

PERSUASIVE WRITING

Hints on making your essay fantastic!

BASIC RULES TO GUIDE YOUR WRITING

- This is still a five paragraph essay. That means you must have an introductory paragraph, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion paragraph.
- Write in a formal voice. Do not write as if you are speaking!
- Do not use personal pronouns (I, we, you, she, he, they)



FORMAL VOICE? HUH?



- Have you ever attended an event in which "formal" attire is expected? You probably did not wear old jeans, a stained tee shirt and a pair of sandals. You probably chose more formal attire.



SO HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO MY WRITING?

- Writing is the same way. You have to be more formal in your word choice, expressions, spelling, grammar, etc. because this is a formal essay.
 - Still not sinking in?
- Think about this: What was the last note you wrote to your friend or boy/girlfriend?
- What types of words did you use in the note? You probably used a lot of contractions and used slang words such as *luv* or *omg*. These are informal words and should be avoided in your essays.





GUIDE TO FORMAL WRITING

(Write this down!)

RULE #1: DO NOT USE FIRST-PERSON PRONOUNS ("I," "ME," "MY," "WE," "US," ETC.).

- Using these expressions in an essay can make the writing wordy, can make the writer seem less confident of his or her ideas, and can give the essay an informal tone. Readers will know that they are reading your thoughts, beliefs, or opinions, so you do not need to state, "I think that," "I believe that," or "in my opinion." Simply delete these expressions from sentences, and you will be left with stronger sentences.

- Example

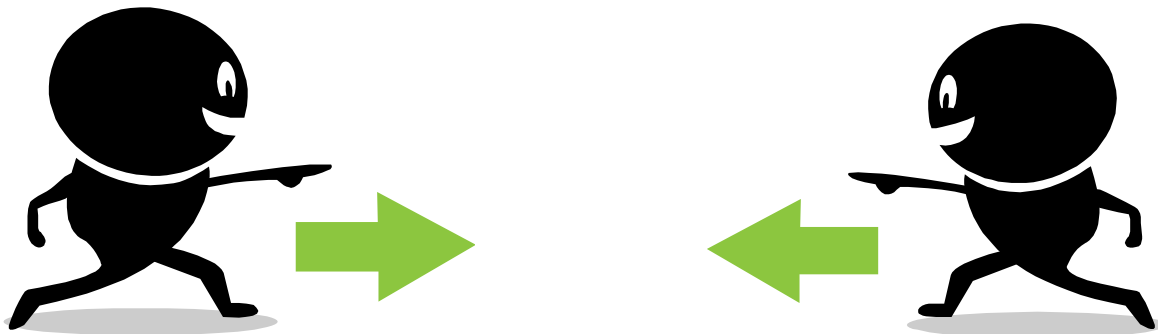
I think that this character is confused.
This character is confused.

- "One," "the reader," "readers," "the viewer," or something similar sometimes can be used effectively in place of first-person pronouns in formal papers, but be careful not to overuse these expressions. You want to sound formal, not awkward and stiff.



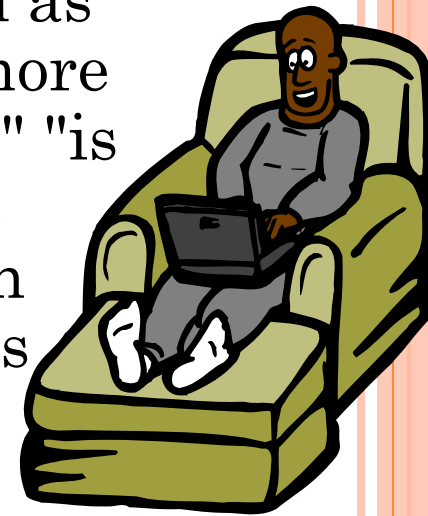
RULE #2: AVOID ADDRESSING READERS AS “YOU.”

