

### MEAL Plan (Main idea, Evidence, Analysis, Link)

As discussed in Crafting a Topic Sentence for Each Paragraph and Crafting the Evidence, Analysis, and Transition for Each Paragraph, a clear and effective paragraph should parallel the structure of a clear and effective essay. The chart below illustrates how the structures of an essay and a paragraph are parallel:

Essay	Paragraph
Introduction/Thesis Statement	Topic Sentence/Main Idea
Body	Evidence and Analysis
Conclusion	Link/Transition to Next Paragraph

The **MEAL Plan (Main idea, Evidence, Analysis, and Link)** is an effective strategy for constructing paragraphs. The Meal Plan is also an effective strategy for the writer to employ in the review and revision of each paragraph. This guide demonstrates how the writer may verify that each component of the MEAL Plan is intact or how each component may be effectively revised for each and every paragraph in the body of the paper:

**Main Idea:** *Just as an effective essay focuses on one main idea (the thesis statement), an effective paragraph should also focus on one main idea (the topic sentence).* The writer should locate the topic sentence for each paragraph (usually the first sentence) and then, paragraph by paragraph, verify that each topic sentence accurately and effectively describes and emphasizes the main idea that is supported and analyzed in that paragraph.

**Evidence:** *Just as an effective essay provides evidence to support the main idea, an effective paragraph should also provide evidence to support the main idea or claim.* The writer's topic sentence is typically a claim related to the thesis statement; therefore, each topic should be supported by relevant and credible evidence. Evidence typically includes summaries, paraphrases, quotations, definitions, and examples from primary and secondary sources. The writer should verify that relevant, credible evidence is presented to support the claim. If the writer determines that the evidence provided is weak or needs further development, that evidence should be revised or replaced with proper evidence to support the paragraph's main idea.

**Analysis:** *Just as an effective essay provides analysis to explain and connect the evidence to the thesis, an effective paragraph should also provide analysis to explain and connect the evidence to the topic sentence or claim.* Evidence alone does not speak for the writer. Evidence is not analysis. Analysis is the writer's perspective on the evidence that may not be immediately evident to the audience. If the writer expects the audience to be persuaded or convinced, to recognize the connections and relationships between the writer's claims and the evidence, then the writer should verify that the analysis is present and is revised to accurately explain how the evidence should be interpreted and how that evidence is connected to the paragraph's main idea.

**Link:** *Just as an essay ends with a conclusion that links all of its main points, a paragraph should close by linking the topic sentence to the main idea in the next paragraph.* The writer should verify that each paragraph's conclusion is revised to *link* the current paragraph's main idea to the next paragraph's main idea. This foreshadowing prepares the audience for the next main idea and for what might be expected from the writer's research. The writer's revisions may include transitional phrases such as *however, so, thus, still, despite, nonetheless, although, or in spite of* to help signal relationships between paragraphs and connections to the main idea in the paragraph to follow.

## MEAL Paragraphs

A MEAL paragraph is a format that helps guide you in your literary analysis writing. It is an acronym for:

**Main Idea** - the paragraph's central focus, what you are trying to prove within the paragraph

**Evidence** - examples that help prove the main idea (and, in a longer paper, the thesis). In an English paper, your evidence is generally made up of quotations from the text. For a history paper, you might be using a quotation or paraphrased fact. REMEMBER: EACH SOURCE MUST BE CITED AND CREDIBLE!!!

Do not place a quotation alone as a sentence. Be sure to give some context that explains to the reader how/where the quotation fits into the story.

**Analysis** - This section is the most important part of the paragraph; it is where you dig deep into your evidence and explain how and why it proves your thesis.

“Quote-suckers” (specific words or phrases from quotations) can be extremely useful when analyzing.

Transcend what the quotation, or any other form of evidence, says and explain connections that you personally come up with.

REMEMBER: EXPLAIN HOW AND WHY!!!

**Last Thought/Linking Sentence** - If you're just writing a paragraph, use this sentence to restate the Main Idea (in a different way!) and wrap up your thoughts. For a longer paper, connect your main idea back to your paper's thesis. Sometimes teachers will tell you to transition to the next paragraph's idea.

Here is an example of a MEAL paragraph:

In the novel, *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, Myrtle Wilson demonstrates how members of the lower class cannot achieve the American Dream. Myrtle, a working class citizen, associates herself with the wealthy in order to appear rich. During her apartment party, Myrtle changes into a party dress and, “with the influence of the dress her personality had also undergone a change. The intense vitality that had been so remarkable in the garage was converted to impressive hauteur...until she seemed to be revolving on a noisy, creaking pivot through the smoky air” (Fitzgerald 39-40). Myrtle strives to be someone she is not by changing into an outfit she thinks implies she is wealthy. She tries to be rich by dressing the part, but the poor side of Myrtle still lurks within her, as displayed through the term, “smoky air.” “Smoky air” relates to the Valley of Ashes, yet at this point in the novel, Myrtle is in New York. By revealing that the “smoky air” of the Valley of Ashes follows Myrtle to New York, a wealthier location, Fitzgerald demonstrates how simply associating with the wealthy is not enough for Myrtle to actually obtain the American Dream. Her attempt to transcend class structures ultimately leads to her death, which reveals that the working class cannot grasp the American Dream.

Red: Main Idea

Green: Evidence

Blue: Analysis

Black: Last Thought

## **The structure of your essay**

**Try to make a plan of your ideas before you start writing, it will help you structure your essay better given the time limit.**

### INTRODUCTION

Start with a clear introduction.

Try to include

- Some background knowledge
- The point you are referring to in the article
- Your thesis
- Brief outline

### MAIN BODY OF ESSAY

- Write and space your paragraphs clearly.
- For each idea you have outlined in your introduction you should use a new paragraph.
- It's a good idea to leave a space/line between paragraphs.

### CONCLUSION

Your essay needs a conclusion to finish it off.

Your conclusion should do two things

- Recap the essay
- give a 'take away' statement (a statement that makes you think after having finished reading)
- Make sure that your conclusion is NOT a new idea

## DRAFTING

Before you start your essay, you will need to ask yourself some questions.

Who? What? When? Why? are good "wh" words to help with the introduction

Future / advice / bigger picture concepts will help round off your essay and make the conclusion interesting for the reader

Now you have a go with an essay topic of your own.

1. Brainstorm to gather ideas and words
2. Outline these ideas into paragraphs
3. Write the first draft.

### Building the Essay Draft

Building a strong essay draft requires going through a logical progression of stages:

- Explanation
- Development options
- Linking paragraphs
- Introductions
- Conclusions
- Revising and proofreading the draft
- Hints for revising and proofreading

Tip: After you have completed the body of your paper, you can decide what you want to say in your introduction and in your conclusion.

### Explanation

**Once you know what you want to talk about and you have written your thesis statement, you are ready to build the body of your essay.**

**The thesis statement will usually be followed by:**

- the body of the paper
- the paragraphs that develop the thesis by explaining your ideas by backing them up
- examples or evidence

**Tip: The "examples or evidence" stage is the most important part of the paper, because you are giving your reader a clear idea of what you think and why you think it.**

### Development Options

- For each reason you have to support your thesis, remember to state your point clearly and explain it.

**Tip: Read your thesis sentence over and ask yourself what questions a reader might ask about it. Then answer those questions, explaining and giving examples or evidence.**

- **Compare and contrast:**

Show how one thing is similar to another, and then how the two are different, emphasizing the side that seems more important to you. For example, if your thesis states, "Jazz is a serious art form," you might compare and contrast a jazz composition to a classical one.

Show your reader what the opposition thinks (reasons why some people do not agree with your thesis), and then refute those reasons (show why they are wrong). On the other hand, if you feel that the opposition isn't entirely wrong, you may say so, (concede), but then explain why your thesis is still the right opinion.

- **Think about the order in which you have made your points.** Why have you presented a certain reason that develops your thesis first, another second, etc.? If you can't see any particular value in

presenting your points in the order you have, reconsider it until you either decide why the order you have is best, or change it to one that makes more sense to you.

- **Keep revisiting your thesis with three questions in mind:**

1. Does each paragraph develop my thesis?
  2. Have I done all the development I wish had been done?
  3. Am I still satisfied with my working thesis, or have I developed my body in ways that mean I must adjust my thesis to fit what I have learned, what I believe, and what I have actually discussed?

### Linking Paragraphs

**It is important to link your paragraphs together, giving your readers cues so that they see the relationship between one idea and the next, and how these ideas develop your thesis.**

Your goal is a smooth transition from paragraph A to paragraph B, which explains why cue words that link paragraphs are often called "transitions."

**Tip: Your link between paragraphs may not be one word, but several, or even a whole sentence. Here are some ways of linking paragraphs.**

- To show simply that another idea is coming, use words such as "also," "moreover" or "in addition."
- To show that the next idea is the logical result of the previous one, use words such as "therefore," "consequently," "thus" or "as a result."
- To show that the next idea seems to go against the previous one, or is not its logical result, use words such as "however," "nevertheless" or "still."
- To show you've come to your strongest point, use words such as "most importantly."
- To show you've come to a change in topic, use words such as "on the other hand."
- To show you've come to your final point, use words such as "finally."

### Introductions

**After you have come up with a thesis and developed it in the body of your paper, you can decide how to introduce your ideas to your reader.**

**The goals of an introduction are to:**

- get your reader's attention/arouse your reader's curiosity
- provide any necessary background information before you state your thesis (often the last sentence of the introductory paragraph)
- establish why you are writing the paper

**Tip: You already know why you are writing, and who your reader is; now present that reason for writing to that reader.**

**Hints for writing your introduction:**

- **Use the Ws of journalism (who, what, when, where, why) to decide what information to give.** (Remember that a history teacher doesn't need to be told "George Washington was the first president of the United States." Keep your reader in mind.)
- **Add another "W": Why (why is this paper worth reading)?** The answer could be that your topic is new, controversial or very important.
- **Catch your reader by surprise by starting with a description or narrative that doesn't hint at what your thesis will be.** For example, a paper could start, "It is less than a 32nd of an inch long, but it can kill an adult human," to begin a paper about eliminating malaria-carrying mosquitoes.

### Conclusions

**There can be many different conclusions to the same paper (just as there can be many introductions), depending on who your readers are and where you want to direct them (follow-up you expect of them after they finish your paper). Therefore, restating your thesis and summarizing the main points of your body should not be all that your conclusion does. In fact, most weak conclusions are merely restatements of the thesis and summaries of the body without guiding the reader toward thinking about the implications of the thesis.**

**Here are some options for writing a strong conclusion:**

- **Make a prediction about the future.** You convinced the reader that thermal energy is terrific, but do you think it will become the standard energy source? When?
- **Give specific advice.** If your readers now understand that multicultural education has great advantages, or disadvantages, or both, whatever your opinion might be, what should they do? Whom should they contact?
- **Put your topic in a larger context.** Once you have proven that physical education should be part of every school's curriculum, perhaps readers should consider other "frill" courses which are actually essential.

**Tip: Just as a conclusion should not be just a restatement of your thesis and summary of your body, it also should not be an entirely new topic, a door opened that you barely lead your reader through and leave them there lost. Just as in finding your topic and in forming your thesis, the safe and sane rule in writing a conclusion is: neither too little nor too much.**

### **Revising and Proofreading the Draft**

**Writing is only half the job of writing.**

The writing process begins even before you put pen to paper, when you think about your topic. And, once you finish actually writing, the process continues. What you have written is not the finished essay, but a first draft, and you must go over many times to improve it -- a second draft, a third draft, as many as necessary to do the job right. Your final draft, edited and proofread, is your essay, ready for your reader's eyes.

#### **Revision**

A revision is a "re-vision" of your essay -- how you see things now, deciding whether your introduction, thesis, body and conclusion really express your own vision. Revision is global, taking another look at what ideas you have included in your paper and how they are arranged;

#### **Proofreading**

Proofreading is checking over a draft to make sure that everything is complete and correct as far as spelling, grammar, sentence structure, punctuation and other such matters go. It's a necessary, if somewhat tedious and tricky, job one that a friend or computer Spellcheck can help you perform. Proofreading is polishing, one spot at a time.

**Tip: Revision should come before proofreading: why polish what you might be changing anyway?**

### **Hints for revising and proofreading:**

- **Leave some time -- an hour, a day, several days -- between writing and revising.** You need some distance to switch from writer to editor, some distance between your initial vision and your re-vision.
- **Double-check your writing assignment to be sure you haven't gone off course.** It's alright if you've shifted from your original plan, if you know why and are happier with this direction.
- **Read aloud slowly.** You need to get your eye and your ear to work together. At any point that something seems awkward, read it over again. If you're not sure what's wrong -- or even if something is wrong -- make a notation in the margin and come back to it later. Watch out for "padding;" tighten your sentences to eliminate excess words that dilute your ideas.
- **Be on the lookout for points that seem vague or incomplete;** these could present opportunities for rethinking, clarifying and further developing an idea.
- **Get to know what your particular quirks are as a writer.** Do you give examples without explaining them, or forget links between paragraphs? Leave time for an extra rereading to look for any weak points.
- **Get someone else into the act.** Have others read your draft, or read it to them. Invite questions and ask questions yourself, to see if your points are clear and well developed. Remember, though, that some well-meaning readers can be too easy -- or too hard -- on a piece of writing, especially one by someone close.

**Tip: Never change anything unless you are convinced that it should be changed.**

- **Keep tools at hand, such as a dictionary, a thesaurus, and a writing handbook.**

- **If you're using word processing, remember that computers are wonderful resources for editing and revising.**
- **When you feel you've done everything you can, first by revising and then by proofreading, and have a nice clean final draft, put it aside and return later to re-see the whole essay.** There may be some last minute fine tuning that can make all the difference.

## EDITING

### Editing Checklist

When revising and editing your assignment, ask yourself:

#### Have I answered the question or task as fully as possible?

- What is my thesis/ central proposition/ main assertion?
- Do I make a clear argument or take a position about the topic? Do I state that position in my introduction?
- Does my introduction or opening paragraph prepare the reader for what follows?

#### Is my essay clearly structured?

- Does my assignment have a clear introduction, a body and a definite conclusion?
- Does the assignment advance in logical stages?
- Are the major points connected? Are the relationships between them expressed clearly?
- Do the major points all relate to the topic and contribute to answering the task or question?

#### Are my paragraphs clearly connected and coherent?

- Does each paragraph begin with a topic sentence?
- Do the sentences flow smoothly and logically from point to point?
- Does each sentence clearly follow on from the one before?
- Does each paragraph state its case clearly and completely, or should there be more evidence/ detail?
- Are there adequate transitions between sentences and paragraphs? Are transitions varied or are they all the same kind?
- Are all examples and quotes relevant to and supportive of my answer?
- Are facts and opinions supported with examples or explanations where necessary?

