Expository Writing

Learning to Write from Beginning to End
What is Expository Writing?

A type of writing, the purpose of which is to explain.

EXPOSITORY = EXPLAIN

You INFORM and tell WHY
Expository Writing Prompt

READ

THINK

WRITE
Expository Writing Prompt

READ

THINK

WRITE
Example Prompt - Expository

Read the information in the box below.

Edward Everett Hale said, “I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something.” And I will not let what I cannot do interfere with what I can do.”

Think carefully about this statement.
It is easy to become discouraged about the possibility of completing a task and to give up on it before ever getting started.

Write an essay about the importance of taking action.
Example Prompt - Expository

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What is the prompt asking you to do?
Deciding what to write: Brainstorming

Just like you must think about the ingredients you will use to cook up a delicious dinner, you must spend some time thinking about what you should write before you begin writing.

One way to brainstorm your ideas is using a Donut Map.

In the box around the donut, you will write **EXAMPLES** that support your reasons.

In the outer circle you will write the **REASONS** to explain the subject.

In the center circle you will write the **SUBJECT** from the prompt.
Deciding what to write: **Brainstorming**

First put the **SUBJECT** of the prompt in the center circle.

| Importance of taking action |
Deciding what to write: Brainstorming

Then put REASONS to explain the subject in the outer circle.

- Importance of taking action
  - To help yourself
    - healthy life
    - academic goals
  - To help others
    - bullying
    - abuse
  - Taking care of the Nature
    - recycling
    - helping animals
  - To improve society
    - prejudice
    - the poor or homeless
Deciding what to write: **Brainstorming**

**Importance of taking action**

- To help yourself
  - healthy lifestyle
  - academic goals

- To help others
  - bullying
  - abuse

- To improve society
  - prejudice
  - the poor or homeless

- Taking care of the Nature
  - recycling
  - helping animals

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**The Hunger Games**
- Katniss protects her sister by taking her place as tribute.

**Schindler’s List**
- Movie about Oskar Schindler saving 1,100 Jewish workers during WWII

**“The Biggest Loser”**
- Contestants try to improve their lives by losing weight and learning how to live healthier lifestyles.

**The Lorax by Dr. Seuss**
- The Lorax speaks for the trees and warns of the dangers of harming the environment.

Finally put **EXAMPLES** that you could use in the surrounding box.
Deciding what to write: Brainstorming

**Importance of taking action**

- **To help yourself**
  - healthy lifestyle
  - academic goals

- **To help others**
  - bullying
  - abuse

- **Taking care of the Nature**
  - recycling
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- **To improve society**
  - prejudice
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Put a star next to the reason that you could develop the most.
Deciding what to write: Brainstorming

COLORED PAPER
PROMPT ACTIVITY 1

Everyone will now receive a prompt on colored paper.

You will use this prompt often to practice the steps of writing an expository essay.

Your first step is to BRAINSTORM ideas.

Read the prompt and complete a donut map.

In the center circle you will write the SUBJECT from the prompt.

In the outer circle you will write the REASONS to explain the subject.

In the box around the donut, you will write EXAMPLES that support your reasons.
Begin at the Beginning: The Introduction

A good introduction should clearly state what your paper is about.

The most important ingredient for a complete introduction is a clear, focused Thesis Statement.
Begin at the Beginning: The Introduction

Staying focused on your topic is often difficult. One way to make sure that you stay on topic is by writing a strong thesis statement.

A thesis statement is just a fancy way of saying your answer to the prompt.

FOCUS, FOCUS, FOCUS

A strong thesis statement:

1) Begins with the SUBJECT from the prompt.

2) Gives REASONS to explain the subject.

Let’s look at how we can cook up a good thesis with all the required ingredients...
The first ingredient for a strong thesis statement is the subject of the prompt.

Remember our brainstorming...

The middle of the donut is where you find the beginning of your thesis.

It is important to take action + REASONS
Begin at the Beginning: The Introduction

The second ingredient for a strong thesis statement is one or two reasons to explain that subject.

Ask yourself WHY after writing the subject.

It is important to take action.

