

Institute for Excellence in Writing



Advanced Communication Series

- Persuasive Writing & Speaking
- Advanced Note Taking:
A Dynamic Key Word Approach
- Power Tips for Planning & Writing a
College Level Paper

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Persuasive Essay Model

I. Introduction

1. Attention
2. Background info (time, place, context)
3. State 3 topics: A,B,C - *Make the Question Clear*

II. Topic A - facts which are least supportive of your position

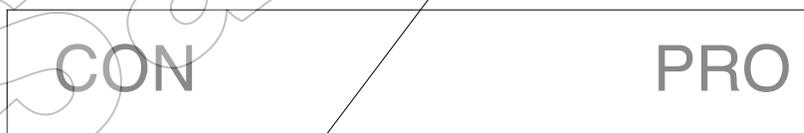
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



Clincher

III. Topic B - balanced, with facts supportive of both sides

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



Clincher

IV. Topic C - facts which most strongly support your position

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



Clincher

V. Conclusion

1. Restate 3 Topics, but...
2. **Argue**: Discredit evidence against your position
3. **Answer question** authoritatively & definitively

TYPICAL THESIS STYLE INTRODUCTION:

The advent of public washrooms, combined with the decline of the cloth handkerchief as a universal accouterment, has gradually brought about the need for disposable towels on an historically unprecedented scale. Every business, factory, office, and school is faced with the need to equip their facilities with a means of drying hands, and sadly, the most prevalent choice today is still the paper towel. However, this extensive use of paper is not only costly, but wasteful of natural resources, destroying millions of trees each year. Trees and the wood they produce are precious, and this mindless squandering of paper and pulp makes no sense when there are other viable alternatives. The reusable cloth rolling towel is one substitute; but clearly, the electric air hand dryer is the better option. It is the most sanitary, the most ecologically friendly, and unquestionably the most economical choice. Institutions, both public and private, should be strongly encouraged, or possibly even required by law, to replace disposable paper towel systems with electric hand dryers at the earliest possible moment.

PERSUASIVE STYLE INTRODUCTION:

With the rapid expansion of public washrooms over the past hundred years, combined with the decline of the cloth handkerchief as a universal accouterment, today's society has seen a gradual increase in the need for disposable towels. Every business, factory, office, and school is faced with the decision of what hand drying system to use in their facilities, and the choices range from traditional paper to washable, reusable cloth rolls and even to electric air-blowing hand dryers. Each of these options has its benefits and detriments, but in making a decision, several factors must be considered, and these clearly include: the economic repercussions, the ecological significance, and the sanitary implications. Paper, because of its ease of use and availability, is by far the most frequently found option today, but can either of the other alternatives become equally as useful? If so, should businesses and public institutions be encouraged or required to make a change?

PERSUASIVE SPEAKING

Know your message

- Notes, key words only
- Rehearsal • Practice constantly, find opportunities
- Strategic presentation (ask question, topics, argue)

Know your audience

- Before - continuity
- During *Relationship - Don't alienate reader*
- After

Know some techniques

- Involvement (questions, voices, hands)
- Allegories, memory devices
- Gestures, "Invisibles," Aids
- Smile / eyes
- Projection
 - voice, - spirit *Goal: Each person: "to me"*
- Humor, stories, silence

Know how to be flexible

- Willing to change, short notice
- Mistake is opportunity

NOTE TAKING EXERCISE #1 - Salt Facts

Oceans are filled with salt water. Rivers and rainwater wash salty minerals from the land to the sea. Some salts are used by sea animals to build their shells. The saltiest waters are small inland seas like the Dead Sea in Israel which is so salty that fish cannot live in it. Saltier water makes it easy for humans to float. If all the seas dried up, there would be enough salt left to build a wall around the Equator 169 miles high and 1 mile thick.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Salt was once extremely valuable. It is an essential nutrient for human life. At one time, it could be traded for gold, ounce for ounce. Long ago in China, some money coins were actually made of salt. Before mining technology was developed, salt could be found only near oceans, so it was rare. When heating with coal became common, salt was more efficiently extracted from sea water. Now salt is not very expensive, although it still is essential for life.

