

Best example of outline  
→ Use as model

*Specific purpose:* To inform my audience about the medicinal and culinary uses of dandelions.

*Thesis:* Despite its reputation as an irritating weed, the dandelion's medical and culinary properties make it a very useful plant.

*Organization:* Topical

### *Introduction*

- I. What starts out yellow and ends up as a fluffy white ball?
  - A. If I told you it was *Taraxacum Officinale*, would that ring a bell?
  - B. What if I told you it was of the *Compositae* family?
- II. The subject I am speaking about is none other than the common, ordinary dandelion.
- III. Homeowners regard the dandelion as the most troublesome of all weeds.
- IV. However, I have learned from my botany class and from further research that the dandelion has wide medical and culinary uses.
- V. Today I will explain these uses to you.

*(Transition: We'll start by looking at the dandelion's medicinal value.)*

### *Body*

- I. The dandelion has a number of medicinal uses.
  - A. Its scientific name, *Taraxacum Officinale*, testifies to its value as a medicine.
    1. *Taraxacum* refers to the medicinal properties of a plant found in Persia.
    2. *Officinale* indicates that a plant species is used by pharmacists.
  - B. Throughout history, dandelions have been used to cure medical ailments.
    1. They were used by the ancient Egyptians to treat stomach and kidney disorders.
    2. Dandelion cures were recorded by Arabian physicians in the tenth century.
    3. In sixteenth-century England, dandelion waters were used to treat illness among the nobility.
  - C. Today, scientists know that dandelions have great medicinal value.
    1. According to Mea Allan, author of *Weeds*, dandelions contain chemicals that stimulate blood circulations, the liver, the digestive organs, the bladder, and the kidneys.
    2. Audrey Hatfield, in her book *How to Enjoy Your Weeds*, says dandelion tea helps relieve many conditions, including liver and lung disorders, anemia, indigestion, eczema, and scurvy.
    3. The dandelion is so valuable in treating medical ailments that 100,000 pounds are imported into the U.S. each year.

*(Transition: If you have no interest in using dandelions for your health, you can still find them of use in the kitchen.)*

- II. Dandelions have many culinary uses.
  - A. Dandelions have been used as a food for thousands of years.
    1. They were among the original bitter herbs of Passover.
    2. The English have used them in salads since the Middle Ages.
    3. Many ethnic groups in the United States eat dandelions.

- B. All parts of the dandelion can be used to make a variety of delicious foods.
  - 1. The leaves can be added to salads.
  - 2. The roots may be roasted and used as a coffee substitute.
  - 3. The flowers can be steeped to produce wine.
  - 4. The entire plant may be used to make beer.
- C. In addition to being tasty, dandelions are also extremely nutritious.
  - 1. According to Peter Gail, professor of economic botany at Cleveland State University, "The dandelion's nutrient qualities read almost like a One-A Day vitamin."
  - 2. Dandelion greens are especially nutritious.
    - a. They have 50 percent more vitamin C than tomatoes, twice as much protein as eggplant, and double the fiber of asparagus.
    - b. They also contain as much iron as spinach and more potassium than bananas.
- D. All of this may sound strange to you, but not to the people of Vineland, New Jersey, Dandelion Capital of the World.
  - 1. Dandelions are a million-dollar crop in Vineland.
    - a. They sell from \$1.25 a pound at the start of the season.
    - b. Most of the crop ends up in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York City.
  - 2. Every March, Vineland hosts a seven-course dandelion dinner.
    - a. The dinner consists entirely of foods made from dandelions.
    - b. Tickets sell for \$25 a piece.
    - c. People come from as far away as Ohio.
  - 3. Former mayor Patrick Fiorilli says, "In your yard, you go out and pull the dandelions out of the grass. Our farmers pull the grass out of the dandelions."

### Conclusion

- I. As we have seen, the dandelion is a very misunderstood plant.
  - A. The dandelion is not simply an irritating weed.
  - B. With many medicinal and culinary uses, it is one of the most underrated plants in the world.
- II. Hopefully, in the future more people will recognize that this "common" weed is a truly uncommon plant.

### Bibliography

- Allan, Mea. *Weeds*. London: Macdonald and Jane's, 1978.
- Gail, Peter. Personal interview. 22 Mar. 1998.
- Hatfield, Audrey Wynne. *How to Enjoy Your Weeds*. New York: Sterling, 1971.