

E12 WRITING



At the heart of the English curriculum is being able to clearly and succinctly express oneself in a written format. Contrary to belief, no one is a 'naturally gifted' or 'born writer'; it is a skill that is learned through process and practice. Like a muscle, the more you properly exercise your writing abilities, the stronger they will become.

So if you need to exercise your writing muscles, where do you start?

- *Good writers are also readers: by exposing yourself to the well written work of others in novels, stories, and articles will help you learn new ways to express your own ideas.*
- *Plan before you write anything important – sometimes just 5 minutes will help you plan and organize your ideas and result in stronger results.*
- *Complete your written assignments early so that you can put them aside to come back the next day to correct and proof them. When writing anything, make sure that you stress that the idea/topic/theme is important to the reader/world: essentially, answer the question 'why do we care about what you are writing?'*

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Title

1. What is the title?

This is the personal title that you choose for your piece of writing that is NOT the name of the assignment (which should be instead put in the header).

2. What does it do?

It is designed to attract and pique the reader's interest in your writing.

3. How do I write one?

- Many writers think they must title their piece at the start: instead of writing it at the beginning, you can wait until you have finished your writing and choose a few interesting words from your conclusion instead.
- Once you know your thesis, you can use the 'main idea' to help generate a few words that encapsulate that main point.

Example:

The Best Place To Live

Attention Getter

1. What is the attention getter?

This is the opening sentence to your paragraph that precedes your thesis or topic sentence and is connected to the main idea but generalized.

2. What does it do?

It is designed to attract and pique the reader's interest in your writing.

3. How do I write one?

- Relate a dramatic anecdote.
- Expose a commonly held belief.
- Present surprising facts and statistics.
- Use a fitting quotation.
- Ask a provocative question.
- Tell a vivid anecdote.
- Define a key term.
- Present an interesting observation.
- Create a unique scenario.

Example:

The Best Place To Live

If an extraterrestrial were to land on Earth, it would have its choice of over 190 countries in which to live. It would be a difficult decision, but one country is certainly a better choice than most of the others.

Topic/Thesis Sentence

1. What is the topic/thesis sentence?

The topic/thesis sentence is the core sentence in a paragraph and occurs after the attention getter.

2. What does it do?

It introduces the main idea of the paragraph and provides an indication of the points/ideas that will be used to prove the topic/thesis statement.

3. **How do I write one?**

Summarize the main idea of your paragraph. Indicate to the reader what your paragraph will be about.

Example: The Best Place To Live

If an extraterrestrial were to land on Earth, it would have its choice of over 190 countries in which to live. It would be a difficult decision, but one country is certainly a better choice than most of the others. **Canada is one of the best countries in the world due to its health care system, standard of education, and its urban centres.**

Supporting Details

1. **What are supporting sentences?**

They come after the topic sentence, making up the body of a paragraph.

2. **What do they do?**

They give details to develop and support the main idea of the paragraph.

3. **How do I write them?**

You should give supporting facts, details, quotations, and examples that are thoroughly explained. In senior level English classes, quotations and direct reference information is required (whether it is from online references or quotes from literature – you must support your ideas).

Example: The Best Place To Live

If an extraterrestrial were to land on Earth, it would have its choice of over 190 countries in which to live. It would be a difficult decision, but one country is certainly a better choice than most of the others. Canada is one of the best countries in the world due to its health care system, standard of education, and its urban centres. **First, Canada has a universal health care system which “comprehensive coverage for medically necessary hospital and physician services” (Health Canada). This allows all Canadians to have access to medical services regardless of their income or geographical location in the country. Second, Canada has a high standard of education that is also publicly funded by all levels of government from kindergarten to secondary levels and has resulted in a 99% national literacy rate (“Education in Canada”). Finally, Canada's cities are clean and efficiently managed with both Calgary, Alberta and Ottawa, Ontario ranking first and fourth on the Sierra Club’s cleanest cities in the world (“Cleanest Cities”).**

Closing Sentence

1. **What is the closing sentence?**

The closing sentence is the last sentence in a paragraph.

2. **What does it do?**

It restates the main idea of your paragraph and also tries to have a lasting impact or epiphany.

3. **How do I write one?**

Restate the main idea of the paragraph using different words.

Example:

The Best Place To Live

If an extraterrestrial were to land on Earth, it would have its choice of over 190 countries in which to live. It would be a difficult decision, but one country is certainly a better choice than most of the others. Canada is one of the best countries in the world due to its health care system, standard of education, and its urban centres. First, Canada has a universal health care system which “comprehensive coverage for medically necessary hospital and physician services” (Health Canada). This allows all Canadians to have access to medical services regardless of their income or geographical location in the country. Second, Canada has a high standard of education that is also publicly funded by all levels of government from kindergarten to secondary levels and has resulted in a 99% national literacy rate (“Education in Canada”). Finally, Canada's cities are clean and efficiently managed with both Calgary, Alberta and Ottawa, Ontario ranking first and fourth on the Sierra Club’s cleanest cities in the world (“Cleanest Cities”). Overall, Canada has more to offer with its health care, education, and cities that would be a wonderful for anyone anywhere on the planet or in orbit above it.

Citations/Works Cited

1. **What is the citation or works cited?**

A list of all source material consulted to craft the piece of writing

2. **What does it do?**

It helps show the material used to write the piece and avoid plagiarism or academic dishonesty, ensuring that the ideas of others are properly documented

3. **How do I write one?**

Whenever you consult, refer to, or quote from a source, enter the information in MLA style using Son of Citation Machine at <http://citationmachine.net/index2.php> and then copy and paste it under your piece of writing or on a full page after your writing. Ensure that for each reference used, whether directly or indirectly quoting, that you put a reference at the end of the sentence for the source.

The Best Place To Live

If an extraterrestrial were to land on Earth, it would have its choice of over 190 countries in which to live. It would be a difficult decision, but one country is certainly a better choice than most of the others. Canada is one of the best countries in the world due to its health care system, standard of education, and its urban centres. First, Canada has a universal health care system which “comprehensive coverage for medically necessary hospital and physician services” (**Health Canada**). This allows all Canadians to have access to medical services regardless of their income or geographical location in the country. Second, Canada has a high standard of education that is also publicly funded by all levels of government from kindergarten to secondary levels and has resulted in a 99% national literacy rate (**“Education in Canada”**). Finally, Canada's cities are clean and efficiently managed with both Calgary, Alberta and Ottawa, Ontario ranking first and fourth on the Sierra Club’s cleanest cities in the world (**“Cleanest Cities”**). Overall, Canada has more to offer with its health care, education, and cities that would be a wonderful for anyone anywhere on the planet or in orbit above it.

Works Cited

Canada. Health Canada. *Health Care System*. 2012. Web. <<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hcs-sss/index-eng.php>>.

"Education in Canada." *Wikipedia*. N.p., 17 07 2013. Web. 1 Sep 2013. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Canada>.

"The Cleanest And The Most Polluted Cities in the World." *Sierra Club GreenHome*. N.p., n.d. Web. 1 Sep 2013.

Prewriting

The prewriting stage is when you think carefully and organize your ideas for your paragraph before you begin writing.

Six Prewriting Steps:

1. Think carefully about what you are going to write. Ask yourself: What question am I going to answer in this paragraph or essay? How can I best answer this question? What is the most important part of my answer? How can I make an introductory sentence (or thesis statement) from the most important part of my answer? What facts or ideas can I use to support my introductory sentence? How can I make this paragraph or essay interesting? Do I need more facts on this topic? Where can I find more facts on this topic?

2. Open your notebook. Write out your answers to the above questions. You do not need to spend a lot of time doing this; just write enough to help you remember why and how you are going to write your paragraph or essay.

3. Collect facts related to your paragraph or essay topic. Look for and write down facts that will help you to answer your question. Timesaving hint: make sure the facts you are writing are related to the exact question you are going to answer in your paragraph or essay.

4. Write down your own ideas. Ask yourself: What else do I want to say about this topic? Why should people be interested in this topic? Why is this topic important?

5. Find the main idea of your paragraph or essay. Choose the most important point you are going to present. If you cannot decide which point is the most important, just choose one point and stick to it throughout your paragraph or essay.

6. Organize your facts and ideas in a way that develops your main idea. Once you have chosen the most important point of your paragraph or essay, you must find the best way to tell your reader about it. Look at the facts you have written. Look at your own ideas on the topic. Decide which facts and ideas will best support the main idea of your paragraph. Once you have chosen the facts and ideas you plan to use, ask yourself which order to put them in the paragraph. Write down your own note set that you can use as you write your paragraph or essay.

Writing Paragraphs

The five step writing stage is when you turn your ideas into sentences.

1. Open your notebook and word processor.
2. Write the topic sentence, supporting sentences, and closing sentence.
3. Write clear and simple sentences to express your meaning.
4. Focus on the main idea of your paragraph.
5. Use the dictionary to help you find additional words to express your ideas.

Editing Paragraphs

The editing stage is when you check your paragraph for mistakes and correct them.

<p>Grammar and Spelling</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check your spelling. 2. Check your grammar. 3. Read your essay again. 4. Make sure each sentence has a subject. 5. See if your subjects and verbs agree with each other. 6. Check the verb tenses of each sentence. 7. Make sure that each sentence makes sense. 	<p>Style and Organization</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make sure your paragraph has a topic sentence. 2. Make sure your supporting sentences focus on the main idea. 3. Make sure you have a closing sentence. 4. Check that all your sentences focus on the main idea. 5. See if your paragraph is interesting.
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Publishing Paragraphs

The publishing stage is when you produce a final copy of your paragraph to hand in.

1. Make a paper or digital copy of your paragraph.
2. Show or send your work to your teacher, tutor, or parents.
3. Ask them for hints on how to improve your writing.

Paragraph Types

Definition Paragraph

When writing a definition paragraph, you take a thing or an idea and explain what it is.

Example: Write a paragraph giving the definition of a pest.

Classification Paragraph

When writing a classification paragraph, you group things or ideas into specific categories.

Example: Write a paragraph discussing two types of energy resources.

Description Paragraph

In a description paragraph, you are writing about what a person, place, or thing is like.

Sometimes, you may describe where a place is located.

Examples: Write a paragraph describing what a polar bear looks like.

Compare and Contrast Paragraph

In a compare and contrast paragraph, you write about the similarities and differences between two or more people, places, things, or ideas.

Example: *Write a paragraph comparing the weather in Vancouver and Halifax.*

Sequence Paragraph

In a sequencing paragraph, you are writing to describe a series of events or a process in some sort of order. Usually, this order is based on time.

Example: *Write a paragraph outlining how a person becomes the prime minister.*

Choice Paragraph

In a paragraph where you have to make a choice, you need to choose which object, idea, or action that you prefer. Often, you will need to give your opinion on a choice of actions or events.

