

BASIC ESSAY STRUCTURE

Delgado Community College

An essay is a collection of paragraphs that focuses on a single topic, presents a thesis (implied or direct), and looks to inform or persuade a reader. Students write essays in college to improve their critical thinking skills.

Parts of an Essay	Explanation
Introduction	The first paragraph of an essay. Its purpose is to ease the reader into the topic. Writers use specific strategies such as an anecdote or story, background information, or rhetorical questions. A <u>thesis statement</u> is present in the introduction. Thesis falls at the end of the introduction paragraph.
Body	Body paragraphs follow the introduction. The number of body paragraphs depend on the number of points the writer needs to prove his or her thesis. Body paragraphs have <u>topic sentences</u> , one topic sentence per body paragraph. Body paragraphs offer support with major and minor supporting sentence.
Conclusion	Last paragraph of an essay. Its purpose is to offer a graceful end to the essay. Writers use specific strategies such as an anecdote or story, summarization of points in the essay, a look to the future, or offer solutions. <u>Thesis is restated</u> in the conclusion to remind the reader what was accomplished.

Basic Essay outline:

- I. Introduction: select strategy (based on topic choice)
 - a. Thesis statement: State the essay's main idea.
- II. Body paragraph #1: Topic sentence (prove one point of the thesis)
 - a. Major details #1: State one point from the topic sentence.
 - b. Minor detail #1: Spend several sentences discussing major detail #1.
- III. Body paragraph #2: Topic sentence (prove one point of the thesis)
 - a. Major detail #2: State another point from the topic sentence.
 - b. Spend several sentences discussing major detail #2.
- IV. Body paragraph #3: Topic sentence (prove one point of the thesis)
 - a. Major detail #3: State another point from the topic sentence.
 - b. Spend several sentences discussing major detail #3
- V. Conclusion: select strategy. Restate thesis.