

Thesis Statements

GOOD NEWS EVERYONE



What is a thesis statement?

- A thesis statement is the **main idea** of an essay.
- It is often a point you want to argue or support in an essay.

SO

- The thesis statement explains to a reader the main idea of the essay, and the writer's opinion on that idea. (NOT persuasive)

What is a thesis statement?

- A thesis statement is usually one sentence.
- It is often placed in the introductory paragraph of an essay.
- A thesis statement is a claim that could be argued.
- The essay will contain evidence and opinions that support the argument.

Thesis statements avoid the following:

- the first person (I believe, In my opinion, etc.)
- unclear language (It seems, etc.)
- attempting two topics at once (even if they seem related). Pick one and stick with it.
- just stating a fact - A thesis is something you plan to make an argument about.

A thesis statement should

- contain a **topic** (main idea of what you are writing about)
- contain an **opinion** about the topic (what your attitude is toward the topic)
- Contain **key star ideas / blueprint** (what you will write about in your essay)

Read the following quotation.

Topic?

- The “Topic” is the short 1-2 word idea that you will be writing about.

Take risks. Ask big questions. Don't be afraid to make mistakes; if you don't make mistakes, you're not reaching far enough.

—David Packard, co-founder of Hewlett-Packard

Taking a risk means acting without knowing whether the outcome will be good.
Think carefully about this statement.

Write an essay explaining why it is sometimes necessary to take a chance.

Be sure to —

- clearly state your thesis
- organize and develop your ideas effectively
- choose your words carefully
- edit your writing for grammar, mechanics, and spelling

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Specific Examples

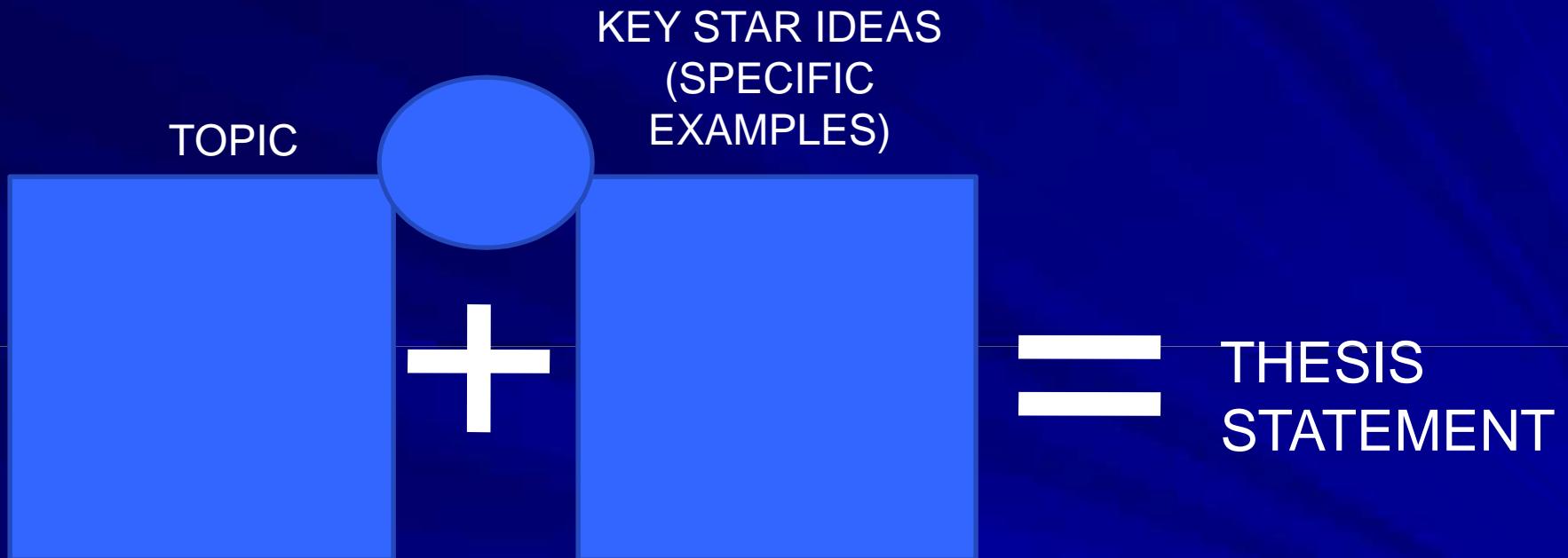
- These would be the examples for the Topic that you will expand upon in your essay.
- “take a chance”

Brainstorm on examples of things you might take a chance on doing (remember Key Star Ideas).

