

Outlining

Many emerging writers suggest that they do not need to outline before beginning an essay. While an adequate essay may, indeed, be crafted without planning, the best show evidence of careful consideration. This is particularly true of a timed writing exercise. You do not have time to revise, and you certainly don't have time to change your mind! Careful planning will allow you to write a more structured, succinct essay in a shorter amount of time.

This is one way of outlining an essay. It is not the only way, but it is the structure I want you to practice. **Use the following as a method of outlining for your *Where Are You Going? Where Have You Been?* essay revisions (should you choose to revise).**

Introduction:

Hook = A general statement about the direction of your thesis

It is sometimes a good idea to provide a brief description of the text you will analyze in between the hook and thesis. This is unnecessary in a timed writing exercise.

Thesis = Subject + Direction
 (literary (theme)
 element)

Body:

Topic sentence: Subject + Direction

Evidence: context + speaker + quote

Explanation:
 Literal

Figurative

Connect to direction

Your next body paragraph may actually be a continuation of the first. In this case, substitute a transition (start with "similarly," "likewise," additionally," etc.) in place of the topic sentence. Presumably, your topic sentence is the same as the one above.

Evidence:

Explanation:
 Literal

Figurative

Connect to direction

Body:

Topic sentence: Subject + Direction

Evidence: context + speaker + quote

Explanation:
Literal

Figurative

Connect to direction

Body:

Topic sentence: Subject + Direction

Evidence: context + speaker + quote

Explanation:
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Connect to direction

Body:

Topic sentence: Subject + Direction

Evidence: context + speaker + quote

Explanation:
Literal

Figurative

Connect to direction

Conclusion: This is a brief paragraph. Use it to illustrate the connections between the ideas in your body paragraphs, and then link these ideas to the direction of your essay. Its structure is just the opposite of an introduction: first, mention the specific ideas (subject) within your essay and how these fit together; then, mention the larger significance; finally, return to your hook.