



The Writing Center

The Five Paragraph Essay



This essay format is effective for addressing many types of prompts. It is especially well suited to shorter, simpler writing tasks. Perhaps its finest quality is its adaptability: feel free to tailor this format to the needs of your individual prompt. Please use the back to help you get started!

1. Introduction Paragraph

- Engage the audience's attention.
- Provide background and/or historical information, relevant details regarding the essay's topic, or related works you may be using in your paper.
- State your **THESIS**, which is composed of three parts:

1. Subject: What topic (thing/idea) are you writing about?
2. Argument: What is your claim? What is your answer to the prompt's question(s)?
3. Premise: How can you support your argument? You will want to provide three MAIN POINTS to substantiate your claim.

2. Body Paragraph 1

- Begin with a topic sentence:

A topic sentence is similar to your thesis; however, it only deals with **one of your main points**. How does your first main point support the argument in your thesis? Your topic sentence should answer this question.

- Explain the main point or give an example.
- Analyze your example.
- Provide a clear explanation of how this point relates to your thesis.

3. Body Paragraph 2

Follow the same guidelines as body paragraph 1, but now focus on your **second** main point.

4. Body Paragraph 3

Follow the same guidelines as body paragraph 1, but now focus on your **third** main point.

5. Conclusion Paragraph

- Revisit your main points, restate your thesis, and consider what idea you want to leave your audience with.

A few good ways to end:

- Advise your readers
- Give your opinion
- Offer a solution
- "Zoom out" (speak about the issue on a real world level)
- Ask yourself what you would write about if you were to keep writing

Use the space below to create a rough draft of your essay.

1. Introduction Paragraph

How are you going to engage your reader's attention?

Provide background, historical information or relevant details regarding the essay's topic or related works you may be using in your paper:

What is your thesis?

2. Body Paragraph 1

What is your topic sentence?

Which example(s) best fits this topic?

How will you analyze this example so readers understand it?

How does this support your thesis?

3. Body Paragraph 2

What is your topic sentence?

Which example(s) best fits this topic?

How will you analyze this example so readers understand it?

How does this support your thesis?

4. Body Paragraph 3

What is your topic sentence?

Which example(s) best fits this topic?

How will you analyze this example so readers understand it?

How does this support your thesis?

5. Conclusion

What are your main points?

How can you reword your thesis?

What idea do you want to leave your readers with? Which technique will leave this idea best?