- Addressing readers using second-person pronouns ("you, your") can make an essay sound informal and can bring assumptions into an essay that are not true.
- As with first-person pronouns, second-person pronouns can be replaced by words such as "one," "the reader," "readers," and "the viewer."



RULE #3: AVOID THE USE OF CONTRACTIONS.

- Contractions are shortened versions of words that use apostrophes in place of letters, such as "can't," "isn't," "she's," and "wouldn't." The more formal, non-contracted versions are "cannot," "is not," "she is," and "would not." You might be surprised by how much better a sentence can sound if non-contracted versions of the words replace the contractions.



- Example

The character isn't aware that he's surrounded by people he can't trust.

The character is not aware that he is surrounded by people he cannot trust.



RULE #4: AVOID COLLOQUIALISM AND SLANG EXPRESSIONS.

- Colloquial diction is informal language used in everyday speech and includes such words as "guys," "yeah," "stuff," "kind of," "okay," and "big deal." Highly informal diction, such as "freak out" and "dissing," falls into the category of "slang." Both colloquialism and slang expressions convey an informal tone and should be avoided in formal writing.
- Example
The guy was nailed for ripping off a liquor store.
The man was convicted of robbing a liquor store.
- Remember you are writing a formal essay, not a note to your BFF or a text message!



RULE #5: AVOID ABBREVIATED VERSIONS OF WORDS.

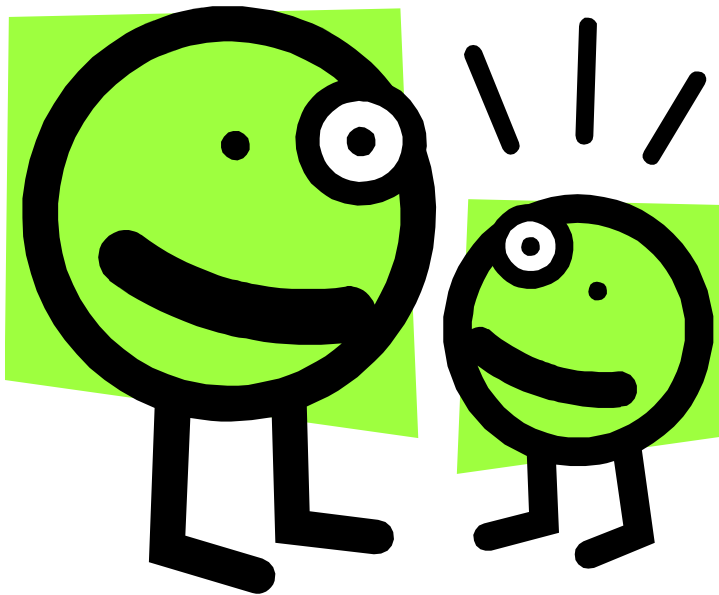


- Don't be lazy! Use the entire word, not the version you use everyday.
- For example, instead of writing "photo," "phone" and "TV," write "photograph," "telephone," and "television."



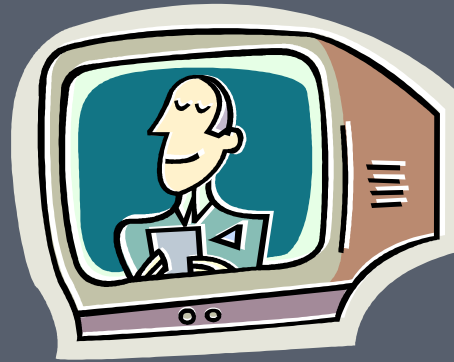
THE BIG IDEA

- Write like you are handing it in to a professional, not your best friend who you eat lunch with everyday. Informal writing is a big no-no in this class!



BIG SALE





NOW BACK TO THE REGULARLY
SCHEDULED PROGRAMMING...

