

## Components of a Good Essay

An essay is a piece of writing that is written to convince someone of something or to simply inform the reader about a particular topic. In order for the reader to be convinced or adequately informed, the essay must include several important components to make it flow in a logical way. The main parts (or sections) to an essay are the intro, body, and conclusion. In a standard short essay, five paragraphs can provide the reader with enough information in a short amount of space. For a research paper or dissertation, however, it is essential that more than five paragraphs are present in order not to overwhelm the reader with too much information in one paragraph.

### Intro:

- Must contain an attention grabber for the reader or at least make the essay sound interesting, may begin with a quote about the particular topic
- Ensure that the intro moves from the general to the specific in regards to the topic
- Provides the reader with a “road map” of the essay in a logical order
- At the end there should be what is called a **thesis statement**, arguably the most important component of the intro
- The thesis statement states the aim of the paper and may give insight into the author’s examples and evidence

### Body:

- Includes the evidence and support of the paper in addition to the author’s ideas
- Paragraphs must include a topic sentence which relates the discussion back to the thesis statement
- Logical ordering of ideas: 3 types of order
  1. Chronological order---order of time, good for narratives
  2. Spatial order-good for descriptions of locations; top to bottom, e.g.
  3. Emphatic order-least important to most important; most common for college writing
- Ensure that transition sentences are present to create a good flow to the essay
- Include substantial examples and evidence to support your argument and remember to cite, cite, cite!
- Make sure each example is relevant to your particular topic

### Conclusion:

- This section should wrap all of your arguments and points
- Should restate the main arguments in a simplified manner
- Ensure that the reader is left with something to think about, particularly if it is an argumentative essay

Always remember to allow time to *rewrite* the first draft of your essay and, then, to proofread it before turning it in. For help, visit the Writing Center!