

## **LBST 1A42 Workshop: The Essay and the Argument**

T.A : Thomas Robles

Email : [trobles@faculty.ocad.ca](mailto:trobles@faculty.ocad.ca)

This workshop is designed for ESL students who wish to reinforce skills in English grammar and writing. Students will focus on grammar, composition, vocabulary building, techniques for reading efficiently, and academic style.

- **Location** : 1525
- **Required text** – Barnet, Sylvan. *A Short Guide to Writing about Art*.
- **Recommended text** – Please select a good English-English dictionary. *The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* is a good one.
- **Workshop Grade Distribution** – The workshop accounts for 20% of your LBST 1A40 final grade with 10% to be calculated at the end of the fall semester and 10% at the end of the winter semester.
- **Workshop Policies** – Attendance and participation are mandatory, and lateness will not be tolerated. The door will be shut as the class begins, so if you are late without a *very* good reason (for instance, an emergency), you will be counted as absent. Absence without official documentation will result in a 0 grade for that day's activities.
- **OCAD Policies for Students** – Please review your LBST 1A40 course outline and the OCAD student handout for details on policies related to your academic responsibilities.

### **Workshop topics may include:**

1. Academic writing in English (structure of essay, misconceptions)
2. Reading strategies
3. Sentence Structure
4. Vocabulary building strategies
5. Fragments and run-ons
6. Introductions and thesis statements
7. Articles
8. Paragraphs
9. Tenses
10. Transitions/Transitional Expressions
11. Conditionals
12. Conclusions
13. Adverbs and Adjectives
14. Writing a Comparison
15. Voice and Tone
16. Pronoun Antecedent
17. Style
18. Verbal Adjectives
19. Description Workshop
20. Subject verb agreement
21. Analysis Workshop
22. Persuasion/Argument Workshop
23. Research Workshop
24. Citing Sources/ Plagiarism
25. Punctuation
26. Exam Review/Writing Essay Exams
27. TBA

Suggestions welcome!

## Analytical Writing

Analytical writing combines description with inference or evaluation. Description involves describing what we see with our eyes whereas inference or evaluation involves interpreting reality based on evidence and combining that with our own (subjective) perspective. Generally, analysis consists of the following formula:

DESCRIPTION (desc.) + INFERENCE/EVALUATION (inf./eval.) = ANALYSIS

When we combine description with inference/evaluation, we analyze something from the context of our own life experience – how that object makes us feel or whether we can relate to it on an intellectual, emotional, or spiritual level. Consider the following examples:

1. Tom is wearing a wet, black raincoat and carrying a wet umbrella. (this is a descriptive statement of what we see).
2. Tom is wearing a wet, black raincoat and carrying a wet umbrella; it must be raining heavily. (this is an analytical statement combining a description of what is seen as well as an inference).

Seen in another way, we can say that a description focuses on the effect (the surface value of an object or image: in sentence #1, it is Tom wearing a wet, black raincoat and carrying an umbrella). In analytical writing, however, there is an attempt to connect the effect with its cause. In sentence #2, the cause is shown to be the rain, which causes Tom and his umbrella to be wet. This cause may be inferred (a subjective interpretation or judgment) based on the evidence (in sentence #2, this includes the wet raincoat and wet umbrella).

### **Exercise 1:**

**Write an analytical sentence on the following objects or ideas:**

1. a painting
2. a photograph
3. a piece of industrial design
4. a piece of fashion design
5. nature

### **Exercise 2:**

**Write an analytical paragraph on the following objects or ideas:**

1. a painting
2. a photograph
3. a piece of industrial design
4. a piece of fashion design
5. nature

## The Persuasive Essay

(v.) to persuade: to convince or cause another to believe, agree with, or feel certain about something.

### A good Persuasive Essay:

- chooses an argument and defends it strongly using supporting evidence for the purpose of informing or advising
- considers and informs about all sides of an issue.
- is passionate and enthusiastic about the argument throughout

### Generally, there are two kinds of persuasive essays:

- Essay of argumentation (position paper):  
The purpose of an essay of argumentation or position paper is to convince the reader of the importance of a particular issue or argument. This is done by providing as much fact or support for the issue being presented. The strength of the conviction also depends on the writer's ability to discredit opposing viewpoints.

#### Developing Ideas:

In preparing to write an essay of argumentation (position paper), it may be useful to list facts or evidence that support your argument and facts or evidence that oppose it. Making such a list may make it easier to organize your thoughts and ideas and help to develop the structure of your essay.

For instance:

Topic/Argument: \_\_\_\_\_

Facts that support my argument	Facts that oppose my arguments

- Essay of opposing ideas:  
The purpose of an essay of opposing ideas is to present (at least) two opposing viewpoints related to an issue.

Developing Ideas:

In preparing to write an essay of opposing ideas, it may be useful to list the opposing viewpoints. For instance:

Subject/Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Viewpoint 1	Viewpoint 2	Viewpoint 3

Adapted from Kamehameha Schools Virtual Strategies/Distance Learning Department.

<http://ksdl.ksbe.edu/writingresource/persuasive.html>

Example Topic:

Your parent(s) is considering a job in Winnipeg, Manitoba. This would mean that your family would relocate during Christmas break if your parent takes this job. A new town, a new school, new friends. Your parent has asked for your help in making this decision. Write a persuasive essay to either support moving or support staying where you are.

Adapted from: <http://members.accessus.net/~bradley/Persuasiveessaytopics.html>

What kind of a persuasive essay topic is this, Essay of Argumentation (position paper) or Essay of Opposing Ideas? \_\_\_\_\_

In-class assignment:

In a group or with a partner, choose a topic or argument for which you can write a persuasive essay about. At this stage, you are simply generating ideas for a topic, not writing the persuasive essay itself. Use the above criteria to help you choose a topic.

Notes:

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