

SELP VAdv Writing Assignment Specifications

Writing Type: 5 Paragraph Essay

Overview

In this assignment, students write a 5-paragraph essay about immigration and cultural adaptation.

Students are assigned (by lot or other means) a particular culture group. They are to imagine a person from this culture group immigrating to their own country. Based on this premise, their essay is to explain the kinds of adaptations necessary for a person from this group to live successfully in their country. Clearly, students will need to draw on the knowledge and experience of their own culture for this essay; but they will also need to gather information about the particular social and cultural habits and sensitivities that might complicate their immigrant's adaptation to the new country.

Content and Organization

Students should frame their text as a 5-paragraph essay as in chart below:

	5 Paragraph Essay
Para. 1	Introduction (with 3 controlling idea thesis statement)
Para. 2	Controlling idea 1 (1 st adaptation challenge)
Para. 3	Controlling idea 2 (2 nd adaptation challenge)
Para. 4	Controlling idea 3 (3 rd adaptation challenge)
Para. 5	Conclusion (restatement of thesis and closing comment)

Introduction (paragraph 1):

- First students introduce the topic in general terms (1 or 2 sentences)
- Then students include some background information about their country and the immigrant's country
- Then students write the thesis statement, including:
 - Claim [It would be a challenge for ... to adapt to...because...]
 - 3 controlling ideas [reasons for the claim]
- Thesis statement example:
 - It would be difficult for a person from Saudi Arabia to adapt to Canada because of religious differences, food culture differences, and educational differences
Claim Controlling ideas Reason operator

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Controlling idea 1 (paragraph 2):

- Here students express the first reason why it would be challenging for an immigrant person from a particular country (culture group) to adapt to their country.
- Below is a structure for this paragraph that would apply to each of the controlling idea paragraphs for this assignment:

Topic sentence

- This sentence provides an overview of the reason for the adaptation challenge

Supporting sentences

- These sentences focus on the cultural expectations of the writer's home country and how those expectations interact with the cultural issues of the immigrant; this, in relation to the particular reason for the adaptation challenge (controlling idea).

Supporting details

- These sentences come on the heels of the supporting sentences and express any elaborative or exemplar information relevant to the adaptation challenge.

Concluding sentence

- This sentence(s) offers a solution or means by which the adaptation challenge can be mitigated.

Controlling Ideas 2 & 3 (paragraphs 3 & 4):

- Same pattern as above should be followed.

Conclusion (paragraph 5):

- Students conclude their essays by restating their thesis and reiterating the solutions arrived at in the controlling idea paragraphs.
- Finally, students should end their essays with a comment, proposal, or projection that binds the thesis to the real-world experience of the target reader.

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Note on Coherence/Cohesion

- It is important to remind students how to logically order their controlling ideas, as well as address the use of appropriate cohesive devices (signalling phrases) needed to connect the supporting sentences and the paragraphs.

Steps

Note: This assignment assumes a degree of instruction which precludes these specifications. This instruction could involve interactive PPs; practice paragraph writing tasks, modeling; etc.

1. Adapt a version of these specification as a handout, or simply go through and explain these specifications on screen.
2. Determine a way for students to arrive at a country/culture, which will be the source culture for their imagined immigrant.
3. Once students have established the identity of their immigrant subject, they can begin researching about the relevant social and cultural characteristics. These should be mapped onto what the students already know about their own culture. Provide a note-form that can guide them in this process.
4. When the above is complete, students are ready to outline and write their first drafts. Review their outlines (making sure the thesis statement is present) and give them one class period to write their drafts.
5. Students should concentrate first on their body paragraphs, then conclusion, then introduction. Although this approach is clearly not a rule, following this order of attack will clarify the purpose or intent of the essay and allow for a more meaningful conclusion.
6. Collect the first drafts and return with feedback. Alternatively, you may wish to have students conduct some peer review before handing in.
6. With first drafts returned, students can now complete a final draft outside of class and hand in on your due date. They should hand in their first drafts along with the final to ensure continuity and to deter plagiarism. Alternatively, you could make copies of the first drafts and compare as needed when the final drafts are handed in.

Post note

Instructors should follow the provided marking rubric for this assignment and promptly enter their marks into Sakai's gradebook. Marked assignments should be returned to students in due course.