Functional English SS150 2+1

COURSE IN CHARGE:

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WEEK # 5

The Academic Essay Writing Process

The Essay

An essay is a written composition on a single topic or subject performing one of the following functions:

- ▶ Informing about a given topic
- Describing something / Narrating something
- Arguing against or in favour of something
- Displaying feelings/emotions about something
- Meditating on an idea or a feeling
- Evaluating something, and so on

Usually, the academic essay is a written composition which treats the respective topic in a neutral & objective way.

STANDARD ACADEMIC ESSAY:

- ► It must contain 5 paragraphs and a maximum of 350 words
- ► The first and the last paragraphs are designated to introducing and concluding the topic
- The middle three paragraphs are reserved for the main body of an essay
- Techniques of writing and the structure of paragraphs may differ in accordance with the type of the essay

Reading to Write

▶ Read the essays (61-64) and identify the <u>central idea</u> of each essay. Also, identify the <u>main ideas/sub-topics</u> and the <u>supporting material</u> used by the writers to elaborate the main ideas.

Essay 1: Losing Touch

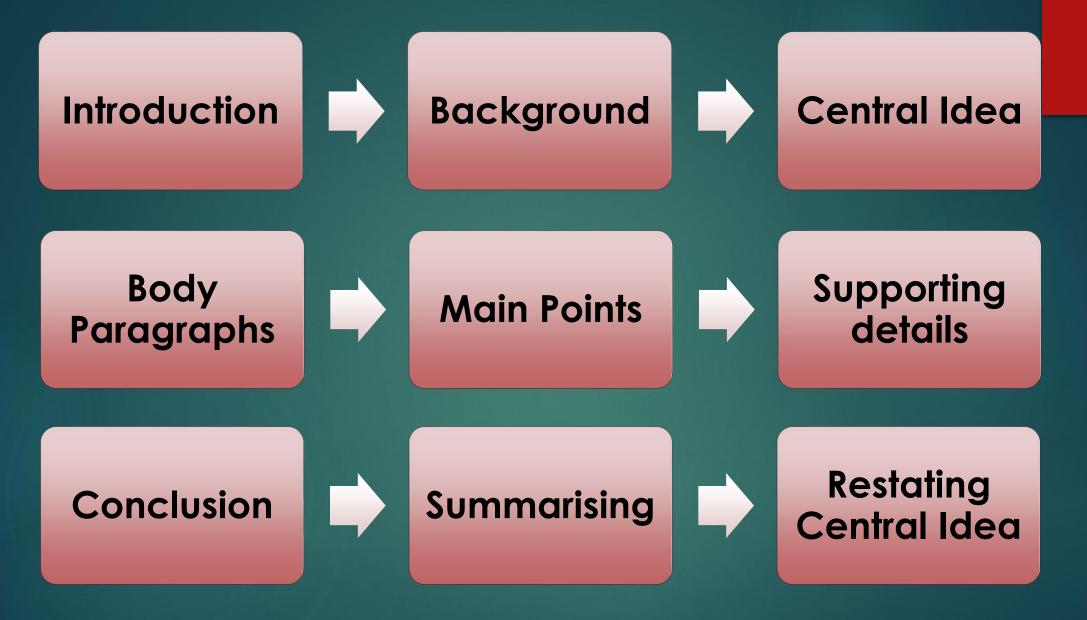
- Central idea: the inventions of modern technology seem to be cutting us off from contact with our fellow human beings
- ► <u>Main ideas/sub-topics:</u>
- The world of business is one area in which technology is isolating us
- 2. Another area that technology is changing is entertainment. Music, for instance, was once a group
- 3. Education is a third important area in which technology is separating us from others

Essay 2:

Central idea: It will provide information on what a typical day in the life of a real estate agent is.

► Main ideas/sub-topics:

- Mornings for a real estate agent usually begin with planning for the future.
- 2. Afternoons are commonly reserved for showings.
- 3. Evenings can go one of two ways for agents: they can be a time for winding down, or they can be a time for pitching a service.



Therefore, we can divide an essay into 3 major parts

The Process of Writing

Writing is a process and for that there are different steps

▶ <u>Step 1: Assessing the writing situation:</u>

The Topic: Focus on key words

The Purpose: Your aim behind writing (inform, persuade, argue, describe, evaluate, etc.)

<u>Audience:</u> Understand your readers (it guides you to select your material, vocabulary, style, and attitude).

Tone: The voice of the writer (depends on the audience, subject matter, purpose, and domain of writing).

Understanding the Topic

- ► Here are some possible subjects for an essay (300 words). Mark each subject as 'too broad' or 'about right'.
- 1. World war II
- 2. Nuclear power
- 3. Computers
- 4. The whooping crane's struggle for survival
- 5. Pollution
- 6. The difficulties of living in one-parent family
- 7. Technology
- 8. Honesty
- 9. Marriage
- 10. Getting a job

Analysing titles

Be clear what the title is asking before starting to plan the essay

- ▶ To identify the main requirements of the title
- ▶ To determine the organization of the essay

For example:

Academic qualifications are of little practical benefit in the real world – Discuss

Discussing involves examining the benefits and drawbacks of something.

Relate the development of railways to the rise of nineteenth-century European nationalism.

Relate means to link one thing to another.

Activity

- Underline the key words in the following titles and consider what they are asking you to do.
- Define Information Technology (IT) and outline its main applications in medicine.
- 2. Compare and contrast the appeal process in the legal systems of Britain and the USA.
- 3. Evaluate the effect of mergers in the motor industry in the last ten years.
- 4. Trace the development of primary education in Britain. Illustrate some of the issues currently facing this sector.

