PROBLEM-SOLUTION

ESSAY







A problem solution essay is written to explain the solution(s) for a problem. This essay can describe multiple solutions or one "ideal" solution to the problem you describe.

A problem/solution essay follows typical essay organization with an introduction paragraph, body paragraphs, and a conclusion paragraph.

With a specific problem in mind (e.g., heavy traffic), think about solutions for that problem. If you feel there is one solution that is the best, choose a few reasons that illustrate why. If there are many solutions that could work, then choose a few solutions to describe. The structure of a problem-solution essay is like:

Paragraph 1: Introduction

General Statements

Thesis Statement

Paragraph 2: Description of the problem and its effects (Body 1)

Paragraph 3: Solution(s) to the problem (Body 2)

Paragraph 4: Conclusion





STEP 1: Organize your ideas

Understand the essay topic and ask some questions.

TOPIC:

Overpopulation in big cities leads to lots of problems. **Explain the problems** and **suggest ways** that governments and individuals can deal with these problems.

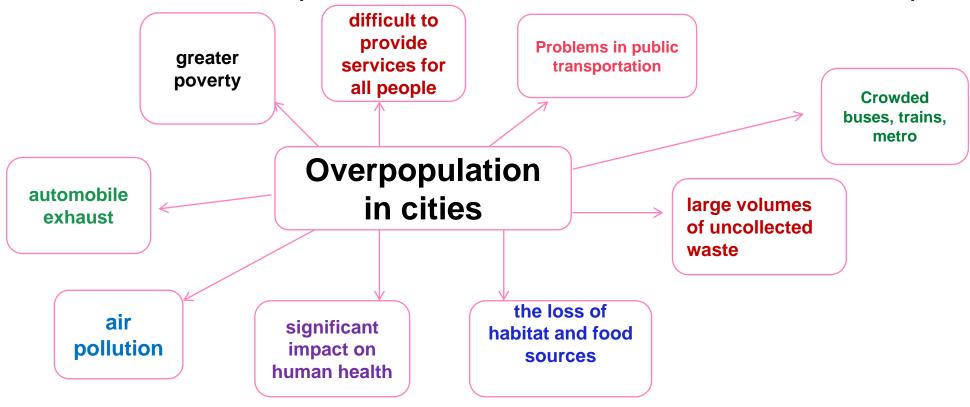
To explain the problem (Body Paragraph 1), think about the answers to these similar questions:

- What are the problems that overpopulation causes in cities?
- What are the consequences of overpopulation in cities?
- What happens when the cities are overpopulated? OR
- Why is it a problem?

STEP 2: BRAINSTORM

Find answers to your questions in **Step 1** and write as many ideas as you can in your chart.

BODY PARAGRAPH 1 (EXPLAINING THE PROBLEM AND ITS EFFECTS)





STEP 3: CLASSIFYING IDEAS FOR DESCRIBING THE PROBLEM (BODY PARAGRAPH 1)

Now, classify your ideas under more general topics. This will help you decide which ideas can be supporting ideas and which ideas can be used for supporting details (examples, explanations) in your body paragraph 1.

Find at least 2 different ideas.

BODY PARAGRAPH 1:

Overpopulation in cities

People's health (1st supporting idea/effect)

air pollution caused by car exhaust, houses, factories)

Ex: respiratory diseases

large volumes of uncollected waste

Ex: infectious diseases

stress, depression

<u>Problems in public services</u> (2nd supporting idea/effect)

- uncollected waste
- > crowded buses, metro
- heavy traffic

STEP 4:

Now, it is time to think about the second part of the essay topic. (Body paragraph 2)

Topic:

Overpopulation in big cities leads to lots of problems. **Explain the problems** and **suggest ways** that governments and individuals can deal with these problems.

To suggest solutions (Body Paragraph 2), think about the answers to these similar questions:

- What are the solutions?/How can this problem be solved?
- What can governments do to get rid of these problems?
- What should individuals/citizens/people do to solve them? OR
- How can we overcome these problems?



STEP 5: FINDING SOLUTIONS

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Now look back at the problems one by one and create solutions for each.

(BODY PARAGRAPH 1)

(BODY PARAGRAPH 2)

PROBLEM AND ITS EFFECTS

SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS

People's health

- air pollution (automobile exhaust, houses, factories)
- Ex: lung/respiratory diseases
- large volumes of uncollected waste
- Ex: infectious diseases
- > stress, depression

- ✓ reducing air pollution by upgrading energy use and alternative transport systems
- ✓ providing free health care for the citizens
- ✓ providing free psychological counselling for the citizens

Problems in public services

- Uncollected waste
- crowded buses, metro
- heavy traffic

- More investment on public transportation
- ✓ More trains, longer metro lines, less cars in traffic
- Motivating people not to waste food and to recycle



Now that you have decided the content of body paragraphs, you are ready to start writing your essay.