#### Is my written expression appropriate?

- Have I used direct and clear language?
- Have I explained my ideas clearly and explicitly?
- Have I kept my audience in mind? Have I said all I need to say so that my reader can understand, or am I assuming they will 'know what I mean'?
- Have I written complete, grammatically correct sentences?
- In long sentences, have I separated related ideas with commas or semicolons for easier understanding?
- Is my use of tenses correct?
- Have I used non-discriminatory language?

#### Have I fully referenced my sources of information?

- Have I referenced all the words, ideas and information sources I have used in my assignment?
- Have I used a consistent referencing style?
- Is there a clear distinction between my thoughts and words and those of the author(s) I've read and cited?
- Are quotations properly introduced?
- Are they accurate?
- Are they formatted correctly?
- Do the quotations add evidence or provide an authoritative voice, or am I letting the author(s) speak for me? Would writing it in my own words be more effective?

#### Have I remained within or exceeded the set word limit?

#### I don't have enough words:

- Have I fully answered the question or task?

- Do I need to read more? Should I include more information or discussion?
- Have I provided enough evidence to support my argument/s?

**I have too many words:**

- Have I included only relevant information?
- Is there any unnecessary repetition in my assignment?
- Is my written expression as clear and concise as possible, or is it too 'wordy'?

**Have I proof read and revised my assignment for errors?**

- Have I checked my spelling? Have I read through my assignment and not just relied on a computer spell checker?
- Is all my bibliographical information correct?
- Have I used correct punctuation? Have I ended every sentence with a full stop?

**Is my assignment well presented?**

- Does the presentation follow any guidelines set by my lecturer or school?
- Have I included a cover sheet? (assignment cover sheets are available from your school office)
- Have I made sure my assignment is legible? Is it typed or written neatly?
- Have I used double-line spacing?
- Have I numbered pages and used wide margins?
- Have I kept an extra copy?

**Further reading**

Barnett, S. and Cain, A. 1997, A Short Guide to Writing About Literature, Harper Collins.

Cuba, I. 1988, A Short Guide to Writing About Social Science, Harper Collins.

## INTRODUCTION

### Being Clear in your Introduction

There are two reasons for trying to write a clear introduction for your exam essay, firstly because the reader is clear about your INTENTIONS, that is, what you are trying to say, and secondly it can help you, the writer, to structure your essay effectively when time is short

Look at this example of an essay introduction on the topic of pollution (on an imaginary article by an imaginary Professor Green):

Nowadays environmental issues and the problems caused by pollution are upmost in politicians' minds, because of this new policies are constantly being revised. In his article on the ground level results achieved by such policies (or cite title of article), Professor Green underlines the importance of applying such policies at a 'grass roots' level (or Professor Green claims that "quotation"). The aim of this essay is to examine why the problems of pollution in this area do not seem to be improving even though policies have been put in place. This paper will start by looking at how measures have been - or not been - implemented in the area, it will then go on to examine citizens mentality towards these measures, to conclude it will suggest how the two ideas could work together better.

### The stages of this introduction are clearly organized

- Give a bit of background knowledge
- Refer to the part of the text you are using
- State the aim of your essay
- Briefly outline what you are going to talk about.

Useful expressions:

### Referring to a particular point in the text

- The author's point/ideas/argument on .....are particularly relevant because....
- In his/her article the author discusses/examines ... which is particularly relevant because....
- The author states that "(quotation)", which is important/significant/relevant because....

### Stating the aim of your essay

- This essay will focus on/examine/give an account of .....
- The aim of this essay is to determine/examine .....
- The purpose of this paper is to .....

### Outlining the steps of your essay

- This essay begins by (gerund)..... It will then go on to (infinitive).....
- This essay will discuss the following ideas....(remember how to list ideas: "one, two, three *and* four" put an 'and' between the last two elements)

If organised well, an introduction can help the reader understand what is you are trying to express, but by checking back on your outline during the exam, it can help you to organise your ideas into paragraphs more logically and efficiently, and you essay will stay on point.

## CONCLUSION

### Writing a clear conclusion

In conclusion, this essay set out to understand why environmental problems in this town do not seem to be improving even though several new policies have been put in place. The essay has shown that although the policies are good initiatives, if they are not implemented properly at a 'grass roots' level, that is, made accessible and effective for citizens, improvement will be slow. It seems appropriate to end by stating that the world belongs to every creature that lives in it, therefore the responsibility to maintain and protect it should be shared equally amongst individual citizens.

### We use a conclusion to do two things:

- To look back over what we have written (the ideas that you clearly outlined in the introduction)
- To give a last statement (which can leave the reader something about)

### Looking back over what you have written

A strategy that can be used is 'echoing' that means giving the same sort of ideas already mentioned in the introduction, at least that way you know that you are tying together all your 'loose threads'

In doing this you can restate the aim of your essay:

In conclusion/To sum up/ In summary/ To summarize

- This essay set out to determine/discuss.....
- The purpose of the essay was to determine ....

Then you can give examples of what was done throughout the course of the essay:

- and, it (the essay) has shown that ....
- it (the essay) has therefore argued that...

### Giving a last statement

- The results of this essay indicate that ....
- It seems appropriate to state/conclude by stating that

# 1. Rhetorical Functions in Academic Speaking: Narrating and reporting

## Language

Past tense is common.

Chronological order is also common, but when we are speaking about past events, it is necessary to be explicit about the order in which things happened. To make the order clear, we mention dates and time, and we also use various links and connectives.

### a) Time

In 1942, ...

During the 20th century, ...

Yesterday, ...

Twenty five years ago, ...

### b) Sequence

#### *before*

Before he was offered a job as a lecturer,	he had finished his research.
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Before this, ...

For the previous X years, ...

Prior to this, ...

Previously, ...

X years previously, ...

Before...

... before which ...

... prior to which ...

#### *after*

When As soon as After	he had finished his research, he was offered a job as a lecturer.
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On finishing his research, After finishing his research, Having finished his research, On finishing his research,	he was offered a job as a lecturer.
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For the following X years, ...

X years later, ...

After ...

Following this, ...

When ...

Subsequently, ...

Soon/Shortly/Immediately afterwards, ...

... following which ...

... after which ...

**while**

While he was doing his research,		he made an important discovery.
When	doing his research,	
While		
During his research,		

During this period, ...

Throughout this period, ...

... during which...

... throughout which...

## 2. Rhetorical Functions in Academic Speaking: Defining

In academic speaking, it is often necessary to define your terms.

### Examples

The name we apply to the liquid rock material, or magma, when it reaches the surface, is lava. The word lava is also used for the solid rock that is formed by consolidation when the liquid rock cools. The temperature of lava as it comes to the surface may be higher than 2000°F. We know this because copper wire with a melting point of 2200°F was melted in the lava from Vesuvius. We have also observed a temperature of 2300° F at Kilauea.

Adapted from *This earth of ours* by Victor T Allen, p. 3

In this case, the term "lava" is being defined.

We call the sediment which is deposited by a stream alluvium.  
*This earth of ours* by Victor T Allen, p. 97.

In this example, "alluvium" is being defined.

### Diseases and symptoms

We normally define a disease as an abnormal condition of the body that has a specific cause and characteristic outward 'signs' and symptoms. Technically speaking, we usually say that a 'sign' is an indication of a disease that is noticed by the doctor but not by the patient, while a 'symptom' is something the patient himself feels - but this distinction is often not so clear in ordinary conversation.

In this example, definitions of "disease", "symptom" and "sign" are defined.

### Language

X is ...

X is called ...

X is known as ...

X may be defined as ...

X is a type of Y that/which ...

A type of Y which ... is X

We call ... ..

We define ... ..

### 3. Rhetorical Functions in Academic Writing: Expressing sequences

#### Language

The table below shows some common expressions used.

Firstly,
First of all,
To begin with,
Initially
Beforehand,
Previously,
Earlier,
At the same time,
Simultaneously,
Secondly, Thirdly etc
Next,
Then,
Subsequently,
Later,
Eventually,
Lastly
Finally,
In the last stage,

#### 4. Rhetorical Functions in Academic Speaking/Writing: Giving examples

In academic speaking it is common to make generalisations. It is often useful to support these generalisations with examples.

##### Language

For example, For instance,	...
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This is shown by the following examples, The following are examples of this: The following is a case in point:	...
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... is a case in point.
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## 5. Rhetorical Functions in Academic Speaking: Generalising

A common organisational principle in academic speaking is the **general-specific** pattern. This pattern involves a general statement supported by specific examples or details.

### Example

Look at the following examples of generalisations. In some cases the generalisations are supported by details or examples.:

1) It is believed that the USA wanted a round-the-world air route with access to all countries including the Soviet Union, China, the Middle East, and Africa, as well as the British Commonwealth and Empire.

2) Marx and Engels followed their contemporaries in believing that the history of mankind usually went through the same sequence of technological improvement. The sequence, by and large, went like this: first gathering of plants and small animals, second fishing, third hunting, fourth pottery, fifth pastoralism, sixth agriculture, seventh metalworking.

3) Throughout most of known human existence the processes, materials and tools of production were available to individuals who were involved in both utilitarian and expressive work. But, since the Renaissance the exponential growth and sophistication of technology has made it impossible for the majority of artists to gain access to many potential tools for expression.

### Language

Percentage	Quantity	Frequency	Certainty	Verbs
100%	all/every/each most a majority (of) many/much	always  usual(ly) normal(ly) general(ly) as a rule on the whole	certain(ly) definite(ly) undoubtedly clearly presumably probably/probable likely	will is/are must have to  should ought to
	some a number (of) several  a minority (of) a few/a little	often frequent(ly) sometimes occasional(ly)	conceivably possibly/possible perhaps maybe	can could may might
	few/little	rare(ly) seldom hardly ever scarcely ever	uncertain unlikely	could not will not cannot
0%	no/none/not any	never		is/are not

Some of the probability qualifications can be further qualified, e.g.

It is	fairly	certain likely	that ...
	very quite	probable possible likely unlikely	
	rather	unlikely	
	almost quite	certain	

Sometimes generalisations may be introduced or qualified in the following way:

In	the (vast) majority a large number	of	cases, ...
	most some a few (+ other “quantity” words)		

## 6. Rhetorical Functions in Academic Speaking: Expressing degrees of certainty

It is important when you are speaking to show how sure you are about something. In other words, you need to show the degree of certainty.

### Examples

Look at the following examples:

We do not know, and will probably never know, when he began writing poetry. The answer almost certainly lay in the sack of papers that Susan Owen, on her son's strict instructions, burnt at his death.

Less finished, but more intimate, is a passage from a fragmentary "Ballad of a Morose Afternoon", which he most probably wrote some time after he had left Dunsden.

There were, broadly, two interrelated reasons for this. The first was related to Britain's economic and imperial difficulties, and the second to the internal dissension in all three parties. This was, perhaps, asymptom of the need for a realignment of political parties.

### Language

	Verbs	Degree of certainty
complete	is (not) will (not) must (not)	certain(ly) definite(ly) clear(ly) undoubtedly
strong	can/cannot should (not)	probably (is) presumably
partial	could (not)	likely/unlikely
less strong	may (not) might (not)	possibly (not) perhaps (not)
impersonal (i.e. no commitment)	It is said that ... It appears that ... A reports that ... There is evidence to suggest that... (etc.)	

## 7. Rhetorical Functions in Academic Speaking: Cause and effect

Take the following sentence:

The death rate from cancer is increasing.

We might want to ask why this is happening. We want the cause of this. The reason, or the cause, is that:

People are smoking more.

The death rate from cancer is increasing is the effect.

People are smoking more is the cause.

### Language

This relationship can be expressed in many ways:

#### a) Simply

##### ***Emphasising cause.***

<u>The death rate from cancer is increasing</u>	because owing to the fact that	<u>people are smoking more.</u>
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##### ***Emphasising effect.***

As Because Since	<u>people are smoking more,</u>	<u>the death rate from cancer is increasing.</u>
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<u>People are smoking more.</u>	Therefore, So, Thus, Hence, Consequently, Because of this, For this reason, As a consequence, As a result,	<u>the death rate from cancer is increasing</u>
<u>People are smoking more,</u>	as a result of which as a consequence of which with the result that	

**b) With some grammatical changes.**

***Emphasizing cause.***

The fact that	<u>the death rate from cancer is increasing</u>	is due to may be due to	<u>people smoking more.</u>
The One	reason for cause of	<u>the death rate from cancer is increasing</u>	is that could be that
<u>An increase in the death rate from cancer</u>		is may be	one effect of one result of one consequence of caused by due to because of
		results from arises from	<u>people smoking more.</u>

***Emphasizing effect.***

Owing to	<u>people smoking more.</u>	<u>the death rate from cancer is increasing</u>
One The	effect of result of consequence of	<u>people smoking more</u>
		is that
		<u>the death rate from cancer is increasing</u>
		is to
		<u>increase in the death rate from cancer.</u>
<u>People smoking more</u>		results in leads to produces causes is the cause of gives rise to brings about
<u>People smoke more.</u>		(so) (thus) (thereby)
		resulting in leading to producing causing giving rise to
		<u>an increase in the death rate from cancer.</u>

		bringing about	
If	<u>people smoke more,</u>	<u>the death rate from cancer will increase.</u>	

## 8. Rhetorical Functions in Academic Speaking/Writing: Arguing & discussing

In arguing and discussing, you are expected to present two or more points of view and discuss the positive and negative aspects of each case. On the basis of your discussion, you can then choose one point of view and persuade your readers that you are correct. This means giving your opinions (positive and negative) on the work of others and your own opinions based on what you have learned. You need to evaluate arguments, weigh evidence and develop a set of standards on which to base your conclusion.

