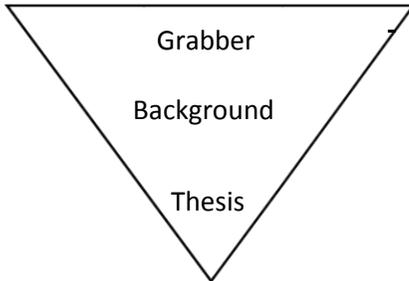


## Essay Structure

Most essays follow the basic structure of introduction, main body, and conclusion. Understanding the basic structures of an essay is vital to becoming a successful student and influences the quality of your paper writing. You need to develop the skills to construct an argument and support your claims.

### Introduction



Introduces the topic of your paper. Should cover 3 main things:

1. Grabber (something to grab the reader's attention)
2. Any background information the reader will need to make sense of your topic
3. Thesis Statement (your answer to the essay question).  
\*this has to be at the end of your introduction!

There are no length limits to introductions.

**\*Writing Tip: Keep the triangle shape in mind as you write your introduction. Think of it as you are going from stating something broad (grabber) to something very specific (thesis) at the end.**

### Main Body Paragraphs

Topic
Evidence
Analysis

This is where you support your argument/thesis. The main body of your essay is made up of several paragraphs. Academic paragraphs are usually longer than you'd expect. General rule: 1 paragraph = 1 point

- The paragraph should start with a **topic sentence** that states the point of the paragraph. This should be the first sentence.
- After the topic sentence you need to provide **evidence** that backs it up. You can't say something is true without any supporting information. Evidence is usually in the form of information from other sources like books, academic journals, reputable sites, etc. You need to cite outside information (evidence) you provide!  
\*As an undergraduate student, **you are not an expert!** Your word is not enough.  
\*You are a student, therefore you are learning from **someone else's material** and you have to cite that throughout the paper and in the reference sheet.
- After your evidence you need to provide your own **analysis** of why this point/evidence is relevant to your essay. How does it answer your essay question and prove your argument?

### University of Hull's Paragraph Structure Acronyms:

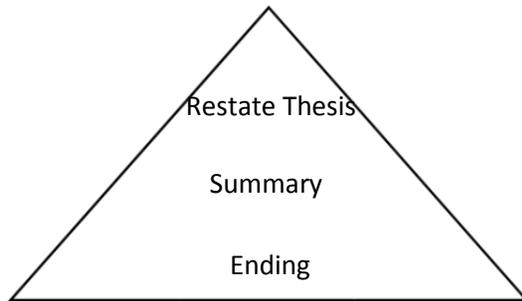
PEE (Point, Evidence, Explanation)

TEA (Topic, Evidence, Analysis)

WEED (What is it about?  
Evidence, Examples, Did I  
answer 'so what?')

**\*Writing Tip: A good way to plan your essay is to write out a list of your topic sentences. This enables you to see how your argument develops and where/if you go off track.**

### Conclusion



Brings your argument and support together.

- Starts by restating your thesis.
- Followed by summary of your main points.
- Ends with last chance to convince your reader about your argument.

**\*Notice how the conclusion is shaped like the reverse of your introduction....**

**\*Writing Tip:** After you've done all your research and have an idea of your main arguments, it might be worth writing a simple draft conclusion **BEFORE** you write the main body of your essay. This helps you plan out your essay and see if your points are relevant to your ending.

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### Reference

Correct referencing is essential to writing an academic essay. You are a student, therefore you are learning from **SOMEONE ELSE'S MATERIAL** and you have to cite that throughout your paper and in your 'References'/'Works Cited' sheet.

Citation/referencing style (APA, MLA, Chicago) will depend on the course and discipline you are writing in. See the MHC's library site for more details.

Failure to reference can result in extreme consequences for your academic and professional career.

**Need help improving your academic writing skills? Contact the writing specialist for support:**

**Online:** <http://www.mhc.ab.ca/Services/AcademicSupport/WritingSupport>

**or at the Student Success Centre located in the**

**Vera Bracken Library.**