**SOCIALS 10**

**RESEARCH ESSAY**

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PLEASE KEEP THIS, AS YOU WILL NEED IT AGAIN.

**THE ESSAY**

**Prewriting Essays**  
  
**What is the prewriting stage?**  
The prewriting stage is when you prepare your ideas for your essay before you begin writing. You will find it easier to write your essay if you build an outline first, especially when you are writing longer assignments.

**Six Prewriting Steps:**

**1. Think carefully about what you are going to write.** Ask yourself: What question am I going to answer in this paragraph or essay? How can I best answer this question? What is the most important part of my answer? How can I make an introductory sentence (or thesis statement) from the most important part of my answer? What facts or ideas can I use to support my introductory sentence? How can I make this paragraph or essay interesting? Do I need more facts on this topic? Where can I find more facts on this topic?

**2. Open your notebook.** Write out your answers to the above questions. You do not need to spend a lot of time doing this; just write enough to help you remember why and how you are going to write your paragraph or essay.

**3. Collect facts related to your paragraph or essay topic.** Look for and write down facts that will help you to answer your question. Timesaving hint: make sure the facts you are writing are related to the exact question you are going to answer in your paragraph or essay.

**4. Write down your own ideas.** Ask yourself: What else do I want to say about this topic? Why should people be interested in this topic? Why is this topic important?

**5. Find the main idea of your paragraph or essay.** Choose the most important point you are going to present. If you cannot decide which point is the most important, just choose one point and stick to it throughout your paragraph or essay.

**6. Organize your facts and ideas in a way that develops your main idea.** Once you have chosen the most important point of your paragraph or essay, you must find the best way to tell your reader about it. Look at the facts you have written. Look at your own ideas on the topic. Decide which facts and ideas will best support the main idea of your essay. Once you have chosen the facts and ideas you plan to use, ask yourself which order to put them in the essay. Write down your own note set that you can use to guide yourself as you write your essay.

**The Writing Stage:**

**Introduction Paragraph**

**What is an introduction paragraph?**  
The introduction paragraph is the first paragraph of your essay.

**What does it do?**  
It introduces the main idea of your essay. A good opening paragraph captures the interest of your reader and tells why your topic is important.

**How do I write one?**

1. Write the thesis statement. The main idea of the essay is stated in a single sentence called the thesis statement. You must limit your entire essay to the topic you have introduced in your thesis statement.   
2. Provide some background information about your topic. You can use interesting facts, quotations, or definitions of important terms you will use later in the essay.

**Example:**

Hockey has been a part of life in Canada for over 120 years. It has evolved into an extremely popular sport watched and played by millions of Canadians. The game has gone through several changes since hockey was first played in Canada

**Thesis Statements: (Adapted from UBC Writing Centre)**

A thesis statement is, first of all, a *statement*. That means that it can be more than one sentence long. For longer, more involved papers, or for papers with very complex arguments, this statement may comprise several sentences, or even paragraphs or pages. The purpose of the thesis is to capture the essence of what you're trying to say in the paper--it should encapsulate the controlling ideas of your essay. When writing your thesis, try to avoid stating the obvious. Also avoid simply rewording the beliefs or viewpoints of your sources. Try to map out the direction of your paper, as this gives both you and your reader an indication of where you're going.

Once you become more confident in your essay writing, you might also find yourself experimenting with an *implied* thesis. In this type of essay, the thesis is not explicitly stated, but rather implied by a very clear, well-developed text that has an inherent sense of direction. For instance, you might write an essay which, for the most part, details your first trip to Marineland. If, through your clear, concrete, and vivid selection of detail and description, an impression emerges that the experience was traumatic for you and important in forming a personal stance against the captivity of wild animals, then you have implied a thesis. In this case, it isn't necessary for you to explicitly state that you don't believe in the continued use of zoos and aquariums.

Assess the following explicitly stated thesis statements. Determine whether or not they are an effective response to the topic question.

**sample topic:** Should zoos, first established in the nineteenth century, be abolished? Provide a well-supported argument in defence of your thesis. Write your essay with a general audience in mind.

**Sample thesis:** "Zoos are cruel to animals and should therefore be abolished."

**Comment:** This thesis takes a position on the issue, but overall is quite vague. In what ways are zoos cruel to the animals? Why does this level of cruelty warrant the abolition of zoos?

**sample thesis:** "Zoos are good in some ways, but not so good in others."

**Comment**: This thesis is vague in terms of both its position and direction. It takes a fence-sitting position in that it's unclear whether or not the writer favours the abolition of zoos.

**Sample thesis:** "Zoos provide an invaluable service and therefore should not be abolished."

**Comment:** Again, this thesis establishes a position on the topic, but it could be clearer in terms of direction. What is the "invaluable service" provided by zoos? Is this invaluable service unique to zoos, thereby supporting the view to keep them?

