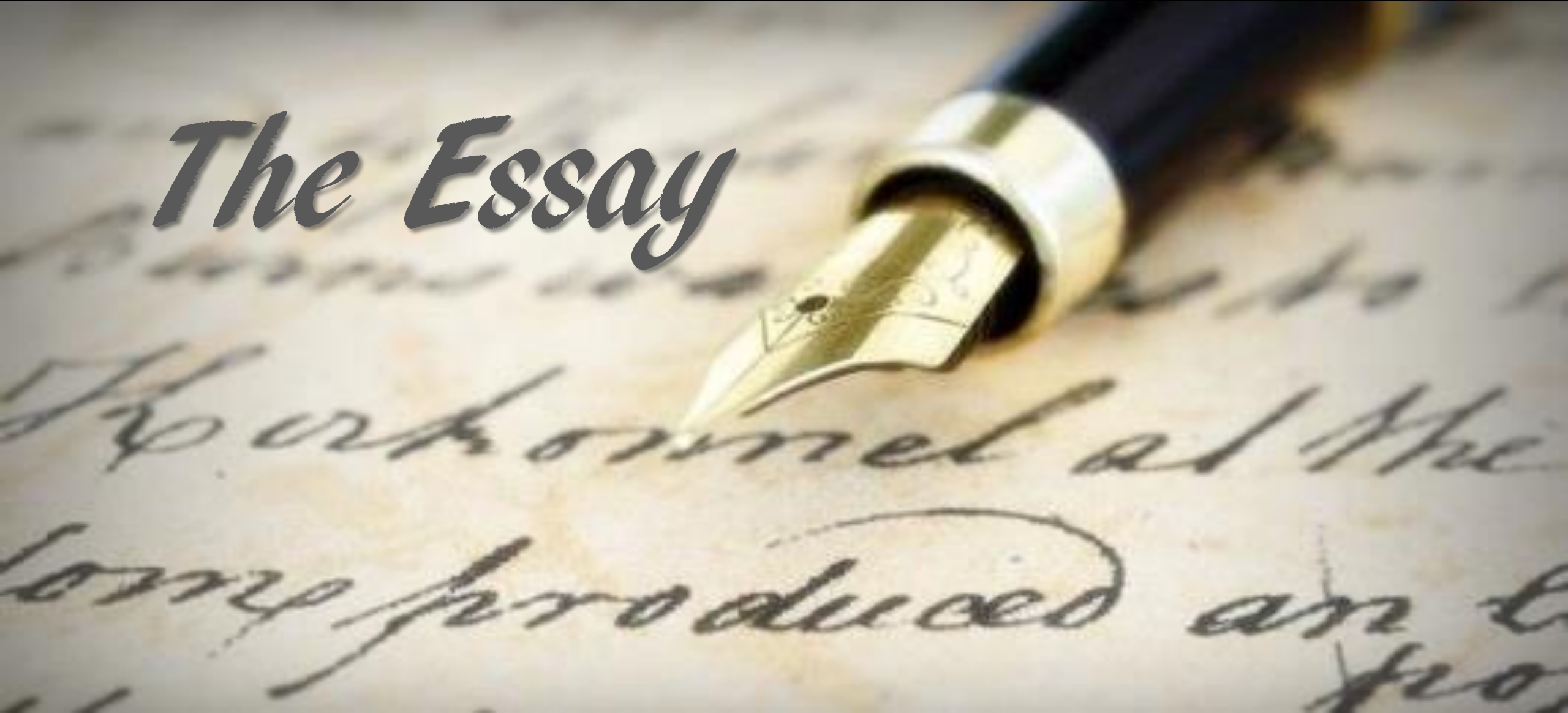


UNIT 2 Expressing a National Spirit
American Renaissance 1800 to 1850

A STEIN WOOD
FROEBEL
BILINGUAL SCHOOL
Home of the Space Generation



The Essay



WHAT IS AN ESSAY?

An essay is a short literary composition on a particular theme or subject, usually in prose and generally informative, analytic, speculative, or interpretative. There are many different types of essays, we are going to focus on the following three:

The Personal Essay

The Informative Essay

The Persuasive (Argumentative) Essay

THE PERSONAL ESSAY

A personal essay is a piece of writing that describes an important lesson gathered from a writer's life experiences. It often describes a significant event from a first-person perspective, and can be done in various writing styles, like a formal essay or as creative nonfiction.

