

English 092 Unit 1.4

English 092 Classification Paragraph Assignment

Write a classification paragraph of between 150 and 250 words on a topic of your choice.

Note that the sample paragraph is written from the **first person (I) perspective**. You may use the first person or third person for your classification paragraph, but **most later work should be written in the third person**. See page 396 in your text for a short explanation of person agreement.

Writing Guidelines and Sample Paragraph

1. Your paragraph should have a **clear topic sentence**.
2. Your topic should be broken into **at least three distinct types or categories**.
3. You should clearly identify **a few distinct characteristics of each type** in your paragraph.
4. Your concluding sentence should give a **sense of completion**. For example, in a paragraph in which you classify bikes, you might conclude with, "Now that you're aware of the differences between mountain bikes, hybrid bikes and racing bikes, you're ready to go looking for your next bike."

Classification Writing Tips

Purpose	Method of Development	Writing Tips
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To explain something by dividing it into types, groups, or categories	Classification	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make sure the categories you are grouping are of roughly equal value. Examples:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Types of athletes: pros, competitive amateurs, recreational, armchair○ Types of parenting: disciplinarian, liberal, hands-off

A classification paragraph or essay:

- **explains a subject by dividing into types or categories**

Although we may not think about it much, we are constantly classifying things by breaking them into types, groups or categories. By classifying things, we better

understand the distinct qualities of two subjects in the same general group. If we are shopping for a new bicycle, we have probably gone through a process of classification. Do we want a road bike, a mountain bike, or a hybrid bike? By breaking down the larger category of bikes into different types of bikes, we are better able to understand the key features of different types of bikes and choose the type that best suits our needs.

Begin your classification paragraph or essay by breaking down your subject into at least three distinct groups or categories. Examples: types of parenting styles could include strict, liberal, and permissive; types of video games could include role-playing, simulation, and shoot-em-up; types of dogs could include family pets, show dogs, and working dogs. However you break down your topic you should identify the basis for the classification. What are the qualities that distinguish each of your categories? If you are classifying drivers you might group them into reckless, sensible, and overly cautious. Your basis for classification then would be **how they drive**. You might point to some specific examples to illustrate some of their driving behaviours and you might make the link between driving styles and personality.

Note how the writer in “Tattoo You” has used classification to provide a humorous picture of annoying clientele in her tattoo studio.

Sample Classification Paragraph

Tattoo You

Having worked in a tattoo studio for the past year, I have come to recognize three types of annoying customers that invariably stroll through the door. The first is the Time Waster. Generally the Time Waster is not serious about getting a tattoo now, or probably ever, but nevertheless is hell-bent on wasting the artist’s time with a barrage of inane questions. They often talk big and have grandiose plans for the ultimate backpiece. But when it comes time to put down a deposit for the work, they suddenly say something like, “That sounds great. I’ll be back in six months when my next student loan comes in.” Meanwhile, the artist has started drawing the design while three serious clients went to another less “busy” studio. The next type of annoying client is the Know-it-all. These people usually have a friend with a tattoo, or maybe even a small one themselves, and therefore consider themselves to be experts on the subject. They contradict the artist on everything, and insist on using words they’ve heard in a movie because they think it makes them sound in the know. What they don’t realize, however, is that those in the know would never use a word like “tatty” to describe the art. Finishing up the list of types of annoying tattoo studio customers is the Bargain Hunter. The Bargain Hunters clearly believe that when having a design committed to their skin for life, getting the lowest price is the top priority. Bargain Hunters often have a “buddy” from some disreputable source—like their kitchen table—who “would do it much cheaper.” What all these people don’t seem to realize is that tattooing is a serious art form that artists dedicate their lives to learning and executing. A little respect and some manners would be appreciated.