

20 (b)

Writing Practice 1

Using the tentative main idea you developed in Chapter 3 or one of the discussion questions above, formulate a topic sentence for your paragraph.

Generating Ideas to Support the Thesis Statement

You will develop your main idea in the body of the essay with a number of paragraphs that support the thesis statement. The process for writing supporting paragraphs begins with generating ideas using the techniques we discussed in Chapter 3 of brainstorming, freewriting, listing, clustering, and dividing. You should generate ideas for two, three, four, or more supporting paragraphs. Remember that each supporting paragraph must include a number of supporting sentences, so your ideas for the supporting paragraphs should justify a paragraph of development.

Writing Practice 2

On scrap paper, use a brainstorming technique to generate ideas to support or develop your topic sentence. (You may use the ideas you generated in Chapter 3.)

Outlining the Essay

Once you have formulated a tentative thesis, you must begin organizing your ideas to illustrate, support, or prove your main idea. If you don't organize your ideas before you start writing, your writing will have a tendency to wander. Because an essay is more complex than a paragraph, we recommend using a formal outline. The outline of your essay is like the framework of a house; without it, the house won't stand, and without a plan or outline, your essay won't hold together. In planning or outlining your ideas, you decide which supporting ideas you will use to illustrate or prove your thesis. You also decide the order of your supporting ideas and what details will develop each supporting idea.

Using Outline Form

An essay outline contains a thesis statement and an outline of the body or supporting paragraphs. Introductions and conclusions are included on the outline but generally are not specified or explained. (Many students prefer to generate ideas for the introduction and conclusion after they have written a draft of the body paragraphs.)

Outlines can be done in phrases or complete sentences, depending on your instructor's preference. If your instructor requires you to turn in your