

The Art of Essay Writing

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Introduction

Of late, Essay writing has become an essential ingredient of testing in almost all the competitive examinations. A question on essay writing has become a common thing in the present day evaluation. It helps the recruiters/evaluators in finalising the candidates appearing for the recruitment tests. The explicit reason for this question type inclusion is that it tests the candidate's ability to think logically, express clearly, and to have a clear understanding of what is happening around him or her. Since it is a harmonious blend of both the thought and the expression, this essay writing, as a must-to-conduct element of testing, plays the role of a filter to sift and scrutinize the candidates on the merit basis. Knowing how to write the essay more effectively makes one a paragon of one's target competition. So let's move on to the details of essay writing to be on top of the competitors.

An essay is a piece of writing that includes several paragraphs, which are written about a subject and interlinked together with one another. To write an effective essay, undoubtedly, one needs a wide range of

ideas / information on the subject. It requires the ability to arrange the thoughts in a clearly expressive flow both at the sentence and on the paragraph level and to present the thoughts logically, which is a real prowess on the part of the composer.

It is to be noted that writing in general, different from speaking, is not an ability we acquire naturally even in one's mother tongue or first language. It has to be practised with a distinct focus and to be learnt with a target, in order to perform effectively.

It is also highly essential to know the basics of writing an essay which we will be discussing in the chapters next to it. It is strongly believed that the clear understanding of the basic elements can certainly be a support to undertake writing courageously.

1. What is an essay?

The word *essay* comes from the French verb *essayer* ‘to try’. It refers to *how* in an essay, one either tries to prove or disprove something. Since 16th century onwards, the genre has been recognised as a literary device and developed as an art in all the languages, world over.

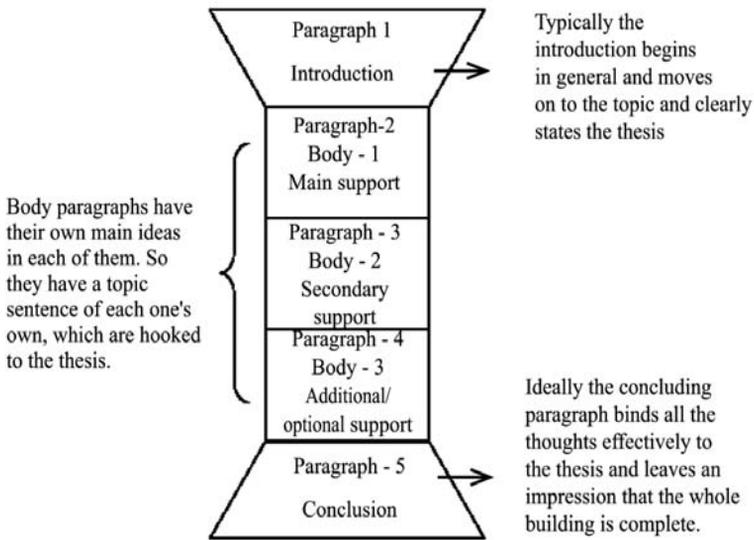
Essay is a short piece of writing, composed from the author’s personal point of view. Aldus Huxley described the essay; *a literacy device of saying everything about almost anything*. A short literary theme or subject, mostly in prose, that gives the reader analytic, speculative or interpretative view of the author.

Essays can consist of a number of elements including literary criticism, political manifestos and logical arguments, observations of daily life, recollections and reflections of the author. In fact, ‘essay’ is one of the best arts that directly appeal to the human heart.

It demands a conscious effort to produce a *unified, coherent, and consistent* piece of writing. In the process of simplifying what an essay is it has come to be understood as a relatively short piece of writing. As far as exams are concerned, the focus will be on how a candidate is eloquent in composing ideas, and fluent in delivering them smoothly. In the present context, essay is a short and organised piece of writing in four or five paragraphs on a subject or topic given as a question. It

is a complete piece of writing that can stand alone within that set of paragraphs presenting the clear point of view on the topic. As a clear discussion, though the writer may not cover all the points of the topic, it should make sense to the reader “in itself” like a complete structure.

Since the essay, in this book, is discussed in the light of examination orientation, where the subject of the essay is given as a question, you are expected to write an essay in about 200 to 300 words on that topic. The most valuable thing as far as the basic structure of the essay is concerned it should look like the diagram shown below.



It is with a perfect base and top; it remains unique only when the body, which reflects the core content, is strong.

Note: The writing of short descriptions or personal experiences in day to day life can provide the necessary training in clarity of expression and logical arrangement of facts that are essential to any composition. This is considered to be the best practice, and as a matter of fact it ought to be a regular practice and analysing such writing is a must to improve oneself.