

Expository Writing

This example of expository writing is from Dr. C. Thomas's dissertation on Zambian education.

“The educational development in Northern Rhodesia under the rule of the British South African Company was entirely established and maintained by the mission societies. Schools were seen as an integral part of mission work, since the missionaries placed their main hope for unwavering converts to Christianity on the young people of the villages (Kelly, 1999). As in the period prior to British South Africa Company rule, the mission schools were motivated to teach reading so people could read the Bible and spread the gospel message to others. Some of the mission schools also wanted to teach carpentry, blacksmithing and other skills that would help Africans raise their living standards. At first, local people showed little interest in school, but this slowly changed with the realization that an education increased the possibility of obtaining paid employment and thus augmented the ability to pay their hut taxes (Kelly, 1999).”

Notice the following:

- 1) The original dissertation document was double spaced.
- 2) The writing states factual information.
- 3) Dr. C. Thomas uses APA style of citation. The sources for the information are cited using the “in-text citation” method, which simply shows the cited-author's surname followed by a comma and the date of the source enclosed in parentheses. If it were an actual quotation, she would have included a comma after the date followed by the page number of the quote.

Descriptive Writing

This is a descriptive paragraph from Doris Lessing's "Sunrise on the Veld."

"The first bird woke at his feet and at once a flock of them sprang into the air calling shrilly that day had come; and suddenly, behind him, the bush woke into song, and he could hear the guinea fowl calling far ahead of him. That meant they would now be sailing down from their trees into thick grass, and it was for them he had come: he was too late. But he did not mind. He forgot he had come to shoot. He set his legs wide, and balanced from foot to foot, and swung his gun up and down in both hands horizontally, in a kind of improvised exercise, and let his head sink back till it was pillowed in his neck muscles, and watched how above him small rosy clouds floated in a lake of gold."

Notice the following:

- 1) The paragraph is filled with descriptive words and active phrases: "sprang into the air," "calling shrilly," "the bush woke into song," "be sailing down," "improvised exercise," "pillowed in his neck muscles," "small rosy clouds floated."
- 2) The paragraph begins excitedly and ends peacefully in a conclusive manner, but with the expectation that the following paragraph will have something interesting to tell the reader.

Narrative Writing

This example of narrative writing was written by Mrs. Frank, and tells a story and has a clear beginning and ending. It is also highly descriptive in nature, but it tells a story hence can be considered narrative.

I was only four years old and in Mrs. Wolfe's kindergarten class. It was snack time, and Stephen and I were eating our Graham crackers and drinking our half pints of milk with our paper straws. We looked at each other and started to snicker and laugh until tears ran down our cheeks and milk sprayed out of our noses! Suddenly, we were being marched up the stairs and down the long hall to the principal, Mr. Hanning's, office. By this time Stephen and I were quite sober; I was beginning to snivel until Mr. Hanning threatened to spank me if this ever happened again. Then I howled, tears running down my cheeks and out my nose! Never again would anyone take me to the principal's office!

Notice the following:

- 1) The paragraph has a clear first sentence which sets the stage for the entire story
- 2) The middle of the paragraph adds details to the story, giving it interest
- 3) Several phrases paint word pictures that help the reader imagine the event: "...started to snicker and laugh until tears ran down our cheeks..."
- 4) The paragraph ends with a solid concluding sentence: "Never again would anyone take me to the principal's office!"
- 5) How long is the paragraph? Six sentences.
- 6) Does it include both simple and complex sentences? Yes.

Persuasive Writing

This example of persuasive writing is by a seasoned Christian writer, David French. He writes political commentary and opinion pieces. In this editorial, he argues (i.e., tries to persuade the reader) that earlier Republican insistence that Democrats should beware of precedence was two-faced. This excerpt was written February 10th and published in the Dispatch (<https://frenchpress.thedispatch.com/>)

He wrote the following:

Throughout the Trump presidency, I've been struck by the extent that his defenders relied on a single word: "precedent." Rather than engage with his conduct, they shrink back from the alleged negative implications of holding him accountable. At every stage in the various investigations (and both impeachments), we've been treated to a parade of arguments that go something like this:

Before the Mueller investigation: "Do we really want to set a precedent of using the FBI to investigate a presidential campaign?"

During the Michael Cohen prosecution: "Doesn't raiding a president's lawyer's office set a dangerous precedent?"

During the Mueller investigation: "Are we really going to set the precedent that the president can obstruct justice by using his constitutional authority to fire his own appointees?"

During the first impeachment: "Are you sure you want to impeach a president for his foreign policy decisions?"

During the second impeachment: "Do we want to start convicting former officials? Won't that set a precedent we'll regret?"

In fact, the precedent argument has been unleashed on behalf of far lesser lights. After House Republicans declined to strip Marjorie Taylor Greene of her committee assignments, they shamed Democrats for failing to follow the precedent of allowing each conference to police its own members.

Notice the following:

- 1) He uses much more informal language than Dr. C. Thomas, including contractions such as "I've" and "won't." In this form of writing, this is acceptable.
- 2) He punctuates his opinion piece with quotations from individuals but offers no citation to indicate where the quote came from. In this form of writing, this is acceptable.
- 3) He tries to lead readers from a set of known facts and persuade them that earlier statements by the Democrats were not genuine but simply political posturing.