

How to write an essay?

The writing of a good essay requires more than just having the right ideas. It is an arduous task that entails a lot of work, time and attention on your side, but the success always come at a price. Here are a few tips to keep in mind during the long process of the creation of a successful essay.

The layout of your essay is almost as important as the content. The examiners look at your essay first and read it afterwards so the first impression is always important. Always use the Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) when you submit your essay electronically. It looks more professional and guarantees that the formatting will not get scrambled when opened by readers that use different word-processing software. Always align the text to both the left and right margins of the page – this creates a clean look along the left and right side of the page. Your essay will be more readable and good-looking if you leave a blank line between the different paragraphs.

The formal structure of the essay is: introduction, body and conclusion. Following the formal structure makes your essay organized, consistent and well-developed. In the introduction, you introduce the topic and your thesis in a catchy way so you can grasp the attention of the reader. In the body, you develop your thesis in a logically consistent way and support it with arguments. In the conclusion you briefly reiterate your message and close the topic.

Do not forget that the essay is to be graded by someone else and it is their opinion that matters. Therefore make sure that you know the grading criteria in case it is not stated explicitly. For example, you can research the organization that is conducting the contest or the members of the jury. You can also review the works of the winners from earlier contests to find out what the jury is looking for in a good essay. Conduct a thorough research on the topic before you start writing – the jury will comprise of experts in the field and if you support your thesis with statements that contradict the facts or the established knowledge the jury will discern it and crack down on you. It is important to understand the point at issue so you don't go off-topic. Going off-topic is a waste of scarce space that you should use to develop and argument your thesis instead, as well as a sure way to create a very bad impression.

Never write your essay at the last moment – give yourself plenty of time for drafting and redrafting. The first draft of anything is usually terrible! Do not forget to check your spelling, but keep in mind that the spell-checker built in the word-processing software will not correct you if you absentmindedly use "their" instead of "there" even though this is, technically, a grammatical mistake. If English is not your native language, you may improve your style of writing and enrich your vocabulary by visiting an online thesaurus. The use of a friend as a proof-reader of the final draft is a must.

As a conclusion – the writing of a good essay is more art than science. The following of the advices listed above does not guarantee you a winning place, but not following them does guarantee you getting a poor score on your essay.