

# A simply good Literature Essay structure

The best essays are the ones which show a detailed and enthusiastic understanding of the text and ones which are logical, convincing and direct. The key thing to remember is that the purpose of an essay is to argue a point and/or answer a question. You must keep that argument to the fore as you plan your response and then write your essay.

Below is a simple essay structure with a sample topic and response.

## **Why was the character of Atticus seen as a hero?**

The Introduction:

- restates the topic or question with a response
- includes the title and author of the text
- provides general points or statements as reasons to support your argument

eg *In the novel To Kill A Mockingbird by Harper Lee, one of the main characters, Atticus Fince, was a hero because he was a great father to his children, was willing to defend an innocent black man wrongly accused by a white woman and represented many honourable qualities: courage, honesty, and, common sense.*

The body of the essay

Your essay should have *at least* three main points where only one point at a time is discussed in the form of a paragraph.

Each paragraph should:

- start with one reason which backs up your argument/statement
- provide at least one example from the text to support your statement
- provide a short quote to support each example
- an explanation of how or why these quotations and these examples support the statement at the start of the paragraph as well as relating to the main argument
- the explanation part of the paragraph should be the longest.

eg *When we first meet Atticus, we learn that*

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\_\_\_\_\_ *For example,*

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***This quote means***

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***This is important because,***

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### The Conclusion

Your essay must end strongly and this is the purpose of the conclusion.

Your conclusion must:

- sum up what your essay says
- not have any new points or ideas
- not repeat sentences or phrases
- not be too long.

eg *Because Atticus was once the sensible, quiet voice of reason and because he was prepared to do what he had to do even though he knew he would not win, we can say that, in the novel, he is the ultimate hero..*

Finally, remember that a literature essay is a formal document so you must take care with spelling, punctuation and tone so that you don't detract your reader from your brilliant argument with careless errors.