**The Introduction:**

**\*\*Lead or Motivator:**

* + Opens with a broad, general statement related to the thesis
  + Two or three sentences in length
  + No specific reference to literature to be examined but suggestions only to the spirit of the discussion
* **Creating the Lead**
  + Write your thesis statement and underline common nouns
  + Compose a general statement based on these nouns
  + Ensure statements do not contain specific reference, are serious, and are not quotations or questions

**\*\*Link:**

* + A statement that links the general opening to the specific text
  + Presents the first mention of the text to be analyzed
  + Acts as the essays first transition

**\*\*Plan of development (Blueprint/Supporting Arguments/Components)**

* + List of central points to be covered in the essay
  + One or two sentences in length
  + Each point listed will represent a separate paragraph
  + Points in order of discussion from weakest to strongest
* **Creating the plan of development**
  + Brainstorm all possible ideas in support of the thesis
  + Select the three strongest arguments and compose short sentences embodying them
  + Organize sentences from weakest to strongest

**\*\*Thesis**

* + Establishes exactly what the essay will attempt to prove
  + Central opinion boiled down to ONE arguable statement
  + Represents a statement with which the reader is forced to agree or disagree and embodies the individual arguments
* **Creating the thesis**
  + Review the topic selected
  + Brainstorm the connections between the literature and the topic selected
  + Design a specific question based on this material
    - This answer is your thesis
  + Test the appropriateness of the thesis by asking the following questions:
    - Is my thesis a fact?
    - Is the position too broad to be proven in the limits of the essay?
    - Is the position so narrow that three strong arguments cannot be raised?

**Body Paragraphs:**

**\*\*Topic Sentences**

* + First sentence of each body paragraph must be a statement of OPINION
  + Represents one of the points from the plan of development (i.e. mini thesis for the paragraph)
* **Creating your topic sentence**
  + Return to the plan of development and identify the point listed
  + Write a forceful statement of opinion which embodies that point
    - This limits your discussion to only that point
  + Incorporate an appropriate transition to link this paragraph with the previous paragraph

**\*\*Argumentation**

* + Two or three sentences to establish the point ………………………… [\*\*\*\***POINT**\*\*\*\*]
  + Include an explanation of the context of the quotation
  + Provide proof (i.e. direct quotations) ……………………………………….. [\*\*\*\***PROOF**\*\*\*\*]
  + Establish a clear connection between the argument, the topic sentence and the thesis
  + Fully explain the relevance of the evidence to the argument, the topic sentence, and the thesis (this is the mortar of your essay) ………………………………..[\*\*\*\***COMMENT**\*\*\*\*]
* **Developing argumentation:**
  + Refer to your itemized list of points to be developed for each topic sentence
  + Review the literature and locate detail to prove each point
  + Write notes on each point
  + List at least two direct quotations from the literature to prove each point
  + Do not merely select quotations which retell the story
  + Write notes outlining the connection between the quotation, the topic sentence, and the thesis
  + Organize the points, the proof, and the comments in the most logical order

**\*\*Concluding Statement**

* + A logical conclusion that reflects the entire paragraph
  + Takes the paragraph full circle (ties up the bow)
  + Reflects the topic sentence
  + Ties in with the thesis
  + Prepares the reader for the next paragraph
* **Creating an effective conclusion:**
  + Consider the paragraph’s topic sentence
  + Review the points raised in the paragraph
  + Consider the overall thesis
  + Compose one or two sentences which summarize the discussion in light of the topic sentence and the overall thesis

**The Concluding Paragraph:**

**\*\*Thesis Restatement**

* + A restatement of the thesis used in the first paragraph
  + Change a few words to reflect that the thesis has been proven
  + Do NOT alter the meaning from the original thesis
  + Maintain continuity by including a transition from the previous paragraph
* **Creating your thesis restatement**
  + Take your thesis from the essay’s first paragraph
  + Consider the previous paragraph and insert an appropriate transition
  + Change the tone of the statement to suggest that you are confident this thesis has been proven

**\*\*Review key arguments**

* + Review the key points covered in the essay
  + Do not merely list points as though you were adding up a column of figures
  + Try to leave the reader with a forceful picture of the key points
  + These points must be the same as those listed in the first paragraph’s Plan of development (Blueprint)
* **Creating the review of key arguments**
  + Make a list of the arguments developed
  + Return to your plan of development (Blueprint/Supporting Arguments)
  + List the key specific proofs which embody your arguments
  + Compose sentences embodying these images

**\*\*General Closing Statement (Clincher/Universality)**

* + End on a general note
  + No specific reference to the literature
  + Two to four thought provoking sentences that relate to the topic in a general and broad sense
  + Very similar in nature to the essay’s lead
* **Creating the closing statement** 
  + Take stock of what has been learned through the essay
  + Consider how this could apply to the reader in a universal sense
  + Jot down a few key ideas
  + Create a general, thought provoking closing

**Important points in essay Writing**

* Never use first (i.e. I, me, us, we, mine, myself, personally) or second person (i.e. you, yours, yourself) in a formal essay.
* Always write in the third person (i.e. he, she, it, one, them, their, themselves) to maintain an appropriate tone of objectivity.
* Write in one tense – best to use present tense.
* Never use abbreviations, contractions, or symbols (unless they are part of a quotation).
* Never use numbers unless in addresses or dates – always write the numbers in word form.
* Never refer to an author using only the first name – always use the author’s surname.
* Never use phrases such as “this essay will prove” or “This quotation demonstrates” or “I.”
* Avoid merely sticking quotes in the essay. Always prepare the reader for the quote by building up to it, leading into it, and by discussing it afterwards.
* Write an essay that is coherent, flows properly, utilizes transitions, and continually relates to the thesis.
* Never end a paragraph with a quotation.
* Never begin an essay with a quotation or definition.
* Exhaust discussion of a point before moving on and then never return to the point unless comparing it to a new point to strengthen it. However, do not repeat yourself.
* Tone is important – write in a persuasive tone without losing objectivity.
* Select quotations carefully. Avoid merely sticking in long passages. Show the reader you can focus on what best proves your point.
* Avoid using secondary sources to prove your point which you could explain yourself. If you do take ideas from a source, be sure to document this idea. Failure to do so is considered plagiarism and will result in a “zero” mark.