

## Plan for an Academic Essay

### **I. Introduction (1<sup>st</sup> Paragraph)**

- i. Thesis sentence: A strong declaratory sentence stating your argument/theory in reference to the question.**

- 1. Simple way is to answer the question!**

- 2. Example:**

**Question: Which major European power bears primary responsibility for starting the First World War?**

**Thesis: “Of all the major European powers in 1914, Imperial Germany bore primary responsibility for the conflict that became the First World War.”**

- ii. Organizational Plan**

- 1. 1-2 sentences that tell the reader what you will be writing about and the order of your evidence**
- 2. Lets reader know the sequence of themes/ideas that you will be positing.**
- 3. Example: “An examination of the political, military, technological and social developments among the major powers of Europe at the turn of the twentieth century will show that the Germans were willing to go to war and sought an opportunity to wage war for territorial gain in 1914.”**
- 4. Essentially tells reader where you are going in the paper.**
- 5. CAUTION: Do not offer key evidence in the introduction, just themes of categories of the evidence that you will discuss in the Body.**

### **II. Body (Paragraphs 2-?)**

- i. Evidentiary paragraphs—one idea fully developed per paragraph**

ii. A paragraph is generally three or more sentences

iii. ORGANIZATION POSSIBILITIES

1. Thematic (see Organizational Plan above)

a. “political, military, technological and social developments”

2. Chronological

a. Follows timeline from earliest to most recent

3. Order of Importance

a. Most important evidence first

b. End with most important evidence

4. Regional

a. Discuss evidence by geographic scope

b. In our example above, the writer could first deal with the other European powers: Russia, Austria, Britain, France, Italy and Germany to show how the German government had the greatest reason/desire to wage war in 1914

5. Other

a. Really any logical sequence that the reader can follow can be used

III. Conclusion (Last Paragraph)

i. Reiterate main points BUT do not copy the main points from your body

ii. Example:

1. “As we have seen, Germany’s conservative politicians hoped to use war to stave off the rising challenge of the Social Democrats in the Reichstag by bringing the country together under a patriotic cause. Germany’s military planners rigidly planned for a European-wide war that pre-empted any possibility of localizing the Balkan crisis to Eastern Europe. The Industrial

**Revolution of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had provided Germany with not only the wealth to wage war but also new technologies such as the machine gun and poison gas to turn the war in 1914 into a true “world war.” Finally, social developments such as military conscription and the sense that “war was inevitable” propelled the German people to rush off to war in 1914.”**

- 2. In other words, restate and summarize your key points.**