

Piscataway High School English Department

# Writer's Handbook

2013

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## The Purpose of Writing

The purpose of an essay is to explore and articulate your own ideas and perspectives of topics, issues, and/or events in people's lives. While it is often required that the writing be based on assigned texts, the essay enables you to conceive, develop, and ultimately reveal your own views of what the assigned authors and texts have presented.

Sometimes, you may become frustrated with the following the writing process, adhering to MLA format, and trying to please your teachers, but you must remember that the **purpose of writing** is to **effectively communicate your ideas**.

Now, the reason that writing can be tricky is that your brain does not necessarily present your ideas in a clear and concise manner. If you were to simply jot down your response to a prompt without thinking about organization, it would be extremely difficult for a reader to follow your ideas. If you did not remember to write a thesis statement, the reader of your paper may not know what your true intent is until the conclusion. If you were presenting a counterclaim but did not provide a helpful transition, the reader may think that you are switching your original argument. You must learn to clearly articulate your ideas in an organized way so that your reader gains a solid understanding of your purpose.

Mastering clear and effective writing takes years of practice, but it will benefit every aspect of your life. The ability to articulate your ideas empowers you in both personal and business relationships. For instance, if you have created a unique invention and want to get funding, you must be able to not only write a business plan, but also present it in a way that is appealing to potential investors. Similarly, if you want to convince your boss that you deserve a promotion or a raise, you need to persuade him or her that it is in the best interest of the company to do so. These skills of articulating, presenting, and persuading can be gained through a strong understanding and application of the writing process.

So next time your teacher assigns you an essay, think of it not as a writing exercise, but as a means of enhancing your communication skills.

# Plagiarism

## Definition of Plagiarism

Several prestigious universities have defined plagiarism as follows:

- Stanford: "use, without giving reasonable and appropriate credit to or acknowledging the author or source, of another person's original work, whether such work is made up of code, formulas, ideas, language, research, strategies, writing or other form(s)." ("What is Plagiarism" Stanford University)
- Yale: "use of another's work, words, or ideas without attribution" ("What is Plagiarism" Yale College)
- Princeton: "when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source." (Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices)
- Brown: "appropriating another person's ideas or words (spoken or written) without attributing those words or ideas to their true source". ("What is Plagiarism" Brown University)

In essence, plagiarism is *submitting someone else's words or ideas as your own*.

## Causes of Plagiarism

In 2003, The Council of Writing Program Administrators offered the following suggestions as to why students engage in plagiarism:

- Students may fear failure or fear taking risks in their own work.
- Students may have poor time-management skills or they may plan poorly for the time and effort required for research-based writing, and believe they have no choice but to plagiarize.
- Students may view the course, the assignment, the conventions of academic documentation, or the consequences of cheating as unimportant.
- Teachers may present students with assignments so generic or unparticularized that students may believe they are justified in looking for canned responses.
- Instructors and institutions may fail to report cheating when it does occur, or may not enforce appropriate penalties.

*Whether your reason for it is fear, laziness, or lack of respect for yourself, your teacher, or your school, plagiarism indicates thinking that is degrading to you and all others involved in your education. It is a violation of school policy, most moral codes, and trust. Plagiarism stands in direct opposition to one of the primary purposes of your education: to develop the confidence and ability to think for yourself.*

## Examples of Plagiarism

- Copying material from either a digital (e.g., website, e-mail, phone, pad, or notebook apps) or a print source (e.g., magazine, newspaper, book) without crediting the source.
- Copying material from a digital or print source and changing some of the words used, but not crediting the source.
- Taking an idea from a digital or print source, completely changing the words (paraphrasing or summarizing), but not crediting the source. (Note: Even if you are using all of your own words, if the *idea* came from someone other than you, you **must** acknowledge your source.)

**Note: If you willingly offer your original document to another student to “use” in completion of his or her assignment, and that student copies or paraphrases your work and then submits it as his or her own work, both you and the plagiarizer will be subject to penalties.**

## Penalties for Plagiarism

As stated in the Piscataway High School Code of Student Conduct, and in accordance with the Piscataway Board of Education Policy 5131, students who engage in plagiarism will be subject to the following consequences:

- Notification of parents
- Loss of academic credit
- Short term suspension (More than two infractions could lead to long term suspension.)
- Community service

# Types of Writing

Please note that often essays cannot be exclusively categorized as one type. Writers sometimes employ more than one writing style in their compositions.

## Narrative

According to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), a **narrative** develops real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

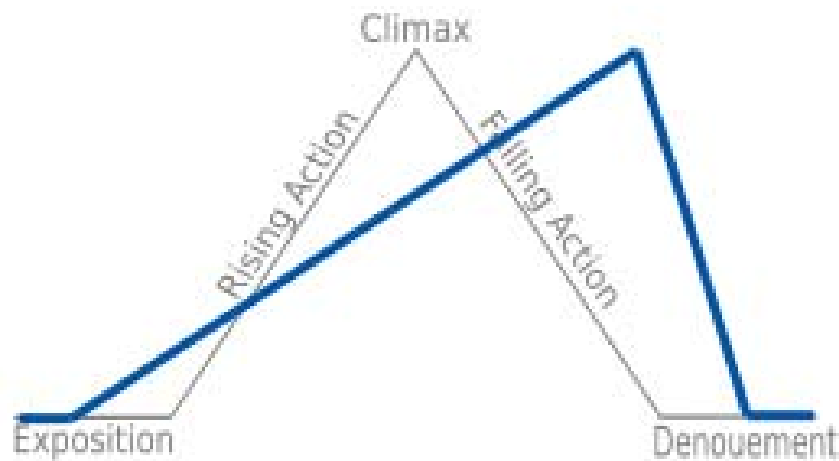
Some common components in narratives you read, and therefore should imitate when you write, include the following:

- Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation or observation
- Establish one or multiple point(s) of view
- Introduce a narrator and/or characters
- Create a smooth progression of experiences or events
- Sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole
- Use narrative techniques:
  - Dialogue
  - Pacing
  - Description
  - Reflection
  - Multiple plot lines
  - Character development
- Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, setting, and/or characters
- Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.

## Narrative Structure

Gustav Freytag, a German novelist and playwright from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, considered a plot narrative in five parts:

1. Exposition- characters and setting are introduced, and importantly, the reader gets to know the **protagonist**, or main character, and his/her goal.
2. Rising Action- the protagonist begins working towards his/her goal. He/she faces and overcomes obstacles.
3. Climax- this is the turning point in the story, when the protagonist makes the single decision that will affect the outcome of the plot. This is the point when the protagonist faces the **antagonist**, or adversary. Usually, neither the protagonist nor antagonist will win completely.
4. Falling Action- loose ends are tied up, and often times it seems as if the protagonist will not prevail.
5. Denouement- the conflict is resolved and all mystery is solved. The end of the narrative should leave the reader with an emotional reaction.



Sometimes, the narrative does not follow the exact Freytag pyramid, and the Falling Action and Denouement will happen quickly after the Climax, represented by the blue line.

*Explanation of Freytag's narrative structure from Professor George Hartley at Ohio University*  
<http://www.ohio.edu/people/hartleyg/ref/fiction/freytag.html>

*Image from www.stonoff.com*



## **Expository/Informational Writing**

According to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), **expository writing** examines and conveys complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

When writing an expository essay, be sure to include the following:

- Introduce your topic to be sure your reader has a clear understanding of your subject.
- Organize complex ideas, concepts and information to make important connections and distinctions
- Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
- Use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major section of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts (See Transitional Words and Phrases).
- Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.
- Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which you are writing.
- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented, and articulate implications or the significance of the topic.

## **Argumentative/Analytical Writing**

According to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), **argumentative writing** supports claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

When writing an argumentative essay, be sure to include the following:

- Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims
- Create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.
- Use words, phrases, and clauses to link major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims (See Transitional Words and Phrases).
- Establish and maintain a formal writing style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which you are writing.
- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

## Pre-Writing

For many of you, the most difficult question you wrestle with is: *What should I write about?* While there is no surefire way that is guaranteed to make that an easy decision, there are two points that should be the focus of your consideration: you should write about matters of which you **know** and **care**. Professional writers of both nonfiction and fiction spend many hours, days, weeks, months, and, on some occasions, even years researching people, situations, events, and settings before composing their manuscripts. Likewise you need to rely on your readings, research, or class discussions to guide you in selecting a topic. Yet knowledge alone will not enable you to express yourself powerfully. You should also care about your subject. If you do, you are much more likely to spend the time doing the questioning, hypothesizing, connecting, and evaluating that are so critical to strong presentations. Bear in mind also that while a quality education will certainly expand your breadth of knowledge and deepen your capacity for caring, even those of you who are new to high school possess the potential to produce effective writing.

One key in developing a passion, or at least a concern, for your writing is to write about *your own* ideas. As stated previously in the purpose for essay writing, you need to understand that essays are a means of expressing *your own* views, even if it's on a topic that was selected by someone else. Teachers, standardized test developers, and college admissions officials may place some limits on your considerations, but within the assigned limits, you have the freedom to explore a multitude of perspectives. The starting point for that exploration is prewriting

## Narrative Prewriting

In essence, narrative writing is telling a story. Consider the following essay prompts from the 2013 Common Application for college admissions, each of which requires narrative writing:

- Some students have a background or story that is so central to their identity that they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
- Recount an incident or time when you experienced failure. How did it affect you, and what lessons did you learn?
- Reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. What prompted you to act? Would you make the same decision again?
- Describe a place or environment where you are perfectly content. What do you do or experience there, and why is it meaningful to you?
- Discuss an accomplishment or event, formal or informal, that marked your transition from childhood to adulthood within your culture, community, or family.

