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# PATTERNS OF IDEA DEVELOPMENT

STW UNIT 03



# WHAT ARE PATTERNS OF IDEA DEVELOPMENT?

- Most academic essays have an overall structure – introduction leading to a thesis, main body of text, and conclusion.
- Essays have topic sentence and unities of idea that constitute the main text.
- These topic sentences and unities of idea need to be ordered logically.
- There are different ways to organize information in the body of an essay, using different patterns of development of the idea presented in the thesis.

# COMMON PATTERNS OF IDEA DEVELOPMENT

1. NARRATION
2. DESCRIPTION
3. EXAMPLE
4. DEFINITION
5. PERSUASION
6. PROCESS ANALYSIS
7. CLASSIFICATION/ DIVISION
8. COMPARISON/ CONTRAST
9. CAUSE & EFFECT
10. PROBLEM & SOLUTION

# 1. NARRATION

- Purpose of narration is to tell a story or relate an event.
- Narration is useful for sequencing or putting details and information into sequential order, usually chronological.
- Literature uses narration heavily, but it also can be useful in non-fiction, academic writing, and journalistic writing.

## 2. DESCRIPTION

- Purpose of description is to recreate, invent, or visually present a person, place, event, or action.
- Making the reader vividly imagine that which is being described.
- Description is heavily based on sensory details: sight, sound, smell, feel, and taste.

### 3. EXAMPLE

- Examples are used in all kinds of situations—an idea can be considered too general or abstract until there is an example.
- This process is called ‘exemplification’: one or more examples are given in great detail.
- Examples show the details of a complex problem, making it easy for readers to understand.

## 4. DEFINITION

- Definition explains what something is in comparison to other members of its class, along with any limitations.
- Definition deeply examines a word or concept as it is actually used and understood.
- It is a discussion of the concept from all possible angles, making it easier for the reader to understand.

## 5. PERSUASION

- Persuasion describes an issue and the writer's position or opinion on the subject.
- Purpose of persuasion in writing is to convince readers toward a certain point of view, or opinion.
- To persuade a skeptical audience, the author can use a wide range of evidence, including scientific studies, expert opinions, historical precedent, statistics, personal anecdotes, and current events.



## 6. PROCESS ANALYSIS

- Analyzing a process can also be thought of as “how-to” instruction.
- Technical writing includes a lot of process analysis.
- Academic writing can incorporate process analysis to show how an existing problem came to be, or how it might be solved, by following a clear series of steps.

## 7. CLASSIFICATION/ DIVISION

- Classification & division groups items into their parts or types.
- Classification takes one large concept, and divides it into individual, bite-sized pieces.
- This helps the reader to understand a complex topic by focusing on its smaller parts.
- This is useful when an author has a unique way of dividing the concepts, to provide new insight.

## 8. COMPARISON/ CONTRAST

- Comparison focuses on similarities between things or concepts.
- Contrast focuses on differences between things or concepts.
- Goal of comparison and contrast in academic essays is generally to examine whether one item is superior to another, based on a set of evaluations included as part of the writing.

## 9. CAUSE & EFFECT

- Cause & effect essays offer an explanation about why a sequence of events matters.
- Cause & effect details why something happens, what causes it, what are the effects and how it is related to something else.
- Cause & effect writing is particularly powerful when the author can provide an unexpected cause & effect relationship.
- Cause & effect writing can help the reader see the situation in a new light.

## 10. PROBLEM & SOLUTION

- Problem & solution writing has two equally important tasks: clearly identifying a problem, and then providing a logical, practical solution for that problem.
- Establishing that a particular situation IS a problem can sometimes be a challenge—many readers assume that a given situation is “just the way it is”.

## EXAMPLE OF TOPICS & POSSIBLE IDEA DEVELOPMENTS

- Compare the economic theories of Maynard Keynes and Milton Friedman. (comparison & contrast)
- Discuss the effects of the U.S. civil war on the U.S. cotton industry during and in the decade immediately after the war. (cause & effect)
- Identify the different literary techniques that Faulkner applies in his short story, “A Rose for Emily,” explaining how he uses each technique to add to the suspense of the story. (division & classification, then example)
- Discuss Piaget’s stages of child development in reference to case studies #1: Rebecca, and #2: Luke. (process analysis)



THANK YOU!