

Five-Paragraph Essay Format

The five-paragraph essay format includes several elements:

- Introduction
- Thesis statement
- Paragraphs to develop the thesis
- Conclusion

The five-paragraph structure is a useful organizational strategy for many writing assignments such as an opinion paper, an essay exam, or an explanatory paper.

Introduction

- Captures the reader's attention
- Introduces the topic
- Gives some general information
- Leads readers to a specific thesis

Thesis

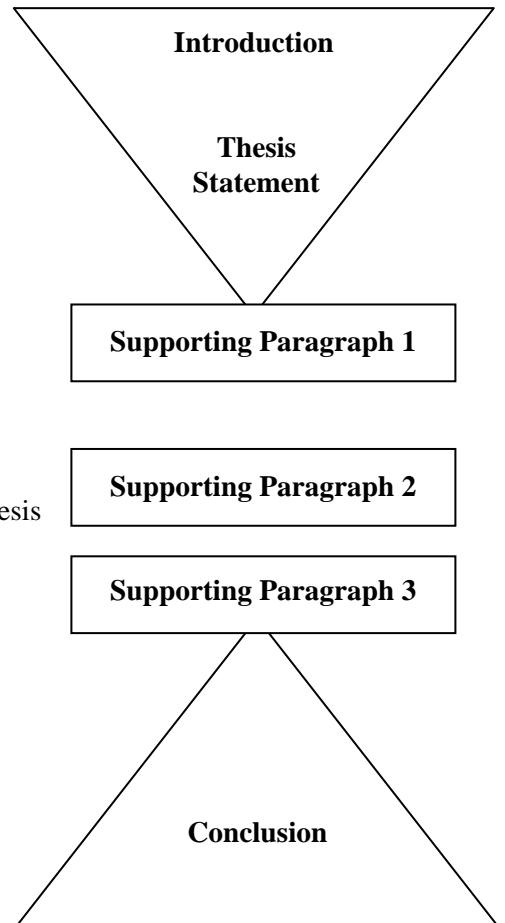
- Includes the central or main idea of the writing
- Explains the writer's purpose
- Is specific and focused on the topic
- May serve as a "map" to guide readers through the essay

Supporting Paragraphs

- Each paragraph includes reasons or examples to support the thesis
- Topic sentences provide main ideas to unify paragraphs
- Develop paragraphs with examples, details, and elaboration of ideas

Conclusion

- Restates the thesis in a new way
- Proposes a solution to a problem
- Summarizes ideas from the whole paper
- Leaves the reader with a question or idea to contemplate



NOTE: The five-paragraph essay is just one way to organize your writing. Other patterns of organization can be found in writing handbooks. Longer papers or research papers can follow an expanded version of the five-paragraph structure.