Essay Outline

This outline is intended for use as a model for essay writing.

A. Introductory Paragraph

1. Opening comment to get the reader's attention.

There are many kinds of attention-getters to choose from:

- interesting incident related to your subject
- statement of opinion that you intend to challenge
- a definition
- a striking or little-known fact
- a quotation related to your topic
- in an essay on literature you should always include the author and title of the work you are discussing

2. Background information

3. Thesis sentence containing ideas #1, #2, etc.

Your ideas should be grammatically parallel.

Example If idea #1 is a prepositional phrase, then ideas #2 and #3 must also be a prepositional phrase. If idea #1 is an infinitive, then the next must also be infinitives.

B. Paragraph #1: Develop the first point of your thesis

1. Major Supports - Paragraph Development

- Would concrete examples help clarify the point?
- Is there a clear relationship between the support and the thesis statement?
- Is there a series of steps or stages involved?
- Would a comparison be appropriate?
- What about quotations?
2. Conclusion / Transition

Transition may occur at the end of the paragraph, at the beginning of the following paragraph, or in both places.

Here are some common transitions that help your writing to flow:

- to show addition and conclusion:
  - and, moreover, in fact, furthermore, finally
- to show time:
  - soon, later, now, occasionally, in a moment, when, all of a sudden
- to show contrast and comparison:
  - but, however, still, just as, instead, similarly, as if
- to show a reason, purpose, result:
  - provided that, in case that, if, because, since, unless

C. Paragraph #2: Develop the second point of your thesis

1. Major Supports - Paragraph Development

   This paragraph should be different in content from the previous one, yet support your thesis.

D. Paragraph #3: Develop the third point of your thesis

E. Concluding Paragraph

1. Summary of the main points of the paper. Make sure that it is not a word-for-word repetition of your thesis statement.

2. Does your conclusion contain a memorable statement?

   Examples: suggestion for further action, solution to the problem discussed in the paper, a thought-provoking question