



Advanced Communication

UNIT 4

Unit 4

Differentiating arguments and opinions

Exploratory Writing

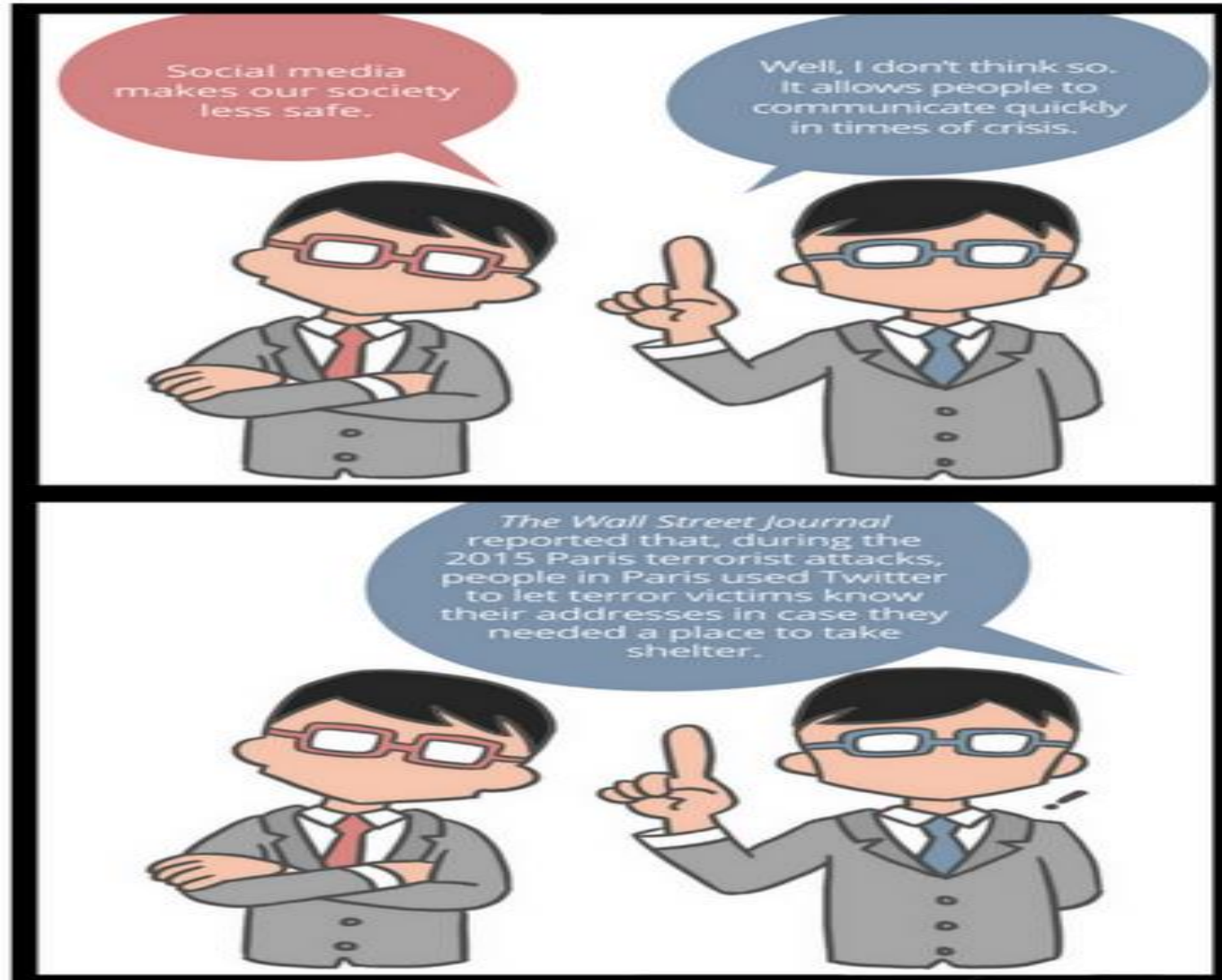
Differentiating arguments and opinions

Argument is often confused with opinion. Indeed, arguments and opinions sound alike. Someone with an opinion asserts a claim that he thinks is true. Someone with an argument asserts a claim that she thinks is true. Although arguments and opinions do sound the same, there are two important differences:

Arguments have rules; opinions do not. In other words, to form an argument, you must consider whether the argument is reasonable. Is it worth making? Is it valid? Is it sound? Do all of its parts fit together logically? Opinions, on the other hand, have no rules, and anyone asserting an opinion need not think it through for it to count as one; however, it will not count as an argument.

