

# Essay Writing

## Review

Please follow the formats and information in the slides that follow to revise your introduction, supporting paragraphs, and conclusion.

**FINAL DRAFTS due by 11:59PM Friday night!**

# Format ~ Introduction

## Single Paragraph Introduction

1. Hook sentence
2. Context (background) sentence
3. IVF sentence
4. Story background sentence
5. Thesis Statement

## Two Paragraph Introduction

1. Hook sentence
  2. 2–3 Context (background) sentences
  3. IVF sentence
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1. More in–depth background of the story (2–4 sentences)
  2. Thesis Statement

# Sample ~ Introduction

## Insert Catchy Title Here

1.3 million people have died in the history of the United States for unjust causes. In 1952, Arthur Miller published a play about the Salem Witch Trials that mirrored the actions of individuals during the McCarthy era. *The Crucible*, by Arthur Miller, captures the hysteria and drama behind the Salem Witch Trials. During that time there were innocent people who died at the hands of vengeful accusers. In the play, John Proctor, a well-respected but deeply pained man, could easily be considered the person most responsible for the mayhem that ensued in that small, Puritan town.

# Format ~ Supporting Paragraphs

## Follow this format for your body paragraphs

1. Topic sentence (don't make it too narrow; should support your claim)
2. Reason/Detail/Fact sentence connected to topic sentence; leads into evidence
3. Evidence that supports the RDF (could be a quote or a summary/paraphrase)
  - a. If you mention the author's name, then only cite page number (63)
  - b. If no mention of name, then last name and page number (Miller 63)
4. Explanation sentence of the evidence
5. Commentary/analysis sentences of the evidence (why does it matter?)
6. Repeat steps 2–5 with a second RDF

# Sample ~ Supporting Paragraphs

Honesty, for the Puritans, was a virtue held in the highest esteem, but it was a virtue that John Proctor lacked.

John Proctor, a covenanted Christian man, harbored a secret sin...an affair with Abigail Williams, the manipulative young woman at the forefront of the false accusations. His infidelity made him "a sinner not only against the moral fashion of the time, but against his own vision of decent conduct." (Miller 34) From ACT I it was clear that Proctor was in anguish, because his betrayal was so contrary to his own personal beliefs and convictions. However deep his torment, though, it was not enough to make John speak out about it, and for that reason alone he should be held accountable for the multitude of deaths. If John Proctor had been honest enough to admit to his sin, then Abigail's godliness could not have been maintained, and if her godliness had not been maintained, then the entire proceedings would have ended much sooner. Whatever reason Proctor had for not revealing his affair— be it his reputation or the livelihood of his children— it could never be good enough to justify the spilling of innocent blood.



# Sample ~ Supporting Paragraphs, **acc**

Honesty, for the Puritans, was a virtue held in the highest esteem, but it was a virtue that John Proctor lacked. John Proctor, a covenanted Christian man, harbored a secret sin...an affair with Abigail Williams, the manipulative young woman at the forefront of the false accusations. His infidelity made him "a sinner not only against the moral fashion of the time, but against his own vision of decent conduct." (Miller 34) From ACT I it was clear that Proctor was in anguish, because his betrayal was so contrary to his own personal beliefs and convictions. However deep his torment, though, it was not enough to make John speak out about it, and for that reason alone he should be held accountable for the multitude of deaths. One might object here and say that Proctor kept the adultery to himself out of respect for his wife, love for his children, or simply to maintain his own reputation. As it was, reputation was everything to the Puritans, and your entire livelihood depended on an untarnished character. Nevertheless, if John Proctor had been honest enough to admit to his sin, then Abigail's godliness could not have been maintained, and if her godliness had not been maintained, then the entire proceedings would have ended much sooner. Whatever reason Proctor had for not revealing his affair—be it his reputation or the livelihood of his family— it could never be good enough to justify the spilling of innocent blood.

# The Conclusion

## Things to keep in mind:

1. The impression you create in your conclusion is what will stay with your readers long after they've finished your essay.
2. For this very reason, you want to create a "drop the mic moment," which is very hard to do if you simply regurgitate your thesis.
  - a. Don't restate your thesis
  - b. Don't summarize your main points
3. Avoid "In conclusion," "In closing," or any cliché concluding phrase.
4. Pretend you're a bad—donkey lawyer giving your closing argument to the jury

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# The Conclusion

## Things to keep in mind:

5. The conclusion should mirror your introduction
  - a. Intro goes from broad to narrow
  - b. Conclusion goes from narrow to broad
6. Tie back into your intro by reiterating a key word or phrase
7. Use the power of words to create EFFECT
  - a. series of single words or sentences, repetition, etc.
  - b. create PATHOS

# Format ~ Conclusion

## Follow this format for your conclusion

1. Restate your claim *without directly restating your claim*.
2. Explain what lesson can be learned through the reading of this play, and make sure it connects to the overarching idea/topic.
3. Answer the questions "So what?" and/or "Why does this all matter?"

# Sample ~ Conclusion

It should be clear by now that John Proctor is the character most responsible for the spilling of innocent blood. Yes, it was Abigail Williams who deceived even the most learned of men, but it was John Proctor who stirred up a crazed passion within her impressionable, young soul and provided her with the motive to do what she did. Miller's classic provides a cautionary tale about the destructiveness of dishonesty and what can happen when good people fail to do the right thing. To be sure, our deceitfulness has far-reaching effects that go beyond our solitary lives. As such, this play should be read, and re-read, and re-read...time and time again, because history repeats itself...time and time again. Perhaps one day we will learn this lesson. Perhaps one day honesty will trump self-preservation. Perhaps. One day.