

STRUCTURES

The Reluctant Writer's Guide to College Essays

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Irving, Texas

Structures: The Reluctant Writer's Guide to College Essays

Written and published by Rufel F. Ramos

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Rowena's World

Irving, Texas

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“Writing comes easy. All you have to do is stare at a blank piece of paper until your forehead bleeds.”

-- Douglas Adams (1952-2001)

.

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mille grazie.

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The Reluctant Writer's
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INTRODUCTION

Some Basic Assumptions about My Readers' Knowledge of English:

1. You can speak, read, and write in English comfortably. You even dream in it.
2. You learned English grammar, even if it was “way back when” and you can’t exactly remember all the rules. For the most part, you can feel what a fluent English sentence or paragraph is when you write one so that, when you write a shopping list, a letter, a note, or an email message, people can understand you.
3. You have access to a trustworthy grammar source, like a grammar book or a grammar website like *The Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL)*.

Some Basic Assumptions about My Readers in General:

1. You weren’t born yesterday, so you’ve lived a life full of experiences that are in your memory, and you are living a life now that will become memories in the future.
2. You have strongly-held beliefs and opinions in at least one thing; this assumption even includes the “laid back” types in my readership.
3. You use many patterns of communication in your thinking, speaking, and writing, even if you aren’t aware of it.

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4. Everything in your mind is meaningful and, therefore, is a great source of writing ideas. If the stuff in your mind wasn't meaningful in some way, then why would you remember it? (That even includes the "stupid trivia" stuff – it's not so stupid when you suddenly need it for some reason.)
5. You like hearing about meaningful stuff from people. Likewise, people will like hearing about meaningful stuff from you.
6. You may not like writing essays nor have much experience in it. That's okay.

Writing essays is a learned skill, just like driving a car or washing your laundry. Nobody is born knowing how to do these things. Also, you may not always like doing it (like washing your laundry), but you know how to do it – it's no big deal. Likewise, the goal of this handbook is to make you more comfortable in the skill of writing short essays so that you don't have to worry about how to do it.

In this handbook, we'll go over the Writing Process first. Next, we'll go over the different kinds of essays by purpose. Then, we'll briefly go over research methods and documentation styles. Finally, we'll end with a short introduction to longer essays. When we're done, you'll be much more confident in writing essays than you were before even if you'll never like doing it – and THAT'S OKAY.

One last point before we get this show on the road: unless otherwise noted, you'll see essay examples written by past college students in my ENGL 1301 (Self-Expressive & Expository Writing) and ENGL 1302 (Persuasive & Research Writing) classes. From the deepest recesses of my teaching and writing heart, I thank them for allowing their essays to serve as models for you. This is the spirit of Peer Review at its finest.

CHAPTER 1: INVENTION & PREWRITING

In the **INVENTION & PREWRITING** stage, you do three steps:

1. **LOOK** at the topic. **Note:** a topic will always be a NOUN (person, place, thing, or idea, no matter how complicated it sounds).
2. **THINK** about all the things that come to mind when you think about the topic.
3. **VOMIT those things that're in your mind onto a sheet of paper – FAST!**

I'm sorry for shouting, but this is REALLY important. Get those ideas out of your head and onto a sheet of paper as quickly as possible before they scurry away like an army of cockroaches when the lights turn on. Real life is distracting: the phone rings, you have to use the bathroom, your kid makes a mess, your significant other gives you that “Hey, baby” look.

You get the picture.

Once you get distracted, your mind shifts away from the topic. Any ideas you had before go bye-bye, unless you pin them down on a sheet of paper so that you can look at them later.

INVENTION is coming up with those ideas. In most personal essays, those ideas come out of your own brain. In essays calling for research, some of those ideas come out of places that aren't your own brain: interviews, radio, TV, movies, magazines, books, websites, and even music albums, for examples. Either way, in **INVENTION** you go to the place or places where ideas come from; those places of ideas

are called “sources.” Remember, YOU are your most important source, even with research (although you can’t cite yourself – more on that later).

PREWRITING is grabbing those ideas and slapping them down on a sheet of paper. You can slap them down on a sheet of paper in several ways. I’ll mention three forms of Prewriting that you’ve probably heard of before (at least the concepts, if not the names). From least organized to most organized, they are **Freewriting**, **Cluster/Idea Mapping**, and **Brainstorm**.

THREE PREWRITING METHODS

1. Freewriting: The Natural But Messy Prewriting

Now, I know that some of you write like this: You stare at a sheet of blank paper or a blank screen for an agonizing amount of time, wondering how to begin that damnable first paragraph. Then, in a flurry of fits and starts, you churn out what you believe are sentences and paragraphs until you run out of ideas. If you don’t make the assigned essay length, you stare some more, try to write more, and repeat yourself somewhere. Then you stop, sick of the whole thing, and declare that you wrote a rough draft (or even the ONLY draft) of your essay.

Well, you didn’t write a draft. What you just did was a form of **Prewriting** called **Freewriting**. **Freewriting is writing down, as quickly as possible, your ideas, filling up the page.** Grammar? Fuggedaboutit. Spelling? Punctuation? Who needs it? It’s not even in English? ¡No problemo! In Freewriting, you’re free from the rules of correct English. Write EXACTLY what’s in your head, as much as you can, as fast as you can. Turn off your mental critic! Be free! Here’s a short example of Freewriting, on the topic of “ice cream” that I’ve come up with:

Ice cream, ice cream, ice cream, yumyumyum. Like ice cream, gives me a brain freeze, though. Probably need a better toothpaste for sensitive teeth. But – what was I

trying to say? Right, ice cream. Makes me fat but tastes so good, like on a summer day, but it melts too fast, wonder if there's such thing as non-melty ice cream? YUCK! Probably would have all sorts of bleahy chemicals in it so that it wouldn't melt YUCK YUCK YUCK ☹ >-P Anyways – what was I saying? Right, ice cream. Vanilla's always a good standby, but kinda boring, ya think? Same with chocolate, though my chocolate addict friends would probably kill me for saying that. Oh well. What I REALLY like is pistachio ice cream with real whole pistachios in them. MMM – good. Hrm... I'm hungry. Think I'll buy ice cream now....

You've probably noticed that my Freewriting has very few spelling and punctuation mistakes, but most folks' Freewriting likely don't look this nice. An omigosh-this-is-illegible-messy-only-I-can-understand-it Freewriting is normal and okay. As an English teacher, I've internalized a lot of spelling and grammar stuff (after all, it's part of my job). So I don't make many grammar mistakes these days, and, actually, this is how I think and talk in real life. As a result, my Freewriting will reflect my current communications skill. Similarly, your Freewriting will reflect your current communications skill.

Freewriting is like talking – you're free to express what's on your mind. You do it when you email and write casual letters to your friends and family. You ramble. That's okay because you're free.

UNFORTUNATELY, since you're free, you have a lot of work, trying to organize these thoughts into something that looks like an essay. What you end up is a Freewriting with circles, cross-outs, arrows, added sentences or chunks of paragraphs here and there, which make your Freewriting look as if a football play-book just exploded. Fixing a super-messy Freewriting can get time-consuming, which isn't good when you have a looming deadline or you are in the middle of a timed essay exam. So you might want to use a more organized

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form of Prewriting than Freewriting. Or you might want to use Freewriting in addition to a more organized form of Prewriting.

2. Cluster: More Organized than Freewriting

In **Cluster (also known as Idea Mapping)**, you draw a big circle in the center of your paper and label it with your topic. Then, jot down your ideas that branch out of that big circle. When you run out of ideas on one branch, go back to the big circle, look at the topic again, and make a new branch of ideas. Do this at least one more time (to have at least three branches of ideas), but you can make more branches. Each branch becomes **an idea map** of where your ideas are going and how they are connected to the Big Picture, that is, the Topic. Here's an example I've come up with, using the "ice cream" topic again.



With a **Cluster**, you can easily prune away parts of the branches (or even whole branches that don't seem to fit what you want to say) much more easily than Freewriting, since there aren't sentence parts in the way to wade through. You can easily see when you don't have enough branches, reminding you to come up with more ideas to slap down. Notice that I used words, phrases, and even little drawings (the happy and

sad faces). Whatever you need to get those ideas out is all good; just get them out -- fast.

SUPER BIG TIP: You probably realize by now that a “cleaned up” Freewriting, with all those cross-outs, circles, and arrows, is just a Freewriting with a Cluster done to it. Unless you’re in love with Freewriting as a Prewriting tool, why don’t you save yourself some time and just skip to a Cluster?

3. **Brainstorm: Make a List**

In a **Brainstorm**, you make a top-to-bottom sequential **list** of ideas that come to mind when you think about the topic. Like Freewriting and Cluster, don’t censor yourself; whatever pops into your head, list it as quickly as you can. The longer the list, the more ideas you can work with. Here’s an example, using the “ice cream” topic again:

ICE CREAM!!!!!!!

yummy

sweet

cold, but if too cold, can’t get scoop through

soft-serve invented ‘cause of this?

don't like soft-serve, prefer REAL ice cream

frozen yogurt – bleah!

feel sorry for lactose-intolerant

soy substitute invented because of it?

is there goat-milk ice cream?

☹ bleah! ☹ ☹ ☹

think I’ll stop now

TIME OUT: Finding Your Thesis

Whatever you chose as your **Prewriting** method, you can use **Freewriting**, **Cluster**, or **Brainstorm** to explore your beliefs and opinions as a way of finding your thesis, if you don’t have one already. A **thesis** is simply **your topic** plus **your opinion of the topic**. You must be able to make it into a sentence ending with a period. For instance, out of one topic “ice cream,” I can create three different theses:

Ice cream is unhealthy.

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Ice cream has a weird history.
Ice cream has great flavors.

Each of these theses produces a different essay from each other because the details supporting one thesis does not support the thesis of another.

TIP: Remember-- writing a thesis is easy if you think of it like a **formula: Thesis = Topic + Opinion**.

It's really that simple, which is good since you can't leave the Invention & Prewriting stage **until you have a clearly specific Thesis**.

But I Have a Thesis!

If you have a thesis in your mind even before you put pen to paper or cursor on computer screen, then you could skip the less organized forms of Prewriting and move to the next stage of the Writing Process: **Arrangement**. There, you arrange your ideas using more organized forms than what you find in Prewriting: **Spider Cluster** and **Outline**. A **Spider Cluster** is a **more organized Cluster**, and an **Outline** is a **more organized Brainstorm**.

Many experienced writers choose either Spider Cluster or Outline as their **ONLY** form of Prewriting, **thereby combining Prewriting and Arrangement in one step**, when they plan their formal essays. My advice is to develop this habit as well. (I myself bounce between Spider Cluster and Outline.) The quicker you can move to the Arrangement of your ideas, the quicker you can move on to the next stage of the Writing Process, that is, Drafting (when your writing starts to look like an essay).

But I'm getting ahead of myself. **So you have a thesis**. Here's what you can do with it in the second stage of the Writing Process: **Arrangement**.

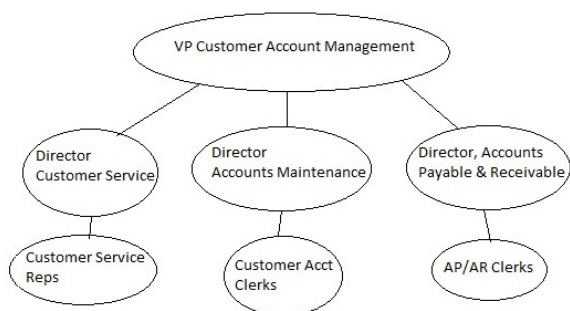
CHAPTER 2: ARRANGEMENT

In **Arrangement**, you organize your ideas into a plan that you use as a roadmap for your **Drafting**. This stage is an important bridge between **Prewriting** and **Drafting**, and the two forms you use to organize your Prewriting are **Spider Cluster** and **Outline**.

TWO METHODS OF ARRANGEMENT

1. Spider Cluster: It's an Organizational Chart!

A **Spider Cluster** is a hierarchical organizational chart of ideas, similar in logic to an organizational chart in the work place. For instance, here's an organizational chart from a corporation that I used to work at:

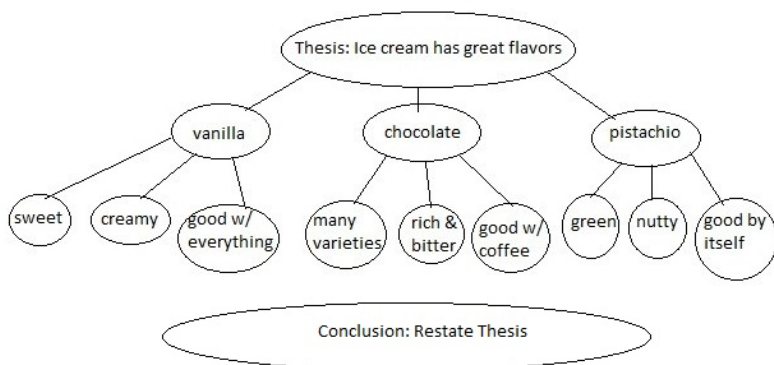


The VP calls all the shots, the Directors are under the VP but equal in rank (and pay) to each other, and the Reps/ Clerks are under their own Directors but are also equal in rank (and pay) to each other.

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Similarly, in a **Spider Cluster**, the VP is the **thesis**, the Directors are the **sub-topics**, and the Reps/ Clerks are the **supporting details** for each sub-topic.

Here's an example, using the "ice cream" topic again, but with the specific thesis, "Ice cream has great flavors."



1. The top circle is the **Introduction** paragraph with a **Thesis**.
2. The middle circles are the three **Body paragraphs' sub-topics**.
4. The little circles underneath are each Body paragraph's **supporting details**.
5. The big **Conclusion** circle on the bottom, on which the **Spider Cluster** rests like a weird three-legged bug floating above the ground, serves as a reminder that the last Body paragraph is NOT the last paragraph in the essay that comes out of this **Spider Cluster**.

Time-saving Tip: With **Spider Cluster** you can use it as an empty but organized form that you fill out, just like a job application form. You slap your ideas down on a sheet of paper (**Prewriting**) AND organize those ideas (**Arrangement**), all on one tool, which cuts down on time in the pre-drafting stages of the Writing Process.

2. Outline: a Hierarchical, Organized List

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An **Outline** does exactly what a **Spider Cluster** does, but in **list form**; here's an example:

Thesis: Ice cream has great flavors.

