

Research Paper Essay Outline Form

(Remember, An Essay is An Argument – Logos and Ethos)

NOTE: *The layout of specific body paragraphs (background/explanation, opposing side is in no particular order – choose the organization that best maintains and develops your argument. You are also not required to fill out the number of body paragraphs or quotes (thought each body paragraph must include one direct quote) on this form; again, choose the organization that works best for you.*

INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH

(Indent 5 spaces) Use one of the hook forms. No yes or no questions, don't ask me "what is (abstract noun?) or tell me how Webster's defines this noun.

Make sure your introduction includes examples, explanations and details

Major Thesis: This is your argument – what you will be proving throughout your paper. All topic sentences, all evidence, all commentary will prove this argument. Argumentative papers must have a subject and opinion; literary analysis must state what your paper will prove. For all essays the thesis must be arguable and clearly state what it is you are going to argue.

- The thesis must clearly address the prompt
- The thesis must be a complex sentence; it must include "because" or "although" or any other word or form that promotes cause and effect.
- Research papers can't have "should", "must", "needs to", or any other biased words
- The thesis **MUST BE UNDERLINED**

BODY PARAGRAPH: DOES YOUR SUBJECT REQUIRE SOME EXPLANATION OR BACKGROUND? If you have chosen a scientific or complex topic, you may need to use ONE paragraph to define the topic so the reader gets a sense of the controversy.

Examples include stem cells, cloning, racial profiling, intelligent design. Take care not to go into unnecessary and/or esoteric detail.

1. (Indent) Topic Sentence. TOPIC SENTENCES MUST NOT BE UNIVERSAL. Make sure you include a transitional word or phrase.

2. **Transition/Lead-In**. Sets up the context for your quote. (For example when/in). Make sure you build a full explanation. All context comes BEFORE THE QUOTE, not after. Lead-ins are another ideal place to evidence the argument. They must transition smoothly.

3. **Concrete Detail**. The quote, itself or the “Say”. Must be a new point that relates to your topic sentence. Include only the part of quote that supports your argument – no filler:

(parenthetical citation: _____)

4. **First Commentary**. THE MEAN. Must focus on and prove your topic sentence. DOES NOT STATE THE OBVIOUS):

5. **Second Commentary.** The deeper commentary or the “Matter” or the “big ideas.” Dig deep here and analyze the quote in terms of the universal meaning, themes, and your thesis.

6. **Transitions/Lead-In.** This second quote must build a bridge between the previous “Matter” and sets up the context for your quote. Again, you must relate it to your topic sentence, which relates to your thesis. (“Cisneros furthers the idea of conflicted maturity in the vignette “The Family of Little Feet. When Esperanza, Rachel and Lucy slip on the yellow shoes they are suddenly and dramatically transformed from the innocence of childhood to the power of womanhood”).

7. **Concrete Detail.** The quote, itself or the “Say”. Must be a new point that relates to your topic sentence. Include only the part of quote that supports your argument – no filler:

(parenthetical citation: _____)

8. **First Commentary for Second Concrete Detail.** The “Mean.” Illustrates the second point in proving the topic sentence. DOES NOT STATE THE OBVIOUS.)

9. **Second Commentary.** The deeper commentary or the “Matter” or the “big ideas.” Again stick to your topic, but analyze the quote in terms of the universal meaning, themes, and your thesis.

10. **Concluding Sentence** (finishes the topic and draws a conclusion)

BODY PARAGRAPH: OPPOSING SIDE. To create a thorough/balanced approach to your argument, you must include an opposing side that IDENTIFIES the most compelling arguments AGAINST your argument. Include quotes and examples and make sure you continue to avoid your own opinion in the exposition. Let the experts have the opinions. Then you must NULLIFY that point, meaning you must argue it down with ethos and pathos (not contradiction).

1. (Indent) Topic Sentence. Begin with a transition that shows contrast (but, while, although, see your list of transitions). .

2. **Transition/Lead-In.** Sets up the context for your quote. (For example when/in). Make sure you build a full explanation. All context comes BEFORE THE QUOTE, not after. Lead-ins are another ideal place to evidence the argument. They must transition smoothly.

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10. **Nullify the points:** Within this paragraph you will want to specifically argue the points in the opposing argument. Again, call upon **logos** and **ethos**, include examples and quotes and DEVELOP this argument to if not thoroughly nullify the argument but to create doubt in the argument.

11. **Concrete Detail.** Use a quote from experts to support your points against the opposing side:

(parenthetical citation: _____)

12. **Concrete Detail.** The quote, itself or the “Say”. Must be a new point that relates to your topic sentence. Include only the part of quote that supports your argument – no filler:

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13. **First Commentary.** Related to the opposing side

14. **Second Commentary.** The deeper commentary or the “Matter” related to the opposing side.

15. **Concluding Sentence** (finishes the topic and draws a conclusion)

BODY PARAGRAPH

1. (Indent) Topic Sentence. This is a point that proves your thesis. It has a clear subject, evidences the argument (arguable) and focuses on only one subject. **TOPIC SENTENCES MUST NOT BE UNIVERSAL.** Make sure you include a transitional word or phrase.

2. **Transition/Lead-In.** Sets up the context for your quote. (For example when/in):

3. **Concrete Detail.** The quote, itself or the “Say”. Must be a new point that relates to your topic sentence. Include only the part of quote that supports your argument – no filler:

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10. **Concluding Sentence** (finishes the topic and draws a conclusion/revisits thesis)

BODY PARAGRAPH

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10. Concluding Sentence (finishes the topic and draws a conclusion)

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10. Concluding Sentence (finishes the topic and draws a conclusion)

CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH

1. (Indent) Revisit and reinvent your argument. Rephrase thesis in a new way. **DON'T REPEAT.** Show the wisdom of your argument. **SHOW THE LEARNING.** (avoid clichéd endings like “in conclusion”, “all in all”, “finally”)

2. Clincher: Revisit the way you started your intro paragraph (can reverse order with summary statement). If you asked a question, answer it, if you used a quote, explain how your argument sheds a new light on it. If you used an analogy, reshape the analogy to show how the situation would be different if your argument were to come to pass.
