

B The Essay in Academic Writing

Writers use the essay structure to communicate their ideas clearly and convincingly. There are several types of essays that you will review in this book, including comparison and contrast, cause-effect, and argumentative. Academic essays typically have the following structure:

- 1 An **introductory paragraph** that explains the topic and the writer's purpose in writing. It includes:
 - a hook
 - background information
 - a thesis statement
- 2 **Body paragraphs** (usually 2–4 paragraphs) that develop the writer's main points. Each body paragraph includes:
 - a topic sentence
 - supporting sentences and details
 - a concluding sentence
- 3 A **concluding paragraph** that restates the thesis statement and provides a final comment. It includes:
 - a restatement of the thesis
 - an insight, an opinion, a recommendation, a prediction, or a call to action

ACTIVITY

3.3 Notice

Circle the answers.

- 1 Which of the following does an introductory paragraph include?
a a topic sentence b a prediction c a thesis statement
- 2 In which paragraph(s) does the writer explain the main points of the essay?
a introductory paragraph b body paragraphs c concluding paragraph
- 3 In which paragraph(s) does the writer say something he or she has learned or wants the reader to do?
a introductory paragraph b body paragraphs c concluding paragraph

THE INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH

The **hook** is usually the first one or two sentences in an introductory paragraph. It makes the reader interested in reading the essay. Writers use different types of **hooks**.

Hooks can be:

- A **thought-provoking question**

What's more important, having the convenience of plastic water bottles or having a healthy, clean environment?

- A **request to reflect on or visualize a situation to help the reader make a personal connection to the issue**

Think about how much paper and plastic you throw away in one day. Multiply that amount by 365 days in the year. Think about how many rooms it all would fill.