Example: *Write a paragraph stating whether you would prefer to play hockey or lacrosse.*

Explanation Paragraph

In an explanation paragraph, you need to explain how or why something happens. Very often in social studies class, you will be asked to explore causes and effects of certain events.

Example: *Write a paragraph explaining why so many Europeans moved to Canada during the nineteenth century.*

Evaluation Paragraph

In an evaluation paragraph, you make judgments about people, ideas, and possible actions. You need to make your evaluation based on certain criteria that you develop. In the paragraph, you will state your evaluation or recommendation and then support it by referring to your criteria.

Example: *Write a paragraph evaluating whether pesticides should be used on farms.*

For more information on specific tips and techniques for writing different paragraph types, please visit the site below from which all the above information is taken. You may also search for "Tip O Matic" at http://www2.actden.com/writ_Den/tips/contents.htm for help on writing sentences, paragraphs, and essays.

Source: http://www2.actden.com/Writ_Den/tips/paragrap/index.htm

Josefson's Guide to Writing a Reflective Paragraph

1. **Opening Sentence (1)** : Introductory or topic sentence

- Introduces the topic of the paragraph. Don't try to put everything into one sentence. Don't try too hard to capture reader interest. Don't cite the dictionary. Ignore your high school teacher.
- Provides a transition from the preceding paragraph by building on or referring to some idea in that paragraph. This transition is more important than providing an in-depth explanation. Transitions provide logical **flow**.

2. **Explanatory Sentences (1-3)** : Explains the topic of the paragraph in more depth.

- Always put your maximum effort into the second sentence of a paragraph. It's the REAL topic sentence.
- Each sentence builds on and transitions to ideas in the preceding sentence. The best way to do this is to use pronouns that have clear antecedents in the previous sentence. (For example: *Some students will complain my paragraph guidelines are stupid. However, they are obviously wrong. They in the second sentence is a pronoun with the antecedent some students in the previous sentence.*

3. **Exploratory Sentences (1-3)** : Explores the author's views on the topic by comparing and/ or contrasting them with the material being explained. Exploration clarifies the author's preconceptions so that they can be critically evaluated. Exploration also helps to clarify the explanation of the topic.

- Reflect on views you the author have held on the subject. Say, for instance, *Before I read this author, I thought that...*
- If you do not have clear preconceptions on the topic, explore what you might have thought about the issue before you encountered the new material you explained.
- Exploratory sentences identify some conflict, confusion, or agreement between the new material and the author's preconceptions that can serve as the basis for further analysis.

4. **Evidence Sentences (1-4)** : Provides evidence for the point being made in the paragraph. There are several kinds of evidence, and you may use them in combination or more an one of each. Never begin a paragraph with evidence, as it obstructs flow.

- Examples or illustrations. Use *For example*, *For instance*, or tell a story based on your experience or common knowledge.
- Quote from a text. Always introduce a quote. Never start a sentence with a quote. Cite.

- Paraphrase from a text. Provide data or evidence from a text without quoting by explaining the views of an author in your own words. Cite even when you are not quoting.
- Logical analysis. Explain why an idea or view is either logical or illogical by exploring fallacies or logic.

5. **Analysis Sentences (1-3)** : Just providing the evidence is not enough, especially when your evidence is a quote. You need to **analyze** the evidence in order to explain why it supports the idea of the paragraph.

- For example: *Dr. King says segregation “substitutes an ‘I-it’ relationship for an ‘I-thou’ relationship and ends up relegating persons to the status of things” (King 1963, 13). When he uses the word “thou”, he means it to invoke some of the sense of respect the word connotes from its frequent use in the Bible to refer to God.*
- Ideally your analysis should go beyond the evidence you provide from other sources to offer new insights into the topic. Do this by drawing novel connections between sources, by examining singular similarities between contrasting views, by identifying distinct differences between largely similar views, or by exploring your own unique ideas on the topic.

6. **Synthesis Sentences (1-2)**: Do not just restate the central idea of the paragraph. Rather, explore the implications or consequences of what you have said in the paragraph in a way that could point towards the next paragraph. Synthesis explores the “now what?” question. What actions are required because of the reflection presented in the paragraph.

- For example, the **implication** of the analysis of the King quote above could be: *King’s lesson here points beyond the issue of segregation to direct us to identify all prejudices and institutions that keep us from treating others with the respect of a Thou. There are still such institutions today.*
- If this is the last paragraph you should still suggest or imply certain **actions** on the part of the reader, further explorations, or unresolved issues that could be addressed as a **consequence** of the ideas presented in the paragraph.

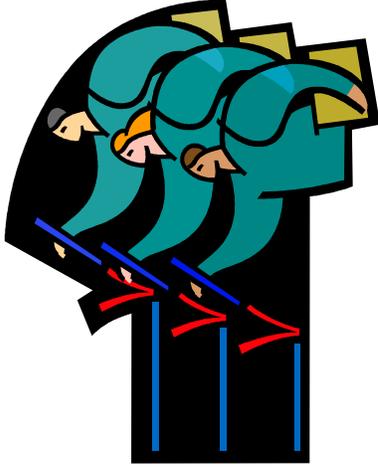
Source: <http://people.bridgewater.edu/~josefso/writing%20a%20reflective%20paragraph%20guidelines.htm>

Whenever writing a paragraph or an essay remember: TAG TIQs(x3) CE



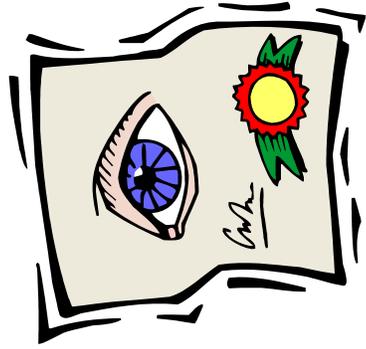
Title
Attention
Getter

Your “TAG” (title & attention getter) is the section that taps your reader on the shoulder and says “follow me”. It is also the part you should write after you’ve done your thesis, support, and conclusion.



Thesis
Integrates
Quotes with
Support (x3)

The “TIQs” (*Thesis, Ideas* are *Introduced* with *Integrated Quotes* for *Support*) is the core of your writing. Just like the checkmarks you want from your reader (the *ticks* or *TIQs*), this section provides the proof and supports it with references and quotes. The smarter you are with your *Integrated Quotes* (your *IQ*), the better your results (remember *STATE, QUOTE, CLARIFY*).



Conclusion
Epiphany

The ending of your work is the final impression; it’s the last thing your reader “sees”, so you want your conclusion to show that you have proven your thesis and have the epiphany where your reader “CE’s” you’ve made your point.

Get to the POINT!



Support your ideas by providing insight and not simply retelling story details. Only use plot details to briefly convey context and instead focus on character, setting, conflict, and theme.

Supporting Your Ideas by Using Quotes (SQC): Review

When you are asked to respond to a piece of literature, you are being asked to show *your* interpretation and understanding of the work and how it applies to life. Your readers sincerely want to know what *you* make of the story, poem, play, etc. Most people believe that more than one interpretation is possible or even likely.

How can you be most effective in doing this? When you present your ideas, you can make your interpretation more clear if you refer **specifically** to the text by summarizing, paraphrasing, or quoting; usually a combination is most effective. Please see the following site for more specific details:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/563/1/>.

This document deals with using quotes to support your ideas. In responses, one format you will be asked to use is the **literary paragraph** to support your interpretation of a text. For this document, I'll use Daniel Keyes short story, "Flowers for Algernon" as an example.

Suppose I ask you to identify how Charlie Gordon's desires develop through the story and ask you to use Abraham Maslow's *Hierarchy of Human Needs* to analyze this (Please see the following site for details: <http://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>.) Near the start of the story we can find a quote that makes Charlie's desires fairly clear: "**When I become intelligent like Doctor Strauss with three times my I.Q. of 68, then maybe people will like me and be friendly**" (Keyes 82). Now that we have a useful quote that shows what Charlie's goal is, we can create a sequence of ideas that use the State-Quote-Clarify approach to quote integration; i.e. we make a statement, provide a quote as evidence and then clarify how the quote supports our statement. After that sequence, we can go on to make another statement, support it with a quote, clarification the support, and so on. How does it work?

1. State: Charlie wants to be smarter
2. Quote: "When I become more intelligent...then maybe more people will like me."
3. Clarify: Charlie believes that people dislike him because he is not as smart as they are.

In paragraph form:

At the beginning of the story, Charlie Gordon wants to increase his intelligence through an experiment, believing that when he becomes more intelligent, "maybe more people will like [him] (82)." Charlie knows that people make fun of him at work, and believes it is his lack of intelligence that is the reason; he doesn't realize that the cruel behaviour of others shows their lack of humanity and compassion: Charlie is not the problem.

Now, I want to synthesize the ideas of author Daniel Keyes and psychologist Abraham Maslow, so I just add in the idea of the need to belong from Maslow's hierarchy:

Maslow illustrates in his theory of motivation that we all need to belong to groups and be respected by their members. Charlie is like everyone else in this sense: he wants to feel that he belongs when he is at work, yet people make fun of him, possibly thinking he isn't aware of their jokes at his expense. Consequently, at the beginning of "Flowers for Algernon," Charlie plans to participate in an experiment that will increase his intelligence, believing maybe this way "more people will like [him] (82)." Charlie *knows* that people make fun of him at work, but he believes it is his lack of intelligence that is the reason; he doesn't realize that the cruel behaviour of others shows their lack of humanity and compassion, and that there is really nothing wrong with him the way he is.

We could go on from here, and show how Charlie's understanding changes by the middle and at the end of the book by using additional quotes. In the example above we used Maslow as a way to blend in our awareness of what motivates people to behave the way they do. We could, if the assignment called for it, also use Maslow's hierarchy to make inferences about why Charlie's coworkers make fun of him. The use of transitions and markers that create unity will be important (separate document).

Answering questions regarding “Flowers for Algernon” using the State/Quote/Clarify Method

Steps:

1. Read the question and think about what it is asking.
2. If you think you know the answer, write down your answer in note form.
3. Find the best quote to support your answer. This is your evidence that shows what you say is true and accurate.
4. Write your answer using the **State/Quote/Clarify** method.
 - a. State: this is your answer. Example
 - i. Question. What is different about Charlie?
 - ii. State: **Charlie is mentally handicapped.**
 - b. Quote: “When I become intelligent like Dr. Strauss with three times my I.Q. of 68, then maybe I’ll be like everyone else and people will like me and be friendly.”
 - c. Clarify: An I.Q. of 68 is low compared to most people.
 - d. Full answer

One part of Charlie’s character that is different from most people is that he is **mentally handicapped**. He hopes the operation will make him smarter as he says, “When I become intelligent like Doctor Strauss with three times my I.Q. of 68, then maybe people will like me and be friendly.” An I.Q. of 68 is low compared to most people, and we can see evidence of the intellectual difficulties that Charlie faces at the beginning of the story in the way he writes with many grammatical and spelling problems and fairly simple ideas.

