

**Technical English for Engineers**  
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**Lecture - 29**  
**Essay Writing**

Hello. So, today we are going to do Essay Writing. We will be doing how to write or make a frame work for an essay and we will also see how to write the keywords that are associated with framing an essay. How to outline and how to make a frame work for an essay? What are the key elements that go into writing an essay? See so far, we have done plenty of grammar, vocabulary building, you have done plenty of exercises, we have seen how sentences are made, we have seen various parts of speeches, word categories, word formation, collocation. Also at one point we have also seen how to write an email, how to do precis and also writing a paragraph.

So, you know that if we take care of our paragraphs, the other paragraphs or the rest of the essay will take care of itself. That is the importance of paragraph and which we have already done in one of our previous classes.

So, considering that 75 percent of this course is already over, you have to be now extremely clear about the rest or the remaining classes that we are going to do which are going to be all about writing and writing not just a sentence or a mere paragraph, but writing extensively and I am going to explain the mechanics of longer pieces of writing. You have to remember that all the things that we have been learning so far are going to come in handy from now onwards. Of course, everything is interconnected, everything is interrelated, but from today onwards; whatever we have done it is going to have an impact on what we do or how you approach writing complex pieces.

Especially, we are talking about technical kind of writing and academic writing. So, please recall, please do not ignore any of the classes that we have already done and all the topics that we have already done. I will want you, I **would** **will** like you to revise whatever we have been doing so far, in order to approach the subsequent classes

including today's class. As you are well aware of, written composition remains at the center of our education system. Why do I say that? You have to know that written works carry the maximum weight in our grading and assessment system, especially at university and institute level.

You know that return works test students on several parameters; such as grammar, syntax or construction of sentences, structuring sentences, vocabulary, punctuation and text organization. So, all these things are evaluated on the basis of your written compositions, you also know that compositions may range between one paragraph report and also extensive report writing and writing 300 pages of doctoral thesis or your M Tech or M sc thesis. So, all these things require extensive awareness about a mechanics of writing. So, in my discussion on essay writing, I will focus on the most common types of academic writing that **our** **are a** student's need, particularly in our Indian contexts.

You may ask that; what is the purpose? What is the relevance of an essay? Like any other skill, essay writing is a complex skill and it is a means of communication. All writing you see even e-mail writing, letter writing is a means of communication. Essay writing is a notch higher, is a notch above because of the complexities of its skills involved. See, very often you will realize that, if you practice writing; it impacts your other skills as well, the more you write the better you are able to organize your thoughts.

It will also help you in speaking better and also in reading better and all these things in effective **or** **listening** **listening** abilities as well. You know you understand the nuances of words, you understand vocabulary fast; you do not have to really group around with understanding or inferring the meanings of various words. Everything is interconnected you know that we have done so much of reading and listening as well and you know how much, let say reading is connected to listening and how much writing is connected to speaking. So, all these skills are interconnected and they should be given equal attention. Now essay writing can be descriptive, it can be narrative and it can be analytical. Descriptive is when we described, we have been describing processes, remember? In some of our earlier classes we have seen how descriptions are, then how equipment are described, how processes are described.

Narrative is when you narrate something and let us say you write a narrative about your personal experience, how you felt about doing this research, it becomes a narrative, almost like sharing your thoughts, telling a story. Analytical, this is something that most of you need, at the essay level, which means that you have to analyze a given question, approach a given problem and discuss it, you have to present arguments for and against, that is approaching analytically.

Of course, there are various types of essays, if you pick up any book of essay writing it would give you bullet points about various types of essays. We will do that also soon, but understand that generally this is what we need, descriptive is more elementary, narrative may be more creative. Analytical is more academic because you speak for and against an argument, you take a stand. Descriptive is more like how I did something or how this let say how this experiment was conducted and I have to write a short report, a short description of it. You do not need to be terribly creative in writing a description, for analytical writing you have to be not creative, but you have to be acutely sensitive to the nuances of the English language.

So, just writing a string of sentences would not do in the analytical kind of writing. When key element of writing an essay is that, it is important to be aware of your own strengths and limitations. For example, if you have a choice; let us say you have been given in a choice in your exam or by your instructor that here is the choice, here is the list of topics, write anything, write an essay on one or two of the given choices.

Now always decide on a subject that you have good command and control on or you feel strongly about. For example, you may have a stronger opinion on let us say; traffic condition of your city, rather than the State of the United Nations or the role of the United Nations in promoting world peace. You will be more equipped to tackle competently, what you are comfortable with. Style is another thing, always be careful about your style; it is important that you use the right kind of tone.