NOTE TAKING EXERCISE #2 - The Red Squirrel

The red squirrel has a multitude of enemies. It is hunted by the bobcat, lynx, mink, weasel, hawk and owl. Even large fish, such as the muskie and pike, may threaten the squirrel if it remains too close to the water. With so many enemies, it must always be cautious and alert to the presence of danger. When it discovers a predator or intruder, it makes a piercing, shrill sound which serves as an alarm for many other forest creatures. At the sound of the red squirrel's signal, every ear within a quarter of a mile is attuned and aware of the potential danger.

The red squirrel eats almost every kind of food, although pine cones are its definite favorite. One individual squirrel may devour over one hundred pounds of seeds, cones, nuts, berries, fruits and insects each year. Even mushrooms that are poisonous to man can be a part of the squirrel's diet. In the spring, this normally herbivorous rodent may become carnivorous, feeding on bird's eggs and newly hatched chicks. Their favorite snack is the sap of maple or birch trees, and if there is no natural break in the tree bark, the squirrel will chew a small round hole in the top of a branch. When the hole fills with the sweet syrup, the squirrel happily laps it up.

This busy animal is known as the "Johnny Appleseed" of pine trees, because his method of food storage results in the planting of many new trees. When it classifies its food into two categories, hard or soft, it stores the items in different locations. Soft items, such as berries and mushrooms, are stored in a tree fork or hollow limb, but hard items such as nuts and seeds, are usually buried. Since the red squirrel stores more food than it needs, each spring the unused seeds and nuts germinate in the warm soil and develop into a new crop of seedlings.

NOTETAKING EXERCISE #3 - Chickens & Music

*By David George Gordon
Special to ABCNEWS.com*

Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast ... or wing or thigh or drumstick. So says Bryan Jones of Edinburgh's Roslin Institute, the United Kingdom's foremost authority on quality of life improvements for chickens.

Last year, Jones stunned the world with his discovery that poultry could benefit from daily exposure to animated images on computer monitors. Especially soothing to hens, he determined, was String Theory—one of the more engaging screensavers in the popular After Dark software package.

This year, Jones is promoting the use of audio as well as video stimuli in the henhouse. At a recent international conference of poultry farmers in Atlanta, Ga., he announced that birds are more content and egg production may increase if farmers play music over loudspeakers.

To arrive at this conclusion, Jones surveyed more than 100 poultry farmers about the conditions in which their captive flocks were kept. He found that 46 percent of the farmers routinely played music to their birds.

Even more significant, according to Jones, was that the vast majority of this group felt that music brought noticeable benefits to their egg-laying operations:

90 percent of those surveyed said their chickens were more calm when serenaded.

More than half reported that music made their birds less aggressive toward one another.

A fifth maintained that music improved the overall health of their flocks.

16 percent noticed a rise in egg production after musical selections were piped in.

"Of the 54 percent of the farmers who said they weren't playing music to their flocks, 90 percent are now saying they will do so," says Jones.

Of the poultry farmers polled, many believed that certain types of music were more beneficial than others. Classical and acoustic music yielded the most positive results. Heavy metal, opera and jazz were regarded as too rough on the birds' tender ears.

The bottom line is that chickens don't fare well in static, sterile environments, devoid of interesting sights and sounds, Jones suggested.

While they don't tap their toes to the beat or cluck along with the lyrics, chickens benefit in at least two important ways. The sound provides additional stimulation, and by exposing the birds to a range of noises, they get used to unfamiliar sounds — like slamming doors or airplanes passing overhead — that might otherwise panic the chickens.

"The basic premise works for all kinds of farm animals, not just chickens," says Jones. "But for some reason, people are much more inclined to think that playing music for dairy cows is acceptable. With chickens, they find the whole idea rather weird."

Notes from “Music & Chickens” (practice):

Sample

NOTETAKING EXERCISE #4 - Voodoo Mice

Numerous studies have been done to determine how sound affects brain function and intelligence. One such experiment, using three groups of mice was performed in 1989 by Dr. Harvey Bird and Dr. Gervasia Shrekenberg at Farleigh Dickison University in New Jersey.