- 5. Identify the main causes of rural poverty in China.
- 6. Calculate the likely change in coffee consumption that would result from a 10% fall in the price of coffee beans.
- 7. Classify the desert regions of Asia and suggest possible approaches to halting their spread.

Note: If a title has **two or more key-terms**, decide how much importance to give to each section of the essay (e.g. title (a) might demand 10% for the definition and 90% for the outline).

Activity

Match the terms to the definitions on the right

- Analyse Give a clear and simple account
- Describe Make a proposal and support it
- Examine Deal with a complex subject by giving the
 - main points
- State Divide into sections and discuss each critically
- Suggest Give a detailed account
- Summarise Look at the various parts and their relationships

Answers

- ▶ Analyse: Divide into sections and discuss each critically
- Describe: Give a detailed account
- Examine: Look at the various parts and their relationships
- State: Give a clear and simple account
- Suggest: Make a proposal and support it
- Summarise: Deal with a complex subject by giving the main points

Analyse means to inspect critically while examine is to observe carefully

Purpose of Writing

aim behind writing: to inform, persuade, argue, describe, narrate, compare and contrast, analyze, evaluate, etc.

Activity: Identify the purpose of the following academic essays.

- 1. Inflation and its Causes
- 2. Impact of Academic Stress on Students' Performance
- 3. Strategies to Eradicate Air Pollution
- 4. Social Media and how it has revolution communication
- 5. Preparing to Study at a University

HOME TASK

For the following writing situations, write a statement explaining what the purpose or purposes of the piece of writing might be. Remember that these purposes may not be completely obvious.

- 1. You have to explain to college students the benefits of career counselling.
- 2. You have witnessed that people in your city are unaware of how to create less waste. You are planning a blog on this topic.
- 3. You are asked to brief about the most effective study strategies you have ever used.
- 4. You feel that people in your class are less aware about the international discussion on environmental problems. You want to write an interesting article for them.
- 5. You are not satisfied with the service of many online shops. You want to write them a detailed email.

Audience Analysis

- Clearly analyze and understand your readers. (as in age, background, gender)
- ▶ This is important in guiding you in your selection of material, your vocabulary, your style, and attitude.

Let's read two paragraphs taken from different essays and articles. Read and decide who the target audience is in each case.

Plagiarism is the fraudulent representation of another person's language, thoughts, ideas, or expressions as one's own <u>original work</u>. Although precise definitions vary depending on the institution, in many countries and cultures plagiarism is considered a violation of <u>academic integrity</u> and <u>journalistic ethics</u>, as well as social norms around learning, teaching, research, fairness, respect, and responsibility. As such, a person or entity that is determined to have committed plagiarism is often subject to various punishments or sanctions, such as suspension, expulsion from school or work, fines, imprisonment, and other penalties.

It's important to know what plagiarism is, and what form it takes (some common types of plagiarism are listed here). It's also important to know how plagiarism happens. The final step is to develop effective academic skills. Many students who plagiarise do so unintentionally, often because they don't have the academic skills to avoid over-reliance on the work of others or because they aren't sure what constitutes plagiarism. So it's important to take every opportunity to develop your academic skills.

Tone

▶ Based on your topic, purpose, audience, and domain of writing, tone will be decided.

Step 2: Planning (Pre-Writing):

First, plan your writing. Following things are done in the planning stage:

- Generating ideas: you can use the following techniques to come up with ideas:
- ▶ <u>Brainstorming / Clustering:</u> Jot down all the ideas that come to your mind ignoring issues like relevance or importance of ideas and points. Scan your brain for any prior knowledge you have about the topic. (Clustering involves more focused thinking).
- ► <u>Free writing:</u> It is to practice <u>writing</u> in general. Used as a preliminary to more formal writing. It involves continuous writing, usually for a predetermined period of time.

Discussion: Discussion can also be very helpful in generating ideas. Jot down the ideas in a notebook. Scan and review your ideas. Select the most relevant and important ones and decide for a logical order. Other than this, you can search for ideas by reading books on the essay topic, or surf the net. Skim and scan sites or books.

Then, organize them into **an outline** for your essay by arranging them in a logical order.

Once you have a rough outline containing ideas for your essay, it is time to move on to the next step of the writing process.

▶ Step 3: Reading:

- After planning, reading is done.
- It helps in getting more ideas, vocabulary, sentence structures, etc.
- Add the new information in your outline.
- Revise and finalize it.

► Step 4: Rough Writing:

- Once you have a final outline, write a rough draft ignoring grammatical and organizational concerns.
- Most writers find beginning with the introduction paragraph difficult. So, they begin with the main body of the essay, and then write an introduction paragraph.
- Your outline and ideas undergo considerable revision at this stage.
- After having written the rough draft, it is now time to bring into consideration the issues you ignored in order not to disturb a spontaneous flow of ideas.

► <u>Step 5: Proofreading/Editing/Revising:</u>

 Check your essay for grammatical, structural and organizational mistakes, unity and coherence, etc.

► <u>Step 6: Final Draft Writing:</u>

 After proofreading and editing, write a final draft of your essay.

The Writing Process

Prewriting

- purpose and audience
 brainstorming
- form



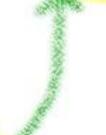
Writing

- organization
- voice
- word choice
- sentence fluency



Revising

- reorganizingrefining
- using precise language



Responding

- teacher/peer conferenceself/peer evaluation



Editing

- conventions

- bulletin board
- website
- performanceauthor's chair



Thank you ©