



U.S. Embassy Youth Essay Competition

Deadline: March 17, 2010 at 5:00 p.m.

Objective:

To write a well-developed essay of around 5 paragraphs and/or 500-800 words.

What is an Essay?

An essay is simply a paper of several paragraphs that supports a single point or tells one story.

The main idea or point developed in an essay is called the thesis statement. The thesis statement appears in the introductory paragraph, and it is then developed in the supporting paragraphs that follow. A short concluding paragraph closes the essay. Therefore, the shortest essay you should write is a minimum of three paragraphs.

The following shows the form of an essay. You should use this form to write your essay.

Introductory paragraph

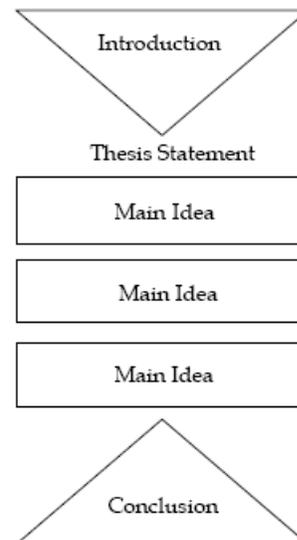
- A. *Catches the reader's interest*
- B. *Gives brief background on your topic*
- C. *Begins or ends with the **thesis statement***

Body (Main idea paragraphs 2,3, etc)

- A. *Develops, expands, supports the thesis statement*
- B. *Includes a topic sentence for each paragraph*
- C. *Includes supporting details which reinforce the topic sentence and main idea.*

Concluding Paragraph

- A. *Restates the thesis or sums up the argument*
- B. *Tells the reader what you think is important to remember*
- C. *Does not introduce new information.*



This essay gives you an opportunity to show how effectively you can develop and express your ideas in English. You should, therefore, take care to develop your point of view, present your ideas logically and clearly, and use language precisely.

Make sure that your essay possesses the following:

- **Unity** – Make your point and stick to the point; do not discuss ideas which are not related to your topic.
- **Support** – Back up your point with specific evidence; do not use generalizations.
- **Coherence** – Organize and connect your evidence; do not leave your sentences without connecting words and transitions.
- **Sentence Skills** – Write clear, error free sentences; do not make mistakes with grammar, sentence construction, punctuation and spelling.

Good Luck!

**** Keep in mind that this essay is supposed to be a creative writing exercise. You are not necessarily trying to “prove” a point, so your thesis statement and body paragraphs will be more descriptive than informative.****