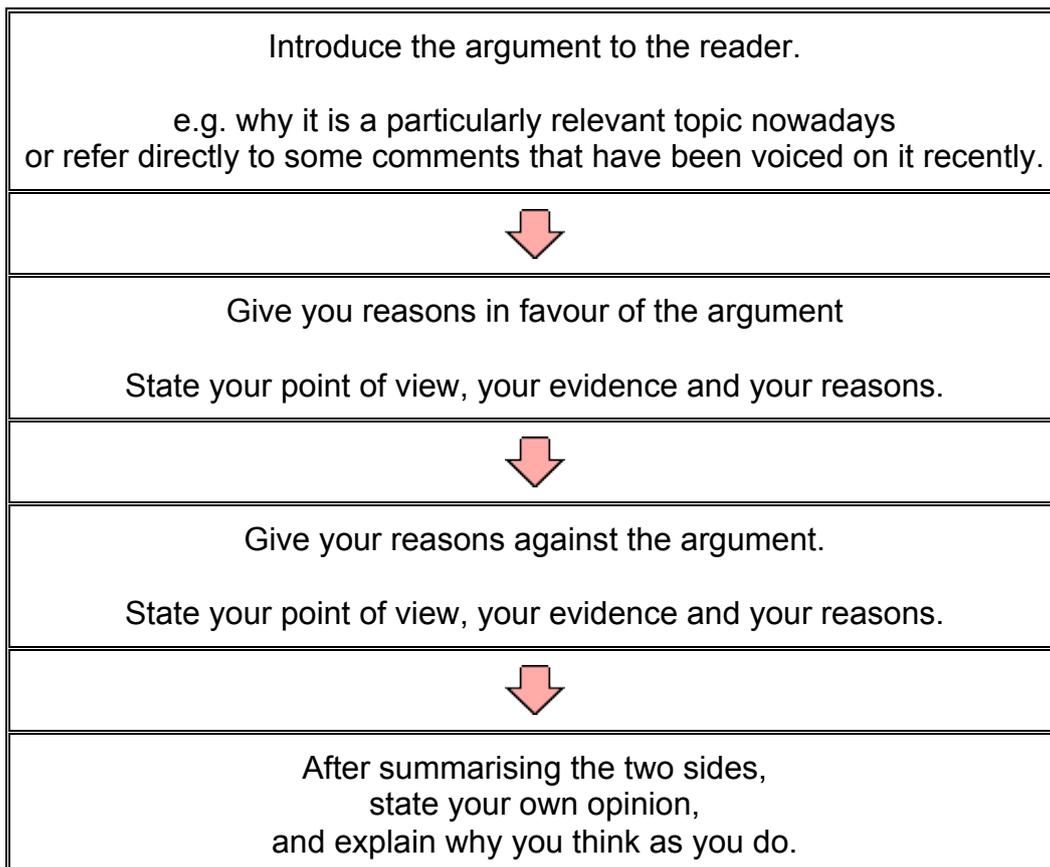
As always, all your opinions must be supported - you should produce your evidence and explain why this evidence supports your point of view. It is important to distinguish between **your claim** (proposition, thesis) - your point of view, what you believe; **your evidence** (support or grounds) - the facts, data and examples that support your point of view - and **your reasons** (warrant or argument) - why you believe what you do, how the evidence you have provided leads to the claim your are making.

There are two main methods of presenting an argument, and in general the one you choose will depend on exactly what the speaking/writing task is:

### a) The balanced view

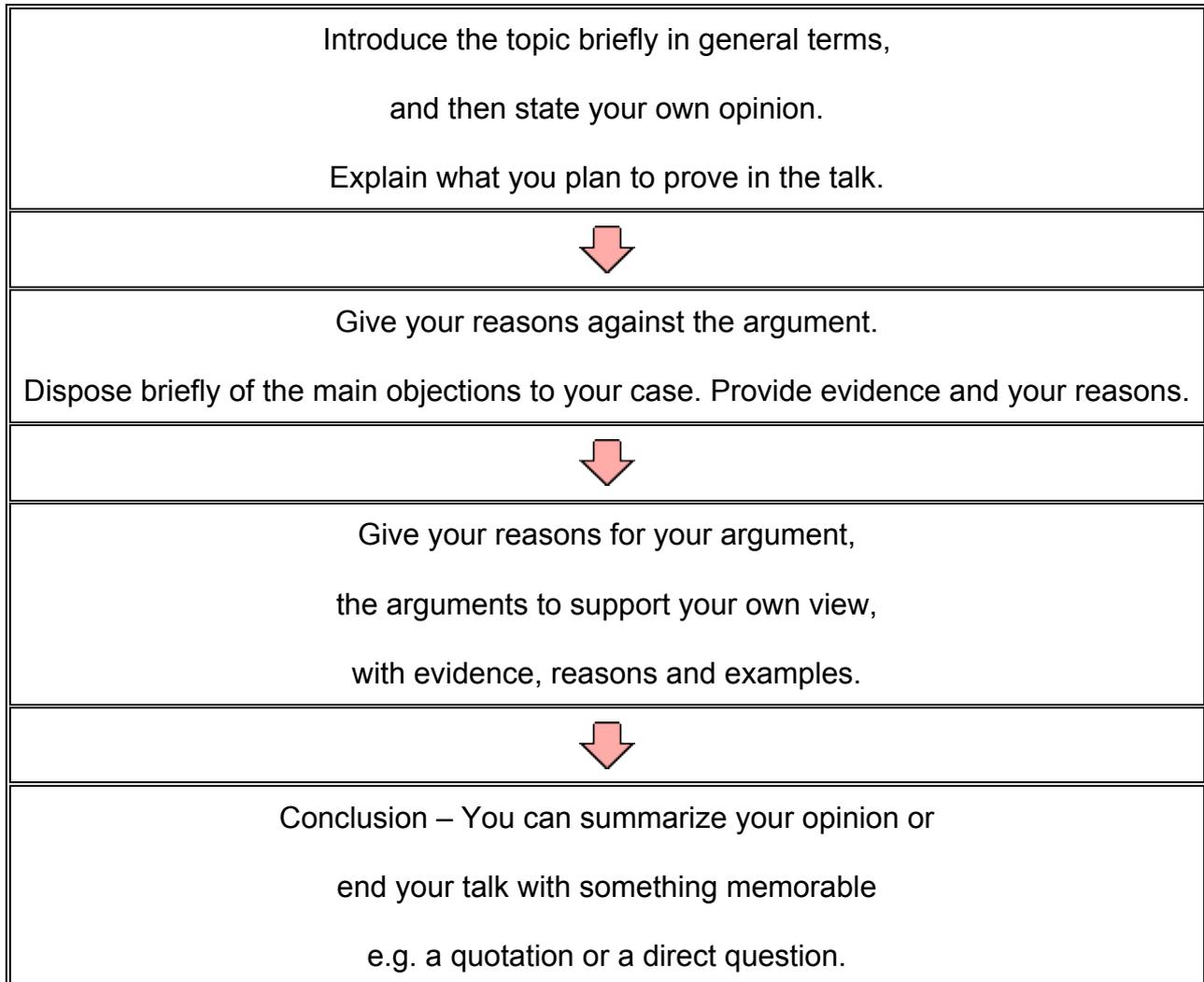
In this case you present both sides of an argument, without necessarily committing yourself to any opinions, which should always be based on evidence, until the conclusion.

At its simplest your essay plan will be as follows:



## b) The persuasive talk

This second type of argumentative talk involves stating your own point of view immediately, and trying to convince the reader by reasoned argument that you are right. The form of the talk will be, in outline, as follows:



### Examples:

1) Talks which contain argument usually have the following sections:

(a) background, (b) plan, (c) arguments for, (d) arguments against, (e) discussion & conclusion.

#### Should military service be compulsory?

(a) Military service is compulsory in most countries of the world. In some European countries all citizens must spend two years full-time in the army, air force or navy from the age of eighteen and to continue to train on a part-time basis throughout their adult lives to be ready in case of war. In

other countries, notably Britain and the United States, military service is not compulsory.

(b) In this talk I intend to look at some of the arguments for and against compulsory military service. First I want to look at the arguments in its favour.

(c) I think there are three main points in support of compulsory military service. Firstly, all countries need a military force. This force defends the citizens in times of war and therefore all citizens should make some contribution. The second point is a practical one. If a country cannot attract enough volunteers to the military service then it cannot operate as effective defence. The third and most often mentioned point is that military service is a good discipline for young people - it teaches them practical and social skills and encourages them to take responsibility for themselves and others. A society with compulsory military service is therefore a better society.

(d) The main arguments against are to do with individual freedom. Many people question the value of a young person breaking his or her career or education in order to learn how to kill.

(e) In my opinion, military service should not be compulsory, but some kind of useful social service should be. That is, all young people should be required either to do military service or to work with disadvantaged groups in the community - for example, with those in hospitals, old people's homes, special schools. This experience would be valuable to the community and would also build a sense of responsibility in the individual. However, whether a person chooses military or community service, their commitment should be part-time so that education and career are not interrupted. I also think that all young people should be involved - male and female.

(Adapted from *Perspectives* by Andy Hopkins, Longman, 1989, p. 70)

## 2) Talks which contain argument usually have the following sections:

(a) background, (b) author's argument, (c) arguments against, (d) rejection of arguments against, (e) arguments for, (f) discussion & conclusion.

Student evaluation of lecturers.

(a) Anyone who has ever attended a university knows that the quality of lecturers varies greatly. A few are very effective communicators: they convey the substance of their lectures clearly and interestingly and inspire students to want to know more about the subject. Others produce dull, rambling and sometimes even incoherent lectures and the students learn little from them. These are also likely to kill any interest the students may have in the subject. Lecturing is a major part of a university lecturer's job and it would seem reasonable that effectiveness in this task should be a major criterion in assessing a lecturer for promotion, tenure and so on. However, it is very often the case that far more weight is given to such factors as participation in research, number of publications and even performance of administrative duties. (b) It is my contention that a lecturer's performance in the lecture hall should be regularly evaluated and that the best people to carry out this evaluation are those directly on the receiving end - the students.

(c) You could, of course, argue that students, particularly undergraduates, are not competent to evaluate the academic quality of lectures. They may know little of the subject and have no means of judging whether a particular lecturer is giving them outdated or irrelevant information and concepts

or whether he or she is accurately reflecting the current state of the discipline. If anyone should evaluate lecturers, the argument goes, it should be their colleagues. (d) However, I am not arguing that students should be asked to comment upon the academic content of lectures. We can still assess the academic calibre of lecturers in the usual way through their qualifications, publications, course outlines, performance at staff seminars and so on. (e) What students are best placed to do is to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching which goes on in a lecture. Lecturers often have little time to regularly attend one another's lectures. Moreover, their comments are likely to be affected by personal or academic prejudices. Students, on the other hand, know perfectly well when they are learning something and are normally quite clear about which lectures are interesting and give them a clear understanding of the subject and which are boring and leave them baffled.

(c) Another common objection is that the students do not know what is good for them. They are likely to rate highly lecturers who do not demand much of them, who keep their lectures very simple, give few assignments and award good grades for mediocre work. They might even be influenced by such irrelevant factors as whether a lecturer is good looking or how friendly he or she is. (d) This argument assumes very low levels of maturity, motivation and intelligence among students. University students, after all, are no longer school children. They come to the university to learn and normally expect a certain amount of stimulation and challenge. Anyone who has mixed with undergraduates will know how critical they can be of lectures which are uninspiring, dull or too elementary. I am certain that most students care far too much about the quality of education they receive at university to treat the evaluation of lecturers as a mere popularity contest.

(f) I suspect that many of the objections to student evaluation of lecturers stem from the fear some lecturers have of being subject to criticism by their students. However, lecturers should see such evaluation as an opportunity to become aware of defects in their lecturing techniques and thus to become better lecturers. Such a system could benefit both students and lecturers as well as help department heads to more realistically assess the strengths and weaknesses of their teaching staff.

(Adapted from *Interactive Writing* by Anna Kwan-Terry, Prentice Hall, 1988, pp.60-61)

**Language**

**a) Presenting another point of view**

Some people X In a study of Y, X	maintain(s) say(s) argue(s) assert(s) believe(s) claim(s) point(s) out is/are of the opinion seem(s) to believe	that	...
It is the view of X The opinion of X is It can be argued It has been suggested It might be said			
According to X			

**b) Commenting on another point of view**

**Negatively**

They He She X This	is/are may be seem(s) to be would seem to be	somewhat rather -	mistaken. wrong. rigid. inadequate.
X's approach position methods beliefs			

This These views	is/are	open to doubt. not always the case. not necessarily true. unlikely to be true. highly debatable. incorrect. highly speculative.
		cannot be upheld.

Serious	doubts reservations	can may	be raised against this.
---------	------------------------	------------	-------------------------

I disagree with X when he	writes says	that ...
---------------------------	----------------	----------

However, it is clear that ...

One of the main arguments	against	X is that	...
---------------------------	---------	-----------	-----

One disadvantage of	X	is	...
Another point against			
A further argument against			
One other disadvantage of			
One objection to this argument			

Plus negative words: wrong, mistaken, false, erroneous, misplaced, inaccurate, incorrect, debateable, untrue, not the case.

### **Positively**

I agree with X when he	writes says	that ...
------------------------	----------------	----------

X is certainly correct	when he	says	that ...
X may be correct	in saying		

One advantage of	X	is	...
Another point in favour of			
A further argument supporting			
One other advantage of			
One of the main arguments in favour of			

Plus positive words: correct, right, accurate.

### **c) Presenting own point of view**

There are many reasons why ...

It is	important true	to	remember bear in mind	that	...
-------	-------------------	----	--------------------------	------	-----

	necessary essential		point out		
--	------------------------	--	-----------	--	--

The first thing First of all,	we have I would like	to consider	is	...
The first thing to be considered is				

It is a fact There is no doubt I believe	that	...
--	------	-----

The first reason why ... is ...

First of all, ...

The second reason why ... is ...

Secondly, ...

The most important ...

In addition, ...

Furthermore, ...

What is more, ...

Besides, ...

Another reason is ...

A further point is ...

#### **d) Qualification**

In all cases points of view may be qualified and generalisations may be made. You may also have different degrees of certainty about your claims.

## 9. Vocabulary building

### 9.1. Affixes and roots

Adding affixes to existing words (the base or root) to form new words is common in academic English. Prefixes are added to the front of the base (*like* → *dislike*), whereas suffixes are added to the end of the base (*active* → *activate*). Prefixes usually do not change the class of the base word, but suffixes usually do change the class of the word.

The most common prefixes used to form new verbs in academic English are: *re-*, *dis-*, *over-*, *un-*, *mis-*, *out-*. The most common suffixes are: *-ise*, *-en*, *-ate*, *-(i)fy*. By far the most common affix in academic English is *-ise*.

