

## HOW TO WRITE AN ESSAY

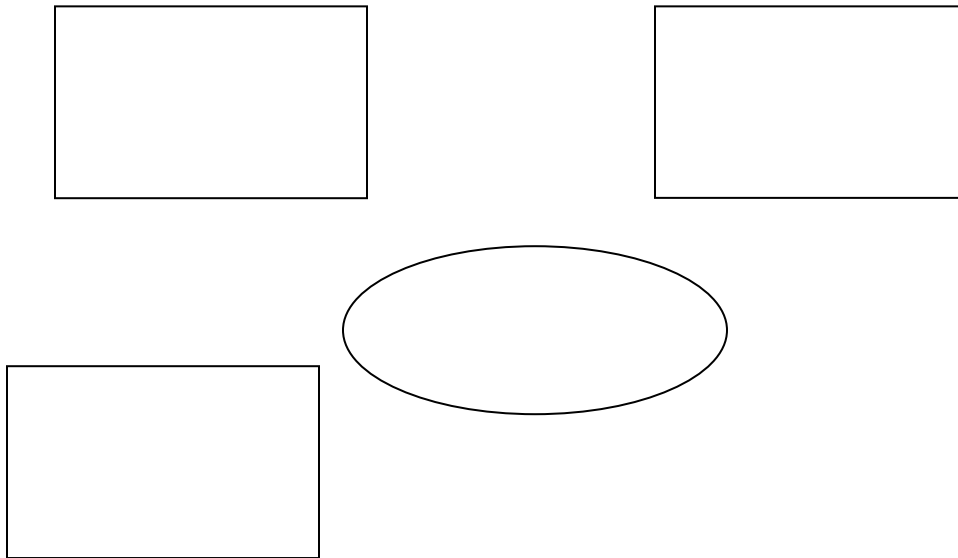
### A. RESEARCH

1. Start with references like encyclopaedia or textbook. You may not use these sources in your essay, but they will give you a point from which to begin.
2. Take notes from scholarly sources. Notes should be point form.
3. Always maintain a working bibliography.

B. ORGANIZING INFORMATION INTO SPECIFIC TOPICS: by now you should have enough information to have a thesis and main arguments to support it. Organize your research under headings related to your main arguments.

C. MIND MAP: create a visual diagram of your research with the thesis in the middle, surrounded by rough paragraphs. This will indicate areas where you require more research. It will also indicate that you have complete paragraphs.

Don't worry about the introduction or conclusion at this point – write those once your body paragraphs are complete.



### EACH BODY PARAGRAPH MUST HAVE:

1. TOPIC SENTENCE:
2. EXPLAINING/ILLUSTRATING SENTENCES
3. CITATION FROM A SOURCE
4. COUNTERARGUMENT AND REBUTTAL
5. CONCLUDING SENTENCE CONNECTING PARAGRAPH CONTENT TO TOPIC SENTENCE.

\*you may change the order of the elements of a paragraph, or in some cases combine a couple of elements into one sentence\*

\*make sure all of the elements of a paragraph are present in the “spider”\*

***COUNTER-ARGUMENT: In a social science essay, each main point you use to defend your thesis will have a counter-argument.***

Eg: **THESIS:** Punitive taxes are necessary to force people to be environmentally responsible.

**Main point #1** Raised taxes on gasoline, cars and car parts is a good way to reduce the amount of pollution from driving.

**Counter-Argument:** This will increase costs to truckers, which will increase prices of consumer goods. It will also increase municipal tax, as emergency services will be more costly.

**Rebuttal:** Canadians will not willingly give up their cars. The short-term difficulties of higher costs are less significant than the long-term effects of damage to the ozone. In Holland, transportation tax was introduced when voluntary programs failed. The tax discouraged driving, and reduced ozone damage significantly in one year (DeBeer22)

***\*Each-counter argument must have a rebuttal. This can be made stronger with the addition of a citation.\* (see above)***

### **SAMPLE PARAGRAPH**

Raised taxes on gasoline, cars and car parts is a good way to reduce the amount of pollution from driving. If driving is too costly, people will either car pool or take public transit. The resulting decrease in emissions will minimize damage to the ozone. In a 2005 study, 80% of Canadians indicated that they would not drive as often if associated costs were doubled (Davidson 17). It is true that this will increase costs to truckers, which will increase prices of consumer goods. It will also increase municipal tax, as emergency services will be more costly. However, Canadians will not willingly give up their cars. The short-term difficulties of higher costs are less significant than the long-term effects of damage to the ozone. In Holland, transportation tax was introduced when voluntary programs failed. The tax discouraged driving, and reduced ozone damage significantly in one year (DeBeer22) Unfortunately, the only way to decrease car emissions is to establish a punitive tax.

*All aspects of the paragraph are present – this is a complete and convincing argument.*

WAYS TO INTRODUCE THE COUNTER-ARGUMENT:

“While it is true that...”

“It may appear at first that...”

“It has been suggested that...”

“Although...”

“Even though...”

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO INTRODUCE A COUNTER-ARGUMENT. DO NOT ALWAYS USE THE SAME WAY.

**D: ESSAY PLANNER (FIRST ROUGH DRAFT)**

**BODY PARAGRAPH #1**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**ANALYSIS OF PARAGRAPH**

- topic sentence reflects the topic of the paragraph?
- all necessary elements of paragraph are present?
- any possible counter arguments are mentioned and dealt with in rebuttal?
- paragraph flows with paragraph above and below?

**COMPLETE THIS ANALYSIS FOR ALL BODY PARAGRAPHS**

**BODY PARAGRAPH #2**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

4.

**BODY PARAGRAPH #3**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

4.

**BODY PARAGRAPH #4(if necessary)**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**INTRODUCTION**

Now that your main points are defended, you are ready to create the introduction.

***THE INTRODUCTION IS TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING:***

- A. sentences to capture reader's attention and introduce topic?
- B. major points of essay, ONE SENTENCE EACH, in the order in which they appear in the essay.
- C. Thesis is the last sentence of the introduction.

FINALLY: Is the introduction interesting? Is it of sufficient length? This is the first impression of your essay that the reader will have.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**CONCLUSION**

**FOLLOW THE SAME BASIC FORMAT FOR THE CONCLUSION AND THE INTRODUCTION (BE CREATIVE WITH THE WORDING)**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**ANALYSIS OF CONCLUSION**

- major points of essay united in conclusion?
- thesis reworked into an interesting final statement?
- no new information

\*It is appropriate to use a quote in either the introduction or conclusion, but not both.\*  
\*organize your body paragraphs so that the strongest ones are first and last.\*

**SOME COMMON ERRORS MADE IN ESSAYS**

- \*do not refer to the essay: “This essay will prove...The purpose of this essay is to...As will be shown in the course of this essay...”\*
- \*do not refer to yourself: “I feel that...In my opinion...” These statements are informal and weaken an argument. The reader assumes that the opinions being expressed are those of the author.\*
- \*informal language:

\*pronouns

\*punctuation

**THE NEXT STEP IS YOUR FINAL DRAFT. IT SHOULD BE TYPED, DOUBLE-SPACED, AND OF SUFFICIENT LENGTH. DO NOT USE THE COMPUTER WORD COUNT. THE FINAL DRAFT SHOULD INCLUDE CITATIONS AND A PROPERLY FORMATTED WORKS CITED PAGE. IT SHOULD BE EDITED BY A PARENT, PEER, TEACHER etc. AND THEN REVISED TO CREATE THE GOOD COPY.**

**THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR REVISION AND RESEARCH.**

