

# Expository Essay Notes

What does expository mean?

What are examples of expository writing?

# Ways to Explain

Define it.

Describe it.

Compare/ Contrast it.

Tell its story.

Classify it.

Analyze it.

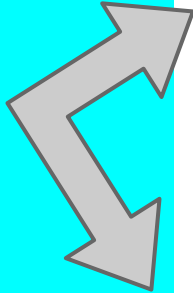
Give examples of it.

Describe its causes and effects.

Evaluate it.

# What will a prompt look like?

*These are supposed to get you thinking*



Read the following quote:

“Love is not something you feel; it is something you do.”  
-David Wilkerson

Think carefully about the following statement.

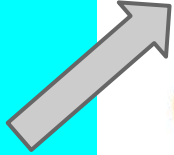
Think about the joy you feel when you do something you love.

Write an essay about the importance of doing something you love.

Be sure to --

- clearly state your thoughts
- organize and develop your ideas effectively
- choose your words carefully
- edit your writing for grammar, mechanics, and spelling

*This was the actual prompt.*



# Essay Structure

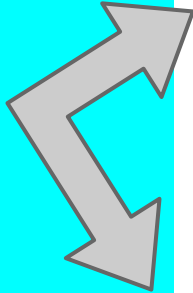
## Map the Expository Essay

### **TYPICAL FORMAT...**



# What will a prompt look like?

*These are supposed to get you thinking*



Read the following quote:

“Love is not something you feel; it is something you do.”  
-David Wilkerson

Think carefully about the following statement.

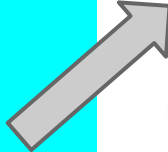
Think about the joy you feel when you do something you love.

Write an essay about the importance of doing something you love.

Be sure to --

- clearly state your thoughts
- organize and develop your ideas effectively
- choose your words carefully
- edit your writing for grammar, mechanics, and spelling

*This was the actual prompt.*



## Former STAAR EOC Prompts

### Expository

Write an essay explaining whether failure can strengthen a person. April 2014 (English 1)

Write an essay explaining why it is sometimes necessary to take a chance. April 2013 (English 1)

Write an essay explaining the effect of one new technology on people's lives. April 2012 (English 1)

Write an essay explaining whether people should be more concerned about others than about themselves. April 2011 (English 1)

Write an essay explaining the importance of getting to know people before forming an opinion about them. April 2013 (English 2)

Write an essay explaining whether a person must always be acknowledged in order to have accomplished something. April 2011 (English 2)

# The Writing Process

1. Brainstorm:
2. Plan the paper: introduction, body paragraphs, conclusion
3. Rough Draft
4. Revise (add, change, take-away)
5. Edit (fix mechanics, usage, and grammar)
6. Final Copy

**Brainstorm:  
reflect on the topic.**



## 4 Square Technique...

Materials: colored note cards or sticky notes

#1 Define It.

#2 Remember It.

#3 Connect It.

#4 So What?

#1

## Define it.

- ☒ Define the subject (*new technology/ risks*)
- ☒ *What do you understand about this topic?*

#2

## Remember it.

- ☒ What does this idea make you remember?
- ☒ What experiences of your own life do you remember?
- ☒ What does it remind you of?
- ☒ Remember the 5 W's and H: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

#3

### Connect it.

- ☒ How does this apply in the real world?
- ☒ How does this idea apply in history, current events, songs/ movies/ books?
- ☒ Remember the 5 W's and the H: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

#4

### So What?

- ☒ Why does this idea matter?
- ☒ How would the world be different without it?
- ☒ What do you understand now about the topic that you didn't understand before?

# 4 Square = an Expository Essay!

INTRODUCTION

**Define It**  
What do you understand about the topic?

BODY PARAGRAPH 1

**Remember It**

- What experiences of your own life do you remember?
- Remember to explain the 5W +1H.

BODY PARAGRAPH 2

**Connect It**

- How does this apply in the real world?
- How does this apply in history, current events, songs, movies, or books?
- Remember to explain the 5W +1H.