### 9.2. Verbs

e.g. prefix + verb → verb

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
<i>re-</i>	again or back	restructure, revisit, reappear, rebuild, refinance
<i>dis-</i>	reverses the meaning of the verb	disappear, disallow, disarm, disconnect, discontinue
<i>over-</i>	too much	overbook, oversleep, overwork
<i>un-</i>	reverses the meaning of the verb	unbend, uncouple, unfasten
<i>mis-</i>	badly or wrongly	mislead, misinform, misidentify
<i>out-</i>	more or better than others	outperform, outbid
<i>be-</i>	make or cause	befriend, belittle
<i>co-</i>	together	co-exist, co-operate, co-own
<i>de-</i>	do the opposite of	devalue, deselect
<i>fore-</i>	earlier, before	foreclose, foresee
<i>inter-</i>	between	interact, intermix, interface
<i>pre-</i>	before	pre-expose, prejudge, pretest
<i>sub-</i>	under/below	subcontract, subdivide
<i>trans-</i>	across, over	transform, transcribe, transplant
<i>under-</i>	not enough	underfund, undersell, undervalue, underdevelop

e.g. Suffix used to form verbs with the meaning "cause to be".

Suffix	Example
<i>-ise</i>	stabilise, characterise, symbolise, visualise, specialise
<i>-ate</i>	differentiate, liquidate, pollinate, duplicate, fabricate
<i>-fy</i>	classify, exemplify, simplify, justify
<i>-en</i>	awaken, fasten, shorten, moisten

### 9.3. Nouns

The most common prefixes used to form new nouns in academic English are: *co-* and *sub-*. The most common suffixes are: *-tion*, *-ity*, *-er*, *-ness*, *-ism*, *-ment*, *-ant*, *-ship*, *-age*, *-ery*. By far the most common noun affix in academic English is *-tion*.

e.g. prefix + noun → noun

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
<i>anti-</i>	against	anticlimax, antidote, antithesis
<i>auto-</i>	self	autobiography, automobile
<i>bi-</i>	two	bilingualism, biculturalism, bi-metalism
<i>co-</i>	joint	co-founder, co-owner, co-descendant
<i>counter-</i>	against	counter-argument, counter-example, counter-proposal
<i>dis-</i>	the converse of	discomfort, dislike
<i>ex-</i>	former	ex-chairman, ex-hunter
<i>hyper-</i>	extreme	hyperinflation, hypersurface
<i>in-</i>	the converse of	inattention, incoherence, incompatibility
<i>in-</i>	inside	inpatient,
<i>inter-</i>	between	interaction, inter-change, interference
<i>kilo-</i>	thousand	kilobyte
<i>mal-</i>	bad	malfunction, maltreatment, malnutrition
<i>mega-</i>	million	megabyte

<i>mis-</i>	wrong	misconduct, misdeed, mismanagement
<i>mini-</i>	small	mini-publication, mini-theory
<i>mono-</i>	one	monosyllable, monograph, monogamy
<i>neo-</i>	new	neo-colonialism, neo-impressionism
<i>out-</i>	separate	outbuilding,
<i>poly-</i>	many	polysyllable
<i>pseudo-</i>	false	pseudo-expert
<i>re-</i>	again	re-organisation, re-assessment, re-examination
<i>semi-</i>	half	semicircle, semi-darkness
<i>sub-</i>	below	subset, subdivision
<i>super-</i>	more than, above	superset, superimposition, superpowers
<i>sur-</i>	over and above	surtax
<i>tele-</i>	distant	telecommunications,
<i>tri-</i>	three	tripartism
<i>ultra-</i>	beyond	ultrasound
<i>under-</i>	below, too little	underpayment, under-development, undergraduate
<i>vice-</i>	deputy	vice-president

e.g. Suffix added to a verb (V), noun (N) or adjective (A) → noun

<b>Suffix</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<i>-tion</i> <i>-sion</i>	action/instance of V-ing	alteration, demonstration expansion, inclusion, admission
<i>-er</i>	person who V-s something used for V-ing	advertiser, driver computer, silencer
<i>-ment</i>	action/instance of V-ing	development, punishment, unemployment
<i>-ant</i> <i>-ent</i>	person who V-s	assistant, consultant student
<i>-age</i>	action/result of V	breakage, wastage, package
<i>-al</i>	action/result of V	denial, proposal, refusal, dismissal

<i>-ence</i> <i>-ance</i>	action/result of V	preference, dependence, interference attendance, acceptance, endurance
<i>-ery/-ry</i>	action/instance of V-ing place of V-ing	bribery, robbery, misery refinery, bakery

Suffix	Meaning	Examples
<i>-er</i>	person concerned with N	astronomer, geographer
<i>-ism</i>	doctrine of N	Marxism, Maoism, Thatcherism
<i>-ship</i>	state of being N	friendship, citizenship, leadership
<i>-age</i>	collection of N	baggage, plumage

Suffix	Meaning	Examples
<i>-ity</i>	state or quality of being A	ability, similarity, responsibility, curiosity
<i>-ness</i>	state or quality of being A	darkness, preparedness, consciousness
<i>-cy</i>	state or quality of being A	urgency, efficiency, frequency

## 9.4. Adjectives

Many adjectives are formed from a base of a different class with a suffix (e.g. *-less*, *-ous*). Adjectives can also be formed from other adjectives, especially by the negative prefixes (*un-*, *in-* and *non-*).

The most common suffixes are *-al*, *-ent*, *-ive*, *-ous*, *-ful*, *-less*.

e.g. Suffix added to verbs or nouns → adjective

Suffix	Example
<i>-al</i>	central, political, national, optional, professional
<i>-ent</i>	different, dependent, excellent
<i>-ive</i>	attractive, effective, imaginative, repetitive

<i>-ous</i>	continuous, dangerous, famous
<i>-ful</i>	beautiful, peaceful, careful
<i>-less</i>	endless, homeless, careless, thoughtless
<i>-able</i>	drinkable, countable, avoidable,

e.g. negative + adjective → adjective

<b>Prefix</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<i>un-</i>	unfortunate, uncomfortable, unjust
<i>im-/in-/ir-/il-</i>	immature, impatient, improbable, inconvenient, irreplaceable, illegal
<i>non-</i>	non-fiction, non-political, non-neutral
<i>dis-</i>	disloyal, dissimilar, dishonest

### 9.5. Mixed

e.g. base with both prefix and suffix

Adjectives: uncomfortable, unavoidable, unimaginative, inactive, semi-circular

Nouns: disappointment, misinformation, reformulation

### 9.6. Word formation

Formal written English uses nouns more than verbs. For example, judgement rather than judge, development rather than develop, admiration rather than admire.

There appeared to be evidence of differential treatment of children.

This is reflected in our admiration for people who have made something of their lives, sometimes against great odds, and in our somewhat disappointed judgment of those who merely drift through life.

All airfields in the country would be nationalised, and the government would continue with the development of new aircraft as recommended by the Brabazon Committee.

Associated with nominalisation is the occurrence of prepositional phrases, introduced by *of*:

judgment *of* those

treatment *of* children

development *of* new aircraft

## 10. Academic Writing

Academic writing in English is linear, which means it has one central point or theme with every part contributing to the main line of argument, without digressions or repetitions. Its objective is to inform rather than entertain. As well as this it is in the standard written form of the language. There are six main features of academic writing that are often discussed. Academic writing is to some extent: complex, formal, objective, explicit, hedged, and responsible.

### a. Complexity

Written language is relatively more complex than spoken language. Written language has longer words, it is lexically more dense and it has a more varied vocabulary. It uses more noun-based phrases than verb-based phrases. Written texts are shorter and the language has more grammatical complexity, including more subordinate clauses and more passives.

### b. Formality

Academic writing is relatively formal. In general this means that in an essay you should avoid colloquial words and expressions.

### c. Objectivity

Written language is in general objective rather than personal. It therefore has fewer words that refer to the writer or the reader. This means that the main emphasis should be on the information that you want to give and the arguments you want to make, rather than you.

### d. Explicitness

Academic writing is explicit about the relationships in the text. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the writer in English to make it clear to the reader how the various parts of the text are related. These connections can be made explicit by the use of different signalling words.

### e. Responsibility

In academic writing you must be responsible for, and must be able to provide evidence and justification for, any claims you make. You are also responsible for demonstrating an understanding of any source texts you use.

Writing is necessary for all students in higher education. Academic writing is clearly defined by having a clear purpose, either an exam question to answer or a research project to report on. Most academic writing in English is linear:



- it starts at the beginning and finishes at the end, with every part contributing to the main line of argument, without digression or repetition. What ever kind of writing your are producing, you, the writer, is responsible for making your line of argument clear and presenting it in an orderly fashion so that the reader can follow. Your written work should have the following sections:

Preliminaries
Main text
End matter

The preliminaries and end matter will depend on the kind of text you are writing. The main text will, however, generally contain an introduction, a main body and a conclusion. The introduction will usually consist of some background information, which will give the reason for the writing and explain, to some extent, how this will be done. This must be closely connected to the essay or research question. The main body will then contain some data - either experimental, from ideas or from reading - and some argument. This will then lead to the conclusion, which will refer back to the introduction and show that the purpose has been fulfilled. The actual form of the main body will depend on the type of writing.

The most common pieces of writing in the academic world are essays and reports.

## 11. Essays in English

Almost all students will at some time be expected to write an essay, or some other kind of argument, e.g. a review or discussion section, in a longer piece of writing. In English, an essay is a piece of argumentative writing several paragraphs long written about one topic, usually based on your reading. The aim of the essay should be deduced strictly from the wording of the title or question, and needs to be defined at the beginning. The purpose of an essay is for you to say something for yourself using the ideas of the subject, for you to present ideas you have learned in your own way. The emphasis should be on working with other people's ideas, rather than reproducing their words, but your own voice should show clearly. The ideas and people that you refer to need to be made explicit by a system of referencing.

According to Linda Flower (1990, p. v) "students are reading to create a *text* of their own, trying to integrate information from sources with *ideas* of their own, and attempting to do so under the guidance of a *purpose*."

Your essay should have the following sections:

1. Preliminaries	Title page
2. Main text	Introduction Main body Conclusion
3. End matter	References

### 1. Preliminaries

Before you start the main part of your essay or assignment, there should be a title page. The title page should contain information to enable your lecturer and departmental office to identify exactly what the piece of work is. It should include your name and course; the title of the assignment and any references; the lecturer it is for etc. Check with your department for clear information.

### 2. Main text

English essays are linear:



- they start at the beginning and finish at the end, with every part contributing to the main line of argument, without digressions or repetition. Writers are responsible for making their line of argument clear and presenting it in an orderly fashion so that the reader can follow. Each paragraph discusses one major point and each paragraph should lead directly to the next. The paragraphs are tied together with an introduction and a conclusion.

The main text of the essay has three main parts:

(Adapted from [www.uefap.com](http://www.uefap.com) © AndyGillett, 2006)

- I. An introduction
- II. A main body
- III. A conclusion

### **I. The introduction.**

The introduction consists of two parts:

- a. It should include a few general statements about the subject to provide a background to your essay and to attract the reader's attention. It should try to explain why you are writing the essay. It may include a definition of terms in the context of the essay, etc.
- b. It should also include a statement of the specific subdivisions of the topic and/or indication of how the topic is going to be tackled in order to specifically address the question.

It should introduce the central idea or the main purpose of the writing.

### **II. The main body.**

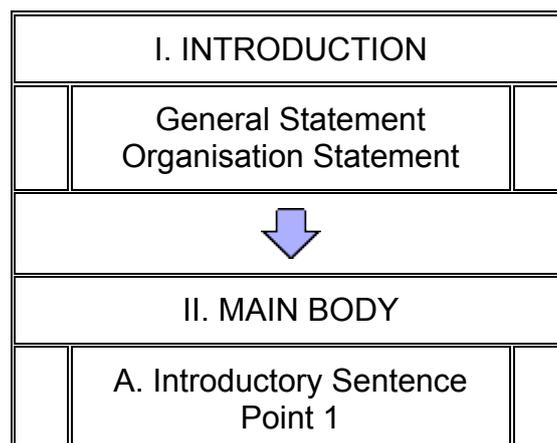
The main body consists of one or more paragraphs of ideas and arguments. Each paragraph develops a subdivision of the topic. The paragraphs of the essay contain the main ideas and arguments of the essay together with illustrations or examples. The paragraphs are linked in order to connect the ideas. The purpose of the essay must be made clear and the reader must be able to follow its development.

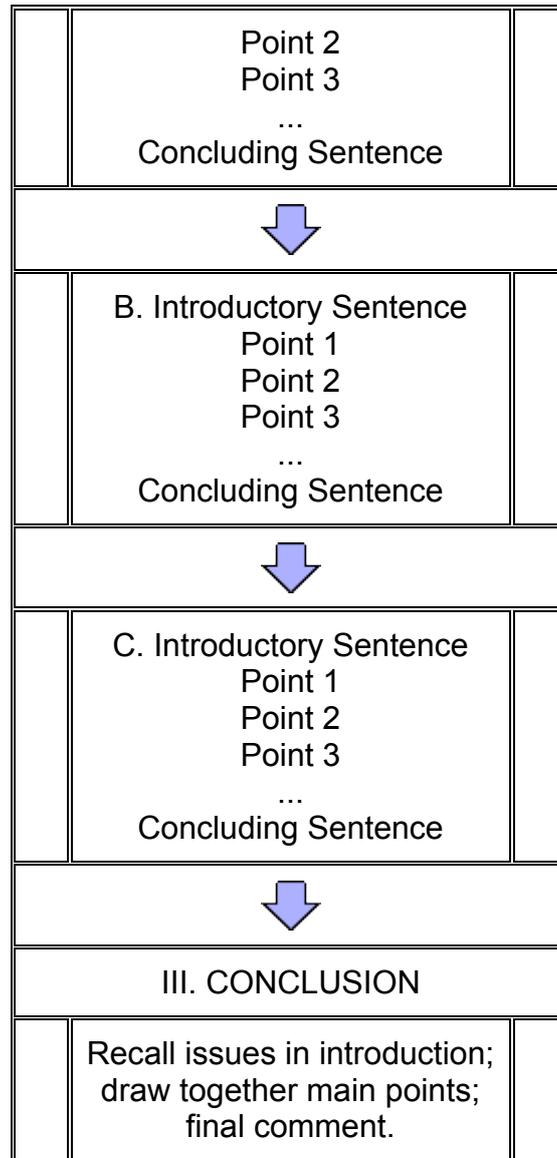
### **III. The conclusion.**

The conclusion includes the writer's final points.

- a. It should recall the issues raised in the introduction and draw together the points made in the main body
- b. and explain the overall significance of the conclusions. What general points can be drawn from the essay as a whole?

It should clearly signal to the reader that the essay is finished and leave a clear impression that the purpose of the essay has been achieved.





### 3. End Matter

At the end of the essay, there should be a list of references. This should give full information about the materials that you have used in the assignment. See Writing a list of references for more information on the reference list.

