**Writing a Five Paragraph Essay**

A five paragraph essay has a simple yet very effective structure:

* Paragraph One is the introduction. It opens by getting the reader interested in what you have to say, and it ends with the main point of the essay: the ***THESIS*** ***STATEMENT!***
* Paragraph Two takes the first of the supporting points and repeats it as a ***TOPIC SENTENCE****.* This is followed by two or three (or more!) supporting details, examples, or pieces of evidence.
* Paragraph Three takes the second of the supporting points and repeats it as a ***TOPIC SENTENCE****.* This is followed by two or three (or more!) details, examples, or pieces of evidence.
* Paragraph Four takes the third of the supporting points and repeats it as a ***TOPIC SENTENCE****.* This is followed by two or three (or more!) details, examples, or pieces of evidence.
* Paragraph Five is the ***CONCLUSION***. It restates your topic sentences, preferably in slightly different words. It finishes with a strong sentence that sums up your main point.

Read the essay. Notice how it follows the pattern described above and complete the following:

1. Highlight, or draw a box around, the THESIS STATEMENT. Label it THESIS.
2. In the thesis statement, label the supporting points SP1, SP2 and SP3.
3. Circle, highlight, or underline the TOPIC SENTENCE in Paragraphs 2, 3 and 4.
4. Find the topic sentence that makes the same point as your SP1. Label it. Then do the same for SP2 and SP3.
5. What do the other sentences in these paragraphs do?
6. What does the conclusion do?
7. Find examples of transition words (*Firstly, For example, In addition* etc.) in the essay and circle or highlight them.

Many tourists each year choose to visit our nation’s zoos. They go to zoos seeking adventure and entertainment, but do not think about the condition of the animals they are seeing. Zoos are an unsuitable environment for wild animals because zoo animals are kept in a very confined area, breeding programs are far less successful than zoos claim, and zoo animals are exposed to many diseases and other dangers.

Zoo animals are usually kept in very cramped enclosures and do not behave like their wild counterparts. Polar bears, for example, are given about 10 meters of walking space whereas in their Arctic home they roam for many hundreds of miles. Similarly, primates, big cats and birds are often confined in cages where they lack exercise and stimulation. Many animals develop unnatural habits such as pacing back and forth or swaying from side to side.

Supporters of zoos argue that they help to conserve endangered species, but in fact they are not very good at this. Even the world famous panda breeding program has been very costly and unsuccessful. Also, zoo life does not prepare animals for the challenges of life in the wild. For example, two rare lynxes released into the wild in Colorado died from starvation even though the area was full of hares, which are a lynx’s natural prey.

The zoo is an unnatural environment that exposes animals to numerous dangers. Diseases often spread between species that would never live together naturally. For example, many Asian elephants have died in U.S. zoos after catching a virus from African elephants. Furthermore, zoo animals are often exposed to chemicals, solvents and other toxic substances. Finally, it is common for visitors to tease and provoke caged animals.

In conclusion, it is not true to say that zoos are educational or that they help to protect endangered species. In reality, they only teach us how wild animals behave when they are confined in small spaces. Breeding programs provide zoos with good publicity, but in fact most of them are failures. Finally, zoo animals are probably more at risk of dying from disease or poisoning than their wild counterparts. It is time that we abolished these cruel institutions!