

Presentation Skills Center

308 Park Library

Informative vs. Persuasive Speeches

A thesis statement is a complete sentence that explains the topic or purpose for the speech. The thesis statement must be defined and clear enough to be supported within the speech, and it also must match the purpose of the presentation. There are different approaches to writing informative and persuasive thesis statements, due to their unique purposes.

Informative Speech: A speech with a thesis that describes something or states how to do something.

- The goal of informative presentations is to accurately convey your subject to the audience.
- Informative theses describe, define, analyze, explain function, and synthesize ideas or concepts.

Example: I will describe the process of becoming an exchange student.

Example: I will define transcendentalism.

Example: I will analyze the differences between baseball and cricket.

Example: I will tell you how to use the grammar and spelling tools in Microsoft Word.

Example: I will synthesize the beliefs of the Buddhist religion.

Persuasive Speech: A speech with a thesis that encourages people to change a position or take action.

- The goal of persuasive presentations is to influence your decisions, feelings, and thoughts.
- Typical persuasive theses give an opinion about whether something is true or false (fact), good or bad (value), or should or should not be done (policy).

Example: The Detroit Red Wings are a superior hockey franchise to the St. Louis Blues.

Example: Vegetarian lifestyles are healthier for humans and for the planet.

Example: Pre-employment drug testing violates a person's right to privacy.

Example: School lunches need to be improved to offer students more variety and healthier choices.

Example: Too much exposure to media has negative effects on children.

What is the difference between an informative thesis and a persuasive thesis?

- The primary difference is whether your thesis seeks to inform or states your opinion about the topic.
- An informative thesis would describe the contents of a law and where it is enforced.

Example: I will describe the contents of the United States Clean Water Act of 1972.

- A persuasive thesis would give an opinion about this law and argue whether the law is good or bad.

Example: I will argue that the restrictions of the United States Clean Water Act of 1972 are insufficient today.