Essay's Introduction: Required Items

For your upcoming and all future essays, in the first ¶ (paragraph) called the Introduction, you may write whatever you were taught before this course, but now must include the following five items.

1. Author’s last name, title, and type (short story, poem, novel, play, etc.)

2. Brief plot sketch: what’s going on or happening and the ending.

3. The central conflict or problem: must be stated in exactly these words, no deviation!
   …between A and B  A and B are not people, but the elements of the conflict. Thus, “the conflict is between Phoenix and all the obstacles” is wrong, but “the conflict is between Phoenix’s need to get the medicine for her grandson and the obstacles to it” is o.k.

4. The topic/theme. If an assigned topic, you must use the exact key words of the topic, not substitute your own interpretation of those words.

5. The Th/s (thesis sentence). Definition: your thoughtful, direct, response to the topic. A one-sentence idea-statement (not a question and not merely a fact) of your opinion, assertion, , claim, etc., on the topic. [ Its position and enclosure for our class, only]: Position: must be the last sentence of the ¶; Enclosure: entire sentence must be enclosed in square brackets, e.g., [The protagonist fails to learn anything from his suffering].

These items are so important that you will always be graded on them first; then (if you have all five), on the entire paper. Note that #1 and #5 have parts: if any of the parts are omitted, the whole item is wrong. #1 must have all three parts and #5 must have the two, position and enclosure. To make absolutely sure that your essays always have all these items, prb this page and use it with every essay. For missing or wrong items, ¼ grade will be deducted each for #3 and #5, ½ grade each for the other three items. If you have any problems with them at any time, see me for help, but never omit any of the items.

When your essay is returned, it may have something like the following symbols in the margin of the Introd. Paragraph:

2 & 3 x  This means that both #2 (plot) and #3 (conflict) are missing or wrong  1 ¼ grades deducted (3/4 for #3 and ½ for #2).

Q. Say that I have a good essay overall, but not all five Introd. Items. What grade can I expect?
A. Nothing above C and maybe lower.
Q. What if I have all five items?
A. Then your paper will be graded in the usual A- through- F traditional way.