University of Tlemcen

Department of English

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**Level : L3**

**Module :CWP**

**LECTURE 10: Tips on writing a good essay answer**

Answering successfully essay questions on an exam is very important for students’ academic achievement; however this may prove to be difficult and stressful for many of them. Students can improve their ability to answer essay questions by learning how to understand the questions, and stay focused. The following tips may help them to provide a good essay answer

* Begin by carefully reading each of the questions.
* Take note of how much time you have (particularly for timed writing assignments) and determine which of the questions you should answer first.
* Identify and underline relevant keywords and those that instruct you on what needs to be done for each question.
* Make sure you understand what type of answer the main verb calls for (a diagram a summary, a list, details, an analysis, an evaluation), and decide on the necessary rhetorical strategy for answering the question (cause-effect, comparison-contrast, definition, classification…).
* Decide if you need to write a one-paragraph or a multi-paragraph answer, i.e. an essay.
* Write a brief outline of all the points you want to mention in your answer.
* Restate the question and answer it with a topic sentence (for a one-paragraph answer) or a thesis statement (for an essay answer).
* Answer the question according to general rules of academic writing.  Use indentations; begin each paragraph with a topic sentence; support the topic sentence(s) with reasons and/or examples; use transition words to show logical organization; write a conclusion.  Use correct punctuation throughout.
* Read over your answer again and check if all the main ideas have been included.
* Check your answer for grammar and punctuation.

**Further readings**

* Essay terms explained

[**https://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ld/all-resources/writing/writing-resources/essay-terms**](https://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ld/all-resources/writing/writing-resources/essay-terms)

* Essay Test Strategies

[**https://www.educationcorner.com/taking-essay-tests.html**](https://www.educationcorner.com/taking-essay-tests.html)

* Question and Answer Format

<https://www.aresearchguide.com/writing-essays-for-exams.html>