

FORMAL & INFORMAL ESSAYS

CHARACTERISTIC	INFORMAL ESSAY	FORMAL ESSAY
Author's viewpoint	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Usually first person• Directly addresses reader	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Usually uses third-person and does not address the reader
Subject/Content (sources of evidence)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frequently drawn from life of the writer and everyday events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More commonly drawn from shared historical events or literature or other forms of knowledge
Tone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frequently more personal and subjective• May be ironic, amusing, thoughtful, angry or serious	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tends to be removed from the subject and appears to be objective• May be ironic, amusing, thoughtful, angry, or serious, but tends to hold emotions in check and express concerns through strong arguments and powerful rhetorical devices
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appears more loosely structured	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follows a fairly rigid structure that focuses on the development of one clear argument at a time to support a clearly stated thesis
Location of Thesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May appear anywhere in the essay• May not be explicitly stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Usually stated explicitly• Usually located in the 1st or 2nd paragraph
Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A number of stylistic devices used to engage the reader• Vocabulary tends to be drawn from everyday usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A number of stylistic devices likely used to engage the reader• Vocabulary tends to be more academic and may contain some unfamiliar words
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Entertainment, gentle reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provokes thought, serious reflection, and sometimes action

TYPES OF ESSAYS

1. **Expository Essay:** Describes or explains a topic. For example, an essay entitled "The Care and Maintenance of a Bicycle" would be an expository essay.
2. **The Narrative Essay:** Uses a single, well-told story as the basis for drawing a conclusion or making a statement of opinion. For example, "My Most Exciting Bicycling Adventure" would be a narrative essay.
3. **The Argumentative Essay:** Presents a reasoned series of arguments in support of a position. For example, an essay entitled, "Cars or Scooters: Which is the More Efficient and Safe Method of Urban Transport?" would be an argumentative essay.
4. **The Persuasive Essay:** Combines reasoned arguments with the emotion required to persuade the reader to take action. For example, an essay entitled "Save the Ozone and Stimulate your Heart: Leave your Cars at Home" would be a persuasive essay.

RHETORICAL DEVICES

- **Rhetorical devices are techniques that are used to create a certain effect on an audience;**
- **Ways of arranging words and ideas to achieve maximum effect;**
- **They can help achieve your purpose; that is, to emphasize, to shock, to add humour, to draw attention to word choice, to create suspense, and so on.**
- **A rhetorical device can govern the arrangement of a sentence, a number or sentences in a row, or a much larger unit.**
- **Rhetorical devices to make writing more colourful.**

