

How to Write a Well-Constructed Essay
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The Title

This is the first thing a person reads, and it can either snag their attention or lose it.

Your title should:

- Identify the subject (or give readers an idea of what your essay is centered around)
- Be specific (avoid vague titles like “Critical Analysis Essay”)
- Be engaging (create a title that is funny or surprising, but remain professional)
- Establish the tone of your paper
- Contain correct capitalization (words like on, by, but, and, or, a, the, too, yet, from, nor, should not be capitalized)

Examples:

The Sky Is Falling! How Man Has Brought About His Own Destruction by Devastating the Environment? (“10 Great Sample Titles”)

Grabs the reader’s attention

Identifies the subject

Sentenced to Death: How the Death Penalty Has Not Only Failed to Deter Crime—It Has Also Cost the Tax Payer Dearly (“10 Great Sample Titles”)

The Introduction

This gives readers a brief overview of your topic and purpose for writing.

Like the title, the first sentence of your introductory paragraph is the attention-grabber, or hook. It is important because it usually determines whether or not a person will want to continue reading.

Consider these tips when writing your introduction:

- Snag readers with an interesting quote or question
- Provide information that is surprising or generally unknown
- Give a brief summary of the issue or work you plan to discuss or analyze
- Provide a short anecdote (or story) that illustrates your ideas
- End your introductory paragraph with a strong argument/thesis statement

Hook Example:

The writer starts with a question that draws readers in.

“**Have a minute?** Good. Because that may be all it takes to save the life of a child—your child. **Accidents kill nearly 8000 children under age 15 each year. And for every fatality, 42 more children are admitted to hospitals for treatment.** Yet such deaths and injuries can be avoided through these easy steps parents can take right now. You don’t have a minute to lose” (“A Proper Introduction”).

The writer presents startling information.

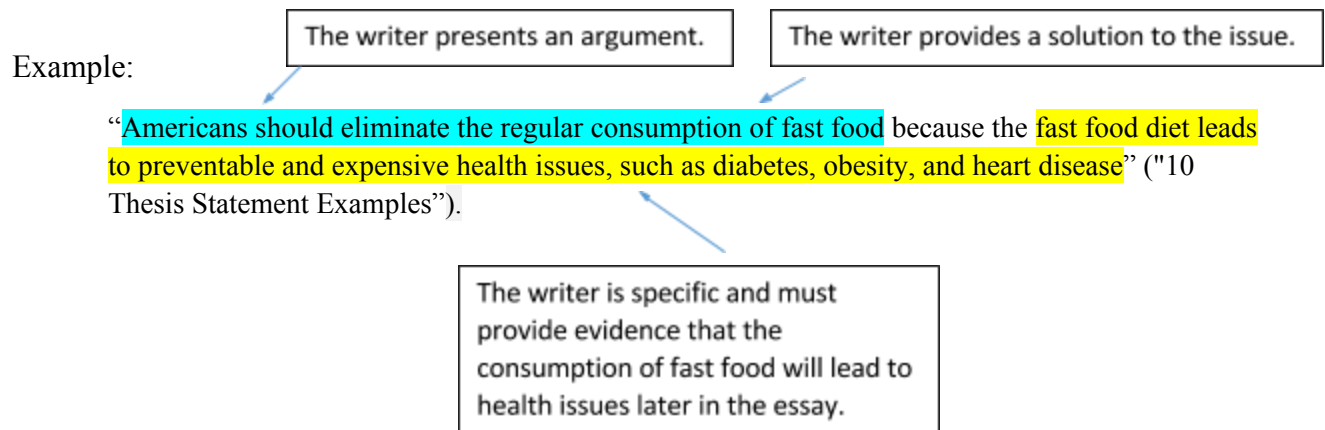
The Thesis Statement

Writing a well-constructed thesis statement is often very challenging.

Let's first consider the definition of a thesis statement. It is typically "[a sentence or two] that summarizes the main point or claim of an essay, research paper, etc., and is developed, supported, and explained in the text by means of examples and evidence" ("thesis statement").

In other words, your thesis statement should:

- Present the main idea or argument of your paper (not a summary)
- Consist of a subject, viewpoint, and reason or solution
- Require evidence
- Be 1-2 sentences long
- Be specific (include only what you plan to discuss and/or provide evidence for).



