determined at Fort Sumter when the conflicting beliefs in state’s rights and federal responsibilities, by the Southern and Northern states, came to a tipping point resulting in armed opposition and aggression against the policies of the Federal government.



SAMPLE THESIS STATEMENTS THAT GET THE JOB DONE:

- United States soldiers encountered heavy forces at Omaha Beach. This encounter helped the Allies win the war and D-Day became a turning point in WWII.
- The Wright Brothers exploration in flight was a major turning point in American History
- Apollo 13’s encounter with disaster caused NASA to realize that stronger precautions had to be taken in space exploration.
- The Cuban Missile Crisis was a critical moment in Soviet and American relations as it foreshadowed the end of the cold war.

- Toni Stone encountered racist and sexist people during her career in baseball. However, she overcame them and broke the gender barrier in her game.
- The advent of air conditioning spurred the migration of Northerners to the southern states such as Florida which significantly changed the economy and culture of the South.
- Through her cooking classes and *The Settlement cookbook*, Lizzie Black Kander introduced Milwaukee's Jewish immigrants to American culture which helped them assimilate and avoid discrimination
- The Harlem Renaissance created a golden age for black American culture as blacks communicated their feelings and ideas through literature, art and music.
- Martin Luther King and Malcolm X although communicating through divergent means, both had startling effects on motivating African Americans to seek greater civil liberties.
- It took an extensive investigation of a minor burglary at the Watergate hotel complex to expose the faults of a President who abused the rights and responsibilities of his presidential powers.
- The civil rights movement was launched in local communities and not on the playing field as evidenced by the stories of Civil Rights catalysts Rosa Parks and Jackie Robinson.
- Poor study habits result in lower grade point averages, and this can lead to fewer academic opportunities, fewer career options for students ,decreased ability to access their rights in society or take part in their responsibilities.

Five kind of weak thesis statements—ones that

1. Make no claim (“This paper will examine the pros and cons of...”);
2. Are obviously true or are a statement of fact (“Exercise is good for you”);
3. Restate conventional wisdom (“Love conquers all”);
4. Offer personal conviction as the basis for the claim (“Shopping malls are wonderful places”);and
5. Make an overly broad claim (“Individualism is good”).



Examples of Poor thesis statements:

- ❖ Martin Luther King changed the civil rights movement
- ❖ People who practice Sharia Law have no rights
- ❖ The Bill of Rights defines the rights and responsibilities of all Americans
- ❖ The South should have won the Civil war because they we refighting for the rights of the common man
- ❖ Women do not have the same rights as men and that is not a good thing for America
- ❖ Lizzie Kander used her cooking classes and the Settlement cookbook to teach Jewish women
- ❖ The Harlem Renaissance created a golden age for African American culture.
- ❖ I will compare Malcolm X and Martin Luther King as civil rights giants
- ❖ The Cuban Missile crisis was a critical moment for the world
- ❖ Pollution is bad for the environment and takes away my rights
- ❖ The judicial system needs to have power over Congress in order to do its job.