

# OUTLINE BASICS

Mastering essay form and  
organization through outline practice.

Interactive component guides to acing the basic five  
paragraph essay and its common variations.

By Avaline Bruinsma & Carli Baum

STARTcommunications

# The ESSENTIAL ESSAY

## About the authors . . .

Avaline Bruinsma graduated from Calvin College with a Bachelor of Arts degree with majors in Physical Education and Religious Studies. In addition she graduated from The University of Calgary with Bachelor of Education certification in secondary education in Physical Education. She has taught junior high, high school and college in the arenas of Social Studies, English, Physical Education, Research Methods, and Performing Arts for over 22 years and has coached numerous basketball and volleyball teams to championships. She is the co-owner of Start Communications; an exam preparation and curriculum development company. Avaline also supervises and develops programming for a vast array of home education programs and has been a key note speaker at conferences in the USA, Canada and Europe.



Avaline

Carli Baum graduated from the University of Calgary with a degree in Communications and Culture. She is the co-owner of Start Communications; an exam preparation and curriculum development company. She is an engaging, humorous communicator and is meticulous about communication methodology. Also as the co-owner and marketing director of Bite Beef, a slow-grown grass fed and finished beef business, she and her business partner recently garnered the prestigious honor of being named in the top forty foodies under forty in Western Living magazine. Her communication and writing skills are intrinsic to all of her business dealings and have aided in gorgeous web design, winning marketing methodology and a great grasp of writing effectively and correctly.



Carli

## Contact

Start Communications  
Aspen Glen Landing RPO  
P.O. Box 15054  
Calgary, Alberta T3H 0N8

♦ [www.theessentialessay.com](http://www.theessentialessay.com)  
[theessentialessay@gmail.com](mailto:theessentialessay@gmail.com)

# The Significance of an Outline

When

*navigating uncharted territory, it's easy to get lost without a guide of some sort. The same can be said for each new essay you set out to write. Whether presenting a factually based argument, interpreting a literary piece or taking a position on a subject it's essential to clearly and articulately present your writing to the reader. The surefire way to do this consistently is by mastering quick and simple outline writing. This module will teach you how!*

In its simplest form, an outline . . .

- is an essay (expansion of the thesis) in point form
- should take less than 5 minutes to jot down
- is the basic structure or backbone of an essay
- keeps the writer focused on the specific task the essay sets out to complete

*Once you've established your thesis for your essay, the outline is a basic evolution from there. Simply take your thesis (the essay's claim) and accompanying reasoning (usually your three supporting topics) and start to expand on them. Like this . . .*

Intro → State your thesis and jot down key words that will be the start of your hook sentence.

Subtopic 1 →  
Subtopic 2 →  
Subtopic 3 →

List your supporting subtopics, some evidence or examples to support each subtopic and some key words that will jumpstart your discussion of that subtopic when you write your essay.

Conclusion → Restate your thesis, supporting subtopics, and jot down key words that will be the start of your impacting clincher or concluding statement.

# Basic Outline Form

Below is a more detailed expansion on the basic breakdown of the outline on the previous page. When reading through this template remember, each point is just that: a point form prompt. When writing out your own outlines, be sure they are point form prompts you can easily refer to and work from when writing your essays.

## The Classic Five Paragraph Outline

### I. Introduction

- A. Hooks the reader's attention.
- B. Tells the reader what to expect in the essay.
- C. Contains a reference to the main topics to be discussed.
- D. Thesis

### II. Body Paragraph 1

- A. Begins with a topic sentence that refers to the 1st point of the thesis.
- B. Discusses 1st of three or more major points about the topic.
- C. Contains evidence or examples to support point.
- D. Is linked to the following paragraph.

### III. Body Paragraph 2

- A. Begins with a topic sentence that refers to the 2nd point of the thesis.
- B. Discusses 2nd of three or more major points about the topic.
- C. Contains evidence or examples to support point.
- D. Is linked to the following paragraph.

