

Modes of Discourse

These are some of the modes of discourse, or types of body paragraphs, that you can use to develop your essays. The topics here are not very complex, and these are not all of the types. They are just some examples for your reference. The other modes of discourse are listed below. You can practice those on your own.

Cause/Effect Paragraph

Married couples today are getting divorced for many different reasons. First, they have poor communication skills. For example, they may not talk about their goals or values before they get married because they are just focusing on romantic feelings. They may not find out until much later that they have different ideas about spending money or raising children. Also, many couples get married before they are mature enough. Many young people who get married end up getting divorced because they change after getting married. An 18-year-old person changes a lot by the time he or she is 25. Two people who got married young may realize they are not compatible after some years. The last reason that couples divorce is lack of responsibility. Many men and some women don't like to do house cleaning or cooking. If one person in the marriage has to do all of the work, the other person may feel annoyed and wish to get out of the marriage. These are some of the reasons that couples get divorced.

This is cause/effect because it gives reasons why something happens.

Compare/Contrast Paragraph

There are many differences between being a student in high school and being a student in college. The first difference is about the classes that are required. In high school, most students take the same classes and do not get to choose many of their classes. Each year, there are certain classes that everyone in that grade must take. In college, students have some required classes, but they can choose when they take them. College students also get to choose many more elective classes and have some options to choose from to meet requirements. Another difference is about schedules. High school students are usually required to go to school Monday through Friday for 7 or 8 hours per day. They don't have much free time during that time. On the other hand, college students can choose to have all of their classes meet on only 2 or 3 days a week. If they prefer, they can choose to have only morning classes or only afternoon classes. The most notable difference between high school and college is lifestyle. Most high school students live with their parents and come home every day after school. They have to eat and go to bed when their parents tell them to. However, in college, students are free to do what they want. They usually live with a friend, and they can choose to eat and sleep whenever they want. High school students have a lot of changes to look forward to in college.

This is compare/contrast because it shows the differences between high school and college.

Description Paragraph

Southern California's beaches are some of the most beautiful in the world. In the south, near San Diego, is La Jolla. This small community has steep cliffs and sandy beaches. The cove is famous for hundreds of sea lions lounging on the sand. Further up the coast in Orange County, there are a series of hidden beaches in the area around Laguna Beach. To get to many of these beautiful beaches, people have to walk down steep flights of stairs, sometimes with as many as 1000 steps. Once there, beachgoers can relax on the sand or swim in gentle waves that crash ashore. In the north, Malibu is so attractive that many rich and famous people choose to live there, and they have beautiful homes right along the beach. Malibu is a favorite destination for many surfers because of the good-sized waves there. These are only a handful of the many beautiful beaches in Southern California.

This is description because it describes the beautiful beaches spatially from south to north.

Narration Paragraph

The football game was exciting but also heartbreaking. It started out great when the home team scored in its first possession of the game. Then its defense held up great and prevented the opposing team from scoring in the first half. However, the second half was not as successful. The opposing team scored twice to tie the game. After that, it was up to the home team's quarterback to move the team down the field and score again before the end of the game. It was in the final minute that the opposing defense pushed past the offensive line and sacked the home team's quarterback. The ball flew out of his hands and was caught by the opposing team, who ran the ball back for a touch down to win the game. In the end, the most heartbreaking thing was that the home team's quarterback broke his collarbone when he was sacked. The rest of their season was ruined.

This is narration because it is a story and uses time transitions to show time order.

Illustration/Exemplification Paragraph

There are many choices for people wanting to find a news source. First, there are TV news channels. Fox and CNN are 24-hour-news channels that offer up to date news reports as well as opinion segments on various political matters. Traditional news junkies may still prefer to get their news from the few newspapers that remain. Some of the major ones like the Washington Post and the New York Times still print newspapers and have award-winning reporting. However, for more and more people, the best place to get news is on the Internet. All of the traditional TV and print news organizations have online versions, but there are also many more choices online. For example, Huffington Post and Politico offer up-to-date news on the latest issues, and they are always at one's fingertips. Regardless of one's preference, there is no shortage of news sources.

This is illustration because it shows something or draws a picture by examples.

Other modes of discourse: argument, process, classification