

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

OUTLINES AND THESIS STATEMENTS

Evaluating a Sample Outline for a Research Paper

Directions Read the following outline for a research paper about efforts to save endangered species. You will find that in some instances the order of topics in the headings and subheadings is incorrect. Answer the questions below the outline. Then rewrite your new, improved outline on a separate sheet of paper.

Saving Endangered Species

- I. Introduction
- II. Causes of endangerment
 - A. Loss of habitat
 - B. Overhunting
 - C. Pollution
 - D. Introduction of predators or competitors
 - E. Establishing refuges
- III. Methods of saving species
 - A. Cleaning up pollution
 - B. Help with breeding
 - C. Reintroducing to the wild
 - D. Controlling hunting
- IV. Definition of endangered species
- V. Success stories
 - A. Trumpeter swans
 - B. Alligators
 - C. River otters are lovable creatures
- VI. Questions
 - A. Question of where to best focus efforts
 - B. Wisdom of interfering with nature
 - C. What happened to the dinosaurs?
- VII. Conclusion

1. Which heading is in the wrong place? Where would you put it to improve the order of this outline?

2. The style of one subheading does not fit the style of the rest. Which subheading is it, and how could you improve it?

3. Which subheading seems to be under the wrong heading? Name it and tell where it should go.

4. Which subheading does not fit the topic? Why?

Research Paper and Report Writing

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Creating an Outline for Your Research Paper

Directions To create an outline for your own research paper, follow these instructions.

1. Review your note cards and sort them into groups of related ideas. What main idea does each group represent? List those main ideas below.

2. Next, think of the most logical order in which to arrange your main ideas. What approach did you decide to take in your research paper? For example, if you are organizing your research paper in terms of cause and effect, you might want to begin by listing a number of effects and then describe the cause of each one. Now rewrite the main ideas you listed above, this time in the correct order.

3. Think about your audience. Is there anything in the way you have organized your information that might confuse your reader? (For example, it would be confusing to describe the answer to a problem before defining the problem itself.)

4. Next, read every note card in each group. Which ideas support other ideas? Identify the subheadings for each heading and then identify the supporting details for each subheading. On a separate sheet of paper, write the major headings and subheadings of your paper in correct outline form. Use Roman numerals (I, II, III, and so on) for the main headings and capital letters for the subheadings.

5. Study your draft outline. Is every subheading under the correct heading? If not, move it. Does every heading have supporting details? If not, either do more research or delete the heading. Does every detail match your topic and your approach? If not, the detail doesn't belong in your paper. The sample outline on page 16 is an example of an incorrect outline. Laying out your information in correct outline form can help you answer these important questions.

6. Review your completed outline. Make sure that the form is correct and that everything is in the proper order. Make sure that words are spelled correctly and that all facts are accurate. Have you left out any information? Be sure that your outline is as complete as it can be. You should be able to write your paper directly from your outline by expanding on your headings and subheadings.

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DRAFTING

Evaluating a Sample Draft for Introduction, Body, and Conclusion

Directions Read this draft of a research paper. Pay special attention to how the writer has organized the information into an introduction, a body, or the main part of the paper, and a conclusion. Then answer the questions on the next page.

In a world increasingly full of people and their creations, is there any room left for wild animals? It's true that many species have adapted to humans by feeding out of our garbage cans, perching on power lines, and nesting on billboards. But what about creatures that are shy and easily disturbed by people? What about species that need large undisturbed forests or plains in which to roam about and feed? One answer to saving these animals is to create wildlife refuges.

Over the past century many such sanctuaries have been created in the United States. In 1903 President Theodore Roosevelt created the first federal wildlife refuge on Pelican Island in Florida. Today there are more than four hundred such refuges across our nation.

Many American refuges have been set aside specifically to help preserve an endangered species. The whooping crane can find a protected home at a Texas refuge called Aransas. The American buffalo can roam safely over the National Bison Range in Montana. In Indonesia rangers at the Ujung Kulon National Park protect the endangered Javan rhino from hunters. Wildlife refuges in the United States seek to promote the survival of wildlife but not necessarily to leave the natural environment completely untouched by humans. In many refuges hikers and other visitors are welcome to enter and observe the animals. In some refuges people are allowed to hunt, fish, and boat. Wildlife managers may dam up ponds, create nesting sites, or plant food crops to help a species survive.

Wildlife refuges are an important part of the solution to how humans and animals can live in harmony. Many species have been helped. Many visitors have been educated.

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1. What is the main idea expressed in the introduction?

2. What technique or techniques has the writer used to get the reader's attention in the introduction?

3. What are the major supporting details provided in the body of this report?

4. Can you find any information in the body of the report that doesn't fit the main focus of the paragraph in which it is located? If so, what is this information, and should it be moved or deleted?

5. Evaluate the conclusion. How could it be improved? Make suggestions, or write an improved version below.

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DRAFTING

Evaluating a Sample Draft for Statistics, Facts, Examples, and Quotations

Directions To make your paper interesting and meaningful, you need to support your ideas with statistics, facts, examples, and quotations gathered during your research. However, you also must give credit to the sources where you found your information. There are many ways to do this. One way is to write the reference to your source at the end of the sentence containing the information. The reference should appear in parentheses. It consists of the last name of the author(s) and the page number where the information was found. In the following example the information in the last sentence comes from page 54 of a book called *Places of Refuge: Our National Wildlife Refuge System* by Dorothy Hinshaw Patent.

Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge in Virginia is a popular beach spot. It is also home to the piping plover, an endangered bird. Refuge officials realized that human activity was making it difficult for the birds to raise their young, so beginning in 1988 they closed two-and-a-half miles of the beach to humans during the birds' breeding season (Patent 54).

A reference in the paper needs to provide only enough information to identify the source. (The rest of the information from your source card will come later, in the source list at the end of your research paper.) In most cases all you need to provide is the author's name and the page where you found the fact or quotation. If your information comes from an unsigned article in a newspaper, encyclopedia, or other source, just list the name of the source and the page in your reference.

According to the Fish and Wildlife Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior, species considered endangered as of July 30, 1992, included the masked bobwhite, the American peregrine falcon, the red wolf, and the American alligator (The World Almanac and Book of Facts 677).

Directions The research paper excerpt on the next page is based on information from the two sources listed below. Read the excerpt and then answer the questions that follow.

Madson, John. "American Waterfowl: Troubles and Triumphs." National Geographic Nov. 1984: 583.

Mackenzie, John P. S. Birds in Peril. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977.

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Can a species be pulled back from the edge of extinction? If you consider the case of the trumpeter swan, the answer would seem to be yes. The trumpeter swan is native to North America. It is a very large bird. For hundreds of years it was hunted, both for food and for its skin. By 1932 only sixty-nine trumpeter swans were known to exist (Madson 583).

In 1935 the United States government set up the Red Rocks Lakes Migratory Waterfowl Refuge in an attempt to save the trumpeter swan from dying out completely (Mackenzie 42). Today nearly ten thousand of these birds exist in the United States and Canada (National Geographic 583). This “most majestic of American waterfowl” seems to be safe from extinction.

1. Look in the excerpt to find an example of a statement that should be supported with precise statistics.

2. You only need to write the last name of the author and the page number where the material was found in a reference. Which reference in the excerpt is written incorrectly?

3. Most of the time, information that is in quotation marks needs a reference. Find an example of material in the excerpt that needs to have a reference but does not. Copy the text that needs a reference.
