

5-Paragraph Essay Outline Template

I. Introduction Paragraph

Hook: Start with an attention-grabbing opening sentence - Use a surprising fact, relevant quote, provocative question, or brief anecdote - Should relate directly to your topic

Background Information: Provide context for your topic - 2-3 sentences explaining what the reader needs to know - Bridge between your hook and thesis - Define key terms if necessary

Thesis Statement: Your main argument/point in one clear sentence - Should be specific and arguable - Preview the three main points you'll discuss - Usually the last sentence of the introduction

II. Body Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence: Introduce your first main point - Should directly support your thesis - Clear and focused on one idea

Evidence/Support: Provide proof for your point - Include facts, statistics, examples, or quotes - Cite sources if using research

Explanation/Analysis: Explain how your evidence supports your point - Connect the evidence back to your topic sentence - Show your thinking—don't just list facts

Concluding Sentence: Wrap up the paragraph - Transition to the next point

III. Body Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence: Introduce your second main point - Should directly support your thesis - Build on the previous paragraph

Evidence/Support: Provide proof for your point - Include facts, statistics, examples, or quotes - Use different types of evidence than paragraph 1

Explanation/Analysis: Explain how your evidence supports your point - Make connections between ideas - Demonstrate critical thinking

Concluding Sentence: Wrap up the paragraph - Transition to the next point

IV. Body Paragraph 3

Topic Sentence: Introduce your third main point - Should directly support your thesis - Strongest point often goes here or in paragraph 1

Evidence/Support: Provide proof for your point - Include facts, statistics, examples, or quotes - Most compelling evidence for your argument

Explanation/Analysis: Explain how your evidence supports your point - This is your last chance to convince the reader - Make it count with thorough analysis

Concluding Sentence: Wrap up the paragraph - Transition to the conclusion

V. Conclusion Paragraph

Restate Thesis: Remind the reader of your main argument - Use different words than your original thesis - Don't introduce new information

Summarize Main Points: Briefly recap your three body paragraphs - 1-2 sentences touching on each main point - Show how they work together to support your thesis

Closing Statement: End with impact - Broader implications of your argument - Call to action, prediction, or thought-provoking final thought - Leave the reader with something to think about

Quick Tips

- Each body paragraph should be roughly the same length
- Use transition words between paragraphs (Furthermore, Additionally, However, Finally)
- Keep your writing focused—one main idea per paragraph
- Proofread for grammar, spelling, and clarity
- Make sure everything connects back to your thesis