

Main Elements of Body Paragraphs:

For this kind of essay, start each body paragraph with a topic sentence clearly stating what supporting point (a reason, a cause, an effect, etc.) the paragraph will develop. Try to be subtle rather than mechanical and repetitious. If you have outlined your main points already in your introduction, be sure not to repeat them word for word in the topic sentences in your body paragraphs.

Use transitions in the topic sentences, but, where possible, avoid the cliché opening of "first," "second" "third," and so on.

After the topic sentence, develop each paragraph with a substantial amount of specific supporting detail and evidence. Think of your topic sentence as a warrant (a mini claim that provides support for your primary claim – your thesis statement). Once you provide your readers that warrant, you need to support and/or prove it with evidence, research, or even (sometimes) personal experience and anecdotal evidence. Try following these steps:

1. State Your (sub)Claim, or warrant
2. Provide reasons why the warrant supporting your claim is valid/sound
3. Offer proof -- examples, facts, and/or observations that support your claim and illustrate your point
4. Explain why and how the claim supports your thesis statement (claim!) in order to build a sound, well-researched argument

Many times, you can supply convincing proof by providing one or more of the following:

- specific details
- an expanded example
- a series of closely-related short examples
- a narration of an event
- an analysis of a process
- a cause-effect sequence
- a classification scheme
- a definition
- a comparison/ contrast
- a detailed description
- or a combination of these techniques.

Key to these body paragraphs in ENG 102 is your strategic use of outside evidence that supports your main claim (and your individual body paragraph warrants). You should use a mix of “local” and scholarly sources.

Try to end each body paragraph with a concluding sentence that ties the paragraph's details, examples, reasons, etc. to its topic sentence and your overall thesis. You will want your readers

to understand why and how your arguments in the body paragraph support your thesis statement.
Do NOT end with a sentence repeating your topic sentence.

Avoid body paragraphs full of vague generalizations. Instead, give your readers specific details, examples, and reasons. Specific details will always create a more convincing argument, so use them!

So, to recap...

1. Insert a Topic Sentence
2. Explain Your Topic Sentence
3. Introduce Your Evidence
4. Insert Your Evidence
5. Unpack Your Evidence
6. Explain Your Evidence
7. Insert a Concluding Sentence