<u>Allegory:</u> a narrative in which the characters and sometimes the setting represent general concepts and ideas	<u>Example:</u> fables in which personified animals are used allegorically to teach lessons of human conduct (e.g. "the Hare and the Tortoise")
<u>Analogy:</u> helps the reader understand something unfamiliar by comparing it to something well-known	<u>Example:</u> Comparing an anthill to an urban centre helps to convey the fact that anthills are heavily populated, busy, and have regular patterns of movement.
<u>Anecdote:</u> short amusing or interesting story, especially one that is true	
<u>Allusion:</u> An instance of indirect casual reference – can be a reference to a person, event, place, literary piece, or work of art. It can be drawn from history, geography, literature, or religion	<u>Example:</u> "He was as strong as Hercules."
<u>Denotation:</u> the thing or situation to which the word specifically refers - definition in the dictionary	<u>Example:</u> Home denotes the place where a person lives
<u>Connotation:</u> associated meanings it implies or suggests - attach personal meaning to the word	<u>Example:</u> Home connotes intimacy, privacy, coziness
<u>Metonymy:</u> a figure of speech in which one word stands for another which it suggests - one word or phrase is substituted for another with which it is closely associated	<u>Example #1:</u> "We have always remained loyal to the crown." <u>Example #2:</u> "He loves the bottle."
<u>Synechdoche:</u> a figure of speech figure in which a part is used to represent the whole or the whole for a part.	<u>Example #1:</u> <i>ABCs</i> for <i>alphabet</i> <u>Example #2:</u> " <i>England</i> won the World Cup in 1966."
<u>Jargon:</u> the specialized language of a professional, occupational, or other group, often meaningless to outsiders - potentially confusing words and phrases used in an occupation, trade, or field of study, sometimes used to leave an impression of intelligence	<u>Example #1:</u> Medical jargon, sports jargon, military jargon <u>Example #2:</u> Computer/Internet Jargon: BTW
<u>Satire:</u> ridicule, irony, or sarcasm in speech or writing (or media) - a novel, play, etc. that ridicules people's hypocrisy or foolishness in this way	<u>Example:</u> e.g. <i>The Simpsons</i> <i>Bowling for Columbine</i>
<u>Rhetorical Question:</u> is one whose answer is already known or implied	<u>Example:</u> "Can anyone deny that the microchip has revolutionized communication?"
<u>Bias:</u> an opinion or influence that strongly favours one side in an argument or one item in a group or series	<u>Example:</u> "George Bush is only attacking Iraq because of his interest in the oil supply."
<u>Reference to Authority:</u> making reference to someone who has extensive knowledge and credibility in a certain field/subject	<u>Example:</u> Using a quotation from a Cardinal in the Catholic Church to strengthen an argument for a belief/practice in the Catholic Church
<u>Understatement (Litotes):</u> creates the reverse effect (and adds a touch of irony) by making the fact seem less significant	<u>Example:</u> "Bruce Willis' onscreen characters frequently find themselves in a bit of a jam."
<u>Exaggeration (Hyperbole):</u> emphasizes a fact	<u>Example:</u> "He was going to live the life of a tree or vegetable."
<u>Image/Imagery:</u> appeals to one or more of the senses by creating a vivid impression through the use of concrete details, adjectives and figures of speech	<u>Example:</u> The beauty of the daisy is conveyed using imagery such as "a nun demure" and "a silver shield with boss of gold."
<u>Metaphor:</u> a figure of speech in which a word or phrase that ordinarily designates one thing is used to designate another; - a comparison which does not use "like" or "as"	<u>Example:</u> "His hands were ice."
<u>Simile:</u> a comparison which uses "like" or "as"	<u>Example:</u> "His hands were as cold as ice."
<u>Personification:</u> the attribution of human qualities to animals or things - a form of metaphor that gives humanlike qualities or human form to objects and abstractions	<u>Example:</u> "Justice is a blindfolded woman holding a scale, Mother Country, Father Time."

