



Expectations of English Readers

English readers have several expectations when reading students' writing. These expectations are grounded in our culture, and our rhetorical patterns. As a student, it is important that you understand the following expectations and incorporate them into your academic writing:

- ▶ **A Thesis:** a clearly stated argument that is usually placed at the end of the introductory paragraph.
 - The thesis lets the reader know what you will be trying to prove in your essay.
 - The thesis will have an appropriate focus; if your thesis is too general, your argument will be weaker, and harder to manage in an essay.
 - The thesis remains the controlling idea throughout the essay.

- ▶ **Coherence:** the natural, logical connection of all the essay's parts.
 - Use a logical sequence of ideas in the body of your essay, such as chronological order, order of importance, or some other appropriate order.
 - Use purposeful repetition of key words and ideas throughout your essay. This helps the reader to see how your ideas relate back to the thesis.
 - Use topic sentences at the beginning of each paragraph. These topic sentences should introduce the main idea of each paragraph.
 - Use transitional words or expressions in your sentences to link your ideas or concepts together.

- ▶ **Evidence:**
 - Any assertions, opinions, or statements used in the essay to develop your main argument must be supported by evidence.

- This evidence can be in the form of quotations, paraphrases, summaries, facts, statistics, illustrations, or tables.

► Analysis or Interpretation:

- Evidence must be analysed and linked back to the thesis.
- A good analysis answers the question “so what?” because it tells the reader why this evidence is important.

► A Conclusion:

- The conclusion restates the thesis in a new way to remind the reader of your main argument.
- The conclusion contains a summary of the main points that prove your thesis.
- The conclusion provides the reader with the answer to the question “so what?”
- The conclusion can end with a clever rhetorical device such as: a quotation; a thought-provoking question, or series of questions; a prediction; a suggestion for change; a statement on the value or significance that the essay subject has for the reader.

Basic Structure of an Essay

Introductory paragraph:

- Introduces the essay topic, and contains the thesis statement

Paragraphs that make up the body:

- Topic sentence
- Evidence
- So what? Link back to thesis
- Summarizing or linking sentence

Conclusion:

- Restatement of the thesis statement
- Summary of the major points made in the body of the essay
- So what? Why is all of this important?
- Relevant rhetorical device that ends the essay effectively.

