

## THESIS AND SUPPORT

One of the most basic patterns in writing is “statement-and support.” We say something, and then we back it up. The statement that sums up the main point is called the **thesis**. When you write to support a central thesis, you are trying to satisfy the reader who says. “Show us what this statement means in practice. Show us that this is true in actual cases. Show us how this works out in examples.” When you write a *thesis-and-support* paper, you commit yourself to a key statement. Then you try to make your statement stick.

The topic for a paper sketches out the area to be covered or the issue to be examined. The thesis sums up the writer’s stand on the issue; it states the conclusion the writer has reached. A strong thesis makes a definite statement; it gives the reader something to accept or to challenge.

**Topic:** Child Support

**THESIS:** Child support received by divorced mothers is generally inadequate.

**Topic:** Recent Asian immigrants

**THESIS:** Traditional patterns of initiative and hard work have helped many recent Asian immigrants establish successful small businesses.

Study the following possible thesis statements for thesis-and-support papers. Your reaction to each may range from “I agree” to “I absolutely *disagree*.” Perhaps at times you will agree up to a point. *Rewrite* each thesis statement in such a way that it will reflect your *own* opinion on the subject at hand. (Your instructor may ask you to select one of the revised thesis statements as the thesis for a paper in which you back it up with examples, reasons, arguments.)

1. Young people today are not as competitive as their parents were.

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2. American manners are deteriorating, with much brutal, callous, abusive behavior observed everyday.

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3. Members of America’s racial minorities today have a stronger sense of pride and self-esteem.

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4. Many young Americans today grow up with an irrational, kneejerk hostility toward the police officers who protect our lives and property.

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5. Environmentalists in this state are fighting a losing battle against the economic interests that perpetuate pollution.

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6. The right to abortion is anchored in a woman's right to be in charge of her own body and her own life.

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7. Most young Americans today are cynical about politicians and apathetic about election.

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8. Much of the current cult of health foods and healthful living is faddish and overdue.

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9. Young people today know that the large extended family as a stable source of moral and economic support is a thing of the past.

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10. Few young Americans today have learned to experience pride in conscientious or difficult work.

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