VII. Writing the First Draft

From Thesis to Conclusion
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What is Jamie’s role in writing his paper?
Jamie as a Seeker of Truth

Does watching TV violence cause teens to commit real violence?
Jamie as the Project Director

I decide how to organize the points and what facts, quotes, and case histories I will bring in to provide proof.
Jamie as a Trial Lawyer

- The **tone** of his argumentative paper is serious, confident, persuasive. (Click for brief discussion of “tone” from the video *English Composition*)

- Jamie presents proof objectively, avoiding “in my opinion” or “I think.” Let the proof speak.
Audience Awareness

- Guide the reader through the points of the argument step-by-step. Imagine the reader as a person who is following the argument.
- Provide analysis/ explanations and use transitions to keep the reader from getting lost.
- Persuade the reader by understanding and anticipating his/her feelings, questions or objections.
How to Start

- Focus on the points in the outline.
- Write a sub-thesis that summarizes each point.
- Add specific proof (facts, quotes) to support each point.
- Write up each point in one or more paragraphs. (Divide paragraphs that are longer than \(\frac{3}{4}\) page.)
Jamie’s research notes provide support for each point.

- For notes typed on computer, cut and paste relevant material into the outline.

- For notes on note cards, arrange proof (facts, quotes, paraphrases) in numbered “Topic Piles” which correspond to the points in the outline.
Body or Introduction First?

- It is often a good idea to write the body paragraphs first and come back to the introduction later.

- Since Jamie has an idea for his introduction, he will start there.

I’ll use school shootings to get the reader’s attention!
The introduction gets the reader’s attention:

- Shocks or startles with facts
- Provides a story or case history
- Gives a quotation to spark interest
- States general background information or definitions of terms readers need to understand.

The introduction states the thesis at the end of one or (maximum) two paragraphs.

Jamie reviews his thesis and outline.

Thesis: There is a link between teens viewing violence on television and committing violence, so . . . (solution) should be done.

I. Teen violence is a problem in America
II. Teens watch violence on television/experts see link with TV watching and aggression (Put thesis here)
III. Research Findings (What they show)
IV. Psychology (How TV watching affects behavior)
V. Solutions
Support for point I: Youth violence is a major problem

**FACT:** Schools shootings involve teens (use Columbine). Recent school shooting at Red Lake High School (Wilgoren A-1)

**FACT:** Majority of violent acts committed by males between 15-30 (Knight et al. 279)

**FACT:** Drop in violent crime in cities/increase suburbs/rural areas/girls (Prothrow-Stith and Spivak 17-19)
Support for point II:  
Link of TV Violence and Real Violence

Typical American child spends 15,000 hours in front of TV before age 18 ("Television Violence" 5) and will have seen 200,000 acts of violence (Dorman 1)

American Psychiatric Association Website reports “exposure to television violence is as strongly correlated with aggression as any other variable that has been measured.”
Writing the Introduction

Jamie writes his first paragraph combining Points I and II.

I’ll tell the reader that youth violence is a serious problem linked with watching TV violence. Then I’ll put my thesis at the end...
Now Jamie will continue to write up the points in his outline. . .
A Sub-thesis is key.

- A sub-thesis is an analytical or critical statement, **not** just a fact.
- Help the reader following your argument by starting each paragraph or section with a sub-thesis that provides an overview of the content and relates to the main thesis. (Break paragraphs when needed. A paragraph should not be longer than \( \frac{3}{4} \) page.)
Point III: Presentation of Research Findings

Next I’ll write up the research studies. Let’s see... what’s my sub-thesis?
Thesis: There is a link between teens viewing violence on television and committing violence, so... should be done.

Paragraph 2

Sub-Thesis: While linking television violence to real life violence is not conclusive, there is a significant connection.

Paragraph 3

Sub-Thesis: Despite the fact effects of television violence cannot be absolutely established, most experts feel there is a connection between youth violence and viewing television violence.

Other Paragraphs

Additional Sub-Theses...
Finally, write the conclusion.

The conclusion of an argument should review the main points, confirm the thesis, and leave the reader with a clear sense of what should be done.

For more Information visit Maple Wood Writing Center http://www.kcmetro.cc.mo.us/maplewoods/writeplace/conclusions.html
Now, go back to the introduction and thesis.

Does the introduction focus the reader’s attention on the topic?

Is the thesis clearly stated?

Does the paper move in a straight line from thesis to conclusion?
First Draft Rules to Remember

- Be sure points are organized logically and have sufficient proof.
- Give each paragraph/section a sub-thesis and pay attention to paragraph structure.
- Provide transitions where needed.
- Make the first draft as correct as possible in sentence structure, grammar, spelling.
- Make sure citations are in correct MLA format.
Jamie’s First Draft

Revision is the last step in writing a research paper.

I’ve got to sharpen my thesis!

That first paragraph looks too long.