

LECTURE 11

Writing an Essay

An essay is a piece of writing several paragraphs long. It is about one topic, just as a paragraph is. However, because the topic of an essay is too complex to discuss in one paragraph, you need to divide it into several paragraphs, one for each major point. Then you need to tie the paragraphs together by adding an introduction and a conclusion.

المقال هو نموذج لكتابة عدة فقرات طويلة لموضوع رئيسي واحد. ولأن كتابة موضوع واحد في فقرة واحدة سيكون معقداً جداً فإليك أن تُقسّم الموضوع إلى عدة فقرات. بحيث يصبح لكل فكرة رئيسية فقرة واحدة. ثم عليك أن تربط فقرات الموضوع ببعضها بإضافة مقدمة وخاتمة.

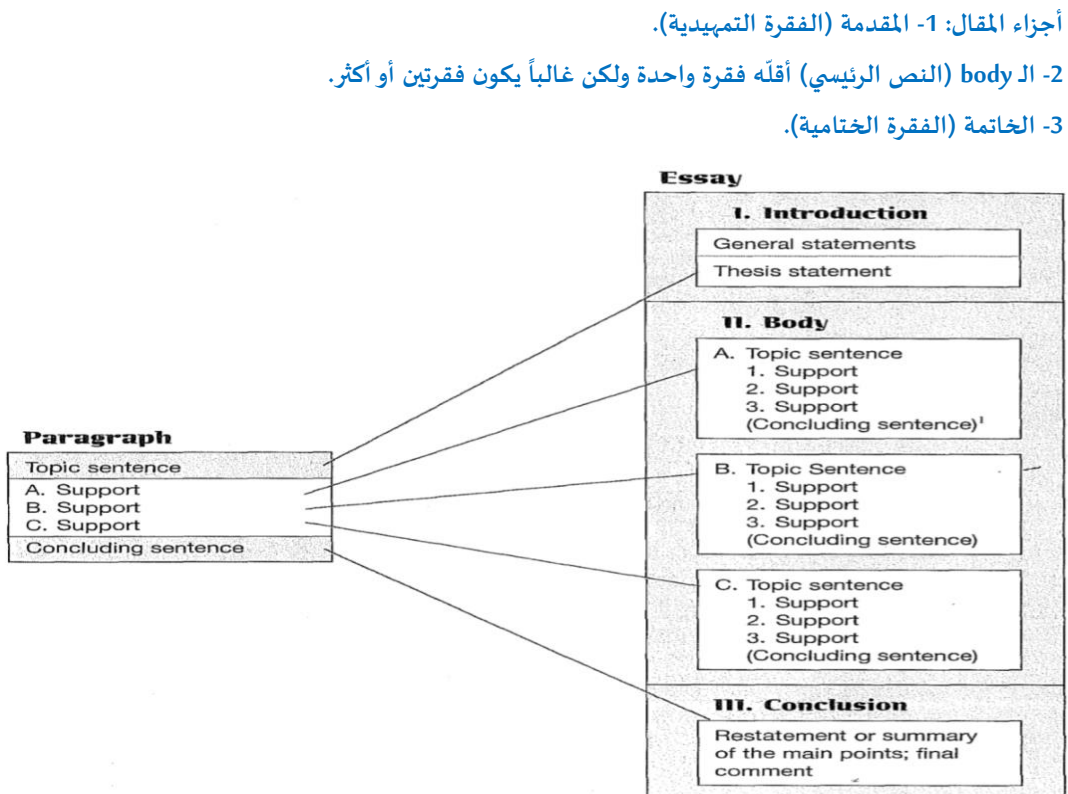
Writing an essay is no more difficult than writing a paragraph except that an essay is longer. The principles of organization are the same for both, so if you can write a good paragraph, you can write a good essay.

كتابة مقال ليست أصعب من كتابة فقرة. باستثناء أنه يكون أطول. فأسس التنظيم لكليهما هي نفسها. فإن كنت قادراً على كتابة فقرة جيدة فبالتأكيد ستتمكن من كتابة مقال جيد.

