



PNU University

Essay Writing

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امروزه کتاب‌خوانی و علم‌آموزی، نه تنها یک وظیفه‌ی ملی، که یک واجب دینی است.

مقام معظم رهبری

در عصر حاضر یکی از شاخصه‌های ارزیابی رشد، توسعه و پیشرفت فرهنگی هر کشوری میزان تولید کتاب، مطالعه و کتاب‌خوانی مردم آن مرز و بوم است. ایران اسلامی نیز از دیرباز تاکنون با داشتن تمدنی چندهزارساله و مراکز متعدد علمی، فرهنگی، کتابخانه‌های معتبر، علما و دانشمندان بزرگ با آثار ارزشمند تاریخی، سرآمد دولت‌ها و ملت‌های دیگر بوده و در عرصه‌ی فرهنگ و تمدن جهانی به‌سان خورشیدی تابناک همچنان می‌درخشد و با فرزندان نیک‌نهاد خویش هنرنمایی می‌کند. چه کسی است که در دنیا با دانشمندان فرزانه و نام‌آور ایرانی همچون ابوعلی سینا، ابوریحان بیرونی، فارابی، خوارزمی و ... همچنین شاعران برجسته‌ای نظیر فردوسی، سعدی، مولوی، حافظ و ... آشنا نباشد و در مقابل عظمت آنها سر تعظیم فرود نیاورد. تمامی این افتخارات ارزشمند، برگرفته از میزان عشق و علاقه فراوان ملت ما به فراگیری علم و دانش از طریق خواندن و مطالعه منابع و کتاب‌های گوناگون است. به شکرانه‌ی الهی، تاریخ و گذشته ما، همیشه درخشان و پر بار است. ولی اکنون در این زمینه در چه جایگاهی قرار داریم؟ آمار و ارقام ارائه‌شده از سوی مجامع و سازمان‌های فرهنگی در مورد سرانه‌ی مطالعه‌ی هر ایرانی، برایمان چندان امیدوارکننده نمی‌باشد و رهبر معظم انقلاب اسلامی نیز از این وضعیت بارها اظهار گله و ناخشنودی نموده‌اند.

کتاب، دروازه‌ای به سوی گستره‌ی دانش و معرفت است و کتاب خوب، یکی از بهترین ابزارهای کمال بشری است. همه‌ی دستاوردهای بشر در سراسر عمر جهان، تا آنجا که قابل کتابت بوده است، در میان دست‌نوشته‌هایی است که انسان‌ها پدید آورده و می‌آورند. در این مجموعه‌ی بی‌نظیر، تعالیم الهی، درس‌های پیامبران به بشر، و همچنین علوم مختلفی است که سعادت بشر بدون آگاهی از آنها امکان‌پذیر نیست. کسی که با دنیای زیبا و زندگی‌بخش کتاب ارتباط ندارد بی‌شک از مهم‌ترین دستاورد انسانی و نیز از بیشترین معارف الهی و بشری محروم است. با این دیدگاه، به‌روشنی می‌توان ارزش و مفهوم رمزی عمیق در این حقیقت تاریخی را دریافت که اولین خطاب خداوند متعال به پیامبر گرامی اسلام (ص) این است که «بخوان!» و در اولین

سوره‌ای که بر آن فرستاده‌ی عظیم‌الشان خداوند، فرود آمده، نام «قلم» به تجلیل یاد شده‌است: «اقْرَأْ وَ رَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ. الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ» در اهمیت عنصر کتاب برای تکامل جامعه‌ی انسانی، همین بس که تمامی ادیان آسمانی و رجال بزرگ تاریخ بشری، از طریق کتاب جاودانه مانده‌اند.

