

8 Steps to a Brilliant Essay

An essay is your side of a conversation about the topic you're studying. It is your opportunity to say everything you know about the topic and how you know it. Your essay should reflect your ideas in your own words.

1. Understand the Question

- Do you know what the question means?
- What type of essay do you need to write?
 - Compare and Contrast?
 - Descriptive?
 - Persuasive?
 - Argumentative?
 - Opinion?
 - Discussion?



2. Break the Question Down

- Turn the question into a number of smaller questions that need to be answered before the main question can be answered.

3. Do your research.

- You need to become an expert on the essay topic:
 - Read the text
 - Is there any other information you need to find out?
 - Write down quotations - and where they come from



4. Plan your Answer



- Decide how many paragraphs you need to answer the questions from step 2
- Decide on the points you need to include in each paragraph

5. Introduction.

- Grab the reader's attention
- You might want to use one of the following:
 - An interesting fact
 - An important piece of information
 - A quotation
 - A definition or explanation of a word or words in the question
 - A summary of the text you are studying
 - A rhetorical question
- Get to the point and be specific
- Let the reader know what your essay is about



6. PEE.

- Each paragraph must include:
 - Point
 - Make a brief point which answers one of your questions from step 2
 - This will tell the reader what the topic of the paragraph is
 - Evidence
 - Select one or more quotations that back up your point
 - This is where you prove that your point is fact and not opinion
 - Put in brackets after the quotation where you found it (Author, Title, Page number)
 - Explain
 - Now explain what your quotation means and how it backs up your point
- Make a clear transition between each paragraph, using connectives
 - "Not only...also..."
 - "Besides..."
 - "In addition to..."
 - "However..."
 - "Although..." etc.

7. Conclusion.

- Recap your main ideas as a summary of what you have written
 - Give your opinion and the brief answer to the question
 - Leave a memorable impression in the reader's mind
 - Do not introduce new ideas to the essay
- You might want to end with:
 - an interesting thought
 - an explanation of why the topic is an important one
 - a comment on consequences
 - a powerful image
 - a thought provoking quotation

The End

8. Proofread

- Read through your essay several times
 - Reading through your work backwards as well as forwards often makes it easier to pick up on spelling mistakes, because you are reading the words out of context.
- Get someone else to read it through, but don't allow them to rewrite anything for you
- If you have written it on the computer, check the spelling, punctuation and grammar yourself, as spellcheckers often get it wrong!
- Polish your language - make it more interesting and intelligent, even making use of a thesaurus



****** If you want to type your essays please write it in size 11 or 12, and in an easy to read font. Comic Sans is good, as is Times New Roman. Make sure you write the title at the top and put your name on the essay.