The Modified Mini Essay

**Know these terms:**

**Topic Sentence (TS)–** a statement having a subject and an opinion. The possibility of disagreement is always present. Possible synonyms include argument, claim, assertion or main idea. The topic must be proved by reasons, not by emotions, in order to be proved valid. The topic statement is the first statement in a mini-essay, and usually the fourth statement in the introductory paragraph of the multi-paragraph essays.

**Concrete Detail (CD)–** facts and examples that support the thesis or topic sentence. They include direct quotations from and summaries or paraphrases of literary texts. These must be documented unless they are in the public domain or are common knowledge. They are another author’s thoughts and words, not the student essayist’s.

**Commentary (CM) –** the student essayist’s opinions and insights, not concrete detail. Other synonyms include development, elaboration and explication of the concrete detail.

**Closing Sentence (CS) –** the "clincher" at the close of a paragraph or mini essay. It also rephrases the thesis statement and provides a sense of completion to the paragraph.

**Chunk –** a cluster of CD/CM/CM sentences in a paragraph.

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Paragraph 1-Introduction

 Identify topic, what is the context and significance?

 Why does this matter? 4th sentence is topic sentence

Paragraph 2- Claim

*Sentence 1* **Topic Sentence (TS)**: What is the main point that this paragraph will make?

*Sentences 2 – 4* **1st Chunk**

* **Concrete Detail (CD)** Write a sentence that identifies a detail from the text that supports your topic sentence.
* **Commentary (CM)** Write a sentence that explains why/how the detail proves or clarifies the thesis
* **Commentary (CM)** Write a sentence that further explains or analyzes the CD

*Sentences 5-7* **2nd Chunk** (CD + CM + CM)

*Sentences 8-10* **3rd Chunk** (CD + CM + CM)

*Sentence 11* **Closing Sentence (CS):**  (summarizes paragraph, restates topic or thesis sentence, and does not introduce new information.)

Paragraph 3-Counterclaim

*Sentence 1* **Topic Sentence (TS)**: What is the main point that this paragraph will make?

*Sentences 2 – 4* **1st Chunk** (CD + CM + CM)

*Sentences 5-7* **2nd Chunk** (CD + CM + CM)

*\*Sentences 8-10* **3rd Chunk** (CD + CM + CM)- optional for counterclaim

*Sentence 11* **Closing Sentence (CS):**  (summarizes paragraph, restates topic or thesis sentence, and does not introduce new information.)

Paragraph 4-Conclusion

Goes back to original claim, extends or reflects on it and includes insight or implications

Include:

Citations within body of paragraph

One additional source not from text provided

Citations page in appropriate format

Materials modified from: Teaching the multi paragraph essay-Jane Schaffer

http://www.janeschaffer.com/guide/teaching-multiparagraph-essay-sequential-nine-week-unit-3rd-edition