



Schematization of the Typical College Essay

Introduction: Naming the Subject
Establishing common ground with the reader
Engaging the reader's interest
Thesis: Stating the case (and the grounds for it)

(Transitional matter)

1. <u>Topic Sentence: 1st main supporting point</u>	(Indented numbers indicate a series of explanatory statements, each a development of the one above it.)
2. Evidence	
3.	
4.	
c: Closure/conclusion	

(Transitional matter)

1. <u>Topic Sentence: 2nd main supporting point</u>	(Repeated numbers arranged vertically indicate ideas of parallel importance, as, say, two examples of the same phenomenon or two reasons for the same outcome.)
2. Evidence	
3.	
3.	
c: Closure/conclusion	

(Transitional matter)

1. <u>Topic Sentence: 3rd main supporting point</u>
2. Evidence
3.
2.
3.
c: Closure/conclusion

Conclusion with statement of significance or return to opening theme

Evidence consists of expert testimony, statistics, samples, examples, personal experiences, self-evident statements, known facts, shared beliefs, truisms, and reasoning, i.e., the analysis by means of which data become significant. This reasoning can employ such forms and techniques as definition, classification and division, comparison, cause/effect analysis, process analysis, narration, description, and, more generally, deduction and induction.

Sources: Edward Corbett's Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student
Francis Christensen's A New Rhetoric (1976)
Packer & Timpane, Writing Worth Reading (1986)
and the Grinnell College Writing Lab