### IV. Body Paragraph 3

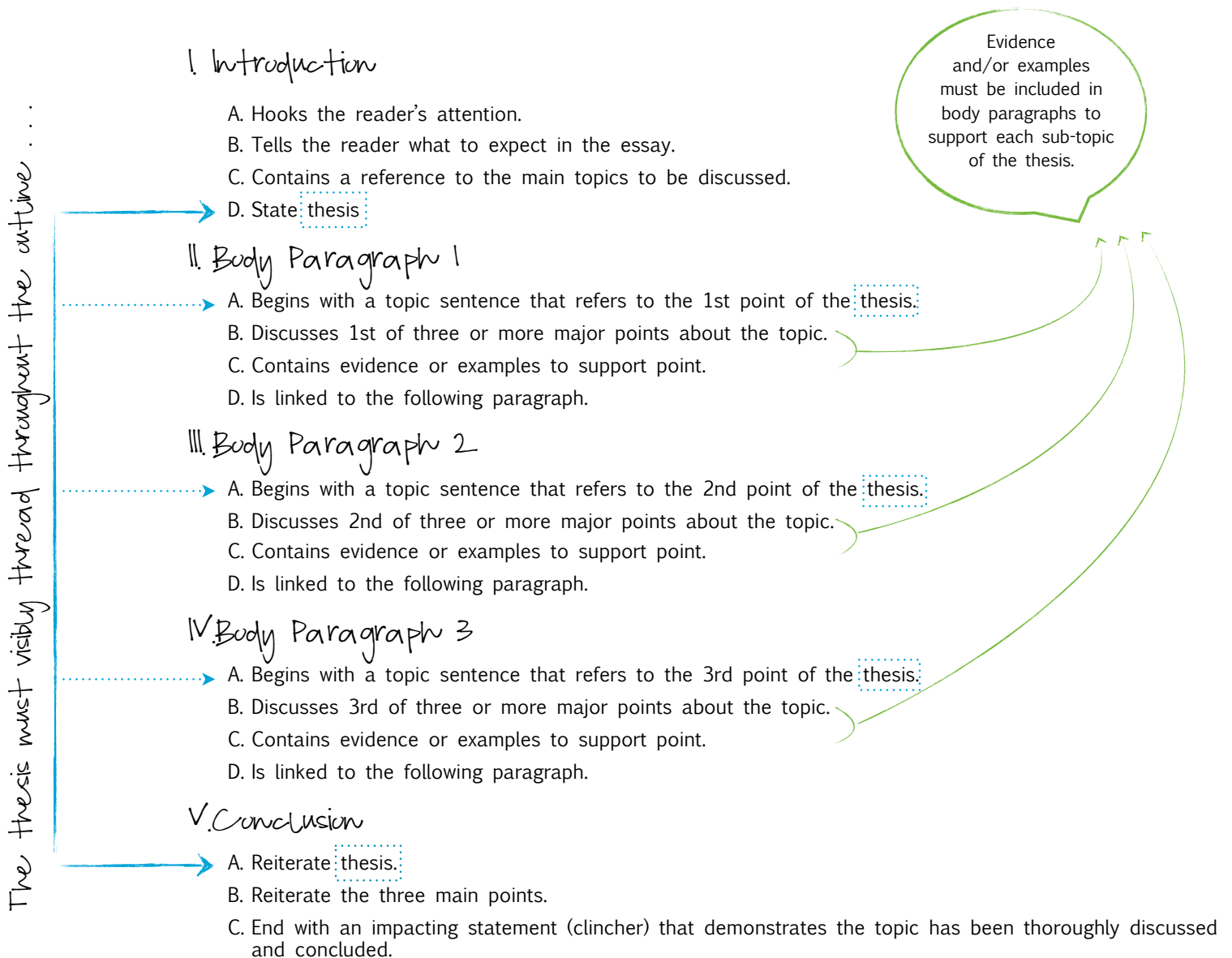
- A. Begins with a topic sentence that refers to the 3rd point of the thesis.
- B. Discusses 3rd of three or more major points about the topic.
- C. Contains evidence or examples to support point.
- D. Is linked to the following paragraph.

### V. Conclusion

- A. Reiterate thesis.
- B. Reiterate the three main points.
- C. End with an impacting statement (clincher) that demonstrates the topic has been thoroughly discussed and concluded.

# Threading the Thesis

Another very important role the outline plays, is the ability to plan and track a constant threading of the thesis through the essay. If the thesis is your claim, what you're writing the essay about and what you want to say, it must be threaded throughout the essay. Highlighting or circling when your thesis shows up in your outline is a good way to be sure you are staying true to your essay's purpose by consistently referring to your main claim.



