

So you're writing an essay.....



And this is how you feel.

Here are some ideas to think about that will put your mind at ease



We know that an essay (whether personal or critical) has some basic parts. Your **introduction** tells the reader what you are talking about and what your most important idea is, your **body paragraphs** let you show how much you know, and your **conclusion** wraps everything up in a neat little package



Think of it another way: Your essay is a **house**



Your roof is your introduction. It covers all of the important stuff inside. If there was no roof, all of your belongings (ideas) would be ruined. The shingles are your guiding ideas, while the beams are your thesis - they connect to the rest of the house.

Your walls are your body paragraphs. They support your roof and prevent everything from falling in on itself.

Your doors and windows are your evidence. They let the reader see inside to see how thoughtfully you have arranged your furniture (do you see where we're going with this...?)

Your foundation is your conclusion. It balances everything out and prevents your house from sinking into nothingness.

## Or, the tried and true idea: Your essay is a **hamburger**



The top bun is your introduction. It helps keep everything together and prevents the meat of your essay from being sloppy

The meat is your body paragraphs. They are significant and satisfying - the more meat, the more enjoyable your essay is (I apologize to any vegetarians out there!)

The condiments are your evidence and analysis - they provide specific flavour to your essay and without them, your essay is bland and flavourless.

The bottom bun is your conclusion, and it keeps everything together so that your ideas don't fall apart at the end.

Just like how your roof and hamburger bun need certain ingredients to be consistent, your introduction needs the follow items (critical response):

A general statement about your topic (What are your feelings about the ideas you are discussing? How do they relate to the world?)

The way teenagers relate to authority figures can greatly vary depending on how much the two have in common.

Introduction of the text(s) you are discussing

This is an idea that is often displayed in Romeo and Juliet by Shakespeare.

A statement that shows how your general statement and text are similar.

Shakespeare uses the main characters to show how older generations do not always understand those who are younger.

A transitional idea that leads to your thesis statement.

When communication between the two breaks down, tragic events are often the result.

Your thesis statement.

In Romeo and Juliet, Shakespeare suggests that these tragic events are preventable if an individual makes an effort to maintain effective communication with their elders.

Just like how your roof and hamburger bun need certain ingredients to be consistent, your introduction needs the follow items (personal response):

A general statement about your topic (What are your feelings about the ideas you are discussing? How do they relate to the world?)

I believe the way teenagers relate to authority figures can greatly vary depending on how much the two have in common.

Introduction of the text(s) you are discussing

Not only have I experienced this in my life, this is an idea that is often displayed in Romeo and Juliet by Shakespeare.

A statement that shows how your general statement and text are similar.

It is clear to me that older individuals often have a hard time relating to teenagers because they don't remember what it's like.

A transitional idea that leads to your thesis statement.

When younger and older people are unable to talk about what they are feeling, negative outcomes may occur.

Your thesis statement.

Therefore, it is my belief that tragic events are preventable if an individual makes an effort to maintain effective communication with their elders.

Body Paragraphs have to be filling - that's why they are consider a MEAL (get it!? It's English humour...)

M - Main Idea - What exactly are you trying to say? What are you trying to prove?

E - Evidence - You've said your idea, now how can you make me believe it? This will take the form of direct quotations for critical paragraphs and a mix of personal experience and direct quotations for personal responses

A - Analysis - You've told me that you're right, but I'm still not convinced. You have to tell the reader what it all means on a deeper level. Think about the why and the how of the situation.

L - Link to your thesis - Ideas cannot exist in isolation. How does the point you have just proven relate back to your main idea?

Conclusion (because no one wants to hold a burger in their hands without a bun, or have their house sink into the ground)

Start with a restatement of your thesis: Same idea, but with different words

Next, summarize your main ideas - remind the reader what you have proven in your essay. This should not be accomplished in one sentence.

Finally, what is your last thought on the subject? After reading your essay, what idea should I be left thinking about?

## Creative Responses

Creative responses call for you to take details from the text and incorporate them into a new format that answers the topic question in an original way.



For example:

Romeo's response to the question "How does an individual demonstrate their desire to be included in their world?" might take the form of diary entries

Diary entry 1 - Discusses his attempts to be a part of Verona society (such as crashing parties and otherwise being inappropriate)

Diary entry 2 - Discusses his realization of what he needs to do to be a part of the world he wants to belong to (run away with Juliet, because young love ALWAYS works out)

Diary entry 3 - Post-realization - Reflects on where things have gone right or wrong. (For Romeo, things get pretty bad, so he would talk about how he tried to be a part of the world he wanted to participate in, but why it didn't work.)

Hopefully, at this point, you are ready to put your ideas down onto paper. Or, computer screen.

If you have questions, ASK!



