

Essay Writing: The Main Body

After writing your introduction, you need to discuss the main points that you will cover to answer the essay question. This is where you will be awarded most of your marks and you should use about 80% of your word count (e.g. 1,600 words in a 2,000 word essay). This section is a chain of paragraphs and each paragraph is dedicated to one point that you make.

If you are writing at level 5 and above, you will present your critical argument in the main body (see [Being Critical](#) on My.Cumbria for more information).

Paragraph 1

- ✓ cover the first thing you told the reader you would in your introduction
- ✓ introduce the main idea of this paragraph in the first sentence
- ✓ following sentences develop the topic of the paragraph
- ✓ include relevant examples, evidence, quotations and references
- ✓ finish by leading up to the next paragraph

Paragraph 2 onwards

- ✓ in the first sentence, link this paragraph to the one before
- ✓ after the link, immediately introduce the main theme of this paragraph
- ✓ develop the theme in following sentences

Paragraph content

Every paragraph you write should include:

1. Arguments
2. Main information
3. Supporting detail

Using the table on the next page; jot down your ideas, examples, facts, etc. Each paragraph should then include:

- ✓ One item from column **1**
- ✓ One to three items from column **2**
- ✓ Ideally several items from column **3**

1. Arguments	2. Main Information	3. Supporting detail
<i>Jot down ideas, theories, opinions and line of reasoning</i>	<i>Jot down the main examples and types of evidence that support your line of reasoning</i>	<i>Write down facts such as names, statistics, dates and examples which support your main argument</i>

Read the extract below and complete the table on the previous page to help you identify the argument presented in each paragraph, the information included and the research that is used to support the argument.

Essay extract

Bowlby's (1907) Attachment Theory originally claimed that if bonding was to occur between a child and its carer, there must be continuous loving care from the same carer (the mother or 'permanent mother substitute'). Without this, he argued, chances of bonding were lost forever, and the child was likely to become delinquent. Originally, this was formulated as a theory of 'maternal deprivation'. Later, Bowlby (1947) focussed more specifically on the first year of life, which he called the 'critical period'. During this time, he believed, the child organises its behaviours to balance two complementary predispositions. These predispositions are firstly 'proximity-promoting behaviours', which establish the mother as a secure base, and secondly 'exploration, away from the mother. Bowlby (1947) argued that the infant develops 'internal working models' of its relationship with the mother which becomes the basis of later relationships. He argued that the mother should be at home with the child during this time for these behaviours to develop, and that day care was harmful (Bowlby, 1947).

Bowlby's (1947) ideas were popular with the governments at the time, as there was a shortage of jobs for men returning from the Second World War (Jackson, 2007): day care during the war had enabled many women to work outside the home (Jones, 2001). There is also other evidence which appeared to support Bowlby (1947). For example, in his research at the time, Goldfarb (1947) compares children who had experienced continuous foster care from nine months onwards to those reared in institutions. He found that the foster children were less likely to suffer intellectual, social and emotional difficulties (Goldfarb, 1947). Similarly, children who stayed in hospital showed distress and little affection to parents when reunited with them (Robertson, 1967). Bowlby's (1947) own research into adolescent delinquency indicated childhood maternal deprivation as a recurring factor.

Much of this research has since been revised. Bowlby's (1947) adolescent research was based on evacuees in the post-war years, a time of unusual trauma and disruption. With respect to Goldfarb's (1947) research, Tizard (1970) found that, although children's homes could have a negative effect on development, this could be because of unstimulating environments and the high turnover of carers. Some four-year-olds in children's homes had more than fifty carers (White, 2010). Similarly, the hospital conditions of Robertson's (1967) research were stark environments where parents were discouraged from visiting and the children were very ill. This is a different situation to pleasant nurseries with healthy children who are collected by their parents each evening.

suggested argument, main information and supporting detail to exercise.

1. Arguments	2. Main Information	3. Supporting detail
<i>Jot down ideas, theories, opinions and line of reasoning</i>	<i>Jot down the main examples and types of evidence that support your line of reasoning</i>	<i>Write down facts such as names, statistics, dates and examples which support your main argument</i>
Paragraph 1 presents theory of attachment	Theory makes a number of claims: 1) continuous care required for a child to bond to their carer 2) first year of life is critical period where child learns about relationships 3) day care is harmful for children	As this paragraph is presenting information about one theory, at this point reference is only made to Bowlby (1907)
Paragraph 2 presents the support authors have given for Bowlby's (1907) theory	Support for Bowlby (1907) includes: 1) Government – freed up jobs women had filled during the war for returning men 2) Research into children with one carer and children with numerous carers in an institution 3) Research on children who stayed in hospitals	Jackson (2007) details the shortage of jobs for men returning from WW2 Jones (2001) discusses the increase in day care during the war Goldfarb (1947) compared children in foster care and children in institutions, foster care children had less difficulties Robertson (1967) also found children in institutions struggled when reunited with carers
Paragraph 3 provides more recent views on Bowlby's (1907) theory and the supporting research. The writer shows the issues with the early research	Writer highlights the unusual period when Bowlby (1947) conducted their research and also that the researchers overlooked other factors which could account for the children' behaviour	Tizard (1970) and White (2010) consider other factors that could affect the behaviour of children in institutions

Exercise adapted from: Cottrell, S. (2008) The study skills handbook. 3rd edn. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.