

## REMINDERS ABOUT ESSAY-WRITING

### FORMAT

- Use the MLA header. The right side should be one-half inch from the top, and the left side should be one inch from the top. Remember to include a space between your last name and the page number on the right side header.
- Include a title that prepares me for the content of your essay.
- You must not underline, bold, or italicize your title
- Your margins should measure one inch on each of the other edges of your paper.

### WRITING

- WRITE IN THE PRESENT TENSE.
- Short story titles appear in quotation marks. Novel titles appear in italics.
- Avoid first person.
- Avoid second person.
- Avoid passive voice.
- Avoid using “there” and “it” as the first words of a clause.
- Be sure that your pronouns have clear antecedents.
- Be sure that your subjects and verbs agree.

### INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH

- Your first sentence must bring your reader into the world of your paper.
- Your second sentence must focus toward your thesis.
- Your thesis, or third sentence, must present the overarching argument of your paper.

### FIRST BODY PARAGRAPH

- Your topic sentence must present an argument that will prove some portion of your thesis.
- You must introduce your first piece of evidence as a way of beginning to build your argument.

- You must present your first piece of evidence in a complete sentence, letting me know who is speaking and on what occasion.
- You must analyze your evidence so that it proves that your topic sentence and your thesis are true.
- You must repeat this process for your second piece of evidence, being careful to BUILD your argument throughout the paragraph.
- You must conclude the argument of your first body paragraph.

## SECOND AND THIRD BODY PARAGRAPHS

- Your topic sentence must link to the thesis, present a transition from the previous paragraph, and present the argument that will prove some other portion of your thesis statement.
- You must present the same elements that the first body paragraph contained.
- You must continue to build your argument in this paragraph, really saving your more important points for the end of the essay.

## CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH

- Your first sentence should conclude the entire essay argument.
- Your second and third sentences should suggest that your essay contains meaning that is important on a larger scale. It should suggest some truth about human nature or life. Don't get too cosmic on me.