## 12. Understanding the question

Students often do worse than they should in examinations or when writing assignments in English in the UK, not because their writing skills are weak or because their knowledge of the subject matter is insufficient, but because they have not fully understood what they have been asked to do. To score high marks in an examination or an essay, it is important to fully understand what a question means and how it should be answered. In order to understand the question it is useful to analyse the questions and to search for certain components. The following technique is very useful (Swales, 1982).

### 12.1. The components of a question

Most essay titles or examination questions contain the following components:

1. *Subject matter or topic*. What, in the most general terms, is the question about?
2. *Aspect or focus*. This is the angle or point of view on the subject matter. What aspect of the subject matter is the question about?
3. *Instruction or comment*. This refers to the instruction word or phrase. These instructions tell the student exactly what to do.

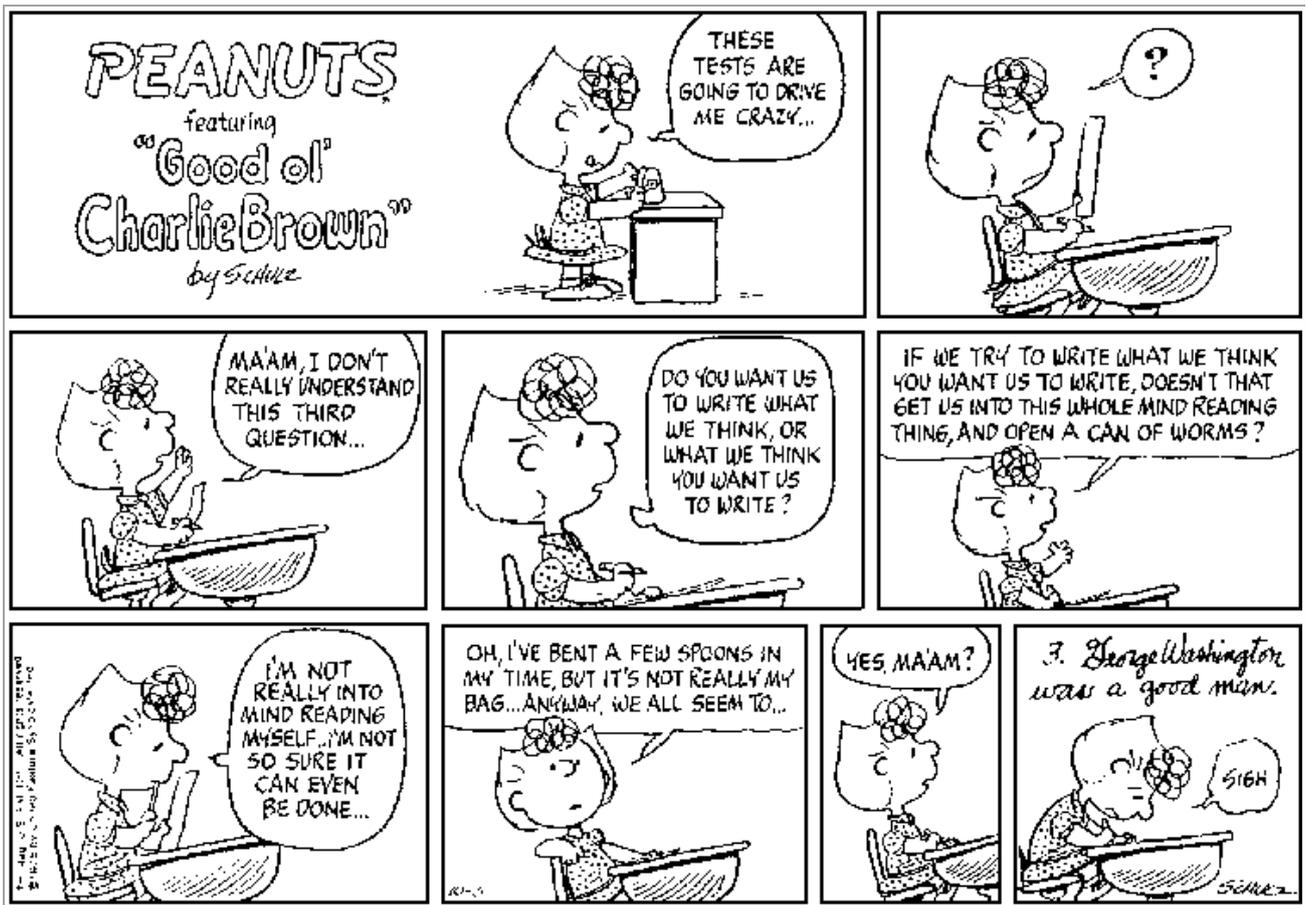
Some questions also contain the following components:

4. *Restriction or expansion* of the subject matter. This is the detailed limitation of the topic. What, in specific terms, is the question about?
5. *Viewpoint*. This refers to the requirement, in the question, that the writer writes from a point of view dictated by the setter of the question.

### 12.2. Analysing the question

To analyse the title, it is useful to follow the following steps:

1. Identify the *topic*.
2. If the *topic* has a *restriction* or *expansion*, identify it.
3. Search for the *aspect*. This is the angle or point of view on the subject matter. Often, the *aspect* is a phrase ending in 'of', e.g. 'the importance of', 'the contribution of'. Be sure you are clear about how the *aspect* relates to the subject matter. It can be an example of it, a stage in its sequence, the cause or effect, one of the solutions to it as a problem etc.
4. Identify the *instruction* (which often comes at the beginning) and decide what it means and what it requires you to do.
5. Check whether there is a *viewpoint* and if so, if it the same as your own.



### 12.3. The vocabulary of questions

Here is a list of the most common *instruction* key-words with an explanation for each.

Note: The explanations given for these words can be a rough guide only. You must always go by the total meaning of the title or question. Read the question carefully: do not jump to conclusions about what is required on the basis of these words only.

#### Analyse

requires an answer that takes apart an idea, concept or statement in order to consider all the factors it consists of. Answers of this type should be very methodical and logically organised.

#### Compare

requires an answer that sets items side by side and shows their similarities and differences. A balanced (fair, objective) answer is expected.

#### Consider

requires an answer in which the students describe and give their thoughts on the subject.

#### Contrast

requires an answer that points out only the differences between two items.

*Define*

requires an answer that explains the precise meaning of a concept a definition answer will include definition structure, probably expanded.

*Describe*

requires an answer that says what something is like, how it works and so on.

*Discuss*

requires an answer that explains an item or concept, and then gives details about it with supportive information, examples, points for and against, and explanations for the facts put forward. It is important to give both sides of an argument and come to a conclusion.

*Explain*

requires an answer that offers a rather detailed and exact explanation of an idea or principle, or a set of reasons for a situation or attitude.

*State*

requires an answer that expresses the relevant points briefly and clearly without lengthy discussion or minor details.

*Summarise/Outline*

require an answer that contains a summary of all the available information about a subject, i.e. only the main points and not the details should be included. Questions of this type often require short answers.

Some other important words used in questions.

*concept*

an important idea

*concise*

short, brief

*in the context of*

referring to, inside the subject of

*deduction*

the conclusion or generalisation you come to after looking carefully at all the facts

*factor(s)*

the circumstances bringing about a result

*implications*

results that are not obvious, long term, suggested results

*with/by reference to*

make sure you write about the following subject

*in relation to*

only a certain part of the first topic is needed

*significance*

meaning and importance

## Key Concepts



- Essay
- Title
- Brainstorming
- Organising ideas
- Argument
- Summarising
- Critical analysis



## The whole essay

When we think about writing at the text level, we need to step back from our work and consider the piece as a whole. We have to check that all parts of the writing fit together, that ideas flow logically from one to the next, and that there are no unnecessary or unconnected parts.

### What is a 'traditional' essay?

In general, traditional academic essays are pieces of writing which are designed to demonstrate the following points: that you understand a particular subject; that you have undertaken some kind of research; that you can produce a clear and coherent argument. This means that you have to combine important ideas, examples, and interpretations from other writers with your own. All of these have to be put together in a linear, written format (making one point, then moving on to the next), which persuades the reader that your line of argument is a convincing one.



## Meeting the Title

Usually, when we think about writing a text, the first question to answer is "What shall I write about?" Often, we have a question or a title which we must answer. Sometimes, you can choose your own title, sometimes it is given to you. Both have advantages and disadvantages.

### Understanding a given question or title

There are usually three main parts in an essay title: a topic, a focus and an action. The topic is the general subject of the essay. The focus is narrower than the topic and identifies one or more aspects of it. The action describes how you will write about the topic and focus, for example, comparing, analysing, discussing. When you have identified these key elements of the title, you can start to [brainstorm](#).

### Making your own title

Sometimes, students are asked to write their own titles. This is especially the case in final projects, dissertations and research essays. The key point to remember is to make your title as narrow as possible. The topic is usually fairly easy to find. However, the focus must be extremely small so that you can write in depth. This means that you will describe the general area briefly, but that most of your writing will concentrate on looking at a very small part of the subject in great detail. Your job is not to write an overview of a subject, but to find answers to new questions or to find new answers to old questions. It is therefore crucial that you limit the area you write about. Remember that when you have finished

writing, you can always adjust the title slightly (in negotiation with your tutor!), if you find that what you have written does not exactly fit your original title.



## Brainstorming

This is one method of generating ideas for your essay. You can do it before you start your research in order to isolate your own ideas and find areas which you need to look into; and you can do it after researching, when you know what other people have already written or said about the topic. You may also need to do it when you have started writing and you find new areas of interest or new connections between ideas.

To brainstorm, you focus solely on the topic of the essay (forgetting all of the things that usually fill our minds like forgotten groceries, plans for the week-end, etc.) and make notes of all the ideas that come into your head which relate to the title. Write down all the ideas you have, even if they do not seem related or important, and allow unexpected ideas to lead you in new or different directions.

From this group of ideas you can choose the most appropriate points and start to outline a rough plan of the essay. Remember that the plan will change, as you do more research. Even as you write, the essay will develop in unexpected ways. However, be careful that you look back at the title regularly so that you do not wander too far away from it.



## Organising ideas

When you have generated ideas from your brainstorming and your research, you then need to put them in a logical order. This means maximising the connections between the different points you want to make. You can help to clarify the best order of the sections by following this process:

- 1) Write down all the points you can think of.
- 2) Identify which points you want to keep (these should relate directly to the title).
- 3) Identify which sections are clearly related and put them in order according to the relationships between them.

Common methods of organising ideas are chronological points, cause and effect, comparison, description of a process or narrative, definition, categorisation and exemplification. Usually, several of these are used in one essay.

**Chronology** – ordering events or ideas by time (use linking words like ‘firstly’, ‘next’, ‘then’, ‘finally’, ‘eventually’).

**Cause and effect** – showing how one thing has an affect on another (use linking words like ‘so’, ‘because’, ‘hence’, ‘therefore’, ‘as a result’, ‘consequently’, ‘due to’).

**Comparison and contrast** – showing the similarities and differences between two or more things (use words like ‘similarly’, ‘likewise’, ‘on the other hand’, ‘whereas’, ‘although’,

'but').

**Description** – outlining the characteristics (physical, spacial, theoretical, temporal) of objects or ideas. Often in this kind of writing, sentences move from known (or 'old') information to unknown ('new') information.

**Definition** – explaining the particular meaning of a word as you use it in your essay (use 'is', 'means', 'refers to', 'which ...', or punctuation like ':').

**Categorisation** – putting similar things in groups (use linking words between categories like 'the first', 'the second', 'the final', 'in addition').

**Exemplification** - one way of moving from the general to the specific, ie. moving from a broad topic to a particular example or element within that topic (use linking words like 'namely', 'in particular', 'for example', 'for instance').

For more expressions which indicate relationships between ideas (eg. to show cause and effect, to compare) look at the section about [linking words](#).



## Argument

The process of creating an academic piece of writing first requires an understanding of a particular question, the essay [title](#). We also have to learn about other people's ideas, theories and opinions. We then have to apply those ideas, alongside our own, to the question. Part of the work is therefore to [summarise](#) ideas that have already been put forward. However, this is not enough on its own. As writers, we also have to put in our own interpretations, ideas and conclusions. This mixture of 'voices' provides the basis of your argument.

Often the clearest way to combine different points of view is to summarise one, then another. Each summary can include direct and indirect quotations of key points, plus your understanding of what they mean and a comment on the weaknesses and strengths of the idea or viewpoint. Having described, interpreted and analysed other people's ideas, you can then go on to describe your own point of view and explain why you have chosen it.

Writing which ignores any of the parts described above, can become unbalanced. For example, if there are none of the writer's (your) own ideas, the piece becomes a review of everyone else's work. In these circumstances you could be accused of being uncritical. If the writing does not refer to other people's ideas (directly or indirectly), there is a problem of being too personal and non-academic (this partly depends on your subject). Neither of these would be persuasive arguments.



## Summarising

Much of the writing we have to do in essays is summarising other people's ideas in order to then put forward our own. Other people's ideas provide a foundation which we might then agree or disagree with. Alternatively we might take the ideas as a starting point and try to improve them or apply them to a new situation.

To write a summary you first have to understand the **main points** of someone's theory or ideas, then write them concisely and accurately in **your own words**. A good summary manages to condense the essence of someone else's ideas into a fraction of the original length, even down to a single sentence.



## What is critical analysis?

Some people distinguish between analytical writing and argumentative writing. Whereas argument can be described as a way of persuading your reader to agree with your line of thinking, analysis is more like an exploration of a particular issue. Analysis involves breaking something into small parts and looking closely at each part, then rebuilding the whole picture.

Being critical means asking questions. It does not mean only looking for problems, disadvantages or negative aspects. It does mean trusting no-one, sometimes even your tutors!

Critical analysis is therefore a skill of breaking things down and questioning each element. Of course usually we only report the bits which we think will be interesting for our reader.

# Structure



- Structure overview
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Body
- Conclusion
- Appendices/Figures
- References/Bibliography



## Structure Overview

Whether you are working with your own title, or one which you have been given, one of the early tasks you have to do is to provide a structure for your writing. Providing a structure to your writing is like arranging the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle so that they make a clear picture. The pieces of the jigsaw come from your [brainstorm](#).

By using the ideas from the brainstorming process, you can start to plan the body of the essay. A well organised plan can dramatically improve the clarity of your writing. If you write your first draft using this basic plan, it is also relatively easy to change the structure later.

