Writing your Lit Crit Essay Body Paragraphs

* Topic Sentence: What is this paragraph about?
* Narrative Framework: Is there background needed for your quote? What is the context of your quote? Is it a character speaking? To whom? Is it a critic’s words? From where are they coming—an article? A book?
* Quote: “What quote says….” (1.2.4) or (Smith 234).
* Comment: How does your quote connect to your thesis? How does it reveal something about the character or how critics view the play? This part should be 3 to 4 sentences in length and go beyond the obvious.

EXAMPLE: (This is just to show you how—it is not complete or necessarily accurate. ALSO, you may not necessarily use a critic and a play quote in the same paragraph. You can organize your quotes how they make sense to you)

One component of psychoanalytic theory proposes that the id controls a person’s basic desires to survive and have pleasure. The id can, therefore, exert a powerful influence upon human behavior. Lady Macbeth is no exception to this idea. When she first learns of her husband’s prophecy, she proclaims her own selfish desire for power to her husband: “…put/This night’s great business into my dispatch, /Which shall…/Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom”(1.6.72-75). Lady Macbeth’s lust for power drives her to commit a heinous act of murder. Her id acts so powerfully that any sense conscience is abandoned as she attempts to gain what she most desires. Literary critic Robert Brown, in his essay “Lady Macbeth Undone,” explores this same idea. He states, “Lady Macbeth….*rest of quote here…”* (Brown 23). Clearly, when viewed through the lens of psychoanalytic criticism, Lady Macbeth’s actions are easily explained by the concepts of the id and superego. One drives her forward while the other is suppressed and totally absent.