

Writing an Impromptu Essay

Before learning how to write an impromptu essay it would probably be helpful to have at least a general idea of what an essay is. Don't you agree?

We might begin by stating that an essay is a composition, but then the question arises: “*What is a composition?*”

We could answer that question by simply stating that a composition is a short essay written as a school exercise, but of course, that would be both frustrating and irritating, since we don't yet know what an essay is.

Approaching it from a slightly different angle, a composition can be thought of as a literary work, or to be more specific, an analytic or interpretive literary work.

For the sake of clarity, let's make sure that we are all aware that the term *literary* refers to **literature**, and the term *literature* refers to **writing in which both expression and form are essential features in the presentation of ideas of permanent and universal interest**.

The term composition can also refer to words and sentences put together in accordance with the rules of grammar and rhetoric, and in a more general sense, a composition is anything in which parts or elements were combined to form a whole.

With that, we probably have enough information to come up with a relatively functional definition for essay:

An essay is a relatively short, written, analytic, interpretive, or speculative work that combines certain key elements in order to express an author's personal views on one particular theme or subject.

Super! Now all we have to do is find out what those “certain key elements” are and we'll be in business. Unfortunately, there are quite a few of them, so we'd better get busy.

However, there is one last piece of business we need to get out of the way. The term **impromptu** means “*made or done without previous preparation,*” so an *impromptu* essay is the type of essay you might be required to compose right on the spot, usually for some type of test, assessment or benchmark, such as the essay section of the new SAT writing exam.

WHERE TO BEGIN

The first step to writing an essay is to choose a topic, though it is not uncommon for a topic to have already been chosen for you. For example, you might be required to include an essay in a college admission application that directs you to respond to a prompt much like one of those listed below.

1. Evaluate a significant experience, achievement, or risk that you have taken and its impact on you
2. Discuss some issue of personal, local, national or international concern and its importance to you.
3. Indicate a person, character in fiction, an historical figure, or a creative work (as in art, music, etc.) that has had a significant influence on you, and describe that influence.
4. Why do you want to spend two to six years of your life at a particular college, graduate school, or professional school? How is the degree necessary to the fulfillment of your goals?

If you fail to conscientiously impose structure around your ideas, your essay is likely to turn out to be rambling and ineffective work. It would be better if you helped to ensure it flows well and makes sense by constructing a solid outline before you write so that your ideas follow logically in the order you list them.

Step 1: Choosing a Topic

If one has not already been provided for you, choosing a topic will be an extremely part of creating your composition. Without a topic you feel passionate about, you run the risk writing a rather boring essay. But, as you probably know, coming up with a good idea can be somewhat difficult, requiring a great deal of effort. We therefore provide the following suggestions to help you in that process.

- Ask for ideas from friends or family.
- List things about which you consider yourself to be the most knowledgeable.
- Ask yourself what activities do you enjoy doing most?
- List people whom you greatly respect or admire. (They can be real or fictional, dead or alive.)
- Consider what are your favorite movies or books?

- List those times in your life when you failed miserably or when you succeeded beyond all expectation.
- Ask your parents, friends, or family what events in your life they will always remember?
- List four of your favorite things and four of your least favorite. (These can include activities, places, objects, virtues, etc.)
- Identify a social injustice that makes you angry.
- Recall one or more periods in your life that you include among the happiest times you ever had.

In this section, you will find a list of Do's and Don'ts to assist you in evaluating each potential topic. If you find yourself repeatedly answering "no" to these questions for any given topic, you should drop it and move on to another.

- Does this topic describe something of personal importance in my life?
- Is this a "gimmicky" topic?
- Will I be able to offer valid supporting paragraphs to my essay topic?
- Will this topic allow me to fully address the essay prompt?
- Is this a topic that will keep the reader's interest from the first word?
- Is the topic unique?
- Will this topic allow me to "be myself" as I write?
- Is the topic of void controversial issues that may offend the reader?
- Can I write about this topic honestly?
- Is this topic memorable?

Step 2: Ask a Question about the Topic

Once you have chosen a topic, you should ask yourself questions about it, which serves two functions:

First, it helps you **narrow your focus** in order to concentrate on aspects of the subject particularly suited for your essay.

Secondly, it helps you **identify your thesis** or main idea. Begin by considering the feedback you gave or received in response to each of the items in the previous section. Follow this by answering the questions below with respect to each of your considerations. Pay particular attention to which ideas reveal themselves as dull, and which seem to offer a wealth of interesting material for "discussion."

1. Is there anything I wrote that is extremely unique, uncommon, or unusual?
2. What made me think of the things that came to mind? Why did I remember those particular places, people, or events?
3. To which one of the items I wrote do I have a strong emotional reaction?
4. Which of the events I listed had a major impact on my life?
5. Why did I select each of the things I listed as one of my favorites or least favorites out of all the other possible choices?
6. What, if anything, did I learn after going through the experience mentioned?
7. What, if anything, good came out of it?

In answering these questions you will probably find that you have a great deal to talk about in response to at least a couple of the items from the previous section. You must now decide on the one that will allow you to best express your various thoughts and feelings as a coherent whole while simultaneously addressing the essay prompt.

Step 3: Make a Thesis Statement Using the Prompt

If your essay does not actually address all aspects of the prompt, nothing else you do will matter and all your effort will amount to nothing. While you will surely have a great deal of latitude in what you write, you must also be sure to answer the questions that were asked of you.

Leaving a lasting impression on a teacher or evaluate or who reads 30 or more essays a day will not be easy. The next section will offer some guidelines to help you get started.

Asking yourself questions about your topic will help you to develop a list of details.

As you add content around these main points, these words should support and reinforce the logic of the outline.

Finally, the outline should conclude with an insightful thoughts or image. Make sure that the rest of your outline reinforces this conclusion.

ESSAY STRUCTURES

Begin with a main argument or thesis statement and follow it with three pieces of evidence that support the argument. Wrap up by stating what the essay has shown. This is a good structure to use when making a single, strong point. Its power lies in its simplicity. Because it allows you to present several points neatly in support of a single claim, it is especially useful for making a persuasive argument. This standard essay format will be most helpful when writing short essays. Other formats include the following:

Step 4: Organize Your Ideas

OVERVIEW

Here are some of the essential elements that characterize a *good* essay:

- Use of multiple paragraphs to develop a central idea
- Paragraphs and sentences that are clear and coherent
- A point of view based on audience and purpose
- A focused, organized structure based on length and other formal requirements

Step 5: Ask a Thesis Question

Ask a question about your thesis sentence and list three (3) answers.

As you add content around these main points, these words should support and reinforce the logic of the outline.

Finally, the outline should conclude with an insightful thoughts or image. Make sure that the rest of your outline reinforces this conclusion.

Let's continue by finding out of what those “other formal requirements” consist. First of all, an essay is divided into three parts: an **introduction**, a **body**, and a **conclusion**.

It is imperative that you actually answer the question in your essay, which should go without saying. If your essay does not address the question, then all of your effort is pointless.

Step 6: Write Supporting Sentences

These sentences **DIRECTLY** support the **ANSWERS** to your thesis question in **Step 3**.

Use your **IDEAS** from Step 1.

Answers to the thesis question and supporting sentences:

1. *Dogs can be taught to perform jobs.*
 - *Dogs are trained to be police dogs and watch dogs.*
 - *Dogs are used to help the handicapped.*
 - *Dogs are used to detect drugs and explosives.*
2. *Dogs protect people and their property.*

- *Barking dogs will stop a thief from entering a home.*
- *Dogs will alert you if someone is near your home.*
- *Dogs will attack strangers who break into a house.*

3. *Dogs are loyal companions.*

- *Dogs like to play with their owners.*
- *Dogs enjoy spending time with their owners.*

Dogs have given their lives to protect

Step 7: Write Your Introduction

THE INTRODUCTION

The first paragraph of your essay is the introduction which, of course, introduces the topic of your essay. An introduction should include an **attention grabber**, a **bridge**, a **summary**, the **problem**, and a **thesis statement**, also referred to as a topic sentence (a sentence that states the subject or main idea of the essay).