- I. Vanilla
 - a. Sweet
 - b. Creamy
 - c. Good with everything
- II. Chocolate
 - a. Varieties – milk or dark
 - b. Dark – rich and bitter
 - c. Good with coffee
- III. Pistachio
 - a. Green
 - b. Nutty
 - c. Good by itself

Conclusion: Restate thesis

A **Brainstorm** that's been organized becomes an **Outline**. While many students get taught the **Outline** in their English classes, the downside to an **Outline** is that some beginner writers forget that sub-topics II, III, and IV are equal to each other in rank and are equally under the command of the thesis. If you can remember, however, the hierarchical nature of ideas in the **Outline**, then feel free to use the **Outline**. The upside to an **Outline** is that it is the closest thing to a **literal map** of what a draft looks like.

Recap: The Three Prewriting Methods:

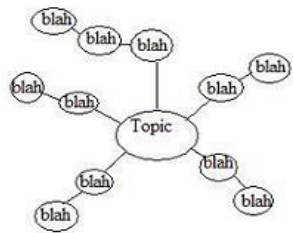
Freewriting

TOPIC blah blah
blah blah blah blah
blah blah blah blah
blah blah blah blah
blah blah blah blah
blah blah blah blah
blah blah blah blah

Brain- storm

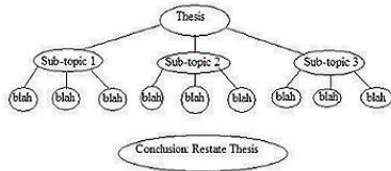
TOPIC
Blah
Blah
Blah
Blah
Blah
Blah

Cluster



The Two Arrangement Methods:***Outline***

- I. Thesis
- II. Sub-topic 1
 - a. blah
 - b. blah
 - c. blah
- III. Sub-topic 2
 - a. blah
 - b. blah
 - c. blah
- IV. Sub-topic 3
 - a. blah
 - b. blah
 - c. blah
- V. Conclusion

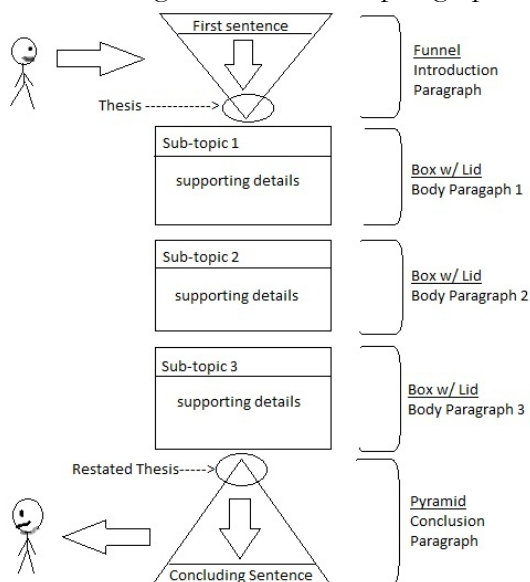
Spider Cluster

It really doesn't matter what **Prewriting** method you choose and what **Arrangement** strategy you use. But the most important thing is **DO NOT SKIP** these pre-drafting stages of the Writing Process. Unless you are a writing genius and can do the Outline or Spider Cluster IN YOUR HEAD (and believe me, I myself am NOT a writing genius, in spite of my BA, MA, and PhD degrees), skipping these two early stages will result in you staring at a blank sheet of paper or a blank screen for way too long, going through unnecessary writer's block, and writing something that is incoherent, repetitious, off-topic, and/or often too short. Therein lies much pulling of hair and great gnashing of teeth.

So -- slap down those ideas, organize them, and move on to the third stage of the Writing Process: **Drafting**.

CHAPTER 3: DRAFTING

Now that you have your ideas nicely organized into **thesis**, **sub-topics**, and **supporting details**, use your **Arrangement** as a checklist to write your **Rough Draft**, which is the end-product of the **Drafting** stage of the Writing Process. In the **Drafting** stage, you turn your **Arrangement** into **sentences and paragraphs**. **IMPORANT NOTE:** At this stage, don't worry about grammar yet; that's a later step. Here's a pictorial representation of a Rough Draft of a five-paragraph essay:



Notice that your Arrangement provides all the information you'll need for 1) the **LAST** sentence of your Introduction Paragraph (the **Thesis**), 2) all of your Body Paragraphs, and 3) the first sentence of your Conclusion Paragraph (the Restated Thesis). **YOUR THESIS DOES NOT START YOUR DRAFT!** I'm sorry for shouting again, but it's true. Your thesis statement isn't the first sentence of your draft. **It's the last sentence in the Introduction Paragraph**, which is the first paragraph of your draft.

"So how the heck do I start my draft?" you ask.

The Introduction Paragraph

Notice that the shape of the Introduction paragraph is an upside-down triangle. It's a funnel, in which the first sentence sucks your reader into the draft, the reader spirals down the rest of the sentences of your Introduction, and he/she lands on top of your thesis statement like he/she has discovered a hidden treasure chest. There are many strategies to write that first sentence, but **you MUST have a thesis statement** ready and waiting before you write that first sentence. When you have that thesis, then you can use **any of the eight strategies below to write that first sentence**. For instance, my thesis is "Ice cream has great flavors." Here are possible first sentences that could lead into my thesis:

1. **Historical Background:** Give a brief history of the topic.
Example: According to some historians, ice cream was once only eaten by the very rich in eighteenth century France.
2. **Anecdote/Personal Story:** Give a brief personal story.
Ex: I was four years old when I had my first taste of ice cream.
3. **Question:** Ask a question.
Ex: Why is ice cream so popular?
4. **Quotation:** Quote somebody.
Ex: My mother always said, "Ice cream will make you fat."

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5. **Definition:** Define an important word.
Ex: Ice cream is just frozen cream, milk, and sugar.
6. **Contradiction:** State the opposite of your thesis.
Ex: Some people think ice cream is bad for you.
7. **Fact/Statistic:** Give an important fact about the topic.
Ex: Some ice cream prices range from \$2.00 to \$8.00 a pint.
8. **Surprising Trivia:** Give a piece of trivia.
Ex: Ice cream can be any flavor, like jalapeño pepper and yam.

Pick one of these strategies, and write your first sentence. Write as many sentences as you need to connect logically this first sentence with your thesis statement. Feel free to use more than one strategy to make those connecting sentences if you get stuck. Be careful not to have a tiny Introduction. A two-sentence Introduction is too short. **Aim for AT LEAST four sentences.**

Body Paragraphs

Follow your Arrangement closely. If you have **three sub-topics** with their supporting details, then you'll have **three body paragraphs**. If you have four sub-topics, then you'll have four body paragraphs – you get the idea. Each **sub-topic label is a topic sentence**. The rest of the body paragraphs is made of your **supporting details** in as many sentences as needed. If the topic sentence is the box lid, then the rest of the sentences are the stuff in the box.

Again, be careful not to have tiny body paragraphs. Five to ten sentences per body paragraph is a good goal to reach in a short, five-hundred word essay, depending on how long your sentences are.

Conclusion Paragraph

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Notice that the shape of the Conclusion paragraph is a right-side-up **triangle**, the opposite shape of the Introduction. While the Introduction sucks in the reader, the Conclusion spits the reader out. The **first sentence of the Conclusion is your thesis again**, restated using different words. The rest of the sentences after this first sentence can be any, some, or all of these **six concluding strategies**, one of which is **a strong concluding statement** at the end of the Conclusion paragraph:

1. Restate an important idea in your body paragraphs:

Example: Out of all three, pistachio is my favorite flavor.

2. Give advice/ call to action:

Ex: You should go and buy ice cream.

3. Predict the future:

Ex: Ice cream will still be a popular dessert for a very long time.

4. Quote somebody:

Ex: As my mother always said, “You can live without ice cream!”

5. Ask a question: Ex: Who doesn’t like ice cream?

6. Restate part of your Introduction:

Ex: I’ve had many opportunities to eat all kinds of ice cream.

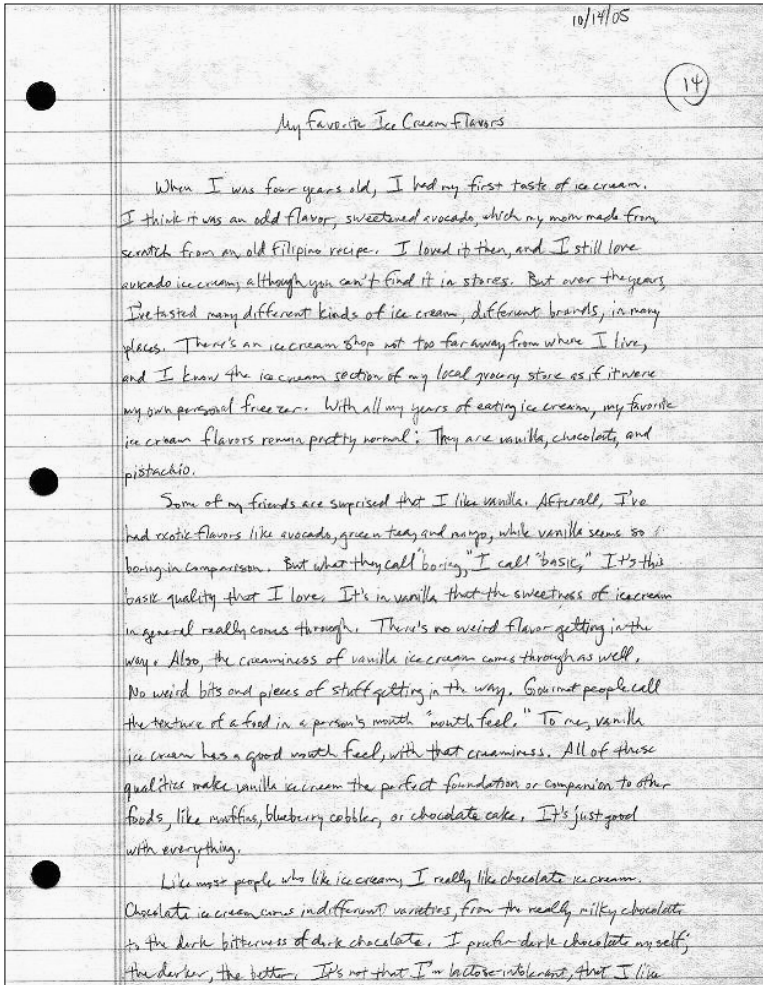
As with the other paragraphs in your Rough Draft, make sure not to have a tiny Conclusion. A two-sentence Conclusion is too short. **Aim for AT LEAST four sentences.**

Sample Rough Draft: “My Favorite Ice Cream Flavors”

With all the parts together in the Drafting stage, here are two examples of a Rough Draft, on the topic “ice cream,” using the “Classification” structure of body paragraph development. (We’ll go over the different essay structures later in this guide.)

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The first is a scanned image of my pencil-on-paper Rough Draft. The second is a typed-directly-on-the-screen Rough Draft.



(15)

dark chocolate over with chocolate. It's just the darker it is, the more chocolatey the ice cream is: richly bittersweet, without the cloying sweetness of vanilla when I'm not in the mood for ice cream that sweet. Not surprisingly, when I'm in a chocolate ice cream mood, my favorite way to eat ice cream is with dark coffee. The bitterness of the ^{chocolate} ice cream complements the bitterness of my coffee that sometimes I put the ice cream into my coffee mug, making myself a cheap mocha drink.

Finally, my most favorite ice cream flavor is pistachio. It's not as common a flavor as vanilla and chocolate, and sometimes I have to search for it, going to several grocery stores. But the search is worth it. The basic flavor is sweet cream, but mixed in it is a delicate pistachio flavor that gives pistachio ice cream a taste that I call "green." Pistachio ice cream doesn't have to be green in color to have this green flavor, a refreshing taste that reminds me of a late spring picnic on a grassy lawn. Also, mixed in the smooth, green-tasting ice cream are pistachio nuts, giving the ice cream a sweet yet ^{rich and nutty texture} dusty nuttiness. Because the green flavor is so delicate and the pistachio nuts give the ice cream a complex mouth feel, I eat pistachio ice cream all by itself. I might have a glass of water to wash it all down, but that's about it. Pistachio ice cream needs no accompaniment.

Thus, my top three ice cream flavors are vanilla, chocolate, and pistachio. Even though I've had many opportunities to eat all kinds of ice cream, I've returned to these three flavors again and again. But of the three, as you've probably noticed, pistachio is my favorite flavor. It is just that good. If you've never had it before, I recommend you should go and buy pistachio ice cream. If you don't like pistachio, that's okay. Any ice cream flavor is good, I believe, and ice cream will continue to be a popular dessert for a very long time. After all, who doesn't like ice cream?

My Favorite Ice Cream Flavors

When I was four years old, I had my first taste of ice cream. I think it was an odd flavor, sweetened avocado, which my mom made from scratch from an old Filipino recipe. I loved it then, and I still love avocado ice cream, although you can't find it in stores. But over the years, I've tasted many different kinds of ice cream, different brands, in many places. There's an ice cream shop not too far away from where I live, and I know the ice cream section of my local

grocery store as if it were my own personal freezer. With all my year of eating ice cream, my favorite ice cream flavors remain pretty normal: they are vanilla, chocolate, and pistachio.

Some of my friends are surprised that I like vanilla. After all, I've had exotic flavors like avocado, green tea, and mango, while vanilla seems so boring in comparison. But what they call "boring" I call "basic." It's this basic quality that I love. It's in vanilla that the sweetness of ice cream in general really comes through. There's no weird flavor getting in the way. Also, the creaminess of vanilla ice cream comes through as well. No weird bits and pieces of stuff getting in the way. Gourmet people call the texture of a food in a person's mouth "mouth feel." To me, vanilla ice cream has a good mouth feel, with that creaminess. All of these qualities make vanilla ice cream the perfect foundation or companion to other foods, like muffins, blueberry cobbler, or chocolate cake. It's just good with everything.

Like most people who like ice cream, I really like chocolate ice cream. Chocolate ice cream comes in different varieties, from the really milky chocolate to the dark bitterness of dark chocolate. I prefer dark chocolate myself; the darker, the better. It's not that I'm lactose-intolerant, that I like dark chocolate over milk chocolate. It's just the darker it is, the more chocolatey the ice cream is: richly bittersweet, without the cloying sweetness of vanilla when I'm not in the mood for ice cream that sweet. Not surprisingly, when I'm in a chocolate ice cream mood, my favorite way to eat ice cream is with dark coffee. The bitterness of the chocolate so complements the bitterness of my coffee that sometimes I put the ice cream into my coffee mug, making myself a cheap mocha drink.

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You've probably noticed that my Rough Draft has very few spelling and punctuation mistakes, but most folks' Rough Draft likely don't look this nice. An omigosh-this-is-illegible-messy-only-I-can-understand-it Rough Draft is normal and okay. As I've mentioned earlier, I'm an English teacher by training and trade, so I've internalized a lot of spelling and grammar stuff. I don't make many grammar mistakes these days, so my Rough Draft reflects my current communication skills.

But even with my English teacher training and experience, I can spot three mistakes: In the second paragraph, I have a fragment. In the third paragraph, "chocolatey" is a misspelling. Also, in the fourth paragraph I'm missing a word between the words "to green". **Fixing those mistakes on a Rough Draft moves me into the fourth part of the Writing Process, which is Revision & Editing.** But before we go there, here's a brief note about using a word processor.

Use a Word Processor

You can draft with pen and paper or with keyboard and word processing software. But for those who compose with pen and paper, type your draft into a word processor. Word processing is a skill you'll need to know in the twenty-first century work world anyway, and Revision & Editing will be easier with an electronic version of your Rough Draft as opposed to a paper version. Trust me on this.

STRUCTURES

Also, don't forget to save your file often and to make a print-out of your word-processed Rough Draft just in case your word processor file gets lost, corrupted, or infected with an electronic virus. You wouldn't want to start your Rough Draft from scratch if something goes wrong with your file. Therein lie insanity and much anger. Trust me on this.

A brief word about file formats: Microsoft Word automatically saves its files as .docx files. Microsoft Works automatically saves its files as .wps files. Apple Pages saves its files as .pages files. Google Docs and Open Office save their files as .odt or .xml files. Many schools and libraries still run older versions of Microsoft Word, which CANNOT read .wps, .pages, .odt, or .xml files. So if you don't use MS Word, then make sure you "Save As" your Rough Draft as a .docx or .rtf file.

Also, save your file with an easily identifiable name and in an easy-to-find place so that you don't accidentally misplace your draft.

Now that you have your typed Rough Draft complete, you can now move on to the fourth and **last stage of the Writing Process: Revision & Editing.**

CHAPTER 4: REVISION & EDITING

With a completed, typed Rough Draft, you move to the fourth and last stage of the Writing Process: **REVISION & EDITING**.

In **REVISION**, check for three big things:

1. Look again to your **Arrangement** (either a **Spider Cluster** or **Outline**) and then back to your **Rough Draft**, making sure that you followed the organization of your Arrangement and aren't missing any important parts.
2. If your paper is too short, **add any additional details** to the body paragraph or body paragraphs. You might even add whole, new body paragraphs, but be careful not to repeat yourself. Write down **any new sub-topics** to your Arrangement to remind yourself not to repeat sub-topics you've already gone over.
3. If you find **details that digress**, that is, get off the point of your thesis, then **delete** those details and **replace** them with details that do relate to your thesis.

In **EDITING**, do these three steps:

1. **Correct any stylistic and grammatical errors**, like confused words, misspelled words, bad punctuation, sentence errors (like fragments and run-ons), and deficient transition words. Consult your personal grammar source, whether it's a book or a grammar website like *The Purdue Online Writing Lab*, as needed. Also, run the spell-checker and grammar-checker of

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your word processor, but don't do this blindly. YOU need to check the electronic checkers to make sure that you agree with their suggestions or not. After all, anyone who has ever dealt with really bad autocorrect while texting can see that these electronic checkers are not perfect.

2. Correct any errors in the manuscript style per your instructor's requirements. For instance, in **MLA style**, make sure you have

- A. a centered essay title,
- B. proper paragraph breaks (0.5" first line indenting the first sentence of each paragraph, with no additional spaces between the paragraphs),
- C. one-inch margins all around,
- D. a book-type font style like Times New Roman, Cambria, or Calibri,
- E. font size no larger than 12, and
- F. a name header or cover page, according to your instructor's requirement
- G. EVERYTHING double-spaced.

3. Have another person (a classmate, tutor, or knowledgeable friend) **read your EDITED Rough Draft** so that he or she can spot errors or problems that you may have overlooked. This "second opinion" is called **Peer Review**, and all experienced writers do this. **DO NOT SKIP THIS STEP.**

Save your file again, in the correct file format and in more than one place. It is now a polished draft. If you submit it to your teacher (either by print-out or electronically), then this draft is called the **Final Draft**. The **Final Draft** is the end product of the Writing Process. You're done!

EXAMPLE OF A FINAL DRAFT:

Here's the **Final Draft** text of "My Favorite Ice Cream Flavors" (it's a **CLASSIFICATION ESSAY** – more on what that is later) before it's formatted in MLA Style:

My Favorite Ice Cream Flavors

When I was four years old, I had my first taste of ice cream. I think it was an odd flavor, sweetened avocado, which my mom made from scratch from an old Filipino recipe. I loved it then, and I still love avocado ice cream, although you can't find it in stores. But over the years, I've tasted many different kinds of ice cream, different brands, in many places. There's an ice cream shop not too far away from where I live, and I know the ice cream section of my local grocery store as if it were my own personal freezer. With all my years of eating ice cream, my favorite ice cream flavors remain pretty normal: They are vanilla, chocolate, and pistachio.

Some of my friends are surprised that I like vanilla. After all, I've had exotic flavors like avocado, green tea, and mango, while vanilla seems so boring in comparison. But what they call "boring" I call "basic." It's this basic quality that I love. It's in vanilla that the sweetness of ice cream in general really comes through. There's no weird flavor getting in the way. Also, the creaminess of vanilla ice cream comes through as well. There are no weird bits and pieces of stuff getting in the way. Gourmet people call the texture of a food in a person's mouth "mouth feel." To me, vanilla ice cream has a good mouth feel, with that creaminess. All of these qualities make vanilla ice cream the perfect foundation or companion to other foods, like muffins, blueberry cobbler, or chocolate cake. It's just good with everything.

Like most people who like ice cream, I really like chocolate ice cream. Chocolate ice cream comes in different varieties, from the really milky chocolate to the bitterness of dark chocolate. I prefer dark chocolate myself; the darker, the better. It's not that I'm lactose-intolerant, that I like dark chocolate over milk chocolate. It's just the darker it is, the more chocolaty the ice cream is: richly bittersweet, without the cloying sweetness of vanilla when I'm not in the mood for ice cream that sweet. Not surprisingly, when I'm in a chocolate ice cream mood, my favorite way to eat ice cream is with dark

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coffee. The bitterness of the chocolate so complements the bitterness of my coffee that sometimes I put the ice cream into my coffee mug, making myself a cheap mocha drink.

Finally, my most favorite ice cream flavor is pistachio. It's not as common a flavor as vanilla and chocolate, and sometimes I have to search for it, going to several grocery stores. But the search is worth it. The basic flavor is sweet cream, but mixed in it is a delicate pistachio flavor that gives pistachio ice cream a taste that I call "green." Pistachio ice cream doesn't have to be green in color to have this green flavor, a refreshing taste that reminds me of a late spring picnic on a grassy lawn. Also, mixed in the smooth, green-tasting ice cream are pistachio nuts, giving the ice cream a sweet yet dusty nuttiness and nice contrasting texture. Because the green flavor is so delicate and the pistachio nuts give the ice cream a complex mouth feel, I eat pistachio ice cream all by itself. I might have a glass of water to wash it all down, but that's about it. Pistachio ice cream needs no accompaniment.

Thus, my top three ice cream flavors are vanilla, chocolate, and pistachio. Even though I've had many opportunities to eat all kinds of ice cream, I've returned to these three flavors again and again. But of the three, as you've probably noticed, pistachio is my favorite flavor. It is just that good. If you've never had it before, I recommend you should go and buy pistachio ice cream. However, if you don't like pistachio, that's okay. Any ice cream flavor is good, I believe, and ice cream will continue to be a popular dessert for a very long time. After all, who doesn't like ice cream?

Here's the same text of the **Final Draft**, "My Favorite Ice Cream Flavors," but **with MLA style manuscript formatting**, and ready to submit to an instructor.

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Lastname 1

Firstname Lastname

Prof. Name

Course name -- section #

Day Month Year

My Favorite Ice Cream Flavors

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So there you have it, the **WRITING PROCESS** from beginning to end: **Invention & Prewriting, Arrangement, Drafting, and Revision & Editing**. As seen in "My Favorite Ice Cream Flavors," the end-product of the Writing Process is an essay that is unified, focused, coherent, well-supported with details, and error-free. If you follow the Writing Process, you should be able to get the same result.

STRUCTURES

Now that we know the steps to write a generic five-paragraph essay, let's see what kinds of essays you will likely write in a college freshman composition class, a timed essay exam, or the essay portion of an admission or scholarship application form.

CHAPTER 5: DIFFERENT ANSWERS = DIFFERENT ESSAYS

In the previous chapter, the essay “My Favorite Ice Cream Flavors” answered the question, “What kinds of ice cream flavors do you like?” My body paragraphs answered that question, giving three kinds of ice cream flavors, one flavor per body paragraph. Finally, I elaborated on each flavor’s body paragraph by giving descriptions and examples as supporting details.

But let’s say I change the question to “When did you first taste ice cream, and what was it like?” or “How is ice cream made?” or “Should you give ice cream instead of Pediasure to your kid?” I won’t have the same body paragraphs as the essay that I wrote. The body paragraphs for those other questions will be totally different because I’ll be giving DIFFERENT answers.

This is why the **Invention & Prewriting** stage is **CRUCIAL**. Depending on **the question** and **your thesis statement** that serves **as a quick answer**, you’ll have body paragraphs that explore in depth **one question but not another**. It’s only in the pre-drafting stages (**Invention & Prewriting** and **Arrangement**) where you can easily spot whether you’ve stuck to the question or accidentally wandered off into Digression Land, where you answered different questions that your essay wasn’t supposed to answer.

Different questions (also called “**the essay’s purpose**”) call for different answers, explained in body paragraphs, which result in different kinds of essays.

**The Most Common Questions = The Most Common
Short Essay Types**

1. Question: “What happened?” = Answer: **Narration**
2. Q: “What does it look, sound, smell, feel, taste like?” = A: **Description ***
3. Q: “How is that done or made?” = A: **Process**
4. Q: “What are its characteristics?” = A: **Division** (also known as **Analysis**)
5. Q: “What are the similarities and/or the differences between these two related persons, places, things, or ideas?” = A: **Comparison and Contrast**
6. Q: “What are the different kinds of that category of person, place, thing, or idea?” = A: **Classification with Exemplification **** ← **Note:** “My Favorite Ice Cream Flavors” is this kind of essay.
7. Q: “What causes that and/or are the consequences of that?” = A: **Cause and Effect** essay.
8. Q: “Why is this right and that wrong? What proof do I have to defend my belief?” = A: **Argument** essay.

In the next few chapters, we’ll go over each of these essays types. However, I must mention two important points:

*** Description rarely is a standalone essay in many college classes.** It usually plays a supporting role in the body paragraphs of other essay types, like Narration and Division. In my English 1301 classes (Expository Writing), I introduce Description in the Narration unit, so that’s how I’ll present it in this handbook

**** Many freshman composition books teach Classification and Exemplification separately, but I don’t.** Noticing that Classification and Exemplification model essays in those textbooks were interchangeable, I have taught these essay types as synonymous for several years now, with successful results in my students’ writing.

CHAPTER 6: NARRATION, WITH DESCRIPTION

DEFINITION:

Narration answers the question “What happened?” by telling **in its body paragraphs** a story through a sequence of events in **chronological (time) order**, from earliest in time to the most recent. In **non-fiction writing** (like personal essays and journalism articles) those events actually happened, while in **fiction writing** (like short fiction stories and novels) those events are entirely made up.

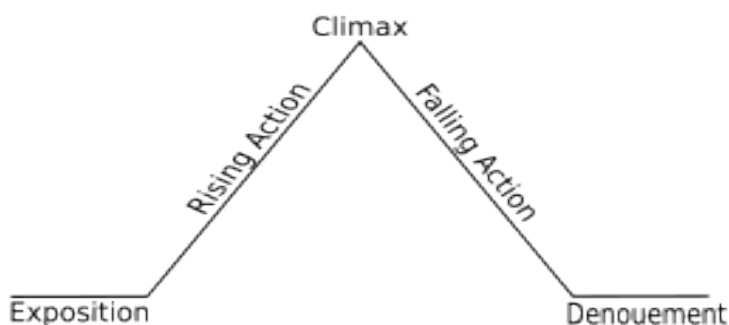
THESIS:

In a **Narration** essay, the **thesis = point of the story**. What’s the lesson? Why are you telling this story? What is your overall opinion of what happened -- sad? happy? mixed? Your answer becomes the thesis statement.

STRUCTURE:

All **Narration** essays follow the classic plot-line structure. You may have seen it before in high school English classes as a way of analyzing an author’s short story. For your purpose, it becomes your **Arrangement** for **the body paragraphs** of your Narration essay.

STRUCTURES



Here's the above chart, translated as a generic, **Narration** outline that is the “skeleton” of your essay:

Intro with Thesis: the overall point of the story

I. **Body or Section 1: Exposition** = Overview of settings (time and location) and characters (the key people in story); **Early Rising Action** = the start of conflict between characters, nature, society, or even the self.

II. **Body or Section 2: Increasing Rising Action** (conflict getting much worse) that leads to the **Climax** = where the story “peaks,” either the best or worst thing that happened; usually some sort of discovery, revelation, or decision.

III. **Body or Section 3: Falling Action to Denouement** = what happened after the climactic moment, a resolution of everybody involved. Can be a happy, sad, or mixed ending.

Conclusion: Restate point of the story; comment on its effects today; end with strong concluding statement.

SUPPORTING DETAILS:

While you have your Narration essay's skeleton, you still need to “flesh out” the story's events, characters, and setting. That's where **Description** comes in. Relying on your five senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste), explain the physical characteristics of the people, places, and things in your

story. (Most people rely on sight and hearing the most in description.)

While a journalist or scientist uses **Objective Description** to describe these things as **logically** (that is, **objectively**) as possible, a personal essayist uses **Subjective Description** to describe those same things as **emotionally** (that is, **subjectively**) as possible. In a personal essay, those descriptions with emotional pull connect the reader to you, show the movie that is in your head, and therefore create a rich and specific story that stays even when the reader has finished your essay.

Note: Avoid using the pronoun “you” in the Body paragraphs.

ESSAY EXAMPLE:

Topic: A childhood dream or goal.

NARRATION WITH DESCRIPTION:

“A Hard Lesson Learned” by Jessica Bray

My mother always joked that I came out of the womb with pointed toes; I believed her. Growing up, I lived for flipping, swinging, stretching, and leaping. As long as I was moving or upside down, I was content. Gymnastics was my very first love, and my dream growing up was to be an Olympic gymnast. “The Magnificent Seven” were my childhood heroes as well as their coach, Bella Koroli. When those girls brought home the gold for America in 1996, I was ten years old, sitting in my father’s lap and sobbing tears of joy as Koroli carried Kerri Strug on to the floor to receive her medal. However, a great number of those tears were conceived from envy and that night was fuel to my fire. Later on, I would learn a hard lesson about that first love.