**sample thesis:** "All zoos are cruel to animals; they house defenceless beasts in horrid conditions that breed disease and lead to premature death. Therefore, these inhumane establishments should be abolished."

**Comment:** While this thesis is emotionally powerful (in its use of language) and specific in terms of why zoos warrant abolition, it could be strengthened by moderating the initial generalization. Are *all* zoos equally cruel? Have *some* zoos made progress in terms of treating and housing animals? Are all zoos inhumane? The writer here must be well-prepared to support the generalizations and assumptions.

**Sample thesis:** "Zoos are a necessary part of our society and must be kept."

**Comment:** This takes a clear position in terms of keeping zoos, but it needs to be more specific in order to provide direction for the reader. In what ways are zoos a necessary part of society?

**Sample thesis:** "While some zoos have genuinely attempted to improve the living conditions and treatment of animals in captivity, most still offer squalid, cramped conditions not much improved over their nineteenth-century counterparts. With a proliferation of large, animal-friendly game farms and wildlife preserves, changes in social attitudes, and advances in technology, it no longer seems necessary to maintain the outdated establishment known as the 'zoo' in order to save the animals or learn from them."

**Comment:** This thesis takes a clear position for abolishing zoos and specifically maps out the direction the writer intends to take. While in this case the writer intends to discuss three major points, the scope of the paper could be easily modified to cover only one or two of the points. Notice that the writer begins with a concession. Also, note that by mapping out which major points are of interest, the writer imposes a inherent sense of organization on the text.

**Sample thesis:** "It is unacceptable for animals to be treated inhumanely in zoos. This is why changes have been, and are being, made all over the world. Advancements in habitat research have enabled modern zoos to create a healthy environment for animals. Of course, while the captive surroundings can never fully mimic life in the wild, we can do our best to see that the animals live comfortable, fruitful lives. Such compromises are necessary because zoos provide an invaluable service to society through the medical and wildlife research their existence facilitates."

**Comment:** This thesis takes a clear position in favour of keeping zoos. It also offers an effective concession and maps out the implicit direction for the paper that will follow.

**Supporting Paragraphs**

**What are supporting paragraphs?**  
Supporting paragraphs make up the main body of your essay.

**What do they do?**  
They develop the main idea of your essay.

**How do I write them?**

1. List the points that develop the main idea of your essay.  
2. Place each supporting point in its own paragraph.  
3. Develop each supporting point with facts, details, and examples.

To connect your supporting paragraphs, you should use special transition words. Transition words link your paragraphs together and make your essay easier to read. Use them at the beginning and end of your paragraphs.

|  |
| --- |
| **For counter examples** |
| However |
| Even though |
| On the other hand |
| Nevertheless |

Examples of transition words that can help you to link your paragraphs together:

|  |
| --- |
| **For listing different points** |
| First |
| Second |
| Third |

|  |
| --- |
| **For additional ideas** |
| Another |
| In addition to |
| Related to |
| Furthermore |
| Also |

|  |
| --- |
| **To show cause and effect** |
| Therefore |
| Thus |
| As a result of |
| Consequently |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |

Like all good paragraphs, each supporting paragraph should have a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and a summary sentence.

**Summary Paragraph/Conclusion**

**What is a summary paragraph?**  
The summary paragraph comes at the end of your essay after you have finished developing your ideas. The summary paragraph is often called a "conclusion."

**What does it do?**  
It summarizes or restates the main idea of the essay. You want to leave the reader with a sense that your essay is complete.

**How do I write one?**  
1. Restate the strongest points of your essay that support your main idea.   
2. Conclude your essay by restating the main idea in different words.   
3. Give your personal opinion or suggest a plan for action.   
  
**Example:**

Overall, the changes that occurred in hockey have helped to improve the game. Hockey is faster and more exciting as a result of changes in the past 120 years. For these reasons, modern hockey is a better game than hockey in the 1890s.

**Essay Outlines**

**Components:**

**Purpose:** To help keep the organization of your essay logical and clear, to help the flow and transitions in your essay, and to ensure that you do not repeat points that have already been stated or separate related points from one another. It also assists you in avoiding plagiarism.

**Hints:**  Use point-form and use pencil

* Introduction
  + [Opener](http://www.bilkent.edu.tr/~caroline/espionage/outlines" \l "opener#opener)
  + [Thesis Statement](http://www.bilkent.edu.tr/~caroline/espionage/outlines#thesis#thesis)
  + Outline of Body
* Body
  + Paragraph #1:
    - Main point #1
    - Supporting thoughts
    - References
    - Quotes
  + [Transition #1:](http://www.bilkent.edu.tr/~caroline/espionage/outlines" \l "opener#opener)
  + Paragraph #2:
    - Main point #2
    - Supporting thoughts

If you have more than 3 paragraphs in the body of your essay just insert them and follow pattern.