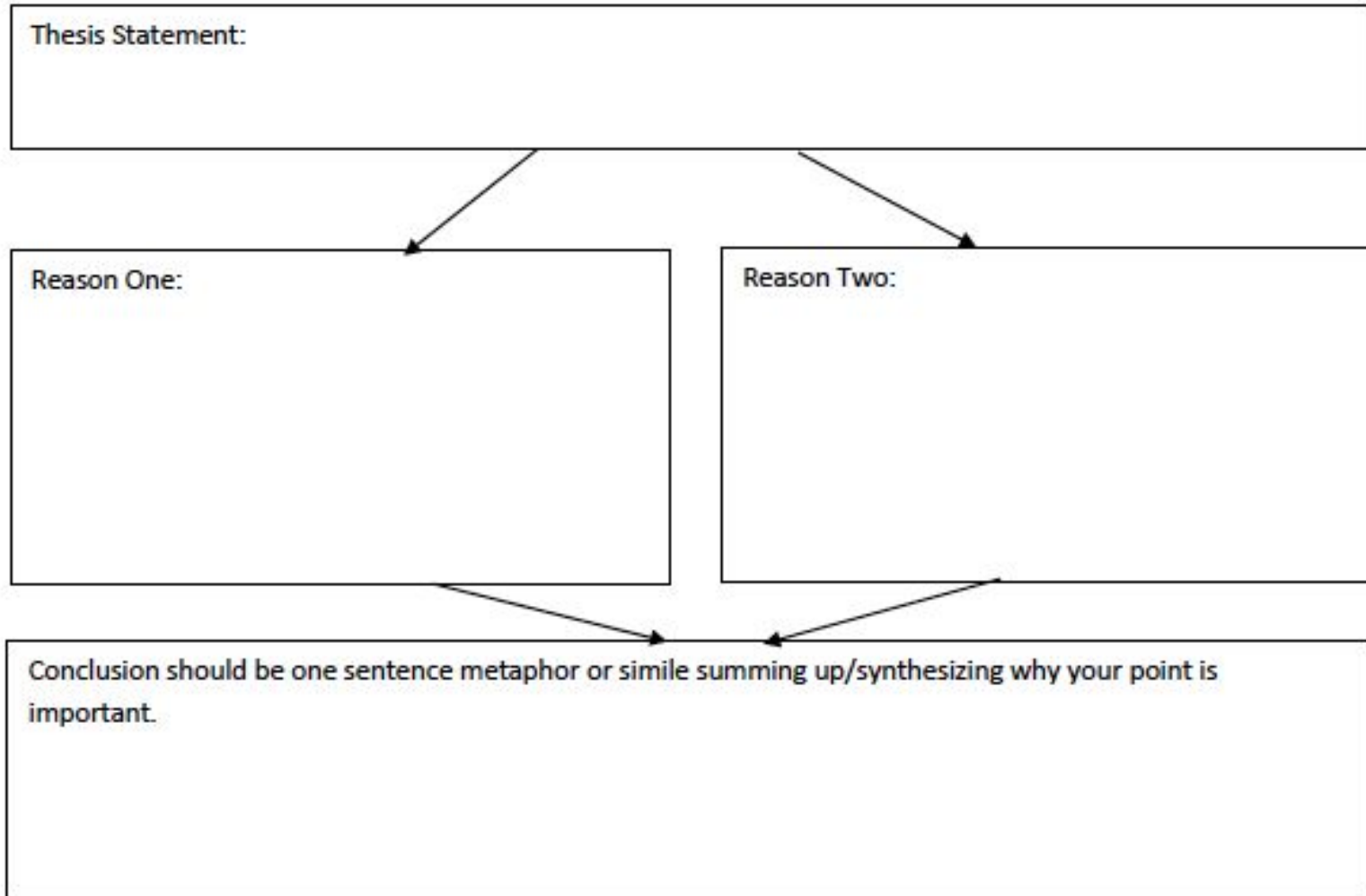
CONCLUSION

**So what?**

- Why does this idea matter?
- How would the world be different without it?
- What do you understand now about the topic that you didn't understand before?

Planning, Planning,  
Planning.

### Putting It Together Graphic Organizer



**The Introduction:  
Paragraph one includes  
a hook and a thesis  
statement.**

# Thesis Statement:

The most important sentence of the paper!

It is an opinion statement.

It needs careful consideration and planning.

Purpose: It shows the organization of the paper.



# Thesis Statement

## Consider the following:

### Thesis Statement Checklist

Does your thesis “do” these things?

- It should NOT be vague, but should clearly express what the essay is about.
- It should NOT be factual information, but make a discussable/arguable point.
- It should NOT start with, “In this essay I will...”, but indicate the structure of the essay.

Example: *“Failure isn’t always the best feeling in the world, but without it people will never grow or find out who they are as a person.”*

This thesis statement clearly <sup>(1)</sup> expresses what the essay is about [failure], gives a topic that can be <sup>(2)</sup> discussed and argued [that is shows true character], and <sup>(3)</sup> indicates the structure of the essay [that failure forces people to grow and discover themselves].

- Do I address the prompt?** Re-reading the prompt after constructing a working thesis can help you fix an argument that has missed the focus of the assignment.
- Have I taken a position that others might challenge or oppose?** If your thesis simply states facts that no one could disagree with, it’s possible that you are simply providing a summary, rather than making an argument.
- Is my thesis statement specific enough?** Thesis statements that are too vague often do not have a strong argument. If your thesis contains words like “good” or “successful,” see if you could be more specific.
- Does my thesis pass the “So what?” test?** If a reader’s first response after reading your thesis statement is, “So what?,” then you need to clarify or connect to a larger issue.
- Does my thesis pass the “How?” and “Why?” tests?** If a reader’s first response after reading your thesis statement is “How?” or “Why?,” your thesis may be too open-ended and lack guidance for the reader. See what you can add to give the reader a better take on what your position is in the paper.

# Body Paragraphs: reason 1 and reason 2

Purpose: to support the thesis statement.

A body paragraph should explain how it supports the ideas presented in the thesis.

### Development of Ideas Graphic Organizer

This graphic organizer represents one body paragraph. In order to write a complete essay, you will need to complete this organizer twice-once for each main reason. Each box only needs one complete sentence.

Paragraph One

Reason:



Specific example:



How example proves reason:



Connect to thesis:

# The Conclusion

Purpose: to reconnect with the thesis one last time.

This reminds the reader of your opinion about the topic.

# Conclusions



- Wrap it all up
- Re-word topic sentence
- Remind reader of topic

May start with:

All in all... As you can see...

Clearly... In conclusion... To sum it up

# Advanced Technique:

How do writers catch a reader's attention? Using a HOOK can accomplish this task.

Read the article.

["Forever War of the Mind"](#)

How did the author begin the article?

Writer's Notebook Tip:

One word statements can be powerful. Choose words wisely and be careful to not over-use.

# Ideas for hooks

