Extended Definition Assignment
Extended Definition Paper
100 points

Adapted from Paragraphs and Essays by Lee Brandon

D: DELVE

Using the word you chose in class, explore it in an extended definition of 500-600 words.

Do not start writing your paper. Instead, DELVE into the term. (Prewriting Assignment 1-3)
Read its dictionary definition. Read some quotes about it. Brainstorm what people tend to think of when your term comes to mind. Let your thoughts roam as you DELVE into your subject.

When you feel immersed in your topic, you are ready to move forward!

C: CONCENTRATE

Concentrate your work by stating your word in one sentence that is not too broad, narrow, or vague to be developed. Use your DELVE stage to guide you toward this statement of guiding purpose. You may have to try several statements here before you formulate one that is best for your writing task. Be sure your statement creates Focus, Unity, and Direction for your paper. This sentence may become part of your paper—the opening line? —the last line in the opening paragraph?

O: ORGANIZE

Consider the information you gathered during your DELVE process. Sketch an outline of the organizational pattern you will use to analyze your term. This outline should indicate a division of your topic into parts that will, in turn, be further divided for support, as necessary.

D: DRAFT

Only now are you ready to begin drafting your paper. As you draft, remember that effective writing is CONSISTENT, expresses ideas LOGICALLY, is precise and CLEAR, and follows CONVENTIONS.
Definition Essay Scoring Rubric

Name: __________________________________________________________ Period: ______________________

_____ of 10  The definition is well-focused & identified by its term, class, and distinguishing characteristics.

_____ of 10  The essay is powerfully organized and developed for purpose and audience.

_____ of 20  Each paragraph/section is clearly identified by a topic sentence(s) & flows well with good transitions.

_____ of 20  Each topic of the definition is well-developed with examples, illustrations, explanations, &/or descriptions.

_____ of 10  The essay maintains a clear and consistent tone.

_____ of 20  The essay’s style is interesting with intelligent sentence and diction variety.

_____ of 10  The essay is virtually free of surface errors.

_____ of 100  Total

Comments:
Take some time and just focus on the definition of your chosen word. Write 2-3 paragraphs discussing what your word really is or how you define it. (Use the space below under “Freewrite”.)

Word:

Dictionary Definition:

Freewrite:
Now that you have defined the word, find ten quotes about your word. Make sure you give the author credit.

Example: “Indifference, to me, is the epitome of evil.” - Elie Wiesel
Now that you’ve explained what your concept is, talk about what it is not and why it’s important. Answer the questions below. Develop at least 2 paragraphs for this prewriting.

How do people misinterpret it or misunderstand it?

Why is it important to understand this concept?

How does knowing exactly what it is help us appreciate or achieve it more?
Now that you've explained what your concept is and what it is not, answer the prompts below. (You can use additional sheets, if needed.)

Why did you choose this word?

What personal experiences have you had that support your definition?

What have you read, within this class, that supports your definition? (If any) Explain.
I. Introduction

A. Attention Getter - Quote from Prewriting #2

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

B. Dictionary Definition

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

C. Thesis Statement - Your definition

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

II. Body

A. Background Information: Why did you choose this word?

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
B. Part One

1. The first part of your definition of the term.

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

2. Example to illustrate that point. Personal story, quote, etc.

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

3. Analysis of how the example illustrates the point.

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

C. Part Two

1. The second part of your definition of the term.

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

2. Example to illustrate that point. Personal story, quote, etc.

________________________________________________________________________________
3. Analysis of how the example illustrates the point.

C. Part Three

1. The third part of your definition of the term.

2. Example to illustrate that point. Personal story, quote, etc.

3. Analysis of how the example illustrates the point.

III. Conclusion
A. Review Your Definition

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

B. Closing Attention Getter

1. Sometimes a reference back to the introduction is a good way of unifying the entire essay.
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

2. Quote
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
Introduction Paragraphs are like Free Samples

**Objective:** I can write an engaging introductory paragraph that clearly states my claim (thesis) and all other necessary background information.

When a customer can't decide whether or not to buy a food item, the store will sometimes give a free sample to persuade them. Restaurants and business owners know that sometimes you have to hook the buyer with a little taste so that they will crave even more!

Introduction paragraphs are like those free samples: they HOOK the reader and get them ADDICTED for more. It's not just about having a great opening line; you also need to convince the reader to keep going.

