

2017

A PERFECT ESSAY RECIPE

ESSAY WRITING GUIDE

(FOR CSS,PMS AND OTHER COMPETITIVE
EXAMS)

“NOW ESSAY PAPER!!! DON'T WORRY YOU CAN PASS IT”

-Prepared by Imaz Virk



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PREFACE

The present work is humble attempt to satisfy the needs of students appearing for CSS Exam conducted by Federal Public Services Commission (FPSC).

My main objective in this book has been to give clear, comprehensive, simple and examination oriented strategy of essay writing. The work is based on my experiences studied from different books.

The materials are organized to develop ability to write an essay on any topic extemporely.

This booklet intends to create an awareness among students not to be fooled by essay classes where only different essay topics are discussed and an impression created that one of the topic may come in the examination.

What is needed is development of real ability to write on any topic, for which there should be a strategy with practice of brainstorming and lateral thinking.

I am thankful to my friend Mr. Ali Sherazi (CSP-PAS) for his kind cooperation and technical support to complete the work.

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Errors and omissions are acceptable.

For feedback, suggestions and if you find any error or spelling mistake; please write to me at :

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Suggestions for making the kindle better would be highly appreciated.

I hope you make the best use of this hard work.

Thank You.

-Imaz Virk

ENGLISH ESSAY PAPER

I have seen many people afraid of many things, yet the fear that CSS essay paper evokes in the hearts of the innocent aspirants is gigantic in size and horrible in nature. Students feel that passing essay paper is as tough as surmounting the K2 and that too without being requisitely equipped. And, they are justified in their perception.

The essay paper is mostly used by the designers of the CSS exam to minimize the number of horses running toward the finish line. Many aspirants see passing the essay paper as an insurmountable task. The reality, however, is altogether different than that what is actually perceived.

Getting through the essay paper, supposedly, is difficult; however, it's not because passing it requires exceptional capabilities and potential, but because CSS aspirants aren't requisitely equipped with the techniques and skills required to achieve the goal. It's just like a man trying to open a lock without the right key. What will happen? He will fail! And, even a small lock would defeat all his power and strength. But, if he has the right key, he can open, in a jiffy, even the biggest and the safest lock.

SIGNIFICANCE

Essay writing is an art. Much importance is attached to the essay paper on the Central Superior Service Exam conducted by Federal Public Services Commission (FPSC) for the recruitment of Grade 17 of the All Pakistan United Grades that go up to Grade 22. It is the toughest competitive examination all over the Pakistan. Every year thousands of candidates apply, and appear in this exam to get the most prestigious job in the country, which could lead them to the higher level of fame, wealth and prestige. The usual aggregate for qualifying the examination is 50 per cent.

Essay paper is the compulsory paper in this exam. Generally, 100 marks are allotted for writing one topic within three hours. Out of total 600 marks in compulsory papers, 100 marks can make or break one's opportunity to get selection. Generally marks between 45-65 considered good. Not only from getting marks but from the point of testing personality, mental development and maturity of the candidate it is one of the most effective and surest means for examination conducting authority.

While you don't have to study separate content for the civil services essay paper, for your general studies preparation is enough to cover possible topics, you do have to remember certain aspects of writing a good essay if you want to have an edge over your fellow CSS aspirants. A lot of CSS aspirants make the mistake of not focusing on the essay paper because of its general nature. However, there are many **advantages** of concentrating on this paper such as:

- You have the option of selecting one topic out of Ten. You should be able to leverage this to your advantage and shine in this paper.
- The essay paper is an area where you can let loose your creativity while displaying your knowledge about the topics.
- Also, you have three hours to write about 2500 to 3000 words. Hence, you can do justice to the essay topic as you have ample time to structure your thoughts and then start writing.
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COMMON HURDLES

"One of the toughest tasks in CSS written part is to get through the Essay paper. CSS aspirants put around 60% of their efforts in preparing English Essay, and English Grammar & Composition papers. However, they account for only 17% of the overall weightage. Some clichés, false practices and our mindset make it a herculean task.

Without delay, let us ponder on the issue and hope things will get easier after that."

Psychological barriers

It is commonly believed that if you pass the Essay paper, you will be a CSP. This extra conscious approach makes

it harder to get through as English always has its “fear factor”.

Language barrier and ill practices

Feeling weak in English, we make relentless efforts to learn it. Here, I disapprove those tutors who take 3 months or so to teach how to write correct English. It means out of 240 days (8 months) to prepare for CSS written part, only 90 days (3 months) are reserved for preparing ‘Essay’, and ‘Composition’ papers with no surety to get through. Therefore, individual tuition should be discouraged in order to utilize energies evenly in right direction.

Misunderstanding the topic

Most candidates, in haste, often don’t comprehend the topic, hence, ultimately end up as a failure. Understanding topic is crucial to achieving success in Essay paper.

Time (Mis)management

Essay is the first paper. It is also true that we always take time to kick off. By the time we start writing essay, it is almost 10:00am. So, do manage your time.

A FEW NUTS AND BOLTS TO PREPARE FOR ESSAY PAPER

"A few prerequisites to prepare for Essay

Basic Knowledge Base:

Philosophy, World History, Politics, Economics, Sociology to name a few. Remember you’re aiming to be an all-rounder.

Past Paper Analysis:

Essay Paper is divided into some core areas i.e. Education, Islam, Socio Economic Crises, Crisis management, Terrorism and Extremism, Governance, Media, Environmental Issues, Pakistan, Science and Technology, and UNO. Choose any 5 areas (to be on the safe side) that you have a command over according to your educational background, interest and aptitude.

Analytical Mindset:

Work on your mind on the go, think in terms of What? Why? How? Pros and Cons? Cause and effect? What ought to be? (It will be used in making outlines)

Now, How to start Essay Preparation?

1. Choosing Your Own Core Areas:

Once you have chosen your 5 core areas, get the past papers and list down all the questions that appeared in past papers regarding that Core Area. (You can simply take it from English Essay Area’s Document) This would act as your guide.

2. Start Practicing Outlines:

Firstly you need to take a simple essay topic from any area that you are well-versed in, and start brainstorming. Think and scribble everything that comes to your mind on a piece of paper. Then divide your outline into Major Variables, and Minor Variables. Make your outline comprehensive to such an extent that the examiner clears you for essay while looking at your outline only. All of your essay preparation would revolve around you practicing your outlines. All of the other stuff is just mechanical. (You in-depth practice of making outlines, it is preferred to hire a teacher to check your outlines on a regular basis, so that you can improve) Once you know how to make an outline, your essay will be clear INSHALLAH.

3. Know Your Paragraph: You need to have a technical know-how of writing a simple paragraph, an Introduction, and a Conclusion. (Refer to the post on English essay, it is discussed in detail)

4. Write a Short Expansion Daily:

It will be an exercise of your mind. Writing an expansion daily will keep your mind running till your exams. You need to be in a writing habit and your mind must be in a habit of thinking too. So keep practicing.

5. Stay Motivated and once in a week, write an essay on one of your outlines.

P.S. It is assumed that your grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, and spellings are in good shape. Anyhow, Good Luck!" -AYESHA YOUNAS, (CSS MENTOR).

INGREDIENTS OF A GOOD ESSAY

Subject matter: An important component of any essay is its matter. Lack of information is one of the main causes of the inability of many students to write satisfactory essay. Only you can rectify this error. It is essential to acquire an interest in reading and collecting information on different subject must be gathered from books, by observation, and by listening and talking to men who know. It is a good plan to keep a note-book, in which you may jot down things quotations, extracts from speeches and books, incidents you have seen nor heard of, references to books which give useful information.

Developing the points: Another important step in the direction of writing an impressive essay is to avoid beating about the bush. This can be done, if the points are noted down before the actual composition of the essay. These points should then be developed into thoughts. To be precise and to the point brings about clarity which is the hallmark of a good essay. Proceeding from the points also ensures that no significant aspect is left out.

Substantiating the points: Example, illustrations and data should be used to support the Arguments. If the arguments are not substantiated, then they may appear as subjective ideas. Furthermore, the writer of essay is expected to be aware of the relevant information about a given topic. Therefore, if an essay is to reflect the writer's knowledge of events developments and data in a particular field it ought to contain all the relevant facts and figures.

Language: Use of appropriate words is criterion of a good essay. Choosing difficult and high sounding words for their own sake is not advisable. Exact meaning can be conveyed by the right words. However, English not being our mother tongue, at times the writer's may not be able to think of an appropriate word. In that case a simple substitute should be used. Short sentences should be preferred to long ones. The emphasis should be on conveying the point only.

Unity: Just as the sentence and the paragraph must have unity, so the composition as a whole must have unity. While it is necessary to introduce many topics into an essay, the main subject should never be lost sight of. At one stage should the reader's attention and interest be allowed to wander far from the subject. In other words, write about the subject, and not about something else. One topic should lead on to another. There should be some connection between successive paragraphs.

Coherence and cogency: It is necessary that there should be a logical development of the arguments. In other words, succeeding arguments should flow out of the preceding ones. Each paragraph should be related to the other by logic. Collection of unconnected paragraphs creates confusion and marks the essay difficult to understand. A well reasoned essay is like a clear picture which leaves an impact on the reader or checker. Besides, it proves the analytical ability of the writer.

Style: language should be simple and clear, devoid of slang and colloquialism. Clichés and verbosity should be avoided.

Personal Imprint: the essay must not merely be a collection of borrowed ideas but must reflect the writer's personal touch and opinion. However, care should be taken not to express extreme opinion. There are no hard and fast rules about the length of an essay; rather he would be more influenced by the pith and substance of your essay and the manner in which you have put it on the answer book. Of course, the essay should neither be too short nor too long. Length of the essay is an important aspect. In my personal view, it is quality and not the quantity that matters. The Examiner usually sets a limit of 2500-3500 words limit to trap the candidates. But it wouldn't bother him much if you put up a good effort which falls short of the words limit. The examiner will be influenced by the substance of your essay and manner in which you have presented or expressed it. The real thing

which matters is that the essay should be systematic and concise of course. When you are asked to write an essay within a fixed limit of words you must adhere to it.

Handwriting: A good handwriting just like a pleasing personality is always an asset in any written examination. Hence the students should try to improve their handwriting beforehand and write the essay in the examination hall quite legible and visible and help the examiners read your essay comfortably. It is always better that after you have finished writing your essay, you must read it carefully at least once, so that you are able to revise it and correct any mistakes which you may have committed regarding spellings, punctuation, etc.

Good introduction: Every essay needs an introduction. The introduction should be direct and to the point. If a candidate writes a lengthy introduction then he may deviate too much from the main topic. In the body of the essay each main idea should be written in a well balanced and logical manner.

Conclusion: Like the introduction, the conclusion in an essay should also be logical, convincing and natural. Without writing a good conclusion the student cannot expect to secure good marks in the examination. The conclusion should be natural and no abrupt. Thus the student must pay special attention to the introduction as well as the conclusion part of any essay. Generally they should not go against the title of the essay.

Attitude: Before writing one must aware about attitude towards the topic which may either be serious, enthusiastic, light-hearted, pessimistic or optimistic; One topic may have, reflections of more than one attitude, but the transition of attitude has to be well planed and logical.

Good Writing Skills: Good writing comprises different aspects viz.

1. Handwriting- or the mechanics of writing
2. Good spelling.
3. Correct grammatical sentences put together
4. Paragraphs linked together
5. Ideas developed clearly in paragraphs
6. Arguments organized logically in paragraphs.
7. Sequence of outline
8. Matter & Mannerism
9. Topic Analysis
10. Literary Tone
11. To the point thoughts

To write effectively following skills should be kept into view

1. Developing ideas coherently.
2. Organization within paragraph, and between paragraphs, using markers and connective (cohesion).
3. Using language focus appropriately and correctly.
4. Using the functions of language appropriately.

Reflection of Fundamental Questions: Before a person gets into the writing mode, he has to ascertain four basic parameters about writing essay:

What am I writing about?
Who I am writing for?
Why am I writing?
Style I am writing in.

These questions include the four essential components of essay writing: topic (what?) audience (who?), purpose (why?), and style (how?)

APPROACH OF WRITING ESSAY

Essay writing is not an inborn quality rather it is an art or, more rightly, a skill that can be learned, enhanced and mastered with practice. When it comes to writing an English essay in CSS, PMS or any of the competitive exams, it turns out to be an uphill task for most of the aspirants. But to be precise, essay writing is a skill of formulating, categorizing and prioritizing one's ideas on a topic in a rational, argumentative, convincing and balanced as well as coherent style.

