Essays do not always have to have 5 paragraphs or follow this pattern; however, the 5 paragraph form serves as a simple model to help you understand the general structure of an essay.

**Paragraph 1: Introduction**
Your introduction should be a few sentences to help your reader know what you will be writing about. The best way to start is by going from general to specific. Your last sentence of this paragraph should be your **thesis statement** which is the sentence that tells your reader what the main focus of your essay is going to be.

**Paragraph 2: Your First Main Supporting Idea**
Start paragraph 2 with a strong **topic sentence**, or a sentence that helps your reader know what your first idea to support your thesis is. After your topic sentence, explain how and why this specific idea is important. Provide reasons to help your reader understand how and why your first main supporting idea is relevant. Keep in mind that your topic will determine the actual number of support or reasons you will need to explain any of your main supporting ideas.

- Topic Sentence
- Support/Reason 1
- Support/Reason 2
- Support/Reason 3

**Paragraph 3: Your Second Main Supporting Idea**
Start paragraph 3 with another topic sentence. This time, make sure to use a transition to help your reader move from your first main supporting idea to your second main supporting idea.

- Topic Sentence
- Support/Reason 1
- Support/Reason 2
- Support/Reason 3

**Paragraph 4: Your Third Main Supporting Idea**
Start paragraph 4 with another topic sentence. Again, make sure to use a transition to help your reader move from your second main supporting idea to your third and final main supporting idea.

- Topic Sentence
- Support/Reason 1
- Support/Reason 2
- Support/Reason 3

**Paragraph 5: Conclusion**
Your conclusion should be your last paragraph. It should be a few sentences to help your reader have a sense of closure. Since you now have proven your main point/thesis through several specific reasons in paragraphs 2-4, you are ready to share your final thoughts based on what you have written.