

The Elements of an Excellent Essay

Title

- Convey the main point of the essay in 10 words or fewer
- Find a creative way to attract the reader's attention and interest.
- Capitalize the first word and all the important words that follow.

Introduction

- Begin with a sentence that captures the reader's attention.
- Give background information on the topic. Enhance the paragraph with an interesting example, surprising statistic or other "hook."
- Include the thesis statement.

Thesis Statement

- State the main idea of the essay, more generally than the supporting material.
- Mention the main point of each of the body paragraphs.

Body Paragraph 1

- Begin with a topic sentence that states the main point of the paragraph and relates it the thesis statement.
- Fill with well-organized examples, quotations, comparisons, analogies, and/or narration.
- End with a transition.

Body Paragraph 2

- Begin with a topic sentence that states the main point of the paragraph and relates it the thesis statement.
- Fill with well-organized examples, quotations, comparisons, analogies, and/or narration.
- End with a transition.

Body Paragraph 3

- Begin with a topic sentence that states the main point of the paragraph and relates it the thesis statement.
- Fill with well-organized examples, quotations, comparisons, analogies, and/or narration.
- End with a transition.

Conclusion

- "Echo" the thesis statement without simply repeating it.
- Pose a question for future thought or suggest a course of action.
- Include a detail or example from the introduction to "tie up" the essay.
- End with a strong image or a bit of wit.