My cousin Kambri is the one who really introduced me to gymnastics when I was four. She demonstrated an aerial, her “skill of the week” at Christmas that year, and I was determined

STRUCTURES

to learn how to do it. (An aerial is a really quick, hands free cartwheel.) My parents put me in classes soon after at a gym called Aerial Works and when, I became old enough and learned more, I was asked to join their competitive team. I competed heavily all throughout middle school, and practices consumed my free time. Gymnastics was my life.

I started high school in ninth grade. College became a common topic, and my main ambition became to join the gymnastics team at the University of Oklahoma, a top team in the nation. My social life blossomed as I was invited to attend football games and birthday parties with friends. This is where it is important to admit how little a priority homework was for me. As soon as school required a little time and effort, I was fresh out and my parents never really showed concern. Both of them are rather successful and neither graduated high school. At the time, I thought I was just lucky to have cool parents who never hounded me about doing my homework. My grades suffered, but gymnastics remained my first priority and friends were a close second. Didn't anyone ever tell me a division one college would have high academic standards? I am sure they did, but seeing as how my parents were not the best disciplinarians, I gave little credit to authority, and consequences for anything never seemed quite real. I was only told to dream big, so I did.

My senior year rolled around and I was heavily recruited by scouts from colleges who would later see my "below average" grades and retract any offer ever mentioned. Anyone in the admissions department at my choice school would have laughed at my transcript. The realization shattered my heart as reality set in. I had worked so hard for nothing. I went through a time of depression that lead to a rebellious phase after graduation and snapped out of it at twenty four after learning I was pregnant. I had no choice but to get my act together.

My new passion is my little family. They are the reason I have chosen to attend college, this time with dedication and determination. I paid a big price for slacking on my school work, but I also feel I could have used a little more direction.

Therefore, I have learned as a mother I want do my best to let my “no” be “no” and my “yes” be “yes”, to stand my ground and keep my promises. I want my kids to possess a greater respect for their elders and authority than I and to listen when given valuable advice, so they will never have to learn the hard way like their mother.

Bray 1

Jessica Bray

Dr. Ramos

English 1301-43405

9 Feb 2013

A Hard Lesson Learned

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CHAPTER 7: PROCESS

DEFINITION

Process answers the question “How is that done or made?” by explaining **in its body paragraphs** a procedure as a sequence of steps in **chronological (time) order**, from earliest in time to the most recent, leading to a definite result. Process can be explained in two methods: as a set of **Instructions**, in which you give directions directly to your reader (addressed as “you”), or as a **Process Explanation**, in which someone other than the reader demonstrates the step-by-step procedure.

THESIS

In a **Process** essay, the **thesis = opinion of the process and/or its end result**. Is the process difficult? Easy? Tricky? Is the end result worth it? Your answer becomes the thesis statement.

STRUCTURE

If you’ve ever read a set of instructions or followed a recipe, then you are familiar with the structure of **Process** – strict, sequential steps, with nothing out of order.

Intro with Thesis: opinion of the process and/or end result

- I. **Body or Section 1:** Stage 1 – getting ready, gathering materials, beginning steps.
- II. **Body or Section 2:** Stage 2 – continuing the steps; the hardest, busiest, or most tedious steps.
- III. **Body or Section 3:** Stage 3 – finishing up and the end result.

Conclusion: Restate Thesis; comment about your experience with the process; strong concluding statement.

SUPPORTING DETAILS

Each body paragraph is a chronological stage of the process, with each stage having several steps. In a **Process**, always remember to keep your readers' needs in mind. What do you know that a newbie most likely don't know? Don't leave ANYTHING out. Besides the most obvious steps, you can include warnings, tips, and suggestions, like specific brands or specific stores.

For Instructions:

- 1) Second Person: Use "you" all over the place. ← Yes, this is the **only** instance where you're allowed to use "you" in the body paragraphs of an essay.
- 2) Use present tense and commands: "Preheat the oven to 400 degrees."

For Process Explanation:

- 1) First or Third Person: Use "I" or "He," "She," "They," "One," or "It" – depending on who (like a person) or what (like a body organ) is doing the process. ← No "you."
- 2) Choose either past tense or present tense and then use it consistently. Avoid commands.

ESSAY EXAMPLE

Topic: A process you know well.

PROCESS: INSTRUCTIONS:
“Shipping Solutions” by Janey Broyles

It is very likely that at some point, you will need to ship something. You may want to purchase gifts for family members who live far away from you. Perhaps your holiday visitors flew home without their car keys. Maybe a friend went on vacation and left all of his vital medication at home. These are all valid explanations that I have heard from customers who come to FedEx Express. Many of these people have never shipped anything before and are quite intimidated by the process. I have worked at FedEx for three years; let me assure you that shipping a package is simple and easy.

The first step is to decide what items you need to ship. If you have the option to choose these things, there are some important factors to keep in mind. It is cheaper to send smaller and lighter items than it is to send bulky or heavy things. For instance, a small jewelry box or shoe box will cost less to ship than a gigantic stuffed bear or a set of encyclopedias. You also need to be aware that there are some items that you cannot ship. Perfume makes a wonderful gift, but is also considered a flammable liquid. Firearms, alcohol (including the liquor filled chocolate candies), and tobacco products are all restricted by the government and have special licensing requirements.

After you select what you want to ship, it's time to package your items. You must first decide what kind of container to use. Sturdy cardboard boxes are the most common, but there are other options available as well. In my opinion, the very best shipping container is a solid, hard-sided ice chest. It is extremely durable, waterproof, and offers great protection for contents. After choosing a container, carefully wrap any fragile items in bubble wrap and place them inside. If there are any empty spaces, fill them with wads of newspaper. Next, completely seal the container with wide clear tape. Do not use duct tape or scotch tape because they do not stick very well. It's now time to take your package and drive to the shipping office.

When you arrive, you will find a variety of forms to fill out:

STRUCTURES

one for ground, one for overnight, and one for international. It's best to ask which one to fill out because if you choose the wrong one, you will still have to fill out the correct one. After you fill out the form, take your package to the counter and give it to the service agent. He will weigh it, measure it, and ask you several questions regarding shipping options. Then he will tell you how much it will cost. It's much cheaper to send your package several days ahead of time, if possible, because ground shipping is much less expensive than overnight shipping. If your package is large and you need it there the next day, you can expect to pay a couple of hundred dollars. If it is small and you don't mind it taking several days, you may only have to pay ten or fifteen dollars. After you pay for your shipment, the service agent will give you a receipt with a tracking number on it. It is very important to keep that number in a safe place until your package arrives at its destination. You can track your package by going to the shipper's website and entering the tracking number in the search box. That's it! Your package is on its way.

As you can see, shipping packages is easy. First, you have to select the items you want to ship. Next, you select an appropriate container and pack your items inside. Finally, you go to the shipping office and pay for the services. I help people ship packages every day. The first time may seem intimidating but, after that, it's a piece of cake!

Janey Broyles

Dr. Ramos

ENGL 1301-43405

26 Feb. 2013

Instructions: Shipping Solutions

It is very likely that at some point, you will need to ship something. You may want to purchase gifts for family members who live far away from you. Perhaps your holiday visitors flew home without their car keys. Maybe a friend went on vacation and left all of their vital medication at home. These are all valid explanations that I have heard from customers who come to FedEx Express. Many of these people have never shipped anything before and are quite intimidated by the process. I have worked at FedEx for three years; let me assure you that shipping a package is simple and easy.

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are any empty spaces, fill them with wads of newspaper. Next, completely seal the container with wide clear tape. Do not use duct tape or scotch tape because they do not stick very well. It's now time to take your package and drive to the shipping office.

When you arrive, you will find a variety of forms to fill out: one for ground, one for overnight, and one for international. It's best to ask which one to fill out because if you choose the wrong one, you will still have to fill out the correct one. After you fill out the form, take your package to the counter and give it to the service agent. He will weigh it, measure it, and ask you several questions regarding shipping options. Then he will tell you how much it will cost. It's much cheaper to send your package several days ahead of time, if possible, because ground shipping is much less expensive than overnight shipping. If your package is large and you need it there the next day, you can expect to pay a couple of hundred dollars. If it is small and you don't mind it taking several days, you may only have to pay ten or fifteen dollars. After you pay for your shipment, the service agent will give you a receipt with a tracking number on it. It is very important to keep that number in a safe place until your package arrives at its destination. You can track your package by going to the shipper's website and entering the tracking number in the search box. That's it! Your package is on its way.

As you can see, shipping packages is easy. First, you have to select the items you want to ship. Next, you select an appropriate container and pack your items inside. Finally, you go to the shipping office and pay for the services. I help people ship packages every day. The first time may seem intimidating but, after that, it's a piece of cake!

PROCESS EXPLANATION: “Shipping Solutions” by Janey Broyles

It is very likely that at some point, people will need to ship something. They may want to purchase gifts for family members who live far away from them. Perhaps their holiday visitors flew home without their car keys. Maybe a friend went on vacation and left all of his vital medication at home. These are all valid explanations that I have heard from customers who come to FedEx Express. Many of these people have never shipped anything before and are quite intimidated by the process. I have worked at FedEx for three years, and I often assure them that shipping a package is simple and easy.

The first step is to decide what items customers need to ship. If they have the option to choose these things, there are some important factors to keep in mind. It is cheaper to send smaller and lighter items than it is to send bulky or heavy things. For instance, a small jewelry box or shoe box will cost less to ship than a gigantic stuffed bear or a set of encyclopedias. They also need to be aware that there are some items that they cannot ship. Perfume makes a wonderful gift, but is also considered a flammable liquid. Firearms, alcohol (including the liquor filled chocolate candies), and tobacco products are all restricted by the government and have special licensing requirements.

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Janey Broyles

Dr. Ramos

ENGL 1301-43405

26 Feb. 2013

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CHAPTER 8: DIVISION, WITH EXEMPLIFICATION

DEFINITION

Division answers the question “What are its characteristics?” It explains **one** person, place, or thing (also known as **one subject**) by dividing it into its **three or more key characteristics**, one characteristic per body paragraph. The body paragraphs are organized by **emphatic** (that is, **importance**) **order**, from least to most important characteristic or from most to least important.

Another name for **Division** is **Analysis**. Under that name, this essay type is the most common essay you’ll find in college classes and in office workplace situations.

THESIS

In a **Division** essay, **thesis = ONE subject + overall opinion of that subject + at least THREE key characteristics**. For instance, let’s say “Mom” is the one subject. Let’s say your overall opinion of that subject is “tough” because you’re thinking of three characteristics: appearance, hobbies, and parental discipline. The thesis would then be “Mom is tough as seen in her appearance, her hobbies, and her parental discipline.”

STRUCTURE

Intro with Thesis: overall opinion of the subject and its key characteristics

- I. Body or Section 1: Characteristic 1** – illustrate with one or more descriptive examples

II. Body or Section 2: Characteristic 2 – illustrate with one or more descriptive examples

III. Body or Section 3: Characteristic 3 – illustrate with one or more descriptive examples

Conclusion: Restate Thesis; other comments; end with a strong concluding statement

SUPPORTING DETAILS

Exemplification: Depending on how personal or impersonal your subject is, your descriptive examples can be personal experiences, facts, statistics, or quotes from witnesses and experts. Whatever your examples are, make sure that they are 1) specific, 2) concrete, and 3) relevant.

Note: Avoid using the pronoun “you” in the Body paragraphs. In less-personal essays, avoid using “I” as well – in those cases, find a substitute person to stand in for you.

ESSAY EXAMPLE

Topic: Explain any person, place, or thing that you know well.

DIVISION: “Vanilla: My Favorite Ice Cream Flavor” by me.

When I was four years old, I had my first taste of ice cream. I think it was an odd flavor, sweetened avocado, which my mom made from scratch from an old Filipino recipe. I loved it then, and I still love avocado ice cream, although you can’t find it in stores. But over the years, I’ve tasted many different kinds of ice cream, different brands, in many places. There’s an ice cream shop not too far away from where I live, and I know the ice cream section of my local grocery store as if it were my own personal freezer. With all my years of eating ice cream, however, my favorite ice cream flavor is surprisingly ordinary: vanilla.

Some of my friends are surprised that I like vanilla. After all, I've had exotic flavors like avocado, green tea, and mango, while vanilla seems so boring in comparison. But what they call "boring" I call "basic." It's this basic quality that I love. It's in vanilla that the sweetness of ice cream in general really comes through. There's no weird flavor getting in the way. Also, vanilla can be a blank canvas on which an ice cream maker can produce a surprising number of variety in it. Between vanilla bean, French vanilla, and even "homemade" country vanilla, vanilla as a flavor is nothing but boring.

Also, the smooth creaminess of vanilla ice cream comes through as well. There are no weird bits and pieces of stuff getting in the way, like one would find in rocky road or butter pecan. Gourmet people call the texture of a food in a person's mouth "mouth feel." To me, vanilla ice cream has a good mouth feel, with that creaminess. It's like a little kid comfort food, right up there with milk and tomato soup. It's no surprise that the first kind of ice cream that my finicky son tasted as a toddler was a spoonful of vanilla from a Blue Bell ice cream tub.

Finally, vanilla ice cream is versatile. It is the perfect foundation or companion to any starchy food like muffins, cobblers, waffles, pancakes, and cakes. Also, melted vanilla ice cream can be used in coffee or homemade hot cocoa as a substitute for milk and sugar and as ingredients in a muffin recipe, substituting milk, eggs, oil, and sugar. In a pinch, melted ice cream, thinned out with water, is a good-enough milk substitute when I've run out of milk for my morning cereal. This is why vanilla is my go-to ice cream, a staple in my freezer. It's just good with everything.

Thus, my top ice cream flavor is vanilla. Even though I've had many opportunities to eat all kinds of ice cream, I've returned to this flavor again and again. But of the qualities, as you've probably noticed, the versatility of vanilla is my most valued one. Vanilla is just that good. If you've never fully appreciated vanilla ice cream, I recommend you should go and buy the best vanilla ice cream that you can find. However, if

STRUCTURES

you don't care for vanilla, that's okay. Any ice cream flavor is good, I believe, and ice cream will continue to be a popular dessert for a very long time. After all, who doesn't like ice cream?

Lastname 1

Firstname Lastname

Prof. Name

Course name – section #

Day Month Year

Vanilla: My Favorite Ice Cream Flavor

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CHAPTER 9: COMPARISON AND/OR CONTRAST

DEFINITION

Comparison and/or Contrast answers the question “What are the similarities and/or the differences between two related persons, places, things, or ideas?” It explains two persons, places, things, or ideas (**Subject A** and **Subject B**) by showing how similar (comparison) and/or how different (contrast) they are in **three or more shared categories (Points)**.

