**The 5 Paragraph Essay**

In your OPIE classes, you will be writing several five-paragraph essays. There will be different types of essays, but they will all be set up similar to this:

**PARAGRAPH 1: Introduction**

**“Hook” sentence:** This is the first sentence of your essay. Having an informative or surprising fact, for example, will make the person reading your essay interested in knowing more about your topic.

**Thesis Statement:** This is the most important part of the introduction. Here you will tell the reader what the main ideas of your essay are. The main ideas support the argument that you want to make or the point you are proving. Sometimes it helps to underline your thesis statement to help you remember your main points.

**PARAGRAPH 2:** First Main Idea

Your strongest argument or idea should be the first one that you write about. This will show the reader that you know a lot about your topic.

**List up to 3 examples that illustrate your main idea.**

**PARAGRAPH 3:** Second Main Idea

Make sure this idea is separate from your first main idea. If you are writing an argumentative or compare/contrast essay, be sure that the argument you are making is clear for the person reading!

**Example 1, 2 and 3**

**PARAGRAPH 4:** Third Main Idea

Your last argument should still be a separate idea from the other two, but make sure your ideas support each other and are going to prove the argument or support the facts that you are writing about.

**Example 1, 2 and 3**

**PARAGRAPH 5: Conclusion**

**Restate Your Thesis Statement:** By clearly restating your thesis, you will remind the person reading your essay what the important points of your argument are. Remember, there should not be any new information in your conclusion!

**Essay Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**PARAGRAPH 1: Introduction**

**“Hook” sentence:**

**Thesis Statement: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**PARAGRAPH 2: First Main Idea\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Example 1:**

**Example 2:**

**Example 3:**

**PARAGRAPH 3: Second Main Idea \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Example 1:**

**Example 2:**

**Example 3:**

**PARAGRAPH 4: Third Main Idea \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Example 1:**

**Example 2:**

**Example 3:**

**PARAGRAPH 5: Conclusion**

**Restate Thesis Statement:**

**Title:** Compare and Contrast Essay: Daily Life in Mexico and the United States

**PARAGRAPH 1: Introduction**

**“Hook” sentence:**

If you live in Mexico, your life will be very different than if you lived in the United States.

**Thesis Statement:**

In Mexico and the United States there are similarities and differences in the ways people eat, how free time is spent, and the relationships between family members.

**PARAGRAPH 2: First Main Idea** The characteristics of a family

**Example 1:**

When Americans turn 18, it is common for them to move out of their parents’ homes. They will often begin working or being taking college classes from outside the home. While Mexicans also begin working and going to college at the same age, it is more common for them to do this while still living with their parents.

**Example 2:**

It is very normal for Mexican young adults to live with their parents until they are married, even if they have a job and support themselves financially.

**Example 3:**

Upper middle class families in some areas of Mexico often hire live-in help to cook and clean in the house. But in the United States, this practice is seen as very unusual or even offensive.

**PARAGRAPH 3: Second Main Idea** The way people eat their meals

**Example 1:**

In Mexico, the largest meal of the day is eaten early in the afternoon, at what Americans would consider to be lunchtime. On the other hand, Americans eat a smaller meal in the middle of the day and have their largest meal in the evening.

**Example 2:**

Recently, it seems that American families are enjoying homemade meals less often than Mexican families are. Because in the United States it is normal for each of the family members to have a job or go to school, there is less time to make your own meals, and dinners are more often brought home from the store already made or partially made.

**Example 3:**

However, in both countries, it is viewed as important for meals to be shared. Whether it is with your friends, your parents, your children, or anyone else you may know, mealtimes are a very social situation and the time is valued.

**PARAGRAPH 4: Third Main Idea** How free time is spent

**Example 1:**

In Mexico, people are more likely to take time off of work to take vacations with their families. Many Americans do not receive vacation days from their jobs.

**Example 2:**

Americans spend free time by following many different sports teams at different times of the year. American football season is in the fall, basketball is in the winter, and baseball is in the summer, just to give a few examples. In Mexico, football is the most popular sport all year long.

**Example 3:**

Recently, Americans have become very dependent on technology. Free time is spent using cell phones, tablets, and computers to surf the Internet, watch movies, and play games, or many other things. In Mexico, it is more likely that people will spend their free time taking a walk or riding a bike through the park, for example.

**PARAGRAPH 5: Conclusion**

**Restate Thesis Statement:** In conclusion, daily life in Mexico and the United States has many similarities and differences. The way of life is different in the ways that people share meals, how free time is spent, and the different ways that families live together.

Bennett Eighinger – Writing Lab – Spring 2015