

The Five-Paragraph Essay



A Framework for Expository Writing



Different Kinds of Writing

- We write for fun. We write letters, stories, jokes, and to share information with our family or friends.
- Most school writing, however, is *expository writing* and fits into a different category.



The purpose of most expository writing is to communicate ideas or answer questions.

Expository Writing

- **Gives information about a topic**
- **Explains ideas**
- **Gives directions**
- **Shows how to do something**



Expository Writing Uses Transitions

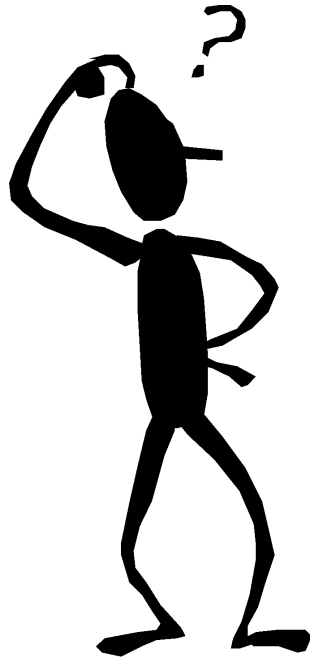
***Writer's Express* says:**

“Expository writing uses transition words (such as *first*, *second*, and *most importantly*). These words help guide the reader through the explanation.”

***Writer's Express - A Handbook for Young Writers, Thinkers, and Learners* ©1995**

So, your teacher gives you a prompt and tells you to write an expository essay:

“Write about your favorite pet.”



What do you do???

Don't panic.

Follow this plan...

(Watch for the color-coding, it will help you organize your ideas.)



It's Easy!

Start with your main idea or topic.
(use key words from the prompt)

You *ONLY* Need *Three* Ideas...

- **Three reasons that show your topic sentence is true**
- **And three examples for each of your reasons (Remember to show, not tell.)**

**That's all you need for the start
of a great essay!!!**



Use Correct Paragraph Form

Each paragraph must include:

- **Topic Sentence**
- **Three Examples**
- **Conclusion**

**No paragraph should be less
than five sentences.**



The Beginning - Your First Sentences

Start with a topic sentence that uses the *key words* from the prompt. Then write *three reasons* that prove the topic sentence is true.

My favorite pet is my dog, Romeo. He is beautiful and easy to care for. Playing with him is lots of fun. He always takes care of me.



Now end with a conclusion:

Remember, each paragraph must have a concluding sentence.

Finish with a sentence that restates your topic sentence “My favorite pet is my dog, Romeo.” using different words.

I have never had a better pet.



**You already have your
first paragraph done!
Pretty easy, huh?**

**To make it even easier look at
this organizational plan using
color-coding.**



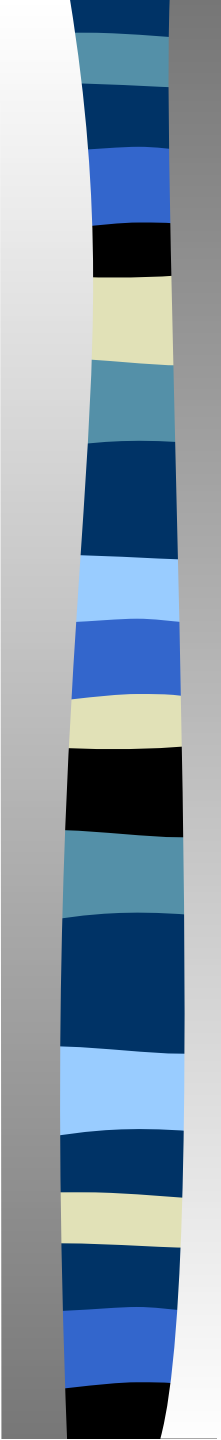
Paragraph 1: The Introduction

- **Introduction or Topic Sentence**
(Use key words from the prompt)
- **First Subtopic** (A “Showing” Example)
- **Second Subtopic** (A “Showing” Example)
- **Third Subtopic** (A “Showing” Example)
- **Conclusion** (Restates Introduction)



