

## Essay Structure

Introduction  
(see CLAS Writing  
an Introductions  
handout)

1. Opening Sentence/Hook
  - a. At a glance, the opening sentence should give the reader an idea of what your paper will be about.
  - b. You can use an appropriate hook to grab your reader's attention and make them want to read more.
2. Background
  - a. Give any information your reader may need leading up to your thesis. For example, texts, events, and/or people you'll be discussing, or the different sides of the argument you will be discussing.
  - b. You don't have to give too much detail; leave the juicy bits of evidence and analysis for your body paragraphs.
3. Thesis
  - a. The last sentence of your introduction should be a specific thesis statement outlining your argument and how you will support it through the rest of the paper (for more help, see the CLAS Thesis Statements handout).

Body Paragraphs  
(as many as is  
appropriate to  
prove your point)

1. Topic Sentence
  - a. Your topic sentence relates back to your thesis and identifies which particular point of your argument the paragraph will discuss.
2. Evidence
  - a. Focus on one or two pieces of evidence. (Your essay should include ample and varying types of evidence, including primary and secondary sources.)
  - b. Be sure to introduce, integrate, and cite all sources.
  - c. Organize evidence so that each piece builds off the one before.
3. Analysis
  - a. Provide analysis for each piece of evidence, showing how it supports your argument/thesis. Analysis should explicitly connect different pieces of evidence to show how they support your main argument.
4. Transition
  - a. Summarize the main point and transition to the next topic sentence.

Conclusion  
(see CLAS  
conclusions  
handout)

1. Restate Thesis
  - a. Summarize the argument of your paper and check to make sure it matches your thesis in your introduction.
  - b. Don't rewrite your thesis word for word. Rephrase it.
2. Significance/"Big Picture"
  - a. Take your paper a step further by showing how it ties into a wider context or is relevant to our daily life.

## Outline Your Essay Structure

### Introduction

Opening Sentence:

Background info:

Thesis:

### Body 1

Main point:

Evidence:

Analysis:

### Body 2

Main point:

Evidence:

Analysis:

### Body 3

Main point:

Evidence:

Analysis:

### Conclusion

Restate Thesis:

Significance: