

English 11-2 Observation Essay

Observation is a common experience in our lives. We watch and interact with all sorts of people and information every day. Real observation requires effort and attention. In this essay you are asked to explain why you feel the way we do and to **support your ideas with evidence and details**.

In order to demonstrate that you've done a high level of observation, you must show the reasons behind your decisions. This requires finding facts and then presenting them in an organized, clear and well-written fashion.

First, you must **pick a topic of interest**: either a person, an event (a divorce, a relationship, a party, an arrest, an epiphany, etc.) or a concept (freedom, anger, love, etc.). This essay **does not** require using the Internet. These choices and others are important and valid and can be used as topics for this essay. Be clear about what your topic is before you attempt to start observing and writing. Generally, topics you are passionate about are easiest to write about.

Second, you must **observe!** Watch or investigate your topic. Think about what information shows how and why your topic of observation warrants attention. What makes this concept or person important in your life? What verities of life are expressed? Look at your journal topics from the first semester (courage, intelligence, compassion, etc.) and see how they are or are not expressed or demonstrated. How has it effected or changed you? What did you learn? What questions does it leave you with still unanswered? What did you see upon closer inspection that an ordinary passing observer would miss?

Third, when you write, **be specific**. Include details that demonstrate insights that only you might have given your proximity and unique perspective with your topic. Show and describe traits or aspects of your topic with examples rather than telling about the generalities. A well-written essay with specific, detailed examples and deep, personal insights will always be interesting, no matter what the topic.

An A paper: will demonstrate a clear, well-communicated appraisal of a topic. The paper will explain and describe the topic you choose. The paper will demonstrate deep reflection and observation. The paper will illustrate your insights with specific examples and include detailed, unique understandings about the topic observed. The paper will be written with proper grammar and punctuation. It will use active verbs, not passive voice. The length of the paper will be long enough to fully describe your observations to the reader, probably between 5 and 6 pages. The paper will be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font.



**Pay close attention
and include specific
examples!**

INFORMATION ORGANIZER

INFORMATION ORGANIZER				
	TOPIC #1		TOPIC#2	
ISSUE	PRO	CON	PRO	CON
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				