Please be very clear about the tone you employ, your tone has to be in accordance with the general nature of the essay. For instance, if your topic is violence in contemporary society; do not approach the essay in a light hearted tone, it is a serious issue. Role of

women in society, these are serious issues we do not banter about these things, we do not crack jokes about these things. So, please remember that there are plenty of opportunities for us to be light hearted about, but not when you approach an academic under serious essay, you have to adopt a very formal tone, a serious tone when you are approaching serious topic.

Finally, be careful about employing a personal point of view. The use of you know constantly saying I believe, I think or in my opinion, in my view, it should be avoided if essay is of objective and scientific nature, you have to be more detached more impersonal. Coming to the important elements in an essay, you always begin with an introduction. When you go to introduction, remember that you have to explain why the general topic of the essay is relevant and then you put the essay in context of it. Your thesis sentence should include your introduction of course, and introduction should end with the specific thesis **of** statement, this could be the major argument of your essay.

So introduction, where you explain why the general topic of your essay is relevant, you put the essay in context and then introduction should end with a specific thesis statement, this is the main argument. After establishing the context, you move on to the next paragraph, see essay writing is all about mastering paragraphing as well. You cannot have, one single block running into 5 pages or 2 pages or even 1 page, there has to be necessarily break-up in paragraph.

So next paragraph should be, the so called body after introduction there is body of paragraphs, depending on the length of your essay. So, assuming it is 300 or 500 then 4 to 5 paragraphs in body should be sufficient, it could be more but 4 to 5 maximum 6 could be sufficient or should be sufficient. These paragraphs contain argument, evidence, supporting statements and topics that aid and help the thesis in or thesis statement in standing.

Now, you know what is a topic sentence, topic sentence is; we are talking about the body of the paragraph, body of the essay. So, you introduce the topic at the beginning of each body paragraph and this should really directly to the rest of the paragraph and link them to the thesis statement and then you move on to do supporting sentences. They should

contain your argument, analysis of your data and facts, if you need to coat something or need to tell an anecdote; particularly in lengthier pieces of writing. You need to give examples supporting details in order to aid your topic sentence.

You should have at least three supporting sentences and that is a standard, but it could be more. So, you should have at least three sentences to support each topic sentence and then make good use of transition moving from one paragraph to another. When we talk about transition, you should focus on the final sentence of the body paragraph that links it to the next paragraph, we will just talk about it in detail and then this should go on for the rest of the essay.

How you develop body? Remember you should not introduce two contrasting ideas or two new ideas in the same para. While doing paragraph, we have already talked about it that each paragraph should contain one main idea. If you may recall, we have done something on Isaac Newton, where I **drew** **do** your attention to the fact that each paragraph had something new to say with supporting details. So, please go back to your earlier classes, earlier lectures if you need more explanation about what is the main idea, how to identify a main idea and then of course, when you are done with your arguments for an against, **you** **we** have conclusion; conclusion summarizes the general points and general theme of the essay and please remember in conclusion, you no longer have a liberty to introduce new information. Please remember that many a time I have noticed that **the** students include something that is absolutely new in the last final paragraph. This is not the right thing or correct thing to do, please avoid this.

So to reiterate, a good essay contains introduction, some general information about the topic. You have to make the reader interested, I am talking about an educated reader to be interested in what you are writing and establish the context, write your thesis statement, you have to write your body, the topic sentences supporting the argument and given details, examples, data explanations etcetera, it should go on supporting that way and then marking transition from one para to another. So, this is the way general body of an essay goes. Now please look at the slide and let us look at the sample.

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### Sample: Essay

- **Intro:** A major change that has occurred in the Western family is an increased incidence in divorce. Whereas in the past, divorce was a relatively rare occurrence, in recent times it has become quite commonplace. This change is borne out clearly in census figures. For example thirty years ago in Australia, only one marriage in ten ended in divorce; nowadays the figure is more than one in three .....
- **Context:** In this essay I will seek to critically examine a number of sociological explanations for the 'divorce phenomenon' and also consider the social policy implications that each explanation carries with it. It will be argued that

This is an introduction and in the same part, **please note that for your own convenience**, I have given two sub headings, intro and context. Actually this is one single paragraph, please note in order to make you understand what is introduction and what is context, I have given separate paragraphs, but this is not the way to actually practice it, this is just for explanation. Introduction, a major change that has occurred in the western family is an increased incidence in divorce. Whereas in the past, divorce was a relatively rare occurrence, in recent times it has become quite commonplace. This change is borne out clearly in census figures. For example, 30 years ago in Australia, only one marriage in ten ended in divorce; nowadays the figure is more than one in three.

