

NON-FICTION UNIT

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

<p>Allegory: a narrative in which the characters and sometimes the setting represent general concepts and ideas</p>	<p>Example: fables in which personified animals are used allegorically to teach lessons of human conduct (e.g. "the Hare and the Tortoise")</p>
<p>Denotation: the thing or situation to which the word specifically refers - definition in the dictionary</p>	<p>Example: Home denotes the place where a person lives</p>
<p>Connotation: associated meanings it implies or suggests - attach personal meaning to the word</p>	<p>Example: Home connotes intimacy, privacy, coziness</p>
<p>Exaggeration (Hyperbole): emphasizes a fact</p>	<p>Example: "He was going to live the life of a tree or vegetable."</p>
<p>Image/Imagery: appeals to one or more of the senses by creating a vivid impression through the use of concrete details, adjectives and figures of speech</p>	<p>Example: The beauty of the daisy is conveyed using imagery such as "a nun demure" and "a silver shield with boss of gold."</p>
<p>Repetition: is used for emphasis and rhythm</p>	<p>Example: "It was a strange night, a hushed night, a moonless night, and all you could do was go to a movie."</p>
<p>Analogy: helps the reader understand something unfamiliar by comparing it to something well-known.</p>	<p>Example: Comparing an anthill to an urban centre helps to convey the fact that anthills are heavily populated, busy, and have regular patterns of movement.</p>
<p>Bias: an opinion or influence that strongly favours one side in an argument or one item in a group or series.</p>	<p>Example: George Bush is only attacking Iraq because of his interest in the oil supply.</p>
<p>Anecdote: short amusing or interesting story, especially one that is true.</p>	
<p>Abnormal Word Order: gives variety and emphasis to your writing by modifying the usual subject-verb sentence pattern</p>	<p>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."</p>
<p>Balanced Sentence: expresses two or more equal and parallel ideas - two ideas are set off one against the other in statements that are grammatically similar - symmetry and equilibrium</p>	<p>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."</p>
<p>Balanced Sentence – Antithetical/Contrasting</p>	<p>Example #1: "Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more." Example #2: "Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers."</p>
<p>Climatic Word Order: presents several facts in order from least to most important</p>	<p>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."</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>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."</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>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."</p>
<p>Repetition: used for emphasis and rhythm</p>	<p>Example: "There is no mistake; there has been no mistake; and there shall be no mistake."</p>
<p>Reversals: make a balanced sentence even more memorable by repeating the words in reverse order</p>	<p>Example: "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." (John F. Kennedy)</p>
<p>Rhetorical Question: is one whose answer is already known or implied</p>	<p>Example: "Can anyone deny that the microchip has revolutionized communication?"</p>
<p>Sentence Fragment: places emphasis on key words to create an overall effect, such as humour or suspense.</p>	<p>Example: "A cold room. A lonely room. A bare room. No place to spend twenty years of a life."</p>
<p>Understatement (Litotes): creates the reverse effect (and adds a touch of irony) by making the fact seem less significant</p>	<p>Example: "Bruce Willis' onscreen characters frequently find themselves in a bit of a jam."</p>
<p>Satire: ridicule, irony, or sarcasm in speech or writing (or media) -a novel, play, etc. that ridicules people's hypocrisy or foolishness in this way</p>	<p>Example: e.g. <i>The Simpsons</i> <i>Bowling for Columbine</i></p>

DEVELOPING 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: illustrates point with reference to a personal or shared experience, statistics, analogy, or quote from an 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>