When writing a formal essay remember the following;

1. What’s your thesis statement?
   1. This is the single most important piece of your essay
      1. This is one sentence that summarizes your entire paper
   2. It consists of your opinion + the topic
   3. Phrase it in the form of a statement
   4. Your thesis should be something along the lines of, the film Star Wars illustrates the hero’s journey.
2. Do not use “I”
   1. Express your opinion in the form of statements.
      1. Avoid “In my opinion”, “I think”, “I believe”
3. Do not speak directly to the reader. Avoid “You”
   1. Try “one”, or “most”
4. Do not use slang terms or contractions
5. Reread your paragraphs
   1. You should not have one giant paragraph
   2. Paragraphs have no set length
      1. Change paragraphs when you change ideas
6. Reread your transitions between paragraphs
   1. Is there a flow?
   2. Does it read like you numbered your paragraphs?
7. Do not address new ideas in your conclusion, instead restate your main points utilizing new verbiage (words).

**Example of a HOT (Intro) and TRIC (Body) Paragraph**

The smell of mildew covers up the onion stink of sweat-drenched T-shirts that have been balled up in the corner since the scrimmage last weekend. The possibility of finding matching socks in the heap of debris is unlikely at best. Arms flailing and eyes darting, a quick scan of the room proves that most moms are serious when they say , “clean up this dump.” Most have been in this position, yet teenagers around the world cringe at the mention of chores. Some teens have easy chores such as making the bed while others have more important tasks. The topic of chores and their importance can spark heated debates as most people hold their own opinions. Regardless of the level of difficulty, it really is important for teens to have chores as it prepares them for adulthood.

One of the most obvious benefits of requiring teens to have chores is self-sufficiency. Most teens like the idea of independence yet shy away from actually learning how to be independent. Chores help to provide real-world skills that will actually help teens learn to stand on their own. For example, my parents never really showed me how to organize my belongings and perform common household duties. My mom just took care of that for me; although it seemed great at the time, it actually backfired on me as I was clueless how to function in my first apartment. The first time I had to wash a load of clothes was a catastrophe as the whites looked like an amateur tie-dye vender at a Grateful Dead show circa 1968. Streaks of cobalt blue striped my work shirts as I began to understand both the power of bleach and how having your first apartment doesn’t make you independent at all. Chores are a great way to begin learning how to be independent and self-sufficient.