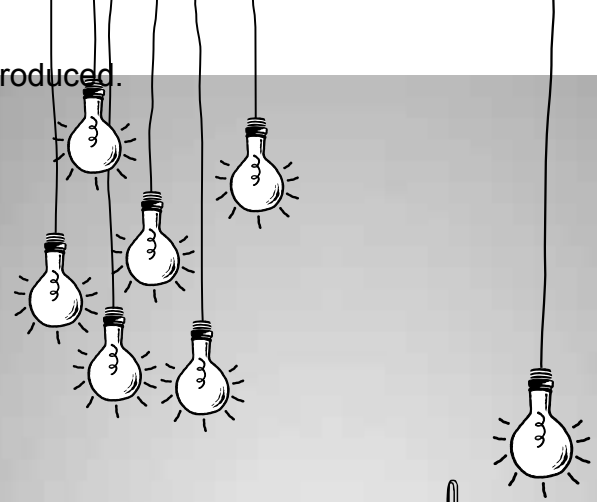
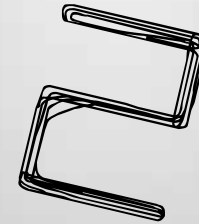


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expository & argumentative
eureka

Model Expository and Argumentative Essays
For Today's Secondary School Students



Written, compiled and edited by
Diana Tham

mc Marshall Cavendish
Editions

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About the Book...

You cannot create experience. You must undergo it.

~ Albert Camus

He was right. Of course, Camus had to be right.

Experience is never something one creates. One must undergo experiences in life to have truly lived.

My Primary Eureka series that was released several years ago encapsulated the creative techniques behind developing plots for stories. These new Eureka books, featuring primary and secondary model essays, are to remember the students behind my years of teaching and writing.

I chose to feature my students' model essays and none of my own in these new books as these are meant to be a showcase of those who have studied under me over the years. These are students whom I have seen pass through the naiveties of childhood mischief as they bloomed into budding and blushing teenage writers (those whose essays are featured in the Eureka secondary school book).

While all my Eureka books exist for the reason of propagating good writing techniques crystallised in the form of easy-to-grasp strategies for young budding writers or those who just need that extra push, guidance and tips on how to craft good compositions, these two special books also exist to encourage and honour those who have excelled at the craft of writing, some after hard work and redrafts.

It has always been my hope and prayer that my students will grow to enjoy that special experience of writing that imparts passion in life.

It is my honour and pride to present to you further Eureka compilations of excellent essays penned by generations of writers in both of these primary and secondary school model essay collections.

Camus said in another quote, "Men (and women) must live and create. Live to the point of tears."

I pray that all students will undergo the experience of writing with cheer and hope, to live and create stories, to the point where they write with excellence and a burning passion.



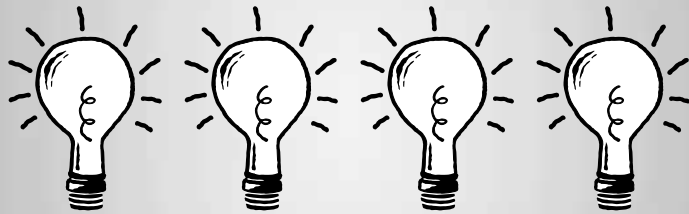
Before You Start...

The skills necessary in writing expository and argumentative skills arguably vary, although a teacher should be able to train students to effectively tackle essay topics pertaining to both genres.

I have adequately dealt with the skills required to write expository essays in detail in my previous book *Expository Eureka*. This book will deal primarily with the diverse skill sets to successfully write excellently crafted argumentative and expository essays.

Argumentative essays

The main difference between argumentative essays and expository essays lie in the stand the student is required to take. This stand can be explicitly expressed in the introductory paragraph in the essay. I have elucidated rather extensively on the structure of an expository essay in my previous book on expository essays which **takes the same format as that of an argumentative essay**. Let me recap the points for writing an introduction for expository and argumentative essays here.



How do I structure introductory paragraphs?

