



Starting an Essay Outline

<p>1. Choose a topic. Before you write, think of what you are most interested in, what you know about, or what you are comfortable with.</p>	<p>physics (no knowledge) horses (no experience) dating (embarrassing) ✓ school (I know about school.)</p>
<p>2. Limit your topic. Narrow it down, for example, by place, time, type, name or activity</p>	<p>my high school (boring) VCC (everyone is choosing this topic) public schools (broad) Canadian schools in the future (hard) ✓ going back to school (I know about this.)</p>
<p>3. Choose one controlling idea. Brainstorm or map out related thoughts on your topic. Choose one idea interesting enough to have supporting details or examples.</p>	<p>need support from others (boring) hard on your family (can't think of examples) expensive to go full-time (boring) ✓ fun (I can think of ideas and examples of fun related to going back to school.)</p>
<p>4. Write a thesis statement. THESIS = TOPIC + CONTROLLING IDEA The thesis statement is a complete sentence that tells the reader what you are going to explain in your essay. <i>Optional: Expand your thesis statement to include how you will develop your ideas. Hint: Teachers often ask students to explain or describe something or give an opinion. These questions can often be rewritten into a thesis statement which will help you develop your ideas.</i></p>	<p>I like school a lot. (general) Fun is good for me. (general) My school is VCC. (fact) Going back to school can be fun for many reasons. TOPIC + CONTROLLING IDEA (+method of development) This thesis statement expresses an opinion and includes the method of development.</p>
<p>5. Outline three main supporting points or ideas. Choose three strong ideas that you can back up with specific examples and specific details. <i>Ask yourself questions to help yourself expand on what you mean:</i> Explain Describe Support Organize each idea in a paragraph form</p>	<p>lunches are fun (weak idea) back-to-school fashion is fun (weak idea) not working is fun (not on topic "back to school") 1) friends at school can be fun (<i>Who are your friends? Why are they fun? What do they do?</i>) old friends, new friends 2) school activities can be fun (<i>Which school activities are fun and why? Think of examples.</i>) sports, clubs, dances 3) schoolwork can be fun (<i>What aspects of schoolwork make going back to school fun?</i>) new subjects (<i>which subjects?</i>) new teachers (<i>who?</i>) getting good marks</p>