

Writing a Thesis

*A thesis is not a topic sentence, nor is it a question; a thesis is **your** opinion or point of view **about** the topic or question.

*The thesis must be placed at the **beginning!** It's not a buried treasure that's found half-way through your paragraph or essay.

*By placing it at the beginning, the thesis forces you to use the rest of the paragraph or essay to prove it.

*It is a necessary straight-jacket which gives your writing purpose and structure. Without it, you'll have unorganized and uninspiring mush!



There are two types of theses: "soft" and "hard." Let's give you an example before we define these two terms.

- Command Question: *Compare and contrast Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia.*
 - **"Soft" Thesis:** There are many differences and similarities between Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia.
 - **"Hard" Thesis:** In a comparison of Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia, it is clear that these two regimes are more alike than dissimilar.

Thus:

A **soft thesis** merely **restates the question** that you are asked and is more descriptive than argumentative. A **hard thesis** is more challenging; it is **argumentative** and demands that you marshal your evidence to prove your point of view. This kind of thesis is necessary if you want a good mark in a persuasive essay.