

Things to Remember: Expository Essays

STAAR Notes



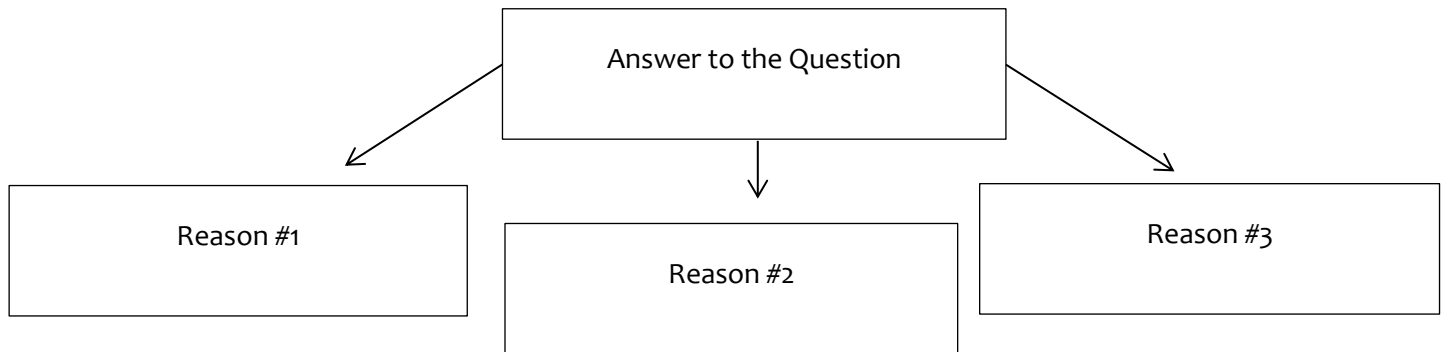
Step I: Look At the ABC's of Writing with a Prompt:

A – Attack/Analyze the prompt

- Focus on what you are being asked to write about.
- Circle/highlight the important/key words.

B – Brainstorm possibilities

- Decide what your answer to the question is going to be.
- Use a Graphic Organizer to plan out your ideas.



C – Choose the two best reasons.

- Decide the best order for your reasons.
- Each idea/reason will receive its own well-developed paragraph.

Step II: Structure Your Introduction

- Lead – Say something (a general statement) about the topic
- Thesis that answers the question asked by the prompt

Step III: Create Strong Body Paragraphs

- Your topic sentence should introduce the reason you will discuss in that paragraph

- Ideas for elaborating on your thesis:
 - Examples that support your reason
 - Your personal opinion about the topic
 - Generalization about the topic (something commonly known)
 - “All of us know...”
 - “Most people...”

Step IV: Close Your Essay / Conclusion

Conclusion Tips

- Avoid simply restating your thesis.
- Try to create a frame for your essay.
 - Look back at your lead.
 - If possible, incorporate the image or idea from your lead in your conclusion.

Final Thoughts...

- You only have 26 lines for your essay. This means:
 - Your introduction and conclusion should be brief.
 - The most space should be devoted to developing the ideas in your body paragraphs.
 - It is better to have two body paragraphs (or possibly even one, if you have that much to say about one of your reasons) than three so you will have ample space to develop them with commentary.
- Avoid “you”
- Unless you are offering a personal story as evidence, avoid “I”
- The purpose of an expository essay is to explain an idea. Avoid calls to actions that would be more appropriate for a persuasive essay.