Paragraph 1: Example

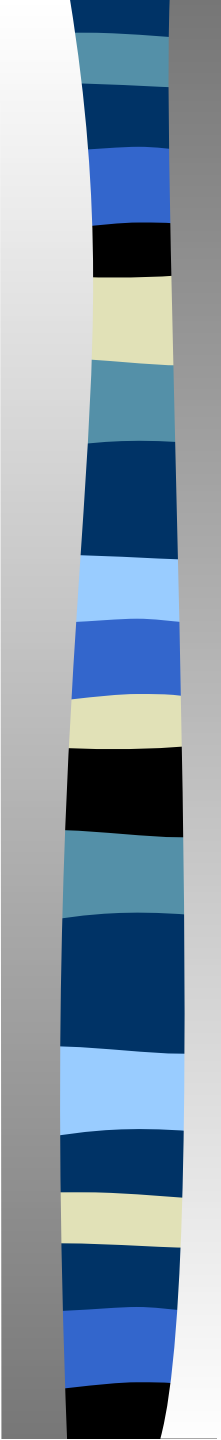
My favorite pet is my dog, Romeo. He is beautiful and easy to care for. Playing with him is lots of fun. He always takes care of me. I have never had a better pet.



**Restate each subtopic as the
topic sentence for each of
the next three paragraphs.**

First Subtopic (Example #1)

**"He is beautiful and easy to
care for." is the topic
sentence you will restate for
your next paragraph.**

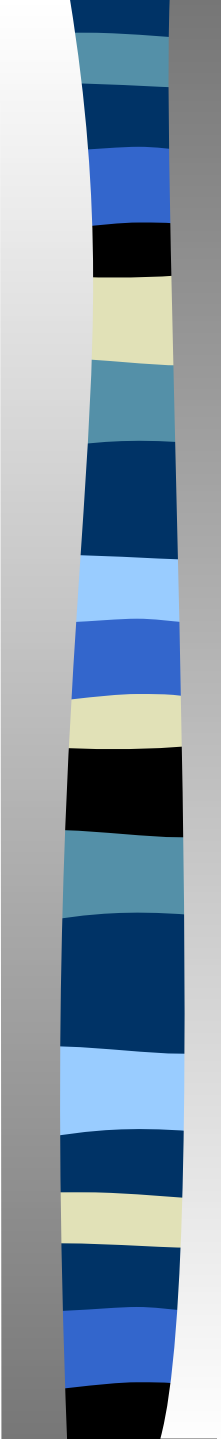


Paragraph 2: Example #1

- **Topic Sentence** (Restates Example #1 from the Introduction "He is beautiful and easy to care for.")
- **3 Example Sentences** (Prove your Topic Sentence)
- **Concluding Sentence** (Restates Topic Sentence from Example #1)

Paragraph 2: Example #1

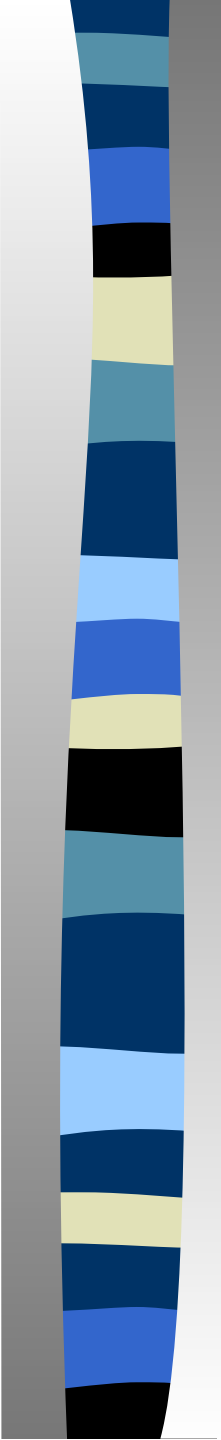
Romeo is beautiful and easy to care for. He is a tricolor Sheltie, mostly black with white and a bit of brown. Caring for him is easy because I simply have to make sure he has fresh water and food every day. I exercise him by throwing his toys. Because he is good looking and doesn't require much care Romeo is a good pet.



