

**DIRECTIONS:** Read *Everyone Learns Differently* and answer the questions that follow.

## Everyone Learns Differently

by A. Curran

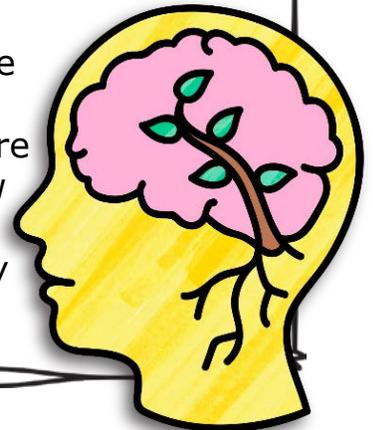
How would you like to spend less time studying for tests, but get better grades? Some experts say that this is possible, simply by knowing how your brain learns new information. Research has shown there are three types of learners: those who learn by seeing information (visual learners), those who learn by hearing information (auditory learners), and those who learn by doing (tactile learners). Identifying how you learn best is the key to successful studying.

Many people learn by seeing information. Visual learners learn by reading information written in handouts or books. They also learn from graphs, charts, and pictures. For this reason, visual learners should study by taking notes, making outlines, and using highlighters to make text stand out. These tricks will help visual learners succeed.

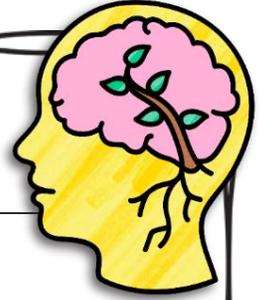
Another way people learn is by hearing information. This is auditory learning. These learners learn and remember information when they hear it aloud. Since they learn through hearing, it is helpful for them to study by using a tape recorder to record their notes. They should even repeat facts with their eyes closed. Since auditory learners learn by listening, these tips will lead to successful studying.

A third type of learner learns by "doing." They are called "tactile" learners. Tactile learners learn best by touching or experiencing things. They remember best by experiencing "hands-on" learning, or by writing things down. In order to study effectively, tactile learners can use flashcards or flipbooks. They may also need frequent breaks to get up and walk around. Because tactile learners learn by doing, they will be successful studiers by adding writing or movement.

People learn differently. Time spend studying can be more useful if the studying takes into account each individual's learning style. When students learn whether they are visual, auditory, or tactile learners, they will know how to make the best use of study time. Isn't it great to know that simple changes to your study habits can lead to greater success?



*Everyone Learns Differently* by A. Curran



1. What is the **topic** of the essay?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What is the **purpose** of the essay? This is the **main idea**.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Look at the **hook**, which is also called a **lead**. How has the writer decided to begin this essay?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Which sentence in the first paragraph tells the reader exactly what the essay is going to be about? This is the **thesis statement**.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Why has the writer included this number of body paragraphs?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. How are the body paragraphs **organized**? This is called **structure**.

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Which **key words** tell you that the text is organized in this way?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. What **type of information** does the writer use to **develop** each body paragraph?

\_\_\_\_\_

10. What is the purpose of the **concluding paragraph**?

\_\_\_\_\_

# Descriptive Prompts

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Describe what makes a good teacher and why those qualities are important.

DESCRIBE

Which rules are absolutely necessary in school, and why are they necessary?

DESCRIBE

What is the most interesting career you can imagine having, and why is it so interesting?

DESCRIBE

**DIRECTIONS:** Read *Moving into the Middle* and answer the questions that follow.

## MOVING INTO THE MIDDLE

by Thomas Richard

Students going to middle school for the first time are sometimes terrified of the transition. That fear comes from the fact that they don't know what to expect. Of course, there are differences between elementary school and middle school; however, there are similarities as well.

Middle and elementary schools have many similarities. For example, students in both schools have the same school calendar. In addition, the school day is the same length. Furthermore, students in middle and elementary schools study the four core subjects: math, science, language arts, and social studies. Students can also expect to have homework, quizzes, tests, and projects to complete. Middle and elementary schools have a lot in common.

There are also some differences between middle and elementary schools. First, students in middle school travel to different classes during the school day. A bell rings to alert student when it's time to move to a different class. Second, students usually have a hallway locker to store their books and supplies. A third difference is that students in middle school usually have extra classes, such as a foreign language class. These differences make middle school different from elementary school.

Although middle school is different from elementary school, not everything is different. Some aspects of middle school will seem familiar to new students. Knowing what to expect is helpful, and should make students feel less nervous about their new school.



*Moving into the Middle* by Thomas Richard



1. What is the **topic** of the essay?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What is the **main idea**?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What kind of **hook, or lead,** is used?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Which sentence in the first paragraph tells the reader exactly what the essay is going to be about? This is the **thesis statement**.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Why has the writer included this number of body paragraphs?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. How are the body paragraphs **organized**? This is called **structure**.

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Which **key words** tell you that the text is organized in this way?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. What **type of information** does the writer use to **develop** each body paragraph?

