

HOW TO WRITE AN INFORMATIVE ESSAY

By [JDW](#), eHow Editor

The informative essay is one of the most challenging of all writing assignments. You essentially take on the role of teacher/expert for a general audience that, you have to assume, is unfamiliar with your topic or thesis. This puts a lot of pressure on you to be both informative and interesting. All you have to do, however, is plan out your essay and structure it in a certain way that entails less stress for you and more enjoyment and satisfaction when writing it.

Step 1

Decide on a topic that you think is important and that your readers could benefit from knowing more about. The example we'll use is eating disorders.

Step 2

Write down a tentative thesis statement. What is it that you want to share with your readers? Don't obsess about it too much at this stage, as you will likely have to revise your thesis somewhat as you conduct your research and write the actual essay. Just try to write down something specific and (hopefully) interesting. Such as, eating disorders lead to a large number of preventable deaths.

Step 3

Draft an outline listing all the questions you have about your topic, all the things you think you know about it, and any personal experiences or observations you may have. For instance: How many people suffer from eating disorders? How many are men and how many are women? What age group suffers from them the most? What's the most common eating disorder?

Step 4

Research your topic online and in a library. Find authoritative, credible sources. For example, to learn more about eating disorders, you could go to the National Health Information Center and National Eating Disorders Association. You could also interview [doctors](#) and people who have personally suffered from these disorders.

Step 5

Write your essay. Begin the opening paragraph with a hook to lure the reader's interest. Use this paragraph to provide a lead-in to the topic and some general context for the issue to be discussed. One possible hook that might work for our example: Anorexia is the leading killer of teenage girls.

Step 6

Use the body of your essay to inform your reader about the specifics of your topic. Provide interesting details that they likely don't already know, or present common knowledge in a new light.

Step 7

Conclude your essay by summarizing the knowledge you've shared. Don't bring up any new information or raise too many questions. This paragraph is meant to bring closure to the essay while maintaining your reader's interest in the topic.

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