

## Writing the Five-Paragraph Essay

- A five-paragraph essay consists of an introduction, three body paragraphs to correspond with the three-point thesis, and a conclusion.

- Begin with three-point thesis sentence

A thesis statement is *what you're trying to say in your essay*; it is the **basis** of your essay. But you need to do more than just answer the question—you need to include your opinion (answer) *and reasons or examples to support that opinion*.

Strong thesis statements do more than *name* topics and subtopics (reasons)—they also express your position or attitude or angle.

- The thesis sentence should restate the topic, say whether you agree or disagree, and give your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing.

I believe that (topic) because [reason one], [reason two], and [reason three]. OR  
 I think that (topic) for the following three reasons [reason one], [reason two], and [reason three].

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- Introductory paragraph (and all paragraphs in the essay) should have at least three (3) sentences. Writing fewer than three sentences means you do not have a paragraph.
- There should be one body paragraph to support each point of the three-point thesis statement. So, if your thesis contains the three necessary points, you should have three body paragraphs.

- Sample essay question:

Would you like to live in a big city? Explain why and why not.

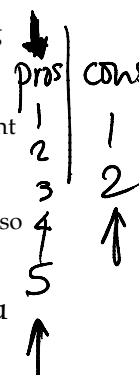
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- How would you answer the question?

What are some things that you think you would like about a big city? Or, if you don't want to live in a big city, what are some things you *don't* like about a big city?

Come up with the three main reasons you think do or don't want to live in a big city. You can do this, for example, by making a "pros" and "cons" list before you create the thesis statement.

Make sure these three things are easily supported or described so you can discuss each one in your body paragraph.



- What else, besides the thesis statement, could you include in the introductory paragraph?

Could you mention general things about benefits of a big city?

Could you state some general reasons why people might not want to live in a large city?

→ How does big-city life affect someone who is single? What about raising a family in a big city?

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- Sample introductory paragraph:

There are many nice things that a large city offers. Some examples are a good transportation system and more job opportunities. In spite of these benefits, however, I would not want to live in a big city because I think they're too crowded, I don't feel as safe in a city as I do in a smaller town, and the cost of living in a big city is too high for me. Even though there are more restaurants, more places to shop, and more activities and events than in a small town, big-city life just isn't for me.

- What points from the introductory paragraph would be used in each of the body paragraphs?

- (1) Talk about how the higher population of cities makes me uncomfortable.
- (2) Discuss the things about city living that concern me about my safety.
- (3) Give examples of how the higher cost of living would affect my life in the city.

## Writing the Five-Paragraph Essay

- There are three main verb tenses: present, past, and future.
- Each category has four forms: simple, perfect (completed action), progressive (ongoing action), perfect progressive (ongoing action that will be completed at a definite time).
- Present tense specifies something that exists <sup>↓</sup>now, or is unchanging, or is a widespread truth.
- Past tense specifies an action that was started and finished in the past.
- Future tense specifies something that will happen in the future. "Will" or "shall" is used with the simple form of the verb. <sup>↑</sup>

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	Simple	Perfect +	Progressive =	Perfect Progressive
Present	read (reads) sleep (sleeps) go (goes) <u>walk</u>	have/has read have/has slept have/has gone (note: NOT <u>"have/has went"</u> )	am/is/are reading am/is/are sleeping am/is/are going	have/has been reading have/has been sleeping have/has been going
Past	read slept went <u>walked</u>	had read had slept had gone (note: NOT <u>"had went"</u> )	was/were reading was/were sleeping was/were going	had been reading had been sleeping had been going
Future	Will read Will sleep will (shall) go <u>will walk</u>	will have read will have slept will have gone (note: NOT <u>"will have went"</u> )	will be reading will be sleeping will be gone	will have been reading will have been sleeping will have been gone

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- Using irregular verbs: An irregular verb is a verb that does not usually end with -ed, -d, or -ied.
- Some irregular verbs change form in each tense; others never change regardless of the verb tense.

→ I readed an interesting article yesterday. *Is this correct?*  
 I *read* an interesting article ...

Her cousins drove to Florida to visit Disney World. She has never driven there.

Her cousins ~~drove~~... She has never *driven* there.

I always leave work at the same time; last Monday, though, I ~~leave~~ earlier.

... ~~left~~ earlier.