

## THE FIVE-PARAGRAPH ESSAY: developing and organizing your ideas

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**Introduction:** Your introduction should *entice your reader* to read on, as well as *preparing him or her to follow your discussion or argument* by providing necessary, relevant, or helpful context, background, and/or information about your subject.

Names \_\_\_\_\_

Dates \_\_\_\_\_

Places \_\_\_\_\_

Key Terms \_\_\_\_\_

**Thesis:** Your thesis should 1) *present a clear statement of your argument or main idea* about your subject, and 2) *introduce the reasoning, examples, information, anecdotes, and/or sources* you will use to support or illustrate your argument.

1) I believe \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(OR \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ is true)

2) because of

#1 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#3 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Body Paragraphs:** Each of the three body paragraphs of your essay should *include a topic sentence or sentences* that clearly signal to the reader which of your “because” statements

you are going to address. Next, the paragraph should *present in detail the reasoning, anecdotes, examples, facts, statistics, or sources*—in other words, the *evidence*—that has led you to your statement. Remember to present your body paragraphs in a logical order.

Topic sentence for body paragraph #1 \_\_\_\_\_

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Supporting points \_\_\_\_\_

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Topic sentence for body paragraph #2 \_\_\_\_\_

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Supporting points \_\_\_\_\_

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Topic sentence for body paragraph #3 \_\_\_\_\_

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Supporting points \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Conclusion**

Your conclusion should not only remind the reader of your topic, your thesis, and your evidence, *but also should ask the reader to think more deeply about your subject* by addressing its implications or broader significance. If you're stuck, ask yourself: Why should someone care about my subject? What would be different if not for my subject? What is the influence of my subject in history? What does my subject mean for the future? How does my subject relate to everyday life? How does my subject fit into a larger discussion? What lessons can be learned from my subject?