

TEN ESSAY WRITING TIPS

1. Make sure you understand the assignment

There's no point struggling for days over an essay that doesn't meet your teacher's requirements. See your teacher right away if you're confused about the topic, question, or any other aspect of the essay.

2. Start brainstorming/prewriting early

Coming up with good ideas can take time, so the sooner you start thinking about your topic, the easier it will be once you start writing. Taking a few notes in point form might help you brainstorm.

3. Go over the material to gather ideas

Make sure you've finished reading the texts before your teacher discusses them so that you can [take meaningful notes](#) in class. Afterwards, reread the sections most relevant to your topic. Highlight useful quotes and note connections to themes or elements you've covered in the course.

4. Narrow your focus

Concentrate only on ideas directly related to your topic. Reread the essay question carefully. If you've been asked to come up with your own topic, make sure it's specific enough to write about.

5. Write down your [thesis](#) statement

This sentence must convey exactly what position your paper will argue. Ask your teacher or visit the Learning Centre if you're not sure how to write one. (Note: sometimes, instead of deciding first what position you'll take, it may be easier to write down some main points, then step back to see how they're connected, or what they "point to." Use these connections to develop a thesis statement.)

6. Make an essay [outline](#).

This will help structure your essay, avoid repetition, and connect your main points to your thesis statement.

7. Use your outline to write your first draft

Don't let all that hard work go to waste! Following your outline will help if you get writer's block.

8. [Proof read](#)

Find those spelling and grammar mistakes before your teacher does! Read your essay out loud - this will help you to find any awkward sentences. Avoid clichés, slang, and repetition. Use your thesaurus and dictionary.

9. Have someone review your final draft

Input from a friend, parent, or sibling can help you identify problems in your essay. You can also work with a fellow student or a staff member from the Learning Centre.

10. Revise

Leave plenty of time to integrate your changes and corrections. Put your paper aside for at least one full day before you begin your final revisions. Remember, **good writing is rewriting!**