

Differences Between Expository and Persuasive Essays

An Expository Essay		A Persuasive Essay
The purpose is to present facts and information in an explanatory way.	Purpose	The purpose is to present one side or point of view to convince the reader to accept that viewpoint or to take a particular action.
A clear, concise, and defined thesis statement or central/controlling idea that clearly focuses on the topic or prompt is evident in the introduction of the essay.	Thesis	The position statement on a topic or issue is evident in the introduction of the essay.
Language and word choice are formal and academic.	Tone	Language and word choice may be casual and personal (but no slang).
Writers can use either first, second, or third person, as long as they clearly explain what they think about something.	Point of View	Writers can use either first or third person, as long as they establish and sustain a persuasive tone.
All ideas center on the thesis statement and help to explain the topic. Specific supporting details (factual, logical, statistical, or anecdotal) fully explain and clearly describe the topic.	Development of Ideas	All ideas center on a clear position that represents the writer's viewpoint on the issue and forms the basis of the argument. Specific examples (but no false evidence) support the position and make it convincing and powerful.
Ideas related to the thesis are presented in a logical way that best explains the topic and shows relationships among ideas. There are a variety of ways to organize ideas (e.g., anecdotes, examples, compare and contrast, cause and effect).	Structure and Organization	Ideas are presented in a way that maximizes their persuasiveness. Example structure: A writer builds an argument so that the strongest reason or evidence is at the end of the essay.