A proper introduction for argumentative essays should take this format:

STEP 1: Background information related to topic

Students must provide a proper contextualisation for the topic at hand. For example, if the topic asks for views on the various requirements of a good teacher, the student should explicitly

state details relevant to the role of a teacher in society and the importance of a teacher in a student's life. For example:

Teachers, especially in the Singaporean context, are indispensable in contributing to a student's academic achievements, widely known for their role in the local education system to imbibe knowledge and content in various academic subjects across the plethora of subjects students are acquainted with in schools.

STEP 2: Definition of terms

Students should define convoluted terms present in the question to help clarify the context and the examiner's understanding regarding the perimeters of the student's essay.

STEP 3: Rhetorical questions

Rhetorical questions act as indications of the student's plan to address some issues in his essay and to state the focus of his essay. Rhetorical questions basically help to scope the student's reflections about the topic at hand in his essay.

STEP 4: Platform statement

Students sometimes ask me about the purpose of a platform statement. Some think a platform statement isn't necessary but a platform statement, also known as a thesis statement, helps examiners to better understand the stand of the student for an argumentative essay and what the student is likely to focus on in his essay.

For example, the student can and should include his stand in his platform statement at the end of his introductory paragraph:

I shall now attempt to expound on the reasons why I disagree to a large extent that the abolition of examinations as a form of academic assessment for students should be made absolute and immediate in my essay.

How do I structure body paragraphs?

What comes after the essay introduction? How should I structure the body paragraphs of my expository essay?

Every essay should have about three to four body paragraphs after the introduction. For discursive essays on advantages and disadvantages about a certain topic, you may wish to dedicate about two paragraphs to discuss advantages and two paragraphs to elucidate the disadvantages. If the question is purely expository and not argumentative, the permutation of advantages and disadvantages can also take the ratio 1:2 or 3:1 respectively, depending on what points you have available.

You will need to follow the format for each paragraph when writing expository essays:

Format (1)

Point → Evidence/Example → Elaboration/Explanation → Link

OR

Format (2)

Point → Elaboration/Explanation → Evidence/Example → Link

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The starting sentence (Point) of each paragraph or PEEL is also known as a topic sentence. The topic sentence must contain the main focal or overarching point of your paragraph. Take for example, the topic sentence:

To start with, an overt advantage of being raised as an only child in a single-child family is that one gets to enjoy the best of all that the parents are able to provide for him or her.

This immediately tells the examiner that your first paragraph will focus on the explicit view that the first benefit of being an only child is the wealth of resources at his disposal.

Topic sentences are therefore of paramount importance as it defines the perimeters of your discussion and sets the tone for your entire paragraph.

You may choose to provide evidence in support of your point before explaining and elaborating or to elaborate on and explain your point before providing examples and evidence to substantiate your point. Do whatever you are most comfortable with and that works best for your essay and its development. Of course, you may wish to alternate between Formats (1) and (2) in the course of writing the body of your essay.

Let us take a look in detail at Format (1). I have taken an excerpt from an essay in my previous book to illustrate my point:

Zoos are nothing more than places where animals lose their freedom and are imprisoned. Discuss your views.

Similarly, a few zoos go the extra mile ----> in their concern for the environment which is rapidly being destroyed through deforestation, poaching and pollution to promote awareness of their worthy cause by educating the young through animal performances. For example, the Singapore Zoological Gardens have daily performances such as *The Rainforest Fights Back*, featuring animal performing tricks in an attempt to save the animals' natural habitats—the rainforest. During the performances, problems of poaching, pollution that devastate our environment leading to the decimation of the animals' natural habitats are overtly addressed, and the audience is urged to be more environmentally conscious. Our next and younger generations need close-up encounters with these lovable animals to be sufficiently impacted with the message of environmental conservation. What better way to do so than to get an up close and personal encounter with animals that endear these young ones so that greater empathy with these voiceless vulnerable animals can be sought with our next generation who

Point: I have stated my point of how some zoos do their part for environmental conservation by taking the extra effort to stage animal performance to educate people on the cause-and-effect of environmental and animal conservation)

Example/Evidence: I have provided evidence to substantiate my earlier point of how some zoos do engage in active efforts to conserve the environment.

may be vested with power to soldier on the worthy cause of conserving our environment? * Having said that, zoos must take the necessary steps and be equipped with the means to amply support these wild animals appropriately so that they may further the realm of exposing our young to, and educating them about the imperative need to conserve these beautiful creatures of nature. This makes them therefore not just prisons where animals lose their freedom.

