

How to Write a Process Essay: From Thesis to Final Draft

Step 1: Make your Thesis (your opinion of the topic)

Example: **Kelly Maxfield's Thesis = How to ski for beginners = 😊**

Step 2: Make a Topic (that is the "Point" for Each Body Paragraph) Outline

Instructions: In a Process structure, the topics (or "points") are in chronological order, from earliest to most recent in time, as explained in "Chapter 7: Process" in [*Structures, 3rd edition*](#).

Example:

Thesis: **How to ski for beginners = 😊**

- I. **First stage: Put on gear**
- II. **Second stage: Get on and off ski lift**
- III. **Final stage: Ski down the bunny slope**

Restated Thesis: **How to ski for beginners = 😊**

Step 3: Turn your Topic Outline into a Topic Sentence Outline

Example:

Thesis Statement: **If somebody is a skiing newcomer like I was, I won't be able to make them a pro, but at least I can get them off the bunny slopes in easy steps.**

- I. **The first step is making sure all of one's gear is on correct, and the right size can affect the skiing experience.**
- II. **Getting on and off the ski lift can be harder than it looks, but with simple instructions, a person can slide in and out of the lift like butter on toast.**
- III. **Now it's onto the fun part; skiing itself is quite simple when broken down into rudimentary steps.**

Restated Thesis Statement: **Knowing these things won't make people an Olympian to skiing; however, this is enough to get them off the bunny slopes and be able to have fun.**

Step 4: Make a Tiny Rough Draft from Your Sentence Outline

Instructions: Put all the info of your Sentence Outline in Paragraph form. You'll have

1. your Essay Title, which is a Keyword or Keywords of your Thesis Statement,
2. your Intro paragraph's Thesis Statement,
3. your Body Paragraphs' Topic Sentences, and
4. your Conclusion paragraph's Restated Thesis Statement

Example:

Process Explanation: How to Ski for Dummies

Intro paragraph: If somebody is a skiing newcomer like I was, I won't be able to make them a pro, but at least I can get them off the bunny slopes in easy steps.

First body paragraph: The first step is making sure all of one's gear is on correct, and the right size can affect the skiing experience.

Second body paragraph: Getting on and off the ski lift can be harder than it looks, but with simple instructions, a person can slide in and out of the lift like butter on toast.

Third body paragraph: Now it's onto the fun part; skiing itself is quite simple when broken down into rudimentary steps.

Conclusion: Knowing these things won't make people an Olympian to skiing; however, this is enough to get them off the bunny slopes and be able to have fun.

Step 5: Expand Your Tiny Rough Draft, Starting with Intro Paragraph

Instructions: Use the information on pages 22-25 in [Structures](#) -- 1) to start your Intro paragraph, 2) to write your Body paragraph's supporting details, and 3) to finish your Conclusion paragraph.

Example (for a minimum **1000 word** rough draft):

Process Explanation: How to Ski for Dummies

Intro paragraph (100-150 words): The question may be asked, why would some ever look at a mountain covered in snow, and think to themselves, "You know what would be fun? Going down that mountain on nothing but some small pieces of wood... maybe some sticks to make me go faster, then pray I don't die in the process." Now I'm not sure if that's how skiing was really discovered, but it has to be pretty close. On a more serious note, skiing can be a lot of fun, but there are rules and guidelines that people should follow in order to be kept safe. People who have been skiing already know these rules. I unfortunately did not, and therefore had to learn the hard way. If somebody is a skiing newcomer like I was, I won't be able to make them a pro, but at least I can get them off the bunny slopes in easy steps.

First body paragraph/ first section (250-275 words): The first step is making sure all of one's gear is on correct, and the right size can affect the skiing experience. An individual may think, "It's very cold I should layer up." While yes they would be correct in normal conditions, this will do no good for them on the slopes. The bib a person should wear will keep them warm enough. Plus skiing is a sport, so there's going to be

