Writing About Art - Thesis Statement

Ana Marjanovic
CUNY City College

Recommended Citation
https://academicworks.cuny.edu/cc_oers/148

This Tutorial is brought to you for free and open access by the City College of New York at CUNY Academic Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Open Educational Resources by an authorized administrator of CUNY Academic Works. For more information, please contact AcademicWorks@cuny.edu.
Thesis statement

A thesis statement:
• Presents your opinion [claim] on a subject [a work of art] and lists your arguments [developed in the body of your essay] to support your claim.
• Justifies discussion
• Is located at the end of introductory paragraph

A thesis statement should never contain the following: in my opinion, I think, I believe, etc. The entire thesis represents what you believe. In addition, it should not be in the form of a question.

Example 1.

Figure 1. Paul Cézanne, Mont Sainte-Victoire, 1904. Oil on canvas, 22 1/2 x 38 1/4 in. (57.2 x 97.2 cm). Princeton University Art Museum

In Mont Sainte-Victoire, Paul Cézanne used complementary color harmony as well as a number of repeated shapes and lines to unify the composition.

Body paragraphs’ main ideas
• complementary color harmony
• repeated shapes
• lines
Example 2.

Figure 2. Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Night Watch*, 1642. Oil on canvas, 11′ 11” x 14′ 4″. (57.2 x 97.2 cm). Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

Exercise:
Analyze the thesis below.

In *Night in St. Cloud*, Munch transformed a view of a dark room into a melancholic portrayal of a lonely man, seemingly deep in reflection; Munch achieved this through his masterful use of directional lines, color, light, and texture.

Figure 3. Edvard Munch, *Night in St. Cloud*, 1890. Oil on canvas, 64.5 x 54 cm. The National Gallery, Oslo.