Three groups of mice, *MusMUSculus*, were raised from birth in one of three auditory environments. The “control” group grew in total silence. The first experimental group (labeled the “harmonic” group) grew up “listening” to Strauss waltzes, while another experimental group (labeled “disharmonic”) was subjected to recordings of ceremonial voodoo drum beats. Voodoo drum is considered to be “arhythmic,” meaning that there are no complex rhythmic patterns, only persistent and continuous beats. During the course of the experiment, observations of the behavior of the mice showed little difference between the control group and those exposed to waltzes. The voodoo drum group, however, became extremely aggressive and ultimately cannibalistic; consequently the experiment had to be shortened.

When the mice were sacrificed and their brain tissue examined under a microscope, the “harmonic” mice showed increased neural connections, more symmetrical dendrite growth and more organized cell networks when compared with the control group.

Surprising to the scientists, however, was the very abnormal and disorganized brain cell growth in the brains of the “disharmonic” mice, indicating a highly pathological condition. Dendrite growth in this group appeared erratic and excessive, and researchers Bird and Schrekenberg theorized that the neurons of the mice in the “voodoo” group were growing wildly, desperately but unsuccessfully attempting to make neural connections, in order to overcome or compensate for the continuous bombardment of the unnatural auditory stimulation.

Although not directly bearing on any particular style of music, this experiment proved that significant neurophysiological changes—either beneficial or detrimental—can occur in the brains of mammals as a result of “harmonic” or “disharmonic” auditory stimulation.

Notes from “Voodoo Mice” (practice):

Sample

Notes from live lecture on “Grizzly Bears” (practice):

