**How to write a problem statement in research?**

Problem statements differ depending on the type and topic of research and vary between a few sentences to a few paragraphs.

However, the problem statement should not drag on needlessly. A good research problem statement usually consists of three main parts:

**Context:** This section explains the background for your research. It identifies the problem and describes an ideal scenario that could exist in the absence of the problem. It also includes any past attempts and shortcomings at solving the problem.

**Significance:** This section defines how the problem prevents the ideal scenario from being achieved, including its negative impacts on the society or field of research. It should include who will be the most affected by a solution to the problem, the relevance of the study that you are proposing, and how it can contribute to the existing body of research.

**Solution:** This section describes the aim and objectives of your research, and your solution to overcome the problem. Finally, it need not focus on the perfect solution, but rather on addressing a realistic goal to move closer to the ideal scenario.

Here is a **cheat sheet** to help you with formulating a good problem statement.

1. Begin with a **clear indication that the problem statement is** going to be discussed next. You can start with a generic sentence like, “The problem that this study addresses…” This will inform your readers of what to expect next.

2. Next, mention the **consequences of not solving the problem**. You can touch upon who is or will be affected if the problem continues, and how.

3. **Conclude** with indicating the [type of research](https://scientific-publishing.webshop.elsevier.com/research-process/research-designs-types-and-differences/)/information that is needed to solve the problem. Be sure to reference authors who may have suggested the necessity of such research.

This will then directly lead to your proposed research objective and work plan and how that is expected to solve the problem i.e., close the research gap.

PROBLEM STATEMENT example

Students in high school 4 and 5 Classes are not passing the Advanced Placement (AP) test in Spanish.

GOAL:

Students will pass the AP Spanish test.

(Based on the goals to alleviate or reduce the problem, you can create your purpose statement.

PURPOSE STATEMENT:

The purpose of this study is to discover what tools are needed to better prepare high school students for the AP Spanish exam and to measure the level of efficacy of those tools.