

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

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Module: Written Expression

Expository Essay

1. Introduction to an Essay Writing

The essay is an extended piece of writing which belongs to academic writing. One main feature of the essay is unity in which it is composed of groups of organized paragraphs stating one topic. The essay has so many types mainly the expository essay which is the kind of well structured writing in which the writer is defining, explaining, and giving more details about a thought or a concept. There are three main examples of expository essay :scientific reports, magazine articles and academic essays.

2. The Different parts of the Essay:

1. Introductory paragraph

The first paragraph of an essay should introduce the reader to the essay topic. It should create interest in the essay, outline the writer's main ideas, and suggest how these ideas will be presented within the body of the essay. The introduction consists of three main elements: a hook, building sentences, and a thesis statement.

1. Hook The first sentence (or sentences) of an essay should catch the reader's attention. It introduces the topic of the essay in an interesting way.

2. Building sentences After the hook, the following sentences should provide background information to give readers some context about the topic. They should "build" towards the thesis statement.

3. Thesis statement The thesis statement comes at the end of the introduction. It is the most important sentence in the entire essay because it presents the essay topic and the writer's position on that topic. It also indicates the main ideas that will be discussed in the body paragraphs.

2. Body paragraphs

The body of an essay consists of three paragraphs. Each body paragraph explains in detail one of the main ideas expressed in the thesis statement. There are three parts to a body paragraph: a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence.

1. Topic sentence The first sentence of a body paragraph expresses the topic of the paragraph and provides a controlling idea about the topic. All information in the paragraph supports the controlling idea.

2. Supporting sentences Supporting sentences explain and develop the topic sentence. They present logical thoughts, evidence, and explanations in support of the controlling idea.

3. Concluding sentence The paragraph may end with a concluding thought on the paragraph topic. It may also show a transition to the next paragraph.

3. Concluding paragraph

The concluding paragraph ends the essay by reviewing the main ideas from each body paragraph and leaving the reader with a final thought. The conclusion consists of three elements: a restated thesis, a summary of main ideas, and a final thought.

1. Restated thesis At the start of the conclusion, the thesis is restated in words different from those in the introduction.
2. Summary of main ideas The main ideas from each of the body paragraphs are summarized as a reminder to the reader.
3. Final thought The writer ends the essay by presenting a final thought on the topic – for example, by stating an opinion, a solution, or a prediction. The final thought should leave a strong impression and encourage the reader to think further about the topic.

3. The main characteristics of expository essay:

- Informative
- Clarity
- Unbiased
- Impersonal



4. Types of Expository Essay : There are six types of expository essay:

1. **Compare and contrast essay:** It is a type of essay that compares and contrasts two things. Learn to write a compare and contrast essay from our ultimate guide.

2. **Cause and effect essay:** This essay tries to find out the causes of some things and their effects on something. Learn cause and effect essay writing with this guide.

3. **Process essay:** This essay explains the process of making or doing something.

4. **Problem and solution essay:** This essay presents a problem and provides its possible solutions.

5. **Classification essay:** In this essay, the topic is divided into categories. The examples, ideas, and characters are defined for each category in the form of groups. Follow the link for a detailed guide on classification essay writing.

6. **Definition essay:** This essay defines what the topic exactly means. A definition essay provides clear and specific information about the topic and uses examples to clarify it.

4. Expository Essay Outline Template

I. Introduction Paragraph

- a. Attention Getter (Write the sentence(s) you will use to capture your reader's attention)
- b. Detail – something to add to or support your attention getter
- c. Complete Thesis Statement

II. Body Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence (Write out the entire sentence)

- a. Supporting detail Give an explanation that supports your topic sentence
- b. Supporting Detail – Give an example that supports your topic sentence and explanation
- c. Give a statement that analytically summarizes your topic sentence and details

III. Body Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence (Write out the sentence)

Repeat the same process as above

IV. Body Paragraph 3

Topic Sentence (Write out the sentence)

Repeat the same as above

V. Conclusion

- a. Restate the thesis ideas without repeating the thesis word for word
- b. Summarize and connect the main points of your essay with a universal idea/theme

Activity One : underline the thesis (and topic sentences) in red, the supporting details in green and the transitions in black.

