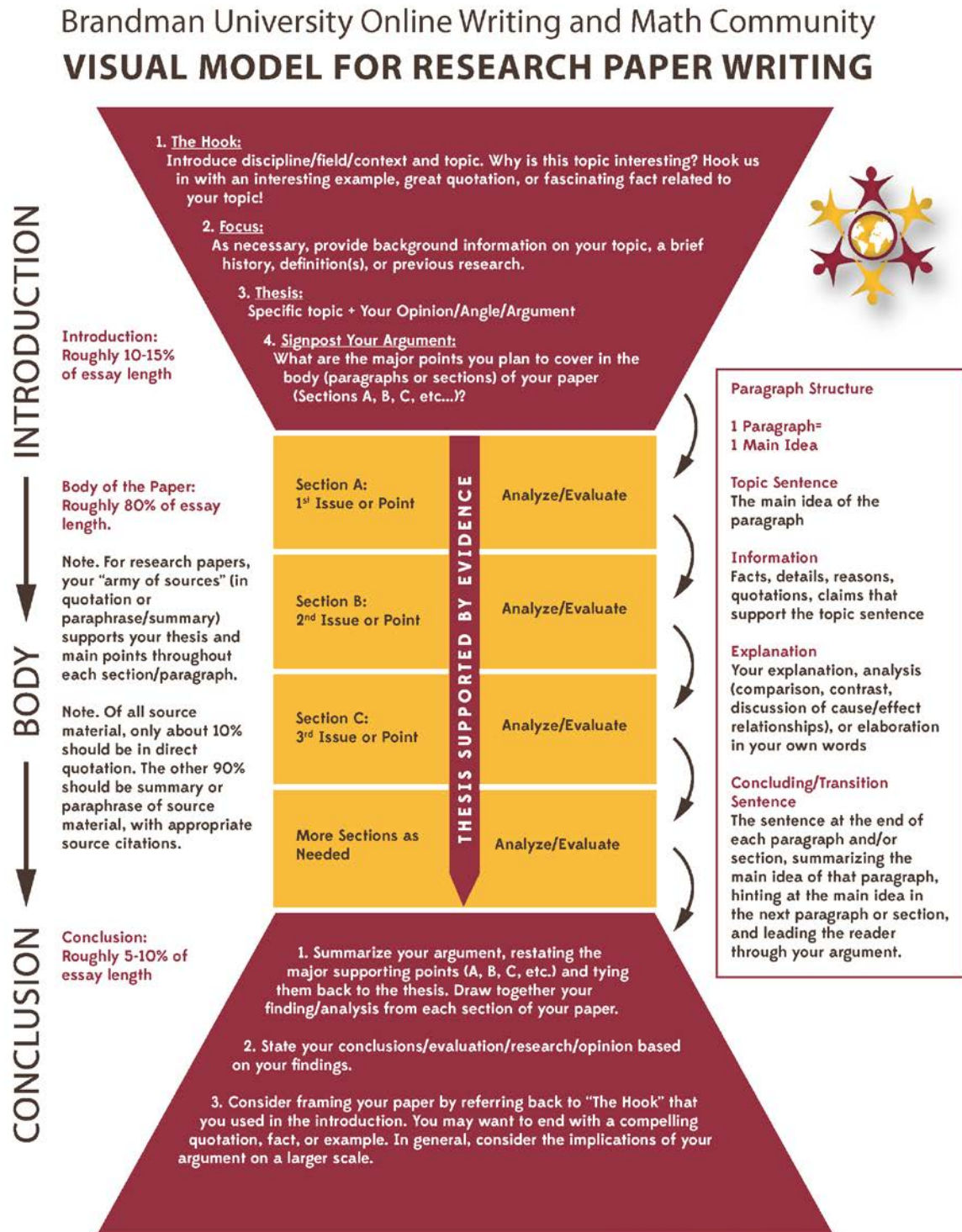


## Drafting, Revising, Proofreading

Drafting occurs when you compose your ideas into sentences and paragraphs. Drafting your essay or research paper should be a fairly straightforward step in the writing process, if you've planned and outlined your assignment well. College-level writing assignments usually begin with an introduction that gives a clear thesis statement. The thesis is supported by a series of body paragraphs with subtopics and supporting evidence. Construct a logical defense of your thesis by using evidence, data, and theory. The evidence must be logically connected to your thesis. Finally, the paper ends with a conclusion that restates your thesis and summarizes the most important details of your analysis.

Here is a visual guide for the research writing process from Brandman's Online Writing Community.



Revision is a crucial step in the writing process. Most of us who compose on a computer understand revision as an ongoing, even constant process; every time you hit the delete button, every time you cut and paste, every time you take out a comma or exchange one word for another, you're revising. But real revision is more than making a few changes here and there. Real revision requires that you open yourself up to the possibility that parts of your paper – and sometimes even your entire paper – might need to be re-thought, and re-written. To revise literally means to "see again," to look at something from a fresh, critical perspective. Revision is an ongoing process of re-seeing and rethinking your paper: reconsidering your arguments, reviewing your evidence, refining your purpose, reorganizing your presentation, and reviving stale prose. I know most of you probably thought revision just meant fixing the commas and spelling. Unfortunately, that process is typically referred to as proofreading, which is an important step before turning your paper in; but if your ideas are predictable, your thesis is weak, and your organization is a mess, then proofreading will just be like pulling a band-aid over a bullet wound. Proofreading typically happens after you revise.

There are many different kinds of revising. There is:

**Large-Scale Revision:** This kind of revision involves looking at the entire paper for places where your thinking seems to go awry. You might need to provide evidence, define terms, or add an entirely new step to your reasoning. You might even decide to restructure or rewrite your paper completely if you discover a new idea that intrigues you, or a structure that seems to be more effective than the one you've been using.

**Small-Scale Revision:** Small-scale revision needs to happen when you know that a certain part of your paper isn't working. Maybe the introduction needs work. Maybe one part of the argument seems weak. Once you've located the problem, you'll focus on revising that one section of your paper. When you are finished you will want to reconsider your paper as a whole to make sure that your revisions work in the context of the entire paper.

**Editing:** Too often students confuse editing with revision. They are not the same processes. Editing is the process of finding minor problems with a text – problems that might easily be fixed by deleting a word or sentence, cutting and pasting a paragraph, and so on. When you edit, you are considering your reader. You might be happy with how you've written your paper, but will your reader find your paper clear, readable, interesting? How can you rewrite the paper so that it is clearer, more concise, and, most important of all, a pleasure to read?

**Proofreading:** When you proofread you are looking for mistakes in your paper. Common mistakes caught in proofreading are punctuation errors, spelling errors, subject-verb agreement, its/it's confusion, their/there confusion, and so on. When you proofread, you need to slow down your reading, which allows your eye to focus on every word, every phrase of your paper. Reading aloud can help you slow down and point your attention to errors that have gone unseen.

### Proofing and Editing Help

At the OWC, we know editing and proofreading your own work can be difficult, but that is why we offer writing assistance. If you want a second pair of eyes to look at your papers, please either Submit your Paper to our Submit a Paper forum or make an appointment with a tutor today. Writing can be hard, but we are here to help! Thank you!

Source: Brandman University Online Writing Community Tips for Revising and Editing.