As far the writing of an essay for a competitive examination is concerned with what examiner wants from the students is a clear expression of his personality and ideas in the brief. The examiner wants to find out a consistency of approach and the precise nature of the subject matter which is covered in the essay. It is, therefore, advisable that a candidate should not deviate from his topic and beat around the bush just for the sake of the vicarious satisfaction of writing a lengthy essay, rather his approach should be exact and to the point. The essay in the competitive examination is quite different from an essay as is understood in the literary sense. In a competitive examination, the essay should be balanced, coherent and it should reflect a unified impression that it is a disjointed and irregular an impression of the poorly grasped ideas regarding the subject matter given in examination. On the other hand, the essay should invariably be convincing and profound in ideas.

For writing a good, well balanced and scoring essay for competitive examinations, first of all, the examiner wants that essay should show the candidate's grasp over the subject matter and whatever material he prefers should have some relevance with the title of the essay. The examiner wants an effectively woven and logical piece of essay written in a concise manner. Naturally the examiner will give a lot of credit to a candidate who keeps close to the subject matter of the topic chosen for his essay. The candidate must also arrange his ideas in an orderly fashion and in an effective manner of expression.

The next most important thing for the candidate appearing for the essay paper in the CSS Examination is the selection of the topic for writing essay. The candidates are always offered a wide choice of subjects in the essay paper. Generally, ten topics are given in the essay paper out of which a candidate has to select only one. These topics usually cover some broad areas or the topics can be classified under broad areas like international topic, national and political topic social-cultural topic, educational topic, philosophical, religion or reflective topic and science environmental topic etc.

Obviously a candidate can easily choose a subject of his liking as there is a wide choice of subjects. Thus, choosing a title for an essay presents no difficulty for the candidates. But the candidate should select the topic of his essay very carefully and after much thought. He should choose only that subject over which he has a complete mastery and in which he is confident do his best. The topic should be of a subject in which he is absolutely at home in or the subject in which the candidate has made a special study.

Practice makes a man perfect. The students must practice essay writing. They can master this art by writing essay on different topic and remembering them properly, while writing an essay the students writing on using very different topic and remembering them properly, while writing an essay the students must not beat about the bush. They should keep quite close to the subject.

The essay should be written in a systematic and logical manner. There is absolutely no necessity of filling an essay with a large number of unnecessary and redundant quotations, rather you should go for a natural but a forceful walk with an idea in your essay which should get the attention and admiration of the examiner. Instead of burdening the essay with many quotations from all sorts of writers, it is better if you say something original in your own language and style. Too much dependence on quotations in an essay connotes a lack of expression and originality on the part of the candidate. In such competitive examinations, the examiner is mainly interested to see the general level of awareness of the things by the students and the ability of the student to express themselves in a lucid and effective manner. The examiner expects the students to put down their ideas and facts in a logical and orderly manner. Credit is always given for keeping close to the subject matter of the topic chosen, for arrangement of ideas in an orderly fashion and for effective and concise expression. For this purpose, they want to discuss in the essay in a very systematic manner and in a coherent and logical sequence.

MANAGING TIME

Time management might not be as important in any paper as it is in CSS essay paper. Poor time management results in loss of coherence, spelling and grammar mistakes, and illegible handwriting.

Time management skills can be learnt only through regular practice. During the whole preparation phase, in my opinion, a candidate should take **at least thirty essay practice tests**. During these tests, more importantly, semblance of examination environment should be tried to be created as much as possible. A practice test taken while sitting in bed or in front of TV can be helpful in everything but not in passing CSS essay paper. Time management is up to the mark only if it manages to save at least twenty minutes for self checking the paper.

USE OF INFLUENTIAL LANGUAGE

The Essay paper requires a language that is embellished with rich vocabulary, suitable idioms and influential, unique and heart-touching style. But the best and effective style of writing a good Essay is the use of simple words. There is no need of using very difficult words. The language used should be simple and idiomatic. The students should write small sentences. In these small sentences there will be less possibility of committing any grammatical mistakes. There is no need of filling an essay with a large number of unnecessary quotations. It shows only the lack of expression on the part of the students. It is better if the students can say something original but their own language. The students should write brief and small but meaningful sentences. In these small sentences naturally there is less possibility of committing any grammatical mistake. Of course, the language should be forceful and convincing. Unless an essay succeeds in proving itself to be a sublime piece of literature, chances of it crossing the threshold of 40 marks remain slim. Refinement of writing skills is possible through reading more and more good pieces of writing. In fact, this is what a person reads that determines what he can write. Newspaper editorials, columns of good writers and speeches of world-famous orators can be the best source of honing one's writing skills. During the course of essay preparation aspirants must learn how to describe the same thought using different types of vocabulary and sentence structure. This technique can be immensely helpful in avoiding repetition of words and sentences in the essay as it enables the candidate to express whatever he wants to without confronting the issue of shortage of words in the expression of thoughts and ideas.

ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE

Essay, in fact, is nothing but the knowledge quoted in influential words and presented in argumentative style. Dreaming to pass CSS essay paper without having relevant, accurate, specialized and extensive knowledge about the topic is tantamount to dreaming to build Taj Mahal without having the basic building material. Acquisition of knowledge is possible through various sources. Newspapers, current affair journals and magazines, research papers, official websites, special investigative reports; all can be handy for the purpose. From the very start of the preparation, aspirants should start collecting data regarding the expected 10-15 essay topics, and the process should continue till the actual exam day. At no point in the essay paper should the examiner be given an opportunity of rating the knowledge of the aspirant as superficial and outdated. Unless the examiner, who has already gone through hundreds of essays on the same topic, finds something new, interesting and unique in your essay, he is not going to let you be among those who would successfully cross the threshold of 40 marks.

PRESENTATION

In essay writing, a special focus is required on presentation. It is advisable that aspirants learn the art of legible, beautiful and neat handwriting, as it plays a pivotal role in one's success. Good presentation consists in leaving margin on both sides of the paper, ensuring legibility and proper size of alphabets, avoiding cutting and overwriting and managing equal and proper inter-word and inter-line spaces.

STARTING WITH AN ESSAY

STEP 1: TOPIC SELECTION IN THE ESSAY PAPER

In CSS examination, a candidate has to write on one out of the ten given topics. Selection of right topic for writing your essay is of enormous importance. At least 30 percent candidates fail this crucial paper merely because they select the wrong topic. So, you should give at least 10-15 minutes to the topic-selection process. Here are a few points on how to choose the right essay topic:

- 1) Go through all the given topics well.
- 2) But Do not go through the paper too quickly. You can cause yourself unrest and that will reduce your confidence and that is surely not required on the day. Read the topics slowly and try to evaluate the meaning of 1st topic to the best of your abilities and then move on the next and then the next. Keep your calm and hold your nerves and if you feel a bit nervous take some deep breaths and remove your eyes for a moment or two and see around to make yourself comfortable. Never reach a decision that Ohhhhhhhhhhhh it too difficult and my CSS has ended or Oh Wowww I can write all the topics and I know every essay. In both the conditions, you have to keep a check yourself whether you are too early onto it. Both perceptions are wrong and can be lethal and prove a death blow.
- 3) Choose a topic that you are most aware of and have significant knowledge about.
- 4) Select the topic only if you are sure of the meaning. For example, know what IT refers to in a given case - information technology or income tax.
- 5) If you come to the assessment that you can write an essay on more than one topic or even more than select your essay as under:
Make a Rough Brain Storming Outline of both the essays which you think have a tie and then opt the one which you think better. Do it on Page 25 of your answer sheet.
- 6) Don't necessarily pick a topic because it excites you. You should have content and a balanced approach while writing about it.
- 7) Now you should close your Question Paper because it sometimes happens that students feel obstruction of thoughts at the mid of the paper. That is very normal. To write an essay of 2500+ words without making a single stroke of pen dwindled out of the scope of the topic can make you OUT of the competition. So you can have your moments during the essay paper. Obstruction of brain occurs sometimes because you are surely in a pressure. If at this crucial time, your question paper is open and you find that Oh My God! I opted the wrong topic and I should have selected that topic. That is very dangerous situation. More dangerous than the obstruction of thoughts. So close the question paper or fold it such that only your selected topic remains to your eyes. This should be like Burning the boats behind.

REMEMBER

While writing an essay try not to be a hero as it is a general observation that more often than not people try to choose a different topic from the rest to appear unique and sometimes it backfires. The best bet is to write about a common topic and make it outstanding. This way you can probably score more than average. One thing is for sure that this way you won't have any surprises in your total score. You might still want to choose a not-so-common topic but the risk is very high. During topic selection, never ever get allured merely by the availability of material on a particular topic. If a topic involves even 1% ambiguity, availability of even 100% material regarding it should be given no consideration at all.

TIP

"The technique to *select a topic* is to read it, firstly, from *up* to *down* while grading the topic according to your interest and knowledge e.g. A*, A, B etc. Secondly, you need to start reading the topics from *down* to *up*, again doing the same thing. The reason behind doing this is as you start with the first topic your concentration level is

100%. As you move along, your concentration level decreases. So not to do injustice to your topic selection, you need to repeat the process from downwards this time. Doing this will help you choose the right topic. Cool?"
-AYESHA YOUNAS, (CSS MENTOR).

SUGGESTION

To be on the safe side, always avoid picking literary or ambiguous topics and also avoid provocative issues like feminism since you don't know about the examiner's gender or personal bias.

A topic related to contemporary issues would be the best choice. Instead of going after literary topics, it is better that you focus on topics related to current affairs like social issues, economy, international relations, international organizations, religion, science, global political scenario, etc.

It is because it is always easier to understand what is required from you in topics on current affairs; plus, you are always more knowledgeable about these topics, besides in a better position to give variegated views about such current themes.

FOR CURRENT AFFAIRS TOPIC:

Start reading Newspaper (Dawn Recommended)

First thing that I would suggest you to do and start right now is to start reading DAWN newspaper. Dawn is considered as the **BIBLE of CSS**. Make a routine of reading DAWN daily, specially its Editorials and Opinion Pages. Start from English Newspaper. Dawn Newspaper is the best choice in this regard. Start reading daily basis. Go through from your areas of interest. Read headlines and editorials. And note down difficult words. Check there meaning from dictionary and use them in your own sentences.

Now, Every day make a table of current issues in spotlight for at least 3 months and it is better if you can make it in Microsoft Excel worksheet. It is better to read the newspaper daily but if you cannot manage no problem, go to www.dawn.com.pk explore the paper and save articles in respective folder i.e Energy. So stop making entries 1.5 months prior to the commencement of the papers, since paper has been made. Now it is time for speculation!

Pencil in a graph between dates and Topics in excel and you will find the tendency line that will show you unerringly on the basis of 6 months history that what topic has been discussed by people most and over and over again. Pick at least 4 topics with medium rating, (*leave burning issue since they are least projected*) and start analyzing them, now you have to find the concealed line in these issues that will be the topic of essay coming in paper. Prepare that topics thoroughly as you will be having all important articles by renowned writers, edit them in e-form accordingly and take a hard copy, and please write at least once. This is one of the smart ways to get through the essay.

STEP 2: BRAINSTORMING

Once you have selected the topic, it is prime time for you to start brainstorming your topic.

Brainstorming is a technique which helps to elicit many thoughts and ideas on a given topic. However, instead of putting whole sentences or phrases to paper, this prewriting technique involves creating a list. It might contain various individual thoughts or ideas that make sense in a particular order, and/or ideas that are linked together by association with previous ideas. Unlike rewriting, brainstorming works well in a limited amount of time.

Out of allotted three hours it is worthwhile to spend around 30 minutes for jotting down your ideas before beginning to write. Putting your ideas on paper will be especially helpful where your goal is to establish a point of view on a topic and support your position.

How to brainstorm?

1. If you are not already being timed, set a timer for at least 25 minutes to bring more and better ideas in rough page.
2. List every word or phrase that comes to mind about your topic spontaneously.
3. As with free writing, do not edit or censor any ideas, and ignore the rules of spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

4. When you are finished, look over the list carefully. Cross out useless information and organize what is left. Categorize similar items.
5. Try to interconnect different areas with one another. Before examination make list about the relevant areas about which you have to deliberate in the brainstorming time or areas which have universal applicability. It will save your time and energy and help you to bring good and powerful ideas within limited time period.

Check Chapter: Area-wise Essay Topics. Along with this you can interrelate your topic with different aspects like philosophy, religion, constitution, UN Charter, different laws, acts, use, misuse, disuse, challenges and opportunities in different areas, genesis of different issues (past, present and future), different stages of life, How-Why-When-Where-What aspects, prediction about any issue, hypothesis formulation (if.....then....), alternative perspectives of any situation, modification proposal of the present, meaning, nature, type, scope, principles, limitations, pros and cons, different aspects like physical- social- intellectual moral- spiritual-emotional-aesthetic, giving diagrams, models, subdivision, criticize, discrimination, different areas viz. social, political, economic, education, anthropological, geographical, psychology, cultural, administrative, scientific, technological, etc. These points will help you to quickly develop a great deal of information about your subject. Every point won't apply to every essay, and the prompts that follow every point are meant to be taken as suggestions. Be flexible and use the format as it best fits your topic.

TIP

"I would like to tell you that there are broadly two types of people in this world. The first type is known as LEFT-BRAINED who has a calculated approach. That person goes by the rule in everything s/he does. The Second type is the RIGHT-BRAINED who is quite creative and innovative in his approach. You'd be wondering why I would be telling you this regarding essay writing.

Well, there are two ways of brainstorming. If you're the Left-brained person you'd restrict your thoughts and categorize them as they come in your mind. For example, if your essay is related to terrorism you may start thinking firstly the causes, then the effects, and so and so forth. You would try to limit your thoughts. Whereas, if you're a Right-brained person, you'd let your ideas flow in a meaningless and category-less approach. This way, a meaningless point may lead you to a very strong point if you put no limits to your thoughts. Once you've scribbled all your ideas, then you may categorize them or code them.

You may choose the approach that suits you, but personally, I would go with the latter."

-AYESHA YOUNAS, (CSS MENTOR).

WRITING OUTLINE

Can you imagine a construction manager working on a skyscraper without a set of blueprints? No way! Similarly, writers construct essays using sets of blueprints or outlines to guide them in the writing process. Of course writers don't have to use outlines, but the effect is about the same as a construction worker who "freebuilds."

Outline of the essay is something very special and it deserves special attention too. Making an Outline is essential, as it is part of the essay question. But even if you are not asked to make outline for the essay, better you make an outline for your essay before starting your essay. Writing an effective as well as impressive outline requires exhaustive practice of necessary techniques. Being essay's introduction to examiner, the outline leaves an indelible impression on his mind; hence, it plays an important role in the success or failure of a candidate.

From a positive view, outline provides a candidate with the very first, and perhaps the most result-oriented, opportunity of convincing the examiner with his skills. If a candidate does not avail himself of this golden opportunity, chances of doing it again at the later stage of the essay are all but rarely available.

An outline, generally, covers 15-20 percent of the total space of the essay. It should be chalked out within 25-30 minutes, in a language which is not only formal and grammatically correct but is also in agreement with the tone

of the topic. All the points and sub-points should be logically arranged and those should be capable of making the examiner completely understand the direction of the essay. An outline, unlike the trailer of a movie, should not be a collection of cut pieces, rather all of its parts must be connected in a rational and logical manner. An outline is good only if it arouses the interest of the examiner.

To sum up, it is a recipe of your essay paper. Outline of the essay plays an instrumental role in making the examiner believe that you have a sound grip on the topic. Outline must be given in a terse style and its content should encompass all possible aspects of the topic. It is always advisable to make small headings, points, bullets, etc., in the outline. An outline can, therefore, be taken as your first handshake with the examiner. So it must be impressive and appealing and lasting.

OUTLINE CREATING:

When you construct your outline, keep it brief. The titles, headings, and points in your outline should be about one line each. Remember that you are only drawing an outline of the forest, not detailing each of the trees. Keep each line under a dozen words. If you can't compress your point into a one-liner, you probably don't have a clear grasp of what you're trying to say.

When you describe the point of each paragraph, phrase the point in a mini-claim. *If the point of a paragraph is that soft drugs should be legal because they are relatively harmless, don't just write "soft drugs" as the point of the paragraph in your outline -- it's too brief and vague. Instead, write "drugs should be legal b/c soft drugs are harmless."* This description is still brief, as it should be (one line or less), but it makes a claim that gives it purpose in the outline.

An outline begins with a reading of your prewriting notes. First, group related ideas together, looking for major topics (which can be headings) and minor ones (which can be subheadings, examples, or details). Define your major points, and rearrange them until they make sense and follow a logical progression. You will be able to see the relationships between your ideas as you outline them, and determine their importance (major point, minor point, example, and detail). If you need more supporting details or facts. subcategories. You can add them now. As you outline your information, use one-word topics, short phrases, or write out full sentences for each point on your outline.

MAJOR HEADERS

1. Introduction: What, How
2. Historical Perspective (Optional)
3. Meaning of the Key Terms
4. Views of Philosophers & Analysts
5. Analysis
 - a) Pros & Cons
 - b) Cause & Effect
 - c) Compare & Contract
6. Case Studies
7. Recommendations
8. Conclusion

General Requirements:

- a) Comprehensive: Put down all justifications in your outline.
- b) Unity, Coherence, Relevance
- c) Fully explained own perspective
- d) Fully justified arguments

MINOR HEADERS

DIVISION OF IDEAS AND THOUGHTS

1. Origin to End
2. All Perceptives:
 - a) Social
 - b) Moral Cultural
 - c) Religious
 - d) Economic
 - e) Political, etc
3. All Levels:
 - a) Individual
 - b) Community
 - c) Provincial
 - d) State level
 - e) Regional
 - f) International/ Global

LENGTH:

Maximum Size 4.5 Pages

Minimum Size 3 Pages

TIP: *If possible, use different colored markers/fonts for Major headings, sub headings, and sub sub headings. (Mega font for major headings, minor font for sub sub headings). Such organized presentation will make it easily navigable for the examiner, plus will occupy lots of space, and will make your outline appear hierarchical and organized.*

A detailed outline, spanning around 4-5 pages, means that if you can expand each point into 4-5 lines in your essay, you are easily going to cross 2500 words threshold. Plus, once you have a very detailed outline in front of you, you KNOW what you got to write, in what manner, and you will not have to write and pause to think and again write and again pause. This write-pause phase can be detrimental, do your best to avoid that, and the best way to avoid that is to chalk out a comprehensive outline.

Practise drawing outlines of difficult and philosophical topics which are as distant from current affairs, as possible. If you can develop outlines for such topics, you can cream the current affairs topics.

Once you have completed an outline, revise and refine it by following these steps:

1. Write down your overall goal (message you want to convey through the topic) for your essay. What are you trying to say to examiner?
2. Go over your outline and circle, underline, or highlight your major points. Do they all support your goal?
3. Brainstorm words and phrases that will accurately and concisely express those points. Jot down them in the margin of your outline, or use a separate sheet of paper.
4. Use this list and your outline to guide your writing. Do not allow yourself to stray from your goal or your major points. Irrelevant writing has negative impact on the examiner.

SAMPLE OUTLINES

Outline is the skeleton of essay. It should be very comprehensive and elaborated.
A sample outline of topic:

“FAILURE OF GOVERNANCE IN PAKISTAN”

1. Introduction

2. Prerequisites of good governance:

- 2.1 Rule of law
- 2.2 Accountability
- 2.3 Equal distribution of resources and opportunities
- 2.4 Service deliver

3. Evidences of failure of governance in Pakistan

- 3.1 Absence of rule of law
- 3.2 State organs and national institutions are contradicting and overriding each other
- 3.3 Rampant extremism, terrorism and security issues
- 3.4 Insurmountable domestic and international political Challenges
- 3.5 Nepotism, favoritism and corruption have become inherent features of institutions
- 3.6 Consistently deploring economic condition and rising unemployment, poverty and inflation
- 3.7 Rupturing social infrastructure, degrading social institutions and widespread social unrest

4. In-depth analysis on current state of governance:

5. Solutions to ensure good governance in Pakistan:

- 5.1 Strong and independent parliament
 - 5.2 Rule of law and no institutional activism
 - 5.3 Drastic measures to curb Terrorism
 - 5.3 De-politicization of administration
 - 5.4 Strict enforcement of Law and accountability
 - 5.5 Ensuring service delivery through public private Partnership, higher GDP allocations and by attracting FDI
 - 5.6 Building human resource and enhancing job base to utilize human resource
 - 5.7 Optimum utilization of indigenous resources to reduce fiscal and trade deficits and economic uplift
 - 5.8 Planned urbanization, controlled population growth and infusing high moral
- #### 6. Conclusion

"STATUS OF WOMEN IN ISLAM"

1. Introduction

2. Status of women before the advent of Islam

(In Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, Greek society, Roman society, Arab society of Dark Ages)

3. Status of woman in Islam;

- A. Changes in Spiritual status
 - a. Equal criterion in judging both genders by Allah
 - b. Equal moral obligations
- B. Advancements in Social status
 - a. Termination of infanticide
 - b. Right to education
 - c. Choice in marriage
 - d. Equal treatment in case of polygyny

- e. Power to give and demand khula
 - f. Right to remarry if widowed or divorced
 - g. Right to be treated kindly and fairly--as daughter, sister, wife, mother and grandmother
 - C. Improvements in Economic status
 - a. Exemption from Financial burdens
 - b. Share of inheritance from property of parents, siblings, children and life-partner
 - c. Children maintenance expenses in case of separation
 - d. Compulsory marital gift and haq-mehr
 - e. Right to private ownership of property and businesses
 - f. Right to seek employment
 - D. Revamp in Political and Legal status
 - a. Right to vote
 - b. Right to participate as election candidate
 - c. Equality before law
- Misconceptions about women
(Women are less sensible, bring bad luck, Men are superior)

4. Discrimination against women

(social, economic, political, cultural and legal)

5. Persecution of women

- A. Female Infanticide
- B. Honour killing

6. Role of women in modern world

7. Reasons for plight of women in the East

8. Conclusion

"GOVT. SHOULD ELIMINATE SUBSIDIES AND INCENTIVES FOR MANUFACTURERS AND CONSUMERS OF ELECTRIC CARS AS THEY ARE COSTLY AND DO NOT DO ENOUGH TO PROTECT ENVIRONMENT"

1.Introduction

2.Electric Cars in the modern world!

3.Benefits of Electric Cars

- a) Nominal environment protection
- b) Sound free technology
- c) Reservation of coal & nuclear energy
- d) Freshness & digitalization of miles while driving

4.Manufacturing Process of Electric Cars

- a) Chemical Processions
- b) Coal generating electricity
- c) Battery manufacturing
- d) Iron, Lithium usages in manufacturing

5.Impacts of Electric Cars manufacturing

- a) Electric manufactured cars are costly

- b) Damages of electric car is more than gasoline car
- c) It generates acid rains
- d) Skin disease
- e) Ultimate global warming

6. Suggestions

- a) Manufacturing of electric cars should not be appreciated
- b) Govt. should eliminate subsidies & incentives for electric cars
- c) Scientists should create another alternative source for car fuels e.g. water, gas, mechano
- d) Research on shuttles for innovative contributions
- e) Assurances of environment protection
- f) Role of UNEP, World Bank to ensure & strengthening other technologies

7. Conclusion

STRUCTURE OF AN ESSAY

In this section we will be looking into the structure of an essay. This is how you need to attempt your essay in your CSS Exam. This is what discipline is all about that I mentioned earlier. To begin with, there are three parts of an essay that are as follows:

- a. **Introduction:** *Will* (what we will discuss)
- b. **Body:** *Am* (what I am discussing)
- c. **Conclusion:** *Was* (what I was discussing)

THE FIRST PART OF THE ESSAY: INTRODUCTION

When writing essay, always start with an introductory paragraph that should be most relevant to the topic as well as subject matter of the essay. This paragraph depicts what – and how – you have comprehended from the topic statement. The introduction should be precise, well-worded, appealing and, at the same time, fascinating. Remember, it makes your first impression on the examiner and you know first impressions are the most lasting. In other words, don't tire your reader with long introductions that fail to get quickly to the point and issue. Begin with specifics and jump right into the problem or conflict you are addressing. When readers see a good conflict, they are likely to take an interest in it.

GET THE READER'S ATTENTION

The first goal in your introduction is to grab the reader's attention. Because this is the first paragraph of your essay, it is your opportunity to give the reader the best first impression possible. Wake him or her up and generate some interest about the topic.

To grab the reader's attention, there are several ways of opening an essay:

By quotation: But the quotation should be relevant and naturally lead on to a discussion of the topic.

By definition: Here the essay starts by exposing the meaning of the topic.

By General to particular: Here you could give a general statement of the topic from which you could then proceed to the particular aspects.

By question: A beginning could be in the form of a rhetorical question which does not require an answer but is simply a trick for sweeping the examiner off their feet.

TIP: *During the preparation phase, aspirants should pay special attention to introductory paragraph. Unless a candidate practices it hundreds of times before the exam, he does a sheer injustice with the demands of this important part of the essay. It is advisable that aspirants attempt the introductory paragraphs of different essay topics on a special register or notebook, reserved for the purpose, and then get it checked by some competent teacher.*

GENERAL STRUCTURE OF INTRODUCTION:

In the Introduction, directly hit the topic without going into irrelevant details. Your Introduction should span around 85% of your 1st page. As Introduction gives a direction to your essay so it should be interesting and captivating; you can start your introduction with an interesting fact, an exciting quotation, a surprising piece of information, an anecdote or a provocative question. Your Introduction should be thought provoking and extremely relevant throughout. Present your thesis statement at the end of introduction.

Structure of Introduction should be:

1. Topic Sentence (addressing the topic directly)
2. Supporting Sentences (6 - 8 sentences comprising explanations, examples, statistics, quotations etc., in support of topic sentence i.e. statement of essay)
3. Thesis Statement (gist of essay in 1 or 2 sentences)

A sample introduction for the topic “Failure of Governance in Pakistan” is as under:

Good governance in Pakistan has become an unrealized dream. **(Topic Sentence)**

History is evident of the fact that nations did not vanish due to poverty or hunger, but because of mal-administration and bad governance. Pakistan has been home to many serious troubles including terrorism, corruption, energy crisis, water crisis, rising poverty and uncontrolled urbanization. But if causes are traced there is only one answer and that is absence of good governance. If recent events are traced back, it will be unveiled that Pakistan must have not fallen prey to such serious problems had there been better governance system. But quite unfortunately, governance kept deteriorating and so did the system. There must be realization among the giants of administration and governance that why there is always need of judiciary to correct their ills? Why at the end of every disaster foreign aid becomes the sole resort? Why after every security failure foreign hand is blamed? The answer is same that when system of governance is absent; the vacuum is filled by those who have no role to play in it. **(Supporting Sentences)**

Present your thesis

The entire introduction should lead toward the presentation of your arguable assertion, or thesis, whereby you take a stand on the issue you are discussing. Deliver your thesis at the end of the introduction so that your reader knows what general position you will take in your essay. You don't need to spell out all the nitty gritty details of your thesis in the introduction, particularly if it would be bulky and unintelligible to the reader who lacks all the ensuing reference and context, but you should give the reader a good idea of what your argument is. As you do this, *avoid saying "I will discuss . . ." or "I intend to argue*

The following paragraphs should highlight main ingredients of good governance followed by the evidences on absence of good governance in Pakistan. Leading to the end, there will be analysis of current situation along with solutions to ensure good governance . **(Thesis Statement)**

TIP BY AYESHA YOUNAS

The Introduction has three parts.

1) Motivators/Brainwashing

- a. This is to be your background where you indirectly come to your topic
- b. Should be General in nature, not specific

- c. You may use a quotation, anecdote, Hadith, Ayat, recent news or historical event.
- d. Attract the examiners attention (emotional trapping) in 4 to 5 lines.

2) Thesis Statement

- a. One sentence opinion explaining your stance/ point of view
- b. You CANNOT waver from your stance, stick to it till the end and defend it at all times.
- c. It is the simplest and clearest sentence (no ambiguities)
- d. It may be a risk for a few but you may use a blue marker to write down your thesis statement.

3) Sketch/Plan

- a. Telling the sequence you'd be following.
- b. It must depict connectivity and coherence.
- c. It must be simply and clearly stated
- d. For instance, if you're writing an essay on "My favorite Politician" Your introduction structure may be as follows:
 - i. **Motivators:** The significance of politics and politicians
 - ii. **Thesis Statement:** Mr. ABC is my favorite politician.
 - iii. **Plan:** I will be discussing Mr. ABC's sincerity, devotion, higher qualification, and courage.
- e. Your plan tells the sequence of your body paragraphs.
- f. The examiner may pick one random point from the list e.g. devotion and see if your second body paragraph is about devotion or not. (Sequence matters a lot)

-AYESHA YOUNAS, (CSS MENTOR).

THE SECOND PART OF AN ESSAY: BODY

Body is that part of essay which initiates right after the introduction. It is the middle, and the largest part, of the essay and can consist of as many paragraphs as you want to write (may be 15 to 20 in number). It is imperative to understand the technique of paragraph writing. All your paragraphs must be according to this technique. The examiner may pick any paragraph to see if you've followed the technique or if you know what it is.

PARAGRAPH WRITING:

Each paragraph should have a clear, singular focus to it. If there is an overriding error students make in writing essays, it is shifting topics within the same paragraph, rather than continuing to develop the same idea they began with. A paragraph is a discrete unit of thought that expands one specific idea, not three or four. If you find yourself shifting gears to start a new topic, begin a new paragraph instead.

Someone once compared the beginning of a new paragraph to the changing angle of a wall. When the angle of the wall changes, a new wall begins. Let your paragraphs be like that wall: running straight along a certain angle, and beginning anew when the angle changes.

Paragraph Writing just like essay writing has three parts. They are as follows;

1) Topic Sentence (WILL)

Nothing will help you keep a tighter focus on your paragraphs than topic sentences. A topic sentence is generally the first sentence of the paragraph, and it describes the claim or point of the paragraph, thus orienting the reader to the purpose of the paragraph. When you use topic sentences, your reader will invariably find it easier to follow your thoughts and argument.

- a) It is the first single sentence.
- b) It is the heading in a form of a sentence.

c) It must contain ONE MAIN Idea.

For example, if you're writing an essay related to crime, and your first portion of paragraphs is on 'causes of crimes', then one of your paragraph may be on unemployment as a cause of crime. Your topic sentence would be ' Unemployment is one of the causes behind crime'

DOs AND DON'Ts

- Compose topic sentences thoroughly; there is no universal template for writing one, because every topic sentence depends on each particular topic.
- Use transition words to indicate the progress of your paper.
- Make your topic sentence in the form of a declarative statement, and not a prediction or a question.
- Keep your topic sentence focused. Keep it to the point and avoid being vague.
- State something you believe and can support with concrete evidence in your topic sentence.

- Simply announce what you are going to discuss in the paragraph; you must make your intentions clear without stating them directly.
- Throw your facts at your reader in the topic sentence; instead, save data as supporting material.
- Think of the topic sentence as just a way to start another paragraph.
- Use rhetorical questions in topic sentences.

2) Supporting Arguments/ Supporting Details (AM)

In Essay paper, every question, or more rightly every essay topic, requires candidates to express their opinion regarding some issue and then prove it with the help of solid and suitable arguments. This is just like preparing a legal case and defending it in front of the judge in a court of law. Aspirants should express their arguments in such an influential and clear way that after reading every argument, the examiner is convinced of the validity of the stance taken up by the candidate in the essay. More precisely, while attempting Essay paper, an aspirant should consider himself to be a lawyer standing in front of the judge, and pleading his case in a loud, confident and distinctive voice. Success in Essay paper doesn't require the candidate to have the same opinion about an issue as the examiner may have, but it simply requires him to have some reasonable justification for having that opinion.

Invariably students shift topics and lose focus within their paragraphs because they do not know how to adequately develop their ideas. They usually know the paragraph needs to be longer, but they don't know how to expand their idea to fill that length. Indeed a paragraph should be at least half a page long, but usually no more than one page. How, then, if you don't have enough to say, do you fill that paragraph length? Instead of broadening the focus, which will only be another form of topic shifting, try implementing these techniques for development:

- 1) This portion would have five to six lines while you're justifying your topic sentence.
- 2) Illustrate your idea with examples.
- 3) Even if you mention one example, that would be enough.
- 4) Give an authoritative quotation.
- 5) Anticipate and respond to counterarguments.
- 6) Back your ideas with more evidence.
- 7) Offer another perspective to the idea.
- 8) Brainstorm more insights about the idea.
- 9) Elaborate on causes/effects, definitions, comparison/contrasts.

HOW TO MAKE ARGUMENTS?

Each headline has to be discussed as an argument developing. Your argument should ideally be Justified, logical, solid, relevant and comprehensively connected with the essay topic. It can be justified with references to any surveys if possible and if general in form should consist of solid reasons.

Approach should be from **General to Specific**.

For example, You are writing an essay on " Causes of Terrorism" and in an argument you want to tell the examiner that how terrorism is caused by injustice to people. , you can say that " It's a rule of thumb that true administration of justice brings peace in society".

It is a general Opening of the Heading "Injustice" in the Essay "Causes of Terrorism". This is a general statement and not a quote or saying. You can carve it on your own. Now you will connect it to the Essay topic. You can say "It's a rule of thumb that true administration of justice brings peace in society. Justice brings the people under the ambit of law. The powerful become accountable for their deeds and when the powerful is answerable to law, a unique harmony prevails on such a society. The rich and the poor, the powerful and the powerless become equal. When they become equal in the eyes of law, reasons for any conflict are minimized because any deed of a person or group of persons to subjugate others is checked by the law. When such a justice is administered, people respect the law and they tend to obey laws as much as possible. When a weaker person gets his right from the court, he would never like to take guns and grenades in his hand and become a criminal to take revenge at his own. This only happens in those societies where conflicts arise due to non-existence of law and non-provision of proper justice.

For example, (here give examples of some countries where human rights have been violated and terrorism is common). So no justice means no peace and no peace means war and war of the powerless against the powerful for his legitimate rights has been defined as the Terrorism in the modern world. Hence, non-provision of justice is a main cause of terrorism."

(You can surely write more comprehensive than this. You can give justifications by quoting examples of those countries where justice exists and terrorism is not found and vice versa to strengthen your argument.)

TIP: You can put your weaker arguments in the middle but you must never repeat your arguments as it gives a bad impression. Add relevant quotes, facts and statistics. Avoid spelling and grammatical mistakes. Do not use abbreviations like WAPDA; use the full form i.e. Water and Power Development Authority.

3) Concluding Sentence: (WAS)

A mere reflection of your topic sentence. It means that it is the restatement of topic sentence.

Characteristics of Effective Concluding Sentences

It is important for your students to know how to write effective concluding sentences in order to drive home the final point. Some characteristics include:

- 1) Reviewing main points mentioned in a paragraph
- 2) Restating the topic sentence
- 3) Are found at the end of a paragraph
- 4) Do not introduce new ideas or topics

What do concluding sentences do?

Concluding sentences link one paragraph to the next and provide another device for helping you ensure your text is cohesive. While not all paragraphs include a concluding sentence, you should always consider whether one is appropriate.

Concluding sentences have *three crucial roles* in paragraph writing.

They draw together the information you have presented to elaborate your controlling idea by:

- a) Summarising the points you have made.
- b) Repeating words or phrases (or synonyms for them) from the topic sentence.
- c) Using linking words that indicate that conclusions are being drawn, for example, *therefore, thus, resulting*.

They often link the current paragraph to the following paragraph. They may anticipate the topic sentence of the next paragraph by:

- a) Introducing a word/phrase or new concept which will then be picked up in the topic sentence of the next paragraph.
- b) Using words or phrases that point ahead, for example, *the following, another, other*

They often qualify the information or perspectives developed in the elaboration. They may qualify this information by:

- a) Using concessive conjunctions to foreground the importance of some perspectives and background others.
- b) Making comparisons and contrasts between perspectives.

Examples of concluding sentences

For each example:

- 1) Read the paragraph and, if there is a concluding sentence, observe its relationship to the other parts of the paragraph.
- 2) Move your mouse over the sentences in the paragraph to see commentary for each section.
- 3) Re-read the paragraph and look carefully at the way the writer has used the concluding sentence to link that paragraph to the next. Click the button to highlight the linkage between the concluding sentence and the next paragraph.

THIRD PART OF AN ESSAY-Ending the Essay: CONCLUSION

So much is at stake in writing a conclusion. This is, after all, your last chance to persuade your readers to your point of view, to impress yourself upon them as a writer and thinker. And the impression you create in your conclusion will shape the impression that stays with your readers after they've finished the essay.

Conclusion is not Suggestion. Always remember it.

