

Discursive Essays

In a discursive essay you are expected to be neutral, objective and explore all sides. This is mostly used for academic writing at university, but is similar to the type of writing used in reporting complex stories at the NST.

Before beginning an essay of this type, you should try and think about what the quote or subject means to you and what possible opinions people might hold.

To write a discursive essay, use the following steps to help you:

1. Begin by saying what the quote means to you and rephrase it in your own words. You may also be able to identify some of the issues that lie behind the title. Keep it interesting, relevant and no more than 1 paragraph.
2. Present evidence that agrees with the quote
3. Present evidence that disagrees with the quote
4. The implications or consequences of the quote (Try and think about the future if the quote is true or false)
5. Conclusion and at this point you can say that based on the evidence presented you agree or disagree. You can either pick out important points or add a personal note after a mainly objective essay.

For steps 2-4 each paragraph should contain one major point of the argument, begin with a topic sentence and should be linked to the previous paragraph using suitable conjunctions or link words. Make sure you include plenty of examples and a few opinions from influential people.

Style in a Discursive Essay

Discursive essays should be formally written:

- Avoid contractions (don't, haven't etc)
- Do not use slang expressions or idioms
- Do not use personal pronouns. (I, you, we etc)

The essay should also be written without titles as one continuous prose and shouldn't appear to have any opinion (Don't use, I believe, I think etc) except in the conclusion.

Above all be, accurate, clear and economical (ACE)