

Expository essays

When writing your expository essay, follow these nine basic steps:

1. Select a topic:

Be sure the topic is narrow enough to make it manageable within the space of an essay

2. Select a style of essay:

- definition example
- compare and contrast
- cause and effect
- process analysis (how-to)
- problem-solution

3. Research

Research your given topic, gathering information using at least 3 reliable sources. Take notes, and don't forget to write down source information for creation of a Works Cited page.

4. Write a thesis sentence:

Be sure the thesis statement(or sentence) expresses a controlling idea that is neither too broad nor too specific to be developed effectively

5. Organize the essay:

Begin by listing the major divisions which the body paragraphs in your essay will discuss; then fill in the primary supports that each body paragraph of the essay will contain

6. Write topic sentences for the body paragraphs of the essay:

For each body paragraph, write a topic sentence that directly relates to the thesis sentence

7. Write the body paragraphs of the essay:

Each body paragraph should develop the main idea covered in that paragraph's topic sentence, contain evidence (quotes, charts, graphs, data), and then explain how that evidence proves the idea of the paragraph.

8. Write an introduction paragraph:

An introductory paragraph should state the thesis of the essay, introduce the divisions in the body paragraphs of the essay, and gain the interest of the reader

9. Write a conclusion paragraph:

- Restate the thesis and divisions of the essay
- Bring the essay to an appropriate and effective close
- Avoid digressing into new issues

Essay Writing

A GOOD INTRODUCTION WILL...

- begin with an attention getter
- spark the audience's interest
- include adequate background info
- end with a thesis statement

A GOOD THESIS STATEMENT WILL...

- be a single, declarative sentence
- convey the main idea
- provide focus by highlighting key points
- establish the essay's purpose
- include strong verbs and precise words

A GOOD TOPIC SENTENCE WILL...

- be a single, declarative sentence
- convey the main idea of the paragraph
- be precise – use precise and specific words
- be brief – only include important information
- be clear

A GOOD EXAMPLE WILL...

- support the topic sentence and thesis statement
- include facts, quotes, and details
- be directly related to the main point in which you are trying to establish

A GOOD EXPLANATION WILL...

- be written in your own words
- link the example to the topic sentence
- help link multiple examples together
- present the audience with thought-provoking information

A GOOD TRANSITION WILL...

- logically link one topic to another
- inform the reader that you have additional points to make
- lead into the next body paragraph

A GOOD BODY PARAGRAPH WILL...

- begin with a topic sentence
- include adequate examples and explanations
- help support the thesis statement
- transition to the next main point

A GOOD CONCLUSION WILL...

- make the audience care about the topic
- restate the thesis
- not include any new information
- compel the audience to take action
- leave a lasting impression
- bring the essay full circle (back to intro)