

HOW TO WRITE A THESIS AND SUBTHESIS

WHAT IS A THESIS?

Your English teacher might tell you something like “it is a controlling statement” or something formal like that. Here's another way to think about it. *YOUR THESIS IS YOUR ANSWER TO THE QUESTION IF YOU ONLY HAVE ONE SENTENCE FOR AN ANSWER.*

WHAT IS A SUB-THESIS?

A sub-thesis adds to your thesis by providing reasons why your thesis is true. It is a concise list that you will build on in the body of your essay.

WHY DO WE NEED A THESIS

1. To help your readers. Readers are lazy—a thesis tells them right off the bat what they are about to read and does it so clearly that it is obvious for all to understand.
2. If the reader has to work to understand what you are writing, they might give up on your piece. A thesis makes this job easier. (And remember the golden rule of writing KISS—Keep It Simple Students!)
3. It helps YOU. If you write a good, well-thought out thesis, it becomes a whole lot easier to organize your essay. You won't get halfway through and forget what you are writing about. The thesis gives you direction.
4. It helps your grade. Essays are like a blind date—you don't get a second chance to make a first impression. If the person grading your essay is happy at the end of the first paragraph, they're more likely to cut you some slack as things go on.

HOW DO I WRITE A THESIS/SUBTHESIS:

1. STEP ONE: FIGURE OUT WHAT THE QUESTION IS ASKING YOU TO DO
 1. This is critical. If the thesis is your answer to the question, you better make sure you understand the question.
 2. Read carefully and think hard.
 3. Underline key words
2. STEP TWO: Answer the question in one sentence.
 1. If the question is “Should Cell Phones Be Allowed in School?” your thesis might be, *Cell phones should be allowed in school.*
3. STEP THREE: ADD A SUB-THESIS
 1. Provide three or more reasons why your thesis is true.
 2. Example: *Cell phones should be allowed in school because they can improve students' communication, be an effective learning tool and help students adjust to the technological demands of the future.*