

Process Analysis Essay

A process analysis essay can either provide steps on how to do something or provide information. It may explain to the reader:

- How to perform steps in a process.
- How something works.
- How the important steps in a process coalesce.
- The logical order in which to do something.
- Describe how something is done.
- Explain how something happens.

What is a Process?

A process may be: a series of actions, specific changes, certain steps, operations, or functions. All of these are meant to demonstrate how to achieve a particular result. While some essays may focus on what, process analysis normally focuses on how.

Types of Process Analysis Essays

There are two basic kinds of process analysis: *directional* and *informational*.

1. The directional type explains *how to do something* (for example, how to get from one place to another or how to prepare for a job interview).

Types of Process Analysis Essays

2 The informational type explains *how something works or happens* (for example, how a computer works, how oil is refined, how calculators are manufactured, or how a dictatorship was overthrown).

Topic considerations

- ◆ Make sure that the process described is a “good fit” for the intended audience.
- ◆ Make sure that the idea is unusual or even unique.
 - When reading the selections on “The American Dream” for this essay, avoid the obvious.
 - Dig deep and find a novel point of view about which to write.
- ◆ Make sure that the process decided upon to describe can be fully explained in a 5 paragraph essay.

Introduction

The introductory paragraph should introduce the topic and establish the purpose for writing the process. The reader should understand why the process is being described and in what situations the process is used.

Introduction

Your introductory paragraph contains no steps; instead, it simply prepares the reader for the topic of your paper. You might try including such information as the following: When did you first try this process? Why is this process important? Why should the reader care about this process or be interested in it?

Introduction – Hook

- ◆ As your writing skills improve, you should strive not only for sentence variety but also for variety in essay openings.
- ◆ A dramatic, humorous, or otherwise interesting opening can capture the reader's attention.
- ◆ There are various ways to make a dramatic entrance. One way is to describe a scene that introduces your reader to the subject of your essay.
- ◆ For process essays, it is often useful to begin with a description of a scene that establishes the need for a process explanation.

Introduction – background

The introductory part should explain the actual process and why it is relevant or important. The writer should avoid any unnecessary information such as the background, history or origin. If for instance, a recipe needs tomato sauce, the readers should be informed so. In other words, go directly to the issue and provide only the necessary information

Body Paragraphs

Body paragraphs are the actual description of the process. It usually begins in the first body paragraph. However, if you are describing how to do something and the process requires that the reader obtain some items first, then you may need to point out in the first developmental paragraph what items are needed. The actual steps of the process usually can be divided into three or four major steps. In most cases, each major section can be described in a separate paragraph. Note that the topic sentence in a process essay is often implied rather than stated directly.

Body Paragraphs

The first paragraph should present a list of all the equipment, tools or resources necessary for the particular process. For instance, if some ingredients cannot be found in the locality, the writer should explain where one can find it or them.

Body Paragraphs

It should also explain potential risks or side effects that are likely to generate from the process should be started so that the reader remains informed. Furthermore, it is important to inform the reader of what might go wrong and what can be done to avoid potential mistakes.

Body Paragraphs

The next paragraphs should outline the process in a sequential order. If the process requires some steps that should be undertaken at particular stages, these should be stated and explained clearly, at the relevant point in the sequence. The writer should be very keen to avoid confusion.

Body Paragraphs

For processes that appear complicated, the steps should be subdivided accordingly. What is more, the writer needs to vary their use of transitional words such as after, then, next so as to make sure that the essay does not become repetitive.

Body Paragraphs

The final part should present a general review of the whole process so the writer can reinforce the main points succinctly without details.

Organization

Writing about a process should be accomplished in a logical order.

- Many times in a process, the logical order will be chronological.
- The logical order may also be order of importance in order to accomplish the particular result.

Transition

- ◆ *At the start of the process* : At first,..... In the beginning,.... As you start,.... To begin with,..... The first step,.... When you begin
- ◆ *In the middle of the process* : Next,..... After that,..... Continuing with,.... The next step is.... When this step is finished,.... As you continue,.....
- ◆ *At or near the end of the process* : Finally,.... As you finish,..... Toward the end,.... The last step,.....

