

Learn the Steps to Clear Essay Writing!

Essays require well-thought-out reasons to back up an opinion or point of view. Learning to reason “on paper” is important when you write up reports at work, write a letter asking your landlord to make repairs, or need to pass the GED. The steps are the same.

Over the next four pages, you will get a chance to learn and practice a good way to write a five-paragraph essay like the one the GED asks people to do. Here is the kind of question the GED might ask you to write about:

IS WAR A SOLUTION TO WORLD PROBLEMS?

Step 1: Read the question & take a position on the issue: decide what you think.

Let's say you decide you're against war. That's your position.

Step 2: Brainstorm ideas or reasons for your position.

You might come up with ideas like these:

innocent people get killed

goes against my beliefs

breeds more violence

splits up families & creates problems without parents

talking peacefully is better solution

destroys people and nations

\$ better spent on problems at home

Step 3: Pick three of the reasons you've brainstormed to support or explain your position.

You could pick these:

- War splits up families which creates other problems
- War kills innocent people
- Talking & other peaceful means are better solutions

Step 4: Organize your thoughts in an outline for the five-paragraph essay.

Here's how:

Outline for GED essay

Instead of I believe,
you can also say I
think, or I feel, or In
my opinion

INTRODUCTION - PARAGRAPH ONE OF ESSAY

Take your position from Step1 and write it in a sentence. This sentence will be the first sentence of your introduction. Begin your sentence with I believe...

I believe war is not a solution to world problems.

Instead of First,
you can also say
To begin with

SUPPORTING PARAGRAPH - PARAGRAPH TWO OF ESSAY

Turn your 1st reason from Step 3 into a topic sentence for your 1st supporting paragraph. Begin this sentence with First,...

First, war splits up families and creates more problems at home for the children and spouses who are left behind.

Instead of In
addition, you can
also say Second, or
Furthermore, or
Moreover

SUPPORTING PARAGRAPH - PARAGRAPH THREE OF ESSAY

Turn your 2nd reason into a topic sentence for your 2nd supporting paragraph. Begin this sentence with In addition,

In addition, innocent civilians are killed in wartime.

Instead of
Finally, you can
also say Third,
or Last

SUPPORTING PARAGRAPH - PARAGRAPH FOUR OF ESSAY

Turn your 3rd reason into a topic sentence for your 3rd supporting paragraph. Begin this sentence with Finally,....

Finally, peaceful solutions can be found for the world's problems if we take the time to listen to one another.

Instead of In
conclusion, you
can also say
Overall, or In
brief

CONCLUSION - PARAGRAPH FIVE OF ESSAY

Restate your position, changing the words a little. Begin this sentence with In conclusion,...

In conclusion, fighting wars is not the answer to the problems that exist in the world.

YOUR TURN

Let's say you're in favor of war as a solution to world problems. After brainstorming, you pick these three reasons to support your point of view:

1. Defend your country
2. Eliminate evil in the world
3. Bring democracy to other countries

Now write an outline for this essay that has a different point of view from the one above:

INTRODUCTION

I believe _____

SUPPORTING PARAGRAPH

First, _____

SUPPORTING PARAGRAPH

In addition, _____

SUPPORTING PARAGRAPH

Third, _____

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, _____

The entire introductory paragraph of the GED essay can be short and sweet — just two sentences. You've already written the first sentence in your outline when you stated your position. For the second sentence, just name your three supporting reasons, putting commas between each reason, and choosing words that are slightly different from the topic sentences of your supporting paragraphs. Look how it's done. This is the introductory paragraph for the first essay that's against war:

I believe war is not a solution to world problems. *War tears families apart, kills innocent people, and doesn't allow for peaceful ways to solve disagreements.*

TRY IT

Now look at the outline above and write a two-sentence introduction for an essay in favor of war as a solution to world problems:

CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH

Your conclusion can also be short and sweet — just two sentences. Simply rewrite the introduction — your point of view and three supporting reasons — but in different words.

SUPPORTING PARAGRAPHS

Develop each supporting reason stated in each paragraph's topic, or first, sentence with specific examples. Try writing at least two or three sentences in each paragraph. Remember, paragraphs usually contain more than one sentence.