

# What is Expository Writing?

## Expository Writing

**Expository Writing** explains how or why something happened or clarifies why you feel a certain way.

**Some of the clue words for expository prompts are:**

**Explain...**

**In your opinion...**

**Describe...**

**Remember: Explaining = Important Reasons & Vivid Details**

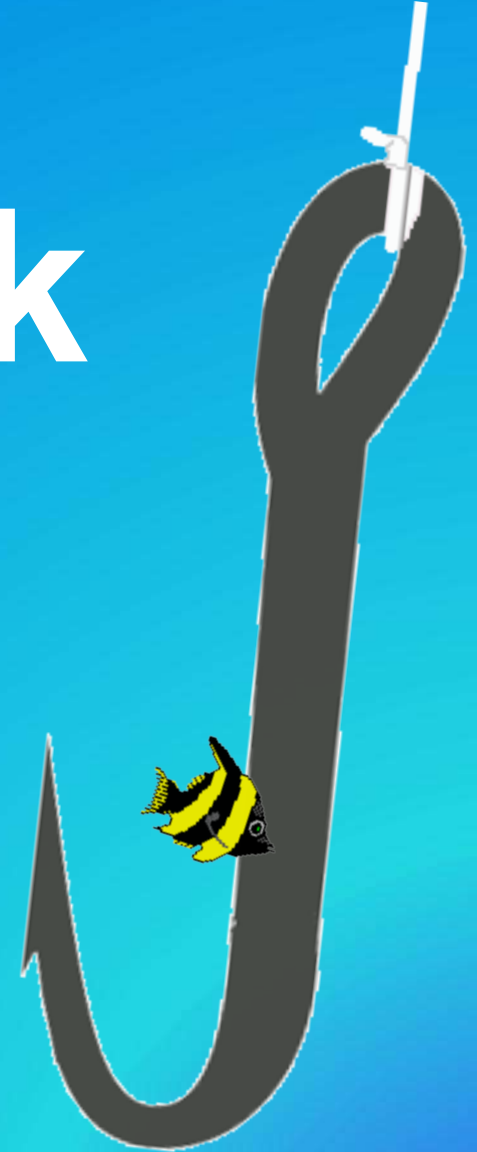
# No Questions Asked

Just ask yourself these important questions about your writing

1. **Focus**: **Are all my sentences on the topic?** Does everything focus on the main idea?
2. **Organization**: **Do I have a beginning, a middle, and an ending?** Is my information in order?
3. **Support**: Did I support a main idea with relevant, interesting details? Is my writing feel complete? **Have I painted a picture for the reader?**
4. **Conventions**: **Did I use capital letters, proper punctuations, and correct spelling?**

# The Hook

Catchy  
Compositions  
Capture  
Critics'  
Concentration



# The Hook

The introductory paragraph combines the hook with the topic sentence (**thesis**) to form the essay lead.

# The Hook: What's the Point?



The hook paragraph makes the reader want to learn more.



We definitely want to impress the blue-haired old ladies who grade our writing assessments!

# The Hook

To catch the reader, use a hook in the introductory paragraph.



Tell a brief, related story (**anecdote**)



Use a **quote**.



Tell the who, what, where, when, why (**statistic or real-world application**).



Use a **simile or metaphor**.

# The Hook: Anecdote

Tell a brief story in 1-2 sent. that captures the essence (main idea) of the issue/situation or topic.

Note: the story must be brief and should not extend past the first paragraph. Otherwise, your whole essay slips into being a narrative!

# The Hook: Anecdote

A small-town housewife wants to buy a pair of shoes for her child. She goes out to her favorite local shoe store, only to discover they've closed due to the popularity of discount giant Wal-Mart. Huge stores like Wal-Mart are ruining the chances of small business to succeed.





# Scuba Steve's Tip for Essay Success

Reread the writing prompt (3 times!) and try to think of a story you can tell to get the reader involved in your composition.

**Embellish** with relevant details and vivid vocabulary.



# The Hook: Quotation

Use someone else's words to address/exemplify the issue/topic.

Note: The quote must be relevant (related to your topic). Do not create or write a conversation. This is called dialogue and does not qualify as a quote.

