

Thesis-Support Essay Structure &

Tips for Introduction and Conclusion

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What is an Essay

- An essay is a way to express your personal opinion about a topic
- It usually has a message to convey for a specific purpose
- It conveys your point (s) of view and full grasp of the topic

- **Types of Essays:**

- **Descriptive Essay**
- **Definition Essay**
- **Compare and Contrast Essay**
- **Cause and Effect Essay**
- **Narrative Essay**
- **Process Essay**
- **Argumentative Essay**
- **Critical Essay**
- **Expository Essay**
- **Persuasive Essay**

Writing Thesis Statements

- **Determine the type of paper**

- An **analytical** paper evaluates and presents an idea into its basic parts
- An **expository** (explanatory) paper explains something to the audience
- An **argumentative** paper makes a claim and justifies it by specific evidence
 - The **thesis statement** usually appears in the end of the **first paragraph** of a paper
 - Should briefly state the **overall idea** of your paper supported with **specific evidence**
 - Revise your **thesis statement** to reflect any changes made to your **topic/arguments**

Essay Outline Example – Introduction and Thesis

Essay Outline

Essay Title (Capitalize all major words): _____

I. Introduction (First Paragraph of Essay)

A. Lead-in (quotation, surprising statement, or question): _____

B. Development (give background information, tell an interesting story, present a vivid description, give a definition, explain both sides of a debate): _____

C. Thesis: _____

First Paragraph - Introduction

- **Essay Title:** Capitalize all major words
 - **Introduction:** First Paragraph of Essay
 - **Lead-in:** Provide a quotation, surprising statement, or question, etc.
 - **Development:** Give background information, tell an interesting story, present a vivid description, give a definition, explain both sides of a debate
 - **Thesis** or the **central theme** of the essay

Thesis Statement Examples – Analytical Thesis

- **Example of an Analytical Thesis Statement:**
 - “An analysis of the college admission process reveals one challenge facing counselors: accepting students with high test scores or students with strong extracurricular backgrounds.”
 - **The paper that follows should:**
 - Explain the **analysis** of the college admission process
 - Explain the **challenge** facing the admissions counselors

Thesis Statement Examples – Expository thesis

- **Example of an Expository (explanatory) Thesis Statement:**
 - “The life of the typical college student is characterized by time spent studying, attending class, and socializing with peers.”
 - **The paper that follows should:**
 - Explain how students spend their time **studying**, **attending** class, and **socializing** with their peers

Thesis Statement Examples – Argumentative Thesis

- **Example of an Argumentative Thesis Statement:**

- “High school graduates should be required to take a year off to pursue community service projects before entering college in order to increase their maturity and global awareness.”

- **The paper that follows should:**

- Present an **argument** and give **evidence** to support the claim that students should pursue community projects before entering college

First Body Paragraph – Topic Sentence, Supporting Ideas & Details

II. First Body Paragraph (Second Paragraph of Essay)

Topic sentence: _____

A. Supporting idea 1: _____

Details: _____

B. Supporting idea 2: _____

Details: _____

C. Supporting idea 3: _____

Details: _____

Organization - Topic Sentences

- **What is a Topic Sentence?**
 - Every essay “**body**” **paragraph** should contain a topic sentence that identifies the main idea
 - It should not be too **general** nor too **specific**
 - It is often the paragraph’s very **first sentence** and ties back to the **thesis statement** in the first paragraph
 - The **supporting details** in the paragraph will further develop the **topic sentence**

Organization - Topic Sentence Example

- **Topic Sentence Exercise:**
 - Write a **topic sentence** for the following paragraph:
 - During the **1990s**, I really enjoyed watching *Friends* on television every Thursday night. I really wanted Rachel's haircut—I think every girl wanted Rachel's haircut back then! Rachel's haircut went really well with the Guess Jeans that were so popular in the 1990s. I remember all the advertisements for Guess and Calvin Klein Jeans that were in each month's *Sassy* magazine. I don't think *Sassy* magazine exists anymore, but it was one of the most popular magazines for young women in the 1990s.
 - "Thinking about the **1990s** brings back a lot of memories for me about **fashion** and **popular culture**."

