

Defining Expository Writing

Expository Writing: Writing that enhances the reader's understanding of a topic by instructing, explaining, clarifying, describing, or examining a subject or concept.

Method

- Provides facts, statistics, descriptive details, comparison, contrast, analysis, evaluation, definition, humor, and personal anecdotes.

Genre Awareness in Ideas

Demonstrating Awareness of the Expository Purpose

- Establishes a clear controlling idea on the assigned topic
- Provides relevant details that explain or describe the writer's topic
- Defines any technical terms the reader may not know

Demonstrating Awareness of the Persuasive Purpose

- Establishes a clear position on the issue
- Provides relevant supporting ideas
- Selects convincing details and examples appropriate to the audience assigned in the writing prompt.
- Anticipates and addresses reader concerns and counter-arguments

Types of Organizational Patterns

- Chronological Order of Events
- Comparison/Contrast
- Spatial Order
- Order of Importance of Ideas
- Problem/Solution
- Cause/Effect Order
- Classification Order
- Definition/Description

Genre-Specific Organizational Strategies

Expository Writing	Persuasive Writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Introduction -Descriptive information -Conclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Introduction -Supporting reasons -Conclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Introduction -Description of events in chronological order -Conclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Argument -Address Counter argument -Conclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Introduction -Comparison/contrast -Conclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Introduction -One side of the issue -Another side of the issue -Conclusion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Introduction -Anecdote illustrating position -Conclusion

What Expository Writing Is and Is Not

An effective expository composition . . .	An effective expository composition is NOT:
Establishes a clear controlling idea	Copying words or information from the writing topic
Uses clear, complete descriptions and/or explanations to develop the controlling idea	A list of facts, a story, and/or personal anecdotes that are unrelated to the topic
Contains an appropriate organizational strategy for the purpose of explanation, description, comparison and contrast, or problem and solution	A response in which ideas are not presented in logical order
Is multi-paragraph writing	A single paragraph
Fully develops the controlling idea with specific details and examples	Formulaic writing or a repetitive, standard five-paragraph formula that overshadows the information instead of explaining it
Blends personal experience and knowledge to inform the reader about the topic	An encyclopedic coverage of facts or an abundance of facts that are unrelated to the topic

What Expository Writing Is and Is Not

An effective expository composition . . .	An effective expository composition is NOT:
Uses a lively writing voice that develops the reader's interest	Flat, uninteresting writing
Uses engaging language and varied sentences	An essay that contains imprecise language and little sentence variety
Introduces the reader to the topic, fully develops the topic, and provides a sense of closure	Writing that provides information without introducing, developing, and/or concluding the topic
May contain a short narrative in the introduction to engage the audience	Writing that consists entirely of a story that does not inform the audience about the topic
Contains correct sentences, usage, grammar, and spelling that make the writer's ideas understandable	Incorrect sentences, usage, grammar, and spelling that distract the reader from the writer's ideas

The Writing Checklist

Student Writing Checklist for Expository Writing

Prepare Yourself to Write

- Read the Writing Situation and Directions for Writing carefully.
- Brainstorm for ideas.
- Decide what ideas to include and how to organize them.
- Write only in English.

Make Your Paper Meaningful

- Use your knowledge and/or personal experiences that are related to the topic.
- Explain, clarify, and define your ideas.
- Establish a clear controlling idea.
- Fully develop your controlling idea with specific, supporting details.
- Organize your ideas in a clear and logical order.
- Write an expository essay and stay on topic.

Make Your Paper Interesting to Read

- Think about what would be interesting to the reader.
- Use a lively writing voice that shows your interest in the topic.
- Use precise, descriptive, vivid words.
- Vary the type, structure, and length of your sentences.

Make Your Paper Easy to Read

- Indent to start a new paragraph.
- Use effective transitions.
- Write in complete and correct sentences.
- Capitalize, spell, and punctuate correctly.
- Make sure your subjects and verbs agree.

Expository Writing Topic

Writing Situation

Your class has been given the opportunity to design a brand new television show for children. It could be a news show, a talk show, a game show, a cartoon, or any kind of show you want for children.

Directions for Writing

Write a report to be read to your class in which you explain your idea for the new children's television show. Be sure to include specific details so that your classmates will understand what the new show will be like.

The sample papers in this section were written in response to the expository writing topic. Student names have been removed for purposes of privacy.

Example of Depth of Development in Score Point 5: Expository Writing

Ideas Score 5

Topic: Design a TV Show

When producers are making a television show, they look for things that are exciting and will bring in as many viewers as possible to the show. That is why every show needs to have a specific audience in mind, and for my show that is children. For my talk show I am going to include special guests and an exciting host, we are going to talk about things in the media, and even have jokes and reward other citizens.

To have a talk show you first need a host. The host's job is to interview guests and lead the show. For my talk show I am going to have someone that is well known and who has had experience in this field of work, like Ryan Seacrest from American Idol. I mentioned earlier that we are going to have guests on the show, and the host is going to need to be able to talk to those guests. The guests we chose are going to be people that can talk about things that have been in the media and are suitable for children.

