

6.3 Identifying the overarching thesis

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ Total: 12 marks

KEY WORDS qualifies 限定

Objective

Build the skills to identify a thesis in a passage that **qualifies** 限定 it.

You must be able to:

- state a thesis together with the limits the writer places on it
- distinguish a qualified thesis from a hedged one
- notice a thesis that narrows as the passage proceeds
- write a one-sentence statement that includes the qualification

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ Qualification is part of the thesis

“Charter schools raise attainment **where the intake is not selected**” is one claim, not a claim plus an excuse. Reporting it without the clause misstates the passage.

■ Qualified against hedged

A **qualified** claim states where it holds. A **hedged** claim states nothing definite anywhere. “In dense cities” is a qualification; “possibly, in some cases” is a hedge.

■ Narrowing thesis

Some passages begin broad and narrow as the evidence is examined. The thesis is the final position, and describing the narrowing is often the best answer available.

2 Practice

2.1 State why a qualification belongs in a statement of the thesis. [2]

2.2 State the difference between a qualified and a hedged claim. [2]

2.3 A passage opens with a broad claim and ends with a narrower version.

(a) State which is the thesis. [1]

(b) State what should be said about the change. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 “Possibly, in some cases, this may be true” is [1]

A	B
C	D

- A a qualified claim
- B a hedged claim
- C a thesis
- D a concession

3.2 Reporting a thesis without its limiting clause [1]

A	B
C	D

- A makes it clearer
- B misstates the passage
- C strengthens it
- D is required

3.3 A writer claims a remedy works, then adds three conditions.

(a) State the thesis in one sentence. [2]

(b) Explain why the conditions strengthen rather than weaken it. [2]
