



Essay Writing

idea

noun

by

1 a plan
by thinking

2 a

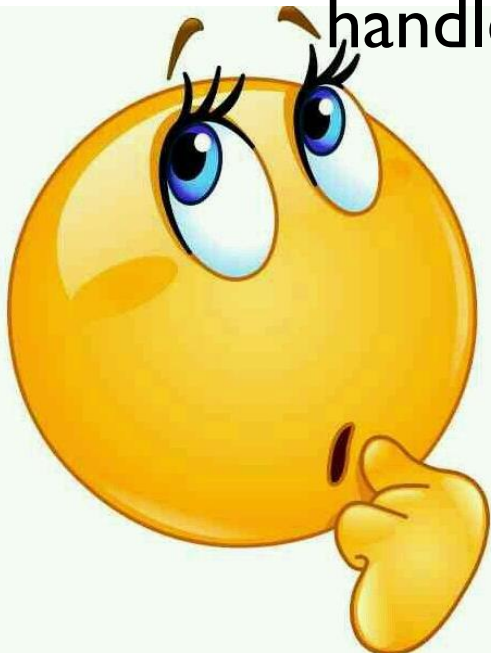
Learning Objectives

By the end of this lecture you should be able to:

- Plan an essay
- Recognise the different stages of an essay, and what to include in each
- Identify the 'Do's and Don'ts of essay writing

What is an essay for?

- To give you the opportunity to demonstrate that you know and understand specific information related to your course
- To give you the opportunity to show how you handle information – how you organise it, analyse it, evaluate it.



What is an essay?

The word essay comes from the Latin word meaning 'to present a case'.

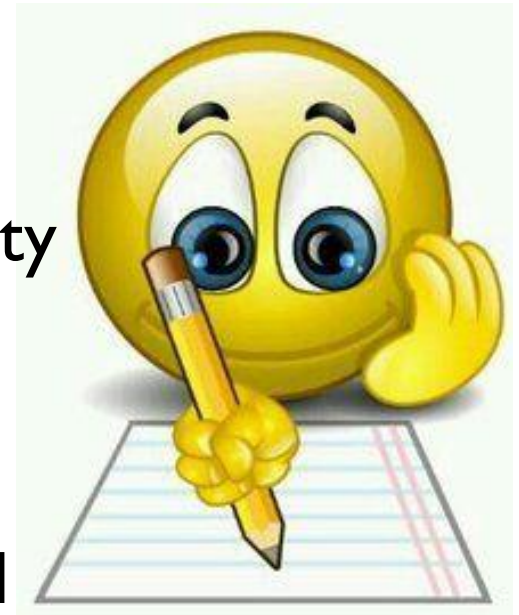
In an essay you are presenting a case, presenting information to the reader.

This will involve you presenting other people's arguments.



An essay...

- Is written in continuous prose –
 - No subheadings
 - No bullet points
 - No pictures, illustrations, charts, or graphs
- Has a set length
 - Usually have +/- 10% flexibility
- Has a set form
 - Beginning, middle and an end



Essay Writing Rules....

- Must be academically written – this means considering several factors...
 - No slang terms
 - Use full words – No contractions (can't, won't, shouldn't)
 - No abbreviations like etc, e.g., i.e (use terms like ...'for example', ...'and so on'.
 - Introduce abbreviations correctly - National Health Service (NHS) can then be referred to as NHS throughout your essay.

Essay Writing Rules...

- Must be written in 3rd person – as if telling a story – no use of I, we, you, us)
- Must make use of paragraphs. Paragraphs should be meaty, they are not one or two sentences long, but they should only be one point per paragraph.
- Don't ask the reader a direct question
- Always give your essay a title (this may be directed by your lecturer)
- Never give your opinion – unless asked for it

Essay Writing Rules...

