

PLANNING A WELL-STRUCTURED ESSAY

The key to a good essay is *structure*. The key to good structure is solid *planning*.

Let me introduce you to the PEEL planning method. Get this down, & writing a well-structured essay will be a breeze...

FIRST you want to come up with **3 or 4 main points** for your essay.

Then, each paragraph should be planned in the following way...

This should be the structure for each paragraph.

P **POINT** *What is your main point in this paragraph? This is almost like a topic line, and the rest of the paragraph will back up and explain/prove this point.*

E **EXPLAIN** *Then expand on your point. Give a bit more detail and explanation here.*

E **EVIDENCE** *Then you need to back up your point with evidence: statistics, facts, opinions. Or, in the case of a literature essay, this is where you **quote** from the text.*

L **LINK** *At the end of your paragraph you should link back to the overall topic/title. This can just be in one sentence, but is crucial as it helps the flow of your essay and makes sure you are staying close to the overall topic at hand.*

THEN planning the introduction is easy, as you take the three or four main points (the **P** elements of each paragraph), summarise and present them in your introduction.

CHECK OUT THIS EXAMPLE...

Essay Topic: *Should students have to wear a school uniform?*

*A typical plan for one paragraph in this essay – following the PEEL method – would look like this (remember, this is a **plan**, it doesn't have to be in full sentences, neat or wonderfully written at this stage):*

Once every paragraph has been planned like this, writing the essay is easy as it is just a matter of putting your plan into full (and brilliant!) sentences.

POINT: *School uniforms help create a sense of unity amongst students.*

EXPLAIN: *- They limit competition amongst students.*
- Students can identify each other in a crowd.
- When you all look the same, you feel a common sense of meaning purpose.

EVIDENCE: *70% of students said they would like a school uniform.*
- Quote from class president Betty: "I would definitely feel unified in a uniform."
- Research from Harvard on this issue.

LINK: *An argument for school uniforms would be that as uniforms can clearly unite students, they should be considered*