Elaboration/ Explanation: I now explain and elaborate on the worth of conserving the environment through the aforementioned illustrated example.

Link: A link simply concludes a body paragraph by bringing the point back to answering the question.

* I have incorporated a noteworthy example in this excerpt which is the deliberate employment of rhetorical question to illustrate the importance of using rhetorical questions not just in an essay's introduction for reflective purposes but also within body paragraphs to emphasise and reinforce my point.

How do I conclude my essay?

Do not bring in any more points for discussion in your conclusion. You may wish to include a rhetorical question in your conclusion to evoke some reflection in readers about the points you have discussed earlier in relation to the given topic. Or you may wish to shed new insights or personal reflections (NOT POINTS!) about the topic like an after-thought.

Here is an excerpt taken from another of my model essays for reference.

How relevant are established traditions in our modern society? Discuss.

In a nutshell, while many established traditions may seem increasingly irrelevant to humans living in our twenty-first century due to practical reasons which have been carefully elucidated above, some traditions remain extremely relevant since they predominantly keep us intertwined closely as humans in our progressively unconnected modern society. The most important thing to remember is the age-old axiomatic maxim: Do not throw the baby out with the bathwater. Not all traditions are out-dated and irrelevant. In the midst of obliterating traditions we consider impractical or maybe annoying to many in our modern society, some traditions ultimately make up a crucial part of who we are, our cultural identity and should be continued lest we lost a part of ourselves, our roots, eventually.

Proverb: I have used a proverb to reinforce my point that not all established traditions are irrelevant and archaic to our modern society.

I have reasserted the points in my essay that while some traditions may be irrelevant, not all traditions should be eradicated and provided the reasons why I believe this to be so.



In summary...

Keep in mind that while writing expository essays may seem a mechanical routine, mainly borne out of a duty to meet school deadlines, it takes an enlightened mind to appreciate expository writing as being no more than an art form.

At the heart of expository essays should be an intention to inform, to discuss, to express opinions, ideas and perspectives. Once you have the necessary skills of structuring your essays, with constant inculcation of good phrases and expressions that you can use at your fingertips, you will develop gradually and emerge as a confident, effective writer and communicator of ideas.

Have the elderly been taken care of adequately in your society? What are some ways we can help the elderly more?

*Zachaeus Yeo
Raffles Institution*



The elderly of many societies are responsible for the prosperity and flourishing economies of many countries as many are the pillars of their economies, the backbone that comprise pioneer generations who have worked hard and made massive contributions to their societies. It is therefore imperative for us, the offspring and the undisputed beneficiaries of society, to ensure that the elderly age gracefully and are well taken care of. Eleanor Roosevelt once said, “Beautiful old people are works of art and it is easy to understand why the elderly are considered works of art.” Are our societies doing enough for our “beautiful works of art” to age actively and well? How can we do more for them if we are not? I will now discuss the reasons why I feel that although we have done a lot for our elderly to age gracefully, there is still much to be done in effectively meeting the needs of the elderly and how we can help them to do so.

For starters, I agree that our society has done much to help the elderly to age actively. For instance, many community centres islandwide have a plethora of activities that the elderly can

participate in with gusto. One of these is Skillsfuture, a workshop that teaches and arms the elderly with new skills like cooking, Information Technology knowledge and how to use social media platforms. These Skillsfuture workshops are usually subsidised by the government to allow the elderly to not only have fun and to pick up a new skill from the workshop but also allow them to be carefree and worry-free in the midst of doing so. This shows that our society is doing a good job of allowing the elderly among us, who have slogged and toiled for much of their lives to ensure the prosperity of our country, to feel integrated and appreciated by ensuring an avenue for them to upkeep and upskill themselves, so they will not feel bored and alienated from the economy in their twilight years. Such noteworthy endeavours to ensure the financial and professional well-being of the elderly also encourage them to keep learning new skills and knowledge from these interactive workshops.

