

[http://www.ehow.com/how\\_5122572\\_write-word-essay.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_5122572_write-word-essay.html)

When an instructor of any grade level imposes a specific word quota on an essay assignment, it's for one of two reasons that will benefit the student later in life. The first is to get him to invest serious time in the research and development of a complex topic beyond a simplistic answer such as, "The Civil War happened because the North and the South didn't get along." The second is to hone her analytical and organization skills so that she can recognize when she has delivered enough content to make her point. Here's how to write an essay that will satisfy both instructional objectives.

## Instructions

### Things You'll Need

- Word processing software Index cards (optional)

1.

○ 1

Gather all of your study notes and research materials in one place where they'll be easily accessible. This will save you time and stress; the less frantic you are about assembling your data, the more focused you'll be on the creative process when you actually start writing.

○ 2

Make a list of all of the pertinent points and/or persuasive arguments you want to address in your essay (i.e., why you believe the legal voting age in the United States should be dropped to 16). This can either be a list you create on your computer or on individual index cards. The latter is often the easier method if you're

not sure what the best order is to develop your essay so that each element flows smoothly and logically into the next.

- 3

Create a five-act outline for your paper with the following headings: Introduction, Act 1, Act 2, Act 3, and Conclusion. Acts 1 through 3 will form the bulk of your essay and each of these sections should hold equal amounts of content. Since the project is limited to a maximum of 2,000 words, allocate 500 words to each act. This leaves 500 words for your introductory thesis and your summary. Assign a cap of 150 words for your introduction and 350 words for your concluding remarks.

- 4

Identify what your essay is going to be about. Even if the topic has been given to you by your teacher, you'll need to elaborate on this in your introductory statement by providing the reader with a brief preview of how you intend to address the material. You'll also need to determine what the takeaway value will be for your readers; i.e., persuading them to embrace your point of view on a controversial subject after reading your arguments and supporting evidence. The takeaway value will be reflected in the introduction as well as reinforced in the conclusion.

- 5

Assign each of the points you came up with in Step 2 to one of the three sections of your outline. Even a nonfiction essay adheres to traditional storytelling structure by presenting a problem in the first act, compounding that problem with more obstacles in the second act, and then resolving it by the third. For example, in an essay

about the causes of the Civil War you would devote the first section to background information on both sides, add fuel to the controversy in the second act by showing how their hostilities toward one another impacted trade relations with Europe, and devote your final section to how irreconcilable differences led to four years of bloodshed.

- 6

Write your first draft of the essay straight through, then go back and start the editing process. If you're trying to edit at the same time you're writing, it's harder to establish a smooth rhythm from one section to the next.

- 7

Stay on message by frequently referring back to your thesis statement and making sure that each section relates to it.

- 8

Rephrase and reiterate the three key points of your essay in the conclusion. As a demonstration of your interpretation skills, your closing summary should also convey to the reader what you learned from your research and, in some cases, how you intend to apply these insights to your own life.

- 9

Give your essay to friends who aren't familiar with your subject matter and ask them if it reads well and is easy to understand.

## **Tips & Warnings**

- Think of your introductory statement as a trailer to a movie. In order to "hook" your audience to want to see more, you need to grab their attention with an intriguing premise or a provocative question and establish the tone (i.e., comedic, dramatic, spiritual) that will prevail throughout the entire essay. Compare your introduction and your summary side-by-side to make sure they're in agreement with each other.
- Refrain from making broad generalizations (i.e., "everyone thinks such-and-such") that aren't supported by solid evidence (i.e., "Civil War expert and author Stella Fitzwitz believes thus-and-so"). Refrain from using slang and contractions unless your teacher has advised that these are acceptable.

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## THE FOLLOWING SECTION DESCRIBES HOW TO WRITE THE INDIVIDUAL 500 WORDS SECTIONS OF YOUR 2000 WORD ESSAY

### How to Write an 500 Word Essay

#### What It Is

The essay is a short piece of writing that expresses organized thoughts through direct statements. Although essays may vary in length, the average student essay is about 500 words long, or about two pages.

#### Types of Essays

There are many types of essays such as expository, argumentative, and descriptive. However, the simplest way to describe the types is to divide them into two categories: the **personal essay** and the **formal essay**. **ESSAYS FOR THIS CLASS WILL BE FORMAL ESSAYS.**

In the personal essay, the writer's feelings are revealed to the reader. In the formal essay, the writer tries to convince the reader with the use of factual statements organized in a logical manner. Student essays are usually of the formal type, although an instructor may also ask for a personal point of view.

## **Choosing a Subject**

The subject of your essay must be approved by the instructor. It will be related to the current reading assignment.

If the instructor has not assigned a specific subject and purpose, begin by going to the library and looking at the library hand-out called “Suggested Topics for Term Papers, Speeches, and Panels.” Or, think about your own interests, or about a subject you would like to know better. Look at encyclopedias, the [InfoTrac](#) online periodical database, or ***Editorial Research Reports*** (INDEX H35 .E35).