\_\_\_\_\_

10. What is the purpose of the **concluding paragraph**?

\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Compare & Contrast Prompts

How are tornadoes and hurricanes similar and different?

Compare & Contrast

Which makes a better pet, a cat or a dog? Explain.

Compare & Contrast

How are the activities middle school students participate in during the summer different from the activities they participate in during the winter?

Compare & Contrast

**DIRECTIONS:** Read Cell Phones in School and answer the questions that follow.

## Cell Phones in School

by Gwyneth Avery

Recently, over 500 high school students in Israel were surveyed about their cell phone use in class. Over 95% admitted that they used their phones during class to send text messages and log onto Facebook. Most of these students said that their teachers were unaware of the cell phone use. Using a cell phone in class is a problem, because if students are using a cell phone, then they are not paying attention. However, there are a couple of possible solutions to the problem of cell phone use in school.

One solution to this problem is to allow students to use cell phones for educational activities. Teachers can ask students to search for information on a specific topic. Or they can require students to take an online poll or survey. Teachers can even allow students to use an online notebook to keep track of homework assignments. By using the phones for specific reasons, students will be less likely to use it to text friends.

Another possible solution is to ban phones and have harsh punishments for students who use them during class. Students can be suspended for breaking the cell phone rules, or their phone could be confiscated. Any student found using a phone can then be required to deposit the phone in an office at the beginning of every day. They can only pick the phone up at the end of the day.



Although student cell phone use is a problem in many schools, there are solutions available. Teachers can allow students to use cell phones for educational activities. Or, strict punishments can be given if students are found using cell phones. Cell phones are not going to go away. Luckily, they don't have to be a problem in school.

*Cell Phones in Schools* by Gwyneth Avery



1. What is the **topic** of the essay?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What is the **main idea**?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What kind of **hook** did the writer use?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Locate the **thesis statement**.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Why has the writer included this number of body paragraphs?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Which **organizational structure** has the writer used?

\_\_\_\_\_

8. How can you prove the text is organized in this way?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. What **type of information** is used to **develop** each body paragraph?

\_\_\_\_\_

10. What is the purpose of the **concluding, or closing, paragraph**?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Problem & Solution Prompts

A new student has moved into town and will be attending your school. What advice would you give him/her about making friends and getting to know the school?

Problem & Solution

What is internet bullying and what can be done to stop it?

Problem & Solution

What kind of cheating is a problem in school? What can be done about it?

Problem & Solution

**DIRECTIONS:** Read *The Reasons for Poor Test Grades* and answer the questions that follow.

## A REASON FOR Everything

by B. Browne

Billy decided to study for Monday's math test on Sunday night. He sat comfortably in his bed and read his notes several times. The next day, he felt confident walking into his math class for the test. However, about midway through the test, he felt a sinking feeling. He could not answer many of the questions, and he knew he had failed the test. When he met with the teacher to talk about it, she asked him "how" he had studied. Then she told him that his poor grade was the effect of his poor study habits, and she explained exactly what caused the "F."

The first habit that caused Billy's "F" was the fact that he waited until Sunday night to study. The teacher announced the test one week prior to the test. Billy should have started studying on the first day he knew about the upcoming test. By studying a little every night, Billy would have spent more time on the material, instead of cramming the studying into one session. This would have increased his chance of remembering the material.

The second habit that caused the poor grade was studying in bed. Billy's teacher told him that studying in bed could make a person too sleepy to concentrate. Students should study at a desk or table, with their back straight to stay alert. Billy admitted that he did almost fall asleep while studying that night.

The third habit that caused Billy to fail was his method of studying. Simply reading the notes is not enough. Billy should have written notes or flashcards to memorize the material. Then he should have had a friend or adult make up practice questions for him to answer. There are even practice test sources online. This would have led to better understanding of the material.

Billy's teacher helped him understand that his poor test grade was caused by poor study habits. Waiting until the last minute to study, studying in bed, and reading over the notes were the reasons for Billy's poor grade. However, with a few simple study changes, Billy's test grades can definitely improve.



*A Reason for Everything* by B. Browne



1. What is the **topic** of the essay?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What is the **purpose** of the essay?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What kind of **lead** did the writer use?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Which sentence is the **thesis statement**?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Why has the writer included this number of body paragraphs?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Which **pattern of organization** has the writer used?

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Support the organizational pattern from #7.

\_\_\_\_\_

9. What **type of information** is used to **develop** each body paragraph?

\_\_\_\_\_

10. What purpose does the **conclusion** serve?

\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Cause & Effect Prompts

What effect can learning to read have on a young person?

CAUSE & EFFECT

What effect can a damaging storm have on a community?

CAUSE & EFFECT

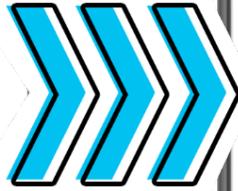
What are the causes of childhood obesity?

