TYPES OF ESSAYS

There are four main types of informal essays:

1) DESCRIPTIVE ESSAYS

A descriptive essay uses descriptive language to paint a picture or vividly describe a person, place, or object. Descriptive essays often use specific details to appeal to a reader’s senses, as well as imagery and figurative language (metaphor, simile).

• Person: describe your best friend/your favourite teacher/you coach/teammate/sibling (favourite of most “loathed”)/someone who taught you something really important/someone who really bugs you/your favourite actor/band/singer/athlete

• Place: your room/your locker/your house/your neighbourhood/the bottom of your backpack/your favourite handout/your favourite vacation spot/a classroom/the cafeteria

• Object: a pet/a book/a movie/a video game/a treasured possession/a pet peeve/poster/billboard/photograph/a favourite pen/piece of jewellery

2) NARRATIVE ESSAYS

A narrative essay tells a story. We tell stories to reflect on an experience, to share with others, and to entertain. Narrative essays need to be relevant to those people reading them so they must have a specific focus, thesis, or “message”. The thesis may be overt (stated) or implied.

• When you found out that there is no Santa Clause/Easter Bunny/Tooth Fairy, etc.

• The most embarrassing moment of your life

• The biggest mistake you every made

• A time you got hurt (physically or emotionally)

• How you learned about the “harsh realities of life”

• Coming to Canada (what your first day in Canada was like)

• The moment you “fell in love”/your first crush

• Turning point in your life/a valuable lesson learned

3) EXPOSITORY ESSAYS

An expository essay refers to any well organized piece of writing that explains a thing, a process, or an idea to readers. Also, a thesis must be stated clearly and supporting points must be ordered logically.

• How to eat a burrito/brush your teeth/entertain a young child/get in shape/get good marks/do your hair every morning

• The causes of acid rain/acne/hiccups/snoring/cheating/child abuse

• Kinds of fads/music/commercials/heroes/chores

• Definition of a browner/generation gap/loyalty

• Social, environmental, historical, political – value, issue, situation

4) PERSUASIVE ESSAYS

Unlike an expository essay which explains an author’s understanding of his subject, a persuasive essay tries to convince readers that the author’s opinion or point of view is the correct one. The author is making a value judgment and arguing only one side of a given topic.

• Why school uniform aren’t a good idea

• Something that is unfair

• Something that needs to be improved

• Something that deserves support

• Why 8:19 isn’t a good time for school

• Why exams should be abolished or should be at least 30% of report card mark

• Social, environmental, political, religious, issue