

Seven Steps of Essay Writing

1. Read and analyze the question.
 - What is the question asking?
 - What is the question asking you to do?
2. Collect and sort the data needed to answer the question.
 - Brainstorm a list of factual information.
 - Create categories for this information.
3. Create your thesis statement.
 - The thesis is your answer to the question. It is the guiding argument of the essay.
 - The thesis must fully address the question, take a position with regard to the question, and provide organizational categories for analysis.
4. Write the introduction to your essay.
 - Begin with a broad statement on the topic.
 - Narrow the paragraph with 2-3 sentences that bring the question into focus.
 - Conclude with the thesis statement.
5. Write the body of the essay.
 - Each paragraph must have a topic sentence.
 - Each paragraph must have evidence, or historical fact.
 - Each paragraph must have analysis, which may be presented as interpretation or commentary.
 - Each paragraph must contain a "clincher" sentence.
 - Each paragraph must contain a transition sentence that directs the reader to the next paragraph.
6. Write the conclusion.
 - The conclusion must reinforce the thesis.
 - The conclusion must summarize the main points of the body paragraphs.
 - The conclusion must synthesize the clincher sentences.
 - The conclusion must address "So what?" (historical importance).
7. Proofread your essay.
 - Eliminate grammatical errors.
 - Eliminate contradictions between the thesis and the body.