CAUSE & EFFECT

# Patterns

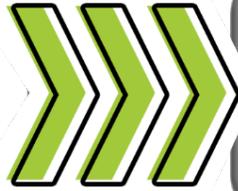
**ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERNS:** Informational essays are organized in the way that best presents the topic.

**SEQUENCE**



The author explains a process or event in sequential or chronological order.

**DESCRIPTION**



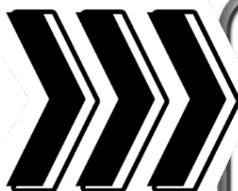
The author defines or describes a topic by including characteristics and examples.

**COMPARE AND CONTRAST**



The author explains how things are alike and different.

**PROBLEM AND SOLUTION**



The author presents a problem and offers solutions for it. This can also be called question and answer.

**CAUSE AND EFFECT**



The author explains the causes of an event or situation and the effects that result.





**Directions:**

Decide which organizational pattern would work best when writing about the following topics. Match the topic to the structure.

**TOPIC**

**ORGANIZATION**

The Life of  
*Helen Keller*

Compare/  
Contrast

Why do tornados  
occur and what  
damage can they do?

Sequence

DOG Care Versus  
CAT Care

Description

Air pollution and the  
things we can do to  
prevent it

Problem and  
Solution

The Job of a  
Circus Clown

Cause and  
Effect

# CHOOSING A TOPIC

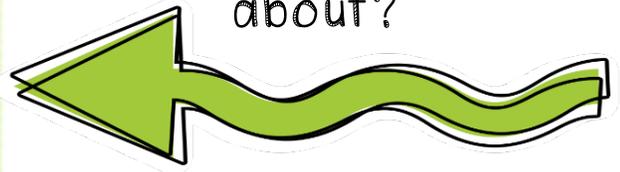
Name \_\_\_\_\_



What am I interested in?



What have I always wanted to LEARN about?



Once you have chosen a general topic, ask yourself these questions. The answer will help lead you to the structure of your essay.

Can I <b>compare</b> the topic to something else? Explain.	
Is the topic an <b>effect</b> of something else, or does it <b>cause</b> something to happen? Explain	
Should I explain the topic in <b>sequential</b> order? Why or why not?	
Is the topic part of a <b>problem</b> or part of a <b>solution</b> ? Explain.	
Would the topic be best explained using <b>descriptive</b> examples? Explain.	

**TOPICS**

**DESCRIPTION**

- Language classes available in middle schools
- Best dogs for families
- Good luck symbols
- Popular children's shows

**SEQUENCE**

- The life of Thomas Edison
- How bees produce honey
- How to train a puppy
- How to learn a musical instrument

**COMPARE CONTRAST**

- Video game tennis or real tennis
- E-books or paper books
- *The Lightning Thief* movie or book
- Pet dog or pet cat

**PROBLEM/SOLUTION**

- Childhood obesity
- Pollution
- Testing in schools
- Cheating in schools
- Internet bullying

**CAUSE/EFFECT**

- Effects of laughter
- Effects of exercise
- Fast food and obesity
- Causes of injuries in middle school sports



# Information

Source: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Information: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Source: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Information: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Source: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Information: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Introduction

The **introduction** to your essay has three parts and purposes.

**I: Hook or Lead:** The lead “hooks” readers and encourages them to keep reading. Try one of the following:

LEAD/HOOK	EXAMPLE
Quote (by a famous person)	“Happiness is a butterfly,” wrote Nathaniel Hawthorne.
Statistic or Fact	Recently, over 500 high school students in Israel were surveyed about their cell phone use in class.
Strong Statement	Students going to middle school for the first time are sometimes terrified about the transition.
Question	How would you like to spend less time studying for tests, but get better grades?
Anecdote	Billy decided to study for Monday’s math test on Sunday night. He sat comfortably in his bed and read his notes several times.

**2: Introduce the topic:** Briefly explain the topic. Give background information.



Most people would agree that it is wonderful watching a caterpillar turn into a beautiful butterfly.

**3: State exactly what the essay is about:** This is the **thesis statement**. It is a promise to the reader that the essay will address the topic.

