

# Reflection Narrative Paper Format

The format of a reflective essay greatly differs from the argumentative or research paper. A reflective essay is more of a well-structured story or a diary entry that's rife with insight and reflection. You might be required to arrange your essay using the APA style or the MLA format.

And the typical reflection paper length varies between about 300 and 700 words, but make sure to ask your instructor or employer about the word length if it was assigned to you. Even though this essay is about you, you should try to avoid too much informal language.

If your instructor asks you to format your paper in APA or MLA style, here are a few shortcuts:

## Reflective Narrative Essay in MLA Format

- Times New Roman 12 pt font double spaced;
- 1" margins;
- Top right includes last name and page number on every page;
- Titles are centered;
- The header should include your name, your professor's name, course number, and the date (dd/mm/yy);
- Last page includes a Works Cited.

## Reflective Narrative Essay in APA Style

- Times New Roman 12 pt font double spaced;
- 1" margins;
- Include a page header on the top of every page;

- **Insert page number on the right;**
- **Your reflective essay should be divided into four parts: Title Page, Abstract, Main Body, and References.**

## Reflective Narrative Essay Outline

To start organizing your reflective essay, take a look at your brainstorming table. The 'past experience' and 'description' should constitute less than 10% of your essay.

**Your introduction should consist of:**

- **The hook:** grab the reader's attention in a short preview of what you'll be writing about.

Example: We found Buffy head-to-toe covered in tar, starved and fur in patches, under an abandoned garbage truck.

- **Thesis statement:** The reflective essay thesis statement should include that 'past experience' information; a brief statement of what your essay is going to be about.

Example: That summer's volunteering experience at the animal shelter inspired me to pursue this type of work in the future.

The structure of body paragraphs is best discussed in chronological events. Answer the bold questions in the 'reflection' section of the table; this should naturally create a linear storyline.

**Here's an example of what the body paragraph outline should look like:**

- Expectations about the shelter

### **Example:**

I thought it was going to be boring and mundane.

- First impression
- Experience at the shelter

### **Example:**

Finding and rescuing Buffy.

- Other experiences with rescuing animals
- Discoveries

### **Example:**

Newly found passion and feelings toward the work.

- A newly developed mindset

### **Example:**

How your thoughts about animal treatment have changed.

## **Conclusion**

Wrap up your ideas and demonstrate a sense of how you've developed as a result of the experience. Describe your feelings, mention discoveries, and most importantly, plans for the future.

Example: Buffy's case inspired me to pursue a career as a veterinarian, hopefully, one day working in an animal shelter.