

ESSAY FORMAT

INTRODUCTION

A full paragraph of complete sentences containing two key ingredients. First, be sure to include the (historical) context in which the question (or task) and your response should be understood. Second, be sure to have a thesis. A thesis is simply your response to the question (or task). It may vary in length from one full complete sentence to several full complete sentences. It should be a position or interpretation, NOT a factual statement. A good thesis allows for the possibility of other viewpoints or positions. The purpose of your essay is to show why your thesis is more valid or a stronger interpretation than the other possibilities.

BODY PARAGRAPHS

- I. An argument or interpretation that supports your thesis. Usually one sentence in length, although in some circumstances it can be two sentences in length.
 - A. Factual evidence that supports your argument or interpretation.
 1. Analysis that explains how or why the evidence you have presented supports your argument or interpretation.
 2. If necessary or desired, you may have several distinct analyses to offer in support of your argument or interpretation.
 - B. If necessary or desired, you may present more than one set of factual evidence to support your argument or interpretation.
 1. Analysis that explains how or why the evidence you have presented supports your argument or interpretation.
 2. If necessary or desired, you may have several distinct analyses to offer in support of your argument or interpretation.
- II. Another argument or interpretation that supports your thesis. Again, can be one sentence long or two sentences in length.
 - A. Factual evidence that supports your argument or interpretation.
 1. Analysis that explains how or why the evidence you have presented supports your argument or interpretation.
 2. If necessary or desired, you may have several distinct analyses to offer in support of your argument or interpretation.
 - B. If necessary or desired, you may present more than one set of factual evidence to support your argument or interpretation.
 1. Analysis that explains how or why the evidence you have presented supports your argument or interpretation.
 2. If necessary or desired, you may have several distinct analyses to offer in support of your argument or interpretation.
- III. The number of body paragraphs you have depends on the number of arguments or interpretations you wish to present in support of your thesis. One interpretation or argument per body paragraph.
 - A. The amount of evidence you wish to include in your body paragraph is up to you. However, just be aware that more evidence helps substantiate your argument whereas insufficient evidence weakens your argument.
 1. The depth of analysis to include in your body paragraph is up to you. However, just be aware that greater analysis of the factual evidence helps substantiate your argument whereas insufficient analysis weakens your argument.

CONCLUSION

A full paragraph of complete sentences that explain how the arguments you have (presumably) proven in your body paragraphs work together to support the thesis you set out in your introduction. Your conclusion should not merely restate or reword your thesis. Instead, focus on giving an overall explanation of HOW you have successfully proven your thesis or WHY the position you have taken in your thesis is more valid than alternative viewpoints. No new evidence should be introduced in the conclusion.