WHY???

Include 2 reasons

Schindler’s List

To improve society

Importance of taking action
Begin at the Beginning: The Introduction

When you put your **SUBJECT** and **REASONS** together, you have a complete **THESIS STATEMENT**.

**It is important to take action because the actions of just one person can impact and inspire those around them.**

A good thesis statement not only tells your reader exactly what to expect in your essay, it also helps you to stay on topic and guides you through the rest of the paper.

Now we are really cooking...
Begin at the Beginning: The Introduction

Let’s practice by rewriting weak thesis statements, starting with the subject of the prompt AND stating reasons to explain that subject.

Prompt: Write an essay about the bond between people and animals.

Weak Thesis: I love my dog for many reasons.

Rewrite:

Now you will rewrite the rest of the weak thesis statements on your activity called FOCUS, FOCUS, FOCUS
COLOR PROMPT ACTIVITY 2

1) Get out your colored paper prompt.

2) On your paper, write a **THESIS STATEMENT** that begins with the **SUBJECT** of the prompt and includes the **REASONS** you will use to explain that subject.

3) Exchange with a partner

4) Read your partner’s thesis statement.

5) Try to guess what your partner’s prompt asked based on their thesis statement.

If your partner guessed correctly, your thesis must have been clear!
Begin at the Beginning: The Introduction

You must also get your reader’s attention right from the start.

This is called a HOOK

This is like your reader’s first bite. You want it to catch their attention and leave them wanting more.
Begin at the Beginning: The Introduction

1) Fold your paper in half horizontally (like a hotdog)

2) Draw three lines on your paper dividing it up into 3 sections.

3) Title each section just like below:

| Funnel | Quote | Turnabout |
Begin at the Beginning: The Introduction

4) Now cut along the lines you made (only on the top) to make flaps

| Funnel | Quote | Turnabout |

5) Take notes as we go through the next few slides.

Open the flap for each hook.

Write the definition and example of each hook on the inside flap.

This will be a great tool to use whenever you are writing an essay in class.
Begin at the Beginning: The Introduction

The hook should be connected to the **EXAMPLE** you intend to use in your essay.

INTRODUCTION:

Hook - Open with your **EXAMPLE**.

Transition to your thesis.

Close with your **THESIS**.
Begin at the Beginning: The Introduction

Types of Hooks: Funnel

The FUNNEL reveals background information about your EXAMPLE.

Six million Jewish people died in the Holocaust, but 1,100 did not because one man protected them. When few others cared or dared to defy the Nazis, Oskar Schindler took action. As shown in the movie, Schindler’s List, it is important to take action because the actions of just one person can impact and inspire those around them.
Begin at the Beginning: The Introduction

Types of Hooks: Quote

Use a QUOTE from or related to your EXAMPLE to begin the essay.

In the movie, Schindler’s List, Oskar Schindler says, "Whoever saves one life, saves the world entire.”

He understood that it is important to take action because the actions of just one person can impact and inspire those around them.

Where are some sources for quotes to use?
Types of Hooks: Turnabout

The TURNABOUT starts with the opposite idea and then moves to the thesis.

During the Holocaust many people stood by and did nothing to help the Jewish people. However, one man named Oskar Schindler did act. He proved that it is important to take action because the actions of just one person can impact and inspire those around them.
Begin at the Beginning: The Introduction

COLOR PROMPT ACTIVITY 3

Using the same colored paper prompt as before, complete the following:

1) Write a **FUNNEL hook** and combine it with the thesis statement you previously wrote.

2) Now write a **QUOTATION hook** and combine it with the thesis statement you previously wrote.

3) Now write a **TURNABOUT hook** and combine it with the thesis statement you previously wrote.

When you finish you will have written 3 introductions that I can grade.

Take your time and be creative!
The Meat of the Paper: Writing the Body Paragraphs

Remember when we learned how to write short answers. We compared it to building a hamburger starting with a bun (the **ANSWER**), adding meat (**EVIDENCE**), and finally filling (**EXPLANATION**).