To stimulate their minds and to keep them mentally healthy and active, the elderly can enrol in exercise classes like tai chi, qi gong and yoga classes which can help them build physical robustness and fitness, which are easily available at community centres, various community or social groups or even with friends and family members. These classes will not only help them to keep a healthy lifestyle through exercising but can also relieve the fatigue or anxiety that many elderly people constantly experience which also allows them to calm their minds through certain breathing exercises. Moreover, there are a range of promotions and discounts that elderly members of the pioneer generation are eligible for when they sign up for these classes. This relieves the financial burdens of the elderly and encourages them to sign up for these classes in order to help them in particular areas. Hence, this society

has provided a substantial number of classes in order to help the elderly age actively.

However, I feel that more could be done for our elderly because our fast-paced society in modern times allows too little time and devotes too little energy to helping the elderly age actively. I feel that the main cause of this is that many governments worldwide may be too busy trying to solve other domestic problems that may be more pressing and urgent, like economic, political and other social problems like widespread unemployment or pandemic woes raging throughout the world in 2020, for example, that resulted in the inadequate dedication of sufficient resources to helping or providing aid to the elderly or an unintended neglect in helping the elderly integrate into society.

Furthermore, the elderly should take active steps in acquiring new skills in technology like the use of social media platforms. They can learn how to use apps like Facebook, Instagram and Whatsapp. This would allow them to integrate into the modern society that we are currently living in which heavily relies on technology to fuel our lives, especially young people, who use social media many times within a day and many hours each time. The elderly can do so by signing up for courses like C3A (council for third age) and ILP (Intergenerational Learning Programme) which helps the elderly to integrate into modern society through technological means and knowledge acquisition. I once helmed an ILP with my research education group mates. The purpose of this programme was to teach the elderly how to use Facebook, Whatsapp and how to identify cyber scams on these online platforms. After our workshop, the elderly completed a survey which showed that they had successfully understood more about social media and the feedback showed an encouraging and overwhelming response of

how the elderly would try their best to integrate these new forms of technology into their daily lives. Through learning how to use social media, the elderly would be able to bridge the intergenerational gap between them and their grandchildren or even children.

As the ancient Chinese saying goes, “Learning is a lifelong journey”. Hence, we should ensure that the elderly are given opportunities, appropriate tools and usable resources by our society to age actively. We should also focus not only on social, political and economic problems but more on the citizens of Singapore or in particular, the elderly of Singapore as the elderly have contributed to a large part of the success in our society and we will forever be beholden to them and their invaluable contribution that have made our tiny red dot into the gigantic success that it is today.

The poor themselves are to blame for their own plight.

Maggie Lin
Methodist Girls School

The learned man Jesus once said, “The poor you will always have with you”. True to these words, the poor continue to be a common sight in many societies today. They starve because they cannot pay to have access to basic human rights like food and shelter. There are many factors affecting why the poor remain this way. However, to what extent are they to be blamed for the vicious cycle of poverty that they are stuck in? I will discuss the reasons why while I sometimes feel that poor people mostly have themselves to blame, there are mitigating reasons and factors that result in the state of poverty they continue to dwell in which are largely beyond their control.

For starters, poor people are to be blamed for their own plight as there are typically many ways to put themselves out there and work. However, many are trapped in the negative mindset that it is difficult or, as some believe, impossible for them to get out of their state of poverty, so many lack motivation and power to do anything. Some might be lazy to start from the bottom and work their way up as they think that they will never make it. As such, these do

not even put in an effort to try. For example, Do Won Chang was extremely poor when he moved from Korea to America. He was forced to work three jobs at the same time to support his family, as a janitor, a gas station attendant, and in a coffee shop. Eventually, he was able to open his first clothing store in 1984. That one store grew into Forever 21, which pioneered fast fashion and is now a multinational, 480-store empire that generates about \$3 billion in sales a year. Do Won Chang is the perfect example of how the fruit of one's hard work and humility of working three jobs results in an impressive span of victories and financial success. If he could tirelessly work three jobs in a relentless effort to overcome the snaring jaws of poverty, then there is no excuse for poor people who refuse to start from rock bottom because they believe such hardship is either beneath their dignity or that they can never surmount their poverty-stricken state.

