

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Semester 3

Composition

Boost your Writing Skills

Abstract

This booklet is divided into sections covering different writing styles. Every section introduces a particular style with a writing practice. The booklet will equip students with the tools they need to be able to write well-developed expository and argumentative essays.

Objectives of the course:

Generally, the students are trained in basic composition techniques. The overall objective of the course is:

- to help the students develop their writing skills and express themselves clearly in formal style, effectively and economically.
- To help students practise and further develop their composition skills; focus is on the skills of expository and argumentation writing.
- To equip students with the tools they need to be able to write well-developed and well-argued argumentative essays

Contents:

The course content includes different types of paragraphs, paragraph development, essay outline, organization of ideas, mechanics (punctuation, run-on-sentences, parallelism....)
Teaching methodology: Instruction and practice in class (class assignments drafting, proof-reading, revision...)

1. Parts of the Essay and their Functions
2. Discovering and Organizing Ideas
3. Writing the Introduction and thesis statement
4. Writing the Conclusion
5. Communicating Ideas to the Reader
6. Writing to Inform
7. Writing to Define
8. Writing to Explain
9. Writing to Persuade
10. Essay Samples

Background:

Without a doubt, developing effective writing skills on the part of university students is of high importance across many disciplines. Whether students major in linguistics or literature or cultural studies, and whether they opt for employment in the teaching profession or translation business, writing is a skill that students have to master. In effect, writing is related to all content areas and is substantial in all types of jobs, and thus the difficulties students face in writing hinder their development of the academic English skills they are required to develop in order to achieve long-term educational and professional success.

Writing is a skill that Students should practice, develop and master. For this reason, this booklet was designed to offer semester-three students in the Department of English an opportunity to practice the writing skills they have developed in Semesters One and Two and further develop these skills with a particular focus on writing expository and argumentative essays.

Introduction

What is Academic Writing?

Academic writing is clear, concise, focused, structured and backed up by evidence. Its purpose is to aid the reader's understanding.

It has a formal tone and style, but it is not complex and does not require the use of long sentences and complicated vocabulary.

Each subject discipline will have certain writing conventions, vocabulary and types of discourse that you will become familiar with over the course of your degree. However, there are some general characteristics of academic writing that are relevant across all disciplines.

Characteristics of academic writing

Academic writing is:

- **Planned and focused:** answers the question and demonstrates an understanding of the subject.
- **Structured:** is coherent, written in a logical order, and brings together related points and material.
- **Evidenced:** demonstrates knowledge of the subject area, supports opinions and arguments with evidence, and is referenced accurately.
- **Formal in tone and style:** uses appropriate language and tenses, and is clear, concise and balanced.
- **Critical aspects to consider:**

Define your purpose and reader

The first step to writing academically is to clearly define the purpose of the writing and the audience. Most formal academic writing at university is set by, and written for, an academic professor, and there should be clear criteria against which your work will be marked.

You will need to spend some time interpreting your question and deciding how to tackle your assignment. If you are writing for yourself – for example making notes to record or make sense of something – then you can set your own criteria such as clarity, brevity, and relevance.

Once you have a clear idea of what is required for your assignment, you can start planning your research or essay and gathering evidence to back up your topic.

Structure your work:

Once you have a plan for your writing, you can use this plan to create the structure of your writing. Structured writing has a beginning, middle and an end, and uses focused paragraphs to develop the argument.

Create the overall structure

Some academic writing, such as lab or business reports, will have a fairly rigid structure, with headings and content for each section. In other formats, writing usually follows the same overall structure: *introduction*, *main body* and *conclusion*.

- The introduction outlines the main direction the writing will take and gives any necessary background information and context.
- In the main body each point is presented, explored and developed. These points must be set out in a logical order, to make it easier for the reader to follow and understand.
- The conclusion brings together the main points and highlights the key message or argument you want the reader to remember. It may also identify any gaps or weaknesses in the arguments or ideas presented and recommend further research or investigation where appropriate.

Arrange your points in a logical order

When you start writing you should have a clear idea of what you want to say. Create a list of your main points and think about what the reader needs to know and in what order they will need to know it. To select the main points you want to include, ask yourself whether each point you have considered really contributes to answering the question. *Is the point relevant to your overall argument?*

Select appropriate evidence that you will use to support each main point. Think carefully about which evidence to use, you must evaluate that information as not everything you find will be of high quality.

Grouping your points may help you create a logical order. These groups will broadly fit into an overall pattern, such as for and against, thematic, chronological or by different schools of thought or approach.

You can then put these groups into a sequence that the reader can follow and use to make sense of the topic or argument. It may be helpful to talk through your argument with someone.

It may be helpful to arrange ideas initially in the form of a mind-map, which allows you to develop key points with supporting information branching off.

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Write in structured paragraphs

Use paragraphs to build and structure your argument and separate each of your points into a different paragraph.

Make your point clear in the first or second sentence of the paragraph to help the reader to follow the line of reasoning.

The rest of the paragraph should explain the point in greater detail and provide relevant evidence and examples where necessary or useful. Your interpretation of this evidence will help to substantiate your thinking and can lend weight to your argument.

At the end of the paragraph you should show how the point you have made is significant to the overall argument or link to the next paragraph.

Use signaling words when writing

Using signaling words will help the reader to understand the structure of your work and where you might be taking your argument.

Use signaling words to:

- Add more information eg furthermore, moreover, additionally
- Compare two similar points eg similarly, in comparison
- Show contrasting viewpoints eg however, in contrast, yet
- Show effect or conclusion eg therefore, consequently, as a result
- Emphasise eg significantly, particularly
- Reflect sequence eg first, second, finally.

(Adapted from Signal words from Clark College, Vancouver)

Words like these help make the structure of your writing more effective and can clarify the flow and logic of your argument.

Here are some examples in practice:

- “Using a laboratory method was beneficial as a causal relationship could be established between cognitive load and generating attributes. However, this method creates an artificial setting which reduces the study's ecological validity.”

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In this example the use of the word however at the beginning of the second sentence indicates that a contrasting point of view is about to be made. It also suggests that the writer may have more sympathy with the second opinion.

- “Firstly, the concepts and person centered care will be defined.... Next, communication will be discussed... Finally, the relationship between loss and communication will be examined.” [Taken from a Healthcare essay]

In this example the writer has used signaling words to demonstrate the sequence of their argument by using Firstly, next, finally making the structure of the essay very clear.

- “Employee satisfaction is justifiable to employees because it causes an improvement on their well being (Grandley, 2003). Moreover, employees that are in a good mood at work are less likely to act because their true feelings are in accordance with the needed display of emotions (Grandley, 2003).” [Taken from a Business School essay]

The use of the word moreover tells the reader that the next sentence will provide further evidence or information to support the statement made in the first sentence. It also suggest that the writer strongly agrees with the first statement.

Revise, edit and proofread your work

Most writing will require several drafts and revisions in order to improve the clarity and structure. It is rare that a writer will make the very best decisions in the first draft. See our editing and proofreading pages for more details.

How to incorporate evidence

Academic writing must be supported by evidence such as data, facts, quotations, arguments, statistics, research, and theories.

This evidence will:

- add substance to your own ideas

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- allow the reader to see what has informed your thinking and how your ideas fit in with, and differ from, others' in your field
- demonstrate your understanding of the general concepts and theories on the topic
- show you have researched widely and know about specialist/niche areas of interest.

There are several methods that you can use to incorporate other people's work into your own written work. These are:

- **paraphrasing**
- **summarising**
- **synthesising**
- **quoting.**

You are likely to use a combination of these throughout your writing, depending on the purpose that you are trying to achieve.

Be aware that your writing should not just be a patchwork of other people's ideas made up of quotes, paraphrases and summaries of other people's work.

You need to show how the information you found has helped you to develop your own arguments, ideas and opinions. See Critical thinking pages for advice about writing critically.

Organising your evidence can be an overwhelming task – especially when you need to manage many different sources.

How to paraphrase others' work

Paraphrasing is using your own words to express someone else's ideas. When paraphrasing, make sure that you:

- identify a relevant theme or point, depending on your purpose
- write the point in your own words
- focus on the meaning of an idea or argument
- include a reference to the original author.

Common pitfalls include:

- describing an author's idea/argument but not explaining the significance to your own argument, or the point that you are trying to make
- using too many of the original author's words, this includes using the same structure

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- not distinguishing between the author's point and your own viewpoint
- providing too much detail.

How to summarize others' work

Summarizing is providing a condensed version of someone else's key points. When summarizing other people's work, make sure that you:

- identify the relevant points of the idea or argument, depending on your purpose
- write a shortened version, in your own words, to show your understanding
- include an in-text citation and reference to the original author.

Common pitfalls include:

- describing an author's idea/argument but not explaining the significance to your own argument or point you are trying to make
- providing too much detail such as examples, anecdotes, unnecessary background information rather than being selective and applying the information to the question you are trying to answer.

For further advice and examples of summarizing, see this tutorial from RMIT university.

How to synthesize others' work

Synthesizing involves combining different information and ideas to develop your own argument. When synthesizing others' work, make sure that you:

- Group sources into relevant categories, for example, authors with similar viewpoints or research that reveals the same results
- Write about these in your own words. Do not discuss each author separately; you must identify the overall points you want to make
- Include references to all the original authors.

Common pitfalls include:

- Not distinguishing clearly which viewpoint/s belong to which author/s
- Listing authors separately or one by one, thus not grouping relevant authors or points together
- Giving too much detail about different perspectives rather than being selective of the key features relevant to your line of argument

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- Describing the idea/argument but not explaining the significance to your own argument or point you are trying to make.

How to quote from others' work

Quoting is where you copy an author's text word for word, place quotation marks around the words and add a citation at the end of the quote. When quoting others' work, make sure that you:

- copy the quote exactly from the original, as the author has written it, taking care to include quotation marks
- show where you have made any changes to the text (see citing quotations using Harvard and citing quotations using Numeric for more guidance on this)
- include an in-text citation and reference to the original author.

Common pitfalls include:

- Using too many quotes throughout your work
- Incorporating a quote without explaining the significance to your own argument or point you are trying to make.

The Paragraph

The Paragraph:

Skill Presentation

A good paragraph has a clear topic sentence, relevant supporting sentences, and a strong concluding sentence.

The topic sentence is usually the first sentence in the paragraph. It is about one idea (the main idea), but it is fairly broad so it can be expanded on in the rest of the paragraph. It helps the reader understand what the paragraph will be about, but it does not usually include specific examples or details.

Supporting sentences follow the topic sentence and support the main idea. They relate only to the topic of the paragraph. They can also give examples and explanations and may provide facts and details about the topic of the paragraph.

A concluding sentence ends a paragraph. It restates the main idea of the paragraph and gives the reader something to think about.

For example, read this paragraph about family size.

¹The size of an average family varies across countries. ²For example, in the United States, the average family size is 3.19. ³That means that there are, on average, about three people per family in the United States. ⁴It is possible that differences in family sizes from one country to another influence people's personalities.

The topic sentence (1) in the paragraph above is about family size across countries. The first supporting sentence (2) offers an example of the topic sentence, and the second supporting sentence (3) explains the example. The concluding sentence (4) restates the idea that family size varies depending on the country. In addition, it gives the reader something to think about by mentioning a possible effect of differing family sizes.

Practice: Supporting Sentences

- 1 Read the supporting sentences from a paragraph about sibling rivalry, and answer the questions.

This is often referred to as sibling rivalry. Siblings normally want to receive an equal amount of attention from their parents. If children feel their siblings get more attention, they may get angry.

- 1 Which topic sentence is the most appropriate for this paragraph?
 - ☐ a. Sometimes children compete for their parents' attention.
 - ☐ b. Eighty-two percent of people in the United States have siblings.
- 2 Which concluding sentence is the most appropriate for this paragraph?
 - ☐ a. Another common problem among siblings is a large gap in ages.
 - ☐ b. Although sibling rivalry is very common, it can have negative consequences.

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2 Match the topic sentences (1–5) with the appropriate supporting sentences (a–e).

- ___ 1 Firstborn children often have an advantage in life.
 - ___ 2 Experts say that some children suffer from “middle-child syndrome.”
 - ___ 3 The majority of people in the United States have siblings.
 - ___ 4 There are many stereotypes about only children.
 - ___ 5 Older siblings often assume responsibility for their younger siblings.
- a In fact, experts estimate that just 18 percent of people are only children.
 - b For example, studies show that they sometimes have more successful careers than their younger siblings.
 - c They feel their parents pay more attention to their younger and older siblings than to them.
 - d They look after them when their parents are busy or unavailable.
 - e For example, some people think that children without siblings are not comfortable socializing with other children.



CHECK!

A good paragraph has strong topic, supporting, and concluding sentences.

- 1 The _____ sentence states the main idea of the paragraph.
- 2 The _____ sentences give more information that is directly related to the main idea of the paragraph.
- 3 The _____ sentence restates the main idea and gives the reader something to think about.

Topic Sentences:

1 Read the paragraphs (1–3) and choose the best topic sentence (a–c) for each one.

- 1 ___ This can be due to a variety of circumstances, such as changing environments or large age gaps between siblings. Distinct individual personalities are an important factor in interactions within the family.
 - 2 ___ Older children can help their younger siblings with a variety of everyday tasks. For example, they can help them get dressed or assist them with their homework. Older children help give their siblings the attention they need.
 - 3 ___ They can also give each child plenty of attention and space. Parents should have a clear strategy for dealing with sibling rivalry.
- a It is common for firstborn children to assume some responsibility for their siblings' needs.
 - b Despite the fact that siblings share genes, they often have very different personalities.
 - c Parents can handle sibling rivalry in a variety of ways. They can focus on family teamwork.