Arguments have support; opinions do not. If you make a claim and then stop, as if the claim itself were enough to demonstrate its truthfulness, you have asserted an opinion only. An argument must be supported, and the support of an argument has its own rules. The support must also be reasonable, relevant, and sufficient.

Opinion vs. Argument



WHAT IS AN ARGUMENT?

When you make a claim and then support the claim with reasons, you are making an argument.

WE ASSUME THE FOLLOWING;

An argument has to defend a position in a debate between two or more opposing sides, it must be on a controversial topic, and the goal of such writing must be to prove the correctness of one point of view over another.

A related definition of argument implies a confrontation, a clash of opinions and personalities, or just a plain verbal fight. It implies a winner and a loser, a right side and a wrong one. Because of this understanding of the word “argument,” many students think the only type of argument writing is the debate-like position paper, in which the author defends his or her point of view against other, usually opposing, points of view.

RHETORICAL ARGUMENT

If rhetoric is the study of the craft of writing and speaking, particularly writing or speaking designed to convince and persuade, the student studying **rhetorical argument** focuses on how to create an argument that convinces and persuades effectively.

The student must understand how to think broadly about argument, the particular vocabulary of argument, and the logic of argument.

Academic Argument

The close sibling of rhetorical argument is academic argument

Argument used to discuss and evaluate ideas, usually within a professional field of study, and to convince others of those ideas.

In **academic argument**, interpretation and research play the central role

RHETORICAL ARGUMENT

An argument is a claim asserted as true.

An argument is arguable.

An argument must be reasonable.

An argument must be supported.

An argument in a formal essay is called a thesis. Supporting arguments can be called topic sentences.

An argument can be explicit or implicit.

An argument must be adapted to its rhetorical situation.

Rhetorical or academic Argument is NOT

01

An argument need not be controversial or about a controversy.

02

An argument is not a mere fight.

03

An argument does not have a single winner or loser.

04

An argument is not a mere opinion.

05

An argument is not a statement of FACT.

source

<https://viva.pressbooks.pub/letsgetwriting/chapter/what-is-argument/>

The six ingredients of good writing

Ideas

Organization

Voice

Word choice

Sentence fluency

Conventions.

CHECK LIST:

SOCIAL MEDIA

Tweet

hello!

good!



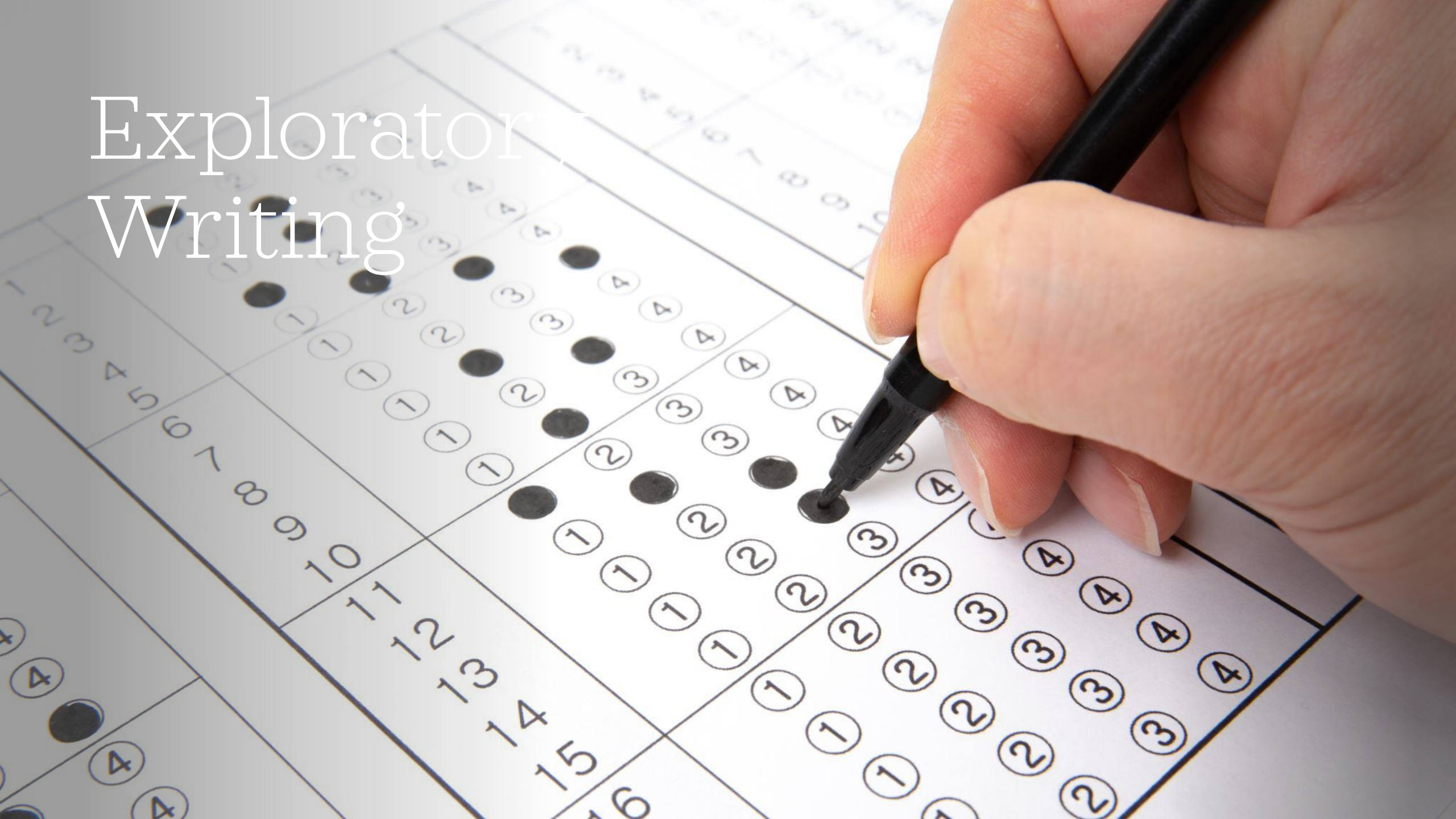
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<https://www.smekenseducation.com/6-traits-of-writing/>