A free bite of ice cream is also ACCURATE. It's the same exact ingredients that the full serving has - just a smaller dose of it. This way, the reader gets a tiny preview to make them continue on and “buy” (read) your essay. The thesis statement provided in the intro paragraph will be fully proven later on in the essay, and your goal is to tempt a reader to read on and see how you will pull it off. (More on thesis statements later.)

**Check out these examples: how do they MAINTAIN your attention?**

**Argumentative Essay: Literary Analysis**
The population of China is four times bigger than the population of the United States. Is that a problem? Some say no – the American military alone could withstand any attempt to take over the country. Others say that, even if both countries retain their separate independence, China’s size and ongoing growth are serious economic or political problems. If China can prove that communism is a valid form of government, then Socialism could spread as it once did in the 1980s, undermining years of work negotiating democracy and ideals of independence around the world. In this argument, one author, Lois Lowry, is loud and clear in her novel *The Giver*: Communism will never be as utopian as it seems because it sacrifices too much individual freedom.

**Informative Essay**
Hearing music is relaxing to many, but playing music has even more physical benefits than simply listening to it. Further, drumming has possibly the most advantages for your health; percussionists, whether professionals or amateurs, experience an increase in endorphins, a decrease in the stress hormone cortisol, a regulation of the heartbeat, as well as physical movement and exercise. All of these physical reactions make drummers happier, calmer, and healthier people, and if done consistently over time, humans can reap the benefits even more. Drumming is widely considered to be a healthy activity due to its impacts on stress, relaxation, and exercise.

**As you annotate these paragraphs, ask yourself:**
- Where is the thesis statement located?
- Where is the hook? Which one is more successful, and why?
- What do you think will be discussed in each essay? How do you know?
Recipe for a good Introduction:

1. **The mix-ins (the hook):** Seize my taste buds' attention with an interesting fact or question.
2. **The ice cream (context or reasons):** This is the majority of your intro paragraph and what holds it all together. Provide any context I will need to understand what you’re writing about and why, AND/OR preview what your main points are going to be.
3. **The spoon (thesis statement):** Just like a spoon actually delivers the important stuff (the food) to your mouth, a thesis statement carries the main message to the reader.

Words of Caution:

- **Don’t give away too much for free.** Introductions that are TOO long lose our attention, AND they also are probably stating too much info that could be saved for a body paragraph later!

- **Don’t hand us the wrong flavor.** If I want chocolate ice cream, don’t hand me blueberry! Make sure your intro actually previews what the essay will be about and that they "match."

Your turn! 😊

**Write your paragraph in the space below.**

**Checklist: Does your paragraph...**

- Grab my attention with a hook?
- Give me any **background information** that I need to understand this topic?
- Give me any **previews** of what you will discuss in your essay?
- Finish with a strong, clear **thesis statement** to make me keep reading?

**Exit Ticket:** Summarize what you learned today. What are the MOST important things to remember about introduction paragraphs?
Thesis Statements are like Menus

Objective: I can describe the purpose and traits of a successful thesis statement.

Why are English teachers so picky about thesis statements? Why do we care about how it is worded, where it belongs in a paragraph, how formally written it is, or whether or not you even have one?

A thesis statement is a single statement that is the focus of the entire writing piece; it is the main claim that we must prove (persuasive) or fact that we must explain (informative).

Why do we need one?

- Imagine that you are a reader. You’ve been hooked by the opening line, you’ve read the intro, and you can tell what the topic is, but you’re still wondering: where exactly is this going?
- Imagine that you’re a teacher. You have to evaluate (judge) whether or not your student can prove a thesis... but to do that, you have to be able to FIND the thesis without a doubt.
- Imagine that you’re sitting in an audience, and the speaker keeps rambling about a topic. Won’t you eventually want the speech to get to the POINT?
- Imagine that you’re reading an article. If you can find out EARLY what the piece is REALLY about, won’t that help you decide whether or not to keep reading?

Thesis statements give the ENTIRE essay purpose. Without one, the essay doesn’t make a clear point.

What do thesis statements do?

Can you tell me why the following analogies COULD make sense? Why is a thesis statement LIKE...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A conductor?</th>
<th>(Of a band, choir, or orchestra)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A spine?</td>
<td>(Of a human body)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A map?</td>
<td>(Or even a GPS...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A shocking news headline?</td>
<td>(Or a dramatic title)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Can you think of another one? Tell me why a thesis statement is like a...

| __________ |

What are the rules for them?

