

Essay Structure Template

Theme: Finding Certainty in Uncertainty

Note:

This essay is based entirely on real events. It focuses not on recounting hardship, but on how those experiences shaped my sense of agency, identity, and long-term academic direction.

I. Introduction — Confronting Uncertainty

Purpose: Establish the core challenge

- Arrival at the University of Toronto as an international student
- Shortly after enrollment, experienced a highly convincing phone-based scam
- No financial loss, but temporary loss of digital autonomy and decision-making freedom
- First direct encounter with how external uncertainty can threaten personal agency

Key message:

I entered university at a moment when the world felt unpredictable, and my sense of control over my own life was disrupted.

II. Context — Limited Energy, Real Constraints

Purpose: Explain the conditions under which choices were made

- Physical and psychological strain (e.g., insomnia, headaches, nausea)
- Limited cognitive and emotional capacity
- Clear awareness that GPA and coursework mattered

Key message:

With limited energy, I had to choose carefully where to invest my focus.

III. Choice — Building Certainty Through Quantitative Research

Purpose: The turning point of agency

- Chose to develop *Leviathan*, a self-directed quantitative real estate model
- Quantitative research offered:
 - structure
 - logical consistency
 - verifiability
 - independence from external narratives

Core framing:

Leviathan was not an escape from uncertainty, but a deliberate way to engage with it on my own terms.

IV. Transformation — Reconstructing Identity

Purpose: Show internal growth, not technical detail

- As the model took shape, uncertainty became something I could analyze and bound
- Learned to reason about failure, regime shifts, and risk
- Regained a stable sense of identity grounded in logic and accountability

Key message:

Through this process, I rebuilt a predictable relationship with myself.

V. Reflection — Cost and Maturity

Purpose: Demonstrate responsibility and growth

- Acknowledge trade-offs, including GPA impact
- Recognize that the approach was intense and not sustainable long-term
- Gained clarity on how to integrate passion within academic structure

Key message:

The experience taught me how to channel intensity more responsibly going forward.

VI. Conclusion — Forward Direction

Purpose: Tie experience to future academic goals

- Seeking academic environments that value rigor, independence, and intellectual accountability
- Commitment to building systems that make sense of uncertainty rather than avoiding it

Closing idea:

I now approach uncertainty not as something to fear, but as something to structure, model, and engage with deliberately.

One-line positioning summary

This essay presents real experiences as the catalyst for developing a stable intellectual identity through quantitative research, emphasizing agency, maturity, and long-term direction.