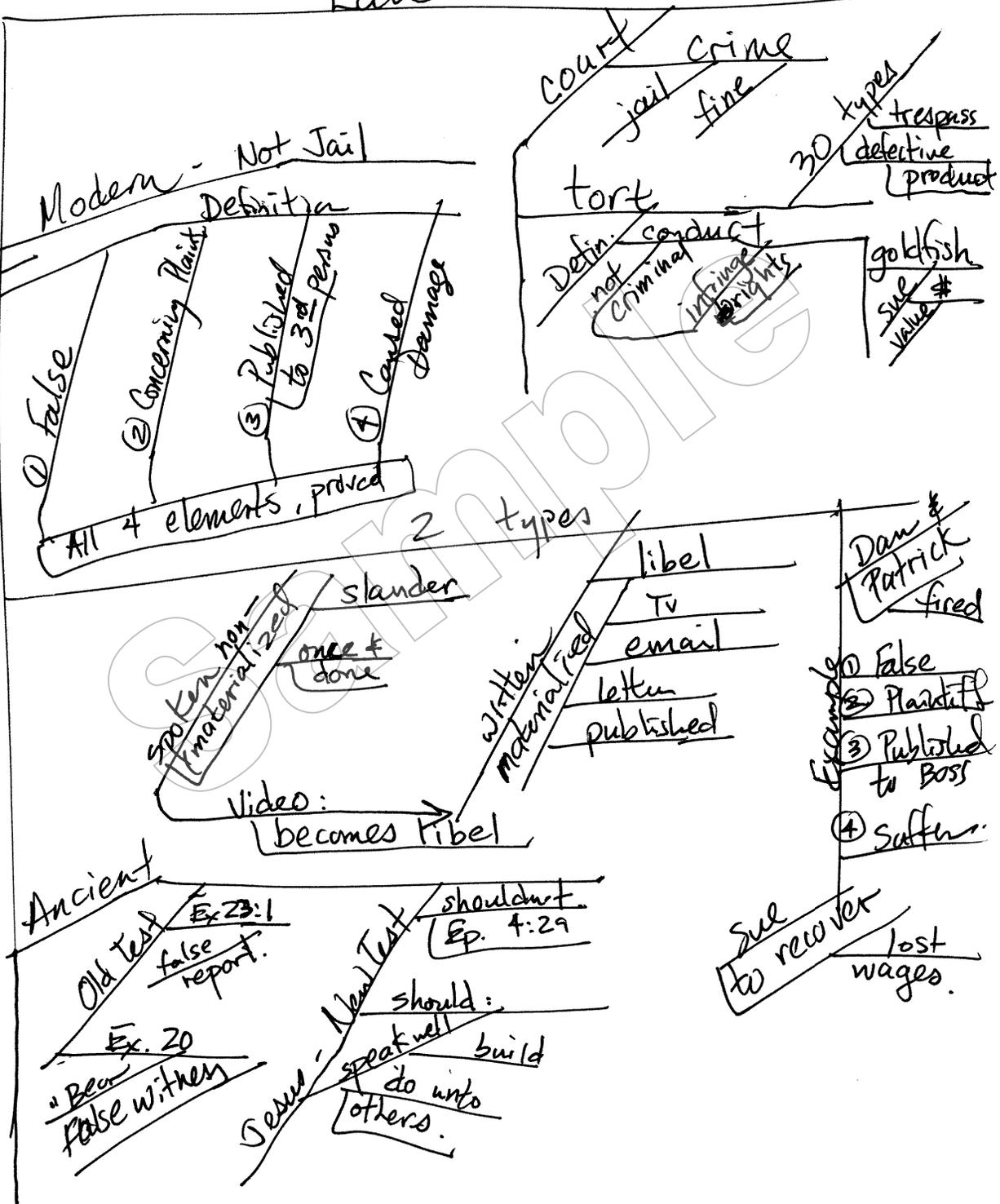
Sample

Notes from live lecture on “Defamation” (practice):

Sample

Law

Tort: Defamation



Power Tips for Planning and Writing a College Level Paper

I. Types of Papers; different strategies

- Essay Exams - timed & supervised
 - preparation: know subject, practice ahead (on past questions if possible).
 - speed: must be legible, but not excessively neat
 - organization: short and simple introductions, obvious thesis, logical topics
 - completion: plan reasonably– short but complete is better than long & unfinished
 - proofing: save time for it, don't make major changes, no rewrite possible
- Short Papers (usually 2-6 pages)
 - purpose: to show that you've done reading, thinking
 - should include ideas from readings, class discussions
 - doesn't generally require radically original ideas
 - summary with commentary
 - stress on organization, logical presentation, and coherence
- Term Papers (7-15 pages)
 - major part of grade
 - purpose: to demonstrate ability to research and discuss subject within discipline
 - stress on organization, supportive evidence, documentation, conclusion
 - original observations, conclusions, very helpful