- Always provide a citation to show where you have retrieved your sources from (at least one for every 100 words of your word count).
- Use appropriate spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Use size 12 font in a professional style
- Line space your essay at 1.5 or 2.0
- Always submit a draft

Stages in Essay writing

There are 7 main stages to writing an essay:

- 1. Managing your time**
- 2. Analysing the title**
- 3. Planning your main body structure**
- 4. Gathering relevant information**
- 5. Writing-rewriting, proof reading**
- 6. Referencing (using the Harvard System)**
- 7. Proof reading again!!!**

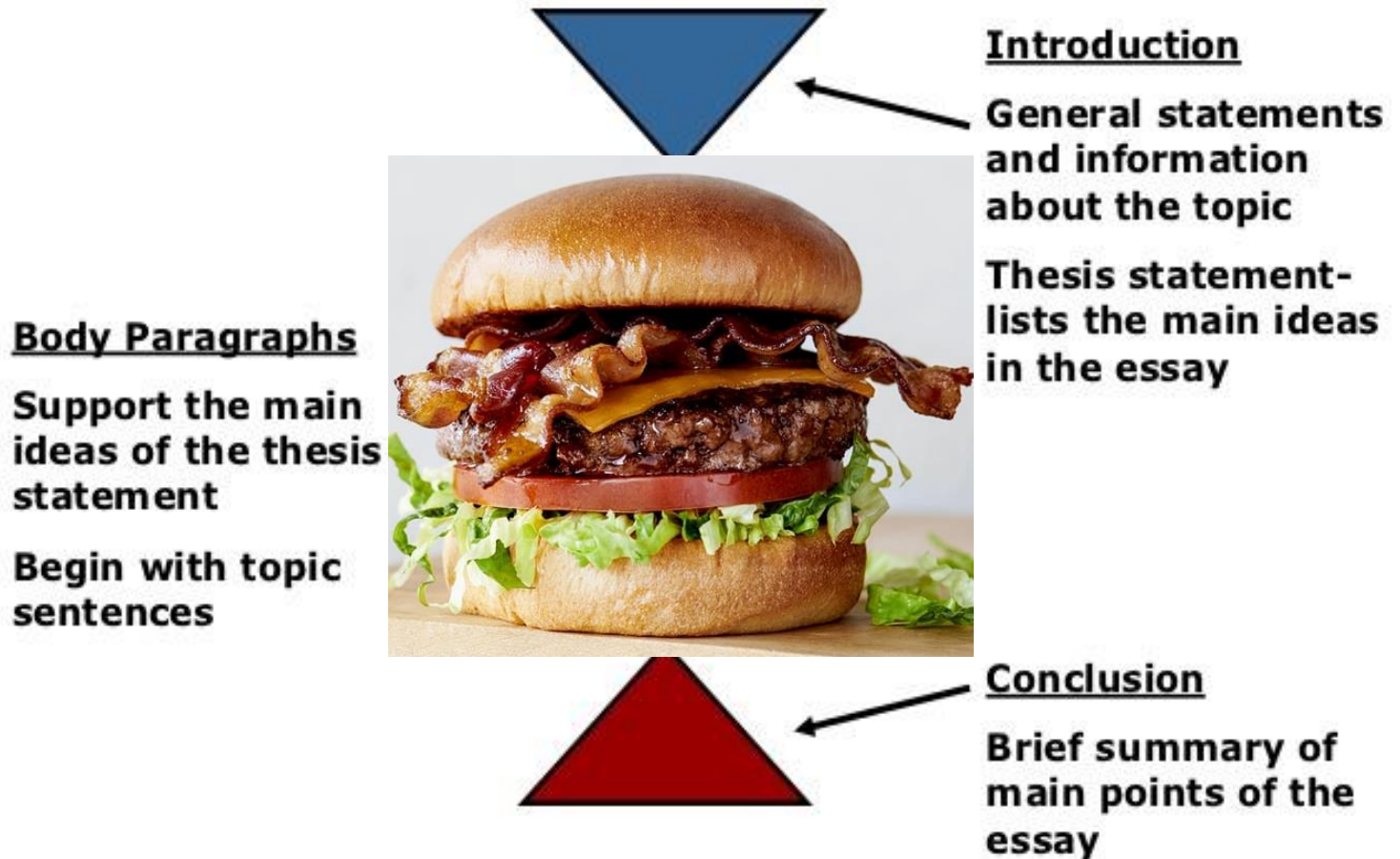
Essay Writing

- Academic essays follow a standardised structural format that usually has five or more paragraphs
- An essay is written about one topic that has several main points
- The main points are introduced in the introductory (first) paragraph and supported in the main body paragraphs
- The conclusion is the last paragraph.

Essay Structure

- Title or Question
- Introduction (10%)
- Main Body (80%)
- Conclusion (10%)
- Reference List (essential) not included in word count. (Bibliography only if requested by lecturer).

Overview of an Essay



Essay Structure

Introduction – write this last

- Usually short and introduces the context and reason for writing the essay.
- ‘Here’s what this essay is going to show’

Main body

- Develops key themes and topics around the writer’s position or argument, which link together to produce a logical and coherent progression of ideas. Each paragraph links to the ‘thesis statement’ or title

Conclusion – write this last

- Summarises the content of the essay and presents concluding arguments and implications for the future
- ‘Here’s what this essay has shown’



Introduction –
'Here's what this essay is
going to show, and how its
going to show it'

Main body –
'show it'

Conclusion –
'Here's what this essay has
shown, and how it's shown
it'

Main Body



Main body

Always start with the main body!

Although writing it first, it will be the 'middle' part of your essay.

This is where you respond to the task, the 'thesis statement', or the question set, by using a series of linking paragraphs.

Main Body

- Should be split into paragraphs – one point per paragraph
- Fully explains the arguments or claims which you make in your introduction.

Each paragraph -