Examples:

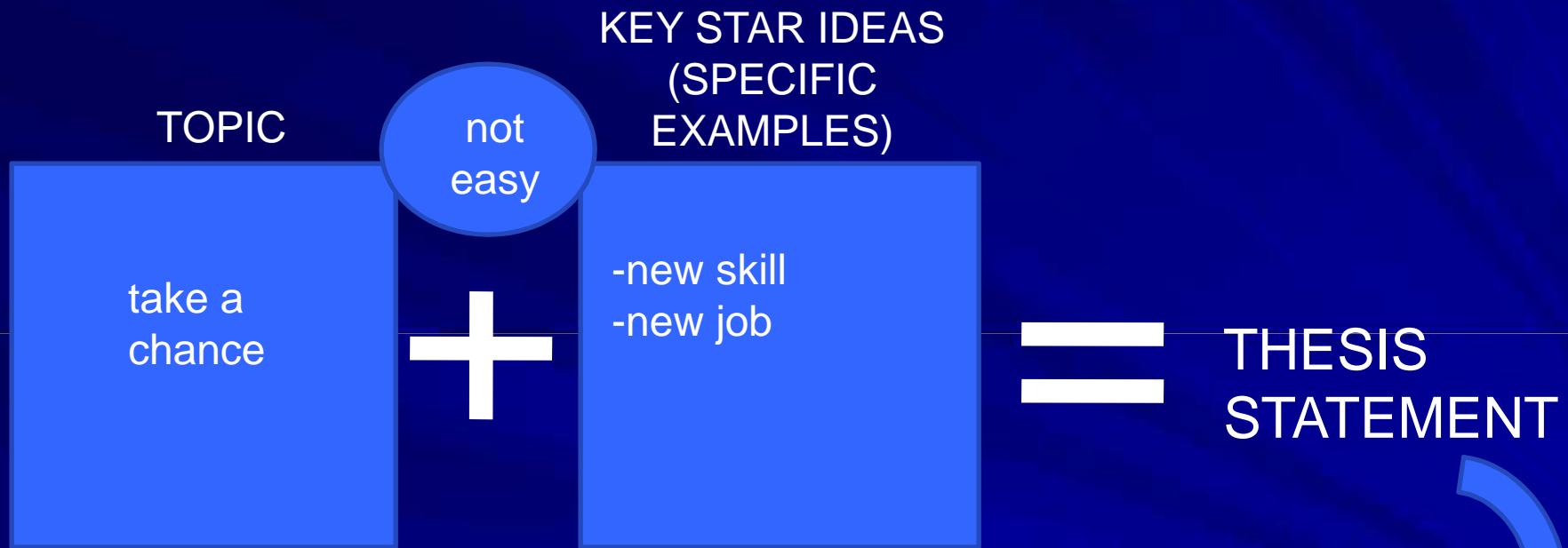
- learned new lesson or skill
- overcome fear
- talent

Box Thesis Organizer



Box Thesis Organizer

How does it work?



Taking a chance and trying something new is never easy especially if you are learning a new skill or starting a new job.

Is this a good thesis statement”

- Does it contain a **topic**
 - “*take a chance*”
- Does it contain an **opinion** about the topic
 - “*never easy*”
- Does it contain a **blueprint**
 - “*if you are learning a new skill or starting a new job*”

More About Thesis Statements

A thesis statement should not be too broad.

Too Broad



The world is a magnificent place to live.

Better

Good teachers and great programs at Levelland High School help to make this a great community to live in.

Which sentence is too broad to be a good thesis statement?

- A. Some reasons to live in Levelland is easy access to entertainment and cultural activities.
- B. Levelland is a great place to live.

A thesis statement should not be too wordy.

