



## Language of Essays - Definitions

<b>Account for</b>	Give reasons for...
<b>Analyse</b>	Find the main idea/s of something by breaking it down into parts and discussing the importance of each part in detail and the way they are interrelated. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses.
<b>Argue</b>	Put forward the reasons and evidence for a particular viewpoint.
<b>Comment on</b>	Present your opinion. Discuss, criticise and explain the ideas.
<b>Compare</b>	Look for and discuss qualities and characteristics which are similar and different (focus mostly on similarities).
<b>Contrast</b>	Look for and discuss qualities and characteristics which are different.
<b>Criticise</b>	Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of opinions, give your views and discuss the evidence. How true is it and why?
<b>Define</b>	Give the <b>exact</b> meaning of a word, phrase or idea. Establish the boundaries of a topic. Show that the distinctions implied within the definition are necessary.
<b>Derive</b>	Present a logical sequence of steps to arrive at an expression, equation or result
<b>Describe</b>	Represent, picture or portray; say what something is. Give a vivid, detailed 'word picture' of the characteristics of a subject. Give a detailed account.
<b>Determine</b>	Arrive at an answer, showing necessary steps or strategies.
<b>Diagram</b>	A labelled drawing, chart, graph or plan.
<b>Discuss</b>	Consider a topic from various points of view. Investigate or give a detailed examination of a topic by means of argument, debating the pros and cons and implications.
<b>Distinguish, Differentiate</b>	List the ideas and say how they differ from each other.
<b>Draw</b>	Depict an object, idea or system pictorially in a clearly defined diagram or flowchart.
<b>Enumerate</b>	Give a list of the facts or elements of a topic. Outline, specify and describe.

<b>Evaluate</b>	Establish the value, quality, importance, merit, relevance, or appropriateness of something. Such judgment should be extensively supported by pertinent evidence.
<b>Examine</b>	Present the case in depth and investigate the implications.
<b>Explain</b>	Make clear; make known in detail. Clarify, interpret and spell out your arguments. In explaining the topic in detail, present a detailed account of the causes that appear to be relevant in understanding the present situation.
<b>Expound</b>	Make a clear and convincing argument for a definite and detailed opinion.
<b>Find</b>	Arrive at an answer by your own strategy, unless otherwise specified.
<b>Generalise</b>	Make a general statement on the basis of evidence given.
<b>Identify</b>	Establish or select.
<b>Illustrate Exemplify</b>	Support or disprove a general statement by providing a specific instance or example. Use concrete examples to explain your argument, if possible using appropriate diagrams.
<b>Indicate</b>	Clearly name or state the relevant points, or mark a feature on a diagram.
<b>Interpret</b>	Attempt to bring out the meaning of an issue or a topic and make it clear.
<b>Justify</b>	Provide sound reasons, examples or evidence for point of view or to support conclusions. Prove or demonstrate the truth or falsity of a claim, or why certain decisions or actions were taken.
<b>List</b>	Make a list.
<b>Narrate</b>	Tell the story or give an account of an event or experience.
<b>Outline</b>	Briefly identify and outline systematically the main points or features of a topic. The emphasis should be on structure and relationship; leave out minor details.
<b>Present</b>	Put forward for consideration.
<b>Prove</b>	Provide factual evidence or use logical reasoning to demonstrate the truth or falsity of a claim or issue.

<b>Quote</b>	Repeat words from another person or source.
<b>Relate</b>	Show how facts are connected to each other.
<b>Review</b>	Survey a subject critically, emphasising the key points, analysing it and commenting on it.
<b>Show</b>	Include all intermediate steps in your calculations or argument.
<b>Sketch</b>	Give an overview of the main points without unnecessary detail.
<b>State</b>	Present the issue or view clearly and concisely without providing examples or details.
<b>Suggest</b>	Propose.
<b>Summarise</b>	Give a brief account of the main points in the right order, without details or examples.
<b>Trace</b>	Identify and describe the development of something from its origin.
<b>Transcribe</b>	Write your own accurate copy.
<b>Verify</b>	Validate a particular result.

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Acknowledgment of Sources:

Assignments: Directive words 2003, Charles Darwin University, viewed 10 June 2006, <[http://learnline.cdu.edu.au/studyskills/as/as\\_es\\_to\\_de\\_di.html](http://learnline.cdu.edu.au/studyskills/as/as_es_to_de_di.html)>.

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