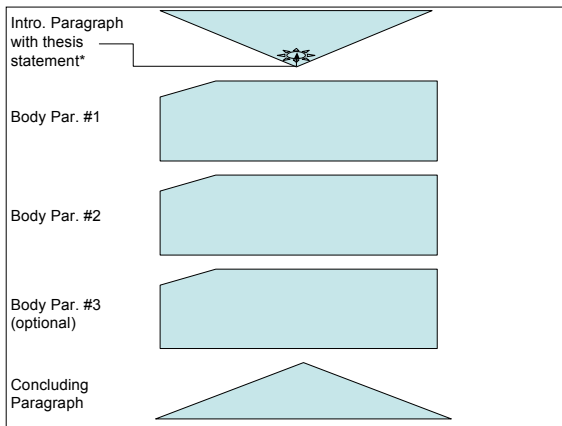
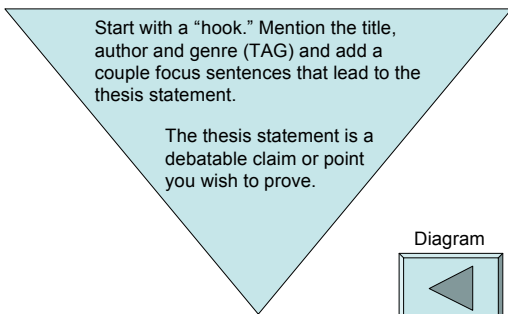


Response to Literature Essay Writing



Introductory Paragraph -- Like a funnel, start with a broad connection to the topic and then hone in on your point (thesis).



INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH: the first paragraph in your essay. It begins creatively in order to catch your reader's interest (HOOK), provides essential background about the literary work, and prepares the reader for your major thesis. The introduction must include the title, author, and genre (TAG) of the work as well as an explanation of the theme to be discussed.

The major thesis goes in this paragraph, usually at the end.

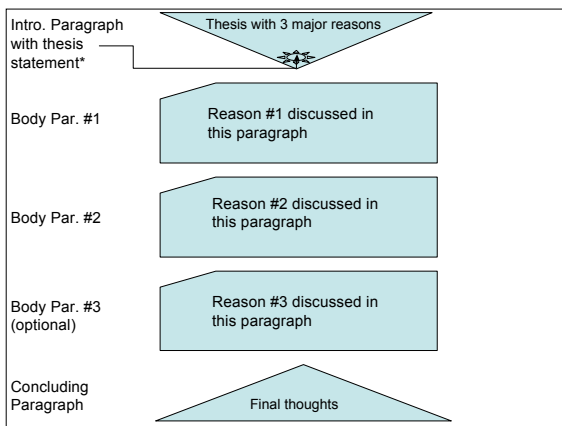
HOOK (also CREATIVE OPENING): the beginning sentences of the introduction that catch the reader's interest. Ways of beginning creatively include the following:

- 1) A startling fact or bit of information
- 2) A snatch of dialogue between two characters
- 3) A meaningful quotation (from the work or another source)
- 4) A universal idea
- 5) A rich, vivid description of the setting
- 6) An analogy or metaphor

TAG -- acronym for title, author, genre

(Genre -- tell whether the literature selection is a novel, play, short story, poem, essay, etc.)

THESIS STATEMENT: a statement that provides the subject and overall opinion of your essay. Many thesis statements explicitly outline the major points of the body paragraphs.



BODY: the support paragraphs of your essay. These paragraphs contain supporting examples (concrete detail) and analysis/explanation (commentary) for your topic sentences.

Each paragraph in the body includes (1) a topic sentence/support thesis, (2) integrated concrete details/examples, (3) commentary/explanation for details/examples, and (4) a concluding sentence.

Body Paragraphs - two minimum

Begin with a topic sentence which supports the major thesis statement from the introductory paragraph.

