

Aims of Today's Lesson



- Learn how to write a good thesis.
- Learn how to avoid the four common thesis mistakes.
- Learn how to develop the thesis with enough specific details.

Essay Structure



Essay outline

Introduction

Body

Conclusion

Paragraphs

Orientate the reader
Identify the focus/purpose
Outline scope
State thesis

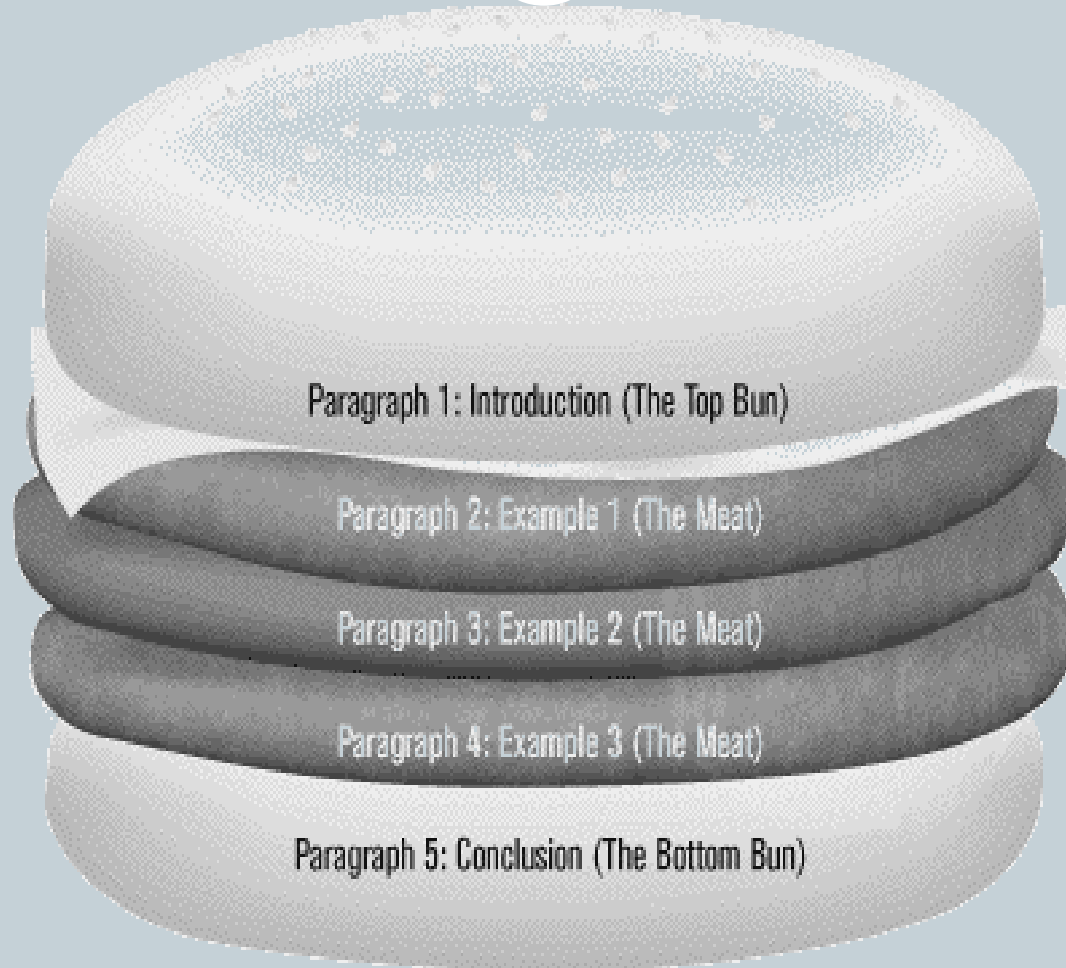
Topic sentence 1
Supporting details
Concluding sentence 1

Topic sentence 2
Supporting details
Concluding sentence 2

Topic sentence 3 and so on
Supporting details
Concluding sentence 3

Restate thesis
Summarise argument

Essay Structure



Paragraph 1: Introduction (The Top Bun)

Paragraph 2: Example 1 (The Meat)

Paragraph 3: Example 2 (The Meat)

Paragraph 4: Example 3 (The Meat)

Paragraph 5: Conclusion (The Bottom Bun)

Step 1: Begin with a Point, or Thesis



- **THE THESIS STATEMENT** IS THAT SENTENCE IN YOUR INTRODUCTION that contains the topic of your essay and presents your reader with your attitude, opinion or idea about it.
- **Why write a thesis?**
 - You want to know from the start if you have a workable thesis.
 - You will use the thesis as a guide while your writing the essay.

