

Opinion

Opinion papers, also called essays or personal essays, are ultimately defined by the supporting details used while composing them. Writing opinion papers prepares students for comprehensive text questions that require a one- or two-sentence response with a statement and supporting details. Note: Initial-stage writers prepare for this genre by practicing descriptive Target Skills.

| | Initial Writer | Developing Writer | Fluent Writer |
|---|----------------|--|---|
| Organizational Most descriptive writing organizational Target Skills apply to expository writing and can be used as review Target Skills during genre pieces. Organizational Target Skills that are especially effective with an opinion piece are: | | | |
| Pre-write for an opinion piece | n/a | generate lists, charts or graphs; sketch; brainstorm; research; and talk about the material | same as developing |
| Plan an opinion piece | n/a | choose a topic; clump words or ideas to form paragraphs; name the rationale for each clump; order paragraphs for presentation; write topic sentences from sorting rationale | organize and order paragraphs; write topic sentences; determine paper focus (what do you want to tell your reader about the information or ideas) |
| State an opinion | n/a | write a declarative sentence for statement of opinion | same as developing |
| Present information in a variety of paragraph structures | n/a | description; sequence; definition; comparison | contrast; general to specific; specific to general; parts of a whole |
| Write an opinion piece | n/a | tell, then write several related sentences on one topic; write multi-paragraphed pieces with a beginning hook and ending | write multi-paragraphed pieces with introductory and ending paragraphs |
| Use beginning techniques | n/a | hooks—questions, exclamations, onomatopoeia, startling fact, talk directly to the reader, definition, general to specific statement, words in capitals, bold, italics, unusual fonts | hooks—sentence fragments, contrast, riddle, homily, alliterative phrase, quotations, exaggeration (hyperbole), play on words (pun), anecdote (narrative vignette) |
| Write introductory paragraph | n/a | tell how you feel about the subject; tell how you got interested in the subject | give background information; define the topic |
| Use ending techniques | n/a | (may be one or two sentences) exclamation; feeling; give the reader advice; make a comparison; remind reader of an important idea or fact in the paper; universal word (<i>all, every, world, etc.</i>); or question | (one or two sentences or paragraph) prediction; where to find out more; circle back to the hook; remind the reader of main points in paper over three pages long |