Outline Example

Here is an example of how to go from a thumbnail outline to a detailed outline. The purpose of the thumbnail outline is to figure out "the basics" of your argument: your thesis and sub-theses. The detailed outline fills in any other non-argumentative paragraphs you need and also the supporting points and evidence for each body paragraph. You can also plan your conclusion.

Thumbnail Outline (just the basics: thesis and sub-theses)
- Thesis: *The Federalist* greatly influenced the ratification of the Constitution in its arguments for a centralized Union and a system of checks and balances between the three branches of government.
- The *Federalist* argued that a strong union would guard against both internal and external dangers.
- Whereas the Anti-Federalists wanted a complete separation of the judicial, executive, and legislative branches, the Federalists argued for a system of checks and balances between the three branches.
- *The Federalist* also argued that, despite the dangers, having an "energetic" and centralized executive branch would allow the government to be effective.
- Likewise, *The Federalist* argued that judicial review was essential to protect the judicial branch from the legislature.

Detailed, Oxford-Style Outline (note that specific evidence is indicated with sources):

I. Introduction
    A. Describe what the *Federalist Papers*, who was involved, and when/how they started
    B. Thesis: *The Federalist* greatly influenced the ratification of the Constitution in its arguments for a constitutional Union, separation of powers, and shaping of the executive and judicial branches of the Constitution.

II. Background paragraph (more details, no argument)
    A. State when *The Federalist* was printed and published (Dow 15), (Lloyd 36)
    B. Discuss the intentions and purposes of *The Federalist* (Jones 78-80)

III. BP1: The *Federalist* argued that a strong union would guard against both internal and external dangers.
    A. The "extended sphere" argument about how it will control factions. (Federalist 10)
    B. Importance in international affairs (Dow 17)

IV. BP2: Whereas the Anti-Federalists wanted a complete separation of the judicial, executive, and legislative branches, the Federalists argued for a system of checks and balances between the three branches.
    A. Anti-federalists wanted a complete separation of the judicial, executive, and legislative branches (Ronald 98-100).
    B. The Federalist said the maxim of complete separation of powers is misunderstood. (Montesquieu)
    C. The branches need some limited power of the other branches to protect themselves from encroachment of the other branches (Federalist 51)

               1.   The branches need to have the interests of maintaining their powers, and not letting the other branches take that away.

V.   BP3: *The Federalist* also argued that, despite the dangers, having an "energetic" and centralized executive branch would allow the government to be effective.

    A. Anti-federalists didn't want a single executive, too much like a monarch (James 50)

    B. The Federalist need the executive to be "energetic" and a plural executive would make this impossible (Federalist 70)

         1.   It would take too long for the people in the executive position to make decision in an emergency, because they might disagree.

         2. In a plural executive, it is hard to tell who is responsible for a wrongdoing because they can all blame each other, so a single executive would lead to more responsible behavior

VI.   BP4: Likewise, *The Federalist* argued that judicial review was essential to protect the judicial branch from the legislature.

    A. Anti-federalists didn't like judicial review and the term of good behavior (Gray 209)

    B. The Federalist argued that judicial review was necessary to protect the judicial branch from the Legislature (James 76)

    C. A term of good behavior was necessary to get qualified people for the positions; it would also give them time to develop knowledge (James 80), (Espanza 108-110)

VII.   Conclusion: *The Federalist's* influence beyond ratification