Exploratory Writing



EXPLORATORY VS ARGUMENTATIVE

An exploratory essay considers a topic or problem and explores possible solutions. This type of paper also sometimes includes background about how you have approached the topic, as well as information about your research process.

Whereas other types of essays take a concrete stance on an issue and offer extensive support for that stance, the exploratory essay covers how you arrived at an idea and what research materials and methods you used to explore it.

For example, an [argumentative essay](#) on expanding public transportation might argue that increasing public transit options improves citizens' quality of life. However, an exploratory essay would provide context for the issue and discuss what data and research you gathered to consider the problem.

WHAT IS EXPLORATORY WRITING?

Importantly, an exploratory essay does not reach a specific conclusion about a topic. Rather, it explores multiple conclusions and possibilities. So, for the above example, your exploratory essay might include several viewpoints about public transit, including research from urban planners, transportation advocates, and other experts.

Finally, an exploratory essay will include some reflection on your own research and writing process. You might be asked to draw some conclusions about how you could tackle your topic in an argumentative essay or you might reflect on what sources or pieces of evidence were most helpful as you were exploring the topic.

Ultimately, the primary goal of an exploratory essay is to make an inquiry about a topic or problem, investigate the context, and address possible solutions.

STYLE AND SOURCE



Style



While exploratory essays will generally follow academic style guidelines, they differ from other essays because they tend to utilize a more reflective, personal tone. This doesn't mean that you can cast off academic style rules, however.



Rather, think of an exploratory essay as a venue for presenting your topic and methods to a sympathetic and intelligent audience of fellow researchers. Most importantly, make sure that your writing is clear, correct, and concise.



Sources



As an exploration of your approach to a topic, an exploratory essay will necessarily incorporate research material. As a result, you should expect to include a bibliography or references page with your essay. This page will list both the sources that you cite in your essay, as well as any sources that you may have consulted during your research process.



The citation style of your essay's bibliography will vary based on the subject of the course. For example, an exploratory essay for a sociology class will probably adhere to [APA style](#), while an essay in a history class might use [Chicago style](#).

OUTLINE AND FORMAT

An exploratory essay utilizes the same basic structure that you'll find in other essays. It includes an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion. The introduction sets up the context for your topic, addresses why that topic is worthy of study, and states your primary research question(s).

The body paragraphs cover the research that you've conducted and often include overviews of the sources that you've consulted. The conclusion returns to your research question and considers possible solutions.

INTRODUCTION

The introduction of an exploratory essay functions as an overview. In this section, you should provide context for your topic, explain why the topic is important, and state your research question:

Context includes general information about the topic. This part of the introduction may also outline, or signpost, what the rest of the paper will cover.

