



WRITING TIP

STUDY SKILLS: Paragraph order

When you are using word-processing software, there is no need to write your paragraphs in order. Instead, decide what the topic of each paragraph will be, and put them in order. Number them if you like - but remember that you can always change the order later. Then, as you write your first draft, you can move between paragraphs as much as you like. In this way you can build your essay up gradually.

This Worksheet will help you to plan and draft your writing. Once you have brainstormed and mind-mapped your thoughts on a topic and done some online research to flesh out your ideas, it is time to plan. By planning out your essay before you write it, and then drafting and redrafting it, you will ensure that you put forward your ideas in a logical order, that your arguments are clear and that your sentences are well worded.

Practice

-  **In pairs, discuss the differences between the way you write essays in examinations and the way you write essays for coursework.**
- Create a new document in your word-processing software.**
 - Write the essay title: *Is social media good or bad for young people?*
 - Add section headings: *Introduction* at the top; *Main body* below; and *Conclusion* at the bottom.
- By now, you should know what you think about the good and bad effects of social media. Write a thesis statement under *Introduction*.**
 - Start with one of these phrases, or a similar phrase:
In this essay I will argue that ...
In this essay I will discuss ...
- Using the ideas from your mind map and any research you have done, plan out the order of the paragraphs in the main body of your essay.**
 - Write a very brief outline of what you will write about in each paragraph.
 - You can include a word limit for each idea.
- Choose a paragraph from your essay. Draft a topic sentence. Then follow it with a few more sentences on the topic, putting forward other people's opinions and your own. Write between 100 and 150 words.**
 - See *Write paragraphs* for more details on structuring paragraphs.
 - See *Avoid plagiarism* for more details on citing other people's opinions.
-  **In pairs, compare your paragraphs. Consider the following questions:**
 - Is the topic sentence clear?
 - Do the following sentences take the argument forward in a logical way?
 - Are any other people's opinions cited?

7 Repeat the process in 6 to complete the first draft of the main body of your essay.

Reflect

8 Think about the planning and drafting process. Answer the following questions, and make notes.

- What's easy?
- What's difficult?
- How much does word-processing software make the process of writing essays easier?
- Do you feel more confident about writing your essay on social media?