

Adapted from a sample literary essay:

<http://www.csd509j.net/cvhs/sherwin/Honors%20Humanities%2011/Literary%20Essay.htm>

Outline of _____

Introductory Paragraph (Paragraph 1)

- Starts out with broad, general statement that introduces the essay's topic
- The title of the work and the author are mentioned towards the beginning of the paragraph
- Optional sentence of background information about why author wrote this work
- Ends with thesis statement

Body Paragraphs (paragraphs 2-5) – Points 1, 2...

- General, transition sentence that ties to thesis statement
- Topic sentence for that paragraph (can be in the transition sentence) – the “point”
- Example or quotation from the text
- Analysis and interpretation (i.e. your personal thoughts) of supporting evidence to show how it supports your topic sentence
- Final sentence that concludes the paragraph, ties to thesis
- Note: body paragraphs should range from 3-5 in amount; depends on how long essay needs to be

Concluding Paragraph (final paragraph)

- Transition sentence between previous paragraph, connects to thesis
- Explains significance of your thesis, answers the “this is my thesis...” “so what?” question.