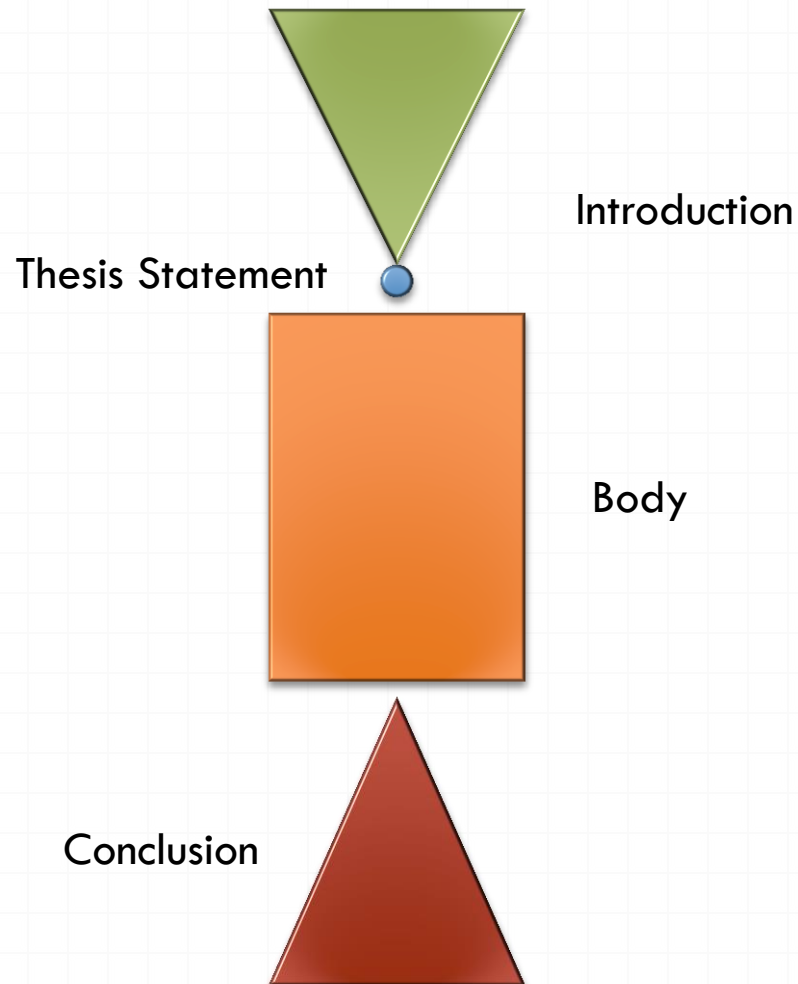


# How To Write An Essay

Essay Format, Introductions, Body, Conclusions,  
Thesis Statements, and Topic Sentences

# Essay Format



# Introduction

- o First part of an essay
- o Try to capture the reader's attention

## Introduction Format

- o 1. Attention getter
- o 2. State your problem
- o 3. Bridge or transition sentences
- o 4. Thesis statement (always at the end)

# Ways to Start Your Introduction

## ◦ Strategy

- Provide some **interesting background** about the topic in the form of a general statement
- Use a thought-provoking **quotation**
- Ask a **question** about your topic
- State a **surprising fact** or a **puzzling statement**
- Start with a **short story**

## ◦ Examples

- Today's gnome owners become tomorrow's leaders.
- "Gnomes are creatures to be loved, not feared!"  
Dr. S. Rosner
- Why don't many people like gnomes?
- In 1693, the first gnome was brought to America.
- Little Susie looked out her window, only to see her precious gnome, Willard, was being stolen....

# Ways to Start Your Introduction

## ◦ Strategy

- State a **common misconception**
- Describe a **problem**
- Give an **analogy**
- Show how the topic is related to the **reader's experience**

