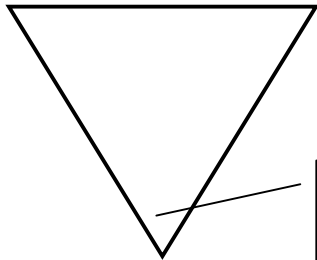


Some Definitions and Examples

Essay topic or subject: “Dreams & Hope”

Essay thesis: “The dreams of George, Lennie, Candy, Crooks, and Curley’s wife are ultimately yearnings not for material wealth but for companionship.”

ESSAY STRUCTURE



Begin the **introductory paragraph** with a general observation (which will eventually lead to your thesis).

End the introductory paragraph with your **thesis**—an arguable opinion, your main point, the controlling idea of the entire essay, stated in one sentence.

The **body paragraphs** of your essay explain, support, and attempt to prove your thesis.

Be sure each paragraph is closely tied to your thesis—continuously ask yourself, “What is the main point of my essay, and is what I’m writing supporting that main point?”

Each paragraph is like a mini-essay—one main point with an introduction, body, and conclusion.

Try to have your last body paragraph be your strongest observation or point.

Three organizing principles:

Unity

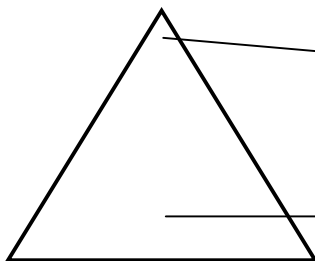
Each paragraph makes one point, and that point must support your thesis.

Coherence

Each paragraph, and the thoughts within each paragraph, need to follow a recognizable pattern.

Emphasis

Use overt statements, position, or proportion to emphasize the relative importance of each example or point.



The first sentence of the **closing paragraph** is often an excellent place to return your thesis idea.

Attempt to make the last sentence a more general observation on the characters, novel, and life—one that recalls your thesis but leaves the reader with an intellectually compelling as well as an emotionally satisfying sense of closure.