Step-by-step Process for Writing your Poem Synopsis using STATE/QUOTE/CLARIFY

1. Make sure you know what happens in your poem (or piece of literature).
2. Take a step back from the actual events, characters, and situation of the poem.
3. Figure out what the poet is trying to say about life or how people deal with problems. This is theme of the poem. *Most of your work is now done.*
4. Now state the **theme**. Everything else that follows is just you proving that your theme is accurate. That is, you will provide three quotes from the poem showing the theme runs through the entire piece of literature.
5. *Now you are ready to write your first sentence:*
Fill in the blanks: In “ _____,” so and so presents a speaker who _____ to _____ convey the idea that _____.

Example: I am a Rock

- A.** In “I am a Rock,” Simon and Garfunkel present a speaker who has withdrawn from people after being hurt by someone he loves to convey the idea that, when we have been emotionally wounded, we may completely withdraw from everyone for some time.
- B.** Now we just need three quotes from the poem to prove our theme: one from the beginning, one from near the middle, and one from near the end. These will be presented using the **state/quote/clarify** method.
- a. Quote 1:
From the very beginning of the poem, the speaker has withdrawn, claiming it is a “deep and dark December” and “I am alone”. The speaker’s isolation is emphasized by the darkness and the depth of the cold.
 - b. Quote 2:
The speaker has emotionally retreated within “...walls / a fortress deep and mighty / that none may penetrate.” The walls are an effective metaphor for how he has pulled away from people and into himself where he can be safe from harm; if someone tries to talk with the speaker, he will probably only answer briefly and perhaps he will even be rude and this behaviour will keep people away.
 - c. Quote 3:
It seems quite clear that the speaker has been emotionally injured by someone for whom he cared deeply because he says, “If I’d never loved, I never would have cried.” At this point, the speaker believes the risk of loving someone is not worth the pain one will experience if that person leaves one.
- C. Concluding Sentence.** Now you need to wrap up your paragraph by showing the reader why this matters. In other words, answer the questions “So what?” and “Who cares?” In this case, it seems one lesson is that loving someone carries the potential for pain. This also seems *inescapable* and that the only way to avoid pain is by not risking love. But what kind of life would that be? We must also ask what might be gained by falling in love with someone who returns that love. What could be better than that experience? So, we understand that the potential for fulfillment in love is great but also that pain might also be part of the situation. If we are wounded by the loss of the person we love, we may expect to feel like the speaker in the poem, at least for a while. Now, how can we get all that into one sentence? Get back to the theme
- Example:
By clearly showing us the effects of losing someone we love, the poets help us understand that withdrawing from human contact after an emotional injury is a normal reaction and that we can expect this of ourselves or of those in our lives who experience similar losses; it is a sad but inescapable part of being human.

Basic Poetry Paragraph Response Writing

When writing a response to a question on literature, there are some basic rules that should be used in conjunction with the basic paragraph structure. Remember in all your writing to follow the rules of grammar, spelling, mechanics, and the new rules for editing.

Discuss the poet's use of _____ with reference to the poem _____.

<p>Topic Sentence(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first sentence (can be more than one depending on usage and writer's abilities) • The most general sentence • Grabs the reader's attention • Demonstrates a sense of depth, theme, message, and understanding of the writer of the topic. 	
<p>Supporting Sentences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These sentences answer the question that is in the reader's mind • Reference to the literary work is made directly (quotes) and indirectly (paraphrasing) • Should be enough support to answer the question fully (8 – 12 sentences is typical in a good paragraph) • Provides a clear explanation 	
<p>Concluding Sentence(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarizes the information presented • Similar to a topic in reverse • More than an ending, this sentence demonstrates understanding and a realization of something important 	

Basic Poetry Paragraph Response Writing

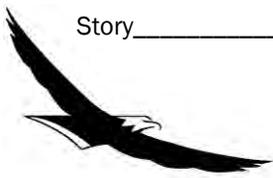
Discuss the poet's use of allusion with reference to the poem "Siren Song" by Margaret Atwood.

	C- to C Range	C+ to B Range	A Range
Topic Sentence(s)	In "Siren Song" by Margaret Atwood there are several examples of allusion.	Poets often use the poetic device of allusion to improve the depth of a poem. In her poem "Siren Song", Margaret Atwood uses references to mythology and history to create connections for the reader.	When a poet decides to make use of allusion, she enhances the ability for the reader to connect with the characters and the theme of her poem. Margaret Atwood does this in her poem "Siren Song" as the reader comes to feel the sorrow of the narrator and her tragic enslavement to her own nature.
Supporting Sentences	In lines 2-3 Atwood writes about a siren who sings a song that is "irresistible" and "forces men" to their deaths (3, 4). The men die even though they can "see the beached skulls" (6). This is an allusion to men dying during an invasion during D-Day.	The siren of mythology was an ancient creature with feathers that sang a song. Men who heard the song were lured to their deaths on the rocks around an island. The siren narrator says "the song / that is irresistible" (2-3) and that it "forces men to leap overboard in squadrons" (5). This reference to soldiers going to their deaths during an invasion also provides a depth an image for the reader.	As the mythical Siren sings "the song / that is irresistible" to men we are reminded of Homer's ancient Greek myth Ulysses (2-3) These birdlike creatures lured men to their deaths on the rocks as their "boring song...works every time" (26-27). Atwood furthers this magical call of the siren by alluding to soldiers an invasion; even though the men can "see the beached skulls," they still jump to their deaths (6)
Concluding Sentence(s)	By using allusion, Atwood has created a very good poem that makes connections for the reader.	By using allusion, Atwood creates a poem that makes the reader think of men going to their deaths lured onto the rocks by mythical creatures of the past.	By using these mythical and historical references, the woman of the poem is given a deep pathos; she cannot resist her own abilities and nature and is just as doomed as those she lures to their deaths.

WHAT the character thinks/feels	WHY the character thinks/feels it	HOW thoughts/feelings affect him/her
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If I can just get to the beach everything will be okay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wants to get away from the “killing zone,” the jungle where he feels closed in, surrounded, vulnerable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give him a feeling of hope, security: Gives him something to look forward to, to focus on during the stressful march.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Pretends” many things (e.g., not in the war, a boy again, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Way of mentally escaping from the current situation; defense mechanism; way to survive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simultaneously calms him and increases his fear—because he keeps focusing on Billy’s death and the war, and his fears. Distracts him.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fear (of war, disappointing his father, dying, his fellow soldiers). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No feeling of control; actual reality of war now that he’s there; father’s disapproval; judgment of comrades. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disorients and unnerves him; inspires doubt in himself and others; not in control of actions or emotions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thinks about what he’ll tell his parents after the war. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wants to assure his mother and impress his father, make him proud that he was “real soldier” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes him very self-conscious; makes him focus on the future; second-guesses himself.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If I can just get to the beach everything will be okay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wants to get away from the “killing zone,” the jungle where he feels closed in, surrounded, vulnerable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give him a feeling of hope, security: Gives him something to look forward to, to focus on during the stressful march.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feels fear even when they get to the sea/beach where he thought all would be well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The fear is inside him, a part of him; he cannot escape it so long as he is there, in war zone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He realizes he will not find peace or feel security until he is home—if he makes it home safe and alive.

PARAGRAPH: Use your notes from above to write a paragraph in which you analyze the character. The main question you are writing to answer is: What does this story and the character’s behavior reveal about them as a person? Use specific examples and quotations from the story to support and illustrate your ideas. Finally, begin your paragraph by establishing a focus (a subject + a point about that subject) in your opening line.

Private First Class Paul Berlin, a boy who thinks about campouts with his dad and “pretends he [is] not a soldier,” is not yet the man a soldier needs to be if he is to survive in combat. While a soldier would focus on war strategies and the enemy, PFC Paul Berlin uses “tricks...to keep [himself] thinking.” He counts—his steps, money, anything—to distract him. He also sings, in this case the old song “Where Have You Gone Charming Billy?” And he daydreams, mostly of the beach and how he will feel when he gets there. He imagines “digging a hole in the sand and sleep[ing] like the high clouds...and not [being] afraid anymore.” Yet none of these techniques work. Instead, they only remind him of where he is (in a war zone in Vietnam), where he is not (at home, with his family), and what really happened (Billy Boy Watkins dying of a heart attack). Eventually PFC Paul Berlin is overwhelmed by his fears, an experience which endangers his comrades but transforms him into the man he needs to be. The experience teaches him what he needs to know if he is to survive, but it also teaches him that so long as he is there he will not feel safe, even when he gets to the beach where he dreamed he would. At the beach, he will “bathe in the sea,” “forgetting how frightened he had been,” and emerge from the sea as a man cleansed of whatever sins war made him commit.



FOUNDATION WRITING WITH SHORT STORIES

Using short stories to practice effective paragraph/mini-essay writing with quotations

Overview: When writing a literary response (where you’ve read a story, play, novel, essay, or online journal, and have been asked to write a paragraph or essay), you can follow various formulas to help you write more effectively.

Process: After you have read a story you can take *two approaches to develop a thesis* (the statement that you declare that you are going to prove through your writing).

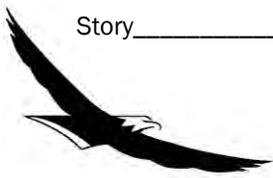
Option 1: Question & Answer Approach: Answer each of the following questions.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the characters? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What’s their problem? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do they solve it? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does that say about people? (Thesis Idea) 	<h1 style="margin: 0;">THESIS IDEA</h1>

Option 2: Topic & Theme Approach: Circle any topics that are a primary focus in the story

- | | | | | |
|------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Abandonment | Ethics | Identity | Nationalism | Science & |
| Alienation | Experience | Illness | Nature | Technology |
| Ambition | Fall from Grace | Individual & | Oppression | Sex & Sensuality |
| American Dream | Family | Nature | Parenthood | Social Class |
| Birth/ Childhood | Fate | Individual & | People relations | Spirituality |
| Coming of Age | Freedom | Society | Pride | Stages of Life |
| Commoditization | Futility | Individual & God | Race | Success |
| Commercialism | Gender | Innocence | Regret | Suffering |
| Commerce | Grief | Isolation | Rejection | Survival |
| Community | Growth & Initiation | Journey & Struggle | Religion | Time |
| Cruelty | Guilt | Justice | Responsibility | Tradition |
| Death | Heroism | Love & Friendship | Revenge | Violence |
| Education | Hope | Memory | Sacrifice | Work |

<p>Pick the one topic you are most interested in, and how is this topic shown in the story and what does that say about people? (Thesis Idea)</p>	<h1 style="margin: 0;">THESIS IDEA</h1>
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FOUNDATION WRITING WITH SHORT STORIES

Using short stories to practice effective paragraph/mini-essay writing with quotations

Thesis Creation: Using your thesis idea, create a single statement that clearly explains what you intend to prove in your essay (your **thesis statement** is usually connected to a theme statement)

THESIS STATEMENT

Now Prove It: Using your source material, provide 2-3 excellent quotes that help prove your thesis.

