

Reading and Comprehending the Question

Question: What I want most that money can't buy?

First, ask yourself what is my first initial thought or reaction to this question?

Possible answer: To improve the lives of as many people as I can for the rest of my life.

Brainstorm (5 minutes)

How do I put 3 supporting ideas around this *thought*?

I use a 3 file drawer example to represent my recommended way of writing an essay.



The entire chest is on the topic you have chosen...your first thought. For example if this is a 15-year old boy's chest, then you wouldn't expect to find any drawers with girls socks in them. Make sure that the chest is only filled with your main idea's thoughts and that each drawer (supporting idea) is filled with only the sub-compartment needed for that paragraph (socks, underwear, t-shirts). Remember don't mix socks with t-shirts. Each drawer needs to focus on only the topic at hand. Stay focused on each topic. The conclusion is where you connect why all 3 drawers are related.

The socks, t-shirts and underwear are all underneath the clothes that this boy wears. Nobody sees them but he knows if they are dirty or clean.

Those last few sentences could be the final thought because it connects all 3 drawers and it leaves a meaningful impression.

Outline (5 minutes)

Now make an outline to just frame your thoughts before you actually start writing your essay.

- Main idea
 - Attention getter
 - Thesis statement
 - List your 3 main ideas
- Supporting Idea 1
 - What 3 facts support your idea number 1. They should be support your idea and not fit into any other drawer but this one.
- Supporting Idea 2
 - What 3 facts support your idea number 2. They should be support your idea and not fit into any other drawer but this one.
- Supporting Idea 3
 - What 3 facts support your idea number 3. They should be support your idea and not fit into any other drawer but this one.
- Closing idea or morale of the story

Summary

Therefore, the 5 paragraph essay can best be described from a high-level as:

First paragraph - Introduction

- Intro/Attention getter
- Thesis statement
- Introduce the 3 supporting topics or drawers in your chest

Second, Third, Fourth paragraphs – All share the same format they are the drawers.

- Topic sentence (for each drawer above) that will be the focus of this paragraph.
- At least 3 supporting ideas
- Conclusion to this paragraph

Fifth paragraph - Conclusion

- Tells the reader what you told them but doesn't it using slightly different words
- Really important to use critical thinking here
- May highlight the overarching idea or concept of the whole essay.
- Try to finish strong!