A body paragraph for an expository essay is very similar to this. We are going to start with only one body paragraph and eventually build to two body paragraphs.
# The Meat of the Paper: Writing the Body Paragraphs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic Sentence</strong></td>
<td>A <em>topic sentence</em> is the first sentence in a body paragraph. This sentence is like a <em>mini-thesis statement</em>. It tells your reader what the paragraph will be about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concrete Detail</strong></td>
<td><em>Concrete details</em> are specific examples, facts, descriptions, or details that support, prove, or illustrate your topic sentence and thesis statement. Concrete details can be found in books you have read, movies you have watched, things that have happened in history, famous people, or things that have happened in the news.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commentary</strong></td>
<td><em>Commentary</em> is how you connect the concrete detail with your topic sentence. It is like asking yourself so what? When you write commentary, you are explaining why you chose that specific CD. How did it support your topic sentence? How does it relate to the thesis of the essay?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Meat of the Paper: Writing the Body Paragraphs

Let’s look at the thesis statement we wrote about taking action.

It is important to take action because the actions of just one person can impact and inspire those around them.

Your topic sentences should break the thesis statement into pieces – one for each reason.

For now let’s focus on the first reason.

Ask yourself, HOW?
How can taking actions impact others?

Those who take actions to help others are often seen as heroes.
The Meat of the Paper: Writing the Body Paragraphs

Now it’s your turn!
COLOR PROMPT
ACTIVITY 4

Complete the top box of the graphic organizer. Write a topic sentence for the prompt you have been working on.

**Topic Sentence**
Choose one of the reasons from your thesis statement to focus on.
The Meat of the Paper: Writing the Body Paragraphs

The next ingredient in a body paragraph is the **CONCRETE DETAIL**.

CONCRETE DETAIL = EXAMPLE

Ask yourself, what happens in the movie that supports my **topic sentence**? Then write a few sentences about the example.
Think about your topic sentence.

Those who take actions to help others are often seen as heroes.

What happens in the movie, Schindler’s List, that supports this topic sentence?

For example, when Oskar Schindler, a Nazi businessman became outraged by the violence he saw against his Jewish workers, he did not think he could do anything to change the situation. He knew that trying to save them could endanger his own life, but he had an idea. He began to bribe the Nazis to keep his workers safe. One bribe led to another, and pretty soon his factory became a safe haven for as many workers as he could manage. By the end of the war, he had given away all of his money and risked his life many times, but he had also saved so many people.
The Meat of the Paper: Writing the Body Paragraphs

Now it’s your turn!

COLOR PROMPT

ACTIVITY 4

Complete the middle box of the graphic organizer. Develop your **concrete detail**.

Write several sentences about your **example** that support the topic sentence you wrote.

**Concrete Detail**

Use the example you chose on your donut map. Include details and facts that will support/prove your topic sentence.
The Meat of the Paper: Writing the Body Paragraphs

To complete your body paragraph, you must EXPLAIN your evidence, just as you did in the short answer responses. This is called COMMENTARY.

Think about why the evidence you chose proves your topic sentence and thesis statement.

Oskar Schindler’s actions proved that being courageous in the face of danger is worth it. He is a hero because of the lives he saved, and his name will live on as someone who wasn’t afraid to take action when others did not.
Those who take actions to help others are often seen as heroes. For example, when Oskar Schindler, a Nazi businessman became outraged by the violence he saw against his Jewish workers, he did not think he could do anything to change the situation. He knew that trying to save them could endanger his own life, but he had an idea. He began to bribe the Nazis to keep his workers safe. One bribe led to another, and pretty soon his factory became a safe haven for as many workers as he could manage. By the end of the war, he had given away all of his money and risked his life many times, but he had also saved so many people. Oskar Schindler’s actions proved that being courageous in the face of danger is worth it. He is a hero because of the lives he saved, and his name will live on as someone who wasn’t afraid to take action when others did not.
The Meat of the Paper: Writing the Body Paragraphs

You would then follow the same steps to write a second body paragraph.

Here is what a second body paragraph would look like for this essay.