In this essay, I will seek to critically examine, so look at what the writer is doing, he is establishing the context here therefore the sub heading. You should not be writing this way, please avoid giving such kinds of sub headings in academic essays. So, the context in this essay; What is the writer trying to do? He states that he will seek to critically examine a number of sociological explanations for the divorce phenomenon and also consider the social policy implications that each explanation carries with it, It will be argued **that there**, I have left it here it will be argued **that there**.

So, this is how you construct a paragraph or introductory paragraph. Introduce the main idea, a thesis, what is the problem, he has given some examples how the rate of a divorce is increasing; particularly in the western world and then establishing the context what am I going to do here, what is his intention to do here. Let me take you to another example, please look at the slide

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### Sample: Body of the essay

**Topic sentence: Academic Performance** is another key factor that was consistently cited as a factor that influences a student staying in school and graduating. **(Supporting detail)** Several research articles cited that the road to academic success starts early in the education system. Both school readiness and 3rd grade reading proficiency have been cited as indicators of future academic success. After the 3rd grade children are no longer learning to read, but are now reading to learn. Helping struggling students in the 3rd grade to read at or above reading proficiency will help be more prepared for success in the future.

Research has also indicated that success in middle school is a key indicator of whether a student will drop out of high school. In middle school, a student is bombarded with many social changes that affect success in school. The transition from elementary school, where children are primarily in one class with the same classmates and teacher, to middle school, where students are rotating classes, teachers and classmates, is a difficult transition for some students. The relationship with their teachers isn't as strong, due to the fact that they have multiple subjects. This makes it difficult for students to get the attention they need. Research has indicated that success in middle school is a strong indicator for success in high school.

Source: <http://www.uwaystan.org/blog-entry/09-03-2013/3-reasons-students-dropout-high-school>

This is a sample text for the body of the sentence, look at the topic sentence and then look at the supporting details; I will read it out for you. Academic performance is another key factor that was consistently cited as a factor that influences a student staying in school and graduating. Now see; this is a part of an essay where the writer is trying to understand a various reasons for high school drop outs, you **look** **know** when children do not complete their higher studies, higher academics. So, what are the reasons so this is from the body, this is not the introduction.

The introduction is, for that you will have to read the entire essay. I have given the source, if you wish you can look at the complete essay. Here I am just trying to explain how one argument is constructed. So, then you look at the supporting detail this is not the way you have to write again, please pay attention to these facts you do not have to write topic sentence and supporting detail in your **formula** **formal** essay. I am doing here just

to make you understand things better so several research articles cited that the road to academic success starts early in the education system both school readiness and third grade reading proficiency have been cited as indicators of future academic success. After the 3rd grade children are no longer learning to read, but are now reading to learn. Helping struggling students in the 3rd grade to read at or above reading proficiency will help be more prepared for success in the future.

Research has also indicated that success in middle school is a key indicator of whether a student will drop out of high school. In middle school, a student is bombarded with many social changes that affect success in school. The transition from elementary school, where children are primarily in one class with the same classmates and teacher, to middle school, where students are rotating classes, teachers and classmates, is a difficult transition for some students. The relationship with their teachers is not as strong, due to the fact that they have multiple subjects. This makes it difficult for students to get the attention they need. Research has indicated that success in middle school is a strong indicator for success in high school.

So, this is the body and this is just one reason and one for school drop out, academic performance and then the various reasons given for the drop in academic performances.

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### Full text

- <http://www.monash.edu.au/lis/lionline/writing/general/essay/analysis-citations/2.xml>



The full text is available on this link; please look at it this is the reference for the full text. A good use of markers, signal words and linking words, you are already very much familiar with **these** things, we have been doing a lot of practice with linking words. For example, when you introduce something, you use a word like now **a**-days, these days. When you describe consequences you say as a consequence, as a result, resultantly, consequently, therefore, thus. You also know when we give more information, then you say further more or more over or in addition etcetera and of course, in conclusion you say; so finally, to summarize and in conclusion.

So, these are the standard words that you use. **You are already familiar with these words, make good use on this.** In the previous passage that we have just seen on high school drop outs, see how well linking words are connected, are woven into the body of the text. I would like you to identify at least 10 linking words from the paragraph or the passage that we have just seen. Now, let **me** show you another sample, please look at the slide.

