

Parts of an Essay

The Writing Center
Email: okc.tutoring@okstate.edu
Phone: 405-945-3278



The general parts of an essay include: an **introduction**, a **thesis statement**, **topic sentences**, **body paragraphs** and a **conclusion**.

An **introduction** paragraph or paragraphs introduces the reader to the subject of your essay. It includes the **hook**, the **bridge**, and your **thesis statement**. The **hook** can be an interesting fact, quote, or statement about your subject to get your reader's attention. The **bridge** then provides your reader with any background information necessary to understand your topic. Finally, and most importantly, is your **thesis statement**. This sentence, which should come at the end of your introduction paragraph, sums up the main point of your essay. The order in which you introduce information in the thesis statement is the order in which you should write about it in your **body paragraphs**. There are several types of thesis statements depending on what kind of paper you are writing.

Types of Thesis Statements:

Critical Response: Your thesis should state what you think about your chosen text.

Rhetorical Analysis: Your thesis should argue the effectiveness of an author's use of rhetorical elements.

Comparative Rhetorical Analysis: Your thesis should identify the similarities and differences between the way authors use rhetorical elements in their respective texts.

Synthesis: Your thesis should argue the effectiveness of an author's use of rhetoric and state which author/text you think is better.

Categorical Evaluation Argument: Your thesis should assert why something is a good or bad example of its kind.

Argument of Fact Essay: Your thesis should argue why a popular misconception is wrong.

Empirical Study Essay: Your thesis should state your research question.

A **topic sentence** is the first sentence of a body paragraph which introduces the main point of the paragraph. To create a strong thesis, it may help to begin writing topic sentences for each point you want to discuss in your essay. Your topic sentences should always relate to the point of your thesis statement.

Body paragraphs make up the bulk of your essay; they include the primary argument formed from all the evidence you've gathered throughout your research. Body paragraphs need to stay focused on the topic expressed in the topic sentence.

The **conclusion** of your essay should be concise; restate and reword your thesis to reiterate your main point. Very briefly summarize the evidence you gathered in one or two sentences. Do not introduce new information. Provide a few final sentences that speculate about the future impact of your subject or about your plans to further research your subject.

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There are many ways to plan your essay the way that works best for your subject, your argument, and you! There is no one correct way to draft, but if you're feeling stuck, try utilizing these planning materials.

Essay Q&A

- In your own words, describe the guidelines for this assignment.
 - What type of essay is this?
 - What is the required word/page count?
 - What citation style do you need to use? MLA or APA?
 - What do you need to turn in *before* the final draft?
- What is a peer-reviewed source?
- What is the main point you want to argue in this essay?
- How can you support your points?

Essay Checklist

- Readings
- Brainstorming
- Prewriting Due Date:
- Rough Draft Due Date:
- Rough Draft Revision
- Final Draft Due Date:

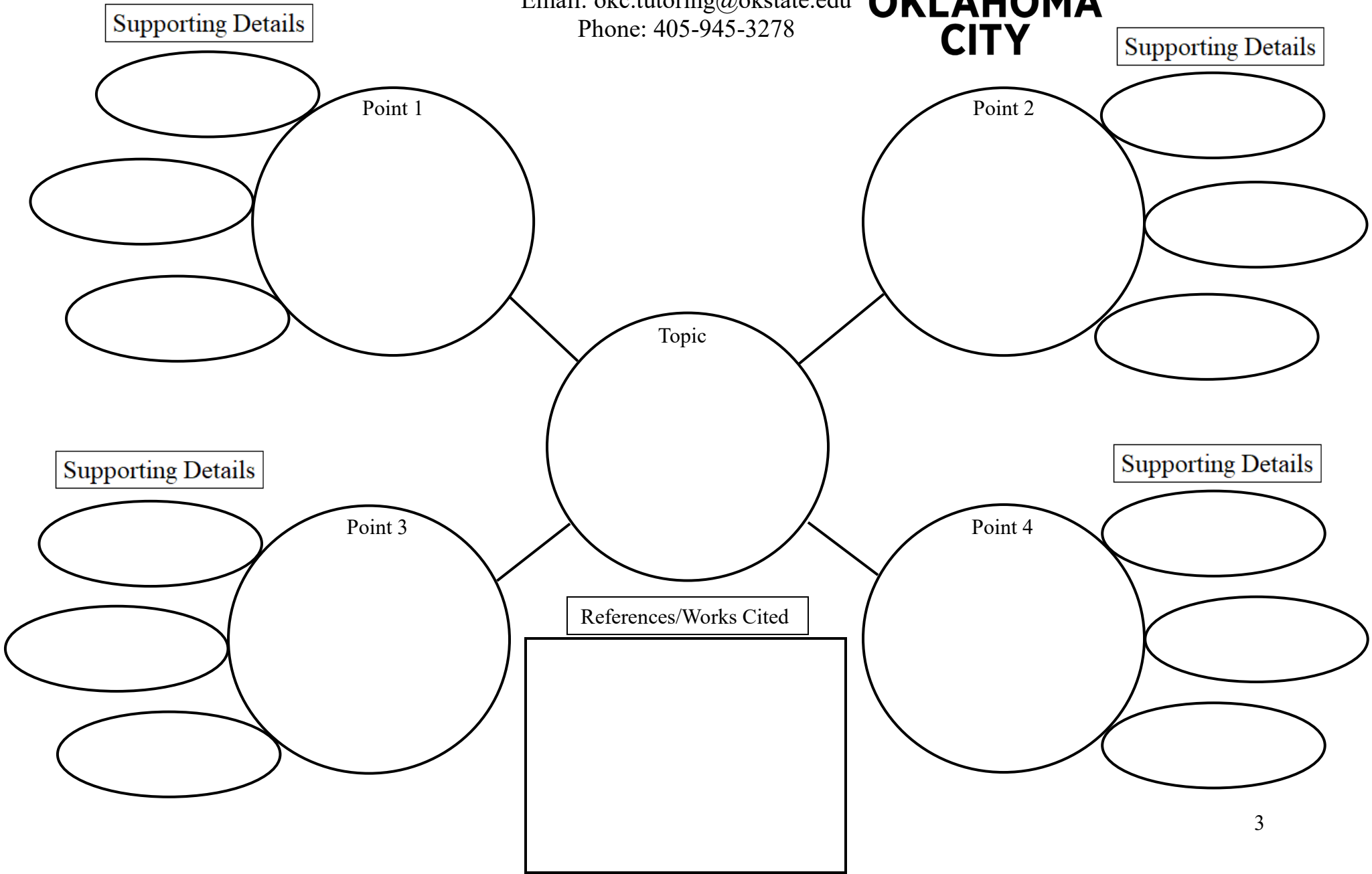
Notes:

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Introduction Paragraph:

Thesis:

Topic sentence I:

Body Paragraph I:

Topic sentence II:

Body Paragraph II:

Topic sentence III:

Body Paragraph III:

Conclusion:

Restate Thesis:

Closing Statement:
