

Parts of the 5 Paragraph Essay

MSVU International Education Centre

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Reminder

**Today's session:
PPT will be posted to the IEC
webpage**



Presenter



Nicolle Bowes Cashen

Manager, EAP Programs

MSVU International Education Centre

nicolle.bowes@msvu.ca

Outline

Today we will examine the three sections of the 5 Paragraph Essay:

1. The Introduction
2. Body Paragraphs
3. The Conclusion



For this Presentation

- In the Canadian education system, like in many others, clear and logical organization is very important in academic writing.
- Professors will give points, and take away points, for organization.
- In this presentation, we will look at a 5 Paragraph Argumentative Essay.
- Many components of the essay can be applied to several writing genres and assignments.



Part I

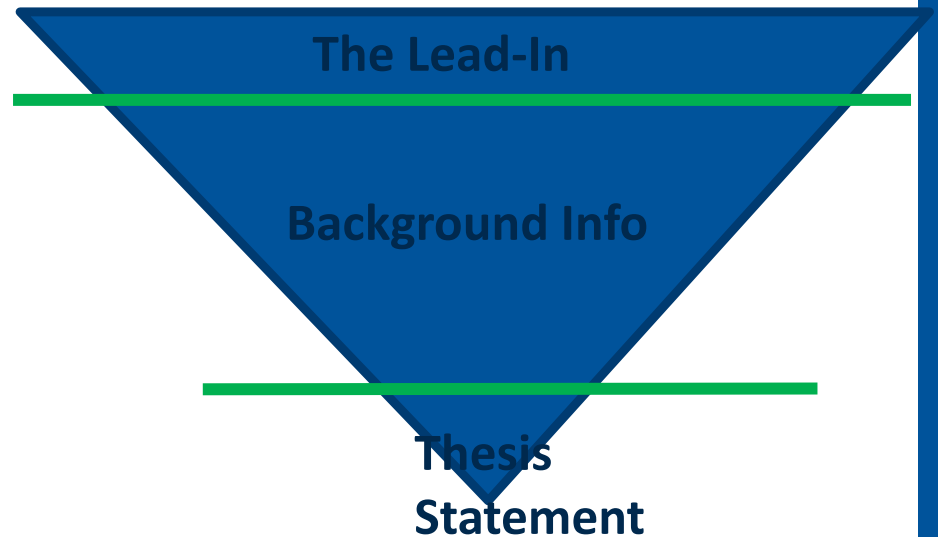
1. The Introduction



The Introduction

The introductory paragraph introduces the subject of your essay. A strong Introduction will capture the reader's attention and entice them to read more. Introductions can be developed in several different ways, but typically, Introductions have three parts:

1. The Lead-In
2. Background Information
3. The Thesis Statement



The Introduction

1. The Lead-In

You can begin the Introduction with an attention-grabbing opening sentence, or lead-in. There are three common types of Lead-Ins:

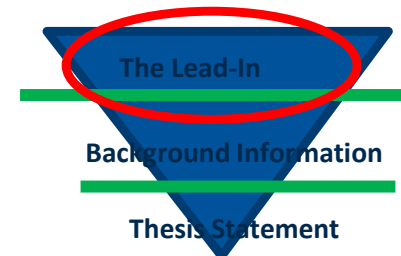
- **A Quotation** - “The number of international students applying to MSVU has quadrupled in the last two years”, exclaimed Dr. Cashen, MSVU Registrar.

OR

- **A Surprising or Provocative Statement** – International students are failing because they are not informed of academic expectations.

OR

- **A Question** – How can the university ethically accept international students without preparing them for the Canadian classroom?



The Introduction

2. Background Information

You can develop the Introduction in several different ways. Experiment with any of these styles. You can often use more than one style in your Introduction:

- **Give general or historical background information** - The general or historical information gradually leads to your Thesis Statement. For example, in an essay about international students' success in Canada, you could begin by giving a brief history of students travelling to Canada for school.
- **Tell an interesting anecdote** - Start your essay with a story that leads to your Thesis Statement. For example, you might begin your essay by telling the story of a real-life international student.



The Introduction

2. Background Information continued...

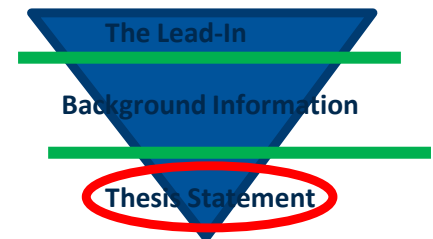
- **Present a vivid description** - Give a detailed description, and then state your Thesis Statement. For example, you might describe an international student's struggle with assignments.
- **Present an opposing position** - Open your essay with an idea that contradicts a common belief, and build to your Thesis Statement. For instance, if most people believe international students deserve support you could speak about how many international students don't believe they need the help.
- **Give a definition** - Define a term, and then state your Thesis Statement. For example, in an essay about the necessity of academic skills classes, you could begin by defining *academic success*.



The Introduction

3. The Thesis Statement

- Is the writer's claim/opinion and gives a preview of the essay's main ideas.
- Contains three reasons why they make that claim.
- Contains no personal language – “I think” or “I believe”.
- Is the last sentence of the Introduction.
- Is only one sentence.
- Is the heart of the essay – everything the writer includes in the essay supports the claim.



The Introduction

3. The Thesis Statement

- Contains three parts:
 - The opposing side
 - The claim (Thesis)
 - 3 supporting ideas/reasons why you are making this claim

“Although a high percentage of international students are now achieving the required IELTS score for full-time entry to the university and believe they are ready for the transition to post-secondary study in Canada, international students should be mandated to enroll in an academic skills course to understand academic requirements, to learn necessary “soft skills”, and to meet other students from abroad.”

The Introduction

3. The Thesis Statement

- Contains three parts:
 - The opposing side
 - The claim (thesis)
 - 3 supporting ideas/reasons why you are making this claim

“Although a high percentage of international students are now achieving the required IELTS score for full-time entry to the university and believe they are ready for the transition to post-secondary study in Canada, international students should be mandated to enroll in an academic skills course to understand academic requirements, to learn necessary “soft skills”, and to meet other students from abroad.”

The Introduction

The Lead-In

Background Information

Thesis Statement

-opposing side

-the claim

-3 supporting ideas



The Introduction

An Example

Lead-In

Over the last five years, the number of MSVU international students who arrive and commence their programs, unfamiliar with the expectations of North American scholarship, has been steadily increasing each semester.

Background Information

This has resulted in many negative repercussions. These include students taking on additional assignments to learn and practice new skills, or resubmitting assignments deemed unsatisfactory on top of an already busy and stressful workload. Meanwhile, the enrolment numbers of international students, coming from countries that have historically not registered at MSVU, is continuing to significantly increase. Although a

Thesis Statement

high percentage of international students are now achieving the required IELTS score for full-time entry to the university and believe they are ready for the transition to post-secondary study in Canada, international students should be mandated to enroll in an academic skills course to understand academic requirements, to learn necessary “soft skills”, and to meet other students from abroad.”



Part II

2. Body Paragraphs



Body Paragraphs

The Body Paragraphs are located after the Introduction. In a typical 5 Paragraph Essay, they are the next 3 paragraphs of the essay. Their purpose is to support the Thesis Statement. The structure of a Body Paragraph is:

Topic Sentence – reason 1 from Thesis Statement

- Point 1
 - Proof 1
 - Explanation 1
- Point 2
 - Proof 2
 - Explanation 2
- Point 3
 - Proof 3
 - Explanation 3

Repeat this structure for Body Paragraph 2 (reason 2 from Thesis Statement) and Body Paragraph 3 (reason 3 from Thesis Statement).



Body Paragraphs

1. The Topic Sentence

The Topic Sentence in each body paragraph is one distinct reason supporting the writer's Thesis (one of the reasons). It should connect to the Thesis Statement (claim) in the Introduction.

- The Topic Sentence starts the Body Paragraph
- The Topic Sentence should be one sentence long

Body Paragraphs

1. The Topic Sentence continued

Thesis Statement from the Introduction:

“Although a high percentage of international students are now achieving the required IELTS score for full-time entry to the university and believe they are ready for the transition to post-secondary study in Canada, international students should be mandated to enroll in an academic skills course to understand academic requirements, to learn necessary “soft skills”, and to meet other students from abroad.”

Example of a Topic Sentence for Body Paragraph #1:

There are many specific academic skills all students must know how to do to be a successful student at MSVU.



Body Paragraphs

Point, Proof, Explanation

Direct following your Topic Sentence, Point, Proof, and Explanation are to follow:

Point – supporting sentence, reason why you stated your Topic Sentence, is in your own words.

Proof - each piece of proof follows a Point. It should come from research, be paraphrased and have a citation.

Explanation - Each Explanation follows a Proof, and it should explain the connection between the Proof and the Topic Sentence in your own words.



Body Paragraphs

Thesis Statement from introduction:

“Although a high percentage of international students are now achieving the required IELTS score for full-time entry to the university and believe they are ready for the transition to post-secondary study in Canada, international students should be mandated to enroll in an academic skills course to understand academic requirements, to learn necessary “soft skills”, and to meet other students from abroad.”

Body Paragraph: Topic Sentence – from Thesis Statement(reason 1) – “retention”

- Point 1
 - Proof 1
 - Explanation 1
- Point 2
 - Proof 2
 - Explanation 2
- Point 3
 - Proof 3
 - Explanation



Body Paragraphs

There are many specific academic skills all students must know how to do to be a successful student at MSVU. **Firstly**, presentations and public speaking are common assignments in MSVU programs, but many students have never experienced this type of assessment. In a 2015 study of 1,500 international students attending a university in Alberta, roughly 65 percent stated they had never been required to do a class presentation (Bowes Cashen, 2017). Many MSVU professors are grading their students this way yet many international students are unfamiliar with how to do them. **The second point is** in North America plagiarism is a serious offense, but most international students are unaware of this. According to Dr. Smith, a professor at the University of New Brunswick, the number of unintentional academic offenses of plagiarism committed by international students has increased 36 percent in the last three years (Smith, 2020). International students must be informed of this if they are to succeed. **Finally**, international students must have self agency. The expectation is students must problem-solve on their own, yet many international students are “used to simply asking their professors for the answers”(Currie, 2018. p.12). Being independent and finding answers by one’s self is an expectation at MSVU.



