

# Keyhole framework for writing for success in college



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Keyhole Framework for Writing for Success in College [Adapted from The Practical Stylist with Readings by S. Baker and R. Yarber] Title Introduction Opening Invitation Key Ideas Thesis Statement Main Body Paragraph 1 Topic Sentence Supporting Ideas Paragraph 2 Topic Sentence Supporting Ideas Paragraph 3 Topic Sentence Supporting Ideas Conclusion Restated Thesis Key Ideas Clinching Comment Elements of a Successful College Essay I. The Title 1. A title is a typically a word or phrase which is the first part of a piece of writing that a reader encounters. 2. The title should accomplish two principal goals: a. alert the reader concerning the topic that the written piece will address b. grab the reader's attention and arouse curiosity. II. Introductory Paragraph A. Opening Sentence — " The Attention-Grabber" 1. Begin with a quotation or proverb E. g.: " Winning isn't everything; it's the only thing. " So a famous coach once declared. 2. Begin with an anecdote or very brief story E. g.: Life on a farm was a tough way to grow up for someone who dreamed of being a sailor. 3. Begin with a startling or interesting fact E. g.: More Americans suffer from heart disease than from any other major health problem. 4. Begin with an analogy to something else E. g.: No one would allow an inexperienced quarterback to start in the Super Bowl. Why then would anyone allow someone who lacks the necessary training to become president? 5. Begin by posing a question E. g.: Is it possible to determine how old the world really is? B. Ending Sentence — The Thesis Statement A thesis statement has three elements: a. the topic of the essay b. the controlling idea (or main idea) about that topic which the essay writer wants the reader to know about the topic c. the key supporting details which will be discussed in the main body paragraphs. E. g.: Football [the topic] is the most popular sport in America [controlling idea] because it is fast-paced, <https://assignbuster.com/keyhole-framework-for-writing-for-success-in-college/>

demands a high degree of teamwork, and involves in-depth strategic planning [key supporting details].

III. Main Body Paragraphs

1. Provides details or evidence to support the thesis statement.
2. Often presents the weakest arguments first so that the reader will have the strongest arguments freshest in mind at the end.
3. Often transition words or phrases are needed in the opening sentence of a paragraph to help tie this new paragraph in with the preceding one.

IV. Concluding Paragraph

A. Purpose

The concluding paragraph wraps up the essay and provides the reader with a satisfying sense of closure. It may include some or all of the following:

1. Restated thesis statement
2. Summary of the main points discussed in the main body paragraphs
3. A conclusion based upon the information presented in the essay
4. A connection to the reader, explaining why the point of the essay is important in some personal way
5. A suggestion or appeal to the reader to take some action or come to some conclusion related to the topic

B. Opening Sentence — The Restated Thesis Statement

The purpose of the restated thesis statement is to remind and reinforce to the reader what has just been discussed and demonstrated in the essay.

E. g.: While there are many sports in America, football remains the most popular because of its action, teamwork, and strategic planning. Compare this to the Original Thesis Statement: Football [the topic] is the most popular sport in America [controlling idea] because it is fast-paced, demands a high degree of teamwork, and involves in-depth strategic planning [key supporting details].

C. Ending Sentence — “ The Clincher”

The final sentence of the essay should be a “ clincher” in some way, driving home the point of the essay in one last, effective way.

1. Draw a conclusion based on what the essay has discussed and demonstrated.

E. g.: No other sport should be televised on prime time.

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2. Direct the reader's attention to some point or implication that naturally flows from what the essay has discussed or demonstrated. E. g.: Perhaps the time has come for the other major sports like hockey and basketball to become more like the NFL before they cease to be relevant. 3. Pose a concluding question (often rhetorical). E. g.: Why then would anyone want to watch any other sport? Elements of a Paragraph [Adapted partially from the Landmark School]

