

THE MODERN ESSAY PARADIGM

Construction workers do not build without a blueprint, and you should not write an essay without a plan. The best way to construct a good essay is to *think out* where it is going *before* you begin to write. The modern essay paradigm offers a logical and efficient writing plan.

The paragraph is the basic unit of construction for the essay. An essay often has five paragraphs, but can have more or less, depending on the *nature of your assertion* and the *quality of your evidence*.

Paragraphs should be arranged in the following order:

INTRODUCTION

The introductory paragraph contains your **ASSERTION**, or the main idea of your essay, and any background information that the reader may need to follow the development of your essay. The point of writing is communication so always be reader friendly.

EVIDENTIAL PARAGRAPH #1

Each evidential paragraph presents a single point of **EVIDENCE** that supports the **ASSERTION** that you made in the introductory paragraph. Each evidential paragraph must have a clear *topic sentence* and *specific details*.

EVIDENTIAL PARAGRAPH #2

Same as evidential paragraph #1.

EVIDENTIAL PARAGRAPH #3

Same as evidential paragraphs #1 and #2.

COMMENTARY

In the final paragraph of your essay, you should offer **CRITICAL COMMENTS** that indicate that you understand the significance of your **ASSERTION**.

Once you master the basic structure of the essay, you should begin working on your *style*.

A STYLE CHECKLIST

Remember that all good writing must be:

- ✓ **CLEAR** – Always follow Standard English usage.
- ✓ **LOGICALLY ORGANIZED** – Utilize the modern essay paradigm.
- ✓ **WELL ARTICULATED** – Say it well.