

# **Writing a Classification Essay**

# Classification Paragraph

## A. Choosing a Topic

The first thing you need when you start writing an essay is a topic and some ideas.

**TASK:** Read the topics on the next page and highlight the ones you find most interesting (2-5 topics). If you like, write your own topic(s) at the bottom of the list.

**TASK:** Choose one of the topics you highlighted and make notes on these questions:

1. Why is this topic interesting to you?
2. What are **three kinds/types/groups** related to your topic?

e.g. *Books* could be divided into: Fiction; Non-fiction; (Auto)Biography

- Books
- Universities
- Paintings
- Websites
- Foreign Countries
- Pets
- Marriage
- Restaurants
- Vacations
- Careers
- Shopping Areas
- Information Technology
- Weddings
- Funerals
- Festivals
- Sports
- Payment Methods
- Leaders
- Traditional Japanese Culture
- Delivery Services
- Parents
- Movies
- Footwear
- Cities
- Domestic Appliances
- Music
- Motorcycles
- Watches
- Cars
- Houses
- Hotels
- Onsen

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**NOTES**

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\*The purpose of any classification essay is to explain a topic clearly by dividing it into logical parts. Above we saw how the topic of **books** can be divided into *Fiction*, *Non-fiction* and *(Auto)biography*. However, you could have decided to focus on genre instead, e.g. *Science Fiction*, *Historical Fiction*, *Murder Mystery*. Which way of dividing you choose will depend on your focus which will depend on your interest or what it is you want to explain (your purpose).

\*Another method of classifying is to take a series of seemingly random ideas and organize them into groups.

**TASK:** Organize the following sports into three logical groups:

Judo, Football, F1 Racing, Volleyball, Rally Driving, Tennis, Greek Wrestling, Powerboat Racing, Rugby, Boxing, Lacrosse, Motorcycle Racing, Kendo

Group 1 \_\_\_\_\_(group name):

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Group 2: \_\_\_\_\_(group name):

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Group 3: \_\_\_\_\_(group name):

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Possible answer on the next page:

Group 1: **Ball Sports**

Football, Volleyball, Tennis, Rugby, Lacrosse

Group 2: **Motor Sports**

F1 Racing, Rally Driving, Powerboat Racing, Motorcycle Racing

Group 3: **Fighting Sports**

Judo, Greek Wrestling, Boxing, Kendo

**C. Analysing a Classification Paragraph**

Once you have decided on your topic and how to divide it into sections (your sub-topics) you are ready to start writing. The format is basically the same as for the persuasive essay: Attention-getter; Background; Thesis statement (in this case your purpose); Guide to the sub-topics); Three sub-topics followed by detail sentences; Concluding sentence

**TASK:** Read the model classification paragraph on the next page and answer the questions/follow the instructions:

1. Underline the attention-getter
2. Draw a box around the background sentences
3. Summarize the Thesis/purpose \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Underline the guide sentence

5. Identify the sub-topics:

i/ \_\_\_\_\_

ii/ \_\_\_\_\_

iii/ \_\_\_\_\_

6. Underline the concluding sentence

## Make the Most of the Gift of Summer

The summer holidays are a precious time for everyone. In particular, students and teachers are lucky enough to have around six weeks when there are no classes to take and no papers to grade. None of us knows when this happy situation might end, with the starting of a busy job with less holidays, the beginning of family responsibilities or some other unpredictable event that life may bring us. I therefore want to take a look at the various ways available to make the most of the upcoming summer holidays. In my opinion there are three basic ways to maximize your summer: focus on your future, focus on friends and family, seek adventure and novelty. Firstly, you could focus on your future. You might decide to put in more hours at your part-time job and save money to spend on a future trip or something you have been longing to buy. You might want to commit to practicing more with your club of choice and maybe going with fellow members to a camp or competition. Or you might decide to knuckle down and study hard at some subject which you think will benefit your future career goals. However, if you are not feeling so ambitious right now and instead want to relax and enjoy the coming holidays, a second option would be to spend plenty of time with friends and family. This is something I love to do and I often go back to my country, England, at this time of year and visit my father, brother and sister in our home town of Cambridge. This also gives me the chance to catch up with old friends and revisit places from my childhood. When I come back to Japan I always feel refreshed and invigorated after reconnecting with the people I love the most and know the best. A final option, for the bold and adventurous, is to use the opportunity presented by summer holidays to do something you have never tried before. Perhaps you want to do something really radical such as a bungee jump or a sky dive, or maybe it's something as simple as visiting a new city or going to a weekend music festival. In my case I am hoping to go to St. Andrews in Scotland for the first time and watch the women golfers I have seen so often on TV play golf live at The Open. Whatever you decide to do with your summer, remember what the great writer Art Buchwald once said: "Whether this is the best of times or the worst of times, it's the only time we've got." Make the most of it!

