



4-H Briefs

Fun ideas to help members and families explore 4-H projects

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service 4-H Youth Development

Outlining

FOCUS:

Communication- exchange of information using writing

LEARNER OBJECTIVE:

Writing an outline

BACKGROUND:

The information in a paper is organized into three parts- the introduction, the body, and the conclusion. Outlines can help structure your paper into the three basic parts. An outline can also help to narrow your topic by eliminating unnecessary information. The following is an example of the traditional outline form.

I. Introduction

II. Major Heading

A. subheading

B. subheading

III. Major Heading

A. subheading

1. detail

2. detail

B. subheading

IV. Major Heading

V. Conclusion

MATERIALS:

- Pencil,
- Paper
- Computer (optional)

PROCEDURE:

Prepare an outline using the information you gathered in your research. Use the following outline form as a guide.

I. Introduction

A. State your thesis or central idea for the paper

B. Present the areas you will be covering

II. Main Idea No. 1

A. Supporting information

III. Main Idea No. 2

A. Supporting information

IV. Main Idea No. 3

A. Supporting information

V. Conclusion

A. Summary

DISCOVERY:

1. Why is it important to organize research information before beginning to write a paper?
2. How can using an outline help in the organization process?
3. When putting your information into outline form did you discover that you eliminated unnecessary information? If so, explain why you eliminated the information.
4. Did you encounter problems while making your outline? What problems did you encounter and what did you do?

PIECING IT TOGETHER:

Besides organizing information for a research paper, in what other instances can you use an outline to help organize information?

TRY THIS:

Once you have written your outline, try reading it to someone else such as your friend or a family member. You should check to see that the person you read it to understood what the main ideas of your paper are by the information in your outline. You should also check for order and correctness of your information. Make any necessary changes and repeat the process.

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