



# **Paper Organisation and Structure**

by  
ESSAYOX





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## Basic Elements of the Paper

A well-organized, grade-A paper should have perfect structure. Every part of the essay should have its purpose, be coherent and correctly formatted.

The following are the inevitable constituents of any essay:

- Introduction

- Main Body

- Conclusion





# Other Structural Elements of the Paper

- Outline
  - Abstract
  - Summary
- 



# Introduction

- It must create first impression of the paper;
  - It must contain the **hook** (some point which will be developed further);
  - It must contain background information;
  - It must have a thesis statement
  - It must be concise but specific
- 



# Ways to Start an Introduction

- 1. With a question**
  - 2. With an interesting, little-known fact**
  - 3. With a meaningful quote**
  - 4. With a shocking story**
- 



## Ways to Give Background Information

- Provide statistics
  - Give historical information
  - Explain why the topic is important
  - Explain causes and effects
  - Use a quote from a prominent figure that relates to your topic
- 



# Thesis Statement

In a typical essay, the first sentence (**curtain sentence**) leads into two or three sentences that provide details about your subject. All of these sentences build up to your thesis statement.

**The thesis statement** is a sentence or two in the text that contain the focus of the essay and tell the reader what the essay is going to be about. The entirety of the paper hangs on that sentence. But its function is to be informative and direct.





# Thesis Statement:

Tells the reader how you will interpret the significance of the subject matter under discussion.

Is a road map for the paper; in other words, it tells the reader what to expect from the rest of the paper.

Directly answers the question asked of you. A thesis is an interpretation of a question or subject, not the subject itself.

E.g. The subject, or topic, of an essay might be World War II or Moby Dick; a thesis must then offer a way to understand the war or the novel.

Makes a claim that others might dispute.

Is usually a single sentence (or two) somewhere in your first paragraph that presents your argument to the reader. The rest of the paper, the body of the essay, gathers and organizes evidence that will persuade the reader of the logic of your interpretation.





# Thesis Statement Should Be Specific

Compare this original thesis (too general) with three possible revisions (more focused, each presenting a different approach to the same topic):

Original thesis (weak):

There are serious objections to today's horror movies.

Revised theses (strong):

Because modern cinematic techniques have allowed filmmakers to get more graphic, horror flicks have desensitized young American viewers to violence.

The pornographic violence in "bloodbath" slasher movies degrades both men and women.

Today's slasher movies fail to deliver the emotional catharsis that 1930s horror films did.





# Thesis Statement vs. Purpose Statement

A thesis statement does not simply announce a topic: it says something about the topic.

E.g. Good: X has made a significant impact on the teenage population due to its . . .

Bad: In this paper, I will discuss X.

A purpose statement announces the purpose, scope, and direction of the paper. It tells the reader what to expect in a paper and what the specific focus will be.

E.g. "This paper examines . . .," "The aim of this paper is to . . .," and "The purpose of this essay is to . . ."

Compare:

The goal of this paper is to examine the effects of Chile's agrarian reform on the lives of rural peasants. The nature of the topic dictates the use of both a chronological and a comparative analysis of peasant lives at various points during the reform period. . .

The Chilean reform example provides evidence that land distribution is an essential component of both the improvement of peasant conditions and the development of a democratic society. More extensive and enduring reforms would likely have allowed Chile the opportunity to further expand these horizons.





## Main Body

- Each paragraph should have one idea
  - Each paragraph should be important
  - Each paragraph should connect with the preceding and following paragraph
  - Topic sentence, assertion, example, explanation, significance
- 



# Conclusion

- 1) Reminds but does not repeat main points
  - 2) Shows what was written was important
  - 3) Has an afterthought
- 



# 1) Reminding

- **Covers all key points, with one sentence each if possible**
  - **Don't use the same words and phrases as before: readers need to see them from a different angle**
  - **Look at the thesis statement and check the conclusion after it is written to see if it matches**
- 



## 2) Showing Importance

- You must have a “because” element
  - Uses effective language that will make your readers have an emotional response
  - Don't be passive - keep strong with assertions
- 



### 3) Afterthought

- **Could be a question, a vivid image of what is to come, or a statement someone could ponder over for a long time**
  - **In purely technical essays, like ones that are laboratory studies, you don't need them**
  - **Don't add new information in the conclusion**
- 



# Outline

- Key phrases so your mind remembers
  - Put thesis statement at the top
  - Play with the order of paragraphs to see which is most effective
- 



# Tips for Creating Outlines

- 1. Keep your thesis statement at the top**
  - 2. Separate main points and subpoints clearly**
  - 3. Make sure you brainstorm before**
  - 4. Edit your outline at least once**
  - 5. Check your outline for flow (logical)**
  - 6. Separate the parts of the paper clearly**
  - 7. When you are done, refer to your assignment guidelines**
- 



# Outline Style Options

## Degrees of information

- Hint (Keywords that make you remember what you want to discuss when you are writing; Incomplete sentences are okay; Specific details not used)
  - Detailed (Besides keywords, specifics are given; Information you are considering)
    - Descriptive (Like a fill in the blank sheet; a first draft that's even messier than a first draft)
- 



# Outline Formatting Options

→ **Alphanumeric**

Use roman numerals for headings, letters for subheadings, and regular numbers for information about subheadings.

→ **Full Sentence**

Everything, even headings, are written in full sentence form. Headings are shown by numbers and subpoints are shown by letters.

→ **Decimal Outline**

Headings are written in decimal form, such as 1.0, whereas subtopics are written as 1.4 and such.





## Abstract

**What you should keep in mind while writing an abstract:**

- get readers interested in your work;**
  - do not use business language or buzzwords;**
  - it should go from general to specific**
- 



# Summary

- **Give readers a look into what the paper is about**
  - **Cover each major point**
  - **Do not include any of your own ideas**
- 



## Difference:

**Summary** - Quick knowledge

**Abstract** - Entice

**Outline** - Plan

**Conclusion** - Remind and answer: so what?





# Tips for Arranging Paragraphs and Developing Main Points Clearly

- 1. Each paragraph should contain a topic sentence which would point to your thesis statement and a specific paragraph simultaneously**
  - 2. All the sentences following the topic sentence in the paragraph must follow the idea of the TS.**
  - 3. Your topic sentence should be a hook to interest readers.**
- 



**4. Thesis statement and topic sentences should state a controlling idea which expresses your attitude towards something based on facts. (e.g. Facts: My dog is a small pug, has straight hair, and has big goooooogly eyes. Controlling idea: My dog looks like an adorable anime character).**

**5. A controlling idea should be backed by supporting ideas (separate paragraphs for each idea)**

**6. The number of paragraphs should depend on the expansiveness of your subject and support you have.**

**Paragraphs should be ordered by the logical flow of ideas**

