

ESSAY OUTLINE

STEP ONE: Take time to make sure you really understand the prompt. Rewriting the prompt in your own words may help.

STEP TWO: Get your creativity flowing by brainstorming as many ideas as you can think of to address the prompt.

STEP THREE: Decide which idea you like the best and create an outline for your essay. Use the outline to generate ideas and figure out how you're going to order them. Wait until you start drafting your essay to flesh out examples, ideas, and explanations.

I. INTRODUCTION

Ideas for an attention-grabbing introduction (relevant definition, interesting quote, striking statistic, brief story, dialogue, etc.):

Thesis Statement: sentence or two, usually at the end of the introduction, that contains the focus of your essay and tells your reader what the essay is going to be about.



II. BODY

A paper may have a few or many main points; decide how many your paper will need. It may take more than one paragraph to adequately discuss a point.

1. Main Point: _____

Examples/Details/Explanations:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

2. Main Point: _____

Examples/Details/Explanations:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

III. CONCLUSION

Wrap up your essay. You want to restate or summarize your thesis to highlight the fact that your essay did indeed accomplish what you said it would. After reading your essay, the reader should see your main thought with a fresher, deeper understanding and your conclusion should reflect that. Consider including one or two, but certainly not all, of the following ideas:

- Bring your essay full circle, by referring back to the attention grabber in you used in the intro.
- Use an interesting quote and discuss its relevance to the experiences you discussed in your essay.
- *Briefly* summarize main points.
- Evoke a vivid image.
- Ask a provocative question.
- How will the points you discussed impact your future?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- Point to the broader implications of the lessons you've learned.

**Don't be afraid to be idealistic or declare your hopes and dreams, but don't get too corny. Ask for the opinions of friends or teachers to make sure you're not doing too much.*

