Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Creating an outline prior to writing a research paper seems like a colossal waste of time. Why bother writing down ideas in outline form when the ideas need to be written into well-formed paragraphs anyway?

Outlines make it easier to organize paragraphs, to ensure continuity between ideas, and each section is proportional and appropriate length.

**Creating the Outline:**

*You must use at least three quotations from the book* and should use information from handouts or daily notes. There are two useful ways of organizing a good outline. One method is with the use of index cards and the other is to make an outline on paper.

Using index cards, write down the citation/bibliography (depending on the assignment's criteria) on one side of the card. On the other side, write down the direct quote that may or may not be used in the paper. Do this for each direct quote found. After collecting all the quotations, use the blueprints from the opening paragraph to organize these ideas into groups. This will create the support for the body of the paragraphs. It is easier to reorganize ideas with this method since the ideas are all on separate cards.

Then write down supporting quotations from the sources used. Remember to make some sort of notation as to where the quote was found for citation purposes. Also, with this method, it is harder to move ideas around since they are already on paper.

After organizing the ideas into their respective paragraphs with the blueprint as the basis for the topic sentence, go back and look over the direct quotations and keep repetition of ideas to a minimum.

**Opening Paragraph:**

Paragraph 1: The first paragraph of a paper should start off with a motivator; a sentence that will hook the reader and make them want to know more about what is written in the paper. The motivator should also be somehow related to the topic or easily tied into the topic of the paper so that it doesn't seem like the writer is jumping subjects.

Following the motivator should be background on the topic of discussion, the thesis statement. The background will focus the paper on a specific topic. This should help lead the writer into the thesis of the paper which is the main point that the writer is trying to get across.

Closing the paragraph should be the blueprint of the paper. These are short sentences that describe how the writer will prove his/her thesis. They are essentially reworded topic sentences of each supporting paragraph.

An easy way of remembering the contents that should be in the opening paragraph is MoBaThBlue (Motivator, Background, Thesis, Blueprint).

**Body Paragraphs:** (aka: Background)

Paragraph 2: Give a *brief* outline of the plot in the book to familiarize the reader with *Of Mice and Men* in your first paragraph. This should be no more than six sentences, one sentence per section.

Paragraphs 3, 4, 5, +: Support your thesis with quotations from the book and other sources from class (handouts or lecture notes). For each paragraph, use a quotation from the book (and from your class materials if possible) to help offer support. Use these quotations to support your thesis statement and explain how they do so. (Refer to the Quote Sandwich notes to help integrate these quotations properly).

**Closing Paragraph:**

Final Paragraph: Close with a thought provoking idea that will make the paper more memorable than others that have been written on the same topic. Look at your MoBaThBlue paper for more tips on how to conclude your writing.