Organization – Supporting Ideas & Details

- To further explain the **topic sentence** of your paragraph, provide **supporting ideas**
- Each time you present a **supporting idea** in a paragraph, you must provide **further details**
- This is to better **organize** your paragraph, and to bolster your **topic sentence and thesis**
- For each **supporting idea**, provide at least two **supporting details**
- **Supporting details** should include examples and **reliable sources**
- Finally, **supporting ideas and details** should shore up your **topic sentence** in totality

Organization- Relevance of Ideas Exercise

- The **bold sentences** in the paragraph below are irrelevant and could be eliminated.

“Exercise is really good for one’s physical and mental health. It is proven that aerobic exercise is good for the heart, which is very important to overall health. **I used to run every day, but now I go to dance classes to get my aerobic exercise.** Strength training is important for maintaining muscle mass and improving bone density. Both muscle mass and bone density can decrease as we age, so improving them through strength training is important. **My grandmother broke a hip last year because her bones were so fragile.** All kinds of exercise have been shown to relieve depression, anxiety, and stress.”

Flow - Order of Ideas Exercise

- The paragraph below is **reorganized** to be more logical:

It is important to plan your trips carefully. When you go on a trip, you need to think about how much money to allot for things like transportation, food, and hotels. Hotels and transportation on trips can be expensive if you don't book them with plenty of time in advance. Another thing to plan for is how much time you want to spend sightseeing and doing different sorts of activities. Even though you may want to do everything, you have to remember that there are only so many hours in the day! Planning your trip carefully will allow you to have a more relaxed trip.

Flow - Transitions Exercise

- In the following paragraphs, the inserted **transitions** are highlighted. **Note:** you may have thought of other possible transitions that would also be appropriate.
 - **Exercise is really good for one's physical and mental health.** First, it is proven that aerobic exercise is good for the heart, which is very important to overall health. Second, strength training is important for maintaining muscle mass and improving bone density. Both muscle mass and bone density can decrease as we age, so improving them through strength training is important. **Finally, all kinds of exercise have been shown to relieve depression, anxiety, and stress.**
 - **It is important to plan your trips carefully.** For example, when you go on a trip, you need to think about how much money to allot for things like transportation, food, and hotels. In particular, hotels and transportation on trips can be expensive if you don't book them with plenty of time in advance. Another thing to plan for is how much time you want to spend sightseeing and doing different sorts of activities. Even though you may want to do everything, you have to remember that there are only so many hours in the day! **In sum, planning your trip carefully will allow you to have a more relaxed trip.**

Second Body Paragraph – Example

III. Second Body Paragraph (Third Paragraph of Essay)

Topic sentence: _____

A. Supporting idea 1: _____

Details: _____

B. Supporting idea 2: _____

Details: _____

C. Supporting idea 3: _____

Details: _____

Third Body Paragraph – Example

IV. Third Body Paragraph (Fourth Paragraph of Essay)

Topic sentence: _____

A. Supporting idea 1: _____

Details: _____

B. Supporting idea 2: _____

Details: _____

C. Supporting idea 3: _____

Details: _____

Conclusion – Example

V. Conclusion (Last Paragraph of Essay):

A. Rephrased Thesis: _____

B. Summary of essay's 3 supporting points: _____

C. Clincher (tie back to intro; or give a prediction, suggestion, quotation, or call to action):

Conclusion – Last Paragraph of the Essay

- The following outline may help you conclude your paper:
 - **Rephrased Thesis:**
 - Restate your topic and why it is important
 - **Summary:**
 - Summarize your essay's three supporting points
 - **Clincher:**
 - Tie back to your introduction; give a prediction, suggestion, quotation, or call to action

The Restated Thesis

- **How to restate your thesis:**
 - The restated thesis is the **first sentence** of the conclusion.
 - It **re-words** (not repeats) the thesis idea.

The Summary

- How to **summarize** the ideas in the concluding paragraph:
 - Briefly **summarize** the ideas discussed in the body paragraphs (usually 3)
 - The summary may be included as **part** of the restated thesis, or it may be in a **separate sentence**
 - The summary should not sound **word-for-word** like the plan of development that appears in the introduction
 - The summary of the main points should be listed **in the same order** as they appear in the essay

The Clincher

- **How to write the clincher:**

- The clincher is the **last sentence** of the conclusion.
- The clincher is a statement that makes **one final observation** on the topic and leaves a lasting impression on the reader.
- The clincher may also tie back to the “hook” of the introduction—this is called **framing the essay**.

