

AXES Handout: for support paragraphs only

THESIS STATEMENT

A

Assertion

An assertion (also known as a topic sentence) is your statement about the topic under consideration. Just as a thesis informs the reader of the topic of an essay, a good assertion lets the reader know the topic of a paragraph. An assertion should take a stand or make a claim about an issue. It should reveal your position on the topic. In addition, an assertion/topic sentence should warrant discussion; it should be a position or stand that is not obvious or self-explanatory. Remember, this is the only component of AXES that should almost always be one-sentence long. All other components need development past one sentence.

X

Example

An assertion requires proof or evidence. An example is a quote or paraphrase from the reading that supports or proves your assertion. Select quotes or paraphrases that confirm (“back up”) your assertion.

E

Explanation

Examples (quotes or paraphrases) require explanation. That is, you must spell out or demonstrate how your example actually supports or proves your assertion. A good explanation illustrates or shows how the example confirms/supports the claim from your assertion.

S

Significance

Importance is a synonym for significance: so is consequence. Every paragraph should include a statement that tells the reader what makes your assertion important. Significance answers the question “So what?” Your significance should tell the reader how this paragraph relates to/ is significant to your thesis statement.