

# Thesis Tips For Researched Essay

ENGL 110 | ORWIG | FALL 2023 | PHASE 4

## What makes a strong Thesis Statement for the Exploratory Essay?

### Checklist:

1. Is it relevant to our topic (i.e., it is related to language and literacy)?
2. Is it arguable (i.e., it presents a particular side that could be debated)?
3. Is it driven by our shared readings (i.e., it is inspired by our course texts)?
4. Is it qualified (i.e., it is not too big, too broad, or overstated)?
5. Is it complicated (i.e., it is not obvious, simplistic, polarized, or overly assertive)?
6. Is it evolving (i.e., it is not repetitive or predictable; your synthesis “evolves” it)?
7. Is it audience appropriate (i.e., it accounts for readers’ values and knowledge)?

### Formats To Try:

1. Pose a question: why or how something is.
2. While it appears as if X is about Y, it’s actually about Z.
3. Although X is important, Y and Z help illustrate that...
4. Insert qualifiers (hedging words).



### Strategy I To Try:

Synthesize together two specific ideas from two sources. Then, use one of the sentence templates listed in the table below to make clear the result of putting the two ideas together. What follows could be the start of a thesis!

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### **Signaling your observations:**

- This means that...
- In other words...
- What's important to notice here is...
- Perhaps this means that...
- This finding might indicate...
- My analysis points to...
- It is possible that this trend signals that...
- The most significant idea here is that...
- In summary, it is important to note that...

### **Signaling your main ideas:**

- My point here is that...
- What I am claiming is...
- The thesis I hope to communicate is...
- My thesis has evolved from...
- Based on my analysis of X, I now posit that...
- So this helps me to conclude that...
- This is, in fact, my principal argument:
- Finally, it should be understood/argued that...
- Therefore, it can be assumed/concluded that...

## **Strategy 2 To Try:**

Replace “absolutes” with “qualifiers” to signal you acknowledge room for error, exceptions to the rule, and nuance (but don't over-qualify your thesis either).

### **Absolutes**

- will
- forms of “be” (am, is, are, was, were)
- all/every
- none/no
- always
  
- never
- certainly
- impossible

### **Qualifiers**

- may, might, could
- may be, could be, might have been, may have been, appears, seems, suggests, indicates
- many, most, some, numerous, countless, a majority
- few, not many, a small number, hardly any, a minority
- often, frequently, commonly, for a long time, usually, sometimes, repeatedly
- rarely, infrequently, sporadically, seldom
- probably, possibly
- unlikely, improbable, doubtful

Others: basically, essentially, generally, kind of, mostly, pretty, rather, slightly