

General Essay Writing Guidelines

An essay is a written argument or discussion. The purpose of an essay is to say something about an issue or a topic in a clear, logical manner so that the reader understands the writer's points and is convinced that they make sense.

The three parts of an essay are:

- A. Introduction
- B. Body
- C. Conclusion

Main functions of the introduction paragraph are:

- attracting the reader's interest, encouraging him or her to continue reading the essay.
- supplying any background information that the reader may need to understand the essay.
- presenting a **thesis statement** which is a clear, direct statement of the main idea or central idea of the essay. The **thesis statement** should (1) identify the topic to be discussed, (2) present the specific point to be made about that topic and (3) plan of development.

A SAMPLE THESIS STATEMENT:

The installation of security cameras in schools is a controversial topic with all the potential benefits it may provide and the inconvenience it may cause.

The main function of body paragraphs is:

- to improve and provide support for the thesis statement

Each body paragraph

- includes a topic sentence that states the paragraph's main idea and controls the paragraph.
- focuses on one specific idea.
- contains supporting sentences that are related to the topic sentence and the controlling idea.
- contains transitional words or phrases that help guide the flow of ideas in the paragraph and between the paragraphs.

Concluding Paragraph

- is the last paragraph of the essay.
- restates the ideas contained in the thesis statement.