

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# The Five Paragraph Essay

Use the text to answer each question below.

1. In the introduction, the very first paragraph of a five-paragraph essay, a writer will provide background on the topic. The introduction also includes a brief statement that summarizes the main argument of the essay. This is called a **thesis** statement. It tells the reader what you believe and what you'll prove.

Read the following introduction from an essay.

*It's an age-old debate: Cat or dog? Which makes the better pet? According to the American Humane Association, there are more cats (64.1 million) than dogs (63.8 million) in the US. But because people often own more than one cat, dog households outnumber cat households. Because dogs are loyal, show more affection and are easier to teach, they make better pets than cats.*

Which of the following sentences from the paragraph is the writer's thesis statement?

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|---|--|
| A. "According to the American Humane Association, there are more cats (64.1 million) than dogs (63.8 million) in the US." | B. "Because dogs are loyal, show more affection and are easier to teach, they make better pets than cats." |
| C. "It's an age-old debate: Cat or dog?"  | D. "But because people often own more than one cat, dog households outnumber cat households."              |
2. The **body of your essay** will be made up of three body paragraphs. Each body paragraph is like its own mini-essay with its own main idea. In a body paragraph, you will state one main idea that provides a reason for your thesis statement. You'll also provide details to support that main idea.

Read the following body paragraph from an essay.

*First, dogs are more loyal than cats. When you come home, dogs won't ignore you like some cats will. Dogs will come running and make you feel like a king. In addition, if you're going for a walk, dogs are ready and willing to be by your side. When you call them, they come right up to you. Not many cats do that.*

What is the main idea of this paragraph?

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|---|-----------------------------------|
| A. Dogs are sometimes larger than cats. | B. Dogs run to your side.         |
| C. Dogs respond to their names.         | D. Dogs are more loyal than cats. |

3. A topic sentence summarizes the main idea of a body paragraph. It's what you're trying to prove in that paragraph. It's usually the first sentence of the body paragraph and states a reason for your thesis. The rest of the paragraph should provide supporting details for your topic sentence.

*Read the following body paragraph from an essay.*

*Dogs will jump in your lap, lick your face, and wag their tails like crazy. There's no need to guess whether a dog is happy or not. You always know where they stand. On the other hand, cats might sit in your lap, but they'll probably ignore you and walk on by. Dogs have plenty of love to give.*

Which of the following would provide the best topic sentence for this paragraph?

- A. "Dogs often whimper when they are scared."  
B. "Dogs have a better sense of smell than cats."  
C. "Dogs show their affection more than cats."  
D. "Dogs have served as pets for more than 12,000 years."
4. Each body paragraph needs evidence to support the topic sentence. Evidence is another name for the facts and specific examples that writers supply to support and prove their main ideas.

*Read the following body paragraph from an essay.*

*Dogs make better pets because they are capable of learning all kinds of commands and tricks. Have you ever seen a cat fetch a stick? I doubt it. But dogs can easily be taught the following commands: "Come," "sit" and "stay." They can also be taught tricks like begging, rolling over and shaking their paw. Some dogs can even be taught to help those in need: guide dogs are specially trained dogs that help people with disabilities.*

Which of the following statements provides additional evidence to support the main idea of this paragraph?

- A. Dogs are the oldest domesticated animal.  
B. Dogs, wolves and coyotes are closely related.  
C. One of the smallest dogs is a Yorkshire terrier, which is about six inches high.  
D. Farmers often train dogs to herd flocks of sheep, ducks and other animals.

5. The **conclusion** is the very last paragraph of your essay. Begin with a restatement of the thesis, using some of the original language. But make sure you don't repeat your thesis word for word. Then summarize the three main points from the body of the essay. Add a final sentence to give the reader a sense that your essay has come to an end.

*Read the following conclusion from an essay.*

*Finally, if you're debating whether to get a cat or dog, think no further. Both can make good companions, but dogs get the upper paw. It is understandable that there are more dog owners than cat owners: dogs are true friends. They show their loyalty by staying by your side, they are more openly affectionate than cats and, best of all, they can learn all kinds of tricks--like how to help those in need. Just make sure they don't eat your homework!*

Based on this concluding paragraph, what were the three main points of this essay?

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|--|--|
| A. Dogs are more loyal, affectionate and easily trained than cats. | B. Dogs are kinder, more intelligent and calmer than cats. |
| C. Dogs are braver, more determined and more soothing than cats.   | D. Dogs are more crafty, strong and athletic than cats.    |