



Stasis Theory

Have you ever been in a situation where you and your friends are arguing about a topic and you can't come to an agreement, so you finally agree to disagree? That is stasis. Although stasis theory won't help you determine how to solve the problem, it will help you identify why you and your friends are unable to come to an agreement. Stasis theory is the first step in helping you pinpoint the reasons for disagreement. This is important to know because in academic writing you must balance the needs of different stakeholders to convince them you understand their needs.

To do this, apply the four levels of stasis.

What are the four levels of stasis?

- Fact: What happened? Did it happen?
- Definition: What type of issue is it? What does the issue mean?
- Quality: Also known as value. How important is the issue? Who is it important for?
- Policy: What steps should be taken to deal with the issue?

Identifying the stakeholders' answers to these questions will help you determine where they disagree on an issue.

How do you apply stasis theory?

People around the US and around the world don't unanimously agree on the topic of COVID-19. Their agreeing or disagreeing about this issue may happen on one or more of the following levels of stasis:

- Fact: Does the virus exist or not? Is it man-made, or did it evolve naturally? How contagious or deadly is it?
- Definition: Should the health crisis be called a pandemic, or does it fall in the same category as other respiratory diseases not labeled as pandemics?
- Quality: What is COVID-19's impact on people's health, employment, education, and social lives and a country's economy? Is it more important to protect public health or stimulate the economy? Education vs. public health?
- Policy: How should governments cope with COVID-19? What measures should be taken to stop the spread of the virus and to offer healthcare to the sick? What measures should be taken to alleviate the impact of COVID-19 on other aspects of people's lives?



Example

Let's consider two stakeholders: parents and doctors. Most parents and doctors agree that COVID-19 exists and is a serious illness. Furthermore, they also both agree that this is a global pandemic. However, many parents place greater value on their children being in school because they recognize the importance of education and fear that their children will fall behind in their learning if schools close. Some doctors, on the other hand, feel it's more important to close the schools to limit the spread of the virus.

So, the parents and doctors agree on the levels of fact and definition. Where their differences lie is on the level of quality. In other words, they disagree about the relative value of education vs. public health.

Stasis theory is not about right or wrong, but about examining where groups agree and disagree about a topic.