### The Process

1. **Compose a list of events or situations in your life that you regard as important.** If you are asked to write a narrative about someone else (e.g., relative, historical figure, fictional character), simply compose a list of events or situations involving that person.
2. **Recall as many details as possible about each event.** You could record this data in a list or a map or any other method that helps you organize your thoughts. (For other suggestions for how to come up with a list of ideas, see *brainstorming* techniques.) As much as possible, attempt to answer the following questions which are central to any narrative: **who, what, where, when, why, and how.**
3. **Describe why the event is important to you.** Whichever incident has the most meaning to you (provided that you can express it) is most likely the best one to use as a topic for your essay. Even if you are writing as another person, the greatest way to generate interest from your readers is to articulate why it is so significant to you. It is the details of your perspective of situations that reveal your uniqueness.

## Expository/Informational Prewriting

Expository or informational writing is explaining a topic or perspective. As such, it will require the following steps:

1. **Gathering your ideas or data.** The gathering may be conducted through research of print and digital sources, as for a traditional research paper, or by searching your personal catalog of experiences and knowledge, realized through actual participation or through reading or viewing, as for a SAT or HSPA writing prompt.
2. **Find a connection to tie together some of the ideas.** For an essay to have a clear focus and strong coherence, it needs to be centered on one main idea. That main idea is the connection that you found among your various pieces of information. For SAT or HSPA writing, it's appropriate to use the given prompt as the connective tissue among your examples. For research papers however, you will need to develop your own connection.

### Example:

Let's say, for example, that you're researching the effects of global warming. You accumulate a plethora of points regarding the issue, including the rising of tides due to the melting of snow caps, the extinction of several species due to the changing of habitats, and the rising of temperatures due directly to the depleted ozone layer. You have compelling evidence for each point, but how do you tie all of them together? This is where your individual perspective enters. If you are concerned for the future, you may point out that each effect is a warning sign of future danger. If you are frustrated by people's lack of concern, you might point out that despite the alarming nature of these effects, the issue is still not relevant to most people because the effects do not yet upset their way of life. So even though you may be doing "objective" research, the perspective with which you present your findings becomes the lens through which your readers will see the findings. That lens then becomes your main point or **thesis**.

## Argumentative / Analytical Prewriting

Argumentative or analytical writing is making and substantiating a specific claim. You will notice that preparing to write an argument or an analysis is similar to preparing for expository writing.

1. **Gather your ideas.** You may be asked to gather examples from your knowledge or experience in order to take a stand on a specific issue, as in a HSPA persuasive prompt or certain SAT writing prompts, or to gather evidence from a text in order to make and substantiate a claim regarding one aspect of that text.
2. **Find a connection to tie together some of the ideas.** For an essay to have a clear focus and strong coherence, it needs to be centered on one main idea. That main idea is the connection that you developed among your various pieces of information.

### *Illustrations*

- Analyze the use of irony in *1984*. To analyze irony, you would need to list the various examples of irony, and then describe each in detail. (E.g. What is the irony? How does it affect the characters? How does it affect the reader? What is the author's purpose?) Then look for the "thread" that will enable you to show how some of the different examples, if not all, are related.
- Analyze a character in *The Odyssey*. To analyze a character, you may need to list the various traits the character displays, and then note all of the examples from the story or epic depicting that trait. After that, look for a connection that will enable you to make some claim about the character that you can substantiate with several detailed examples.
- Discuss whether *Romeo and Juliet* is a tragedy. In this case, and in other similar assignments, you need to first write down all of the reasons you can think of on both sides of the issue. You may need to find more!) Then look for a connection that ties a few of your ideas or examples together.

(For a more detailed example, see the following prewriting for the *Romeo and Juliet* question.)

## **Is *Romeo and Juliet* a tragedy?**

### **Yes**

Died young

Good intentions

Not their fault

---- fate against them (too many circumstances  
beyond their control

---- Monk gives bad advice

---- Nurse gives bad advice

---- Capulet rushes wedding to Paris

---- Lord and Lady Capulet reject Juliet

----- Montague doesn't know his own son  
well enough to talk with him

### **No**

suicide

free will decision

--- no one forced them

spoiled, whiny teens

rash decisions – no patience

emotions out of control

Now if I found the characters of Romeo and Juliet annoying I would probably argue that the play is not a tragedy and devote my time to considering how to prove it with the ideas I had. However, as I look at my list, one connection that jumps out at me is the behavior of the grownups in the play. The Monk, the Nurse, and both of the Capulets either made remarkably bad decisions or gave extraordinarily bad counsel. That gives me cause to think that the deaths of Romeo and Juliet were not their fault because they were misled and /or rejected by the “responsible” adults that they should have been able to trust. That is tragic indeed.

## Prewriting Without an Assigned Topic

Now what do you do in the event that you are given extensive freedom to develop your own topic? For example, what do you do if the teacher assigns you an analytical essay on any theme in *The Kite Runner*? The following tips should prove helpful:

1. **Consider what you cared about as you read.** What intrigued you? What annoyed you? What concerned you? What overwhelmed you? What saddened you? What delighted you? What frightened you? What surprised you? In other words, what stood out the most **to you** as you read the novel?
2. **List** every situation, discussion, event, character, setting, passage, etc. that relates to your point of interest.
3. **Find a connection to tie together some of the ideas.** Then use that connection as the basis for your **thesis**.

### Example:

Let's say that as I read *The Kite Runner* I become extremely annoyed [#1] with the characters of Amir and Baba for either their inability or refusal to acknowledge their mistakes. At the same time, I may admire them for what they did to pay for their mistakes. So I list [#2] the situations in which they could have confessed their sins along with the actions they took to pay for those sins. Then I reflect on ways in which I can connect the two sides of their characters [#3]. At first I think that it's ironic that these men are willing to risk their lives, but not their reputations. Then I realize that their egos are the most important aspects of their lives. Then I'll construct a thesis that reflects how I feel about them. If I want to emphasize the positive perspective, my thesis might state that heroism can result from shame. If I want to emphasize the negative perspective, I might state that their "heroism" is a cowardly attempt to escape their past transgressions. [Note: If I also consider how the characters of Soraya and Sanaubar handled their past sins, that opens the door to reflecting on why the women in the story were able to admit their mistakes, but not the men.]



# Thesis Statements

## Composing a Thesis

A thesis is a statement of the view(s) that your paper will prove. It may be your response to an assigned question or to an original question that you considered in your prewriting. As the main idea of your essay, the thesis provides focus and coherence to the entire composition.

The basic components of a thesis are a subject and an opinion. If your thesis merely introduces a topic without adding your opinion of that topic, it will lead to ineffective writing. In addition, your thesis needs to introduce an opinion that is worthy of consideration. If your thesis simply makes a claim that is already known by or obvious to the readers, it will generate an uninteresting essay.

A strong thesis provides a claim that is unique and significant. A strong thesis will cause readers to consider a perspective that they had not considered before. That is why it is crucial to seek your own connection among the ideas or information that you've gathered in preparation for the essay. In developing your own connections, you are putting your unique perspective on the material.

In case you doubt your ability to come up with an original idea, just remember that no two people think exactly alike. Consider this example. Third graders were asked to consider the following words on an intelligence test some years back: Which of the following words is **not** like the others: **duck, apple, ball** ? The testers thought the correct answer was ball because it was the only one that was not a living thing. The third graders however selected each of the answers for different reasons. Some picked apple because it was the only one with five letters. Some picked duck because it was the only one without a double letter. The point is that we all see things differently. You need to believe that the way you see things is worth writing about.

## Thesis Statement Examples

Now let's consider some samples of both weak and strong theses:

### Example 1

**Prompt:** Discuss whether or not Odysseus is a relevant hero for the contemporary world.

**Weak Thesis:** Odysseus is a relevant hero to modern audiences.

**Commentary:** *While the thesis does answer the question, it does not provide enough insight. It does not indicate how or why Odysseus is relevant. Thus the thesis is too general or vague to be considered "strong".*

**Stronger Thesis:** While Odysseus's coolness under pressure, courage in peril, and loyalty to his family and friends would gain him admiration in any society, it is his weakness – his inability to control his ego, his men, or his gods – that makes him particularly appealing to modern audiences.

### Example 2

**Prompt:** Discuss how the characters in *Hamlet* reflect Shakespeare's view of the world.

**OK Thesis:** The characters of Claudius, Gertrude, and Hamlet all depict a bleak view of the world.

**Commentary:** *This thesis clearly identifies the characters to be discussed and makes a bold claim as to the Shakespeare's view of the world. It could be improved by specifying the particular traits that comprise the "bleak view" and articulating a more vivid description of its bleakness.*

**Stronger Thesis:** In *Hamlet*, Claudius's moral corruption, Gertrude's emotional instability, and Hamlet's spiritual indecisiveness all contribute to Shakespeare's portrayal of a world in which the frailty of man dwarfs and ultimately consumes his goodness.

### Example 3

**Prompt:** Discuss whether or not *Romeo and Juliet* is a tragedy.

**Weak Thesis:** *Romeo and Juliet* is a tragedy because the unreasonableness of Juliet's parents led to the deaths of the two young lovers.

**Commentary:** *This thesis identifies a specific example that could be used to substantiate a claim, but it has not made a specific claim. Also, by limiting the thesis to one example, the writer is excluding several other examples which could substantially strengthen the argument.*

**Stronger Thesis:** Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is a tragedy because the young lovers' deaths were a direct result of their turning to the Monk, the Nurse, and the Capulets for counsel and comfort and instead receiving deceit and rejection.

## Advanced Thesis Statements

The preceding examples each attaches three key arguments or examples to the thesis statement. This works well in constructing a five paragraph essay in which one body paragraph is devoted to each of the key examples. However, as you progress in your writing ability, and as the rigor of your assignments increases, you will be asked to write essays that are not limited to five paragraphs. In these cases, it will not be practical to attach your key arguments or examples to your thesis. Note how the stronger theses in the two examples that follow make specific, provocative claims, but do not mention the specific arguments that will be used to prove the claims.

