

ESSAY WRITING



INTRODUCTION (Tell the Reader What You Are Going To Say)

- ❖ Provide broad, general information to get your reader thinking about your topic.
- ❖ Include titles, authors, and genres
- ❖ Thesis Statement, also known as the controlling idea – what your essay is about – what you set out to prove (Always use an objective tone-do not write: "This essay will prove that the main character's actions are justified." Instead, make it a declarative sentence: "The main character's actions are justified.")
- ❖ Briefly identify your examples in the order you will develop them to establish a clear pattern of organization.



BODY (Say It) (This section can be 1-1,000 paragraphs)

- ❖ Topic Sentence – the first aspect of your thesis you will develop – What you set out to prove in this paragraph.
- ❖ Provide detailed explanation of first reason/example/belief
[Use short quotes from text to support your opinion. **Try to integrate quotes smoothly with your own words. Quote key phrases in sentences that contain your own words as well. Signal phrases can also help introduce quotations.**]
- ❖ Move from example to example using transitional phrases. (Also, Furthermore, Secondly, etc.)
- ❖ Close paragraph with a summarizing sentence. (This sentence is about this paragraph's topic – do not introduce the next point. Draw an overall conclusion but do not simply repeat the topic sentence.)



CONCLUSION (Tell the Reader What You Said)

- ❖ Restate thesis & major supporting ideas using different words
- ❖ Add clincher statement. A clincher sentence ties together the information in your supporting sentences and reminds your reader of the importance of your main idea.

TONE IN YOUR ESSAYS: Use a semiformal tone, meaning:

- ✓ No 1st or 2nd person pronouns (I, me, my, mine, you, your, yours, we, us, our, ours)
[Hold "Ctrl" and press "F" to access Find Function]
- ✓ No contractions, and write out numbers from 1-20
- ✓ Use present tense verbs
- ✓ No slang, colloquialisms, or clichés
- ✓ Avoid informal or imprecise language such as "a lot," "big," "nice," "guy," "good," "bad," etc.
- ✓ Do not name the parts of your essay. Eliminate phrases such as "in this essay," "the topic of this paragraph is," or "a quote that shows this"
- ✓ Limit your use of passive voice:
[97-2003: Under the "Tools" Menu, select "Options." Go to the "Spelling and Grammar" Tab, 2007: Under the "Review" Menu tab, select "Spelling & Grammar." When the dialog box appears, click the "Options" button.
For all versions: check the "Show Readability Statistics" option in the "Grammar" section. When you finish a spell check, a dialog box will appear that tells you much about your writing including what percentage of the text is written in passive sentence and the Flesch-Kincaid readability scores. You can highlight specific sections and check them individually if you'd like.]

Remember all examples in your essay should help support your thesis statement. Keep looking back at your thesis statement to be sure you focus on the task.