

Discussing Essay Structure as Various Parts and How They Function

As there are many parts to an analytic essay, you can enter a conversation with clients concerning their arguments through any one of these individual avenues, not only the thesis statement. Here are some key phrases that will help you enter into conversations.

INTRODUCTION – the first part of a paper that outlines the main ideas and sets up a universe of discourse for the author’s position (see Introductions Module).

THESIS – a position or proposition that a person advances and offers to maintain by logical argument supported by evidence (see Developing the Thesis Statement Module).

BODY PARAGRAPHS – the means by which a writer makes an argument. A single body paragraph should contain either a single, specific facet of the argument or address a singular, narrow focus. A series of body paragraphs, though, should forge a broader argument that supports the writer’s thesis.

TOPIC SENTENCES– the leading sentence of a paragraph that introduces the main idea and establishes the structure of that paragraph.

EVIDENCE – something that furnishes or indicates the proof of an idea or proposition.

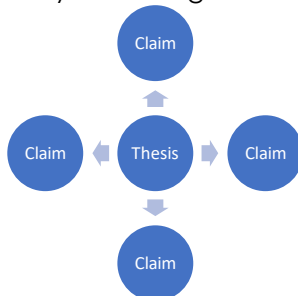
TRANSITIONS – a steadfast movement, development, or evolution from one idea to the next that typically resides between paragraphs or sections.

CONCLUSION – the end of a piece of writing in which the author brings a logical argument and evidence to its precise end and further advances his or her proposition. The author also discusses the consequence of his or her conclusive position (see Conclusions Module).

Discussing Argument Construction or “Flow”

Below are two distinct styles that you may encounter:

HUB AND SPOKE METHOD – Here the author will begin with a single, simplistic claim and will support it with paragraphs that have little or no relation one another. In effect, there is no “flow” to the paper. Instead, the author winds up with many disconnected ideas pointing to the original thesis. Hence, the thesis is not really developed; instead, it is simply explained or made clear with disconnected examples. For this reason, tutors should typically discourage clients from pursuing this construction.



EXAMPLE: Thesis: This module is easy to understand

Claim: The pictures make it easy to understand

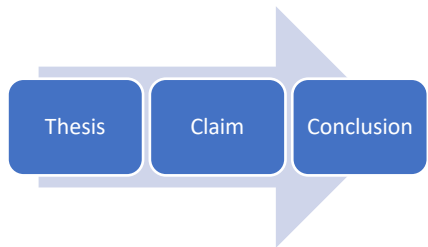
Claim: The examples make it easy to understand

Claim: The clear language makes it easy to understand

Conclusion: This module is easy to understand because it has a clear set of style characteristics.

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THE ACCUMULATIVE ARGUMENT – This style of organization starts with a thesis and verifies it by building *from/on* claims instead of *to* claims. In this style, the author should use claims (and associated evidence) that connects with and builds upon earlier claims (and associated evidence) in order to expand and verify the thesis. The argument flows and builds logically upon itself. It's a little like building a wall. Each brick supports the entire structure, but only when they are all connected is the wall's stability ensured. This is the style of organization tutors should encourage.



EXAMPLE: Thesis:

The construction of this module makes it an effective tool for influencing tutor practices.

Claim: The language is clear and the formatting easy to read.

Claim: The clear language makes the many examples easier to understand.

Claim: The comprehension check is relatively easy to accomplish in a short amount of time.

Conclusion: Because the tutor will be easily successful working with this module and can comfortably use the language and examples, he/she will use it in tutoring sessions as a resource.

Module Comprehension Check:

1. Explain two parts of a conventional essay the way you would to a client. For example, "The purpose of an introduction is X, which helps readers Y. That's why these kinds of ideas must begin the paper."
2. What is the benefit of an accumulative versus a hub and spoke argument?
3. How could the hub and spoke method be used during pre-writing to find and develop an accumulative argument?