REMEMBER the structure of problem-solution essay:

Paragraph 1: Introduction

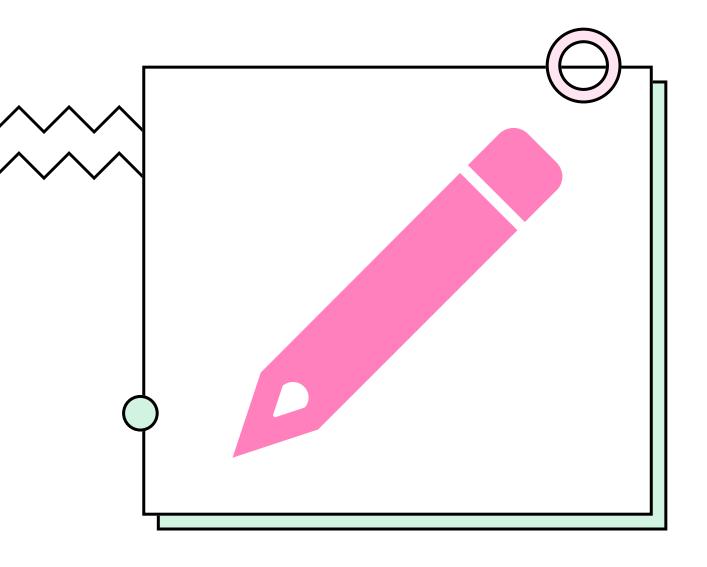
General Statements

Thesis Statement

Paragraph 2: Description of the problem and its effects (Body 1)

Paragraph 3: Solution(s) to the problem (Body 2)

Paragraph 4: Conclusion



WRITING THESIS STATEMENTS



Thesis statement in Problem-Solution Essay should have two parts:

Part 1: expressing the general problem Part 2: hint about the solution

expressing the general problem

Overpopulation of urban areas leads to lots of problems. However, there are still several things that governments and individuals can do in order to overcome these problems.

hint about the solution



Exercise 1: Write a thesis statement for the given problem-solution essay topics.

Topic 1: During the last weeks of the academic year, there is a **decrease in students' motivation**. What are the reasons for this problem and how can it be solved?

expressing the general problem

Alternative thesis statements:

<u>University students may lose their interest in the lessons at the end of the year, yet there are many things that can done to prevent this.</u>

hint about the solution

University students usually feel demotivated in their studies towards the end of the year. However, we can still do many things to solve this problem.

There is always a loss of concentration and motivation among university students at the end of the academic year, but this can still be prevented by taking some specific steps.



Topic 2: Many people start smoking at an early age and endanger their lives. What are the reasons for this problem and what are the measures that can be taken?

Alternative thesis statements:

The number of young people who start smoking increases day by day. <u>However,</u> there are many ways to dissuade them from smoking.

Many people start smoking as teens. <u>However</u>, we can take some measures to prevent this from happening. This essay will explore the problem and propose some solutions to deal with it.

Many young people endanger their lives by starting smoking at an early age; <u>yet</u> there are many ways to solve this problem.

Topic 3: Many university students have difficulty in managing their money while they are studying at university away from their family. What kind of problems do they have related to money? And what should they do to solve these problems?

Alternative thesis statements:

It is difficult for university students to manage their money on their own but there are many ways to solve this problem.

University students have many problems about managing their money while they're studying at university away from their family. However, these problems can be solved in many ways.

University students may go through many problems because they do not know how to manage their money, yet they can cope with this problem in many ways.



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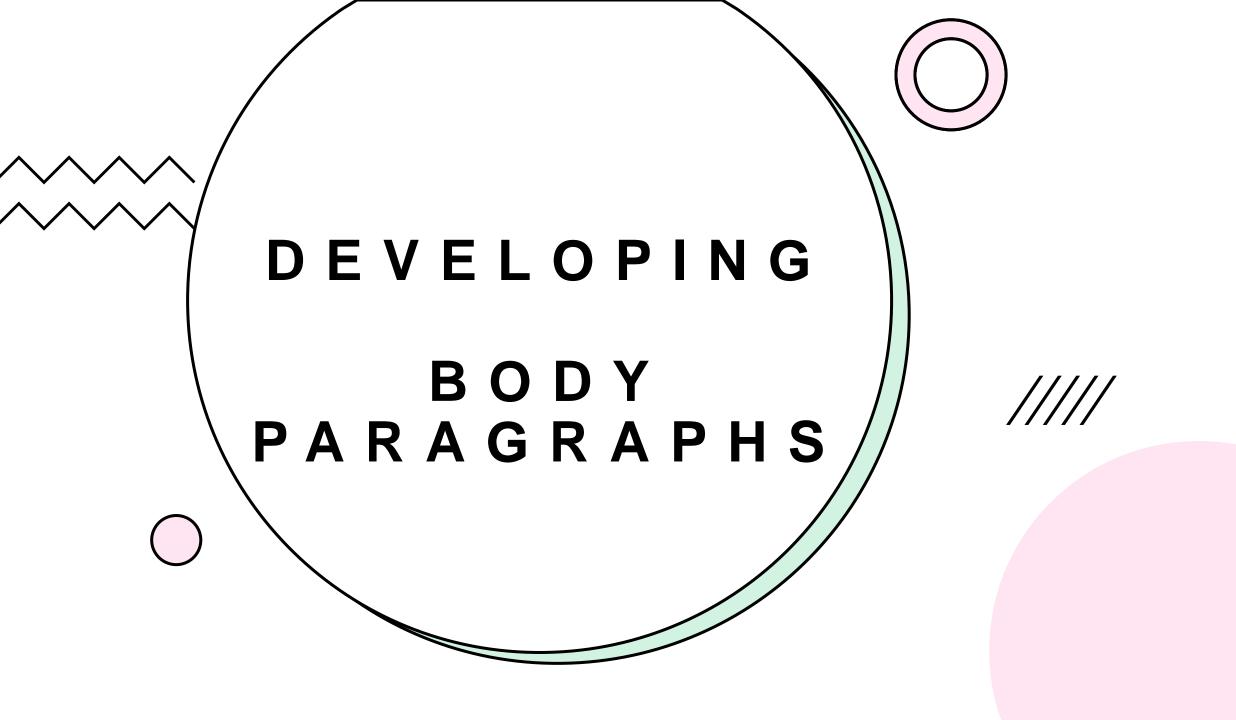
Topic 4: University students may have some problems with their roommates during their stay in the dorm or their flat. What kind of problems may they have? How can college students handle problems with roommates?