Conclusion Example – Restated Thesis/Summary/Clincher

- **Restated Thesis:**

- To conclude, credit card companies should continue offering credit cards to college students for several valid reasons.

- **Summary:**

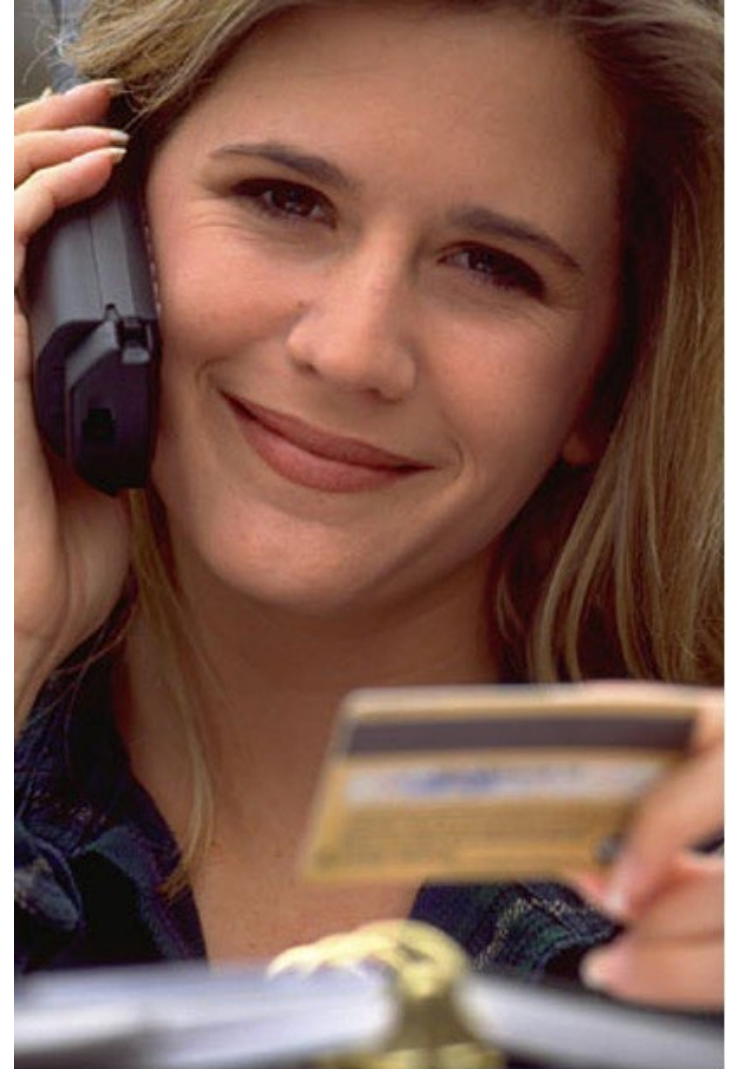
- Credit cards help students learn financial responsibility, begin to build credit, and most importantly, help cover emergency costs.

- **Clincher:**

- Granted, a few students will abuse their credit cards, but that is not an adequate reason to deny all students the benefits of owning a credit card.

Questions

- Is the summary part of the restated thesis or given in a separate sentence?
- How many sentences does the conclusion contain?



Sample Conclusion for an Essay on the Benefits of Working Overtime

Sample Concluding Paragraph:

In **conclusion**, working overtime has several benefits. It offers people the extra money they may need or want, allows people to become better at their jobs, and gives people who want to work over forty hours a week the ability to do so. Overtime is a win-win situation for employers and employees; the tasks on the job get done and the employees get paid for their work beyond standard job hours.

Discussion

- Mark the **restated thesis**, **summary**, and **clincher** in the preceding conclusion.
- Are the **restated thesis** and **summary** combined into one sentence or not?

Recap: Introduction-Body-Conclusion

- Remember that once you accomplish these tasks, unless otherwise directed by your instructor, you have **completed** your assignment.
- The **preacher's maxim** is a simple formula to follow:
 - Tell what you're going to tell them (**introduction**)
 - Tell them (**body**)
 - Tell them what you told them (**conclusion**)