In conclusion, *no new argument should be added*. You will just sum up the arguments and justification to support your stance in the conclusion and here your justifications should resonate the essay topic and should re-confirm it. This is must part of essay. You can give your own perception as well. But never add something new in the conclusion. Conclusion never means suggestions. Here you just re-confirm your essay topic or the stance you have maintained in the essay. Here you will support all your essay. This is a backdoor of the essay from where you exit.

Also it is inappropriate to start your conclusion suddenly. It should be smooth in the essay. It should not look like in essay that you were arguing and justifying and abruptly you realized that oh my God.....! only five minutes are left. And you stop your arguments and right after that para you straight away write "To conclude".....just like a car was moving at the speed of 40Km/hour and suddenly it stopped and took a 180 degree U-Turn. You will bring the reader of the essay slowly towards the end of the essay. Your outline should be such that your last 2 or at least one heading is like a closure of the essay. It would help you keeping to the track. You will systematically move to the conclusion yourself. The reader will assess himself that its now heading towards the closure. Transition from Essay Body to Conclusion should be smooth, coherent, in order and must come as a gradual step in essay. It should feel like gradually going the stairs instead of a jump from the top of the roof. It should look like a part of the essay and a part of gradual descending towards the conclusion. It should not be like a misfit brick in the wall.

In conclusion, you show the examiner that you are confident on yourself and you re-confirm yourself. You've got to make a graceful exit from your essay by leaving a memorable impression on the reader. You need to say something that will continue to simmer in the reader's minds long after he or she has put down your essay.

Keep it short

Keep your conclusion short, probably ten lines or less, and avoid fluff. You're just trying to make a clever exit, and presumably all the really important points have been made previously in your essay.

TIP: *You should not introduce any totally new ideas in the conclusion; however, you should not merely repeat your thesis either. This situation -- not presenting anything new, and neither just sticking with the old -- at first seems to be a paradox. However, with a little effort, one of the above six methods will usually yield "a quiet zinger," as John Tribble calls it.*

Always conclude with a positive and optimistic note.

TIP

"While writing your conclusion, you must be very clear about your stance i.e. it must be the same as it was in your introduction paragraph. It can range from five to six sentences. You must be like 'What I was saying was right, I still believe that I was right, I have proved above that I was right, and I am stating it again what I believe in'. Furthermore, make sure that you finish your essay on a positive and optimistic note."

-AYESHA YOUNAS, (CSS MENTOR).

LITERARY ESSAYS

The very first tip on Literary essays is to avoid going for such topics unless no other option is available. Only those aspirants should risk choose such topics as their first option who have strong academic background or a great aptitude for English literature. Given below are some useful tips which would be quite helpful for you in case you are going to write essay on a literary topic:

1. Comprehend the topic statement

Read the topic statement again and again and comprehend it in all its bearing before working on it. Usually such topics are very tricky and difficult to understand.

2. Write outline smartly

Prepare outline of the essay just the way you would do for other types of essays. This outline, however, would be much different in its body structure and length. Instead of focusing on causes, impacts and recommendations, you should forward more and more arguments in favour of the stance that you have taken.

If the topic allows so, you may go against it. However, it would be wise only if you have extremely solid arguments supported with relevant evidence.

3. Give an impressive introduction

In introductory paragraph, try to make it clear to the examiner that you have fully comprehended the topic and are fully aware of what your stance is going to be. The length of the introductory paragraph should be 3/4th to one full page of an A4 size paper.

Since examiners go through the introductory paragraph very meticulously, it should be exquisitely crafted using suitable vocabulary and idioms.

PREPARATION STRATEGY FOR ESSAY PAPER:

1. Go through well written essays by experts in newspapers and magazines, and understand how they frame the 'Introduction' and 'Conclusion' passages.
2. This will give you a feel of what constitutes a well-written essay.
3. Keep reading newspaper editorials every day. Most of the times, essay questions are asked from them.
4. When you read newspapers or books, note relevant lines or quotes which you can use in your essay.
5. Have a good collection of opening and closing lines.
6. It is advised to go through the past 10 years Essay Papers and make a note of it and its theme like (Character, Disaster Management, Education, Environment, Future, Inclusion, IT development, Nationalism, Poverty/Inequality, Science & Technology, Women, etc. Your material should include quotations, case studies, examples, government initiatives, etc. This will be useful while writing the essay. But beware of writing all that you have prepared. You must fine-tune your essay according to the topic, not as per what you have prepared.
7. Start reading lot of books on history, literature, social sciences. Current affair , philosophy and improve your style of writing, broad your imagination, be factual, memorize quotes and struggle hard all the way so that time may comes when you shall be able to write on any topic in an extemporal tone and continue to practice. (This is one of the proven ways)
8. One thing is positive that Examiner does not know or even does not want to know whether the candidate he is examining has been preparing for the last 5 years or for five days! What he wants: an impressive and inspirational essay on the topic.
9. When you prepare, focus more on real-life examples rather than theoretical jargon. Even though many topics may seem like theoretical, you must write relevant, contemporary, current affairs-related stuff in your essay. Similarly, even if your essay question is philosophical, your essay need not be so. Your essay should be relevant to current times.
10. Learn to approach a topic from different angles like political, social, historical, environmental, etc.
11. To write essay on a topic one should analyze the topic in different angle. It will be hard to think of a topic in different angle during the exam. Hence, here is a simple and easy method on essay practice, as said earlier while practicing answer writing for CSS Exam, make Essay writing practice as part of it.
12. You must prepare by writing essays during your preparation time. Also get feedback on the essays you write from mentors, teachers or seniors.
13. While you prepare, keep in mind the structure of the essay. It should have an introduction, body and conclusion.
14. Resist the urge to give too aggressive or one-sided arguments in the essay no matter how passionate you are about the topic.

THEN, Note your reactions to the essay; ask yourself the following questions and answer the following:

- 1) Does the content of your essay address or match the topic?
- 2) Will your essay help you stand out? Is it memorable and interesting?
- 3) Would any examiner understand everything you have written, or are some points in need of clarification?
- 4) Is the introduction a good .hook. that draws the reader into the essay, or could it be eliminated?
- 5) Does your writing flow? Does it follow a logical progression, with each paragraph and point made in the right place?
- 6) Are the points you make supported by examples and details, and are all of the details necessary?
- 7) Does your writing strike the right balance between formality and informality?

- 8) Does your conclusion make sense after the preceding paragraphs? Is it strong, or just a wrap-up of what you have already said?
- 9) Make any necessary modifications, and be willing to add and/or remove writing that unintentionally included in the essay.
- 10) Do I repeat myself? Rework your point so that you say it well the first time and remove any repetitious words and phrases.
- 11) Do I have enough details? Look through your formatting for generalities and make them more specific.
- 12) Do I reinforce each point with a concrete and/or personal example?
- 13) Is my sentence structure varied? Sentences should not be the same length, nor should they be repetitive in any other way, such as all beginning with .I.
- 14) Are there any clichés or other types of overused language?
- 15) Do I use the active voice whenever possible?
- 16) Are there too many or too few adjectives and adverbs?
- 17) Are verb tenses consistent?
- 18) Is the antecedent for every pronoun clear?

SOME MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT ESSAY WRITING

- 1) Quantity doesn't matter. Quality does.
- 2) The Examiner needs to see your structure and knowledge i.e your own opinion expressed in clear and simple English in a convincing manner.
- 3) Avoid using idiomatic verbosity or technical diction, nothing else can irritate the examiner more than this so called stunt of yours.
- 4) The placement of your thesis statement and topic sentence must be correct. Give them what they want.
- 5) Try to improvise the knowledge you have gained from other subjects; relate your knowledge and extract convincing arguments. You may come up with points from Islamic Studies or even General Science. Let your creative juices flow.
- 6) Do not prepare pet essays. Essays are never asked on one topic, it is usually a relation between two or more concepts.
- 7) Keep things simple, clear, and follow the basics.
- 8) Essay never decides your allocation so don't try to impress the examiner, just try to pass. That'll be a great favor you'd be doing for yourself.

-AYESHA YOUNAS, (CSS MENTOR).

HOW TO ATTEMPT THE ESSAY PAPER WHILE SITTING IN THE EXAMINATION HALL

- 1) Spend around 10-15 minutes choosing one out of ten given topics. Choose the topic which you can elaborate well and you believe you possess most knowledge about.
- 2) Take around 45-50 minutes sketching a rough, crude outline. I recommend you draw it on the backside of the question paper because if you do it on the last page of answer sheet, you are going to have to ruffle through pages maniacally, while writing the essay, looking for points, every now and then. That is going to waste a lot of time and might take its toll on your mood. If you sketch it on the backside of the question paper, you can keep it in front of you, in your one hand, while writing the essay, reading the points and elaborating them on answer sheet.

- 3) Outline sketching is purely a function of brainstorming. The deeper, the wider you can think, the better is your outline. Give your thoughts free reign, do not restrict your mind, and do not refrain from putting on paper what you think. You might write irrelevant points but mere writing them might cause you to come up with a more relevant one. Explore various dimensions of the given issue, adding bits and pieces from every dimension, relating them to your essay statement, coming up with stats, examples etc to justify your stance.
- 4) Make sure your outline is VERY COMPREHENSIVE. If possible, use different colored markers/fonts for Major headings, sub headings, and sub sub headings.
- 5) Once done with outline, leave few pages on the answer sheet, and start with your essay. Elaborate each point in your outline in around 5-7 lines, starting from Intro to Conclusion. This should not take more than 1.5 hours. While writing the essay you will come across many points which you did not write in your outline. As it happens, include those points in the rough outline.
- 6) With half hour at your disposal, now come to the beginning of your answer sheet where you left blank pages and transfer the outline on those pages. The point of doing this exercise in the end is that you will come across many points while inking the essay, and had you written the outline right at the beginning, you would miss those points. When you write the outline later on, it will include the points you missed while sketching the outline and conceived later on.
- 7) **Before Submitting the Essay paper, Proofread Carefully.**
Don't let your eagerness to submit the English Essay paper cause you to overlook careless mistakes. Small grammatical Errors and spelling mistakes can doom your otherwise excellent Paper. Make sure you schedule sufficient time (10-15mins at least) at the end for a thorough review.

“10 MOST COMMON MISTAKES”

The candidates commit while attempting CSS ENGLISH ESSAY.

What makes the candidates flunk the English Essay Paper in CSS exams? Let's find it out here, the 10 most common/lethal mistakes committed by the CSS candidates while taking on the Essay Paper.

- 1) **Selecting the wrong Topic**
One of the most common mistake the majority of the CSS candidates happen to commit is their wrong Essay selection. Accept the fact that not all essays are made for just anybody. There are essays which one can attempt confidentially, based on his/her strength areas, and their are those essays which are not meant for every Tom, Dick and Harry e.g. essays from literature, Social issues, Organizations, philosophical debates etc. So, bottom-line is, select the topic that you feel is Made-for-you.
- 2) **Partially grasping the Topic**
Another Big mistake many of the CSS candidates commit is partially understanding the Topic sentence. They pick one part of the Essay topic and start filling pages only on that part alone. For example, in CE-2015, the Essay#3 “Punctuality is virtue of the bored.”- Here many candidates picked “Punctuality” as one part of the essay, and started writing about the virtues of punctuality.
- 3) **Myopic view of the Essay**
CSS level essay requires a thorough and in depth analysis cum exploration of the topic sentence. This requires the candidate to give arguments and justifications from a variety of angles. But, many candidates attack the Essay topic with a very myopic vantage point, and discuss the topic from only a handful perspectives. So, keep in mind next time you write an essay, let your mind explore different perspectives related to the topic.

4) Exhibiting personal prejudice & narrow perspectives

Often times candidates of the CSS exams jot down their own personal prejudice, bias or self-centered view of the topic at hand. This causes their own personal beliefs, values and cultural mindsets to transform onto their papers. Unfortunately, the examiner may belong to a different school of thought or may possess a different belief system. What you did there? You just gave him a chance to disagree from your point of view. So, keep your paper politically correct, free from all bias and prejudice and let it be an essay universally acceptable to all readers alike.

5) Not exploring the Topic

As discussed previously, explore the topic at hand from a variety of angles. It gives an essay a vibrant flavor, an all encompassing outlook and saves the candidate from being marked strictly.