Once you have decided upon a general subject, begin to narrow it down so that it can be adequately discussed in 500 words. Ask yourself questions about the subject so that you can decide what specific point of view you are going to take. Learning how to limit the general subject is one of the most important tasks in writing the essay. Information about methods to limit topics can be found at : <http://www.lavc.edu/library/libraryresearch.html>

## **Thesis, Topic Sentence, or Central Idea**

The thesis or topic sentence is the central idea or focus of the essay. It tells the reader what point you are going to make in the essay about the subject you have chosen for consideration. **The thesis must always be a complete, or grammatical sentence which is specific, brief, and suggestive of the organization to be followed in the essay.**

Example: The unleashed presence of dogs on streets and sidewalks is a danger and nuisance to pedestrians, automobiles, and property owners.

The thesis sentence should appear in the beginning of introductory paragraph of the essay. It lets the reader know what to expect in the rest of the essay.

### **Sources of Information**

It is important to recognize that in order to write an essay, you must have something to say. Much of what you write and come from your own knowledge and experience. However, you must check your information to be sure it is correct. In addition, you might want to find out more about your subject. Use all of the library’s resources such as books, reference materials, magazines, and pamphlets in order to supplement your own ideas. Ask for help from the librarian at the Reference Desk if you are not sure about how and where to look.

### **Outlining**

Ask for the library hand-out “How to Make an Outline.” It is not necessary to make of formal outline of your subject unless it is required by your instructor. However, it is vitally important to have a plan before you begin to write. Jot down ideas as you read and think about your topic. Arrange these ideas in some logical order. Decide your starting point and think about the ending. Take out facts that have no relation to your thesis. Writing the essay will be simpler with a rough outline before you.

### **Organization of the Essay**

Paragraph 1: Introduction, 50-75 words

Introduce your subject through a general statement. Give any background to the topic. Make the reader feel that what you are going to say will be of importance and interest. State your thesis sentence and be sure it allow you to discuss three aspects of the subject.

Paragraph 2: First developmental paragraph, 150 words

Begin this paragraph by stating the first aspect of the topic mentioned in the introductory paragraph. Use detailed facts to support your ideas and opinions. Give specific examples in developing your supporting evidence.

Paragraph 3: Second development paragraph, 150 words

Begin this paragraph by stating the second aspect of your topic that you will treat in the paragraph. As mentioned above, give clear supporting elements to prove your ideas and opinions.

Paragraph 4: Third developmental paragraph, 150 words

Begin this paragraph by stating the third aspect of your topic that you will treat in the paragraph. As mentioned in paragraph 2, be sure that your supporting details are clear and factual.

Paragraph 5: Conclusion, 50-75 words

Summarize and conclude your essay. Point out that you have proven your thesis statement by elaborating on each of the three aspects of your subject.

### **Transition Words**

Probably the easiest, and most abused, method of pulling together thoughts is through the use of transition words. They direct the reader from the thought of one sentence to that of another. Here are some of the most commonly used transition words:

therefore, as a result, consequently, in other words, thus, then, for example, namely, on the other hand, nevertheless, on the contrary, but, or, finally, moreover, in addition, similarly, furthermore, for instance, accordingly, to sum up

Remember, use transition words sparingly as overuse of these words weakens the writing.  
<http://www.lavc.edu/Library/essay.htm>

DON'T FORGET THE REFERENCE PAGE- see "How to cite a reference"

<http://www.uwp.edu/departments/library/guides/apa.htm>

### **Tips and Examples for Writing Thesis Statements**

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/545/01/>

### **Tips for Writing Your Thesis Statement**

1. Determine what kind of paper you are writing:

- An **analytical** paper breaks down an issue or an idea into its component parts, evaluates the issue or idea, and presents this breakdown and evaluation to the audience.

- An **expository** (explanatory) paper explains something to the audience.
- An **argumentative** paper makes a claim about a topic and justifies this claim with specific evidence. The claim could be an opinion, a policy proposal, an evaluation, a cause-and-effect statement, or an interpretation. The goal of the argumentative paper is to convince the audience that the claim is true based on the evidence provided.

If you are writing a text which does not fall under these three categories (ex. a narrative), a thesis statement somewhere in the first paragraph could still be helpful to your reader.

2. Your thesis statement should be specific—it should cover only what you will discuss in your paper and should be supported with specific evidence.
3. The thesis statement usually appears at the end of the first paragraph of a paper.
4. Your topic may change as you write, so you may need to revise your thesis statement to reflect exactly what you have discussed in the paper.

### **Thesis Statement Examples**

Example of an analytical thesis statement:

An analysis of the college admission process reveals one challenge facing counselors: accepting students with high test scores or students with strong extracurricular backgrounds.

The paper that follows should:

- explain the analysis of the college admission process
- explain the challenge facing admissions counselors

Example of an expository (explanatory) thesis statement:

The life of the typical college student is characterized by time spent studying, attending class, and socializing with peers.

The paper that follows should:

- explain how students spend their time studying, attending class, and socializing with peers

Example of an argumentative thesis statement:

High school graduates should be required to take a year off to pursue community service projects before entering college in order to increase their maturity and global awareness.

The paper that follows should:

- present an argument and give evidence to support the claim that students should pursue community projects before entering college