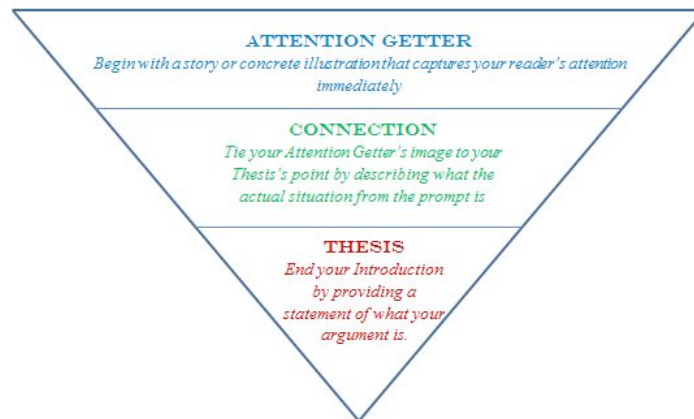


The Shape of an Essay

Introduction

- **Hook**
 - Definition: An interesting sentence or two that captures the attention of the reader and keeps him reading.
 - Can be a quote, startling fact, or surprising statistic.
- **Introduction of topic, statement of opening idea(s) and introduction of the author(s) and text(s), when applicable**
 - Example: Throughout the storied history of professional basketball, fans have constantly debated various topics. The greatest team, the best coach, and the most exciting game all stand as subjects bandied about by both casual and religious followers of the game. However, none of these debates compares in importance to the most important debate of them all: the greatest player in history. Legendary names like Magic Johnson, Larry Bird, and Bill Russell arise in these discussions. While these name indeed carry a great weight, none of them compare to the player who truly stands as the best ever.
- **Thesis**
 - Definition: A sentence or two that states the author's viewpoint and provides the reader with the paper's main idea.
 - Example: Michael Jordan is the greatest basketball player ever because of his individual and team accomplishments.



The Shape of an Essay

Body Paragraphs

- **Topic sentence**
 - Definition: A sentence that captures the meaning of the whole body paragraph.
 - Example: Michael Jordan stands as the greatest basketball player ever because of his individual achievements.
- **Evidence**
 - Definition: Factual information presented to readers in order to establish the authenticity of the author's point and to help persuade the reader.
 - Can be examples, facts, statistics, anecdotes, quotes, testimony
 - Example: Much of Jordan's greatness stems from his individual accomplishments, such as winning five NBA Most Valuable Player (MVP) awards, six Finals MVP awards, and earning a First Team All-NBA spot ten times in his career (nba.com).
- **Commentary/Analysis**
 - Definition: Explains to the reader why or how the evidence helps prove the paper's thesis.
 - Example: No player matches the pedigree of Jordan's individual regular season and playoff performances. Jordan holds the second most regular season MVP awards and appearances on the First Team All-NBA Team and the most Finals MVP awards in spite of the fact that he retired for almost two full seasons in the prime of his career. These individual achievements stand as a testament to Jordan's greatness.
- **Transition sentence to next paragraph(s)**
 - Definition: A sentence that helps the reader understand how separate paragraphs work together to prove a larger point and smoothly highlights connections between paragraphs.
 - Example: However, greatness does not come solely from individual achievements, but also team accomplishments.

Conclusion

- **Restate thesis**
- **Summarize main point(s) or suggest ideas for further study**
- **Call to action**
 - Definition: Words urging the reader to commit to an immediate endeavor on an issue.
 - Example: The shadow that Jordan's individual and team accomplishment casts on all other players past and present should force us to reconsider who truly stands at the forefront of basketball's Mount Rushmore.