THESIS

In a **Comparison and/or Contrast** essay, **thesis = TWO subjects + overall opinion of those subjects in relation to each other + in at least THREE points.**

For instance, “Mom” is **Subject A** and “Dad” is **Subject B**. Your overall opinion is that **Subject A** is “tougher” than **Subject B** because you’re thinking of three **points**: appearance, hobbies, and parental discipline. The thesis would then be “Mom is tougher than Dad as seen in their appearance, hobbies, and parental discipline.”

STRUCTURE

Comparison and/or Contrast have **two methods of structuring body paragraphs**; either one works for the same topic.

Point-By-Point Method

Intro with Thesis

- I. **Body or Section 1: Point 1** – compare and/or contrast Subjects A & B on this Point, with detailed, descriptive examples.
- II. **Body or Section 2: Point 2** -- compare and/or contrast Subjects A & B on this Point, with detailed, descriptive examples.
- III. **Body or Section 3: Point 3** -- compare and/or contrast Subjects A & B on this Point, with detailed, descriptive examples.

Conclusion: Restate thesis; other comments; end with strong concluding statement

Subject-by-Subject Method

Intro with Thesis

- I. **Body or Section 1: Subject A** – explain this Subject regarding Points 1, 2 & 3, with detailed examples.
- II. **Body or Section 2: Subject B** – explain this Subject regarding Points 1, 2 & 3, with detailed examples.

Conclusion: Restate thesis; other comments; end with strong concluding statement

SUPPORTING DETAILS

Exemplification: Just like Division essays, your descriptive examples in your Comparison and/or Contrast essay's body paragraphs can be personal experiences, facts, statistics, or quotes from witnesses and experts, depending on how personal or impersonal your two subjects are. Whatever your examples are, make sure that they are 1) specific, 2) concrete, and 3) relevant.

Note: Avoid using the pronoun “you” in the Body paragraphs. In less-personal essays, avoid using “I” as well – in those cases, find a substitute person to stand in for you.

ESSAY EXAMPLE

Topic: Compare and/or Contrast two related persons, places, or things that you know well.

COMPARISON/CONTRAST, POINT-BY-POINT METHOD:

“You Get What You Pay For” by Jessica Bray

“You get what you pay for.” This saying actually has great merit when traveling and choosing the airline that will take you to your destination. Last summer, my husband and I went on our honeymoon to beautiful Isla Mujeres in Mexico and were fortunate enough to be able to attend a friends’ wedding a few months later in Las Vegas. The trip to Mexico was an all-inclusive, flight-included package where we would fly with American Airlines. Since we spent the majority of our vacation money on the honeymoon, we were on a budget for traveling, so we chose the new low cost carrier, Spirit Airlines, to get to Vegas. While both airlines definitely serve their main purpose of transporting passengers to various destinations, the two contrast greatly when it comes to comfort, cost, and convenience.

Comfort is important in many aspects of my life, and transportation is one of them. This is where American and Spirit vary the most. The flight on Spirit compared to American was like riding a horse bareback on a rocky dirt road versus a leisurely drive in a town car. The seats were terribly narrow and shared the most pointless arm rest with the seats on either side. They were covered in itchy polyester and sat so straight up that it was very difficult to relax. I am not sure even a slightly overweight person would have fit in one of these seats.

On American, my husband and I sat comfortably in normal sized seats upholstered in soft generic material. Each row consisted of four seats that shared two television monitors, and there were different channels to choose from. We were even able to recline the seats at one point and partook in a pleasant

nap. Elbow room and personal space go a long way when contained in an airtight compartment for four hours with complete strangers.

Another comparable aspect between the two airlines was the cost. When advertised, the cost of a ticket with Spirit is as much as a couple hundred dollars less than the cost of one with American to the same destination. Spirit does not openly advertise the hidden costs we encountered, like baggage check. There is a fee for a carryon bag and every bag checked in to the cargo compartment. Also, any refreshments on the plane, even the nonalcoholic drinks and traditional pretzels, must be paid for separately; as one could guess, they are certainly overpriced.

In contrast, American Airlines does not charge for the one carryon luggage piece, and the first bag checked is free. During the flight, complementary drinks and snacks are offered and are available upon request at any point. Contrary to popular belief of Spirit being the inexpensive route, the amount of money “saved” is easily made up for in extra fees along the way.

Finally and equally important as the previous aspects is the convenience of the two airlines. By convenience I mean the punctuality of the two. Before booking with either carrier, I constantly heard stories of people who had to wait several hours to days because of Spirit airlines canceling a flight or being way behind schedule. We decided to save the money and take the risk but planned to arrive the day before the wedding just in case. This was wise because a half hour before our departure time in Dallas, we were informed our flight would be thirty minutes late. Thirty minutes eventually turned to three hours. If it would have been the day of the wedding, we would have missed it, not to mention that the staff was very unapologetic.

It is understood that bad weather happens, safety is a priority, and this sometimes causes flights to be late for any airline, but I have always flown with American and have had this issue very few times. On our honeymoon, there were no issues. We arrived at the scheduled time to and from Mexico.

After both trips, my husband and I decided we would never again choose Spirit Airlines when traveling. The chance of missing an important event or missing out on part of an expensive vacation is not worth the cheap price. We may have paid a small amount more to fly with American, but in comparison to the comfort level, amenities, and friendliness of the staff, it was well worth it. As we found out first hand, “you get what you pay for.”

Bray I

Jessica Bray

Dr. Rufel Ramos

English 1301-section#

March 19, 2013

You Get What You Pay For

“You get what you pay for.” This saying actually has great merit when traveling and choosing the airline that will take you to your destination. Last summer, my husband and I went on our honeymoon to beautiful Isla Mujeres in Mexico and were fortunate enough to be able to attend a friends’ wedding a few months later in Las Vegas. The trip to Mexico was an all-inclusive, flight included package where we would fly with American Airlines. Since we spent the majority of our vacation money on the honeymoon, we were on a budget for traveling so we chose the new low cost carrier, Spirit Airlines to get to Vegas. While both airlines definitely serve their main purpose of transporting passengers to various destinations, the two contrast greatly when it comes to comfort, cost, and convenience.

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After both trips, my husband I decided we would never again choose Spirit airlines when traveling. The chance of missing an important event or missing out on part of an expensive vacation is not worth the inconvenience they caused us by being behind schedule. We may have paid a small amount more to fly with American, but in comparison to the comfort level, amenities, and friendliness of the staff, it was well worth it. As we found out first hand, "you get what you pay for."

COMPARISON/CONTRAST, SUBJECT-BY-SUBJECT METHOD:

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English 1301-section#

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In contrast, Spirit Airlines was a horrible shock. Comfort is important in many aspects of my life, and transportation is one of them. This is where American and Spirit vary the most. The flight on Spirit compared to American was like riding a horse bareback on a rocky dirt road versus a leisurely drive in a town

car. The seats were terribly narrow and shared the most pointless arm rest with the seats on either side. They were covered in itchy polyester and sat so straight up that it was very difficult to relax. I am not sure even a slightly overweight person would have fit in one of these seats.

Another comparable aspect between the two airlines was the cost. When advertised, the cost of a ticket with Spirit is as much as a couple hundred dollars less than the cost of one with American to the same destination. Spirit does not openly advertise the hidden costs we encountered, like baggage check. There is a fee for a carryon bag and every bag checked in to the cargo compartment. Also, any refreshments on the plane, even the nonalcoholic drinks and traditional pretzels, must be paid for separately; and as one could guess, they are certainly overpriced. Contrary to popular belief of Spirit being the inexpensive route, the amount of money "saved" is easily made up for in extra fees along the way.

Finally and equally important as the previous aspects, is the convenience of the two airlines. By convenience I mean the punctuality of the two. Before booking with either carrier, I constantly heard stories of people who had to wait several hours to days because of Spirit airlines canceling a flight or being way behind schedule. We decided to save the money and take the risk but planned to arrive the day before the wedding just in case. This was wise because a half hour before our departure time in Dallas, we were informed our flight would be thirty minutes late. Thirty minutes eventually turned to three hours. If it would have been the day of the wedding, we would have missed it. Not to mention, the staff was very unapologetic.

After both trips, my husband I decided we would never again choose Spirit Airlines when traveling. The chance of missing an important event or missing out on part of an expensive vacation is not worth the inconvenience they caused us by being behind schedule. We may have paid a small amount more to fly with American, but in comparison to the comfort level, amenities, and friendliness of the staff, it was well worth it. As we found out first hand, "you get what you pay for."

CHAPTER 10: CLASSIFICATION, WITH EXEMPLIFICATION

DEFINITION

Classification answers the question “What are the different kinds of that category of person, place, thing, or idea?” It explains the diversity of a category by explaining **three or more major types of that category**, one type per body paragraph. The body paragraphs are organized by **emphatic (that is, importance) order**, from least to most important type or from most to least important.

THESIS

In a **Classification** essay, **thesis = “different kinds of” + overall opinion of the category + at least three types**. For instance, “The different kinds of weird moms in the United States that I’ve encountered are immigrant moms, bible-thumper moms, and cougar moms.”

Note: Always narrow the category to **a specific time and place** so that the types – while having something in common -- are also as different to each other as possible. Notice that the topic above wasn’t just “moms” or “weird moms” but the place-and-time specific “weird moms in the United States that I’ve encountered”. Brainstorming will help narrow down a too-broad category.

STRUCTURE

STRUCTURES

Intro with Thesis:

- I. Body or Section 1: Type 1** – illustrate with one or more descriptive examples
 - II. Body or Section 2: Type 2** – illustrate with one or more descriptive examples
 - III. Body or Section 3: Type 3** – illustrate with one or more descriptive examples
- Conclusion:** Restate Thesis; other comments; end with a strong concluding statement

SUPPORTING DETAILS

Exemplification: Depending on how personal or impersonal your subject is, your descriptive examples can be personal experiences, facts, statistics, or quotes from witnesses and experts. Whatever your examples are, make sure that they are 1) specific, 2) concrete, and 3) relevant.

Note: Avoid using the pronoun “you” in the Body paragraphs. In less-personal essays, avoid using “I” as well – in those cases, find a substitute person to stand in for you.

ESSAY EXAMPLE

Topic: Explain a category of persons, places, things, or ideas that you know well.

Go to **CHAPTER 4: REVISION & EDITING** for the **CLASSIFICATION** essay, “My Favorite Ice Cream Flavors.”

CHAPTER 11: CAUSE AND EFFECT

DEFINITION

Cause and Effect answers the question “What causes that and/or are the consequences of that?” Similar to a **Division** essay, **Cause and Effect** explains **one** event or phenomenon by dividing it into its **three or more key past causes**, one cause per body paragraph. If required, it looks into the present and/or future, explaining **three or more key effects** of that event or phenomenon. The body paragraphs are organized by **emphatic** (that is, **importance**) **order**, from least to most important cause (or effect) or from most to least important.

Cause and Effect is always based on **Narration**: you can’t answer **why** something happened unless you clearly know **what** happened. In analyzing an event’s narrative timeline, you accurately identify causes that may be **remote** in time but are also **main** (or **root**) **causes** of the event or phenomenon. While **immediate** (that is, **recent**) **causes** are easy to identify, they are often only **contributory** (**secondary**) **causes**. So it is best for you to analyze all causes before settling for the top three or more causes.

Remember: in explaining causes, always make sure you have **main and remote causes** in your **Cause and Effect** essay.

Also, don’t confuse **chronology** (A happened before B) with **causality** (A caused B). Just because A preceded B doesn’t necessarily mean A caused B. It may just be coincidence unless there is plenty of evidence to link the two by causality. Mistaking chronology for causality is called a “**post hoc fallacy**,” a common error in reasoning.

In college assignments and workplace reports, **Cause and Effect** is sometimes called **Causal Analysis**.

THESIS

In a **Cause and Effect** essay mostly analyzing causes: **thesis = event or phenomenon + overall opinion of that event or phenomenon and/or the causes + at least THREE key causes**. For instance, “Many members of the Ramos family immigrated with hope to the United States because of poor conditions in the Philippines: poor job prospects, a corrupt government, and lack of a good, affordable education for their children.”

In a **Cause and Effect** essay mostly analyzing effects: **thesis = event or phenomenon + overall opinion of that event or phenomenon and/or the effects + at least THREE key effects**. For instance, “Many members of the Ramos family immigrated with hope to the United States with several positive effects: the top three are excellent professional careers, a strong loyalty to America and the US Navy, and higher education for all of the Ramos children.”

STRUCTURE

Cause and Effect essays have **four methods of organizing its body paragraphs**, depending on what part of the event’s or phenomenon’s timeline you are analyzing. The methods listed below are in order of student popularity as well as ease of use.

Classification Method of Causes: Different Kinds of Causes

Intro with Thesis, analyzing Causes

- I. **Body or Section 1: Cause 1** – with Exemplification
- II. **Body or Section 2: Cause 2** – with Exemplification
- III. **Body or Section 3: Cause 3** – with Exemplification
- IV. **Body or Section 4: Overview of Key Effects** – with Exemplification

Conclusion: Restate thesis; other comments; end with strong concluding statement.

Classification Method of Effects: Different Kinds of Effects

Intro with Thesis, analyzing Effects

- I. **Body or Section 1: Overview of Key Causes** – with Exemplification
- II. **Body or Section 2: Effect 1** – with Exemplification
- III. **Body or Section 3: Effect 2** – with Exemplification
- IV. **Body or Section 4: Effect 3** – with Exemplification

Conclusion: Restate thesis; other comments; end with strong concluding statement.

Causal Chain Method (The Domino Effect Method)

Intro with Thesis, analyzing Causes

- I. **Body or Section 1:** Root Cause A causes Effect B – with Exemplification
- II. **Body or Section 2:** Effect B causes Effect C – with Exemplification
- III. **Body or Section 3:** Effect C causes Final Effect D, which is the event being analyzed – with Exemplification
- IV. **Body or Section 4:** Overview of Key Effects after Effect D – with Exemplification

Conclusion: Restate thesis; other comments; end with strong concluding statement.

Backwards Causal Chain Method (The Detective Method)

Intro with Thesis, analyzing Causes

- I. **Body or Section 1:** Event or Phenomenon caused by Immediate Cause C – with Exemplification
- II. **Body or Section 2:** Immediate Cause C caused by Cause B – with Exemplification
- III. **Body or Section 3:** Cause B caused by Root Cause A -- with Exemplification

IV. Body or Section 4: Overview of Key Effects after Event or Phenomenon – with Exemplification

Conclusion: Restate thesis; other comments; end with strong concluding statement.

