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 or 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.
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• 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 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Simple</th>
<th>Perfect</th>
<th>Progressive</th>
<th>Perfect Progressive</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>read (reads)</td>
<td>have/had read</td>
<td>am/is/are reading</td>
<td>have/had been reading</td>
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<td></td>
<td>sleep (sleeps)</td>
<td>have/had slept</td>
<td>am/is/are sleeping</td>
<td>have/had been sleeping</td>
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<td></td>
<td>go (goes)</td>
<td>have/had gone</td>
<td>am/is/are going</td>
<td>have/had been going</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(*note: NOT “have/had went”)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td>read</td>
<td>had read</td>
<td>was/were reading</td>
<td>had been reading</td>
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<td></td>
<td>slept</td>
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<td>(*note: NOT “had went”)</td>
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<td>Future</td>
<td>will read</td>
<td>will have read</td>
<td>will be reading</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Will sleep</td>
<td>will have slept</td>
<td>will be sleeping</td>
<td>will have been sleeping</td>
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<td></td>
<td>will (shall) go</td>
<td>will have gone</td>
<td>will be gone</td>
<td>will have been gone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Will walk</td>
<td>(*note: NOT “will have went”)</td>
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</tbody>
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• Using irregular verbs: An irregular verb is a verb that does not usually end with \(-ed, -d, \text{ or } -ied\).

• Some irregular verbs change form in each tense; others never change regardless of the verb tense.

\[\rightarrow\] 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 leaved earlier.

… I left earlier.