

Basic History Essay Structure

Is your introductory paragraph HOTT?

Hook—This is the first sentence. It should interest the reader and is a chance to show off, but be reasonable. Do not spend too much time on this.

Overview—Similar to the hook. This sentence sets the stage for your thesis. This can also be a restatement of the question.

Thesis—The position you will argue and support. This is definitely the most important sentence in your essay. It should be clear but not short. Well developed thesis statements often include key words such as “although” and may stretch two or even three sentences in length.

Themes/Topics—This sentence or group of sentences introduces the reader to the main points that will support your thesis and will be fully developed in your essay. It is best to keep these in the same order throughout your essay.

Do the body paragraphs TEST what you know?

Topic Sentence—This is the theme that will be developed and supported in a paragraph.

Evidence and Analysis—Evidence is the specific information and factual details that will support your theme. Analysis is the explanation of *how* and *why* your evidence (from the documents and outside information) support your thesis. These two elements are the heart of any essay.

Summary Statement—This sentence will remind the reader of the relevant sub-points made in this paragraph.

Transition—This sentence finishes off the paragraph and introduces the theme of the next paragraph.

Do you STOP in your conclusion?

Summarize the Themes/Main Points—This sentence or group of sentences should remind the reader of the main points that were made. Do not include new information.

Thesis Restatement—This sentence should remind the reader of your answer to the question. Restate the thesis in different words than before.

Omit Any New Information—The only exceptions would be to make a conceptual point that is more general than your main points, or to mention the aftermath or result of something.

Perspective—Finish your essay with a sentence that unifies the essay and/or puts it in historical perspective. Leave a good impression with the reader.