The Three Parts of an Essay

An essay has three main parts: an **introduction** (introductory paragraph), a **body** (at least one, but usually two or more paragraphs), and a **conclusion** (concluding paragraph).

The following chart shows you how the parts of a paragraph correspond to the parts of an essay.



An essay **introduction** consists of two parts: a few **general statements** to attract your reader's attention and a **thesis statement** to state the main idea of the essay. A thesis statement for an essay is like a topic sentence for a paragraph: It names the specific topic and gives the reader a general idea of the contents of the essay.

المقدمة تحتوي على جزأين:

1- جملة عامة لجذب انتباه القارئ.

2- جملة الموضوع لتوضيح الفكرة الرئيسية للمقال.

The **body** consists of one or more paragraphs. Each paragraph develops a **subdivision of the topic**, so the number of paragraphs in the body will vary with the number of subdivisions or subtopics.

ال body (النص الرئيسي) يحتوي على فقرة أو أكثر. كل فقرة توضح جزء من أجزاء الموضوع الرئيسي. لذلك سوف يتفاوت عدد الفقرات تبعاً لعدد الأجزاء أو المواضيع الفرعية.

The **conclusion**, like the concluding sentence in a paragraph, is a summary or review of the main points discussed in the body.

الختام في المقال مثل الختام في الفقرة، هو ملخص أو استعراض للفكرة الرئيسية التي نوقشت في المقال.

An essay has **unity** and **coherence**, just as a paragraph does. **Transition signals** and the **repetition of key nouns** link the paragraphs into a cohesive whole.

أهم عناصر المقال هي: الوحدة، التماسك، علامات الانتقال، وتكرار الاسماء المفتاحية.

Study the model essay about the influence of Native Americans' on modern U.S. culture and notice its structure.

MODEL Essay Structure

INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH

THESIS STATEMENT

BODY PARAGRAPH 1

Native American Influences on Modern U.S. Culture

When the first Europeans came to the North American continent, they encountered the completely new cultures of the Native American peoples of North America. Native Americans, who had highly developed cultures in many respects, must have been as curious about the strange European manners and customs as the Europeans were curious about them. As always happens when two or more cultures come into contact, there was a cultural exchange. Native Americans adopted some of the Europeans' ways, and the Europeans adopted some of their ways. As a result, Native Americans have made many valuable contributions to modern U.S. culture, particularly in the areas of language, art, food, and government.

First of all, Native Americans left a permanent mark on the English language. The early English-speaking settlers borrowed from several different Native American languages words for places in this new land. All across the country are cities, towns, rivers, and states with Native American names. For example, the states of Delaware, Iowa, Illinois, and Alabama are named after Native American tribes,² as are the cities of Chicago, Miami, and Spokane. In addition to place names, English adopted from various Native American languages the words for animals and plants found in the Americas. *Chipmunk*, *moose*, *raccoon*, *skunk*, *tobacco*, and *squash* are just a few examples.

BODY PARAGRAPH 2

Although the vocabulary of English is the area that shows the most Native American influence, it is not the only area of U.S. culture that has been shaped by contact with Native Americans. Art is another area of important Native American contributions. Wool rugs woven by women of the Navajo tribe in Arizona and New Mexico are highly valued works of art in the United States. Native American jewelry made from silver and turquoise is also very popular and very expensive. Especially in the western and southwestern regions of the United States, native crafts such as pottery, leather products, and beadwork can be found in many homes. Indeed, native art and handicrafts are a treasured part of U.S. culture.

BODY PARAGRAPH 3

In addition to language and art, agriculture is another area in which Native Americans had a great and lasting influence on the peoples who arrived here from Europe, Africa, and Asia. Being skilled farmers, the Native Americans of North America taught the newcomers many things about farming techniques and crops. Every U.S. schoolchild has heard the story of how Native Americans taught the first settlers to place a dead fish in a planting hole to provide fertilizer for the growing plant. Furthermore, they taught the settlers irrigation methods and crop rotation. Many of the foods people in the United States eat today were introduced to the Europeans by Native Americans. For example, corn and chocolate were unknown in Europe. Now they are staples in the U.S. diet.