دانشگاه پیام‌نور با گستره‌ی جغرافیایی ایران‌شمول خود با هدف آموزش برای همه، همه‌جا و همه‌وقت، به‌عنوان دانشگاهی کتاب‌محور در نظام آموزش عالی کشورمان، افتخار دارد جایگاه اندیشه‌سازی و خردورزی بخش عظیمی از جوانان جویای علم این مرز و بوم باشد. تلاش فراوانی در ایام طولانی فعالیت این دانشگاه انجام پذیرفته تا با بهره‌گیری از تجربه‌های گرانقدر استادان و صاحب‌نظران برجسته کشورمان، کتاب‌ها و منابع آموزشی درسی شاخص و خودآموز تولید شود. در آینده هم، این مهم با هدف ارتقای سطح علمی، روزآمدی و توجه بیشتر به نیازهای مخاطبان دانشگاه پیام‌نور با جدیت ادامه خواهد داشت. به‌طور قطع استفاده از نظرات استادان، صاحب‌نظران و دانشجویان محترم، ما را در انجام این وظیفه‌ی مهم و خطیر یاری‌رسان خواهد بود. پیشاپیش از تمامی عزیزانی که با نقد، تصحیح و پیشنهادهای خود ما را در انجام این وظیفه‌ی خطیر یاری می‌رسانند، سپاسگزاری می‌نماییم. لازم است از تمامی اندیشمندانی که تاکنون دانشگاه پیام‌نور را منزلگاه اندیشه‌سازی خود دانسته و ما را در تولید کتاب و محتوای آموزشی درسی یاری نموده‌اند، صمیمانه قدردانی گردد. موفقیت و بهروزی تمامی دانشجویان و دانش‌پژوهان عزیز آرزوی همیشگی ما است.

دانشگاه پیام‌نور

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Preface

Many English students find it challenging to write an essay. The main challenge is to organize and develop the ideas and arguments in a clear and coherent way. In order to help English students, **Essay Writing** book provides instruction in steps, and makes writing a more manageable task for them. It focuses on the kinds of writing tasks that are commonly set for assignments and tests, and it contains explanations, activities and examples that are intended to improve English students' writing skills. Unlike most essay writing books, this book does more than offer general advice about writing essays. In effect, it provides specific writing skills through detailed and explicit instructions. The book also includes scaffolded writing activities that coach the student through important stages in the planning and writing of real essays.

The authors of the book did their best to write the book in a simple and user friendly manner. In doing so, they have presented the fundamentals of essay writing in the first and second chapters of the book and the essential parts have been repeated one at a time in the rest of the chapters. Besides, basic parts of an essay have been explained in seven easy steps, and maximum practices have been provided for the students to become familiar with various types of academic essays. This essay writing book also gives the students a lot of instructions and rubrics on how to revise their essays and eliminate

as many errors as possible before submission. Tips for effective writing are included in every chapter, as well.

The readers' suggestions are sincerely welcomed since the authors' main aim was to design and write an essay writing book which best matches the needs and interests of students.

Unit 1

Pre-writing Steps

In this unit, you will learn about...

- Questioning
 - Brainstorming
 - Free writing
 - Outlining
 - Drafting
-

In your previous courses you have become familiar with paragraph writing and its pre-writing activities such as **thinking about the topic**, **brainstorming** and **drawing a mind map**. Brainstorming is an informal way of collecting ideas and information or points to make about your topic. **Mind mapping** is a visual form of note taking that allows you to comprehend and choose the ideas that are relevant to your topic and build connections. In writing an essay, you have to follow the same steps that you take in paragraph writing; however, the planning and developing phases have to take place in more than one paragraph and in a broader sense. This chapter presents prewriting activities such as **questioning**, **free writing**, **outlining**, and **drafting** that might be beneficial as you begin working on an essay. In the next chapters, you will become familiar with the main steps in writing essays as well as different types of essays.

Questioning

The first thing to do when looking at the title is to determine what you want to write about, examine the topic carefully and make sure that you understand what is being asked. If you get this stage wrong, your whole essay may become worthless and you have wasted your time. If you take the time to understand the title, you can be confident that your essay content will be relevant. In order to understand the title, you should identify the key words in the topic carefully and then write down all the questions that seem relevant to that. Look at the following topic as an example:

The health benefits of swimming for people

First, try to find and underline the key ideas that the topic is asking you to write about. Ask yourself questions about the key elements. Think about the four questions below, and add another question:

1. How does swimming benefit you?
2. How much weight can you lose by swimming for 1 hour?
3. What are the mental benefits of swimming?
4. What are the social effects of swimming?
5.



