

How to Write a Creative Essay

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A creative essay is any short, non-fiction text written with specific attention to its aesthetic qualities and presentation that is written from the point-of-view of the author. Creative essays are a form of creative nonfiction, a genre used to describe any type of imaginative authoring that is true. The most well-known form of creative nonfiction is probably memoir or autobiography. Creative essays can be understood as a small portion of a memoir or autobiography, because they describe, explain, or explore one period or moment in the writer's life.

Creative reports should not be confused with fictional writing. Sometimes, the word "creative" is misinterpreted to mean "made up." Creative essays sometimes include slight embellishing, but they are distinct from fictional pieces in that they are asserting themselves to represent the true events and experiences of the writer's life.

There are several types of creative essays. The most common are the descriptive report and the narrative article. A descriptive essay depicts a person, place, or object that is in some way significant to the writer. Descriptive essays often employ vivid language and imagery in order to allow the reader to "see" the object of depiction in his or her mind's eye. However, descriptive reports do not merely describe, but also seek to demonstrate how and why the described person, place, or thing moves the report writer.

Narrative essays are creative articles that relate the experience of the writer. There are many specific types of narrative essays, such as travel reports, which relate the writer's traveling experience. In general, however, a narrative essay is simply any story from the writer's life.

Writing creative essays is very different from writing informative essays. Creative essays are written to express, render, and entertain. Therefore, they frequently do not follow a standard structure. Most informative or academic reports are presented in a very logical, easy-to-follow order because they are designed to inform or persuade. A creative essay, on the other hand, is designed to move the emotions. Therefore, the writer should structure and present his assignment in the way that best reflects the emotional timbre. Sometimes, creative essays will be nonlinear, meaning they do not progress in a chronological order, but may jump back and forth between times in a writer's life. Other reports do not even have a consistent narrative, but prefer to show a brief series of scenes. The structure of a creative essay will largely be determined by the subject of the report; therefore, the writer should think about how best the article's themes or story can be told before beginning the writing process.

Perhaps the most important aspect of a creative article's creativity is its language. Creative reports should be rich with imagery, modifiers, and fresh language, and should vary their syntax.

A creative essay will always be told from the first-person voice. This is because the author is the subject. The first-person voice allows and encourages the writer to relate her thoughts, impressions, and emotions throughout the text. A creative essay would be very dull without this input, so creative writers should attempt to accurately and honestly relate these personal ideas.

Viewpoint of Author #2

College students are often so tired of writing book reports by the time they reach college, they are surprised by the assignment. Yet book report assignments generally continue, at some level, even into graduate school. Writing a creative book report can help alleviate boredom and frustration with what students often consider a rather tedious assignment.

Creative book reports require that learners write more than just the basic facts of a book. Although the requirements of any book report include such details as the characters, the setting, and the plot, there is reason why a creative student cannot write a creative story review. Instructors also appreciate it when students think outside the box and turn in a report which is as entertaining as it is academically fulfilling.

Creative book reports sometimes even cross the boundaries of traditional writing assignments. Some students get creative with the presentation of their documents, creating reports using visual displays, using PowerPoint presentations, and even various types of report and graphics. Some care should be taken by the student however when submitting such a report. If an instructor has given specific instructions for formatting a novel critique, it is always best to follow those guidelines.

One forum in which students can often submit the most creative book reports is online. Online universities and educational institutions generally require that students submit all of their work electronically so students are relatively free to create and submit work that is more creative and freeform than in a traditional classroom setting. Online instructors are less likely to penalize students for creativity because they do not collect paper reports at the beginning of class like traditional instructors.

Another way to submit a creative book report is with the selection of the book. Students who are not assigned a specific book for their document often have some latitude as to which book they can select. Although students should always remain within the scope of the assignment, there is no reason why they cannot stretch the rules a bit. Any time a student is having difficulty deciding on a book, he or she should consult with a university librarian for suggestions.

Sometimes creative book reports include a poster-type presentation. Using different colors, textures, and layouts can add visual interest to the display. However, the visual presentation aspect of the project should never overshadow the information required as a part.

Viewpoint of Author #3

Unlike standard, strictly academic dissertations, creative dissertations may feature the creative output of the writer in the form of poems, short stories, novels, or creative essays. Like standard academic dissertations, however, creative dissertations must typically include a lengthy analytic component in which the writer discusses—in scholarly terms—the influences, style, and devices employed in his or her work.

A creative dissertation is a Ph.D. student's culminating project. This means that it should represent the body of work a student has produced over the course of his or her Ph.D. study. Typically, creative dissertations are assembled from the writer's existing portfolio and are then refined to reflect a coherent theme or style. When complete, a creative report should resemble a manuscript that can be submitted to publishers for consideration. Thus, a creative dissertation is essentially a draft of a book of poems, collection of short stories, group of essays, or a novel. To this end, the report must, in appearance, style, and content, be a complete manuscript that can be considered an accomplished and coherent work of artwork.

Writers of creative dissertations are accustomed to the type of revision, excision, and selection required for assembling a manuscript, so the creative component of the report will be difficult, but familiar. It is usually the critical component of the project that poses the most problems. How is a writer to analyze with an academic eye his or her own creative work and process? Many creative writers find this type of analysis exceptionally difficult, as they are accustomed to tuning in to the creative aspects of their own work rather than examining their work from an analytic perspective. To effectively complete this portion of the report, the learner will have to step back from the creative process to consider the motivating forces and influences behind that process. For instance, one of the most important components of the critical essay portion of a creative dissertation is a discussion of the writer's influences. This should not be merely a list of names, but a detailed explanation of how the styles and themes of particular writers have developed the writer's own writing. This should include several text excerpts wherein illustrative examples from the writer's influences are presented alongside excerpts from the student's own work.

