**Pre-Writing Activities: Outlines**

This week we are going to take the pre-writing activities to the next level, and develop an outline for a five-paragraph essay. To start, go through and read the information provided at the following link.

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/544/02/

Now that you understand the importance of developing an outline as part of the writing process, here is an example of how an outline is typically created.

1. Start with the thesis. The thesis statement is what the rest of the essay will be about, so it makes sense to put this at the top.

2. Next, items that follow that have the same general level of importance, will visually appear at the same level on the outline. Since this is a five-paragraph essay, you know there are going to be three body paragraphs, so go ahead and make a line for each, with plenty of space between each so you can put more details in later.

3. Add a final number in the list for the concluding paragraph. This is what you should have so far (sample is using Roman numerals, but you can use whatever numbering system works for you):

I. Thesis statement

II. First Body Paragraph – Topic Sentence

III. Second Body Paragraph – Topic Sentence

IV. Third Paragraph – Topic Sentence

V. Conclusion

Next, you are going to add lines to represent the supporting sentences: major and minor details (explanations or examples). These should appear indented to visually show they are support, and not the main idea sentences. Also, use a different numbering system to keep the distinction clear between the main idea and the support. Here is what it might look like:

I. Thesis statement

II. First Body Paragraph – Topic Sentence

a) Major detail

b) Minor detail

c) Major detail

d) Minor detail

III. Second Body Paragraph – Topic Sentence

a) Major detail

b) Minor detail

c) Major detail

d) Minor detail

IV. Third Body Paragraph – Topic Sentence

a) Major detail

b) Minor detail

c) Major detail

d) Minor detail

V. Conclusion