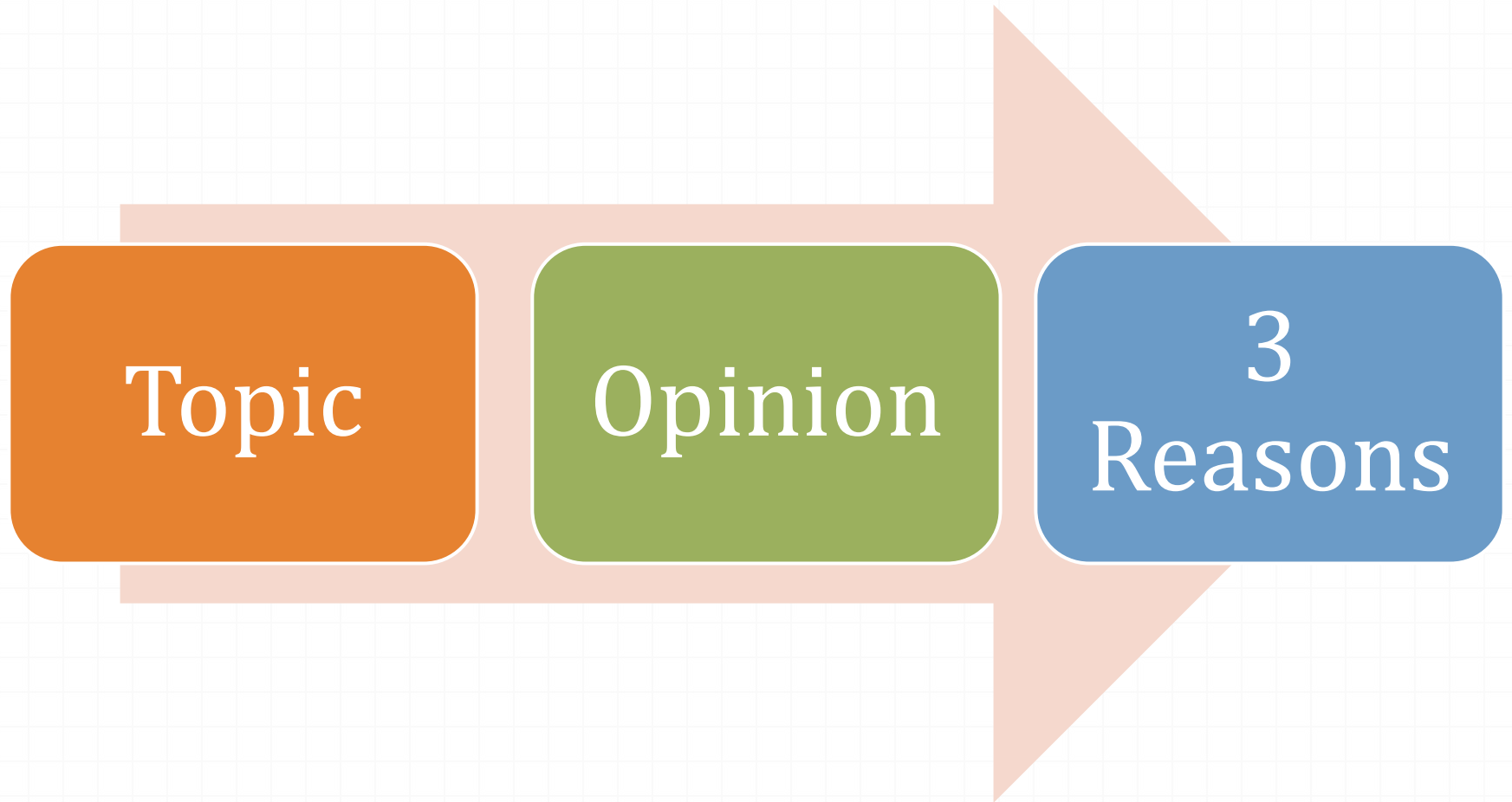
## ◦ Examples

- People don't learn bad habits from gnomes.
- Everyone knows what a problem gnome-napping has become in our society.
- Gnomes are just like children.
- Most people know how difficult it is to take care of garden gnomes.

# Introduction

- o Make a bridge to connect the attention getting sentence(s) to your thesis statement
  - o Common way to make a bridge is to explain why the topic is important.
  - o This bridge is often a few sentences long.
- o Conclude introductory paragraph with the most important idea of the essay-**THE THESIS STATEMENT**

# The Parts of a Thesis Statement



# The Functions of a Thesis Statement

To announce the topic to the reader

To reflect a judgment about the topic

To provide the reader with a blueprint of what is to come in the paper



# Example of an Introduction

## o Example

### Gnome-Phobia in America

1. In 2004, the Gnome Liberation Front (GLF) was created. This group of people believes that gnomes should be free, not prisoners of their owner's garden. 2. The GLF has now begun gnome-napping, the act of stealing gnomes and "freeing them" in the wilderness; however, the law is unwilling to do anything. 3. Many police state that the gnomes are not a serious enough offense to deal with and that they have larger crimes to deal with. This is not acceptable. The law should be taking the gnome-napping more seriously because people are committing a crime. 4. Gnome-napping is stealing personal property, and is illegal, morally wrong, and disrespectful.

- o 1. Attention getter
- o 2. State your problem.
- o 3. Bridge or transition sentences
- o 4. Thesis statement

o \*\*NOTE: This doesn't mean your intro is 4 sentences long. It just has 4 parts.

# The Body

- o The body is a set of paragraphs that develop the idea expressed in the thesis statement.
  - o Make a list of main ideas that support the thesis statement. Each main idea becomes the main idea sentence for a body paragraph.
  - o Arrange the main ideas in logical order (time, place, importance)
  - o Plan out each body paragraph by listing major details that support each main idea
  - o Order the details within each paragraph in a logical way. Each body paragraph may end with a concluding sentence.

# Example Essay Outline

## Thesis Statement

Gnome-napping is stealing personal property, and is illegal, morally wrong, and disrespectful.

## Body Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence: Gnome-napping is stealing someone's personal property, and stealing is illegal.

- Main Points:
- 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.

## Body Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence: It is morally wrong to take anyone's property, whether it is a gnome or a car.

- Main Points:
- 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.

## Body Paragraph 3

Topic Sentence: The GLF is incredibly disrespectful because they take items that don't belong them.

- Main Points:
- 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.

# The Writing Stage

- After planning and arranging your main ideas and major details, begin writing your body paragraphs.
- The number of paragraphs depends on the topic's complexity, inclusiveness, and your purpose for writing.
- Usually a short essay contains 3 to 5 body paragraphs, plus an introduction and conclusion
- Remember to use signal words to make smooth transitions between sentences and paragraphs.

# Signal/Transition Words

- For examples: For example, for instance, to illustrate
- For organization or chronological order: The six steps are..., next, finally first, secondly, third
- For additional points: Furthermore, in addition, also, moreover
- For opposing ideas: On the other hand, in contrast, although, however
- For similar ideas: Likewise, similarly, in comparison

# Signal/Transition Words

- For exceptions: However, nevertheless, but, yet, still
- For emphasis: Above all, finally, more importantly
- For understanding: In other words, in essence, briefly
- For summarizing: In conclusion, to sum up, for these reasons, in a nutshell
- For exams: Remember this, this is important, this could be on the test

# Conclusion

- o Leave the reader thinking about your topic. Leave an impression on them!
- o No new information in conclusion
- o Be sure to recap your ideas
- o Should follow logically from the body of the essay
- o Restate your thesis statement in different words
- o You might want to have your reader do something after reading (“call to action” – Example: Go write your Senator about this problem.)