

ENGL 2530 Essay Outline

This outline will help you organize, plan, and structure your papers before you begin writing the rough draft. You can fill in the blanks on this document, or you can create your own outline. The goal is to do planning and to organize your points/thoughts before writing the paper.

Part I. Introduction and Thesis Statement/Main Idea: Your introductory paragraph should establish your topic; explain your selected text and its background; and state your main idea (you can call this a “thesis” if you want). Below, write/type your working thesis statement/hypothesis (which you can change later):

Part II. Body Paragraphs/Topic Sentences: Each body paragraph in your paper should begin with a clear topic sentence that establishes your main point for that paragraph. The topic sentence should directly relate to your thesis/hypothesis. Each body paragraph should also contain evidence from the text that supports and illustrates your topic sentence—evidence in a literary paper is a quotation from the text. Below, plot out the topic sentence for each of your body paragraphs as well as the main quotation/evidence for each topic sentence (if you have more body paragraphs, simply add them on—I’ve only included slots for five below, which will probably be the average length):

Topic Sentence #1: _____

1. Evidence/Quotation: _____

Topic Sentence #2: _____

1. Evidence/Quotation: _____

Topic Sentence #3: _____

1. Evidence/Quotation: _____

Topic Sentence #4: _____

1. Evidence/Quotation: _____

Topic Sentence #5: _____

1. Evidence/Quotation: _____

Part III. Conclusion: An effective conclusion returns to your original idea (without repeating thesis); makes a point that ties everything together; and provides readers with a send-off, or takeaway point. Below, right what you want to be the takeaway point for your essay—that is, what do you want readers to takeaway/learn from reading your essay?
