

Lesson Topic: Introduction to Argumentative Thesis Statements

Objective

Students will be able to write a simple argumentative thesis statement.

Lesson Outline

1. Read objective
2. Introduction: The purpose of a thesis statement
3. Introduction: The parts of a thesis statement
4. Introduction: Sample thesis statement
5. Introduction: How to state a position
6. Introduction: How to list reasons
7. Introduction: How to maintain parallel structure
8. Individual Practice: Write a thesis statement
9. Individual Practice: Write a thesis statement
10. Individual Practice: Write a thesis statement
11. Wrap-up

Optional Follow-up Activity

There is no follow-up activity for this lesson.

Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.1.A

Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this lesson.

Slide 1/11

By the end of class today, you will be able to write a simple thesis statement.

Objective

Read the objective with the class.

Ask a student to read the objective out loud.

Say: Good. Today we're going to work on writing basic thesis statements for an argument essay. Let's start by talking about what a thesis statement does.

Slide 2/11

What is a thesis statement?

A thesis statement is a sentence at the end of your introduction that reveals your position on the issue and the main points you're going to make in your essay.

Introduction

Discuss the purpose of a thesis statement.

Ask a student to read the definition of a thesis statement out loud.

Say: A thesis statement is essential to every essay you write. In fact, crafting your thesis statement is one of the first things you should do before writing the essay.

Say: Why do you think thesis statements are so important to an essay?

Anticipated student response: Thesis statements help the reader understand what you're saying in the essay; thesis statements help you clarify your own ideas and position; they help you stay on track while writing your essay.

Say: Exactly! In order to write a thesis statement, you have to know what your position on the issue is, and you have to know what main points you're going to make to support your position.

Say: That helps you as the writer create a well-organized, clear essay, and it helps your reader understand your ideas better by clearly telling them what to expect before they begin reading.

Slide 3/11

A thesis statement has two main parts:

Your position on the issue

Two or three reasons to support your position

Introduction

Discuss how to write a thesis statement.

Ask a student to read the slide out loud.

Say: Good. While some thesis statements may be more complex and include other information, every thesis statement has at least these two parts.

Slide 4/11

Prompt:

Should schools offer one long break during the summer or should school be year round with

Introduction

Analyze a sample thesis statement.

Ask a student to read sample prompt out loud.

Say: What is the prompt asking the writer to do?

multiple short breaks throughout the year? Why?

Thesis Statement:

School should be year round because it helps students maintain their academic progress and provides a safe, healthy environment for all students.

Anticipated student response: Talk about whether school should be year round or not and why.

Say: Exactly. We said a thesis statement needs to have two things: the writer's position on the issue, and the claims to support that position.

Say: What is the writer's position on this issue?

Anticipated student response: The writer is arguing for year-round schools.

Say: Good. What are the writer's reasons to support this position?

Anticipated student response: It helps maintain academic progress and provides a safe environment for students.

Say: Exactly. Let's talk in more detail about how to create this thesis statement.

Slide 5/11

School should be year round because it helps students maintain their academic progress and provides a safe, healthy environment for all students.

Introduction

Discuss how to state the position.

Say: Let's start by talking about the position. In this thesis, it's that school should be year round.

Say: The position is your opinion, usually on an issue that not everyone agrees on. The rest of your essay is going to try to convince people to agree with your opinion, or position.

Say: When you write your thesis, you have to choose just one position—you can't argue for both sides. Even if you can see both sides of the argument, choose one for your essay and stick with it the whole way through.

Say: The other thing to remember is to avoid using words like *I think* or *in my opinion*. Just state your position. That will make it sound stronger and more convincing!

Slide 6/11

School should be year round because **it helps students maintain their academic progress** and **provides a safe, healthy environment for all students**.

Introduction

Discuss how to list the reasons.

Say: Once you've stated your position, the next step is to list the main points you're going to make in your essay that support your opinion. They're the reasons you think what you do.

Say: This thesis provides two reasons school should be year round. What are they?

Anticipated student response: Year round school helps students maintain their academic progress; year round school provides a safe environment for all students.

Say: Yes. There are two reasons, so that means I'm going to have two body paragraphs in the essay—one for each reason.

Slide 7/11

Parallel

...**it helps** students maintain their academic progress and **provides** a safe, healthy environment for all students.

Not Parallel

...**it helps** students maintain their academic progress, and **students also need** a safe place to go, which the school can provide.

Introduction

Discuss what it means for the thesis statement to have parallel structure.

Say: One thing to keep in mind is that the reasons should be written in parallel structure. Does anyone know what that means?

Anticipated student response: The action words are in the same form; the reasons have the same sentence structure.

Say: Exactly. Look at the example that is not parallel.

Ask a student to read the non-example out loud.

Say: The reasons are written with completely different structures. The second reason has a different subject (the students), and it includes a *which* statement. If one of your reasons begins with *it helps*, then the other reason should begin with *it provides*.

Slide 8/11

Should kids be given an allowance, or should they be required to earn their money instead?



Students input sentences

Individual Practice

Ask students to write a thesis statement.

Say: Okay, let's practice!

Ask a student to read the prompt out loud.

Say: Read the prompt again in your head, and then try writing a simple thesis statement. Remember to clearly state your position, and then list at least two reasons to support it.

Discussion

Select 3-4 responses to display and discuss.

Lead a discussion about the strengths and areas for improvement in each thesis statement.

Discuss the following:

- Do the thesis statements avoid phrases like *I think* and *in my opinion*?
- Do the thesis statements take clear stances on the issue?
- Do the thesis statements each include at least two clear reasons that support the position?
- Are the thesis statements written with parallel structure?
- Are the thesis statements grammatically correct and clear overall?

Slide 9/11

Should junk food be taxed more than healthy food to encourage people to make healthier food choices?



Students input sentences

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Slide 10/11

Is it better to grow up in a small town or a big city?



Students input sentences

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Slide 11/11

Today I learned...

Wrap-up

Review what the students learned today.

- Thesis statements include a clear position on an important issue
- Thesis statements include at least two reasons to support the position

Say: Great work everyone! Let's review what you learned today.

Ask students to read each bullet point out loud.