Wordy



Some problems with South Elementary School is that it needs a larger playground, an air conditioned gym, an auditorium, restrooms connected to each classroom, running water in the classrooms, and a number of other physical changes to the building.

Better

South Elementary needs several changes to its building and playground to make it a better school.

Which sentence is too wordy to be a good thesis statement?

- A. Abe Lincoln was one of the best orators and presidents the United States has ever known.
- B. Abe Lincoln was an excellent speaker, the 16th President of the United States, a liberator of slaves, and united the North and South at the end of the American Civil War.

A thesis statement should not be too general.

Too general



Levelland High School is a good school.

Better

Daily writing practice and STAAR Bootcamps have led to improved writing skills for the students at Levelland High School.

Which sentence is too general to be a good thesis statement?

- A. Music makes people happy.
- B. Music therapy is useful in relieving stress and other conditions.

A thesis statement should not be a title.

A title



Cost of Living

Better

The cost of food and housing in Levelland is lower than in most other cities in the United States.

Which sentence would not be a good thesis statement because it is a title?

- A. Good teaching has led to an increase in STAAR scores at Capital Elementary.
- B. Rising STAAR Scores at Capital Elementary

A thesis statement should not be a fact.

A fact



The average temperature for Levelland in winter is 34 and in summer is 75 degrees.

Better

The climate in Levelland is ideal for outdoor sports and year round camping.

Which sentence would not be a good thesis statement because it is a fact?

- A. The recycling of one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV for three hours.
- B. Recycling is one of the most important jobs a person can do to protect our environment and climate.

More Practice

Directions:

- Find the opinion words in the statement. If there are no opinion words, it is not a thesis statement.
- Look for two or more points to be proven. Then tell if the statement is a good thesis statement.

1. Although most people believe otherwise, bats are harmless and highly beneficial.

Directions:

- 1) Find the opinion words in the statement. If there are no opinion words, it is not a thesis statement.
- 2) Look for two or more points to be proven. Then tell if the statement is a good thesis statement.

2. In this essay I will discuss the crime rate in Levelland.

Directions:

- Find the opinion words in the statement. If there are no opinion words, it is not a thesis statement.
- Look for two or more points to be proven. Then tell if the statement is a good thesis statement.

3. Energetic exercise is a good way to help relieve stress.

Directions:

- Find the opinion words in the statement. If there are no opinion words, it is not a thesis statement.
- Look for two or more points to be proven. Then tell if the statement is a good thesis statement.

4. Mountain City and Boone differ in many ways.

Directions:

- Find the opinion words in the statement. If there are no opinion words, it is not a thesis statement.
- Look for two or more points to be proven. Then tell if the statement is a good thesis statement.

5. This paper will consider the advantages and disadvantages of students having nightly homework.

Directions:

- Find the opinion words in the statement. If there are no opinion words, it is not a thesis statement.
- Look for two or more points to be proven. Then tell if the statement is a good thesis statement.

6. Hate speech should be eliminated for many reasons.

Quiz Time

In your Journal, go to the back of your Thesis folder notes (J pg 50). Title it “Thesis Statements Quiz” and number from 1 to 10.

In each of the following slides tell whether the sentence is a good or bad thesis statement and why.

Good or Bad

1. Many people do not like to watch violent horror movies.
2. Today's movies do not have the emotional impact nor strong story lines of the classic horror movies of the 1940's.

Good or Bad

3. Rap music is the best music ever.
4. Although many people find rap music offensive, it has had a positive impact on today's youth and can teach a lesson.

Good or Bad

5. I enjoy white water rafting.
6. The first white water rafting trip can challenge a person both in body and spirit.

Good or Bad

7. Freshman students are busy.
8. The life of a typical Freshman student is challenging due to the need to succeed in academics as well as extracurricular activities.

Good or Bad

9. Community service projects include building shelter for the homeless, servicing meals to the hungry, providing transportation for the sick, distributing clothes, and a large number of other helpful activities.
10. Students should help others who are less fortunate because it builds character and helps the community.

Let's Create!

- Now, you try it.
- Work through the process to write a Thesis Statement from the example your teacher will give you.
- Good Luck and remember to PLAN! PLAN! PLAN!

