

Writing Handout 18 - Writing Style Checklist

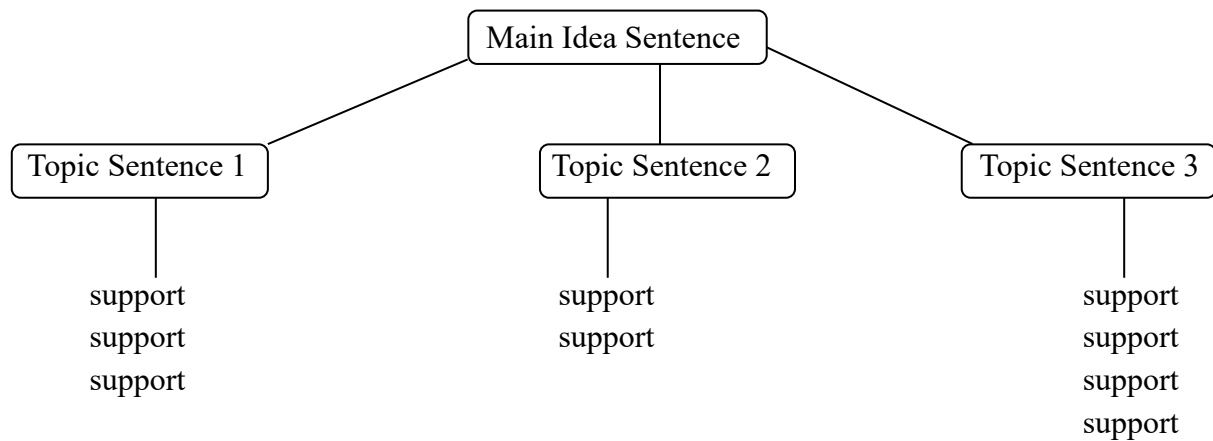
Follow this list and you will have good essay style!

1. Understand the assignment (the general topic to be written about).
2. Do prewriting.
3. Decide your main idea sentence and your topic sentences. Do the topic sentences support your main idea sentence?
4. Make sure you will have an introductory paragraph, at least 3 body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph.
5. DO NOT give support in your introductory paragraph or concluding paragraph.
6. Make sure your paragraphs are NOT only 1 sentence long.
7. Does each topic sentence have support sentences?
8. Finally: Did you stay focused on your main idea?

Your essay should look something like this:

Introductory ¶	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX xxx. Main Idea Sentence.
Body ¶ 1	Topic Sentence #1. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXXX. Xxx XXXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.
Body ¶ 2	Topic Sentence #2. XXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXXXX XXXXXXX. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.
Body ¶ 3	Topic Sentence #3. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXXX.
Concluding ¶	Concluding Sentence. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXXX.

You should also think of your essay as a pyramid. You have the top block (the main idea) alone at the top. That must be supported by your topic sentences. Those topic sentences must be supported by the other sentences in the body paragraphs.



At the beginning, do not worry too much about the introductory paragraph or the concluding paragraph. Just use the introductory paragraph to introduce the main theme of the essay (but not to give support!). Use the concluding paragraph to “prove” you supported your main idea. You may give your opinions in the concluding paragraph, and you may also give the reader more “food for thought” such as ask the reader a question.