

6. Form a thesis and write it below. (See the *Thesis Math* and *Step 3: Thinking about Your Thesis* handouts.) Your thesis and the items from #5 must be clearly related.

7. Decide how you would like to order the paragraphs (items from #5). Where will all these things go? Write a tentative order below.

8. Look at the order above. Are you satisfied with it? Show it to another person and ask his/her opinion. Is the organization logical and clear?

9. Plug your ideas from #7 into an outline. You can provide as much or as little detail here as you desire; it depends on your preference. Look in your grammar handbook for more ideas for outlining. *Remember, you don't have to create a perfect formal outline; use a format that works for you. It is just important to have a plan for your paper.*
 - I. Introduction
 - a. Attention getter
 - b. Topic
 - c. Thesis
 - II. Body Paragraph 1
 - a. Topic sentence/Claim
 - b. Support for claim (evidence)
 - c. Explanation of support/evidence
 - III. Body Paragraph 2
 - a. Topic sentence/Claim
 - b. Support for claim (evidence)
 - c. Explanation of support/evidence
 - IV. Body Paragraph 3
 - a. Topic sentence/Claim
 - b. Support for claim (evidence)

- c. Explanation of support/evidence
- V. Body Paragraph 4
 - a. Topic sentence/Claim
 - b. Support for claim (evidence)
 - c. Explanation of support/evidence
- VI. Conclusion

Note: The outline template here is only a guide; there are infinite ways to organize an essay. Feel free to experiment! Many of us learn the 5-paragraph essay, but you can (and often will) have more than 5 paragraphs. In addition, some people will devote the first body paragraph to background and history, while others will not cover these items at all; some writers will refute opposing views in different places in the essay. It depends on your topic and audience.

Be sure to only have one main topic per paragraph. Too many topics in a single paragraph will only confuse the reader.

10. Finally, go over your outline and think about what kind of information you might need to support your points. Add notes about the type of information needed and where to find it (Use audience information from *Step 1* to help you decide what kind of information would work for your paper.) This will lead into the next worksheet *Step 5: Conducting Research*.

Example:

- I. Body Paragraph
 - a. Topic sentence/Claim
 - b. Support for claim (evidence) – *Need to find a statistic on _____!*
Look for articles using Academic Search Premier.
 - c. Explanation of support/evidence