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2.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we shall:

- Study the constituents of essay form and
- Discuss the various types of essays and its nuances.

On completing this unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the crux of any essay type and its features; and
- Appreciate the essay form for its capacity to hold vast variety of subjects.

2.1 ESSAY FORM: A MULTITUDE OF MEANINGS

As a literary genre, the term essay derives from the French infinitive *essayer*, "to try" or "to attempt". In English essay first meant "a trial" or "an attempt", and this is still an alternative meaning. Essay is an analytic, interpretative, or critical literary composition usually much shorter and less systematic and formal than a dissertation or thesis and usually dealing with its subject from a limited and often personal point of view. Various critics have defined "essay" such as, Aldous Huxley states that the most satisfying essays "...make the best not of one, not of two, but of all the three worlds in which it is possible for the essay to exist." Aldous Huxley also described the essay as "One damned thing after another." Francis Bacon defined essay as "dispersed meditations"; whereas Samuel Johnson defined it as a "loose sally of the mind."

2.2 Components of Essay

- **Thesis:** an essay's main proposition. A thesis should not be confused with a topic, which represents only the subject area of an essay. A good thesis must be arguable; there must be intelligent ways to disagree with it. Arguability distinguishes a good thesis from a fact (clearly demonstrable in the text) or an observation (an interpretation so obvious that no intelligent reader would challenge it). Although writers often wish to delay announcement of the thesis, good academic writing generally states the thesis explicitly on the first page, then returns to a more nuanced and complex form of it later in the text.
- **Problem or Question:** the intellectual context in which your thesis matters. In academic essays, the problem usually arises from a current misunderstanding of an important issue. The author of an essay promises to clarify something that would otherwise remain obscured or mistaken. Establishing the problem or question is the primary role

of an essay's first few paragraphs. If it doesn't promise to illuminate, deepen, or solve a problem, an essay risks irrelevance.

- **Evidence:** the material a writer works with in exploring a thesis. Evidence that has been overlooked or previously undiscovered may serve to prove a thesis. Frequently, however, academic writers re-examine evidence that others have looked at before, in which case the evidence is more likely to suggest or persuade readers that the writer's approach is a fruitful one. Since a good thesis must be arguable, academic writers are especially obligated to consider counter-evidence, to grapple directly with facts, patterns, or passages that resist or complicate the essay's main argument. Writers must orient readers to the source of the evidence, which must be cited.
- **Analysis & Reflection:** the work a writer does to turn evidence into argument, to show the reader how the evidence supports, develops, or extends the essay's thesis. Since a thesis must be arguable, no evidence in a good academic argument can speak for itself—all of it must be processed by the writer. Typical moves of analysis are to highlight significant details of the evidence and to name patterns that might otherwise be undetected. When working with written evidence, it's good to observe the rule of two: the writer should supply at least two words of analysis for every word of a citation, and usually more. Analysis generally refers directly to the evidence (“Describing his actions with such words as ‘growled’ and ‘stalked’ suggests an underlying animal savagery”), while reflection builds upon analysis to support larger claims (“This imagery seems to contradict the narrator's stated assessment that Paul is a ‘gentle soul’”). Other moves that indicate reflection are consideration of a counter-argument, definitions or refinements of terms and assumptions, and qualifications of previous claims. Reflection is important throughout an essay, but should be especially rich and full in between sections of the argument and in the essay's conclusion.
- **Structure:** how the sections of an essay are organized and stitched together. College essays are frequently organized either by repetition (where each paragraph develops evidence of the same proposition: “X is clearly present”) or by chronology (where evidence appears in the essay in the same order that it appears in the text): both of these patterns are inadequate. Sections of a good argument proceed in a logical way, but also develop the implications of a thesis more deeply

as the essay progresses. The reader should understand how each new section extends the argument that's come before and prepares for the argument that's still to come. Reflective sentences at moments of transition often guide this review/preview, and complex essays frequently include 1-2 sentences of this type in their introductions.

2.3 Types of Essay

1. Narrative Essay

- A narrative essay is a narration like a short story. It is, however, different from a short story in that it is written in an essay format.

Narrative Essay Outline:

Introduction:

The hook

In introduction the first sentence should be fascinating that attracts the readers to continue in reading. The writer on a Narrative Essay need begin the essay with startling facts and numbers. One may begin with the description of one's own feeling and experiences.

Set the scene

Here the writer can give the information of the place and time related to the topic. The reader must be made acquainted with the place and action from the beginning.

