**PROPER ESSAY FORMAT**

**THE PERFECT INTRODUCTION**

There are three critical steps that students should use when writing a historical, funnel style, introduction.

3 Steps:

1. Broad statement or hook
2. Define topic or background information on topic.
3. State thesis or position

**STEP 1**

Start with a broad statement or hook question of some kind. An example might be, “Throughout history….” Or an interesting hook statement like, “So you ask what it is to be an American….”

**STEP 2**

Begin to explain what topic is being discussed. Give a reference to the time frame or geographic area relevant to your essay. This is where the introduction becomes more specific to the topic.

**STEP 3**

Write the thesis of the essay. This should be a statement that explains the point of the essay or what you are trying to prove.

**BODY PARAGRAPHS**

The point of the body paragraph is to provide evidence, support, and/or proof that your position or thesis is correct.

**Topic sentence:** The first sentence in a body paragraph is the topic sentence. This sentence should directly support the thesis or position of the paper. It will tell the reader what the paragraph will focus on.

**STEP 1**

Begin the paragraph with a concise, clear topic sentence.

**STEP 2**

Make a claim that supports the topic sentence and thesis, and provide **factual** information to support that claim. Examples and details are a great way to provide factual information.

**STEP 3**

After repeating step 2 as many times as appropriate to support your point, be sure to provide a transition statement when switching or moving onto another idea in your next body paragraph.

**THE IDEAL CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH**

A conclusion paragraph is called such because the writer should be drawing conclusions at this point in the essay. There are three easy steps to be successful in writing a conclusion paragraph.

**STEP 1**

Restate your thesis or position. Do not use, “In Conclusion”. It is the last paragraph the reader knows it is a conclusion.

**STEP 2**

Quickly summarize, in one or two sentences, the ideas included in the body paragraphs.

**STEP 3**

Draw a conclusion or conclusion about what you have written. This could be a connection to modern day event, a relation to another point in history, or explaining the impact the topic had on history.

**GENERAL RULES**

1. Do not use personalized statements. Anything with the words, “I, you, your, our, we, we’re, or my”. They do not belong in a formal essay.
2. Do not use contractions in formal essays. (Can’t, doesn’t, we’re, don’t, shouldn’t, isn’t)
3. Anytime you introduce a new idea or you make a new point, start a new paragraph. Essays should not have long body paragraphs with multiple arguments in them. Short, concise, direct body paragraphs are more effective.