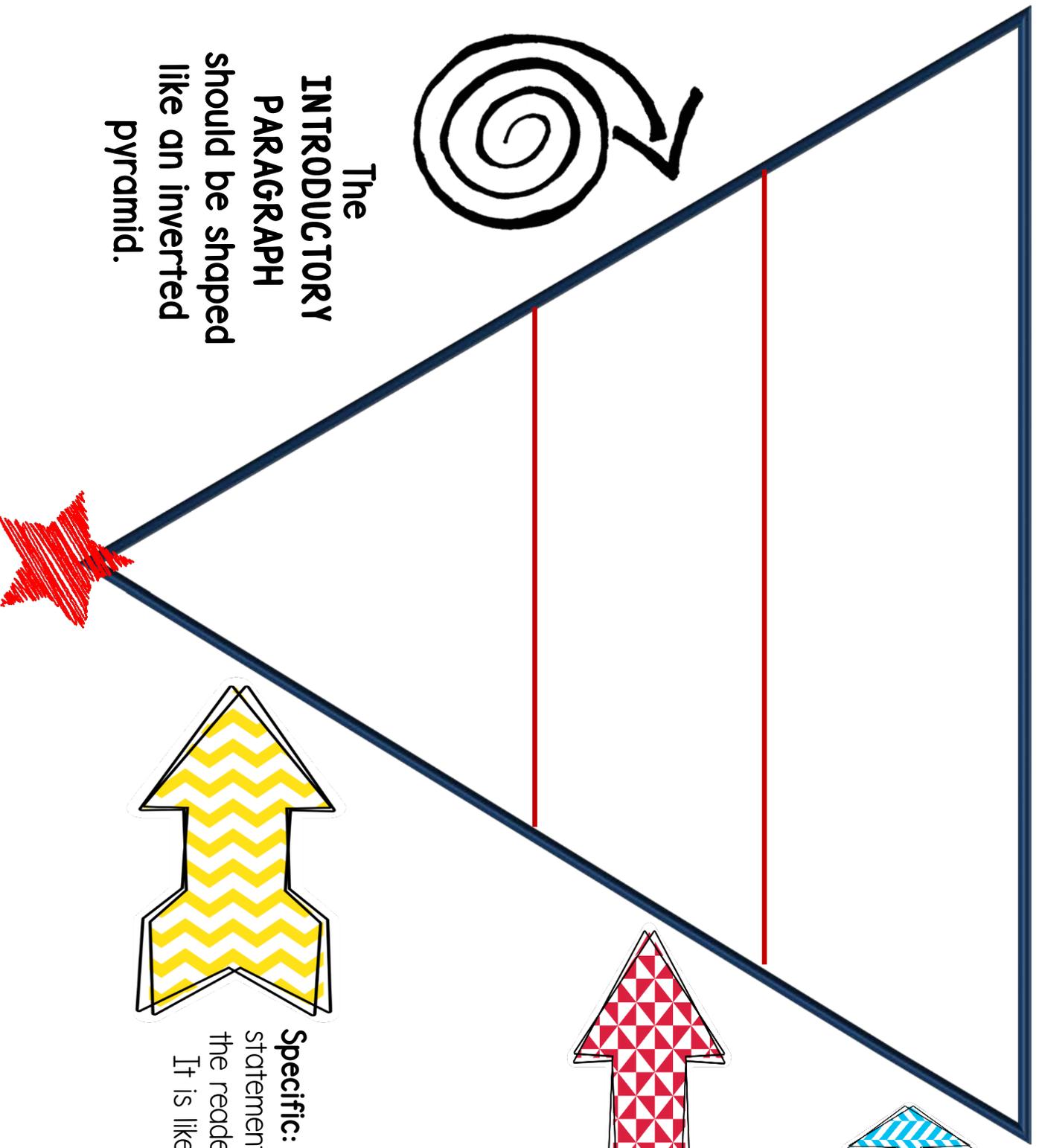


To grow into an adult, a butterfly goes through four stages, called metamorphosis.

## NOTES

Never begin by writing “This essay is about...”

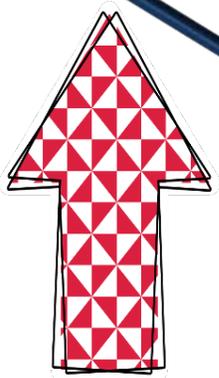
The sentences should be in this order, but each part can be more than one sentence. For example, you can write a two sentence “hook.”



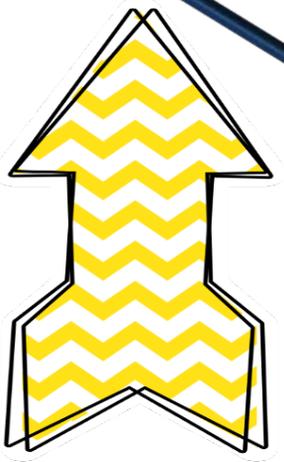
The  
**INTRODUCTORY  
 PARAGRAPH**  
 should be shaped  
 like an inverted  
 pyramid.



**General:** The “hook” is broad and gets the reader’s attention.



**Less General:** Narrow the topic. Introduce the topic and give background information.



**Specific:** Get to the point. The thesis statement is very specific, and it tells the reader the purpose of the essay. It is like a promise to the reader.

# BODY PARAGRAPHS OF A

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Sequencing Essay

- Include the events or steps in a process.
- Support it with facts, definitions, concrete details, information, and examples in chronological order.

#1  
→  
STEP  
OR  
EVENT 1



#2  
→  
STEP  
OR  
EVENT 2



#3  
→  
STEP  
OR  
EVENT 3



# BODY PARAGRAPHS OF A

Name \_\_\_\_\_



# Descriptive Essay

- Decide how many subtopics (paragraphs) are required to explain the topic.
- Include descriptive details that are facts, definitions, concrete details, information, and examples.