Quotation	How does this quote prove your thesis? (Proof Statement)
	PROOF STATEMENT
	PROOF STATEMENT
	PROOF STATEMENT

Now Write it: Using your thesis and quotations, write your response with an introductory sentence, your thesis, supporting body, and a conclusion. Remember that you should be incorporating quotations and following these guidelines.

1. The reader should only hear one voice, which is that of the writer only (YOU!)
2. Avoid introducing quotations with “He said/She said” or “In this quotation...”.
3. Take only the segment of the sentence that you need; you do not need to take the whole sentence.
4. If you need to make changes for the sake of grammar, verb tense, or clarification of noun/speaker, mark these with [].
5. Remember always to indicate the significance of the quote within the same sentence or directly afterwards.

Incorrect	Correct
In <u>Ashes for the Wind</u> , Juan is under a great deal of stress. On page 17, Simon Arevalo says, “You’d better clear out.”	In “Ashes for the Wind” Juan is under a great deal of stress when the son of Simon Arevalo instructs him to “clear out” or else face the consequences from the authorities (17).
The sheriff informs the mayor about Juan. He says, “We had no choice, the fool locked the door.” (page 17)	The sheriff informs the mayor that they “had no choice” to break into the house as “[Juan had] locked the door” (17).

ESSAY-WRITING

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE

In a subject like Communications Studies, much of your university work will be assessed by essay – whether that’s an essay you prepare in your own time over a period of days or weeks, or one you concoct in an examination hall in the space of an hour. It therefore follows that if you learn how to prepare, organise and present essays, you will do much better in your degree overall. So this document might also be called:

HOW TO GET BETTER MARKS WITHOUT (NECESSARILY) DOING MORE WORK

We’ll assume that you’ve read widely about the particular subject of your essay, and have a good understanding of the broader area within which that topic is located. Broad and deep research is the essential basis of an essay. You will have lots of notes on the subject – see the *ICS Study Skills Guide to Note-Making* for tips on how to do this.

So now it’s time to write the essay. You sit down in front of the keyboard and start typing: you put the title, you try to group some similar bits of information or argument together, and then you put a conclusion on the end saying that there are many interesting points of view on this subject, right?

No, of course you don’t. You’ve got to start off with an essay plan. By designing this you’ll come up with the **structure**. A well thought-out structure is at the heart of every good essay.

What is a good structure?

It isn’t enough to make sure that you have an introduction at the start, a conclusion at the end, and the other stuff in between. So what do you need?

1. You **do** need a solid introduction. It will probably contain something about how you have interpreted the question, and it is often a good idea to state a thesis (an argument) which you are going to illustrate or explore in the body of the essay – although you may prefer to save the ‘findings’ of your exploration to the end, in which case you have to introduce the question carefully at the start.

2. And you need a tight, powerful conclusion *which is the logical consequence of everything that has gone before*. The good essay has developed a number of related strands which the conclusion ties together. It may also contain an extra, surprising thing which you saved to throw in at the end with a flourish.

3. So what happens in between? Well...

Six really awful ways to begin the essay ‘Why have baked beans become so popular in twentieth century Britain?’:

“The question of why baked beans have become so popular in twentieth century Britain is an interesting...”

“The Oxford English Dictionary defines ‘baked beans’ as...”

“In this essay I will explore the question of why baked beans have become so popular in twentieth...”

“The Penguin English Dictionary defines ‘popular’ as...”

“The twentieth century has been going for quite a while now and...”

“The Collins English Dictionary defines ‘twentieth century’ as...”

☆ *Why are these awful? Because they are so predictable, uninspiring and limp. What should you do instead? Something else.*

You need to organise your material so that it flows from one area, sub-section or argument to the next in a logical order. Each part should build upon, or at least reasonably follow on from, the previous parts, and the whole thing should be pulling the reader, clearly and inescapably, to your triumphant conclusion.

The box on the right shows unimaginative kinds of essay structure, which are likely to get low marks. But what can you do instead?

One good approach is to look through your notes and identify a handful of **themes** within the discussion, and to structure your essay around consideration of those. You should order the analysis of each theme so that the essay builds up towards the conclusion.

Two dull kinds of essay structure:

The one that's not well enough organised:

1. Definition of the thing
2. Some stuff about the thing
3. Summary

The one that's too formulaic:

1. Introduction, saying that we will discuss the thing
2. Three arguments in favour of the thing
3. Three arguments against the thing
4. Summary of the above

DON'T KNOW HOW TO START?

If you've got some notes but you don't know how to start the next stage, get a nice big clean sheet of paper and write down phrases which summarise all of your thoughts about the subject, the different questions and ideas you've had in your mind, and the areas and problems that have been covered in your reading. Then look for similarities, and related concerns, and group them together in whatever way makes sense to you. After that, see if you can number these areas into an order – the order in which you will weave your way through the material. And voila! You've accidentally created an essay structure. Now just check it, tweak it a bit to make it more coherent, and you're ready to go.

More analysis = more marks

You will often need to *describe* something before you give an *analysis* of it. But the more analysis the better. Only include as much description as is needed for the analysis to make sense. The analysis is what you will get the marks for. Of course, a muddled, illogical and unsubstantiated analysis can still leave you with no marks. We'll be looking for a **clear, coherent and consistent analysis**, supported by **evidence**.

Don't just repeat what some books (or your lecture notes) say – we want *your* analysis. However, you should also show your awareness of other people's analyses!

Don't wander off the subject

Answer the question, and only the question. And keep checking that you are remaining on track throughout the essay. If there's something interesting that you want to include, but which is of dubious relevance to the main argument or theme of the essay, put it in a *footnote*.

Don't rush

You might remember that you 'did all right' last time you stayed up all night on pharmaceuticals, the day before the deadline, to research and write an essay. But this most likely means that you would have done much *better* if you had started reading and researching, and then writing, days or weeks before that. It is always obvious to your tutors when an essay is rushed.

Don't cheat

Plagiarism – using other people's words and ideas without acknowledging where you got them from – is regarded as an enormous sin, the penalties for which are actually *worse* than just getting zero for the essay. Just say no. Or more specifically, make sure that you have got perfect references: see pages 4–5.

Style as well as substance

Whilst it would seem 'nice' if the ideas of a genius would be appreciated even when written in horrible prose, you should not bank on this. The good student not only has good ideas to write about, but can write about them *well*. And it seems particularly wasteful to be losing marks just because you didn't spend a little bit of time learning a few style tips.

WAFFLE AND PADDING: NOT THE KEYS TO SUCCESS

Don't use superfluous words, phrases or sentences. If a sentence means the same thing with a word taken out, take it out. The same applies to whole phrases and sentences within the wider context of a paragraph. Using words and phrases which don't add anything to what you're saying will mean that your examiners will conclude that (a) you don't have enough to say to meet the required essay length, and that (b) you are trying to hide this by means of a slow, repetitive and boring writing style. Which is not clever.

For example — <i>don't</i> write:	When you could write:
<p>Greg Dyke transformed the BBC, changing it so that it was altogether different from what it had been like before.</p> <p>Some people feel that he is a megalomaniac who wants to take over the world, whilst at the same time other people feel that he is a fundamentally weak man who lacks strength.</p> <p>Nevertheless, we can certainly see that he clearly wields a considerable and substantial degree of direct power, influence and the ability to change things around within the organisation.</p>	<p>Greg Dyke transformed the BBC.</p> <p>Some people feel he is a megalomaniac; others contend that he is fundamentally weak.</p> <p>Nevertheless, he clearly has a considerable degree of direct power within the organisation.</p>

The left hand column contains 250 per cent more words than the right-hand column, but it contains zero per cent more information. Your examiners spot this kind of thing.

Furthermore, by not inflating her essay with space-filling nonsense, the pithy writer of the right-hand column has got room to show her understanding of the subject by expanding on all of these points: *what* did Dyke do? *Why* might he be seen as power-crazed, or weak? *How* has he demonstrated his personal power? In other words, she has got room for lots of *analysis*, which, as we established above, is good news.

CAN I SAY "I FEEL THIS ARGUMENT IS WRONG BECAUSE...?"

There are different preferences about whether you should say "I" in an essay or not. Sometimes it can look really good if you confidently say "Rather, I would argue that...". But saying "I feel this argument is wrong because..." can look a bit ponderous, and some tutors don't like it. A solution to this is to be even more assertive and say "However, this argument is weak, since...". It will still be clear to your examiners that you are making your own argument – and we definitely *do* like you to make your own argument. Whatever you are saying, make sure you back it up with *argument* and *evidence*.

SURELY THIS STUFF ABOUT 'STYLE' IS JUST SUPERFICIAL AND ISN'T VERY IMPORTANT?

Wrong. If your essay is badly-written, you will be losing marks. And, in the outside world, you would be losing readers (whether you are writing books and screenplays, or company reports and letters... or even job applications!). It is very important to write in a crisp, clear style, with good sentence construction and proper punctuation. Needless to say, spelling mistakes also fail to impress.

TWO MORE EXAMPLES OF BAD WRITING	
Bad thing:	What's wrong with it?:
The film was criticised for it's drug-taking, violence, etc.	<p>☆ You only put an apostrophe in "it's" where you are using it as an abbreviation of "it is" (e.g. "it's a great film").</p> <p>☆ The writer should really have put "...criticised for its <u>depictions</u> of drug-taking..." – otherwise the reader might wrongly infer that the <i>production</i> of the film involved actual drug-taking and violence, for example.</p> <p>☆ The use of 'etc.' shows that the writer wanted to suggest that the film had been criticised for other things, but hadn't got a clue what these were. It's better to simply say: "The film was criticised for its depictions of drug-taking and violence".</p>
The theory was very popular, Foucault was said to be 'more popular than the Beatles'.	<p>☆ Two units of meaning – parts that could stand alone as sentences, such as "The theory was very popular" – cannot just be strung together with a comma in the middle. In this case, the comma could be replaced with a full stop, or a semi-colon (which represents a more emphatic pause than a comma, and suggests a connection between the material before and after it). Or add a connecting word: "The theory was very popular, and Foucault was said to be 'more popular than the Beatles'".</p> <p>☆ You want a reference for that quote, of course, too.</p>

References

As you may know, there are a range of different ways of writing references. Some of them involve using footnotes, or having separate lists called 'References' and 'Bibliography', and generally give you a headache. We therefore recommend the 'Harvard' system of referencing, which is straightforward, and widely-used by publishers and academics.

