Read the following articles:

* <http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/ransomware-europe-russia-ukraine-petya-bitcoin-1.4179683>
* <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/oshawa-hospital-cyberattack-1.4114758>
* <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2017/05/13/ontario-health-ministry-on-high-alert-amid-global-cyberattack.html>

Guidelines for writing a supported opinion paragraph (SOP)

* + <http://schools.peelschools.org/sec/fletchersmeadow/studentlife/OSSLTprep/Documents/Sample_%20Writing%20a%20Supported%20opinion%20paragraph.pdf>

**Level 1: Ransomware Basics**

1. What is a ransomware attack?

It is malicious software that locks up computer files with all-but-unbreakable encryption and then demands a ransom for its release.

1. How does ransomwhare work and what does it affect?

The malware appears to require direct contact between computer networks.But once activated, the virus can automatically and freely distribute itself on your network. It has the ability to and has paralyzed some hospitals, government offices and major multinational corporations. This shows that malicious programs can bring daily life to a halt.

**Level 2: Canada & Other Countries**

1. What was affected in Canada in the articles above?

A Canadian intelligence agency, said in a statement Saturday that the federal government's computer networks do not appear to have been affected by the attack. However, Lakeridge Health — one of Ontario's largest community hospitals — said it appeared the ransomware threatened its computer system, but a spokesman said the facility's system was able to deflect the attack. Ontario’s health ministry is on high alert to ensure that computer systems at the province’s 145 hospitals remain secure

1. How badly was Canada affected?

Canada was not affected as badly as other countries. Only one hospital was affected in this attack, but even that hospital was able to fight off the attack. Moving forward, The ministry has put all hospitals to a software update, which protects against ransomware infections. The ministry was ready for this with an emergency management protocol for cybersecurity threats. The hospitals are currently updating their systems. Overall, in comparison to other countries, Canada was not badly affected.

1. What other countries were affected?

## Victims include hospitals, government offices and major corporations, from Ukraine to U.S.

* Spread all over Europe

## Ukraine and Russia were hardest hit.

## In the United States, the malware affected companies were the drugmaker Merck and Mondelez International, the owner of food brands such as Oreo and Nabisco.

## “In Ukraine, victims included top-level government offices, where officials posted photos of darkened computer screens, as well as energy companies, banks, cash machines, gas stations and supermarkets. Ukrainian Railways and the communications company Ukrtelecom were among major enterprises hit”

**Level 3: Attack Details**

1. Where did the attack come from?

The origins of the attack are unknown.

1. Why was the attack started?

To summarize, the purpose was for the cyber-attackers to take over the computers, encrypt the information on them and then demand payment of $300 or more from users to unlock the devices. “Researchers picking the program apart found evidence its creators had borrowed from leaked National Security Agency code, raising the possibility that the digital havoc had spread using U.S. taxpayer-funded tools.”

1. How was the attacked stopped?

Microsoft quickly changed its policy, announcing security fixes available for free for the older Windows systems still used by millions of individuals and smaller businesses. In addition, other affected places like the hospital in Oshawa, deflected the attack.

1. How could you be affected by a ransomware attack?

“Attacks like this one happen when a type of software seizes control of a computer, encrypting its contents and rendering them inaccessible. It looks as if it's from someone you know, in your contacts. You click on it, and bingo. The actual malware, the file, is downloaded." (CBC)

1. How can you protect yourself against a ransomwhare attack?

People can keep their computers' operating systems up-to-date, because the latest updates often patch up security holes. People can also avoid clicking on suspicious links.