**Restate the second subtopic
as the topic sentence for the
next paragraph.**

Second Subtopic (Example #2)

**“Playing with him is lots of fun.”
is the topic sentence you will
restate for your next paragraph.**



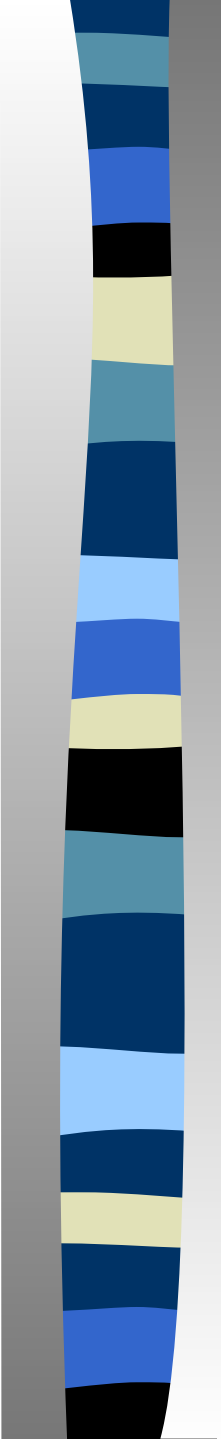
Paragraph 3: Example #2

- **Topic Sentence** (Restate Example #2 from the Introduction "Playing with him is lots of fun.")
- **3 Example Sentences** (Prove your Topic Sentence)
- **Concluding Sentence** (Restates Topic Sentence from Example #2)



Paragraph 3: Example #2

Romeo is lots of fun to play with. He loves to play catch. He follows me around the house with a toy and drops it on my foot so I will toss it. He can catch just about anything, but his favorite is chasing a Frisbee. I really have fun playing with Romeo.

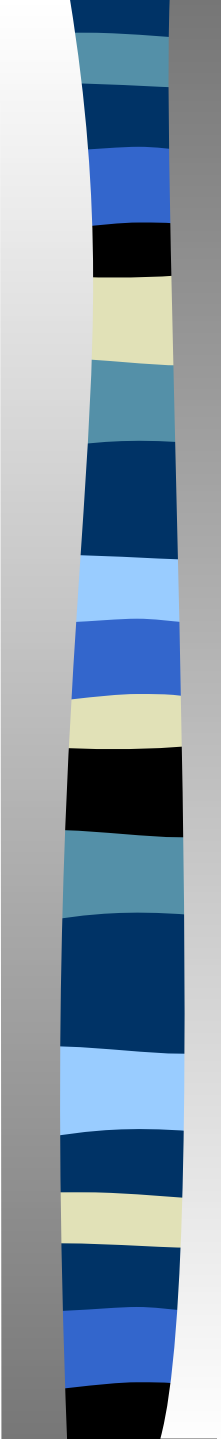


**Use the third subtopic (example)
as the topic sentence for the
next paragraph.**

Third Subtopic (Example #3)

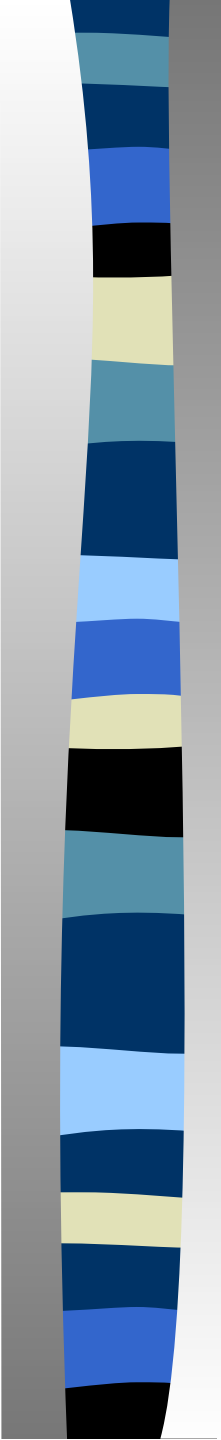
"He always takes care of me."

**is the topic sentence for your next
paragraph.**



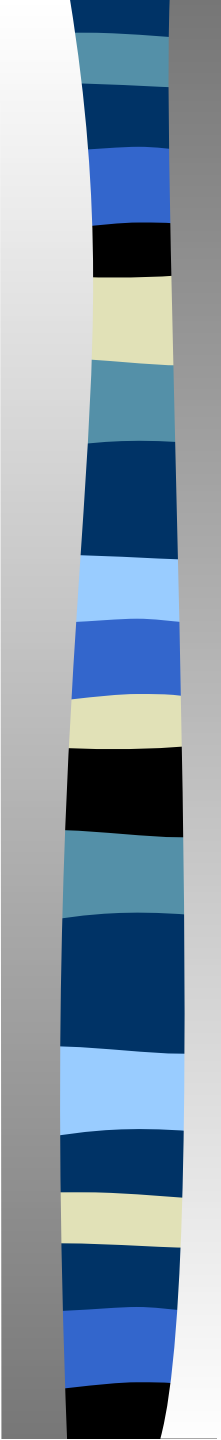
Paragraph 4: Example #3

- **Topic Sentence** (Restates Example #3 from the Introduction "Romeo takes care of me.")
- **3 Example Sentences** (That prove your Topic Sentence)
- **Concluding Sentence** (Restates Topic Sentence from Example #3)



