WRITING AN ESSAY:
Using the "Tic-Tac-Toe" Method

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Workshop sponsored by:

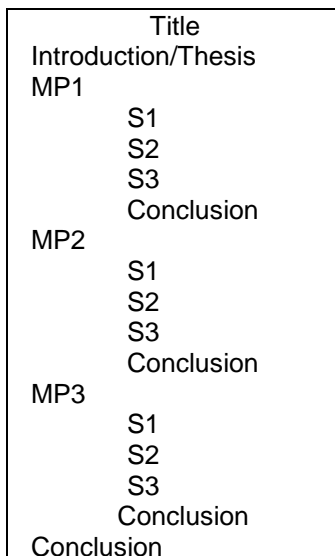## The Dr. Mack Gipson, Jr.,
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Parts	Description
Title	• is centered on top line • in not underlined or bolded • is not in quotations • is written with proper capitalization
First Paragraph: **Introduction**	• catches the reader's attention and makes him interested in reading the essay • starts with a general statement, question, or "attention-grabber" • ends with your thesis statement that tells the reader what you will be talking about and what your 3 **main points** are
Second Paragraph: **Main Point 1 (MP1)**	• develops your <u>**first main point**</u> • starts with a topic sentence that states **MP1** • contains at least 3 sentences (S1, S2, S3), each of which gives a supporting detail (each of these sentences may be further developed with sub-support sentences (SS1, SS2, SS3, etc.) • ends with a **conclusion** sentence which summarizes or wraps up MP1
Third Paragraph: **Main Point 2 (MP2)**	• develops your <u>**second main point**</u> • starts with a topic sentence that states **MP2** • contains at least 3 sentences (S1, S2, S3), each of which gives a supporting detail (each of these sentences may be further developed with sub-support sentences (SS1, SS2, SS3, etc.) • ends with a **conclusion** sentence which summarizes or wraps up MP2
Fourth Paragraph: **Main Point 3 (MP3)**	• develops your <u>**third main point**</u> • starts with a topic sentence that states **MP3** • contains at least 3 sentences (S1, S2, S3), each of which gives a supporting detail (each of these sentences may be further developed with sub-support sentences (SS1, SS2, SS3, etc.) • ends with a **conclusion** sentence which summarizes or wraps up MP3
Fifth Paragraph: **Conclusion**	• summarizes your entire essay and wraps up your paper (draws it to a close) • may review main points and come to some kind of conclusion

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                Title
        Introduction/Thesis
        MP1
                S1
                S2
                S3
                Conclusion
        MP2
                S1
                S2
                S3
                Conclusion
        MP3
                S1
                S2
                S3
                Conclusion
        Conclusion
```

The "Tic-Tac-Toe" Method

Step	Action	Purpose
1	Answer the question	Get your thesis
2	Give 3 reasons for your answer	Get your topic sentences
3	List your main ideas or evidence for each topic sentence	Get your major support
4	Fill in explanations/examples/details	Get your minor support
4A	Put your ideas in order (most important to least important, for example)	Get organized
5	Wrap it up	Get your conclusion

What's left to do after you have done all of the above steps?

- Write a good introduction that leads up to your thesis statement.

- Follow your organized plan and write your 3 body paragraphs.

- Write a good conclusion paragraph that wraps up your paper and leaves your reader with a clear understanding of your ideas. Use your conclusion sentence at the beginning or end of your conclusion paragraph (wherever it fits best).

- Read and proofread and read and proofread and . . . .

- Write your final copy.

- Read and proofread and . . . .

- Pat yourself on the back for having written a good essay.

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The next page of this handout presents a Tic-Tac-Toe brainstorming session for a student who is working on a sample essay that answers the following question:

Should all college students be required to take a computer class?

The student answers the question in his head with "yes." See the next page for his thesis statement, conclusion statement, and brainstorming chart.

THESIS: All college students should be required to take a computer class.		

(1)	**(3)**	**(2)**
learn the basic parts	**learn common software**	**lose the fear**

(3) learn how to set up	**(1)** MSWord	**(2)** practice
- plug wires in	- toolbars	- modify desktop
- install software	- tables	- flash drive

(1) become familiar	**(2)** PowerPoint	**(1)** get answers
- disk drives	- colors	- won't blow up
- USB port	- sound	- reboot

(2) learn functions	**(3)** Excel	**(3)** try new things
- CPU	- chart/graph	- pixels: display
- memory card	- formulas	- copy/paste

CONCLUSION: All college students would benefit from taking a computer class.