Activity 1.1. Think about the topic “The importance of TV in our daily lives” and ask questions with “Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?”. Respond to each question in as much detail as you can.

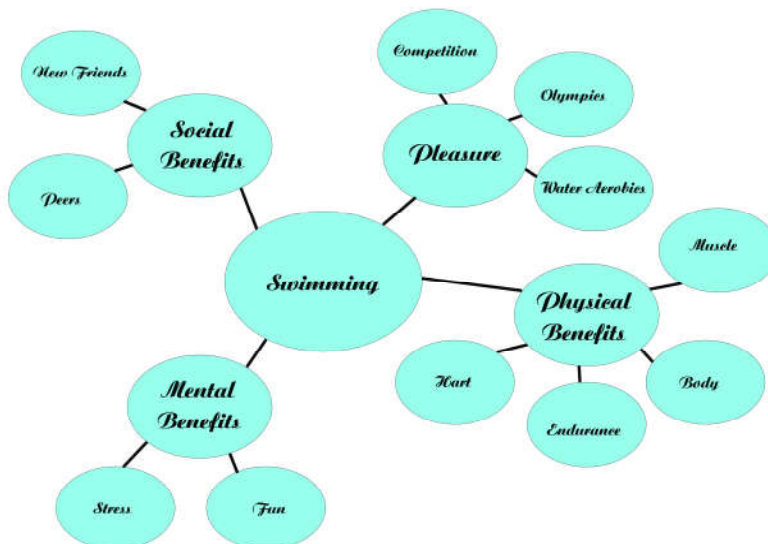
1.
2.
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6.

Brainstorming

Another effective activity that can help you have a good start in writing an essay is **brainstorming**. As an essential part of essay writing, brainstorming refers to listing or generating ideas for a topic as fast as they cross your mind. There are two useful brainstorming techniques, namely, **clustering**, and **listing**.

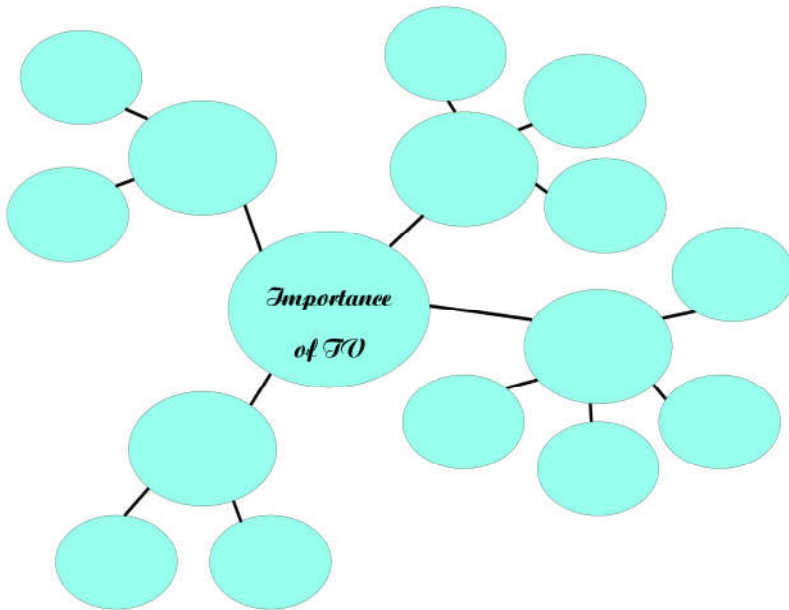
Clustering

Clustering, or **mind mapping** is a "visual of outlining", which allows you to generate as many ideas as soon as they occur to you. To begin to cluster, choose a word that is central to your assignment. For example, if you were writing an essay about "the health benefits of swimming", you might choose the word "benefits of swimming" and write that word in the middle of your sheet of paper. Circle "benefits of swimming," then write words all around it--words that occur to you as you think of "swimming." Write down all words that you associate with "swimming," words that at first may seem to be random. Write quickly, circling each word, grouping words around the central word. Below is an example of the clustering style of brainstorming.





