

Developing a Working Thesis

A thesis statement gives a paper focus and expresses a clear, committed belief or insight about a topic. A strong thesis statement creates tension or makes a significant point to reflect the writer's purpose; a weak thesis merely announces the topic or purpose, says the obvious, or is too vague. Consider the following examples of weak and strong thesis statements as you compose a thesis statement for your own paper.

Weak thesis statements:

William Zinsser's article "Clutter" is humorous. **(Too general)**

The purpose of my paper is to discuss why William Zinsser's article "Clutter" is an exaggerated discussion about eliminating wordiness from essays. **(An announcement)**

Strong thesis statement:

William Zinsser's article "Clutter" presents exaggerated examples to help students eliminate wordiness from their essays; however, Zinsser's use of sarcasm and outdated references may prevent some students from comprehending the author's viewpoint and appreciating his sense of humor. **(Creates tension, makes a significant point, and presents the writer's purpose)**

How to generate a thesis:

1. Identify the <i>subject</i> of your paper.	William Zinsser's article "Clutter" is about eliminating wordiness from essays.
2. Turn your subject into a guiding question.	Does Zinsser do a good job of getting his point across to his audience?
3. Answer your question with a statement.	Zinsser does not do a good job of getting his point across to his audience.

<p>4. Refine this statement into a <i>working</i> thesis.</p>	<p>William Zinsser's article "Clutter" presents exaggerated examples to help students eliminate wordiness from their essays; however, Zinsser's use of sarcasm and outdated references may prevent some students from comprehending the author's viewpoint and appreciating his sense of humor.</p>
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Now, you can use the generator to develop your own thesis:

1. Identify the <i>subject</i> of your paper.	
2. Turn your subject into a guiding question.	
3. Answer your question with a statement.	
4. Refine this statement into a <i>working</i> thesis.	

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