sweat! Also when I say bib, I'm not talking about a baby bib, but a ski bib that keeps the snow off the skiers. Next thing to tackle is the ski boots. Now I highly recommend getting a half size up on an individual's boots, because with thick socks on there will be no extra room. My first day I got my size and couldn't feel my toes up to my mid-calf, which is straight up not a good time. I just ended up on the side of the mountain with my boots off while everyone else was having fun. People like to be able to feel their ligaments, so new skiers should get the half size up. After putting only one of the boots on, they should take the other one to the counter. The counter workers are going to get the right size ski for the person. It's suggested to ask if they can grease the skis or else someone could end up like my sister. Her skis had not been greased. When she had finally reached the top and was ready to go down, she just stayed there. No matter what this girl did, she remained motionless. She eventually took them off and had to walk down the slope, which is no fun. Now new skiers should grab their skis and poles and then head to those bunny slopes. The last part of getting on the gear is putting on the skis themselves. Persons should put the skis perpendicular to the slope and put the foot that is downhill in first. I cannot stress this enough: if a person messes this up, either that person will struggle for a long time putting on the other one, or the ski could go rogue while putting on the other ski and going down the slope itself. Yes, it's happened to me, and it's not fun to ski down on one ski trying to get the other one back on, even though people around will find it amusing. Once skis are on, new skiers will look like they are pro skiers, but in fact they are far from it. Now it's time to get on those tricky ski lifts.

Second body paragraph/ second section (250-275 words): Getting on and off the ski lift can be harder than it looks, but with simple instructions, a person can slide in and out of the lift like butter on toast. The ride itself is very peaceful and a nice break, unless a person is like me and doesn't like heights. (Getting over a fear of heights is someone else's paper to write.) Getting on the lift is fairly easy: we just ski up to the marker and bend the legs. If a person doesn't bend the legs, the lift will tackle that person down like an NFL player. If the getting on is a win, then we enjoy the ride and the view. A small note to mention is to make sure that we hold onto our belongings because there is no finding them later on. When coming to the end, we ask the operators to slow down the lift. This will give more time to get in the right position and get off the lift safely. It's important to follow these next steps because if a person messes them up, the lift's next seat will come up and hit that person. A person should lean forward and tilt the skis to the sky, then getting closer to the end of the lift ride, the new skier should use the pole on the ground to push off of the lift. It will take a couple tries to get it done perfectly. It took me falling and crashing all day to finally get it down, but it can be done.

Third body paragraph/ third section (250-275 words): Now it's onto the fun part; skiing itself is quite simple when broken down into rudimentary steps. Step one is getting to the bunny slope; that is where all the newcomers go. I'll say that there's going to be little kids that are already professionals at skiing and can ski circles around a new skier. Individuals shouldn't be discouraged by this; they will get there. The first trick is keeping our feet in what's called a "Pizza Wedge". This is to keep people from going down the slope fast and slow things down a bit. A side note to mention is that this move will do nothing for us on the big slopes; it is just for the bunny slope and learning only. The poles given are only for going faster! They should not be used to stop. New skiers will hurt themselves or someone else. A lot of skiers don't use or need the poles. The next goal is to go down the slope slow and easy for the first time. Now a mistake my sister made is that one does not go down the mountain in a straight line. My sister went straight down the slope, and physics reared its ugly head. She went zooming down, which looked cool for a second until she lost it and did somersaults for the rest of the trip down. To avoid looking like a human drying machine, new skiers should go down the slope in an S turn. We start out doing slow and big S turns on the bunny slopes. On the mountain, skiers can do as big or as small of S turns they want. While doing the S turn, we put weight on the inner leg and relax the other foot. When starting out, I found that picking up the outer foot helps get the feeling of putting all the weight on the inner leg. I looked ridiculous, but it helped me out in the end. Now, we ride out the turn

and keep the skies parallel to each other following the S turn. That way, when we start to slow down, it's time to turn the other way and remember to put all that weight on the inner leg. If skiers are too perpendicular to the mountain, they will stop or slow down, which also can be helpful when starting out. We rise and repeat the S turns until the end is reached. New skiers should go at a pace that they are comfortable with, but once they get it down, it is time for the bigger slope.

Conclusion paragraph (100-150 words): Knowing these things won't make people an Olympian to skiing; however, this is enough to get them off the bunny slopes and be able to have fun. I wish I did my research before I went skiing and maybe would have had more time to have fun. Once all the steps are met, it's time to hit those slopes -- literally in some cases!

- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Maxfield's 1st and 3rd body paragraphs were each over 400 words long; as a result, her draft is over 1300 words long.

Step 6: Transform Your Rough Draft into a Final Draft

Instructions: Revise for body paragraph structure and word count, edit for errors, and format in [MLA Manuscript style](#) for a Final Draft.

Example: see [Kelly Maxfield's Process Explanation Final Draft for "Process Explanation: How to Ski for Dummies"](#).