

5 Paragraph Essay Organization

ACTS, MEL-Con, and STAC

Paragraph #1 The Introduction

- **Attention Grabber:** Introduce the topic of your essay in a strong opening statement.
- **Connector:** Transition the reader from your opening statement to your thesis by introducing the title of the work and the author in a way that is connected to your topic.
- **Thesis Statement:** Present your thesis which provides the argument you will prove throughout the essay.
- **Supporting Points:** Present the points you will discuss in your body paragraphs.

Paragraph #2 First Body Paragraph

- Use **MEL-Con organization** to present your main idea, supporting evidence, connections to your thesis, and concluding statement.
- Present your 3rd strongest point in this paragraph.

Paragraph #3 Second Body Paragraph

- Use **MEL-Con organization** to present your main idea, supporting evidence, connections to your thesis, and concluding statement.
- Use your 2nd strongest point in this paragraph

Paragraph #4 Third Body Paragraph

- Use **MEL-Con organization** to present your main idea, supporting evidence, connections to your thesis, and concluding statement.
- Use your best or strongest point in this paragraph

Paragraph #5 The Conclusion

- Use a transition: AVOID using "IN CONCLUSION" OR "ALL IN ALL"
- **Synthesize:** Bring together the three points from your body paragraphs.
- **Thesis:** Restate your thesis in a new way.
- **Analysis:** Return to your topic and present the logical conclusion of the evidence presented in your essay.
- **Clincher:** Ask yourself the question, "So what?" about your thesis, and answer it by saying something important, interesting, or provocative that provides closure.

MEL-CON: MEL stands for Main Idea, Evidence, Link / Con stands for Concluding Statement

The writing process involves prewriting, composing, evaluating, revising, and finally editing. Mel-Con is a way for you to remember the important steps of writing a strong BODY PARAGRAPH – on any topic.

M - Main Idea (your topic sentence)

This is what you intend to prove in your paragraph stated in a very **direct** and concise way. (Keep it simple!!)

Should answer question posed in one sentence.

Should NOT start with “yes” or “no” even though you are answering a question!

Sets up the paragraph.

E - Evidence (example)

This is how you will prove your Main Idea. Use examples, facts, reasons or quotes to prove the point you have stated you will prove. In other words, be specific. You must also make certain that this information moves along smoothly with TRANSITIONS.

Evidence:

Should always be prefaced by a **transition**

Should prove only the main idea – nothing else

Should use information directly from the text

Should **not** be choppy.

Is something that is a fact. Anyone can find and use it

L -Link (explanation)

This explains what your evidence has proven about your MAIN IDEA in one or two concise sentences.

Explains how the evidence supports your thesis.

The link is what you think or how you relate the evidence to the thesis.

Should move the reader *beyond* the main idea.

Your link is unique. It shows your thought processes and why you chose the evidence you chose.

CON – Conclusion (wrap-up!)

The last sentence of the paragraph should be a conclusion; a sentence that wraps everything up and gives your paragraph closure. This should once again stress (but reword) your first claim or main idea.

The last sentence of your paragraph that summarizes your main idea and your evidence.

Mentions your pieces of evidence again in a new, short way.

LIST OF COMMON TRANSITIONS Use transitions to separate examples within a paragraph.

FIRST (to replace the overused "first")

One good example is
Initially
One piece of evidence that points to this is
It is important to note that
The first good piece of evidence is
One way to look at this is through
One example that proves this is
One example that suggests this is
One notable example is
To begin with
One reason is
One way this is true is
On one hand, there is
A great example is
One example that stands out is
The best place to start is with
This can first be seen when
For example
For instance
This can be clearly seen first of all when...

SECOND (to replace the overused "second")

Another good example is
Secondly
Furthermore
Another way to look at this is through
Another example that proves this is
Another example that suggests this is
Another great example that helps support this is
Another indication of this is
Still
Even so
In the same way
Next
On the other hand, there is
Even more compelling is
Another example that stands out is
Similarly
Likewise
Along with that, there is
Moreover
In addition
Also
In the same light
Even more interesting is
An even better example of this is
An additional fact is
Another strong indication was when

THIRD or FINAL (to replace the overused "finally")

Lastly
A final great example is
The final good piece of evidence is
The last example that suggests this is
Yet the best reason is
The final indication of this is
Most compelling is
Even so
The best and final reason is
On top of that
Best of all
The final example to note
The last example that stands out is
Most importantly
Accordingly
Moreover
Adding to those
In addition to those
Of course
But most conclusive is
In the same light
An even better example of this is
The last place this can be seen is when

IN CONCLUSION (to replace the overused "in conclusion")

So, it is clear to see that
Accordingly
In summary
Consequently
Thus
As a result
In short
Therefore
So
The evidence clearly points
All of this together means
With all of this
The three examples,....., prove that....
And so therefore
For all of these reasons, one can see that.....
With all of this in mind
Due to all of these reasons
Together
One can see that
The evidence is clear
And so it is
Truly
There is no doubt that
With all of these examples
In total
When looking at all of the possibilities
When looking at the facts, it is evident that

Essay Planning Template

Opening ACTS: Introduction Method

Attention Grabber

Connector

Thesis Statement

Supporting Point

MEL-Con Body Paragraph Organization Template

M = Main Idea (topic sentence; provides the point you will make in this paragraph)
E = Evidence (facts and direct quotes from the text)

L = Links (your explanation of how the example connects to or supports your main idea)
Con = Concluding Statement (summary and transition to the next paragraph)

		M Topic Sentence
		E Evidence (Fact from the text)
	Transition to 1 st example	
		L Link to thesis (explain and connect)
		E Evidence (Direct Quote)
		L Link to thesis (explain and connect)
		Con Concluding Statement Recap your examples

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		M Topic Sentence
	Transition to 1 st example	E Evidence (Fact from the text)
		L Link to thesis (explain and connect)
	Transition to 2 nd example	E Evidence (Direct Quote)
		L Link to thesis (explain and connect)
	Transition to conclusion	Con Concluding Statement Recap your examples

Closing STAC: Conclusion Method

Synthesis and Thesis Restatement

Analysis

Clincher:
