WRITING AN ESSAY

WHAT IS AN ESSAY?

An academic essay is an organised piece of writing that demonstrates your considered and coherent ideas about a particular subject. It is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your knowledge, ability to criticise and synthesise evidence and ideas, and develop a reasoned argument or approach to a topic.

Expressing your ideas in a logical and reasoned manner is also an important part of the learning process. While you might not need to write academic essays in your professional life, essay writing is a very useful learning tool for developing important communication skills including expression, structure, critical evaluation, and synthesis.

GENERAL ESSAY STRUCTURE

There are many different types of essays: argumentative essays, research essays, expository essays, personal essays … the list goes on. They can also vary in length and complexity depending on your discipline and level of study. Fortunately, while the length and depth may change, the general structure remains the same. You may wish to check if there are any discipline specific requirements you need to consider.

INTRODUCTION

- About 10% of the total essay length
- Introduces the background, context, and significance of the subject
- Includes a **thesis statement** that demonstrates the essay's main argument or position and outlines the essay's structure

BODY

- About 80% of the total essay length
- Made up of paragraphs that develop each of the essay's main points
- Each paragraph contains a single idea. However, in complex essays, multiple paragraphs may be required to develop an idea. Use topic sentences and connectives to connect sub-ideas and show where main ideas begin and end.
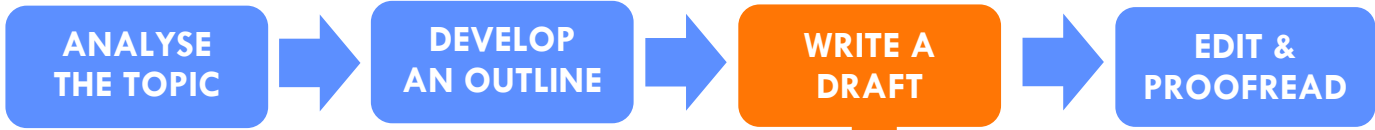- Includes evidence and connectives to support and link each idea

CONCLUSION

- About 10 – 15% of the total essay length
- Synthesises the main ideas presented in the essay and shows how the thesis has been demonstrated
- Ends more generally and may include implications, recommendations, or areas for further research

WRITING AN ESSAY

Flinders University — SLSS

ANALYSE THE TOPIC → DEVELOP AN OUTLINE → **WRITE A DRAFT** → EDIT & PROOFREAD

Begin with an **introduction** that provides a brief background about the topic demonstrates its significance.

State your **argument** by including a **thesis statement** outlining your claim and guiding the reader as to the structure of your essay.

Each **body paragraph** begins with a **topic sentence** that introduces a key point that will supports your claim.

Quote or paraphrase to support your points.

Use **connective words** to indicate the flow and logic of your writing. This is particularly important when integrating evidence.

Use **concise** and **specific** language to convey your

The **conclusion** synthesises the main points of your argument in order to demonstrate how they come together to prove your claim.

Provide all **references** in-text and in a reference list according to your topic's preferred style.

Recent studies have indicated that high school students are bored or widely disengaged within the classroom. This is of particular concern, as young people require receptive communities that encourage social interaction and experiential learning, particularly involving new technologies, to help develop their identities. One strategy for reengaging students is game based learning. Gamification encompasses the use of game design, or game-based mechanics, to motivate students and promote learning through the introduction of explicit goals, rules, and interactions. This essay will argue that Gamed-Based Learning should be an integral component of teaching Economics and Business within the Australian Curriculum and SACE due to its ability to engage students and foster social interactions while encouraging strong learning outcomes. The link between game-based learning and constructivist learning theories will be examined, showing that the challenges provided by games are invaluable in ensuring student-self motivation and construction of meaning.

Game-based learning is an effective tool that can be utilised through with a constructivist lens within the classroom. Constructivism originated from the work of Piaget and sees learning as a "process of accommodation, assimilation, and equilibration" (Ang, Anvi & Zaphiris, 2008, p.538). Constructivists believe that students create their own understanding of the world through individual experience. Therefore, constructivist education is not generated through direct instruction by the teacher, but through socio-cultural interactions and self-reflection, particularly in a welcoming and interesting learning environment (Jong, Shang & Lee, 2010). As constructivist lessons are intended to place students in a more self-regulated position in their learning environment, the kind of content delivered will differ from traditionally rigid task-oriented approaches by aiming to create learning environments that emphasise individual student-focused participation and learning processes. Thus, game-based learning can be seen as an appropriate aspect of constructivist lesson design; educational games encourage deeper learning from students who are willing to spend more time and effort on activities they deem as engaging, while feeling more positively about the content they learn in the process (Jong, Shang & Lee, 2010).

Gamed-Based Learning should be an integral component of teaching Economics and Business within the Australian Curriculum and SACE, as this form of teaching is crucial in keeping modern students engaged in the classroom while meeting their need for social interaction. Games enable students to enjoy themselves in school while also being challenged, which can lead to strong learning outcomes. In particular, game-based learning can be seen as a constructivist tool through which, aided by socio-cultural interactions, students can engage in self-motivated learning and create their own meaning in the classroom. Educational video games are especially useful as constructivist teaching tools due to their adaptable nature and should be utilised by teachers in Australian schools as much as possible.

Reference List

Ang, C.S., Avni, E. and Zaphiris, P. (2008). Linking pedagogical theory of computer games to their usability. *International Journal on E-Learning*, *7*(3), 533-558.

Jong, M.S., Shang, J. and Lee, F.L. (2010). Constructivist learning through computer gaming. In M. R. Syed (Ed.) *Technologies shaping instruction and distance education: new studies and utilizations* (pp. 207-222). IGI Global.

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