6) Vague Introduction

As they say, your first impression is the last impression. Your introduction speaks volumes of what kind of an individual are you. Why we say that? Because it is very natural the way you introduce your essay to the examiner, he automatically develops a sense of your personality type. He may also categorize you immediately as a 60+ candidate, 50+ candidate, 40+ candidate or a one who is going down the 40. Don't be vague in your introduction; be as precisely close to the topic sentence as possible, so that the examiner realizes that this candidate truly understands the meaning and central theme of the Essay topic.

7) Weakly build arguments

Examiners mark the candidates arguments based on somewhat following criteria:

(Wrong argument-weak argument-Acceptable-Fair argument-Good argument)

So, before you begin writing down an argument, analyze it yourself against this criteria. If it's anything below acceptable leave it.

8) Abusing Crammer, Vocabulary and Sentence structure

The examiners of English Essay are men of letter and of high caliber. They are there to check your papers because they are good at what they do i.e. Marking English Essay. So, don't be the reason that puts them off, or brings down their mood because of your abuse of the English language. Trust us, they hate such papers.

9) Focusing too much on the Outline

Stop. Yes you heard it. Stop spending such great amount of energy, effort and time on trying to make your outline stand out from the rest or trying to make it so impressive. Outline is just like a table of contents of a book. A good book without the table of contents is still a good book. So don't over emphasize on creating an amazing outline, instead, focus on improving your introduction and the conclusion.

10) Writing like a 10 year old

Have a semblance of shame. Even a 10 year old could write like that. If you are writing anything in the CSS Essay paper like a kid, please don't. English Essay needs to be written in an elegant fashion. It should reflect intellectual maturity of the candidate. It must inspire the examiner, and make him/her feel that you have got what it takes to be a Bureaucrat.

In a nut shell, these are just about the 10 most common mistakes committed every year by thousands of CSS Exam candidates. Hopefully, this might help you understand, learn and avoid these mistakes in your coming CSS exam. BEST OF LUCK.

SIX THINGS NOT TO DO IN AN ESSAY

1) Fail to address the question's topic in your introduction

The test of a good introduction is whether someone can guess what the essay question is just from reading it. If not, the introduction has failed. Therefore, a good introduction briefly sets out what the topic is and what your position is regarding the question. Be specific about your topic, but don't go into too much detail—no examples or definitions are needed in an introduction. So, if your question asks you to discuss the thematic links between three myths, it is best to say what the three myths are and to specify what themes you have identified. Don't try to 'wow' the reader with grandiose statements or pithy quotes that broadly relate to your topic.

The trouble with such trite openings is that they do not focus your reader. Rhetorical questions are also a bad choice for a first sentence. You are writing an essay, not a blog entry. The first one or two sentences of an introduction should directly address the question with a statement outlining your position regarding the topic. Using the terminology of the question helps to keep the statement focussed and ensures that you have not misinterpreted or misrepresented it. But never quote the question itself—the marker knows what it is. The next sentence, or sentences, should explain what the key aspects are that inform your position (i.e. they explain why you are arguing that position). The last part of the introduction should outline the method of your argument or the structure of your essay. With that done, you move on to your argument.

2) Stray from the focus of the question (especially in the conclusion)

Students often think a conclusion is where they get to discuss the wider ramifications of their position on the topic, or where they can branch out and touch upon other aspects slightly related to the topic. Wrong. The job of a conclusion is to highlight the key ideas that you have been arguing in response to the question (i.e. readdress the essay question in light of the discussion you have just provided). It helps to reuse the same terminology for consistency (but don't just repeat what you said in the introduction verbatim). You can then summarise each main point from the body of the essay in the logical order in which you presented them. How do you know if something is off topic? Ask yourself whether your paragraph or sentence directly helps you to answer the essay question. If not, it is off topic and should be cut from the essay.

In a conclusion, don't just say that you have discussed what the question has asked you to discuss. You must be specific and say what the key aspects were (and why). The trick is to say what you have argued in a concise way that does not just repeat what you have already said (don't repeat your examples). Like introductions, conclusions should be one paragraph. And never include information—even if on topic—that you have not already discussed in the body of the essay. (So that means no footnotes in a conclusion!) The time for discussing the material of the topic is over; your argument is drawing to a close, not breaking new ground. Here it is common for students to get swept away by their own argument and attempt to say something profound. That is fine, so long as it is on topic. Never deviate from the question to discuss something else in the conclusion. If you have been discussing the themes of ancient Greek myths for the whole essay, do not start talking about how parallels can be seen in modern cinema, or how modern society has its own myths. The irrelevant digression belongs to old Abe Simpson, not your essay.

3) Insert quotes without introducing them or relating them back to the topic

Try to use quotations from secondary sources sparingly, if at all. And only include them if they say something of vital importance that you could not have worded better yourself. If you quote someone who says something that anyone could have said because it isn't specific, or does not regard a contentious issue, you are only distracting your marker with unnecessary waffle. If you wish to refute what a source has said, it is a courtesy to quote it so that the reader can see you are not misrepresenting the source. But long quotes or lots of little ones will only hide your own voice—and it is you, not your sources, that is getting the marks for the essay. And don't use a quote that repeats what you just said. That is tedious. If you do use a quote, you must introduce it correctly so that the reader understands why it is there and who said it. Don't just shove it in and hope the reader knows why you have included it. So say something like: Regarding survival rates for gladiators, Johnstone states: "Gladiator shows were hardly the bloodbaths we see in modern films and TV programs. If there were five fights in a day, on average only one would end in death." This shows that the risk of death may have been low enough to entice free men to become gladiators. You must also explain how the quote helps to answer the essay question (here the question would be: 'Why would free men become gladiators in ancient Rome?'). Be explicit: don't leave it up to your reader to work it out. And never refer to your quote as a quote ("This quote shows...").

4) Fail to provide references:

Essays are designed to test your ability to reference your sources. It is not pointless—it is worth marks. You include references to primary sources when you quote from or refer to a specific episode or instance from an ancient text. For example, if you say that "Hector calls his brother Paris the bane of Troy before the duel with Menelaus", it is necessary to show the author, the work, the book, and line/section number where you read it. That way your readers can check it for themselves. If, however, you say something that is not specific to a passage or is widely understood, you do not need to provide a reference. For example, if you say that "Hesiod's

Theology and Works & Days reveal a misogynistic attitude that is the product of a patriarchal society”, you don’t need to cite specific passages (though, if you go on to provide examples, you would).

You include references to secondary sources when you use ideas from them. If you say that “the chances of survival for a gladiator in the first century BC were one in ten”, you will need to cite whoever gave you that statistic. You also need to include a reference to your secondary source whenever you say something like “Futrell states” or “Hopkins argues” or “Slater believes”—otherwise your readers cannot verify your claims. If you don’t include a reference, your argument is weakened. If you keep failing to reference, you risk receiving a zero for plagiarism.

5) Don’t Fall in Love with the Thesaurus.(Vocabulary Overdose)

This is one of the most common, typical Pakistani CSS aspirant mentality. We just love to impress the examiner with arsenal of our vocabulary, even if our sentences start to make no sense, it doesn’t matter (sarcasm). Resist the temptation to be a sesquipedalian or come across as a pedantic freak! There’s no need to use a big word in every sentence. Use caution when showing off your extensive vocabulary. You risk using language improperly and may appear insecure or overly eager to impress. The Examiners aren’t keen about picking up a dictionary to understand your essay.

6) Use informal language, colloquialisms, or overuse rhetorical questions:

An essay uses a different style of language from that of a casual conversation. For an essay, you are being tested on your use of formal communication. There are certain things that are common in speech that should be avoided in an essay. Rhetorical questions Responding to an essay question with more questions is annoying. So, try to avoid posing direct rhetorical questions to the reader in an essay. These are usually tiresome to read because they shift the burden of answering the question to the reader when the reader just wants to sit back and let you do that. Rhetorical questions are useful for the person writing the essay (i.e. they help you come to grips with the topic), but it is best to rephrase them as statements or as indirect questions.

Question: Why did Zeus chose to punish man for Prometheus’ sins? Statement: Zeus chose to punish man for Prometheus’ sins because... Direct: Why did slaves not run away from their masters more often? Indirect: The question arises as to why slaves did not run away from their masters more often.

You can then go on to answer the indirect question without the reader feeling like you have tried to pull them into your discussion. So, one maxim of essay writing is: don’t ask: tell

1st Person Singular

Some say not to use the word I in an essay. Others say it is fine. If you do use it, it is best to use I only in an introduction (and to a lesser extent, the conclusion), rather than in the body of the essay. But use it sparingly; otherwise you can come across as too self-important.

1st Person Plural

Avoid using we or us in an essay. Saying ‘Let us now turn to the issue of manumission’ sounds pretentious. If you must guide the reader through your argument, use: ‘Turning (now) to the issue of manumission’. It still sounds phoney. ‘With this evidence, we are shown the unsavoury side of Roman society’. This sentence is not so bad, but again it tries to include the reader in the essay. This is fine for books, but for an essay it is artificial and a breach of expected roles. The reader (your marker) should remain a separate and impersonal individual.

You wouldn’t try to hold hands with someone interviewing you for a job, would you? Thus, the sentence with we can be rephrased to maintain distance from the reader: ‘This evidence illustrates the unsavoury side of Roman society.’

2nd Person

Don’t use you in an essay. In spoken English, this is used for generalisation: ‘You would expect that...’ or ‘You don’t win by giving up’. The word you, however, tends to pull the reader into your argument and distracts from what you are saying. ‘You must not disrespect the gods.’ Me specifically? Who told you I disrespected them? Oh, wait. I see now. Carry on. This sort of confusion can be avoided by using the indefinite one: ‘One must not disrespect the gods’. It may sound strange, but that’s just because it’s more formal, which is what an essay should be.

Elision

Elision is what happens to words when we speak them (casually). In written form, it is marked with an apostrophe, representing a missing letter or letters. But because spoken English is not formal enough for an essay, don't write don't. Instead, write do not. This goes for many other elided forms: e.g. would have for would've, it is for it's, she would for she'd.

Colloquialisms

Colloquialisms are phrases and words which are commonly used in conversation but have a non-literal meaning (e.g 'bucketing down'). Use of colloquialisms implies a level of familiarity with the reader that is unsuitable for an essay. Moreover, they weaken an argument by obscuring meaning; e.g. 'He was wasted'. By a wasting disease? Or does this mean 'inebriated'?

(Avoiding the above list of common pitfalls for your essays should ensure you receive better marks).

MY TAKE ON ENGLISH ESSAY

-AYESHA YOUNAS, (CSS MENTOR).

There are two parts in Essay i.e. reading and writing. Reading quality books enhances one's vision and also increases the capability to write academically. As mentioned in earlier posts, there are a few diverse areas that need to be strengthened by every Css aspirant. Some of the resources are mentioned below that can help greatly.

PART ONE: READING

1) Politics

- a) Politics: A very short introduction (by Kenneth Minogue)
- b) Introduction to Political Theory (by John Hoffman and Paul Graham)
- c) Introduction to Political science (by Mazhar ul Haq)
- d) Analyzing Politics (by Ellen Grigsby)
- e) Penguin Dictionary of Politics

2) Economics

- a) Economics (by Partha Dasgupta)
- b) Issues in Pakistan Economy (by Akbar S. Zaidi)
- c) Economic Survey of Pakistan

3) World History

- a) World History (by V.B Rao)
- b) Western Heritage (by Donald Kaghan)
- c) International History (by Anthony Best)

4) Literature

- a) Siddhartha (by Hermann Hesse)
- b) Pleasures of Philosophy (by Will Durrant)
- c) Conquest of Happiness (by Bertrand Russell)
- d) Unpopular essays (by Bertrand Russell)
- e) Skeptical Essays (by Bertrand Russell)

5) Philosophy

- a) Sophie's World (by Jostein Gardner)
- b) Philosophy the Power of ideas (by Brooke Noel Moore)

6) Pakistan Studies

- a) Pakistan A modern History by (Ian Talbot)

- b) Struggle for Pakistan (by Ayesha Jalal)
- c) Pakistan a crisis state (by Maleeha Lodhi)
- d) Idea of Pakistan (by Stephen Cohen)
- e) Pakistan A Hard Country (by Anatol Levien)
- f) Pakistan A manifest Destiny (by Atif Qureshi)
- g) Jinnah of Pakistan (by Stanley Walport)

PART TWO: WRITING

The Stages of Academic Writing are as follows:

1. **Basic Grammar:** Tenses, Parts of Speech, and Use of Punctuation.
2. **Sentence Structure:** Types of Sentences, Parallelism, Sentence problems, and Types of Clauses.
3. **Paragraph Writing:** Paragraph Structure, Outlining, Unity and Coherence, Kinds of Logical Order, and Concrete Support.
4. **Essay Writing:** The Process of Academic Writing, Components of Essay, Patterns of Essay Organization, Outline-Making, and Capacity Building.
5. **Developing Expression:** Analysis, Evaluation of knowledge and proper linking.

