HISTORY ESSAY: A MODEL OUTLINE

Topic: Political Outlook of the Delphic Oracle

INTRODUCTION
- **Attention Grabber:** surprising or interesting statement about topic
- **Background:** one or two sentences about topic
- **Thesis:** Ex. While the messages of the Oracle at Delphi sometimes supported democracy and sometimes favored tyrants, they consistently supported colonization.

BODY
- **Topic Sentence on supporting democracy:** The sayings of the Delphic Oracle, as recorded in ancient texts, sometimes supported democratic political structures.
  - **Evidence:** “Firstly, it prescribed...the establishment of the gerousia of 30 members, including the kings; and the regular meeting of assemblies. And secondly, it prescribed the correct procedure to be followed in the assemblies, leaving the right of the final decision to the people.”¹
  - **Analysis of evidence** (connect to thesis): Ex. Oracle calls for people power = supported democracy
  - **Evidence**
  - **Analysis of evidence** (connect to thesis)

- **Topic sentence on favoring tyranny:** However, the oracle’s preference for democracy was inconsistent: sometimes it supported tyranny.
  - **Evidence:** “The credit of the oracle cannot be saved by any attempt to translate it...it prophesies happiness only for Cypselus and his sons, rather than kingship. Cypselus and his sons are called happy because they will reign, and that was the exact way in which the oracle was taken in Hellenistic times.”²
  - **Analysis of evidence** (connect to thesis): Predicts happiness for tyrant Cypselus = supported tyranny
  - **Evidence**
  - **Analysis of evidence** (connect to thesis)

- **Topic sentence on supporting colonization**
  - **Evidence**
  - **Analysis of evidence** (connect to thesis)

CONCLUSION
Recap of how evidence supports thesis
Branching out: making a connection, a prediction, or a judgment

**Do** make sure your topic sentences support your thesis and your thesis doesn’t say anything not addressed by your topic sentences.

**Don’t** paraphrase sources in your outline. At this stage, use direct quotation only.

**Don’t** include any evidence without specifying the source.

² H. W. Parke, “Notes on Some Delphic Oracles,” Hermathena 27, no. 52 (1938): 63, JSTOR.

See Reverse for Bibliography

Parke, H. W. “Notes on Some Delphic Oracles.” *Hermathena* 27, no. 52 (1938): 56-78. JSTOR.