

An essay has 3 parts: an introduction, body, and a conclusion.

### Introduction

- the first paragraph in an essay
- provides some background information on the topic
- starts general and gradually gets more specific
- ends in a thesis statement
- thesis statement: = “map” to the rest of your essay  
= identifies the main topic  
= lists your ideas about the topic in the order  
in which they will be discussed

e.g. Ebooks are cheap and convenient, despite their technological drawbacks.  
           topic       idea #1       idea #2                   idea #3

### Body Paragraphs

- each body paragraph discusses 1 idea mentioned in your thesis statement
- start each body paragraph with a topic sentence that introduces that idea:  
     e.g. First, ebooks are cheaper than traditional print books.
- then provide supporting details and explanations for that idea, using a transition signal each time you bring up a new point (e.g. *first, finally, for example, in addition, moreover, as a result*):  
     e.g. In addition, a lot of older titles are sold in ebook format for as little as \$0.99.
- if the body paragraph is long, summarize the idea again in a concluding sentence  
     e.g. In short, ebooks are easier to buy, read, and produce than print books.

### Conclusion

- often begins with a concluding signal (e.g. *In conclusion, To sum up*)
- restates main ideas in a new way
- usually shorter than the introductory paragraph

## Sample Essay

Advances in digital technology led to the adoption of ebooks in the late 1990s. By May 2011, retailers like Amazon were selling more ebooks than print books. It is not surprising that ebooks have increased in popularity, as they have many advantages over ebooks. Ebooks are inexpensive and convenient, despite their technological drawbacks.

Firstly, ebooks are inexpensive. Publishers are able to sell ebooks at a low price because they cost less to produce: ebooks do not need to be printed, stored in a warehouse, or shipped like paper books. As a result, ebook editions of new releases are typically sold on Amazon for \$9.99-\$14.99, whereas new hardcover or paperback books cost \$29.95-\$39.95. In addition, a lot of older titles are sold in ebook format for as little as \$0.99. Some ebooks of literary classics are even available for free on sites like Project Gutenberg.

Secondly, ebooks are convenient. For instance, they are much easier to buy. Customers do not have to travel to a bookstore to pick up ebooks: they can purchase them online and download them from a remote location. Because online retailers carry an almost infinite selection of titles, customers also have a greater chance of finding what they're looking for when shopping for ebooks online. Furthermore, ebooks are convenient to read. Ereading devices like the Kindle weigh a lot less than hardcover books, so they are more comfortable to hold for long periods of time. Users can also adjust the brightness of the screen and the size of the font on their ereader: this reduces eye strain and makes it easier for people with vision problems to read. Because ebooks can be read on smart phones, they're also very portable. In addition to being easy to read, ebooks are easy to publish. If a publisher has to make a correction to an ebook, the publisher only needs to update a file, instead of recalling or reprinting hundreds of copies of that book. Furthermore, because ebooks are relatively easy to produce, authors can now publish their own work electronically instead of relying on traditional print publishers. In short, it is convenient to buy, read, and produce ebooks.

Although ebooks are cheap and convenient, they do have some technical requirements. For example, in order to use an ebook, a person must have an electronic device like a computer, tablet, e-reader, or smart data. These devices also require an energy source: owners must either recharge them or replace their batteries periodically. At this time, ebooks also have certain technical limitations. Some devices, like the Kindle, can only read certain ebook file formats. Also, owners often are not able to share their ebooks with other people or transfer their files from one device to another. Finally, because the field of digital publishing is changing rapidly, ebooks that exist today may not be compatible with future ereading devices.

To sum up, though ebooks may have several drawbacks that come from their technological requirements, they are less expensive and more convenient than print books.\*

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\* **NOTE:** In order to make this a strong research paper, many of the statements made in this essay would need to be supported by other sources (e.g. books, articles, online sources).