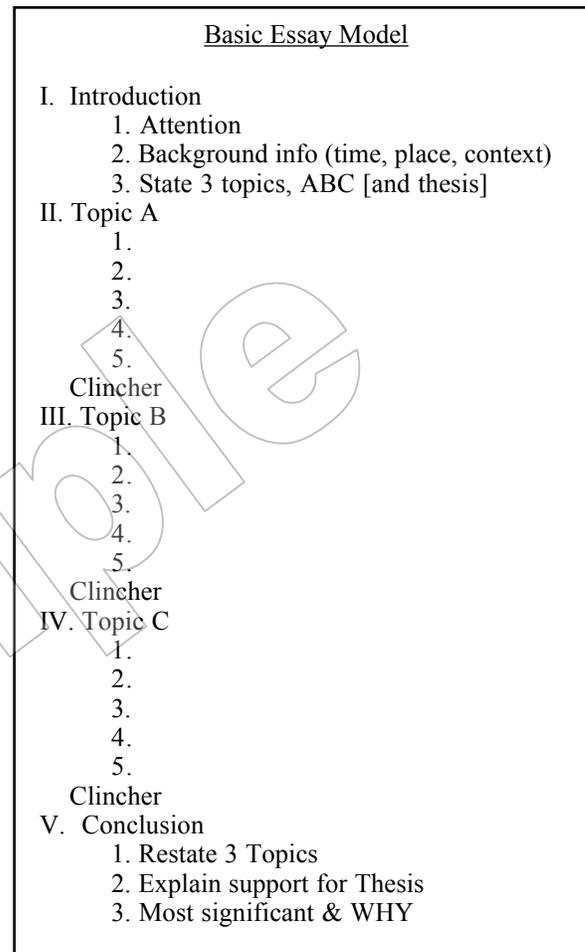
II. Analyzing the Assignment

- Instructor Guidelines: extremely important - clarify with instructor if necessary
 - Length (usually # of pages)
 - transfer into # of words, and then to # of paragraphs to help plan structure
 - “12 pt. Times w/ 1 inch margins double spaced”
 - = ~350 words/pg., which = 3 ¶ of 100-120 words, or 2¶ of 160-180 words
 - Therefore, 4-5 pages = 12-15 short ¶ or 8-10 long ones; know your average
 - Purpose: follow exact wording of assignment very carefully;
translate into structure and style. See Examples. (end of handout)
 - Documentation Format
 - Samples (if available)
 - Paragraph length and structure
 - length and quantity of footnotes
 - use of stylistic techniques
 - tone of title, introduction, conclusion
- Discipline (Science/History/English/Social Sciences, etc.)
 - Science - facts, supportive evidence, logical argument, simple style
 - History/Humanities - unusual subject, research, quotes, documentation, length
 - English/ Literature - class discussion, quotes, interesting language, boldness
 - Social Sciences - ideas, documentation, application, opinion

- Audience (professor, marker, committee, peers)
See: Espionage method of doing “good” writing for everyone (below)

III. Selecting a Structure to meet the need:

- Basic Essay Model
- Adapting the model for:
 - length (# pages = paragraphs)
 - # ¶ = # topics
 - “expanded” essay (6-7 ¶)
 - “super” essay (12-16 ¶)
 - purpose:
 - summary
 - thesis
 - persuasive
 - argumentative
- Designing a new model
 - meet the assignment description
 - related, continued or sub- topics

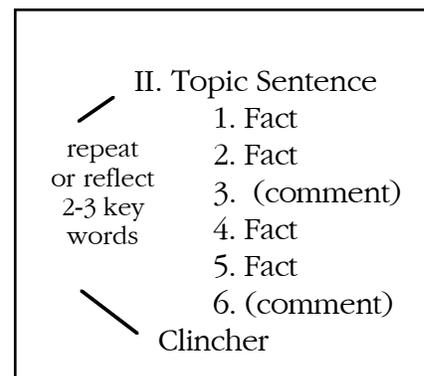


IV. Planning the paper

- Read on subject, develop thesis
- Find and list possible topics
- Select topics which support thesis
- Notes on topics
- List possible quotes
- Outline body paragraphs, logical order

V. Body paragraphs

- Topic/Clincher rule for “cohesive” topical paragraphs
- Follow assignment guidelines, models
- Make clear, easy to follow statements
- Have logical progressions
- Avoid confusing or convoluted sentence structures
- Use smooth transitions, “transitional clinchers”
(repeat or reflect 2-3 key words from topic, AND repeat or reflect 1-2 key words from next ¶ topic)



VII. Introduction and Conclusion

- Clearly state thesis (or question, if persuasive) and introduce topics
- Clearly connect topics to each other and state reasoning

NOTES:

Sample

VIII. Rewriting

- Get 2nd opinion – editor, friend, teacher
- Adjust style to meet needs, goals, models
- Vary sentence patterns, add decorations, triples as appropriate

- Openers:
1. subject
 2. prepositional
 3. -ly
 4. -ing , - ed,
 5. clausal , (when, while, where, since, as, if, although, because)
 6. very short sentence (2-5 words)

Decorations:

Question, Conversation/Quotation, Short staccato sentences, Dramatic opening
Simile - Metaphor, Alliteration, Triple patterns

- Use checklists (see samples)

IX. Proofing

- Techniques for editing
 - Read out loud!
 - Read backwards
 - Look for one problem at a time
 - Print and read in different font size
 - Hire an editor
- Dangers of grammar checkers, spell checkers

X. Footnotes & documentation

- Four types: Commentary, Paraphrase, Integrated, Inset (block)
- Precise format (MLA, APA, CEE, Chicago, etc.)
- Varies from department to department, even professor to professor