- Usually makes a point then introduces and explains evidence from your reading/ research to support the point.
- Compares views/opinions.
 - In order to corroborate any point you must use evidence from a range of sources from your reading/research (try at least 2).

Main Body

- Close your paragraph with a link to the next paragraph if you can (but this can always be done in your re-draft!)
- If your paragraph is only 4 or 5 lines long – then it is not a paragraph... It's sentences.
- Tell the reader how sources are similar or different. 'Compare and Contrast'.

Compare and Contrast

- Compare – showing similarities
 - Thomas (2018) identifies that... Jones (2017) shares a similar view, adding...
 - Jones (2017) and Thomas (2018) are of the same opinion that....
- Contrast – showing differences
 - Thomas (2018) identifies that..., however Jones (2017) takes an opposing view, adding...
 - Jones (2017) disagrees, highlighting that...

Examples to introduce your evidence

- The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) (date) advises that ...
- For instance, the NMC (date) argues ...
- It is evident in the NMC (date) 'Code of Conduct' that ...
- As an example, the NMC (date) suggests within its 'Code of Conduct' that ...
- According to the NMC (date) ...

Examples to interpret the evidence

- This statement shows that ...
- This can be regarded as evidence that ...
- The meaning/ implication of this statement is ...
- This suggests/illustrates that ...

Introduction





Introduction

First complete paragraph of your essay!

This is where you tell the reader exactly how you are going to tackle the question or address the task.

This is where you provide an agenda of your essay and signpost what is to come!

Introduction



- Is very important – it establishes the context, topic and focus of your response to the essay question.
- A good introduction should present an interesting, succinct and logical reason for writing the essay/assignment that will encourage the reader to continue to read.

Introduction

- Usually includes:
 - An attention grabbing statement.
 - For example - identification of a problem, a controversial issue or point of view, or the relevance of the topic today.
- Definitions and explanations of key terms
 - You should have identified what these are from your analysis of the assignment question /task.
 - This is setting your parameters!

