

To transform your topic into a research question for this example, all you have to do is stick an interrogative pronoun at the beginning and tack a question mark at the end; in other words, MAKE IT A QUESTION! Your research question would be something like "*What is the ultimate effect of music-listening while studying on grades?*" The paper will then go on to analyze and explore the range of answers. If your question is refined enough, this simple tactic works quite well.

Hopefully what you've seen from this example is the ultimate difference between a thesis statement and a research question: a thesis lands on one side of the fence and tells the other why its side is better; a research question hovers above the fence like an inquisitive bird, a third party trying to decide which side is really more inviting given all the evidence. In short, a thesis is one possible *answer* to a research question on the same topic.

Introductory Paragraph

- What do I need to say to set up my research question? Background?
- **Research Question** (stated within a sentence, not as a question. E.g., "In light of recent changes in our environment, it is worthwhile to consider just what the effects global warming can and will have on our world")

EFFECT #1

EFFECT #2

EFFECT #3(if needed)

EFFECT #4(if needed)

EFFECT #5(if needed)

- **Do not give ANY reasons, that is what the rest of paper is for.**

- (You may want to outline what's to come below briefly)

Transition (you don't have to write these out now but you should know what they'd roughly be)

• Answer #3 = _____

- one possible answer to the question + explication/summary
- strengths and weaknesses of the position

Transition

Reason #2 = _____

- another possible answer + explication/summary (especially how it addresses weaknesses of the previous paragraph or completely counters it).

Transition

Reason #1 = _____

- best answer so far ^ what does it say?
- why is it a better consideration of the research question? Or is it really?

Transition

Concluding Paragraph

- sum up what different angles have shown re: research question
- critically evaluate what is still needed in the field, or if you looked at three equally strong cases, analyze why one is still more convincing
- look at the implications