The thesis statement should be followed by at least three supporting detail sentences. Besides introducing the topic, the introduction serves two other additional functions.

The second job of the introduction is to narrow the topic down to a specific focus, stating the essay's purpose or thesis. The thesis statement is often found at the end of the paragraph and summarizes the main argument of the paper.

The third and final purpose for writing an introduction—and an extremely important one—is to grab the audience's attention. There are at least six common ways of accomplishing this task:

Start with an ATTENTION grabber.

- *A question*
- *A quote*
- *A surprising fact or statement*

Example:

The term “dumb animal” has always confused me when it is used to describe dogs.

Include the GENERAL TOPICS of your essay. Use the ANSWERS to your Thesis Question in Step 3 as your General Topics.

Example:

Why dumb? Dogs can be taught to perform jobs. Dogs are used to protect people and property. Dogs are also known to be loyal companions.

Include your THESIS SENTENCE from Step 2.

Example:

I strongly believe that dogs are truly man’s best friends.

Use TRANSITION WORDS and/or PHRASES to help your paragraph flow smoothly, such as...

- *first*
- *next*
- ***in addition***
- *finally*
- *consequently*
- ***however***

Attention Grabbers:

Begin your essay with a sentence that grabs your reader's attention. A creative introduction catches members of the audience off guard with an opening statement that leaves them smiling or wondering what the rest of the essay contains. Some common attention grabbers include.

- Humor (write something funny)
- Repeat a famous or interesting quote (something someone else said, in their exact words) from a text or other source
- Cite an interesting statistic (the results of a study, all told, or a survey)
- Ask an intriguing question related to this subject
- Use an "imagine" statement, which places the reader in your shoes, making him or her more interested in what takes place in the rest of the essay. (The drawback is that its informality gives the essay a slightly hokey or corny tone, so be careful not to take it too far.)
- Present an interesting fact related to the subject

Bridge:

In the second sentence you should take the audience from the attention grabber to the topic by making a connection. If you are writing about a literary work, the bridge should include the title and author.

Summary:

Next, give it a very brief introduction to the topic or a summary of the story or text being used. It should be no more than one or two sentences long.

Problem:

Explain the problem or topic that your essay will address.

Thesis Statement:

Write your thesis statement. The thesis statement tells the reader what you are trying to prove in this essay. It states your point.

Reread:

Reread your introduction to be sure that everything makes sense and flows together well. Remember that the reader should be able to follow your argument.

INTRODUCTIONS (page 36)

Step 8: Write the Body of Your Essay

Write the **TOPIC SENTENCE** for the paragraph. Use one of the **ANSWERS** you wrote for Step 3 as your **Topic Sentence**. Then write your **SUPPORTING SENTENCES**. Use the supporting **SENTENCES** you wrote in Step 4. Use **transition words and/or phrases** to build bridges between sentences and paragraphs.

Example: *Dogs can be taught to perform many useful and important jobs. Dogs are trained to be police dogs and watch dogs. In addition, dogs are used as guide dogs to help the handicapped. Finally, because of their excellent sense of smell, dogs can effectively detect drugs and explosives.*

(Repeat for each paragraph.)

Example: *Dogs are also known to protect people and their property. Barking dogs, though sometimes annoying, will stop a thief from entering a home. In fact, dogs will alert you if someone is even near your home. If noise is not enough, dogs will attack strangers who break into a house.*

Most importantly, dogs are loyal companions. As many dog owners know, dogs like to play with their owners. In fact, dogs seem to truly enjoy

spending time with their owners, even if it is not play time. Dogs have even been known to give their lives to protect people.

THE BODY

The second part of a composition is the **body**, which is formed by taking the introduction's supporting detail sentences, and extending, expanding, and developing them until each one has become a complete and full paragraph. Hence, the number of paragraphs in the body will be equal to or greater than the number of supporting sentences in the introduction. The standard number of whatever is 3.

Each of the three paragraphs that constitute the body of your essay should have a supporting point followed by evidence for it (analysis of example to show how it supports the topic sentence and thesis).

Writing a Body Paragraph:

Step 1- Topic sentence:

Write a topic sentence which states one key point or main idea that supports the thesis statement or argument.

Step 2- Support Details:

Provide specific details (examples, illustrations, evidence, quotations, plot references) that support your key point or prove that your topic sentence is true. Be sure to utilize the support formula:

- Set up the importance of the support detail
- Give the specific support detail
- Explain how the support detail validates your topic sentence.

Step 3- Concluding Sentence:

The last sentence in a body paragraph completes the paragraph. It returns the reader to the essay's thesis. It may also transition to the next body paragraph.

Step 9: Write Your Conclusion

This is the FINAL RESTATEMENT of your Thesis (main idea).

- *Do NOT just recopy your Thesis Sentence.*
- *Refer back to your ATTENTION GRABBER.*
- *You can SUMMARIZE your main points—however in Mr. Duckworth’s class, you MUST summarize your main points.*

Example: *In conclusion, how could anyone believe that dogs are just “dumb animals?” Considering all that dogs do for people, dogs should be given more respect. Can anyone disagree that dogs are truly our best friends?*

(Note that in this example the main points were not summarized. This is not acceptable in my class.)

PART III

The Last part of a composition is the **conclusion**. To write the conclusion you simply say the same thing you said in the introduction, but you say it in another way (using other/different/alternative words).

Writing a Conclusion:

Step 1- Restate Thesis:

In the first sentence, restate the thesis statement as a fact. Do not just copy the thesis statement from your introduction. You should rewrite the thesis in different words.

Step 2- Recap Main Points:

Next, recap your essay's key points in two or three sentences. Do not add any new information.

Step 3- Final Comment:

Make a final comment on the subject by writing a strong, effective message (a "So What?" statement) that the reader will remember. This is your last opportunity to present a powerful message.

CONCLUSIONS (page 41)

The conclusion is your last chance to persuade the reader or impress upon them your point of view. Indians are the last experience your reader has with your essay, so you need to make these words and thoughts count. You should not feel obliged to tie everything up into a neat bow area the essay can conclude with some ambiguity, if appropriate, as long as it offers insights. The aim is for the reader to leave your essay thinking, "That was a satisfying read." Here are some do's and don'ts as you develop your conclusion

Expand upon the broader implication of your discussion.

By the conclusion back to your introduction.

Tried in on a positive note.

Don't summarize

Don't you stock phrases

Don't try to explain the unexplainable.

EDITING AND REVISING (Page 42)

Students write narrative, expository, persuasive, and descriptive texts of at least 500 to 700 words in each genre. Student writing demonstrates a command of standard American English and the research, organizational, and drafting strategies outlined in Writing Standard 1.0.

Write expository compositions (e.g., description, explanation, comparison and contrast, problem and solution):

- a. State the thesis or purpose.
- b. Explain the situation.
- c. Follow an organizational pattern appropriate to the type of composition.
- d. Offer persuasive evidence to validate arguments and conclusions as needed.

Students combine the rhetorical strategies of narration, exposition, persuasion, and description to produce texts of at least 1,500 words each. Student writing demonstrates a command of standard American English and the research, organizational, and drafting strategies outlined in Writing Standard 1.0.

2.3 Write expository compositions, including analytical essays and research reports:

- a. Marshal evidence in support of a thesis and related claims, including information on all relevant perspectives.
- b. Convey information and ideas from primary and secondary sources accurately and coherently.
- c. Make distinctions between the relative value and significance of specific data, facts, and ideas.
- d. Include visual aids by employing appropriate technology to organize and record information on charts, maps, and graphs.
- e. Anticipate and address readers' potential misunderstandings, biases, and expectations.
- f. Use technical terms and notations accurately.

Students write narrative, expository, persuasive, and descriptive texts of at least 500 to 700 words in each genre. Student writing demonstrates a command of standard American English and the research, organizational, and drafting strategies outlined in Writing Standard 1.0.

2.2 Write expository compositions (e.g., description, explanation, comparison and contrast, problem and solution):

- a. State the thesis or purpose.
- b. Explain the situation.
- c. Follow an organizational pattern appropriate to the type of composition.
- d. Offer persuasive evidence to validate arguments and conclusions as needed.

2.3 Write reflective compositions:

- a. Explore the significance of personal experiences, events, conditions, or concerns by using rhetorical strategies (e.g., narration, description, exposition, persuasion).
- b. Draw comparisons between specific incidents and broader themes that illustrate the writer's important beliefs or generalizations about life.
- c. Maintain a balance in describing individual incidents and relate those incidents to more general and abstract ideas.

QUIZ

1. What are the three parts of an essay?

Five Paragraph Essay

The five paragraph essay is a staple of middle school writing. This essay format is an effective way to organize any assignment that requires a student to present, explain, examine, or discuss material. The basic structure of the five paragraph essay is as follows:

The first paragraph introduces the topic and narrows it to a specific focus or thesis. The thesis statement is often found at the end of the paragraph and summarizes the main argument of the paper.

The next three paragraphs make up the body of the essay. Each body paragraph contains a topic sentence that supports the thesis statement, provides evidence to back up the topic sentence, and then ends with a concluding or transition sentence.

The essay closes with a concluding paragraph that restates the thesis statement, summarizes the essay's major points, and allows the writer one last opportunity to make his/her point.

Introduction:

There are three purposes to an introduction. First, an introduction must grab the audience's attention. Next, it introduces the topic. Finally, it states the purpose or the thesis of the essay.

Body:

The purpose of the body paragraphs is to provide evidence that supports the topic. The body paragraphs do this by supplying supporting details such as facts, statistics, examples, quotations, or text references.

Conclusion:

The purpose of the conclusion is to restate and highlight the major ideas that were presented in the essay. It should not bring up any new questions or ideas. However, it should allow the writer one last opportunity to state an opinion and/or make any suggestions, recommendations or proposals.

Writing an Introduction:***Step 1- Attention Grabber:***

Begin with a sentence that grabs your reader's attention. Some common attention grabbers include:

- A quote from a text or another source
- An intriguing question related to the subject
- An "Imagine" statement
- An interesting fact related to the subject

Step 2- Bridge:

In the second sentence you should take the audience from the attention grabber to the topic by making a connection. If you are writing about literature, the bridge should include the title and author.

Step 3- Summary:

Next, give a very brief introduction to the topic or a summary of the story or text being used (one or two sentences).

Step 4- Problem:

Explain the problem or topic that your essay will address.

Step 5- Thesis Statement:

Write your thesis statement. The thesis statement tells the reader what you are trying to prove in this essay. It states your point.

Step 6- Reread:

Reread your introduction to be sure that everything makes sense and flows together well. Remember that the reader should be able to follow your argument.

Writing a Body Paragraph:

Step 1- Topic sentence: Write a topic sentence which states one key point or main idea that supports the thesis statement or argument.

Step 2- Support Details: Provide specific details (examples, illustrations, evidence, quotations, plot references) that support your key point or prove that your topic sentence is true. Be sure to utilize the support formula:

- Set up the importance of the support detail
- Give the specific support detail
- Explain how the support detail validates your topic sentence.

Step 3- Concluding Sentence: The last sentence in a body paragraph completes the paragraph. It returns the reader to the essay's thesis. It may also transition to the next body paragraph.

Writing a Conclusion:

Step 1- Restate Thesis: In the first sentence, restate the thesis statement as a fact. Do not just copy the thesis statement from your introduction. You should rewrite the thesis in different words.

Step 2- Recap Main Points: Next, recap your essay's key points in two or three sentences. Do not add any new information.

Step 3- Final Comment: Make a final comment on the subject by writing a strong, effective message (*a "So What?" statement*) that the reader will remember. This is your last opportunity to present a powerful message.

❧ Expectations for Writing ❧

Middle school students can produce documents that show planning and organization, and can effectively convey the authors' intended message or meaning. Students must be capable of writing for a variety of audiences, using different styles of writing.

Following is a list of writing skills that middle school students are expected to master. The ability to write clearly is essential for good communication.

- ✎ *Construct a topic sentence*
- ✎ *Locate at least three supporting details for a topic using text, personal experience, or outside sources*
- ✎ *Organize supporting details sequentially, or by order of importance*
- ✎ *Use transition words*
- ✎ *Construct a concluding sentence*
- ✎ *Compare and contrast objects / people / situations / events*
- ✎ *Summarize text by paraphrasing*
- ✎ *Recognize cause and effect*
- ✎ *Express an opinion and support it with evidence*

Use correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, and mechanics

http://www.mtps.com/80030126164431/lib/80030126164431/Literacy_Handbook_FINAL.doc

Admissions Essay Writing 101

<http://www.essayedge.com/teachers/curriculum.pdf>

ESSAY STRUCTURE:

2. Compare and Contrast
3. Narrative or Chronological Structure
4. Descriptive Structure
5. Cause-and-Effect Structure

THE BODY

Each of the three paragraphs that constitute the body of your essay should have a supporting point followed by evidence for it (analysis of example to show how it supports the topic sentence and thesis).

STYLE

Writing style can take an amazing story and make it dreadfully boring, or take a ridiculously dry topic and transform it into an exciting read. Here are some style tips to help you spice up your writing.

- Use a conversational style and easy-to-understand language to project a genuine, relaxed flavor.
- Make your essay easy to read. Make sure that the parts work together and move to a point, carrying the reader along. Give it a momentum.
- Avoid writing a dull essay by employing the use of sentence variety, transitions, good word choice, and proper verb tense.

SENTENCE VARIETY

Don't make the mistake of thinking that longer sentences are better sentences. This is patently untrue and you don't need long, complicated sentences to show that you are a good writer. In fact, a short sentences often packed the most punch. The best essays contain a variety of sentence lengths, mixed with in any given paragraph.

Read your essay out loud, pausing at every period. Listen to the rhythm of the text. Are all the sentence is the same length? Did each of your sentences twist and turn for the entire paragraph? Do you run out of breath at any point?, if so, break some of your sentences up into smaller statements.

WORD CHOICE

Don't make the second mistake of thinking that big words make a good essay. Advanced vocabulary is fine if it comes to you naturally and you know how to use it correctly in the appropriate context.

Avoid using words and phrases that can be deleted from your essay without any loss of meaning, especially those that invite passive constructions—those that employ the verb “to be,” such as:

- I believe that
- I feel that
- I hope that

- I realize that
- I learned that
- in other words
- in order to
- in fact
- it is essential that
- it is important to see that
- the reason why
- the thing that is most important is
- this is important because
- this means that
- the point is that
- really
- very
- somewhat
- absolutely
- definitely
- surely
- truly
- probably
- practically
- hopefully
- in conclusion
- in summary

Also, avoid using words together that mean the same thing, such as:

- hard work and effort
- teamwork and cooperation
- dreams and aspirations
- personal growth and development
- determination intelligence
- challenges and difficulties
- objectives and goals
- worries and concerns
- loving caring

SHOW, DON'T TELL (page 27)

Avoid repeatedly starting your sentences with the pronoun “I” since this will cause your language to sound stunted and unsophisticated, and you will see in to be extremely conceited.

Don't repeat the same subject nouns. For example, when writing an essay about soccer, do not repeatedly use the word “soccer.” The repetition of nouns has a stunting effect as well. Instead, look for alternative phrases for your subject nouns. For example, you might use vague synonyms for soccer such as: the sport or the game. Or you might use specific terms such as “going to practice” or “completing a pass.”

VERBS

as you write your essay, remember to focus on verbs that keep adjectives to a minimum. Thumping your sentences full of adjectives and adverbs is not the same thing as adding detail or color. Adjectives and adverbs are lazy description, but verbs at action.

PASSIVE TENSE

One of the greatest weaknesses of student writers is their frequent use of the passive tense. Overuse of the passive voice throughout an essay can make your text seem flat and uninteresting. It is preferential to use the “active voice.” Sentences in active voice are also more concise than those in passive voice.

RECOGNIZING PASSIVE-VOICE EXPRESSIONS

You can recognize passive voice expressions because the verb phrase will always include a form of “to be,” *such as am, was, were, are, or been*, though the presence of such verbs does not necessarily mean that the sentence is in passive voice.

In sentence is written in passive voice, the subject receives the action expressed in the verb; the subject is acted upon. In sentences written in active voice, the subject performs the action expressed in the verb; the subject acts.

EXAMPLES:

PASSIVE	I was elected to be the tuba player by the then leader
ACTIVE	the bandleaders elected me to be the tuba player.

PASSIVE	I will be prepared for college as a result of the lessons my mother
taught me.	
ACTIVE	by mother taught me lessons that will prepare me for college.

PASSIVE	I am reminded of her voice every time I hear that song.
Active	that song reminds me of her voice every time I hear it.

TRANSITIONS

Do not ignore transitions. A good essay must use transitions within paragraphs and especially between paragraphs to preserve the logical flow of the essay. An essay without the transitions is like a series of isolated islands; the reader will struggle to get from one point to the next.

Use transitions as bridges between your ideas. As you move from one paragraph to the next, you should not have to explain your story in addition to telling. If the transitions between paragraphs require explanation, your essay is either too large in scope or the flow is not logical. But they transitions statement will straddle the line between the two paragraphs.

You should not have to think too much about how to construct transition sentences. If the concepts in your outline following build on one another naturally, transitions will write themselves.

To make sure that you are not forcing your transitions, try to refrain from using words such as: *however*, *nevertheless*, and *furthermore*. If you are having trouble transitioning between paragraphs or are trying to force a transition onto a paragraph that has already been written, then this may indicate a problem with your overall structure. It uses spec this to be the case, go back to your original outline and make sure that you have a signed only one point to each paragraph, and that each point naturally follows the preceding one and leads to a logical conclusion.

The transition into the final paragraph is especially critical. If it is not clear how you arrived at this final idea, you have either shoehorned a conclusion into the outline, or your outline lacks focus.

If you are confident in your structure, but find yourself stuck on what might make a good transition, try repeating keywords from the previous paragraph and progressing the idea.

WHY OVOID CLICHÉS

Clichés (phrases or expressions that have become overly familiar or commonplace) should be avoided in that they make your writing appear lazy, your ideas ordinary, and your experience is typical. Avoid using clichés in your writing, such as the following:

- I always learn from my mistakes
- I know my dreams will come true
- I can make a difference
- _____ is my passion
- I know longer take my loved ones for granted
- these lessons are useful both on and off the field, court, or other sporting arena
- I realize the value of hard work and perseverance
- _____ was the greatest lesson of all
- I know what it is to triumph over adversity
- _____ opened my eyes to a whole new world

<http://www.essayedge.com/teachers/curriculum.pdf>

