

**TEACHING THE MULTIPARAGRAPH ESSAY
INTRODUCTION TO THE UNIT
THE "BIG PICTURE" LESSON**

OVERVIEW

The goal of this lesson is for students to see the "big picture" of the writing program and realize that all of the pieces they will learn in the next few weeks are connected. The following steps introduce it:

1. Tell them about the writing program and its role over the next four years.
2. Tell them they will be taking notes on 18 terms and definitions. ("Think of this as a vocabulary list.")
3. Put the terms and definitions on the board, one by one. Students copy. (Tell them, "Don't worry if it doesn't make a lot of sense right now -- think of this as your own little dictionary that you can look at later.")
4. Break the list into two parts: *Steps in the Writing Process* and *Parts of the Essay*.
5. Put the essay format on the board and have students copy it. They won't necessarily understand all of it, but they will have a sense of where the unit is going.

STEPS IN THE WRITING PROCESS

1. Pre-writing
2. Shaping the Essay
3. First Draft
4. Peer Response
5. Revision
6. Final Draft

PARTS OF THE ESSAY

1. Introductory paragraph
2. Thesis
3. Body paragraph
4. Topic sentence
5. Concrete Detail
6. Commentary
7. Chunk
8. Concluding Sentence
9. Conclusion paragraph

**TEACHING THE MULTIPARAGRAPH ESSAY
THESIS SENTENCES
STUDENT HANDOUT**

1. A thesis is a general sentence with a subject and an opinion (also called commentary).

Example: Australia is the best country of all for a vacation.

In this sentence, *Australia* is the subject. The rest of this sentence tells the writer's opinion, or commentary, about it--that it's the best country for a vacation.

2. REVIEW:

A thesis is a general sentence with a _____ and an _____ (also called _____).

3. PRACTICE

For each of the following thesis sentences, underline the subject once and the opinion (commentary) twice.

Example: West Hills is a wonderful place to go to school.

- a) Fishing is fun to do when I'm with my dad.
- b) English is my favorite class.
- c) It's exciting going to a new school.
- d) Tacos are my favorite food.
- e) I like radio station Q106 the most.

4. REVIEW

What are the 2 parts to a thesis?

_____ and _____
(also called _____).

5. Now you will practice writing thesis sentences of your own. First you need to think of some subjects you know something about.

Here are some subjects students have used in the past:

- getting braces
- bicycling
- homework

Think of a subject of your own and write it here:

6. The next step is to write a thesis for your subject. Here is an example about the subject *getting braces*.

Thesis: Getting braces was one of the best things that could have happened to me.

This is a thesis because it has a subject (*getting braces*) and an opinion, or commentary (*was one of the best things that could have happened to me.*)

Now think of a thesis for the subject you chose in #5 and write it here:

Underline the subject once and the opinion twice.

7. You will do some more thesis practice here. First, think of 4 more subjects that you know something about. Write them in the blanks below:

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____

8. Now, write a thesis for each of your subjects.

- a) _____

- b) _____

- c) _____

- d) _____

Go back and underline each subject once and each opinion twice.

9. FINAL REVIEW

Fill in the blanks to review the parts of a thesis.

A thesis is a general sentence with a _____ and an
_____ (_____).