

Essays Forms and styles

Cause and effect

The defining features of a "cause and effect" essay are causal chains that connect from a cause to an effect, careful language, and chronological or emphatic order. A writer using this rhetorical method must consider the subject, determine the purpose, consider the audience, think critically about different causes or consequences, consider a thesis statement, arrange the parts, consider the language, and decide on a conclusion.

Classification and division

Classification is the categorization of objects into a larger whole while division is the breaking of a larger whole into smaller parts.

Compare and contrast

Compare and contrast essays are characterized by a basis for comparison, points of comparison, and analogies. It is grouped by object (chunking) or by point (sequential). Comparison highlights the similarities between two or more similar objects while contrasting highlights the differences between two or more objects. When writing a compare/contrast essay, writers need to determine their purpose, consider their audience, consider the basis and points of comparison, consider their thesis statement, arrange and develop the comparison, and reach a conclusion. Compare and contrast is arranged emphatically.

Descriptive

Descriptive writing is characterized by sensory details, which appeal to the physical senses, and details that appeal to a reader's emotional, physical, or intellectual sensibilities. Determining the purpose, considering the audience, creating a dominant impression, using descriptive language, and organizing the description are the rhetorical choices to be considered when using a description. A description is usually arranged spatially but can also be chronological or emphatic. The focus of a description is the scene. Description uses tools such as denotative language, connotative language, figurative language, metaphor, and simile to arrive at a dominant impression.

One university essay guide states that "descriptive writing says what happened or what another author has discussed; it provides an account of the topic".

Dialectic

In the dialectic form of essay, which is commonly used in Philosophy, the writer makes a thesis and argument, then objects to their own argument (with a counterargument), but then counters the counterargument with a final and novel argument. This form benefits from presenting a broader perspective while countering a possible flaw that some may present.

Exemplification

An exemplification essay is characterized by a generalization and relevant, representative, and believable examples including anecdotes. Writers need to consider their subject, determine their purpose, consider their audience, decide on specific examples, and arrange all the parts together when writing an exemplification essay.

Familiar

A familiar essay is one in which the essayist speaks as if to a single reader. He speaks about both himself and a particular subject. It has been suggested that while critical essays have more brain than heart, and personal essays have more heart than brain, familiar essays have equal measures of both.

History (thesis)

A history essay, sometimes referred to as a thesis essay, will describe an argument or claim about one or more historical events and will support that claim with evidence, arguments and references. The text makes it clear to the reader why the argument or claim is as such.

Narrative

A narrative uses tools such as flashbacks, flash forwards, and transitions that often build to a climax. The focus of a narrative is the plot. When creating a narrative, authors must determine their purpose, consider their audience, establish their point of view, use dialogue, and organize the narrative. A narrative is usually arranged chronologically.

Critical

A critical essay is an argumentative piece of writing, aimed at presenting objective analysis of the subject matter, narrowed down to a single topic. The main idea of all the criticism is to provide an opinion either of positive or negative implication. As such, a critical essay requires research and analysis, strong internal logic and sharp structure. Each argument should be supported with sufficient evidence, relevant to the point.

Economics

An economic essay can start with a thesis, or it can start with a theme. It can take a narrative course and a descriptive course. It can even become an argumentative essay if the author feels the need. After the introduction the author has to do his/her best to expose the economic matter at hand, to analyse it, evaluate it, and draw a conclusion. If the essay takes more of a narrative form then the author has to expose each aspect of the economic puzzle in a way that makes it clear and understandable for the reader.

Other logical structures

The logical progression and organizational structure of an essay can take many forms. Understanding how the movement of thought is managed through an essay has a profound impact on its overall cogency and ability to impress. A number of alternative logical structures for essays have been visualized as diagrams, making them easy to implement or adapt in the construction of an argument.