Introduction

- Background and scene setting
 - Provide an overview and context for the topic.
 - Maybe briefly describe and summarise the condition that lead to the problem you are discussing.
- Identifying the focus
 - Narrows the context to the focus area, relevant titles and thesis statement by setting parameters.
 - Maybe include some of the key writers, critics, theorists and experts connected to the research and discussion.

(Hopkins and Reid, 2018: 11)



Example of a good and bad introduction.



Boxing is an archaic sport which has no place in a modern society. It should be banned because people get killed. Anyone who wants to watch two people beat each other unconscious is uncivilised. There are lots of other reasons why boxing should be banned too.



There have been calls in recent years from some leading medical bodies for a complete ban on boxing within the United Kingdom (UK), ostensibly on medical grounds. Counter arguments have claimed that these demands are really based on moralistic reasoning, rather than any medical consideration. This essay will examine the medical arguments supporting the ban of boxing presented by these medical bodies including the British Medical Association (BMA) and the Department of Health (DoH). The essay will show that statistically, boxing is less likely per capita to result in death, whilst serious injury has not been researched enough for any conclusive judgements to be made. In lieu of statistical evidence, the essay will argue that these calls for bans are, in the opinion of the British Boxing Association (BBA), based upon moral distaste and pose the question: 'who has the right to make these moral decisions on behalf of others?'



Conclusion

Conclusion

- Is very important – it presents the final words of the essay.
- Should leave the reader satisfied that you have provided a thorough, well-researched and reasoned response to the assignment question/task.
- An indication that the essay is finished, that the purpose has been achieved and the question answered.

Conclusion

Should:

- Reiterate the main statements using different wording to the introduction.
- Complete the essay by briefly summarising the most important ideas previously discussed in the essay.
- Outline any implications, limitations, future investigations/research which may be needed.
- Include a prediction or suggestion/recommendation for a solution to a problem or a possible way forward.



Example of a good and bad conclusion.



It does not seem to be that medical bodies have enough for a ban on medical grounds. Who has a right to ban things? Who has the right to tell others what to do? I think, therefore, that a ban should not happen.



The medical reasons for the banning of boxing presented within this essay have centred on the likelihood of injury and death. The statistics on deaths presented from the DoH (2019) however, have shown that participants in boxing are less likely to be killed than participants in other sports, including Formula 1 racing, which attract no such criticisms. The pro-banning arguments, that these statistics do not take into account serious but non-fatal injury such as brain damage, are also inconclusive as convincing statistics for this do not yet exist, leading to the suggestions made by Thomas (2019) that much more research needs to be undertaken in order to process these. A powerful argument made by the pro-boxing lobby is that underlying the medical arguments is a strong moral revulsion to the activity, which gives rise to the question 'who has the right to decide these issues?' Anyone attempting to take the 'moral high ground' runs the risk of being accused of infringing on an individual's autonomy, and the right to make one's own decisions, and take one's own risks. On these grounds a ban on boxing should perhaps be postponed until more conclusive medical evidence is gained, then permitting a debate to occur as to whether this is enough to infringe on a person's choice of activities with the implementation of a ban.

