

# **Writing the Five-Paragraph Essay**

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**Adapted from Anne Brooksher's  
Dec 11, 2003**

- A good, clear format can make any essay easy to write. Structuring your ideas clearly, creating a strong thesis statement, and providing lots of support make the essay easier to read. The five-paragraph essay provides a schema into which ideas will fit. By confining the ideas of your paper into this format you will *increase* your organization, your reader's attention and understanding, and thus your grade.

# Five-paragraph Format

- The five-paragraph format is a tried and true way to structure an essay. The first paragraph is the introduction. It should include a basic overview of the subject matter, as well as an idea of what will be discussed in the body of the work. The paragraph should **conclude** with a strong thesis statement. The body of the essay should include approximately three paragraphs, each with one well-developed thoughts. The conclusion will **sum up** the material covered in the body and **restate** the thesis. By following this basic format, any essay can become easy to write.

# A Generic Template of an Essay

- Introduction
- Body
- Conclusion

# Introductory paragraph

- The introduction is the first thing a reader sees. It sets the tone for the entire piece by laying out not only what will be written, but also how it will be written. Begin the essay with something catchy. A bold statement or even a question is a great way to begin. Next, discuss what the body of the essay will include. This is a brief summary of what the subject is, and your opinion about the subject. Finally, conclude with a directly stated thesis. This is one sentence including what the point of the essay is and how you plan on proving it.

# Thesis statement

- It shows the writer's commitment to the readers.
- It is usually at the end of an introductory paragraph.
- It is the most general statement in the essay.
- It depends on the kinds of writing (description, exposition, etc.) that a writer wants to write.

# Examples of thesis statement

- This essay discusses the preparation, production and packaging of hygienic soybean tempeh (Exposition).
- Intermediate birth rate, low death rate, and high life-expectancy rate are among the most important demographic characteristics of a developed country (Description).
- Death rate and life-expectancy rate indicate that females might be biologically stronger than males (Argumentation).
- Sending young children to English courses might be a waste of time and money.

Sending young children to English courses  
*might be a waste of time and money.*

- Reasons for:
  - Theories of children language acquisition  
(Receptive first then productive)
  - Theories of continuous and intensive exposures
- Reasons against
  - theories of critical periods
  - learning language should be early
- Rebuttals
  - the curriculum
  - learning experiences

# Introductory paragraph

- Usually inductive
- Beginning with an eye catching statement
- Ending with a topic statement

# Body

- The body is the true meat of your essay. This is where you lay out your ideas and make your point. Begin your paragraph with a topic sentence. State the point you're trying to make in this paragraph, along with how you intend to do that. If there is one thing to remember when writing your essay, it should be **SUPPORT, SUPPORT, SUPPORT**. Just like the essay has three supporting paragraphs, your paragraph should have three supporting points. Two of these three points, especially if the paper is for an English class, should include citations. As long as you support the citation you've made, quotes can only help you. Conclude the paragraph with a wrap-up sentence revisiting the point of the paragraph.

# Conclusion

End your essay as neatly as you can. Restate the thesis you laid out in the introduction. Talk about the points you've made in the essay and to what conclusion those points ultimately lead. This is a great opportunity to look back over your essay and see whether you met the promise of your thesis. Did you discuss all the things you planned to? Did you support each with evidence from the text? Finally, did the things you wrote about in your essay point to one ultimate conclusion? The conclusion is the last chance you have to make your point. Make the piece as memorable as possible. Good luck!