

Organizing an Essay

Three Parts of an Essay:

1. Introduction: The introduction of your essay should introduce the topic and main idea of your paper and begin with an attention getter. An attention getter captures the audience's attention and makes the reader want to continue reading your essay.

The introduction also previews your essay. The length depends on your topic, purpose, and audience, and includes your thesis statement.

Example Introduction:

Attention Getter

Many Americans consider television to be a high priority in their lives. So much so, there is often more television sets in American homes more than bathtubs. Many of these homes often have children who are young and impressionable. The combination of television and children can be both positive with educational programming and negative with acts of violence. There needs to be regulation of what young children see on their televisions while they are at home. **Because of this, parents should monitor and screen their children's programming. As a result, parents can control what their children are watching.**

Thesis

2. Body: The body of your paper is made up of paragraphs that will expand your thesis statement. Each paragraph supports, develops, and adds detail to your main idea. To guide your reader, each body paragraph should begin with a clear topic sentence. Make sure the topic sentence is related to your argument (or topic of your paper).

Example Topic Sentences:

Topic Sentence #1: Parents need to monitor what their children are watching and how long their children are spending in front of the television.

Topic Sentence #2: In addition to monitoring what their children watch on television, parents should screen television programs by making sure the programs are content appropriate for their children's age.

Topic Sentence #3: Through the means of monitoring and screening programs, parents should have the ability to maintain control regarding what their children watch.

Be sure to use transitional words that connect each paragraph to the paragraph before it. (Using words like: likewise, moreover, however, in contrast, on the other hand) so the reader can follow your train of thought.

3. Conclusion: The conclusion summarizes the body paragraphs and concludes your essay's main points. A conclusion helps the reader see why your analysis should matter to them after they put the paper down. It gives you a chance to have the last word, summarizes your thoughts, demonstrates importance of your ideas, and propels your reader to a new view of the subject.

Example Conclusion:

Reiterate Thesis

Parents have an obligation to monitor, screen, and control what their children watch on television. Their children will then make better choices, learn right from wrong, and grow up as law-abiding citizens and members of society. By keeping a careful eye on their children's television habits, parents can make watching television not only beneficial, but also safe and educational.

