

WRITING Organizing and preparing your essay

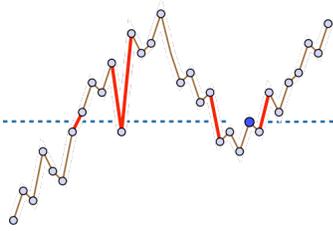
After brainstorming, creating a skeleton structure is a good way to organize our ideas. Well-organized writing is easy to understand and receives high marks on tests.

The **Introduction** has two jobs. It must tell the reader what they are going to read about, using the thesis statement, and it must make them want to continue reading. When the reader finishes our introduction, they should be able to guess some of the ideas that we'll discuss in our essay.

The **Body Paragraphs** explain why our thesis statement is true. **Body 1** should be the least powerful reason, **Body 2** should be of medium importance, and **Body 3** should be the strongest reason. Each body paragraph should begin with a **Topic Sentence**, which is then followed by three **Supporting Details**. The supporting details give reasons why the topic sentence is true. You can organize your supporting details however you want, but be sure that you pick a reason for your organization. I have chosen to organize mine from general to specific.

The **Conclusion** also has two jobs. It must **Re-state the thesis**, using different words, to help our reader remember our most important idea. It must also make the reader feel like they have finished reading. The **Clincher** gives them this feeling by showing our ideas in a new or surprising fashion. Be careful, though: don't introduce new ideas in the conclusion.

Imagine that we want to share some research about coffee drinking. I've created a skeleton structure that gives an outline of our main points on the next page.

**Introduction:**

- Introduce the subject of your essay - Recent research has shown that drinking coffee can be dangerous.
- Thesis statement - Drinking coffee daily can cause many types of disease.

Body 1:

- Topic sentence 1 - People who drink coffee daily get more diseases than people who drink juice daily.
- Supporting detail 1A - The study tested both coffee-drinkers and juice-drinkers.
- Supporting detail 1B - The juice-drinkers became sick less often.
- Supporting detail 1C - The juice-drinkers got sick from only a few types of disease, but the coffee-drinkers got sick from many types of disease.

Body 2:

- Topic sentence 2 - Coffee makes the body's defenses weak.
- Supporting detail 2A - Coffee contains siccitol, a substance that stops white blood cells from working effectively.
- Supporting detail 2B - Ineffective white blood cells cannot stop disease from growing in the body.
- Supporting detail 2C - People who drink coffee daily have fewer healthy white blood cells.

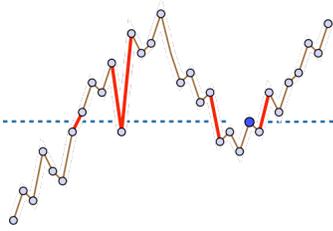
Body 3:

- Topic sentence 3 - Coffee is a source of disease.
- Supporting detail 3A - Samples of coffee had three times as many disease-carrying bacteria as samples of juice.
- Supporting detail 3B - Laws about cleanliness of coffee are less strict than laws about cleanliness of juice.
- Supporting detail 3C - Studies show that businesses that sell only coffee are dirtier than businesses that sell only juice.

Conclusion:

- Re-state thesis - People who drink coffee every day will become sick more often than people who don't.
- Clincher - To stay healthy, drink coffee less frequently.

I've used this skeleton to start an essay on the next page.



Coffee

Recent research has shown that drinking coffee can be dangerous. Drinking coffee daily can cause many types of disease.

People who drink coffee daily get more diseases than people who drink juice daily. The study tested both coffee-drinkers and juice-drinkers. The juice-drinkers became sick less often. The juice-drinkers got sick from only a few types of disease, but the coffee-drinkers got sick from many types of disease.

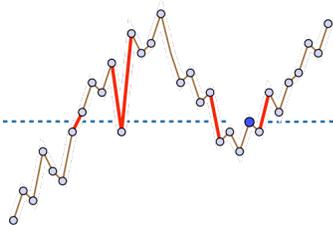
Coffee makes the body's defenses weak. Coffee contains siccitol, a substance that stops white blood cells from working effectively. Ineffective white blood cells cannot stop disease from growing in the body. People who drink coffee daily have fewer healthy white blood cells.

Coffee is a source of disease. Samples of coffee had three times as many disease-carrying bacteria as samples of juice. Laws about cleanliness of coffee are less strict than laws about cleanliness of juice. Studies show that businesses that sell only coffee are dirtier than businesses that sell only juice.

People who drink coffee every day will become sick more often than people who don't. To stay healthy, drink coffee less frequently.

As you can see, this is a good beginning. It is 187 words long, and didn't take much time to write. I also know now what my most important ideas are, and I am pleased with their order in my essay.

However, it doesn't really show much of my own style, and the sentences might benefit from a bit of variety in length, structure, and vocabulary. Additional details would make our writing more convincing, too. On the next page, I've added in some sentences to make it a bit more realistic. The sentences or words I've added are in **bold** type so you can see them more easily. Sentences where I changed the structure are underlined. I have not changed the order of the sentences from the skeleton structure.



Coffee: It Makes Us Sick

Recent **university** research has shown that drinking **too much** coffee can be dangerous **to our health and our work**. Drinking coffee daily can cause many types of disease.

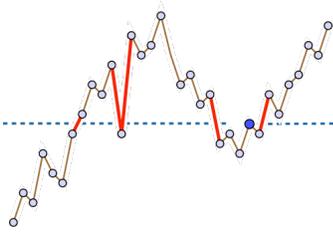
People who drink coffee daily get more diseases than daily juice drinkers. A research group from Blabla University studied groups of coffee-drinkers and juice-drinkers to try and find the reasons for this surprising fact. The juice-drinkers became sick less often and from only a few types of disease, but the coffee-drinkers got sick from many types of disease. Coffee-drinkers also had to miss more days of work.

Coffee makes the body's defenses weak because it contains siccitol, a substance that stops white blood cells from working effectively. Weak white blood cells cannot stop disease from growing in the body. If the body cannot stop the disease, the person will become sick. People who drink coffee daily have fewer healthy white blood cells.

Coffee is a source of disease. **The study also examined places where coffee and juice are sold. The samples** of coffee had three times as many disease-carrying bacteria as samples of juice, **regardless of the cost of the drink or sanitation standards of the business. In Canada,** laws about cleanliness of coffee are less strict than laws about cleanliness of juice. **Other scientists have completed tests that** show that businesses that sell only coffee are dirtier than businesses that sell only juice.

People who drink coffee every day will become sick more often than people who don't. To stay healthy, drink coffee less frequently.

This final essay reflects my own style of writing, much more so than the example before it. The extra information I have added makes the ideas more clear, and it is now 265 words in length. Adding or subtracting details to meet a specific assignment limit



would not be difficult at this point. It's also easy to read, and it shows my own ideas well. Try using a skeleton structure with your own writing. You'll be surprised at how it helps!