

Expository Essay - Outline

Your essay will have an introduction paragraph that includes your thesis/theme statement, three body paragraphs supporting your thesis statement with textual evidence and analysis, and a conclusion paragraph that wraps it up. Use this sheet to plan your essay and organize your ideas.

Paragraph #1 – Introduction – Note: there is flexibility in how you order this paragraph.

Hook – How will you draw the reader in? A broad statement? Question? Something interesting?
Thesis/Theme statement – What is the main point you are making? (Include title and author.)
Forecast – What are three ways you will be making your point? (These are your three subtopics.)
Closing sentence – Wrap up the introduction and transition smoothly to the first subtopic.

Five parts of a literary analysis paragraph:

- Topic sentence – This should state your claim (argument, opinion, idea). In a five-paragraph essay, this is one of your three subtopics.
- Context - Connect your argument to the evidence you will present. Do not just put a quote down. Lead into the evidence by introducing the speaker or character and his or her connection to the text. State the character’s location or the overall situation occurring at the time the quote takes place.
- Evidence – Provide at least two pieces of evidence. One must be a direct quotation; the other can either be a direct or indirect quotation. You can quote from dialogue or narration. Include the page number and write it at the end of the direct quotation, “like this” (3). The page number goes at the end of an indirect quotation like this (5).
- Analysis – This is the most important part, your chance to show off what a brilliant and original thinker you are! After you have provided the evidence/quotation, you must spend multiple sentences explaining how the quote supports your argument. Dissect the quote, interpret what is happening in the scene, apply it to other areas of the book, and/or explain its significance.
- Closing sentence – This should complete the paragraph by connecting to your topic sentence. Do not restate the topic sentence. Include a transition to the next paragraph if applicable.

Paragraph #2 – First subtopic

Topic sentence – Tell what your first subtopic is.

Context – Connect your claim to the evidence you will present. Set up the evidence.

Evidence – Two things illustrating your point. At least one should be a quotation. Include page #.

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Analysis – Explain how the evidence supports your claim, using original thought and insight.

Closing sentence – Wrap up this thought and transition smoothly to the next one.

Paragraph #3 – Second subtopic

Topic sentence – Tell what your second subtopic is.

Context – Connect your claim to the evidence you will present. Set up the evidence.

Evidence – Two things illustrating your point. At least one should be a quotation. Include page #.

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Analysis – Explain how the evidence supports your claim, using original thought and insight.

Closing sentence – Wrap up this thought and transition smoothly to the next one.

Paragraph #4 – Third subtopic

Topic sentence – Tell what your third subtopic is.

Context – Connect your claim to the evidence you will present. Set up the evidence.

Evidence – Two things illustrating your point. At least one should be a quotation. Include page #.

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Analysis – Explain how the evidence supports your claim, using original thought and insight.

Closing sentence – Wrap up this thought and transition smoothly to the conclusion.

Paragraph #5 – Conclusion – Note: there is flexibility in how you order this paragraph.

Topic sentence – Emphasize and intensify your thesis/theme statement, using different words.

Summary – Restate your three subtopics, using different words.

Closing sentence – Connect back to your opening hook if possible. Conclude with authority.