"An effective thesis statement tells readers specifically what you plan to write about in your paper. A thesis statement usually takes a stand or expresses a specific feeling or feature of your subject."

—Writers, Inc.

Your thesis statement will explain what you believe your research project can prove or support with appropriate facts and details.

A SPECIFIC SUBJECT + A PARTICULAR STAND, FEATURE, CONNECTIONS = AN EFFECTIVE THESIS STATEMENT

Your thesis statement is like a lighthouse ... because it will guide you along the way.
Thesis Statement Definition and Structure

I. Definition

Thesis = idea/point of view/theory/opinion(not fact)

Thesis Statement = a statement of...

One sentence of the writer’s point of view avoiding 1st and 2nd person

A clear, concise, unified statement to inform/convince the hostile/skeptical audience

II. Structure

One sentence with three basic components:

Basic point of view

Why?

So what?

Part 1: states basic point of view

Part 2: answers question “why?”

Part 3: answers question “so what?”

III. Examples

...Nixon was a bad president because he was directly responsible for Watergate, which caused a majority of the American people to lose faith in the office

...Boys are better athletes than girls for they are given more recognition; and therefore, they are better motivated.
IV. Assignment

In your groups, add parts 2 and 3 to the following:

1. Athletes should (not) be given scholarships

2. Roe vs. Wade should (not) be overturned

3. The death penalty is (not) a just means of dealing with criminals

4. We do (not) need gun control laws

5. Euthanasia should (not) be legalized
Thesis Statement Checklist

A successful thesis statement:
- Gives you something to prove, back up
- Sums up what you are going to say
- Is neither too broad nor too narrow for the scope of the assignment
- Does more than state a well-known fact
- Establishes a contract between you and your readers. They can expect that you will support your thesis convincingly and interestingly and that you will not be bothering them with extraneous information

Assignment:
In your groups, determine what is wrong with the following thesis statements:
1. Richard Nixon was the first President of the United States to resign from the office.

2. An examination of the benefits of penicillin.

3. In this essay, I am going to talk about the problems faced by ex-prisoners in returning to society.
4. Have you ever wondered why most people read so much more slowly than they need to?

5. Unemployment is a serious problem in today’s world.

Your History Day project must have a thesis statement!
4. Have you ever wondered why most people read so much more slowly than they need to?

5. Unemployment is a serious problem in today’s world.

Your History Day project must have a thesis statement!