

## Why and How to Create a Useful Outline

Why create an outline?

- Aids in the process of writing
- Helps you organize your ideas
- Presents your material in a logical form
- Shows the relationships among ideas in your writing

During your research be sure you are thinking about your outline?

- Determine the purpose of your paper. (What research question are you answering?)
- Develop the thesis of your paper. (What is your answer to the research question?)
- Think about the parts of your paper. (What are the various aspects of your topic that you are researching?)

Then:

1. **Brainstorm:** List all the ideas that you want to include in your paper.
2. **Organize:** Group related ideas together.
  - Go through your note cards and group the ideas by topic
  - Each topic will then be a section of your paper
3. **Order:** Arrange material in subsections from general to specific or from abstract to concrete.
4. **Create:** Create your bibliography using headings, subheadings, etc.
  - You need to include as much information in order as you can so that it will help when you write your paper.

**Remember:** creating an outline before writing your paper will make organizing your thoughts a lot easier.

Above is from: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/printable/544/>

## Two strong outlines...

### 1. Introduction

World War I

- what was it and when
- who was involved

Country X

- location
- background info

Thesis

### Reason #1

X wanted to expand

- Where they wanted to expand
- Why they wanted to expand
- Why this was a major factor in starting WWI

### Reason #2

Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand

- What happened
- When
- Why
- Who was responsible
- How this caused WWI and supports thesis

### Reason #3 – Counterargument

Other countries were also responsible for starting WWI

- Expansion in other countries
- Militarism/tension
- Why X is more responsible for starting WWI than these other countries

### Conclusion

All countries wanted to expand, but X was most responsible

- Relate to today

## 1. Introduction

All countries had a hand in starting WWI

- Why all were responsible

Thesis: X was most responsible for starting WWI because its motives were power, declared war on many countries first...

### Reason #1

X's motives

- Aggression
  - o In Europe
  - o In colonies
- Fear of attacks
  - o From neighbors

### Reason #2

Declarations of war

- Country X declared war on...
- Method of attack once war was declared

### Reason #3 – Counterargument

Motives of country a, b, c, d, and e

### Conclusion

Why Country X was the most responsible of all the European nations

- Recap of previous points
- No reason for it to be in the war other than aggression