**Basic Essay Template**

Introduction:

* **Introduce the reader to the subject**, presenting basic information like author(s), title(s), terminologies, and key concepts needed to understand the claim/thesis.

*-Include only the most necessary information here. Keep this short and sweet!*

* **State the thesis/opinionated claim**.

*-The claim must be written in very clear and purposeful language because everything in the essay will tie back to and support the words and ideas in this one sentence.*

Body Paragraphs:

* **Begin with a topic sentence** that presents an idea that is both unique to that paragraph and related to the essay’s claim/thesis.

*-A purposeful topic sentence will help you write a paragraph with purpose.*

* **Provide context** to set up the forthcoming textual evidence/excerpt.

*-Be sure the reader understands who is involved, where and when events occur, and the key circumstances surrounding the excerpt.*

* **Integrate textual evidence** in the form of direct quotations and paraphrased details into the essay’s prose.

*-Quoted evidence cannot stand alone! It must be made part of your writing.*

*-Be sure to cite all sources using MLA parenthetical citations.*

* **Argue the topic sentence**’s (and thus the claim’s) validity by logically connecting the *specific* language and ideas of the evidence with the *specific* language and ideas of the topic sentence and claim.

*-This is where you show off what you have learned about the subject matter. Don’t cut corners here!*

Conclusion:

* **Reconnect the big ideas** and key evidence from each paragraph, expressing how they all work together to support the essay’s claim/thesis.

*-Do not simply restate the same language from your introduction! A conclusion must represent the new understanding you have expressed through your essay’s evidence and argument.*

* **Leave the reader with an understanding** of the value and significance of the essay’s thesis and supporting details.

*-Why do the ideas expressed in this essay matter? You must be able to answer this question.*