

## Basic 3-Category Essay Outline Template

Essay Title: [Your Title Here]

Total Target Word Count: 750-1,500 Words

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### I. Introduction (Target: 100-200 words)

- **Hook:** [A compelling sentence, question, statistic, or anecdote to grab attention.]
  - **Background/Context:** [Briefly introduce the general topic. Define key terms if necessary.]
  - **Thesis Statement:** [A clear, arguable claim that presents your central argument and previews your three main points/categories.] *Example: "To understand [Topic], one must examine [Category A], [Category B], and [Category C]."*
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### II. Body Paragraphs

**Category A:** [Name Your First Main Point/Category] (Target: 200-300 words)

- **Topic Sentence:** Introduces this specific category and links it to your thesis.
- **Evidence & Analysis (Point 1):** Provide a fact, example, quote, or data point. Explain how it supports your category's point.
- **Evidence & Analysis (Point 2):** Provide a second piece of evidence. Analyze its significance.
- **Concluding Sentence/Transition:** Summarize the insight from this category and hint at the next.

**Category B:** [Name Your Second Main Point/Category] (Target: 200-300 words)

- **Topic Sentence:** Introduces this distinct category and connects it back to the thesis.
- **Evidence & Analysis (Point 1):** Support for this category. Analyze.
- **Evidence & Analysis (Point 2):** Further support. Analyze.
- **Concluding Sentence/Transition:** Summarize and lead into the final category.

**Category C:** [Name Your Third Main Point/Category] (Target: 200-300 words)

- **Topic Sentence:** Introduces the final, often strongest or most nuanced category.
  - **Evidence & Analysis (Point 1):** Strong support for this category. Analyze.
  - **Evidence & Analysis (Point 2):** Powerful, conclusive evidence. Analyze.
  - **Concluding Sentence/Transition:** Solidify this category's role in your argument and prepare for the conclusion.
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### III. Conclusion (Target: 100-200 words)

- **Restate Thesis (in new words):** Reaffirm your central argument in light of the evidence presented.
- **Synthesize Categories:** Briefly summarize the key insights from Categories A, B, and C. Show how they interconnect to prove your thesis.
- **Broad Implications/So What?:** Explain the significance of your argument. Why does it matter? Suggest implications, future considerations, or a final, memorable thought.
- **Closing Statement:** Leave the reader with a strong, final impression.

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**Tips for Using This Template:**

1. **Fill in the Brackets:** Replace all [text] with your own ideas.
2. **Category Logic:** Ensure your three categories are distinct, logical, and directly support your thesis. They can be three types, three causes, three effects, three perspectives, or three criteria.
3. **Word Counts are Guides:** Use targets to balance your essay. Adjust slightly as needed.
4. **Draft First, Outline Later:** If stuck, try brainstorming your three main points first, then fit them into this structure.
5. **Check Flow:** Read your topic and concluding sentences in sequence. They should form a coherent "skeleton" of your argument.

**Best of luck with your essay!**

