Preparing a Basic Essay Outline

Use an outline to plan your essay. Creating an outline allows you to think before you do your research and start to write. The essay outline is laid out in a visual way so that you can see how it is organized. You do not have to write full sentences as an outline is only a map of what you plan to do.

Introduction of Your Topic

Get your audience's attention. What is important or intriguing about this topic? What background is relevant for your readers?

Thesis Statement

What are you planning to prove or demonstrate in this essay?
Generate arguments by turning your thesis into a question.
Write three topic sentences of your supporting arguments/main ideas (how you are going to prove your thesis).

Body Paragraphs

Topic sentence paragraph one
Content for body paragraph one - Supporting points, Quotations, Evidence.

Always tie quotations/evidence in to your thesis. Explain, explain, explain and cite, cite, cite.

Topic sentence paragraph two
Content for body paragraph two - Supporting points, Quotations, Evidence.

Topic sentence paragraph three
Content for body paragraph three - Supporting points, Quotations, Evidence.

Conclusion

Restate thesis. Summarize most important points. Show that you proved your thesis (your learning). Do not add new content.

Finally

With an outline, you will be able to see if any of your sections are repetitive or redundant. A test of a good outline is if you can look at the outline and orally summarize your essay to someone who is unfamiliar with the topic.

More Writing Resources

KPU's Peer Tutors and Learning Strategists through The Learning Centres: tlc.kpu.ca

TutorOcean Tutoring & Assignment Review (The Learning Centres). Access face-to-face online tutoring or submit a paper online for tutoring help: tlc.kpu.ca

Write Away Receive free, fast, and friendly feedback from BC post-secondary tutors at
http://writeaway.ca/

Purdue University's OWL (Online Writing Lab)
Citation styles (MLA, APA, Chicago), grammatical help, thesis statement tips, explanation of essay types such as expository, descriptive, narrative, argumentative, persuasive, etc.
https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/

KPU librarians can give you further help with citation styles, research techniques, and finding resources. http://www.kpu.ca/library