Paragraph 4: Example #3

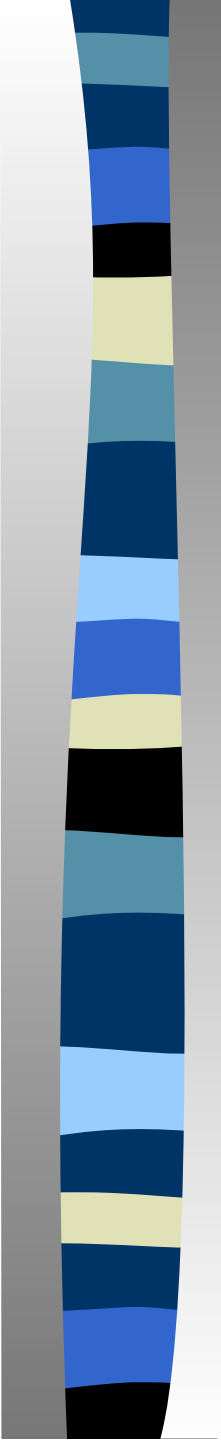
Romeo takes care of me. He always follows me when I leave a room. When I am sitting on a couch he plops down right beside me. On sunny days when we are hiking in the woods he always makes sure that I keep up with the rest of the family. He always watches out for me.



Paragraph 5: Conclusion

(Restates Paragraph 1: Introduction)

- Introduction
- First Subtopic (Example)
- Second Subtopic (Example)
- Third Sentence (Example)
- Conclusion



Paragraph 5: Conclusion

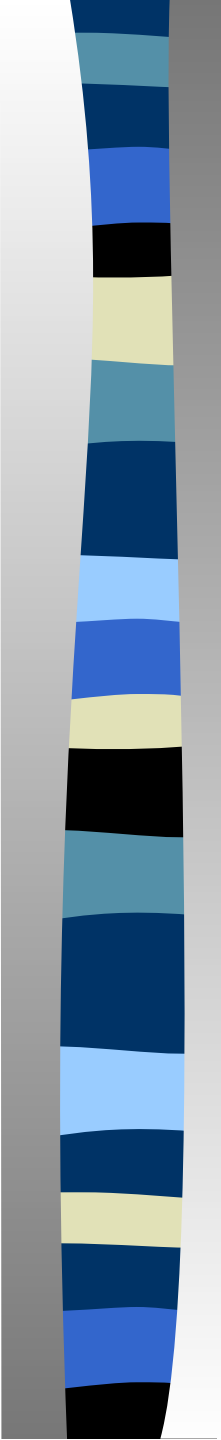
(Restates Paragraph 1: Introduction)

As you can see, Romeo is a great pet. I am proud of him and he doesn't require much care. Playing with him is very pleasurable. I am always safe because he watches over me. Romeo is a wonderful pet.

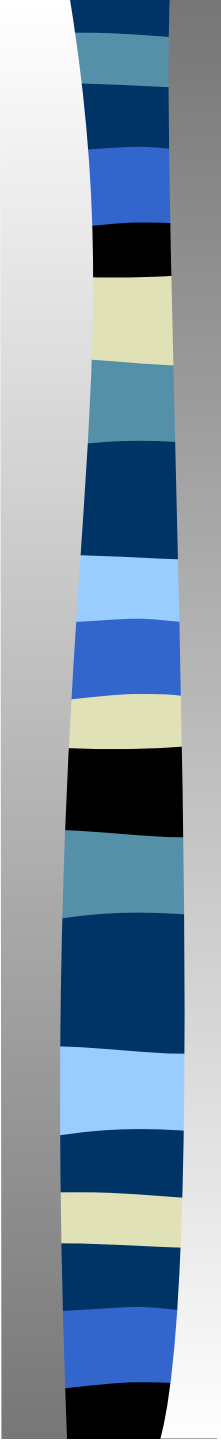


There you have it!