The Thesis Statement

The thesis statement of this essay can be different from other types of essays. The writer can begin from his/her story. For example, "The morning began like any other with breakfast" It also can be with the theme. For instance "Hardships and lack make us all innovators of sorts." It needs to be appealing.

The Body

The body part will detail the story of experience. It also includes examples in each paragraph.

The Conclusion

It summarizes the entire body part with some questions posed. It also exhibits the writer's intention for writing such essay.

1. Descriptive Essay

- A descriptive essay describes something to make readers feel, smell, see, taste, or hear what is described.

2. **Expository Essay**

- An expository essay exposes things in detail to make readers understand without any complications.

3. **Persuasive Essay**

- A persuasive essay is meant to convince the target audience to do something or not do something.

4. **Argumentative Essay**

- An argumentative essay is meant to present arguments in the favor of something. It has an additional fourth body paragraph that is meant to present opposite arguments.

5. **Analytical Essay**

- An analytical essay analyzes something, such as in literature an analytical essay analyzes a piece of literature from different angles.

Analytical Essay Outline

- Most analytical essays or response-to-literature essays are 4-5 paragraphs. They contain an introduction, two-three body paragraphs, and a conclusion. The following format is a recommended approach to writing this kind of essay, but it is not the only method. After getting the basics under one's belt, one might want to take the basic structure and expand with more individualistic techniques.

I. Introduction

- A. Introduce Author and Title of work
- B. Provide a concise summary of main characters, plot and summary as they relate to the thesis.
- C. Provide a thesis statement.

II-IV. Body Paragraphs

- A. Each Body Paragraph should contain a topic sentence that supports some aspect of your thesis.
- B. Introduction to quotation that provides context and a quotation that is evidence for your topic sentence.
- C. Translate or restate the quotation in your own words to match your argument.
- D. Analyze the quotation for meaning. Draw connections from themes, character and conflict. Isolate particular language to connect to topic sentence. *Try not to repeat the same thing over and over. Try not to draw a conclusion that you have not broken down step by step.*
- E. Draw a conclusion that finishes analysis and brings in language from thesis statement. More advanced writers will create a bridge between paragraphs, stating how each idea is ultimately connected and why the order of evidence is as such.

V. Conclusion

- A. What deep and thought-provoking questions does this book raise?
- B. How can you connect this book, its themes and characters to the real world?
- C. Tie all of your ideas back to original thesis.

6. Comparison and Contrast Essay

- A comparison and contrast essay makes either a comparison, a contrast, or both between two different or similar things.

7. Cause and Effect Essay

- A cause and effect essay makes readers understand the cause of things, and their effects on other things.

Format of Cause and Effect Essay

Introduction

In the introduction, provide the necessary background to introduce your reader to your topic, and then write a thesis statement that clearly indicates whether your essay will discuss causes or effects.

The introduction of a cause paper will usually contain a brief description of the effect. Provide in your thesis statement an indication of the nature of the (typically three or four) causes or effects that you will discuss.

Examples

A paper on the causes of the popularity of disco dancing might provide the following:

Background material: Disco dancing started in Europe, spread to the United States several years ago, and is currently popular all over the U.S. among all age groups.

Thesis statement: Disco dancing has become the most popular form of entertainment because it . . .

A paper on the effects of the popularity of disco dancing might use much the same material in its introduction.

Thesis statement: The effects of the current craze for disco dancing are . . .

Body

Analyze the causes or effects, giving a paragraph to each major cause or effect.

Discuss causes or effects in a logical order:

1. least obvious to most obvious,
2. most obvious to least obvious,
3. most important to least important,

4. least important to most important, or
5. sequence (first, second, third [or final]).

Begin with indirect causes or effects if you must discuss both indirect and direct causes or effects.

Use proper word indicators to show causes or to show effects.

Poor: Minority quotas in the job market are bad. They discriminate against the white male.

Better: Minority quotas in the job market are bad because they discriminate against the white male.

Use appropriate transitions:

because, therefore, the reason is, as a result, consequently, hence, thus, the first cause (reason) is, the second cause is . . . , the third (or final) cause is . . .

Explore each cause or effect thoroughly; don't just write a list.

Don't shift away from the causes or effects. For instance, don't discuss ways to avoid sunburn in a paper if the purpose is to discuss the causes of sunburn.

Regularly remind your reader of your main idea or restate the importance of the topic.

Raise a question about the causes or the effects.

Give a prediction about the causes or the effects.

8. Critical Essay

- A critical essay is written on literary pieces to evaluate them on the basis of their merits or demerits.

