

# CCS1090d

## Academic English Skills

### Week 10 – Session 1

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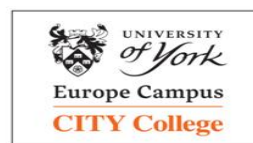
## Aims of today's lecture



Thesis statement

How to write an introduction  
and a conclusion

# Thesis statement



## What is a thesis statement?

Every paper you write should have **a main point, a main idea, or central message**. The argument(s) you make in your paper should reflect this main idea. The sentence that captures your position on this main idea is what we call a thesis statement.

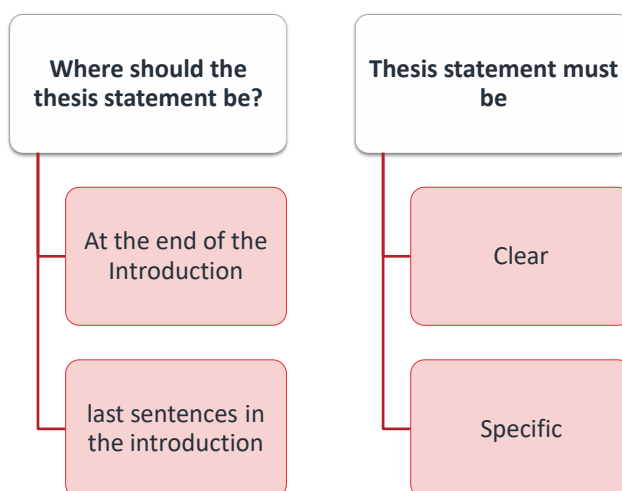
## How long does it need to be?

A thesis statement focuses your ideas **into very few sentences**. It should present the topic of your paper and also make a comment about your position in relation to the topic. Your thesis statement should **tell your reader what the paper is about** and also help **guide your writing and keep your argument focused**.

<http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop/writers/tips/thesis/>

3

# Thesis statement



<http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop/writers/tips/thesis/>

4

# Thesis Don'ts



### Don't:

- announce your thesis: “In this essay, I am going to tell you about...”
- confuse your reader: make sure that the topic and point are clear;
- be vague: Words like “good,” “bad,” “right,” and “wrong,” don’t convey specific meaning

## A thesis

- cannot be a fact: Doesn't allow you to prove anything because it's already factual.
- cannot be a question: "Don't you think animal testing is inhumane?" – Does not give the point of the paper clearly. – Leaves it open for readers to fill in the blank.

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5

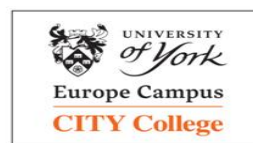
## Schematic structure of the essay

[illegible]

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6

## Thesis statement: Summary of Basic principles



Condensed meaning

Locating **yourself** and **your work** within the academia

Triggering the reader's interest

Introducing your perspective and approach

Sharpness: be clear and to the point

Conveying your arguments

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7

## Is this a weak or strong thesis?



Second-hand 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.

Weak - Is the writer for or against? Pick a side and stick with it!

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8

## Is this a weak or strong thesis?



It is too late to save Earth; therefore, humans should immediately set a date for their relocation to Mars, where they can, with proper planning, avoid issues of famine, war, and global warming.

Strong - This statement includes some thought-provoking claims. The reader will wonder how the author plans to defend them.

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9

## Why is this thesis weak?



Recent college graduates must have discipline and persistence in order to find and maintain a stable job in which they can use and be appreciated for their talents.

This is, in fact, a very STRONG thesis statement!

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10

## Why is this thesis weak?



“Eating fast food is bad and should be avoided.”

*How can we improve this?*

Improved thesis statement:

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

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11

## Why is this thesis weak?



“There are high numbers of homeless people living in Berkeley, California.”

*How can we improve this?*

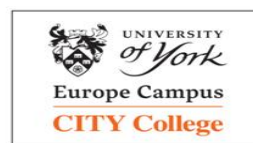
Improved thesis statement:

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 31 inhabitants of the city.

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12

## What is an argumentative research paper?



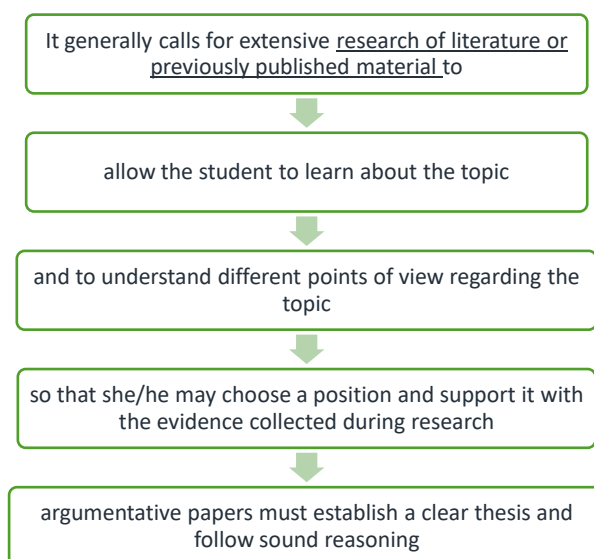
The argumentative research paper is a genre of writing that requires the student to:

- investigate a topic;
- collect, generate, and evaluate evidence;
- and establish a position on the topic in a concise manner.