SUPPORTING DETAILS

Exemplification: Depending on how personal or impersonal your subject is, your descriptive examples can be personal experiences, facts, statistics, or quotes from witnesses and experts. Whatever your examples are, make sure that they are 1) specific, 2) concrete, and 3) relevant.

Note: Avoid using the pronoun “you” in the Body paragraphs. In less-personal essays, avoid using “I” as well – in those cases, find a substitute person to stand in for you.

ESSAY EXAMPLE

Topic: Explain the causes of an event or a phenomenon in society that you know well and briefly explain its effects.

CAUSE AND EFFECT:

“Causes of Lower Income in a Restaurant” by Georgia Rudd

Evelyn Pellicane points out in her essay, “The Irish Famine, 1845-1849,” that the contributory causes of an economic event can increase the effects of the more obvious immediate causes (333). Similarly, my coworkers and I have been experiencing a personal economic crisis recently; we are not making as much money as we made earlier this year. We work in a restaurant called Woodfire. Because work has been slower than it was previously, we have had time to discuss the potential causes for the restaurant’s slower business. Although the business circumstances at Woodfire are not as severe as a famine, my coworkers and I are greatly affected by the lower income. We believe that the causes of our decreased income are due to the seasonal issues of higher temperature and the end of the school session multiplied by the lack of restaurant advertising.

STRUCTURES

The most obvious and immediate cause of slower business in the restaurant is the warmer summer temperature. Even though the outdoor temperatures may be hot, many restaurant patios have water cooled mister fans. Woodfire does have a small patio, but it does not have mister fans. Therefore, the blazing heat of summer might deter customers from sitting on our patio. The newer restaurant across the street possesses a two-story patio containing many mister fans. We occasionally gaze out the large windows and see many people on the patio across the street while our restaurant is slow.

Another cause for less business could be that school is out over the summer. Many people are out of town on vacation in the summer because their children have time away from school. People also need money for vacations, so they do not have as much to spend in restaurants. Since college students are home, their parents are not going out for dinner as frequently. Also during summer months, many parents and children are doing outdoor activities together instead of going to restaurants.

Although the summer's reasons for changes in business are obvious, as employees, we believe that the major cause for slower business in the restaurant began long before the season started. We believe that the main cause is the lack of advertising. Woodfire does not place ads in papers nor magazines; therefore, many people have not heard of the restaurant. Bluefish, in contrast, is a popular restaurant next door to Woodfire that does advertise. Many people in the area have heard of Bluefish and do know where it is. Even though Woodfire has been in the same location for several years, many people in the area do not seem to even know that it exists.

For the employees, the effect of these causes is a lower income. We watch with frustration the booming business across the street. We watch with difficulty the customers walk past our front door into the well-heard-of neighboring restaurant. Even though seasonal causes cannot be changed, adding mister fans and advertising before the summer began might have lessened the effect of a decreased income for the restaurant and employees.

STRUCTURES

Evelyn Pellicane describes the Irish Famine as a “natural disaster compounded by the insensitivity of the British Government and the archaic agricultural system of Ireland” (334). Woodfire’s slower business may have begun with the warmer weather and the end of the school session, but the lack of mister fans and advertising compounded the already declining income of the restaurant and employees.

Work Cited

Pellicane, Evelyn. "The Irish Famine, 1845-1849." *Patterns for College Writing: A Rhetorical Reader and Guide*. 12th ed. Ed. Laurie G. Kirsznner and Stephen R. Mandell. Boston: Bedford, 2012. 333-34. Print.

STRUCTURES

Rudd 1

Georgia Rudd

Dr. Ramos

ENGL 1301-45403

July 2, 2014

Causes of Lower Income in a Restaurant

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Work Cited

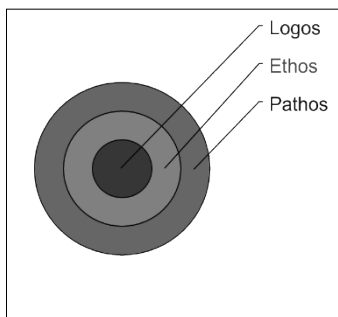
Pellicane, Evelyn. "The Irish Famine, 1845-1849." *Patterns for College Writing: A Rhetorical Reader and Guide*. 12th ed. Ed. Laurie G. Kirszner and Stephen R. Mandell. Boston: Bedford, 2012. 333-34. Print.

CHAPTER 12: ARGUMENTATION

DEFINITION

Argumentation answers the question “Why is this right and that wrong? What proof do I have to defend my belief?” Unlike the other essay types, which are either forms of self-expression or information and don’t require your audience to agree with your essay, **Argumentation** is quite different. Although self-expression and information are both in an **Argument** essay, they serve only one purpose: **Persuasion**.

PERSUASION = the methods that a speaker/writer influences readers/audience **to change their mind and their behavior**. The three methods – “**appeals**” – of persuasion are these:



1) **Pathos** (the **feelings** of the audience),

2) **Ethos** (the **ethics** of the writer), and

3) **Logos** (the **logic** of the reasons and the evidence).

All **three methods** work together

for effective **Argumentation**.

Pathos and Ethos “candy-coat” your Logos to accommodate your audience’s views by you making **respectful word choices**. Since the whole purpose to **Persuasion** is to **convince a reluctant audience** to give up their belief and adopt yours, you immediately risk failure if your word choices

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sound disrespectful to their own reasonable but contrasting points of view.

ARGUMENT is a form of **Persuasion**, primarily using **Logos**, which has at least these **four core elements**:

1. **CLAIM** (argumentative thesis)
2. **REASONS** (common-sense & probability, logically explained)
3. **EVIDENCE** (physical & testimonial)
4. **OPPOSITION** (summarized and refuted)

CLAIM = ARGUMENTATIVE THESIS

A basic **Claim Statement** uses a “because” clause:

Example: “All four year olds in America should be required to attend public pre-kindergarten because all kids should have the right to a good start in their education.”

Good Claim test: make a Counterclaim (opposite of your Claim). If the Counterclaim makes sense, then your Claim is good (the Counterclaim is your Opposition’s viewpoint). **Example of Counterclaim:** “All four year olds shouldn’t be required to attend public pre-kindergarten because only poor families who can’t afford private pre-kindergarten need public pre-kindergarten.”

TIP: A good **Claim** should be about a **specific problem**, should be **interesting to you**, should be **debatable** by all reasonable people who disagree with you, and should be **manageable** to write about within the required word count and time-frame.

SOME USEFUL VOCABULARY

Note: I will explain what **Classic and Toulmin Argument Structure** are soon.

REASONS (common-sense & probability, logically explained) = called “**Deduction**” in Classic Arguments and “**Grounds**” in Toulmin Arguments

EVIDENCE (physical & testimonial) = called “**Induction**” in Classic Arguments and “**Data**” in Toulmin Arguments

OPPOSITION (summarized and refuted) = called “**Refutation**” in Classic Arguments and “**Counterclaim & Rebuttal**” in Toulmin

DEDUCTION/GROUND: The 3-Part Syllogism Formula of Deductive Reasoning

1. **MAJOR PREMISE:** general assumption(s) or belief(s); the major category = your BIG REASON

Example: Racism in all forms is harmful.

2. **MINOR PREMISE:** specific assumption or belief of the specific situation; a member in that category = the specific conditions/characteristics of what the Big Reason means, often explained as a Cause/Effect.

Example: The XYZ Scholarship is racist.

3. **THEREFORE:** apply general belief to specific conditions.

Example: Therefore, the XYZ Scholarship is harmful.

INDUCTION/DATA: Your Evidence = 3-Part Formula of Inductive Reasoning

1. **The Deduction/Ground** is a **hypothesis** – it needs proof

2. Body of **evidence** – **as the proof**, logically explained and connected together

3. **Therefore** – evidence confirms the hypothesis

Physical Evidence

Facts:

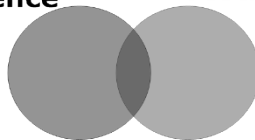
numbers,
names,
events

Testimonial Evidence

Opinions:

interpretations
of facts by

experts, witnesses, and/or
participants



REFUTATION (COUNTERCLAIM & REBUTTAL): Dealing with the Opposition

1. **Summarize** what the opposing point is **fairly**. Avoid making a straw man (that is, portraying members of your opposition weaker than they actually are).
2. Show **your evidence that contrasts** their evidence.
3. Show **logical fallacies** (errors in reasoning) in your opposition. **TIP:** You can find a good introduction to logical fallacies at *The Purdue Online Writing Lab*:
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/659/03/>

REMINDER: Even in Refutation, always assume **your opposition has a good reason** to believe what they believe. After all, you are trying to persuade them to join your side.

STRUCTURE: 4 METHODS TO STRUCTURE ARGUMENT'S BODY PARAGRAPHS

CLASSIC (DEFINITION) METHOD

INTRODUCTION: Introduce and give background of the issue; state your **CLAIM**

- I. **Body or Section 1: Your REASON:** Explain why you believe your Claim is true, using common-sense opinion/reasoning, based on a definition that you have
- II. **Body or Section 2: Your EVIDENCE:** Give concrete, specific examples (that is, EVIDENCE) to prove your Reason exists in the real world
- III. **Body or Section 3: Your OPPOSITION:** Summarize the opposition's viewpoint and respond to it

CONCLUSION: Restate **CLAIM**; give advice and/or predict future

TOULMIN (POINTS) METHOD

INTRODUCTION: Introduce and give background of the issue; state your **CLAIM**

- I. **Body or Section 1: Your First REASON:** Explain reason + **EVIDENCE** as proof

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- II. **Body or Section 2: Your Second REASON:** Explain reason + **EVIDENCE** as proof
- III. **Body or Section 3: Your Third REASON:** Explain reason + **EVIDENCE** as proof
- IV. **Body or Section 4: Your OPPOSITION:** Summarize the opposition's viewpoint and respond to it
- CONCLUSION:** Restate **CLAIM**; give advice and/or predict future

REBUTTAL (DEBATE) METHOD

INTRODUCTION: Introduce and give background of the issue; state your **CLAIM**

- I. **Body or Section 1: OPPOSITION'S First Reason:** Rebut with your counter-**REASON** and counter-**EVIDENCE**
- II. **Body or Section 2: OPPOSITION'S Second Reason:** Rebut with your counter-**REASON** and counter-**EVIDENCE**
- III. **Body or Section 3: OPPOSITION'S Third Reason:** Rebut with your counter-**REASON** and counter-**EVIDENCE**

CONCLUSION: Restate **CLAIM**; give advice and/or predict future

ROGERIAN (COMPROMISE) METHOD

INTRODUCTION: Give the background of the problem to the present-day, pointing out how both you and the opposition are negatively affected (**COMMON GROUND**); state your **CLAIM**.

- I. **Body or Section 1: Opposition's COUNTERCLAIMS**
-- State your opposition's positions and calmly explain the contexts (circumstances and conditions) in which they may be valid; provide **EVIDENCE** and/or logical reasoning.
- II. **Body or Section 2: Your CLAIM** -- State your position and calmly explain the context (circumstances and

conditions) in which it is valid and works better than other positions; provide **EVIDENCE** and/or logical reasoning.

III. Body or Section 3: BENEFITS -- Explain how your position **benefits the opposition** – provide **EVIDENCE** and/or logical reasoning. Offer possible compromises (**CONCESSIONS**) that benefit both you and the opposition – provide **EVIDENCE** and/or logical reasoning.

CONCLUSION: Restate **CLAIM** give advice and/or predict future

PROPOSAL (PROBLEM-SOLVING) METHOD

INTRODUCTION: Give the background of the problem to the present-day; state your **CLAIM (that is, your SOLUTION)** as a “should” statement + a “because” clause + plus any qualifiers (conditions on when and where it works).

- I. **Body or Section 1: THE PROBLEM** – support with **EVIDENCE** and logical chain of reasoning.
 - A. Explain the **seriousness of the problem**, especially who are the most affected by the problem.
 - B. Analyze the different **past and present solutions** and why they haven’t solved the problem.
- II. **Body or Section 2: YOUR REFUTATION**
 - A. **COUNTERCLAIM:** Summarize the Opposition’s positions (their **REASONS**), from those who don’t see a problem or believe the problem cannot be solved.
 - B. **Your REBUTTAL:** Your respectful response to the opposition – your **REASONS**, supported with **EVIDENCE** and logical chain of reasoning.
- III. **Body or Section 3: YOUR SOLUTION** – support with **EVIDENCE** and logical chain of reasoning
 - A. Describe your solution (can be a multi-step or multiple-approach solution).
 - B. Explain the context (circumstances and conditions) in which your solution works (feasibility) – provide **EVIDENCE** and logical chain of reasoning.

IV. **Body or Section 4: THE BENEFITS** – support with **EVIDENCE** and logical chain of reasoning.

- A. Explain how your solution benefits those affected by the problem, **including the opposition**, with the least number of problems.
- B. Offer possible **compromises**, if needed, that accommodates any continuing concerns from the opposition

CONCLUSION: Restate claim, give advice, and predict the future.

No matter what Argument you write, **ALWAYS introduce** the issue and state your claim in the beginning and **conclude** with some recommendation and/or prediction of the future.

SUPPORTING DETAILS

In addition to **evidence** and **logical chains of reasoning**, you will often have to research outside sources and include them in your body paragraphs. We will go over the Modern Language Association Style conventions in the next chapter, but for now here's a quick explanation of how to embed (that is, incorporate) outside sources into your Argument's body paragraphs.

1. Your Topic Sentence.
2. Your explanation of what that topic sentence means (optional)
3. Example pulled from a source, either "Quoted," paraphrased, or summarized – with in-text citation: a) Beginning ID tag of name or title and/or b) parentheses at the end (more info in MLA chapter).
4. If you have more than one example, have transitions between examples – Also, In addition, Next, Or, However, On the other hand
5. End your body paragraph with an explanation of what these examples add to our understanding of the Thesis.

REMEMBER: Avoid using the pronoun “you” in the Body paragraphs. In less-personal essays, avoid using “I” as well – in those cases, find a substitute person to stand in for you.

ESSAY EXAMPLES

Topic: Argue for or against an issue that you know well.

Go to **Chapter 14: ARGUMENTATION ESSAYS** for examples of the different methods of the Argument essay.

CHAPTER 13: RESEARCHING & DOCUMENTING SOURCES

What Is a Source?

When journalists refer to someone where they got their information, they refer to that person as “my source.” For instance, if some authority is trying to force journalists to name that person who preferred to remain anonymous, they often say, “I cannot reveal my source.”

In essence, **a source is always people other than yourself**, so always look first for an actual person’s name or people’s names whenever seeking and identifying sources. Who are they? Are they credible? Do they have an agenda, and are they honest about it? Do you trust them – and why?

