PROSE

In this unit, we will be exploring both formal and informal writing while building upon essay skills and techniques. Essay writing, formal or informal, is also called exposition – expressing an opinion, or convincing the reader of some opinion, or simply explaining facts.

Here are the main differences between Formal and Informal Essays:

Formal

- to inform, persuade

- written on serious subjects

- creates unity by strict adherence

expressed in the Introduction, developed

in the Body and summarized in the Conclusion

-logical development of thought (chronological

or current)

- strong diction

-references to secondary sources (other books or authorities)

- learn little of the author

Informal

- to entertain

- serious or trivial

- unity by single mood

expressed in the Introduction, developed

in the Body and summarized in the Conclusion

-uses a plan of development but may wander or introduce loosely related ideas

- more colloquial language

-may learn a great deal about the author

ESSAY PURPOSES:

• to instruct or teach a process

• to inform or provide facts

• to persuade or to convince someone of something

• to describe and create a picture of a person, place, or thing.

• to narrate or to tell a story

• to entertain

ESSAY TERMS

Subject: What the essay is about.

Prose: Any writing that is organized into sentences (i.e. not verse).

Thesis: A key sentence that reflects the central idea of the entire piece of writing.

Tone: The writer’s attitude to the subject as conveyed through diction and style.

Audience: The person(s) for whom you are writing.

Diction: The choice of words and phrases. In literature, a term used to describe the level of language used (e.g. slang, colloquial, formal).

Theme: The central or dominating idea(s) in a literary work.

Unity: A sense of oneness in writing in which all sentences work together to develop the main idea (i.e. Theme).

Coherence: Putting your ideas together in such a way that the reader can easily follow from one point to the next.

Emphasis: Giving great importance to a particular idea in a piece of writing by placing it in a special position, by repeating a key word or phrase, or through the use of Rhetorical devices.