

# THE OUTLINE TREE

Think of your outline for the paper as a tree with bare branches. After you have chosen your thesis (trunk) and your main ideas (branches). You will add the --

1. Twigs (supporting ideas)

2. Leaves (details).

A research paper is a combination of facts and opinions. Your thesis statement is an opinion, but you have to support it with facts in order to convince the reader that your argument is valid.

**Thesis:** This statement belongs in your first paragraph.

**The thesis is the point that you are going to argue in your paper.**

**Branches:** The main ideas that support the thesis.

**Twigs:** The supporting ideas and the details (leaves) that develop from the main ideas (branches).

**Conclusion:** A restatement of the strongest points of your argument.

**Your thesis forms the trunk of the tree. All of your proof will branch off from this point. Your main ideas that support the thesis will be the branches, and the examples you give to discuss and explain the main ideas will be the twigs and leaves.**