Topic importance helps readers "buy in" to your research. A few sentences that address the question, "so what?" will enable you to situate your research within an ongoing debate.

The last part of your introduction should clearly state your research question. It's okay to have more than one, depending on the assignment.

If you were writing an exploratory essay on public transportation, you might start by briefly introducing the recent history of public transit debates. Next, you could explain that public transportation research is important because it has a concrete impact on our daily lives. Finally, you might end your introduction by articulating your primary research questions.



Example of introduction in exploratory writing

While some individuals may choose not to utilize public transportation, decisions to expand or alter public transit systems affect the lives of all. As a result of my preliminary research, I became interested in exploring whether public transportation systems improve citizens' quality of life. In particular, does public transit only improve conditions for those who regularly use these systems? Or, do improvements in public transportation positively impact the quality of life for all individuals within a given city or region? The remainder of this essay explores the research around these questions and considers some possible conclusions.

BODY PARAGRAPHS IN EXPLORATORY WRITING

Body paragraphs

The body paragraphs of an exploratory essay discuss the research process that you used to explore your topic. This section highlights the sources that you found most useful and explains why they are important to the debate.

You might also use the body paragraphs to address how individual resources changed your thinking about your topic. Most exploratory essays will have several body paragraphs

EXAMPLE OF BODY PARA IN EXPLORATORY WRITING

One source that was especially useful to my research was 2016 study by Richard J. Lee and Ipek N. Sener that considers the intersections between [transportation planning and quality of life](#).

They argue that, while planners have consistently addressed physical health and well-being in transportation plans, they have not necessarily factored in how mental and social health contributes to quality of life.

Put differently, transportation planning has traditionally utilized a limited definition of quality of life and this has necessarily impacted data on the relationship between public transit and quality of life.

This resource helped me broaden his conception of quality of life to include all aspects of human health. It also enabled a better understanding of the stakeholders involved in transportation decisions.

HOW TO CONCLUDE IN EXPLORATORY WRITING

Conclusion

Your conclusion should return to the research question stated in your introduction.

What are some possible solutions to your questions, based on the sources that you highlighted in your essay?

While you shouldn't include new information in your conclusion, you can discuss additional questions that arose as you were conducting your research

EXAMPLE OF CONCLUSION OF EXPLORATORY WRITING

In my introduction – the question is - whether public transit improves quality of life for all, not simply for users of public transportation.

The research demonstrates that there are strong connections between public transportation and quality of life, but that researchers differ as to how quality of life is defined. Many conclude that public transit improves citizens' lives, but it is still not clear how public transit decisions affect non-users, since few studies have focused on this distinct group.

As a result, I conclude that more research is needed to answer the research questions stated above

PARTS OF EXPLORATORY WRITING

The introduction should outline the problem you explored and why it's important. In addition, you should briefly discuss 1) some of the problem's possible causes; 2) the institutions and people involved with the problem; 3) some of the possible solutions to the problem. A brief overview of the types of sources you researched during your inquiry.

BODY PARAGRAPHS

Body paragraphs should discuss the inquiry process you followed to research your problem. These paragraphs should include the following:

Introduction of source (title, author, type of media, publisher, publication date, etc.) and why you chose to use it in your exploration

Important information you found in the source regarding your problem

Why the information is important and dependable in relation to the problem

Some personal introspection on how the source helped you, allowed you to think differently about the problem, or even fell short of your expectations and led you in a new direction in your research, which forms a transition into your next source.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion should restate the problem you explored, outline some of its possible causes, review the institutions and people involved, and highlight some possible solutions. If you still have any questions about the problem (and it's ok to have some), you will discuss them here. Talk about why you think you still have questions regarding the problem you explored, where you might look to answer these questions, and what other forms of research you would have to do.

WHY EXPLORATORY WRITING IS DIFFERENT?

Instead of writing to convince an audience of the validity of a thesis, you will be writing to find out about a problem and perhaps to form some preliminary conclusions about how it might be solved.

An exploratory essay is, in essence, a retrospective of your writing and thinking process as you work through a problem. It describes when, how, and why you completed certain types of research. This kind of writing is about how you work through problems that require writing and research. You will have to be introspective and think about your thinking process in order for your essay to turn out well.

SOURCES

<https://www.bibguru.com/blog/write-exploratory-essay/>

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/common_writing_assignments/exploratory_papers/organizing_an_exploratory_essay.html