XI. Resources

- *Transitional Words & Expressions* by Victor Pellegrino (Maui Arthoughts)
- *Keys for Writers: A Brief Handbook* by Ann Raimis
- *The Little, Brown Essential Handbook for Writers* by Jane Aaron

Examples of Actual College and University Assignments:

SAMPLE ASSIGNMENT #1

HUM103/Austin
20 possible points

Write a 1-2 page profile on one of the Greek/Roman or Norse gods or goddesses. You need not select one of the twelve Olympians. Use Bulfinch's *Greek and Roman Myths* and any other sources you have available, such as *The Metamorphoses of Ovid* as sources for your paper. Be sure to document all sources. I also recommend the following web site:
www.pantheon.org/mythica/areas/

How to write a profile: Include a short biographical sketch for the Greek/Roman god or goddess of your choice, including parentage, place of birth, and physical description. Find at least two stories about your chosen deity. End your profile with a couple of sentences that explain the function of your chosen figure for Greek (or Roman) culture. Athena, for example, represents wisdom, something that all kings need. Being a woman and Zeus's favorite child, she also represents the need for balance between the masculine and feminine principles. In fact, as goddess of civilization and war (defensive, not offensive) she contains and, hence, reconciles a duality.

Formatting requirements: Use 1-inch margins and 12-point font. Double space throughout your paper. Do not include a title page. You may either footnote, or include a bibliography and in-text citations, using MLA or APA guidelines.

Grading Criteria:

- Include a vivid description
- Develop your portrait, using sufficient details to describe the character and actions of the deity, including important relationships.
- Summarize and paraphrase (put into your own words) the stories you include. You may include one short (not block) quotation.
- Write clearly and coherently, keeping in mind that paragraphs require topic sentences. Use transitions to show the connection between your points.
- Don't be afraid to be creative. You are welcome to include illustrations.

SAMPLE ASSIGNMENT #2

General Chemistry II Writing Assignment:

Your writing assignment is one of the following options:
Convince the President that one particular environmental concern should have highest priority.
Convince a classmate that chemistry is necessary to understand environmental issues.

Some general guidelines <<http://niagara.rivier.edu/staff/dburgess/web/writing.htm>> are available. This is an argumentative paper and the logic must be readily apparent. I have included here a few rough sketches or examples of some basic kinds of arguments that could be made. These are only examples, that may or may not be sound, and many other possibilities exist. Also, it may be necessary to construct complex arguments by arguing for one or more of the premises

Chemistry is required to understand the ozone problem.
Chemistry is required to understand the acid rain problem.
Chemistry is required to understand the air pollution problem. Etc.
Ozone, acid rain, air pollution, etc. are the environmental issues.
Therefore, chemistry is required to understand the environmental issues.

Ozone, acid rain, air pollution, etc. are the environmental issues.
If chemistry is required to understand ozone, acid rain, air pollution, etc., then chemistry is required to understand the environmental issues.
Chemistry is required to understand ozone, acid rain, air pollution, etc.
Therefore, chemistry is required to understand the environmental issues.

Ozone causes A, B, C.
Acid rain causes A, D, E.
Air pollution causes D, E, F.
A, B, and C endanger life as we know it.
The environmental issue that endangers life as we know it should be the highest priority.
Only ozone causes A, B, and C.
Therefore, ozone should be the highest priority environmental issue.

Ozone has the greatest impact on life.
The problem that has the greatest impact on life should be the highest priority.
Therefore, ozone should be the highest priority.

<http://niagara.rivier.edu/staff/dburgess/web/writing.htm>

FIRST PARAGRAPH

The first paragraph contains the thesis statement with the main points (premises) that support the thesis.

- P1 Main premise directly supporting the thesis statement.
- P2 Another main premise directly supporting the thesis statement.
- P3 Another main premise directly supporting the thesis statement.
- .
- C Conclusion. The conclusion is the thesis statement.

SECOND PARAGRAPH

The second paragraph contains support for the first main premise (P1) of the thesis statement.

