

OUTLINE

An outline is an organizational tool that can help student's layout a paper or develop the main points of an argument. Pre-writing exercises make the scripting process easier and more successful. Outlines help a writer clarify one's argument or goal, see the strengths of one's research, and recognize where holes still exist in proving one's thesis. If done well, the outline can substantially improve the quality of the paper submitted. Outline formats vary by instructor, but all should include a paragraph by paragraph layout of your original scholarship and the research you plan to present to back up your ideas. Some students prefer a traditional outline, others like an analytical outline, while others benefit from using graphic organizers.

Consider the example outlines below:

1. A Traditional Outline Format:

Spreading the Faith

Thesis: The Protestant Reformation of the 16th century spread due to technological advances such as the printing press, social factors such as the development of a new wealthy middle class, and political transformation such as the emergence of independent princes and monarchs who use the religious debate to gain power.

I. Introduction

II. Technology helps spread new Protestant ideas

- A. Through printing-books and pamphlets and sermons were published
- B. Through preaching- pastors and monks preached the popular simple faith
 - 1. Provoked debate
 - 2. Promoted freedom of religion
 - a. Conversion of many
 - b. Attracted wide audience
 - i. Peasant revolt- took Luther's free Christian literally and wrote the 10 articles using Luther's ideas to back their revolt
 - ii. Luther- said peasants misinterpreted Gospel and were wrong to revolt, he had contempt for people trying to better themselves, guilty of 3 sins: perjury, blasphemy, and rebellion
 - iii. Peasants liked a middle ground between state and religion

II. Protestantism appeals to the rising middle class

- A. Wealthy Merchant-Bankers
 - 1. Lent money to royalty, and funded voyages
 - 2. Tried to monopolize the markets
- B. Entrepreneurs
 - 1. Masters of the guilds
 - a. Fought for fair, fixed prices
 - b. Fought against monopolies
 - 2. More numerous than nobility
 - 3. Journeymen
 - a. the largest group
 - b. pitied by masters of guilds

III. Religious Views

- A. nobility remained Catholic- stay on good side of Charles V, they lent money, tax exempt, don't argue w/authority

- B. guild masters and peasants more eager to convert to Lutheranism
- C. during peasant revolt-Zwinglian, Anabaptists and others preached and had some converts, still majority were Lutheranism, Catholics almost disappeared
- D. religion was different in all the social classes

IV. Conclusion

2. **Alternative Outline Format:**

Working Title _____

I. Introduction

1. Thesis statement: _____

3. Mapping statements: _____

II. Body Paragraph 1

1. Topic sentence: _____

2. Evidence: citations needed in this paragraph? Yes No
 author _____ page# _____

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author _____ page# _____

III. Body Paragraph 2

1. Topic sentence: _____

2. Evidence: citations needed in this paragraph? Yes No
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IV. Body Paragraph 3

1. Topic sentence: _____

2. Evidence: citations needed in this paragraph? Yes No

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V. Body Paragraph 4

1. Topic sentence: _____

2. Evidence: citations needed in this paragraph? Yes No

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VI. Body Paragraph 5

1. Topic sentence: _____

2. Evidence: citations needed in this paragraph? Yes No

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VII. Body Paragraph 6

1. Topic sentence: _____

2. Evidence: citations needed in this paragraph? Yes No

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VII. Conclusion: this is the last chance to convince the reader to accept your thesis and an opportunity to provide the reader something “new” about your topic to encourage continued thought about your argument.