Expository Essay Structure Outline

Introduction

1. **Begin with a hook**. Tell a detailed story that pulls the reader in. The story should relate to the thesis of your essay in some way.
2. **Tie-in** – This is a sentence (or a few sentences) that provides a link from your hook to the thesis of your essay.
3. **Thesis statement** – This sentence is typically the last sentence of the introduction. It responds to the prompt and provides the main idea of the entire essay. The thesis statement should NOT include 3 supporting reasons. Sample thesis statement for the prompt "What is your favorite time of the year?": "Without a doubt, Thanksgiving is my absolute favorite time of the year."

Body Paragraph 1

1. **Begin with a topic sentence** - The topic sentence provides the direction for the entire paragraph and should include one reason/example that supports your thesis statement. For example, with the prompt and thesis statement mentioned above, an appropriate topic sentence for body paragraph one might be "Undoubtedly, I eat better on Thanksgiving than any other time of the year."
2. **Extension sentence** – This sentence provides further clarification on the idea presented in the topic sentence. It allows you to start moving into the details you will develop in the paragraph.
3. **Details** – Provide detailed examples that support the idea you presented in your topic sentence. Personal anecdotes provide excellent details.
4. **Closing sentence** – This is the last sentence of the paragraph and should summarize the main idea of the paragraph or put a finishing thought to it.

Body Paragraph 2

1. **Transition** – This should summarize the main idea from the previous paragraph and lead into the new idea for this paragraph. Note that this also serves as the topic sentence for this paragraph with a new supporting reason. Possible transition structures include:

   Not only do I eat like a king on Thanksgiving, but I also get to spend precious moments with family members I rarely see.

   Besides eating like a king on Thanksgiving, I also get to spend precious moments with family members I rarely see.

   Eating well on Thanksgiving is only the beginning; I also get to spend precious moments with family members I rarely see.

   While eating well on Thanksgiving is a pleasure, even more important are the precious moments I get to spend with family members I rarely see.
2. The rest of Body Paragraph 2 follows the same structure as Body Paragraph 1

Body Paragraph 3

1. **Most important supporting detail/reason** should be reserved for this paragraph to end your essay with a bang. Ways to transition to this last idea include:

   Above all else, Thanksgiving is a time I get to show my gratitude for everything I have.

   Most significantly, Thanksgiving is a time I get to show my gratitude for everything I have.
2. The rest of Body Paragraph 2 follows the same structure as Body Paragraph 1

Conclusion

1. **Restate/summarize your three supporting reasons/examples** from each topic sentence. Example:

   I savor every bite of the food I eat on Thanksgiving. Also, I appreciate the opportunity I have to spend quality time with my family and show gratitude for everything I have.
2. **Link back to your story in the hook** and finish it up.
3. **Restate your thesis** using different words.