**Structure of an essay**

An essay is a piece of writing made up of a number of paragraphs. Each paragraph has a specific role in an essay. In a five-paragraph essay, the first paragraph is an introduction; the second, third, and fourth paragraphs form the body of the essay; and the fifth paragraph is a conclusion ).

**1. Introductory paragraph**

The first paragraph of an essay should introduce the reader to the essay topic. It should create interest in the essay, outline the writer’s main ideas, and suggest how these ideas will be presented within the body of the essay. The introduction consists of three main elements: a **hook**, **building sentences**, and a **thesis statement**.

**1. Hook**

The first sentence (or sentences) of an essay should catch the reader’s attention. It introduces the topic of the essay in an interesting way.

**2. Building sentences**

After the hook, the following sentences should provide background information to give readers some context about the topic. They should ”build“ towards the thesis statement.

**3. Thesis statement**

The thesis statement comes at the end of the introduction. It is the most important sentence in the entire essay because it presents the essay topic and the writer’s position on that topic. It also indicates the main ideas that will be discussed in the body paragraphs.

**2. Body paragraphs**

The body of an essay consists of three paragraphs. **Each body paragraph explains in detail one of the main ideas expressed in the thesis statement**.There are three parts to a body paragraph: a **topic sentence**, **supporting sentences**, and a **concluding sentence**.

**1. Topic sentence**

The first sentence of a body paragraph expresses the topic of the paragraph and provides a controlling idea about the topic. All information in the paragraph supports the controlling idea.

**2. Supporting sentences**

Supporting sentences explain and develop the topic sentence. They present logical thoughts, evidence, and explanations in support of the controlling idea.

**3. Concluding sentence**

The paragraph may end with a concluding thought on the paragraph topic. It may also show a transition to the next paragraph.

**3. Concluding paragraph**

The concluding paragraph ends the essay by reviewing the main ideas from each body paragraph and leaving the reader with a final thought. The conclusion consists of three elements: a **restated thesis**, a **summary of main** **ideas**, and a **final thought**.

**1. Restated thesis**

At the start of the conclusion, the thesis is restated in words different from those in the introduction.

**2. Summary of main ideas**

The main ideas from each of the body paragraphs are summarized as a reminder to the reader.

**3. Final thought**

The writer ends the essay by presenting a final thought on the topic – for example, by stating an opinion, a solution, or a prediction. The final thought should leave a strong impression and encourage the reader to think further about the topic.