THE HARVARD REFERENCE SYSTEM

It's quite simple. When you quote or paraphrase something, you cite the author's last name, the year of publication, and the page reference, in brackets. For example:

The popularity of baked beans soared when Elvis Presley was seen to eat six whole tins on *Entertainment Tonight* in 1959 (Heinz, 2000: 34).

At the end of the essay you then include a 'References' section which must include every item you've referred to in the essay. If there are two or more works by an author published in the same year, distinguish them as 2000a, 2000b, and so on. References are written in the following style:

Type of reference:	Example of reference:
Book	Heinz, Edward (2000) <i>A History of Baked Beans</i> , London: Arnold.
Article in book	Johnson, Sarah (1998a) 'The Cornflake in History' in Norman Jennings (ed.) <i>Food for Thought</i> , Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
Article in journal	Johnson, Sarah (1998b) 'Deconstructing the pre-millennial diet: Special K and postmodernism', <i>Cultural Studies</i> 11, 1: 32–44. Explanation: This means that an article by Sarah Johnson called 'Deconstructing the pre-millennial diet: Special K and postmodernism' was published in the journal <i>Cultural Studies</i> , volume 11, number 1, on pages 32 to 44. This issue of the journal was published in 1998. The piece is listed here as '(1998b)' since it's the second of two articles by Sarah Johnson, which we are referring to, published in 1998.
Article in newspaper	Ratner, Clifford (2000) 'Magazine sparks love feud', <i>The Independent</i> , 10 October 2000, <i>Thursday Review</i> section: 14.
Article from the internet	Wherever possible, identify the author, so you can have a reference like this: Holmes, Amy (2000), 'Greenpeace wins media war', at http://www.independent.co.uk/international/green25.htm (accessed: 25 November 2000). Always state the date you visited the site. If you can't state the author, have a reference like this: BBC Online (2000) 'Radical autumn shake-up', at http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10276.htm (accessed: 8 December 2000).

And that's it. The Harvard system is easy to use, relatively simple to produce, and the reader doesn't need to keep stopping to look up references in footnotes. Instead, as you write your essay you can use **footnotes** for extra bits of information which are surplus to requirements in the main body of the essay, such as extra details about the subject, or interesting quotes. However, remember that when writing footnotes, just as when you are writing the main body of the essay, you should draw out the *relevance* of the material you are using. Use them to enhance the impact of your argument.

The complete short tips collection...

The tips below (like all of this guide) are based on an informal survey of ICS teaching staff which established what they do and don't like in essays. Each point has been kept brief, so that you can write each tip on a piece of coloured card and turn them into a lovely mobile to hang above your bed.

Answer the question.	A clear, logical structure is essential.	Give your own analysis, not mere description.	We want to see a fresh, original approach.
Clear, consistent references are essential.	Base your essay on extensive relevant reading and research.	Indecisive 'It's a bit of both' essays are disappointing.	Argue your case, with your own point of view.
Use commas properly. Learn how to deploy semi-colons.	We want to see evidence of independent thought.	Try to avoid formulas, clichés, and the obvious approaches.	Have a clear, relevant introduction and conclusion.
It's important to know the difference between "It's" and its alter ego, "its".	Don't allude to anything you've read without giving a reference for it.	Avoid a purely 'journalistic' style, in academic essays.	Don't waffle. It's not cunning, it just suggests you've got little to say.
Illustrate your points with up-to-date examples.	Construct your sentences carefully.	Use the internet – but with care and discrimination.	Don't fill an essay with irrelevant historical detail.
Use electronic resources to find material (see library website).	Check your spelling and punctuation. Seriously.	Ensure your essay is the required length.	Bring the subject to <i>life!</i>

This guide by David Gauntlett (1998, revised 2000, 2001).

Is there anything else about essays that you think the next edition of this document should cover? All feedback is very welcome – e-mail david@theory.org.uk.

Visit the Institute's extensive website at <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/ics/> where you can view all of the *Study Skills* material, as well as other useful documents, in the 'Undergraduate' section.

Literary Thesis Generator

Topic: Compare and contrast the different types of relationships humans have with nature. Include examples from your own experience and the different texts we have read or viewed. After comparing and contrasting, make a claim about what you feel are our rights and responsibilities toward the natural world in general. Provide reasons and evidence to support your claim.

Example

1. Identify the <i>subject</i> of your paper	The development of one's own identity.
2. Turn your subject into a guiding question	How does a young man go about developing his own identity apart from his parents?
3. Answer your question with a statement	Telemachus realizes that he must set out on his own journey to find his own identity.
4. Refine this statement into a <u>working</u> thesis	In the absence of his father, Telemachus assumes the role, sending himself on a quest that will transform him into the man he needs to be.

1. Identify the <i>subject</i> of your paper	
2. Turn your subject into a guiding question	
3. Answer your question with a statement	
4. Refine this statement into a <u>working</u> thesis	

For a nonliterary paper, I use the following variation:

1. Identify the <i>subject</i> of your paper	Relationships between teenagers and their parents
2. Turn your subject into a guiding question	How does the relationship between teenagers and their parents change?
3. Answer your question with a statement	As teens grow more independent, they resent and resist the limitations and expectations their parents impose on them.
4. Refine this statement into a <u>working</u> thesis	Conflict between teenagers and their parents is a difficult but necessary stage in kids' development.

Writing Terms 12

This list of terms builds on the preceding lists you have been given in grades 9-11. It contains all the terms you were responsible for learning in the past, as well as the new terms you are now responsible for learning for the exam.

- *The new terms are marked with (NT): New Term.*
- *Government exam terms are marked with an asterisk (*).*

-
- **Audience***: The particular individual or group to which a piece of writing is addressed or appeals.
 - **Form***: Form refers to genre, as writing can take the form of a story, or poem, or script for a play, for example. It can also refer to the shape or structure of the writing, as an essay, for instance, may use the chronological form or the climactic order form as an organizational technique (see below for details).
 - **Purpose***: The author may have one or more purposes in a piece of writing; these include the desire to inform, satirize, criticize, persuade, entertain or argue, etc. Be careful in assigning an author's "purpose" to a work without appropriate
-

The Paragraph

- **Narrative* Paragraph**: Narrative paragraphs tell a story, often a segment from the narrator's life, and the lesson to be learned from the story (which is the thesis). Short anecdotes are written in narrative paragraphs, and, like short stories, they have climax.
- **Descriptive* Paragraph**: Descriptive paragraphs describe a scene or a collection of scenes, and rely more on description than action or character to make their point. In fact, often nothing really happens at all in a descriptive paragraph. These paragraphs are like written photographs in that they simply describe a scene.
- **Expository* Paragraph**: This paragraph is the basis for the typical essay written for school. In a single paragraph, the writer either persuades the reader to a particular point of view or explains something to the reader. The first type of expository paragraph is called the persuasive or argumentative paragraph; the second is called the explanatory.

The Essay

An essay is a short piece of prose (comparable in length to the short story in that it can be read in a single sitting) that analyses a subject or offers an argument on a topic. "*Essais*" means "to attempt" or "try out" in French, which is exactly what an essayist does in his/her writing – tries out a few thoughts on a topic. When writing an essay, there are several primary considerations for the writer:

A. Essay Structure

An essay is comprised of a minimum of three paragraphs. There isn't really a magic number of paragraphs. A typical "canned" structure for an essay is the five paragraph form. The essay is broken into an introduction, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion. This is one structure; essays can take a longer multi-paragraphed form.

- **Introduction:** This is the first paragraph or two of an essay and is where the reader is made aware of the purpose for the piece of writing. The introduction provides information on the topic and allows the reader to figure out what kind of essay it is.
- **Thesis:** This is the main idea of the essay, which ties the whole piece together. It is like the theme in a short story. Usually, the thesis is stated explicitly, most often in the opening paragraph. The thesis is most often expressed as a single sentence, otherwise known as the thesis statement.
- **Transitions:** These are words that allow the reader to slide smoothly from one idea to the next or one paragraph to the next (however, therefore, nevertheless, as a result, etc.).
- **Body:** This is the bulk of the essay, where most information is provided (where one proves the thesis).
- **Conclusion:** The end of the essay, usually one or two paragraphs in length, where the writer wraps up the argument or otherwise ties together the content of the essay for the reader.

B. Types of Essays

Essays can be either formal* or informal, depending on the language and style selected by the writer (see language and style below). There are many different types of essays, including narrative, but four main categories follow. In general, the narrative, descriptive, and personal essays are informal while the expository and literary are formal, but even these guidelines are flexible.

- **Descriptive*:** An essay in which the main objective is to engage the senses and convey the essence of a character and/or place rather than plot (as in a narrative essay) or ideas (as in an expository essay). Just as an artist's paint strokes can capture a personality or setting, an author's words illustrate its subject in a moment in time when depicted in a descriptive essay.
- **Personal*:** The personal essay is an extension of the narrative and/or descriptive paragraphs described above. In it, a writer describes a situation in which he/she learned something profound or discovered something about life. These essays are written in first person point of view.
- **Expository*:** This is the most common essay form used in school. Expository essays persuade or explain, are written in third person point of view, and follow a fairly strict format. Typical expository essay writing techniques (HOW a writer explains or

persuades) include cause and effect and compare/contrast, although there are many, many more other approaches. Exposition is therefore writing that conveys information or explains something in a detailed way.

- **Literary:** The literary essay is a formal, academic essay in which a piece/pieces, of literature is/are analyzed for theme, characterization, style, use of figurative language, and/or other stylistic device. The writer expresses his or her interpretation of the literary work and provides evidence from the text to support his/her opinion.
 - **Quotation Incorporation:** This is the method by which a writer defends his/her interpretation of a literary work. Evidence from the text is supplied in the form of direct quotations and/or paraphrases, followed by a page or line reference in parentheses, in order to convince the reader that the writer's interpretation of the literature is sound. Strict rules govern quotation incorporation: ask your teacher for more details about these rules. Also see MLA formatting rules for more information.

