

## The Expository Essay

An expository essay attempts to explain the subject to the audience. This may be accomplished by explaining a process, comparing or contrasting two items, identifying a cause-effect relationship, explaining with examples, dividing and classifying, or defining. Depending upon the particular type of expository essay being written, the order of presentation of supporting details may vary. The process essay will employ chronological (time) order; the essay which compares or contrasts, explains with examples, or divides and classifies may use an order of importance (most-to-least important or least-to-most important); the essay which employs causal analysis may identify a cause and then predict its effect or start with the effect and seek to identify its cause.

### Sample Process Essay

#### How to Make a Simple Birthday Cake

Have you ever wanted to make a birthday cake for a loved one? Well, here is how to make a simple birthday cake. All you'll need is a little time, love, and a few items from the grocery store.

You will need a boxed cake mix (the favorite of the birthday person), shortening, eggs, oil, flour, and birthday candles (the number will depend on the age of the birthday person.) When you get home, you will need to gather a few items: a large mixing bowl, a large cake pan, an electric mixer or a large mixing spoon, a spatula, and measuring cups and spoons.

First, you will need to wash your hands and work area. Read through the directions on the cake box to be sure you have everything you need. Then, gather all of your equipment and food items in your work area, organize it according to the order you will use them in making your cake. Be sure to preheat your oven to the appropriate temperature before you begin.

Next, put the dry cake mix into your large mixing bowl. Then, put the prescribed amount of water, oil, and eggs into the mix. Then, with the electric mixer or mixing spoon mix the batter until it is smooth and free of clumps. Next, grease the large cake pan with the shortening. If you wish, you can wrap your fingers with wax paper to keep them from getting greasy. Then, flour the pan lightly. If you do this over the garbage can it will be easier to clean your work area later. Next, pour the cake batter into the cake pan, using the rubber spatula to scrape all of the batter off of the sides of the bowl. Be sure the batter is level in the pan so it will rise evenly. Next, place the cake on the top rack of the oven and bake for the amount of time specified on the box, the time is usually around thirty minutes. While the cake is baking clean up your work area.

After the cake is done remove it from the oven. If you push a toothpick to the bottom and it comes out clean it is done. Turn off the oven and let the cake cool. After the cake has had ample time to cool, you are ready to spread the icing on the cake. If you use a spatula, rather than a knife, the icing will spread easier and will be less likely to ruin the cake. When the icing is on the cake, place the appropriate number of birthday candles on it, you are ready to present your simple birthday cake.

There you have it, a birthday cake that someone will be glad to devour. This cake is easy to make, but still shows someone you care. Be sure to prepare it with love, and your loved one will appreciate it.

## Sample Comparison-Contrast Essay

Sarah Eiben  
6th Hour

### Two Friends

People of the world all have different personalities, but some are similar in nature. Not only do your actions reveal a lot about you, but your friends reveal just as much. I know that different aspects of my personality are more dominant with certain people. Two of my best friends, Amanda and Tim, are very different from each other, although both have sparkling personalities.

Amanda and I have been friends since we were nine years old. We have always shared our most enjoyable and our most trying times. For instance, every time Amanda and I are together, we always have fun. We have always been able to laugh at ourselves, and we always think of some new inside joke to have the next day at school. With the rest of our friends, we have always been able to share our silly escapades and ridiculous humor. Just sharing our stories brings back memories of more and more of our escapades. On the other hand, when Amanda or I have a rough time, we are always there for each other. When Amanda's Grandfather died, I was there for her. She was very upset and I was there for her to talk to. Then, when my Grandfather was very ill and in the hospital, I was worried about my family. She was there for me the whole time my Grandfather was in the hospital.

Tim, on the other hand, is more of a mentor. He has been a friend of mine since we were nine years old as well, but he was always a little more serious. We always talked about things rather than going out and doing things. Tim has been there to give me advice about guys, choices I have to make, and other problems that may come up. Just as Tim has been there for me, I have been there for him as well. When Tim has something on his mind, he will talk about it with me. If he ever hesitates to talk to me, by the time I have told him he can trust me, he will begin to pour his heart out. I would almost regard him as a brother.

As you can see, these two friends are different but both are very important in my life. Both play important roles and both would cause a major change in my life if our friendships

## Sample Explaining with Examples Essay

Sarah Eiben  
Expo  
09-03-96

Some People!

Working in a retail store, a person encounters many kinds of people. I have encountered countless people and all fall into one of two categories, those who are aware and those who are not. Customers who are not aware can seem to be rude, obnoxious, and, most often, stupid. In this case, the woman was not only stupid, but also completely rude.