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### Descriptive type Sample text: Linkers

- CCTV is a visual surveillance technology designed for monitoring a variety of environments and activities all at the same time. CCTV systems **typically** involve a dedicated communications link between cameras in the field **and** monitors at one or more control centers. Systems can be made up of technically mature analog cameras and image storage devices, **or** newly developed digital cameras and image storage devices, **or** a mix of the two technologies. CCTV systems may provide real-time, time-lapse, event, **or** digitally recorded surveillance information to help in detecting, responding to, investigating **and** providing evidence for security, safety **and** related incidents. A CCTV system may **also** be used to prevent security breaches by allowing security personnel to monitor access control systems at entry points to secure areas.

Source: [http://www.inter-pacific.com/documents/education/CCTV\\_Product\\_Overview.pdf](http://www.inter-pacific.com/documents/education/CCTV_Product_Overview.pdf)

Again we are going to pay attention to some linkers and this a descriptive type of passage. Of course, full passage or full essay is not given here; I have just given one section, one part of the essays on CCTV. So, CCTV and please notice I have highlighted all the linkers please take a look. CCTV is a visual surveillance technology designed for

monitoring a variety of environments and activities all at the same time. CCTV systems **typically** involve a dedicated communications link between cameras in the field **and** monitors at one or more control centers, systems can be made up of technically mature analog cameras and image storage devices **or** newly developed digital cameras and image storage devices **or** a mix of the two technologies. CCTV systems may provide real time, time lapse, event **or** digitally recorded surveillance information to help in detecting, responding to investigating **and** providing evidence for security, safety **and** related incidents. A CCTV system may **also** be used to prevent security breaches by allowing security personnel to monitor access control systems at in entry points to secure areas.

Now see, it is a very technical kind of writing, it is not trying to impress you with lot of things, with plenty of jargon. It is all very technical kind of vocabulary and basic minimal use of linking words, but effectively used.

In the high school drop out paragraph or in that particular essay, you have a wide range of linking words and **single signal** words. But that is the demand of that kind of a passage, here persistence use or continues use of and, an, or an, and, an, or and also should be enough, there is nothing that writer can be actually do, do this kind **of auto write, this kind** of description. But **in that one,** in the previous passage a writer can, so that is the difference; however, you as writers, I would strongly suggest that expand your vocabulary and try to use a variety of markers and singles and linking words in your writing. Now, here is an exercise for you.

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### Analytical Essay: Exercise--- Fill in the blanks with linking words

- Thinking about society using surveillance as a concept enables us to mount an ethical, social and spatial critique of the information processing practices .....are part of the way society is formed, governed and managed. It enables us to question and evidence its impact on the social fabric: on discrimination, trust, accountability, transparency, access to services, mobility, freedoms, community and social justice. .... it enables us to engage in debates with regulators, businesses and journalists about the consequences of their surveillance-based activities. ...., instead of thinking about surveillance as a single all-knowing oppressive force – as George Orwell depicts in the novel Nineteen Eighty Four – we prefer to think of it as something which is woven into everyday life and that is more complex and multi-layered. The covert hi-tech world of the spy or the all-seeing evil despot are .... tiny aspects of the surveillance society. Begin....., by thinking about the many different activities in which we engage during the course of a single day. At different times we interact with surveillance as part of these activities. .... workers, performance information is collected by the organizations for which we work. Managers use that information to let us know how we are performing in our jobs and how we can improve in future.

Extract is a quiet analytical, please look at the slide. This is your exercise, fill in the blanks with linking words. Thinking about society using surveillance as a concept, enables us to mount an ethical, social and spatial critique of the information processing practices. Dash are part of the way society is formed, governed and managed. Here you have to fill in a reference word, it enables us to question and evidence its impact on the social fabric, on discrimination, trust, accountability, transparency, access to services, mobility, freedoms, community and social justice. Dash it enables us to engage in debates with regulators, businesses and journalist about the consequences of their surveillance based activities. Dash instead of thinking about surveillance as a single all knowing oppressive force, as George Orwell depicts in the novel 1984, we prefer to think of it as something which is woven into everyday life and that is more complex and multi layered. The covert hi tech world of the spy or the all seeing evil despot are dash tiny aspects of the surveillance society. Begin dash by thinking about the many different activities in which we engage during the course of a single day. At different times, we interact with surveillance as part of these activities, Dash workers, performance information is collected by the organizations for which we work, Managers use that information to let us know how we are performing in our jobs and how we can improve in future.

I would like you to discuss this exercise and do this exercise in pairs or in groups, small groups of course, and choose a variety of signal words. Perhaps you can think of more words than that (Refer Time: 31:51) we actually uses, so here is the answer.