There are a few main ingredients most successful personal essays include:

- Compelling hook
- A personal essay is a story
- Engaging story
- Immersive setting
- Meaningful point

A personal essay is usually show how you have grown or changed. Unlike formal writing, it doesn't have to prove anything.

THE INFORMATIVE ESSAY

The purpose of an informative essay is to inform and educate the readers about topics that they may not know. An informative essay educates an idea, reveals a fact, or explains a process. For an informative essay, you have to think as a reader in order to craft your paper in way that can best convey a message.

After you gather your information from an outside source, you will organize the information into separate paragraphs, each focusing on a single point. Considering the main point of a paragraph, write down the information pertaining to that point. For example, if you are writing about the causes of World War II, you could consider points such as Imperialism, Fascism and Nationalism. To expand a point, you can describe it further in an outline.

THE PERSUASIVE (ARGUMENTATIVE) ESSAY

The goal of the persuasive essay is to convince (persuade) the reader to accept the writer's point of view or recommendation. The writer must build a case using facts and logic, as well as examples, valid opinion, and sound reasoning.

The writer should present all sides of the argument, but must be able to communicate clearly why his/her position is correct. Writing a persuasive essay is like being a lawyer arguing a case before a jury. The writer takes a stand on an issue—either “for” or “against”—and builds the strongest possible argument to win over the reader.

THE WRITING PROCESS

To do well, in any field, you need to go through a series of steps. The same applies to writing. First, you need a topic... What to write about! Sometimes you are given a choice of prompts. You're also given a deadline. You need to think it over and decide. This is the hardest part!

The Writing Process consists of a series of steps that ensure that you produced a polished, coherent, complete piece of writing. The steps are:

- Prewriting
- Drafting
- Revising
- Editing
- Publishing



Prewriting

At the start of an assignment, explore possible topics before choosing one to write about. Do the necessary research so you'll better understand what you're writing about. People shouldn't talk or write about stuff they don't know! Organizing the information is what this step is about.



Drafting

During this step, complete your first draft using the prewriting plan as a guide.

This draft is your first chance to get everything down on paper.



Revising

After reviewing the first draft, you can change the ideas any way you want. If you're smart, you'll ask someone else to review the draft as well. An extra pair of eyes is often helpful.



Editing (Proofreading)

After revising you must check your writing for correctness before preparing a neat final copy. Proofread the final copy for errors before sharing or publishing it.



Publishing

This is the final step in the writing process. This is where it all comes together when the writing gets to be as “good as it gets.” Publishing is to a writer what an exhibition is to an artist - an opportunity to share your work with others.

STRUCTURE

The design of the 5-paragraph essay is quite simple: The Introduction with a strong lead-in, the reasons that support your thesis and your thesis statement telling the topic and point of the essay. Your well-elaborated first reason with specific examples. Your well-elaborated second reason with specific examples. Your well-elaborated third reason with specific examples. The Conclusion where you restate your thesis and your 3 reasons with a strong, decisive closing statement. That's how it's done!

THE FREEDOM OF THE ESSAY

The essay is uniquely designed for reflection because it is free of the limitations that shape other literary forms.

It is fitting that Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau became masters of this literary form. During a time of rapid industrial growth and social change in the United States, intellectuals turned inward to examine their values and beliefs.

Reaction gave rise to the philosophical movements such as Transcendentalism, which resisted the materialism and expansionism of the age. The introspective, spiritual nature of this movement provided fertile ground for the flowering of the essay form.

Over time, the essay has become increasingly popular and accessible to the general reader. Most of us are comfortable with the first-person voice that seems to echo our own thoughts or speak to us in instructive tones. For the writer, the essay is a way of trying on a more intimate, unconstrained voice.

ASSESSMENT

Personal Essay Topics About Your Experiences or About You

Writing about life experiences can help you process them. Additionally, an essay can show the reader insights about you that they may not know. See if these topics inspire you to write about ... Yourself! Write a personal essay about:

1. Write about a time you learned something from someone unexpected.
2. Write about why you hold a particular set of beliefs. Which are they?
3. Could you live without technology for a week? A year? What would it look like?
4. If you could trade personality traits with someone, what would you trade?

Tomorrow, turn in a paper, no less than 500 words long. Must be fully formatted.



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