6. RESOURCES FOR WRITING

- 1) Grammar by Wren and Martin
- 2) Grammar by Raymond Murphy
- 3) College Writing by Macmillan
- 4) Exploring Writing by John Langan
- 5) How to write great essays by Lauren Starkey

TIPS AND TRICKS BY CSPs

- ✓ Essay is definitely the most important part of the exam. Take a few sample essays on different topics, read them twice and thrice and then write them on your own. Add valuable and logical material in the prepared essay particularly for essays on current issues. Improve your expression with practice and avoid using one word again and again, use synonyms instead. **(CSP Dr. Najam us Sahar Butt)**
- ✓ Essay is the only paper to evaluate writing skills and focused approach of the candidate on any topic. Students must have good understanding and enough knowledge about societal issues like poverty, gender discrimination, social inequality, women empowerment; economic issues like tax reforms, budget, national finance commission award; religion like Islam vs West, Islamophobia, Islam and terrorism, pluralism; scientific issues like global warming, pollution; national issues like democracy, military intervention, provincial autonomy, energy crisis, independence of judiciary, media; international issues like global terrorism, credit crunch, new world order etc. The best way to go through this paper is that candidates should write on 10-15 general topics comprehensively and get it checked by a professor. Once you follow this technique, essay writing will no more be a tough task. **(Syed Nadeem Abbas -PSP)**
- ✓ One should keep this thing in one's mind that CSS is a game of English and most of the candidates fail in English essay and composition paper. For essay good writing skill and a bright analytical approach is required. First of all, one should categorize the essay topics as most important and less important. Then give full attention to the most important topics of essay and also make a comprehensive synopsis of these chosen topics. Now go for the collection of material from the relevant and reliable sources. For instance, if one wants to write essay on 'Terrorism' or 'Foreign policy of Pakistan' then he/she must consult the works of

Ahmad Rashid, Noam Chomsky, Shamsah Ahmad and Tariq Fatemi because it would help a lot. Moreover, try to personify your essay with reasonable and convincing arguments and do take great care of 'coherence' in your arguments while writing essay. **(Baqar Muhammad Bugti -PSP)**

- ✓ English alone is the basic need of the CSS because one has to attempt all papers in English except language paper. Moreover, in Essay, examiner only checks command over language and quality of our written presentation, thus extra attention is required for this paper. There are some ways which can be helpful in this regard. These are:
 - 1) A candidate must study and solve the exercises given in these two books: Exploring the world of English and mastering the world of English.
 - 2) Candidates must improve their written and listening skills in English.
 - 3) Always discuss issues and ideas in English with aspirants of CSS as well as with your mentors.
 - 4) One must read English newspapers and magazines like Daily Dawn, The News and Jahangir's World Times.
 - 5) Listen English news channels such as BBC, CNN and Express24/7.
 - 6) One must practise making of outlines, writing essays, self-making stories and get it checked properly.

I think these are some steps which a candidate can tackle the essay paper. **(CSP Faiz Mohammad Jaffar)**

- ✓ To me the only key to success in Essay is "write, write and write". But, of course, do get your work checked by some good teacher. Once your teacher okays your material, you may keep on practicing the same on your own. Gone are the days when writing 6 or 7 essays in December was sufficient. Nowadays, if you want to be on the safe side start writing under someone's supervision right now and keep it on till the actual papers. **(Sayyed Muhammad Abbas Shah—3rd in CSS-2012. Essay Marks: 44)**
- ✓ Despite being a thesis writer, it was really a tough task, even for me, to tune myself to the requirements of English Essay paper. I would suggest that to get a command over essay, the aspirants should prepare comprehensive outlines covering all the aspects of a particular topic. In addition, they should prepare introductory paragraphs which may be altered as per situation. They should strictly follow the format of essay and their writing should have spontaneity and logical flow. Do misused bombastic vocabulary, spelling mistakes as it is like a crime in competitive exams. **(Batool Asadi 1st in Balochistan, 21st in Pakistan CSS-2012. Essay Marks: 40)**
- ✓ It is better to have a sprinkling of literary quotes in your essay. I attempted the essay on Terrorism and wrote 3 relevant poems from English literature and 5 quotes by well known English writers in my essay. **(Muhammad Bin Ashraf. Essay Marks: 70)**
- ✓ Be your own while writing, never try to imitate anybody. Your expression needs try to be limited yet comprehensive while writing Essay. In Essay paper, your imagination can reach zenith but with a purpose, never divert from the main topic. To ensure, work out the essay into parts, rearrange them if necessary and once you are satisfied with the rough work, elaborate on this outline afterwards. There is no standard word-limit yet. What one can effectively write in 3-hour duration is good enough length. My essay consisted of approx. 2800 words. Conclusion should be drawn only at the end, take a balanced approach and write whatever good comes to your mind at the end at the moment. Devote initial 40-45 minutes on preparing rough outline. Next 2 hours for writing inflow and last 15-20 minutes for review and corrections. **(Kashif Ali -PAS)**

- ✓ English Essay is the most important paper in CSS. More often than not, it is the only paper which determines your fate in this examination. In essay paper, you are given a choice of around 10 topics and you have to attempt only one of them. If we look at the English essay topics asked in previous exams, relate to only one aspect of the issue that the candidate may have prepared. You have to make a distinction between the issue that you have prepared and the specific aspect of that issue being asked in the paper. Those candidates who reproduce crammed material irrespective of the specificity of the topic asked are likely to annoy the examiner. Thus, relevancy of your essay is the most crucial factor in determining your scores in this paper. Moreover, your essay must contain up-to-date information presented with a logical flow and symmetry as required by the topic. You should also focus on your written skills related to basic English grammar, punctuation and sentence construction. - (ATIF-IRS)

ENGLISH ESSAY AREAS

Education: Policy options (National Education Policy, educational reforms, syllabus, exam system, Medium/language issue etc. Co-education, Critical Evaluation, Purpose, Comparison of Pakistan with the region.

Islam: Muslim Ummah vs West, Islam and Extremism, Islam and Peace, Muslim Ummah and OIC.

Socio Economic Crises:

- a) Natural Resources and Energy Crisis
- b) Water Crisis
- c) Food Crisis (Origin, Energy Profile, Solution, Reasons, effects and solution Kala Bag Dam and other dams, Indian Dams)
- d) Economic Crisis (World, Pakistan, Breakdown of economic terms, Policy options, Economic Condition of Pakistan in All perspectives: Pakistan's economics problems, IMF, WB donations and their terms and conditions, inflation, Poverty, Foreign Investment & New taxes.
- e) Corruption & Accountability (International Scenario, Critical Evaluation of anticorruption organizations in Pakistan)

Governance:

- a) **Democracy:** Past, Present, Future & Failure, Suitability of democracy for Pakistan, Comparison with dictatorial regimes (Dictatorship vs Democracy), Way Forward
- b) **Good Governance:** Ideal Model, State of governance in Pakistan, Suggestions
- c) **National Integration:** Historical perspective, Current cleavages on various grounds, Role of pressure groups, Way towards national integration.

Media: Media and State, Media and Journalism Ethics, Media and Freedom of Speech, Media and its power, Media Global National Role & Development, Media and Democracy, Yellow Journalism, Consequences & Suggestions.

Crisis management: Disaster Management (Major disasters in world and Pakistan, Recent natural disasters, Strategy to mitigate effects). Disaster Recovery Plan:- Flood , Earth quake, Terrorist attacks, Fire, Mob aggressive attacks

Terrorism and Extremism: Reasons, Causes, Psycho-socio-eco-politico effects, Solution. War against terrorism and economic cost, Terrorism and Dialogue. From Global, Af-Pak and National perspectives and a comprehensive strategy to curb it.

Sectarian, Extremism and Ethnic Violence in Pakistan, Historical Perspective, Effects, Remedial measures.

UNO: Mission vs Action, Developed block and discriminatory trends, Past, Present and Future. Moreover, Different Essay topics regarding the organization from the past papers, Pakistan and UNO

Media: Media and State, Media and Journalism Ethics, Media and Freedom of Speech, Media and its power, Media Global National Role & Development, Media and Democracy, Yellow Journalism, Consequences & Suggestions.

Environmental Issues: Global Warming and failure of whether forecasting, drastic changes in seasonal patterns, Monsoon and floods, tsunami, Climate Change (Heat wave in Karachi, Role of major emitters, Treaties).

Pakistan

Science and Technology

FPSC: ESSAY REQUIREMENTS

Majority of the candidates relies on the stereotypical substandard material available in the market instead of keeping themselves abreast of updated information and using their own mind and intelligence for innovative and genuine approaches. They demonstrate glaring flaws both in comprehension and expression. They abruptly jump at writing on a topic without comprehending its meaning, spirit, direction and range. Consequently a loose and lengthy jumbled lot produced without any sense of relevance, clarity, coherence and structured organization. From the angle of the question paper it is heartening fact that the candidates attempt almost all topics. This manifests that due to multiple orientations and thematic variety of the given topics, the candidates do not have to face any undesirable inconvenience in finding a subject.

WHAT FPSC REQUIRES YOU TO FOCUS ON?

- 1) **Updated Information:** Improve the quality of your arguments through effective research and extensive reading.
- 2) **Innovative and Genuine Expression:** Learn to write whatever's on your mind on the paper academically.
- 3) **Comprehension:** Understand the topic's meaning, spirit, direction and range.
- 4) **Components of the Essay:** Develop a sense of relevance, clarity, coherence and structured organization.
- 5) **Strengthen your Core Areas:** Thematic variety of the topics is provided, hence, choose a niche and strengthen it.

THE MARKING SCHEME OF ESSAY PAPER:

- 1) **Presentation:** Hand writing, effective paragraphing
- 2) **Language:** Correction, Vocabulary, Punctuation, Conciseness, Sentence-structure
- 3) **Knowledge:** Facts & figures, Examples, Analysis, Arguments
- 4) **Relevancy:** Write the title words in outline.
- 5) **Sequence:** Introduction, present scenario, causes, effects, suggestions and conclusion

ESSAY CHECKING TECHNIQUE OF THE FPSC EXAMINER

I look at the outline first and foremost. There are three possible types of outlines:

- 1) Relevant, to the point
- 2) Twisted, convoluted and confusing
- 3) Incomprehensible due to poor English

The last two outline-producing varieties of candidates are half-failed in my mind when I reach the end of their outlines. Then I look for the thesis statements and again there can be three types of them

- 1) Coherent and relevant
- 2) Irrelevant
- 3) Incomprehensible

For the third variety, their thesis statement marks the end of their stories. I skim through the pages of their sheets in next few seconds just to find out more blunders and finally award them, marks in 0-20 range. For the second type of thesis statements, if the outline is irrelevant too, I give a read to their introductory and concluding paragraphs, and just a fleeting glance to the material they've written in the body. If they used correct English, I award them marks just for doing that. If the thesis is irrelevant but the outline was relevant, I give them a fighting chance. I read the introductory paragraph, if it conveys some sense as a whole, I continue. If the essay is coherent and strong till the end, and my eyes don't find mistakes while turning the pages, this type of candidate can make through. For the candidates who have relevant outlines and thesis statements, they are already half-passed when I reach the end of their introductory paragraphs. I skim through their essays just to check if they have written the same stuff as their outline inside or if they have digressed and gone beyond the scope of the title. If they haven't done that to an unforgiving extent, they are clear. Some candidates produce very good outlines and introductory paragraphs. Once I have decided to pass them, I read whole of their essays just to decide how much they deserve above 40. But this is a very rare variety.

(I have quoted a person who used to be an examiner for FPSC. They don't need to read the whole essay just to ascertain this. He could know whether a candidate knew proper English just by reading five to six sentences.)

