

Writing Ex. > Types of Essays

What is an essay?

In a nutshell, an academic essay is a structured form of writing students face in school, college, and university as a part of their curricula. The most common purposes of such writing are to either present some new pieces of information or to use existing facts and knowledge to deliver specific ideas. This type of assignment allows students to demonstrate their knowledge and creativity and encourages them to develop their ideas to communicate a message. Here are some key features of an academic essay for you to keep in mind:



- **Conciseness** — as a rule, essays are short; the length ranges from 200 to 500 words.
- **Topic** — a perfect topic for an essay should be narrowed-down and not too broad.
- **Well-structured text** — they need to have a solid structure and follow the proper format.
- **Clear central idea** — every essay should deliver a specific point that should be clear and powerful (i.e. thesis statement).
- **Supporting facts, evidence, and examples** — although essays may present an author's personal beliefs and ideas, they should also provide arguments that support those ideas.

1. Opinion Essays

- 1.1 To what extent do you agree/disagree?
- 1.2 Do you agree/disagree?
- 1.3 What is your opinion?

Example:

- “Many people say that the only way to guarantee a good job is to complete a course in university education. Others claim that it is better to start work after school and gain experience in the world of work. **How far do you agree or disagree with the above views? Give a reason for your answer and include any relevant examples from your knowledge or experience.**”

TIPS:

- Provide reasons and supporting details to convince the reader.
- You may be inclined to only one side of the argument (completely agree or disagree).
- ALWAYS give 2 or 3 reasons to support your opinion > provide specific details in each paragraph

OR Give 2 reasons to support your opinion, and in the 3rd paragraph an opponent's opinion with your refutation.

OR Analyze both sides of the issue and state which side you are in favor of at the same time.
- Give your opinion in the introduction and in the conclusion.
- You can use phrases such as 'I think', 'I believe', 'I agree' and examples of your own experience.

2. Discussion Essays

- 2.1 Discuss both sides
- 2.2 Discuss both sides and give your opinion

Example:

- “Some people prefer to directly help or support people who need it in the local community, however, others prefer to give money to national or international charities. **Discuss both views and give your own opinion.**”



Examples taken from <https://ieltsmaterial.com/writing/writing-task-2/> and <https://ieltsliz.com/types-of-ielts-essays/>
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TIPS:

- Discuss both sides of the argument given in the task.
- Check if your opinion is asked. Give it if the task requires so.
- ALWAYS give 2 or 3 reasons to support each side of the argument.
- You can use phrases such as 'people think', 'people believe', 'It is believed', but **DO NOT USE** examples of your own knowledge or experience.

3. Advantage-disadvantage Essays

- 3.1 **What are the advantages or disadvantages?**
- 3.2 **Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?**

Example:

- "Some people think that youngsters should be required to do unpaid work helping people in the community. **Are disadvantages of this requirement greater than the benefits for the community and individuals?**"

TIPS:

- Discuss both advantages and disadvantages of the argument given in the task.
- Check if your opinion is asked. Give it if the task requires so.
- ALWAYS give 2 or 3 reasons to support each side of the argument.
- You must use examples for each side. Write a paragraph for advantages and another one for disadvantages.

4. Solution Essays

- 4.1 **What are the possible solutions?**
- 4.2 **Why is this the case? What solutions can you suggest?**
- 4.3 **What problems does it cause? What are the possible solutions?**

Example:

- "People today do not feel safe either at home or when they are out. **What are the causes? What are the solutions?**"

TIPS:

- Discuss the causes and solutions/effects of the argument given in the task.
- Check if your opinion is asked. Give it if the task requires so.
- ALWAYS give 2 or 3 reasons to support each side of the argument.
- Make each paragraph with a problem and its corresponding solution.

5. Direct Question(s) Essays or Two-question Essay

- 5.1 **It might contain one, two or three questions for you to answer.**

Example:

- **"How is success measured? What makes a successful person? Do you think wealth is the best measure of success?"**

TIPS:

- Paraphrase the question(s) in the intro with an idea of what you are going to discuss.
- Discuss each question fully and provide relevant and specific reasons/examples.
- ALWAYS summarize the main points of each argument.
- The reasons must be developed within the context of the question to score high marks for the task achievement. Outline each answer in the introduction.



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