Classification/Division Checklist

⇨ Does your thesis statement include categories/parts of the whole and the significance for the reader?

⇨ Do your categories result from the same principle?

⇨ Are your categories parallel?

⇨ Do you provide a description for each category in the body paragraphs?

⇨ Do you give examples in each body paragraph?

⇨ Do you use appropriate transitions?

⇨ Are your divisions and classifications meaningful?

Works Cited

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The Writing Center

Room: BACA 207

Phone: 813-259-6598

E-mail: myascbrandon@hccfl.edu

The Writing Center

Classification/ Division Essay

813-259-6598

Brandon Academic Success Center at Hillsborough Community College

Classification/ Division

How Do I Recognize Classification/ Division?

Topics that ask you to classify and divide can be recognized by several key words or phrases: what kinds?, what types?, categorize and, of course, classify and divide.

You might be asked to write a classification/division essay in a science course like anatomy or biology or in a business or economics course.

What Is Classification?

Classification is the process of sorting individual items or ideas into categories. For a classification essay, it is beneficial to consider the characteristics of the categories as you consider how these items or ideas may fit into each.

How might a classification essay work? One way it might work is to sort or order your categories according to a specific standard. Another way to classify would be to determine how an item or idea might or might not fit into a category.

For example, you could rank sports based on the levels of energy exerted within the sport. However, you could also write a classification essay about why ballet should be considered a sport based on the level of energy one must exert to dance.

In both cases the writer must examine the categories of sports based on how much energy an individual might use during that sport. Also, in both cases, examples will be key to assist the reader in understanding how this classification works and the main argument of the thesis.

What Is Division?

Division breaks down a whole into its parts. A division essay will take complex ideas or topics and break them down. A division essay will focus on how the individual parts are separated under a single idea.

How might a division essay work? The easiest way to think about a division essay is by explaining a complicated topic by breaking it down into easier to understand parts or categories.

For example, you might start with the large class of movies and break it down into these categories: drama, action, and comedy. In doing so, you might be trying to demonstrate the diversity of the movies created. Remember that examples will demonstrate your point for the reader.

When Writing a Classification/ Division Essay:

- Create categories that result from the same principle. i.e., if you are dividing students into their majors you would not include a category called freshman students.
- Make sure categories are on the same level. i.e., if you are classifying students based on their major you would not want to have one category called English majors and another, more specific, one called evolutionary biology.
- Don't overlap categories/parts of the whole.
- Don't omit important categories/parts of the whole.

Transitions Used in Classification:

Can be divided	the first type
Can be classified	the second type
Can be categorized	the last category

Outline:

Introduction:
- Make sure you define or explain the categories in the introduction
- Thesis: make sure the thesis clearly states the categories you will discuss and why they should matter to your reader

Body Paragraph(s):
- Use specific examples to demonstrate the categories or parts of a while that you are examining
- Discuss each category or part of the whole in a separate paragraph
- Be sure to include all important categories.
- Use transitions between ideas and paragraphs
- Make sure your ideas in each paragraph are parallel

Conclusion:
- Wrap up your paper: Summarize and restate the thesis.
- Don't forget to remind the reader of the reasons why these categories and division should matter
- If any elements might not fit into your classification or division, make sure you acknowledge them in your conclusion and explain why

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