Concluding Sentences:

2 Read the paragraphs (1–3) and choose the best concluding sentence (a–c) for each one.

- 1** Some parents believe that a large age gap between siblings gives them more quality time with each child. For example, when the youngest child is born, the firstborn might already be in school. The parents can manage their time and focus on the needs of each child separately. ____
 - 2** Parents who have more than one child often decide how big a gap there should be between siblings. According to some parents, having three or more years between children is beneficial. They say children over the age of three or four are less likely to be jealous when a new sibling is born. On the other hand, other parents argue that a smaller age gap between siblings is better. These parents think it is easier to get the difficult years of parenting young children out of the way at one time. ____
 - 3** Some mothers prefer to have a large age gap between siblings for health reasons. Many women claim that they go to the gym more often when they only have one baby to care for. They may also feel that they have more time to cook nutritious meals when they only have one young child at home. ____
- a** Clearly, there is no “right” age gap between siblings, and parents must decide what works best for their family.
 - b** A large age gap between siblings may help some women feel healthier.
 - c** One-on-one time with each child is one good argument for a large age gap between siblings.

Skill Quiz

Check (✓) the correct answer for each item.

1 A topic sentence

- ☐ a. introduces the main idea of a paragraph.
- ☐ b. supports the first sentence of a paragraph.
- ☐ c. restates the main idea of a paragraph.

2 A good topic sentence

- ☐ a. is very specific.
- ☐ b. contains several examples and facts.
- ☐ c. is fairly broad.

3 Supporting sentences

- ☐ a. introduce the main idea of a paragraph.
- ☐ b. give more information about the topic of a paragraph.
- ☐ c. come at the end of a paragraph.

4 Good supporting sentences

- ☐ a. give broad, general ideas.
- ☐ b. are related to specific ideas in other paragraphs.
- ☐ c. give specific facts, details, and examples.

5 A concluding sentence

- ☐ a. usually comes at the very end of a paragraph.
- ☐ b. is exactly the same as the topic sentence.
- ☐ c. introduces the main idea of the paragraph.

6 A good concluding sentence

- ☐ a. restates the previous supporting sentence.
- ☐ b. restates the main idea of the paragraph.
- ☐ c. introduces a new, unrelated topic.

7 Which is the best topic sentence for a paragraph about how changes within a family affect people's behavior?

- ☐ a. Firstborn children often experience career success later.
- ☐ b. Changing family dynamics contribute to different personalities in a family.
- ☐ c. Some children move several times during their childhood.

8 What is the best topic sentence for a paragraph about how adult siblings behave when they are together?

- ☐ a. The age gap between the two siblings was seven years.
- ☐ b. Many people go back to childhood roles when they are with their family.
- ☐ c. Firstborn children often assume responsibility for their siblings.

9 *Children with no siblings have unique benefits.*

Which supporting sentence does NOT support this topic sentence?

- ☐ a. They have more one-on-one time with their parents.
- ☐ b. They may have more opportunities because their parents have more time and money to spend on them.
- ☐ c. There are many negative stereotypes about them although they usually get along with adults.

10 What is the best concluding sentence for a paragraph about benefits that children with no siblings may experience?

- ☐ a. Being an only child has several advantages.
- ☐ b. Firstborn children are more responsible than only children.
- ☐ c. Only children do not worry as much about sibling rivalry.

Parallel Structure

Skill Presentation

Parallel structure means using similar patterns when you write. It helps your sentences flow well, and it makes your writing clearer. Sentences that do not have parallel structure can sound awkward and may be incorrect.

Use parallel structure in lists of words (like nouns, verbs, or adjectives), in lists of phrases, and in lists of clauses. Use parallel structure in comparisons, as well.

Women tend to give similar compliments whether they are **American, Canadian, or British**.
People give compliments **on appearance, on possessions, on ability, or on personality**.
A person may tell someone **that her hair looks nice, that she drives a nice car, or that she is kind**. (same verb tenses in clauses)
Men do not **compliment each other** as often as women **compliment each other**. (same structure + same verb tenses)

When you write, check your sentences carefully to be sure they have parallel structure. Look for conjunctions like *and*, *or*, and *nor*. They can indicate a list, which needs to have parallel structure. Also look for comparison words like *as* or *than*. Make sure the structure of the things being compared is parallel.

Practice: Parallel Structure

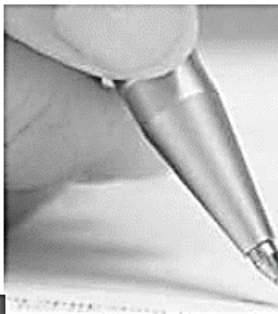
1 The sentences below do not have parallel structure. Correct them in the way suggested.

- 1 Some women do not want to be thought of as too assertive or behaving aggressively.
(list of adjectives): _____
- 2 Men tended to compliment women more than women were complimenting men.
(same verb tenses): _____
- 3 Women give each other compliments to build relationships with friends, relationships with coworkers, and with bosses.
(list of phrases starting with *with*): _____

2 Read the sentences and pay attention to the words in bold. Do the sentences have parallel structure? Write Y for Yes, or N for No.

- ___ 1 When traveling to another country, it is helpful to understand how men and women communicate with **friends, family members, and co-workers**.
- ___ 2 Both men and women in China are more likely to respond to a compliment **by giving another compliment** than by saying thank you.
- ___ 3 Not understanding how men and women communicate can lead to **misunderstandings, miscommunication, and causing other problems**.

- ___ 4 Some students may get more attention in class because they **raise their hands frequently, enjoy speaking in front of others, and demonstrate greater confidence.**
- ___ 5 Women who **feel comfortable speaking** may get the same amount of attention in the classroom as men who **may be acting competitively.**
- ___ 6 Some researchers believe that girls learn better at all-girls schools because the schools may help improve **cooperation, focus, and girls feeling good about themselves.**
- ___ 7 **Getting a higher salary** may be more difficult for some women than **getting an advanced degree.**
- ___ 8 At many colleges, few women major in **engineering, computer science, or earn a degree in psychology.**
- ___ 9 Jobs offering **flexible schedules and to help people** may be appealing to some women.
- ___ 10 Some women believe success at work is possible with **less shy behavior, acting more confidently, and by speaking more assertively.**



CHECK!

- 1 When you write, make sure your sentences have parallel structure. Use _____ word patterns in lists of words, phrases, or clauses.
- 2 Sentences that express _____ must have parallel structure, as well. Parallel structure makes your sentences flow well, and it makes your writing clearer.

- 1 Read the paragraph and underline the sentences that do not have parallel structure. How many are there?

¹Research shows that communication, language, and gestures are sometimes used differently by men and women. ²Men's language is often direct, honest, and contains facts. ³Women's language is sometimes not as direct as men's language. ⁴Women often use language that is indirect, that is deferential, and their language is nurturing. ⁵Research shows that many women like to discuss relationships, about how they feel, and personal experiences. ⁶Many men avoid discussion of personal issues. ⁷Men typically use language to exchange information or to solve problems. ⁸One way of communicating is not necessarily better than the other way people communicate.

There are _____ sentences without parallel structure. Sentences: _____

Skill Quiz

Check (✓) the correct answer for each item.

1 What is parallel structure?

- ☐ a. relating sentences to the topic
- ☐ b. using similar word patterns
- ☐ c. comparing two or more things

2 Use parallel structure

- ☐ a. with multiple subjects.
- ☐ b. in run-on sentences.
- ☐ c. in lists and comparisons.

3 Which words can help you identify sentences that need to have parallel structure?

- ☐ a. subjects and verbs
- ☐ b. conjunctions in lists and comparison words
- ☐ c. objects and prepositions

4 Which sentence has parallel structure?

- ☐ a. Adults, teenagers, and children communicate differently.
- ☐ b. Adults, teenagers, and those who are young communicate differently.
- ☐ c. People who are older, when people are teenagers, and children communicate differently.

5 Which sentence has parallel structure?

- ☐ a. Teenage girls often communicate through notes and through text messages.
- ☐ b. Teenage girls often communicate through notes and sending text messages.
- ☐ c. Teenage girls often communicate by writing notes and to send text messages.

6 Which sentence has parallel structure?

- ☐ a. Teenage boys communicate differently than girls who are teens.
- ☐ b. Teenage boys communicate differently than teenage girls.
- ☐ c. Teenage boys communicate differently talking to girls.

7 *Girls often develop language skills sooner*

—
Choose the option that gives this sentence parallel structure.

- ☐ a. than boys develop slowly
- ☐ b. that boys
- ☐ c. than boys

8 *In girls, the part of the brain that controls expression, verbal skill, and — develops earlier.*

Choose the option that gives this sentence parallel structure.

- ☐ a. that is in control of social behavior
- ☐ b. social behavior
- ☐ c. to control social behavior

9 *Research shows that girls use the abstract part of the brain when processing language verbally or —.*

Choose the option that gives this sentence parallel structure.

- ☐ a. with visibility
- ☐ b. vision
- ☐ c. visually

10 *Gender studies is a field that is complicated, that is complex, and that is interesting.*

Which words can be removed from the underlined part of this sentence?

- ☐ a. and, that
- ☐ b. that, is
- ☐ c. complex, interesting

Essay Writing

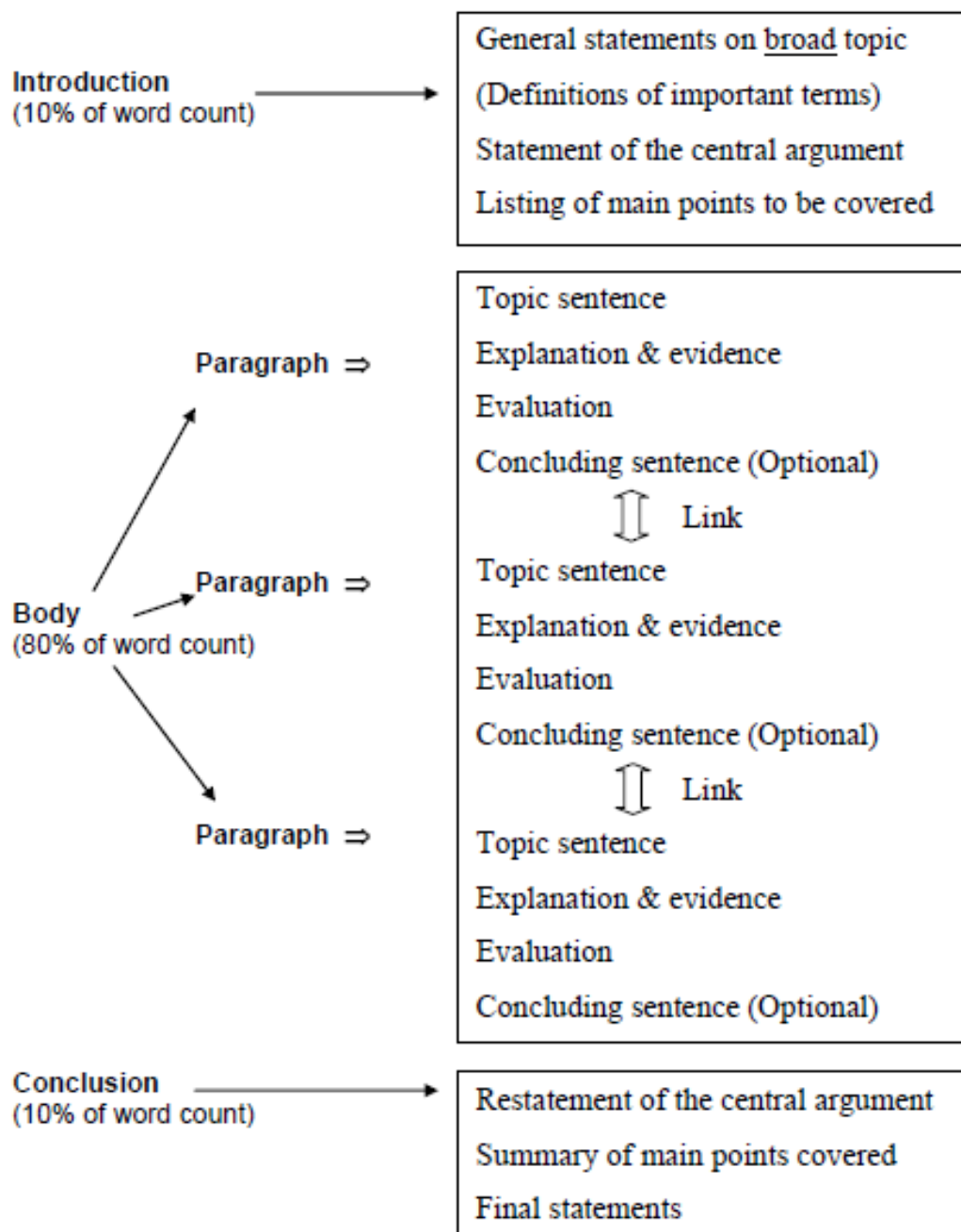
Why Writing Essays?

Writing a correctly structured, well-supported essay teaches you how to learn and how to think more effectively—to solve problems. You will be assigned essays that ask you to explore and learn more about your subjects. You must read deeply and conduct research to stimulate your thinking and to find material relevant to your topic.

Learning in college and university does not mean collecting and memorizing facts. To take a position on a topic, and to explain or defend that position, you must understand and interact with information gained from reading and research. You learn a new way of learning. As you test facts and ideas, you expand your ability to think. In fact, you are practicing the essential skill of critical thinking, which is distancing yourself from those automatic like/dislike, yes/no responses to ideas. You repeat this thinking and problem-solving process, selecting, weighing, and testing information, each time you work on the argument and proof for an essay.

Parts of the essay and their functions

The Essay Structure



Essay Structure

The Introduction

- * The *Introduction* should generally be 1 paragraph. It should be no more than 10% of your word count.
- * Indicate the general topic or thesis: what is this essay about?
- * Explain your opinion of the topic: what is your central argument?
- * Outline the main topics you discuss: what are the main points you use to back up your argument?
- * Explain any main terms you feel need defining.

The Body

- * The essay is written as a series of *paragraphs* and the *Body* makes up roughly 80% of the word count. Write the *body* of your essay *first* (then the conclusion & finally the introduction).
To write a paragraph:
 - * Start with a *topic sentence*. This is the first sentence of a paragraph. It should outline the main point discussed in that paragraph and make links to the central argument. The topic sentence should be *in your own words*.
 - * Following the topic sentence, a paragraph is usually structured from general information to specific details. These specific details may be statistics, quotations, theories or examples that support the main point you are putting forward in that paragraph.
 - * In an essay you must present a *central argument*, with several points to support your argument. Critical thinking involves thinking through *both sides of an argument* (this includes developing a *counter argument*). Thus, you will need to be aware of the *exceptions* to your argument, as well as the facts that *support* your argument. Discussing the *counter arguments* or claims against your central argument and explaining why they are incorrect can make your argument stronger and demonstrate your broad understanding of the topic.
 - * It is essential to *reference carefully*. *In-text references* should be placed *immediately after all quotations and paraphrases*. Always acknowledge from where your information is coming. Failure to do so is considered PLAGIARISM.

