



Example for Outlining a Research/Term Paper

Before you start writing get your ideas down in a logical sequence that you can then use to expand while actually writing the paper. ***This is only meant to be an example and a guide***; pay attention to your teacher's instructions for the assignment and format instructions for their class. Know what style format your instructor wants you to use - APA or MLA.

Thesis statement: <What your paper is going to be about.> Example:

The cost of medical care in the United States is causing the poor to receive substandard care.

Key points: <What ideas you will actually be writing about. For a short paper at least three, no more than five. You can take ideas away, modify or add when you start writing. Check with your instructor.> Examples of possible key points for the above thesis statement:

1. Paying for medical care is beyond the reach of the poor.
2. Paying for medical insurance is beyond the reach of the poor if not offered by their employers.
3. The poor are forced to use over-extended and under-staffed medical facilities if they cannot afford care.
4. Are we ethically responsible for caring for the poor?
5. What would possible alternatives be to supplying medical care for the poor?

You can use the thesis statement and key points to create an introductory paragraph; then you will expand in the rest of the paper on the thesis and key points. Examples of expanding on key points:

Key point 1. Paying for medical care is beyond the reach of the poor. < Expand your ideas for this topic – this *could be* one or more paragraphs.>

Demonstrate why and how medical care is beyond the poor.

Average cost of medical care as opposed to average salaries.

The poor have to use clinics and other free care.

Key point 2. Paying for medical insurance is beyond the reach of the poor if not offered by their employers. <Expand your ideas for this topic– this *could be* one or more paragraphs.>

Can the average worker afford health care costs even if they have them.

Average costs of health care plans.

If an employer does not supply health care benefits how can employees get it.

Key point 3. The poor are forced to use over-extended and under-staffed medical facilities if they cannot afford care. <Expand your ideas for this topic – this *could be* one or more paragraphs.>

What kind of facilities are available to people who can't afford health care.

What are limitations for using those facilities (income, etc.).

Are these facilities adequately staffed and funded.

Pros and cons for these facilities – i.e. better than no health care at all, don't see the same doctor, etc.

Key point 4. Are we ethically responsible for caring for the poor? <Expand your ideas for this topic – this *could be* one or more paragraphs.>

Does a society have an ethical responsibility to take care of its poor?

Moral & ethical foundations – religious, ethical, philosophical.

Economic / political reasons for providing or not providing health care.

Key point 5. What would possible alternatives be to supplying medical care for the poor? <Expand your ideas for this topic – this *could be* one or more paragraphs.>

What models exist in other countries? Do they seem to work?

What alternative models are available in this country? i.e. Faith based, private foundations like The Shriners, etc.

What factors / institutions would fight against change in health care? i.e.

Pharmaceutical companies, insurance companies, non-flexible thinking, etc.

Summary / Conclusion:

Create a key summary sentence/paragraph that declares a wrap-up of concepts you have covered in the paper.

You may want to quickly summarize your main ideas.

This should transition into a *Conclusion* of your ideas on the topic.

The conclusion could be a separate paragraph or this section could be more than one paragraph.

Reference / Works Cited:

List of the sources you used in writing the paper.

Follow your teacher's instructions for number required and format.

Glossary:

Thesis statement - a brief sentence presenting the main point of a persuasive writing, usually in the introductory paragraph.

Key points – those ideas that you will use to support your thesis and expand on in the text of the paper.

Summary - a brief statement that presents or recaps the main points in a concise form.

Conclusion – bring to a close in a logical, reasoned way the ideas that you have supported in your paper.

References / Works Cited:

Citation - a short note recognizing a source of information or of a quoted passage.

Works cited - a page at the end of a research composition that lists all the resources that you used.

Parenthetical citation - a citation style in which in-text citations must be enclosed within parentheses and embedded in the paragraph, as opposed to the footnote style.

Footnote - A brief note at the bottom of a page, or on a separate page at the end of a paper (then usually called an **Endnote**), explaining or expanding upon a point in the text or indicating the source of a quotation or idea.

Thesis statement:

Where will I find information on this topic? Print – Internet – Journals – Interviews – etc.

Has the instructor specified where you are to look for information? What resources you are not to use? How many sources you are to use?

Key Points – list the key points to investigate based on your thesis statement:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

On separate sheets of paper expand on each of your key points - jotting down additional ideas or beginning to actually write.

Summary / Conclusion:

On a separate sheet of paper summarize and come to a conclusion on your topic. This is where you are bringing it home and wrapping up the paper.

Works cited:

List the resources that you have used. Remember to use the style your instructor specified – APA or MLA.

Use this outline to begin writing your paper. When you have completed a **draft – read, edit and rewrite.**