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For the Classroom Study Skills: Outlining a Paper

Discussion Questions

- Do you find it difficult to organize your thoughts?
- Have you heard the term “writer’s block?” What does that mean to you? Have you ever experienced a writer’s block?
- How are study guides useful tools to prepare for tests?

Activity: Advisory Outliners

Students will practice outlining techniques in order to develop and organization their thought process for paper and essay writing.

PROCEDURE

1. Begin the session by reviewing the following classic outline format for a paper or essay. An outline is like a road map for researching and writing a paper. It usually includes an introduction, three to four sub-topics with supporting points that become the body of the paper, a conclusion and a bibliography.
2. Copy and distribute the attached outline format. Work with the group to devise an easy-to-write about sample topic, or use this as an opportunity to help students create an outline for a current school assignment.
- I. **Introduction>Title – Tells the reader what the topic is about. Keep it short and easy to read.**
- II. **Thesis Statement: Taking a position about the main point of the paper.**
- III. **Subtopic I**
 - A. Supporting Point
 - B. Supporting Point
- IV. **Subtopic II**
 - A. Supporting Point
 - B. Supporting Point
- V. **Subtopic III**
 - A. Supporting Point
 - B. Supporting Point
- VI. **Conclusion -- Summarizes the information without providing new data.**
- VII. **Bibliography – Listing sources that support points**

3. Either as a group or individually, practice creating an outline with an assigned topic of the role of high school advisories. Remind students that in this outline format, they can simply indicate where further research is required to identify information, quotes and supporting points. Discuss the outline, with examples of what would populate each section with an assigned topic on high school advisory. What could we research and write about high school advisories? What is the thesis statement for the paper (e.g., High school advisories are the key to academic success, high school advisories help students make important peer connections, high school advisories need structure and continuity.)

Paper Outline:

Suggested Topic -- The Role of Middle and High School Advisories

I. Introduction>Title

Tells the reader what the topic is about. Keep it short and easy to read.

II. Thesis Statement

The position you are taking in this paper.

III. Subtopic I

A. Supporting Point:

B. Supporting Point:

IV. Subtopic II

A. Supporting Point:

B. Supporting Point:

V. Subtopic III

A. Supporting Point:

B. Supporting Point:

VI. Conclusion

Summarizes the information without providing new data.

VII. Bibliography

List of sources that support points and information presented