Name: _____

Writing the Perfect Paragraph
in Five Sentences

Your main goal in writing a perfect paragraph is to do the following:

- **Begin with a discussable point** (the topic sentence—what is the paragraph about)
- **Stick to the point** (provide evidence or support for the topic sentence)
- **Prove the point; don't merely repeat it** (now, explain the evidence or support)
- **Link your sentences to make your ideas easy to follow** (link by using transitional words and phrases, by repeating key words or pronouns, or by using similar sentence patterns)

The paragraph should be structured as follows:

1st sentence—topic sentence (what the paragraph is about)

2nd sentence—introduces a piece of evidence that will support the topic sentence

3rd sentence—piece of evidence or support for the topic sentence (pick a sentence or two from the source that has to do with your topic)

4th sentence—back up the 3rd sentence with explanation as to how or why this evidence supports the topic sentence

5th sentence—concluding sentence—sum up the paragraph in a sentence

Remember, this is the format for a body paragraph. Introduction and conclusion paragraphs have a different format!

MLA Formatting:

When using a quote or idea that is not your own, you must cite it. See below for formatting a book/novel citation:

In-text citation (you will use this format for the 3rd sentence in this perfect paragraph):
- Author's last name and page number in parenthesis after the quote
- Punctuation goes after the final parenthesis

ex) "Their most faithful disciples were the two cart-horses, Boxer and Clover," (Orwell 18).

On the Works Cited page (this will be the last page of your essay):
- Author's last name, first name. *Book Title in Italics*. City of Publisher: Publisher Name, year published. Print or Electronic.
- If the citation goes on to a second line, that second line must be indented (also known as a hanging indent).

ex) Orwell, George. *Animal Farm*. New York: Penguin, 1996. Print.