

Reverse outlining is a helpful revision tool. If you don't choose to organize your paper with an outline before drafting, a reverse outline can help you highlight problems in organization, thesis support and flow of ideas in your draft. It should be done before making any changes to help avoid having to do extensive revisions far into the writing process. A reverse outline allows you, the writer, to step back from your essay and ask yourself the following questions: does the thesis address the essay prompt? Does each paragraph support the thesis? Is the essay logically organized?

Steps to create the reverse outline

- Print a copy of your essay
- Next to each paragraph, write the main point or topic using as few words as possible to identify your
- main points
- Write this list in order on a separate piece of paper with your thesis on top

These questions will help you use your list to revise the essay

Relationship to Thesis

Do the main ideas listed support your thesis? You may need to revise your thesis if your paper has modified it or revise your essay if it doesn't support the thesis.

Logical Organization

- Does the paper flow logically?
- Does one idea follow another to build your argument/support your thesis? Are there gaps in logic?
- Is information in the right place or should it be rearranged?

Flow of Ideas

- Are there clear connections between ideas and paragraphs? Does your reader see where your paper is heading?
- Are there multiple ideas in a paragraph? If expressing the main idea takes more than one sentence, there are probably too many ideas in that paragraph. This is sometimes referred to as a "monster paragraph" with many ideas that will not get the attention that they deserve.
- Are some ideas repeated unnecessarily?
- Are there ideas that are extraneous in the paragraph? Could they be moved or dropped?

Check out the Pizza Essay Draft on the second page and good luck revising!

Pizza Essay Draft

Main point of each paragraph

Pizza is everywhere in New York City. Busy commuters devour folded pizza slices while hailing cabs, college students are lured to club events by pizza's delicious aroma, and Mayor DeBlasio creates a controversy every time he eats pizza with a fork and knife. Even the rats can be seen dragging pizza back to their subway burrows. Nonetheless, New Yorkers debate whether pizza's popularity is a good thing. Opponents of pizza allege that it is fattening, messy, and low-quality. Despite this reputation, pizza should be praised for its affordability and cultural adaptability.

Thesis statement

First, pizza is one of the most affordable foods available: it can cost as little as \$1 per slice. A researcher at the Institute of Nutrition Studies, Alicia Jalowsky, shows that the average fast food burger costs about \$7, while a complete pizza meal with a drink costs about \$2.75 (39). This is a standout bargain, even when compared to other cheap options. A person can feed a family of four with one large pizza for less than \$20. And everyone likes pizza because it tastes so good! New Yorkers seeking an affordable meal know they can always turn to pizza.

Pizza is inexpensive.
Everyone likes pizza.

Equally important, pizza has also evolved to reflect different cultures. In *History of Italian Cuisine: A Fresh Start*, Sallucci, emphasizes that classic Margherita Pizza was created to honor Queen Margherita of Italy (223). Moreover, the same author points out that, its red tomato sauce, green basil, and white cheese correspond to the colors of the stripes on the Italian flag (Sallucci et al. 226). This example illustrates pizza's cultural adaptability because other distinct pizza toppings reflect the world's diverse cultures, including smoked reindeer and cod in Sweden; kangaroo, snake and crocodile in Australia; and squid ink and seaweed in Japan. Also, some pizza can seem unhealthy. It can be greasy, salty, and carbohydrate heavy, with fattening toppings. Those qualities would make pizza taste bad. Clearly, there is no universally correct way to enjoy a pizza.

-Toppings vary in different cultures.
-Pizza can be unhealthy (I have two topics here: I need two separate paragraphs!)

On the whole, critics exaggerate pizza's few negative qualities and ignore its numerous positive qualities. When consumed properly, pizza provides nutritious and affordable meal. This food will only improve as future generations continue to make new and innovative pizzas.

Pizza is nutritious, affordable, and adaptable.