The Conclusion

- ◆ The result of the process should be demonstrated.
- ◆ Restate the thesis statement in a novel way.
- ◆ Include closing remarks that give the reader something to think about:
 - It may discuss the future.
 - It may inspire the reader.
 - It may provide contemplation on the impact of the process

Sample Essay

The Successful Student

Some people never learn effective study habits in high school. Thus, they may struggle through their first semester of college. A student should figure out how he studies the best; many people cannot create a quality essay at four in the morning with the music playing and the television on. Although poor study habits may cause the student to struggle, which results in unhappiness, he can become connected by joining clubs, music groups, or sports that will help a person make more friends while balancing his life, thus making him a happier student. So, students should get involved! School does not have to be just about schoolwork. One should find an activity that his school offers, and he should join if his schedule allows. Yet, some people have a harder time adjusting to school than other people and may feel that success is impossible. However, a student can be successful in many ways, such as by being on time for class, keeping an assignment notebook, and managing his time.

For a student to be successful, he must begin by getting to class on time. To do this, he should make next morning preparations on the night before, such as ironing his garments on the night before class; this will save him at least five to ten minutes in the morning, and he may use that time to read the newspaper or take out the garbage. He also should put gasoline in his vehicle after he runs his final errand for the day; this simple task will prevent him from having to wait for an available pump at the gas station in the morning when other people have decided to wait until the last minute to buy gas for their vehicles in their rush to work or school. Next, one should purchase an alarm clock and batteries if he does not already own one.

After completing the buying process, he must set this clock two hours before his first class is scheduled to begin. He should set his alarm to wake him with the annoying “beep, beep, beep” sound rather than the sound of soothing music; he must also resist the urge to hit the snooze button, which could cause him to be late for class if he hits it too many times. By following these simple steps, he will have thirty minutes to prepare and eat a wholesome breakfast, which will benefit him by allowing him to be more focused during class instead of being distracted by the growling of his stomach. He will then have fifteen minutes to take a revitalizing shower, which will awaken his senses; fifteen minutes to groom; ten minutes to brush his teeth; twenty minutes to get dressed; five minutes to start the car and heat or cool the inside; fifteen minutes to drive to school; and ten minutes to get to his seat and settle in. By doing these daily activities in the allotted amount of time, the student will stay on schedule and be on time for class each day.

The next undertaking for the prospective successful student will be the acquisition of an assignment notebook. This notebook will help him in many ways; he should begin by recording all tests, quiz dates, and chapters that are involved immediately upon receiving his syllabus at the beginning of each semester; this provides the student with a convenient reference. The importance of this reference is the student has quick access to information; otherwise, he would frantically search through all of the accumulated handouts that he had received throughout the semester. As a result, he will save time. He should also jot down all project and essay due dates and work on them prior to the eve of the due date. By doing this, the student has ample time to complete and review his material more than once, allowing him to make the necessary changes, which will result in a better grade. He should not procrastinate; if a student starts an assignment earlier than he thinks he needs to, he will have time for any unexpected problems that may surface, for example, computer failure or personal illness. Therefore, by making studying a priority, one can allow time for hobbies and friends.

The student must manage his time effectively; to achieve this goal, the student should designate specific hours to study and not take phone calls or accept visits because studying is more effective when the student has no distractions; the student remembers what he studies better at test time than he would if he were to stop periodically to talk on the telephone or visit with his friends. People should think of college as a full-time job by putting in an eight-hour day, including class and study time. This dedication will be evidenced in the student's grades. One should keep in mind that planning ahead is not as bad as it sounds. For example, if a student's first class begins at 9:00 a.m. and his last class ends at 1:00 p.m., he could be done studying by 5:00 p.m. and have plenty of time for visiting with friends and watching television, which make the demands of being a full-time student less stressful. Therefore, students should find a way to make studying beneficial.

Some students could really benefit from having a “study buddy” (someone to study with). The two could schedule a few hours in their assignment notebook for studying, and, in the meantime, the two of them should take good notes during each class session. Students should be encouraged to take their own notes instead of borrowing someone else’s. Therefore, the student does not spend unnecessary time trying to make sense of the borrowed notes.

Finally, each student can create a quiz, using the notes that he took in class. Since most people would not create the exact same materials, this technique should help the student to become prepared for tests, thus ensuring coverage of material from the notes each “study buddy” has taken during class; the quiz method will help guide the student in determining what study techniques he should use.

Being punctual shows that the person respects rules and possesses knowledge of academic policies; keeping an assignment notebook and managing one's time are all necessities for becoming a successful student. A person must also have certain desirable traits to remain successful. He should have a positive attitude to be assertive. He must have a sense of his goal to know why he gets up each morning at 7:00 a.m. because he could easily get a dead-end job and work the evening shift. He needs to be independent; by doing so, he will know that he cannot and should not expect someone else to force him to do well in school. Most importantly, he should make the most of his education adventure. Most people generally get only one opportunity to succeed, so they should not let anything – or anyone – stand in the way of whatever they are trying to accomplish.