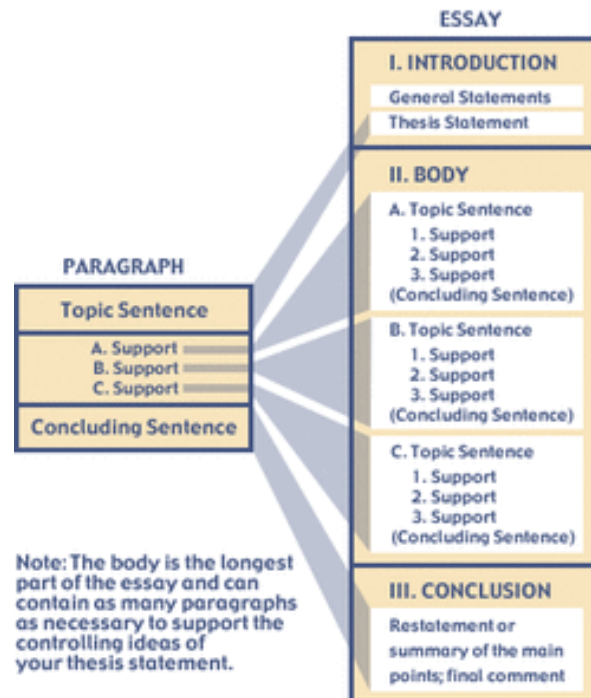# FROM PARAGRAPH TO PAPER

The diagram below shows the parallels between the structure of a paragraph and the structure of a whole essay, article or paper. Writing from an outline is a good way of ensuring balanced distribution of content and making sure you don't forget any important points.

The structure of an essay

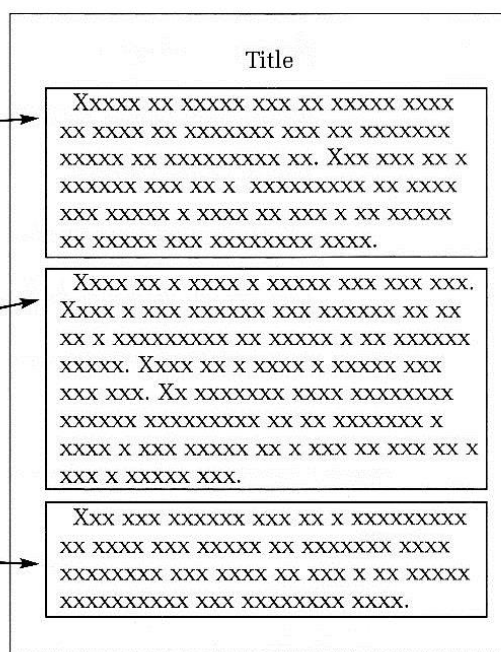↻ **The three main parts of an essay**

The introduction
This is the first paragraph of an essay. It explains the topic with general ideas. It also has a *thesis statement*. This is a sentence that gives the main idea. It usually comes at or near the end of the paragraph.

The main body
These are the paragraphs that explain and support the thesis statement and come between the introduction and the conclusion. There must be one or more paragraphs in the main body of an essay.

The conclusion
This is the last paragraph of an essay. It summarises or restates the thesis and the supporting ideas of the essay.

TASK 1: <u>COMPLETE A SIMPLE OUTLINE</u>

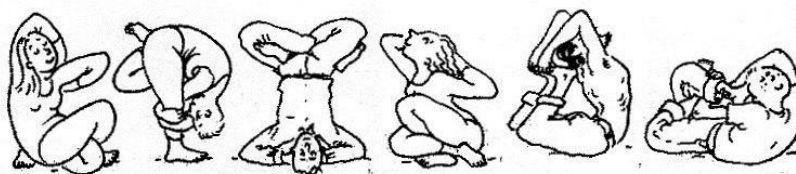**3** Label each statement T for thesis statement, M for main idea, S for supporting point, or C for conclusion.

Title: The Benefits of Yoga

a. .... Develops clear thinking

b. .... Physical benefits

c. .... Improves concentration

d. .... Reduces fear, anger, and worry

e. .... Mental benefits

f. .... Improves blood circulation

g. .... Improves digestion

h. .... Helps you feel calm and peaceful

i. .... Develops self-confidence

j. .... Doing yoga regularly can be good for your mind, your body, and your emotions.

k. .... Makes you strong and flexible

l. .... Therefore, to build mental, physical, and emotional health, consider doing yoga.

m. .... Emotional benefits

4 Arrange the ideas in exercise 3 above into an outline. Compare your finished outline with a partner.

I. ....

II. ....

   A. ....

   B. ....

III. ....

   A. ....

   B. ....

   C. ....

IV. ....

   A. ....

   B. ....

   C. ....

V. ....

TASK 2: <u>Read a short essay and complete the outline for it.</u>

Changing English: the African American Influence

If you ask average Americans where their language comes from, they will probably say 'England'. However, English vocabulary has also been influenced by other countries and groups of people. Some words are borrowed from other languages, such as *typhoon*, which originally came from the Chinese word, 'tai-fung', meaning 'big wind'. *Skunk*, the name of a small, smelly, black-and-white animal, came to English from a Native American language. African Americans, too, have both contributed new words to English and changed the meanings of some existing words.