Activity 1.2. Think about the topic “The importance of TV in our daily lives” and fill in the following cluster map.



Listing

Another brainstorming technique which you can use is **listing**. This technique enables you to make a list of ideas and generate them more quickly than clustering. Below is an example of the listing style of brainstorming for the same title as above, namely, “the health benefits of swimming”.

The health benefits of swimming
physical benefits
heart
body
muscles
endurance
mental benefits

stress
keeps you younger
mental benefits
relieves stress
fun
pleasure
relaxation
competitions
Olympics
Water aerobics



Activity 1.3. List all the ideas about the topic “The importance of TV in our daily lives” that come to your mind (good or bad) and then look over the list you have made and group similar ideas together.

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Freewriting

Freewriting is a technique which helps you write anything about the topic, hoping that one idea will lead to another. This technique might enable you to write continuously, and generate ideas when the other methods fail. It also allows you to write about the topic without worrying about rules, spelling, grammar, style, etc. Even so, this method is not generally favored by students of academic writing. It takes more time, and the writing you produce will likely be

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disorganized and as such, may need to be discarded in the end. Anyhow, you can try freewriting when you write creative works such as narratives and stories.



Activity 1.4. For approximately five minutes, write anything and everything about the topic “The importance of TV in our daily lives”. Try to keep writing without stopping, crossing-out, or erasing even if what you are writing seems like it isn’t “correct” or “perfect”.

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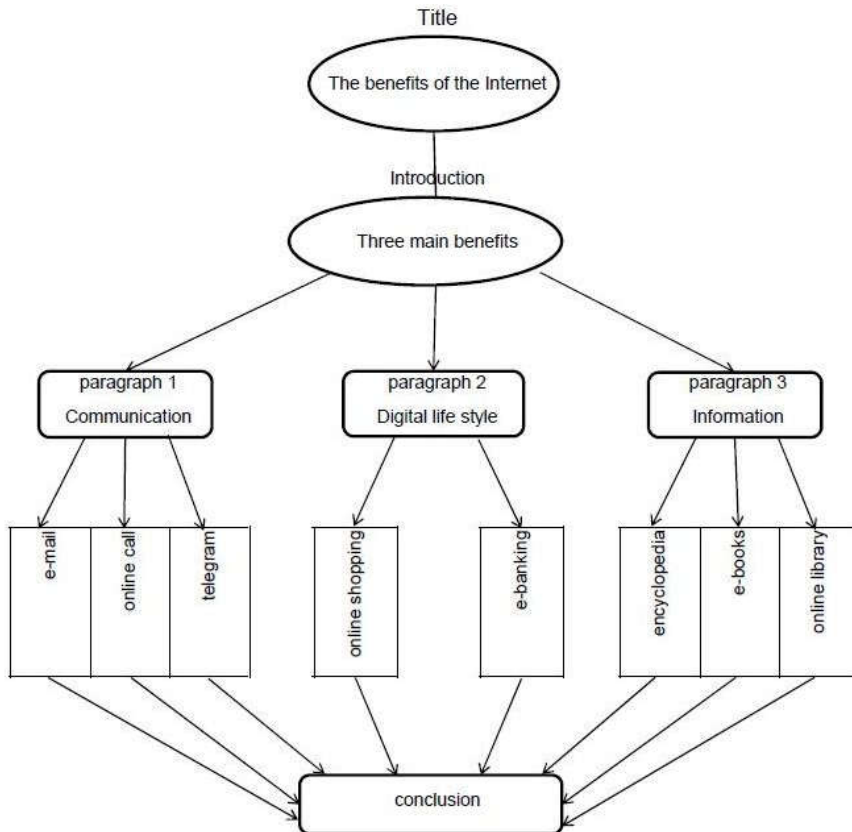
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Writing an essay outline

After brainstorming about your topic and choosing the main ideas for your essay, you should prepare **an outline** for it. An outline is a general plan which ...

