Introductory Paragraph:

1. **Hook** the reader in with a statement that gets them interested without addressing them specifically (avoid “Have *you* ever wondered…?)

2. Provide brief **background information** about the topic. Include a general overview about the topic as if you were describing it to someone who had never heard the topic before.

3. State the **question** being addressed (ex. Should aquariums be used in America?).

4. State the **claim** (Aquariums should not be used in America)

5. A brief **overview** of the reasons that support your position/claim (Aquariums restrict the environments of large marine animals and do not provide accurate research data to scientists hoping to study them.).

Body paragraphs

1. Each body paragraph will address one of the reasons you stated in the introductory paragraph. Reason 1 might be your first body paragraph, reason 2 might be your second body paragraph, etc.

2. In your body paragraphs, you must **use facts, data, and statistics** to address your topic and prove your claim!

Counterclaim

1. You must provide a **counterclaim** which offers the other side of the argument.

2. You can either include your counterclaim: a) In each body paragraph

 b) In a paragraph of its own

3. Remember, you have to **prove the counterclaim wrong!**

Conclusion

1. Restate the topic

2. Restate your claim and your reasons that support the claim

3. If possible, you can offer an alternative or solution to the issue being address, but limit the amount of new information/facts/data incorporated into the final paragraph (that’s what the body paragraphs are for)!