# Outline Practice

In five minutes or less, using the following thesis and template below, write an outline. This is a fast paced exercise meant to get you thinking quickly about how to structure an essay by using a simple outline.

*Smart technology has contributed to a unique learning environment for today's student because of more easily accessible information, mass and instant distribution of communication and an ever-changing base of knowledge.*

<u>Classic Outline Reference Tool</u>	<u>Classic Outline – Activity Template</u>
<p style="text-align: center;">Introduction</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Hook Sentence</p> <p style="text-align: center;">List three supporting sub-topics</p> <p style="text-align: center;">...</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thesis</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Introduction</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;">Body Paragraph 1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Topic sentence about thesis 1st point</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discuss 1st point</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Evidence &amp; Examples for support</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Link to following paragraph</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Body Paragraph 1</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;">Body Paragraph 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Topic sentence about thesis 2nd point</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discuss 2nd point</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Evidence &amp; Examples for support</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Link to following paragraph</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Body Paragraph 1</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;">Body Paragraph 3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Topic sentence about thesis 3rd point</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discuss 3rd point</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Evidence &amp; Examples for support</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Link to following paragraph</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Body Paragraph 1</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;">Conclusion</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Reiterate thesis</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Reiterate main points of 3 body paragraphs</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Clincher (Final Sentence)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Conclusion</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>



# Outline Practice

In five minutes or less, using the following thesis and template below, write an outline. This is a fast paced exercise meant to get you thinking quickly about how to structure an essay by using a simple outline.

*Reading, writing and arithmetic still remain the central values of a thorough education; without them, the foundational abilities of literary and expository study, the consistent need for written communication across many mediums and the essential ability to manage one's financial affairs would all be jeopardized.*

<u>Classic Outline Reference Tool</u>	<u>Classic Outline – Activity Template</u>
Introduction	Introduction
Hook Sentence	
List three supporting sub-topics	
...	
Thesis	
 <u>Body Paragraph 1</u>	 <u>Body Paragraph 1</u>
Topic sentence about thesis 1st point	
Discuss 1st point	
Evidence & Examples for support	
Link to following paragraph	
 <u>Body Paragraph 2</u>	 <u>Body Paragraph 1</u>
Topic sentence about thesis 2nd point	
Discuss 2nd point	
Evidence & Examples for support	
Link to following paragraph	
 <u>Body Paragraph 3</u>	 <u>Body Paragraph 1</u>
Topic sentence about thesis 3rd point	
Discuss 3rd point	
Evidence & Examples for support	
Link to following paragraph	
 <u>Conclusion</u>	 <u>Conclusion</u>
Reiterate thesis	
Reiterate main points of 3 body paragraphs	
Clincher (Final Sentence)	

# Outline Practice

In five minutes or less, using the following thesis and template below, write an outline. This is a fast paced exercise meant to get you thinking quickly about how to structure an essay by using a simple outline.

*Globalization of industry is beneficial because of its contribution to the reduction of trade barriers and easy access to affordable global commodities; however, one could counter-argue the often related detriment of globalization of industry is that it exploits third world laborers in an effort to reduce production costs.*

<u>Classic Outline Reference Tool</u>	<u>Classic Outline – Activity Template</u>
Introduction	Introduction
Hook Sentence	
List three supporting sub-topics	
...	
Thesis	
 <u>Body Paragraph 1</u>	 <u>Body Paragraph 1</u>
Topic sentence about thesis 1st point	
Discuss 1st point	
Evidence & Examples for support	
Link to following paragraph	
 <u>Body Paragraph 2</u>	 <u>Body Paragraph 1</u>
Topic sentence about thesis 2nd point	
Discuss 2nd point	
Evidence & Examples for support	
Link to following paragraph	
 <u>Body Paragraph 3</u>	 <u>Body Paragraph 1</u>
Topic sentence about thesis 3rd point	
Discuss 3rd point	
Evidence & Examples for support	
Link to following paragraph	
 <u>Conclusion</u>	 <u>Conclusion</u>
Reiterate thesis	
Reiterate main points of 3 body paragraphs	
Clincher (Final Sentence)	



# Outline Practice

In five minutes or less, using the following thesis and template below, write an outline. This is a fast paced exercise meant to get you thinking quickly about how to structure an essay by using a simple outline.

