**Mr. Weinstein’s Tips:**

**Writing the Expository Essay**

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* Pre-write: Organize your thoughts with a quick mind-map, outline, or sketch of some kind.
* Open with pathos-inducing imagery.
* Grab the reader’s attention and don’t let go.
* Transition smoothly into the thesis statement.
* Transition words are adequate; however, to be outstanding you must *transition on idea*.
* Always place the thesis statement at the end of the introduction.
* Don’t overwrite the introduction – especially if there is a time limit.
* Don’t overwrite anything! Brevity is the key. Be terse. Be laconic. Be concise.
* Be economical with words. Waste none. Subtract them!
* Consider your diction. Use appropriate terms for your subject matter.
* Be a little wild with your words. Wake the reader!
* Avoid the word “thing(s)” – you can probably choose a better word.
* Begin body paragraphs with topic sentences.
* Transition from paragraph to paragraph in the topic sentences.
* Connect topic sentences to the thesis. Every time.
* Boomerang theory: Always return to thesis. Thread your thesis!!
* Provide examples through imagery and direct quotes.
* Only quote a half-sentence of source material. You need to transition in and out of the half-sentence. Don’t overquote.
* Analyze and explain how the examples support the thesis.
* Provide multiples examples.
* The last sentence of a body paragraph should be a *clincher*.
* Clinchers should tie back to the topic sentence and to the thesis.
* Directly connect to your thesis in three places: the topic sentence, the examples, and the clincher.
* Always save something for the conclusion.
* Use new imagery, new dialogue, and quick new examples in the conclusion.
* Do not simply rehash your essay in the end – that’s *so lame*. End strong!
* Practice sentence variety at all times. (So many ways …. Study the lessons.)
* Mix it up with a punctuation of variety! (Semicolon, colon, long dash, hyphen, exclamation point, question mark. There’s more to life than periods and comma.)
* Writing is rhythm. Get in your rhythm and utilize diction, sentence structure, and punctuation to control the reader’s rhythm.
* Search for, seek out, and create opportunities for parallel structure. Add other rhetorical flourishes (antithesis, anaphora, chiasmus….)
* Create balanced sentences. Think symmetry. Be a poet, even in prose.
* Title every essay. A good title creates intrigue and has a *reveal* when the reader is done with your piece.
* Take risks!
* Write in your original, unique voice. Don’t try to imitate anybody else – just try to find *your* voice. Listen for it and sculpt it. Create it.