INTRODUCTION



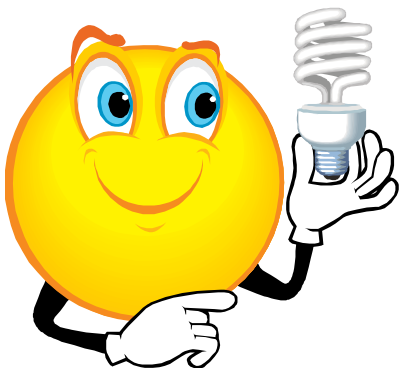
- Your introduction must include the following:
 - A. Hook: Grab the reader's attention.
 - B. Thesis Statement: What side of the argument are you on? You must choose one side and stick to it. Once you have stated your position support it as if you believe it completely.
 - C. List supporting evidence: List the main reasons you believe your argument is correct.



REASONS OR EXAMPLES?

- Your introduction requires you to list your supporting reasons for your opinion.
- What are reasons?
 - Reasons are how you support your argument.
 - Examples are how you support your reasons.

Get it?





REASON OR EXAMPLE?

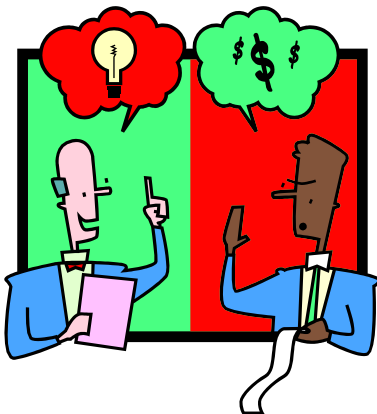
- Prompt: Write to convince someone about the dangers of using tobacco.
- 1. A person can develop lung, mouth, and throat cancer from using tobacco products.
- 2. A person can develop serious health issues from using tobacco products.

Which is the reason? Which is the example? Why?

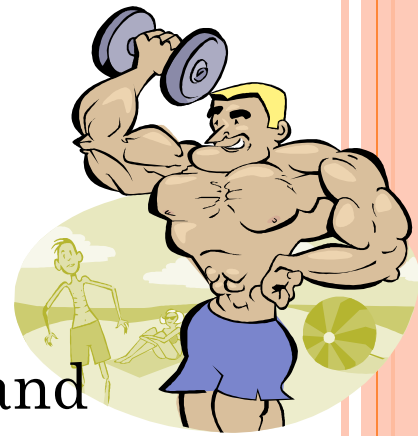


LET'S PRACTICE!

- Should teachers be required to give extra credit to students?
- As a class, let's create three REASONS to support our argument.
- First, we have to decide if we are for or against this question.



BODY PARAGRAPHS



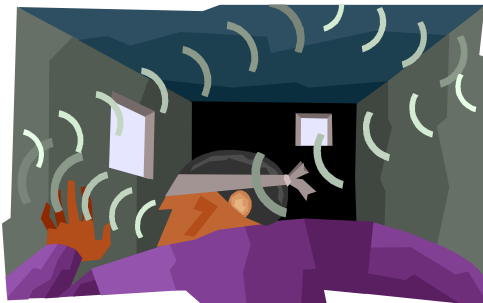
- Okay, now that we have cleared up reasons and examples, let's move along to the body of the essay! (*This is an example of informal writing!*)
- Each paragraph needs a transition, but avoid overused ones like “first” “second” “last”. Those are BORING! (Refer back to those notes you took on transitions.)
- One reason per paragraph (duh!) and each paragraph should have three details/examples to support it!



FINALLY.....THE CONCLUSION!!



- All you need for a fantastic conclusion is to:
 - A. Restate your thesis
 - B. Summarize your main points
 - C. Echo the hook
- Do NOT use the same thesis as you did in the beginning! The reader has already read that; show them something new while still using the same ideas as the original thesis.
 - Echo the hook means you revisit the same idea you used to start off the essay. It wraps up the essay very nicely!





WAIT, WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?

- Write five paragraphs to convince your reader to think the same way you do.
- Avoid informal writing like the plague!
- Use three strong reasons, that you introduce in your introduction, and three strong details for each reason.
- Restate your reasons (not examples!) in your conclusion as well as your new and improved thesis and hook.

