

MURPHY BI-WEEKLY WRITING TIP

Reading Tip: Locating the Thesis

Dear Murphy Students:

Sometimes, writing your own thesis statements is not as difficult as *finding* the thesis of a text you are reading. (Sometimes not – but either way, still difficult).

This week's tip will offer suggestions for where to locate a text's thesis.

What is a thesis?

A "thesis" is another way of saying a text's "main idea" or "main argument"

It is the sentence or two that summarizes the argument or purpose of a text.

For example,

if the topic of the reading is parent-teacher relationships, the thesis may be:

teachers should develop stronger relationships with parents by embracing cultural backgrounds and linguistic diversity

Where do you find it?

Think about where you write your thesis statements:

near the end of your introduction and (re-stated) in your conclusion.

The same applies for the texts you read:

At the end of their introduction and somewhere within the final paragraphs, the author will usually explain or hint at what their main argument or purpose is.

Go there, to both sections:

- read and re-read those paragraphs
- if the author does not *directly* say what their purpose or argument is, read the rest of the text and ask yourself:
 - What are they giving evidence about?
 - If you had to guess their position on the topic, what would it be?

Then return to the introduction & conclusion to see if you can find sentences that summarize that position, perspective, or argument.

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If you have questions or want to put this into practice, feel free to contact me! 😊