

Writing Resources

The resources in this document are intended as supplementary material for students enrolled in ELAP, ENGL101, and ENGL102 courses. For further support or guidance on your writing, reading, or speaking assignments, we encourage you to meet with a tutor at the Writing, Reading, and Language Center Takoma Park/Silver Spring.

Writing, Reading, Language Center – TP/SS

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Genres of Writing (Types of Essays)

Additional genres of writing are covered the Duke University Thompson Writing Program's [webpage](#).

Narrative Essay & Paragraph

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Narrative Essays	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	Overview of the structure and components of a narrative essay; includes a sample outline for a 5-paragraph narrative essay
Narrative Paragraphs	Harper College (web)	Overview of what a narrative paragraph entails; includes examples and exercises (useful for ESL and ELAW classes)
Student Narrative Essay Examples	OER Textbook: <i>Write What Matters</i> (web)	Three sample narrative essays for ideas on how to start and organize your own narrative essay

Argumentative Essay

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Argumentative Essays	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	Guidance on how to structure and organize a 5-paragraph argumentative essay; includes a sample outline
How to Write a Standout Argumentative Essay	Grammarly (web)	Describes what an argumentative essay is and various ways to structure one
MLA Sample Argumentative Papers	Skyline College (web)	Sample argumentative essays with annotations

Cause and Effect

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Cause & Effect	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	Explains concept of cause/effect; includes list of connecting phrases used in cause/effect writing
A Guide to Writing a Cause and Effect Essay	Grammarly (web)	A guide to what and how to structure a cause/effect essay
Unit 6: Cause-Effect Essays	National Geographic Learning (PDF)	A textbook chapter that covers how to organize, use effective transitions and verb tenses for a cause/effect essay; includes examples
Cause and Effect Essay	Excelsior Online Writing Lab (web)	Overview of cause/effect essays with video explanation and sample essays.

Compare and Contrast Essay

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Compare and Contrast Essay: Quick Guide with Examples	PaperTrue (web)	Detailed explanation of how to plan and organize a compare/contrast essay, with sample block and point-by-point outlines
Compare and Contrast Essay Example: ENG111	Logan Dupree (YouTube video)	A detailed walk-through of a sample compare/contrast essay, focusing on thesis, topic and summative sentences, and structure of the body paragraphs
How to Write a Compare and Contrast Essay	Breaking English (YouTube video)	Demonstration of how to brainstorm and outline for a compare/contrast essay, followed by a walk-through of a sample essay with a focus on transitions/connectors
Compare/Contrast Essays	Smrt English (YouTube video)	Overview of the block and point-by-point methods for structuring and organizing a compare/contrast essay
Compare & Contrast	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	A “cheat sheet” on point-by-point organization, structuring a thesis statement, and connecting words to use for a compare/contrast essay

Summary/Response Essay

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
How to Write a Summary	Smrt English (YouTube video)	Review of the structure and do’s and don’ts of a summary
How to Write a Summary of an Academic Article in English: Writing Tips	Learn Academic English (YouTube video)	Targeted at Adv level ESL students; goes over the basics of how to read an article critically and how to plan and write a summary
Sample paragraph summaries of news articles	Michelle Chan, Montgomery College (Google Doc)	Professor Chan’s sample summaries of news articles assigned in her first-year composition course
ProfBTV: The Summary/Response Essay	Dan Beugnet, Tallahassee CC (YouTube video)	Detailed overview of what a summary/response essay entails; includes how to structure this type of essay

Rhetorical Analysis Paper

What is Rhetorical Analysis?

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
What is Rhetorical Analysis?	OER Textbook: <i>Guide to Rhetoric, Genre, and Success in 1st Year Writing</i> (web)	Summary of what rhetorical analysis entails; lists questions you should ask yourself when conducting a rhetorical analysis.

Rhetorical Analysis	Travis McNair (YouTube video)	Explanation of rhetorical analysis in terms of the situation, constraints, and rhetorical strategies
Rhetorical Analysis Sample Essay	St. Louis CC (web)	Sample rhetorical analysis of an article

Rhetorical Appeals

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Common Rhetorical Devices	Grand Canyon Diploma English (YouTube video)	Summary of 7 types of rhetorical devices and appeals: rhetorical questions, allusions, repetition, parallel structure, ethos, logos, pathos
Rhetorical Appeals	OER Textbook: <i>Guide to Rhetoric, Genre, and Success in First Year Writing</i> (web)	Summary of Logos, Pathos, and Ethos
Modes of Persuasion	OWL Excelsior (web)	Analysis of a sample article for elements of ethos, logos, and pathos
The Rhetorical Situation	Travis McNair (YouTube video)	Explains the four elements of a rhetorical situation: speaker, subject, audience, and setting (also known as the Rhetorical Triangle).
What is the Rhetorical Situation?	OER Textbook: <i>Guide to Rhetoric, Genre, and Success in First Year Writing</i> (web)	Explains 5 concepts of a rhetorical situation: author, audience, setting, purpose, and text.

Logical Fallacies

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
14 Logical Fallacies in 14 Minutes	Clay Arnall (YouTube video)	Identifies 13 common logical fallacies with explanations and real-world examples
Logical Fallacies	OWL Excelsior (web)	Describes 8 types of logical fallacies; module includes a video lesson analyzing examples and a video of a student revising her essay for them.

Definition Essay

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Definition Essay	Excelsior OWL	Thorough explanation of what a typical definition essay entails; includes video and student sample essays
The Definition Essay	Dallas Baptist University (PDF)	Explains what a definition essay is, what it should include, and how plan for this type of essay

Definition Essay Examples and Topic Ideas	YourDictionary (web)	Provides a general structure for a definition essay and two short examples
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Exemplification Essay

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Exemplification Essay	Dallas Baptist University Writing Center (PDF)	Guidelines for how to incorporate examples in an exemplification essay
Exemplification Essay	Austin Peay State University Writing Center (YouTube video)	General guidance on how to write an exemplification essay

Exploratory Essay

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Organizing an Exploratory Essay	OWL Purdue (web)	General overview of the purpose of an exploratory essay and what to include in the introduction, body, and conclusion sections
How to Write and Exploratory Essay	BibGuru (web)	Detailed explanation of what an exploratory essay is and what to include in the introduction, body, and conclusion sections (features short examples)

In-class / Timed Essays

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Ace the In-class Essay (and other timed writings!)	WRLC TPSS (YouTube video)	Tips on how to tackle timed or in-class essays
Timed Essay/Essay Exam	Duke University Writing Studio (PDF)	A handout with tips on writing timed essays

Analyzing Poetry or Short Stories

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Analyzing Poetry/Stories	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	Guide on what literary elements to consider when analyzing a poem or short story; includes a sample 5-paragraph outline and tips on how to write about the literary elements

Transfer & Scholarship Essays

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
3 Biggest Mistakes of Transfer Applications	SupertutorTV (YouTube video)	Thorough and specific guidance from a college consultant on avoiding three major mistakes when completing a transfer application
Everything you need to include in your college transfer essay-my thoughts as an admissions reader	Koodoos (YouTube video)	Tips for what to include or address in a transfer essay to increase your likelihood of success
Do's and Don'ts of Writing a Transfer Essay"	Carnegie Mellon (PDF)	A handout on what to do and what not to do in transfer essays; includes examples
In Their Own Words	American University Magazine - Winter 2026 Issue (web)	9 sample essays for the Common App written by students who were accepted to AU
Transfer Essays That Worked	Johns Hopkins University (web)	Selections of essays that “worked” as nominated by the JHU admissions committee
Scholarship Application Essay Tips	Pierce College (web)	Tips on what to consider and how to organize a scholarship essay
Fourteen Scholarship Essay Examples That Won Thousands 2024	College Essay Guy (web)	Examples of successful scholarship essays

Organization

Outline Templates

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
4-paragraph essay outline	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	Outline template for a 4-paragraph essay
5-paragraph essay outline	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	Outline template for a 5-paragraph essay

Introductions & Conclusions

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Introductions	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	Overview of the components of an introductory paragraph; includes examples for different types of essays
Conclusions	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	Tips on how to conclude an essay

Paragraphs

Paragraph Structure

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
5 Keys to a Strong Paragraph	The Nature of Writing (YouTube video)	A review of elements that make a strong paragraph: coherence, a topic sentence, evidence, transitions, and closure.
Paragraph Unity, Coherence, and Development	Wheaton College (web)	An overview of what makes a unified and coherent paragraph; also includes links to information about topic sentences and transitions.
Paragraphs & Topic Sentences	Indiana Univ Bloomington - Writing Tutorial Services (web)	A thorough description on what a paragraph is, the structure of a paragraph, and how to ensure coherence in a paragraph

Cohesion (connectors and transitions)

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Cohesion and Coherence	EAP Foundation (web)	Detailed guide on how to ensure cohesion and coherence in essays; includes a video and sample annotated short essay
Transitions and Connectors	Allan Hancock College Writing Center (PDF)	A handout on coordinate conjunctions (FANBOYS), subordinate conjunction, relative pronouns, and transitions
Crafting Great Transitions	The Nature of Writing (YouTube video)	A presentation on how to effectively transition from one paragraph to the next while avoiding repetition