Taking actions can also inspire others to follow your lead and act. In Schindler’s case, one of his factory workers who survived the war dedicated his life to sharing what happened there. As a result of his actions, a book was written and made into a film about Schindler’s life and what he did. Millions of people now know his powerful story. Seeing his powerful story might motivate people to take action against injustices in the world and stand up for others.
The Meat of the Paper: Writing the Body Paragraphs

Now it’s your turn!
COLOR PROMPT
ACTIVITY 4

Now complete the graphic organizer by adding commentary to your body paragraph.

Complete the last box of the graphic organizer.

Commentary
Now ask yourself, So what?
Explain how that example supports your topic sentence.
Connecting to the Ending: The Conclusion

An effective way to write a conclusion is to draw an insightful reflection in the last few sentences.

One way to do this is through a

Concrete Reflection.

A concrete reflection uses the object placement strategy.

This simply means you take something you mentioned in your introduction and mention it again in your conclusion to bring the paper together.
Connecting to the Ending: The Conclusion

Remember that we wrote hooks that connected to the example we wanted to use in the paper.

You should end your essay with a final reflection about your example AND a restatement of your thesis statement.

Let’s take another look at our introduction. I will use the funnel hook we wrote.

Six million Jewish people died in the Holocaust, but 1,100 did not because one man protected them. When few others cared or dared to defy the Nazis, Oskar Schindler took action. As shown in the movie, Schindler’s List, it is important to take action because the actions of just one person can impact and inspire those around them.

What could we say to reflect on the movie AND restate our thesis statement?
In the closing scene of the movie, more than a hundred survivors that Oskar Schindler saved line up to lay flowers on his grave. Their tribute to him demonstrates the impact of his actions and will hopefully inspire others to act as he did.
Connecting to the Ending: The Conclusion

COLOR PROMPT ACTIVITY 5

Using the same colored paper prompt as before, complete the following:

1) Choose your best introduction from your colored paper prompt.

2) Write a conclusion that reflects on the EXAMPLE you chose AND restates your THESIS STATEMENT.
Putting it all Together

Six million Jewish people died in the Holocaust, but 1,100 did not because one man protected them. When few others cared or dared to defy the Nazis, Oskar Schindler took action. As shown in the movie, *Schindler’s List*, it is important to take action because the actions of just one person can impact and inspire those around them.

Those who take actions to help others are often seen as heroes. For example, when Oskar Schindler, a Nazi businessman became outraged by the violence he saw against his Jewish workers, he did not think he could do anything to change the situation. He knew that trying to save them could endanger his own life, but he had an idea. He began to bribe the Nazis to keep his workers safe. One bribe led to another, and pretty soon his factory became a safe haven for as many workers as he could manage. By the end of the war, he had given away all of his money and risked his life many times, but he had also saved so many people. Oskar Schindler’s actions proved that being courageous in the face of danger is worth it. He is a hero because of the lives he saved, and his name will live on as someone who wasn’t afraid to take action when others did not.

Taking actions can also inspire others to follow your lead and act. In Schindler’s case, one of his factory workers who survived the war dedicated his life to sharing what happened there. As a result of his actions, a book was written and made into a film about Schindler’s life and what he did. Millions of people now know his powerful story. Seeing his powerful story might motivate people to take action against injustices in the world and stand up for others.

In the closing scene of the movie, more than a hundred survivors that Oskar Schindler saved line up to lay flowers on his grave. Their tribute to him demonstrates the impact of his actions and will hopefully inspire others to act as he did.
Putting it all Together

Clarity

When you write your essay you need to be very clear. You want your reader to understand what you are saying.

Your essay is clear when you...

• **Organize it** using good transition words

• **Use words from the prompt to stay focused and on topic**

• **Revise and edit** your essay
For your final task on your colored paper prompt, complete the following:

Put your essay together and write it on the lined paper.

1) Choose one of your introductions.
2) Write your first body paragraph down.
3) Now write a second body paragraph.
4) Finally write your conclusion which includes a concrete reflection.

Be sure that all of your essay fits on the 26 lines.

When you finish you will have written an entire expository essay that I will grade.

Take your time and be creative!