3. The Conclusion



Conclusion

Conclusion

A strongly written Conclusion leaves the reader with a clear understanding of the central point in your paper and with a final comment that provides an interesting closing thought.



Conclusion

Conclusion

An effective Conclusion has three parts:

1. **A restatement of your Thesis/Claim** - This is simply restating your argument without the three points of proof or the opposing side. This should be the first sentence of the Conclusion. This sentence can start with a transition like, “In conclusion,”
2. **A final restatement of the 3 main points of your paper** - Restate each of your Topic Sentences (reasons) in a separate sentence. Do not include any of your supporting ideas or pieces of evidence.
3. **Ending comments that inspires your reader to continue thinking about your topic** - This part includes any of the following techniques, and it should be just about half of your Conclusion (about 4 sentences):

Conclusion

Techniques for writing an Ending Comment:

- 1. Echo the approach used in the Introduction** - Use different wording and take the topic from specific to general again.
- 2. Use a quotation** - For example, in a paper supporting mandatory academic skills class for international students, you may include a quotation from an academic skills class graduate.
- 3. End with a powerful fact or other detail related to the topic of the paper** - For example, you could conclude with a statistic comparing grades of students who took the program and those who did not.
- 4. Recommend a course of action, if called for in the material you present** - For example, to conclude you could offer a few suggestions for implementing this policy.
- 5. Give suggestions for future research** - Explain areas related to this topic that could be explored more in the future, and why it would be beneficial to get more information about this.

Conclusion

Example of a Conclusion

Thesis Statement

3 Points of Proof

Ending Comments

In conclusion, there is a significant issue growing at MSVU and therefore, a required academic skills course should be mandatory for international students. An increasing number are finding themselves in troubling situations because when they arrive they believe they are ready, but quickly discover the academic system is different and some go on to struggle understanding academic requirements, learning necessary “soft skills”, and meeting other students from abroad. In November 2020, MSVU’s new Strategic Plan, entitled “MSVU 2020: Strength Through Community” was presented and will guide the university through the next seven years. Commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility are dominant themes and international students, if not academically prepared, are perhaps being denied these rights. In the words of a recent MSVU graduate, who was required to register for MSVU academic preparation course, “Knowing that I was academically prepared for graduate studies gave me the confidence to participate, engage, and thrive. I am certain this would not have happened if I did not register for the GPP” (Ali, 2020, n.d.).



Recap

The 5 Paragraph Essay:

1. Introduction

- The Lead-In
- Background Information
- Thesis Statement + three reasons

2. Body Paragraphs (Body 1, Body 2, Body 3)

- Topic Sentence
 - Point 1
 - Proof 1
 - Explanation 1
 - Point 2
 - Proof 2
 - Explanation 2
 - Point 3
 - Proof 3
 - Explanation 3

3. The Conclusion

- Restate the Thesis
- Final Statement of 3 Points
- An Inspiring Comment



To Review This Webinar

www.msvu.ca/international

International Education Centre



The International Education Centre (IEC) at MSVU offers personal, academic, cultural and immigration advising to international students in Canada, as well as any student or faculty wishing to study, research or conduct projects abroad. The IEC is also home to the University's English for Academic Purposes programs. [Learn more about us.](#)

FALL 2022 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION

As the university transitions to in-person classes, our orientation delivery will be both online and in-person. **The in-person orientation will be hosted from Wednesday, August 31st, to Friday, September 2nd, 2022. Registration required!**

We are delivering a number of online webinars to help you get settled into your new home and to ease your academic transition to MSVU. These webinars are scheduled throughout July to August 2022.

Attend as many webinars and answer quizzes correctly for a chance to win a \$20 gift card from the MSVU bookstore.



Traveling to Canada: COVID-19 Requirements

MSVU international students are no longer required to have their quarantine plans approved by the International Education Centre. However, you are still required to have a quarantine plan to enter Canada. Please continue to check this website as it will help you create your own quarantine plan and will prepare you for your travel to Canada.

If you need further support, please email international@msvu.ca.



Pre-recorded Online Supports

We've gathered a number of online support webinars and workshops that will help you in your transition to Canada. The list is a combination of academic and student life support services and information. Please continue to visit this page as we are continuously adding to the list.



Future Webinars or Workshops

If you have any ideas for future webinars or workshops:

- Assignments you are doing in classes
- Skills you are not sure how to preform
- Academic challenges you are encountering

Please feel free to email me: nicolle.bowes@msvu.ca



Thank You!
Questions?