As an outgrowth of this discussion, the writer should comment on his or her individual style, focusing on any distinguishing characteristics featured in his or her writing. This should go beyond a discussion of influences to include commentary on how the writer's own style has evolved past the influence into something wholly new. The writer should also use the critical essay as a place in which to comment on the theme or themes explored in the creative component of the report, and to identify his or her alignment with any particular school of thought or tradition.

The critical essay component of a creative dissertation should be a scholarly work. This means that it should feature critical analysis and doctoral-level literary acumen. Writers of creative reports should read other such reports to see how other students completed this portion of their project.

Viewpoint of Author #4

Creative writing is writing that seeks to entertain, express, or render. In this, it differs from most types of academic writing, which seeks primarily to inform, explain, or argue. There are four primary genres of creative writing: fiction, poetry, drama, and creative non-fiction.

Fiction is creative writing in prose. Prose is writing presented in sentence form. An article is prose, a newspaper article is prose, and a novel is prose. The majority of writing is presented in prose form; fiction is simply prose that tells a story. Thus, fiction takes two primary forms: the short story and the novel. As its name implies, a short story is brief. There is no specific page number that determines whether a short story is a short story or a novel, but typically a short story can be read in an hour or less, whereas reading a novel requires many different sittings of an hour or more. A novel is typically more than 100 pages. In between the short story and the novel is another, less common form of fiction called the novella. A novella is shorter than a novel, but longer than a short story.

Fiction is probably the most popular form of creative writing. However, this has not always been the case. For centuries, poetry was the primary mode of literary expression. There are many debates about the exact definition of a poem because there are so many types of poems. Generally, however, a poem can be recognized by its form. Form is the presentation a literary work takes. Unlike prose, which is written in sentences like the text presented here, a poem is presented in lines. And these lines are frequently organized into stanzas.

Thus, the form of a poem
looks something
like this.

There are of course exceptions to this rule, the primary one among them being the prose poem, which presents itself in a block of prose rather than in line and stanza form.

Drama is another classic mode of creative writing. Drama has existed for centuries, and still thrives today. Typically, when we think of writing, reading, or watching drama, we think of its most traditional form: the play. However, screenplays are also forms of drama, and arguably the form of drama we encounter most frequently. Plays and screenplays are typically divided into acts and scenes. An act can be compared to a chapter of a book. A scene is just what the word suggests—a presentation of a single event.

The final genre of creative writing is creative non-fiction. This is a genre that is probably less known and less studied than the other modes of creative writing, but is no less significant in the literary world. Creative non-fiction is writing that presents the true experiences of the author. The most easily recognizable form of creative non-fiction is memoir, in which an author recounts an experience of her life in a creative and aesthetically pleasing way. Another very popular form of creative non-fiction is a personal report, which presents a writer's description or commentary regarding some aspect of his or her personal life.

Viewpoint of Author #5

When learning how to write a creative essay, you will still work toward developing a theme just as you would with academic writing. Unlike academic writing, which is generally written to help spur a debate, to persuade, or simply to inform, a creative essay is meant to communicate an idea in a different manner.

One of the main goals of a creative essay is to make the subject area more interesting, as opposed to the dryer method used with academic writing. Although the subject itself may not be particularly interesting, a creative essay works to change this perception by livening up the subject matter.

One of the key elements to writing creative essays is making sure that it tells a story. When writing a creative essay, it should include narratives and may use many of the same devices that are found in fictional works, such as having a plot, characters, and a dialogue. In this way, the creative essay can be action oriented and involves some sort of change or dramatic element.

A creative report should also be reflective in nature, which means it will delve deeper into the subject matter. Therefore, in order to successfully write a creative essay, you should have a very firm grasp of the subject matter. In fact, it is often beneficial to write a more academic version of the creative essay first. In this way, you can gather your thoughts and ideas in order to formulate an opinion and a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

Although a creative writing essay is meant to be less academic in the style of writing, you must still pay attention to punctuation and grammar. In addition, though creative writing is more freeing in nature than an academic essay, it can actually be more difficult to write because you need to find interesting twists and turns that you can take with your writing. Similarly, you should avoid using clichés and should strive to create original and fresh metaphors.

The structure of the creative essay is also critical, though there is no formula to adhere to. In other words, there is no pre-determined pattern for the writing that requires writing a specific number of paragraphs or including certain information in specific paragraphs. Rather, you simply need to take care to arrange the report in a manner that is logical and that flows together. In addition, each paragraph should work toward moving the reader toward some sort of point-of-view or insight that is to be expressed by the report as a whole.

Although there are no strict guidelines to writing a creative essay, it is still essential to have a strong opening paragraph that will catch the reader's attention. Similarly, your final paragraph should serve as a conclusion that will wrap up the report and leave the reader thinking.

Keep in mind that a creative essay does not strive to provide answers to questions or even to necessarily explain a particular concept. Rather, a creative essay is meant to help create sense of the world and to raise questions that the reader may wish to explore further.