# The Hook: Quotation

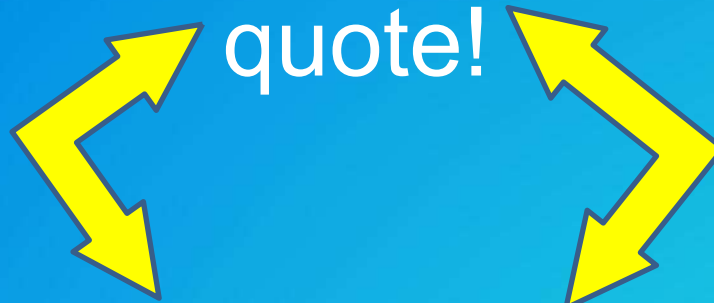
—

John Kennedy once said, “Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country.” Today, though, it seems that many want to know how much the government will give them. It is time for our generation to make a change and stand on our own feet, without intervention from “Uncle Sam.”



# The Hook: Quotation

**Don't** do this! This is dialogue, not a quote!



“Mom, what’s for dinner?” “Not now! I’m about to get a high score on Guitar Hero!”  
“You’re always playing games, Mom!” “Hey! I had too many responsibilities when I was a kid. Now’s my time to have fun.” This shouldn’t happen. Adults have to be responsible so that we can have a childhood.

# Scuba Steve's Tip for Essay Success



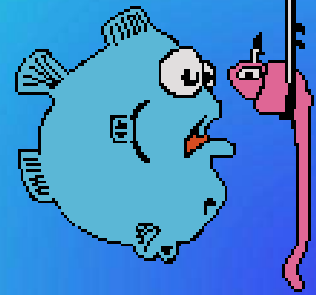
If you have time and are able to use resources, a great source for famous quotes is *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*. If you are in a testing situation, stick with quotes you know from memory.



# The Hook: Statistic or Real-World Application

Give the reader **the who, what, where, when, why** of the issue/topic (and sometimes the how).

Note: Use facts, percentages, or numbers to give pertinent information that relates to the topic/main idea.



# The Hook: News

Heart disease is the number one killer in the United States and many want to know why. Some scientists blame fast food restaurants for the recent rise in the number of unhealthy Americans. In 2008, a few towns even made fast food illegal in their city limits! However, it may not be possible to identify just one culprit in this battle.



# Scuba Steve's Tip for Essay Success

You may have noticed that some of these hook techniques blend with one another at times. This is okay. Remember: these are just some tricks you can use to avoid sounding like every other writer out there. We're working on developing your own style and voice. 😊

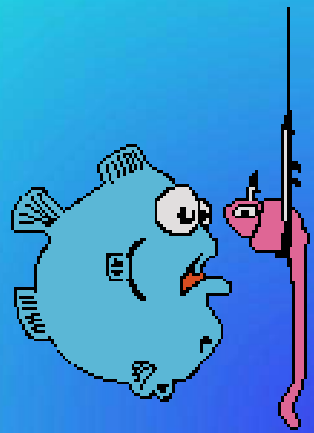




# The Hook: Simile or Metaphor

**Use a comparison between two unlike things, but stay on topic!**

Note: be sure the comparison makes sense and that it won't take the reader off topic in his/her mind.



# The Hook: Simile & Metaphors

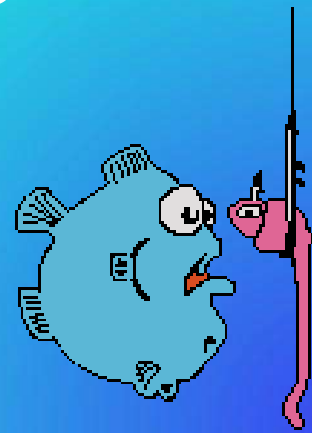
The smoke was a cloud of black cotton that filled the room. As Amy ran from the kitchen toward the fire extinguisher, she began to panic. She did not know if she would stop the fire in time...



# The Hook: Sensory Details

Using figurative language (i.e. cliché, onomatopoeia, vivid adjectives, etc.) to paint a picture for the reader

Note: This type of HOOK is usually used in narrative writing.



# The Hook: Sensory Details

Whap! Whap! Whap! Was the sound I heard as mom sought to destroy one of the summer's worst enemies—mosquitoes. As we sat on the porch, drinking lemonade, and talking about “old” times, we became frustrated at the infiltration of these beasts. I love summer, but I wish I could experience at least one summer without mosquitoes.



Adapted by Dr. Precious Prothro from Donna Barrett and Elise Keeney, who also adapted from: Nancie Atwell's *Lessons that Change Writers* and The Hook – a PowerPoint presentation by Connie Campbell found at <http://jc-schools.net/writeaway/>

