

Essay Outline Planner

Grade 9-12 • ELA • Essay outlining and planning • Standards: W.9-10.5

Use each section below to plan your essay. Write your ideas on the lines provided to create a strong foundation for your writing.

- 1.** Write a clear thesis statement for an essay about the importance of learning a second language.
- 2.** List three main points that would support this thesis: 'High schools should start classes later in the morning.'
- 3.** Write a topic sentence for a body paragraph that discusses how social media affects teenage friendships.
- 4.** For an essay arguing that community service should be a graduation requirement, write two pieces of evidence (examples, facts, or statistics) that could support the first body paragraph about building life skills.
- 5.** Write a counterargument and rebuttal for this thesis: 'Schools should eliminate letter grades and use narrative evaluations instead.' Include both what opponents might say and your response.
- 6.** Create a complete outline structure for a five-paragraph essay about why schools should teach financial literacy. Include a thesis statement, three topic sentences for body paragraphs, and a main idea for your conclusion.

Answer Key — Essay Outline Planner

For the teacher / parent. Do not distribute with the worksheet.

1. Learning a second language enhances cognitive abilities, opens career opportunities, and deepens cultural understanding. *(A strong thesis statement presents the main argument and previews the supporting points that will be developed in the essay.)*

2. 1) Teenagers need more sleep for healthy development, 2) Later start times improve academic performance, 3) Students experience better mental health with adequate rest. *(Main points should directly support the thesis and be distinct from one another while maintaining logical connection to the central argument.)*

3. Social media platforms allow teenagers to maintain friendships across distances but can also create pressure to present a perfect image online. *(A topic sentence introduces the main idea of a paragraph and should connect to the essay's thesis while being specific enough to guide the paragraph's content.)*

4. 1) Students who volunteer develop leadership abilities by organizing projects and working with diverse groups, 2) Community service teaches responsibility as students must commit to schedules and complete tasks for organizations depending on them. *(Evidence should be specific and directly support the paragraph's main point while being relevant and credible.)*

5. Counterargument: Critics argue that letter grades provide clear, objective measures that colleges and employers understand. Rebuttal: However, narrative evaluations offer more detailed feedback that helps students identify specific strengths and areas for improvement, ultimately providing more useful information than a single letter. *(A strong counterargument acknowledges opposing views fairly, while the rebuttal explains why the thesis position is still valid or stronger.)*

6. Thesis: Schools must teach financial literacy to prepare students for economic independence, prevent debt problems, and promote long-term financial stability. Body 1: Understanding budgeting and saving helps students make responsible decisions with their money from an early age. Body 2: Learning about credit, loans, and interest rates protects young adults from falling into dangerous debt cycles. Body 3: Knowledge of investing and retirement planning enables students to build wealth and security for their futures. Conclusion: By making financial literacy a priority, schools equip students with essential life skills that benefit individuals and society as a whole. *(A complete outline shows the logical flow from thesis through supporting points to conclusion, with each element connecting clearly to create a cohesive argument.)*