- **What**: a single sentence, either a fact (informative) or an opinion (argumentative)
- **Where**: the last sentence in the introduction paragraph (usually*)
- **Formally written**: based on the genre...
  - Informative: the fact is stated objectively with carefully neutral, factual tone.
  - Persuasive: the opinion is confidently stated; no wimpy “I think” or “I believe” statements.

*Please note that some teachers are completely fine with putting a thesis statement somewhere else. This is just a beginner’s guideline. Always check with a teacher and/or boss if you’re not sure.
How exactly do you "prove" a thesis?

In a way, thesis statements are like menus: a promise of what is to come.

However, readers (and eaters) still need the meal itself. A promise isn’t enough; the chef/writer have to DELIVER, give us our money/time’s worth, make us satisfied, and make us want to either keep reading or come back for more!

Here’s how it works:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In restaurant meals...</th>
<th>In essays (and some articles)...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The menu</strong> makes a promise about a specific meal: the ingredients AND the overall meal.</td>
<td><strong>The thesis statement</strong> is a snapshot or promise of the overall argument to come.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Free samples</strong> are sometimes given to persuade the buyer to purchase a meal or product.</td>
<td>The <strong>introduction</strong> previews the topic, the thesis, the context, and sometimes the reasons why.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each <strong>course</strong> of the meal (appetizers, salads/soups, entrees) is served.</td>
<td>The <strong>body paragraphs</strong> each prove a supporting point of the thesis overall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Waiters</strong> take away old plates, refill cups, and bring each new set of food.</td>
<td><strong>Transitions</strong> connect the sentences WITHIN paragraphs as well as ACROSS the paragraphs themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dessert</strong> is served, and the overall meal is complete; diners feel that the promise has been fulfilled.</td>
<td>The <strong>conclusion</strong> paragraph paraphrases the thesis and the biggest supporting points (probably the topic sentences) to review and summarize.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In other words, the thesis statement gets SAID early, but it is reinforced throughout each body paragraph AND also gets paraphrased at the end (in the conclusion).

So, what does a good thesis LOOK like?

Thesis statements are ONE sentence and are specific, formal statements that preview what is to come.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version #1: Not Great</th>
<th>Version #2: Better</th>
<th>Why...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tornadoes are dangerous. They cause more monetary damage to communities than any other type of weather.</td>
<td>Tornadoes are dangerous because they cause more monetary damage to communities than any other type of weather.</td>
<td>One sentence only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think that we should get to use our cell phones in class because they help with safety, studying, and communication.</td>
<td>Students should be allowed to use cell phones in class because they help with safety, studying, and communication.</td>
<td>No personal pronouns (I, you, he, she, it, we, they)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country music is awesome.</td>
<td>Country music is a popular genre because of its instruments, its relatable topics, and its American heritage.</td>
<td>More specific (previews the reasons)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damage is done to football players’ brains every year.</td>
<td>Football is America’s most dangerous sport due to the increase in concussions and long-term damage.</td>
<td>Second version is clearer and makes a claim</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Practice: Your Turn!

Is your thesis...

- One sentence only?
- Clearly stating the main opinion and/or fact?
- Previewing the reasons why?
- Formal (no personal pronouns)?
Create the introduction of your definition paper. It should include: thesis statement, hook, preview of the points.
Body Paragraphs are like Courses (in a Meal)

At this point…

∙ **...in a meal**, you’ve given the diners menus that promise a certain dish, and possibly a free sample or photograph of what it’s supposed to look like.

∙ **...in an essay**, you’ve made a big claim or thesis statement and given a preview of the essay in the introduction paragraph.

Now, it’s time to give the people what they ordered and keep your promise! J

**Why do we need body paragraphs?**

The body paragraphs are the true meal, the part where you make or break the essay. Even if you did a great job stating an opinion in the introduction, you still need to prove those big ideas you mentioned.

**Body paragraphs should do two things:**

1. Match the thesis statement (the promise): If you said you were going to deliver a double cheeseburger, then bring it to the table!
   a. **Example**: If you stated in the thesis that cheetahs are the most dangerous animal in the wild today, then your body paragraphs need to stay focused on keywords like cheetah, danger, wild, today/21st century, etc.
   b. Don’t go on a completely unrelated detour that strays too far from what the thesis statement PROMISED you would discuss.

