



# Success Center Tips for Writing an Exploratory Essay

An exploratory essay presents a current problem or question that people disagree on and introduces the different points of view that exist. The purpose of an exploratory essay is to remain impartial by showing current perspectives on the issue instead of persuading readers to adopt one viewpoint over another. A writer may conclude the essay by asking readers to arrive at their own decisions on issues on the basis of the information provided in the essay.

## Introduction

- Discuss the nature of the issue under discussion (e.g., what is already known historically, statistics, potential effects)
- Identify the key individuals or groups of people connected to the issue
- State why the issue is both a present and future concern for the individuals or groups of people you have identified
- Organize the essay around questions the issue raises instead of writing an explicit thesis in the introduction. A delayed (implied) thesis may be placed near the end of the paper, but it does not develop a persuasive stance. For example, in a news article, writers present others' views without stating their own. **Always check the instructor's assignment guidelines regarding a thesis.**

## Body Paragraphs

- Explain the views that key individuals or groups have contributed, recent actions that have taken place, and any intentions key people have revealed
- Uncover both sides of **three or four** important positions on the issue that others have voiced
- When using supporting evidence, include in-text citations for paraphrases or direct quotations, and list sources, including interviews, on a works cited page

## Conclusion

- Without repeating sentences word-for-word, summarize the results or future results of the recent actions and beliefs you uncovered in the body of the paper.
- Reflect on how the ideas in the paper can help people understand both sides of the issue
- Encourage readers to formulate their own decisions and conclusion