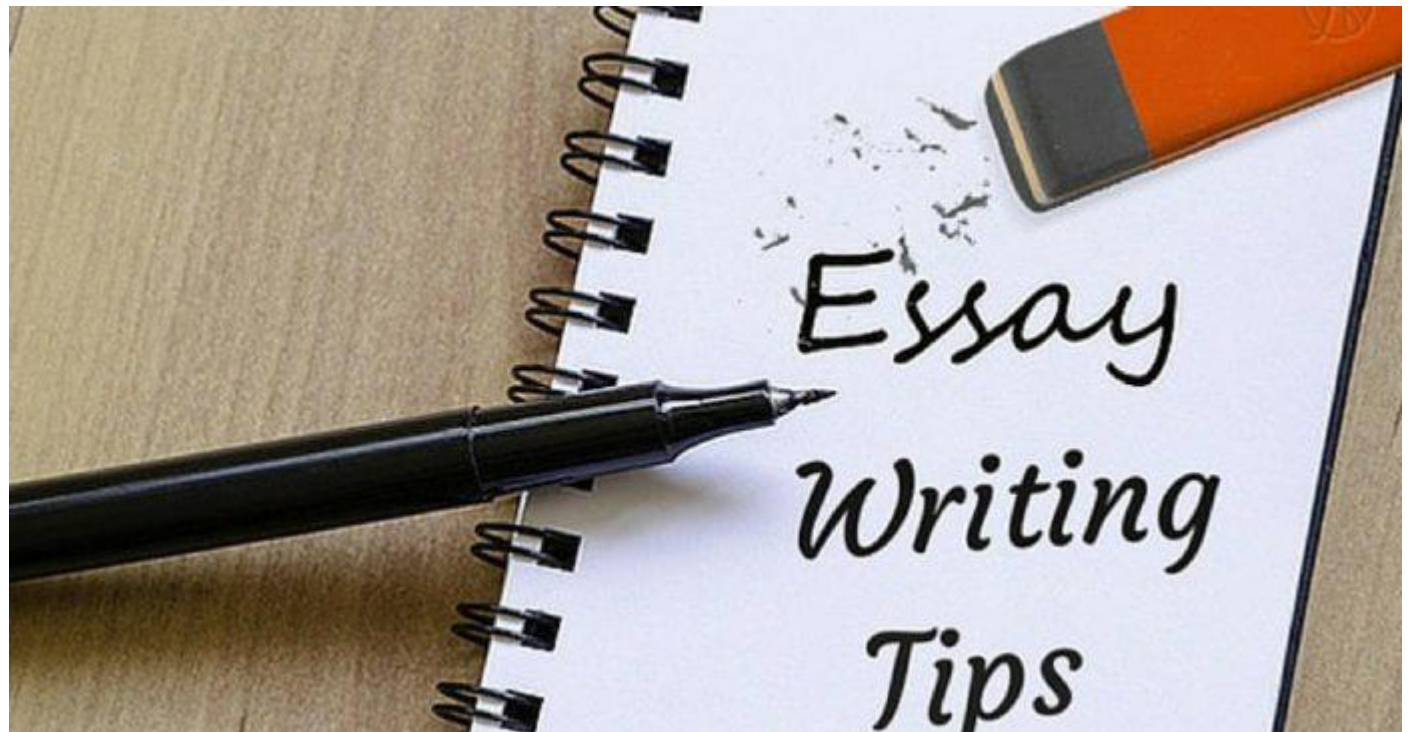
References

The record of the full details of the sources that you have 'made reference' to within your main body, by providing a citation

Must use the Harvard Referencing System

Must be in alphabetical order!

(Remember to Cite when you write and always put in brackets what you wouldn't say out loud)



Do...

- Read and analyse what the question/assignment brief is really asking you
- Undertake plenty of early background reading and research using a wide range of materials (Books, journals, reliable electronic sources etc)
- Make a time plan
- Start early—taking notes and researching
- Make an essay plan before you begin to write
- Stick to the questions asked/ assignment brief
- Write a rough draft, allow your tutor to read it and provide feedback
- Reference correctly
- Read through before handing in, and leave plenty of time for corrections
- Hand in on time

Don't...

- Leave research and preparation time to the last minute
- Gather materials only a few days before the submission date
- Copy large sections of text from books (plagiarism)
- Forget to make a note of where information came from as you go along, as you will not know the information to reference
- Rely on the computer to pick up all your spelling and grammatical errors
- Use limited sources/references. The more you have read the better your knowledge and understanding will be
- Use irrelevant/unreliable material
- Put quotes in or paraphrase without references
- Rush it
- Sit and worry about it **SEEK HELP FROM TUTOR**



**KEEP
CALM**

AND

**WRITE YOUR
ESSAY**