### Example 4

**Prompt:** Discuss whether or not *Romeo and Juliet* is a tragedy.

**Weak Thesis:** *Romeo and Juliet* is a tragedy because their deaths were not their fault.

**Commentary:** *This thesis does make a claim, but it does not address why it was not their fault or whose fault it was. Thus the claim is not specific or substantial enough to generate either interest from the reader or extensive arguments for the writer.*

**Stronger Thesis:** *Romeo and Juliet* is a tragedy because when Romeo and Juliet had the good sense and humility to ask for help, the adults they trusted led them down the path to death with deception and rejection.

### Example 5

**Prompt:** Analyze the irony in *1984*.

**OK Thesis:** Orwell uses irony in *1984* to criticize totalitarian governments.

**Commentary:** *Though it is a somewhat obvious comment, this thesis at least makes a specific claim in response to the assigned topic. It could be significantly strengthened by taking the analysis one step further, such as examining why Orwell does this.*

**Stronger Thesis:** While on the surface it's clear that Orwell's *1984* uses irony to attack the cruelty of totalitarian governments, underlying those attacks are criticisms of modern man that are just as scathing.

## Attaching Arguments to the Thesis

If you are expected to attach your key examples or arguments into your thesis statement, here is a four step process to accomplish this:

1. **Write a FOCUS Statement that conveys your insight into the topic.**
  - *Brave New World* warns against the misuse of science and technology.
2. **Phrase this STATEMENT as a QUESTION.**
  - How does *Brave New World* illustrate the misuse of science and technology?
3. **List the Three Best Answers (for 5 paragraph essay) that you found in your search.**
  - Abuse of genetic engineering, manipulation of human conditioning, and the use of the all-purpose drug, Soma.
4. **ASSERT YOUR OPINION by combining both the focus statement (#1) and your three answers (#3) into a thesis statement.** (Your opinion is valid because you have the research to support your idea.)
  - Throughout his novel, *Brave New World*, Aldous Huxley warns against allowing science and technology to control human life as seen in the abuse of genetic engineering, manipulation of human conditioning, and the use of the all-purpose drug, Soma.

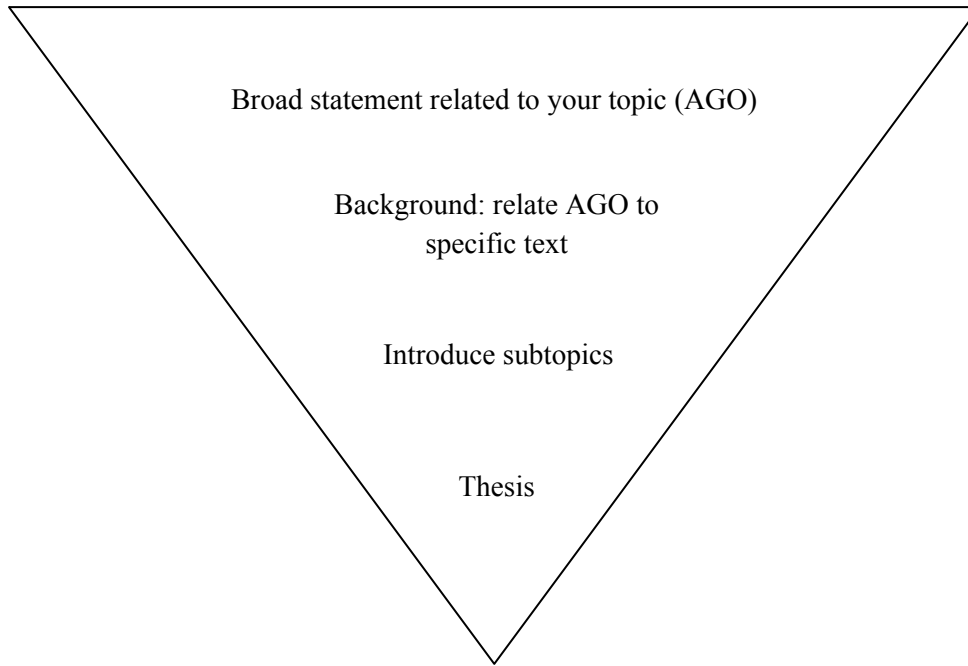
# Introduction Paragraphs

The purpose of an introduction to an essay is to get the reader's attention, establish a tone appropriate to the topic and audience, provide the background information needed to understand your point(s), assert a thesis, and forecast what is to follow in the essay.

## Introduction Checklist

1. **Get Reader's Attention** ... Use *one* of these attention grabbing openers (AGO)
  - Use an anecdote that relates to your topic.
  - Use a quote that relates to your topic.
  - Make a bold claim that relates to your topic.
  - Make broad statement that relates to your audience and your topic
  
2. **Provide Background Information**
  - Include author and title of text(s) used.
  - Mention characters, settings, and events relevant to your topic. (fiction)
  - Mention individuals, places, events relevant to your topic (nonfiction)
  - Define key term(s)
  
3. **Forecast Subtopics Covered in Body**
  - Mention the key arguments, examples, or pieces of evidence that will be the topics of your body paragraphs.
  - Mention them in the order that they will appear in the body.
  - If asked to do so, incorporate them into your thesis statement.
  - Place them either directly before or after your main point of your thesis depending on the expectations of your instructor.
  
4. **Assert Your Thesis**
  - State your unique perspective of the topic.
  - Make sure it encompasses all of the arguments, examples, or evidence in the essay.
  - Make sure your wording is clear.
  - Make sure you're making a significant, provocative, and/or arguable claim.

As a general rule, introductions function like a funnel or inverted pyramid. They begin with a broad or general statement related to a topic and then become narrower until you finish with your specific view on the topic, your thesis. Here's a visual illustration of how the introduction "funnels" the topic from a broad comment to specific thesis.



## Sample Introductions

Note that each one gets the reader's attention, provides the background needed to understand the topic, and asserts a specific claim. All except the introduction for the college admission essay prompt ("Discuss an ... event...that marked your transition from childhood to adulthood..."), also inform the reader of the specific arguments or examples that follow in the essay.

*Prompt: Is Beowulf a relevant hero for today's world? (AGO – anecdote)*

[AGO] While my dad shakes his head sadly when my favorite defensive player pounds his chest after sacking the opposing team's quarterback, thousands of fans in the stadium and around the country watching at home are cheering wildly. They love his passion, his bravado, and of course his talent.

[background] Perhaps that's why Beowulf, the main character from the epic poem of the same name, is a fitting hero for today's younger generation. Yes he has superhuman strength and extraordinary courage, but his huge ego is very human indeed. [subtopics] When one considers his reasons for fighting Grendel, Grendel's mother, and even the dragon, it becomes clear that [thesis] Beowulf's yearning for glory and immortality makes him a fitting hero for the modern age.

*Prompt: Is Beowulf a relevant hero for today's world? (AGO – broad statement)*

[AGO] When one considers the billions of dollars that have been spent in recent years to see movie versions of comic books, it seems quite evident that there is an aspect of man's nature that craves a hero. We love the idea that no challenge is insurmountable, particularly when the one doing the surmounting has imperfections like us. [background] Perhaps that's why Beowulf, the main character from the epic poem of the same name, is a fitting hero for today's younger generation. Yes he has superhuman strength and extraordinary courage, but his huge ego is very human indeed. [subtopics] When one considers his reasons for fighting Grendel, Grendel's mother, and even the dragon, it becomes clear that [thesis] Beowulf's yearning for glory and immortality makes him a fitting hero for the modern age.

*Prompt: Discuss whether or not Romeo and Juliet is a tragedy. (AGO – bold claim)*

[AGO] Whoever came up with the idea for the television show "Father Knows Best" must have been experimenting with hallucinogenic drugs. Certainly, there are parents and guardians who have compassion and wisdom to share with their children, but unfortunately, that is not always the case. [background] Witness the "responsible" grownups in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, a tragedy of two teenagers who fall in love, but end up taking their own lives when they are unable to find a way to be together in this life. [subtopics] The Monk, the Nurse, and Lord and Lady Capulet each had the opportunity to prevent the tragic deaths of the young people for whom they supposedly cared. Yet when asked for counsel and comfort, they either advised dishonesty or turned a deaf ear. [thesis] Ultimately then, *Romeo and Juliet* is a tragedy because when Romeo and Juliet had the good sense and humility to ask for help, the adults they trusted led them down the path to death with deception and rejection.

*Prompt: Discuss how the characters in Hamlet depict Shakespeare's view of the world. (AGO – quote)*

[AGO] Albert Einstein was once quoted as saying, "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking that we used when we created them". [background] That's an apt description of the weakness in the characters in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, all of whom contribute to the "rottenness" in the state of Denmark. While on different sides of the conflict in the play, the characters of Claudius, Gertrude, and Hamlet each repeats the same type of behavior even though none of them is pleased with the state of affairs that their behavior has created. [subtopics /thesis] Claudius's moral corruption, Gertrude's emotional instability, and Hamlet's spiritual indecisiveness in the play all participate in Shakespeare's portrayal of a world in which the frailty of man dwarfs and ultimately consumes his goodness.

*Prompt: Discuss an accomplishment or event, formal or informal, that marked your transition from childhood to adulthood within your culture, community, or family. (AGO – anecdote)*

As I stood outside a coffee shop with my best friend at 4AM on a Sunday morning waiting for another friend named Sara who had told me that she went to the coffee shop around 4:30 to put the inserts into the Sunday papers, I pondered whether I should have called my father to tell him that Nick's uncle, who apparently didn't think teenagers should be spending the night in his brother's house unsupervised, had kicked us out of the house seven hours before. When the police car pulled up moments later, the answer began to get clearer. When the officer asked what we were doing there and my inarticulate friend replied, "Waiting for a girl," the answer became a flashing neon sign in my mind. When the officer then asked me if I had any ID and I stated confidently, "No, but I have a house key," the answer rose before me like a brilliant sunrise. Many things can go through your mind as you stand behind a police officer knocking at your front door at 4:15 on a Sunday morning, but one thing that went through mine was that I would never again be the same person I was when this night began.