Expository writing isn't that difficult when you have *a plan*. To make it even easier you may want to use a graphic organizer like the following ones to organize your thoughts.



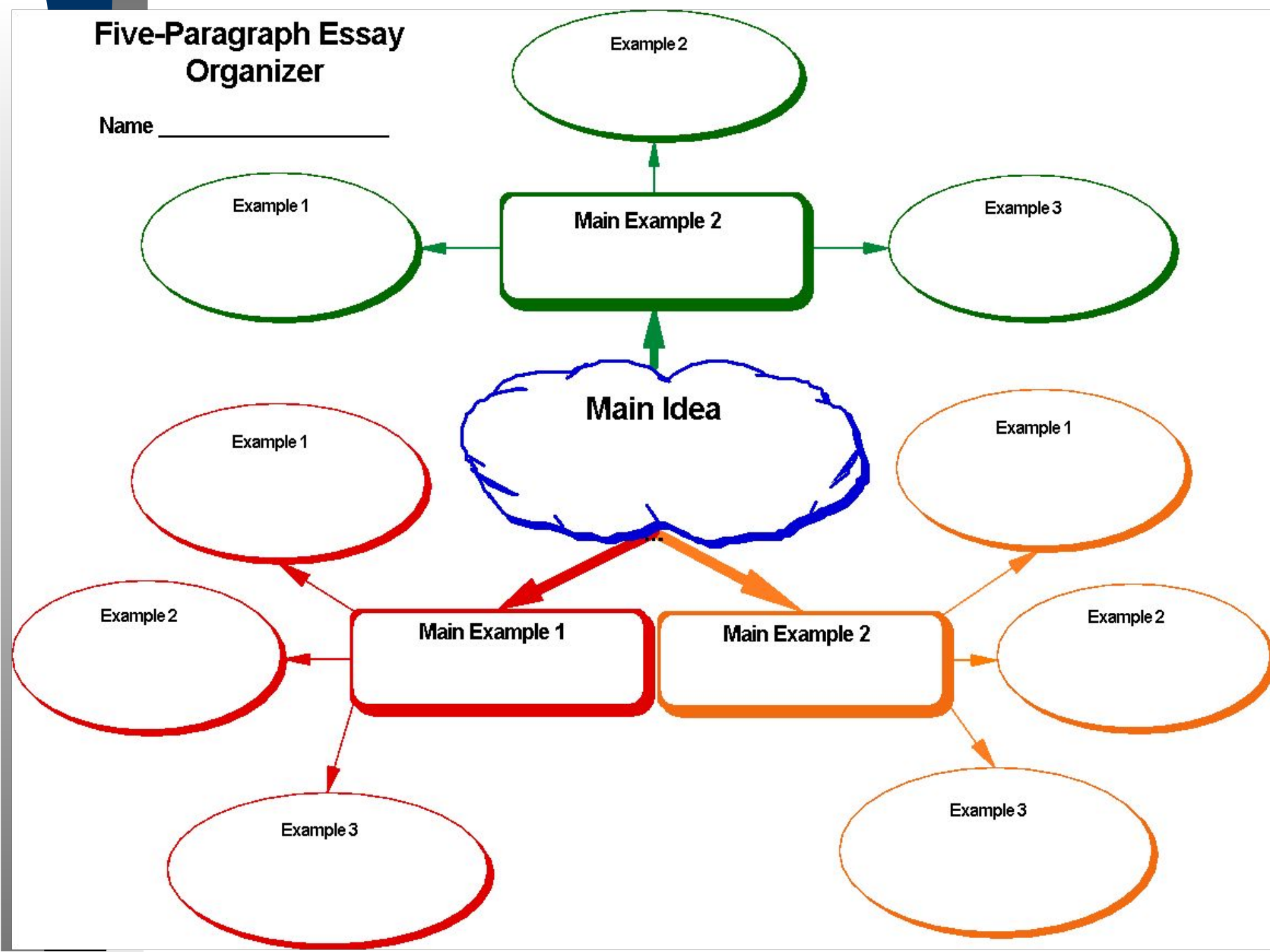
QuickTime™ and a
QuickDraw decompressor
are needed to see this picture.



QuickTime™ and a
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Five-Paragraph Essay Organizer

Name _____



**Have fun with your writing &
remember, you only need
THREE IDEAS
for a great expository essay!**

