

Paper Writing Formula

Here is a summary of the formula for a good paper, follow by more detailed examples of each section:

1. Introduction
 - a. Grabber
 - b. Thesis statement – where applicable
 - c. A preview of subtopics covered in the rest of the paper
2. First subtopic
 - a. Introduction to the first subtopic mentioned in the introduction
 - i. Topic sentence
 - ii. Preview of the concepts covered relating to this subtopic
 - b. Detailed paragraph(s) relating to the first concept mentioned in the previous paragraph
 - c. Detailed paragraph(s) relating to the second concept mentioned in the previous paragraph
 - d. Continue until finished with the first subtopic
3. Second subtopic
 - a. Follow the same pattern as the first subtopic, but make sure to link this back to the previous subtopic with a transition.
4. Continue on until you have covered all of the subtopics.
5. Conclusion
 - a. You can tie back to the quotation, scenario, or question in your introduction, or state the definition in a new way.
 - b. Then summarize the main points of the paper, again in a new way
 - c. Finish with a call to action

1. Introduction

- a. Begins with a grabber – choose ONE of the following
 - i. Question
 - ii. Quotation
 - iii. Interesting scenario
 - iv. Meaningful statistics
 - v. Define the topic of your paper
- b. Write your thesis statement – where applicable
- c. A few sentences that preview the rest of the paper IN THE SAME ORDER IN WHICH THEY APPEAR IN THE BODY OF THE PAPER

Example (color-coded to match the formula):

Bullying is a global problem that affects every student, teacher, parent, and administrator.

Defining bullying requires one to set it apart from peer-conflict, and to take into account the many types of bullying, including physical, relational, and cyber-bullying. There are many causes of bullying, including parental influences, social climbing and stress and frustration. The presence of bullying in schools contributes to academic failure and social and emotional stress in victims, as well as social deviance, depression, and possibly future criminal behavior by bullies. While the problem of bullying cannot be solved as a whole, the most effective way of approaching this issue is the implementation of school-wide bullying prevention programs with support from administrators, teachers, and parents.

2. Body paragraph one – a summary of the first subtopic covered in your paper

- a. Begin with a general sentence letting the reader know the topic of this section of the paper. It should be the first topic mentioned in the introduction:

Bullying is a multi-faceted and multi-definitional malady.

- b. The next sentences in the paragraph should support the statement made in this first sentence:

Researchers most commonly set bullying apart from peer-conflict by the frequency with which it occurs, an imbalance of power between the two parties, and the intent to cause harm. “Bullies systematically harass certain groups or individuals using physical or psychological aggression with the intention of causing harm.” (Rock, Hammond, and Rasmussen, 2005)

Note that this paragraph is an introduction to the section of the paper defining bullying. While it does include a quotation, the quotation is first set-up or introduced by an expository sentence.

3. Body Paragraph two

a. This paragraph elaborates on the topic introduced in the previous paragraph:

Bullies choose different modes for harming their victims. “Crick and Grotpeter (1995) assert that when children are attempting to harm a peer, they choose a method that they perceive will cause harm to the goals which are most valued by that particular peer group.” (Bowie, 2007) Typically, boys use physical aggression more frequently, while girls use relational aggression more. While males establish their pecking order through physical means, females are far more likely to be hurt by gossiping, exclusion from a group, or verbal put-downs. Zero-tolerance policies at many schools now prohibit physical aggression, however, and relational aggression by boys is becoming far more common as a result.

Note the broad topic sentence and quote that prepare the reader for the rest of the paragraph.

Your reader should ALWAYS know what is coming in your paper.

4. Continue focusing on the same subtopic until you are ready to move on. Each paragraph should begin with a topic sentence – a broad, general sentence that tells the reader what to expect in the rest of the paragraph.
5. When you are ready, segue into the next subtopic.
 - a. Your first paragraph on this subtopic should introduce the new subtopic. It should be the second subtopic mentioned in the introduction. Be sure to link it to the previous topic with a **transition**:

Just as the definition of bullying is multi-faceted, the causes of aggression and bullying are numerous. Many influences contribute to bullying, including biology, frustration, social learning, parenting styles, and social status. In some instances, bullying is a response to difficult life experiences, while in others, it is learned from parents or media role models. Although there are far more known causes of bullying than there are solutions, knowing the roots of the problem enables teachers to better understand bullies and therefore gain insight into possible ways of curbing their aggressive behavior.

Note that this paragraph is a summary of this topic and does not go into any specific details.

6. The following paragraphs will link back to this one and expand on each of the topics mentioned. Again, each will begin with a topic sentence
7. Continue on in this manner until all of the topics covered in the introduction have been introduced and expanded upon.
8. Conclusion
 - a. You can tie back to the quotation, scenario, or question in your introduction, or state the definition in a new way.

b. Then summarize the main points of the paper, again in a new way

c. Finish with a call to action

NOTE: DO NOT INTRODUCE NEW MATERIAL OR MAKE NEW ARGUMENTS IN YOUR CONCLUSION. SIMILARLY, DO NOT REPEAT THE INTRODUCTION.

Bullying and aggression are classroom problems which all teachers and administrators face. Bullying is a multi-faceted problem, including physical and relational aggression and cyber-bullying. Its causes range from parenting style to frustration to attaining social status goals. Effects of bullying are internalizing behaviors such as depression and anxiety in victims and externalizing behaviors such as aggression and rule-breaking in bullies. While no absolute solutions have been found for bullying, school-wide anti-bullying programs are most effective at stopping bullying behaviors. If you are a teacher or an administrator, consider starting an anti-bullying program in your school to combat the ever-present problem of bullying.