However, blaming the poor for the state that they are in may be extremely ludicrous due to several reasons. The poor are constantly stuck in the vicious poverty cycle and are unable to get out of it. When a family is poor, the children would have been raised in poverty-stricken circumstances that might have prevented them from having enough money to afford even basic necessities, much less an education. Thus, most children who are born poor do not have learning opportunities available to them unlike people who have been born with golden spoons in their mouths. Furthermore, the vast majority of poor people might have been forced to abandon academic opportunities in favour of starting work at a young age in order to earn some extra cash to supplement family incomes. However, their limited knowledge and skimpy educational qualifications only allow them to slave at laborious and manual jobs that require little skill as they grow up. When

these same manual labourers start their own families, the vicious cycle repeats itself with their children. For example, recruiters in Southern India convince parents in impoverished rural areas to send their daughters to spinning mills with the children being paid appallingly low wages and deprived of their right to go to school without interference from work. Due to difficult financial straits, many lowly-educated children from poor families are forced to work to earn money for the family and are unable to receive proper education with dignity, a basic human right, leaving them to suffer in the vicious cycle of poverty without any known end in sight.

Furthermore, another reason why the poor should not be blamed for their plight is the fact that the poor are often marginalised. These poverty-stricken people may harbour aspirations and ambitions for their lives in their desire for proper jobs and may even work extremely hard to prove themselves. However, with unjust marginalisation that happens in many parts of the world, factories, companies and governments often have erroneous misconceptions that poor people are lazy and dishonest because of their backgrounds and as such, do not put in effort to help lift the poor out of the cycle of poverty. Many mistakenly assume that these people are poor solely because of the lack of motivation to do anything. Many also often unfairly associate the poor with dishonesty as they think that since many poor people never had proper education even in their younger years, their grasp of basic social etiquettes and character development are also limited. For example, in many countries, governments and companies put spikes on the ground, arms between benches and many more physical deterrents to discourage the homeless from sleeping in public areas. Recently, someone tweeted a picture of a series of metal spikes built into the ground outside a London apartment

building. This shows how people are discriminating against the poor, spending money on these structures to prevent them from having equal opportunities and access to sleeping places instead of donating that equal sum of money to help them get off the streets and out of their poor state. Unfortunately, the poor then often find it extremely hard to find a proper paying job or decent financial support from governments and companies that will provide them a helping hand to heave them out of their poverty-stricken circumstances and to finally live above the poverty line.

In conclusion, it would be extremely naive of people to assume that all poor people are responsible for their own plight. This assumption is also part of the reason why there are so many poor people all around the world still in existence, along with the fact that they are often stuck in the vicious cycle of poverty. Due to these reasons, the best chances for a permanent solution to lift the poor out of their cycle of poverty would be help from richer people. Imagine this, with just a little donation out of people's wallets, if everyone with living breath in their nostrils can give just a dollar to help the poor, how many lives, communities and generations can be changed?

Museums are no longer relevant in the world today. Discuss.

Reuben Tham
Anglo-Chinese School (Independent)

Museums have always been an exciting source of fascination and intrigue for me. Many fond memories have been forged visiting the quiet serenity of museum hallways with their grand displays of statues and abstract artworks and the impatient shushing of little children by their parents. Mairah Kalman once said, "A visit to the museum is a search for beauty, truth and meaning in our lives. Go to museums as much as you can." With the many beautiful associations Man has with museums and the meaning behind each exhibited work, is it fair to say that museums will one day lose its relevancy in our world today? I will now expound on reasons why I feel museums will continue to stay relevant despite naysayers who may think otherwise.

