

ELEMENTS OF AN EXCELLENT ESSAY

TITLE

- Capture the spirit of the essay in approximately ten words or less. Find a creative way to attract the reader.
- Capitalize the first word and all the important words that follow according to the rules of standard English.

INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH

- Write an effective lead.
- Hook your reader's attention and make him or her want to keep reading. Begin with ...
 - An unusual detail
 - A short personal experience
 - An emotional statement
 - A question (often overused)
 - A common human experience
 - An inspiring quote
 - A startling statistic
- Include background or further information if it is needed.
- Include a strong thesis statement, telling the main idea of the essay.
- State the organizational parts—the main ideas for each of the upcoming body paragraphs.
(This information can be included within the thesis statement.)

BODY PARAGRAPHS

- Begin each body paragraph with a topic sentence that reveals the main point and relates to the thesis statement.
- Include detail sentences with well-organized elaboration: examples, quotations, comparisons, analogies, and/or narration.
- Use transition words/phrases to help the reader know when the essay is moving from one detail to the next, or from one organizational part to the next.
- End with a closing sentence to wrap up the paragraph

CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH

- Echo the thesis statement without simply repeating it.
- End with a strong image, a bit of wit, a question for future thought (often overused), or a suggestion for a course of action. Offer a new insight related to the essay topic that leaves the reader thinking about your essay.