Alternative thesis statements:

University students may have some problems with their roommates, but they can solve these problems in many ways.

Sometimes, university students cannot get on well with their roommates in the dorm or in their flat; however, there are potential ways to solve these problems.





Developing Body Paragraph 1 (describing the problem and its effects)

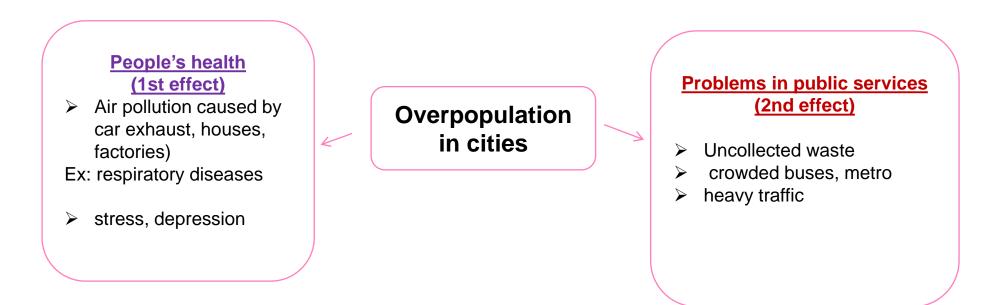
Alternative topic sentences for Body Paragraph1:

- ✓ There are many problems associated with/related to overpopulation in cities.
- ✓ Overpopulation causes lots of problems in big cities.
- ✓ Overpopulation leads to several problems in big cities.
- ✓ Big cities are negatively affected by overpopulation.
- ✓ There are several problems in big cities caused by overpopulation.





Developing **Body Paragraph 1** (describing the problem and its effects)



Overpopulation causes lots of problems in big cities. (TOPIC SENTENCE) The first problem is that it negatively affects people's health. (1st effect) Air pollution caused by car exhaust, factories and houses makes it very difficult to breath and it also leads to respiratory diseases among people. Moreoever, people suffer from stress and depression in overpopulated cities since they face with lots of problems during their daily lives. Secondly, there are lots of problems in public services. (2nd effect) For instance, the waste of the city cannot be collected, and the streets can be full of garbage, which is a bad scene for the citizens. Furthermore, buses and trains are always crowded, and people lose a lot of time while travelling.

Developing Body Paragraph 2 (providing solutions)

Alternative topic sentences for Body Paragraph 2

- ✓ However, there are many ways to solve these problems.
- ✓ Despite these problems, there are some solutions to overcome the negative effects of overpopulation.
- ✓ On the other hand, in order to solve these problems, the governments and individuals can do lots of things.
- ✓ Solving these problems will not be easy but there are some measures that can be taken.

Developing **Body Paragraph 2** (providing solutions)

Problems about people's health

- ✓ reducing air pollution by upgrading energy use and alternative transport systems
- ✓ providing free health care for the citizens
- ✓ providing free psychological counselling for the citizens

Problems in public services

- ✓ More investment on public transportation / punishment
- Motivating people not to waste food and to recycle

Despite these problems, there are some solutions to overcome the negative effects of overpopulation. (TOPIC SENTENCE) The first solution is that the government should take actions about reducing the air pollution. They can do this by motivating people not to use their cars and by investing on the public transportation systems more. Besides, the factories should be punished if their emissions exceed the limits. Another solution is that the government should provide free health care for those who have respiratory diseases and give free psychological counselling for all the citizens. In this way, people can cope with the stress of living in an overpopulated city. The last solution is that the local authorities should motivate people not to waste food. For example, they can organize campaigns and seminars about recycling.

Writing Conclusion

In conclusion paragraph, you should return to the thesis statement, restate it and express your final thoughts and recommendations:

As a result, although there are several negative effects of overpopulation in big cities, overcoming these problems is possible. Due to these problems, people living in overpopulated cities suffer from health problems and they face many challenges during their daily lives. However, governments, local authorities and individuals should take responsibility and minimize these problems for a better future.

