# Thesis Statements

## *What is a thesis statement?*

* 1-3 sentences that captures **your interpretative position on the main idea**. So you need to identify:
  + Controlling idea
  + The claim you’re making (take a stance, be assertive!)
* Should be **arguable (not descriptive)**
  + About a central problem or tension
  + Open to dispute, other arguments or interpretations can be made
  + Support with evidence
* Remember: a **claim is an assertion**
  + Your thesis is the main claim your essay backs up (the conclusion of what you’re arguing)
  + You make smaller claims along the way in your analysis

## *How does a thesis function in your paper?*

* **Tells your reader** about the paper – roadmap
* **Guides** your writing – organizes what you’re saying
* **Focuses** your argument – distill into most important parts
* Place at the beginning of your paper (end of first or second paragraph)
  + Reader’s expectations
  + Offer some lead-in or context
* Continue to refer to your thesis throughout your paper
  + Usually topic and concluding sentences
  + **As the** **focus and guide your thesis should provide the organization**

Ideally: WHAT | HOW | WHY

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# Reason

## *Why do you say that? Because…*

Give reasons to expand and support your claim.

# Evidence

## *How can you back it up? Where do you see that? What is your proof?*

Give evidence to ground your claims and reasons.

# Analysis

## *What do you mean? Why is this important to your argument?*

In your analysis, explain how your evidence demonstrates your point.

Break it down. Connect the dots.