The Conclusion

- * The *Conclusion* should be 1-2 paragraphs and no more than 10% of your word count.
- * Restate the main argument.
- * Summarise the main points you used to support your argument.
- * Make a final statement.

The Reference List □

- * Start on a new page with the heading '**Reference list**'.
- * Follow the *Harvard Referencing System* to format your reference list. You need to provide the full details of all the sources you referred to within your essay.

The Reference List □

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Different Types of Writing Styles:

What is an essay?

An essay is a short piece of writing, which is often from the writer's point of view. Essays can consist of a number of elements, including literary criticism, political manifestos, arguments, observations of daily life, recollections, and reflections of the author. This handout will cover argumentative/persuasive, research, compare/contrast, descriptive, evaluation, narrative, exposition, classification, and analysis essays.

1. Research:

A research essay includes a presentation of facts, which are based upon reading or consulting several sources. There are two types of research papers: argumentative and analysis. An argumentative research essay proves a point, while an analytical research essay simply informs the reader about the topic. Features of a research paper include:

- **An interesting topic**
- **Description of a problem**
- **The definitions of the terms, concepts, and vocabulary you use.**
- **A summary of your research in the conclusion**

2. Argumentative/Persuasive:

The function of an argumentative essay is to prove that the author's opinions about a particular subject are correct or more truthful than other opinions on the subject. Features of an argumentative or persuasive essay include:

- **A well-defined, controversial issue**
- **A counter argument**
- **A clear position taken by the writer**
- **A persuasive argument as to why the writer's stance is correct**
- **Support the thesis using facts, data, quotes, rhetorical questions**

- **A reasonable, confident tone/Lack of bias**

3. Analysis:

An analysis essay, or often called an analytical essay, is a paper that presents a critical assessment of a text, concept, behavior, or other entity in a thorough and academic way. As its name suggests, an analysis essay intends to analyze using a variety of critical thinking skills and approaches. Features of an analytical essay include:

- **A strong thesis that states the author's position on the text you are analyzing**
- **Facts and details to support the author's point of view**
- **A critical evaluation of the structure and information of the text**
- **A conclusion that restates the thesis in a different way than before and briefly restates the supporting details**

4. Compare-Contrast:

Compare-contrast essays are informative because they discuss a subject in one of two ways. Either it identifies likenesses between two ideas or things that are commonly thought to be different, or it identifies differences between items that are commonly thought to be similar.

There are two methods of writing this type of essay, which include:

- A thesis that is specific and backed up by a highly argumentative analysis
- (Method 1) First, the author can write all the information about the first subject of comparison. Then, he or she goes on to write about the points of another subject of comparison.
- (Method 2) One can discuss the similar aspects of one subject in a few paragraphs; then, one can discuss the differences of the same subject in the next few paragraphs.

5. Descriptive:

An essay rarely consists of just descriptions. It is usually within another type of essay. Description conveys the qualities of a subject – person, place, or object – by focusing on concrete sensory details of sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell.

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Features of a descriptive essay include:

- **A specific subject**
- **Specific, descriptive details**
- **A clear pattern of organization**
- **Adjectives and adverbs that help to describe the subject**

6. Evaluation:

In our everyday lives, we are constantly evaluating, making judgments and forming opinions. Evaluative essays seek to prompt readers to examine their own values and to perhaps accept the view of the writer. This type of essay can be used in book and movie reviews, or it can be used to describe a work process, such as a recipe.

Features of an evaluation include:

- **An adequately described subject**
- **An assertion or definitive judgment**
- **An argument based on reasonable criteria**
- **A clear pattern of organization**

7. Narrative:

Narrative essays are typically about detailed experiences that the writer has faced in life. It is a story that is meaningful to the author, which can be either real or imaginary. It describes how a certain event changed a major part of the writer's life and how he or she reacted to this event. A narrative has a point to make and an idea to pass on. The writer uses details that are significant and merges them to build up a storyline that is easy for the reader to follow.

Features of a narrative essay include:

- **An introduction that clearly indicates the topic (an event or recurring activity, a personal experience, or an observation)**
- **Personal stories and a great amount of detail**

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- **Generally in first person**
- **Descriptive terms to help the reader visualize the story/events**
- **The writing should be personalized, reflecting the unique writing style and personality of the writer**

8. Exposition:

The purpose of an expository essay is to present, completely and fairly, the views of others. It can also report about an event or a situation. Expository writing presents a subject in detail apart from criticism, argument, or development.

Features of an expository essay include:

- **A clear, concise and well-defined thesis statement (the last sentence of the introductory paragraph containing the main idea of an essay)**
- **Clear and logical transitions between paragraphs**
- **Body paragraphs with evidential support**
- **Evidence that is presented with creativity**
- **A conclusion that restates the thesis and highlights the evidence presented to support it**

9. Classification:

A classification essay arranges and organizes a topic or subject into categories. The purpose of a classification essay is to break things down, so they can be further investigated.

Features of a classification essay include:

- **Complex subdivisions with detailed information about each class**
- **Consistency in the categories (Ensure all the information leads back to one point)**
- **Each category must be exclusive to the information provided in it (No two categories can overlap information)**

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In conclusion, each essay that we've discussed has its own purpose and importance. The task of writing an essay may seem daunting, but given the appropriate amount of time to write it and learning what the criteria is, essays become a lot easier to tackle.

Examples:

On the following page, there are examples of introductory paragraphs for each type of essay that will help with getting started.

Research:

Batteries come in many shapes and sizes. Some are no larger than a pill while others are too heavy to lift, but most batteries have one thing in common: they store chemical energy and change it into electrical energy. The cell is the basic unit that produces electricity. A battery has two or more cells, but people often use the word battery when talking about a single cell, too, like a dry cell. A dime-sized battery in a watch is a cell. Cells act like pumps to force electrons to flow along conductors.

Argumentative/Persuasive:

In the twenty-first century, most citizens of the modern world have practically forgotten how important it is to connect with nature. Despite all the technological advances and scientific inventions that make us believe we have nothing in common with the rest of the animal kingdom, we are still part of the planet, whether we realize it or not. Needless to say, back when humanity's main achievements were the invention of the round wheel, or specific tools for farming and agriculture, human beings were dependent on nature. Now, with the technological revolutions and discoveries that made our past history, we seem to pay little attention to nature, getting more and more disconnected from it every day. However, the links we have with nature cannot disappear. There are a number of key reasons in favor of the concept that people should try to connect with nature more than they do today.

Analysis:

The idea of a human mission to Mars has been capturing the imagination of the scientific community and popular culture for decades, manifesting itself in cinema, literature, and art. Conceptualizations of how this mission would be planned, funded, and executed have waxed and waned since the space race of the mid-20th century. What has never been disputed is the fact that an expedition to Mars is a momentous undertaking, with high risks and unknown rewards. When a mission takes place, it will most likely result into settling a human base on the Red Planet, with a scientific base that may perform exploitation, and contribute to further colonization or even terraforming.

Compare/Contrast:

Health care has always been one of the key factors for a successful society. Medicine itself has a history spanning thousands of years, and specialized establishments for treating the sick have also existed for a long period of time. Simply stated, hospitals are institutions that cater to the patients by providing them with appropriate conditions and continuous care as they undergo medical treatment. All these services are geared towards restoring the patient's wellbeing. However, technological and scientific progress has made treatment options possible that weren't available a hundred years ago making a large contribution to health care. Thus, there are key differences between hospitals today and a century ago. These differences include improved surgical techniques, safer use of anesthesia, and safer childbirth procedures.

Descriptive:

Bryce remembered the smell that permeated in the air that evening: a combination of the gingery sweetness of wildflowers, hazelnut crust, and ripe raspberries. The Smell of a hot summer evening, when the sun had already hidden its rays for the night, but the Earth was breathing out the steam of the day fever. That July, two years ago, was particularly hot, humid, and promised to be boring for Bryce Gordon. Having finished his second year in college and planning to spend the summer working in the local amusement park, Bryce was not anticipating any glory. Moreover, most of his college friends had moved out of campus for the summer and traveled back to their homes while he was in Grindson for the whole summer since this was where he grew up and spent every summer of his life. The goal for the season was to simply stay in town and try to survive the heat of the Central Texas prairie.

Evaluation:

One of the most ambiguous movies shot by Stanley Kubrick is *The Shining*, a horror film that tells the story of a family that has moved into a hotel called "Overlook," which was inhabited by ghosts. Throughout the movie, the plot develops around the Torrence family: Jack, Wendy, and their son Danny. Kubrick based the movie on a novel written by Stephen King. The literary source is rather thrilling and intriguing; however, the movie can provide the audience a gruesome depiction of the events from the novel and is recommended for all film majors learning adaptation techniques.

Narrative:

It was mid-April on a beautiful day. I felt unsure about the rash decision I had just made to change high schools on a whim. I spent the majority of my previous year-and-a-half in high school scraping by in terms of academia; I knew a change needed to be made, or I'd never graduate. As I walked into my new educational institution, a flood of emotions flowed through

me. This really meant that my old life was over. I left everything I knew to make something of my future. This was my new beginning, and I was determined to do my best.

Exposition:

Computers once had a singular purpose: to solve mathematical equations. Rapid advances in computer technology have altered the way in which people interact with computers, as well as the functionality of these intelligent machines. With the advent of a worldwide and nearly universally accessible Internet, the way in which we interact with each other has also changed drastically. People from all over the world can instantaneously exchange both business and personal information. Internet commerce has become a huge part of the daily lives of millions, as well as social networking and streaming media. Most recently, portable electronics capable of nearly all internet-related tasks have become a common possession for the average middle-aged American. The unlimited free exchange of information has changed, and it is continuing to shift society at large in a profound way.

Classification:

In the early twentieth century, close to twenty-six million people attended nickelodeons weekly. Gross receipts totaled close to 100 million dollars yearly. The frequent movie watchers were immigrants, the working class, or the unemployed. All could understand the silent films; however, the middle and upper class did not attend the early film showing as they would not have been caught dead in the disreputable nickelodeons. During the silent picture era, movie studios produced three main categories of films. The western, slapstick comedy, and romance genres were used repeatedly during early motion picture production.

Discovering and Organizing Ideas

- **Brainstorming:**

Brainstorming is an informal way of generating topics to write about, or points to make about your topic. It can be done at any time during the writing process. You can brainstorm the topics for a whole paper or just a conclusion or an example. The important point about brainstorming is that there should be no pressure to be "brilliant." Students should simply open their minds to whatever pops into them. Think of it as a kind of free association. When I say "literacy" what pops into your mind? Much of what the students will come up with will not be useful, but that's okay. Part of brainstorming will involve a selection process.

- **Brainstorming techniques**

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What follows are great ideas on how to brainstorm—ideas from professional writers, novice writers, people who would rather avoid writing, and people who spend a lot of time brainstorming about...well, how to brainstorm.

Try out several of these options and challenge yourself to vary the techniques you rely on; some techniques might suit a particular writer, academic discipline, or assignment better than others. If the technique you try first doesn't seem to help you, move right along and try some others.

- **Freewriting**

When you freewrite, you let your thoughts flow as they will, putting pen to paper and writing down whatever comes into your mind. You don't judge the quality of what you write and you don't worry about style or any surface-level issues, like spelling, grammar, or punctuation. If you can't think of what to say, you write that down—really. The advantage of this technique is that you free up your internal critic and allow yourself to write things you might not write if you were being too self-conscious. The crucial point is that you keep on writing even if you believe you are saying nothing. Word must follow word, no matter the relevance.

When you're done with your set number of minutes or have reached your page goal, read back over the text. Yes, there will be a lot of filler and unusable thoughts but there also will be little gems, discoveries, and insights. When you find these gems, highlight them or cut and paste them into your draft or onto an "ideas" sheet so you can use them in your paper. Even if you don't find any diamonds in there, you will have either quieted some of the noisy chaos or greased the writing gears so that you can now face the assigned paper topic.

- **Break down the topic into levels**

Once you have a course assignment in front of you, you might brainstorm:

- the general topic, like "The relationship between tropical fruits and colonial powers"
- a specific subtopic or required question, like "How did the availability of multiple tropical fruits influence competition amongst colonial powers trading from the larger Caribbean islands during the 19th century?"
- a single term or phrase that you sense you're overusing in the paper. For example: If you see that you've written "increased the competition" about a dozen times in your "tropical fruits" paper, you could brainstorm variations on the phrase itself or on each of the main terms: "increased" and "competition."

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- **Listing/bulleting**

In this technique you jot down lists of words or phrases under a particular topic. **You can base your list on:**

- the general topic
- one or more words from your particular thesis claim
- a word or idea that is the complete opposite of your original word or idea.

For example, if your general assignment is to write about the changes in inventions over time, and your specific thesis claims that “the 20th century presented a large number of inventions to advance US society by improving upon the status of 19th-century society,” you could brainstorm two different lists to ensure you are covering the topic thoroughly and that your thesis will be easy to prove.

The first list might be based on your thesis; you would jot down as many 20th-century inventions as you could, as long as you know of their positive effects on society. The second list might be based on the opposite claim, and you would instead jot down inventions that you associate with a decline in that society’s quality. You could do the same two lists for 19th-century inventions and then compare the evidence from all four lists.

Using multiple lists will help you to gather more perspective on the topic and ensure that, sure enough, your thesis is solid as a rock, or, ...uh oh, your thesis is full of holes and you’d better alter your claim to one you can prove.

- **3 perspectives**

Looking at something from different perspectives helps you see it more completely—or at least in a completely different way, sort of like laying on the floor makes your desk look very different to you. **To use this strategy, answer the questions for each of the three perspectives, then look for interesting relationships or mismatches you can explore:**

1. **Describe it:** Describe your subject in detail. What is your topic? What are its components? What are its interesting and distinguishing features? What are its puzzles? Distinguish your subject from those that are similar to it. How is your subject unlike others?
2. **Trace it:** What is the history of your subject? How has it changed over time? Why? What are the significant events that have influenced your subject?