**SUBTOPIC:** Goes in topic sentence

**DETAILS**

**SUBTOPIC:** Goes in topic sentence

**DETAILS**

**SUBTOPIC:** Goes in topic sentence

**DETAILS**

# BODY PARAGRAPHS OF A

Name \_\_\_\_\_



# Compare/Contrast Essay

- Write one paragraph to compare and one to contrast.
- Include facts, definitions, concrete details, information, and examples.

\_\_\_\_\_ **AND** \_\_\_\_\_

**ALIKE**                      **DIFFERENT**

## Problem/Solution Essay

### 1-2-3 SOLUTIONS METHOD

- Include the problem in the introductory paragraph.
- The body paragraphs state the solutions.
- Support the solutions with facts, definitions, concrete details, information, and examples.

#1 →  
1<sup>ST</sup>  
SOLUTION

#2 →  
2<sup>ND</sup>  
SOLUTION

#3 →  
3<sup>RD</sup>  
SOLUTION

The graphic organizer is a large hexagonal shape divided into three horizontal sections. Each section is a hexagonal cell. The top cell is labeled '#1 1ST SOLUTION', the middle cell is labeled '#2 2ND SOLUTION', and the bottom cell is labeled '#3 3RD SOLUTION'. The cells are connected by horizontal lines, and there are red circles at the junctions where the lines meet.

## Problem/Solution Essay

### 1 PROBLEM- 2 SOLUTIONS METHOD

- Include the problem in the introductory paragraph; explain it in-depth in body paragraph 1.
- The other body paragraphs state the solutions.
- Support the solutions with facts, definitions, concrete details, information, and examples.

