Meal of an Essay

Presentation/ MLA or specified format  Clean plates, table cloth, and utensils

This shows your reader that you can adhere to the standards of the academic community.

The Menu/ Title  The name of the food can make you want to eat it or choose something else

Use your first opportunity to set your essay apart from the rest and to hook your reader. Get him/her interested and curious right away. Your reader wants an interesting, original title that hints at your thesis. Not “Essay #1.”

Appetizer/ Introduction  Do not tell the reader what the meal will taste like. Instead, interest him or her by

Quoting
Giving a Statistic
Using 5 senses description
Telling a relevant story
Asking a question
Presenting a startling statement

Main Dish/ Thesis
The thesis communicates the main idea of your paper. Academic writing defines a thesis as 1 arguable statement presented in 1 clear sentence.

Side Dishes/ Paragraphs  We don’t want 1/2 a sandwich floating in the soup! 1 idea per paragraph.

In the body of your essay, support your thesis with S-E-E paragraphs. Academic writing has no right or wrong number of paragraphs as long as they compliment the main dish and your reader feels full and satisfied.

Statement: the topic of your paragraph
Examples: support your statement
Explanation: how does the above statement support your thesis?

Pepto Bismal/ Refutation
Give reasons for your reader to swallow your argument even if the meal gives them an upset stomach or contains a ton of calories. Take this opportunity to anticipate any reader objection and explain how these objections do not invalidate your thesis.

Dessert!/ Conclusion  After the meal, what do you want to eat next? A little bit of everything you just tried? Or do you want to top it off with something special? Do NOT REPEAT. Your reader can remember your point. Instead:

Call to action
Propose a solution
Look to the future
Ask a Thought Provoking Question
Quote