BODY PARAGRAPH 4

Finally, it may surprise some people to learn that citizens of the United States are also indebted³ to the native people for our form of government. The Iroquois, who were an extremely large tribe with many branches called "nations," had

developed a highly sophisticated system of government to settle disputes that arose between the various branches. Five of the nations had joined together in a confederation called "The League of the Iroquois." Under the league, each nation was autonomous⁴ in running its own internal affairs, but the nations acted as a unit when dealing with outsiders. The league kept the Iroquois from fighting among themselves and was also valuable in diplomatic relations with other tribes. When the 13 colonies were considering what kind of government to establish after they had won their independence from Britain, someone suggested that they use a system similar to that of the League of the Iroquois. Under this system, each colony or future state would be autonomous in managing its own affairs but would join forces with the other states to deal with matters that concerned them all. This is exactly what happened. As a result, the present form of government of the United States can be traced directly back to a Native American model.

CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH

In conclusion, we can easily see from these few examples the extent of Native American influence on our language, our art forms, our eating habits, and our government. The people of the United States are deeply indebted to Native Americans for their contributions to U.S. culture.

The Introductory Paragraph

An introductory paragraph has two parts, **general statements** and the **thesis statement**.

General statements

- 1- Introduce the general topic of the essay.
- 2- Capture the reader's interest.

الجملة العامة:

1- تُقدّم الموضوع العام للمقال.

2- تستولي على انتباه القارئ.

The thesis statement

- 1- States the specific topic.
- 2- May list subtopics or subdivisions of the main topic or subtopics.
- 3- May indicate the pattern of organization of the essay.
- 4- Is normally the last sentence in the introductory paragraph.

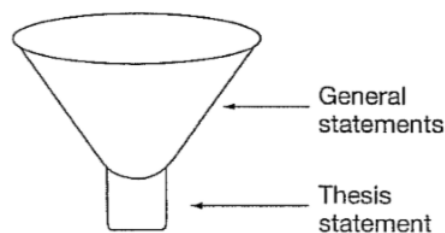
جملة الموضوع أو البحث: 1- توضّح الموضوع بدقة. 2- تعداد للمواضيع الفرعية.
3- تشير إلى أسلوب تنظيم المقال. 4- تكون عادةً آخر جملة في الفقرة التمهيدية (المقدمة).

Funnel Introduction

The introductory paragraph of the model essay is a funnel introduction. This introduction is so called because it is shaped like a funnel—wide at the top and narrow at the bottom. It begins with one or two very general sentences about the topic. Each subsequent sentence becomes increasingly focused on the topic until the last sentence, which states very specifically what the essay will be about.

الفقرة التمهيدية لمقال نموذجي هي الفقرة القمعية وسميت بهذا الاسم لطريقة كتابتها الشبيهة بالقمع. فهي فكرة عامة واسعة من الأعلى وتضيق وتتمحور حول الفكرة الأساسية كلما اتجهنا للأسفل. وتكون آخر جملة هي التي تكشف عمّا سيكون موضوع المقال.

Writing a funnel introduction is like focusing a camera with a telephoto lens. You start with a wide picture and gradually narrow the focus so that just one object appears in the camera's viewfinder: your thesis statement.



Model: Funnel Introduction

Moving to a new country can be an exciting, even exhilarating experience. In a new environment, you somehow feel more alive. Seeing new sights, eating new food, hearing the foreign sounds of a new language, and feeling a different climate against your skin stimulate your senses as never before. Soon, however, this sensory bombardment becomes sensory overload. Suddenly, new experiences seem stressful rather than stimulating, and delight turns into discomfort. This is the phenomenon known as culture shock. Culture shock is more than jet lag or homesickness, and it affects nearly everyone who enters a new culture—tourists, business travelers, diplomats, and students alike. Although not everyone experiences culture shock in exactly the same way, many experts agree that it has roughly five stages.