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3. **Map it:** What is your subject related to? What is it influenced by? How? What does it influence? How? Who has a stake in your topic? Why? What fields do you draw on for the study of your subject? Why? How has your subject been approached by others? How is their work related to yours?

- **Cubing**

Cubing enables you to consider your topic from six different directions; just as a cube is six-sided, your cubing brainstorming will result in six “sides” or approaches to the topic.

Take a sheet of paper, consider your topic, and respond to these six commands:

1. **Describe it.**
2. **Compare it.**
3. **Associate it.**
4. **Analyze it.**
5. **Apply it.**
6. **Argue for and against it.**

Look over what you’ve written. Do any of the responses suggest anything new about your topic? What interactions do you notice among the “sides”? That is, do you see patterns repeating, or a theme emerging that you could use to approach the topic or draft a thesis? Does one side seem particularly fruitful in getting your brain moving? Could that one side help you draft your thesis statement? Use this technique in a way that serves your topic. It should, at least, give you a broader awareness of the topic’s complexities, if not a sharper focus on what you will do with it.

- **Similes**

In this technique, complete the following sentence:

_____ is/was/are/were like _____.

In the first blank put one of the terms or concepts your paper centers on. Then try to brainstorm as many answers as possible for the second blank, writing them down as you come up with them.

After you have produced a list of options, look over your ideas. What kinds of ideas come forward? What patterns or associations do you find?

- **Clustering/mapping/webbing:**

The general idea:

This technique has three (or more) different names, according to how you describe the activity itself or what the end product looks like. In short, you will write a lot of different terms and phrases onto a sheet of paper in a random fashion and later go back to link the words together into a sort of “map” or “web” that forms groups from the separate parts. Allow yourself to start with chaos. After the chaos subsides, you will be able to create some order out of it.

Organizing an Essay

Some basic guidelines

The best time to think about how to organize your paper is during the pre-writing stage, not the writing or revising stage. A well-thought-out plan can save you from having to do a lot of reorganizing when the first draft is completed. Moreover, it allows you to pay more attention to sentence-level issues when you sit down to write your paper. When you begin planning, ask the following questions: What type of essay am I going to be writing? Does it belong to a specific genre? In university, you may be asked to write, say, a book review, a lab report, a document study, or a compare-and-contrast essay. Knowing the patterns of reasoning associated with a genre can help you to structure your essay. For example, book reviews typically begin with a summary of the book you’re reviewing. They then often move on to a critical discussion of the book’s strengths and weaknesses. They may conclude with an overall assessment of the value of the book. These typical features of a book review lead you to consider dividing your outline into three parts: (1) summary; (2) discussion of strengths and weaknesses; (3) overall evaluation. The second and most substantial part will likely break down into two sub-parts. It is up to you to decide the order of the two subparts—whether to analyze strengths or weaknesses first. And of course it will be up to you to come up with actual strengths and weaknesses. Be aware that genres are not fixed. Different professors will define the features of a genre differently. Read the assignment question carefully for guidance. Understanding genre can take you only so far. Most university essays are argumentative, and there is no set pattern for the shape of an argumentative essay. The simple three-point essay taught in high school is far too restrictive for the complexities of most university assignments. You must be ready to come up with whatever essay structure helps you to convince your reader of the validity of your position. In other words, you must be flexible, and you must rely on your wits. Each essay presents a fresh problem.

Writing the Introduction and the thesis

Skill Presentation: An introductory paragraph

When you write an introductory paragraph, you need to get the reader's attention and then give general information about the topic. Before you write an introductory paragraph, first choose a topic for your essay. Next, think about the **thesis statement**, or the main point you want to make.

^{TS}Using an iris recognition system is an effective way to identify patients.

Then think about the **background information** the reader needs to know in order to understand the thesis. These will become the supporting sentences that give general background information about the topic.

- ^{BI}A computer analyzes the iris of an eye.
- ^{BI}The computer matches a unique iris pattern to an individual.
- ^{BI}The computer saves the pattern in a database.

Finally, think about why a person should be interested in the topic you're writing about. Some people call this the **hook** because it should "hook" readers and pull them into your essay.

^{HK}Everyone hates filling out paperwork at the doctor's office, but some people can now avoid it because of a new technology.

The hook is usually the first sentence in the introductory paragraph. The background information goes next. Finally, include the thesis statement to tell your reader what the rest of the essay will be about.

^{HK}Everyone hates filling out paperwork at the doctor's office, but some people can now avoid it because of a new technology. ^{BI}With iris recognition technology, a computer analyzes the iris of an eye and matches a unique iris pattern to an individual. ^{BI}It then saves the pattern in a database. ^{BI}The next time the person comes to the clinic, she will be properly identified. ^{TS}There are many reasons why all clinics should use iris recognition for identification.

What points in this paragraph do you find most interesting? Which points would you like to learn more about?

At a New York clinic, patients don't sign in to see a doctor. Instead, a computer takes a picture of the colored ring in the center of their eyes to identify them. This part of the eye, called the iris, is unique. Therefore, iris recognition is one way to record a person's identity. At the clinic, iris recognition helps keep track of patients without identity documents. Some may have similar names, and doctors want to make sure they treat the right patient. Doctors at the clinic are very happy with the system and can now treat patients accurately and safely.

Practice:

- 1 Read the paragraph and decide what the sentence in bold does. Check (✓) the correct answer.**

Most people do not realize that technology can tell who they are without a passport or even a name. The science of **biometrics uses people's physical characteristics in order to identify them.** It uses information like the distance between the nose and the mouth, the pattern in the iris, or fingerprints. This information is very personal. If it gets into the wrong hands, the results can be terrible. Biometrics can violate personal privacy in several serious ways.

- ☐ a. It gets the reader's attention.
☐ b. It provides important background information.
☐ c. It gives the overall topic of the essay.

- 2 The sentences from this introductory paragraph are in the wrong order. Find the hook and label it *H* for Hook. Find three sentences that give background information, and label them *B* for Background. Find the thesis statement and label it *TS* for Thesis Statement.**

- ___ 1 Even if there is a picture or a video of the person who took the child, police have to figure out who that person is.
___ 2 The disappearance of a child is tragic for parents, and finding the criminal who took the child can be nearly impossible for police.
___ 3 There are several reasons why all police departments should have face printing technology.
___ 4 Face printing is one example of a new technology police are using to find these criminals.
___ 5 This new technology can use pictures or videos of the criminal to predict what they will look like in the future.

- 1 Look at the different parts of this introductory paragraph. Circle the correct answers.**

²Your phone knows who you are. ¹New technology helps cell phones recognize their owners. ¹The technology identifies people by their facial features. ¹It allows only the identified owner to use the phone. ¹This technology could prevent problems with stolen devices. ¹It could also stop strangers from reading personal information on phones. ³Cell phone companies should make this technology available for three important reasons.

- 1 These sentences give *background information* | *the main topic of the essay* | *information to get the reader's attention*.
2 This sentence is the *first supporting sentence* | *thesis statement* | *hook*.
3 This sentence is the *first supporting sentence* | *thesis statement* | *hook*.

2 Read the introductory paragraphs. They are missing hooks and thesis statements. Check (✓) the correct answers to complete the paragraphs.

A ____ Recently, scientists began to develop programs that can identify people by their ears. They have developed a new technology called computer vision. Computer vision can identify an ear using a digital picture. However, there can be problems with ear identification. Bad lighting can make the computer think it is seeing a different person. ____

1 What is the best hook for this paragraph?

- ☐ a. Your ears may soon be used for things other than just listening.
- ☐ b. Biometrics refers to using data about physical appearance to identify people.
- ☐ c. The ear consists of three parts: the outer ear, the middle ear, and the inner ear.

2 What is the best thesis statement for this paragraph?

- ☐ a. Human ears continue to grow throughout a person's life.
- ☐ b. In addition to this, jewelry can also confuse the technology.
- ☐ c. Despite some current problems, computer vision will likely become a common way to identify people for a number of reasons.

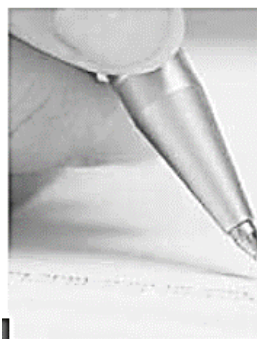
B ____ That is, a new system allows them to access lunch money using their fingerprints. Parents put money into a special account. They can even tell the system not to let their children buy certain foods. Then, instead of paying with money, the students simply scan their fingerprints. The cost of the meal is taken from their account. ____

3 What is the best hook for this paragraph?

- ☐ a. Black ink and white paper are often used to take fingerprints.
- ☐ b. Fingerprinting is sometimes used by police officers who are trying to find a criminal.
- ☐ c. Thousands of schoolchildren are now getting their lunch by simply using a finger.

4 What is the best thesis statement for this paragraph?

- ☐ a. Fingerprints are not as reliable as some other technologies like iris identification.
- ☐ b. Some children buy lunch at the school cafeteria whenever possible, especially when there is pizza.
- ☐ c. This is a convenient and effective system that can be implemented in any school.



CHECK!

- 1 An introductory paragraph is the _____ paragraph of an essay.
- 2 It usually starts with a _____, which gets the readers' attention.
- 3 Next, there are several sentences that give _____, or general, information about the topic that readers need to understand.
- 4 Finally, the _____ tells the reader the topic of the essay, or what the rest of the essay will be about.

Skill Quiz:

Check (✓) the correct answer for each item.

- 1 Which of the following is not found in an introductory paragraph?
 - ☐ a. several specific examples that explain the topic
 - ☐ b. a hook that gets the reader's attention
 - ☐ c. general background information about the topic
- 2 Which of the following is true of the hook?
 - ☐ a. The hook always gives facts that the reader already knows.
 - ☐ b. The hook is usually the first sentence of the introductory paragraph.
 - ☐ c. The hook is at least two paragraphs long.
- 3 The thesis statement contains
 - ☐ a. a list of main ideas.
 - ☐ b. the main topic of the essay.
 - ☐ c. information that gets the reader's attention.
- 4 What is the correct order of information in an introductory paragraph?
 - ☐ a. thesis statement, background information, hook
 - ☐ b. thesis statement, background information, hook
 - ☐ c. hook, background information, thesis statement
- 5 Which sentence is the most appropriate hook for an essay about new biometric technologies?
 - ☐ a. There are many kinds of biometric technology.
 - ☐ b. Biometric technology is changing life as we know it.
 - ☐ c. Fingerprinting is one kind of technology.
- 6 Which sentence is the most appropriate hook for an essay about ear recognition?
 - ☐ a. Until recently, identifying people through technologies like ear recognition may have seemed like pure fiction.
 - ☐ b. These advances in technology will improve safety and security for everyone.
 - ☐ c. Computers use databases to organize information about different people.
- 7 Which sentence is the best thesis statement for an essay about the advantages of biometrics?
 - ☐ a. In the near future, you may be able to pay for things just by using your eyes.
 - ☐ b. These advances in biometric technology may help improve public safety, computer security, and data management.
 - ☐ c. Computers use biometric databases, which are large sets of personal information that are
- 8 Which sentence is the best thesis statement for an essay about the risks of face printing?
 - ☐ a. DNA tests are a popular way to learn someone's identity.
 - ☐ b. If you have been to an airport or a train station recently, you may have had a "face print."
 - ☐ c. Before face printing becomes widely used, it is important to consider several possible negative effects.

The Skill Presentation: Thesis statement

An essay includes a thesis statement in the introductory paragraph. The thesis statement gives the main topic of the essay. Many thesis statements have three main points. In a five-paragraph essay, each point is explained in its own supporting paragraph. The supporting paragraphs are called **body paragraphs**. Each body paragraph begins with a **topic sentence**. This topic sentence often includes the specific point from the thesis statement.

Supporting sentences follow each body paragraph's topic sentence. They are related to that topic sentence only, not to topic sentences from other body paragraphs. They give specific information about the point from the thesis statement covered in that body paragraph.

THESIS STATEMENT: Members of Generation Z grew up with ¹the Internet, ²cell phones, and ³social networking sites.

The three main points in this thesis statement are:

- 1 Generation Z and the Internet → body paragraph 1
- 2 Generation Z and cell phones → body paragraph 2
- 3 Generation Z and social networks → body paragraph 3

The topic sentence in the first body paragraph relates to the first point from the thesis statement. The topic sentence and supporting sentences are only about Generation Z and the Internet. The next body paragraph will be about the second point – Generation Z and cell phones – and so on.

^{TS}Members of Generation Z, or Millennials, were raised using the Internet. They cannot remember a time before computers. They have been surfing the Internet since they were young.

How are you like Generation Z? How are you different?

Members of Generation X are now in their 40s, and members of Generation Y joined the workforce in the early twenty-first century. Their younger colleagues will be members of Generation Z, people born after the mid-1990s. Most members of Generation Z grew up with technology. They cannot remember a time before the Internet and cell phones. Some researchers think Generation Z workers will be fairly independent. Growing up during a bad economy might also make them more realistic about money. Generation Z workers are likely to be independent, realistic, and comfortable with technology.

- 1 Read a second body paragraph from the same essay about Generation Z and technology. Underline the point in the thesis statement that this body paragraph is about.

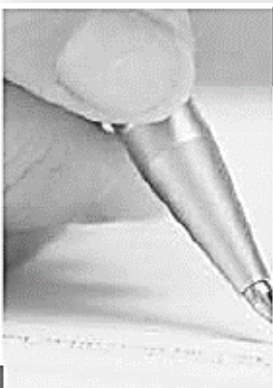
Cell phones have always been a part of Generation Z's world. They can't imagine life without a mobile phone. They expect to be able to be in touch anywhere, anytime. They are comfortable using the many features of cell phones today.

Thesis Statement: Members of Generation Z grew up with the Internet, cell phones, and social networking sites.

- 2 Read the thesis statement and the five possible body paragraphs. Check (✓) three body paragraphs that would be appropriate for this essay.

Thesis statement: Millennial employees are confident, have many opinions, and want to succeed.

