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## **STEPS OF A BASIC ESSAY**

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### **I. Introduction (*establishes the paper's topic*)**

- A. Opening statements (*Sentences containing some general comments about the subject at hand*)
- B. Thesis Statement (*1-2 sentences saying what the paper is about and how it will be broken down. Whatever points are specified here will be reiterated in the Body in the \*same order\*.*)

**EX: Teenage drivers have the highest rate of accidents than any other group of drivers. Due to their lack of judgment, lack of experience, and unwarranted aggression, the high insurance premiums of teenage drivers are more than justified.**

### **II. Body (*describes the paper's main points*)**

- A. First Topic (*not the strongest point*)
  - 1. Write one or two paragraphs (dependent on paper length) discussing the first idea in detail. In the same section, back up each paragraph with research, facts, examples, an anecdote (a short personal story), or some type of descriptive justification.
  - 2. The last sentence in this section should be a transitional one. Try to make a statement that sums up the last paragraph, while also introducing the new topic.

**EX: Not only do teen drivers' decisions show a marked lack of judgment, but they also show a problematic lack of experience.**

- B. Second Topic (*also not the strongest point*)
  - 1. Write one or two paragraphs discussing the 2nd idea in detail.
  - 2. In the same section, back up the ideas with research, facts, examples, an anecdote, or some type of descriptive justification.
  - 3. The last sentence in this section should be a transitional one as well. Try to make a statement that sums up the last paragraph, while also introducing the new topic.

**EX: Obviously, since the new driver's lack of experience is such an important factor, high insurance rates are warranted in reflecting that. Similarly, overt aggression is also a contributing point in expensive monthly premiums.**

C. Third Topic (*this should be your strongest point or argument*)

1. Write one or two paragraphs discussing the 3rd idea in detail.
2. In the same section, back up the ideas with research, facts, examples, an anecdote, or some type of descriptive justification.
3. The last sentence in this section should be a transitional one as well. Try to make a statement that sums up the last paragraph, while also hinting that the paper is coming to a conclusion or ending.

**EX: Clearly, the unwarranted aggression of the new driver is another justifiable reason for the high monthly rates.**

**III. Conclusion (*wraps up the paper*)**

- A. Summarizing Statements (*1-2 sentences rehashing the main points of the paper. Do not ever introduce new thoughts into the concluding paragraph.*)
- B. Reiteration of the Thesis (*1-2 sentences restating the thesis in different words than used in the first paragraph*)
- C. Final Thought (*1 sentence that leaves the reader with your final thought that applies to the topic*)

**EX: The new driver should be held accountable for his/her actions. Therefore, high teenage insurance rates are justifiable since experience, judgment, and aggression are common factors found in young drivers. While at first glance insurance rates for new drivers may seem overly exorbitant, these rates merely reflect the serious challenges that come with being a new driver.**

The links below offer additional information.

**FIVE PARAGRAPH ESSAY**

[http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/five\\_par.htm](http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/five_par.htm)

In-depth lesson about developing a five-paragraph essay.

<http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/acadwrite/intro.html>

Visual lesson about developing an introduction.

**THESIS STATEMENTS**

<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/composition/thesis.htm>

In-depth lesson about building a thesis statement.

<http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/acadwrite/thesistatement.html>

Brief information only.

[http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl\\_thesis.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl_thesis.html)

Detailed information with links to other research paper information.

[http://www.smccd.net/accounts/sevas/esl/classnotes/focus\\_topic.asp](http://www.smccd.net/accounts/sevas/esl/classnotes/focus_topic.asp)

Visual process for developing a thesis statement and how to narrow ideas.