#1  
PROBLEM



#2  
1ST  
SOLUTION



#3  
2ND  
SOLUTION

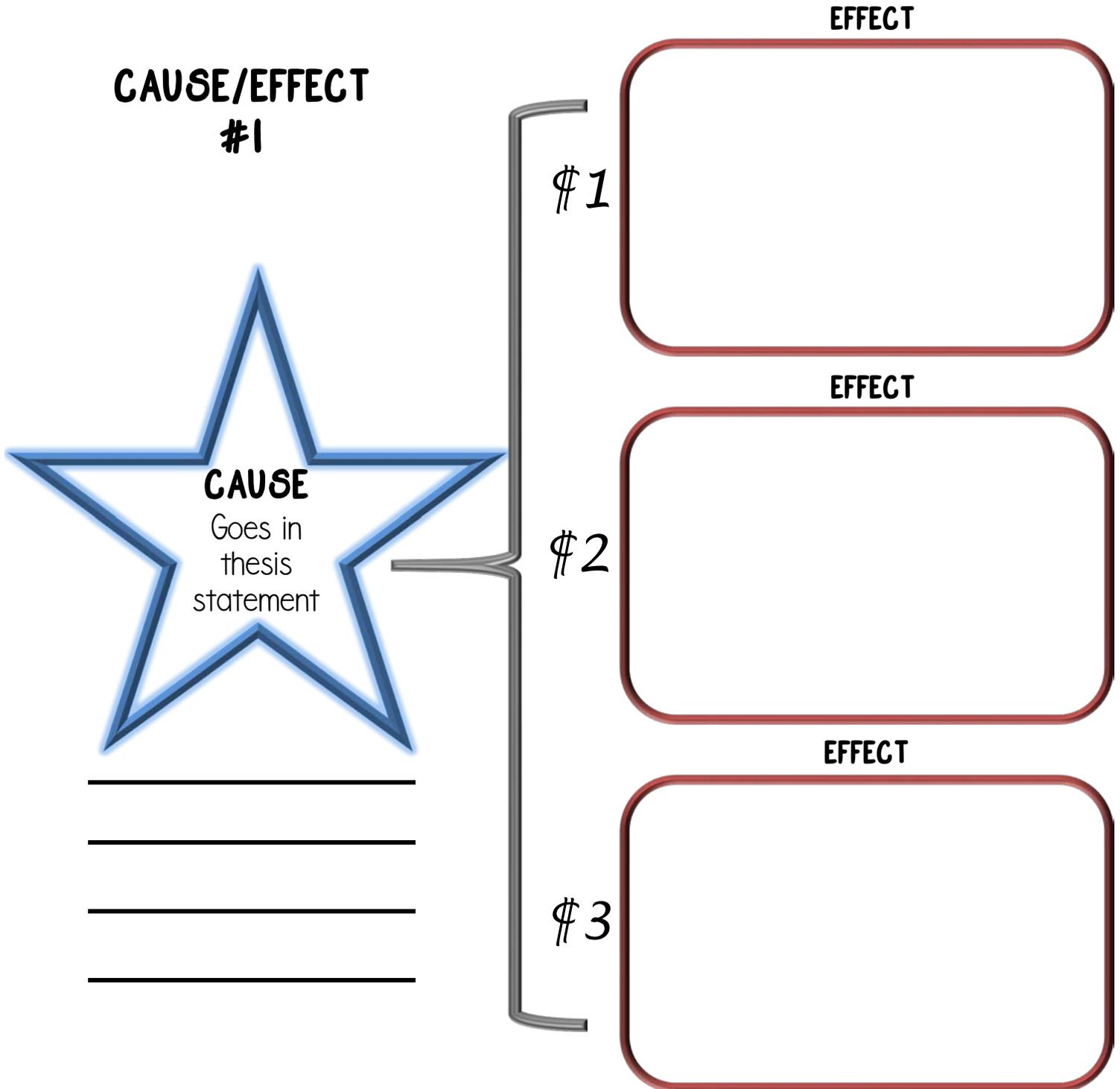


# BODY PARAGRAPHS OF A

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## CAUSE & EFFECT ESSAY

- There are two possible ways to write this:
  - 1) The thesis statement can state a cause and the body paragraphs can be the effects.
  - 2) Or the thesis statement can state an effect and the body paragraphs can state the causes.
- Include facts, definitions, concrete details, information, and examples.



# BODY PARAGRAPHS OF A

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## CAUSE & EFFECT ESSAY

- There are two possible ways to write this:
  - 1) The thesis statement can state a cause and the body paragraphs can be the effects.
  - 2) Or the thesis statement can state an effect and the body paragraphs can state the causes.
- Include facts, definitions, concrete details, information, and examples.

### CAUSE/EFFECT #2



**EFFECT**  
Goes in  
thesis  
statement

---

---

---

---

**CAUSE**

#1

**CAUSE**

#2

**CAUSE**

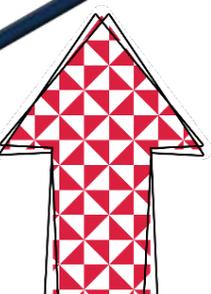
#3



The **CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH** should be shaped like a pyramid.



**Specific:** Paraphrase the thesis statement.



**More General:** Summarize the main points of the essay.



**General:** Leave readers with something to think about. It could be a strong reflection, the theme, a concluding thought, or a new (but related) idea.

# TRANSITION

Name \_\_\_\_\_



# Words and Phrases

Transition words and phrases are an important part of good essay writing. They bring ideas together.

Think of the essay as a collection of individual sentences. Putting them in order isn't enough until you use some tape. Transitions are like the tape that keeps the pieces together and helps the essay have structure.

This is a partial list of transition words that are grouped to help you write each type of informational essay. Keep in mind that you can use them interchangeably.

## SEQUENCE

also	since
first	before
second	after
next	during
later	furthermore
in addition	finally

## PROBLEM AND SOLUTION

because	as a result
consequently	for this reason
therefore	then
above all	since
as long as	while

## COMPARE AND CONTRAST

similarly	in common
likewise	in the same way
yet	after all
but	however
however	though
on the contrary	in contrast
nonetheless	on the other hand

## CAUSE AND EFFECT

because	as a result
consequently	then
therefore	when
whenever	since
as long as	while

## DESCRIPTIVE

above	besides
across	near
over	when
under	in front of
to illustrate	like

# STUDENT REVISION CHECKLIST

Name \_\_\_\_\_

CRITERIA	ABSOLUTELY	MOSTLY	PARTIALLY	NOT REALLY
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> ➤ Have you provided an interesting hook?				
➤ Have you given background information?				
➤ Have you included a thesis statement?				
<b>BODY PARAGRAPHS</b> ➤ Have you included topic sentences?				
➤ Have you developed the essay by using facts, definitions, concrete details, and examples?				
➤ Have you included concluding sentences?				
<b>CONCLUSION</b> ➤ Have you restated the thesis, summarized, and ended strongly?				
<b>ORGANIZATION + STYLE</b> ➤ Have you organized the response and used transitions?				
<b>MECHANICS:</b> ➤ Have you reviewed for grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization errors?				

# WRITING Student Revision Checklist



## Revise

<b>ARMS</b>	<b>You</b> ✓	<b>Peer</b> ✓
<b>A</b> Add details, words & sentences		
<b>R</b> Remove unneeded details, words & sentences		
<b>M</b> Move information for clarity & organization		
<b>S</b> Substitute specific, vivid words for bland ones		

## Rockin' Revisions!

You've worked hard! Don't blow it now by skimping on the revision work!

Read over your draft once for each letter in the acronym ARMS, and then check the "You" column. That means rereading four times. Improvements should be made with each reading.

Also have a classmate revise your work. They can check the peer column and answer the revision questions below.

**Peer Revision Partner**

\_\_\_\_\_

- ❖ Does the passage have an interesting hook that makes me want to keep reading?
- ❖ Is it well-organized?
- ❖ Are important and interesting details included?
- ❖ Is there an interesting conclusion?
- ❖ What is the best part of the passage? Why?
- ❖ What is the part that still needs some improvement? Explain.

*Partners should meet to discuss revision suggestions and results.*

# WRITING Student Editing Checklist

## Exceptional Editing!

You're nearing the finish line!  
Don't give up now!

