

Expository Writing (writing a report)

1. There are four methods you can use to develop the subject for your report. They are:
 - a. Through Examples
 - b. Comparison and Contrast
 - c. Cause and Effect
 - d. Definition and Explanation
2. Here is an example of each:
 - a. **Subject: Dinosaurs**
 - b. Through **Examples**: Describe different kinds of dinosaurs
 - c. Through **Compare/Contrast**: Tell how the dinosaurs' environment was different from our own today
 - d. Through **Cause/Effect**: Tell what may have caused dinosaurs to become extinct.
 - e. Through **Definition/Explanation**: Define what a reptile is and explain why most dinosaurs fit into the reptile category.
3. Focus on the Beginning:
 - a. For most writers, just getting started is the hardest part of writing. Remember that it doesn't have to be "perfect" and can always be changed in part or entirely at any point in the writing process. You can use these activities to just begin:
 - i. Develop a purpose statement. For example:
 1. My purpose is to tell about bats.
 2. My purpose is to tell how bats can free areas of insects.
 3. My purpose is to give examples of dog intelligence.
 4. My purpose is to compare and contrast two dog breeds.
 - ii. These sentences will not be sentences you use in your paper, however; they are a good starting point to keep you focused as you do the research on your subject.
4. **Develop a topic sentence**: A good topic sentence is like a headline: It clearly states the writer's main idea, and it appears at, or very near, the beginning of the paragraph.

- a. Look at this paragraph. What idea seems to be developing? Use the information given in the paragraph to develop your own topic sentence and add it to the paragraph.
 - i. **Paragraph:** The first book our reading group studied was *Julie of the Wolves*, in which the heroine learns how to survive by herself in the Arctic tundra with the help of a wolf pack. After that, the reader is introduced to Sam, the hero of *My Side of the Mountain*, who chose to spend a whole winter alone in the Catskill Mountains. Our reading group also included the story *Call It Courage*, with the main character Mafatu, in our study of wilderness heroes and heroines, even though Mafatu's wilderness was the Pacific Ocean. Now we're reading *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, in which Karana manages to survive for years on a deserted island.
 - b. With a partner or by yourself, come with and write down a possible topic sentence for the above paragraph.
5. Hook Sentence: To capture the audience interest and make the audience want to read on, many writers put a "hook" sentence at the beginning of the paragraph.
 - a. Examples:
 - i. Sometimes the topic sentence can be phrased as a hook. For example: Here he comes, World!-our local golf champion!
 - ii. Sometimes the hook comes before the topic sentence. For example: (hook) In the twilight, they come on leathery wings and begin to eat. (topic sentence) Tiny and jet-black, bats free our yards of insect pests.
6. Write your own hook for the following subject:
 - a. Dolphins
 - b. Vacation (pick a place)
7. Go over pages 57-60 together and then work with a partner to complete.