

## Thesis statement

A thesis statement is your controlling idea. It is the summary of your purpose. A thesis statement is made up of a **limited topic**, a **comment** about the limited topic, and preferably a **plan of development**.

**Example:** Mountaineering is a beneficial activity since it enhances physical strength, develops problem-solving, and improves self-confidence.

Limiting your topic:

Ask yourself these questions:

1. What do I want to write about? **Sports**
2. What kind of sports do I want to write about? Olympic sports, winter sports, extreme sports, etc.? **Extreme Sports**
3. What kind of extreme sports do I want to write about? Paragliding, canoeing, snowboarding, mountaineering, etc.? **Mountaineering**

Deciding on what to say about the topic:

The comment about your topic usually depends on the type of essay you want to write.

For example:

1. Effects: Mountaineering is a beneficial activity.
2. Causes: Young adults decide to practice mountaineering for several reasons.
3. Similarities: Mountaineering and ice climbing are similar in several ways.
4. Contrast: Mountaineering and hiking are different in several ways.

Writing your plan of development:

The plan of development shows how you will organize your supporting material in the essay.

In the following example, the reader expects to read about how mountaineering enhances physical strength in the first body paragraph and how it improves self confidence in the last body paragraph.

**Example:** Mountaineering is a beneficial activity since it enhances physical strength, develops problem-solving, and improves self-confidence.

*Organizing your supporting material:*

There are several ways to organize your support:

1. Chronological order (time — ending with the most recent event)
2. Spatial order (division/parts)
3. Emphatic order (least important to most important)
4. Reverse emphatic order (most important to least important)

Features of a Thesis Statement:

- 1- It should never be a question.

Incorrect: What are the ways to stop cheating at schools?

Correct: There are several ways to stop cheating at schools.

- 2- It should never be an announcement.

Incorrect: In this paper, I will discuss the methods schools can implement to stop cheating.

Correct: There are several methods schools can implement to stop cheating.

- 3- It should not be too broad or too narrow. It should be specific enough to allow you to develop your topic.

Incorrect: Students cheat on exams. (too broad) 25 students cheated on the exam. (too narrow)

Correct: Students employ many devices to cheat.

- 4- It should be a simple sentence to avoid having two points to be developed.

Incorrect: <sup>1</sup>Even though educational institutions have implemented several means to eradicate cheating on exams, <sup>2</sup>students still manage to employ novel methods that escape supervisors.

Correct: Students always manage to employ novel methods that escape supervisors.