



Formal Essay Structure

An essay consists of three parts: the introduction (which includes a thesis statement), the body (which is typically made up of three paragraphs that prove the thesis), and the conclusion (a final paragraph that sums up the proofs and reiterates the thesis).

Introduction/Thesis

- This paragraph starts with a general statement related to the essay's topic that catches the reader's attention and leads to the main idea.
- The last sentence usually states the main point (the thesis) of the essay and often states three or more reasons for supporting the thesis.

Body

- The body paragraphs support and prove the thesis. All should begin with some type of transition (e.g. *first, to begin, secondly, finally, in addition to, etc.*)
- Each body paragraph should consist of:
 - 1) A topic sentence that helps the reader anticipate what the paragraph will be about.
 - 2) A sentence or group of sentences that support the thesis. Each paragraph typically represents one of the reasons mentioned in the thesis statement.
 - 3) One or several proofs that support the paragraph.
 - 4) A comment for each proof.
 - 5) A concluding sentence that links the paragraph to the essay as a whole.
- Use transitions and logical relations (e.g. *moreover, thus, and consequently*) throughout the body paragraphs.

Conclusion

- The conclusion sums up the essay and lets the reader know what should have been learned.
- It restates the thesis (which also serves to sum up the arguments used), and then moves to a general application of the issues discussed.