Apostrophe (direct address): a figure of speech in which some absent or nonexistent person or thing is addressed as if present and capable of understanding - the use of personification in which the thing or idea is spoken to directly	Example: "Hello darkness, my old friend I've come to talk with you again . . ." (Paul Simon, "The Sounds of Silence")
Onomatopoeia: imitative harmony → the sound that a word makes imitates the sound it describes - words that sound like the objects they name or the sounds those objects make	Example: "The bumble bee buzzed by his head."
Pun: a play on words wherein a word is used to convey two meanings at the same time	Example: "An egg in the morning is hard to beat."
Alliteration: the repetition of consonant sounds at the beginnings of words	Example: "Sally sells sea shells by the sea shore."
Assonance: the repetition of vowel sounds within words (a, e, i, o, u, and sometimes y)	Example: "Because of his fleet <u>f</u> ee <u>t</u> and a quick <u>s</u> we <u>e</u> p, the Gree <u>k</u> easily won the martial arts <u>m</u> ee <u>t</u> ."
Consonance: The repetition of consonant sounds within and at the end of words (consonants are any letters that are not vowels).	Example: "It was no <u>t</u> ri <u>gh</u> t tha <u>t</u> he go <u>t</u> in a fi <u>gh</u> t."
Abnormal Word Order: gives variety and emphasis to your writing by modifying the usual subject-verb sentence pattern	Example: Normal word order (subject-verb): "The actor's worst nightmares stood laughing at him from the shadows." Abnormal word order (verb-subject): "Laughing at him from the shadows stood the actor's worst nightmare."
Balanced Sentence: expresses two or more equal and parallel ideas (symmetry and equilibrium) - two parts of a sentence (or of consecutive sentences) in similar grammatical arrangement - two ideas are set off one against the other in statements that are grammatically similar	Example #1: "Many TV actors work hard all through the season; they play in films all through the hiatus." Example #2: "Silence is as deep as eternity; speech is as shallow as time."
Balanced Sentence – Antithetical/Contrasting - a special use of the device of balance in which the two balanced ideas are in contrast to one another	Example #1: "Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more." Example #2: "Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers."
Chiasmus: a verbal/written pattern (a type of antithesis) in which the second half of an expression is balanced against the first with the parts reversed - the placing of two groups of words so that the order of the second group is an inversion of the order of the first (the second group is grammatically a 'mirror image' of the first)	Example: "You forget what you want to remember, and you remember what you want to forget." (Cormac McCarthy, <i>The Road</i> , 2006)
Juxtaposition: putting two contrasting ideas side by side - the arrangement of two or more ideas, characters, actions, settings, phrases, or words side-by-side or in similar narrative moments for the purpose of comparison, contrast, rhetorical effect, suspense, or character development	Example #1: Michael Moore uses juxtaposition in Fahrenheit 911, when he plays the song "What a Wonderful World" while playing scenes of war and violence
Climax (Climatic Word Order): presents several facts in order from least to most important - an arrangement of words, phrases, or clauses in order of their importance or emotional force (usually 3 or more)	Example: "The young politician's career rise was meteoric; after beginning as a municipal councillor, she became mayor, and three short years later a Member of Parliament."
Parallel Structure (Parallelism): repeats specific words, phrases, or clauses in a series, giving emphasis to key words and making them memorable - ideas which are parallel in thought should be parallel in form	Example #1: Abraham Lincoln's "government of the people, by the people, for the people" (preposition, definite article, and noun are repeated in a series) Example #2: "Let us consider the origin and development of medicine." Example #3: Her voice was low, soft, and pleasant."
Periodic Sentence: withholds an important part of the sentence until the end so that it doesn't make complete sense until the last word is read - reader is kept in suspense	Example #1: "Whether playing a young wild adventurer, a fugitive from the law, or a U.S. president, there is one actor whose films always make money – Harrison Ford." Example #2: "If music be the food of love, play on."
Repetition: used for emphasis and rhythm	Example #1: "There is no mistake; there has been no mistake; and there shall be no mistake." Example #2: "It was a strange night, a hushed night, a moonless night, and all you could do was go to a movie."

Reversals: make a balanced sentence even more memorable by repeating the words in reverse order	Example: "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." (John F. Kennedy)
Sentence Fragment: places emphasis on key words to create an overall effect, such as humour or suspense	Example: "A cold room. A lonely room. A bare room. No place to spend twenty years of a life."

TONE:

- The author's **attitude**, stated or implied, toward the subject matter and/or readers.
- Tone may be pessimistic, optimistic, earnest, bitter, humorous, joyful, playful, formal, intimate, angry, ironic, outraged, baffled, tender, serene, depressed, etc.
- An author's tone can be revealed through choice of words (**diction**), stylistic devices and details.
- The means of creating a relationship or conveying an attitude or mood.
- By looking carefully at the choices an author makes (in characters, incidents, setting; in the work's stylistic choices and diction, etc.), careful readers often can isolate the tone of a work and sometimes infer from it the underlying attitudes that control and color the literary work as a whole.

Example: To illustrate the difference, two different novelists might write stories about capitalism.

- Author #1 creates a tale in which an impoverished but hard-working young lad pulls himself out of the slums when he applies himself to his education, and he becomes a wealthy, contented middle-class citizen who leaves his past behind him, never looking back at that awful human cesspool from which he rose.
- Author #2 creates a tale in which a dirty street-rat skulks his way out of the slums by abandoning his family and going off to college, and he greedily hoards his money in a gated community and ignores the suffering of his former "equals," whom he leaves behind in his selfish desire to get ahead.
- Note that both author #1 and author #2 basically present the same plotline. While the first author's writing creates a tale of optimism and hope, the second author shapes the same tale into a story of bitterness and cynicism. The difference is in their respective tones--the way they convey their attitudes about particular characters and subject-matter.