## Body Paragraphs

The purpose of a body paragraph is to support your thesis statement. Each body paragraph should have a specific focus, and evidence should be both presented and explained.

If you are writing a standard five-paragraph essay with a three-point thesis statement, you will have three corresponding body paragraphs. Each body paragraph will represent one of the ideas from the thesis statement.

However, if you are not writing a three-point thesis statement and are not restricted to a five-paragraph format, then the number of body paragraphs is undetermined. You must decide how to best organize and explain your ideas. Sometimes, you may have multiple body paragraphs about the same argument. Just be sure that each body paragraph serves a purpose that connects to your thesis statement.

### Body Paragraph Checklist

Generally speaking, here are the components of a typical body paragraph:

- **Transition-** this is used to link your ideas together. How does this body paragraph relate to the paragraph before it? A transition can be a single word, a phrase, the incorporation of a previous idea, or an entire sentence. It is often times combined with the topic sentence. See [Transitional Words and Phrases](#) for more information.
- **Topic Sentence-** this conveys the main idea of your body paragraph. It is similar to a thesis statement, but rather than portraying your overall idea, it is focused on the specific argument that you are presenting in your body paragraph.
- **Examples and/or Quotations and Analysis-** this information should support your topic sentence. How can you prove that your topic sentence is true? See [Embedding Quotations](#) for more information.
  - Introduce Quotation
  - Quote accurately
  - Cite properly
  - Discuss and analyze quotation
  - Connect to your argument
- **Connection back to Thesis Statement-** this explains why the specific argument in your topic sentence directly relates to the thesis statement. How does this body paragraph help to support your overall argument?

## Body Paragraph Example

[TRANSITION] Consequently,[TOPIC SENTENCE] in the opening chapters of the novel Reverend Dimmesdale has a reputation of being an honorable man.

[EXAMPLES/QUOTATIONS WITH ANALYSIS] After Hester is released from prison and makes her way to the scaffold, many of the townspeople gossip about her sentence. Although some desire a more severe penalty for her, many are content with the fact that Reverend Dimmesdale is in charge of administering her punishment. One such townspeople comments, “Reverend Master Dimmesdale, her godly pastor, takes it very grievously to heart that such a scandal should have come upon his congregation” (49). The significance of this quotation is twofold. First, it illustrates that Dimmesdale’s opinions are taken seriously by the townspeople, and that he is a person they can trust. He is in agreement with the rest of the people of Boston, and therefore shows his credibility to the masses. Even though one of the townswomen thinks that he, and the rest of the magistrates, will not provide a severe enough punishment (49), this only highlights Dimmesdale’s mercifulness. Second, he has taken Hester’s sin “grievously to heart,” which portrays his sense of holiness and morality. [CONNECTION BACK TO THESIS] If he is upset about Hester’s affair, it can be assumed that his morals are honorable.

# Using Quotations

## Choosing Effective Quotations

In order to choose effective and appropriate quotations, you must understand the purpose of quoting. The purpose of your essay is to present *your original argument*, while the purpose of quotations is to *support* your argument. Think of your essay as a wooden table. Your argument is the tabletop, and the most important part of a functioning table. Meanwhile, the quotations are the legs of the table. Your tabletop, or argument, could stand with wobbly legs, but it would be unsteady. Therefore, you want strong, perfectly aligned quotations to support your argument, just as you want strong, perfectly aligned legs to support your tabletop.

Bear in mind that *too many* quotations can be unnecessary and distracting, so you should only consider quoting a passage from the text if:

1. The passage is worthy of further analysis.
2. The language of the passage is particularly elegant, powerful or memorable.
3. You wish to confirm the credibility of your argument by enlisting the support of an authority on your topic.
4. You wish to argue with someone else's position in considerable detail.

**For literary essays, you will most likely quote because the passage is worthy of further analysis.** The quotation should directly relate to your argument and should support your own ideas.

### Example

If you are writing an essay about Reverend Dimmesdale in *The Scarlet Letter* and whether or not he is truly honorable, you may want to discuss what the townspeople think of him. You know that you can find quotations from townspeople in the opening of the novel. Which quotations would you choose to include?

1. "'Goodwives,' said a hard-featured dame of fifty, 'I'll tell ye a piece of my mind. It would be greatly for the public behoof, if we women, being of mature age and church-members in good repute, should have the handling of such malefactresses as this Hester Prynne'" (49).

*This quotation shows us one of the townspeople's opinions, but the comment is focused on the woman's desire to punish Hester herself rather than on her opinion of Dimmesdale.*

2. "'The magistrates are God-fearing gentlemen, but merciful overmuch, — that is a truth,' added a third autumnal matron" (49).

*This quotation refers to the magistrates (which includes Dimmesdale) and is a townspeople's opinion, and it even refers to mercy, which can be related to honor. However, it is not specific to Dimmesdale and does not explain what the magistrates are*

*being merciful about. However, you may want to use this quotation in your analysis as it does show that the townspeople think of Dimmesdale as merciful.*

3. “‘Reverend Master Dimmesdale, her godly pastor, takes it very grievously to heart that such a scandal should have come upon his congregation,’ said a third woman” (49). *This quotation has a direct mention of Dimmesdale, it is an opinion of a townspeople, and that he has taken a “scandal” “grievously to heart” suggests that he is honorable.*
4. “‘Why, gossips, what is it but to laugh in the faces of our godly magistrates, and make a pride out of what they, worthy gentlemen, meant for punishment?’” (54).

*In this quotation from a townswoman, the “godly magistrates” are mentioned, but the quotation is more specific to Hester and her beautifully embroidered scarlet letter. Hester’s honor is under attack, not Dimmesdale’s.*

5. “‘Notwithstanding his high native gifts and scholar-like attainments, there was an air about this young minister, — an apprehensive, a startled, a half -frightened look, — as of a being who felt himself quite astray and at a loss in the pathway of human existence, and could only be at ease in some seclusion of his own” (65).

*This quotation may seem like it could work, because it is describing Dimmesdale and even discusses his “native gifts” and “scholar-like attainments.” However, the description is not expressed by a townspeople and there is no mention of honor or good deeds.*

Therefore, Quotation #3 is the best option for a paragraph that will discuss the townspeople’s opinion of Dimmesdale. Quotation #2 can also work to support the argument.

After you have chosen the quotations that most aptly support your argument, you will incorporate them into your body paragraph (See [Embedding Quotations](#)), as seen on the [Body Paragraph Checklist](#) page.

*In the opening chapters of the novel, Reverend Dimmesdale has a reputation of being an honorable man. After Hester is released from prison and makes her way to the scaffold, many of the townspeople gossip about her sentence. Although some desire a more severe penalty for her, many are content with the fact that Reverend Dimmesdale is in charge of administering her punishment. One such townspeople comments, “‘Reverend Master Dimmesdale, her godly pastor, takes it very grievously to heart that such a scandal should have come upon his congregation’” (49). The significance of this quotation is twofold. First, it illustrates that Dimmesdale’s opinions are taken seriously by the townspeople, and that he is a person they can trust. He is in agreement with the rest of the people of Boston, and therefore shows his credibility to the masses. Even though one of the townswomen thinks that he, and the rest of the magistrates, will not provide a severe enough punishment (49), this only highlights Dimmesdale’s mercifulness. Second, he has taken Hester’s sin “grievously to heart,” which portrays his sense of holiness and morality. If he is upset about Hester’s affair, it can be assumed that his morals are honorable.*

Notice that the quotations used are then further analyzed. The quotations are used to support, or prove, the argument and would not function without further explanation. If you find that you are simply restating what the quotation already says, or that the connection between the quotation and your argument is weak, then you have chosen the wrong quotation.

## Paraphrasing

Sometimes, you need to include information from the text but the passage is lengthy and/or difficult to understand, or you simply want to use the idea, but the author's wording is unnecessary. In this case, you have other options so that your essay is not burdened with unnecessary quotations. In the paragraph above, notice that it refers to a particular part of the text, but does not directly quote it:

*Even though one of the townswomen thinks that he, and the rest of the magistrates, will not provide a severe enough punishment (49), this only highlights Dimmesdale's mercifulness.*

This is called **paraphrasing**. Paraphrasing should be used when you believe that you can make the information from a source shorter and/or clearer for your audience. Remember, however, that a paraphrase is NOT an exact copy of the original; simply changing a few words here and there is NOT acceptable. Instead, a true paraphrase shows that you as a reader completely understand the text. Paraphrasing is restating a passage or the author's ideas in your own words. Look at the example below:

The original passage from *The Confident Student* (6<sup>th</sup> Ed.):

“Whatever your age, health and well-being can affect your ability to do well in college. If you don't eat sensibly, stay physically fit, manage your stress, and avoid harmful substances, then your health and your grades will suffer” (Kantar 158).

A proper paraphrase:

No matter what condition your body is in, you can pretty much guarantee that poor health habits will lead to a lack of academic success. Students need to take time for their physical and emotional well-being, as well as their studies, during college (Kantar 158).

NOTE: paraphrasing requires proper MLA citation. You are still making a specific reference to an author's work, so it is imperative to cite.

## Summarizing

When you want to refer to a larger section, chapter, or overall work, you may **summarize** the author's general ideas in your essay. To write an effective summary, be sure you do not quote from the original work. Instead, restate what you have read in your own words, encompassing only the major ideas.