Answers on the following page:

## Make the Most of the Gift of Summer

The summer holidays are a precious time for everyone. **(Attention-getter)** In particular, students and teachers are lucky enough to have around six weeks when there are no classes to take and no papers to grade. None of us knows when this happy situation might end, with the starting of a busy job with less holidays, the beginning of family responsibilities or some other unpredictable event that life may bring us. **(Background)** I therefore want to take a look at the various ways available to make the most of the upcoming summer holidays. **(Thesis/Purpose)** In my opinion there are three basic ways to maximize your summer: focus on your future, focus on friends and family, seek adventure and novelty. **(Guide)** Firstly, you could focus on your future **(Sub-topic 1)**. You might decide to put in more hours at your part-time job and save money to spend on a future trip or something you have been longing to buy. You might want to commit to practicing more with your club of choice and maybe going with fellow members to a camp or competition. Or you might decide to knuckle down and study hard at some subject which you think will benefit your future career goals. However, if you are not feeling so ambitious right now and instead want to relax and enjoy the coming holidays, a second option would be to spend plenty of time with friends and family **(Sub-topic 2)**. This is something I love to do and I often go back to my country, England, at this time of year and visit my father, brother and sister in our home town of Cambridge. This also gives me the chance to catch up with old friends and revisit places from my childhood. When I come back to Japan I always feel refreshed and invigorated after reconnecting with the people I love the most and know the best. A final option, for the bold and adventurous, is to use the opportunity presented by summer holidays to do something you have never tried before **(Sub-topic 3)**. Perhaps you want to do something really radical such as a bungee jump or a sky dive, or maybe it's something as simple as visiting a new city or going to a weekend music festival. In my case I am hoping to go to St. Andrews in Scotland for the first time and watch the women golfers I have seen so often on TV play golf live at The Open. **Whatever you decide to do with your summer, remember what the great writer Art Buchwald once said: "Whether this is the best of times or the worst of times, it's the only time we've got."** **Make the most of it! (Concluding sentence(s))**





## D. Writing a Classification Essay

1. When you have written your classification paragraph using this way of organizing (Attention-getter, background etc.), it is quite easy to turn it into an essay. All you have to do is to separate the 5 parts (Introduction; Body 1; Body 2; Body 3; Conclusion)

### Make the Most of the Gift of Summer

#### INTRODUCTION:

**The summer holidays are a precious time for everyone.** **(Attention-getter)** In particular, students and teachers are lucky enough to have around six weeks when there are no classes to take and no papers to grade. None of us knows when this happy situation might end, with the starting of a busy job with less holidays, the beginning of family responsibilities or some other unpredictable event that life may bring us. **(Background)** I therefore want to take a look at the various ways available to make the most of the upcoming summer holidays. **(Thesis/Purpose)** In my opinion there are three basic ways to maximize your summer: focus on your future, focus on friends and family, seek adventure and novelty. **(Guide)**

#### BODY 1

Firstly, you could focus on your future **(Sub-topic 1)**. You might decide to get a part-time job (or put in more hours at your current job) and save money to spend on a future trip or something you have been longing to buy. Or you might want to commit to practicing more with your club of choice and maybe going with fellow members to a camp or competition. Alternatively, you might decide to knuckle down and study hard at some subject which you think will benefit your future career goals. If you decide you want to make money there are many options. The Japan Living Guide, (2023) lists several jobs which you can choose based on your needs. For example, teaching English or Mathematics in a *Juku* (after school study classroom) or sorting and packing in a warehouse run by Amazon or Rakuten will pay a **higher hourly rate** than other jobs. On the other hand, working in a restaurant or as an event staff will give you **the opportunity to meet a wide variety of people**. Finally, convenience store or food delivery work requires **little or no experience** and offers **flexible working hours** to suit your schedule.

## BODY 2

However, if you are not feeling so ambitious right now and instead want to relax and enjoy the coming holidays, a second option would be to spend plenty of time with friends and family(**Sub-topic 2**). This is something I love to do and I often go back to my country, England, at this time of year and visit my father, brother and sister in our home town of Cambridge. This also gives me the chance to catch up with old friends and revisit places from my childhood. When I come back to Japan I always feel refreshed and invigorated after reconnecting with the people I love the most and know the best.

## BODY 3

A final option, for the bold and adventurous, is to use the opportunity presented by summer holidays to do something you have never tried before (**Sub-topic 3**). Perhaps you want to do something really radical such as a bungee jump or a sky dive, or maybe it's something as simple as visiting a new city or going to a weekend music festival. In my case I am hoping to go to St. Andrews in Scotland for the first time and watch the women golfers I have seen so often on TV play golf live at The Open.

## CONCLUSION

Whatever you decide to do with your summer, remember what the great writer Art Buchwald once said: "Whether this is the best of times or the worst of times, it's the only time we've got." Make the most of it!  
**(Concluding sentence(s))**

NOTE: To make it a longer essay, do some reading about each sub-topic and add information to that body paragraph. For example, I could read something about part-time jobs for students in order to expand my first sub-topic.

## References

1. Japan Living Guide (2023)  
<https://www.japanlivingguide.com/business/jobs-in-japan/jobs-for-students-japan/>