

Aim: How do we understand what is being asked of us on an essay?

What Writing Form?

One of the key stumbling blocks of writing prompt [*task*] interpretation [*explain the meaning*] is figuring out what form of writing is required.

For example, is it an expository, narrative, or persuasive prompt?

Sometimes prompts clearly specify the form of writing to be used, or give strong hints with words like “persuade” for the persuasive writing form.

But often on tests, the task of deciphering [*understanding*] which form of writing to use is part of the challenge.

**The trick is to recognize the clues given in the prompt.
Here are some key words to look for:**

Type of Essay or question	Writing prompt key words:
Expository	Explain, define, classify, analyze, compare/contrast, cause/effect
Narrative	Describe, tell about or relate an experience.
Persuasive	Convince, give your opinion, choose a point of view, what is your position on this issue, argue for or against
<p>-Identify & Define discuss, explain, evaluate, analyze. -Discuss the identifiers and task on an essay question sheet. -Explain how to break down the task information of an essay.</p>	

Understanding the prompt!

- 1- What form of writing is the prompt asking for?
- 2- What ideas or arguments will the reader (teacher) expect you to suggest? Would these points be good paragraph topics?
- 3- What does the prompt expect you to do?
- 4- How does the audience (teacher) affect your writing choices?
- 5- Write a quick, one-sentence answer to each question asked in the prompt. Use these answers to develop your outline and thesis!

I- How will I understand what is being asked?

- A. Locate the essential question; if there is no question you will have to create a question out of the information you are being given.
 1. Determine what is being asked for you to figure out or do. One of a few things:

- **Discuss** - means "to make observations about something using facts, reasoning, and argument; to present in some detail"
- **explain** means "to make plain or understandable; to give reason for or causes of; to show the logical development or relationships of"

- **evaluate** means "to examine and judge the significance, worth, or condition of: to determine the value of"
- **analyze** means "to determine the nature and relationship of the component elements"

NOTICE HOW THIS ONE IS WRITTEN-

- **compare and contrast-** to "express similarities and differences
- PLEASE be advised that things are written in order. Compare appears 1st then contrast. How should the definition be worded if the words were listed:
- Contrast and Compare-?

You also need to understand this word:

Identify

- verb (**identifies, identifying, identified**) [with obj.]
- **1** establish or indicate who or what (someone or something) is: *the judge ordered that the girl not be identified | the contact would identify himself simply as Cobra.*
- • recognize or distinguish (esp. something considered worthy of attention): *a system that ensures that the student's real needs are identified.*
- **2 (identify someone/something with)** associate (someone) closely with; regard (someone) as having strong links with: *he was equivocal about being identified too closely with the peace movement.*
- • equate (someone or something) with: *because of my upstate accent, people identified me with a homely farmer's wife.*
- • [no obj.] (**identify with**) regard oneself as sharing the same characteristics or thinking as someone else: *I liked Fromm and identified with him.*

Explain how to break down an essay question so that you know what you are to write about.

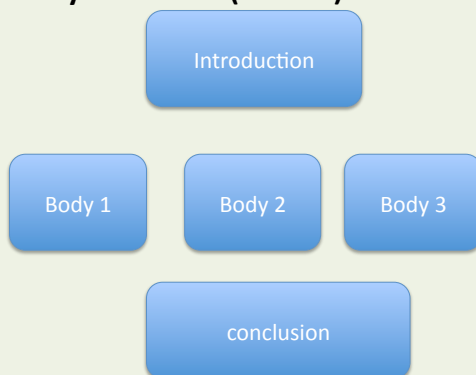
How do we determine what we are to write about on the past essay?

Question: Evaluate the reign of Emperor Justinian. Did he revive the Roman Empire in the Byzantine Empire? What is his legacy?

- What must you 1st do?
- What is the last thing you need to do?

Aim: How to format your outline & your essay?

System 1-3-1 (outline)



The question or task:

- What does the question ask?
- Do you have to make a decision based on the question?
- What kind of decision?
- What information do you need to prove that your decision is the correct decision?
- Regardless of whether you are right or wrong, can you prove your stance?
- What information must you provide?

Magic of Three

Introduction paragraph

- This sets the tone of your essay.
- Use the Magic of Three.
- Three is an easy number:
 - 3 little pigs
 - 3 times a charm
 - ??

Introductory paragraph states the 3 top points you will write about. Introduce each in its own sentence ending with your thesis statement (point of view) which you will support in your 3 body paragraphs.

Concluding paragraph restates your thesis statement and ends by showing its broader historical context. Context is how it relates to the world or civilizations as a whole.

Pick three things to write about.

- There will be more, but only focus on 3.
- Pick the top 3 that prove your stance or point.
- Don't repeat details, and separate each by paragraph.

Below is a Thematic Essay theme and task.
Read the information for basic knowledge of what the Theme is and the task.

Theme: Human Rights

Throughout history, there have been many examples where groups of people have been denied their human rights. Individuals, groups, and governments have attempted to end many of these human rights violations although they have not always been successful.

Task: Select *two* different examples from history where human rights have been denied to groups of people and for *each*

- Explain the historical circumstances that led to the denial of human rights
- Describe how the human rights of that group were denied
- Discuss an action taken by an individual, a group, or a government that attempted to end the human rights violations

You may use any example of human rights violations from your study of global history. Some suggestions you might wish to consider include the indigenous people in Latin America during the Encounter, Jews in Russia during the pogroms, the Armenians under the Ottomans, blacks under apartheid in South Africa, Chinese students in Tiananmen Square, Bosnian Muslims in the former Yugoslavia, and women under the Taliban in Afghanistan.

You are *not* limited to these suggestions.

This is a student's introductory paragraph to the Thematic Essay described on the previous slide.

Student uses prompt from theme to develop 1st 2 sentences.

Anchor Paper – Thematic Essay – Level 4 – A

Human rights are the rights identified in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights including freedom for the individual and equality before the law. However, in many societies through history many of these rights have been denied to people that are different from the people in power. Many times human rights get denied in times of wars and takeovers. Through this adversity there have been some that have been willing to stand against these violations.

Based on the last sentence can you determine what the body paragraphs will contain?

Below is the same student's concluding paragraph for that Thematic Essay.

First sentence restates the student's opinion using different words.

Undoubtedly, through history there have been many human rights violations. All though they are wrong they still happen. But there are those people who rise above it and try to stop it.

Second sentence restates her proven opinions from the body paragraphs.

Final concluding sentence restates how people of world are affected by the events in the future.