Just like the revision step, you should read over your draft once for each letter in the acronym, and then check the "You" column.

Also have a classmate edit your writing. Sometimes we miss errors that others pick up.

Peer Editing Partner  
\_\_\_\_\_

Edit		You	Peer
 <b>CUPS</b>		✓	✓
<b>C</b> Capitalization - proper nouns: names, titles, etc...			
<b>U</b> Usage - subject/verb agreement, tenses			
<b>P</b> Punctuation - apostrophes, commas, quotes, etc...			
<b>S</b> Spelling - check all words, including homophones			

- ❖ Are titles, subtitles, proper nouns, and proper adjectives capitalized? How about the first word in every sentence and the first word in every quote?
- ❖ Are quotation marks used correctly? How about commas? Are apostrophes used in contractions and possessives?
- ❖ Is each sentence a complete thought?
- ❖ Are there any run-on sentences?
- ❖ Is the tense consistent? Do subjects and verbs agree?
- ❖ Have spelling errors been corrected?

Partners should meet to discuss revision suggestions and results.

# INFORMATIVE ESSAY Rubric

Name \_\_\_\_\_

CRITERIA	4	3	2	1
<b>Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Clear, interesting introduction of topic.</li> <li>➤ Demonstrates understanding of topic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Clear introduction of topic.</li> <li>➤ Demonstrates grade level understanding of topic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Introduction of topic is unclear.</li> <li>➤ Demonstrates limited understanding of topic .</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Introduction does not address task.</li> <li>➤ Demonstrates little understanding of topic .</li> </ul>
<b>Development of Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Thorough development of topic by use of facts, definitions, concrete details, and examples.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Development of topic by use of facts, definitions, concrete details, and examples.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Partial development of topic .</li> <li>➤ Facts, definitions, concrete details, and examples may be incomplete or partially correct.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Little development of topic.</li> <li>➤ Facts, definitions, concrete details, and examples are missing or incorrect.</li> </ul>
<b>Organization, Clarity, and Style</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Skillful organization and use of transitions enhance meaning.</li> <li>➤ Includes style, sophisticated vocabulary, and voice.</li> <li>➤ Interesting concluding statement that clearly stems from the topic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Clear organization and use of transitions.</li> <li>➤ Includes style and grade-level vocabulary.</li> <li>➤ Concluding statement relates to topic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Partially organized, with little use of transitions.</li> <li>➤ Some attempt at style, with basic vocabulary.</li> <li>➤ Some attempt is made to conclude.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Little attempt at organization.</li> <li>➤ No use of transitions.</li> <li>➤ Lacks style.</li> <li>➤ Conclusion is missing or irrelevant.</li> </ul>
<b>Mechanics:</b> grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ There is clear evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised and edited.</li> <li>➤ There are few errors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ There is some evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised, and edited.</li> <li>➤ There are some errors, but they do not interfere with understanding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ There is little evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised, and edited.</li> <li>➤ Frequent errors interfere with understanding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ There is no evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised, and edited.</li> <li>➤ Frequent errors hinder understanding.</li> </ul>

# INFORMATIONAL ESSAY RUBRIC SCORING GUIDE

<u>Total</u>	<u>Grade</u>
16	100
15	94
14	88
13	81
12	75
11	69
10	63
9	56
8	50
7	44
6	38
5	31
4	25

**Please Note:**

I'm all for flexibility and ease when I'm scoring. If a student is "between" a 3 and a 4 in any one area, they can be given a score in the middle of the grading scale. So even though the scores go in 6 point increments, students can earn those "in-between" scores.

## KEY

### BRAINSTORM!

What kind of writing do you do every day? Make a list of the writing you do on a typical school day, from morning until evening.

- name and date
- homework assignments in planner
- answer questions from textbooks
- essays
- notes from board
- notes from listening
- instructions
- text messages
- and more

### BRAINSTORM!

What kind of writing do you think adults do every day? Make a list of all of the writing you think they do.

- shopping lists
- reports for work
- "to do" lists
- emails
- text messages
- letters and notes
- Twitter messages
- fill out forms
- sign name
- and more

What PURPOSE do all of these writing examples have in common?

- They explain.
- They provide information.

THEY ARE **ALL** EXAMPLES OF

informational text.

An informational essay is written to

use facts to inform, explain, or describe a topic.

It can also be called an an expository essay.

*The Life Cycle of a Butterfly* by J. Harrell

1. What is the **topic** of the essay?

*The Life Cycle of a Butterfly*

2. What is the **purpose** of the essay? This is the **main idea**.

*The selection explains the process (or metamorphosis) of a butterfly.*

3. Look at the **first sentence**. How has the writer decided to begin this essay? This is the **hook**.

*The first sentence is a quote.*

4. Which sentence in the first paragraph tells the reader exactly what the essay is going to be about? This is the **thesis statement**.

