

**What is an effective
thesis statement?**

An effective thesis statement is...

relevant

Your claim should answer the question posed.

precise

Your claim should be narrowed down from a broad subject.

supportable

You must be able to prove your claim with evidence at hand.

arguable

Your claim should not be a statement of fact or an assertion with which every reader is likely to immediately agree.

Let's look at some **weak** and **strong** thesis statements.

Weak thesis statement:

[1] *John Lennon is one of the greatest musicians of all time.*

Reason:

This thesis statement merely states a fact or repeats the information given. It is not arguable.

What your critical academic reader might think:



So what? Why do you say that? This is a commonplace statement.

Stronger thesis statement:

More than any other contemporary artist, John Lennon transformed the way people feel about music.

Reason:

This thesis statement indicates the writer's position for the discussion to follow.

What your critical academic reader might think:



I wonder how Lennon "transformed the way people feel about music" and how you will compare him to other "contemporary artists"

Weak thesis statement:

[2] *Overseas travel has advantages and disadvantages.*

Your reason:

This thesis statement merely states a fact. The writer's position is unclear.

What your critical academic reader might think: ○ ○ ○

So what? Are there more advantages than disadvantages or not?

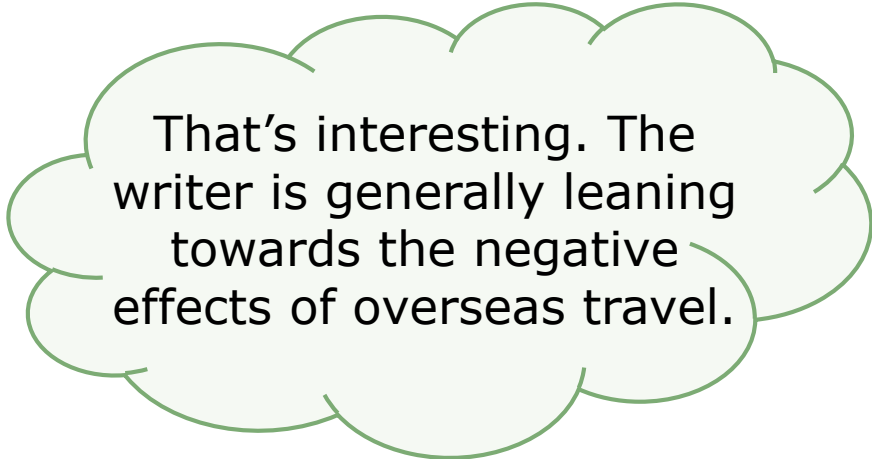
Stronger thesis statement:

Despite many obvious advantages, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that overseas travel is not always beneficial.

Reason:

This thesis statement establishes clearly the writer's position. The essay will discuss the obvious advantages but will largely argue against overseas travel.

What your critical academic reader might think:



That's interesting. The writer is generally leaning towards the negative effects of overseas travel.

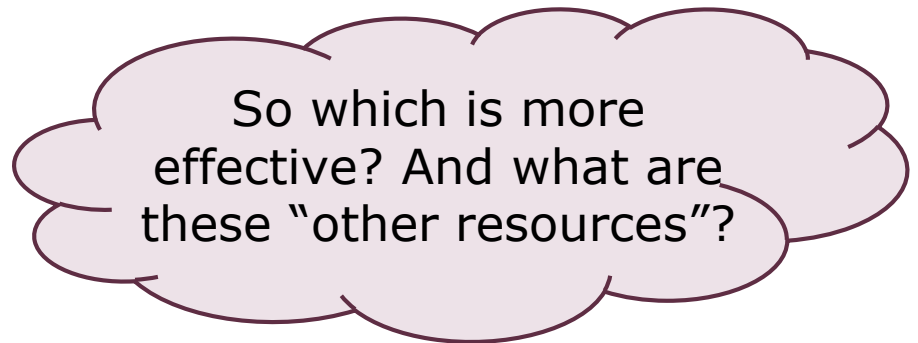
Weak thesis statement:

[3] *Technology can enhance competitiveness. Of course, other resources can also do that.*

Your reason:

This thesis statement is vague. There is no indication of how technology compares with the "other resources".

What your critical academic reader might think:



Stronger thesis statement:

It is true that technology can effectively enhance competitiveness, but without skilled staff, a favourable infrastructure, and information system plan, organisations are unlikely to make use of any competitive advantage gained from the modern technologies.

Reason:

This thesis statement establishes at the outset that technology must go hand in hand with clearly identified resources if competitive advantage is to have a positive outcome for organisations.

What your critical academic reader might think:



OK. That's interesting. These other factors appear to be more than technology alone.