9. Process Essay

- A process essay outlines a process of making or breaking or doing something that readers understand fully and are able to do it after reading it.

10. Synthesis Essay

- A synthesis essay means to synthesize different ideas to make a judgement about their merit and demerits.

11. Explicatory Essay

- An explicatory essay is meant to explain a piece of literature. It is often written about poems, short stories, and novels.

12. Rhetorical Analysis Essay

- A rhetorical analysis essay evaluates a speech or a piece of rhetoric on the basis of rhetorical strategies and devices used in it.

13. Review Essay

- A review essay discusses the merits and demerits of a book and evaluates it through a review.

14. Simple Essay

- A simple essay is just a five-paragraph essay that is written on any topic after it is specified.

15. Research Essay

- A research essay revolves around a research question that is meant to answer some specific question through a research of the relevant literature.

2.4 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have learnt about the components of essay, its types. These have allowed better understanding of the shape and construction of essay form. Basically, you are aware of the history and development of essay form which has been charted from 16th to 19th centuries, with its main proponent, Michel de Montaigne. Like any form of writing, essays come in many different types. But, down the years the development of essay form as an entity is inestimable and the various types of essays possible is equally infinite.

2.5 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Exercise 1: Worksheet for Narrative Essay

A Bad Day

1. I should never have deleted the chain letter e-mail from my computer. The letter clearly warned me that if I did, I would have one day of bad luck. Unlike my mother, I tend not to believe these types of things bringing bad luck: breaking a mirror, someone giving me the “evil eye” of even opening an umbrella in the house. As a result, I got rid of this **Superstitious** e-mail with one quick click of the mouse. That night, however, as I fell asleep, I had the uncomfortable feeling that something was not quite right.
2. When I woke up the next morning, I was surprised to find that I had overslept and would be late for work. As I rushed down the stairs to eat a quick breakfast, I tripped over my bag and

3. On my way to work, I decided to take a short cut through an old part of _____ town.

4. When I arrived at work, I found a note from my boss on my desk. She wanted to see me right away. I took a deep breath and walked into her office. As I stepped inside, I noticed a scowl on her face.

5. Finally, after a long and difficult day, I returned home to find that my air conditioner was broken. I could not take it anymore! It had been the worst day ever, and I did not want anything else to happen. I rushed to my computer, opened up my e-mail, and went directly to the deleted e-mail folder. I opened up the letter and reread the words: "Send ten copies of this e-mail to your friends, and you will have good luck for a year." I put on my reading glasses and began scrolling through my list of e-mail contacts. They could take their chances, but I was not going to have any more bad luck!

Exercise 2: Worksheet for Descriptive Essay

Original	Edit
Ex. My day was very busy.	Due to an avalanche of work, I ate lunch at my desk today while catching up on my email.
1. My grandfather is funny.	
2. My mother had a headache.	

3. My friend makes me laugh.	
4. He was nice.	
5. The room was messy.	
6. Her hairstyle is wild.	
7. Our family vacation was a disaster.	
8. Taking tests makes me nervous.	
9. My father is a good man.	
10. Lying is not a good idea.	
11. I was scared.	
12. The twins are completely different from each other.	

Exercise 3: Worksheet for Argumentive Essay

Over the past two years, the number of shoppers in Central Plaza has been steadily decreasing while the popularity of skateboarding has increased dramatically. Many Central Plaza store owners believe that the decrease in their business is due to the number of skateboard users in the plaza. There has also been a dramatic increase in the amount of litter and vandalism throughout the plaza. Thus, we recommend that the city prohibit skateboarding in Central Plaza. If skateboarding is prohibited here, we predict that business in Central Plaza will return to its previously high levels."

Write a response in which you discuss what questions would need to be answered in order to decide whether the recommendation is likely to have the predicted result. Be sure to explain how the answers to these questions would help to evaluate the recommendation.

