

## Organizing the Structure of Your Essay

Readers dislike having to work to get through a piece of writing. As a writer you need to pique the interest of your reader, to convince him or her to believe your thesis through your evidence and arguments, and then to provide closure so that the reader feels at the end that reading the essay was worthwhile. It is with these ends in mind that we offer this sample structure. But avoid limiting yourself too soon. Although it is true that most essays follow the format outlined here, tremendous flexibility still exists. Allow yourself some prewriting time to explore ideas without a format in mind at all--this is when true inspiration occurs--and even when you must begin planning the essay, try to be creative and original.

### A SAMPLE ESSAY

#### (INFORMATIVE TITLE)

I ¶ 1 Develop a provocative, interesting opening. Possible options include: **1)** using an  
 N anecdote; **2)** using quotations; **3)** citing statistics; **4)** creating a pertinent metaphor.  
 T **Avoid** the boring “inverted pyramid” strategy whereby you begin with a very  
 R broad statement (if your idea is “very broad,” then it’s also very obvious and  
 O boring).

Usually the introductory paragraph contains your specific thesis statement (a sentence or two in which you assert your central claim).

B ¶ 2-5 Include informative sentences that relate **closely to your thesis**. Keep going back  
 O to your thesis to check. In the body you must provide the necessary evidence to  
 D support your thesis. (You may have fewer or more paragraphs if you need them;  
 Y how many paragraphs you have is determined by how many points you have.)

C  
 O  
 N ¶ 6 Conclude by providing closure and relevance to your reader.  
 C Possible strategies include  
 L 1) making a concluding statement;  
 U 2) recommending a solution;  
 S 3) making a prediction;  
 I 4) ending with a final question that leads the reader to consider the ideas  
 O advanced by your essay.  
 N