**ENG 2PI Common Essay Mistakes**

**(aka. Common “Series of Paragraph” Errors on the Literacy Test)**

1. **Clearly state your thesis**

While it’s good to show that you’re aware of both sides of the argument in your introductory paragraph, your **thesis** needs to clearly state which stance you take. Don’t be a fence-sitter, and remain undecided.

Which is the more clear argument for the topic, what is the best fruit?

Thesis statements:

“Apples are delicious, and there are a lot of other healthy and yummy fruits like oranges or bananas”

Versus

“Apples are the best fruit because they are delicious and nutritious”

1. **Structure your argument properly**

Know the proper way to organize your [introductory and concluding paragraphs](http://mrbignell.weebly.com/uploads/5/5/7/8/5578009/introductory__conclusion_paragraph.doc), as well as your body paragraphs. Use transition words, and have multiple points in each body paragraph for full marks.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Introductory Paragraph** | **Body Paragraph** | **Concluding Paragraph** |
| Macintosh HD:Users:chrisbignell:Desktop:Intro P.jpg   * Hook the reader with a fact about the topic * Introduce the argument * State your thesis *formally* | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Topic Sentence** | | | | **Point** | **Proof** | **Discussion** | | **Point 2** | **Proof 2** | **Disc 2** | | **Point 3** | **Proof 3** | **Disc 3** | | **Concluding Sentence** | | |  * Make sure you have all the parts * Be concise * Use a separate sentence for each part to help distinguish between your point and proof | Conclusion   * Restate your thesis * Draw conclusions from your argument * End with a broad statement |

1. **Provide specific examples**

Stating “apples are yummy” without providing proof doesn’t cut it. You need to refer to **specific examples**.

For example:

**Point**: Apples are found in lots of desserts.

**Proof**: Examples include, apple crisp, apple blossom, apple pie, apple sauce.

**Comment**: Apples are so common in desserts because the majority of people find them delicious.

1. **Proofread for mechanical and grammatical errors**

To be marked, your writing must:

* Be legible
  + Take your time and write clearly
  + Clearly indicate paragraph breaks by **indenting** your paragraphs
* Make sense
  + When you are finished, review your work by reading it in your head. If you think anything is unclear at this point, then fix it
  + Watch out for homonyms, and other tricky words (ie. they’re, there, and their)