

# Basic Essay Mechanics

SAT Intensive 2019

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# Section 1: Organization

- ▶ 5 paragraph paper.
  - ▶ Introduction
  - ▶ Body Paragraph 1
  - ▶ Body Paragraph 2
  - ▶ Body Paragraph 3
  - ▶ Conclusion

# Introduction (Section 1)



2-5 sentences long.



1-2 sentences about central claim in passage.



1 sentence about target audience.



1-2 sentence *specific* thesis statement.

# Body Paragraphs (Section 1)

6-10 sentences long.

## Topic sentences

- Should link to thesis statement by repeating key words.
- Should say what your paragraph will be about.
- Should link the previous body paragraph to the next one.

## Body sentences

- 3-4 sentences to provide evidence in the form of quotes, paraphrasing.
- Each paragraph should have 1-2 quotes (no more than 2).
- 3-4 sentences to explain how that evidence convinces reader.


# Conclusion (Section 1)

2-4 sentences long.

Repeat thesis statement in different words (1-2 sentences).

Mention how your main examples worked to show your thesis statement.

## Section 2: Mechanics and Style



- ▶ Good grammar.
- ▶ Word choice.

# Grammar (Section 2)

## Verb errors

- Subject-verb agreement
- Tense errors

## Punctuation errors

## Sentence errors

- Run-on sentences
- Fragments
- Dangling Modifiers

## Vague pronouns

# Setting your Style (Section 2)

Intro paragraph is where style is set.

Tone: didactic, condescending, satirical, empirical, emphatic, etc.

Register: formal, informal, professional, quotidian, etc.



# Word Choice (Section 2)



Avoid using  
evaluative terms  
in intro.

Effective, ineffective,  
successfully, good, bad,  
etc.



Avoid using vague  
statements.

Clarify when discussing  
author's:

- Tone
- Diction
- Imagery
- Reasoning



Avoid being  
informal.

No contractions  
No slang  
No abbreviations

## More Word Choice (Section 2)

Avoid being repetitive.

- Proofreading.
- Wide vocabulary.
- Easier at end than at beginning.

Avoid describing, but not naming rhetorical devices.

- If you see logos, say it's logos, etc.
- More concise this way.

## Section 3: Analysis

- ▶ See presentation on rhetorical triangle.
- ▶ <https://literarydevices.net>