TACKLE ESSAY-SAMPLES:

"DEMOCRACY IS NO MORE VULNERABLE IN PAKISTAN"

Introduction

1) An overview of Pakistan's political history

- a) The game of musical chair in the first nine years
- b) Martial law of Ayub Khan
- c) Revival of democracy after the secession of East Pakistan
- d) The murder of democracy and Zia regime
- e) Era of 90s – the miracles of Article 58-2(b)
- f) Plane Hijacking case and martial law of Pervez Musharraf
- g) Controlled democracy during Musharraf regime
- h) Charter of Democracy and revival of democracy in Pakistan

2) Factors behind the derailment of democracy in the past

- a) Absence of patriotic, nationalist, competent and better-styled leadership
- b) Over-dependence on army under the influence of antagonistic and uncongenial relations with neighboring countries
- c) Anemic, impotent and spineless political institutions

- d) Frail, feeble and puny judiciary
- e) Narrow-mindedness leading to absence of national spirit
- f) Benighted and intransigent attitude of religious leaders
- g) Absence of unshackled, well-established and wide-awake media
- h) Evils of illiteracy, poverty and backwardness

3) Is democracy still vulnerable in Pakistan?

- a) No, the situation is changed now as we have:
- b) A sovereign, watchful and well-founded media institution
- c) A vigilant and proactive civil society extremely alive to the importance of democracy
- d) A judiciary that appears to be contrite and remorseful for its past character
- e) Political leadership which looks conscientious enough to protect democracy even at the cost of personal gains
- f) Military leadership that appears to have more inclination toward fulfilling its professional responsibilities
- g) A recent experience of bitter repercussions of dictatorship in Musharraf regime.

4) Indispensability of the sustenance of democracy to the development of Pakistan

Democracy is important because it:

- a) Bestows upon the people political maturity and wisdom and enables them to choose the best lot for managing their affairs.
- b) Ensures consensus-based decision-making and helps in the formulation of coherent and practicable policies.
- c) Promotes the culture of accountability and wipes out the malaises of corruption, inefficiency and nepotism.
- d) Instills a sense of participation in the various sections of society and thus promotes national integration.
- e) Confers the sense of freedom upon citizens and wins their loyalty to the state.
- f) Fosters the culture of equality before law and invigorates public faith in institutions.
- g) Brings political stability and provides an environment conducive to development and growth.

5) Recommendations for the further strengthening of democracy in Pakistan

- a) Introducing meaningful electoral reforms
- b) Strengthening local government institutions
- c) Improving the performance of democratic governments
- d) Bringing in purposeful regulation of media to make it more responsible and sensible
- e) Enhancing contributory role of educational institutes
- f) Ensuring independence of judiciary
- g) Reforming the civil services to improve the performance of bureaucracy

CONCLUSION

TIPS:

- 1) As usual, you should start the introductory paragraph with some beautiful and attention-catching sentences. In thesis statement, you should go with the topic and take the stance that democracy is secured in Pakistan now. Going against the topic is also possible but, in my opinion, it would be difficult for you to substantiate your contention with justifiable arguments.

- 2) Introductory paragraph will be followed by 4-5 paragraphs shedding light on the political history of Pakistan. While writing these paragraphs you should avoid setting foot in unnecessary details as time management is the key to success, in essay paper particularly.
- 3) After giving a brief on the political history of Pakistan, you will come to address the basic question of the essay i.e. 'Is democracy still vulnerable in Pakistan?' In this part, you are to give arguments to prove that democracy is no more vulnerable in Pakistan. You should use a new paragraph for every new argument. In total, your arguments should cover at least 5-8 pages of the answer sheet.
- 4) In the wake of submitting arguments in the support of your thesis statement, you will highlight the importance of democracy for the progress of Pakistan. Your arguments in this part also should be extremely logical and plausible. Use of data, quotations, facts and figures, illustrations, etc. can be very helpful in this particular part.
- 5) In the recommendations part, you should suggest such measures that may prove helpful in further securing the future of democracy in Pakistan. As I always advise that recommendations should by no means be a wish list, your recommendations should not only be highly result-oriented but practicable as well. Writing "Recommendation Paragraphs" is an art. In the first sentence of every "Recommendation Paragraph," recommendation is presented in a very unequivocal way. In the next sentences of the para, ways and means are described through which the proposed recommendation can be implemented. Generally, a "Recommendation Paragraph," consists of 4-5 sentences.
- 6) In concluding paragraphs, summarize all that has been discussed in the essay. Average length of concluding paragraph is approximately 8-12 sentences.

"WHAT ARE THE HURDLES IN OUR WAY TO BECOMING A TRULY INDEPENDENT STATE?"

Introduction

- 1) Measures to gauge the independence of a state
- 2) Critical analysis of Pakistan's 68 years of independence
- 3) Hurdles in our way to becoming a truly independent state
- 4) The hurdles are of diverse categories, as:

I. Political Hurdles

- a) Problematic borders
- b) Military domination: an impediment to development of other state institutions
- c) Lack of consensus among politicians on major issues
- d) Perennial issue of terrorism
- e) Shortsighted, imprudent and impetuously-designed foreign policy

II. Administrative Hurdles

- a) Spineless bureaucracy
- b) Delayed justice
- c) Dishonesty, nepotism and red-tapism
- d) Flawed transparency and accountability mechanisms

III. Economic Hurdles

- a) Vicious circle of poverty
- b) Outdated techniques of agricultural farming
- c) Unbridled inflation rate

- d) Undocumented economy
- e) Blind privatization

IV. Religious Hurdles

- a) Pathetic role of religious icons for power lust
- b) Inculcation of anti-democratic sentiment in the minds of followers and support of dictatorship
- c) Use of religious followers as a pressure group
- d) Unignorable role of religious parties in promoting sectarianism
- e) Inclination toward taqleed rather than ijtihad

V. Social hurdles

- a) Marginal and unproductive role of women
- b) Class disparities because of feudalism and landlordism
- c) Resistance of general masses to adopting new things
- d) Uncontrolled population growth

5) Can we ever become a truly independent nation? Yes!

6) Recommendations for removing the hurdles in becoming a truly independent state

- a) Strengthening democracy by ensuring continuity of credible elections and proper vetting of candidates
- b) Devising meticulous, far-sighted and independent foreign policy
- c) A complete overhauling of administrative systems
- d) Adopting prudent and visionary economic policies
- e) Enacting of stringent laws to broaden the tax net
- f) Promoting of progressive scholars
- g) Launching of media campaign to change the mindset of society.

7) Conclusion

TIPS

- 1) As usual, start the introductory paragraph with a general discussion and gradually narrow down its scope till it finally comes to an end with "Thesis Statement". Give Thesis Statement in an attractive but unambiguous way; clearly defining the scope and limits of the essay.
- 2) While critically analyzing the post-independence history of Pakistan, you should come up with solid arguments suggesting that Pakistan has never been a truly independent state throughout the period. To substantiate your point, do quote examples from the economic sector, foreign policy, military history and social sector. In this part of the essay, your focus should be to imprint a positive image of the depth of your knowledge in the mind of the examiner.
- 3) The fourth main point i.e. "what are hurdles in our way to becoming a truly independent state," is, in fact, the main question asked in the essay. Answer to this question demands a detailed discussion on all the hurdles that have caused Pakistan to remain deprived of true independence. Discussion on this point should be spread over, at least, 10-12 pages. Put up your arguments in an extremely logical way with citation of relevant data, and references of pertinent facts from the history. Always remember that unless you convince the examiner of the depth, accuracy and relevance of your knowledge, you will not be able to secure good marks merely on the basis of linguistic skills.

- 4) While expanding the fifth main point i.e. “Can we ever become a truly independent nation? Yes,” shed light on the brighter side of the picture. In this part, try to prove that we, as a nation, are sufficiently endowed with the potential for getting rid of all the impediments to becoming a truly independent state. Examples from our history as Pakistanis and Muslims would be quoted to corroborate the point. Discussion on this particular aspect may span 2-3 pages. In fact, this is the part where you will be kindling the light of hope for the better future of the country. After the detailed discussion, in the previous part – on the barriers to our becoming a truly independent state – in this part, you would disperse the clouds of uncertainty and dismay. It is strictly advisable to end the essay on a note that gives the readers some element of hope and this is what this part of the essay would do.
- 5) Recommendations, as is always advised, should not present a “wish list”; instead, they should be highly practicable and relevant, keeping in view the present circumstances of the country. Each “Recommendation” should be described in a separate paragraph, however, owing to the scarcity of time, last 2-3 recommendations can be summed up in a single paragraph. While recommending corrective measures, do refer to the steps already taken by the government for the amelioration of the situation and the causes of their missing the targets.
- 6) In the concluding paragraph, present a summary overview of all that you have discussed in the whole essay. Here, you should focus on the selection of suitable and impressive vocabulary as it is highly important to leave the examiner with his mind fully convinced of the skill and adroitness of the candidate as far as the art of essay writing is concerned.

“Now, I am highly confident that if students follow all these guidelines, they will be successful in passing this paper with excellent marks.”

MESSAGE:

I would like to say the aspirants that always believe in Allah and in your abilities. you should always work hard and give your best. Giving 100% in everything you do ALWAYS leads you to greater things in life. So give your best, give everything you have to get your best possible result, if it doesn't work out at least you will have the pride of knowing you gave it your best shot. At worst you will have also learned as much as you can along the way, and those who are committed to learn more in life will almost always be the same people who earn more and become more. *And CSS is not the end of the world.* Students think of CSS as the last and only resort. This makes the whole process too difficult for normal students and the burden of thoughts decrease their performance manifolds. It's more of a *test of nerves* than the test of actual intelligence.

One failed test doesn't mean jack in the real world.

Do you know how many successful people failed tests in school?

Every one of them.

It's normal. But guess what? Those successful people didn't give up, and THAT IS THE KEY. They kept working on becoming BETTER THEMSELVES . Better in everything they do.

When you get out on the field of life, no one wants the guy who passed every test, they want the guy who was willing to fight for his dream, the one who had the character to fight back after failing - that guy is much more valuable in the real world than someone with book knowledge.

So work on yourself.
Work on your education, yes, but work on yourself just as much.
Build some mental strength - it's much more important than passing a test.

You cannot win in life, if you're losing in your mind.
If your mind is strong, then your LIFE will be strong.

It's tough
Life... is tough
It's tough when you work so hard...
And get so little...

It's hard when your effort is high...
but your reward is low

It's hard when you do EVERYTHING right
but everything turns out WRONG

But what are you going to do?
Are You going to give up?
You have every right to give up...
You can and SHOULD throw in the towel...
This is not for you...
This successful living thing people talk about...
This abundant life...
This amazing story of how you fought back and MADE IT despite the odds being stacked against you....
It's not for you... GIVE UP...

But...
If you give up you will NEVER make it...
You will NEVER know just how GREAT you can be.

However...
If you FIGHT BACK
If you SUFFER through.
If you develop PERSISTENCE and an unstoppable DESIRE to do WHATEVER IT TAKES...
Then, you will come out on top

What is important to you?
What dreams do you have?
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR!
YOU ONLY GET ONE SHOT
If you miss the target at least you will LIVE with pride knowing you have no regrets

Before you reach that last breath, TODAY might be the day to make a change
Make Your life matter
One day it will be over...
There will be 2 dates, either side of a dash
Make sure that dash is not empty
Make sure it is full of life
Full of LIVING

Don't be like everyone else: Existing
Be EXTRAORDINARY

LIVE EVERY MOMENT WITH PASSION & WONDER
DON'T TAKE ANYONE OR ANYTHING FOR GRANTED

Life Is Tough
YOU ARE TOUGHER
Life Is Persistent
YOU ARE RELENTLESS

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WHEN LIFE BEATS YOU TO THE GROUND
LIFE HAS KNOCKED YOU DOWN AGAIN AND AGAIN

FIGHT BACK
DON'T BACK DOWN
YOU ARE IN CHARGE HERE

Life may be tough. But YOU... YOU ARE TOUGHER!

There will always be tough moments... tragedy and pain

But if you STAY STRONG and KEEP FIGHTING you will not only survive
you will THRIVE.

You will discover the challenge was actually the reward.

The climb and sacrifice were the reward not the prize.

It's not the reward that gives you the ultimate satisfaction... but the PRIDE in knowing YOUR CHARACTER
prevailed...

Your Character shone through...

THE PRIDE IN KNOWING YOU ARE STRONG
BE STRONG
YOU CAN DO IT
YOU WILL MAKE IT
YOU WILL

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?
YOU ONLY GET ONE SHO

Remember *there is no shortcut to success*. Nature has pledged to help those who strive, work and sacrifice. Never lose hope, you will certainly find success. Be humble about your capabilities and achievements. Even if you become PSP or PAS officer, there is no point of being arrogant, as Almighty Who gives respect and privileged position is verily in a capacity to take it back.

Best of Luck!

-IMAZ VIRK