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general\\_writing/academic\\_writing/essay\\_writing/argumentative\\_essays.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/academic_writing/essay_writing/argumentative_essays.html)

13

## What is an argumentative research paper?



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14

## Structure of the argumentative paper



**Clear and logical transitions between the introduction, main body, and conclusion.**

- Transitions are the foundation of the paper together.
- Without logical progression of thought → the reader is unable to follow the arguments, and the structure will collapse.
- Transitions: wrap up the idea from the previous section and introduce the idea that is to follow in the next section.

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general\\_writing/academic\\_writing/essay\\_writing/argumentative\\_essays.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/academic_writing/essay_writing/argumentative_essays.html)

15

## Structure of the argumentative paper



**Body paragraphs that include evidential support.**

### Each paragraph should:

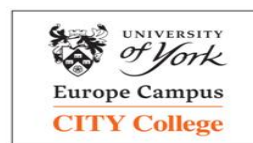
- discuss one general idea → clarity and direction throughout the paper → creates an ease of readability for one's audience.
- have some logical connection to the thesis statement in the introduction.
- all paragraphs: directly support the thesis statement with evidence collected during research.
- explain how and why the evidence supports the thesis

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general\\_writing/academic\\_writing/essay\\_writing/argumentative\\_essays.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/academic_writing/essay_writing/argumentative_essays.html)

16



## Structure of the argumentative paper



Body paragraphs that include evidential support.

### Each paragraph should:

- consider and explain differing points of view regarding the topic. Depending on the length of the assignment, dedicate one or two paragraphs to discuss conflicting opinions on the topic.
- note how opinions that do not align with the thesis might not be well informed or how they might be out of date.

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general\\_writing/academic\\_writing/essay\\_writing/argumentative\\_essays.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/academic_writing/essay_writing/argumentative_essays.html)

17

## Structure of the argumentative paper



Evidential support (whether factual, logical, statistical, or anecdotal).

- well-researched, accurate, detailed, and current information to support the thesis statement and consider other points of view. Some factual, logical, statistical, or anecdotal evidence should support the thesis.
- consider multiple points of view when collecting evidence
- discuss opposing views

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general\\_writing/academic\\_writing/essay\\_writing/argumentative\\_essays.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/academic_writing/essay_writing/argumentative_essays.html)

18



# Writing Introductions and Conclusions



What to include:



Introduce your topic: start with general information and then narrow it down.



Create some context and background.



Provide definitions of concepts.



Explain why your research is important.



State the aim of paper: thesis statement

## Writing Introductions for a research paper

# Example of an Introduction



Comics have been part of America since the 1930's and their appeal has survived to present day. Graphic novels are comics in a trade paperback format—the story is told both through text and through images. Graphic novels first appeared on the scene in 1978 and are steadily becoming mainstream in American culture (Maureen Mooney, 2002). In recent years, much debate has been stirred regarding whether or not graphic novels have a place within a library's collection. To most, comics and graphic novels are silly, violent and chauvinistic. However comics are no longer simply men in tights—many graphic novels deal with current issues, serious subjects and learning. Graphic novels have matured to become a legit form of literature with many titles winning major literary awards, including the Pulitzer Prize. While the overall general public tends to feel that graphic novels are a frivolous use of library budget, more and more librarians are finding that graphic novels are powerful tools in getting reluctant students to read.

Taken from: <https://libguides.astate.edu/papers/introparagraph>

21

# Writing conclusions



1

- **Thesis:** restate the thesis (using synonyms) and remind the reader of your stance/opinion.

2

- **Summary of main ideas:** summarise the key points discussed in the main body.

3

- **Recommendation/prediction/solution:** the final sentence should be a future focus on what needs to be done.

**Importantt: NO NEW information in the conclusion**

Taken from: <https://www.academic-englishuk.com/conclusions>

22

## Conclusion

**In conclusion**, this essay has discussed three key areas of CSR and **has argued that it is an important consideration for larger companies in 2020**. In promoting a good reputation in being environmentally friendly, supporting local companies and providing positive working conditions, evidence suggests that this will in the long-run improve profitability and encourage outside investment. **One future prediction is that as consumers are becoming more ethically minded, now is the time to invest in CSR.**

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### Thesis:

Remind the reader what your stance is.

### Summary:

Summarise the key points made in main body paragraphs.

### Future Focus:

A prediction / recommendation or solution

## CONCLUSION – EXAMPLE

## Introduction-best practices, yet...

The world and society in which we live in today is the most advanced it has ever been, making life filled with diverse experiences. This societal state has been a major advantage for the technological and cognitive improvement of the human race, however it does bring new information and obligations. Because of these obligations people in their personal life are constantly struggling with their mental state in the aspects of frustration, stress, and anxiety. This stress cannot be avoided because it has become the norm, but there are many ways to combat the stress and anxiety which are known as coping mechanisms. University students, as a narrower population, encounter relatively more stress than the typical citizen due to their exposure to a new environment, stressful reading materials, as well as interpersonal struggles. The coping mechanisms that university students use to combat their stress and anxiety are dependent on their personality type. Frequent and effective coping mechanisms that university students use in order to strive against stress and anxiety are religious practices and physical activity.