*Dogs as beloved pets, contribute beneficially to family dynamic by producing many laughable moments, by giving uninhibited affection and as a side effect improve the family's health due to all those long dog walks outside.*

<u>Classic Outline Reference Tool</u>	<u>Classic Outline – Activity Template</u>
Introduction	Introduction
Hook Sentence	
List three supporting sub-topics	
...	
Thesis	
Body Paragraph 1	Body Paragraph 1
Topic sentence about thesis 1st point	
Discuss 1st point	
Evidence & Examples for support	
Link to following paragraph	
Body Paragraph 2	Body Paragraph 1
Topic sentence about thesis 2nd point	
Discuss 2nd point	
Evidence & Examples for support	
Link to following paragraph	
Body Paragraph 3	Body Paragraph 1
Topic sentence about thesis 3rd point	
Discuss 3rd point	
Evidence & Examples for support	
Link to following paragraph	
Conclusion	Conclusion
Reiterate thesis	
Reiterate main points of 3 body paragraphs	
Clincher (Final Sentence)	


# Outline Practice

In five minutes or less, using the following thesis and template below, write an outline. This is a fast paced exercise meant to get you thinking quickly about how to structure an essay by using a simple outline.

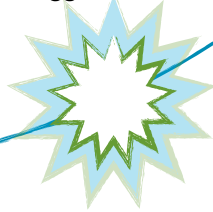
*Secretariat, the record-setting and Triple Crown champion thoroughbred racehorse, garnered unexpected notoriety as one of the most magnificent thoroughbreds in history, ranks among the greatest athletes of all time and set a standard of beauty and strength in racehorses that remains a benchmark to this day.*

<u>Classic Outline Reference Tool</u>	<u>Classic Outline – Activity Template</u>
<p style="text-align: center;">Introduction</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Hook Sentence</p> <p style="text-align: center;">List three supporting sub-topics</p> <p style="text-align: center;">...</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thesis</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Introduction</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;">Body Paragraph 1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Topic sentence about thesis 1st point</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discuss 1st point</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Evidence &amp; Examples for support</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Link to following paragraph</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Body Paragraph 1</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;">Body Paragraph 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Topic sentence about thesis 2nd point</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discuss 2nd point</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Evidence &amp; Examples for support</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Link to following paragraph</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Body Paragraph 1</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;">Body Paragraph 3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Topic sentence about thesis 3rd point</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discuss 3rd point</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Evidence &amp; Examples for support</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Link to following paragraph</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Body Paragraph 1</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;">Conclusion</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Reiterate thesis</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Reiterate main points of 3 body paragraphs</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Clincher (Final Sentence)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Conclusion</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

## Outline Module Recap



While there are many components that go into writing your best essay, a quick and efficient outline is one of the best tools you can equip yourself with! For every essay you write, first establish your thesis: the main claim you're basing your essay on and at least three supporting topics. From there, take five minutes to jot down a point form outline that expands on that thesis. As you write your essay, frequently refer to your outline. Continuously referring to your outline while writing will ensure a more articulate finished piece; one where your thesis has been thoroughly discussed in an orderly, efficient and convincing manner.



# The **ESSENTIAL ESSAY**

Did you find this module helpful? If so, look for the complete 66 page Essential Essay workbook coming to Teachers Pay Teachers soon!

## The **ESSENTIAL ESSAY**

An interactive guide to acing any essay that comes your way!

Includes engaging visual instruction and detailed practice on the following essay writing components:

- Essay at a Glance (Visual illustrations of essay writing in its simplest form, including the Funnel Model.)
- Outline Practice
- Relationship between the Outline & Thesis
- Understanding Different Essay Types (Expository, Persuasive, Literary)
- Mastering the Thesis
- Introductions
- Hook Sentences
- Body Paragraphs
- Incorporating Support Seamlessly
- Conclusions
- Final Comprehensive Essay Practice (Expository, Persuasive & Literary)

*As always with any Essential Essay product, all components are taught visually and dynamically, and are followed immediately by several practice pages to ensure thorough concept understanding.*

---

© START Communications 2013. All rights reserved. Limited photocopying within classroom is permitted. Mass copying and duplication for use beyond the individual classroom, including posting in part or in its entirety on the internet, redistribution for commercial use, use throughout entire schools and/or school systems are all strictly prohibited.

---