

# Kingsborough Learning Center

## ENGLISH TEAS WORKSHOP Practice Material: The Four Main Types of Writing Styles

### 1. Expository Writing

The word *expository* contains the word *expose*, so the reason *expository* is an apt descriptor for this type of writing is that it exposes, or sets forth, facts. It is probably the most common writing genre you will come across throughout your day. In an expository piece, a topic will be introduced and laid out in a logical order without reference to the author's personal opinions.

**Expository writing** can be found in:

Textbooks Journalism (except for opinion and editorial articles)  
Business writing Technical writing Essays Instructions

All of these kinds of writing are expository because they aim to explain and inform.

The municipal government of Happyville unanimously approved the construction of sixty-two miles of bike trails in 2017. Made possible by a new tax levy, the bike trails are expected to help the city reach its sustainability and clean air goals while reducing traffic and congestion. Eighteen trailheads with restrooms and picnic areas have been planned at a variety of

access points. The city expects construction to be complete in April 2021.

Because this paragraph supplies the reader with facts and figures about its topic, the new bike trails, without offering the author's opinion on it, it is expository.

## 2. **Descriptive Writing**

The aim of descriptive writing is to help the reader visualize, in detail, a character, event, place, or all of these things at once. The author might describe the scene in terms of all five senses. Descriptive writing allows the writer a great deal more artistic freedom than expository writing does.

**Descriptive writing** can be found in:

Fiction Poetry Advertising Journal and diary writing

The children pedaled leisurely down the Happyville Bike Trail, their giggles and whoops reverberating through the warm spring air. Sweet-scented wildflowers brought an array of color to the gently undulating landscape, tempting the children to dismount now and then so they could lay down in the springy, soft grass.

Through description, this passage paints a vivid picture of a scene on the new bike trail.

### 3. Persuasive Writing

The aim of persuasive writing, or argumentation, is to influence the reader to assume the author's point of view. The author will express personal opinions in the piece and arm him- or herself with evidence so that the reader will agree with him or her.

**Persuasive writing** can be found in:

Advertising Opinion and editorial pieces Reviews Job applications

The bike trail is the glittering gem of Happyville's new infrastructure. It winds through sixty-two miles of lush landscape, dotted by clean and convenient facilities. If you haven't experienced the Happyville Bike Trail yet, ditch your car and head outside! Could life in Happyville get any more idyllic?

A number of statements in this paragraph are opinion rather than fact: that the bike trail is a glittering gem, that the facilities are clean and convenient, and that life in Happyville is idyllic. Clearly, the author's aim here is to use these depictions to persuade readers to use the bike trail.

### 4. Narrative Writing

The purpose of narrative writing is to tell a story, whether that story is real or imaginary. Pieces in a narrative style will have characters, and through the narrative, the reader learns what happens to them. Narrative writing can also include dialogue.

**Narrative writing** can be found in:

All types of fiction (e.g., novels, short stories, novellas) Poetry  
Biographies Human interest stories Anecdotes

As I cycled down the trail, I heard children giggling and whooping just around the bend. I crested a small hill and coasted down the curving path until I found the source of the noise. Three little girls sat in the grass by a big oak tree. They were startled to see me, and I smiled kindly to put them at ease.

“Whatcha doing?” I asked.

“Nothing,” they chirped in unison.

In this passage, the author sets the scene on the bike trail from his or her own point of view (which is referred to as *narrating in the first person*). Using both description and dialogue, the story that takes place is laid out in chronological order.