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### Answer

- i. Which
- ii. Moreover
- iii. So
- iv. But
- v. For example
- vi. As

Answer list, the first was which, moreover, so, but, for example, as. The full text is given on this particular link, but I would still want you to approach the essay all over again a passage sorry all over again and see if you can come up with a different set of answers. The answer that I have shown are taken from the text itself, but if you think that you can come up with the different list, different answers please give it a try and see if you are writing reads better.

Now, I will talk about using a hook, in writing an essay. Hook not be confused with your scientific hooks law, this is a hook while writing academic essays. So, please look at the slide.

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## Sample text: Using a hook

New technologies, above all the computer, facilitate surveillance in ways that Max Weber, Franz Kafka, or George Orwell never dreamed of, but new hardware and software do not on their own create new surveillance. Indeed, much surveillance occurs because in the world of modernity people prefer a 'private' existence, which prompts the development of systems to authenticate their activities in the 'public' world. Presenting a driver's license to a police officer from within a private car makes the point well.

*Of course*, it is ironic that the quest for privacy produces surveillance, because privacy is also looked to as protection against surveillance. But privacy is in any case a relative term. Once, the home was thought of as a private realm par excellence, a place into which others could not intrude.

• Source: [https://panoptikon.org/sites/default/files/FeedsEnclosure-editorial\\_7.pdf](https://panoptikon.org/sites/default/files/FeedsEnclosure-editorial_7.pdf)

Here is the sample text and how to use a hook. **Now** New technologies, above all the computer, facilitate surveillance in ways that Max Weber, Franz Kafka or George Orwell never dreamed of, but new hardware and software do not on their own, create new surveillance. **Indeed**, much surveillance occurs because in the world of modernity, people prefer a 'private' existence, which prompts the development of systems to authenticate their activities in the 'public' world. Presenting a driver's license to a police officer from within a private car makes the point well.

**Of course**, and now of course, is your hook. Transition from one paragraph to another and what is he saying that, for the sack of their privacy, people are using surveillance and of course, it is ironic that the quest for privacy produces surveillance because is surveillance sort of **encourages encroaches** on your privacy, but here the writer makes a very efficient use of a hook where he makes a transition from the previous idea, thought and connects it to the next paragraph. So, this is a good example of using a hook, you should know that hooks help in flowing of thoughts from paragraph to paragraph. Writers use a hook to connect ideas between one paragraph and then next. **Of course**, becomes one example of hook and you can also use word such as, as well as, on the contrary, further, more over, transition of an idea from one para to another, please look at this particular slide.

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## References (writing hooks)

- <https://www.kibin.com/essay-writing-blog/good-hook-sentences/>
- <http://bid4papers.com/blog/hook-for-essay/>
- <http://www.time4writing.com/learning-how-to-write/starting-with-a-hook/>

It has references about writing hooks are given you three useful links. Now layout of an essay is extremely important and some cardinal rules, layout of an essay. So some important rules of writing a layout is that, remember to be very particular about when to use capital and when to use lower cases.

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Informal and academic writing it is important to distinguish between upper and lower cases. We have already talked about using contractions and abbreviations minimal use of abbreviations and contractions and contracted forms of a verbs should be avoided like don't or shouldn't or mustn't, it should be avoided in written return language. Avoid writing the entire essay in capital letters, some times people do that please avoid that, you should also remember not to write one line paragraph, it is important that there should be paragraphs, but there is a method to it, you cannot write one essay in one breathless tone with no paragraphing at the same time avoid using one line and single line paragraphs. Also avoid using bullet points and numbers, unless absolutely necessary and remember always to live leave some space or a line between paragraphs. Now here is a list of references how to write effective essays, please take a look at this slide.

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## References

<http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ld>

<http://www2.elc.polyu.edu.hk/cill/eap/2001/egacademicesay.htm>

<http://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/essay-structure>

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/685/01/>

So, this was just an introduction to how to write an essay how, to frame the outline and what are the key elements. We will do essay writing in more detail in our next class.

Thank you very much.

## *Tags*

Reading English, English for Engineers, English words, English Exercise, Exercises in English, Grammar usage, English Grammar, vocabulary, words and phrases, spoken communication, written communication, English writing, English speaking, scientific English, report writing, CV, formal letter, Speech-Preposition, Noun Phrases, Countable and uncountable nouns, singular, plural, Modals and Voice, Tenses, Effective Speaking

Essay writing, word categories, word formation, formal tone, paragraph writing, tone in writing, speaking tone, signal words, Letter writing, understanding essays, Mechanics of Essays, publishable essays, nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, propositions, determiners, linking words, 'be' form, linking words, reading, listening, sentence, Subject, Verb, Object, Articles, comparatives, passive voice, Dictionary skills, Presentation, Punctuation, collocation