- ☐ a. Confidence at work is a trait many Millennials share. They were raised by parents who offered frequent praise. Millennials believed in their abilities as children and carry this confidence into the workplace.
- ☐ b. Even after age 21, some Millennials still live with their parents. Some people believe Millennials do not want to grow up. Others argue that a poor economy has forced the Millennials to continue living at home.
- ☐ c. Many Millennials have strong feelings about a variety of topics. They are often eager to share their ideas at work. Even as new employees, Millennials expect their opinions to be heard.
- ☐ d. Technology is important to Millennials. Some employers allow Millennials to chat and text at work. Others believe that the personal use of technology is a distraction and shouldn't be allowed at work.
- ☐ e. Many Millennials also desire success. They want to be the best at what they do. Those who are smart, capable, and hardworking should achieve success on the job.



CHECK!

- 1 A five-paragraph essay often has a thesis statement with _____ main points. There is one _____ paragraph for each point.
- 2 Body paragraphs begin with a _____ that says what the paragraph will be about.
- 3 _____ follow each body paragraph's topic sentence and are related only to that topic sentence. They give specific information about the point covered in that body paragraph.

Practice

- 1 Match the main points of each thesis statement (a–c) with the correct topic sentences (1–3).**

A Thesis Statement: Generation Z employees may be more comfortable with technology, more independent, and more realistic than Generation Y employees.

___ a. more tech savvy ___ b. more independent ___ c. more realistic

- 1 Members of Generation Z will probably want less teamwork than Generation Y.
- 2 Members of Generation Z have grown up in harder economic times, and they understand they may not get everything they want from a job.
- 3 Generation Z employees may be better at using technology than Generation Y employees.

B Thesis Statement: Millennial employees are sometimes criticized for being too self-confident, irresponsible, and opinionated.

___ a. too self-confident ___ b. irresponsible ___ c. opinionated

- 1 Millennials sometimes give the impression that they already know everything about the job.
- 2 Millennials are used to having their ideas heard and are not shy about expressing their thoughts at work.
- 3 Doing personal tasks online during work can be a serious problem for some Millennials.

- 2 Read each thesis statement in the chart and the topic sentences (a–g). Write the three topic sentences that relate to each thesis statement in the correct columns, in the correct order. There is one topic sentence that is unrelated.**

Many Millennials prefer jobs that offer challenges, positive relationships, and freedom of choice.	Many Millennials expect free time, value family, and are active outside of work.
1.	4.
2.	5.
3.	6.

- a Playing sports with co-workers is important to many Millennials.
- b Many Millennials expect their bosses to listen to their new ideas.
- c Many Millennials feel that spending time with their children is very important.
- d Most Millennials say they enjoy teamwork and like to build friendships with their colleagues.
- e Millennials like to make their own work schedules and choose their own tasks at work.
- f Millennials work hard but feel it is important to have a life outside of the office.
- g Some Millennials enjoy doing difficult tasks at work.

Skill Quiz

Check (✓) the correct answer for each item.

- 1 A ____ gives the main idea of an essay.
☐ a. topic sentence
☐ b. thesis statement
☐ c. supporting sentence
- 2 In a five-paragraph essay, many thesis statements have
☐ a. three main points.
☐ b. five main points.
☐ c. two main points.
- 3 Supporting paragraphs in an essay are called
☐ a. topic paragraphs.
☐ b. essay paragraphs.
☐ c. body paragraphs.
- 4 Each topic sentence in the body paragraphs should include
☐ a. one of the points from the thesis statement.
☐ b. all three points from the thesis statement.
☐ c. a new point that was not in the thesis statement.
- 5 Thesis statement: *Millennial workers are sometimes seen as too confident, demanding, and impatient on the job.* Which of these topic sentences would not belong in this essay?
☐ a. Millennial employees sometimes seem to have too much self-confidence in the workplace.
☐ b. Millennial employees often want to move on to a more important job before they are ready.
☐ c. Millennial workers prefer to work in teams.
- 6 Thesis statement: *Young workers expect to have access to social networking sites, cell phones, and the Internet 24 hours a day.* In this essay, there would not be a body paragraph about
☐ a. young workers' expectations about salary.
☐ b. young workers and social networking sites.
☐ c. young workers and cell phones.
- 7 Topic sentence: *Generation Z employees may have to accept jobs with relatively low salaries.* Which thesis statement does this topic sentence most likely relate to?
☐ a. Generation Z employees may share traits with Generation Y workers, such as confidence, impatience, and outspokenness.
☐ b. Generation Z employees may have to lower their expectations about salary, quality of work, and job flexibility.
☐ c. Generation Z employees will be self-confident, independent, and driven to succeed at work.
- 8 Topic sentence: *Millennial workers value making friends with their colleagues.* Choose the best supporting sentence for this topic sentence.
☐ a. Millennials think that spending time with their families is very important.
☐ b. Millennials dislike working long hours and do many activities outside of the workplace.
☐ c. Millennials enjoy working on projects with co-workers and going out to dinner with them.

Writing the conclusion:

Skill Presentation

A concluding paragraph has several purposes. One purpose is to restate the thesis. Another is to summarize the most important points from the body paragraphs. A final purpose of a concluding paragraph is to give the reader something to think about. Let's look at the thesis statement from the introductory paragraph of an essay about news.

Some approaches include avoiding negative news, reading positive news, and trying to balance the two.

Several body paragraphs then give more information about the topic and support the thesis statement.

Some people feel popular news sources focus on tragic and sad news. . . .

There are a few websites dedicated to reporting only positive news. . . .

Some experts suggest that you read positive news once a week. . . .

The concluding paragraph then helps remind the reader of the most important points in the essay. The topic sentence often begins with a **transition phrase** like *To conclude*, *In summary*, or *In conclusion*. You can then use slightly different words to remind your reader what the essay is about. After that, use supporting sentences to briefly explain the main points of the essay. End your concluding paragraph with a **suggestion** about what you think people should do, an **opinion**, or a **prediction**.

In conclusion, reading a variety of both “happy” and “sad” stories is one way to get more balanced news. Of course, it is important to read about things that are happening in the world. These events may not always be happy. However, finding the right balance of news sources is important to many people. Certain news sources can help you avoid reading only about sad news. ^SChoose the news sources that are best for you. OR ^OIt is important for everyone to read mostly positive news. OR ^PWebsites that focus on happy news will probably become very popular in the next ten years.

- 1 Read the thesis statement. Underline the sentence in the concluding paragraph that restates the ideas in the thesis using different words. Circle the sentence that offers a suggestion.

Thesis Statement: Balanced news sources include ideas from important leaders, experts, and people in the community.

In summary, balanced news sources represent many points of view. Balanced news stories are important because they help educate the public. The public hears different opinions from a variety of people. This helps them consider other ideas. Read balanced news stories to better understand important events.

2 Read the beginning of each concluding paragraph, and check (✓) the sentence that concludes the paragraph appropriately.

1 Many people choose to read news blogs that reinforce their opinions. They like to read news that reflects their own point of view. ____

- ☐ a. Therefore, people should read blogs about celebrities more often.
- ☐ b. However, it is probably best to read many different types of news blogs.
- ☐ c. Some people prefer blogs that have many colorful pictures.

2 In summary, politicians suggest many different policies. People vote for the policies they believe are best. ____

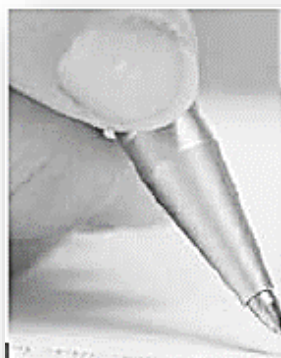
- ☐ a. People should learn about all the policies before they vote.
- ☐ b. Student elections happen every year in September.
- ☐ c. Many people like to read blogs that reinforce their opinions.

3 More and more people rely on news from a variety of sources. As a result, people are exposed to different ideas. ____

- ☐ a. People who prefer different books will criticize each other more often.
- ☐ b. There are many different places to find news stories these days.
- ☐ c. In the future, there will likely be even more sources for news.

4 In conclusion, some new policies are problematic. These policies are harmful to people in the community. ____

- ☐ a. People in the community deserve better policies.
- ☐ b. Newspapers often report on problematic policies.
- ☐ c. Additionally, people disagree about these policies.



CHECK!

- 1 A concluding paragraph has _____ purposes.
- 2 One purpose is to restate the _____ (using slightly different words).
- 3 A second purpose is to _____, or briefly explain, the most important points from the body paragraphs.
- 4 The final purpose is to give readers something to think about. You can offer a _____, give an _____, or make a _____.

Practice:

1 Match each thesis statement (1–4) with the correct restatement (a–d).

- ___ 1 Relying on news from websites, TV, and magazines helps balance your views.
 - ___ 2 Many people argue that newspapers are the best way to learn about new government policies, current events, and experts' opinions.
 - ___ 3 The news programs people watch often reflect their views about their community, their country, and people in general.
 - ___ 4 Newspapers have exposed some stories that surprised almost everyone.
- a Getting the news directly from friends makes it difficult to find out about new ideas.
 - b Many people choose to watch TV programs that support their opinions about the world.
 - c Some people believe the best place to find a variety of information is in the newspaper.
 - d Some news stories have shocked the public.

2 Number each set of sentences in the correct order to form concluding paragraphs. The restatement of the thesis goes first, then the summary of the main points, and finally a sentence that gives the reader something to think about.

- 1 Thesis Statement:** Many people dislike news shows that only support one person's opinion.
- ___ TV news shows should be more balanced and reflect the opinions of a variety of people.
 - ___ In summary, some people criticize TV news shows for sharing only one point of view.
 - ___ Unfortunately, many TV programs reflect the opinion of only one group of people.
 - ___ These people expect news shows to discuss several different perspectives.
- 2 Thesis Statement:** These blogs include only interesting, cheerful, or amusing stories.
- ___ Blogs that avoid negative news will likely become more popular in the next few years.
 - ___ To conclude, many blogs include only positive stories.
 - ___ Other blogs share "happy" news from different parts of the world.
 - ___ Some blogs have stories about people who were heroes.
- 3 Thesis Statement:** Most people have access to the Internet and several TV news shows.
- ___ Some people read just one online news site. Other people only watch TV news.
 - ___ Finally, a few people read several online news sites and watch TV news shows.
 - ___ People should get their news from all of these sources.
 - ___ In summary, people can usually choose where to get their news.
- 4 Thesis Statement:** People who write newspaper articles often reveal surprising facts about different issues.
- ___ For instance, these newspaper reporters might help people better understand a complicated environmental problem.
 - ___ Newspaper reporters can help educate the public about a variety of problems.
 - ___ Newspapers should be responsible for exposing stories and educating the public.
 - ___ In conclusion, newspapers often expose issues the public does not know about.

Check (✓) the correct answer for each item.

- 1 In the concluding paragraph of an essay, the thesis statement should be
 - ☐ a. repeated using different words.
 - ☐ b. repeated using the same words.
 - ☐ c. added to the end of the paragraph.
- 2 Which transition phrase can begin the topic sentence of a concluding paragraph?
 - ☐ a. One reason is
 - ☐ b. In contrast
 - ☐ c. In summary
- 3 The concluding paragraph of an essay
 - ☐ a. reminds the reader about one point from the thesis statement.
 - ☐ b. summarizes information from the body paragraphs.
 - ☐ c. includes a hook with information to get the reader's attention.
- 4 A concluding paragraph should
 - ☐ a. give the reader something to think about.
 - ☐ b. follow the introductory paragraph.
 - ☐ c. support only one point from the thesis statement.
- 5 A concluding paragraph can end with
 - ☐ a. an unrelated idea.
 - ☐ b. a thesis statement.
 - ☐ c. a suggestion.
- 6 Choose the sentence that restates this thesis statement: *Anyone can read local newspapers, political blogs, and websites to find out more about certain policies.*
 - ☐ a. In my opinion, newspapers are the best way to get the news.
 - ☐ b. In summary, people can use a variety of resources to learn more about these policies.
 - ☐ c. On the other hand, blogs are becoming increasingly popular.
- 7 Choose the sentence that restates this thesis statement: *Some politicians are not well-liked because their policies are unclear, not useful, or ineffective.*
 - ☐ a. In the future, politicians will make policies that protect children.
 - ☐ b. For example, some politicians create policies that people do not like.
 - ☐ c. In conclusion, politicians who do not create clear, useful, and effective policies are often unpopular.
- 8 Choose the concluding sentence that makes a prediction.
 - ☐ a. People should listen to news on Internet radio stations.
 - ☐ b. Listening to news from the radio is the best way to get information.
 - ☐ c. Radio news will likely become more popular in the future.
- 9 Choose the concluding sentence that offers a suggestion.
 - ☐ a. Newspaper writers should expose important issues.
 - ☐ b. Reading newspaper articles about important issues is enjoyable.
 - ☐ c. Newspapers will continue to expose important issues in the future.
- 10 Choose the concluding sentence that gives an opinion.
 - ☐ a. News programs on TV will continue to report mostly bad news.
 - ☐ b. It is relaxing to watch news programs on TV.
 - ☐ c. News programs on TV are common.

The Narrative Essay

What is it?

A **narrative essay** achieves a certain purpose through telling a story, which makes it interesting to the reader and also results in getting some point across. For example, you might write a story about meeting someone special to you. The purpose may be to tell how meeting this person affected your decision to attend college or to entertain the reader with a funny story about that person. The purposes of writing narratives include the following: to create a sense of shared history, to provide entertainment, to offer instruction, and to provide insight. Some examples of narrative essay topics include a special person, event, or place. After choosing a topic, you should determine the main point you want to make about that topic and then concentrate on that throughout the rest of the paper.

Guidelines for writing a narrative essay:

- Make a specific point. Determine what the purpose of your essay is. State that point in your thesis statement, or controlling idea, and build upon it throughout the essay by using examples, stories, and other details that all relate back to the main idea.
- Involve readers in the story and create a visual picture by using dialogue and physical description, which is achieved through telling events that happened and presenting problems that arose. Also include specific descriptive details so that the reader can easily picture the scene in each of the events.
- Sequence events. Often this is done chronologically (the order in which events happened), but using flashbacks (writing the story from one point in time but then talking briefly about something that happened in the past) and foreshadowing (briefly talking about something that will happen in the future) can make the story more interesting.
- Decide which point of view, first-person (from the author's point of view, using "I") or third-person (using "he," "she," "them," etc. instead of "I"), works best for your essay, and tell the story from that viewpoint.