Research

Forming your Research Question

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Choose a Research Topic	Montgomery College Library (web)	A guide on how to get started and focus on a topic for research; includes video tutorials for developing a research plan and narrowing your topic

Finding Academic Sources

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
MC Course Research Guides	Montgomery College Library (web)	List of courses, each linked to their respective research guide
Quick Tips & Shortcuts for Database Searching	Modern Librarian Memoirs (YouTube video)	Quick tips for doing database searches on EBSCO

Claims

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Types of Claims	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	Overview of types of claims with explanations and examples (useful for ENGL 102)

Thesis Statements

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Guide to Basic Thesis Statements	WRLC TPSS (YouTube video)	Basic guidelines for writing thesis statements, including examples for compare/ contrast and cause/effect thesis statements
Thesis Statements	UNC Chapel Hill Writing Center (web)	Handout describing what a thesis statement is, how thesis statements work in one's writing, and how one can craft or refine a thesis statement

Annotated Bibliographies

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Annotated Bibliography	UNSW Sydney (web)	Detailed summary of what an annotated bibliography is and how to approach writing one; includes a sample annotated bibliography for reference
Resources for Creating an Annotated Bibliography	Purdue OWL (web)	Explanation of what an annotated bibliography is and its purpose and format; includes examples

Incorporating Outside Sources (ICE/Quote Sandwich)

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
ICE: Introduce, Cite, and Explain Your Evidence	University of Michigan (PDF)	Detailed explanation of how to introduce, cite, and explain quotes in your writing; includes sample body paragraph incorporating ICE method

Quote Sandwich	St. Louis Community College (web)	General explanation for how to effectively incorporate outside sources into your writing; includes examples
Integrating Quotations	The Nature of Writing (YouTube video)	Overview of how to incorporate a short expression (sentence quotation), block quotation, run-in quotation, and multiple quotes
Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and Quoting: The guide to doing it right!	Genesee Library (YouTube video)	Clarifies difference between a summary, paraphrase, and quote; includes examples and an explanation of when it is appropriate to use quotations
Quoting and Paraphrasing	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	A “cheat sheet” on when to quote and paraphrase; includes guidance on how to use signal phrases and punctuate quotes
Signal phrases	George Mason University Writing Center (PDF)	Explains what signal phrases are and when and how to use them to incorporate outside sources in your writing
Words that introduce Quotes or Paraphrases	Gallaudet University English Center (web)	Includes examples of neutral, strong, and inference verbs for introducing quotes or paraphrases, as well as sample sentences using MLA and APA-style formatting

Writing Academic Essays (various topics)

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Essay Writing	The Nature of Writing (YouTube Video Playlist)	Video playlist covering a variety of academic writing topics ranging from organizing ideas and reading sources effectively to citation styles and editing

Works Cited page

See the list of resources under [“Citation Styles”](#) below.

Citation Styles

MLA

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Cite Sources: MLA Style, 9th Ed.	Montgomery College Library (web)	General overview of how to incorporate in-text citations using signal words and phrases, and how to format and list various types of entries on a Works Cited page in MLA-style

MLA Formatting and Style Guide, 9th Ed.	Purdue OWL (web)	Detailed explanations and guidance on in-text citations and how to list different types of sources on a works cited page; also features a sample paper using APA-style formatting
MLA Documentation	Austin Community College Library Services (PDF)	Overview of properly attributing credit to sources and how to list various types of entries on a works cited page
MLA Citation Guide (9th Edition): How Do I Cite?	Columbia College (web)	Guidance for how to cite various types of sources

APA

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Cite Sources: APA Style, 7th Ed.	Montgomery College Library (web)	General overview of how to incorporate in-text citations using signal words and phrases, and how to format and list sources on a references page in APA-style
APA Styling Guide	APA Style (web)	Detailed guidelines on how to format all aspects of an APA-style paper; includes sample paper
APA Formatting and Style Guide (7th Edition)	Purdue OWL (web)	Detailed explanations and guidance on in-text citations, footnotes, and listing different types of sources on a references page; also features a sample paper using APA-style formatting
How to Cite in APA Format (7th edition) Guide & Generator	Scribbr (web)	Overview of APA in-text parenthetical and narrative citations; guidance on formatting a references page; also features an APA citation generator

Chicago

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Chicago Style Citation Guide: Templates & Citation Examples	Scribbr (web)	Overview of how to cite sources with notes and creating a bibliography using Chicago style
Chicago Style Guide, for 17th Edition: Paper formatting	Western Oregon University Hamersly Library (web)	Detailed descriptions for formatting the title page, notes, and bibliography using Chicago style; sample paper for reference; additional formatting topics on left-hand menu
Chicago style "Quick Guide"	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	General overview of how to format footnotes/endnotes and bibliography page

