

# Exemplification

Exemplification writing uses specific, vivid examples for the purpose of adding more information to explain, persuade, define, or illustrate a general idea. Likewise, exemplification provides solid support and strong evidence to prove the writer's main statement. Appropriate examples also create interest in a writing assignment.

By supplying specific examples, the writer adds additional *who, what, when, where, why, and how* information to elaborate on the main idea of a paragraph or essay. Good examples are logically related to the topic and provide the mental imagery needed by the reader to make important connections. Making these connections with suitable examples is important so that the author's intended meaning, difficult concepts, or unfamiliar ideas are made known and clearly understood.

\*\*\*Exemplification moves from the general to the specific\*\*\*

Broad	Specific →	→ More Specific
compound	H <sub>2</sub> O	a chemical substance made up of two hydrogen atoms and a one oxygen atom that exists in several forms
lawsuit	Roe vs. Wade	controversial landmark decision granting women the right to choose
tree	Oak	a deciduous genus of the northern hemisphere bearing a fruit known as the acorn
film	<i>Gone With the Wind</i>	a classic American epic tale of riches, ruin, and romance set in the aftermath of the Civil War

There are several ways to organize an exemplification paragraph or essay. Some writers need several examples to sufficiently explain their main idea. Other writers might use only one major example and examine all its subordinate features to satisfactorily demonstrate their point.

The examples can be organized chronologically, spatially, from the simple to complex, or with the emphatic order which moves from the first example to the one that is most important. Examples organized chronologically are moving through time, while examples organized spatially are moving through space.

For the purpose of writing a unified paragraph, decide on a main idea that can be expanded with appropriate examples. To be effective, choose the best concrete examples that will logically represent the main idea in the paragraph. Any facts or statistics that are used as examples need to be accurate. The details should be specific enough to accomplish clarity of the intended meaning of the idea set forth in the topic sentence.

**Multiple Example Outline** uses several examples to completely support the main idea

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Example: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Example: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Example: \_\_\_\_\_

Concluding Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

**Extended Example** focuses on one major example, but examines all its finer details.

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Example: \_\_\_\_\_

a. Major supporting detail: \_\_\_\_\_

1) Minor supporting detail \_\_\_\_\_

2) Minor supporting detail \_\_\_\_\_

b. Major Supporting detail: \_\_\_\_\_

1) Minor supporting detail: \_\_\_\_\_

2) Minor supporting detail: \_\_\_\_\_

c. Major Supporting detail: \_\_\_\_\_

1) Minor supporting detail: \_\_\_\_\_

2) Minor supporting detail: \_\_\_\_\_

Concluding Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

**Transition words and phrases signal to the reader that additional specific details follow:**  
such as, for example, for instance, such as, like, in particular, in fact.