- P1a Premise supporting the first main premise.
- P1b Another premise supporting the first main premise.
- .
- C1 The conclusion in this paragraph is the first main premise (P1) of the thesis statement.

THIRD PARAGRAPH

The third paragraph contains support for the second main premise (P2) of the thesis statement.

- P2a Premise supporting the second main premise.
- P2b Another premise supporting the second main premise.
- .
- C2 The conclusion in this paragraph is the second main premise (P2) of the thesis statement.

NEXT PARAGRAPH.

- . This process of providing arguments for each of the main premises in the first paragraph is continued until all premises have been addressed.

LAST PARAGRAPH

The last paragraph summarizes what has been done and restates the basic argument for the thesis statement as given in the first paragraph. The first paragraph proposes the thesis while this paragraph concludes that the thesis must be true.

SAMPLE ASSIGNMENT #3

English 101.07 & 101.15
Fall 2000
Matthew Colley, Instructor

FINAL PAPER - Literary Analysis

Your final task is to write a brief four page paper on Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. In our class discussions we have talked about a number of different ways of looking at the novel, as well as some of the many themes. You may write your paper on any aspect of the novel that interests you. Remember that you must come up with a thesis, which in this case is your opinion about one of the issues in the book, and then defend that thesis/opinion with evidence from the novel. Be sure you cite and quote your material correctly. As always, proofread carefully for spelling and grammar errors. This paper is to be typed and double-spaced, with one-inch margins on all sides.

SAMPLE ASSIGNMENT #4

Library Project
General Ed. 110-1
Fall 2000

[Check out: <http://www.wsu.edu/~brians/errors/index.html>]

Select a person, place or thing that intrigues you. If you select a person, try to avoid writing a biography of him/her – rather, choose some aspect of the individual's life or thinking that merits interest or historical importance before 1500. Similarly, it will be easier to focus on a smaller geographic area, e.g. Actium, rather than on a huge one like Rome. A thing could be anything from a type of art to the development of a musical instrument to the use of a new technology, e.g., the plow.

After completing your research, write a three-page paper, typed double-spaced, 12-point type. Please note the following time schedule for turning in portions of the library project:

Library Resource Sheets and Outlines Due Sept. 8
Library Projects in duplicate Due Sept. 15

SAMPLE ASSIGNMENT #5

English 209
Paper Number Two
Length: 3 pages

Write a paper explicating William Wordsworth's "Michael," discussing these two questions:

In what ways is "Michael" a pastoral poem (or not one)?

What does the pile of stones symbolize?

You might concentrate more on one of these topics than the other, but mention both. Be sure to consider the poem, the editor's notes, the Abram's *Glossary*, and the pastoral as discussed in class.

Here are a few suggestions: Give the paper a title of your own. In the opening paragraph, give the author's full name and the poem's full title, and make a clear statement of the thesis you will demonstrate. Develop paragraphs fully; think in terms of at least four or five sentences for each. Use some quotations. Here is a sample paragraph illustrating the use of poetry quotations in an essay on another Wordsworth poem:

SAMPLE

Perceptions of Nature in "Tintern Abbey"

In "Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey," William Wordsworth recounts spiritual experiences that begin with observations of nature but culminate in inner growth. Returning to the banks of the Wye River after five years spent away in cities, he realizes that he has been sustained during his absence by memories of the natural beauty of the landscape near Tintern Abbey. He has at times been transported into a kind of trance by contemplation of such beauty, and he describes a condition in which "we are laid asleep/ In body, and become a living soul" (lines 44-45). At such times, he believes, we are able "to see into the life of things" (lines 44-45, 49); and the creative spirit in nature turns out to be everywhere—in "setting suns," in the "living air," and even "in the mind of man" (lines 97-99). Since he has learned to depend on this presence, knowing that "Nature never did betray/ The heart that loved her" (lines 122-123), he can confidently recommend to his sister that she, too, should find in nature a refuge from life's troubles as she grows older:

If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me
And these my exhortations! (lines 138-146)

His optimism comes from a belief in nature as the "nurse/ The guide, the guardian of [his] heart" and of his "moral being" (lines 109-111), and he is certain that his sister will feel the same.