What's is your purpose?

The main purpose of your narrative essay is to engage readers with real-life events that have the feel of a story. Colourful details and interesting events that build up to a point of some kind make narrative essays enjoyable for readers and writers alike.

You have probably listened to someone tell a rambling story that didn't seem to go anywhere. You might have wondered impatiently, "Where is this story going?" or "Is there a point here?" Keep these reactions in mind as you think about your own narrative essay. To satisfy your audience, your story must have a clear overall purpose and point—the main characteristics of an essay.

Your narrative essay should deal with an event or a topic that will appeal to your audience. A group of young children, for example, would probably be bored by a narrative essay about your first job interview. They might, however, be very interested if you wrote about the time you were chased by three tiny terriers or stood up to a class bully.

Writing a thesis for a narrative essay.

Narrative essays may be about conflict, change, or discovery. As non-fiction narratives, these essays lead readers to new states of awareness or alter their views of themselves or their lives in some way. Your narrative essay's thesis can be some general truth that the conflict or discovery reveals. Your narrative essay illustrates how you have come to understand your thesis. Whether your thesis explains a change or a human truth, it is the point or "lesson" of the essay.

A thesis for a narrative essay focused on **change** might be similar to the following:

That turn in the road was a genuine turning point for Yonggi.

A thesis based on an **easily understood human truth** could be something like this:

The value of family is, and should be, an unforgettable lesson.

When you work on a thesis statement for a narrative essay, ask yourself, "What specific moment or event changed me?" or "What truth did I learn from learning this?"— whether your "this" is something you experienced directly or from research. That moment, event, or learning experience will be your topic and what you learned as a result of that pivotal experience will be the viewpoint that shapes your thesis statement.

Are you writing a narrative or a story?

While some narrative essays have the feel of a story, their structure is that of an essay. When you write a fictional story, you may not reveal a clear point at all; your story's point may be woven throughout it, or it may be in your characters' actions or feelings. But when you write a narrative essay, your job is to make your point in your thesis, then to select events, scenes, and emotions that will maintain your readers' interest as they see your meaning shown in your supporting details.

The descriptive Essay

What is it?

A **descriptive essay** tells about a certain topic or story, using details to appeal to the five senses. It gives readers the ability to vividly imagine the situation or scene and feel as if they are experiencing it firsthand. To write a descriptive essay, you could choose a person, place, event, object, or experience and describe it thoroughly using many sensory details.

Guidelines for writing a descriptive essay:

- Use sensory details. Appeal to sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch.
- Use active verbs (in which the subject is doing the acting instead of being acted upon by something or someone else, such as “Cindy hit the ball.” instead of “The ball was hit by Cindy.”). Also, use a variety of sentence types, such as a simple sentence (“Tom went to the store.”), compound sentence (“Tom went to the store, and he bought a loaf of bread.”), complex sentence (“While Tom was at the store, he bought a loaf of bread.”), or compound-complex sentence (“While Tom was at the store, he bought a loaf of bread, but he forgot to buy a gallon of milk.”).
- Avoid vague language, such as “pretty,” “really,” “a lot,” and “very.”
- Create a dominant impression (overall attitude, mood, or feeling about the subject), such as causing the readers to sympathize with you about a sad event that happened or to agree with you strongly on a certain controversial topic. Choose the details and descriptions that will help accomplish this impression.
- Use comparisons. In order to help make the descriptions even more vivid to the reader, use similes (such as “His emotional state was like a roller coaster.”), metaphors (such as “Her smile was a ray of sunlight in the dark sea of unfamiliar faces.”), personification (giving human characteristics to an object, such as “The wind howled in my ears and beckoned me to walk further into the forest.”), and analogies (brief stories that relate to the topic). Determine the method of organization that works best for your essay: spatial (top to bottom, inside to outside, near to far), chronological (the order in which events happened), least-to-most, or most-to-least.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DESCRIPTIVE ESSAY

▪ Purpose

- Portrays people, places, or things with vivid details to help the reader create a mental picture of what is being described
- Involves the reader so that he or she can visualize what or who is being described
- Creates or conveys a dominant impression of what is being described through sensory details
- Can be objective or subjective

▪ Organizational Pattern

✓ Introduction/Beginning

- Establishes the purpose
- Sets the tone for the overall impression
- May begin with a general statement followed by more specific statements related to the purpose

✓ Body/Middle

- Specific details, examples or reasons
- Anecdotes or “narrative chunks” may serve as details or examples
- Transitions connect the ideas in a logical way
- Transitions assist the flow from paragraph to paragraph
- No prescribed number of paragraphs

✓ Conclusion/End

- Gracefully ends the essay
- May include a restatement of the writer’s opinion or the main idea
- May summarize the information given in the body
- Reader should have a sense that things are “wrapped up.”

Writing Your Thesis Statement for a Descriptive Essay

Descriptive essays need an organizing principle, a focus for the writer’s choice of details. Your descriptive essay requires a variation on the expected form of the thesis, called a dominant impression. Your dominant impression of something or someone is your general feeling about it (under which all your details will fit) in an expressive description, and an overview of your subject in an objective description. So, first, consider how your dominant impression varies with the two forms of descriptive essays, and next, see how your primary and secondary purposes relate to these two approaches to writing description.

Personal or Expressive Descriptive Essays

When you work on a thesis statement for a descriptive essay based on something you have experienced, or someone you know, ask yourself, “What do I feel (or think of) when I see (my topic) in my mind?” or “What words come to mind when I think about (my topic)?” In a personal/expressive descriptive essay, your thesis (or point) is your overall response to something or someone, the dominant impression that this person, place, or thing makes on you. Your dominant impression must be broad enough to cover all the aspects of, and all your observations about the item or person that you will include in your essay. Your thesis statement, then, sums up and previews for your reader the range of emotions, sensations, observations, and/or responses that you will describe in your essay. Your descriptive essay will go on to break down that dominant impression into the key reactions you have to your topic.

A thesis for a descriptive essay about a motorcycle trip could be something like this:

The trip that was such a thrilling idea was, in reality, grueling days of bone-chilling wind and stinging rain.

A descriptive essay gives a detailed picture of a topic. It describes how something looks, feels, smells, tastes, or sounds. Like all essays, a descriptive essay has an introductory paragraph, body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph.

In the introductory paragraph, give a basic description of your topic and general background information. Try to get the reader interested in your topic. The thesis statement should be the last sentence. In the thesis statement, state the main idea of the essay and what you will describe.

Each body paragraph should describe a different aspect of the topic you gave in the thesis statement by giving details about how things look, smell, feel, taste, or sound. Remember, each body paragraph should have a topic sentence that relates to the main idea in the thesis statement and that tells the aspect of the essay topic it will describe.

In the concluding paragraph, summarize the main points from the body paragraphs and remind the reader of the most important details and descriptions. It should leave the reader with an overall impression of the essay topic.

When you write a descriptive essay, organize your ideas clearly. To do this, you can use spatial organization. For example, describe something from bottom to top, front to back, or left to right. This works best if you are describing a specific place or a specific object. Another common way to organize a descriptive essay is time order, in which you organize events in the order they happened. Choose the type of organization that works best for your topic.

The Expository Essay

What is it and what purpose does it serve?

Expose means to uncover or lay something bare, or to discover something in a way that others know what it is. Therefore, **An expository essay** requires the greatest amount of time because the volume is large. It is possible to divide this essay into several categories. Those are **interpretation, definition, cause-&-effect, response, and analysis.**

- **A basic explanation essay** refers to the process of interpreting some process step-by-step (providing detailed instructions). Such assignments answer the “how” questions. The straightforward topics of this sort could be the way The President of the United States is elected; write about the way chocolate factory creates its best candies.
- **A definition essay** is the simplest one, but do not come up with a single definition copied from the English dictionary. Plagiarism will result in eliminating your paper. A writer should include both the official definitions (several of them) and personal understanding of the specific word/phrase: define “justice,” “hatred,” or “school bullying” in the essay.
- **The cause-&-effect essay** is the one, which proves that things are interrelated in this world. In such an essay, a writer should draw a parallel between some subjects/events by specifying the reasons for some things to happen and the consequences. An example of such essay could be the causes & effects of the Civil War in the US.
- **Reflection essay** (or personal response essay) is in the realm of subjectivity on one side. A writer still has to explain the main topic of the essay based on the credible evidence and facts. Focus on personal opinion regarding the analyzed piece in such essay.
- **A critical analysis essay** is an essay, which goal is to make a writer understand the covered material. A teacher/student chooses a related piece of text (from book chapter to scholarly article) to write, analyze, and interpret the results in own way. The teacher compares the essay to the actual interpretation of work. Go line by line to provide a clear explanation of this type of essay.

Characteristics of an Expository Essay

- The purpose is to inform, describe, or explain
- Describes important facts
- Writer is a teacher
- Presents exhaustive information on a topic
- Written in 3rd person (using “it”, “he”, “she”, “they”), uses formal language to discuss someone or something

Sample focus of the paper:

- a medical or biological condition
- a social or technological process

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- life or character of a famous person

When writing any paper, you will most likely have to follow these six steps. The following takes you through all six steps in the process of writing an Expository Essay.

- Step 1. Organizing your Thoughts (Brainstorming)
- Step 2. Researching your Topic
- Step 3. Developing a Thesis Statement
- Step 4. Writing the Introduction
- Step 5. Writing the Body of the Essay
- Step 6. Writing the Conclusion

Step 1: Organizing your Thoughts (Brainstorming)

Believe it or not, there is almost no topic on which your mind will draw a complete blank. Even if you know very little about the subject matter, you are likely to have something to say about it based on something you heard or read about it, or your basic values. It is imperative to take an inventory of what you know first. Sorting out what you know can be done in a number of ways:

- **Free writing** – writing quickly, without stopping, editing, or self-correcting to become aware of what you already know, think, or feel on a topic
- **Subject tree** – related ideas, connecting outwards from the main topic, in a tree form (See illustration 1)
- **List** – free flow of ideas on a topic (See illustration 2)
- **Clustering** – main topic is in the middle circle, all related associations are linked to the main topic (See illustration 3)
- **Outline** – framework of an essay, which includes main points, followed by the breakdown into sub-points (See illustration 4)

Below are visual illustrations of these brainstorming methods. When using them, simply rely on what you already know on the topic – facts, opinions, emotions, and/or concerns.

Subject Tree

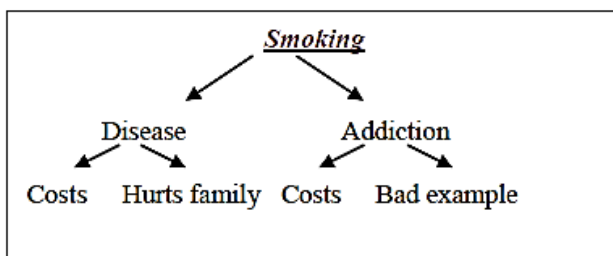


Illustration 1

List

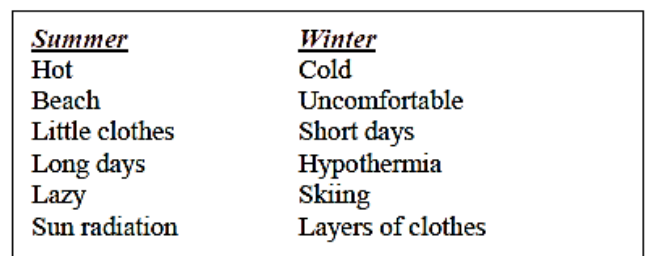


Illustration 2

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Cluster

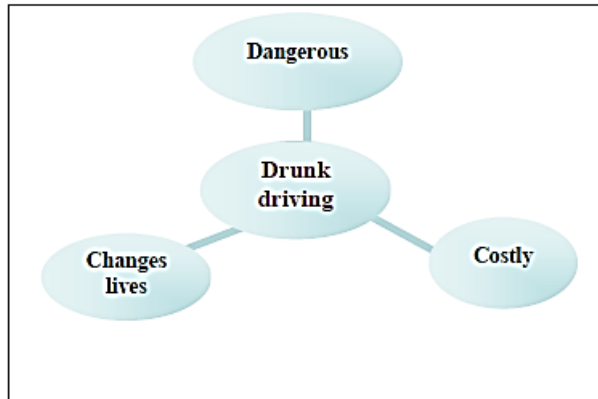


Illustration 3

Outline

- | |
|--|
| <p>I. Introduction</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is depression2. Thesis – Depression is a complex condition as evident in its causes/symptoms/treatments <p>II. Body</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Causes of depression2. Symptoms of depression3. Treatments of depression <p>III. Conclusion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Why is studying depression important2. Reiterate causes/symptoms/treatments3. Consequences of depression |
|--|

Illustration 4

Step 2: Researching your Topic

Research may require going to a library or searching online. All research should be current. Acceptable sources are reference works, books, and scholarly articles by experts. Encyclopedias and popular magazines should not be used in academic writing.

When using information from a Web site, evaluate the site for timeliness and reputability. Also, consider the site's purpose, the reliability of its sponsors, and credibility of the author. Make sure to collect all necessary reference information in order to give credit to the authors.

Step 3: Developing a Thesis Statement

Developing a thesis is like building a bridge. In a bridge, the cross-beam (driveway) has to be held up by strong columns in order for the bridge to function. Similarly, **a thesis has two main components** – a claim and the supporting details that sustain it. In the bridge analogy, a cross-beam represents a claim, and the columns / pillars represent supporting details.

Claim

A claim is a one-sentence statement that

- Makes an assertion or takes a stance
- Is based on a generalization
- Is not a fact
- Is debatable
- Must be presented in the introduction of the essay

When making a claim, ask yourself any of the following:

- What point am I trying to make?
- What am I trying to say?
- What am I getting at?