*The thesis is the third sentence.*

5. How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay? 4

6. Why has the writer included this number of body paragraphs?

*The butterfly's life cycle has 4 stages, so there is one body paragraph for each stage..*

7. How are the body paragraphs **organized**? This is called **structure**.

*It is organized in sequential order.*

8. Which **key words** tell you that the text is organized in this way?

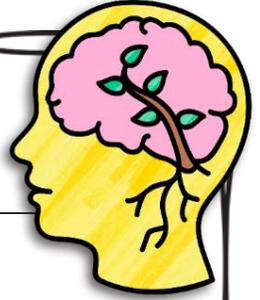
*first, second, third, and finally*

9. What **type of information** does the writer use to **develop** each body paragraph?

*It includes facts, specific details, and definitions.*

10. What is the purpose of the **concluding paragraph**?

*It restates the thesis, summarizes, and ends with a strong statement.*



*Everyone Learns Differently* by A. Curran

1. What is the **topic** of the essay?

Learning Styles

2. What is the **purpose** of the essay? This is the **main idea**.

The purpose is to describe the three ways people learn.

3. Look at the **hook**, which is also called a **lead**. How has the writer decided to begin this essay?

It begins with a question.

4. Which sentence in the first paragraph tells the reader exactly what the essay is going to be about? This is the **thesis statement**.

The last two sentences form the thesis statement.

5. How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay? 3

6. Why has the writer included this number of body paragraphs?

There are three learning styles reviewed in the essay, so there is one body paragraph for each style..

7. How are the body paragraphs **organized**? This is called **structure**.

Each paragraph describes one learning style.

8. Which **key words** tell you that the text is organized in this way?

"Many," "another," "the third type."

9. What **type of information** does the writer use to **develop** each body paragraph?

Facts, specific details, and definitions.

10. What is the purpose of the **concluding paragraph**?

It restates the thesis, summarizes, and ends the way it started, with a question.

*Moving into the Middle* by Thomas Richard

1. What is the **topic** of the essay?

Middle school versus elementary school

2. What is the **main idea**?

The essay states similarities and differences between middle school and elementary school.

3. What kind of **hook**, or **lead**, is used?

It begins with a strong statement.

4. Which sentence in the first paragraph tells the reader exactly what the essay is going to be about? This is the **thesis statement**.

The last sentence.

5. How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay? 2

6. Why has the writer included this number of body paragraphs?

One paragraph compares and the other contrasts.

7. How are the body paragraphs **organized**? This is called **structure**.

The similarities are stated first. Then the differences are stated.

8. Which **key words** tell you that the text is organized in this way?

"Things in common" and "There are some differences."

9. What **type of information** does the writer use to **develop** each body paragraph?

Facts, specific details, and examples.

10. What is the purpose of the **concluding paragraph**?

It restates the thesis, summarizes the information, and ends with a strong statement.

*Cell Phones in Schools* by Gwyneth Avery

1. What is the **topic** of the essay?

The essay is about cell phone use in schools.

2. What is the **main idea**?

Cell phone use in schools is a problem, but there are solutions.

3. What kind of **hook** did the writer use?

The writer starts with a statistic.

4. Locate the **thesis statement**.

The last two sentences form the thesis statement.

5. How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay? 2

6. Why has the writer included this number of body paragraphs?

The writer has included two possible solutions to the problem.

7. Which **organizational structure** has the writer used?

The body paragraphs are organized one solution at a time.

8. How can you prove the text is organized in this way?

"One solution," and "Another solution."

9. What **type of information** is used to **develop** each body paragraph?

Specific ideas, details, and examples are used.

10. What is the purpose of the **concluding, or closing, paragraph**?

It restates the thesis, summarizes the main points, and ends with a statement.

*A Reason for Everything* by B. Browne

1. What is the **topic** of the essay?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Test grades and study habits.
2. What is the **purpose** of the essay?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 The purpose is to explain that poor grades are caused by poor study habits.
3. What kind of **lead** did the writer use?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 It begins with a brief story, or anecdote.
4. Which sentence is the **thesis statement**?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 The last sentence is the thesis statement.
5. How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay? 3
6. Why has the writer included this number of body paragraphs?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 There are three poor study habits that cause poor grades.
7. Which **pattern of organization** has the writer used?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 The most important cause is listed first.
8. Support the organizational pattern from #7.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 The author uses phrases such as, "The first habit," "The second habit," and "The third habit."
9. What **type of information** is used to **develop** each body paragraph?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 The ideas are developed using specific details and examples.
10. What purpose does the **conclusion** serve?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 It restates the thesis, summarizes the information, and ends with a strong statement.

# Patterns

**Directions:**

Decide which organizational pattern would work best when writing about the following topics. Match the topic to the structure.

## TOPIC

## ORGANIZATION

The Life of Helen Keller

Why do tornados occur and what damage can they do?

DOG Care Versus CAT Care

Air pollution and the things we can do to prevent it

The Job of a Circus Clown

Compare/ Contrast

Problem and Solution

Sequence

Description

Cause and Effect

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