

Academic Writing

Difference between Essay and Report



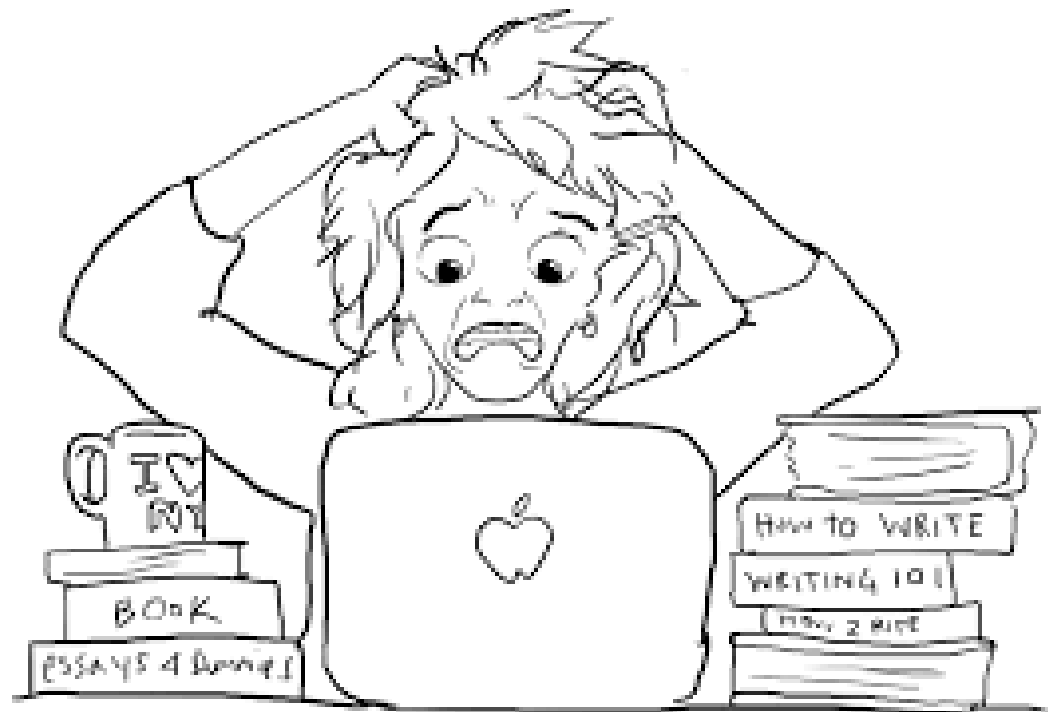
Learning Objectives

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

- Describe the difference between an essay and a report.

Difference between an essay and a report.

What is the difference?



Formal Writing

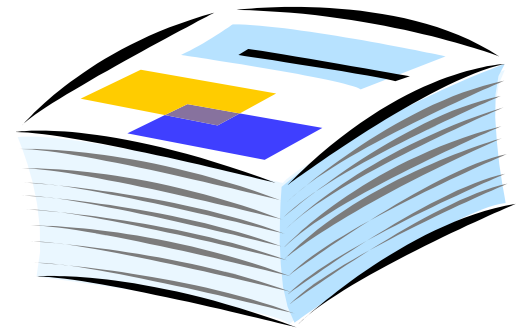
- Report

- A spoken or written account of something seen, done or studied.



- Essay

- A shorter piece of writing on a given subject matter



The difference between an Essay and a Report

Essay

- An essay requires you to think and write about ideas presented in the form of a question or statement for you to analyse.
- Essays allow you explore hypothetical situations and to expand on possibilities, ideas and concepts.



The difference between an Essay and a Report

Report

- A report is a factual and systematic account of what has happened or is happening .
- A report usually makes recommendations, but an essay will not always do this.



Class Activity

- Academic Writing True or False statements.
- Complete the checklist provided deciding if each statement is true or false.
- Be prepared to feedback your answers.