Some people prefer to write their ideas in a random stream of thought. While this is a very useful way to start writing, your ideas will need to be reorganised later. This is because a random stream of thought will be difficult for your reader to follow. Remember that your reader will not think of the same ideas as you, nor will they think of ideas in the same order. A further disadvantage of writing randomly is that it may be difficult for you to improve the order by moving parts around later. That is why it is usually recommended that you organise your writing in the beginning and make the connections between each part totally clear



## Introduction

The **introduction** is the official start of the essay and it usually includes some or all of the following:

- a statement introducing the topic
- an explanation of why it is important
- a brief mention of work on the same topic written by other writers
- a gap or problem in previous related work which will be solved or answered in this essay
- an outline of the structure of the essay
- definitions of key terms
- an anecdote or vignette (short story) which highlights the main point of the essay



## Body

The **body** is largest part of your writing and this is where you guide your reader through your main ideas and arguments. These ideas and arguments come from your brainstorming and research. It is therefore a mixture of other people's ideas and your own. These points should be organised into a logical order which allows your reader to follow your train of thought. (See the section about [ordering your ideas](#))

The balance of discussion between your own ideas and information and those from external sources is crucial to the development of your argument. Without this balance, the writing can become either a summary of other people's ideas and theories, or a description of your personal ideas and experiences with no evidence of research. Both of these would lack **analysis**, a core component of a good essay. It is therefore vitally important to ensure that a mixture of positions are presented.

Each main point will be described, supported and analysed using examples from your own experiences, and information and theories from external (secondary or tertiary) sources (books, journals, web-sites, lectures, etc.). The main points should be clearly organised by using [paragraphs](#) (see section).

In **short pieces** of writing (< 3,000 words), there will be groups of paragraphs which together form one part of your [argument](#) (see section). Usually these sections in "short" essays do not have specific headings. However, they can be clearly identified by using linking phrases which show for example:

- how many elements the section consists of:  
*There are four main reasons why ...*
- the connection of additional points:  
*Another important point to consider is ...*  
*A further issue of importance is ...*  
*Moving on to the issue of ...*
- or the introduction of a contrasting point:  
*On the other hand, ...*  
*In contrast to the above, ...*  
*An alternative understanding of the issue is ...*

In **long pieces** of writing (> 3,000 words) it is sometimes useful to identify clear sections by using **sub-headings**. Each section (or chapter of a dissertation or thesis) with a sub-heading is like a short essay which could stand alone. The sub-headings may come from your brainstorm and/or your research. However, the best order for the sections in long essays may only become clear after you have started writing them. When the best order becomes clear, chapter introductions and conclusions can be written in each section.

A short chapter introduction should briefly outline the contents of each section and where possible, should also refer back to the sections before and explain how they are related. Similarly, each section needs a conclusion. This should summarise what has been written in this part and should again make connections to other sections. In particular, it should describe the relationship between this part and the next. These are crucial in order to tell the reader what each part is about and how it fits with the other sections. It is like tying knots between separate pieces of string in order to make a single, stronger cord: your [argument](#).



## Conclusion

The **conclusion** is the closing part of the essay and, like the introduction, connects the body of the essay to the title. However, whereas the introduction often starts generally, becomes more focussed and often includes an outline of the main points; the conclusion attempts to summarise the main ideas and arguments, then leads to a final statement. It should not include new ideas which have not been mentioned before, although you can join ideas you have mentioned in a new way. You may also want to restate questions which you could not answer in your essay, but which you think deserve further study. As the final part of the essay, the conclusion is the last thing which the reader sees. Therefore, it should tie together the different points you have made.



## References

Academic writing which includes ideas or information from other sources usually has a **reference list** (sometimes called a bibliography) which gives the details of all the sources you have found and referred to in your writing. Typical sources include books, journals and web-sites, but you can also refer to TV programmes, lectures, personal correspondence or conversations. Details must be given for ALL references to outside sources of information, in other words, for both direct and indirect quotations. Forgetting or not bothering to cite the source can lead to accusations of **plagiarism** – do not be tempted!

There are basically three places where information about your sources can go:

- into numbered footnotes at the bottom of each page;
- into numbered endnotes at the end of the text;
- or into an alphabetical reference list (bibliography) at the end of the text.

(Footnotes and endnotes are usually also used to add short pieces of interesting, extra information which do not fit into the main paragraphs.)

A reference list (bibliography) comes after the conclusion (or appendices and final figures) and includes all the information about the sources you have mentioned in the essay. Reference lists should not include books or sources which you have not mentioned, even if you read them in preparation for the essay. You could put this type of source into a **further reading list**. But if you think it is an important reference, you can usually add a sentence somewhere in your essay with a direct or indirect quotation, so that you can include the source in your main reference list.

Typically, each reference should include details of the:

- author(s) and/or editor(s);
- date of publication;
- title of piece;
- title of book or journal (if several writers are published together);
- publishing company;
- place of publication.

Of course, some sources may not have all of these items of information and others will have different information. For example, an internet source may not have a publisher, but it will have a Universal Resource Location (URL), in other words, the “http://www...” address.

There are various systems of referencing and you should check which one your department recommends, however, the most important thing is that you use the same system consistently.

## Paragraphs



- Paragraph overview
- Unity of theme
- Linking



### Paragraph overview

#### What is a paragraph?

A paragraph is a sentence or group of sentences with a related theme or idea. Usually there is a topic sentence which identifies the main point of the paragraph, plus supporting sentences which give extra information, details, examples or explanations.



### Unity of theme

One of the key decisions in writing a good paragraph is knowing when to stop and start a new one. It is often useful to identify the topic sentence in each of our own paragraphs, then ask if every sentence relates to it. Those which do not, can be cut or moved into other paragraphs.



### Paragraph linking - cohesion and coherence

As mentioned under the section level heading, one of the jobs of the writer is to show the reader how the different ideas in the writing fit together. This means making the connections between sections, between paragraphs and between sentences clear for the reader.

Each paragraph, follows some other part of the writing. Even the first paragraph comes after the title. In order to help readers follow our writing, we have to remember what they have already read and what line of argument we want them to read. It is like taking someone who cannot see along a particular path. You have to hold their hand and give them directions to guide them up and down, left and right, in order to reach the final destination: your conclusion.

Even when sentences are clearly related by the same topic, there can be a problem of flow. This usually occurs because the connections between sentences are not explicit or because the reader has to make a jump in their understanding without any help from the words on the page. There are several ways of improving the cohesion (connectedness) and coherence (clarity of logic and flow) of our writing.

Cohesion can be improved by using linking words (also called conjunctions or connectives), such as: because, so, firstly, secondly, in addition, furthermore and however. But it can also be improved by simple techniques such as the repetition of key

words, groups of words, or even whole sentence structures (called parallelism). Another way of improving cohesion is by replacing key words with pronouns (it, they, these, this, that, he, she) in neighbouring sentences.

TIMES NEW ROMAN, 12, LINE SPACE 1,5, MARGIN SPACE: 2,5.

The entire text must be **justified** with the exception of titles and bibliographical references which should be ranges left.

A **cover page** should include the name of the a) university b) faculty c) programme d) course e) module; your personal data, the **title of your paper**.

**Number all pages** after the title page, starting with your first text page as page 1. Place the page number in the footer section of the page, centered.

Use a **formal register**: avoid colloquial forms/ contracted forms/ casual punctuation

### **1st step: FIND INFORMATION**

**Find original material, surf the Net, look for bibliographical references on your topic.**

Be selective of .com (commercial) sites. Many .com sites are excellent; be wary of the millions of personal home pages on the Net. The quality of these personal homepages vary greatly. Learning how to evaluate Web sites critically and to search effectively on the Internet can help you eliminate irrelevant sites and waste less of your time.

#### **Find books in the Library**

Check out other print materials available in the Library.

Check out **online resources**, Web based information services, or special resource materials on CD.

Read and evaluate. Bookmark your favourite Internet sites. Printout, photocopy, and take notes of relevant information.

As you gather your resources, write full bibliographical information (author, title, place of publication, publisher, date of publication, page numbers, URLs, creation or modification dates on Web pages, and your date of access) on your work sheet, printout, or enter the information on your laptop for later retrieval. **Remember that an article without bibliographical information is useless since you cannot cite its source.**

## **2. Structure of the paper**

**a. Introduction** (How do you plan to approach your topic? Explain briefly the major points you plan to cover in your paper and why readers should be interested in your topic)

- Aim of the paper
- Motivation (why did you choose it?)- Framing of your analysis
- Sources (which material are you using?)

- Revise your introduction at the end

Useful expressions that you could use to write your aim:

This The present	paper	-deals with/is about/ is concerned with -discusses/ focuses on - explains/highlights/clarifies -investigates/explores -is intended to explore	
The aim The purpose  The focus The aim The analysis	of the present paper	Is  Is on..... Is to outline Is structured through various examples	the analysis a discussion about/on...

- **Break your paper into sections and subsections.** Label sections with vivid section headings that convey the main message of the section.

**b. Body: First part.**

**Theoretical background** > discuss the key concepts

**Argumentation:**

1. Use empirical evidence - facts, numbers, examples from the texts - to support your argument. Purely deductive argument is sometimes appropriate, argument backed by evidence is always more persuasive.
2. Clearly frame the general point(s) that your evidence supports.

**c. Second part: Textual analysis**

Analyse your authentic material using the tools you discussed in class.

Find keywords

**d. Style:** Avoid exclamations: they are inappropriate in technical writing.

**Punctuation** orders prose and sends signals to the reader about how to interpret it. Good sentence structure and punctuation makes reading flow; it warns of what is to come; it helps the reader read without having to re-read. Meaning is changed, sometimes dramatically, by punctuation.

The essence of technical writing is *communication*. The first quality, with precedence over all others, is **clarity**. Use simple language and simple, concise construction; short words rather than long; familiar words, not obscure.

Poor writing lacks order, mixes ideas that should develop separately, fails to progress in a logical sequence. The concept-sheet gives **structure**: there is a place on it for each part of your story. In making it, decide where the bits will go, the logical order, the way they will fit together.

**e. CONCLUSION** - Restate your thesis. Summarize your arguments. Explain why you have come to this particular conclusion.

**f. Bibliography**

**Pay attention to the way you organize paragraphs: (they need to convey a unique concept)**

	<b>Subordinators</b>	<b>Sentence Connectors</b>	<b>Phrase Linkers</b>
<b>Addition</b>		Furthermore, In addition to, Moreover,	In addition to
<b>Adversative</b>	Although, Even though, Despite the fact that..	However, Nevertheless,	Despite, In spite of , ...
<b>Cause and Effect</b>	...because... Since..., ... ..., since ...	Therefore, ... As a result, ... Consequently, ... ..., hence... Thus, ...	Because of... Due to... As a result of...
<b>Clarification</b>		In other words, ... That is, ... i.e., ...	
<b>Contrast</b>	While ..., ... ..., whereas ...	In contrast, ... However, ... On the other hand, ... Conversely, ...	Unlike ... , ...
<b>Illustration</b>		For example, ... For instance, ...	
<b>Intensification</b>		On the contrary, As a matter of fact, In fact, ...	

## QUOTATIONS

If you copy directly from a source without noting that it is a quote and properly referencing it, **YOU ARE COMMITTING PLAGIARISM**.

Always go to the original sources.

Use **direct quotes** when they are especially pertinent and cover an important point. Reserve the use of quotation marks (“ ”) for direct quotes. You must give the page number for direct quotes in the footnotes. Your material will have to be written so as to place the quoted material in appropriate grammatical context.

Omitting material from a quote: **Ellipses** ( [...]) are used to denote the omission of material from a direct quote. Ellipses are generally not to be used at the beginning or ending of a quote.

Long quote format: If the quote is more than one sentence, or more than three text lines, go to long quote format which is indented from left and right margins and is single spaced. No quotation marks are required, although the citation must go at the end of the last line. To indent both margins in Word, use the Format, Paragraph menu commands and in the dialog box, under Indentation set both left and right at 0.5". You can also set the line spacing to single in this dialog box.

If you are not quoting you can refer to some authors rephrasing their texts:

Ex. John Urry and Graham Dann

- State
- Maintain
- Remark
- Propose
- Observe
- Suggest
- Declare
- Define
- Emphasize
- Comment
- Report
- Assert
- Claim
- Point out
- Argue
- Imply
- Explain

**Or using such phrases:**

- According to \_\_\_\_\_, ...
- In the opinion of \_\_\_\_\_, ...
- \_\_\_\_\_ expresses the view that...
- \_\_\_\_\_ holds the view that...
- As \_\_\_\_\_ states, ...
- As reported by \_\_\_\_\_, ...

**Book reference format:**

All documents need to be **alphabetized**,

Follow the same structure for all the volumes you list

**1. Volumes:**

**Cognome, nome, (o cognome e nome puntato) *titolo*, luogo, casa ed., anno.**

Crystal, David, *English as a Global Language*, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1998

Urry, J., *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies*, London, Sage, 2002

Selby, Martin, *Understanding Urban Tourism: Image, Culture and Experience*, London and New York, Tauris, 2004

NB: nei titoli in inglese tutte le parole hanno le iniziali *maiuscole* (tranne preposizioni e articoli)

## 2. Articles

**Se rivista: Cognome, nome, “titolo articolo”, titolo rivista, n°, data, pp.**

Crystal, David, “The Future of English”, *English Today*, 15:2 (April 1999), pp. 10-20.

**Se saggio in volume, cognome, nome, titolo saggio tra virgolette, in cognome, nome ....  
Indicazione delle pagine alla fine.**

NB: il curatore (**editor**): ed. o eds. tra due virgole, dopo cognome e nome

Leith Dick, “English –Colonial to Postcolonial”, in Graddol, David, Leith Dick, Swann, Joan, eds., *English. History, Diversity and Change*, London: Routledge, 1996, pp. 180-201.

Culler, J. “The Semiotics of Tourism”, in *Framing the Sign: Criticism and its Institutions*, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1989, pp. 153-167

Mike Robinson “Between and Beyond the Pages: Literature-Tourism Relationships” in M. Robinson & H.C. Andersen, eds., *Literature and Tourism*, London, Continuum, 2002, pp. 1-38

## 3. Website

**Definizione del sito, indirizzo, data di consultazione**

The World Tourism Organisation website: <http://www.world-tourism.org> (accessed DD.MM.YYYY)

## **REVISE YOUR OUTLINE AND DRAFT**

Read your paper for any content errors. Double check the facts and figures. Arrange and rearrange ideas to follow your outline. Reorganize your outline if necessary, but always keep the purpose of your paper and your readers in mind.

