

ENGL 220 Advanced Writing Essay 3

After working with your instructor to focus your topic when you submitted your proposal, you need to determine what sort of essay you will write for our third essay. You have a choice:

- An academic essay that makes a claim supported by evidence about your topic.
- An exploratory essay that looks at a topic (usually a problem, idea, or an experience) without trying to solve a problem or argue a point the way an academic essay does.

An **academic essay**'s claim must be backed up with evidence – from *Craft of Research*, the formula for this is “[Claim] because of [Reason] based on [Evidence].” Evidence is academic essays on the topic, results of scientific studies, hard data from reliable sources. Also the topic can't be overly simple, and the claim can't be obvious or already well established. Examples of these are “cats make good pets” or “having a pet lowers your blood pressure”. If the answer to your research question can be easily found with a Google search, it won't work for this genre of essay. Additionally, an academic essay must anticipate an argument someone could make against your claim, and provide a defense against this counter-claim. Finally, academic essays tend to be less personal, though you will recall we read about how we can weave our personal experience into academic essays.

An **exploratory essay**, as you know from our second essay, is “work of nonfiction in which a writer works through a problem or examines an idea or experience, without necessarily attempting to back up a claim or support a thesis . . . [that] tends to be speculative, ruminative, and digressive” and, is personal in terms of subject matter and approach.

Audience: Imagine that you are writing for a group of readers who are curious and read a great deal about many subjects. They aren't reluctant readers (we may find these sorts of readers when writing in the workplace); instead, they enjoy reading for pleasure. In Week 15 you will further narrow your audience when we look at journals and publications that may be suitable for your essay.

Other info: Your final target should be about 3000 - 5000 words. MLA is strongly suggested, though if you are more comfortable with another format (APA, Chicago, etc) you may use that format instead.

Week 12

Tuesday, March 28 – final essay plans; begin work on essay in class (brainstorming, outlining). Discuss if we should meet next week.

This week's work – Annotated bibliography is due March 31; continue work on essay.

Week 13

Tuesday, April 4 – in-class writing lab (or no class meeting, work independently).

This week's work – continue work on essay. Make conference appointment with instructor; submit draft 24 hours before your scheduled conference.

Week 14

Tuesday, April 11 class won't meet – conference week.

This week's work – conference; Revise your essay draft.

Week 15

Tuesday, April 18: Finding places to publish your third essay; formatting your essay for submission to publications/publishers. Finalize word count target, format, etc.

This week's work – Complete course evaluation (SEI) online; check your campus email with directions and links. Finish final draft of paper.

Week 16

Class will not meet – write!!

This week's work – Complete course evaluation (SEI) online; check your campus email with directions and links. Finish final draft of paper.

Grading criteria:

In addition to the above guidelines for your chosen genre, your essay will be evaluated using the following criteria –

A: An excellent essay has a clear aim, strong introduction, and thoughtful conclusion; there are strong supporting details; it is logically developed and very well organized; uses a tone appropriate to the aim of the essay; shows stylistic maturity and confident facility with language as demonstrated by sentence variety and appropriate word choice; and is virtually free of surface and usage errors.

B: A good essay has a clear aim and a strong introduction, has good supporting details, is logically developed and well organized, uses a tone appropriate to the aim of the essay, lacks the stylistic maturity and facility with language of an A essay, and is largely free of surface and usage errors.

C: An average essay has a clear aim, an introduction, and a conclusion; uses adequate supporting details; shows competence in logical development and organization, although it may exhibit occasional organizational and developmental weakness; uses a tone appropriate to the aim of the essay; shows basic competence in sentence variety and word choice; has a pattern of some surface errors.

D: A poor essay lacks a clear aim, focus, or conclusion; lacks sufficient support; includes supporting details that may be trivial, inappropriate, or logically flawed; shows flaws in organization/development; uses an inappropriate tone; has stylistic flaws characterized by lack of sentence variety and by evidence of limited vocabulary; and demonstrates frequent usage or surface errors.

F: A very poor essay lacks focus to the point that it is off-topic; may be too general or too specific; has no support for claims made; lacks organization; uses an inappropriate tone, has serious stylistic flaws, and includes serious usage or surface errors.

No evaluation: Essays receiving no grade (zero) will fail to address the topic or assignment, fail to fulfill other requirements of the assignment, show evidence of plagiarism, or fail to be accompanied by previous drafts when requested.