

## ESSAY STRUCTURE

Introductory Paragraph

First Support Paragraph

Second Support Paragraph

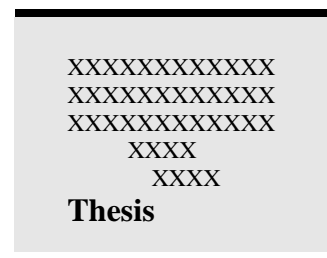
Third Support Paragraph

Fourth Support Paragraph

Concluding Paragraph

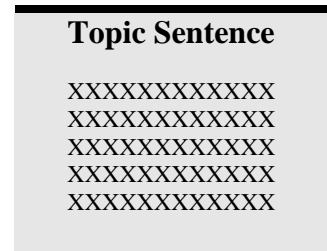
### 1. Introduction

Lead into your topic. Begin broadly, but end the paragraph with a thesis statement that narrows your topic and says something about it (a position or point of view).



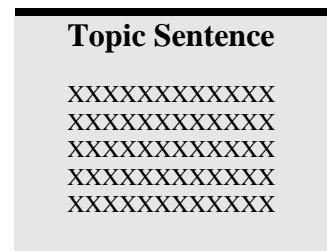
### 2. First Point

Begin with a topic sentence that sums up the point you will develop in **this paragraph**. Develop the topic sentence with specific support—details, facts, examples, comparison, causes, reasons etc. Check that the paragraph is fully developed. A single sentence, except for transitional units, does not constitute a paragraph.



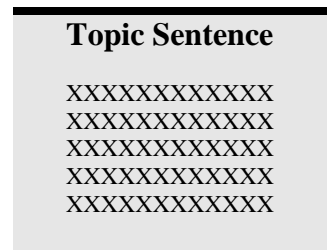
### 3. Second Point

Begin with a topic sentence. If your essay does not flow smoothly from the first point to the second, **provide a transition word or phrase where needed**. Sometimes the transition may require a sentence (“There is another important consideration that educators overlook”). As before, develop the point with specific data.



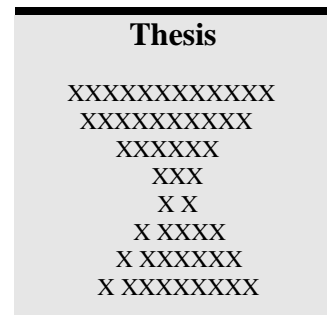
### 4. Third & Subsequent Points

Begin with a topic sentence. Again, check coherence and supply a transition if needed. Develop topic with specific support.



### 5. Conclusion

Restate or reinforce your thesis. Generally, the conclusion is the opposite of the introduction. Whereas the introduction begins broadly and ends with the thesis, the conclusion reiterates the thesis and ends by broadening out to a more general reflection (the implications of your thesis, significance for the future, etc.) **Note: Do not change topic or drift from your original purpose.**



FROM PARAGRAPH PRINCIPLES TO ESSAY WRITING

Frequently you will be required to write essays for some of your college courses. Such assignments usually require the presentation of information about a selected subject. An essay that is written to convey information is called exposition.

In many ways the expository essay has the same structure as a paragraph, except that the essay has more extended discussion and uses additional specific examples. Perhaps a few pointers will guide you in planning your essays:

<b>The Paragraph</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>The Essay</b>
The topic sentence	To state, limit, and control the main idea	The introductory paragraph
Development with use of: facts; examples; incident; definition; comparison and contrast; or statistics, names, and the senses	To develop the main idea with specific points	The main body paragraphs (there should be at least three of them)
(in certain cases: the concluding sentence)	To conclude by coming back to the general main idea	The concluding paragraph

Notice from the comparisons chart above that an expository essay should have at least five paragraphs. Keep this in mind when selecting a topic. Some topics might be suitable for a book but too broad for an essay; other topics might be suitable for a paragraph but too limiting for an essay. For example, suppose that you wish to write an essay on the general topic of *alcoholism*:

- TOO BROAD:       Alcoholism Is a Serious Problem
- TOO LIMITING:   Alcohol Is a Clear Liquid
- GOOD TOPIC:     Some Causes of Alcoholism

Before you can be sure that a topic is good for an essay, it is best to think ahead to each of the main points that you will discuss in the main body of the essay. Try to think of interesting main ideas, each of which can be stated in a good topic sentence. If you cannot, the chances are that the topic you have chosen is not suitable.

## ESSAY STRUCTURE

As you think ahead of the main points that you plan to make, write them down. Looking at the main points you have listed will help you to see whether or not a topic is suitable for your essay. Compare the plan for each of the following topics, and notice the judgment made for each plan:

	A Some Causes of Alcoholism	B Alcoholism is a serious Problem	C Alcohol is a clear liquid
Introduction	Introduce the three main ideas	←	←
Main Body (three main ideas)	I. Curiosity  II. Peer group influence  III. Feeling of loneliness	1. Crime  2. Deaths  3. Rehabilitation Programs	I. What it look like  II. Why it is clear  III. How to identify it
Conclusion	Summarize the three main ideas	←	←

Judgments:

- A is fine, not too broad or too limiting.
- B is too broad, each development would be shallow and general.
- C is too limiting; the main points are similar and repetitious.