THE BASIC ESSAY

THE INTRODUCTION

GRAB THE READER’S ATTENTION
* say something startling (statement, statistic)
* refer to an event (historical, current)
* state a controversy, contradiction, unusual opinion
* ask a question
* use a quotation, adage, proverb

ESTABLISH YOUR POINT (thesis statement)

If writing an essay exam, you may need to limit the introduction to stating your point.

THE BODY

TOPIC SENTENCE—one reason/idea/argument that supports the Point (thesis)
+ details that explain or support the topic (Point) sentence
+ examples/Illustrations that explain the context/circumstances of the point made in the topic sentence
+ Explain why illustrations/examples support the topic sentence (point)

EXPANDABLE!
* one or more paragraphs
  • one topic per paragraph
  • write as many paragraphs as you have strong arguments

THE CONCLUSION

SUM UP/POINT TO THE FUTURE
• give specific suggestions/recommendations
• state something memorable (something the audience should remember and why)
• state results
• mention limits
• state any resistance
• echo key words from the intro and body
• mention possible spin-offs
• acknowledge possible future work

Don’t forget that each paragraph, particularly in the body of the essay, needs PIE!
  • Point
  • Illustration
  • Explanation

FOCUS
NARROWS

SCOPE
BROADENS

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