Organizational Techniques

Whether they write paragraphs or essays, writers require ways of organizing their thoughts and often cite evidence to prove their points. The following is a short list of organizational possibilities and evidence types:

- **Analogy*:** An analogy is a comparison of certain similarities between two different things, sometimes expressed as a simile. For example: A street light is like a star in that both provide light at night, both are in predictable locations, both are overhead, and both serve no function in the daytime.
- **Anecdotal Evidence*:** An informal account of evidence, perhaps from an interview, leaving verification dependent on the credibility of the party presenting the evidence. (NT)
- **Case Study*:** A detailed, intensive study of an individual unit—such as a person, family, social group, or corporation—that emphasizes developmental issues and environmental relationships. The case study analysis stresses factors that contribute to the success or failure of the unit, and it is written as an exemplary, cautionary, or instructive model for the reader.
- **Cause and Effect*:** An essay technique whereby the events leading up to a single effect are explained to the reader. What causes something to occur? The answer to this question is found in the cause and effect essay.
- **Chronological Order*:** When the essay, usually a narrative, simply recites the events of an action in the order in which they occurred.
- **Climactic Order*:** If an essay is organized so that the least important idea is presented first and the ideas build in importance to the most important idea, that essay is organized using climactic order. The closing of this essay is the climax, so it doesn't simply trail off into feeble nothingness.

- **Compare and Contrast*:** An essay technique whereby one item or concept is evaluated relative to another. Both similarities and differences between the two items are explained.
- **Expert Testimony*:** Doing research and finding out what the experts think on a topic, then quoting the experts so your ideas have more weight. (NT)
- **Explanatory:** This essay tries to explain something to the reader, either how something works, or how to do something. It simply offers information to the reader, without trying to persuade the reader to think a certain way about the information.
- **Persuasive*:** This essay attempts to convince the reader to agree with a particular point of view on a topic. Persuasion is the act of persuading the reader to agree with the writer's position on something. Persuasive techniques* are the methods writers use to convince the reader; they include appeals to logic (deduction and induction) and appeals to emotion (through word choice, example, repetition, hyperbole, irony, etc.).
- **Pro and Con Argument*:** This method of writing offers the reader both sides of the argument on a topic, the pros and the cons. The reader is then able to make up his or her mind on the topic by him or herself.
- **Question and Answer*:** This organizational method for writing offers the reader a series of questions about a topic and then answers them. The answers to the questions allow the writer to convince the reader to adopt the writer's/narrator's opinion on a topic.
- **Statistical Evidence*:** This organizational method is similar to the one on expert opinion. The writer does research to find out about the statistics on his or her topic, and then he or she quotes those statistics in order to convince the reader that the writer's opinion is correct.
- **Research*:** The writer uses researched facts and examples to prove that his or her idea about a topic is correct or to persuade the reader to accept his or her point of view. Research essays always cite sources, so the writer won't be accused of plagiarism, and the reader can feel confident that the writer has done enough research to be knowledgeable.

Writing Styles and Language

Style is the individual manner in which an author expresses his or her thoughts and feelings. Style is basically determined by aspects such as diction, tone, sentences, images, and language. Other stylistic devices include descriptive language, parallel construction, exaggeration, sentence fragments, and dialogue. Essentially, style is the way the writer chooses to express his or her ideas. A writer chooses a style for any piece of writing, whether it is a paragraph, an essay, or something else. The following lists different things writers play with when creating their style and making their language choices:

- **Archaic Language*:** Words and phrases that are old or obsolete (no longer used). For example, the archaic word smote has been replaced with the modern word hit. (NT)
- **Bias*:** This is a tendency in a person that prevents objective consideration of an issue. Bias is a form of prejudice, in that a person might be partial to a particular way of seeing something and try to influence others accordingly. Bias is a form of favouritism.
- **Cliché*:** An idea that has been so frequently stated over time that it has lost its impact through excessive use. Clichés are too familiar to readers to have any powerful effect on them, and thus are best avoided by writers. For example, “It was a dark and stormy night” is a cliché.
- **Colloquial Language*:** The informal language of conversation (not acceptable when writing essays and reports) that often makes a character seem more “real” and believable. Words such as “blab”, “okay”, “check it out”, and “surf the web” are colloquial. When someone uses colloquial language, s/he is using a colloquialism*. This type of language is also known as slang.
- **Description:** The use of sensory appeals (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch) and poetic language to make powerful writing. The goal of description is to have the reader live the experience described in the writing.
- **Diction*:** Choice and use of words in speech or writing—a style of speaking or writing results from a deliberate choice and arrangement of words in a story/essay. Each writer uses diction appropriate to his or her purpose, subject, essay type, and style.
- **Didactic*:** A didactic style is a formal kind of writing that is used when the writer wants to teach something important, usually a lesson on morality, ethics, politics, or something of that nature. If the writer is not careful, this kind of writing can make the reader feel he or she is being lectured or preached at (“You should...”).
- **Formal* and Informal* Language:** Formal language is writing that is deliberate and dignified; it avoids partial sentences, most contractions, colloquial expression, and slang. Informal language is writing that resembles everyday casual conversation and communication with no regard for formality; this type of language incorporates slang, idiomatic expressions, partial sentences, and contractions. Informal language is the representation of speech in writing. For example, a writer depicting a party would have the characters use informal language at the party itself, while formal language would be used when the characters explain the party to a police officer.
- **Idiom*:** A phrase that can’t be translated literally into another language because the meaning isn’t the same as the words that make up the phrase. There are thousands of idioms in English. For example: “it is raining cats and dogs”; “flat broke”; and “going to hell in a hand-basket.” (NT)

- **Historical Reference*:** Used as a persuasive technique, a historical reference is when a writer cites something that occurred in the past to support his or her argument.
- **Irony*:** When there is a surprising gap between what might be expected and what actually occurs. There are three different kinds of irony (see your “Story Terminology” handout), but verbal irony is the type most frequently used in essay writing. Verbal irony occurs when the opposite of what is said is actually meant (sarcasm is an extreme form of verbal irony). (NT)
- **Jargon*:** Words or expressions developed for use within a specific group (e.g. technology, science, education) that are often meaningless to people outside of that group. For example: megabytes, feedback, guesstimate.
- **Juxtaposition*:** The deliberate placing together of two or more thoughts, images or other elements that emphasize each other through their side-by-side placement. Juxtaposition is a form of contrast.
- **Objective*:** In objective writing, the author relies more on hard evidence and logical proof than on intuition, prejudices, anecdotal evidence, or personal interpretations. Objective writing is the opposite of subjective writing.
- **Propaganda*:** Information for readers that is designed to influence opinion, sometimes in unfair ways. The information may be true, or even false, but it is carefully selected and organized to manipulate the reader. Propaganda is often associated with corrupt governments, which isn’t a necessarily fair association.
- **Rhetorical Question*:** A question for which no answer is expected—often used for rhetorical effect, such as making a point in writing. “You don’t expect me to really do that, do you?” is an example of a character using a rhetorical question. The implied answer is clearly, “No.” Rhetorical questions are often used in essay conclusions and can be used in a modified way to transition in the body of an essay. In this case, the writer concludes a paragraph with the rhetorical question and answers it as the first sentence of the next paragraph.
- **Slang*:** Another word for casual, colloquial language, which is often the form everyday speech takes: “I was, like, ya know, so INTO that movie!” or “My bad” are examples of slang, or colloquial, expressions.
- **Subjective*:** In subjective writing, the author relies more on intuition, prejudices, or emotional appeals than on hard evidence and proof. This is the opposite of objective writing.
- **Tone*:** Tone is the author's attitude toward his/her subject or readers. It is similar to tone of voice and should not be confused with mood or atmosphere. An author's tone might be sarcastic, sincere, apologetic, humorous, bitter, analytic, reflective, nostalgic, resigned, didactic, etc.

- **Understatement***: Understatement is a form of satire or sarcasm. It achieves its effect through stating less than what is necessary. For example, a person might say to a hospitalized car crash victim, “I bet that hurt.”
- **Voice***: Voice is the personality of the writing, the specific characteristics that make the writing unique. The voice of a piece of writing is assessed in terms of style and/or tone. Every writer has a unique and recognizable voice.
- **Wit***: Wit refers to clever, often humorous, intelligence and the ability to make clever remarks in an amusing way. A witty person can recognize the relationships between seemingly unrelated things and express those relationships with keen perception. Sarcasm is a form of extreme wit intended to wound or ridicule another.

Sentences

- **Active Voice* and Passive Voice***: The active voice reads as more immediate and concise. In an active sentence, the subject performs the action.

⇒ *Active Example*: The dog bit her.

- *Active Voice*: the subject (the dog) performs the action.

⇒ *Passive Example*: She was bitten by the dog.

- *Passive Voice*: the action is being described as happening to the object (she).

Each sentence states exactly the same thing, but the active voice is preferable because using passive voice can create awkward sentences. Also, overuse of passive voice throughout an essay can cause your prose to seem flat and uninteresting.

- **Parallelism or Parallel Structure***: This is a good writing technique where a writer creates emphasis through making different parts of a sentence follow the same pattern.
 - **Faulty Parallelism**: He spends his days working, eating, and also to hike.
 - **Correction**: He spends his days working, eating, and hiking.

Other Forms of Non-Fiction Writing

- **Autobiography***: An account of a person’s life written by that person.
- **Biography***: An account of a person’s life written by someone else.
- **Diary***: Writing about, often on a daily basis, the events in a person’s life. The diary is a personal and private place where a person can write without an intended audience (though this is not always the case). Ironically, some diaries are later published, especially if the person is famous.
- **Editorial***: An article in a news medium (such as a newspaper, magazine, radio broadcast, or television broadcast) that presents the personal opinion of the publisher, editor, manager, or owner of the news medium. (NT)

Academic Writing

FOCUS	ORGANIZATION	DEVELOPMENT	PURPOSE
<p>Subject What you are writing about (e.g., Hamlet, the Depression, modern art)</p> <p>Main Idea What you are trying to say about the subject. This is also known as your “point,” as in “What’s your <i>point</i>?”</p>	<p>Cause-Effect Arranged to show connections between a result and the events that preceded it. Also known as Problem-Solution.</p> <p>Classification Organized into categories or groups according to various traits.</p> <p>Comparison-Contrast Organized to emphasize similarities and differences.</p> <p>Listing Arranged in a list with no consideration for other qualities.</p> <p>Mixed Organized using a blend of patterns. Might, for example, classify groups while also comparing or contrasting them.</p> <p>Order of Degree Organized in order of importance, value, or some other quality. Also known as Order of Importance.</p> <p>Sequential Arranged in the order that events occur. Also known as Time order or Chronological order.</p> <p>Spatial Arranged according to location or geographical order. Also known as Geographical order.</p>	<p>Examples Primary text Secondary texts Class discussions Outside world</p> <p>Details Sensory Background Factual</p> <p>Quotations Direct Indirect Primary text Secondary texts</p> <p>Explanations Importance Meaning Purpose Effect</p> <p>Elaborations Connections Clarifications Comparisons Contrasts Consequences Concessions</p>	<p>Cause and Effect Answers the question, “Why did it happen?”</p> <p>Classification Answers the questions, “What kind is it?” or “What are its parts?”</p> <p>Compare-Contrast Answers the questions, “What is it like?” or “How is it different?”</p> <p>Definition Answers the question, “What is it?”</p> <p>Description Answers the question, “What does it look, sound, smell, taste, or feel like?”</p> <p>Illustration Answers the question, “What is an example?”</p> <p>Narration Answers the question, “What happened and when?”</p> <p>Persuasion Answers the question, “Why should I want to do, think, or value that?”</p> <p>Problem-Solution Answers the question, “What is the problem and how can it be solved?”</p> <p>Process Analysis Answers the question, “How did it happen?”</p>

Basics: Writing a Timed Essay

Writing a brilliant essay about a topic and a text you may never have seen before is difficult! You have to think and act fast if you are going to write something you can turn in with pride at the end of the allotted time. After reading these strategies for writing a timed essay, consult the annotated sample prompt, rubric, and paper. Note that most readers realize you are writing under difficult circumstances and are trained to “reward you for what you do well, not punish you for what you do wrong” as they say when scoring the AP Literature and Composition essays.

