



# The Thesis Statement


## 1. A good argumentative thesis is focused and not too broad.


It's important to stay focused! Don't try to argue an overly broad topic in your essay, or you're going to feel confused and unsure about your direction and purpose.

 Don't write, "Eating fast food is bad and should be avoided."


 Do write, "Americans should eliminate the regular consumption of fast food because the fast food diet leads to preventable and expensive health issues, such as diabetes, obesity, and heart disease."


## 2. A good argumentative thesis is centered on a *debatable* topic.

 Don't write, "There are high numbers of homeless people living in Berkeley, California."


 Do write, "Homeless people in Berkeley should be given access to services, such as regular food donations, public restrooms, and camping facilities, because it would improve life for all inhabitants of the city."


## 3. A good argumentative thesis picks a side.

 Don't write, "Secondhand smoke is bad and can cause heart disease and cancer; therefore, smoking should be outlawed in public places, but outlawing smoking is unfair to smokers so maybe non-smokers can just hold their breath or wear masks around smokers instead."

 Do write, "Secondhand smoke is just as harmful as smoking and leads to a higher prevalence of cancer and heart disease. What's worse, people who inhale secondhand smoke are doing so without consent. For this reason, smoking in any public place should be banned."

## 4. A good thesis makes claims that will be supported later in the paper.

 Don't write, "Humans should relocate to Mars."

 Do write, "It is too late to save our planet; therefore, humans should immediately set a date for their relocation to Mars where, with proper planning, they can avoid issues of famine, war, and global warming." This statement includes some thought-provoking claims. The reader will wonder how the author plans to defend them. (*"Famine, war, and global warming can be easily avoided on Mars? Go on..."*)