

Writing a Thesis Statement

Adapted from: Sebranek, P.; Kemper, D. & Meyer, V. (2006). Writing the research paper. Writers, Inc., p. 267. Massachusetts: Houghton-Mifflin.

- An effective thesis statement has two parts:
 - Specific topic
 - A particular stand, feeling, or feature

- Sample thesis statement:
 - *Writing assignment:* Research paper on personal family history
 - *Specific subject:* Family travel
 - *Thesis statement:* Though my family members have strong ties to one another and enjoy doing things together, my parents have never valued family travel as a worthwhile activity. As a result, I treasure every trip out of town, no matter how short or small, as a way of making up for lost time.

- Picking it apart:
 - *Specific topic:* “Though my family members have strong ties to one another and enjoy doing things together, my parents have never valued family travel as a worthwhile activity.”
 - *A particular stand, feeling, or feature:* “As a result, I treasure every trip out of town, no matter how short or small, as a way of making up for lost time.”

- Now you try it:
 - *Specific topic:*

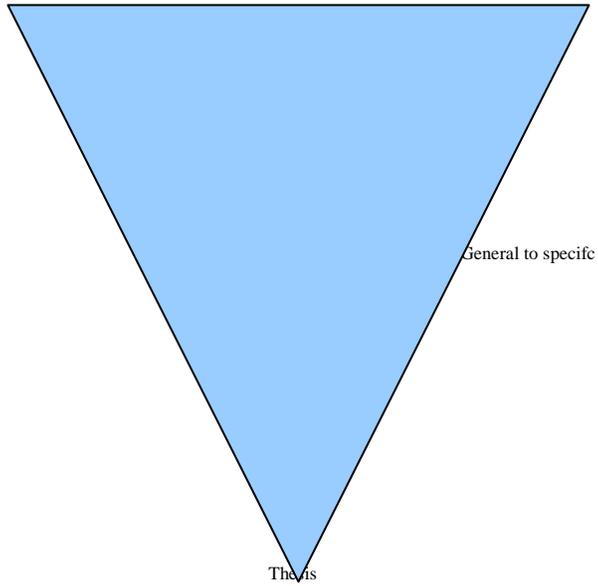
 - *A particular stand, feeling, or feature:*

- Make sure your thesis has the following:
 - Identifies a limited, specific topic (ex.: family travel);
 - Focuses on a particular feature or feeling about the topic (ex.: feeling like lack of travel equals lost opportunities in life that have to be corrected or made up for with lots of travel in the future);
 - Is stated in a clear sentence (or sentences);
 - Can be supported with convincing facts and/or details (we'll get to this later);
 - Meets the requirements of the assignment (ex: if you're writing a research paper, make sure your thesis statement is set up to research something).

- Now you've practiced writing an introduction, and have written a thesis statement, you're just about finished with your opening paragraph!

Organizing Your Research Paper

Introduction



Thesis

Body/Research



Specific to
General

