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## Writing an Essay

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- Write an introductory paragraph. Begin with an interesting opening sentence to get the reader's attention. Include some background information or generalizations about the topic. Narrow down the topic. State the narrowed down topic and one controlling idea in a thesis statement, which is usually the last sentence in the introductory paragraph. As an option, include the method of developing the main idea.

**Topic:** Dogs → Dog Owners → Vancouver dog owners  
**Controlling Idea:** "should leash their dogs"  
**Method of Development:** "for several reasons"

**Example of a Thesis Statement:**

Vancouver dog owners should leash their dogs for several reasons.  
Vancouver dog owners should leash their dogs for several reasons: public safety, dog safety, and city cleanliness.

- Write the body of the essay to support your thesis. In an essay, the supports are sometimes called **major points**. Come up with three major points. Each one is expanded upon in a separate paragraph with two or three supports and details, such as examples, reasons, descriptions or explanations. Every paragraph should have its own topic sentence and concluding sentence.

**Example of a Body Paragraph:**

The most important reason to leash dogs in Vancouver is to keep our city clean. First of all, dog owners with leashed pets watch where their dogs leave unpleasant reminders in public spaces, such as parks, sidewalks, and streets. As a result, these responsible owners quickly spot and pick up their dogs' deposits, leaving our public spaces tidy. In addition, dogs on leashes are normally under their owners' control, so these dogs will usually defecate on command at predetermined locations where it least impacts other users. For example, some dog owners train their dogs to go in a garden area not directly used by people and where it is easy for the owners to pick up their dogs' feces. On the other hand, unleashed dogs often run far away from their owners and out of sight, so dog owners, even those who wish to be responsible, will miss their dogs' deposits. Dogs running off the leash deposit their messes randomly and irresponsibly, leaving citizens to inadvertently find mini-disasters underfoot. The leash is the best method to confine dogs' actions. Unleashed dogs mean dogs out of control and messes not picked up. All in all, leashing dogs is the only way we can keep our city mess-free for everyone.

- Write a concluding paragraph. Briefly highlight the major points and restate the thesis statement in other words. You can sometimes add a comment.

**Example of a Concluding Paragraph:**

To sum up, dog owners need to take responsibility for their animals. The best way to control a dog is to keep it on a leash. Leashing dogs will protect citizens, reduce dog conflicts, and keep our public spaces tidy. Vancouver city government should enact a leashing bylaw so that we can all share city spaces conflict-free and mess-free.