



What is an Essay?

Just as a paragraph is a collection of sentences about the same topic, **an essay is a collection of paragraphs that are all related to the same topic. Most essays have five paragraphs organized this way:**

Parts of an Essay

First paragraph - the introduction

Second, third, and fourth paragraphs - the body of the essay

Fifth paragraph - the conclusion

Sometimes your teacher may assign a **prompt**, or topic for your essay. Or you may get to choose one on your own. Either way, you should look at your topic and ask yourself, "What do I want my audience to know about this subject?" Your answer will be your purpose for writing. You can easily see that the first two steps in writing an essay are to: 1. choose a topic and 2. choose a purpose for writing.

You have learned that writing is a process made up of several steps. The first step is **prewriting**. After you know your purpose, prewriting is the time to gather and organize the information you want to include in your essay. During prewriting you may jot down notes, make an outline, copy quotations from a book or article, or brainstorm ideas for your essay. As you do this, your teacher may ask you to use graphic organizers to gather the information and put it in a usable form. We will discuss using graphic organizers in a later chapter.

The next step in the writing process is **drafting**. This is the time when you begin to put your ideas into complete sentences on paper. You can share some of the interesting facts you've found through your research or you can make a point about a topic in order to persuade someone to believe as you do. There are several graphic organizers that will help you with the drafting process.

After you have finished the first draft of your essay, you will need to read it very carefully and make any changes in wording or structure that are needed. This process is called **revising** the essay. Your next step will be to **proofread**, or look for and correct any mistakes that you might have made. When you have finished proofreading, your essay is ready to be **published** or presented to your audience.



The Writing Watch Dog says,
"An essay is a short piece of writing that discusses, describes, or analyzes one topic. It can be about anything, and be written in almost any style. It can be serious or funny, straight-forward or symbolic. It can describe personal opinions, or just report information."

NAME: _____



Writing a Descriptive Essay

1. Use the descriptive essay prompt, "My Favorite Hobby" and write a topic sentence, two or three supporting sentences, and a summary sentence for each paragraph on the Essay Map below.

INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH # 1

Topic Sentence
Thesis Statement

INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH # 2

Topic Sentence

Support Support Support Support

INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH # 3

Topic Sentence

Support Support Support Support

INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH # 4

Topic Sentence

Support Support Support Support

CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH # 5

Topic Sentence

Support Support Support Support



What is an Informative Essay?

1. Put an "I" in front of each informative essay title.

- a) The Story of Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox
- b) The Causes of the Civil War
- c) Why You Should Vote for Tim Hall for Class President
- d) The Animals of Australia
- e) A Report about Tales of a 4th Grade Nothing by Judy Blume

2. Use the informative prompt, "Animals in My State", and complete this KWL organizer.

K What I Know	W What I Want to Learn	L What I Have Learned