ESSAY FORMAT / TEMPLATE

An analytical history essay has five paragraphs and six parts:

Thesis Paragraph

Body Paragraph #1

Body Paragraph #2

Body Paragraph #3

Summary / Conclusion Paragraph

Bibliography / Works Cited Page

Thesis – The ALL IMPORTANT 1st Paragraph: Clear and precise writing is writing that is focused, using precise word choices for a specific and particular effect. Focus comes from structure and implies actively choosing a direction, and sticking to it. In this exercise, the goal is to construct an analytical thesis that is the 1st paragraph of your essay. Generally follow the outline below in your first draft(s).

A. Consider the Reader – Who is to be reached, and what is to be accomplished? Continually think of how to do this. Don’t assume that you are writing for me. Seek to inform and engage the reader.

B. Topical sentence – In general, who, what, when, where is the paper about?

C. Define thesis - Thesis sentence – Specifically what will be analyzed, and why is it important?

D. Working environment – Narrow down the focus to the most essential aspects of the topic that relate directly to the thesis.

E. Argument – methodology – What analytical tools are being used? Comparison? Contrast? Evaluation? Examination? What set of criteria form the basis of judgment? (theoretical orientation).

F. Depth - beginning and ending – Impose limits that allow for a specific goal to be reached. These limits may be of time, place, or level of complexity.

G. Linking sentence – What is of first priority? How will this paragraph state what the first priority is, and smoothly connect to the next paragraph? .

B. Body – 3 body paragraphs. This should be a point by point expansion of the thesis. Each paragraph should reflect and aspect of fact that is analyzed and related to the established argument. Each area of analysis should be followed by a source note that tells where your research was done. Using a standard system (footnote, endnotes, or parenthetic notes) cite your sources.

C. Summary / Conclusion – The final paragraph of the paper should draw together the essential features of body into a summarized synthesis of exactly how they support the thesis. In addition, this portion of the piece should conclude or direct the reader to come to a conclusion on the meaning of the paper.

D. Bibliography / Works Cited – This is a formal scholarly exercise in acknowledgement of the resources used to write the paper. A standard format should be used that originates from a specific academic area or discipline. Some samples can be found in writer’s style manuals. This assignment should have five (5) sources. No source from an un-refereed source allowed. This means that if you cannot find author credits and/or an institution that sponsors the source, then it is a questionable source.