### Lecturer's comment:

Very good but you need to establish your position more directly; do you see the coping mechanisms as beneficial/appropriate or do you also see certain preferences in type of coping mechanism as harmful?

## Introduction-best practices



3

As children become adolescents they slowly rid of different physical fears and become more aware socially, which leads to new fears in the social aspect of life. We see this occur when children start to handle social situations on their own, become aware of the consequences of their actions and need to perform for some kind of audience, which can be more frightening to some than to others (Westenberg, Drewes, Goedhart, Siebelink, & Treffers, -2004). Social Anxiety or Social Phobia is anxiety that arises when someone is trying to make a specific appearance or impression on a certain crowd and is handicapped by the thought of performing poorly ultimately leading to negative evaluation of his/her performance (Schlenker & Leary, -1982). The desire to impress others and expecting rewards by doing so are some of the main causes of social anxiety (Schlenker & Leary, -1982). Social Anxiety among adolescents is becoming a big issue, which needs to be prevented through coping mechanisms because it hinders their social performance and often leads to substance abuse. In my essay, I am going to be addressing the cause and effect of social anxiety and ways to cope with it, as well as the potential harmful behaviors that can be imposed by it.

Lecturer's comment:

This is a very well compiled introduction, presenting the topic, justifying the group you're focusing on as well as a clear/direct thesis

## Introduction-bad practices



Nowadays, internet has a big influence in our lives, because nearly everything we do today, the internet is part of it, starting from shopping online, reading the news, watching different shows, sending E-Mails and of course social medias, which are very frequented by the people today, especially by the teenagers. Most of these applications require to create a personal account first. To create a personal account, most of the time you need to provide personal information such as your name, surname, date of birth and even mobile number and home address. We all know that the internet is not a secure place, because there are certain people, who can easily break into our private accounts and steal our personal information and this can be very harmful for the people, because there is also information about credit cards, which means they can take all the money from your bank account. So, as we can see, stealing our personal data can be very harmful for us and we should find solutions to prevent this, for example by changing the privacy policy and adding big fines for those who take our data. Weak thesis

Lecturer's comment:

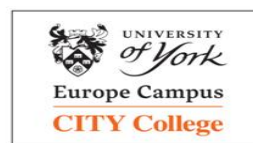
This is too detailed to be part of the introduction. It should be in the main body.

Lecturer's comment:

Your thesis statement should show your stance on the topic and introduce the main arguments that will be discussed in the main body. Your thesis shows your opinion but it does not outline your main arguments. For example, adding big fines is not one of your main arguments, but the use of VPN or cookies is

## Conclusion-best practices, yet...

In conclusion, we can clearly see from the evidence and problems preliminarily mentioned above that the misuse of Adderall could have a multidimensional impact on one's life, but also lives of others. The risk factors of abusing this prescribed stimulant encourages the conclusion of it not being a sufficient coping mechanism against anxiety. It is crucial to once again highlight Adderall's potential of becoming highly addictive and the impact that could have on a person's mental and physical health in addition to society on a larger scale. Research has shown some of the dominant objectives of students consuming illicit prescription drugs for non-medical reasons,



Lecturer's comment:

To exhibit further critical engagement and evaluation of the problem, offering alternative and in your opinion appropriate coping mechanisms would have been useful.

3

such as higher academic scores in correlation to less stress while accomplishing that goal. Even though the intentions of students seeking out Adderall on campus are more than easy to comprehend, the lack of realization that these very same people are actually becoming part of the problem is disturbing. I believe that even in the case of Adderall not producing dangerous side effects the illicit use of it to perform better in University, school or even work should be examined in a way detached from numbers, scores and grades. When you [you](#) under the influence of something that expands your concentration to unnatural levels, you deprive yourself of the chance to let your mind wonder freely. Through such moments are born unique ideas, creativity, art, unpredictable inspiration and extraordinary moments of human connection and expression.

## Conclusion-bad practices



To conclude, my focus in this essay was the explanation of coping mechanism and how effective they can be. The problems that teenagers face every day were mentioned. How to deal with their stress and depression. Also how to avoid peer pressure and bullying and how important is the support of the family and friends around them. I've mention some ways on fighting this problems like: time managing, exercising, healthy food, psychologist and things that make teenagers feel better.

Lecturer's comment:

Avoid stating what you've done, and simply provide the main points you've raised.



practice  
makes  
perfect

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29

**Write an introduction (including a thesis statement) on one of the following topics**



- Why I do not like cities
- Gun violence in schools
- The influence of TV on our lives
- The beneficial uses of social media
- The likely causes of widespread teenage drinking
- Discrimination against women/men in advertising
- The advantages of jogging

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30