The **products in which sources give their information** – web sites, books, newspaper articles, and so forth – have different names like **“references” (in APA Style)** or **“works” (in MLA Style)**. However, the word **“sources”** often refer to both the **people** and their information **products**.

Do I Need Outside Sources?

1. Does the assignment require research?

2. Do I need more info than what I have in me in order to meet the word length?

If you answer “Yes” to either of those questions, then you need outside sources.

Where Do Sources Belong in the Writing Process?

Looking for outside sources of information – that is, **research** – belongs in the **Invention & Prewriting** and **Arrangement** stages of the Writing Process. Do your research first; then draft your essay (or sections of your essay).

TWO KINDS OF SOURCES: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES

PRIMARY SOURCES

A **Creator** makes his/her **personal expression** → That expression is a **Primary Source**

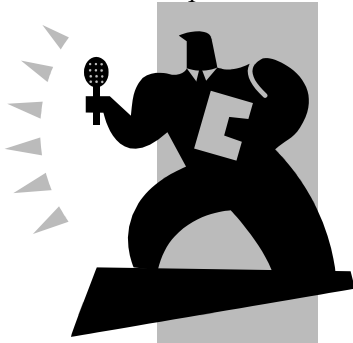


Examples:

- Autobiography
- Fictional movie
- Fictional story
- Interview
- Painting/Sculpture/Dance
- Personal essay
- Poem
- Song / Music

SECONDARY SOURCES

A **Critic** reviews and/or critiques a **Creator's primary source**.
→ That review or critique is a **Secondary Source**.



Examples:

- Art critic's review
- Biographer's book
- Documentary
- Scholar's analysis
- Music critic's review
- Newscast
- Research essay

HOW THE TWO KINDS ARE RELATED

The Creator does not need the Critic to make his/her primary source. But the Critic ALWAYS needs the Creator in order to make his/her secondary source.

By the way, there will always be more Critics than Creators. If you have a primary source, therefore, it's a good idea (unless your instructor tells you not to) to look for a few secondary sources of that primary source as well. This is useful in an Argument essay, especially if the two secondary sources disagree with each other.

REPUTABLE PLACES FOR COLLEGE-LEVEL SOURCES

Some Reputable Places for Sources

- **non-reference books** from a public or college library
- **personal interviews** from experts, witnesses, and/ or participants
- **news and scholarly articles** from library online databases,
- information from **reputable websites**

What's a Reputable Website?

Any website whose main purpose ISN'T selling something = usually reputable. If it has a shopping cart (as lots of .com sites do), then don't use that site. A website with these at the end of the web address are considered reputable – that is, college-level:

- **.com** that are respected **news sites**
- **.edu** (education sites)
- **.gov** (government sites)
- **.mil** (military/ armed forces sites)
- **.org** that are respected non-profit organization sites, **with one exception:** Wikipedia as a source – while

useful for casual, everyday use -- is a no-no in college-level research.

TIP: When using a web search engine like Google or Bing, type your keyword + a site filter to screen out un-reputable websites -- for example, “depression” site:.edu will give you results only from .edu websites.

DOCUMENTING YOUR SOURCES IN MLA STYLE: A TWO-PART PROCESS

PART 1: IN-TEXT CITATION

Here's how to do in-text (**that is, “in your essay”**) citation of your direct quote, short paraphrase, or short summary of your source. Use introductory phrases and/or parentheses to name your source (usually the author's last name, title – if no last name is available -- and/or applicable page number if the source is a print source). For example:

According to Lester Faigley and Jack Selzer, “A reason is often offered in a because clause” (24). “A reason is often offered in a because clause” (Faigley and Selzer 24).

PART 2: WORKS CITED LIST

Here's how to do the end-of-text (**that is, at the end of your essay**) Works Cited source list. Use an alphabetical-by-last-name list of the sources that you used in your essay, also called the “Works Cited” list. If you label this list “References” (APA Style) or “Bibliography” (CMS Style), then you are NOT doing MLA Style. An example of the order of information for a book source:

Works Cited

Faigley, Lester and Jack Selzer. *Good Reasons: Researching and Writing Effective Arguments*. 5th ed. Boston: Pearson, 2012. Print.

USEFUL TIPS WHEN RESEARCHING

To prevent **plagiarism** (which is presenting someone else's work as your own without crediting that other person) and speed up the **Drafting** and **Revising & Editing** stages, use MLA Style of Documentation in the **Invention & Prewriting** and **Arrangement** stages, when you research:

- When taking notes or making copies/print-outs, note the full name, title, and any page numbers of your source.
- When making your list of sources, note as much information as you can of who the author is, what the titles are, dates, and where you can find that source – the more details, the better.
- Use your library's online database as much as you can – many databases can create the Works Cited entry of your source for you. (Hey, that's less work for you to do!)

Also, you may want to make an **Annotated Bibliography** of the sources that you have found in order to remember the main ideas of your sources and how you will use them. Just write out the Works Cited entry for that source and then do three things: 1) **Summarize** the main idea of the source. 2) **Assess** its value as a source. 3) **Reflect** on how you'll use it as a source. Here's an example:

Hudson Union Society. "Morgan Spurlock on Supersize Me."

YouTube. YouTube, 19 Mar. 2009. Web. 06 Nov. 2012.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8nj_7F_h-Xw>.

Summarize: In this video clip, Morgan Spurlock narrates McDonald's reaction to his documentary *Super Size Me*. In response to losing money, McDonald's began to offer healthy options. **Assess:** This useful source gives us more of Spurlock's behind-the-scenes viewpoints and is definitely biased against McDonald's, but he's honest about it. **Reflect:** This source helps in providing more evidence for my "benefits" section of my proposal argument.

**FOR MORE RESEARCHING, WRITING &
DOCUMENTATION INFO**

Documentation styles like MLA and APA are updated every couple of years and are beyond the scope of this little handbook. To get the most updated and in-depth information of correct formatting and documentation, I highly recommend (as I've done here and there throughout this handbook) this website:

The Purdue Online Writing Lab:
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

CHAPTER 14: ARGUMENTATION ESSAYS

CLASSIC ARGUMENTATION: “Stereotyping Is Wrong” by C. Smith

In his essay “An Argument against the Todd Jennings Scholarship” Matt Daniels narrates a situation where he, as “a white, well qualified, and definitely a deserving student” for the Anna Todd Jennings Scholarship, decided against applying for the scholarship because the scholarship is limited for “Caucasian students” only (563). He further states that “racism in any form is an evil that should be opposed” (Daniel 563). In my observation, along with racism, any form of discrimination and stereotyping is not only unhealthy but also leads to an unnecessary wide chasm between individuals in a society.

People often associate certain preconceived notions about certain individuals, or groups, or even nations, thus, creating an image which may be far from reality. Whether it is a phenomena that arose due to the rapid wide spread of media or it was around for a long time before that, stereotyping has had a drastic effect on relationships amongst individuals and societies, and the outcome is not positive in majority of cases. Certain societies such as Muslims are stereotyped as terrorists because of a handful of extremist individuals. Mexicans are often portrayed as gun toting illegal immigrants because the gun law is lenient in Mexico. Irish being drunkards, English being snobs, French being nudists, Russians being greedy, and Italians being mobsters are but few examples of how these societies have been stereotyped on a massive scale. Similarly, on an individual level, all Goths wearing black, all punks wearing

Mohawks, spikes and chains because of their way of dressing in concerts, politicians being philanders due to certain personal corruption cases, blondes being unintelligent because of the ill-conceived concept of beauty and no brains, and all teenagers being rebels are some examples of individuals being limited to a restricted set of stereotypical qualities.

This characterization almost always leads to misdirected preconceived notions of an individual. For example, I personally have sported long hair for most of my life. At any given age, I have had hair length between medium to long, and I rarely went for a haircut before a period of six to eight months. Recently, I have grown my hair to a considerable length and have sported an anchor goatee alongside them. As an individual with long hair, I have a first-hand experience of how certain individuals use stereotypes to discriminate against other people in society. I am often a happy go lucky kind of individual, often eager to help fellow mates, give advice and constructive criticism to younger students, and rarely let a moment pass by without cracking a light joke about something. However, it is the moments before I know certain individuals, or the interim period when I am getting to know them, that I often have to walk on eggshells as people often tend to come up with preconceived notions about me. They often think of me as being aggressive, overtly angry, violent, hostile, antagonistic, and “hard core.” I may be a little aggressive, but what is important is that I may be possibly a little more than that. There might be something more behind just the long hair and a goatee.

Yes, some people can make an argument that these preconceived notions are based on the way a group of individuals truly behaves. And these notions have been set over ages, which lends to their credibility. However, the fact still remains that everyone is an individual and should be treated as an individual, with their own set of characteristics which could be far from the preconceived notion of the individual. If we presume that we know what an individual’s character is like just based on preconceived notion of a group which that individual

STRUCTURES

belongs to, we tend to neglect the fact that the individual is a person and we are more likely to make errors in judging the person's character.

I hope that we could look deep inside people as individuals, rather than looking at the surface and treating them based on prior notions. To quote Matt Daniels, "All of us have a responsibility towards us and to society" (565). If we could just treat others as we wish to be treated by them, I think our societies and the world collectively would become a much better place.

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Daniels, Matt. "An Argument against the Anna Todd Jennings Scholarship." *Patterns for College Writing*. 11th ed. Ed. Laurie G. Kirszner and Stephen R. Mandell. New York: Bedford, 2010. 563-65. Print.

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 Dr. Ramos
 ENGL 1301-4442
 05/31/2013

Stereotyping Is Wrong

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TOULMIN ARGUMENTATION:
“Quality Headphones” by Stephen Klehm

With the trendsetting Beats headphones being worn around the necks of more and more college students, the idea of spending three-hundred dollars on headphones is becoming more and more accepted. For decades, headphones in that price range were for audio professionals and rich people who spent a lot of time flying; but now, they’re becoming commonplace. Should college students spend three-hundred dollars on a pair of headphones? I believe buying high quality headphones can be a prudent and beneficial decision for college students.

After a stressful day of getting earfuls from unsatisfied professors, meddling parents, and demanding friends, many college students find comfort in getting an earful of music from their headphones. This time of unwinding is very important for these students. Without it, they might just go crazy with stress. Naturally, then, using high quality headphones, which sound much better and are much more comfortable than cheap headphones, would make this time of unwinding that much more relaxing. Other students listen to music while doing everything. From studying, to perambulating, to using the restroom, these students always have their headphones on. Yet other students listen to instrumental music while they drink tea and meditate in public. The noise canceling feature in many expensive headphones blocks out the outside world so they can concentrate, the high quality sound aids in the enlightening process, and the trendy design improves their appearance to the outside world, to whom they are oblivious. Since college students use headphones so much, spending extra money on them seems to be a good investment.

Many college students intend to finish their degree and get a

good paying job so they can buy high quality products. However, many of them have the youthful mindset of using and abusing their possessions until they are completely destroyed, only to buy more cheap products to disvalue. Spending three-hundred dollars on a high quality product while in college would help to build the respect of, and responsibility to take care of, quality items early on. Moreover, the foretaste of future luxury would encourage perseverance in the academic endeavors of these students.

Another reason to use high quality headphones is that they don't cause as much ear strain at high volume levels as cheaper headphones do. Ear strain can permanently damage one's ears. For example, my father listened to very loud music on low quality headphones for an extended period of time, when he was young. This gave him permanent, partial hearing loss, which could have been avoided by using quality headphones.

Of all the chapters in a person's life, college is probably the one in which he or she should be the most provident. A college student doesn't often have a high-paying job and usually lives on the charity of his or her family and government. Therefore, spending three-hundred dollars on something like headphones would seem to be a decision that lacks prudence. However, most college students spend more than that on coffee every year. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for a good pair of headphones to last decades. This, compared to the couple years the average cheap headphones last, is actually a rather good investment.

Students must endeavor to make prudent decisions in every aspect of their lives. However, buying high quality headphones can be a prudent and beneficial decision for college students. While their longevity proves them to be a good fiscal investment, good headphones promote responsibility, healthiness, providence, and relaxation in college students. Have you thought about buying a pair?

Stephen Klehm

Dr. Ramos

English 1302-43030

11 Feb 2014

Quality Headphones

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REBUTTAL ARGUMENTATION:

“For the Love of Pit Bulls” by Hamilton Pacheco

Many people believe pit bulls to be vicious monsters that terrorize any who may be unfortunate enough to cross their paths. In my neighborhood the HOA, Home Owners Association, prohibits the ownership of pit bulls. Their claim, that pit bulls should not be allowed in small neighborhoods because they are violently aggressive toward the people of the community, fails to consider that a pit bull's behavior is dependent on their owner's care, that pit bulls were once called “Nanny Dogs” for their protection of children, and that pit bulls are extremely affectionate animals.

While it is true that pit bulls can be violent, a pit bull's behavior is an outcome of care or neglect received by the pet owner. The ASPCA, American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, states that a pit bull “can either fuel pit bull myths or become an ambassador for his breed. It's all up to you and the way you handle him. As a responsible pit bull parent, you have the power to educate the public and change people's minds about this much maligned breed” (“The Truth About Pit Bulls”). Not only does the ASPCA support my claim, it weakens my opponent's claim of why pit bulls should not be allowed in small neighborhoods. While many may believe that pit bulls are violently aggressive animals, a second look at the care received from their owners should be taken.

My opponents, the HOA and those against pit bulls, will likely point out that pit bulls are a danger to small children. Conversely, pit bulls were once known as “Nanny Dogs” for their affectionate love towards children. If we think back to the American adored movie *The Little Rascals*, we remember that even Petey was of pit bull breed. *Modern Dog Magazine* says, “In truth, bully breeds are goofy, loyal, lovey dogs, by and large

fantastic with children. In the UK, they were known as “nanny” dogs, and many Victorian illustrations of family life portray a sweet Pit Bull-type dog overseeing his chubby, beribboned charges” (Frosek). Pit bulls were entrusted with children in the past and can still be today. Properly cared for pit bulls are not a danger to small children.

My opposition may say that pit bulls are naturally aggressive. However, pit bulls are extremely affectionate animals. *Global Animal* states that “even today, credible organizations, including the SPCA and United States Humane Society stand behind pit bulls as being among the most good-natured, balanced, loyal and affectionate of family pets” (“About Dog Breeds: Pit Bull.”). *Global Animal* not only strengthens my argument but weakens my opposition’s claim of describing a pit bull as naturally aggressive. There are many well respected organizations defending pit bulls, and they would not be willing to risk their reputations had they not believed that pit bulls truly are affectionate animals.