Example: Depression affects people. (Weak because it is not debatable)

Depression is a complex condition. (Stronger because it presents an assertion that needs to be supported with evidence)

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Supporting Details

Supporting details provide the means for reinforcing the claim, and can be organized in different patterns – 1) categories/topics, 2) time frames/chronological periods, or 3) cause/effect.

Thesis Statement

To create a thesis statement, combine the claim and the supporting details in one sentence. The direction of your essay can change depending on the pattern in which you organize the supporting details.

Example

Supporting details organized into categories:

Depression is a complex condition, understanding of which requires an in-depth look at its causes, symptoms, and available treatments.

Supporting details organized into time frames:
the

Depression is a complex condition, the treatment of which has undergone dramatic changes as the medical field progressed from late 19th century into the mid-20th century and finally into the early 21st century.

Supporting details organized into cause/effect:

Depression is a complex condition, which may be caused by any combination of biological, genetic, and environmental factors.

NOTE: Writing is a fluid process. As you complete your essay, you may realize that your thesis needs to be modified to reflect your position better.

Step 4: Writing the Introduction

The introduction is the most general part of the paper. It helps provide a roadmap for further discussion or analysis. This simplified formula offers components for a basic introduction:

- Definition:** Identify, define, and/or describe the topic, concept, or literary theme. What will you be talking about?
Relevance: Show the importance of your topic, concept or theme. How does it relate to or impact society?
Thesis: Copy the thesis statement generated in the previous step.

Example

Topic: Depression

Definition: Depression is a crippling condition that makes people feel despair in their lives.

Relevance: While 16% of all Americans experience depression during their lifetime, most remain undiagnosed and untreated.

Thesis: Depression is a complex condition, understanding of which requires an in-depth look at its causes, symptoms, and available treatments.

Step 5: Writing the Body of the Essay

The body of the essay is the most detailed part. It involves addressing each supporting detail in a separate, fully-developed paragraph. Make sure to include the necessary evidence from your research.

It is imperative that each supporting detail be announced or introduced within the text. This introduction is called a **topic sentence** and it is found at the beginning of a paragraph. The topic sentence is a statement you make about the supporting detail.

Example

- Topic sentence 1:** Depression is caused by several major factors.
Topic sentence 2: Though not always clearly evident, several symptoms can signal that a person is experiencing depression.
Topic sentence 3: A number of treatments are currently available for people who suffer from depression.

Step 6: Writing the Conclusion

Conclusion brings the paper to a close. It should be similar to the introduction, but worded differently. It allows you to reiterate and summarize the main points of the essay. The following components comprise a conclusion:

- Relevance:** Repeat the importance of your topic.
Review: Reiterate the points you discussed.
Summary: Summarize your conclusions.

Example

- Relevance:** Depression affects thousands of men, women, and children every year; many endure it without any help.
Review: This paper focused on the symptoms, causes, and available treatments of depression.
Summary: Depression can have devastating consequences not only for the people experiencing it, but for those around them as well. Education about this painful condition may allow us to reach out to a greater number of people suffering from it.

The Argumentative Essay

What is it?

An argumentative essay makes a claim and then gives examples and evidence to prove that point. You can begin writing an argumentative essay by deciding on a certain topic, such as something about a belief, idea, or controversial issue. Then, do research to obtain detailed information. The information can be statistics, stories, examples, observances, and other facts. Use the information throughout the essay to argue your point and convince the reader.

You already have a natural tendency to question a point of view or opinion: this is the basis for argumentation as a method of development. No two minds see a person or situation in exactly the same way, so readers nearly always suspend agreement until they are satisfied with the reasons why. You also innately understand how to get what you want in numerous situations, how to appeal to others by making your wishes relate to them. This is the essence of persuasion, a skill allied to, and used in combination with, argumentation.

If you say that student health care available on your campus is inadequate, your listening audience might listen carefully as you state your case, judging whether or not you have solid evidence to support your point. “Well, it’s closed half the time, and it just isn’t any good” sounds weak and unconvincing, so you try to come up with stronger evidence to back up your statement. You may try to think of issues that your listeners can relate to. The thinking involved in arguing and persuading takes some work, but you will have clarified your opinion.

Arguing a point and persuading readers in an essay requires you to do three things: (1) search for logical answers as to why you hold an opinion—argumentation, (2) examine and weigh the usefulness of the emotions associated with your opinion— persuasion, and (3) present clear and credible information to support the viewpoint you are arguing. The ability to present sound and compelling arguments is an important skill in everyday life. As you develop skill in clear, logical reasoning you will become a better critic of advertisements, newspaper articles, political speeches, and other everyday persuasive appeals.

Guidelines for writing an argumentative essay:

- Choose a narrow issue.
- Tell your reader what you believe about the issue very clearly and specifically in your thesis statement or controlling idea.
- Be aware of your audience and anticipate the reader’s views. This means that if you know your readers will most likely not believe a certain statement because it goes against

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traditional beliefs or their personal viewpoints, make sure you give solid evidence to back it up.

- Use convincing details as evidence to support your claim. These should be from believable and reliable sources. For example, if you're stating something that has to do with human health, quote a doctor who knows about that topic, or if you are talking about a trend in society, include statistics from a well-known organization.
- Choose the most appropriate way of arguing your point (inductive or deductive).
 - inductive=start with stating all the evidence and then move on to one conclusion
 - deductive=start with one basic statement of belief and move on to the supporting points of evidence
- Acknowledge opposing viewpoints to prove you have thought about the topic thoroughly yet still find that your point is correct.

Writing a thesis statement for an argumentative/persuasive essay.

Persuading your audience of your viewpoint about a certain controversial subject is your primary objective in the argumentation essay, and the direct and clear statement of your viewpoint is the key to the argumentation/persuasion thesis statement. Be direct and unambiguous about your position. If possible, avoid the use of conditional verb forms that soften your position, as in "Volunteer work might help some students to gain experience." The extended thesis is ideal for an argumentation/ persuasion essay. Presenting the main supporting points of your argument in the thesis will clearly show readers the direction of your argument.

Compare the forcefulness of the following argumentation thesis with the extended thesis that follows:

- Colleges and universities must set an example where recycling is concerned.
An example of an extended argumentation thesis:
- Lack of family or peer support, financial pressures, and health problems make students drop out of college and university.

What is your purpose?

The main purpose of your argumentation/persuasion essay is to convince your audience that your opinion on a controversial issue is correct. You may, at times, also have a second purpose: to persuade your audience to take some sort of action, even if that action is simply considering your opinion with an open mind.

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To convince your readers in an argumentation essay, it is important to provide them with a clear main point and plenty of evidence to back it up—this presents your *ethos*, your credibility as a writer. If you want to argue that public schools should require students to wear uniforms, do some research to gather as much supporting evidence as possible. For instance, check to see if uniforms are cheaper than alternatives.

Perhaps you could find out if schools with uniforms have a lower incidence of violent behaviour than those without them or if students' academic performance improves when school uniforms are adopted. As you search for evidence, make sure that it clearly links to your topic and supports the main point you are trying to get across to your audience.

Next, clarify your purposes. Do you want your readers to take action? If so, you must motivate them to do so. Do you want to inform your readers, to show them why your viewpoint is a valid one? Then you will have to present appropriate, convincing support that allows readers to feel that they might reach your conclusion on their own. Or do you just want to break down your readers' probable resistance to your ideas or viewpoint? Here you will not try to convince your readers; you will instead work to show the positive aspects of your position so they will view it in a more balanced way.

Organization:

The most common type of argumentative essay has six paragraphs. Like all essays, it begins with an introduction and ends with a conclusion. In between are the body paragraphs where you must do three things: support your opinion, present the opposing point of view, and tell why that viewpoint is wrong.

INTRODUCTION	Paragraph 1	Hook Connecting/Background Information Main idea Statement/Thesis Statement
	Paragraph 2	Support 1 (first reason) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explanation, detail, example• Explanation, detail, example
	Paragraph 3	Support 2 (second reason) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explanation, detail, example• Explanation, detail, example
	Paragraph 4	Support 3 (third reason) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explanation, detail, example• Explanation, detail, example
	Paragraph 5	Opposite Side <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Counterargument 1• Refutation (ATTACK)• Counterargument 2• Refutation (ATTACK) 
CONCLUSION	Paragraph 6	Repeat your thesis statement in different words Suggestion/Opinion/Prediction for the future

TOPICS FOR ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAYS

What is a great topic for an argumentative essay? Obviously, it should be an issue that you feel strongly about, know something about, and would like to share your opinion about. What is your opinion, why do you feel this way? Can you think of some reasons why people might disagree with you?

When you choose a topic, consider these two questions:

- Does the topic have two sides?
- How much do you know about the topic?

Look at the list of argumentative topics below. What is your opinion about each topic? Are they two sides of each topic?

Topics for Argument	
Banning cigarettes	Banning violent video games
Requiring school uniforms	Using animals for medical research
Mandating military service	Requiring a test for people who want children
Lowering the drinking age to 18	Banning cell phones in schools
Getting rid of zoos	Requiring a year of study abroad

TOPICS FOR ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAYS

After you choose a topic, think about what you know about it. What do you know about your side of the argument and what do you know about the opposite side of the argument? A good way to organize your ideas is to use a **Pro & Con T-chart**. [Pro = in favor of thesis statement, Con = against thesis statement]

If you cannot think of several ideas for one or both sides, you should do more research about that topic or choose a different topic.

Conclusion:

After you write an essay, it is important to **analyze** it, or read it again carefully to see if you can make any improvements. Learning to analyze whether or not your essay contains certain key features will help you improve your writing. One of the first things you should do is **check that you have used the appropriate type of writing**. For example, if you wanted to describe how a place looks, you should have written a descriptive essay. If you wanted to show the similarities between two places, you should have written a comparison essay.

Next, you should **make sure your essay has a clear thesis statement**. Your thesis statement should state the main idea of the essay and include the main points that you write about in your body paragraphs. Check that your thesis statement is in the introductory paragraph, usually as the last sentence. Each aspect of the thesis statement will be described in its own body paragraph.

Check for unity when you analyze your essays. All of the information in the essay should relate to the thesis statement. Read each body paragraph in your essay, and make sure it has a clear topic sentence as well as supporting sentences that directly relate to the thesis statement.

Make sure your essay has a strong concluding paragraph. Read your concluding paragraph and make sure it restates the thesis statement, summarizes the most important points of the essay, and offers a suggestion, an opinion, or a prediction.

Finally, **make sure your essay has clear organization**. As you read your essay, make sure that your ideas are easy to follow. Remember that common ways to organize essays are time order (the order events happen), spatial order (the physical location of items), and point-by-point organization (writing about one aspect of the thesis statement in each body paragraph).

Samples for self-study: Sample 1

Title:

Note how creative title relates to essay.

Introductory paragraph:

First paragraph sets the stage where the action happened, when it happened, and to whom it happened. Note descriptive words.

First body paragraph:

Note how writer provides details, translating an experience into written words that permit the reader to visualize the situation. Note descriptive details.

Tense:

This essay is written in the present tense; most narratives, however, will be written in the past tense. Either tense can be effective.

Second body paragraph:

Note use of details, especially adjectives. Writer makes use of figurative language (personification - flowers "waving hello").

Third body paragraph:

Writer continues to appeal to readers' senses with visually descriptive words. Figurative language is again used with the simile "like a carriage created by nature."

Imagery:

Note how the writer creates images for the reader (bold type) by appealing to the senses.

Conclusion:

Writer alludes to another sense (smell) and uses words to indicate closing ("final crest"). Essay ends with strong concluding sentence.

Summer Escape

My family has always looked forward to leaving Florida during the torrid summer months. It is a tremendous relief to get out of the heated hustle and bustle of summer living in Florida. Each summer, we follow the yellow brick road to our hometown in upstate New York.

As we drive through state after state, it becomes apparent that the world around us is changing. In South Carolina, we already begin to notice changes. The trees appear to be touchable, offering soft, plush leaves which sway in the breeze, and the grass actually invites us to share its place rather than scaring us away with mounds of intruding fire ants. As each state brings new surroundings, our anticipation builds, and home seems closer all the time.

Leaving the flatlands and entering an area where we are suddenly surrounded by hills of purple and blue are by far the most awakening moments. Virginia and Pennsylvania offer brilliant scenery with majestic hills and checkerboard farmlands. As we descend through the curves and winds of the northern region of the United States, home is now very close: we are almost there. Suddenly, we have driven from wide-open flatlands to a narrow, winding road surrounded by hillsides of stone and trees. Around every curve, orange and black tiger lilies claim their place in the world as they push themselves out toward the car, waving hello and flashing their mysterious black spots toward us as we drive by.

The journey home is almost complete. As we begin our final descent through the state of Pennsylvania into upstate New York, the surroundings become comfortably familiar. Before long, we are welcomed by a sign that reads "Waverly, 18 miles" and the familiar fields of grazing cattle. Through the last stretch of Pennsylvania, the bursting foliage seems to envelop us and carry us over the hills like a carriage created by nature.

It is at this point that our family, even the youngest member, knows that our vacation in New York is about to begin. Our eldest son has joked for years that he can "smell" Grandma's apple pie already. Approximately fifteen minutes pass and as our vehicle takes us over the final crest, we see the smoke stack from the local factory as we cross the border of Pennsylvania and New York and are aware of our surroundings. A couple of turns later, we are there. We have reached our destination; we are home.

Sample 2



My First Japanese Pastry

Japan is known as the "Land of the Rising Sun." Ever since I was a child I always thought of Japan as an exotic country, filled with many strange and interesting customs. I had always wanted to travel to Japan and experience its old and unique culture. Luckily, it was my first year in university, and I was able to study abroad in Japan. I was so excited, but little did I know that I was about to learn an important lesson because of a simple pastry.

At first, everything was new and exciting for me. Getting off the airplane from the London and walking the streets of Tokyo for the first time was very exciting. Seeing old temples, shrines, and some people dressed in kimonos was exciting, and it fit my image of Japan exactly. I thought to myself, "My dream has come true!" However, after a while, the new buildings, the modern public transportations system, and the modern department stores with all the signs in English made me feel at home. I thought, "Basically, Japan is like the U. K."

