**Writing a Five-Paragraph Essay Resource**

**Format & Organization:**

* Use a Times New Roman font, unless given permission from instructor to use another font choice.
* ALL lettering should be sized at 12 point; the title included
* Do NOT use **bold** in any wording.

**Heading and Title:**

* Make sure you have the proper heading in the upper-left-hand corner; you should have the following and in the order: name, course, date, and instructor.
* If you use APA, make sure your cover page is in proper format; you may wish to discuss with your instructor if they would prefer this or the heading as mentioned in the above bullet point.
* Your title should be centered and capitalized appropriately per GCU Style Guide or APA format.

**Introduction Paragraph:**

* The first paragraph of your essay is the introductory paragraph.
* In this first paragraph of your essay, you should review your topic in a general fashion. You should also tell the reader why they might care to read more.
* The final sentence of your introductory paragraph will be your thesis statement. Your thesis statement will guide the reader as to what will follow.

**Body Paragraphs: (Middle Paragraphs of the Essay)**

* Each paragraph should be limited to one idea.
* Each paragraph should be connected in some way to your thesis statement.
* Within your body paragraphs, include the information from the resources you found.
* Do not forget to cite information from outside sources.
* Your final body paragraph may look at opposing views. For a well-rounded point of view, it is important to consider multiple perspectives.
* The body of your essay should include detailed, accurate, and relevant information that aims to support your thesis statement.

**Concluding Paragraph:**

* Your last paragraph is your conclusion. Rather than simply restating your introduction, try and brand your reader with your closing statements.
* Tell the reader again about your topic, thesis, and main point(s) of your essay.
* End with a strong stance on the topic to make the reader think about what they just read; leave an impact.

**Using Transitions:**

* Transitions are very important to your essay. Transitions are the glue that holds the paragraphs of your paper together.
* Examples of transitions are: *next, furthermore, moreover, however, on the other hand, no doubt, and finally.*
* You should be using these from transitions in thought and in ending and/or beginning new paragraphs.

**Using Citations:**

* Citations are used to reference material from another source.
* Using citations to give credit to others whose ideas or words you have used is an essential requirement to avoid issues of plagiarism.
* To avoid potential problems, always be sure to cite your sources by referring to the author’s last name and the year of publication in parentheses at the end of the sentence, such as (Johnson, 2008) and page or paragraph numbers if you are using word-for-word materials, such as “ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country” (Kennedy, 1960, p. 34).

**Reference Page:**

* The reference list should appear at the end of a paper.
* It provides the information necessary for a reader to locate and retrieve any source you cite in the body of the paper.
* Each source you cite in the paper must appear in your reference list; ***likewise, each entry in the reference list must be cited in your text***.
* For examples of references, please refer to the GCU Style Guide, located in the Writing Center portion of the Student Success Center.