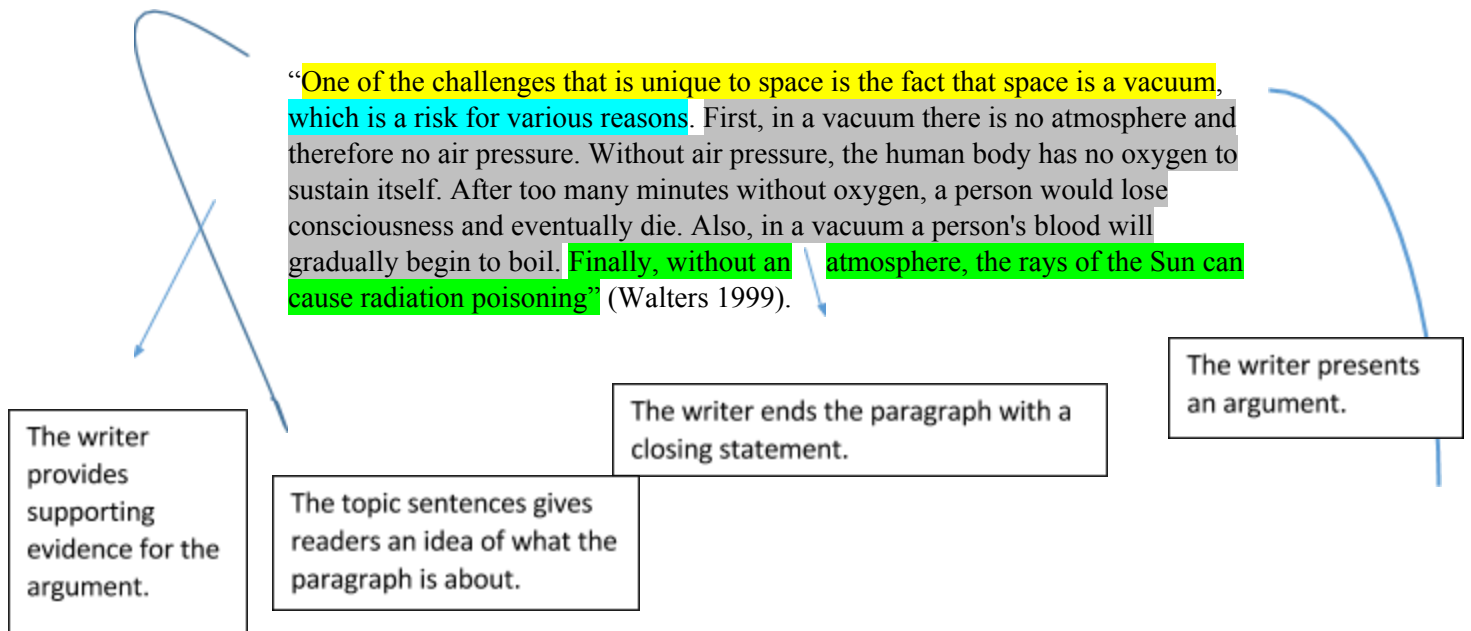
The Body

In the body paragraphs, you should provide textual evidence that supports your thesis statement. Each paragraph should focus on a specific idea, argument, or issue. Consider, for example, the thesis statement provided earlier. In one paragraph, you could discuss how a fast food diet leads to diabetes. In another paragraph, you could discuss how it can lead to heart disease. For both paragraphs, however, you should provide evidence that supports your claim.

Each body paragraph should contain the following:

- A topic sentence
- An argument/claim
- Evidence
- A closing statement

Example paragraph:



The Conclusion

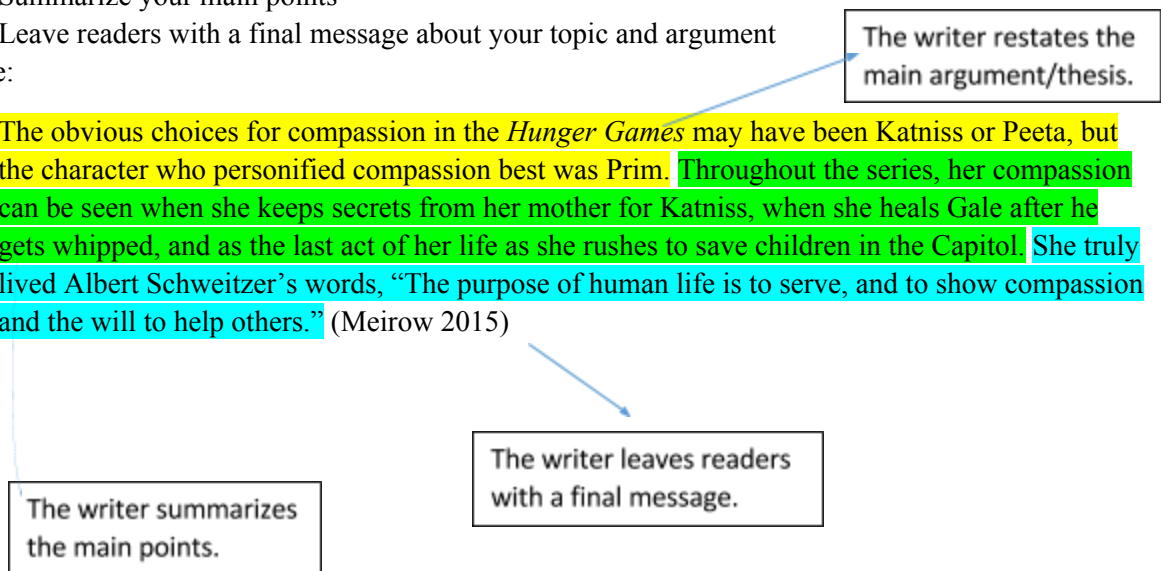
For many, writing the conclusion paragraph is as challenging as writing a thesis statement.

Once you've arrived at the end of your essay, you should do the following:

- Restate your thesis (*not* word-by-word)
- Summarize your main points
- Leave readers with a final message about your topic and argument

Example:

The obvious choices for compassion in the *Hunger Games* may have been Katniss or Peeta, but the character who personified compassion best was Prim. Throughout the series, her compassion can be seen when she keeps secrets from her mother for Katniss, when she heals Gale after he gets whipped, and as the last act of her life as she rushes to save children in the Capitol. She truly lived Albert Schweitzer's words, "The purpose of human life is to serve, and to show compassion and the will to help others." (Meirow 2015)



Good luck and keep on writing! ☺

References

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