Summarizing is especially helpful in your introduction paragraph or in referring to a text that is not the focus of your essay. It also serves as a tool for introducing a quotation in order to establish context. Look at the summary of the first half of the chapter "The Market Place" in the *Scarlet Letter*:

*After Hester is released from prison and makes her way to the scaffold, many of the townspeople gossip about her sentence. Although some desire a more severe penalty for her, many are content with the fact that Reverend Dimmesdale is in charge of administering her punishment.*

Note also in the following example how an effective summary can be an integral part of the necessary background in the introduction:

*Prompt: Discuss whether or not Romeo and Juliet is a tragedy.*

[AGO] Whoever came up with the idea for the television show "Father Knows Best" must have been experimenting with hallucinogenic drugs. Certainly, there are parents and guardians who have compassion and wisdom to share with their children, but unfortunately, that is not always the case. [background with summary] Witness the "responsible" grownups in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, **a tragedy of two teenagers who fall in love, but end up taking their own lives when they are unable to find a way to be together in this life.** [subtopics] The Monk, the Nurse, and Lord and Lady Capulet each had the opportunity to prevent the tragic deaths of the young people for whom they supposedly cared. Yet when asked for counsel and comfort, they either advised dishonesty or turned a deaf ear. [thesis] Ultimately then, *Romeo and Juliet* is a tragedy because when Romeo and Juliet had the good sense and humility to ask for help, the adults they trusted led them down the path to death with deception and rejection.

## Embedding Quotations

After you have identified the most valuable and supportive quotations for your essay (See Choosing Effective Quotations), You must be sure to embed them properly within your paper. Remember that a quotation CANNOT stand alone as a sentence. You must include an introductory phrase (See Incorporating Quotations into Sentences). Also, all quotations must be cited properly (See Quotation Format).

In order to be sure that you are properly and effectively embedding quotations into your paper, use the IQCDC method for each quotation:

**I**ntroduce the quotation, at least by giving the speaker's name. Be sure to insert a comma after the introductory phrase and before the quotation (e.g.: Turkle says, "Quote").

**Q**uote accurately and with consideration of the original context (including who is speaking and the exact wording – do not change the quotation or take it out of context).

**C**ite correctly in MLA format, with parenthetical page reference (e.g.: "Quote" (263)).

**D**iscuss to explain the meaning of the quotation or with attention to some key word being used.

**C**onnect to your argument, to the point being developed, or to another part of the text.

Often times, you will use more than one quotation in a paragraph. If this is the case, you will use the IQCDC method for EACH quotation. Use a transition (word or sentence) to tie your quotations together. Look at the passage below to see an effective use of the IQCDC method:

[INTRODUCE] One such townspeople comments, [QUOTE] "Reverend Master Dimmesdale, her godly pastor, takes it very grievously to heart that such a scandal should have come upon his congregation," [CITE] (49). [DISCUSS] The significance of this quotation is twofold. First, it illustrates that Dimmesdale's opinions are taken seriously by the townspeople, and that he is a person they can trust. He is in agreement with the rest of the people of Boston, and therefore shows his credibility to the masses. Second, he has taken Hester's sin "grievously to heart," which portrays his sense of holiness and morality. [CONNECT] If he is upset about Hester's affair, it can be assumed that his morals are honorable.

Helpful Hint: After you have embedded your quotations, complete the IQCDC test. Write IQCDC next to every quotation and circle the letters that indicate what you have included. For example, if the quotation is introduced, quoted accurately, and cited properly but not discussed or connected, you would circle only I, Q, and C. It will help you to check for proper quotation incorporation.



## Incorporating Quotations into Sentences

When incorporating quotations into your essay, you must be sure to embed them into a sentence. In order to be sure that your paper and your quotation use do not become overly repetitive, there are several different ways you can incorporate quotations into sentences.

### 1. An introducing phrase or speaker plus the quotation

*Speaker before quotation:*

One such townspeople comments, “Reverend Master Dimmesdale, her godly pastor, takes it very grievously to heart that such a scandal should have come upon his congregation” (49).

*Speaker after quotation:*

Gatsby is not to be regarded as a personal failure. "Gatsby turned out all right at the end" (176), Nick accorded.

### 2. An assertion of your own and a colon plus the quotation

*Note that the assertion of your own must be a complete sentence and that the quotation directly relates to the assertion.*

The townspeople's trust in Reverend Dimmesdale's moral compass is evident: “Reverend Master Dimmesdale, her godly pastor, takes it very grievously to heart that such a scandal should have come upon his congregation” (49).

Fitzgerald gives Nick a muted tribute to the hero: "Gatsby turned out all right at the end" (176).

### 3. An assertion of your own with quoted material worked in

*Note that the quoted material works grammatically in the sentence.*

For Nick, who remarks that Gatsby "turned out all right" (176), the hero deserves respect but perhaps does not inspire great admiration.

Dimmesdale has taken Hester's sin “grievously to heart” (49,) which portrays his sense of holiness and morality.

## Partial Quotations

Partial quotations, or pieces of a direct quotation that are threaded into your own original sentence, are very helpful in livening up your writing and allowing you to maintain a personal writing style. Identify specific words or phrases from a text that are most important in presenting your ideas and incorporate them into your own sentences. Be sure to use quotation marks around the author's words and phrases, but commas are not necessary. Also be sure to properly cite your quotations.

Example:

Though not explicitly stated, Nick reveals that he is searching for companionship, and this loneliness proves to be the motivation for his friendship with Gatsby. After returning from the Great War, Nick feels “restless” (3), as if he is on “the ragged edge of the universe.” His isolation in the Midwest sends him to New York City, where he decides to enter the bond business because “everybody [he] knew” was in it. Nick chooses his profession based primarily on what others around him are doing, and because he hopes to find a connection amongst the sea of other “single [men]”. Once he settles in his bungalow, originally meant to be shared with another young man, Nick's loneliness is even more poignant. He had a dog “until he ran away” and a Finnish housekeeper who simply “muttered Finnish wisdom to herself” (4). It is no wonder that Nick is desperate to find a friend in his neighbor Gatsby. Nick's loneliness after the war follows him East even in his attempt to escape it, and it is not until he meets a man who is also desperate for companionship that Nick once again feels connected to the world around him.

NOTE: See Adding Words to a Quotation for an explanation on the brackets in the sample paragraph above. Often times, you will have to change words within a quotation to maintain grammatical correctness, so you must use square brackets to indicate which words have been changed.

## Block Quotations

If you have a quotation that exceeds four lines of type, you must block, or indent, it. These lengthy quotations should be used very sparingly. They are only necessary if you plan on discussing the entire passage. Sometimes, paraphrasing (See [Paraphrasing](#)) or working quoted material into your own sentence (See [Incorporating Quotations into Sentences](#)) are better options.

However, if you need to quote a large portion of text, you must follow these rules:

1. Quotation should be blocked if it is longer than four lines of type.
2. Include an introductory phrase in the paragraph, and then use a colon.
3. On a new line, indent your quotation and maintain indentation for the entire quotation.
4. When a quotation is indented, do not use quotation marks.
5. The parenthetical citation is included **outside** the ending punctuation.
6. Maintain double spacing.
7. When you are finished quoting and citing, start a new line at the original margin.

Example:

In the final sentences of the novel Nick remarks on human determination:

Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgastic future that year by year recedes before us. It eluded us then, but that's no matter — to-morrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms farther. . . . And one fine morning ——

So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past. (192)

Even though we are consistently disappointed as our dreams “elude us”, it is human nature to “run faster and “beat on.” Yet, if we continue to strive for these unreachable goals, never truly achieving success, there is a point when human determination becomes sad, even pathetic.

## Adding Words to a Quotation

If you are using a quotation but want to add a word or phrase in order to clarify the information for your reader, be sure that you use the proper formatting so that you maintain the validity of your source. Sometimes you may have to change a word so that it works grammatically into your sentence, and you treat it as an added word as well.

### Use square brackets to add additional words or phrases:

Nick says that he “decided to go East [to New York City] and learn the bond business” (3).

*In this case, “to New York City” is added to the quotation using brackets because readers who are unfamiliar with the setting of The Great Gatsby need more specific information. Since this information was not included in the original text, brackets must be used.*

### Use square brackets to change a word:

He chooses the bond business simply because “everybody [he] knew was in the bond business, so [he] supposed it could support one more single man” (3).

*Here, the original quotation is in first person, but in order to embed it into the sentence and maintain grammatical correctness, the pronouns needed to be changed from “I” to “he”.*

NOTE: Changing words within a quotation is only appropriate if you do not alter the author’s intent. It is only meant to allow better flow within an essay.

## Omitting Words from a Quotation

If you want to use a quotation but do not need every word within the sentence, you may omit words in order to keep the quotation at an appropriate length and only include the information necessary for your argument.

### Use ellipses to indicate omitted words:

Nick describes one of the signs that wild and luxurious parties are constant occurrences at Gatsby's mansion: "Every Friday five crates of oranges and lemons arrived... [and] every Monday these same oranges and lemons left his back door in a pyramid of pulpless halves" (61).

*The phrase "from a fruiter in New York" has been omitted because the supplier of the oranges and lemons is not important in this particular essay. By omitting this phrase, the reader will not be burdened with unnecessary additional information, only information that is pertinent to the argument presented.*

Nick describes the Valley of Ashes and notes, "Above the gray land...you perceive...the eyes of Doctor T. J. Eckleburg" (22).

*Here, "and the spasms of bleak dust which drift endlessly over it" and "after a moment" have been omitted because they are not necessary in illustrating the location of the billboard.*

NOTE: Partial quotations (See Partial Quotations) can also be used to highlight individual parts of a passage and allows for better fluency.