The day had been extremely busy, people were asking me questions left and right. I always knew people would ask questions that seemed ridiculous to me, but I could see how it could be a mistake. So, when it finally slowed down, I was tired of answering questions, so, I tried to stay at the register. Then, when an older woman came up to the register, I was ready to ring her out. While I was preparing to punch in the sku numbers she made the comment, "Boy, that's a great deal for ninety-nine cents!"

"It sure is," I said, thinking she was referring to the lid for the casserole dish she had. Then, I proceeded to ring her out. After, I rang up the casserole dish and the lid, I told her the total, " That will be six dollars and thirty-five cents."

"No, it's not!" she proclaimed

"All right, I'll check it again." So, I added the totals the computer said the items were. " Yes, it's six dollars and thirty-five cents."

"That's not what the sign says. It says that it's ninety-nine cents."

"Well, maam, are you sure?" I said this very politely. I knew the lid was ninety-nine cents and the base was around five dollars( both were on sale.)

"Right here it says, 'glass plus plastic lids ninety-nine cents.'" She said this in a very unappealing tone.

" No, maam. That says that the glass and plastic lids are on sale for a dollar." I said this as pleasantly as possible. Then Chad, the Third Key, started listening in.

"Yes, the glass and plastic lids are on sale for ninety-nine cents." She said glass and pointed furiously at the dish. By then I was next to her by the table with all of the casserole dishes and lids on it.

"Maam, this is the glass lid that is on sale for ninety-nine cents, along with the plastic lid that you have on the counter." I did this as sweetly as I could. By now, I was frustrated. Then the woman looked to Chad who was behind the counter to see if I was wrong.

"Well, that sign is deceiving. I don't want it then." Then she stormed out of the store.

Chad looked at me while he almost whispered to me, "What was that? Was that lady just stupid or what?"

"I don't know. Now I have to void out this entire sale."

"Here, let me," Chad said. Then he began to type in the reason we had to void the sale.

The rest of the night went well, although I kept thinking about how anyone could be so bull headed and not want to see anything any other way. It amazed me to the point I found myself laughing at the idea of a casserole dish and a lid for the price of ninety nine cents.

Now, as I look back, I know that the lady was either completely oblivious to the fact that our store was a retail store (compared to a garage sale), just trying to get something for nothing, or just completely unaware of the fact she was wrong. So, the next time an unaware person is in the area, be as polite as possible and laugh at the ridiculous things he or she tries to get away with.

## Sample Cause Effect Essay

### The Many Causes of Asthma Attacks

Asthma, a condition that affects the lungs, is a disease that many people, the majority of whom are children, have. Asthma is most commonly thought to be hereditary. One known cause for an attack is an allergic reaction, but stress and vigorous activity are thought to be causes as well. This disease can be fatal if it is not taken care of immediately, but with the medical technology of today, mild asthma is more of a nuisance than a life threatening disease.

Although not proven, asthma is thought to be hereditary. The majority of asthmatics tend to have asthmatics in the family. In most cases, asthma usually is present at birth, although some cases have developed after age forty (Mayo Clinic Family Health Book "Asthma" 466-467).

A flare up of asthma is generally referred to as an asthma attack. An asthma attack starts with the a spasm and constriction of the muscles in the bronchial passages; there is also an inflammation of the mucous lining. This will cause breathing to become labored and cause a wheezing sound (Mayo Clinic Family Health Book "Asthma" 933). At this stage, some asthmatics may experience coughing. The coughing will often be a "wet" cough, which is the kind of cough with which mucous is coughed up (Microsoft Encarta "Asthma, Bronchial"). This will continue until medication is taken, or, if no medication is taken, the symptoms will subside after time. Most asthma attacks occur at night, although an asthma attack can occur at anytime (Mayo Clinic Family Health Book "Asthma" 933).

An asthma attack is known to be caused by an allergy. Exposure to allergens will trigger an asthma attack. The most common allergens are dust mites, pollen, animal fur or dander, and feather pillows. The only way to prevent an attack caused by an allergy is to avoid the allergen (Microsoft Encarta "Asthma, Bronchial").

In addition to allergies, there are many unknown causes for an attack. Vigorous exercises, like running or aerobics, can cause an asthma attack. Stress also tends to trigger an attack. It is not known why these things cause an asthma attack, but the tendency is great (Mayo Clinic Family Health Book "Asthma" 466-467).

Even though the cases of asthma have increased forty percent since 1982, still little is known about the lung condition (Microsoft Encarta "Asthma, Bronchial"). With immuno-therapy and medication, asthma is not as life threatening as in the past; however, since allergies, stress, and exercise all can cause an attack, the asthma sufferer must