Be sure to include:

Concrete details (quoted passages or paraphrased facts from the story)

Commentary -- interpretation/elaboration

Concluding sentence -- to sum up or transition to the next paragraph

TOPIC SENTENCE: the first sentence of a body paragraph. It identifies one aspect of the major thesis and states a primary reason why the major thesis is true.

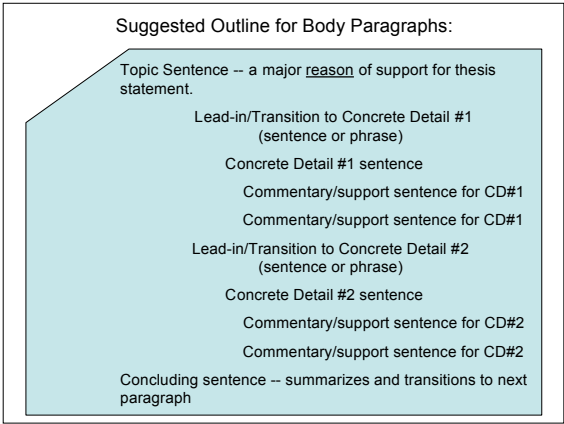
LEAD-IN/TRANSITION: phrase or sentence that prepares the reader for a concrete detail by introducing the speaker, setting, and/or situation.

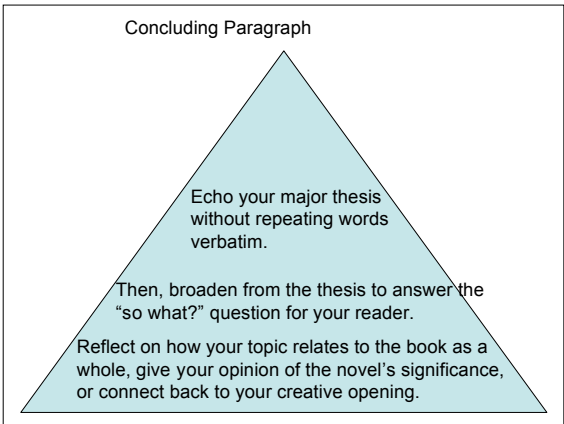
CONCRETE DETAIL: a specific example from the work of literature used to provide evidence for your topic sentence/support thesis.

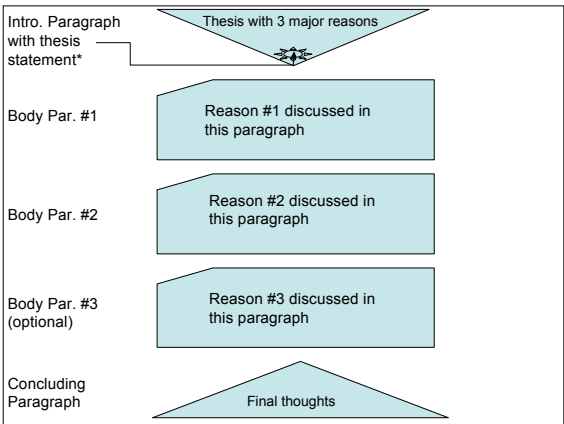
Concrete detail can be a combination of paraphrase and direct quotation from the work.

COMMENTARY: your explanation and interpretation of the concrete detail. Commentary tells the reader what the author of the text means or how the concrete detail proves the topic sentence and supports the thesis. Commentary may include interpretation, analysis, argument, insight, and/or reflection.

CONCLUDING SENTENCE/CLINCHER: last sentence of the body paragraph. It concludes the paragraph by tying the concrete details and commentary back to the topic sentence and/or thesis statement.







Credit:

PowerPoint by Anita Mattos; April, 2006

Based in part on:

Poway Unified School District "A Guide to the
Literary-Analysis Essay" which was based in part on:
Cobb County's "A Guide to the Research Paper,"
Upland High School's "Student Writer's Handbook,"
and the *MLA Handbook for Writer's
of Research Papers*.