## **CHECKLIST ONE:**

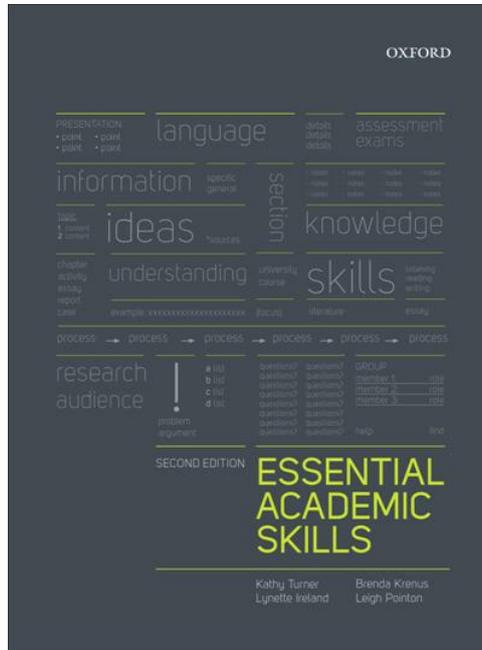
- 1. Is my analysis concise and clear?**
- 2. Did I follow my outline? Did I miss anything?**
- 3. Are my arguments presented in a logical sequence?**
- 4. Are all sources properly cited to ensure that I am not plagiarizing?**
- 5. Have I proved my thesis with strong supporting arguments?**
- 6. Have I made my intentions and points clear in the essay?**

Re-read your paper for grammatical errors. Use a dictionary or a thesaurus as needed. Do a spell check. Correct all errors that you can spot and improve the overall quality of the paper to the best of your ability.

## **CHECKLIST TWO:**

- 1. Did I begin each paragraph with a proper topic sentence?**
- 2. Have I supported my arguments with documented proof or examples?**
- 3. Any unfinished sentences?**
- 4. Any unnecessary or repetitious words?**
- 5. Does one paragraph or idea flow smoothly into the next?**
- 6. Any spelling or grammatical errors?**
- 7. Quotes accurate in source, spelling, and punctuation?**
- 8. Are all my citations accurate and in correct format?**
- 9. Did I avoid using contractions? Use "cannot" instead of "can't", "do not" instead of "don't"?**
- 10. Did I leave a sense of completion for my reader(s) at the end of the paper?**

# SAMPLE ESSAY



## Essential Academic Skills Second Edition

Edited by Kathy Turner, Brenda Krenus, Lynette Ireland and  
Leigh Pointon

Oxford University Press

2011

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## Sample essay

**Topic:** Test anxiety causes university students to underperform in their examinations. Discuss.

**Note:** The essay is in the left column. In the right-hand column are short notes indicating which academic writing skills are being used in the essay, and page references for the textbook.

Essay	Comment
<p>This essay examines the relationship between test anxiety in university students and their performance in examinations. Typically, universities use examinations to test part or even all the knowledge of students, particularly in first-year courses. As Burns (2004, p. 120) noted, examination results can determine if a student passes a course or can progress onto further study, and may even influence employment opportunities. Understandably, educators are concerned that examinations are a fair indication of a student’s knowledge. One area of special interest is the role anxiety plays in relation to examination performance.</p> <p>This essay argues that in general, test anxiety lowers performance slightly, although this is not evident in all situations, nor with all types of students. Further, it is argued that the main mechanism for this result appears to be that test anxiety leads to the development of interfering thoughts, which prevent a proper focus on examination tasks. The essay also points out that although many factors impact on examination performance, test anxiety is of particular interest as it appears to lead directly to unfair results.</p> <p>Test anxiety is normally understood as a form of debilitating anxiety, although how it is measured varies. Early research indicated there were two forms of test anxiety: facilitative and debilitating. Facilitative anxiety is understood as a type of anxiety that students recognise as being helpful. For example, students answer positively to a question such as “Nervousness during a test helps me to do better” (Alpert &amp; Haber, 1960, p. 213). Facilitative anxiety helps students succeed and has been found to be present in students with better results in tests of all kinds (Hembree, 1988, p. 59). However, since the 1960s, it is debilitating anxiety that has come to be called ‘test anxiety’. It is defined by Sarason (1984) as the anxiety experienced in “one important definable class of threatening situations, those in which people are evaluated” (p. 929). Most researchers have recognised that test anxiety is complex. It can involve a large range of features, including thoughts, emotions, behaviours and body reactions such as tension or headache (Sarason, 1984, p. 931). Following from the work of Liebert and Morris (as cited in Hembree, 1988, p. 48) test anxiety has generally been examined in terms of ‘worry’ or ‘emotionality’, or some extension of these. Worry covers the worrying thoughts that interfere either with examination preparation or with the</p>	<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b> General statement of the essay topic (p. 151)</p> <p>Background from the literature (p. 151)</p> <p>Sentence(s) to link the background into the essay</p> <p><b>ARGUMENT STATEMENT</b> Comprehensive position (pp. 152–3)</p> <p><b>USE OF THE LITERATURE</b></p> <p>Quotation with citation used as an example (pp. 103–5)</p> <p>Paraphrase with citation used to provide rich information (pp. 99–103)</p> <p>Quotation with citation used to define</p> <p>Paraphrase with citation—building ideas using the same source</p> <p>Paraphrase with citation—building ideas from different sources (p. 144)</p>

processing of examination tasks. Emotionality captures the awareness of bodily reactions to anxiety.

Evidence points to the fact that, in general, test anxiety lowers performance slightly. This relationship has been studied for well over 60 years. During that time, some studies have reported that test anxiety does not lead to lower results (Burns, 2004; Sansgiry, Bhosle, & Sail, 2006). However, these findings are not likely to be true of all students. Burns (2004, p. 121) examined general anxiety rather than the more specific 'test anxiety', thus limiting what he can claim. Equally, Sansgiry, Bhosle, and Sail's (2006, p. E3) research findings are limited to their sample as it was made up of a very particular group of students, with 72.5% being female and 51% Asian/Pacific Islander. More important is the fact that most other studies have found that test anxiety does lower performance. For example, Hembree (1988), after analysing 562 studies of test anxiety concluded that for all students at all levels of education including university, "test anxiety harms performance" (p. 75). More recent research involving university students has provided additional support for the earlier findings. Musch and Bröder (1999, Discussion section, para. 1) claimed that test anxiety lowered the performance of students sitting a statistics examination at the University of Koblenz, explaining about 5% of the variance in examination results. Most impressively, in a large study of 5414 undergraduate and graduate students at three American universities, Chapell et al. (2005, pp. 270–1) similarly found that test anxiety was significantly negatively correlated with Grade Point Average for undergraduate students. Those who had low test anxiety received an average of a B+ grade, while the students who had high test anxiety received a third of a grade lower, on average, with a B.

However, in some specific situations examination results are not negatively impacted by test anxiety. Despite the general agreement about the negative relationship between test anxiety and achievement, the issue is, in fact, more complex (Burns, 2004, p. 121). When the examination is less threatening, the impact of test anxiety is lower or even absent. Eysenck (as cited in Tobias, 1990, Cognitive capacity and drive theory section, para. 3) summarised the evidence for the relationship between task difficulty and anxiety and found that anxiety tended to facilitate performance on easy tasks and hinder it on difficult tasks. It

### MAKING A STRONG ARGUMENT (SHOWING DISAGREEMENT)

If studies disagree, present the ideas you think are incorrect first (p. 143).  
Give reasons as to why these ideas are not likely to be correct.

Present the ideas that you believe are correct (p. 143).

### PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE

Topic sentence (pp. 118–21)  
Background sentence (pp. 121–2)

Introductory sentence (pp. 121–2)

Paraphrased claim from the literature, with citations

A sentences of your own to elaborate

is certainly possible that such findings could be extended to examinations at a tertiary level. This is supported by Hembree's (1988, p. 56) claim that test anxiety does not affect performance in elective courses at university, probably because students experience greater ease in dealing with the material in courses they choose themselves. Test anxiety also appears to have different impacts at different levels of tertiary education. Chapell et al. (2005, p. 271) found that male students studying at postgraduate level experienced no significant impact of test anxiety on their performance.

Additionally, the relation between test anxiety and examination results is also shown to be more complex when gender is considered. An early assessment of the role of gender was made by Hembree (1988, p. 731) in his comprehensive review of studies on test anxiety. He concluded that although females experience higher test anxiety than males, it does not lower their performance. However, more recent research by Chapell et al. (2005, p. 272) showed the relationship between gender and anxiety to be more complex. They also found that females experienced higher test anxiety than males but, in addition, showed that females consistently scored higher Grade Point Averages than males. Hence, when female undergraduate students only were considered, the level of their test anxiety did significantly impact on their Grade Point Averages, but because of the females' ability to score higher Grade Point Averages their results were better than those of the males with similar levels of test anxiety. This difference in the impact of test anxiety is probably due to the fact that females tend to use more productive means of coping with high anxiety. Female anxiety was shown to be related to task orientation and preparation (Stöber, 2004, Results section, para. 3), both of which would help students to compensate for their high level of anxiety. On the other hand, males tended to favour avoidance coping as a means of dealing with anxiety. Clearly such behaviour would not be useful.

It appears that when there is a reduction in performance as a result of test anxiety, it occurs mainly because of the presence of interfering thoughts. There have been two main models to explain the impact of anxiety on examination results: the deficit model and the Interference model. The deficit model proposes that the anxiety itself is a result of some inadequate preparation, for example, in study habits or in test-taking skills. The model thus suggests that it is

and link (p. 122–3)

Paraphrased claim from the literature, with citations

A sentence of your own to explain and link (pp. 122–3)

Paraphrased claim from the literature, with citations

**PARAGRAPH COHESION**

Connective: Linking topic sentences (p. 155).

Cohesive device: Referring to the same 'thing' (pp. 29)

Connective: Linking ideas (pp. 36–7).

Cohesive device: Referring to the same 'thing' (pp. 29)

Connective: Linking ideas (pp. 36–7).

Cohesive device: Labelling technique (pp. 31–2)

Cohesive device: Same point of view – continuation of an idea (pp. 33–5)

Connective: Linking ideas (pp. 36–7)

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Evaluation of claims (pp. 9–10)

the lack of skills which result in poorer examination results, rather than the anxiety, which is merely a side issue (Tobias, 1990). The general view, however, is that the model is unsatisfactory. When students are taught study or test-taking skills, the relationship between test anxiety and lower performance still holds (Hembree, 1988, 74). Musch and Bröder (1999, p. 108) also found that study habits had no impact on examination performance. Given these consistent findings over a considerable period of time, it is not surprising that the interference model has gained support. It suggests that students have acquired the relevant knowledge but cannot recall it sufficiently well during an examination due to interfering thoughts that reduce the students' ability to focus on the examination tasks. It is accepted that such a model accounts for students' descriptions of 'freezing up' in an examination (Musch & Bröder, 1999, p. 105; Tobias, 1990). There is ample evidence to support this model. Sarason (1984) used a number of experiments to examine the relationship and concluded that his Cognitive-Interference model explained what the experiments showed: that "the problem of anxiety is, to a significant extent, intrusive thoughts that interfere with task-focussed thinking" (p. 929). From a different direction, Hembree (1988, p. 74) provided support for the interference model by noting that many studies show that techniques used to teach students how to deal with interfering thoughts, such as cognitive modification, lead to a positive impact on performance.

Test anxiety is of special interest to educators and students. Certainly, many factors impact on examination performance. As Zeidner (as cited in Chapell et al., 2005) noted, "any reasonable model of school achievement needs to consider ... a wide array of ... factors ... scholastic abilities, study habits, school attitudes, self-perceptions and self-efficacy, student health, classroom environment, opportunities for enrichment etc" (p. 273). Hence, test anxiety could be considered as just one of many issues surrounding examination performance. Yet, it is of special concern as it, along with bias, is seen as one of the two "primary problems inherent in the testing process" (Burns, 2004, p. 121) and so needs to be addressed in order to ensure fairness. This is particularly the case as test anxiety can have serious consequences, especially when a student is close to a pass grade in an examination. In this situation, test anxiety could

Presenting academic evidence (pp. 9–10)  
Evaluation of claims (pp. 9–10)

Presenting academic evidence (pp. 9–10)  
Evaluating the amount of support for the evidence (pp. 9–10; p. 88)  
Evaluation of claims (pp. 9–10)

Evaluating the amount of support for the evidence (pp. 9–10; p. 88)  
Evaluation of claims (pp. 9–10)

Presenting academic evidence (pp. 9–10)

Presenting academic evidence (pp. 9–10)

reduce that student's performance to a fail (Putwain, 2008, p. 1028).

The impact of anxiety on examinations has been very closely studied for a long time. There is general acceptance that debilitating anxiety negatively impacts examination performance slightly and that it does so via an interference mechanism in which task-irrelevant thoughts undermine a student's ability to recall previously learned material. However, this essay also shows that not all examinations are impacted by anxiety. Test anxiety appears to have its greatest impact in difficult examinations and in earlier years of a degree program. As well, not all students are equally affected. Female students have higher anxiety than male students, and while their examination scores are reduced, they are not as reduced as those of their male colleagues with lower anxiety. While the question of anxiety has been studied for many years, it is still an important issue to consider as its presence does mean that a student's knowledge is not fairly assessed during an examination.

## CONCLUSION

Summarise the essay content. No citations. No new material (pp. 157–8)

Link to the background as a means of highlighting the importance of the topic.

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Reference list begins on a new page (p. 116)

The reference list is organised alphabetically using the family name of the first author (p. 116).

Use a hanging indent paragraph style for reference list items (p. 116).

Use all the authors' names in the order in which they are presented in the publication (p. 307).

When an article has a DOI, use it (p. 115).

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## OTHER SAMPLES

### Initiation and Social Identity of "the girl" in "Boys and Girls"

Recent history boldly notes the protests and political unrest surrounding the Vietnam Conflict during the 1960s and 70s. However, equally important in this era are the women who pushed for gender role reevaluation and publicly rebelled against the established social norm of a woman's "place." Although Alice Munro may not have been burning her bra on the courthouse steps, threads of a feminist influence can be found in "Boys and Girls." Munro's main character, a girl probably modeled after Munro's own childhood experiences on an Ontario farm, faces her awakening body and the challenge of developing her social identity in a man's world. "The girl," an unnamed character, acts as a universal symbol for the initiation of a girl into womanhood. Through first-person narrative, Munro shows the girl's views of her budding femininity and social identity by describing the girl's conceptions of her parents' work, her parallel to the wild mare Flora, and the "mysterious alterations" (Munro 474) in her personal nightly stories.

