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APPROACHING THE WRITING TOPIC

ESSAY WRITING (PART TWO)

As it was mentioned previously, an essay consists of an introductory paragraph, a number of body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph. The introductory paragraph of the essay was introduced in the previous unit, and now our focus will be on the body paragraphs and concluding paragraph of the essay.

1 BODY PARAGRAPHS

The body paragraphs of an essay contain the supporting details of the essay. There are three points to be considered here. Firstly, the topic sentence must clearly state the content of each paragraph. It must support and expand on an aspect of the topic and controlling idea of the **thesis** statement. Secondly, each body paragraph must develop a point presented in the topic sentence, and clearly expand that topic in detail. Thirdly, there may be a concluding sentence which can either bring the idea of the paragraph to a close or suggest the content of the next paragraph.

Here is an example of a body paragraph:

An important **component** of a computer is the **monitor**. This looks very much like a TV, but of course it doesn't have any channel buttons. **Monitors** come in basically two kinds: black and white, and color. The **monitor** has a screen just like a TV, and on this screen you can **observe** what you are telling the computer to do, such as move words around, draw figures and charts, or play video games. Although the **monitor** isn't necessary to make the computer work, it sure helps you see what you are doing. The **monitor** is, for me, an essential **component** of the computer.

- Topic sentence:** An important **component** of a computer is the **monitor**
Support sentences: This looks are doing.
Concluding sentence: The **monitor** is, for me, an essential **component** of the computer.

2 THE CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH

The concluding paragraph of the essay reminds the readers of the main point of the essay, and it gives them a sense of finality. The concluding paragraph may contain the reworded **thesis** statement, or it may have the summary of the main points of the essay.

Here is an example of a concluding paragraph containing the reworded thesis statement:

Little children are funny creatures to watch, aren't they? But as we laugh, we have to admire, too, because the humorous mistakes are but temporary side trips that children take on the amazingly complicated journey to maturity, a long way from the beginning, where they lay in wonder, silently watching the strangely-shaped spacecraft passing, back and forth, before their infant eyes.

The reworded **thesis** statement: Little children are funny creatures to watch, aren't they?
And here is an example of a concluding paragraph containing the summary of the main points:

All in all, **New Orleans** should definitely be counted as one of the great cities in the United States. Its people are a **diverse** mixture of many **ethnic** groups; the **Vieux Carré** has many interesting sights; and **Mardi Gras** and the **Spring Fiesta**, while very different, offer unique celebrations. For all these reasons, **New Orleans** is a city that **highlights** the southern part of the United States.

The summary of the main points: Its people offer unique celebrations.

Activity

- 1 In the following body paragraph, find the topic sentence, the support sentences, and the concluding sentence (if any).

It is vitally important for a good photograph to have a main center of interest. This main center of interest can be large or small in the frame, but as long as it **contrasts** with its surroundings, it will demand attention. All other **elements** in the photograph are secondary when compared to this main center of interest.

Topic sentence: It is vitally of interest.

Support sentences: This main center demand attention.

Concluding sentence: All other element center of interest.

- 2 In the following concluding paragraph, find the reworded thesis statement or the summary of the main points.

Academic writing requires critical thinking skills, an understanding of the topic, high level vocabulary, and correct grammar. Having these skills is empowering since it has made me a better and more communicative student. I have come a long way since I started college, and I am now proud of the writing that I produce.

Reworded thesis statement: Academic writing and correct grammar.

Summary of the main points: Having these skills more communicative student.

- 3 Outline the following essay by finding its introductory paragraph, body paragraphs, and concluding paragraph. In the introductory paragraph, find the **thesis** statement, and in each body paragraph, find the topic sentence, support sentences, and the concluding paragraph (if any). Finally, in the concluding paragraph find the reworded **thesis** statement or the summary of the main points of the essay.

introductory paragraph

To [The road to success in college is full of obstacles that might interfere with students' reaching their goals.] Despite these obstacles, students can achieve their dream of earning their degree. [They need support from family and friends, strong motivation, and the ability to focus.]



body

To [First, college students need the support of their families to succeed.] If they are lucky, they have families that protect and **nurture** them. Their family members act as helping hands, friends whom they can depend on emotionally. Students need this support system to help them realize their own capacity even when they doubt themselves. For example, because the workload is too great or the exams are too hard, students may get discouraged. Families can encourage them to **persevere**. In addition, tuition and books are very expensive; consequently, some students are forced to work. [If they receive financial assistance from their families, they can **dedicate** all their time to their studies.]

body

To [Students need to keep up the motivation they need to study.] Students have many obligations to fulfill, such as completing homework assignments and research projects, studying for exams, and writing term papers. Many students work after school and arrive home late at night. Only **dedicated** and responsible students will push themselves to finish their work before going to bed. [When the options are to go to a party with friends or stay home and work, only **determined** students will choose to study.]

body

To [Students also need to focus on **realistic** academic goals.] Many students are not aware of the importance of selecting the right college and major. In fact, a wrong decision may result in a waste of time and money. For example, students may have very high expectations and select a major that presents demands they cannot meet. In some cases, they find themselves on a career path they do not even enjoy. As a result, they may have to change their major or **drop out** of college when they realize that they cannot keep up their grades. [The more focused they are on what they want, the better their chances will be to achieve goals.]

concluding paragraph

If students are **enthusiastic** about what they are studying, **realistic** about their academic goals, and receive support from their families, their college journey will be easier. They need to transform themselves into eagles. [An eagle knows how to focus on what it wants and **capture** it even when the distance is great.]

To → topic

The → thesis

Con → concluding paragraph

Su → summary