



Writing Help Sheet: Writing an Outline

The purpose of an outline is to provide a brief summary of the essay or speech. It should cover all of the points that are going to be covered. Ideally, an outline should cover all the major points and most of the minor points of the composition.

Each heading should be related to a main idea in your work. Subheadings should be the explanations, examples, and details in that paragraph. The statements in the outline should be brief, but still contain enough information to know what is going to happen in what you plan to write.

I. Introduction

- A. Anecdote about leaving the lights on in the house while on vacation.
 - 1. Being late for the airport
 - 2. Leaving the house quickly
- B. Being well-prepared for a vacation can make it more enjoyable.

No outline should have single subheading. If there is a Heading I, there must be a Heading II.

If there is a subheading A, there must be a subheading B.

If there is a secondary subheading 1, there must be a secondary subheading 2.

You can have as many heading, subheadings, and secondary subheadings as you need for the information in your essay or speech.

Sample Outline/Essay

Review the following outline and essay. Note the heading and subheadings and how they connect to the essay.

- I. How to be found
 - A. Avoiding panic
 - B. Marking your location
 - C. Staying put
 - D. Letting rescuers find you
 - E. Making signals
 - 1. Giving smoke signals
 - 2. Making blast on whistle
- II. How to stay dry and warm
 - A. Preventing hypothermia
 - B. Seeking shelter
 - 1. Using caves
 - 2. Using overhangs
 - 3. Using trees
 - C. Building fire
 - D. Conserving energy
- III. How to obtain food and water
 - A. Rationing supplies
 - B. Preventing starvation

Surviving in the Wilderness

When you are lost in the wilderness, the first priority is being found and rescued. This is painfully obvious. First, stay calm. Only calmness can help you determine a logical course of action. Try to mark your location. Then remain in that location. This will help people find you. Another thing to do is to create signals that can be seen by potential rescuers. One of these would be a smoke signal. This means gathering wood, building a fire and using a blanket of some sort of cloth to flap at the fire to create discernible smoke formations. Another is blowing a whistle. This, of course, is assuming you brought one.

The next item is keeping reasonably comfortable, especially if you are in a cold, wet environment. You must avoid getting hypothermia. This is a condition caused by exposure to excess cold and resulting in abnormal loss of body heat. Shelter is imperative. There are various sources. Caves are one. Another is overhangs. Trees may also work. Building a bonfire is especially important - for signals, warmth, and light. Naturally, you must save your strength. Use energy sources sparingly: flashlight batteries, matches, etc.

Conserving energy means attending to bodily wants as well. Use food and water sparingly. Look for sources of clean water. Decide on rations and stick to them. Until you get found or find your way back to civilization, you must avoid starvation. If your food supplies are limited, you may have to trap some of the local animals or catch fish if they are available.