

WRITING AN ESSAY

WORKSHEET 2: TOPIC ANALYSIS

As we saw in the lesson, the most successful essays are based on careful analysis of the topic. The method recommended in the lesson is the **QUESTION and ANSWER** technique. It works this way:

- (1) Take the topic - ask as many questions as possible about it.
- (2) Find answers to those questions.
- (3) Find evidence to support or explain those answers.

Let's get some practice now.

ACTIVITY 1

Here are a range of topics for analysis under the four major types. In groups, (a) create **as many questions about the topic as you can**, and (b) brainstorm **answers to those questions**. The result is a series of notes for each topic.

- (1) Expository essay: Australians are getting fatter all the time; We learn so many things from TV; Some of the things we learn at school aren't on the curriculum.
- (2) Argumentative essay: Is TV good for us?; We should use more renewable energy; Bullying is bad.
- (3) Personal essays: My greatest fear; What's good and the bad about family?
- (4) Literary essay: What is the best book ever written for children?; The greatest film ever made.

Read out and discuss the notes from each of the groups.

ACTIVITY 2

- (1) Now, individually, take the notes from your group and build them up into an essay plan. Create a series of topic sentences - one for each of the paragraphs that would take you through the subject.
- (2) Now it's time to write the essay in full. Write a draft of the essay and then go over it carefully to remove any mistakes or errors.
- (3) Find a time to read the essay to the class - maybe one sample per topic.