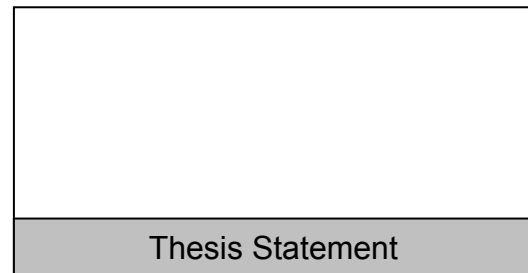




# Structure of an Essay

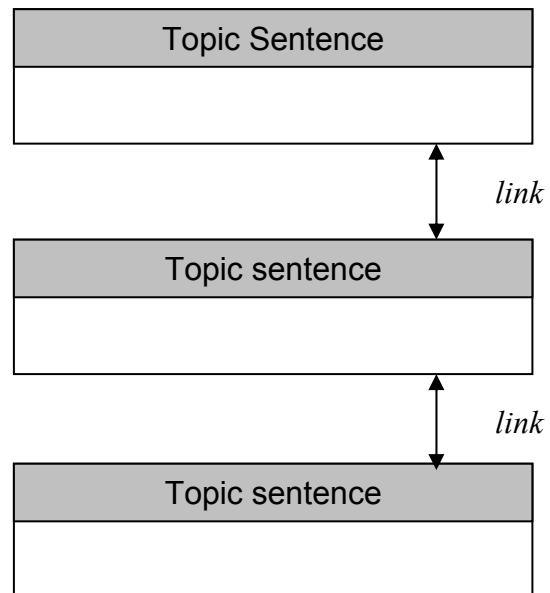
## Introduction (10% of total words)

- Gains the reader's attention
- Provides brief background material about the meaning, context & significance of the topic. Includes definitions of keywords if necessary.
- Identifies the 'gap', problem or issue outlined in the question. Gives the reader some understanding of the order in which the ideas in the essay will be presented.
- Clearly identifies the author's point of view in a thesis statement.



## The body of an essay (100 -200 words each paragraph)

- Your argument is developed through paragraphs. Each paragraph should contain only one main idea, as stated by the topic sentence.
- Each paragraph supports the main idea by explaining the issue, and providing evidence - eg quotes, statistics, facts, examples, case studies.
- Decide how many points you wish to make and in what order.
- Link the paragraphs together.
- Make sure paragraphs follow in logical sequence (*as promised in the Introduction*) so that the essay flows towards the conclusion.



## The conclusion (10% of total words)

- Sum up your main points.
- Tie these back to the thesis statement.
- Avoid adding new material or using quotes.
- Possibly comment or make recommendations for further discussion of topic.



- ❑ Include your reference list or bibliography

# Sample Essay

## INTRODUCTION:

*broad opening; setting scene, defining issue, introducing key concepts*

**Thesis Statement:** *outlining essay shape + author's opinion*

## BODY:

**Part 1:** *Topic sentence introducing 1st part of argument*

*Supporting evidence*

**Part 2:** *Topic sentence introducing 2nd part of argument + link from previous para*

*Supporting evidence*

**Part 3:** *Topic sentence introducing 3rd part of argument + link from previous para*

*Supporting evidence*

## CONCLUSION:

*summarising each part of argument, recapping thesis statement, opening discussion out again*

## REFERENCE LIST

*Alphabetical list of full bibliographic details, formatted according to the referencing style recommended by your School (in this case, APA)*

## The Role of Computers in Modern Society

In existence for only a few decades, personal computers have had a major impact on modern society, especially in the fields of commerce, education and leisure. It is now impossible to imagine engaging in business or learning activities without computers, but their value as a form of entertainment is more questionable.

The business world has become increasingly competitive, with speed of the utmost importance. Before computers, tasks such as book-keeping, liaising with clients, suppliers and manufacturers and filing information were time-consuming and inefficient. Nowadays, software has revolutionised accounting practice (Williams et al., 2003), electronic messages are transmitted across the globe in seconds, and "countless millions of bytes of data" (Chen, 2007, p. B4) can be stored and accessed almost immediately.

Education has also benefited from the computer's ability to manage vast amounts of information. Scientists and scholars use computers for calculations and simulation programs that would have been impossible in the past, while students can research and study online. Indeed, according to Samson (2004), self-directed learning programmes often prove more stimulating than traditional forms of instruction.

For this reason, many young people regard computers as a form of entertainment rather than a learning tool. Parents and educators express concerns that children who spend hours surfing the net may not learn to socialise with others. (Holby, 1999). A number of recent studies (Aitkens, Jackson & Green, 2001; Erricsen, 2006; Shaw & Reid, 2000) suggest that adolescents who regularly engage in 'virtual reality' or online gaming communities often experience difficulty interacting with their peers in the real world.

Therefore, while computers undoubtedly make a significant contribution in terms of business transactions, scientific research and the delivery of educational materials, their role as a primary source of entertainment, especially by the young, is far less beneficial, and should be closely monitored.

## References:

- Aitkens, S; Jackson, W.R., & Green, B. T. (2001). Perceptions of reality: Virtual versus 'real'. *Adolescence* 103 (2): 159-163.
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- Erricsen, P. (2006). Surfing the net. In D. Faber (ed.). *Trends in twentieth-century youth culture* (45-51), Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Holby, G.A. (1999). *Caught in the world-wide-web*. New York, NY: Wheatsheaf.
- Samson, A.J. (2004). *Teaching online*. Retrieved July 11, 2007, from <http://www.educationdebate.com>.
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