

# The “Basic” Paper Outline

This common essay structure often fills the requirements for academic writing here at Texas Wesleyan University. This style may be used for compare and contrast, cause and effect, and literature analysis papers.

## *Introduction Paragraph:*

- ✓ Consists of 2-3 brief introductory sentences, also called clauses, closely related to the paper’s theme.
- ✓ Thesis sentence: what the paper is all about; a.k.a. the main idea.  
**The thesis sentence should be the last sentence in the introduction paragraph.**

**Ex. Good journalism can inform, empower, and enlighten.**

## *Body:*

- ✓ The body consists of tightly-constructed paragraphs that link back to or are parts of the thesis.  
**The body should consist of at least three paragraphs.**
- ✓ Introductory Sentence: The topic of the paragraph is featured in the lead-in sentence.  
**Ex. Good journalism informs the public about current events.**
- ✓ Detail Sentences: Each additional sentence includes a detail about the subject.  
**Provides additional support for the topic or presents supporting evidence.**
- ✓ Transition Sentence: Briefly introduces the next topic.  
**Ex. While journalism can inform the public, it can also empower the individual.**

## *Conclusion:*

- ✓ The last paragraph of the paper, the conclusion includes a brief restatement of the thesis sentence. Usually 2-3 sentences in length. Suggest possible applications of the thesis or offer a closing thought. **ALWAYS END STRONG!**

