

Language features and structure of an exposition

Purpose of an exposition

To present one side of an argument and persuade the reader or listener to agree or take action to solve the problem

Exposition or arguments can be presented as:

- essays
- editorials
- letters to the editor
- speeches

An exposition or argument includes particular language features. Aim to include some of these features in your exposition.

Conjunctions (or joining words) join one part of a sentence to another. They link the flow of the argument	<i>so, and so, because, therefore, if, and, but</i>
Modal verbs express the writer's attitude to the topic	<i>can, could, should, must, might</i>
Evaluative language suggests the degree of approval or helps compare ideas	<i>important, best, most, truth, largest, more popular</i>
Thinking verbs	<i>know, believe, feel, people think, agreed</i>
Connective words link ideas in an argument	<i>firstly, for that reason, for example, as a consequence, because of this, in particular, therefore, finally</i>

There are three main parts to an exposition. Your writing will be clear if you follow this structure.

Statement of position

Introduce the topic and make it clear what your position is. You need:

- a strong opening sentence that provokes your reader's interest or captures your reader's attention
- an overview of your thesis (or argument) on the topic and the points you will make.

Provide a brief outline of the key points to be covered by your argument. This gives your reader a preview of where you are going to take them. This also enables you to show the reader that your exposition is structured logically.

Argument

In this section you can make a number of points. Begin each paragraph with a key statement or general statement. Give supporting reasons in the rest of the paragraph.

Then make a new point in the opening sentence of the next paragraph and give supporting reasons, and so on.

Reinforcement of the statement of position

Sum up your argument. You could make a statement about what you see as a solution to the problem or what might happen if the situation is not resolved. You could call for some form of action from the audience.