



**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICES**

Suite 3/14-16 Central Rd.  
MIRANDA. 2228  
Fax/Tel.9524-2566  
ABN: 21 341 737 580  
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Correspondence to:  
PO Box 420  
Spit Junction. 2088

**ASSIGNMENT PLANNING FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Planning and preparation are the key factors to successfully complete assignments.

In the planning/ preparation phase you need to:

- 1) Plan your time line to complete sections of the assignment so that it is completed before the due date and
- 2) Plan how you are going to actually complete the assignment.

**1) PLANNING YOUR TIME LINE**

Use your diary to record the dates and also put them onto a term planner which should be kept on the wall/ corkboard in front of your desk at home.

- Mark in the due date to hand in the assignment
- Highlight in your diary/put in an alarm on one of your devices, to pack the assignment in your schoolbag the day before
- Mark the date to finish your assignment – this should be the weekend before or 2-3 days before the assignment is due. This allows time for printing (and to make sure there is toner in your printer), and a final proof read of your work.
- Note in your diary that you should be doing some research, reading or summarising for the assignment every night for homework
- The amount of time you have to complete an assignment, will determine the amount of time to complete smaller chunks of the assignment:
  - understanding the question
  - brainstorming ideas
  - research and summarising the information
  - commence bibliography
  - writing
  - proofreading
  - finish bibliography
  - presentation



## 2) PLANNING AND WRITING YOUR RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION

### A) Understanding the Question:

- re-read the question and highlight the main words
- confirm you know the format required (eg: essay, power point presentation etc.)
- check the marking criteria for specific information, format, tables, diagrams etc. that may be required
- ensure that you know any specific instructions that you need to follow or research (eg: you may need to do a science experiment TWICE to compare results; you may need to read a specific article).
- What do you do if you don't understand what to do or what the question means?

### B) Brainstorming Ideas

- Brainstorming is thinking about the question then writing down your ideas of the main issues and any information that answer the question. It is a way of planning how you are going to answer the question.
- Two ways you can do this are to :
  - make a list OR
  - mind mapping
- When using the list format you:
  - Have a heading - a short summary of the question
  - You the list ideas in point form and add any extra ideas under this point
- When using mind mapping:
  - the question is in the centre
  - the ideas are written around the question
- Once you have written down all your ideas, rank them in order of importance, as this will help you to organise the order in which you will write your paragraphs.
- If you don't have any ideas, or only a few, you will have to start reading and researching to be able to make your plan.
- When you have completed your research and created a plan, added more ideas, or deleted ideas which do not seem relevant to the question, you can re-check the order of importance before you commencing writing.



### C) Research

- You need to investigate as many different sources as possible to:
  - provide evidence to support your ideas,;
  - to discover new ideas to answer the question; and
  - to determine if any of your ideas were not correct and need to be modified or deleted.
  
- Where would you begin to look for the information
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- What sources can you look for?
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- Look for key words to search in indexes, not just the general topic
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- Ask the Librarians for assistance of how to look for information on your topic
  
- Gather other useful resources such as tables, photographs, pictures, graphs as you are researching, not just text.
  
- Remember to record what the graph/picture is showing and where it is from, to include in the assignment and bibliography.
  
- If you are using the internet as a source, remember that the information is not always accurate and reliable.
  
- Visit the study skills handbook for tips on researching and what to look out for when using the internet as a source.
  
- What do I do with all this information?
  - Save it onto your computer
  - Take a photocopy or photograph pages (note limit on copying for copyright purposes) then download onto your computer
  - THEN PRINT AS HARD COPY so you are able to read, reread, highlight points, then handwrite your own summary on PAPER.
  - Before you begin the summary make a note of the source or article
  - Begin to file/sort information into the different topics of your argument
  - How can you sort or file the information?



D) **Bibliography:**

- You will need to include a Bibliography at the end of any assignment, but to make sure you have ALL the information that is needed, you should start putting your list together as soon as you begin researching.
- You need to know the specific information to be recorded as there are different formats for different sources of information (eg: books, internet, videos, pamphlets, magazine, newspaper), and it is different for print and electronic versions.
- There are many format styles so always check with your teacher to see if there is a specific method to use.
- Create a page on your PC at the beginning of your research so that you can include the information for each article or book straight away.
- <http://www.sac.sa.edu.au/Library/Library/Bibliography/bibliography.htm> - is a good website with examples for all types of sources.
- If you are reading a book in the library and you don't want to borrow the full book take a photo the cover including the Title and author, a photo of the of the page/s making sure the page number/s are included, and another photo of the publication information. You can then add this information to your list at home.

E) **Writing the draft:**

- Your assignment should be divided into three sections as you would write any essay:
  - Introduction
  - Body
  - Conclusion
- The **introduction** should:
  - provide information on the question
  - outline your argument and
  - outline the main points you will be making
  - After you write the main body of your discussion you can always come back to refine this paragraph to support your information
- The **Body:**
  - Remember to use the PEEL structure when writing your paragraphs  
ie: P – Point  
E – Example/Evidence  
E – Explain  
L - Link
  - Use your priority list as a structure to define the topic of each paragraph
  - Use this in your introductory sentence. (P)
  - Then explain the point further and why it is important - Remember to use your own summary words (E)
  - Use your research to provide evidence for the point you are making (E)
  - If you use a quote from a source remember to put it in quotation marks and reference it.  
eg: “.....” Mason (2012)
  - Conclude the paragraph with a summary sentence relating back to the question (L)

**The Conclusion:**

Summarise your argument/ answer, and relate back to the question



**F) Proof Reading:**

- What is proof reading?
- What can you check?
  - Spelling and Grammar
  - Word limit
  - Are quotes cited correctly
  - Are diagrams, graphs, pictures etc. labelled
  - Is any information repeated
  - Is there enough evidence to support your point
  - Re-read the marking criteria to make sure you have covered everything listed
  - Re-read the introductory paragraph to see if it clearly explains your viewpoint and what you have written in the body of your essay
- Print out the draft to read out loud and to visually judge the layout and presentation of your work.
- Ask someone else (eg: a parent) to read the essay to see if they can understand your points and to look for any errors

**G) Finish Bibliography:**

- If you have been recording your sources as you have been researching, this part will be very easy.
- Check that you have included all the information for each source and that it is listed correctly
- Generally you need to include:
  - Author's Last Name, First Initial. Middle Initial. (Year of Publication). Title of book: Subtitle of book. edition. Place of Publication: Publisher.
- Examples of how to cite a reference in a bibliography:
  - Books:  
Mason, K.J. (2012). Experience of Nationhood: Modern Australia in 1901. (5ed.) Victoria, Australia: Cengage Learning Australia.
  - Internet articles with an author:  
Ward, C 2004, Australian bush fires burn on, Disaster Relief, viewed 10 January 2005, <<http://www.disasterrelief.org/Disasters/020104Ausfires4>>.
- All you then have to do is place them in alphabetical order and include on a separate page at the end of the assignment.

**H) Presentation:**

- Before the final printing check how your essay looks
- Is the font and size consistent throughout
- Are headings clear and do they stand out
- Does your work need a title page
- Does your work table of contents
- Is your name on every page in case the pages become separated
- Staple pages together and present in a plastic sleeve
- use a display folder
- make a copy on a USB in case anything happens to your computer or the hard copy



## Making a List:

Example:

QUESTION: *Explain why Australia is a great country to live in.*

- Heading: (a short summary of question) eg:

- Ideas:

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## Mind Mapping

