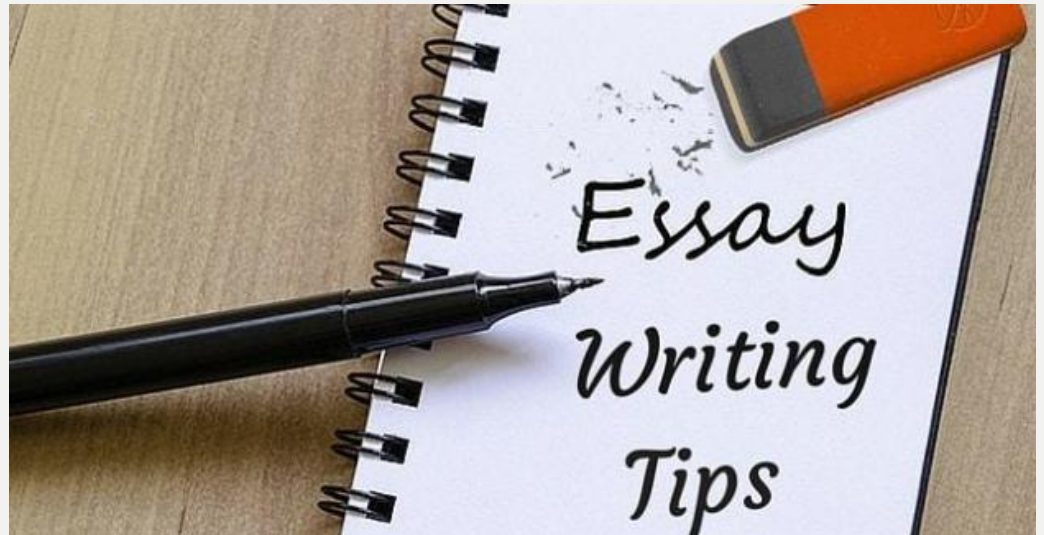


Essay Writing Workshop

■ Essential Questions:

- *Why write an essay?*
- *What is the structure of an essay?*
- *How do you write a thesis statement?*



Why do we write essays?

- Essays, especially expository essays, are used to give information about a certain topic or show your understanding about a piece of literature
- Because essays are longer, they let us show a more in-depth understanding of a topic



How are Essays Structured?

- They are multi-paragraph (3 or more paragraphs)
- They have an introduction paragraph with a thesis
- Body paragraphs that give evidence for the thesis (Jr. aim for 1-2 body paragraphs and Sr. aim for 3 body paragraphs)
- Concluding paragraph that summarizes your main points

Let's take a look at the
assignment/outline

The image features a solid purple background. Two large, dark purple L-shaped brackets are positioned on the left and right sides, framing the central text. The left bracket starts at the top left and extends downwards and then rightwards. The right bracket starts at the top right and extends downwards and then leftwards. The text is centered between these brackets.

THESIS STATEMENTS

What is a Thesis Statement?

- Almost all of us—even if we don't do it consciously—look early in an essay for a one- or two-sentence condensation of the argument or analysis that is to follow. We refer to that condensation as a thesis statement.
- A thesis is the argument of your essay. Every point you make should connect back to your thesis

Why Should Your Essay Contain A Thesis Statement?

- to test your ideas by distilling them into a sentence or two
- to better organize and develop your argument
- to provide your reader with a “guide” to your argument

Your thesis statement is the answer to the question that your paper explores.

How to Generate a Thesis Statement if the Topic is Assigned.

- Almost all assignments, no matter how complicated, can be reduced to a single question.
- Your first step: turn the assignment prompt into a specific question (if it is not already phrased like a question).

- Example: if your assignment is “Write a report to the local school board explaining the potential benefits of using computers in a fourth-grade class,” turn the request into a question like “What are the potential benefits of using computers in a fourth-grade class?”

Let's try turning a few of our
essay topics into questions
together!

- After you've chosen the question your essay will answer, compose one or two complete sentences answering that question.
- **Q:** "What are the potential benefits of using computers in a fourth-grade class?"
- **A:** "The potential benefits of using computers in a fourth-grade class are . . ."
- **The answer to the question is the thesis statement for the essay.**

A good thesis statement will usually include the following four attributes:

- take on a subject upon which reasonable people could disagree
- deal with a subject that can be adequately treated given the nature of the assignment
- express one main idea
- assert your conclusions about a subject

How to Tell a Strong Thesis Sentence from a Weak One.

- A strong thesis takes some sort of stand.
- A strong thesis justifies discussion.
- A strong thesis expresses one main idea.
- A strong thesis statement is specific.

How to Generate a Thesis Statement if the Topic is Not Assigned.

- What if your assignment doesn't ask a specific question?
- Your thesis statement still needs to answer a question about the issue you'd like to explore.
- In this situation, your job is to figure out what question you'd like to write about.