False or True

- The ability to write well is something that you are born with

False – writing is a skill and a discipline

- Great writers are not born, they are made

True – Some find it easier than others, but academic writing is not a skill you are born with.

- In order to write well you need to wait for inspiration

False – sit and write out your ideas, a little like a warm up before you begin your race.

- When you write you should not use your own words

False – everything needs to be your own work except when giving a direct quote

False or True

- Academic writing is different from other kinds of writing you may be asked to do

True – it follows certain rules around language and the style of writing

- It is important to back up what you say with evidence

True – every statement that is made needs to be backed up

- Most of the time you spend on an assignment should be used in the planning

True – the more time spent planning the clearer your thinking and the easier it will be to write

False or True

- Using other people's ideas without acknowledging them is plagiarism

True – This is a form of cheating

- The reference list is another name for a bibliography

False – the references are what you have referred to directly, whereas the bibliography refers to other reading you have done to understand the subject but have not specifically referred to in the essay.

- Writing is difficult.

It can be difficult at first but becomes easier with practice.



Essay Writing

The essay is a traditional form of assessment in higher education.

A piece of formal writing for students to demonstrate to tutors their in-depth understanding, questioning and evaluation of a topic.

Essays offer you an opportunity to learn more about a topic and to develop skills of structured writing.

Essay writing will encourage you to research a subject and to analyse a range of arguments and perspectives.

An Essay

- From Latin for 'to argue'.
- Particular structure and layout.
- Formal, academic style.
- Question to answer or statement to discuss.
- Follows certain conventions - a process with clear, logical steps.



Why Write an Essay?

- explore a topic
- develop and organise ideas
- writing skills
- own views about a topic
- assess progress

Different Types of Essays

Show what you know essays

- *Argument or Discussion Essay*
 - Investigates a topic, collects and evaluates evidence and presents a reasoned and supported position.
- *Problem-Solution Essay*
 - Type of argument essay that identifies a problem and proposes one or more solutions, supported by investigation and research.

Different Types of Essays

Show what you know essays

- *Cause and Effect Essay*
 - Focuses on reasons why something happens (cause) and what happens as a result (effect).
- *Reflective Essay*
 - A reflection of the writer's own personal attitudes, experiences, thoughts and feelings about a specified topic or activity and how it has impacted on their learning and/or life.

(Hopkins and Reid, 2018: 9)

Different Types of Essays

Show what you think essays

- *Definition or Factual Essay*
- Explores and explains what specific terms means. Terms can be concrete (e.g. nuclear fusion, greenhouse effect) or abstract (e.g. trust, caution, fear).
- *Review Essay*
 - A summary or critical evaluation of one or more texts e.g. journal article, case, study, chapter of a book.

(Hopkins and Reid, 2018: 10)

Purpose of a Report

- A report is used to provide an account of a given process or research.
- Sometimes utilised to persuade with factual evidence.
- Often a conclusion is provided as a result of the factual representation given in the report.
- This may be followed by recommendations.

Why Write a Report?

- Present specific research-based information.
- States a course of action.
- Gives information concisely and accurately.
- Impersonal and objective.
- Outlines and discusses clear findings.
- Using a minimum of words.
- Standard, rigid structure.

Reports

- Clearly defined sections.
- Used to outline the process of something and how that process was conducted.
- Larger collection of literature.

Structure of a Report

Title Page

Contents Page

Executive Summary (or Abstract)

1. Introduction
2. Literature review
3. Methodology
4. Main Findings/results
5. Conclusions
6. Recommendations
7. References
8. Appendices

References

- Payne, E. & Whittaker, L. (2006), *Developing Essential Study Skills*. 2nd Edition, Harlow: Pearson Education Limited
- Craig, C. (2009), *Study Skills for Health and Social Care Students*, London: Sage
- Cottrell, S. (2003), *The Study Skills Handbook*. 2nd Edition, Basingstoke, Palgrave: Macmillan
- Hopkins, D. and Reid, T. (2018) *The Academic Skills Handbook*. London: Sage