Most people want to learn about popular things and my show is going to be able to help them. For example, skateboarding is a very popular sport so we might have Tony Hawk come and teach us some tricks about skateboarding. We want to have people that are going to appeal to our audience and will entertain them. Most children don't want to have the head of Homeland Security come and talk about things, so we need to have the people that children will recognize and enjoy.

Something that mostly all kids enjoy are jokes. So I plan to perform practical jokes on people. These jokes will not be harmful or offensive. Things that can harm or offend someone aren't funny and you shouldn't encourage children to do things like that. Instead, we will have innocent and simple jokes that are also entertaining. I like seeing people in weird situations like on Punk'd.

I also think that we should recognize people that have done something in their community. After Hurricane Katrina lots of people tried to collect money and supplies for the victims of the storm. If we show a young person that has raised a lot of money for the Red Cross by having a lemonade stand, then that might encourage others to help people in need. We should expose children to things that they will benefit from, not to something that could hurt them or they could get in trouble for.

The purpose of my talk show is to entertain children. All of the ideas, that I have stated will support this idea. Some shows that are entertaining are also harmful and not suitable for young children, but my show will be fun to watch and also suitable. There are already too many shows on television that are violent or negative. My show will be the one thing that is positive.

Example of Depth of Development in Score Point 4: Expository Writing

Ideas Score 4

Topic: Design a TV Show

When producers are making a television show, they look for things that are exciting and will bring in as many viewers as possible to the show. For my talk show I am going to include special guests, we are going to talk about things in the media, and even have jokes and reward other citizens.

Most people want to learn about popular things and my show is going to be able to help them. For example, skateboarding is a very popular sport so we might have Tony Hawk come and teach us some tricks about skateboarding. We want to have people that our audience will like and will entertain them. Most children don't want to have the head of Homeland Security come and talk about things, so we need to have the people that children will recognize and enjoy.

Something that mostly all kids enjoy are jokes. So I plan to perform practical jokes on people like on Punk'd. These jokes will not be harmful or offensive. Things that can harm or offend someone aren't funny and you shouldn't encourage children to do things that can harm or offend someone. Instead, we will have innocent and simple jokes that can also entertain children like throwing pies.

I also think that we should give awards to people that have done something in their community. If we show a young person that has raised a lot of money for the Red Cross by having a lemonade stand, then that might encourage others to help people in need. We should expose children to things that they will benefit from, not something that could hurt them or they could get in trouble for.

The purpose of my talk show is to entertain children. All of the ideas, that I have stated will support this idea. Some shows that are entertaining are also harmful and not suitable for young children, my show will be fun to watch and also suitable. There is already too much stuff in the media that is negative and my show will be the one thing that is positive.

Example of Depth of Development in Score Point 3: Expository Writing

Ideas Score 3

Topic: Design a TV Show

My class has the chance to design a TV show. I would like to do a talk show. For my talk show I am going to have guests and a host, we are going to talk about things kids care about, and even have jokes and give awards to kids.

Most kids care about popular things and my show is going to give them what they want. Because skateboarding is a popular sport we could have Tony Hawk come and teach us some tricks about skateboarding. We only want to have guests that entertain kids. Most kids don't want to have the head of Homeland Security come and talk about things, so we need to have guests that kids will like.

Something that mostly all kids enjoy are jokes. So I plan to perform practical jokes on people. These jokes will not hurt anybody. Things that can hurt someone aren't funny and you shouldn't show kids how to do things that can hurt people. We will have funny jokes that make kids laugh like throwing pies.

I also think we should give awards to people who have done something in their town. If we showed someone who raised a lot of money for the Red Cross, it might make other kids want to help.

This talk show will entertain kids. My show will be fun to watch. There is already too much stuff on TV that isn't good for kids.

Examples of Depth of Development in Score Points 1 & 2: Expository Writing

Ideas Score 2

Topic: Design a TV Show

Hey class! I want to tell you about a great new talk show for kids. It will be like this. I am going to have guest stars and a host. We are going to talk about things kids care about, and even have jokes and awards for kids.

Skateboarding is a very fun sport. We could have Tony Hawk come and teach us some tricks about skateboarding. We only want to have people that kids like. Something that mostly all kids like are jokes. So I will do practical jokes on people. We will have funny jokes that make kids laugh like throwing pies. I also think that we should talk to kids who did something good in there town. If we show somebody who collecked money for the Red Cross after the hurricane that might make other kids to want to help people. This talk show will be fun for kids. You'll like it. Bye!

Ideas Score: 1

Topic: Design a TV Show

I want to desing a talk show because most of the childrens like to wach them. It will be like this. We are going to talk about things kids care about, and have jokes. We could have Tony Hawk come and tell us about skateboarding. We only want to have people that kids will like. Something that mostly all kids enjoy are jokes. We will have funny jokes that make kids laugh like throwing pies. This talk show will be fun for kids. You'll like it.