

DEV 110 Notes -- The Illustration Essay

1) An Illustration essay develops an idea (an opinion) by presenting examples of it.

NOTE: The idea appears in the THESIS statement; the examples appear in the BODY of the essay.

2) There are two types of Illustration essays:

A) the single example type

B) the multiple example type

NOTE: A writer usually adheres to one of these types in the body of his essay; that is, he does not use a single example in one paragraph and a multiple example in another.

3) A SINGLE EXAMPLE Illustration essay goes into depth on one example in each body paragraph.

EXAMPLE: I THESIS: There are many good restaurants in Dayton, Ohio. Three of the best are The Pine Club, King Cole, and L'Auberge.
II BODY: The Pine Club
III BODY: King Cole
IV BODY: L'Auberge
V CONCLUSION: Because of these three restaurants and other fine ones like Charlie's Crab, Barnsider and Peasant Stock, there is no need for a Daytonian to drive to Cincinnati or Columbus for a good meal.

4) Personal experiences can be used in a SINGLE EXAMPLE Illustration essay.

EXAMPLE: I THESIS: I truly started to "grow up," to mature when I went to college.
II BODY: I learned to get along with all types of people by living in a dormitory.
III BODY: I discovered the importance of budgeting my money the first time some bills arrived.
IV BODY: I realized I didn't "know it all" when I entered my first college class.
V CONCLUSION: Among the many important experiences a college education offers, the opportunity to mature was the most valuable to me.

5) A MULTIPLE EXAMPLE Illustration essay discusses a series (two or more) of related examples in each paragraph in the body of the essay.

EXAMPLE: I THESIS: There are many choices available to Daytonians who enjoy fast food. Those who crave pizzas, and hamburgers are especially fortunate.
II BODY: Examples of good pizza
A. Donato's
B. Marion's
C. Pizza Hut
III BODY: Examples of good hamburgers
A. Wendy's
B. McDonald's
C. Burger King
IV CONCLUSION: Fast food enthusiasts in Dayton will certainly never go hungry, especially if they like hamburgers and pizzas.

- 6) Be certain that your thesis statement is phrased in a way that leads itself to examples.
 NO: President Reagan should not be elected to a second term. (This thesis would be developed through reasons, not examples).
 YES: President Reagan has made numerous political blunders since his election. (This thesis would be followed with examples of Reagan's "blunders.")
- 7) The following sample thesis statements would all be supported with examples:
 A) Spring is a beautiful season.
 B) The Physical Activity Center at Sinclair Community College is a fine athletic facility.
 C) Whenever I take my car into a garage for repairs, I have trouble with the mechanic.
 D) Many excellent movies appeared in 1981.
 E) A German shepherd is a very versatile dog.
 F) Religious cults tend to be rather bizarre.
 G) In the fashion world of today, anything goes.
 H) All sorts of strange people attend rock concerts.
 I) In the past several years, Rock music has fused with other types of music to create exciting, new musical forms.
- 8) To ensure that your reader can follow the format of your paper, include a THESIS MAP at the end of your introduction. This map serves two purposes:
 A) It tells the reader what examples will be discussed in the body of your essay;
 B) It tells the reader the order in which these examples will be covered.
 EXAMPLES (See examples 3 and 5 on the other side, Roman numeral I):
 Three of the best are The Pine Club, King Cole, and L' Auberge.
 Those who crave pizzas and hamburgers are especially fortunate.
- 9) A common way to organize an Illustration essay is to apply CLIMACTIC ORDER to it. Start with your least important example and progress to your most important one.
- 10) It is usually necessary to expand upon your examples a bit. Don't just cite an illustration and then immediately drop it. Instead, comment on the example; explain its significance.
 WEAK: One good fast food restaurant is Upper Krust. Another is Taco Bell.
 BETTER: One good fast food restaurant is Upper Krust, which serves a variety of generous sandwiches, homemade soups, and fresh salads. Frozen yogurt, cheesecake, and other desserts are also available. The decor at the Upper Krust. . . .Another enjoyable fast food restaurant is Taco Bell. . . .
- 11) Common TRANSITIONS in an Illustration essay:
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|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| For example | An illustration of this is |
| For instance | This is illustrated by |
| To illustrate | This is exemplified by |
| An example of this is | This is evidenced by |
| As an illustration | |