

Reflection/ Research Essay

Reflective essays describe an event or experience, then analyze the meaning of that experience and what can be learned from it. What makes an essay reflective is that the writer is analyzing a past event from the present.

Reflective essays require the writer to open up about their thoughts and emotions in order to paint a true picture of their history, personality, and individual traits. They should include a vivid summary and description of the experience so that the reader feels they have also experienced it. They should also include an explanation of your thoughts, feelings, and reactions.

Think of it as a narrative and include lots of sensory details in your description of the event or experience i.e. taste, touch, smell, sight, and hearing to transport your audience into your shoes as the event or experience happened.

Criteria: Choose an event or experience that had a strong psychological or emotional effect on your life. This could be something dramatic or comedic, and you must decide the tone you are going to use in your essay.

Purpose: This assignment is designed to prompt you to identify the strategies that help you communicate an experience to your reader in detail and go a step further by having you decide what meaning or themes can be deduced from this experience.

Research: Provide two outside sources somewhere in the body of the essay.

These outside sources can be used in a variety of ways. You can cite a quote to help with emotional or philosophical impact, you can find a fact, statistic, or quote related to the experience to help your audience understand the context of the experience, or in any other creative way you can think of integrating them. Make sure to provide in-text citation in APA format and cite the two outside sources on the References page.

Content/Subject:

Intro paragraph

Your first paragraph should be an introduction in which you get the reader's attention, identify the subject and give the reader a general overview of the impression it made on you, and also include a thesis statement that will serve as the focal point of your paper. You should also establish a tone and narrative point of view i.e. First, Second, Third person perspective are all allowed in this essay.

Example Thesis: *"Why was I feeling so peaceful while walking down this beach? I realized it was because the beach had always been a place of rest to me."*

Body of essay

The body of your essay should then be divided into paragraphs with identifying topic sentences.

The first body paragraph should describe the event in dramatic detail using the sensory details stated above. You are trying to transport the audience to that event and take them through it step by step. You want to provide a linear description i.e. in chronological order from beginning to end.

The rest of the the body paragraphs should give distinct reasons how this event affected you and provide reasoning as to why it had this effect. Think about several ways that it has changed you. Make sure these paragraphs also have topic sentence. Have at least two different paragraphs with distinct ways and reasoning as to why it made this effect or change on you.

Conclusion

Recap your thesis statement and the reasons you provided in the body of your essay. Sum up your article with some final thoughts on your subject, and some closing reflective thoughts.

Specific guidelines for this assignment are:

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- Two outside sources with in-text citations and citation on References page.
- Length: 700-1000 words in length (not including title page or APA References page)
- Adherence to APA format
- Correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.