- shows an organized list of related items or ideas.
- tells what ideas you intend to discuss.
- shows which ideas will come first, second, and so on.
- groups similar ideas together and presents them in a type of tree structure that clearly shows the relationship within each group and among all of the other groups.

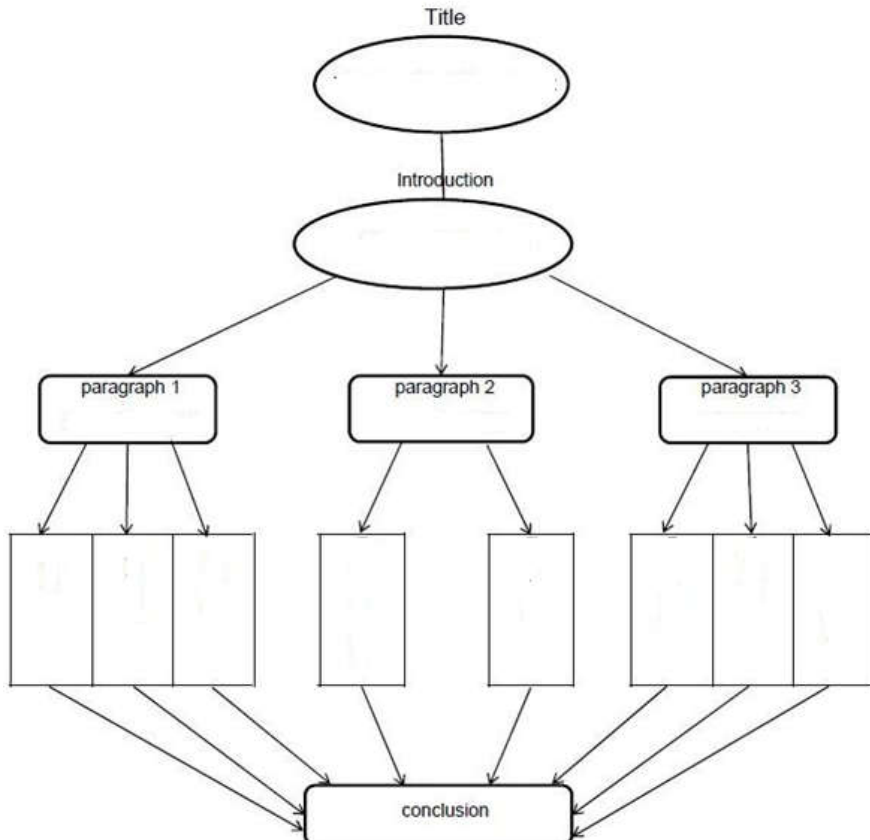
For an essay question on a test, all you may need to prepare is a **diagram outline** in which you jot down key ideas in the order you will present them. This kind of outline reminds you to stay focused and to include all the good ideas that help may you explain or prove your point. The following diagram illustrates an essay outline.



As illustrated in the diagram, the title of the essay is: The benefits of the Internet. In the introductory paragraph, the purpose of the essay which is writing about three benefits (communication, digital life style, and information) of the Internet has been mentioned. The three benefits are then categorized into three paragraphs each elaborating on two or three detailed benefits. Finally, the whole idea of the essay is summarized in the concluding paragraph.



Activity 1.5. Your prewriting activities and readings have helped you gather information on the topic “The importance of TV in our daily lives”. Use the ideas and fill in the following diagram.



If your college instructor requires you to submit an outline before writing a major paper as a way to make sure you are working in an organized manner, you should prepare a **formal outline**. It is a detailed guide that shows how all your supporting ideas relate to each other. You build your paper on the framework created by the outline.

There are two types of formal outlines: **the topic outline** and **the sentence outline**. You format both types of formal outlines as follows:

- Place your introduction and thesis statement at the beginning, under roman numeral I (you will learn about thesis statement in the next chapter).
- Use roman numerals (II, III, IV, V, etc.) for your essay's main points such as the introduction, thesis statement, supporting paragraphs, and conclusion.
- Use capital letters (A, B, C, D, etc.) to divide your main points into parts.
- Use Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc.) if you need to subdivide any As, Bs, or Cs into smaller parts.
- End with the final roman numeral expressing your idea for your conclusion.