## Formatting Quotations

### Quoting text

Be sure to make your quotation part of a sentence (See [Incorporating Quotations into Sentences](#)) and use MLA parenthetical citation:

- When using an introductory phrase, follow with a comma.
- Then, open quotation marks, write the quotation, and close quotation marks.
- Type a space, open parenthesis, the author's last name, another space, and then the page number. **Do not** put a comma between the name and the number. Close the parentheses.
- Place the period (or whatever punctuation is necessary) **after** the parentheses.
- Be sure the work you are quoting has a complete reference on your Works Cited Page (See [Modern Language Association \(MLA\) Format](#)).

One such townspeople comments, "Reverend Master Dimmesdale, her godly pastor, takes it very grievously to heart that such a scandal should have come upon his congregation" (Hawthorne 49).

When you are using partial quotations, a comma does not come before the quotation:

He had a dog "until he ran away" and a Finnish housekeeper who simply "muttered Finnish wisdom to herself" (Fitzgerald 4).

If the author of the quotation is implied, either because you have already stated his/her name or because only one text is being discussed, you only need to include the page number in your parenthetical citation:

One such townspeople comments, "Reverend Master Dimmesdale, her godly pastor, takes it very grievously to heart that such a scandal should have come upon his congregation" (49).

He had a dog "until he ran away" and a Finnish housekeeper who simply "muttered Finnish wisdom to herself" (4).

NOTE: Question marks and explanation points should be included within the quotation marks if they are part of the quoted material, and **after** the parenthetical citation if they are a part of your own writing.

## Quoting Poetry

Follow the format for Quoting text, but replace page number with **line number**.

When quoting more than one line of verse, separate each line with a slash (/). Use a space both before and after each slash.

Edgar Allan Poe begins his poem, “Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered weak and weary, / Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore” (1-2).

And so, he realizes that he will never recover from his grief: “And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor / Shall be lifted - nevermore!” (Poe 107-108).

If you are quoting more than three lines of verse, follow the guidelines for Block Quotations.

## Quoting Dialogue

Follow the format for Quoting text, but use single quotation marks **within** your double quotation marks to indicate someone besides the narrator is talking:

One such townspeople comments, “‘Reverend Master Dimmesdale, her godly pastor, takes it very grievously to heart that such a scandal should have come upon his congregation’” (49).

Nick recalls, “‘Whenever you feel like criticizing anyone,’ he told me, ‘just remember that all the people in this world haven’t had the advantages that you’ve had’” (3).

If you want to include a longer passage of dialogue within your essay, follow the Block Quotations format. However, you will use double quotation marks to indicate that someone is speaking, since no quotation marks are used to indicate a block quotation.

Even from the first time Nick witnesses Daisy and Tom as a married couple, the unhappiness, but more importantly, spitefulness, is easily recognizable:

“Look!” she complained; “I hurt it.”

We all looked — the knuckle was black and blue.

“You did it, Tom,” she said accusingly. “I know you didn’t mean to, but you *did* do it. That’s what I get for marrying a brute of a man, a great, big, hulking physical specimen of a —”

“I hate that word hulking,” objected Tom crossly, “even in kidding.”

“Hulking,” insisted Daisy. (14)

## Quoting Drama

If you want to quote several lines of a conversation in a play, follow the Block Quotations format, but be sure to capitalize the entire names of the speakers and follow with a colon. Include stage directions as they appear in the original text.

Even Reverend Parris is hesitant to admit that the girls have been affected by witchcraft:

PARRIS, *eagerly*: What does the doctor say, child?

SUSANNA, *craning around Parris to get a look at Betty*: He bid me come and tell you, reverend sir, that he cannot discover no medicine for it in his books.

PARRIS: Then he must search on.

SUSANNA: Aye, sir, he have been searchin' his books since he left you, sir. But he bid me tell you, that you might look to un-natural things for the cause of it.

PARRIS, *his eyes going wide*: No - no. There be no unnatural cause here. Tell him I have sent for Reverend Hale of Beverly, and Mr. Hale will surely confirm that. Let him look to medicine and put out all thought of unnatural causes here. There be none. (9)

If you are quoting a verse drama, like *Romeo and Juliet* or *The Odyssey*, you will include the act, scene, and line numbers in your parenthetical citation rather than the page number.

Upon hearing that Romeo has killed her cousin, Tybalt, Juliet both curses and blesses her husband Romeo:

Beautiful tyrant! fiend angelical!  
Dove-feather'd raven! wolfish-ravening lamb!  
Despised substance of divinest show!  
Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st,  
A damned saint, an honorable villain!  
O nature, what hadst thou to do in hell,  
When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend  
In mortal paradise of such sweet flesh?  
Was ever book containing such vile matter  
So fairly bound? O that deceit should dwell  
In such a gorgeous palace! (3.2.75-85)



## Quoting a Quotation

Sometimes, you will find a work in which the author quotes from another work. This is common especially in nonfiction articles. If you find that you would like to use the quotation within the work, you have two options to be sure that you give credit to the original author.

Ideally, the text that is being referred to could be a valuable additional resource for your paper, so the best option is to find the original text that the author is referring to, and then properly cite it in your paper using Quoting Text format.

However, if you simply want to use the quotation within the text, follow the format for Quoting Text, but in the parenthetical citation give the author of the quotation, followed by “qtd. in” and then the author of the work’s last name and the page number:

The definition of the American Dream used to be one of simplicity: “a steady job with decent pay and health benefits, rising living standards, a home of your own, secure retirement, and the hope that your children would enjoy a better future” (Smith qtd. in Lynch G5).

You can also include the original speaker into your introductory phrase:

Smith describes the American Dream as, “a steady job with decent pay and health benefits, rising living standards, a home of your own, secure retirement, and the hope that your children would enjoy a better future” (qtd. in Lynch G5).

NOTE: G5 refers to a newspaper page.

# Conclusion Paragraphs

As the name implies, your conclusion comes at the end of your essay. It should reaffirm the main point of the essay and it should extend or intensify the significance of your thesis for the reader. As with the conclusion in a science experiment, your essay conclusion should state what you learned while exploring your thesis. In this way, rather than simply repeating yourself in the conclusion, you can offer additional insight into the value or significance of your argument.

## Conclusion Checklist

### 1. Reaffirm your Thesis

- Remind the reader of your primary claim in different, yet emphatic wording.
- Do NOT simply repeat the thesis.
- Avoid formulaic phrases such as “In conclusion” or “In summary”.
- Only refer to specific points made earlier in order to connect them to your additional insight

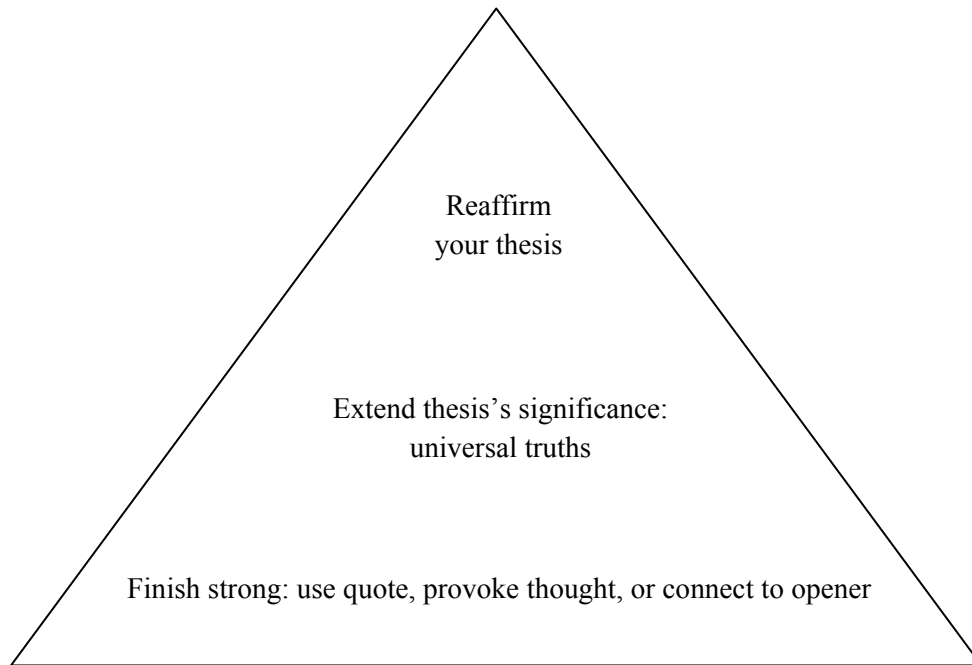
### 2. Extend the Significance of your Thesis

- Do NOT add new evidence or a new argument.
- Shed additional insight into the arguments and evidence already presented.
- Explain to the reader how your thesis is not only relevant to the text or issue you were discussing, but also to a larger context. In other words point out the *universal truths*. By showing the reader that your argument is also relevant to other texts, the reader’s life, or to all of society increases the significance of your argument in the reader’s mind and leaves the reader with something to think about.

### 3. Finish Strong

- Call to action
- Memorable quote
- Connection to your opener (AGO).
- Provocative statement

As a general rule, conclusions function like a pyramid or inverted funnel. They start with a narrow claim, the reaffirming of your main point or thesis on the assigned text or issue, and then they become broader as you explain how the thesis has greater relevance to you, the reader, or the world. Here's a visual illustration of how the conclusion functions as an inverted funnel, expanding your specific thesis to a broad statement with greater relevance for the reader.



## Strong Finishes

Just as there are many different types of essays, there are different ways to produce an effective conclusion. We'll consider a few of those ways, but the point to remember is that the conclusion is the last thing your reader will see. It's worth your time and effort to make a memorable impression.