Annotated Expository Essay Key

“Wolves”

Wolves are found all over the world and are popular in many cultures. Wolves are often pictured in fairy tales as ferocious animals, but they are very social and unique animals who do not deserve their scary reputation.

One interesting thing about wolves is that they are very social animals . They live together in packs as small as only two or as large as twenty wolves. Additionally, each wolf pack has a male leader and a female leader and the members of the pack cooperate and get along well with one another.

Another interesting thing about wolves is that they are often pictured howling at the moon. Scientists have discovered that the wolf howl is an important form of communication between members of the pack. The howl is a way for a lone wolf to locate the rest of his or her pack, or a way to sound an alarm if there is danger nearby. The howl is also a way to announce to the rest of the pack when one member has killed an animal for food and wants to share.

A third interesting thing about wolves is that they are great hunters. They actually feed on large animals such as deer. To do this the pack must work together because the deer is so much larger than the individual wolves. Wolves, it should also be noted, will only kill what they need to eat.

Who are the worst enemies of wolves? Humans! Wolves may be portrayed as ferocious man eaters, but they are actually more likely to run from people than attack them. In fact, wolf attacks on humans are rare, but wolves were almost hunted to extinction by man.

Wolves are much more complex animals than people think and more interesting than picture books show them to be.

Review of Terms: Thesis, Topic Sentence, Supporting Detail, Transitions

Thesis statement and/or topic sentence: A thesis statement is a sentence that states the subject of an essay. A topic sentence states the subject of a paragraph. For example, the first sentence in the “Wolves” essay is the topic sentence. It tells the reader that the essay is about wolves: “Wolves are ...” A concise topic sentence is imperative for creating a strongly written paragraph.

Supporting Details: Supporting details are sentences which add information to your topic sentence by explaining, describing, or defining it. For example, we learn in the second body paragraph of the “Wolves” essay three reasons why wolves howl at the moon: “to locate their pack, to sound an alarm or announce a kill.”

Transitions Transition in writing are like road signs in traffic: they tell the reader what is coming next. They also tell the reader how the information contained in two sentences relates to each other. For example, the transition “in addition” or “similarly” tells the reader that they are going to learn “more of the same” information. “On the other hand” is a transition that tells the reader that he or she will hear an opposing point of view. Transitions are imperative for unity and coherence in writing.

Expository essay example:

Introduction

In many ways, the invention of the printing press marked the end of the Middle Ages. The medieval period in Europe is often remembered as a time of intellectual and political stagnation. Prior to the Renaissance, the average person had very limited access to books and was unlikely to be literate. The invention of the printing press in the 15th century allowed for much less restricted circulation of information in Europe, paving the way for the Reformation.

Body paragraph

The invention of the printing press in 1440 changed this situation dramatically. Johannes Gutenberg, who had worked as a goldsmith, used his knowledge of metals in the design of the press. He made his type from an alloy of lead, tin, and antimony, whose durability allowed for the reliable production of high-quality books. This new technology allowed texts to be reproduced and disseminated on a much larger scale than was previously possible. The Gutenberg Bible appeared in the 1450s, and a large number of printing presses sprang up across the continent in the following decades. Gutenberg's invention rapidly transformed cultural production in Europe; among other things, it would lead to the Protestant Reformation.

Conclusion

The invention of the printing press was important not only in terms of its immediate cultural and economic effects, but also in terms of its major impact on politics and religion across Europe. In the century following the invention of the printing press, the relatively stationary intellectual atmosphere of the Middle Ages gave way to the social upheavals of the Reformation and the Renaissance. A single technological innovation had contributed to the total reshaping of the continent.