Walking around, I started to feel hungry. I started looking for something cheap and delicious. I didn't know where I was, so I followed my nose and found a bakery. There were many breads and pastries everywhere. I really felt like I was back home. Suddenly, I spotted a delicious looking strawberry jam pastry. After I paid, I bit into the pastry. "What is this?" I thought. I was surprised to find that it was not filled with strawberry jam. It was filled with sweet bean paste, called "anko" in Japan. It was such a disappointment.

Although I didn't like sweet bean pastry that day, I have since learned to love it. What I learned was that many things look the same in Japan as in my country. However, on the inside, they are pure Japanese, and they should be appreciated for what they are. Now, travelling is more enjoyable since I learned that lesson.

Sample 3

The **introductory paragraph** introduces the topic of *vegetable oil fuel*. It gives interesting background information about the topic. The **thesis statement** clearly states the overall purpose of the essay – to discuss the advantages of using vegetable oil instead of gasoline. The rest of the essay will talk about specific advantages of vegetable oil fuel.

The **topic sentences** from the three **body paragraphs** of the essay tell what each paragraph will be about. They all relate to the thesis statement about advantages of vegetable oil fuel. These paragraphs support the thesis statement by providing specific examples of the advantages of using vegetable oil fuel.

In the **concluding paragraph**, the writer makes a prediction based on the information in the essay.

Fuel for the Future

These days, people are concerned about the environment. Many people want cars with engines that use alternative sources of fuel. Oil from plants, or vegetable oil, is one fuel source that people are talking about. ^{TS}There are many advantages to using vegetable oil instead of gasoline to power cars.

^{TS}First, vegetable oil fuel is much safer for the environment than gasoline. Vegetable oil does not release dangerous substances into the air. Gasoline does. Many people argue that this makes vegetable oil a better choice.

^{TS}Second, vegetable oil comes from plants, such as corn and soybeans. Plants are renewable, meaning farmers can grow them over and over again. Gasoline is not renewable. This makes vegetable oil a better long-term solution for our energy needs.

^{TS}Third, many people save money by switching to vegetable oil fuel. This renewable source of fuel is a much cheaper alternative than gasoline.

Since many people are concerned about the environment, it is important that they are aware of these possibilities. If we encourage the use of vegetable oil, we can help the environment and have plenty of energy to power our cars for years to come.

Sample 4

A Volcano Stops Travel

The introductory paragraph gives a basic description of a specific volcano and includes some general background information. The thesis statement shows that the essay will describe how the volcano's eruption was devastating to travel.

Read the three **body paragraphs**. Each one has a **topic sentence** that relates to the main idea in the thesis statement, and tells what aspect of the essay topic will be described.

This essay organizes events by time. It describes the effects of the ash in the order they happened. The first body paragraph describes the first problem that happened because of the ash soon after the volcano erupted. The second body paragraph describes more problems that happened a few days later after wind blew the ash. The third body paragraph describes the airports after they had been closed a week later. Together, the three body paragraphs give a complete picture of how the eruption of this volcano hurt travel over time.

The concluding paragraph summarizes the main points of the essay by reminding the reader of the most important details and descriptions. It leaves the reader with an overall impression of the problems the volcano caused for travelers.

The 2010 eruption of the volcano "E15" affected almost every country in Europe. Ice and ash from the volcano caused major problems. Ice melted and flowed down the volcano, causing rivers to rise. The ash, however, caused the most problems. It filled the air and made it hard to see. As a result, airports in many European countries closed for more than a week. ^{TS}The eruption of E15 was devastating to travel throughout Europe.

^{TS}Ash from the volcano started causing problems after the eruption on April 14, 2010. The volcano blew huge amounts of gray ash into the sky. The ash was a thick, gray smoke, making it very difficult for airplane pilots to see. In addition, pilots feared that the ash would damage the engines of their airplanes. Flights into Iceland were canceled.

^{TS}A few days after April 14, strong winds blew ash from E15 to several countries in Europe. This caused more problems. Airports in England, Finland, Sweden, and many other countries had to cancel flights, too. The airports became crowded, chaotic, and noisy. People on cell phones frantically made calls to make other arrangements.

^{TS}A week later, many airports were still closed, but they became much quieter. There were no flights in or out of airports in many European countries. Word of the disaster spread, and the airports were calmer and less crowded as more people avoided them.

In conclusion, the eruption of E15 affected travelers around the world. Enormous clouds of ash from the volcano first caused problems with flights in Iceland. As the wind got stronger, it blew ash to other countries. Airports in other European countries had to cancel flights, as well. The airports buzzed with activity for several days because desperate travelers had no place to go. As the news of the catastrophe spread, airports slowly became less chaotic. Although the 2010 eruption E15 was disruptive, it was certainly memorable to many people.

Sample 5

Mexican and Tex-Mex Foods

The **introductory paragraph** gives background information about how foods from other countries are adapted for Americans' tastes. The **thesis statement** tells the reader that the essay will explain how Mexican food and Tex-Mex food are different.

Look at the excerpt of the three **body paragraphs**. Each **topic sentence** relates directly to the topic in the thesis statement, and tells what aspect of the main idea will be compared in that paragraph. The first body paragraph compares the way Mexican and Tex-Mex foods are served. The second body paragraph compares the ingredients used in Mexican and Tex-Mex foods. The third paragraph shows that sometimes the two types of food are completely different.

The first sentence in the **concluding paragraph** restates the main idea of the essay. The second and third sentences summarize the main points of the essay. The last sentence offers an opinion.

There are many different cultures in the United States. As a result, there are many different types of foods. Many of these foods are adapted for Americans' tastes. For instance, Tex-Mex food, which was adapted from Mexican food, is extremely popular in the United States. Some of this food is similar to food in Mexico, but not all of it is the same. ^{THS}There are some important differences between Mexican and Tex-Mex foods.

^{TS}One difference is that some Mexican and Tex-Mex foods are served in different ways. Tex-Mex restaurants in the United States usually serve chips and salsa before dinner. Although salsa is popular in Mexico, people do not typically eat it with chips before dinner.

^{TS}Another difference between Tex-Mex and Mexican foods is that the ingredients are not always the same. Tex-Mex food often uses ground beef, whereas Mexican food often uses chicken. In addition, Tex-Mex food is often made with yellow or orange cheese, but Mexican food is usually made with soft white cheese.

^{TS}Finally, some Mexican and Tex-Mex foods are completely different. A *sope* is a dish with meat, vegetables, and cheese. It is on many menus in Mexico. However, many Tex-Mex restaurants do not serve them. *Sopapillas* are a common Tex-Mex dessert, but they are not a traditional Mexican food.

In conclusion, there are many clear differences between Mexican and Tex-Mex food. The way meals are served, the ingredients, and the actual dishes can be completely different. Both kinds of food appeal to many people in the United States. Everyone should understand the differences between Mexican and Tex-Mex foods.

Further Practice:

Task 1

The Invention of Foods

Have you ever wondered where all those new foods on the supermarket shelf come from?

Hundreds of new foods are invented every year, and each one is the result of an inventor at work. Potato chips, chewing gum, and peanut butter are three popular foods that were invented here in North America.

Today, potato chips are the biggest selling snack food in Canada. The average Canadian eats about 4.5 kilograms of potato chips every year. Sometimes inventions happen by accident. This is how the potato chip was invented about 150 years ago by a chef named George Crumb. One night a customer at the restaurant asked George to make the potatoes thinner and George cut them as thin as paper and fried them in oil. The customer loved them and the idea soon caught on. But it wasn't until a potato peeling machine was invented that potato chips could be made in factories and sold all over North America.

Imagine a chewing gum made from tree sap. The earliest chewing gum was invented by the Aboriginal peoples, who used the resin from the black spruce tree for a kind of chewy snack. The Aboriginal peoples shared this idea with the pioneers who settled in North America. In 1850, John Curtis decided to turn this idea into a chewing gum business. He cooked the gum until it was thick, rolled it out, and cut it into small pieces. They called it "pure spruce gum." It wasn't until 1906 that the first bubble gum was invented. It was called "blibber-blubber." Today there are over a hundred different kinds of bubble gum and new flavours are always being invented.

It's hard to believe that four out of every five homes in Canada has peanut butter in the cupboard. Peanut butter was invented by a doctor from St. Louis, U.S.A. in 1890. He wanted to give his patients a high-protein food that was easy to digest. There are eight grams of protein in two tablespoons of peanut butter. It also contains some vitamins and minerals. Now there are lots of factories that make peanut butter and this sticky food is the most common sandwich filling in children's lunches. What kind is your favourite, smooth or chunky? Our food is always changing thanks to inventors who continue to think up new foods. So go ahead, crunch that potato chip, chew that gum, and spread the peanut butter! Perhaps someday you will create a food of your own.

The Invention of Foods — Analysis

1. Number each paragraph.
2. Write the word "Introduction" above the introductory paragraph.
3. Circle the lead sentence in the introduction.
4. Draw a box around the thesis statement in the introduction.
5. Write the word "Conclusion" above the concluding paragraph.
6. Read paragraphs 2, 3, and 4. Underline the main idea (topic) sentence in each of these paragraphs.
7. Summarize paragraphs 2, 3, and 4 in one or two words. In the left margin, write these words
8. next to the appropriate paragraph.
9. List three supporting details that explain how chewing gum was invented:
- 10.

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a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

11. If you wanted to find a statistic or number fact about a food, which paragraph would you skim? _____

12. What is this piece of writing all about? _____

Task 2

Making a Pizza

Introduction

So you want to know how to make your own pizza!

Main Idea #1

To begin with, you need to prepare the pizza dough. _____

Main Idea #2

Now your pizza is ready for the sauce and cheese. _____

Main Idea #3

Of course, everyone agrees it's the toppings that make your pizza really special.

Conclusion

Now that you have your own home baked pizza fresh from the oven, there's nothing left to do but sit down and enjoy it. With all that bread, zesty cheese, and toppings, pizza is not only delicious, it's nutritious too!

Task 3

ACTIVITY Identifying Topics for Argumentative Essays

Read these eight topics. Put a check mark (✓) next to the ones that could be good topics for argument essays.

- _____ 1. The first time I flew in a plane.
- _____ 2. University education should be free.
- _____ 3. How and why birds fly south for the winter.
- _____ 4. High school teachers need a higher salary.
- _____ 5. Steps needed to get a driver's license.
- _____ 6. Legalizing gay marriage.
- _____ 7. Increasing tax on imported food.
- _____ 8. How to become a karate master.

Can you think of three additional topics that would be excellent for an argumentative essay?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Task 4

ACTIVITY Brainstorming Supporting Ideas

Read the thesis statements and complete the Pro & Con T-charts. Write three ideas to support each statement. Then write three ideas against each statement. Finally, choose an original topic and write a thesis statement of your own. Then fill in the pros and cons for your new topic.

1. *Thesis statement: Adults should be required to pass a test before they can become parents.*

PRO	CON
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

2. *Thesis statement: The drinking age in Japan should be lowered to 18 years old.*

PRO	CON
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

Task 5

Read the thesis statement from an essay about how mocap was used in a movie.

Check (✓) three topic sentences from the body paragraphs. Remember to make sure they are directly related to the thesis statement.

Thesis Statement: Many critics agree that mocap made the characters appear realistic, believable, and interesting.

- a. Mocap gave the characters emotional expressions that brought their personalities to life.
- b. The movie made more money in ticket sales than any other movie in history.
- c. The characters moved like real people because of mocap technology.
- d. Mocap allowed the characters to interact realistically, making the story more interesting.

Task 6

Read the introductory paragraph from an essay about mocap, and circle the correct answer for each item.

The History of Motion Capture Technology

The use of motion capture technology for animation started in the 1970s. It has changed and improved significantly over the years. Artists used to film people and then trace their movements. This helped them create realistic characters. Today, actors are filmed, and their movements are sent to a computer. Then, artists can change the images to create digital characters. Several important inventions in the last four decades have made motion capture an effective way to animate movies.

1 This paragraph is from *a descriptive* | *a comparison* | *an informal* essay about the history of mocap technology.

2 The thesis statement is the *last* | *first* | *second* sentence in the introductory paragraph.

3 The three body paragraphs will probably describe *some things that were invented since the 1970s* | *tools artists used before the 1970s to draw characters* | *several characters from different animated movies*.

4 The writer will probably organize this essay *in the order inventions were made* | *by the location of the parts of the inventions* | *in alphabetical order according to the artists' last names*.

Task 7

Read the thesis statement and the possible sentences from the body paragraphs.

Check (✓) one sentence for each that does not relate to the thesis statement.

Thesis Statement: Although there are many similarities between how mocap is used to make movies and to make video games, there are important differences.

1 Sentences from body paragraph 1:

- a. One difference between using mocap for movies and for video games is the way characters interact with viewers.
- b. In video games, on the other hand, the viewer controls one of the character's movements.
- c. Designers are paid a lot of money to create animation.

2 Sentences from body paragraph 2:

- a. Another difference is the environments that characters "live" in.
- b. Scenes in older TV programs often showed only one side of a room.
- c. Unlike movies, video game backgrounds allow the viewer to see in every direction.

3 Sentences from body paragraph 3:

- a. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences now recognizes the importance of animated movies.
- b. A third difference between animation for movies and for video games is the use of sound.
- c. Characters in these movies speak to each other more often than they do in video games.

Task 8:

Read the thesis statement and the three possible concluding paragraphs for the essay.

Answer the questions.

Thesis Statement: Programs that use mocap to train pilots are effective because they give pilots confidence, reduce risk, and help prepare pilots for different weather.

A In summary, pilots have a variety of skills. They must have good hand-eye coordination, be able to concentrate for long periods of time, and be in good physical shape. Without these special skills, a pilot will not be very successful.

B Mocap training programs help pilots gain confidence, provide practice without risk, and allow pilots to gain experience with different kinds of weather. These training programs are extremely

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useful, and more airlines will likely use them in the future. As technology improves, the programs will become more realistic, too.

C Because mocap training programs are so effective, more flight schools should use them. They are clearly useful for improving confidence. In addition, they allow pilots to practice safely and give pilots practice flying in different kinds of weather. Airlines should continue to use mocap training for both inexperienced pilots and experienced pilots.

1 Which concluding paragraph does not relate to the essay?

2 Which concluding paragraph offers a suggestion?

3 Which concluding paragraph makes a prediction?

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