

I. Methods of Organization for Academic Writing

A. Descriptive Writing: Allows writer to "paint" word pictures. Details, of all types, are important with this type of writing. There are several types listed below.

- 1. Spatial Order:** With spatial order transition words such as behind, next to, along, nearest, above, below, and other words can help readers visualize a scene.
- 2. Order of Impression:** Focus on how you notice details. What catches your attention first, what second, and so on.
- 3. Order of Importance:** From least important, to more important, to most important.

B. Explanatory Writing: Informs and explains. There are many types listed below.

- 1. Classification:** Break a subject down into categories or subcategories. Outlining works well for this organization.
- 2. Order of Location:** Useful for describing a person, place or thing. Provides unity by arranging details in a logical way - left to right, right to left, top to bottom, and so on.
- 3. Chronological Order:** (time) Useful for sharing a story or explaining a process. Information is organized according to what happens first, second, third, and so on.
- 4. Cause and Effect:** Helps to show a relationship between events and their results. This type can begin with a general statement about the effect and follow with specific causes, or it can begin with a general statement about the cause and follow with specific effects. **Might be used:** to explain a character's actions, the progress of a disease, or the outcome of a war.
- 5. Comparison and Contrast:** Helps to show the similarities OR differences between two subjects. Often, this type ends up showing both the similarities and differences. **Might be used:** to compare and contrast two stories or two main characters or two events in history or two processes in science.
- 6. Problem-Solution:** Clearly states a problem, analyzes the problem, and proposes a solution. **Might be used:** identify and solve a conflict between characters, analyze a chemistry experiment, or explain why the home team keeps losing.
- 7. Analysis:** Useful for explaining how something works, how it is defined, or what its parts are.
 - a. Process Analysis:** Major steps of a process. What background information the reader needs to understand the process.
 - b. Definition Analysis:** Most important characteristics of a subject.
 - c. Parts Analysis:** Parts, groups, or types that make up a subject.

C. Persuasive Writing: Clarify your position and support your argument with examples, facts, or observations. Answer opposing views. Use a reasonable and respectful tone. Use logical language.

- 1. Reason for Your Opinion Organization:** Each reason with its evidence and support are presented with objections presented at the end of the piece.
- 2. Point-by-point Basis Organization:** Each reason and its objections are examined on a one-by-one basis.
- 3. Illogical Arguments:**
 - a. Circular Reasoning:** Trying to prove a statement by just repeating it in different words.
 - b. Overgeneralization:** Making a statement that is too broad to prove.
 - c. Either or Fallacy:** Stating that there are only two alternatives when there are many.
 - d. Cause and Effect Fallacy:** Falsely assuming that because one event follows another, the first event caused the second.