Expository Essay
Created by: Brandon Everett

What is an Expository Essay?

An expository essay explores various angles of a specific topic to provide information in an **objective** manner. For example, if the subject is universal healthcare, the paper would provide information on what universal healthcare is, how it works, which countries use it and how it differs from privatized healthcare. All of these issues would be expressed in a *neutral tone*, without trying to convince the reader of either one side or the other.

Expository vs Argumentative

Many students confuse these types of essays. Your goal with the argumentative essay is to convince the reader of your chosen position. In an argumentative paper, using the same example of universal healthcare, you would choose either to convince the reader that universal healthcare is the better healthcare system or that privatized healthcare is better. In short, the main difference between the expository and argumentative essays is that one is **objective** (expository) while the other is **subjective** (argumentative).

Argumentative	Expository
Chooses a position either for or against something	Explores multiple viewpoints of a topic in a neutral way
May be written in the first person (as designated by your instructor/assignment prompt)	Is usually written in third person
Thesis statement presents the writer's **argument**	Thesis statement presents the writer's **topic**
Is subjective	Is objective

Steps for Writing an Expository Essay

Key in on Your Topic
- Review your instructor's prompt – if they provided you with a topic, then become as familiar with it as you can.
- If you're left to find a topic on your own, start with something you're familiar with. This will help the research portion go more smoothly.

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Do Your Research
- Even if you already know a lot about the topic you've chosen, don't skip this step.
- You will probably need to cite sources as evidence, and you should learn more about the topic.
- When researching:
  - ➢ Start broadly by reading a variety of articles on the topic you've chosen/were assigned to see which themes or subtopics are most commonly researched and discussed.
  - ➢ Then, start to narrow your research to include only credible subjects (respected publications, peer reviewed articles, websites written by experts in the field).
  - ➢ As you research, take notes on all of the possible topics you might want to cover in your work.
  - ➢ Once you have a list of topics to cover, pick and choose a few of them that you can develop a discussion around.

Developing Your Thesis
Remember, an expository essay "exposes" the reader to a topic; it informs the reader with details, descriptions, or explanations of a subject. If you are writing an expository essay, your thesis statement should explain to the reader what they will learn in your essay. For example:

"The United States spends more money on its military budget than all the industrialized nations combined."

"Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) increases the risk of stroke and arterial fibrillation (irregular heartbeat)."

These statements provide a declaration of fact about the topic (not just opinion) but leave the door open for you to elaborate with plenty of details.

Outline and Draft Your Paper
- Introduce your topic in an interesting way by telling a compelling story, citing a shocking statistic or a quote that eloquently sums up the main point or central idea of your paper. The introduction will also include your thesis statement which outlines the chosen topics of discussion.
- Include multiple body paragraphs (depending on assignment length), each covering one of the topics outlined in the thesis.
- Conclusion: Drive home the discussion with a conclusion that focuses on the significance of your topic and, if relevant, suggest further research or discussions that should be conducted.

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Reference:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/academic_writing/essay_writing/expository_essays.html