Here is what the skeleton of a formal outline looks like.

- I. Introduction
 - Thesis statement:
- II. First main point
- III. Second main point
- IV. Third main point
- V. Conclusion

After writing the main points, write down the sub-points supporting each major-point using capital letters (A, B, C, etc.). The number of categories that you use depends on the amount of information that you are going to cover.

- A. Introduction
 - Thesis statement:
- B. First main point
 - A. First supporting point
 - B. Second supporting point

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- C. Third supporting point
- C. Second main point
 - A. First supporting point
 - B. Second supporting point
 - C. Third supporting point
- D. Third main point
 - A. First supporting point
 - B. Second supporting point
 - C. Third supporting point
- E. Conclusion

Finally, use Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.) to give details for your supporting points. It is not necessary to have the same number of details for each sub-point.

- I. Introduction
Thesis statement:
- II. First main point
 - A. First supporting point
 - 1. First detail
 - 2. Second detail
 - B. Second supporting point
 - 1. First detail

Topic outline

Topic outline consists of short phrases or logical topics. Each topic begins with a capital letter. The topics of the same rank should be written in the same grammatical form and they should be indented the same distance from the margin. Now take a look at the following example. The essay topic is “the health benefits of swimming”.

- I. Introduction.....
.....

Thesis statement: Swimming is an excellent sport for senior citizens.

- II. Pleasure
 - A. Relaxation
 - B. Competition
 - 1. Senior Olympics
 - 2. Water aerobics classes
- III. Health
 - A. Physical exercise
 - 1. Strengthens muscles
 - 2. Tones body
 - 3. Increases endurance
 - 4. Strengthens heart
 - B. Mental alertness
 - 1. Relieves stress
 - 2. Retains youth
- IV. Companionship
 - A. Activity done with others
 - B. Introduces new friends
- V. Conclusion:

.....



Activity 1.6. Plan a topic outline for the topic “The importance of TV in our daily lives”

I. Introduction.....

Thesis statement:

II.

A.

B.

C.

III.

A.

B.

C.

IV.

A.

B.

C.

V. Conclusion:

Sentence outline

A **sentence outline** lists complete sentences and it is used when your essay focuses on many details. For writing this kind of outline use short and to the point sentences. The following outline is an example of sentence outline based on the topic, “the health benefits of swimming”.

I. Introduction.....

Thesis statement: Swimming is an excellent sport for senior citizens.

II. It provides pleasure.

A. It is an enjoyable way to relax.

B. To compete with each other is exciting.

1. Seniors can participate in Senior Olympics.

2. They can compete in water aerobics classes.

III. Swimming is a healthy exercise.

A. It helps keep the elderly physically fit.

1. It strengthens muscles.

2. It tones the body.

3. It builds endurance.

4. It strengthens the heart.

B. It increases mental alertness.

1. The physical exertion helps relieve stress.

2. Being more alert keeps the elderly younger longer.

IV. Meeting regularly provides seniors with companionship.

A. It is an organized activity with their peers.

B. It is a wonderful way to make new friends.

V. Conclusion:



Activity 1.7. Plan a sentence outline for the topic “The importance of TV in our daily lives”

I. Introduction.....

Thesis statement:

II.

A.

B.

C.

III.

A.

B.

C.

IV.

A.

B.

C.

V. Conclusion:

Drafting

In order to write your first **draft**, follow your outline. In the first draft, you should not worry about the grammatical or spelling errors and instead focus on presenting your ideas as clearly as possible. Sometimes, as you are planning the outline of your essay, you feel that you need to generate more ideas to support your main ideas. Adding more ideas to your outline is a normal part of writing an essay. You can generate additional points by choosing one of the steps of generating ideas such as, brainstorming, listing or clustering.

After you have completed your outline, you can embark on writing the first draft of your essay. If you have prepared a topic outline, write a sentence or two for each supporting idea on your outline. If you have generated a sentence outline, transfer your sentences into paragraphs. The main task here is to give them the