

# RESEARCH WORKSHOP II

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# What makes a good research paper?

- ▶ Clear thesis statement
- ▶ Argument that is well constructed across the paper and easy to follow (think about the organization of your paper!)
- ▶ Interesting research questions to be explored
- ▶ Well supported evidence (for an art history paper, this could mean an analysis that is drawn directly from the artwork, historical facts, writings of other scholars)

# So what is a thesis statement?

Sentence(s) that:

- Identifies the topic of the paper
- Answers a research question
- Establishes to the reader what your argument is
- A statement of opinion (not a statement of fact!)
- Draws the reader in and lets them know what to expect from the paper
- Is **specific**
- In all, should form the core of your paper: **always go back to your thesis statement**

Next, what is a good thesis statement?

“Using the internet has a positive effect on people”



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"Using the internet has a positive effect on people"



"The internet improves lives by instantly connecting people across the world, creating new networks and serving as a forum for the exchange of ideas"

Next, what is a good thesis statement?

This paper will look at the advantages of school uniforms



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School uniforms positively impact students by lowering clothing costs, reducing on-campus violence and bullying, and creating a unified schooling experience

The Egyptian collection, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, is grand in size and beauty. I chose an Egyptian sculpture because I am immediately drawn to this wing. However, I specifically chose, *Statue of Haremhab as a Scribe*, because of the portrayal of power, both political and societal, through knowledge. This paper will employ close visual analysis of the Ancient Egyptian Statue, *Statue of Haremhab as a Scribe* (ca. 1328-1316 BCE), describing how the visual elements of the work relate to its function of displays of power.



Since antiquity, art has been used as a mode of spiritual expression and representation of what we cannot explain: what is greater than our human existence. From Greek and Roman art to modern-day sculpture, this attempt to explain what we do not implicitly understand continues to be one of the greatest motivations of artist's today and yesterday. The *Seated Four-Armed Vishnu* [8th–9th century CE] of the Pandya Dynasty is an iconic example of this attempt to represent the heavens on earth. In this paper, I will employ close visual analysis of this South Asian statue, describing how the visual elements of the work allow the viewer to transcend from reality to a spiritual plane. Furthermore, I will provide religious context to the work in order to understand the culture it exemplifies. Finally, I will explain how this work continues to pervade modern society with its celestial implications.

# How do you write a thesis statement?

1. Spend time looking at your chosen artworks
2. Pose questions that you want to ask of them
3. Make a claim (a hypothesis) or state your opinion about the works
4. Collect evidence (ie do the research)

# How do you write a thesis statement?

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3. Make a claim (a hypothesis) or state your opinion about the works
4. Collect evidence (ie do the research)
5. Finally, go back to step 3– refine your thesis statement based on your findings

# Where should you put your thesis statement?

1-3 sentences at the end of your introductory paragraph.

Spend the beginning introduction setting up your topic and end it with your statement

The thesis statement should organise the paper, telling the reader what to expect

So, return to it throughout your paper. You don't need to repeat it in the body word for word, but tell the reader how the argument you are making proves or supports your initial thesis

Finally, return to it in the conclusion reminding the reader what you started out with and how your paper has successfully provided evidence to prove it

Based on what we have discussed so far, attempt to write a bullet point outline for the paper with:

1. A sentence summarising your topic.
2. 1-3 main research questions
3. Your thesis statement (at this point a claim or hypothesis)
4. Three topic sentences that would form the body paragraphs of your paper