

How do I write an Essay?

At GCSE you will need to show that you can write a piece of extended writing (an 'essay') which answers a question.

It will need to have a number of **points** in answer to the question, **facts** ('evidence') which prove the point, and **arguments** which **explain** and **develop** how what you are saying answers the question.

REMEMBER

THE FIRST thing to do when confronted by an Essay question is to establish:

WHAT KIND OF QUESTION IS IT?

There are **THREE** types of Essay question:

Describe.

Did the assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand make European war inevitable? Explain your answer.

IN BRIEF – Simply write down a many facts as you can remember in a sensible order.

- 1st **Facts:** Get your facts straight - where you're going to start and finish the story/ have you remembered all the facts/ sort them into a logical order. Arrange your account in a sensible order, e.g.: Beginning - Middle - End.
- 2nd **Explanation:** As you tell your story, explain how one thing led to another/ identify areas of change and continuity/ detail different reactions to events/ draw links between people and events.
- 3rd **Judgement:** Briefly, as you tell your story, explore underlying principles/ weigh the importance of different people and events, the pace of events, or the degree of change.

Agreement. (i.e. questions that ask you to EXPLAIN and then to AGREE or DISAGREE with a given statement)

'Naval rivalry was the main cause of the First World War.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer.

IN BRIEF – Think of a number of points in answer to the question and present, give evidence and explain every paragraph.

DO NOT BE FOOLED – Even if the question asks straight out 'Do you agree', the examiner is NOT interested in your opinion. DON'T just write a paragraph saying what you think!!! Write a regular interpretations essay, explaining both sides of the argument, then presenting your opinion as your concluding comments weighing the two sides.

- 1st **Points:** Think of 4 or 5 points which answer the question.