

# EXPLORATORY ESSAY GUIDE

*Use to explore a topic, gather information, and share that information with your audience*

## TO BEGIN, THINK ABOUT...

- The context of the essay – background about the main idea/ central question, and the circumstances of the given subject
- Why the subject is important – what is the significance of the topic in terms of its informative value? Why should your topic interest the reader?
- The main idea/ question – allow the reader to easily follow your paper by clarifying what it is that you will be talking about. If your paper is long, briefly describe the structure the paper will follow.

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

- Describe the issue/ main idea, and why it's important/ interesting.
- Briefly discuss matters that are directly related; causes of the problem, history of the issue, etc.
- Mention the people or institutions involved with the issue.
- Talk about the different perspectives included in the subject.

## 2. BODY PARAGRAPHS:

- Explain the issue and give further background; present relevant information.
- Describe the different perspectives on the issue in detail. CAUTION: don't present arguments for and against a certain issue; instead, simply and factually talk about the different views that exist.
- Analyze the perspectives and connect them to the backgrounds from which those perspectives emerge.
- Consider possible solutions to the issue.

## 3. CONCLUSION

- Restate the main idea.
- Discuss the significance of the issue and its implications for the future.

Note: an exploratory essay is used to investigate an issue, not to take sides or to persuade. Therefore, you should remain as objective as possible.

Inspired by the Purdue OWL and by writers at the ASU Writing Center