BEFORE

Preview, Pick, and Prepare

1. Preview all prompts (if you have choices) and pick the topic about which you can write the best essay (which may be different from the one about which you would *most* like to write).
2. Analyze the prompt, paying close attention to what you must *do* and *include*; this means identify and underline the required nouns and verbs (e.g., *compare* and *contrast*, *textual evidence* and *literary devices*).
3. Read and take useful notes—in the margins or on a separate piece of paper—related to your chosen prompt if you are writing about a text included in the test; if there is no text, proceed to the planning stage.

Plan

4. Generate compelling, specific ideas that are clearly related to the prompt.
5. Gather examples, quotations, evidence, or details from appropriate sources or the text you are analyzing.
6. Revisit the prompt to confirm that your ideas, examples, and evidence are appropriate to the prompt.
7. Sketch out a brief writing plan, outline, or mindmap *if time allows*; indicate the key connections and ideas.
8. Develop a thesis that is narrow and compelling, but also supportable and related to the prompt.
9. **Avoid** a formulaic thesis or restatement of the prompt itself if at all possible (to make a strong first impression)
10. Write *legibly*: What the reader can't read, they skip them, resulting in a lower grade.

DURING

Write

11. Establish your purpose and point quickly and in a compelling voice to make a strong first impression.
12. Use an organizational strategy appropriate to the prompt and your thesis, making sure it prevents writing a summary or mere description. Choosing a journey pattern, for example, gives the writer an analytical focus.
13. **Avoid** long introductions; instead, create a narrow, compelling argument you can then defend in the essay.
14. Organize each body paragraph around a specific topic sentence that makes an assertion related to your thesis (instead of beginning with description or narration which takes time and does not advance your argument).
15. Integrate specific examples, evidence, and details—and *comment on these*, explaining what the quotations or examples mean, why they are important, how they relate to your thesis or topic sentence.
16. **Avoid** summary; if you find yourself summarizing, keep asking yourself, “So what?” and “Who cares?” and “How is that related to my claim or the point I was trying to make?”
17. Revisit the prompt, checking that you are doing or including *everything* it requires.
18. Monitor the time: You must write a *complete* essay with a beginning, middle, and end. Every second counts!
19. Take time to write well: You have no time to revise, so pay attention along the way to make sure that you:
 - ❑ Pay as much attention to *what* you write as you to *how* you write: voice and style matter!
 - ❑ Use strong verbs, precise nouns, and a variety of sentence types appropriate to your purpose.
 - ❑ Provide effective transitions to clarify and emphasize your ideas and the connections between them.
 - ❑ Organize your ideas in paragraphs that are visibly indented, fully developed, and purposefully arranged.
 - ❑ **Avoid** any grandstanding, editorializing, ranting, seeking pity, asking for mercy, or making excuses.
20. Conclude the essay, tying up all your ideas, connecting them to the thesis; however, do more than just restate what you have already said. Reach for the great closing line that delivers to the reader a final WOW!

AFTER

Revisit and Refine

21. Revisit the prompt and, if available, the rubric to make sure you have done *everything* the prompt asks.
22. Edit and proofread as needed depending on the number, type, and severity of your errors.
23. Follow any other minor directions for which you might be penalized: indicating which prompt you wrote about, attaching the prompts, scoring rubric, or notes you may have made to prepare to write.

Troubleshooting

- What if you do not understand the topic or the text you must write about?
- What if reading and writing are difficult for you and so you need more time to complete this assignment?
- What if you write better on the computer than on paper?



Review

- ❑ Quotations are words by other writers that you use to enhance your own ideas and add to your own work
- ❑ When properly used, a quotation flows with your work. The reader does not need to stop to notice the quote, but instead reads it.
- ❑ Visit the following links for a brief review of quoting effectively
 - http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/q_quote.html
 - http://www.jjuriaan.com/Quoting_Effectively.htm
 - <http://www.english.wayne.edu/writing/Quotation%20Workshop%20Handout-c.pdf>
 - <http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/quotations.html>
 - <http://quotations.about.com/cs/quotations101/a/aa042503.htm>

Overview

- ❑ **References to sources are required** when writing a formal paragraph or essay. These references can include
 - Poem (i.e. “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” by T.S. Eliot)
 - Short Story (i.e. “Young Goodman Brown” by Nathaniel Hawthorne)
 - Novel (i.e. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell),
 - Play (i.e. *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare)
 - Essay (i.e. “Ode to a User-Friendly Pencil” by Bonnie Laing)
 - A dictionary or encyclopedia
 - A website
 - A newspaper
- ❑ **When referring to a source you can use indirect references.** This might be when you paraphrase (put into your own words) an idea, thought, or passage from what you have read.

With the advent of the *The Matrix* films, a new camera system is used by which actors and/or objects are held stationary and multiple cameras are used to take individual images that are later made into consecutive images (“*Bullet Time*”). The resulting effect almost replicates the theory of time dilation where time can appear to slow down the closer one approaches the speed of light (Nova)

NOTE: Even though I am not using a quote, I must still provide a reference to material that is not my ideas or thoughts



USING QUOTATIONS IN YOUR WRITING

English Department

- ❑ **When referring to a source you can use direct references.** Only quote the most necessary portions where the words of the author are so *perfect*, that you must use them instead of using your own.

In his poem “The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock”, T.S. Eliot creates a marvelous juxtaposition of images that actively engages the reader to the poem. The image of two lovers having a romantic stroll is sharply marred by the comparison spread out clear night sky to a “patient etherized upon a table” (3). Readers are not able to romanticize the moment as Eliot continues to use jarring contrasts:

Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,
The muttering retreats
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells. (5-7)

The *lovesong* that the narrator is sharing is subverted by his choice of images of the streets and the hotels. Even in these first few lines, the reader is aware that J. Alfred Prufrock is not your typical balladeer. It is as Jeffrey Hunter remarks in his *Contemporary Literary Criticism* a “dramatic monologue” of a man who is “physically and spiritually bleak” (Hunter)

NOTE: Short quotes use page or line numbers (if only one source is used). Quotes longer than 2 sentences or 2 lines of poetry should be offset from the text.

NOTE: Use the Works cited references on sharepoint to help with your citations or <http://citationmachine.net/> and choose MLA

Works Cited

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Hunter, Jeffrey. *Contemporary Literary Criticism*. Ed. Jeffrey W. Hunter. Vol. 113. Thomson Gale, 1999. eNotes.com. 2006. 6 Mar, 2007
<<http://lit.enotes.com/contemporary-literary-criticism/love-song-j-alfred-prufrock-eliot-t-s/copyright-page>>

"Nova : Einstein's Big Ideas : Time Traveller." *Nova*. June 2005. PBS. 7 Mar 2007
<<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/einstein/hotsciencetwin/>>.

Definitions for Key Verbs in Written-Response and Essay Questions

Successful results can be achieved by addressing the specifics of the question. Most questions contain a key verb or command term. The following list will help students to understand and respond to written-response questions effectively. Any particular examination may use terms selected from this list.

Assess	Estimate the value of something based on some criteria; present an informed judgment.
Compare	Describe how the elements or qualities of one event, issue or character are similar to those of another. Often used in conjunction with CONTRAST.
Contrast	Describe how the elements or qualities of one event, issue or character are different from those of another. See COMPARE.
Describe	Give a detailed or graphic account of an object, event, or concept.
Discuss	Present the various points of view in a debate or argument; engage in written discourse on a particular topic, process or concept.
Evaluate	Use criteria or standards to make judgments about the strengths and weaknesses of a position on a particular issue.
Explain	Give an account of a topic, process, or concept, providing evidence and reasons.
To What Extent	Advance arguments in favour of a position or point of view and respond to or take into account arguments opposed to that position or point of view.

Tone and Formality in Academic Writing

Being aware of one's audience is a crucial part of successful writing, whether you are writing an e-mail to a friend, a memo to a business colleague, or formal paper for a class. Writers need to consider what the audience's expectations are, what assumptions they can and can't make about their audience, and what kind of attitude/personality comes through in their writing. Tone, a term for your manner of expression in speech or writing, is another way of saying "attitude," as in the attitude your readers perceive when they peruse your text. Many times, writers inadvertently choose an inappropriate tone for their writing, which can cause misunderstandings and frustration.

Tone exists in speech, too, but when you are speaking to someone else, your body language and vocal inflections give cues about your attitude, so misunderstandings are less frequent. But writing lacks those cues; with only the words on the page, you have to make your attitude clear to your readers. This is no simple feat, and it might take some practice.

Imagine that you're hungry and looking for a friend to go to lunch with. How would you ask that person to join you? Now imagine that you're asking your grandmother the same question. What about your boss? A client? Your professor? The president? You would probably choose different phrasing for each of these individuals. Why is that?

When you sit down to write, consider whether your audience falls into one of these categories (or others you might have thought of). Try to choose language that seems appropriate for that audience.

Academic writing typically requires a formal, professional tone. To make your writing more formal and "academic-sounding," try some of the suggestions below.

- 1. Avoid using *you, your, etc.*** These pronouns make your writing sound like you are addressing a single individual rather than the wider, general audience that academic writing usually targets.
- 2. Eliminate contractions and slang.** Contractions (like *isn't, don't, you're,* etc.) are considered too informal and conversational for academic writing.

Slang is appropriate for conversations and e-mails, but not research papers, or other formal writing. If you're not sure if it's slang, pick another word or phrase just to be on the safe side.

3. Avoid run-on sentences. Run-on sentences are common in speech and other informal interactions because we just keep adding on to something we wanted to say. In writing, however, these run-ons become distracting and hard to follow.

