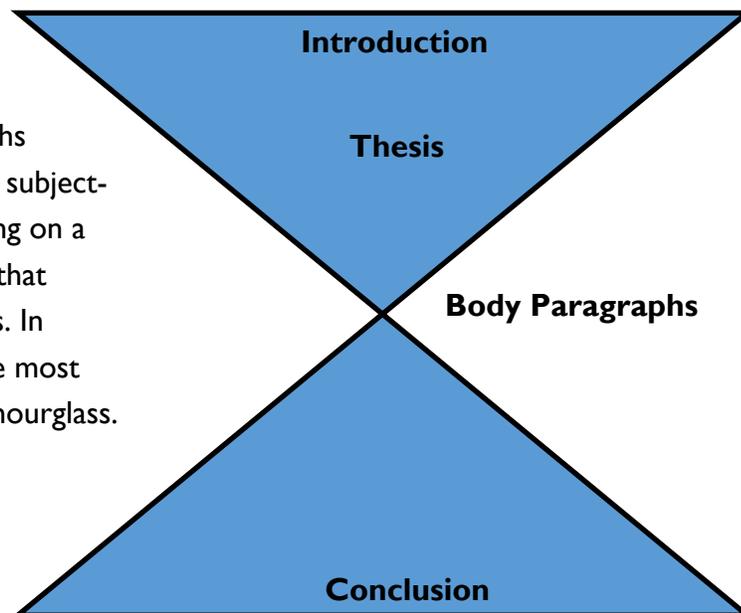


## Tips For Essay Introductions and Conclusions: The Hourglass Method

When writing an essay, the most challenging parts to write are often the introduction and the conclusion. Thinking of your essay as an hourglass can be a helpful way to figure out what to write in these areas.

In your introduction, start with a general idea. You can give a brief definition or introduction of your topic as a whole. As you move through the intro, narrow your focus and start getting more specific. Your thesis should be the most specific part of your intro, really honing in on the main points that you are going to bring up in the body of your essay. The hourglass goes from wide to narrow.

Your body paragraphs should each be very subject-specific, each focusing on a single idea or point that supports your thesis. In other words, it's the most narrow part of the hourglass.



The conclusion is where you go over all of your main points again and wrap things up. For this paragraph, do the opposite of what you did in your introduction. Widen the hourglass back out again and go from specific back to general. Instead of defining or introducing the general topic, though, you can finish off by giving an idea of what implications your topic or idea has on the future, or giving your reader something to think about after they finish the piece. Keep in mind, though, that the conclusion is not a place to ask questions or bring up new ideas.