Content

Academic Tone & Vocabulary

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Academic Tone for Formal Writing	Antioch University Writing Center (PDF)	A guide on what to avoid and tips for maintaining academic tone in formal writing
The Tone of Academic Writing	The Nature of Writing (YouTube video)	Analysis of formality between two sample paragraphs
The Academic Vocabulary List	EAP Foundation (web)	Explains what the AWL is; includes list of academic words, including each word's definition and word family
How Strong Is Your Vocabulary? (Quiz)	Merriam Webster Dictionary (web)	Take a 10-question quiz to test your knowledge of advanced vocabulary words (various versions available)
Free Rice (Quiz)	Free Rice (web)	Select the correct synonym for the target word where for each correct answer, 10 grains of rice will be donated to the World Food Programme; click on "Categories" on the main menu to practice other English topics, such as spelling and root words

Conciseness (cutting words)

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Writing Concisely	The Writing Center at UNC at Chapel Hill (web)	Tips on identifying wordiness in your sentences, paragraphs, and essays; also features strategies for writing concisely
My paper is too long!	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	Suggestions for how to reduce your essay to the required word count (useful for application essays)
8 Tips to Reduce Your Word Count	WRLC TPSS (YouTube video)	Tips on how to reduce word count without affecting the quality of content; See also related video: " Cut Your Word Count (With an Example Essay!) "

Expanding ideas (adding details)

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Descriptive and Sensory Details	Chandler-Gilbert College (PDF)	Brief description on the purpose of using descriptive and sensory details; includes examples of use of sensory details in paragraphs
My paper is too short!	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	Suggestions for how to add length to your essay

Reading Skills

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Reading Actively: How to Annotate a Text	University of Texas English (YouTube video)	Provides an overview of seven useful things to mark when reading actively: emotional sparks, figurative language, patterns, shifts, genre, allusions, and questions
Active Reading and Note-taking	Columbia Learn (YouTube video)	Strategies for “activating” your reading to make the process more effective and efficient

Speech and Public Speaking

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
10 Tips for Improving Your Public Speaking Skills	Harvard Division of Continuing Education (web)	Ten tips for speakers to calm the nerves and deliver memorable orations
7 Public Speaking Tips for Beginners	Communication Coach Alexander Lyon (YouTube video)	Seven public speaking tips for beginners to look, sound, and feel more confident in front of an audience
Public Speaking Tips & Strategies: Resources about Public Speaking	Butler University Libraries (web)	Compilation of articles, websites, and sample speeches

Sentence Structure

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Run-ons and Comma Splices	Khan Academy (YouTube video)	Detailed explanation of what run-on sentences and comma splices are; practice questions linked in the description of the video
Run-ons and Comma Splices	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	Explains what comma splices and run-on sentences are and provides strategies for correcting them
Recognizing Fragments	Khan Academy (YouTube video)	General explanation of what fragments are; practice questions linked in the description of the video
Sentence Fragments	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	General overview of what is and makes a sentence fragment
Finding and Fixing Sentence Fragments	Grammar Bytes (web)	Explains the different types of sentence fragments and presents solutions for correcting this error
Finding and Fixing Errors in Parallel Structure	Grammar Bytes (web)	Explains how to recognize non-parallel and parallel structure; provides ways to maintain parallel structure
Sentence Structure Help	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	Ways to approach and revise sentence structure issues; includes explanations of different types of clauses

Grammar & Punctuation

Commas

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Commas with Practice	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	A list of how commas are commonly used and when commas are not used; includes examples and practice exercises with answers
Rules for Using Commas	Grammarly (web)	Explanation of the various common uses of the comma; includes examples

Subject-verb agreement

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Subject-verb Agreement	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	Handout on how to check for subject-verb agreement issues; includes examples and practice sentences
Making Subjects and Verbs Agree	Purdue OWL (web)	Guidelines to help ensure your subjects and verbs agree

Modal Verbs

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Modal Verbs Table	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	A table listing common modals and their uses
Modal Verbs	English Page (web)	Tutorial on modal verbs; includes exercises

Proofreading for verb errors

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Proofreading for Verb Errors	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	A guide on how to check for correct use of verbs in your sentences

Formatting

RESOURCE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE
Formatting Your Document	WRLC TPSS (Google Doc)	A guide on where to find the settings to format your Word document
Basic Word Document Formatting	WRLC TPSS (YouTube video)	A guide on how to double-space, center, and indent text on Word documents