OUTLINING A PAPER
Green Ch. 14: Reading Review

- What does organization in writing refer to?

- Why is organizing your writing important (benefits)?

- What happens when a piece of writing is not well organized?
Organizing as a reader and a writer

- In what ways is the organization of a piece of writing important to a reader?

- What benefits are there to reverse outlining?
  - Define, list, and explain
What is an Outline?

- A way to:
  - plan a paper
  - organize the structure of a paper (create a skeleton)
  - organize the ideas of a paper
  - Support a thesis statement with evidence and analyses
  - Ensure you cover the requirements of an assignment
Developing an Outline

- Can be **informal** (most common, a.k.a “working outline”)
  - Ideas jotted down
  - Thesis stated
  - Topic sentences stated

- Can be **formal**
  - Numbered headings and subheadings
  - Phrases or sentences that will occur in each part of the paper
  - May be required for submission with some writing assignments
“Outlines usually follow a specific format using parallelism, Roman Numerals, upper case letters, and sometimes numbers to indicate ideas with different levels of importance.

Unless your instructor is planning to collect and grade your outline based on proper formatting, try not to get too hung up on making sure that you're formatting each section properly.

The important thing to remember is that the outline is meant to be a helpful organizational tool--compose your outline in such a way that it will be helpful to you!”

http://www.roanestate.edu/owl/Outline.html, 2016
An Outline as a Story

- Think of it as the sketch for a story you are telling a reader
- It needs to show the relationship between the facts and ideas of a paper
- It is a way to help you develop your ideas
“Remember that all writing — even academic writing — needs to tell a story:

- **the introduction** often describes what has already happened (the background or history of your topic),
- **the body paragraphs** might explain what is currently happening and what needs to happen (this often involves discussing a problem, the need for a solution, and possible solutions), and
- **the conclusion** usually looks to the future by focusing on what is likely to happen (what might happen next, and whether a solution is likely).”
Introduction in Outline form

- Fact that grabs audience attention
- Background/history of issue/problem/topic
- Thesis statement
Body in Outline Form

Current state of issue/problem/topic

- **Topic/claim sentence:** Make a claim that explains what the paragraph is about

- **Evidence** that supports/explains the claim (this is often research from primary and secondary sources)

- **Analysis** that explains how the evidence supports your claim and why this matters to the paper's thesis statement and topic sentences in a body section of the paper
Conclusion in Outline Form

- Restate the thesis

- Recap major points

Answer questions:
- What might happen now?

- Is a solution likely?

- What's the future of the issue?
Strategies for Developing Outlines

- Start with the assignment directions:
  - What questions are you required to answer?
  - What sections are you required to include?
  - Do you need a formal outline (are you required to submit one)?
Think in sections, bullet points or phrases, and then in sentences

- This will help you to break the assignment down into smaller pieces

Think of the outline as a sketch or skeleton that gives you a roadmap (overview) as to where you will go next and how you will complete the writing assignment
Types of Outlines

Alphanumeric Outlines (Formal Outlines)

- Most common type of outline
- The formatting follows these characters, in this order:
  - Roman Numerals
  - Capitalized Letters
  - Arabic Numerals
  - Lowercase Letters

- Watch Video on Formal Outlines
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZ57Jh1xdRw
The full sentence outline format is essentially the same as the Alphanumeric outline. The main difference (as the title suggests) is that full sentences are required at each level of the outline. This outline is most often used when preparing a traditional essay.”- (Purdue OWL 2016)
Decimal Outline

- “The decimal outline is similar in format to the alphanumeric outline.

- The added benefit is a system of decimal notation that clearly shows how every level of the outline relates to the larger whole.” – (Purdue OWL 2016)