1. A paragraph is a group of related sentences that develop one idea. It is both an independent unit and also a part of a larger work, such as a theme, essay, or chapter. 2. When the purpose of the paragraph is not clear, the direction of the larger paper is lost for the moment. A. The Topic Sentence 1. The topic sentence is the sentence that provides the main idea or direction of the paragraph. It defines the function and purpose of the sentences under its control while also connecting the paragraph to the larger paper. As such, it provides a topic and the controlling (i. e., main idea) about that topic. E. g.: The Roman Empire provided a mechanism for the just administration of various nations. 2. In a well-constructed paper, the topic sentence of each paragraph should reveal the basic skeleton or structure of the whole essay. The placement of topic sentences, and thus paragraphs, should follow a clear, logical order that will combine to allow for the steady progression of an effective argument or presentation. 3. Topic sentences may appear anywhere in a paragraph but usually are the first or last sentence of a paragraph B. The Body of the Paragraph The other sentences of a paragraph should exemplify, modify, qualify, add to, or develop the point expressed in the topic sentence. E. g.: Experienced bureaucrats provided vital municipal services. A professional corps of soldiers offered security and deterred undue disruptions to civil

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society. Skilled Roman jurists maintained an efficient, highly advanced, and just court system. Compare this to the Topic Sentence: The Roman Empire provided a mechanism for the just administration of various nations.

Remember... Every essay has a thesis statement. Every paragraph has a topic sentence. Topic Sentence = Topic + Controlling (i. e., Main) Idea Thesis Statement = Topic + Controlling (i. e., Main) Idea + Key Supporting Details

The Seven-Step Process for Writing a Successful College Essay After the

required material has been gathered, reflected on, and analyzed, the

following steps are taken to identify and then organize key points into a

coherent and effective essay. 1. Brainstorm 2. Group ideas (i. e., claims) 3.

Evaluate and rank ideas 4. Provide two or more pieces of evidence or

reasons to support each idea (i. e., claim) 5. Construct paragraphs for each

key idea with supporting evidence 6. Add a title, an introduction with thesis

statement, and a conclusion 7. Proofread, refine, revise, proofread, and

submit The Proofread, Refine, Revise, Proofread, and Submit Process During

the proofreading and revision process, the following questions should be

asked: 1. With regard to unity: a. Is my essay unified? Do all parts contribute

to the main idea, and have I avoided digression? b. Have I supported all

generalizations that I made? c. Have I given enough emphasis to each part of

my essay? 2. With regard to structure: a. Is my introduction interesting? Will

it catch the reader's interest? b. Does my thesis statement clearly delineate

my assigned subject? c. Does my conclusion give a sense of finality or

completion? 3. With regard to paragraphing and transition: a. Does the first

sentence of each paragraph provide an idea about what each paragraph

discusses? b. Has each sentence been developed properly, using one or

more of the following methods for developing paragraphs: examples, details,

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reasons, comparison/ contrast, cause or effect, etc.? c. Does each sentence relate directly to the purpose of the paper as stated in the thesis statement? d. Is there a clear transition from the last sentence of each paragraph to the first sentence of the next paragraph? Have I used effective transitional words or phrases? 4. With regard to coherence: Have I used effective transitional words and phrases to connect the sentences so that they flow smoothly from one to the next and are coherent (i. e., “ stuck together" or clearly connected)? 5. With regard to sentences: Have I used mainly complex (rather than simple) sentences and used a variety of different sentence lengths? 6. With regard to diction: a. Have I removed all slang, jargon, and unnecessary clichés from my diction? b. Is my vocabulary sophisticated and vibrant? 7. With regard to footnoting and bibliography: Have I introduced and handled quotations properly and acknowledged accurately in footnotes and a proper bibliography everything that requires acknowledgment? Please Note: A good style text that covers footnoting and creating a bibliography is an essential tool for the essay writer. Schopenhauer’s Rules on Effective Writing Style [Adapted from “ On Style" by Arthur Schopenhauer] 1. Write in your “ own voice. " 2. Have a purpose for writing and know what it is. 3. Think deeply but write accessibly. 4. Be clear and concise. 5. Avoid writing what readers can think for themselves. 6. Avoid using abstract words or phrasing. 7. Avoid using vague, enigmatic, or trite words and phrases. 8. Avoid using flowery or florid language. 9. Avoid redundancy. 10. Avoid carelessness in writing. 11. Avoid parenthesis. 12. Write as if having a dialogue with the reader.