**WRITING A THESIS STATEMENT**

The most important thing to keep in mind, no matter what you are writing, is the idea that you want to convey to your reader. Whether you are writing a paragraph or an essay, you need to have a single idea in mind that you want to express to your reader. In an essay, this is called a thesis statement. In a paragraph, it is called a topic sentence.

Consider the following topic: **Bushwalking in Washpool National Park**. This does not make any point. What about that day? What did it do for you? What point about the day would you like to present to your reader? You might write:

One day of bushwalking in Washpool National Park taught me the importance of getting in

shape beforehand.

*Or*

One day of bushwalking in Washpool National Park showed me that I had more

resourcefulness than I was aware of.

Now you have said something. **When you write in one sentence the point you want to present to your reader, you have written a thesis statement.** There are two things to keep in mind:

1. A thesis statement must be a sentence (not merely a topic)

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| --- | --- |
| TOPIC | THESIS |
| Modern eating habits | Modern eating habits have changed dramatically in the past twenty years. |
| Smoking | Smoking seriously affects a person’s physical fitness. |

1. A thesis must be a statement that you can explain or defend (not simply a fact that no one would deny)

|  |  |
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| FACT | THESIS |
| Many accidents involve drunk drivers | Tougher laws should be passed concerning drinking and driving. |
| William Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth* | *Macbeth* is the best play that William Shakespeare wrote. |

Exercise: Which of the following are merely topics or facts, and which are thesis statements that you could explain or defend? Write TOPIC, FACT or THESIS.

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Buying a new car
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Physical fitness
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ The amount of homework given to year 7 students should be reduced.
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ For some students, English is a second language.
5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ English should not be a compulsory subject in years 11 and 12.
6. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_When painting a room, four steps are necessary.
7. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Coal seam gas mining
8. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ School uniforms

*In summary, a thesis is a line of argument or an opinion that relates to an essay question. TRY TO WRITE THESIS STATEMENTS THAT DON’T JUST REWORD THE ESSAY QUESTION. Try to go deeper!*