

THE STAGES OF ESSAY WRITING

STAGE	THINGS TO DO
<p><u>THROUGHOUT</u> THE ESSAY PLANNING AND WRITING PROCESS OUTLINED BELOW</p>	<p>Plan and organise your essay, checking what you are doing all the time.</p> <p>Stand back, think about and evaluate where you are up to in the essay writing process, asking yourself questions such as: Have I enough information on each section? Am I still on track towards answering the question? Have I gone off at a tangent anywhere?</p>
<p>1. PICK THE ESSAY TITLE TO BITS</p> <p>Information sheets:</p> <p>Essay title analysing “Do” words in essay titles</p>	<p>Read the title carefully, several times.</p> <p>Underline the key words and phrases.</p> <p>Break the title down into its elements, making sure you don't miss any out.</p> <p>Identify <u>all</u> the “do” words and define them.</p>
<p>2. CREATE A ROUGH PLAN OF THE MIDDLE SECTION OF YOUR ESSAY</p> <p>Information sheet:</p> <p>Essay title analysing</p>	<p>Using your workings from Stage 1, create a rough, basic plan of the <u>middle</u> section of your essay, in whichever format you prefer.</p>
<p>3. GATHER THE INFORMATION YOU NEED FOR YOUR ESSAY</p> <p>Information sheets:</p> <p>Sources of information Evaluating sources of information</p>	<p>Using your rough plan to maintain your focus, gather and evaluate the information you need to answer the essay question.</p>
<p>4. READ AND TAKE NOTES FROM THE INFORMATION YOU HAVE GATHERED</p> <p>Related topics:</p> <p>Reading and notetaking [link] Critical thinking and analysis [link]</p>	<p>Carefully read the books and other sources of information you have gathered, making notes on them as you go along.</p>

<p>5. CREATE A DETAILED PLAN OF THE MIDDLE SECTION OF YOUR ESSAY</p> <p>Information sheet:</p> <p>Essay structure</p>	<p>Using the reading you have done, create a plan of the <u>middle</u> section of your essay which is much more detailed than your original rough plan.</p> <p>Include in your plan, your main sections and arguments, in the order in which you will present them.</p>
<p>6. WRITE A DRAFT OF YOUR ESSAY</p> <p>Information sheets:</p> <p>Essay structure Editing the draft of your essay</p> <p>Related topics:</p> <p>Critical thinking and analysis [link] Effective writing [link]</p>	<p>Write the <u>middle</u> section of your essay first, using the detailed plan you have just created.</p> <p>When you are satisfied with your middle section, write the introduction to and the conclusion of your essay.</p> <p>Edit your draft as you go along.</p>
<p>7. CREATE YOUR LIST OF REFERENCES</p> <p>Related topic:</p> <p>Referencing and avoiding plagiarism [link]</p>	<p>Reference the sources of information you have drawn on for your essay, according to your department's referencing guidelines.</p>
<p>8. PROOFREAD THE FINAL DRAFT OF YOUR ESSAY</p> <p>Information sheet:</p> <p>Proofreading the final draft of your essay</p>	<p>Once you are happy with your essay, proof read it carefully, several times.</p> <p>Also ask someone else to proofread it – you are often too close to your work to spot your own mistakes!</p>