4. Leave the IM spellings and capitalization quirks in Instant Messenger. Yes, "r u comin? i c u there!" makes sense in cyberspace, but you need to abide by standard spelling, punctuation, and capitalization in formal academic writing. (*Hint:* The same goes for e-mailing professors, as well as current/potential employers.)

Thank you to:

http://www.temple.edu/writingctr/student_resources/tone_and_formality.htm

New Rules for Editing

	Wrong Way	Right Way
1.	Verbs has to agree with their subjects	Verbs have to agree with their subjects.
2.	Prepositions are not words to ends sentences with.	Do not end sentences with prepostions.
3.	And don't start a sentence with a conjunction.	Don't start a sentence with a conjunction.
4.	It is wrong to ever split an infinitive	It is wrong to split an infinitive.
5.	Avoid cliches like the plague. (They're old hat)	Avoid using clichés in your writing.
6.	Also, always avoid annoying alliteration.	Avoid using alliteration.
7.	Be more or less specific.	Be specific in your writing.
8.	Parenthetical remarks (however relevant) are (usually) unnecessary.	Parenthetical remarks are unnecessary.
9.	Also too, never, ever use repetitive redundancies.	Never use repetitive redundancies.
10.	No sentence fragments	Do not have sentences fragments in your writing.
11.	Contractions aren't necessary and shouldn't be used.	Contractions are not necessary and should not be used.
12.	Foreign words and phrases are apropos.	Foreign words and phrases are inappropriate.
13.	Don't be redundant; do not use more words than necessary; it's highly superfluous.	Do not be redundant.
14.	One should never generalize.	One should try to avoid generalizing.
15.	Comparisons are as bad as cliches	Comparisons are to be avoided.
16.	Eschew ampersands & abbreviations, etc.	Avoid ampersands and abbreviations.
17.	One word sentences? Eliminate.	Eliminate one word sentences.
18.	Analogies in writing are like feathers on a snake.	Analogies in writing are unnecessary.
19.	The passive voice is to be ignored.	You should ignore the passive voice.
20.	Eliminate commas, that are, not necessary. Parenthetical words however should be enclosed in commas	Eliminate commas that are not necessary. Parenthetical words, however, should be enclosed in commas.
21.	Never use a big word when a diminutive one would suffice.	Never use a big word when a small one would suffice.
22.	Use words correctly, irregardless of how others use them.	Use words correctly, regardless of how others use them.
23.	Understatement is always the best way to put forth earth shaking ideas.	Understatement is not the best way to put your ideas.
24.	Eliminate quotations in personal writing. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "I hate quotations. Tell me what you know." Use quotations and direct references when doing a literary response essay	Do not use quotes in personal writings, but do use them in a literary response essay.
25.	If you've heard it once, you've heard it a thousand times: resist hyperbole; not one writer in a million can use it correctly.	Avoid hyperbole in your writing.
26.	Puns are for children, not groan readers.	You should avoid puns in your writing
27.	Go around the barn at high noon to avoid colloquialisms.	You should avoid using colloquialism in your writing.
28.	Even if a mixed metaphor sings, it should be derailed.	Even if a mixed metaphor sings, it strikes the wrong note. Even if a mixed metaphor is going along full steam ahead, it should be derailed.
29.	Who needs rhetorical questions?	Do not use rhetorical questions in your writing.
30.	Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement.	Exaggeration is worse than understatement.
31.	When someone is writing, they often avoid using the proper pronoun to keep the work gender neutral.	When someone is writing, he often avoids using the proper pronoun to keep the work gender neutral.
32.	I think you should avoid using the first person in your writing unless it is a personal response.	You should avoid using the first person in your writing unless it is a personal response.
32.	Spell out any number under 20 and use digits for any number over twenty-one including references to time, money, and age.	Spell out any number under twenty, and use digits for any number over 21
33.	A comma splice is an awful thing, do not use them in your writing.	A comma splice is an awful thing, so do not use them in your writing.
34.	Hey, like avoid familiarity and common speech in your writing, you know what I mean?	You must avoid familiarity and common speech in your writing.
35.	Alot of students do not know that you can not put some words together but others you can.	A lot of students do not know that you cannot put some words together but others you can.
35.	Artwork, short stories, and poems such as <u>The Road Not Taken</u> and novels and plays such as "Macbeth" are often incorrectly formatted.	Artwork, short stories, and poems such as "The Road Not Taken" and novels and plays such as <i>Macbeth</i> are often incorrectly formatted. (NOTE: you can <u>underline</u> or <i>italicize</i> longer works)
36.	Proofread carefully to see if any words out.	Proofread carefully to see if any words are left out.

Essay Writing Checklist: Name: _____

Date submitted: _____

1. Divided Thesis statement:

- Is it a clear sentence?
- Does it state exactly what you are going to argue?
- Does it answer the essay question? (9s: What makes a good short story? - or 10s: What is the difference between good and bad short stories?)

2. Introduction:

- Is it interesting?
- Does it begin broad and narrow down to the DTS
- Does it introduce your thesis statement?
- Does it explain how you are going to prove your thesis?

3. Essay Body:

a. Organization/Development:

- Is your essay organized in a logical manner?
- Are your arguments presented in the most effective, most logical sequence?
- Do you present your arguments in order, from weakest to strongest? Or in chronological order from beginning middle end?
- How did you decide on the order of your paragraphs (please attach a separate sheet of paper with your explanation).

b. Paragraph Structure:

- Does each paragraph have a topic sentence?
- Does each paragraph stick to the point(s) stated in your topic sentence?
- Does each paragraph have a concluding/transitory sentence?
- Are the transitions between paragraphs smooth?

c. Quotations:

- Does each quotation prove your point?
- Is each quotation integrated into your writing and discussed, explaining how it proves your point? SQC
- Are your quotations used in the context of the rest of the text? Or, are you misinterpreting quotations so that they help to prove your point?
- Does each quotation have a citation?

4. Conclusion

- Does it summarize your argument?
- Does it restate your thesis in light of the arguments you have presented in your essay?
- Does your conclusion introduce new material? Does it include a quotation that you have not fully explained in the body of your essay? It shouldn't!
- Do answer the questions, "So what?" and "Who cares?"

5. Writing Style

- Do not use vague references (i.e., he, she, it, this, they, etc.). When you use these words, ask yourself if it is clear as to what/whom you are referring.
- Avoid wordiness. Have you cut all of the "dead wood" from your sentences?
- Beware of generalizations. Do not use these unless absolutely necessary. If you must use a generalization, make sure that you have provided sufficient evidence.
- Have you used examples, specific details, concrete description(s), etc.?
- Avoid passive tense. Use active verbs wherever you can.
- Use the present tense when writing about events in the stories or when discussing the author's achievements or your ideas.
- Have you used the most precise word or term that you can? Are you sure that you understand it and are using it correctly?
- Avoid clichés and slang/colloquialisms. Is your language sufficiently academic for the topic at hand?
- Can you combine sentences to avoid repetition?

6. Proofreading

- Eliminate contractions
- Watch for comma splices and misused semicolons.
- Make sure that your sentences are complete: no sentence fragments or run-on sentences.
- Beware of dangling/misplaced modifiers.
- Be sure that you have no subject-verb, pronoun-antecedent, and/or tense agreement problems.
- Watch verb tenses. Have you referred to the text in *present* tense?
- Is everything spelled correctly? Have you used each word correctly?
- Are your in-line citations properly formatted?
- Is your works cited page properly formatted?
- Do your online sources have working URLs and the date you accessed them?

Name _____ Additional Proofreader _____
 Assignment _____ Due Date _____
 1st Draft 2nd Draft Final Draft Read Aloud Partner Read Aloud

PROOFREADING CHECKLIST - USE THIS CHECKLIST TO PROOFREAD YOUR COMPOSITIONS. CHECK OFF EACH ITEM AS YOU FIX IT OR ENSURE THAT IT IS NOT USED IMPROPERLY IN YOUR ESSAY. TURN IN ALL PROOFING SHEETS WITH YOUR FINAL DRAFT.

Spelling/Misusage		YOU	PARTNER			YOU	PARTNER	Grammar		YOU	PARTNER	
a lot not alot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	God/gods	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	neither & nor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
through not thru	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	no one not noone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	either & or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
throughout not through out	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	threw/through	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consistent tense (said, asked, walked/says, asks, walks)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
can't or cannot NOT can not	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	choose/chews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No run-on sentences (2 or more lines without conjunction)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
effect/affect	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	choose/chose	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parallel structures and tense (Tom was a fast runner and he was	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
apart/ a part	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	and/end	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a strong swimmer not Tom was a fast runner and he is a very strong swimmer)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
sea/see	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	who's/whose	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No sentence fragments (all sentences have subject & verb)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
were/we're	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	past/passed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consistent Point of View (Use "I" - 1st person/ "He/Scott" - 3rd	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
your/you're	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	it's/its	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Proper use of Poetic Devices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
witch/which	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	want/won't	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Proper Paragraphing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
whether/weather	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	dye/die	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't overwrite idea, choose another topic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
especially/specially	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	waist/waste	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alternate Noun & Pronoun (Tom ran home. He ran fast)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
assay/essay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	there/their/they're	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Subject/Verb Agreement (Tom is good not Tom are good)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
bale/bail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	to/too/two	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	First, Second, Third, not Firstly, Secondly, Thirdly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
been/bean	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	When in doubt, look it up or leave it out!				Aesthetics/Content		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
wear/where	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					Essay/Composition Title	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
brake/break	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					Legible & Easy to read	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ensure/insure/assure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					Writer's name indicated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mechanics				YOU	PARTNER							
Offset when more than 3 lines of quotations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoid cliches (Don't count your chickens...Needle in a haystack)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Don't Misquote ("To be or to be not, that's the questions.")	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoid jargon or slang (dope, chick, piece, wheels)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Punctuation inside quotation marks ("Go away," said Tom)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoid use of conventional 5 paragraphs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Proper names capitalized (Tom, Vancouver, Kleenex)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong Conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Proper use of commas, periods, colons, & semicolons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not <i>wishy-washy</i> in formal essay (I believe, I think)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Indent all new paragraphs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No vulgarity/profanity (appropriate use)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Italicize novel, play, and movie titles <i>The Lord of the Flies</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Answers question posed in topic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Quotation marks for titles of stories, poems, & TV "The Tell-Tale Heart", "The Road Not Taken", "Big Bang Theory"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoid common speech & familiarity (You know what I mean)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
			Avoid use of 5 paragraph essay structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Remember

- TAG TIQs CE
- State / Quote / Clarify
- You MUST use quotes/references/support for all academic writing at a senior level

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