Some may consider museums to be irrelevant in the world today as people can derive the same joy of gaining information from museums through the advent of the Internet and technology. Take for example, the Rosetta Stone, which is found in the British Museum. People can easily find pictures of it all over the Internet, and these pictures which have good lighting are clear in showing

the explicit details of the Rosetta Stone. The Internet contains write-ups of the artefacts found in the museum, which allows people to learn about historical artefacts like how they would at a museum. As such, people can simply access pictures of the Rosetta Stone with just a click of the button, which is a lot more convenient compared to having to travel all the way to the museum and back just to see and examine the actual artefact. Visitors to the museums may not be able to examine the artefacts in such close detail as is possibly shown on the Internet. This example thus showcases how museums are losing out to the Internet in terms of practical appeal as information, pictures and videos found in the museums associated with various historical relics can be found all over the Internet, with the Internet at times far excelling information found in actual physical museums. Therefore, with people being able to derive the same joy of gaining information from museums by searching the Internet, how can one disagree that museums are increasingly irrelevant in the world today?

Moreover, in our ever-evolving world of glitz and ritz today, museums are irrelevant as there has been an explosion of stunningly life-like or exciting entertainment available through various sources, making the museum an often inferior choice. Take Netflix, for example. Netflix is an irrefutably attractive alternative to visiting museums, as it is a platform where people can search for whatever movie they want. As such, people may prefer watching documentaries and programmes featuring various historical artefacts on Netflix at home compared to physically visiting museums as they can learn about the history of artefacts from the comfort of their homes compared to journeying to and from museums, some of which may be situated overseas, like the famous Louvre Museum in Paris, which some may consider time-

consuming. This shows how museums may progressively become irrelevant as people may generally prefer watching historical documentaries to visiting museums which would allow them access to the same information that they would have been able to acquire. This makes visiting museums irrelevant since there are many websites or programmes which can be substituted for museums such as Bolivar and Frontier. Another example would be the exciting world of anime-watching that is now accessible to millions of youngsters nowadays, who would gladly spend their time watching anime such as the most recent hit Demon Slayer for countless hours rather than visiting museums which may not appeal to them. This showcases how many young people may have lost interest in museums which once again reinforces how museums are becoming irrelevant in our world today.

However, contrary to increasingly common ideas that museums are boring, it is worthy to note that nothing can truly replace the stunning reality of visually capturing the astonishing and awesome sights of historical artefacts in person. The extraordinary sight and awe associated with viewing the Terracotta warriors from China up close and personal constitute a breathtaking experience. Imagine the sheer wonder of physically viewing countless numbers of these solidly crafted warriors all lined up in one accord in mournful respect and reverence to honour the body of Qin Shi Huang who wanted to be protected even in death. When one sees images or videos of the Terracotta Army online, how can one help marvelling at their unique magnificence while silently wishing they are able to view it in person? Nothing beats seeing the grandeur of such historical artefacts and statues in the flesh and in person and museums thankfully provide us with the opportunity to get physically close to these artefacts for some

photographic privileges to thrill the senses. Hence, it would be erroneous to assume that museums can be considered irrelevant in the world today.

Although many in the younger generations are tempted to say that museums are a thing of the past, many powerful and quietly inspiring moments can only be beheld by simply being in a museum, as nothing beats a physical experiential encounter with one of the historical relics from yesteryears.

Are you grateful to be born a female?

Jenna Howe
Methodist Girls' School

Being born into an era where women's rights movements are at its peak, I cannot help but reflect upon my identity and my place in the world as a woman. Although many consider and refer to women as meek and vulnerable, I believe that many others recognise and acknowledge that women are among some of the strongest people in the world, with unending potential and strength that many can tap on. As Hillary Clinton so famously said, "Women are the largest untapped reservoir of talent in the entire world." Indeed, being a woman comes with a lot of benefits and a lot of things to be grateful for. As such, what are some things that I am grateful for to be born a woman? I will now elucidate some benefits and struggles associated with being a woman.

Firstly, I feel that being a woman does come with disadvantages, with the gender stereotypes and obvious discrimination that some women face in society. An example of such would be the gender pay gap that women face in the workforce in some countries, where women are paid 78 per cent less in wages compared to their male counterparts, even if they have the same skills and the same experience as their male colleagues. There are also a significantly