

Assignment: Essay Organization

Name:

Part 1: Topic Sentence/Supporting Detail

Put the Introduction designed to give background to the essay in Italics

Underline and put in bold print the Thesis Statement for the essay

Put the Topic Sentence in blue type for Support Paragraphs 2, 3, 6, and 7.

Put one Example of Supporting Detail in red type for Support Paragraphs 3,4,6, and 7 that provides evidence for the Topic Sentence of that paragraph.

Put the Conclusion that restates the Thesis Statement in different words in Green type.

Put the Conclusion that takes the reader a step further in Underlined Green type.

Part 2: Define the following words:

Paragraph 1: harbinger

Paragraph 1: despised

Paragraph 4: Proportional

Part 3: Use the Internet to look up and explain the following term:

Paragraph 2: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Paragraph 7: Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology

Part 4: What is meant by the following statements?

Paragraph 2: "Mentally, crows and ravens are more like flying monkeys than they are like other birds,"

Paragraph 4: "Proportionally, the crow brain is the same size as the chimpanzee brain. Like chimpanzees."

Paragraph 8: "a murder of crows"

Despite bad press, crows aren't such bad fellows

**By Karen Youso, Minneapolis-St. Paul Star Tribune
October 13, 2006**

1A dark crow, with beady black eyes and menacing beak, cocks its head and studies passersby. This harbinger of autumn featured in Halloween displays is

associated with bad luck, death and all things sinister. A crow's attention can be unnerving. Indeed, ancient people watching crows devour their dead kin on the battlefield believed they saw evil incarnate. And that cluster of crows crossing the October sky has come to be called not a flock, but a murder. Crows are also despised for tearing into garbage bags, raiding songbird nests and engaging in raucous morning caw-fests. But they really aren't such bad characters, say wildlife experts. They're just misunderstood. Corvids — crows, ravens and similar birds — are some of the smartest birds around, with a highly developed social structure.

2"Mentally, crows and ravens are more like flying monkeys than they are like other birds," writes John Marzluff in the book, "In the Company of Crows and Ravens." Since our own cave days, Marzluff says, corvids have taken advantage of every human action, adapting as humans advanced. Consider, for example, the country crow turned city crow. Crows weren't seen in cities or towns in significant numbers until the mid-1950s, according to Carroll Henderson of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Non-game Wildlife Division. Urban sprawl is probably one reason for their current presence in cities.

3As forests and farmlands gave way to housing and shopping centers, life became easier for crows. Development brought backyard bird feeders, fast-food trash, road kill and myriad other food opportunities. When researchers in Washington state offered crows a choice of plain brown bags and McDonald's bags, the crows consistently went for McDonald's.

4Proportionally, the crow brain is the same size as the chimpanzee brain. Like chimpanzees, crows will use tools, even making them when necessary. A crow at the University of Chicago, who preferred his mash wet, would take a toy plastic cup, fill it with water from a trough and wet his meal. If it spilled along the way, he would return and refill it. When Betty, a captive crow at Oxford University, was presented with food in a long narrow tube and a thin metal wire, she fashioned the wire into a hook to fish out the food.

5And it's not just smarty-pants lab crows that can solve problems. In Sweden, crows have learned to fish by watching fishermen place a baited line through a hole in the ice. When the fisherman moves off, the birds pull the line from the water to eat the bait — or the hooked fish. Here's another example: Crows in Tokyo wait at busy intersections for the light to turn red, then place walnuts in front of the car tires. Returning to their perches, they wait for the green light and the cars to clear, then retrieve the nut meats.

6Notorious scavengers, crows also "hunt," even cooperatively, according to Henderson. Observers at a Minnesota wildlife feeding station found that a group of crows took up posts surrounding the feeder, but at some distance. One crow

in the group flew in close to the feeder, causing the birds there to scatter. The waiting crows picked them off as they flew away.

7Crows can even recognize and remember individual humans. Kevin J. McGowan, an ornithologist at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, for example, who has trapped and banded crows in upstate New York for 20 years, said he was regularly followed by birds who have benefited from his handouts of peanuts — and harassed by others he has trapped in the past. And Stacia Backensto, a master's student at the University of Alaska Fairbanks who studies ravens in the oil fields on Alaska's North Slope, has assembled an elaborate costume — including a fake beard and a potbelly made of pillows — because of the scolding she received by previously captured birds even years after their release.

8Crows are indeed highly intelligent birds that have learned to survive even thrive with or without humans. Still, the experts say there's nothing to fear from a murder of crows, other than being hit by droppings. Crows are highly intelligent birds who have learned to live along side humans. The birds are just living their crow lives — which includes watching you.