

Schematic: Five-Graph Essay

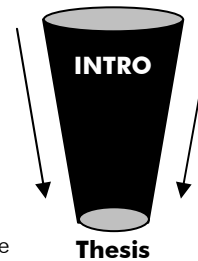
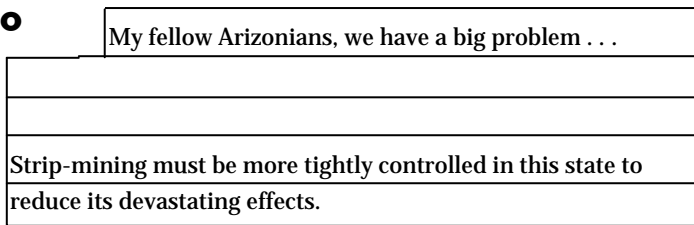
At its most basic level, an essay consists of these simple parts:

- an intro paragraph with a **thesis** stated at or near the end
- body paragraphs, each beginning with a **topic sentence (TS)**
- **signpost** and **echo words** in the topic sentence that tie it to the thesis
- a conclusion

Here is a brief schematic of the intro and body graphs at work:

Control Strip-Mining Now!

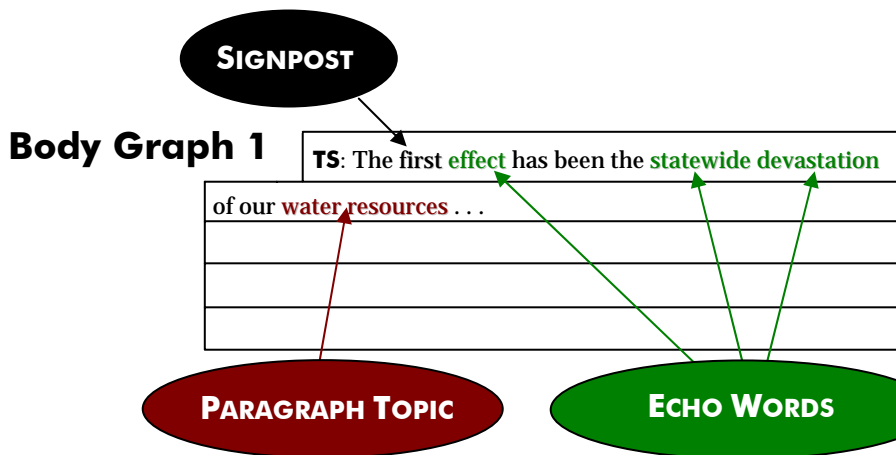
Intro



Funnel Effect

Like a funnel, the intro paragraph must begin broad and gradually narrow your reader's focus down to the thesis statement—the intro's last sentence.

The thesis must be debatable and predict the body of the essay: in this case, the reader expects to read about a series of devastating "effects" of strip-mining in the paragraphs that follow.



Signpost and Echo

The topic sentence should contain a **SIGNPOST** word or phrase (*first, second, in addition, another, an even more important effect*) and **ECHO** words that repeat or echo key words from the thesis.

Body Graph 2

Signpost
TS: A second **effect** has been the **widespread destruction of public lands**.
Echo **Topic**

Body Graph 3

Signpost
TS: The third **devastating effect** has been the **disruption of our citizens' lives**.
Echo **Topic**