

## Q: What is each major essay's function?

A: Another great question! Below you will find a couple of charts featuring the types of papers that are most frequently assigned in your college courses.

### Analytical / Synthesis Essay:

Explores how the work (poem, novel, film...etc) emerges with a particular meaning.

Writers will do this by...	Writers should avoid...
explaining how the parts of the work are related to the meaning	Summarizing the work
How does the meaning emerge from the relationship of these parts?	Describing what the work means to you as the writer
Calling on specific scenes or lines that highlight the meaning	Trying to discuss too many meanings

### Argumentative / Persuasive Essay:

By using reasoning and evidence, writers take a definitive stand on a controversial or debatable issue.

Writers will do this by...	Writers should avoid...
Narrowing topic down to a manageable size.	Inserting their own opinions on the issue
Investigating both sides of the issue and select a position to defend.	Over quoting sources
The writer will collect, generate, and evaluate evidence.	Plagiarizing with incorrect citations
Thorough research is required with this type of paper. Students may look to scholarly journals, articles, and other forms of text for information to support his or her claim.	

### Narrative Essay:

These essays are used to recount an event or to tell a story that might illustrate a specific idea.

Writers will do this by...	Writers should avoid...
Letting the reader know whether the narrative is informational or if it is for entertainment.	Writing without a purpose

Making sure the point of the narrative is clear	Trying to focus on too many topics
Having a clear point of view	
Paying attention to language usage. Words should be creatively and carefully selected.	

**Expository Essay:**

This type of essay asks that the student investigates an idea, evaluates evidence, explains the idea, and develops an argument surrounding that idea.

<b>Writers will do this by...</b>	<b>Writers should avoid...</b>
Investigating an idea or topic.	Over quoting. Your ideas are important!
Evaluating findings and evidence.	Resorting to the standard 5 paragraph essay. Attempt to explore more original structures that lend themselves to the paper to make it more interesting.
Explaining the idea in detail.	
Coming up with an argument that surrounds the idea or topic.	

**Descriptive Essay:**

The descriptive essay will ask that the author describes something-person, place, experience, emotion, situation...etc.

<b>Writers will do this by...</b>	<b>Writers should avoid...</b>
Brainstorming and jotting down extensive notes and ideas on the topic.	Losing focus or straying too far from the topic
Using creative and vivid language in the description.	Becoming unorganized-It is easy with this type of paper to just list and describe, but some type of structure should remain consistent through the paper.
Attempting to use your senses in the description to contextualize the topic for readers.	
Leaving the reader with a clear impression of the topic.	