Exercise 5. Write essays on Cause and Effect Essay

1. Explain the major reasons for the high dropout rate in college.
2. Explain the effects of noise pollution.

2.6 KEY WORDS

alternative	An alternative plan or method is one that you can use if you do not want to use another one
analytic	examining or liking to examine things in detail, in order to discover more about them
interpretative	related to explaining or understanding the meaning of something
literary	relating to literature (= written artistic works, those with a high and lasting artistic value)
composition	the parts, substances, etc. that something is made of
thesis	a long piece of writing on a particular subject, especially one that is done for a higher college or university degree
proposition	an offer or suggestion, usually in business
distinguish	to notice or understand the difference between two things, or to make one person or thing seem different from another
illuminate	to light something and make it brighter
irrelevance:	the fact that something is not related to what is being discussed or considered and therefore not important,

	or an example of this
analysis	the act of studying or examining something in detail, in order to discover or understand more about it, or your opinion and judgment after doing this
significant	important or noticeable
growl	to make a low, rough sound, usually in anger
stalk	the main stem of a plant, or the narrow stem that leaves, flowers, or fruit to the main stem of a plant
savagery	(acts of) cruel and violent behaviour
consideration	the act of thinking about something carefully
refinements	the process of making a substance pure
assumptions	something that you accept as true without question or proof
inadequate	not good enough or too low in quality
implications	an occasion when you seem to suggest something without saying it directly
transition	a change from one form or type to another, or the process by which this happens
exhibits	to show something publicly
descriptive	something that tells you what something or someone is like
expository	explaining or describing something
persuade	to make someone do or believe something by giving them a good reason to do it or by talking to that person and making them believe it
analytical	examining or liking to examine things in detail, in order to discover more about them
synthesis	the production of a substance from simpler materials after a chemical reaction
explicatory	giving an explanation about something
rhetorical	Rhetorical speech or writing is intended to seem important or influence people

2.7 SUGGESTED READING

1. Caulfield, J. (2021). *The four main types of essay*. Quick Guide with Examples
2. *The Art of the Personal Essay: An Anthology from the Classical Era to the Present* – Phillip Lopate
3. *The Oxford Book of Essays* – John Gross
4. *Types of the Essay (Classic Reprint)* by Heydrick Benjamin.

5. *Writing Essays about Literature: A Guide and Style Sheet* by Kelley Griffith
6. *Essays and Letters for Winners: Ideas for Creative Writing* by Anupam Banerjee and Gautam Sen Macmillan Education
7. *Writers at Work: The Essay* by Dorothy E. Zemach and Lynn Stafford- Yilmaz

❖ **Check Your Progress**

Multiple Choice Question with Answer

1. Who describe essay as "One damned thing after another"?
 - A. Francis Bacon
 - B. Aldus Huxley
 - C. Charles Lamb
 - D. E. V. Lucas

2. Who defined essay as "loose sally of the mind"?
 - A. Samuel Johnson
 - B. John Dryden
 - C. Alexander Pope
 - D. George Chapman

3. Which of the following is not a component of an essay?
 - A. Hypothesis
 - B. Thesis
 - C. Problem
 - D. Analysis

4. _____ is the material a writer works with in exploring a thesis.
 - A. Hypothesis
 - B. Problem
 - C. Analysis
 - D. Evidence

5. In essay analysis can also be called _____.
 - A. Interpretation
 - B. Outcome
 - C. Argument
 - D. Reflection

6. _____ is how the sections of an essay are organized and stitched together.

- A. Structure
- B. Argument
- C. Thesis
- D. Problem

7. What is the Hook?

- A. A fascinating closing
- B. A fascinating opening
- C. A dull closing
- D. A dull opening

8. An _____ essay exposes things in detail to make readers understand without any complications.

- A. Narrative
- B. Descriptive
- C. Expository
- D. Persuasive

9. A _____ essay is meant to convince the target audience to do something or not do something.

- A. Narrative
- B. Descriptive
- C. Expository
- D. Persuasive

10. A _____ essay is written on literary pieces to evaluate them on the basis of their merits or demerits.

- A. Critical
- B. Process
- C. Synthesis
- D. Cause and effect essay

11. A _____ essay is just a five-paragraph essay that is written on any topic after it is specified.

- A. Critical
- B. Process
- C. Synthesis
- D. Simple

12. A _____ essay is a narration like a short story.

- A. Narrative
- B. Simple
- C. Descriptive
- D. Expository

13. Which of the following is not a component of a well-written essay?

- A. A clear introduction
- B. A strong thesis statement
- C. Irrelevant information
- D. A well-organized body

14. What is a personal essay?

- A. An essay that explores the writer's own experiences, thoughts, or feelings
- B. An essay that provides information on a particular topic
- C. An essay that is written in a formal style
- B. An essay that is fictional

15. Which of the following is not a common type of essay?

- A. Narrative essay
- B. Haiku essay
- C. Persuasive essay
- D. Descriptive essay

Answers: 1=B, 2=A, 3=A, 4=D, 5=D, 6=A, 7=B, 8=C, 9=D, 10=A, 11=D, 12=A, 13=C, 14=A, 15=B.