Examples of Common Methods used to Develop an Argument

<p>Analogy: compare something less familiar with something more familiar in order to help the reader understand the former</p>	<p>Example: Comparing a circuit board to a superhighway helps those less familiar with computers to understand that the circuit board is a busy communication highway, containing set routes with junctions for going in different directions.</p>
<p>Definition: explores in greater depth the significance associated with the term or concept under consideration in order to give as full a picture as possible of its characteristics</p>	<p>Example: Susan Sontag defines "beauty" by examining the ancient Greek and Christian views of beauty, the language used to describe men's versus women's beauty, internal and external beauty, and the significance of the absence of beauty in the world.</p>
<p>Comparison: points out similarities and differences between two or more ideas, things, people, etc.; point-by-point comparison is a more effective organization in that similarities and differences are clearly pointed out</p>	<p>Example: Comparing King Lear and Hamlet as tragic heroes reinforces the characteristics of the Shakespearean tragic hero while pointing out specific differences in their tragic flaws.</p>
<p>Contrast: points out differences between two characters or ideas; because this method can sharpen and clarify an argument it is frequently more powerful than comparison</p>	<p>Example: By contrasting the openly discriminatory laws and practices against women with what couldn't be (and isn't) said to any minority, Doris Anderson in "The 51% Solution" argues that women are routinely discriminated against.</p>
<p>Example and Illustration: illustrates point with reference to a personal or shared experience, statistics, analogy, or quote from an authority (which can also be called "reference to authority")</p>	<p>Example: In his essay "Were Dinosaurs Dumb?" Stephen Jay Gould cites Jack chopping down the beanstalk and David smiting Goliath with a slingshot as examples of metaphors and fairy tales that show how "slow wit is the tragic flaw of a giant."</p>
<p>Cause and Effect: give reasons why something happened; show the results of an event or actions</p>	<p>Writing tip: Decide whether you are going to deal with cause or effect and make this clear in your introduction. If you are explaining why something happened or the reasons for it, you are looking at the causes. If you are looking at the results of an action or event, then you are focusing on the effects. Example: An essay on a related series of events that led to you getting a particular job.</p>
<p>Classification: explain something by dividing it into types, groups, or categories (grouping should be of roughly equal value)</p>	<p>Example: Looking at types of athletes → pros, competitive, amateurs, recreational, armchair</p>
<p>Division: explain the characteristics or qualities of something</p>	<p>Writing tip: look for the qualities that something is made up of; think of the qualities your ideal of something (a great athlete, teacher, etc.) would have.</p>

	Example: A great restaurant would have delicious food, a distinct atmosphere and professional service.
Narration: telling how something happened; to entertain or amuse the audience	
Description: create a clear impression in the reader's mind of a person, place, object or situation; include great detail that appeals to the senses	Example: "My Campus Cafeteria" → descriptive essay on the food, atmosphere, people (etc.) found in the cafeteria of a university campus.
Process Analysis: provide instructions for doing something; explain how something works. Organization is step by step; there needs to be good clarity and detail.	Example: Finding a good car involves researching different models, knowing where to find good vehicles, and getting a thorough mechanical inspection.
Fact: using facts to develop an argument, including numerical facts and statistics. facts answers the questions <i>who? what? when? where?</i> and <i>how?</i>	
Appeal to Emotion: an argument that primarily appeals to the emotions, using emotionally loaded details, diction and figurative language	Example: An essay about the need to stop animal cruelty would use appeal to emotion to get a stronger reaction out of the reader, to engage and hold the audience's interest.
Sentence Structure: using various sentence structure rhetorical devices to develop and strengthen your argument	Example: juxtaposition, climatic word order, balanced sentences, etc.