So, every thesis must have a **topic** and **main point** (or angle)



Activity 1, page 52/53.

- Our cafeteria would be greatly improved if several changes were made.
- Celebrities are often poor role models because of the ways they dress, talk and behave.
- The 20th century produced three inventions that dramatically changed our lives.

Writing a good thesis I



1. You need a topic that is neither too broad nor too narrow. i.e. not too specific and not too general.

General Subject	Limited subject	Thesis
Marriage	Honey moon	Honeymoon is the worst way to begin a marriage.
Family	My older sister	My older sister helped me overcome my shyness
Television	TV advertisements	
Children		
Sports		

Writing a good thesis I



- Sometimes a subject must go through several stages of limiting before it is narrow enough to write about.
- Activity 2, page 54.

Writing a good thesis II



Four common thesis mistakes:

1. One mistake is to simply announce the subject rather than state a true thesis.
2. Another mistake is to write a thesis that is too broad.
3. The third mistake is to write a thesis that is too narrow.
4. The fourth mistake is to write a thesis with more than one idea.

1. Write a statement not an announcement



- Remember, a thesis must make a point about a limited subject.
 - Today I will talk about my parents ✖ ☹
 - My parents have had the hardest time raising me for many reasons. ✓ ☺
 - The subject of this essay is the crime wave in our country. ✖ ☹
 - There are many causes for the recent increase in crimes in our society. ✓ ☺
 - I will discuss the disadvantages of the recent spread of fast food restaurants in the Kingdom. ✖ ☹
 - The recent spread of fast food restaurants in the Kingdom has many negative effects. ✓ ☺

2. Avoid statements that are too broad/too general.



- Remember, your thesis statement should be focused enough that it can be effectively supported in a five-paragraph essay.

Example of too broad thesis statements:

- Disease has shaped human history. ☹️
- Insects are fascinating creatures. ☹️
- Men and women are very different. ☹️

3. Avoid statements that are too narrow/too specific.



Avoid statements that **seem like facts** and that leave no room for support to be given. These are called **dead-end statements**.

- The speed limit near my home is sixty-five miles per hour. ☹️
- Our college has small classes and more than fifty students in each class. ☹️
- Diabetes affects more than 35 percent of the Saudi population. ☹️

4. Avoid statements that have more than one idea.



- Never put more than one idea in the thesis statement.
- Remember, the point of an essay is to communicate a *single idea* to readers.
- To be as clear as possible, try to limit your thesis to the single key point you want the readers to know.

4. Avoid statements that have more than one idea. 🖐️



- **Examples of statements with more than one idea:**
 - Studying with others has many benefits, but it has drawbacks, too. ✖
 - Teachers have played an important role in my life, but not as my parents. ✖
 - Studying at this college has both some advantages and disadvantages. ✖

Examples of revised statements with one idea:👍



- Studying with others has many benefits. ✓
- Teachers have played an important role in my life. ✓
- Studying at this collage has had many positive effects on my personality. ✓
- Activity 3 –page 57.

Final Remarks on the thesis Statement



- A. It is ONE sentence – there is only one and it is a sentence, NOT a question nor a phrase or fragment.
- B. It is the main idea of the entire paper.
- C. It is persuasive.
- D. It is the last sentence of the first paragraph (i.e. the introduction)
- E. There are NO pronouns in the thesis statement.

Step 2: Support the thesis with specific evidence.



- The second basic step after forming a good thesis is supporting it with specific reasons or details.
- An informal outline can be very helpful.
- ON YOUR DRAFT PAPER, write a brief version of your thesis, and then write three short points that will support the thesis.
- Each body paragraph then will discuss one of these three points.

Step 2: Support the thesis with specific evidence.



- A scratch outline looks very simple but it is very invaluable.
- Once you have planned the steps that logically support your thesis, you can write an effective essay.
- Activity 4, page 58/59.

The Importance of Specific Details



- Just as a thesis must be developed into three supporting points, each supporting point must be developed with specific details.
- Specific details will help in two ways:
 1. Details excite the reader's interest.
 2. Details explain the writers' point or opinion. They give evidence for us to understand general ideas.

The Importance of Specific Details



- Do not only include vague generalities.
- Ineffective paragraphs **ask us to guess** about details and leave the readers with many questions in mind.
- Effective paragraphs give sharp details that enable us to share the writer's experience.
- Details can be examples, events or stories, statistics, descriptions of colors, smells, and appearances...etc.
- **Do not repeat the same idea over and over in different words = The wordiness trap.**