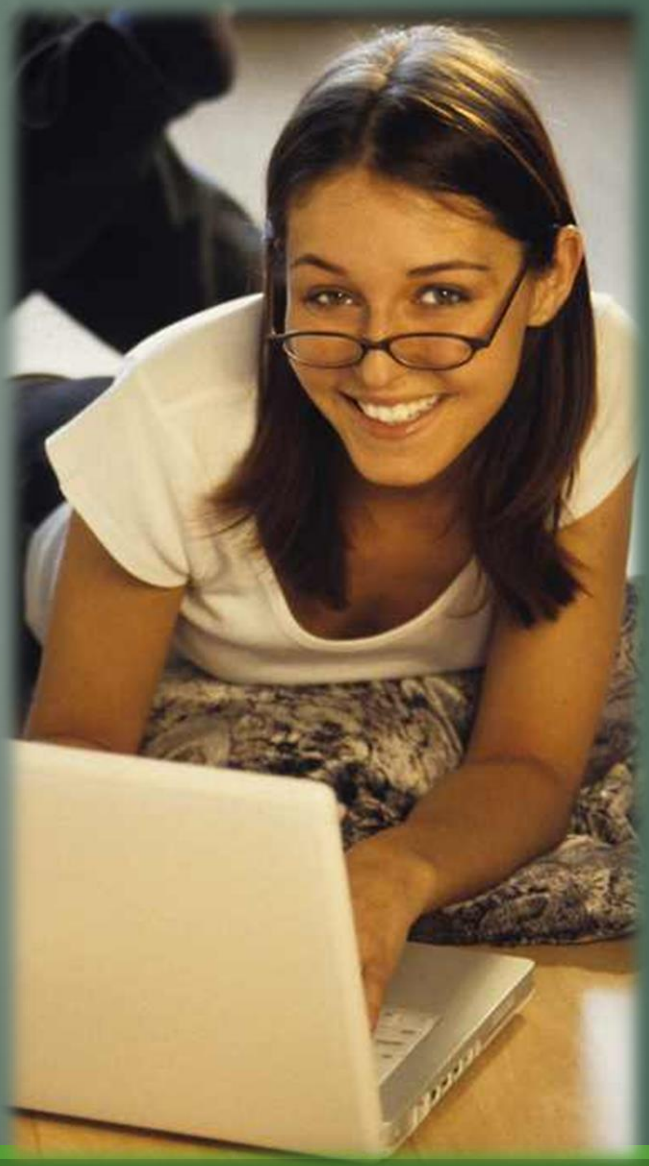
Writing the Body Paragraphs



Before writing the body paragraphs

- ✓ Save your intro and conclusion for last.
- ✓ Remind yourself that this is not the final draft of the paper.
- ✓ Give yourself room to explore and change as you become more confident in your paper.
- ✓ Make sure you have enough notes, ideas, and research to write enough body paragraphs to meet the page or word count of the assignment.

Set up the first draft of each body paragraph like this:

I. Topic sentence
II. Detail
III. Example with evidence
IV. Example with evidence
V. Explanation of the examples and evidence
VI. Explanation of how the contents of the paragraph support the thesis statement

The topic sentence

Just as the thesis statement is the claim for your entire paper, a topic sentence is a claim for your paragraph. It clearly indicates the point you are making in the paragraph.

Example Topic Sentence:

One of the ways cell phones can be used in the classroom is to take pictures of notes that are written on the whiteboard or projected on the screen.

Details

Details are the very specific descriptions that make your point come alive and show your reader you know what you are talking about.

Example of Detail

Manual note taking can be laborious and distracting for students, especially if they are trying to multi task between listening to the lecture, consulting the textbook, and scribbling down messy, unorganized notes all at the same time. Instructors too tend to jot down notes and diagrams quickly, then erase them or click through PowerPoints as if running a race against time.

Examples and evidence

Take examples from your own experience or from specific situations found in your research. Use credible sources to back up your points.

Example:

A Student Services survey of one hundred students at CBC asked students about their style of note taking. Most students responded that they "preferred note packets provided by the instructor" but that if the instructor's teaching style was geared more toward the white board or PowerPoints, they "used their cell phones to take pictures of notes if the instructor permitted" ("Survey 2014"). Professor Peter McHale, noted expert on classroom engagement, points out in his article, "On one hand we have students who lack the soft skills necessary for effective note taking. On the same hand, we have a generation reliant on their digital technology" (214).

Explanation of how evidence supports the point

Example:

The evidence suggests that the viable solution is to let students use their “digital technology” to record or take photos of notes to enable them to be more engaged in healthy classroom discussion and interaction.

Connect back to the thesis statement

Example:

Taking notes is just one of the ways a cell phone can be used wisely in the classroom.

Complete body paragraph

One of the ways cell phones can be used in the classroom is to take pictures of notes written on the whiteboard or projected on the screen. Manual note taking can be laborious and distracting for students, especially if they are trying to multi task between listening to the lecture, consulting the textbook, and scribbling down messy, unorganized notes all at the same time. Instructors too tend to jot down notes and diagrams quickly, then erase them, or click through PowerPoints as if running a race against time. A Student Services survey of one hundred students at CBC asked students about their style of note taking. Most students responded that they "preferred note packets provided by the instructor" but that if the instructor's teaching style was geared more toward the white board or PowerPoints, they "used their cell phones to take pictures of notes if the instructor permitted" ("Survey 2014"). Professor Peter McHale, noted expert on classroom engagement, points out in his article, "On one hand we have students who lack the soft skills necessary for effective note taking. On the same hand, we have a generation reliant on their digital technology" (214). The evidence suggests that the viable solution is to let students use their "digital technology"—or iPhones—to record or take photos of notes to enable them to be more engaged in healthy classroom discussion and interaction. That is just one of the ways a cell phone can be used wisely in the classroom.