### *The Call to Action*

Persuasive essays, which sometimes are classified as speeches or letters, often finish with the writer or speaker calling upon the audience to take action. Examine these two examples:

**The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us -- that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion -- that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain -- that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom -- and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.**

Abraham Lincoln "Gettysburg Address" (November 19, 1863)

**It is now almost 40 years since the invention of nuclear weapons. We have not yet experienced a global thermonuclear war -- although on more than one occasion we have come tremulously close. I do not think our luck can hold forever. Men and machines are fallible, as recent events remind us. Fools and madmen do exist, and sometimes rise to power. Concentrating always on the near future, we have ignored the long-term consequences of our actions. We have placed our civilization and our species in jeopardy.**

**Fortunately, it is not yet too late. We can safeguard the planetary civilization and the human family if we so choose. There is no more important or more urgent issue.**

Carl Sagan "The Nuclear Winter"

Note how both Lincoln and Sagan not only finish strong by using powerful words, but also by showing their audiences that the issues are far bigger than just honoring soldiers or disarming weapons. Lincoln relates the soldiers' efforts to the preservation of freedom and democracy, while Sagan connects the disarming of weapons to safeguarding civilization on the planet.

### *Memorable Quote*

Sometimes writers feel that the best way to leave a memorable impression is to use other people's words which befit the issue or topic under discussion. Here are two examples:

**Despite the celebrity that accrued to her and the air of awesomeness with which she was surrounded in her later years, Miss Keller retained an unaffected personality, certain that her optimistic attitude towards life was justified. "I believe that all through these dark and silent years God has been using me for a purpose I do not know," she said. "But one day I shall understand and then I will be satisfied."**

**Alden Whitman "Helen Keller: June 27, 1880 – June 1, 1968"**

**And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old spiritual: "Free at last! Free at last! *Thank God Almighty, we are free at last.*"**

**Martin Luther King, Jr. "I Have a Dream" (August 28, 1963)**

### *Connection to Opener*

Another way in which writers can provide a memorable conclusion for the reader is by finishing with a comment that connects back to the opening line(s) used to get the reader's attention in the first place. (See Sample Conclusions.)

### *Provocative Statement*

Another method writers employ to make a lasting impression on the reader is to finish with a controversial or thought-provoking comment. (See Sample Conclusions.)

## Sample Conclusions:

Here are sample conclusions that attempt to demonstrate the greater relevance of a few of the theses mentioned previously in the “Introductions” segment of this handbook. Note that each one reaffirms the thesis with different wording, extends the significance of the thesis by connecting it to a context beyond the text, and finishes strong to leave an impression on the reader.

**Introduction:** [AGO] Albert Einstein was once quoted as saying, “We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking that we used when we created them”. [background] That’s an apt description of the weakness in the characters in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, all of whom contribute to the “rotteness” in the state of Denmark. While on different sides of the conflict in the play, the characters of Claudius, Gertrude, and Hamlet each repeats the same type of behavior even though none of them is pleased with the state of affairs that their behavior has created. [subtopics /thesis] Claudius’s moral corruption, Gertrude’s emotional instability, and Hamlet’s spiritual indecisiveness in the play all participate in Shakespeare’s portrayal of a world in which the frailty of man dwarfs and ultimately consumes his goodness.

**Conclusion:** [reaffirm thesis] The prevailing weakness found in the characters of *Hamlet* leads one to believe that Shakespeare had little hope for the world in which he lived. The way in which the corruption in Denmark eventually destroyed the entire royal family indicates Shakespeare’s view that there was simply not enough good to overcome the evil that was present. [extend significance] Yet when one considers the rise and fall of empires over the last several millennia, it appears that his view is not overly pessimistic, but rather substantiated by history. The biggest disappointment in this though is not the ubiquitous nature of evil, but the inability and/or unwillingness of good men like Hamlet to stand against it. [memorable quote / connection to opener] As Einstein also said, “The world is a dangerous place to live, not because of the people who are evil, but because of the people who don’t do anything about it.”

**Introduction:** [AGO] While my dad shakes his head sadly when my favorite defensive player pounds his chest after sacking the opposing team’s quarterback, thousands of fans in the stadium and around the country watching at home are cheering wildly. They love his passion, his bravado, and of course his talent. [background] Perhaps that’s why Beowulf, the main character from the epic poem of the same name, is a fitting hero for today’s younger generation. Yes he has superhuman strength and extraordinary courage, but his huge ego is very human indeed. [subtopics] When one considers his reasons for fighting Grendel, Grendel’s mother, and even the dragon, it becomes clear that [thesis] Beowulf’s yearning for glory and immortality makes him a fitting hero for the modern age.

**Conclusion:** [reaffirm thesis] Beowulf’s risking his life to be praised and remembered by men is an act that many people today appreciate and admire. [extend significance] Though putting one’s life on the line may not be common to many fields of endeavor, the desire to make a great, lasting name for oneself is. Every day people dedicate their utmost strength to achieve greatness in sports, arts, businesses, professions, etc. in the hopes of attaining recognition and prestige. Still, it does raise an interesting question: if a man performs heroic feats in an attempt to gain glory for himself, is he selfish? [provocative statement] Perhaps the underlying reason today’s world welcomes Beowulf as a hero is that he lets us know that it’s OK for us to be selfish. [connection to opener] Maybe my father is right to shake his head.

**Introduction:** [AGO] Whoever came up with the idea for the television show “Father Knows Best” must have been experimenting with hallucinogenic drugs. Certainly, there are parents and guardians who have compassion and wisdom to share with their children, but unfortunately, that is not always the case.

[background] Witness the “responsible” grownups in Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*, a tragedy of two teenagers who fall in love, but end up taking their own lives when they are unable to find a way to be together in this life. [subtopics] The Monk, the Nurse, and Lord and Lady Capulet each had the opportunity to prevent the tragic deaths of the young people for whom they supposedly cared. Yet when asked for counsel and comfort, they either advised dishonesty or turned a deaf ear. [thesis] Ultimately then, *Romeo and Juliet* is a tragedy because when Romeo and Juliet had the good sense and humility to ask for help, the adults they trusted led them down the path to death with deception and rejection.

**Conclusion:** [reaffirm thesis] From the opening scene when Montague asks Benvolio to make up for his lack of a relationship with his son to the closing scene in which the Prince puts the blame for Romeo and Juliet’s deaths on their parents, Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* tragically depicts the failure of adults to fulfill their responsibility to care for their young. [extend significance] It also raises some red flags about how children are raised in the United States today. How many fathers are unable to talk with their sons as Montague was? How many parents are as unaware of their daughter’s activities as the Capulets were? How many parents have so earned their children’s trust that those children will come to them with even the most unthinkable of situations or concerns? [provocative statement] It seems commonplace for adults to bemoan the attitudes and behaviors of the younger generation, yet maybe it’s time for an older generation to stop abdicating their responsibilities and actually *raise* their children. [connection to opener] Clearly, fathers do not always know best.

Note: The last two examples include both a provocative statement and a connection to the opener for the sake of demonstration. It is not necessary to use both in your conclusions.

# Revision

## Essay Revision Checklist

1. Look at **the title** of your paper. Does it...
  - show original thought connected to the assignment?
  - prepare your reader for your argument?
  
2. Re-read your **introduction**. Does it...
  - begin with something engaging?
  - identify and narrow your topic?
  - provide all necessary background information? How much plot or conflict summary do you need to set up your argument discussion?
  - correctly include the names of the authors and the title of the work? (Remember: film, play, and novel titles are italicized; article, short story, essay, and poem titles are in quotes.)
  - state key examples or arguments (subtopics)?
  - clearly state your thesis?
  
3. Re-read **your thesis**. Does it...
  - narrow the topic appropriately?
  - make an arguable claim?
  - state your topic and your position?
  
4. Look at each **body paragraph**. Do you...
  - begin with **transitional words**?
  - use topic sentences that correctly relate to the subtopics in your thesis statement?
  - use detailed evidence to prove your point (textual evidence when appropriate)?
  - introduce (speaker, context), quote accurately, and properly cite your textual evidence? (IQCDC)
  - Discuss the significance of your textual evidence? (IQCDC)
  - relate the topic of the paragraph back to the main point of the essay? (IQCDC)
  - transition smoothly between paragraphs?
  
5. Re-read your **conclusion**. Does it...
  - extend the significance of the thesis?
  - finish strong?



## Self-assessment Suggestions

- ✓ Read the text aloud to yourself.
- ✓ Have someone read it to you. This will enable you to hear your work.

### Did You...

- ✓ Make your writing grammatically horror-free?
- ✓ Avoid using passive voice (See Active vs. Passive Voice).
- ✓ Employ elevated vocabulary throughout the essay.
- ✓ Write in present tense, avoid tense shifts, and correct quotations to fit into the tense of sentence
- ✓ Avoid excessive use of the verb “to be.”
- ✓ Edit for wordiness and redundancy.
- ✓ Conform to MLA standards (page numbers, header, title, punctuation, etc.) and includes a works cited page.
- ✓ Spell-check by a computer **and** a human being.
- ✓ Integrate quotations correctly (See Using Quotations).
- ✓ Identify and revise simple sentences that can be combined together.
- ✓ Identify sentences that go on for more than three lines. Revise wordy or confusing sentences, perhaps shortening them.