My opposition does not understand the true nature of pit bulls, and they seem to have fallen to the media’s attacks on this maligned breed. Their claim to banning pit bulls in small communities ignores the fact that pit bulls are all around family orientated dogs. The number of families owning pit bulls is great, and there is no doubt that pit bull ownership will continue to be present despite current or future bans of this misunderstood breed.

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Hamilton Pacheco

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March 30, 2014

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ROGERIAN ARGUMENTATION:

“A Christian Defense of *Harry Potter*” by Caroline Pecena

Harry Potter has quickly become one of the most well-known and talked about series of books and movies in the past fifteen years. I, as a Christian, read *Harry Potter* when I was thirteen and consider it one of the great books of my childhood along with *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *Beowulf*, and *The Hobbit*. Unfortunately, some Christians have viewed reading *Harry Potter* as a sin. Their main concern about *Harry Potter* is the use of magic as the central element of the story. I believe that reading and enjoying *Harry Potter* is not a sin and that it has Christian values rooted in the narrative.

The Christians who are against the reading of *Harry Potter* are against it for moral reasons. They believe reading the *Harry Potter* series is sinful because it features magic and witchcraft. The witchcraft in *Harry Potter* is not denounced or portrayed as evil. Instead the main characters learn how to cast spells and practice magic. The Bible clearly states that Christians are to “avoid every kind of evil” (1 Thes. 5:22), and witchcraft and spell casting is listed as things that are detestable to God (Duet. 18:10-12). “God is clear in His Word; He never condones witchcraft of any kind and never considers witchcraft good” (Carpenter). They believe that their children will become interested in the occult and will be harmed by reading it. They only want what is best for their children and do not want to cause them to sin or be exposed to unnecessary evil.

However, the reason why the magic in *Harry Potter* is not evil is that it is not “invocational magic,” but instead is “incantational magic.” Invocational means “to call in,” and the Scriptures warn against calling in demonic powers (Granger 4). Incantational, on the other hand, means to “sing along with,” or “to harmonize” (Granger 5). There is no invocational magic

in *Harry Potter*. The concept of incantational magic is aligned with the Scriptures. Christians believe that Creation came into being through “God’s creative Word, or His song” (Granger 6). Since we are His creations we can “harmonize with God’s Word. The magic we read about in great literature are merely reflections of God’s work in our life” (Granger 6). For example, there is nothing occult about the spells. Most of the names of the spells in *Harry Potter* are simply derived from Latin. For example, the spell *lumos* that casts a light comes from the Latin word “lumen,” which means light. The witchcraft that is in *Harry Potter* is not the same as the witchcraft in the Bible. Instead, it is a picture of how we as Christians can harmonize with God.

The benefit of reading *Harry Potter* comes from the Christian morals modeled by the characters in the book. Harry, in many ways, represents Christ. He gives himself up to protect his friends and school. “These books feature wizards, witches, and magic, but in addition, they inspire the imagination within a Christian framework—and prepare the hearts of readers for the real-life story of Jesus Christ” (Coleson). *Harry Potter* can be used as a teaching tool to warn against the danger of the occult. Most children, if asked if magic is real, will scrunch their noses and reply that they aren’t *that* young. Imagine their surprise if they were told that there really is a kind of magic in this world. They could be warned of the dangers of occult magic while still enjoying the fantasy magic in *Harry Potter*. “Harry’s struggles against evil can provide motivation of kids to grow in goodness” (Neal).

Reading the *Harry Potter* books isn’t wrong, but that doesn’t mean that it’s right for everyone. “Neither side is prepared to back down, because each considers the stakes too high: for one side, the spiritual safety of their children; for the other, their freedom” (Neal). Families have the choice of whether or not they will allow their children to read *Harry Potter*, but they also do not have a say in what other families choose to do. Both sides should be respectful and understanding of the choices made.

Harry Potter has not been around long enough to be one of the classics, but I believe it will be. These books and movies are not going away. Christians will have to deal with it in one way or another in the coming years. Some will benefit from reading it while others will still see it as wrong. However, "I have the freedom to rejoice in the *Harry Potter* story, because even there, Christ is King. Wherever we see beauty, light, truth, goodness, we see Christ" (Peterson). I will always hold *Harry Potter* close to my heart because I do not believe I am sinning in doing so.

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Caroline Pecena

Dr. Ramos

ENGL 1302-43028

March 28, 2014

A Christian Defense of *Harry Potter*

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The benefit of reading *Harry Potter* comes from the Christian morals modeled by the characters in the book. Harry, in many ways, represents Christ. He gives himself up to protect his friends and school. “These books feature wizards, witches, and magic, but in addition, they inspire the imagination within a Christian framework—and prepare the hearts of readers for the real-life story of Jesus Christ” (Coleson). *Harry Potter* can be used as a teaching tool to warn against the danger of the occult. Most children, if asked if magic is real, will scrunch their noses and reply that they aren’t *that* young. Imagine their surprise if they were told that there really is a kind of magic in this world. They could be warned of the dangers of occult magic while still enjoying the fantasy magic in *Harry Potter*. “Harry’s struggles against evil can provide motivation of kids to grow in goodness” (Neal).

Reading the *Harry Potter* books isn’t wrong, but that doesn’t mean that it’s right for everyone. “Neither side is prepared to back down, because each considers the stakes too high: for one side, the spiritual safety of their children; for the other, their freedom” (Neal). Families have the choice of whether or not they will allow their children to read *Harry Potter*, but they also do not have a say in what other families choose to do. Both sides should be respectful and understanding of the choices made.

Harry Potter has not been around long enough to be one of the classics, but I believe it will be. These books and movies are not going away. Christians will have to deal with it in one way or another in the coming years. Some will benefit from reading it while others will still see it as wrong. However, "I have the freedom to rejoice in the *Harry Potter* story, because even there, Christ is King. Wherever we see beauty, light, truth, goodness, we see Christ" (Peterson). I will always hold *Harry Potter* close to my heart because I do not believe I am sinning in doing so.

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PROPOSAL ARGUMENTATION:

“Solving Childhood Obesity in America” by Ruth Gonzalez

Obesity is defined as having excess body fat and is often a result of calorie imbalance. Obesity is one of the easiest conditions to recognize, but it is one of the most difficult conditions to treat. It has immediate negative health effects in children. If not treated early in the child’s life, the damage can be long-term. It is time for positive action to change the habits of young people of this nation. By starting in the home, parents can provide healthy choices for a healthy life. Parents should teach by example, such as avoiding fast food, because this can prevent childhood obesity.

According to Dr. Margo Wootan, childhood obesity has tripled in the past three decades in the United States and is becoming a growing epidemic. In ever alarming numbers, 12.5 million children and teens in the United States are considered obese; this means that 17 percent of children in this country are overweight (*WON* 2). We are in the midst of an epidemic of childhood obesity, and children who are obese are much more likely to become obese adults. It is important for parents to know that there are significant risk factors when obesity occurs in childhood. It is not just about their physical appearances; this is the least important factor of obesity. The risks are far more devastating than physical beauty.

It is true that there are certain genetic diseases that may increase a person's body weight regardless of dietary choices. These genetic disorders can create hormonal imbalances, which increase body fat. Dr. Thomas Frieden listed some genetic disorders that increase obesity in children, such as Down’s syndrome, Prader-Willis Syndrome, Cushing’s Syndrome,

Alstrom Syndrome, primary or secondary hypothyroidism, and primary hyperinsulinism (low blood sugar in infants). These disorders, however, are responsible for only approximately 5% of the obesity in children (*WON* 2).

Also, some parents may feel that any problem connected with eating fast food is worth it because the food is fast, easy to get, and cheap to buy for their family. However, they do not realize that eating junk food will cause serious obesity problems for their family in the future. These problems will be more expensive than they think because they will have to pay for doctors, surgery, and medicine to fix their obesity. Children who are obese are at risk for cardiovascular diseases such as high blood pressure or high cholesterol. Diabetes can also develop. Buying fast food is buying one's death or, at the very least, causing damage to one's body. Americans should learn to love their bodies and do them no harm.

Obesity can be preventable as long as adults are willing to rethink their food choices and make lifestyle changes for the benefit of all children. Families and communities must unite to fight and prevent this epidemic from growing and destroying our children, who are the future of our country. Changing our lifestyles now will benefit our children in the future. According to Dr. Walter Willett,

Children do not consume enough vegetables or whole grains and they consume far too many calories from solid fats and added sugars. Snacks with low nutritional value and high in saturated fats and sugar are the most popular among children. Cookies, candy, crackers, sugar-sweetened beverages are usually fed to children (*WON* 3).

But children aren't the ones buying those bad foods.

We, as parents, are responsible for the health of our children, so we must establish good eating habits for them from birth. Parents need to work together with their children. When it is time to grocery shop, parents need to make wise and healthy choices and distinguish between what will be more beneficial to their children and what can harm them. According to Alyssa Shaffer of *Health* magazine, parents should provide

their families with healthy food options and limit the amount of junk foods. If children only eat sweets every now and then, it truly will be a treat. Schools must also play a big part in preventing childhood obesity. Schools can provide healthy meals for lunches that provide nutrition. Snacks must be considered mini-meals, and parents should offer healthier foods such as fruits, vegetables, low fat yogurt and whole grain foods. Parents should also limit television time because children fall into the bad habit of unnecessary and constant snacking.

One benefit will be that children will become more physically active. This should become an enjoyable lifetime habit. Children who are physically active are more likely to remain active into adolescence and adulthood, preventing many of the health issues associated with obesity. Adults must demonstrate fun activities that can be done outside, such as biking, playing team sports, or swimming. Exercise has many other positive effects for our children, including improved classroom performance and overall physical health. As Morgan Spurlock said, the time that a child spends in exercise is time not wasted on eating fatty foods (*Super Size Me*).

Another benefit is that a child who is healthy enough to be active can enjoy more adventures with the family. Being healthy starts mainly in the home. Families who enjoy swimming, hiking or camping together become close-knit (*WON 2*). This close relationship among family members gives new meaning to the idea of support and encouragement to stay on a healthy path. This development of mutual support also keeps everyone thinking healthy and acting the same way. This new lifestyle, therefore, will help them to extend their lives.

Still another benefit of being healthy is that one will need fewer visits to the doctor, fewer medications, and fewer treatments at the hospital. The savings of being healthy are enormous because those monies are not spent. Money not spent on medical concerns is money that one can keep. According to the HBO documentary *Weight of the Nation*, 'The United States, as a country, spends more money on medications than any other country in the world (*WON 3*).

Government money not used for illnesses related to obesity could be invested in other important issues, like education.

Finally, a healthy child is a child with a healthy self-esteem. This confidence helps a child to feel secure about his physical appearance. This will help the child to be more social with classmates, friends and family. Increased class participation occurs when a child is not worried about being teased or bullied for being obese. A balance blend of food, activity and knowledge creates a successful child.

Now that we learned what could happen to our children's health if obesity is not prevented, we must analyze what we are doing incorrectly at home. Nutrition, or lack thereof, plays a large part in the development of obesity. Since obesity is caused by consuming a higher amount of calories than those that are burned, we must change what we are doing at home. It will always be important to keep in mind that today's meals will have consequences for our children in their future. We must unite to ensure a healthy and prosperous future for the well-being of our children. Teaching them good eating habits and showing them how to take care of their bodies now will give them the tools they need to prevent and fight obesity throughout their lives. Our society has no time to lose. Today is the time to do this; we must do it together as families, communities and as a nation.

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Solving Childhood Obesity in America

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CHAPTER 15: MIXED-MODE ESSAY

In the last chapter of Madeleine L'Engle's 1962 young adult fantasy novel, *A Wrinkle in Time*, one of the main characters, an extraordinary creature named Mrs. Whatsit, says, "You're given the form, but you have to write the sonnet yourself. What you say is completely up to you."

With outlines and essay examples, I've guided you through the basic structures (the "forms") of the short formal essay. In focusing on the basics, I hope I've demystified the skill of essay writing, to make it as straightforward and ordinary as doing laundry and washing dishes.

Once you know **HOW** to write an essay, then concentrate on the **WHAT** of the essay: the topic. Even if your instructor gives you a topic, you'll need to narrow the topic to something manageable, and that narrowing is, as Mrs. Whatsit says, "completely up to you." In mastering the basic structures of essay writing, however, you also have the structures to make a longer and more sophisticated essay, the **Mixed-Mode Essay**.

The **Mixed-Mode Essay** uses more than one essay structure in the body paragraphs. While you have an overarching purpose – like argue a point, analyze a subject, or tell a story – you build your body paragraphs with different essay structures in order to support that one, overarching purpose and thesis.

Ruth Gonzalez's **Proposal Argument**, "Solving Childhood Obesity in America" is a type of **Mixed-Mode Essay**. Although its overarching purpose is to argue for a solution, Gonzalez's essay has **Narration, Classification, Process**, and **Cause/Effect** in specific sections of her essay. Each essay

structure is logical, well-organized, and unified in supporting her thesis. By using more than one essay structure in her body paragraphs, Gonzalez's essay is also longer than the standard five-paragraph essay (it has eleven paragraphs). Yet all of those varied structures fit together, like pieces in a big puzzle.

The **Definition Essay** is another kind of **Mixed-Mode Essay**. Since the question "What is it?" is expansive, the methods to answering can also be expansive. The answer can involve its history (**Narration**), its function (**Process**), its characteristics (**Division** and/or **Description**), its similarities or differences to a related other (**Comparison and/or Contrast**), its different types with examples (**Classification with Exemplification**), its influences and/or consequences (**Cause/Effect**), and/or its proof whether something really is or is not it (**Argumentation**). In fact, many long **research papers** are **Definition Essays** that have different kinds of structures in their multi-paragraph sections.

Also, any essay can mix two or more essay structures to make a longer and more sophisticated essay: a Narration with a Process Explanation somewhere in the middle, an extended Classification with a series of multi-paragraph Division analyzing each example, a Comparison/Contrast of Causes and Effects, and so on.

As long as you follow all the stages of the **Writing Process** to ensure everything is well-organized and supports your **Thesis**, the **Mixed-Mode Essay** can be your best choice when it comes to writing those inevitably assigned long essays (even if you still despise writing essays).

You now have the essay structures, but you still have to write the essay yourself. However, you also have the skills, knowledge, and freedom within those structures. Remember: "What you say is completely up to you."

Let's start.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

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She has written a poetry and short story collection, *Rowena's World*; a personal finance advice chapbook, *The Lizard Queen's Adventures in Per\$onal Finance*; a fantasy novel, *Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones*; a doctoral-level academic study, "My Kind of Comedy": *An Exegetical Reading of Flannery O'Connor as Medieval Drama*; and a memoir, *Scaffolds: A Childhood Memoir of Books*.

She often writes on any and all of those various roles on her blog, thelizardqueen.wordpress.com and her website, rowenasworld.org.