

How to plan an essay response

What are the top 5 things you need in a good essay plan?

Discuss with the group around you, list as many things as you can think of, but make sure you choose the five *most* important.

Discuss for five minutes, and then share as a group

The answers that you should be looking for are:

1. Unpack the key terms in the prompt.
2. Decide where you stand with the prompt.
3. Come up with a contention.
4. Brainstorm ideas to support your contention.
5. Organise your brainstorm, choose which three ideas you will use and in what order.

1. Unpack the key terms in a prompt (15 min)

What are the key terms in this prompt?

‘Our identity is always inherited in some way.’

Discuss for five minutes with a small group.

The key terms you should get are:

Identity, always & inherited

Come up with definitions of these words and synonyms as a group

2. Decide where you stand with the prompt (15 min)

Do you agree or disagree with this prompt? There are 4 positions that you can take:

AAA – Completely Agree

ADA – Mostly Agree

DAD – Mostly Disagree

DDD – Completely Disagree

Decide where you stand and share as a group

3. Come up with a contention (15 min)

Now that you know where you stand, rephrase the prompt to reflect your contention.

For example:

‘Our identity can be inherited in some cases, but our choices define who we are.’

This contention statement makes it clear where the writer stands on the prompt, in this case, mostly disagree.

For ten minutes in small groups share your ideas and come up with a contention of your own.

Discuss as a group.

4. Brainstorm some ideas to support your contention. (15 min)

Now come up with a list of ideas that you can use to support your contention. Come up with as many as you can in 10 min.

Find someone else who has a similar contention and share with them.

Share examples of ideas as a group that would agree and disagree with the prompt.

5. Organise your brainstorm.

Look over your ideas and pick the three strongest ideas that will best support your contention.

Now organise them in the order you would have them in the essay.

If finished early...

Students may use the remaining time to work on any incomplete, or upcoming classwork.