African Americans, many of whose ancestors were brought to the States as slaves hundreds of years ago, have introduced a number of words to English from languages that they spoke in their native countries. The common English word *OK* is used around the world today, but it was not always part of English vocabulary. One theory is that slaves in America used a phrase in their own language that sounded like *OK* to mean 'all right'. Americans heard the phrase and started using it. Today, almost everyone in the world uses *OK* to mean 'all right'. Another good example of a 'new' word is the word *jazz*. African American musicians living in the United States began playing jazz music in the city of New Orleans, and they used the word *jass* or *jazz* to describe the music and certain kinds of dancing. No one is sure where the word originally came from, but as jazz music became more and more popular, the word *jazz* became a common English word.

The meanings of words sometimes change over time. The word *cool* is a good example. *Cool* has been used in English for a long time to describe a temperature that is 'not warm but not too cold' or to describe a person who is 'calm or unemotional'. However, an additional meaning was given to the word *cool* in the past 100 years. Just like the word *jazz*, African American musicians used the word *cool* to describe the music they were playing. For them, *cool* meant 'good'. As jazz music and other forms of music played by African American musicians became popular, more and more people started to use the word *cool* in conversation. Today, it is still a commonly used word, especially by younger people, to mean 'good' or 'great'. A word with the opposite meaning of *cool* is *square*. Square is, of course, a shape, but it also is used to describe a person who is not cool. This may be because a person who is too old-fashioned and not flexible is like a shape with four straight sides and four corners.

English owes some of its interesting and colourful vocabulary to African Americans. Existing ethnic groups in the United States as well as new immigrants will surely continue to bring new words to English and give fresh meanings to existing words. Who knows what the 'cool' words of tomorrow will be?

INTRODUCTION
THESIS STATEMENT: _____

    BODY PARAGRAPH 1
    TOPIC SENTENCE: _____
    SUPPORT 1: _____
    SUPPORT 2: _____

    BODY PARAGRAPH 2
    TOPIC SENTENCE: _____
    SUPPORT 1: _____
    SUPPORT 2: _____

CONCLUSION
RESTATEMENT OF THESIS: _____

TASK 3: Now analyse the structure and organization of the PDF article 'Making science a desirable career' and answer the questions below.

INTRODUCTION

    1. **What is the purpose of the introductory statements?**
    2. **What is the thesis statement?**

BODY PARAGRAPH 1

    1. **What is the topic sentence?**
    2. **What kind of support is provided and what is its purpose?**
    3. **Is there a concluding sentence? What is its purpose?**
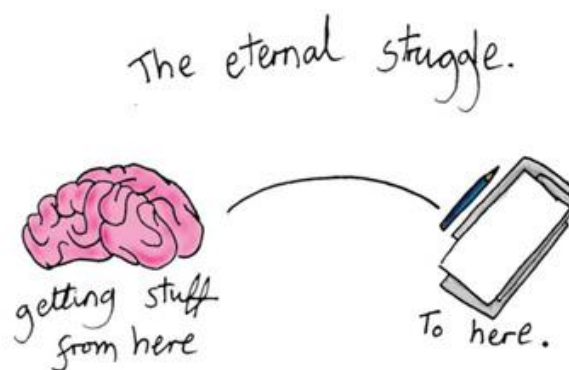
Now answer the above questions for body paragraphs 2, 3 and 4.

CONCLUSION

    1 **Is the thesis statement reiterated/echoed in the conclusion?**
    2 **What is the purpose of the other sentence(s) in the conclusion?**

REFERENCE AND PRACTICE …
Structure of an argument paper
    ✓ https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/owlprint/724/
Writing introductions
    ✓ http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/intros.htm
    ✓ http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/introductions/
Writing thesis statements
    ✓ http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/thesis_statement.shtml
    ✓ http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop/writers/tips/thesis/
    ✓ http://depts.washington.edu/pswrite/thesisstmt.html

HOMEWORK

1. **STUDY** the information and advice for structuring an argument paper, and writing introductions and thesis statements from the **REFERENCE AND PRACTICE** section.

2. Choose one of the <u>**argument essay prompts**</u> below and **WRITE** an introduction paragraph beginning with introductory statements and finishing with a strong thesis statement identifying your personal stance on the matter. You may wish/need to spend some time researching your chosen topic.

The eternal struggle.

getting stuff from here

To here.

<u>Argument essay prompts</u>

1   Contemporary written communications between friends and family are now overwhelmingly digital (emails, text messages, social network posts) and few people under the age of 50 can remember when they last drafted or received a handwritten letter. Should the lost art of paper-and-pen letter-writing be revived? Why (not)?

2   Educational technology experts say that tablet computers combining educational software and video-gaming technology should be used in schools from an increasingly young age. They argue that such technology accelerates and incentivises learning by making it fun and can be closely tailored to individual needs. They predict that "game-based learning" will be one of the major trends in education in the next five years. Do you think this is a positive or negative trend? Why?

3   In June 2013 Edward Snowden revealed that the US National Security Agency was running a clandestine mass electronic surveillance programme, known as PRISM, with the cooperation of telecommunications companies and European governments. In the name of national (and international) security the programme allowed NSA analysts to "listen in" to millions of telephone, email and internet communications around the world without judicial authorisation. To what extent do you think government surveillance of individuals' private communications is justifiable?

<u>**Don't forget … the SEVEN STAGES of the WRITING PROCESS**</u>

PLANNING	DRAFTING	REVISING
1. Choose a topic	4. Write the first draft	5. Edit and revise
2. Generate ideas		6. Proofread
3. Create an outline		**7.** Submit