## Rule Sheet For Review of Mechanical/Structural Errors

1. **Run-On-** a run-on sentence is two or more sentences improperly combines. (e.g., I like you, you like me.) Four ways to correct a run-on are by using a period, semicolon, comma and conjunction, and dependent clause.
2. **Fragment-** a fragment is a piece of a sentence, one that is missing either a subject, a predicate, or both. (e.g., walking down the hall in my new shoes.)
3. **Choppy sentences-** Choppy sentences are sentences that need to be combined. (e.g., I like Mr. Smith. He is my friend.)
4. **Apostrophes-** Apostrophes are used to show possession or to indicate a contraction. (e.g., Mary’s book doesn’t seem to have a cover.)
5. **Semicolons-** Semicolons are primarily used to separate two sentences (two independent clauses) of equal weight. (e.g., I went to Europe; she went to Texas.)
6. **Comma for Introductory Word Group-** a comma is used to set off an introductory word group from the rest of the sentence. (e.g., As soon as the bell rings, the teacher will pass out the tests.)
7. **Subject/Verb Agreement** – Subjects should always agree in number with their verbs. (e.g., each of the men has his work done.)
8. **Pronoun/Antecedent Agreement** – Pronouns should agree with their antecedents (the words to which the pronouns refer). (e.g., each one of the girls did her work.)
9. **Vague Pronoun Reference (vpr)-** A pronoun with no clear antecedent is unclear. (e.g., After Jill called Bet, she felt sad.) We don’t know WHO feels sad-Jill or Beth.
10. **Parallel Structure-** The rule of expressing ideas in similar terms (all nouns, all verbs, etc.) is called parallel structure. (e.g., I like fishing, boating, and camping. NOT I like to fish, boating and let’s go camping.)
11. **Double Negative-** a double negative occurs when two negative words are used in the same sentence. (e.g., I don’t have no money.)
12. **Dangling and misplaced modifiers** –they make sentences awkward. They keep sentences from expressing clear, straightforward ideas. A modifier at the beginning of the sentence must refer to the subject. Keep a word or phrase near the word it modifies.(e.g., The new gymnasium was paid for by Mrs. Franklin, who later became Mrs. Lowenstein, at a cost of \$1.3 million. The phrase “at a cost of \$1.3 million” is misplaced. It should come after the word “built”.)

## Peer Editing Worksheet

### INTRODUCTION

Does the first sentence grab your attention? Does it make you want to keep reading?	
Does the introduction begin generally and end with the specific thesis statement?	

<b>THE THESIS STATEMENT</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Is the thesis statement clear and specific?	

<b>TOPIC SENTENCES</b>	<b>Body Paragraph 1</b>	<b>Body Paragraph 2</b>	<b>Body Paragraph 3</b>
Does each topic sentence relate to the thesis in order and content?			
Is each topic sentence clear and specific? If it is vague, how can it be improved?			

<b>QUOTATIONS</b>	<b>Body Paragraph 1</b>	<b>Body Paragraph 2</b>	<b>Body Paragraph 3</b>
Does each quote effectively support its respective topic sentence?			
Can you suggest stronger or more effective quotes to support the writer's argument?			

### THE CONCLUSION

Do you have any suggestions how the writer could make the conclusion more interesting?	
--	--

## Rubric for Literary Analysis Essay

### Organization

- a. Easily identifiable thesis statement that relates to prompt
- b. Introduction directly builds up to focus of thesis and includes a hook.
- c. Topic sentences convey and develop each subtopic presented in thesis
- d. Closing sentences in body paragraphs connect to subtopic explored within paragraph
- e. Text flows and transitions naturally within each body paragraph
- f. Conclusion presents synthesis of arguments and restated thesis
- g. Paragraphs do not summarize, retell events, or ask questions

### Content

- a. Thesis is significant and arguable
- b. Demonstrates understanding of the text
- c. Shows full comprehension of complex ideas expressed in the text
- d. Utilizes supporting details directly connected to the thesis
- e. Cites and incorporates convincing textual evidence (direct quotes) to support analysis
- f. Uses clear and convincing reasoning to analyze textual evidence
- g. Conclusion adds insight to the essay's thesis.

### Grammar, Mechanics, and Voice

- a. Proper spelling, grammar, punctuation, and tense
- b. Avoids first/second person pronouns
- c. Avoids slang and conversational tone
- d. Uses precise language, including descriptive words and sensory details
- e. Uses domain specific vocabulary

### Format

- a. MLA format for academic writing (12 pt. font, Times New Roman, 1" margins, double-spaced, title)
- b. MLA heading in upper left hand corner (Your Name, Teacher Name, Course Name, Day month year)
- c. MLA format for parenthetical citations
- d. MLA format for Works Cited Page (and Bibliography if needed)
- e. Meets length requirements (**e.g., five paragraph, 2 page minimum...3 page maximum**)

## Transitional Words and Phrases

Transitions enhance logical organization and readability. They improve the connections between thoughts. Following are examples of different types of transitions:

### **Addition:**

also, again, as well as besides furthermore in addition, likewise, moreover, similarly

### **Consequence:**

accordingly, as a result, consequently, hence, otherwise, subsequently, therefore, thus

### **Contrast and Comparison:**

contrast, conversely, instead, likewise rather, similarly, yet, but, however, still, nevertheless, in contrast

### **Emphasis**

above all, chiefly, especially, particularly

### **Illustration:**

for example, for instance, as an example, in this case

### **Similarity:**

comparatively, correspondingly, likewise, similar, moreover, together with

### **Sequence:**

at first, first of all, to begin with, in turn, later on, meanwhile, next, then, soon, the meantime, later, while, earlier, simultaneously, and afterward

### **Summarizing:**

after all, all in all, briefly, in any case, on the whole, in summary, to summarize, finally

## Active vs. Passive Voice

Voice refers to whether the subject of a sentence is performing or receiving the action. In sentences written in the active voice the subject is the doer. Voice affects tone and emphasis. These are issues of style, not of right or wrong. *Active voice is preferred.*

Active voice advantages:

- ✓ Writing is more direct and concise.
- ✓ Writing is clearer and more powerful.

### **Passive voice**

*The room was painted lavender by Jayne.*

*The test was taken by Joe.*

### **Active voice**

*Jayne painted the room lavender.*

*Joe took the test.*

## Tone

Tone in an essay is your attitude towards your topic. Think of it as your tone of voice. Your word choices, or diction, will determine the tone that you present to your reader. Different types of writing call for different tones.

- Narrative writing is often enhanced by words that convey your emotions regarding your subject. Be cautioned though that too much emotion can make many readers uncomfortable.
- Argumentative writing requires words that clearly convey your opinion of the topic or issue that you're discussing. In this case, it is customary to choose positive words when discussing your side of the issue and negative words when discussing opposing viewpoints. Effective persuaders, however, attempt to point out the positive aspects of their opponents' arguments before offering their rebuttals. This demonstrates to the audience that you are an objective person who has considered both sides of the issue, and that it is only after careful consideration that you have chosen to promote your viewpoint. For the same reason, you want to avoid using overly emotional words when making your arguments because displaying too much emotion causes your audience to think that you are not objective.
- Expository writing and analytical writing both require a calm, rational, and thoughtful voice. These writings allow the information or ideas to speak for themselves. Thus you will need to choose words that avoid unnecessary emotion, but demonstrate serious reflection on the topic. One key to accomplishing this is using **standard, or formal, English**. Another key is *writing in the third person*. Third person writing prevents the following "emotional" pitfalls:
  - Avoiding first person writing (I, me) lets the reader know that you are not selfish; you are not only thinking about yourself. It also demonstrates that you are not too emotionally wrapped up in your topic; you are able to consider the topic clearly and rationally.
  - Avoiding second person writing (you, your) lets readers know that you do not pretend to know what they are thinking. It also prevents awkward emotional, and even offensive, moments when you challenge the readers views in a direct confrontation.

## Examples of Tone

Notice the difference that word choices and person make in these sentences:

The article is filled with **stupid** arguments. (*“Stupid” is an extremely emotional word; it makes the writer sound immature and biased, or at the very least, narrow-minded.*)

The arguments presented in the article are **unfounded**. (*“Unfounded” is still a negative word, but not nearly as emotional as “stupid”. The writer sounds as though he or she is thinking more logically and objectively.*)

**You get so mad when reading *Animal Farm*; watching the animals get manipulated by the pigs really pisses you off.** (*The writer makes a valid point but uses language that is too informal and too emotional to inspire readers to treat the writer as a reliable source.*)

**Watching the pigs’ manipulation of the other animals often arouses great indignation in readers.** (*This writer makes the same point but with words that convey thoughtfulness and rationality.*)

**I can’t believe every single character fell for Iago’s lies.** (*First person shows too much emotion for the writer to be considered a credible source.*)

**One cannot help but react with incredulity, or at least, amazement at the gullibility of characters that encountered Iago’s deceptions.** (*Using third person and more formal language eliminates the emotion that can overshadow the power of the writer’s argument.*)

**I tried to find the logic in his arguments, but I didn’t have a powerful enough microscope.** (*Using sarcasm can be effective if properly placed in an argumentative piece. Insulting those that hold different viewpoints could lower one’s credibility with an audience though.*)

**Readers will be hard-pressed to understand the logic in his arguments.** (*This makes the same point, but without the sarcasm.*)



## Modern Language Association (MLA) Format

### MLA Overview

- Font: Times New Roman, size 12
- Spacing: Double (be sure Before and After spacing is set to “0”)
- Heading:
  - Your Name
  - Your instructor’s name
  - Your class
  - Date (Day Month Year)
- Header: Your last name followed by the page number, right aligned
- Title: after heading, center aligned, follow capitalization rules for titles (NOT bolded, underlined, italicized or quotation marked)
- Indent: at the start of each paragraph
- Parenthetical Citation: See Quotation Format
- Works Cited Page: on a separate page, the last page of your paper, every work that is cited in your paper must be included, use hanging indent

### Works Cited Page

For a book:

Author’s Last Name, First Name. *Book Title*. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. Medium of Publication.

For electronic sources:

Author’s Last Name, First Name. “Article Title.” *Website, Project, or Book Title*. Any version numbers available, including revisions, posting dates, volumes, or issue numbers. Publisher, Publishing Date. Page Numbers. Medium of Publication. Date you accessed the information.

Click to look at the [Sample](#) for more clarification on MLA format. Another helpful source is the [Purdue Owl MLA Guide](#).