

Write On! That's My Opinion

Writing About Your Opinion

Did you know that some people earn a living writing their **opinions**? It's true. Movie critics watch movies and then write their opinion of them. The same is true for restaurant critics. They go to restaurants, eat the food, and then write their opinions. Many people make decisions based on the opinions these critics share.



Your friends may not pay you, but sometimes they may ask your opinion. How was the food at that restaurant? Did you like that movie? Where is the best place to buy auto parts? Once in a while, someone may want you to give reasons for your opinion. For example, "I liked this lesson because it was full of useful information." Maybe one day, your boss will ask you to give your ideas for making a process better. Maybe one day you will want to send your opinions in a letter to the news or someone else. Talking about your opinions is easy. Writing them down can be easy, too. In this lesson, you will learn how to organize the reasons for your opinion. You then will learn how to write about your opinion.

Writing an essay about your opinion is similar to talking about your opinion. Look at the following outline. This is the **format** for writing an essay based on your opinion. If you think about it, it is also how you would discuss your opinion.

1. Opening: This is a paragraph which tells about your topic and very clearly states what your opinion is.
2. Body: For this essay, your body will be one paragraph which gives an argument to support your opinion. You will use details, facts, and examples to support your argument.
3. Closing: This paragraph will restate your opinion and then *call your reader to action*. This means that you will try to encourage your reader to take action about changing things.

By following these easy steps, you will be able to write about your opinion.

Brainstorming: Coming Up with Ideas

People have strong opinions on many topics. You probably have heard people argue over the death penalty or immigration. An essay for one of those topics would be many pages long. For this lesson, you are going to pick a simple topic to write about. Following is a list of examples you can choose from. You may also choose your own topic.

- What vegetables should be planted in a small garden?
- Should music be played in the barn at feeding time?
- What kind of music should be played at work?
- What is your opinion of lessons like this?
- Should you have to wait until you are 18 years old to date?
- Should pesticides be used on crops?
- Choose a topic of your own.

Whether you are talking about your opinion or writing about it, you need details to support it. Following is a graphic organizer you can use to list details, facts, and examples that support your opinion.

Which topic did you choose to write about?	
List one detail about your topic that you believe is important for people to know.	
List one fact that your reader may or may not have known. (This may require research.)	
List one example of why this is a good thing.	
What is your call to action? What do you want your reader to do after reading this essay?	

Writing the Essay

Opening: Paragraph One

When you write any type of an essay, you want to get your reader's attention right away. A good way to do that when you are writing an opinion essay is to use a question, a surprising fact, or to address the reader personally. Look at these examples:

- **A question:** Have you ever eaten a carrot straight from the garden?
- **A surprising fact:** Did you know that music in the barn increases milk production?
- **Personal address:** Have you ever been in love? Didn't you want to spend every minute with that person? We shouldn't have to wait until we are 18 years old to date.

Once you've decided on how to start your essay, you need to follow that up with your opinion.

Look at this example:

Did you know that one horn worm can eat an entire tomato plant in just one day! It's weird, but true. He eats it because he loves the taste. There is nothing that beats the taste of a tomato picked fresh off the vine. A carrot fresh out of the ground has a special flavor all its own. If you have a small garden, tomatoes and carrots are two vegetables you should plant.



Check it Out!

What's the Point? in the Reading on the Move lesson series discusses author's point of view and can help you with your writing.

Find it on the Internet at

www.migrant.net/migrant/publications/index.htm

The Body: Paragraph Two

In the second paragraph you will need to add details, facts, and examples. These will be used to persuade your reader. The details, facts, and examples show that you know what you are talking about. You may have to research these. If you can use a computer, you may go on the Internet to do your research. If you don't have a computer, go to the library to do your research. Let's take a look at a paragraph with details, facts, and examples.



Check it Out!

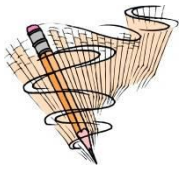
Why? in the Reading on the Move lesson series can also help you with writing about your opinion.

Find it on the Internet at

www.migrant.net/migrant/publications/index.htm



Tomatoes and carrots are the most important vegetables to plant in your garden because they taste good and can be used in so many ways. When you harvest your tomatoes and carrots, you can eat them fresh from the garden. You can also process them and save them for after the growing season. With tomatoes, you can make salsa, spaghetti sauce, or use them in soup. You may preserve your whole, skinned tomatoes by canning them. Salsa, sauce, or soup can also be preserved this way. The same is true of carrots, or they can be frozen. You can parboil them and put them in the freezer so you will have them months later.



Your Turn

In this paragraph you may want to use linking words or phrases such as *for this reason, because, therefore, so,* etc. These phrases let your reader see the link between the example and your opinion.

1. Restate your opinion followed by the word *because* and then a fact that supports your opinion.
2. List a detail that supports your opinion. Remember to use linking words/phrases here.
3. List an example that supports your opinion. Use linking words/phrases here also.

Remember:
Using facts and details
helps your reader
understand what you are
saying.

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Closing: Paragraph Three

In this paragraph, you will restate your opinion and encourage your reader to make a change. When starting the last paragraph, you will want to use a word or phrase that shows you are starting to wrap things up. Here is a list of some good words to use: *clearly*, *therefore*, or *so*.

Here's an example:

So clearly, when you think about planting a garden, you should always include tomatoes and carrots. They are two useful vegetables that taste good. You can eat them fresh, or preserve them for use months later. Run out today and buy your tomato plants and carrot seeds. You'll be happy you did.



Your Turn

1. Use a word to show you are concluding your essay, and then restate your opinion.
2. Remind the reader of your BEST fact, detail, or example.
3. Call the reader to action. This means encouraging him to do something. For example, "So go out today and buy several tomato plants and a packet of carrot seeds for your garden."

Finishing Up

What you have written is called a **rough draft**. It is a great start. It may have mistakes in it. Some sentences may not sound right to you. Now is the time you can make it better.

This is your chance to correct mistakes. Go back and read each sentence. Are the words spelled correctly? Did you use capital letters and punctuation? Did you remember to use paragraphs and indent? If you need help in this area, more help can be found in the *Reading on the Move* lessons that can be found on the Internet at www.migrant.net.

Is your essay as good as you can make it? Did you give it a title? If you can, type it on a computer and print it out. If you do not have a computer, use your best handwriting and copy it over on a piece of paper or on the following lines. Before you do that, you may want to complete the checklist at the end of this lesson.

Remember:
Give your essay an interesting title.

Writing Traits Scored in this Lesson

	Great Job 5 points	Almost There 3 points	Keep Working 1 point
Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a consistent tone. • The audience wants to read more. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tone is fairly consistent. • It could be made more interesting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tone is unclear and inconsistent. • The piece is not interesting to read.
Conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentences are complete. • Punctuation and capitalization are used correctly. • Spelling is correct. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentences are complete. • Capital letters and periods are used. • Spelling is mostly correct. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentences run together. • Punctuation and capitalization are inconsistent. • Several words are misspelled.

Words to Know

opinion: your thoughts and beliefs on a certain subject

format: a plan for the organization of your essay

rough draft: the first copy of a piece of writing