As if to forsake her femininity and forego a life of confinement and housework, the girl reveres her father's work and condemns her mother's duties. The sum of the girl's respect seems to lie with her father, as is evident in her reference to his work outdoors as "ritualistically important" (468). On the other hand, while the girl recognizes that her mother is busy, she still considers her mother's "work in the house [to be] [...] endless, dreary and peculiarly depressing" (468). The division between her parents' tasks is especially apparent in the girl's reaction to her mother's presence at the barn. She feels threatened by her mother's appearance, calling it "out of place" and saying her "mother had no business down [there]" (468). The girl distrusts her mother and believes her to be out of touch, while helping her father in "his real work" (468). Surprisingly, the girl's desire to avoid the manifestation of her femininity in womanly tasks, such as cooking and cleaning, influences her into feeling that her mother is "plotting now to get [her] to stay in the house [...] and keep [her] from working for [her] father" (469). The girl chooses to dismiss her mother, thereby dismissing her own future role as a housewife.

In an attempt to reflect the girl's changing awareness of her social identity and femininity, Munro weaves in a young sorrel mare, Flora. As the expectations of the girl's pending role in society grow, Flora takes up residence in the stable and adds an "air of gallantry and abandon" (470) to the girl's sheltered life. Just as the girl experiences confusion and angst, "Flora [is] given to fits of violent alarm" (470) of more of tangible nature. An approaching crossroad in Flora's life, namely her death, parallels the crossroad of identity the girl is facing. With the realization of Flora's death, the girl adopts "a new wariness, a sense of holding-off, in [her] attitude to [her] father and his work" (473), causing her to question the very foundation of her social opinions up to that point. By allowing Flora to escape through the gate, the girl symbolically opens the passageway to her feminine side. Even in its futility, this act sets the stage for a new level of consciousness for the girl.

Ironically, one of the girl's most heightened moments of awareness to her changing role comes during an instance of imagination. Rather than "opportunities for [personal] courage, boldness and self-sacrifice" (466), as in her past stories, the girl's new stories concern themselves with her personal peril or need for rescue. Also, the added element of "what [she] looked like" comes into play to the degree that "the real

excitement of the story [is] lost" (474). This "damsel in distress" mentality is a recognizable universal factor in the maturation of a girl to a woman. The girl's climactic realization becomes clear to her family, too, as she breaks into tears at the dinner table. Whether this quantifies complete acceptance with the girl, however, is not solidified by Munro due to the final sentence: "Maybe it was true" (475).

Through opinion, comparison, and imagination Munro details the girl's journey from a rebellious tomboy to a slowly blooming woman. The characteristics so endearing to the girl's developing identity, such as her assistance in Flora's escape and her unwillingness to easily submit to the social constraints of life as a woman, also lend themselves to her universality as a representative to initiation to femininity. Munro's own personal views of femininity arguably color this work, "Boys and Girls."

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#### The Good Shepherd and the Black Sheep: Paradoxical Irony in "The Lame Shall Enter First"

"[W]hen thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth" counsels the Bible, thus setting the precedent for all well-meaning members of western society concerning their charitable intentions (Matt. 6.3). Humanity's motivation to aid others, regardless of the outcome, is oft times spotted by the subtle struggle between *selflessness* and *selfishness*. Flannery O'Connor captures this classic conflict between good and evil in Southern Grottesque fashion through her characters, the protagonist Sheppard and his foil, Rufus Johnson, in "The Lame Shall Enter First". Challenging the literal paradigm of light and darkness, O'Connor weaves together well crafted characterization, cryptic dialogue, and both biblical and literary allusion in this paradoxical plot and, by way of Sheppard and the antithetical Rufus, blends the black and white of Christian dogma into an ironic grey.

The contrast of light and dark begins with the description and characterization of the apparently angelic Sheppard, and continues with the introduction of the obscure and ominous Rufus Johnson. O'Connor is not pretentious in her description and development of either character. Sheppard's white hair and "halo" are obvious references to his protagonistic status as the story's do-gooder (Norton 371). The narrator continues on by lauding his charitable contribution to the community as a counselor and weekend volunteer for "boys no one else cared about" (372). The reader's only initial clue toward Sheppard's self-righteous mania is his deliberate, guilt-implying sermon towards Norton, his disconcerted and doomed son. It is not, however, until the arrival of the dim, drenched Rufus that seemingly stark white coat of Sheppard loses its untainted radiance. Johnson is literally cast as the black sheep from the moment he limps into the house in his soaking "wet black suit" (376). The ultimate personification of evil comes when he is physically compared directly to the perennial villian Adolf Hitler (378). His opaque character is developed as dark as his appearance through his unending ingratitude and spiteful words toward his supposed savior, Sheppard.

The ambiguous dialogue between the two main characters continues to blur the line between the traditional literal concept of good versus evil and the author's own Grottesque version. O'Connor's use of foreshadowing and plot development through dialogue is essential to the work, and is much more obvious

upon rereading it. Though Sheppard's works are concrete and compassionate, his words are abstract and empty. His answers to both Norton and Rufus come in rehearsed, logical explanations. Sheppard's attempts to animate either child about their future are thwarted by his own uncertainty. The clearest example of this comes from one of the most crucial sections of the story, when Sheppard fails to satisfy Norton's desire to know where his deceased mother is: "She doesn't exist [. . .] That's all I have to give you, [. . .] the truth" (383). Where the "good" shepherd fails, the black sheep prevails. The dark character that Rufus is developed into shows an admirable assurity and for once a faint light flickers from behind the "black sheen [that] appear[ed] in the boy's eyes" (375) as he describes the existence of heaven and hell to Norton, confirming that the boy's mother is "saved" (383). Then, in one of the most obvious uses of foreshadowing in the story, Rufus goes on to tell Norton that "Right now you'd go where she is [. . .] but if you live long enough, you'll go to hell" (383). Once again Sheppard and his *voice of reason* seem to grow grayer as he immediately tells Norton to close the window, as if to separate him from the stars and his newly found hope in the existence of his mother (383).

Admittedly influenced by her orthodox Christian background (408), O'Connor scatters both biblical and assorted literal allusions throughout her story, creating somewhat of a parody of common Christian themes. The use of Sheppard as the name of the protagonist binds the character to some religious comparison immediately. This is only reinforced when Rufus pronounces bitterly: "He thinks he's Jesus Christ!" (381) Another use of allusion with reference to Sheppard is Rufus' crudely accurate accusation of him as a "big tin Jesus" (395). Like the forlorn tin man from *The Wizard of Oz*, Rufus' statement argues that Sheppard is just as hollow as that empty, heartless shell of a man, regardless of his outwardly good deeds. Perhaps the most encompassing phrase in the story is O'Connor's allusion to the verse in St. Matthew quoted in the first paragraph. Repeated both at the beginning of the story and in his final appearance, Rufus declares that Sheppard "don't know his left hand from his right!" (377, 395). Clearly O'Connor is alluding to Sheppard's selfish or misguided agenda well illustrated when he tells Norton of his desire to help the orphaned Rufus. Sheppard's publicly done deeds are challenged by Rufus, the unwilling recipient of a well-meaning man going through the motions, yet craving some sort of reward for his actions. The once polarized characters grow ever closer with the equalizing power of reality.

"The Lame Shall Enter First" ends as abruptly as it begins. There is no cathartic victory for the alleged "good shepherd", only the agony of total defeat. Sheppard's epiphany comes too late and the stark contrast that once distinguished him from the dark object of his alms turns into the faded realization that he is no better than the beleaguered beneficiary. Through O'Connor's strategic literary devices, deft character contrast, and parody of entrenched Christian values, the reader is left to digest and dissect the fact that maybe the entire flock isn't worth one black sheep. Between the black and white islands of moral certainty, good and evil, there lies a sea of ironic grey.

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## Perceptual Manipulation in Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*

Teun A. Van Dijk, in his essay "Pragmatics and Poetics," explains the reason for speech is "to change the internal state of the hearer" (Dijk 30). Ferdinand de Saussure describes in his essay, "Nature of the Linguistic Sign," how a word is more connected to the minds of the speaker and the hearer than to anything else. He describes that the "linguistic sign" as a unit formed equally by the association of a "concept" and a "sound-image." The "sound-image" is what one would call a spoken word, something that "signifies." Saussure describes it as "the psychological imprint of the sound, the impression that it makes on our senses" (Saussure 832). He goes on to describe its materiality: "the sound-image is sensory" (Saussure 832). The term "concept" is summed-up as being "generally more abstract" (Saussure 833) than the "sound-image." The "concept," it appears, is what one would call objective perceptions, for example, the table, or an ox. A "concept" is anything that can be "signified." In *The Taming of the Shrew* Petruchio intends to break Katharina by disassociating her from her sense of reality by prying apart the linguistic unit she has intuitively taken for granted.

The first scene demonstrates Katharina's personality through the interaction she has with her sister, Bianca, and her father, Baptista. She is shown to have "a devilish spirit" (Shakespeare 2.1, 25). Katharina has tied her sister's hands and is taunting her, goading her into telling her which of Bianca's suitors is her favorite. Petruchio, shortly afterwards, meets Baptista and speaks to him about Katharina. Instead of calling her a shrew, Petruchio compliments her on her "beauty and her wit, / Her affability and bashful modesty, / Her wonderous qualities and mild behavior" (Shakespeare 2.1, 47-9), all of which strike Baptista as so strange a depiction of his daughter Katharina that he thinks Petruchio must have mistaken her for a different girl. Petruchio has started the process that will disassociate Katharina from the world she knows to be true and make her dependent on the world he asserts to be true.

Petruchio's claims of how sweet he has heard Katharina to be are the absolute opposite of how she is perceived by the other characters in the play. Katharina is notoriously un-sweet. Bent Rosenbaum explains in his essay, "The Discourse of Psychosis and the Process of Listening," that when speech is manipulated so that what is being spoken is radically different from what is spoken about, the spoken realm takes on a reality of its own. Whether or not this spoken realm is perceived by anyone but the speaker does not diminish its existence for the speaker and, by extension, those who respond to the speaker (Rosenbaum 206). Petruchio is constructing an identity for Katharina that contradicts completely the one Katharina herself demonstrates, and because he is stating it as if it were true it begins to take shape as a truth. Harly Sonne states that in certain forms of madness, language becomes "liberated from its otherwise tightly bound relations to what it means" (Sonne 228). Sonne says it is as if the linguistic sign has been abnormally broken down into its components, and the signifier begins to work independently of the signified (Sonne 228). Petruchio works in this model and madly separates signifier from signified.

Petruchio gives a soliloquy in which he communicates his plan to "tame" Katharina. Petruchio says that he will present the world to her as the opposite of how she perceives it to be. When she frowns, he will "say she looks as clear / As morning roses" and when "she be mute and will not speak a word, / Then [he will] commend her volubility / And say she uttereth piercing eloquence" (Shakespeare 2.1, 169-72). By asserting to be true the opposite of what Katharina perceives, Petruchio intends to break her of her intuitive bond between the world as it is and the world as it is communicated. He wishes to break Katharina's

association between the world and its signifiers. Jacques Derrida, in his essay "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," suggests that there is a structure that does not change, beneath a layering of words and concepts that do change (Derrida 879). Petruchio is aware of the relative independence of words from objects, or actions. He is in a position of power over Katharina who relies on the existence of a complete linguistic sign.

Petruchio is not only destabilizing Katharina's perception of the world around her, but he is also misrepresenting her. Petruchio asserts the opposite of how Katharina is perceived by the other characters in the play. When speaking to her father, Petruchio states that Katharina is "not froward, but modest as the dove. / She is not hot, but temperate as the morn" (Shakespeare 2.1, 286-7). There is no apparent change in Katharina's attitude and nothing she has done validates his assertion that she is now sweet and "temperate" (Shakespeare 2.1, 287). Petruchio is creating a reality using nothing but words and imposing it on to the other characters in the play. His asserted reality is taken so far, that it traps Katharina into a marriage against her will. Katharina makes it clear to her father, and to Petruchio, that she does not want to marry Petruchio. Yet when Petruchio tells Baptista that they "have agreed so well together / That upon Sunday is the wedding day" (Shakespeare 2.1, 290-1), Baptista readily accepts Petruchio's invented reality over his daughters expressed wishes, and the wedding is set.

In order to disassociate, for Katharina, the intuitive assumption that appearances and words have a structural attachment to something real, Petruchio dresses in a way that is opposed to what is expected, and he says the opposite of the truth. Petruchio then moves from demonstration to imposition and attempts to dress Katharina as he wishes. Katharina guesses correctly when she says to Petruchio, "you mean to make a puppet of me" (Shakespeare 4.3, 103). He has set up his invented reality and made it clear that he will act according to his invented customs and perceptions despite the other characters in the play. Petruchio now begins to force Katharina to acknowledge his reality over the one she perceives. Weakened by lack of sleep and food, Katharina, in her last attempt to defend her vision of reality, refuses to be dressed by Petruchio. It is the last time she speaks of the connection between her words and a passion or an emotion she feels: "My tongue will tell the anger of my heart, / Or else my heart, concealing it, will break" (Shakespeare 4.3, 77-8); she never expresses her anger and her utterances become shorter and shorter as Petruchio wins control of them.

Petruchio constructs a separate reality that works independently of any form of objective reality. It is fair to say that Petruchio has invented a cage to keep Katharina once she is caught. In Petruchio's created world, Katharina will be dependant on him for guidance because it is a world of arbitrary signifiers. Katharina becomes dependant on Petruchio at the same time the word "say" comes to have more validation than the word "know." It is day when Petruchio says "it is the moon that shines so bright," and Katharina responds to him by saying "I know it is the sun that shines so bright" (Shakespeare 4.5, 5-6). He has her trapped, if she does not agree with him he will punish her. Katharina relinquishes what she "knows" in favor of what he "says": "I say it is the moon" and Katharina responds with "I know it is the moon" (Shakespeare 4.5, 16-17). Katharina does not try to argue or fight with Petruchio, instead she easily accepts his worded perception over what she knows to be true. He leads her back and forth, from the reality she perceives to the reality he asserts. He addresses Vincentio as a "gentle mistress" and urges Katharina to do the same, and when she has done so, he drags her back by saying Vincentio "is a man, old, wrinkled, faded, withered" (Shakespeare 4.5, 42).

Petruchio succeeds in separating the signifier from the signified. He succeeds in creating a situation in which Katharina depends on him for clues on how his world is currently being perceived. Katharina learned well from Petruchio how to separate the meaning from an utterance. She demonstrates how well she can say it is night when it is day, and how she has learned to say an old man is a young maiden, and then an old man again. But in a world where there is no accordance between what is said and what is felt or perceived, the spoken word loses its value. Katharina can say what she pleases without any care for meaning. With this in mind, it is hard to tell if Petruchio's plan to "tame" her has worked, or if it has set her free.

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