

Boost Free Lessons - Year 7 English

Lesson 12: Thesis and Argument Paragraphs

Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

Worked Example 1

Why is the sentence below a weak thesis statement, and how would you fix it?

This essay is about mobile phones in schools.

1. A **thesis statement** gives your position and signals the reasons you will use.
2. This sentence announces a topic but takes no position, so the reader cannot tell what you will argue.
3. Decide your position first: phones should be banned during class time.
4. Then add the main reasons, which gives the reader a map of your essay.

Model: Mobile phones should be banned during class time, because they distract students from learning and reduce face-to-face conversation.

Worked Example 2

Build an argument paragraph from the reason *phones distract students*.

1. An argument paragraph has four parts: **Point**, **Evidence**, **Explanation**, **Link**.
2. **Point**: state the reason as a topic sentence. Phones distract students from learning.
3. **Evidence**: give a fact, statistic or example. One study found students checked their phones every six minutes in class.
4. **Explanation**: say why that matters. Each interruption breaks concentration and costs time to recover. **Link**: tie it back to the thesis.

Point, Evidence, Explanation, Link: a complete argument paragraph.

Remember: A **thesis** states your position and signals your reasons in one sentence. Each argument paragraph then follows **Point**, **Evidence**, **Explanation**, **Link**.



Question 1: Write whether each thesis statement is **strong** or **weak**.

1. This report will discuss recycling.

2. Recycling should be compulsory, because landfill space is running out.

3. Are school uniforms a good idea?

4. School uniforms reduce bullying and save families money, so they should be kept.

5. I am going to write about zoos.

6. Zoos should focus on breeding endangered species rather than public display.

7. Homework is an interesting topic.

8. Homework should be limited to thirty minutes a night in Year 7.



Question 2: Read the passage below, then answer the questions.

Every morning the road outside our school fills with cars. Cycling to school should be encouraged, because it improves student alertness and reduces traffic around the school gate.

Students who ride arrive more alert than those who travel by car. A trial at one high school found that riders scored higher on morning concentration tasks. Arriving alert means the first lesson is not wasted settling in.

1. Which sentence is the thesis statement?

2. What two reasons does the thesis signal?

3. Identify the Point in the second paragraph.

4. Identify the Evidence in the second paragraph.

5. The paragraph is missing its Link. Write one.

6. Rewrite the thesis to argue the opposite position.



Question 3: Answer the following questions.

1. Write a thesis statement arguing for later school start times.

2. Write the Point and Evidence for one argument paragraph supporting it.

3. Explain why a thesis statement should never be a question.

4. Why should the Link sentence refer back to the thesis?





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Answers and Model Responses: Thesis and Argument Paragraphs**Question 1**

1. Weak (topic only)
2. Strong
3. Weak (a question, not a position)
4. Strong
5. Weak (topic only)
6. Strong
7. Weak (topic only)
8. Strong

Question 2

1. *Cycling to school should be encouraged, because it improves student alertness and reduces traffic around the school gate.*
2. Improved alertness, and reduced traffic near the school gate.
3. *Students who ride arrive more alert than those who travel by car.*
4. *A trial at one high school found that riders scored higher on morning concentration tasks.*
5. Model response: Encouraging cycling would therefore lift concentration across the whole first session.
6. Model response: Cycling to school should not be encouraged, because many students live too far away and local roads lack safe bike lanes.

Question 3

1. Model response: Schools should start at nine o'clock, because teenagers biologically need more morning sleep and later starts have been shown to improve attendance.
2. Model response: Point: teenagers need more sleep in the morning than adults do. Evidence: sleep research has found that the teenage body clock shifts later by up to two hours during puberty.
3. A thesis must state your position. A question leaves it open, so the reader still does not know what you will argue.
4. It shows the reader how this paragraph supports your overall case, so the essay reads as one argument rather than a list of separate points.