* + - References
    - Quotes
  + [Transition #2:](http://www.bilkent.edu.tr/~caroline/espionage/outlines#opener#opener)
  + Paragraph #3:
    - Main point #n
    - Supporting thoughts
    - References
    - Quotes
  + [Transition #3:](http://www.bilkent.edu.tr/~caroline/espionage/outlines#opener#opener)
* Conclusion
  + Restate Thesis and Main Points
  + [Closer](http://www.bilkent.edu.tr/~caroline/espionage/outlines#opener#opener)

Openers and Closers   
Openers and closers are statements in the introduction and conclusion, respectively, of an essay, whose purpose is to add some excitement or interest to the essay. In the case of an opener, it should make the reader WANT to read your essay. It should answer the reader's question of "Why should I read this? What's in it for me?” In the case of a closer, it should help the reader remember the essay with pleasure and interest. Both openers and closers are your chance to use a bit of creativity and excitement in your essay.   
An example of an opener might be "A white man, more Arab than British, blowing up railways and leading battling tribes of Bedouin into guerrilla warfare, sounds like a ridiculous fiction. However, Lawrence of Arabia was 100% real."   
And for a closer..."Lawrence of Arabia has fuelled thousand of romance and spy novels since his dramatic campaigns in the sands of Arabia, but his ultimate impact, the self-rule of those lands has changed the world as we know it."

**Documentation in Essays:**

**How to FOOTNOTE/ENDNOTE**   
  
In academic research papers and in any other writing that borrows information from sources, the borrowed information *(such as quotations, summaries, paraphrases, statistics or any facts of ideas that are not common knowledge*), must be clearly documented.  
  
**WHAT ARE FOOTNOTES?**  
Footnotes are used to give credit to sources of any material borrowed, summarized or paraphrased. They are intended to refer readers to the exact pages of the works listed in the *Bibliography* section. **[[1]](#footnote-1)**  
**WHERE DO FOOTNOTES GO?**  
*There are TWO parts to a footnote:*  
1) immediately after a citation(s) (quote, statistic, etc.) a small number is inserted (each citation is given a number in chronological order)**[[2]](#footnote-2)**  
  
2) at the bottom (foot) of the very same page where the direct citation(s) were made, a footnote is placed that consists of the same small number as the citation and all the publishing information. **[[3]](#footnote-3)**  **OR** at the end of your paper, before your bibliography, you may place an Endnote Page. On this page there will be a continuous string of numbers relating to your footnotes.

**HOW DO I FOOTNOTE USING MY COMPUTER?**  
Step 1: Click on *insert*Step 2: click on *footnote*Step 3: choose *footnote*Step 4: click *OK*Step 5: type in publication information as follows: *Author’s First Name, Author’s Last Name, Title of Source.  
 (Place of Publishing: Publisher, copyright date) page number.*Step 6: scroll back up to your essay

Each word processing program is different. Word 2007: Choose references, instead of insert. You can then choose endnotes or footnotes.

**HOW DO I EMBED QUOTATIONS IN MY ESSAY?**

1) If the citation (quote, summary etc.) is **3 lines or LESS**, then it is placed **within** the essay itself **with quotations marks**.

EXAMPLE:

The high tariffs were put in place in order to protect the industries within the country but unfortunately, they also “choked off international trade”.[[4]](#footnote-4)

2) If the citation is more than three lines, then it must be **set off** by indenting the citation five spaces on left margin and five spaces on right margin **without quotation marks**.

EXAMPLE:

Through the 1920’s many people bought items on credit. Due to the fact that this was something new to society, many people went above their budget.

The piano that cost $445 cash was purchased with $15

down and $12 a month for the next four or five years.

With the interest payments, it ended up costing far more

than it was worth. Sometimes by the time the purchases

were paid for, they were ready for the junk pile.[[5]](#footnote-5)

**WORKS CITED (BIBLIOGRAPHY)**

* Use <http://www.citationmachine.net/chicago> OR
* Use <http://www.bibme.org/chicago>

1. G. Wayne Miller, How to Footnote in Research Essays (New York: Oxford University Press) 245. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Alan Dundes, “Footnote”, World Book Encyclopaedia, 2000 ed. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. I. Lee, “Sample Footnotes in MLA Style”, A Research Guide for Students  
   <http://www.aresearchguide.com/samplefootnote.html> (September 30, 2004) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Bradley, Cruxton. Spotlight Canada: Fourth Edition. (Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2000) 185. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Bradley, Cruxton. Spotlight Canada: Fourth Edition. (Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2000) 226. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)