

Answering the Question

What is the
mission?

(From Your Online Tutor)

You are about to
discover how to
improve your
marks...get
excited!

Did you read the assignment?

Tell the truth – did you read the assignment?

If so, you know what you should do – if it was written in a clear manner.

What did you notice?

Content words?

Process words?

Were you familiar with the language of the subject?

Let's face it – if you don't know the language of the subject you are going to fail in gaining an understanding of the concepts.

Each Subject has its Own Language!

In order to gain the most marks, focus on the most important words in the statement or question.

The important words are known as keywords and keywords are broken up into two main groups: process words and content words.

Keywords

Keywords are the nouns in the assignment question or statement and process words tell you what to do.

Before you tackle your assignment, make sure to research each of these words and take notes so that you understand them fully. These words are important and you must focus on them to gain the most marks.

You cannot understand a subject if you do not understand the language of the subject. Create definitions and notes on the important words for each subject you are studying. Learn your definitions and keep a record of words that you discover as you study.

Each content word should be the start of your research into the topic and the way to produce meaningful research notes on specific points for the assignment.

Process Words

Process words explain what the reader should do. For example you may be asked to, “discuss”, “explain” or “compare”.

What do they mean? Record each word and it’s meaning by looking them up in the dictionary to get a clear concise explanation.

***Contrast** is an interesting process word. When this word pops up in your assignment you are meant to say how one thing is the **SAME** or **DIFFERENT** to the other. We are basically comparing things.*

Your Preparation

If you are interested in winning the intellectual game of writing then make sure you prepare well. All games require preparation and an understanding of the rules.

READ THE QUESTION

Collecting Data

Next, prepare by researching your keywords. You are not going to create your introduction. You are not going to create the body of your essay or your conclusion.

You are going to prepare your notes! Become an expert on the topic. Read as many on-topic resources as you can find, dealing with your topic and record your most important observations, understandings and examples. This is how you prepare to write something meaningful.

Organizing Data

Now that you have created your notes make sure to label everything and organize these notes according to your important keywords or key ideas. This way you can locate information for your essay quickly.

Presentation

Creating your presentation is the next task and the assignment should give you a clear idea of how to present your answer. Let's just assume you are writing an essay that will have three major parts: firstly the introduction and a possible thesis (what you think the answer should be), a body (containing the arguments – major essay points) and lastly the conclusion.

Quick Start Guide

1. **Brainstorm – write your thoughts and questions.**
2. **Research and answer your own questions.**
3. **Create your thesis. Pick the major essay points you will use as your answer.**
4. **Create your essay structure and sequence of ideas.**
5. **Write your first draft.**
6. **Edit your draft. Correct poor paragraph sentences, making sure each paragraph deals with one topic idea. Poor spelling and punctuation make you look bad so make sure to ask someone else to proof read your work after you have completed the job.**
7. **Re-draft your essay until you think you have achieved the mark you want.**

PARAGRAPHS

Why are paragraphs so easy to write? The answer is that a paragraph deals with ONE main idea. If you get sidetracked your writing ends up looking like a kitchen after dinner – a mess!

Firstly, start with your main idea sentence. Now that you have the introduction sentence or topic sentence discuss it. Introduce examples and proof. Explain the importance and relevance of this key idea and end with a concluding sentence that will logically lead on to the next point.