2. Make a new point (make a balanced plate): If you promised a dinner, don’t only give three bread rolls; people expect a variety of food on the plate, like an entrée, side dishes, and more!
   a. **Example**: In your three body paragraphs, don’t restate the same reasons three times. (Don’t give us three different paragraphs that only talk about how fast cheetahs are. It will get boring.) Essay readers expect a variety of reasons/proof for your topic.
   b. Each new body paragraph should bring up a new, different point about the topic that will help prove that thesis statement.

**But why do I have to write (at least) 3 of them?**

Have you ever noticed that a lot of meals work in threes?

∙ **Larger, fancier meals** often have at LEAST three courses: bread, appetizer, soup or salad, and THEN a full dinner plate!

∙ **Even the simpler meals** have more than one food type on the plate: a meat or entrée and multiple side dishes (like vegetables, starches and carbs, etc.)

∙ **Fast food** usually works in trios: burger, fries, and a drink!

If a healthy, balanced meal has variety, then shouldn’t your essay, too?
Let's Review: The Formula for Body Paragraphs

Although some teachers and writers HATE feeling restricted by “boring” formulas, there are some things that we expect to see in the body paragraphs of academic essays:

1. **A topic sentence**: ONE sentence that CLEARLY states what the topic will be about (and ideally, how it connects to the thesis statement).
2. **Middle sentences**: a combination of reasons, evidence/facts, and explanations or analysis that PROVE the topic sentence you just listed in a super-focused way. (We will discuss evidence later.)
3. **Concluding sentence**: Either restate the topic sentence, summarize the paragraph you just wrote, or start to bridge to the next topic. (Ideally, you would also list a transition sentence after or with the concluding sentence, but we are talking about that in another lesson too. J)

Let’s write them now!

Write your body paragraphs in the space below for your current essay. Use the checklist on the left to make sure you've included everything!

**First Paragraph**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COPY your <strong>thesis statement</strong> here so you don’t lose focus or forget to prove it.</th>
<th>&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Does my paragraph…

- Have a focused **topic sentence** that makes a new point about the thesis?
- Have multiple **sentences of reasons and evidence** that prove the topic sentence?
- Ended with a **conclusion of that paragraph and/or a transition**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leading into the next one?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

## Second Paragraph

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COPY your thesis statement here so you don't lose focus or forget to prove it.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Does my paragraph...
  - Have a focused **topic sentence** that makes a new point about the thesis?
  - Have multiple **sentences of reasons and evidence** that prove the topic sentence?
  - Ended with a **conclusion of that paragraph and/or a transition** leading into the next one?

## Third Paragraph

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COPY your thesis statement here so you don't lose focus or forget to prove it.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
- Does my paragraph...
  - Have a focused **topic sentence** that makes a new point about the thesis?

- Have multiple **sentences of reasons and evidence** that prove the topic sentence?

- Ended with a **conclusion of that paragraph and/or a transition** leading into the next one?
Conclusion Paragraphs are Like Dessert

Although desserts taste delicious at any time of day, there’s a reason why we eat them after dinner: they’re the grand finales that leave us with a good impression of the meal we just had. Mmm…

Your conclusion should also leave us feeling content, impressed, and maybe even inspired. Even if all the body paragraphs are fantastic, if you put a boring or incomplete conclusion at the end, the reader will walk away with a negative final impression of your work. (Gasp.) This is why some restaurants give free mints or chocolates with your check: customer satisfaction and building a positive reputation!

Recipe for a good conclusion:

1. **Pie crust**: Restate the thesis using new words (paraphrasing)
2. **Cheesecake**: Review the major points of the essay concisely and using new words
3. **Whipped cream**: Mention the legacy, significance, lessons we can learn, or other “takeaways” (the “so what”)
4. **Strawberry garnish**: A final statement that is either a call to action (argumentative), or a more subtle closing thought (informative)

Words of caution…

- **Think about portion control.** You don’t want the reader to still feel hungry (too short) or stuffed to the point that she’s going to be sick (too long).
- **Stay consistent** with the tone/style of the paper. Don’t suddenly shift into wording that is more or less formal than before.
- **Do not introduce brand new facts for the first time.** Rather, this is the time to analyze facts that were already stated, restate them, or maybe even synthesize multiple facts to make big general statements.
- Don’t let anything in your conclusion be random or off-topic.
This is where you will write your final paper. Copy and paste your introduction and body paragraphs to this page. Then write your conclusion.

Requirements: 12pt Times New Roman, 500-600 words