

Visual Essay Organizer  
UMW Writing Center

Use this essay organizer to begin developing your essay points and structure. You are not limited to the space available on this exercise; some professors will require different structural parameters. This handout is intended to guide you through the writing process in a more strictly organized manner.

**Research Question:** What do you hope to answer in this paper?

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This part of the writing process is not essential, but helps immensely. Think of your thesis as answering a question someone has asked you. What would that question look like? How can you answer it specifically?

**Thesis:** What is the argument or discussion point of this paper?

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Even if you do not have an argument, each paper has a thesis. This is the main idea you will discuss throughout the paper.

**Topics:** What specifically will you use to prove your thesis?

Topic 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
Topic 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
Topic 3: \_\_\_\_\_  
Topic 4: \_\_\_\_\_

These will act as your topic sentences in each paragraph. Not every paper will require four topics, but for this exercise, we have four spots available.

**Introduction:** What overarching theme will draw in your reader? List some ideas here.

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<b>Body 1:</b> <i>Topic Sentence:</i> What is this paragraph about? _____ _____	
<i>Evidence:</i> What sources/citations will you use to show how this topic proves your thesis? Source: _____ _____ Source: _____ _____ Source: _____ _____	<i>Explanation:</i> How will you tie your source to your topic/thesis? Explain: _____ _____ Explain: _____ _____ Explain: _____ _____
<i>Conclusion/Transition:</i> Tie your topic back to your thesis and move on to the next topic. _____ _____	

<b>Body 2:</b> <i>Topic Sentence:</i> What is this paragraph about? _____ _____	
<i>Evidence:</i> What sources/citations will you use to show how this topic proves your thesis? Source: _____ _____ Source: _____ _____ Source: _____ _____	<i>Explanation:</i> How will you tie your source to your topic/thesis? Explain: _____ _____ Explain: _____ _____ Explain: _____ _____
<i>Conclusion/Transition:</i> Tie your topic back to your thesis and move on to the next topic. _____ _____	

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<b>Body 3:</b> <i>Topic Sentence:</i> What is this paragraph about? _____ _____	
<i>Evidence:</i> What sources/citations will you use to show how this topic proves your thesis? Source: _____ _____ Source: _____ _____ Source: _____ _____	<i>Explanation:</i> How will you tie your source to your topic/thesis? Explain: _____ _____ Explain: _____ _____ Explain: _____ _____
<i>Conclusion/Transition:</i> Tie your topic back to your thesis and move on to the next topic. _____ _____	

<b>Body 4:</b> <i>Topic Sentence:</i> What is this paragraph about? _____ _____	
<i>Evidence:</i> What sources/citations will you use to show how this topic proves your thesis? Source: _____ _____ Source: _____ _____ Source: _____ _____	<i>Explanation:</i> How will you tie your source to your topic/thesis? Explain: _____ _____ Explain: _____ _____ Explain: _____ _____
<i>Conclusion/Transition:</i> Tie your topic back to your thesis and move on to the next topic. _____ _____	

Note: You may use more (or less) than four paragraphs in your paper. This handout is just an example of structure, not length requirements.

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**Conclusion:** How can you summarize your paper memorably?

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*"Because of Topics, Thesis is correct."*

This structure guides you through reminding your reader of the discussion without directly repeating your thesis statement. Conclusions can be difficult but they are very important in a paper.

NOTE: Do not introduce new material in your conclusion paragraph.

Additional notes or comments: