

## Effective thesis statements

Thesis statement	Strengths	Source
<p><b>Biology</b> Much maligned and the subject of unwarranted fears, most bats are harmless and highly beneficial.</p>	<p>This thesis promises to offer evidence that bats' bad reputation is undeserved. The thesis works <i>against</i> a common perception.</p>	<p><i>Smithsonian</i> magazine</p>
<p><b>Biology</b> This paper reviews the contributions of hypothermia and the mammalian diving reflex (MDR) to human survival of cold-water immersion incidents. It also examines the relationship between the victim's age and MDR and considers the protective role played by hypothermia. . . . Future research is suggested to improve patient care.</p>	<p>This thesis (or purpose statement) establishes the type of writing (a literature review) and indicates what the writer will cover. It promises to identify gaps in the research that could improve patient care.</p>	<p>Briana Martin, review of the literature paper for biology class</p>
<p><b>History</b> The American Revolution was the central event in Washington's life, the crucible for his development as a mature man, a prominent statesman, and a national hero.</p>	<p>This thesis takes an argumentative stance and provides a blueprint for the argument. In three sections, the writer will show that the Revolution influenced Washington's development as (1) a mature man, (2) a statesman, and (3) a hero.</p>	<p><i>Smithsonian</i> magazine</p>
<p><b>Environmental science</b> Raging in mines from Pennsylvania to China, coal fires threaten towns, poison air and water, and add to global warming.</p>	<p>This thesis uses a controlling idea: the <i>effects</i> of coal fires. The three-part structure provides a blueprint for the writer's argument.</p>	<p><i>Smithsonian</i> magazine</p>
<p><b>Business</b> This report will define the problem of employee motivation in one company and examine potential solutions.</p>	<p>This thesis (or purpose statement) sets up a problem/solution structure for a business report.</p>	<p>Brian Spencer, report for business class</p>
<p><b>History/women's studies</b> An analysis of the available evidence reveals that rather than being exploited, women mill workers shaped their experience for their own purposes and actively engaged in expanding the constricted opportunities for women.</p>	<p>This thesis sets up a contrast between the perception that young women factory workers were exploited and the author's assertion that the women in the textile mills were actually in control of their lives and helped shape their world.</p>	<p>Jenna Benjamin, research paper for history class</p>
<p><b>Psychology</b> Researchers agree that the apes have acquired fairly large vocabularies in American Sign Language and in artificial languages, but they have drawn quite different conclusions in addressing the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How spontaneously have apes used language?</li> <li>2. How creatively have apes used language?</li> <li>3. Can apes create sentences?</li> <li>4. What are the implications of the ape language studies?</li> </ol> <p>This review of the literature on apes and language focuses on these four questions.</p>	<p>This thesis summarizes what the student found in her review of the literature on apes and language. The thesis statement establishes the scope of the discussion and characterizes the specific type of report: a literature review.</p>	<p>Karen Shaw, review of the literature paper for psychology class</p>