

Category Classification Essay Outline Template

Basic Category Structure

Essay Structure: Intro + 3-5 Category Paragraphs + Conclusion

Each category needs: - Clear name/label - 2-3 defining characteristics - 1-2 specific examples - Brief analysis

Fill-in-the-Blank Outline

I. INTRODUCTION

Hook: _____

Background/Context: _____

Classification Thesis: [Subject] can be classified into [#] types based on [principle]: [Category 1], [Category 2], and [Category 3].

My Topic: _____

Classification Principle: _____

Categories: _____

II. CATEGORY 1: _____

Category Name: _____

Topic Sentence: The first type of [subject] is [Category 1 name].

Defining Characteristics: 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Specific Example(s): For example, _____

Analysis/Explanation: This category exists because _____

III. CATEGORY 2: _____

Category Name: _____

Topic Sentence (with transition): Unlike [Category 1], the second type is [Category 2 name].

Defining Characteristics: 1. _____

Specific Example(s): For instance,

Analysis/Explanation: What distinguishes this category:

IV. CATEGORY 3: _____

Category Name: _____

Topic Sentence (with transition): The final type is [Category 3 name].

Defining Characteristics: 1.

Specific Example(s): Specifically,

Analysis/Explanation: This category is important because

V. CATEGORY 4 (Optional): _____

Category Name: _____

Topic Sentence (with transition):

Defining Characteristics: 1.

Specific Example(s):

Analysis/Explanation:

VI. CONCLUSION

Restate Categories: These [#] types—[Category 1], [Category 2], and [Category 3]—

Synthesis (How categories relate):

Significance (Why classification matters):

Final Thought:

Quick Category Development Template

Use this for EACH category:

Category Name: _____

1. Define it in one sentence:

2. What makes it unique? - Characteristic 1:

_____ - Characteristic 2:

_____ - Characteristic 3:

3. Real example:

4. Why do people/things fit this category?

5. How is it different from other categories? - vs. Category 1:

_____ - vs. Category 2:

Sample Completed Outline

Topic: Types of Social Media Users Based on Posting Habits

I. INTRODUCTION

Hook: Scroll through any social platform and you'll notice vastly different posting patterns.

Background: With billions of users worldwide, people engage with social media in distinctly different ways.

Thesis: Social media users can be classified into three types based on posting behavior: Oversharers, Lurkers, and Curators.

II. CATEGORY 1: The Oversharer

Topic Sentence: The first type, the Oversharer, posts everything from breakfast photos to relationship updates.

Characteristics: 1. Posts multiple times daily (5+ posts) 2. Shares personal information freely 3. Seeks constant validation through likes/comments

Example: The Oversharer documents their entire vacation with 50+ photos, shares workout routines, and posts about arguments with roommates—all before noon.

Analysis: Oversharers use social media as a digital diary, finding validation through engagement metrics.

III. CATEGORY 2: The Lurker

Topic Sentence: Unlike Oversharers, Lurkers observe silently, consuming content without

contributing.

Characteristics: 1. Rarely posts original content (maybe 5 posts ever) 2. Reads/watches but doesn't comment 3. Maintains minimal profile presence

Example: The Lurker created their account in 2018, has five total posts, but checks the app daily for an hour.

Analysis: Lurkers prefer passive consumption, avoiding the pressure of public sharing.

IV. CATEGORY 3: The Curator

Topic Sentence: The third type, the Curator, carefully selects and shares high-quality, purposeful content.

Characteristics: 1. Posts thoughtfully and selectively (weekly) 2. Shares informative or artistic content 3. Maintains consistent aesthetic/theme

Example: Curators post weekly with carefully chosen articles, professional photography, or meaningful quotes aligned with their personal brand.

Analysis: Curators treat social media as a portfolio, emphasizing quality over quantity.

V. CONCLUSION

Restate: These three types—Oversharers, Lurkers, and Curators—represent the spectrum of social media engagement.

Synthesis: While most users exhibit traits from multiple categories, one style typically dominates their online behavior.

Significance: Understanding these types helps explain different motivations for social media use and personal relationship with technology.

Final Thought: Next time you open Instagram, identify which type you are—and whether you want to change categories.

Category Checklist for Each Paragraph

Before moving to the next category, confirm:

- ☐ Category clearly named and introduced
 - ☐ Topic sentence with appropriate transition
 - ☐ 2-3 specific, distinct characteristics listed
 - ☐ At least one concrete example provided
 - ☐ Example illustrates the characteristics
 - ☐ Analysis explains why category exists
 - ☐ Paragraph is 6-8+ sentences long
 - ☐ Different from other categories
 - ☐ Flows logically from previous paragraph
-

Category Comparison Chart Template

Use this to ensure categories are distinct:

	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
Name	_____	_____	_____
Main trait	_____	_____	_____
Key behavior	_____	_____	_____
Frequency	_____	_____	_____
Motivation	_____	_____	_____
Example	_____	_____	_____

Categories should differ in most rows!

Quick Category Development Process

Step 1: Name Your Categories

Write down each category name clearly.

Example: 1. The Procrastinator 2. The Planner 3. The Crammer

Step 2: List Characteristics

For EACH category, list 2-3 specific traits.

Category 1 - The Procrastinator: - Waits until last minute - Works under extreme time pressure - Often produces rushed work

Category 2 - The Planner: - Schedules everything in advance - Uses organizational tools - Rarely stressed by deadlines

Category 3 - The Crammer: - Studies intensively before exams - Dedicates entire days to preparation - Avoids long-term studying

Step 3: Find Examples

Write one specific, concrete example for each category.

The Procrastinator: Starts 10-page research paper at midnight before 8 AM deadline.

The Planner: Breaks research paper into daily tasks starting three weeks early.

The Crammer: Spends 12 hours straight studying the day before the final exam.

Step 4: Explain Why

For each category, answer: "Why do people fit this category?"

The Procrastinator: Thrives on deadline pressure; poor time management; overestimates available time.

The Planner: Anxiety about deadlines; enjoys organization; wants to ensure quality.

The Crammer: Effective short-term memory; works best with concentrated focus; busy schedule.

Category Paragraph Formula

Every category paragraph should follow this structure:

1. **Topic sentence** (introduce category) → 1 sentence
2. **Characteristics** (what defines it) → 2-3 sentences
3. **Example** (concrete illustration) → 2-3 sentences
4. **Analysis** (why/how it works) → 2-3 sentences

Total: 7-10 sentences per category paragraph

Transition Words Between Categories

First category: - The first type is... - To begin with... - Initially...

Middle categories: - The second type is... - Unlike [previous category]... - In contrast to... - Another category is...

Final category: - The final type is... - Lastly... - The last category is...

Visual Category Map Template

TOPIC: _____

CLASSIFICATION PRINCIPLE: _____

CATEGORY 1

Characteristic:
- _____
- _____
Example:

CATEGORY 2

Characteristic:
- _____
- _____
Example:

CATEGORY 3

Characteristic:
- _____
- _____
Example:

Category Quick Reference

Strong Categories Have: ✓ Clear, memorable names ✓ Distinct characteristics that

don't overlap ✓ Real, specific examples ✓ Explanation of why they exist ✓ Logical connection to classification principle

Weak Categories Have: ☐ Vague names (“Type A,” “Group 1”) ☐ Overlapping traits with other categories ☐ Generic examples without detail ☐ No analysis of why/how ☐ No connection to stated principle

Before You Write Checklist

- ☐ I have 3-5 categories identified
- ☐ Each category has a clear name
- ☐ I've listed 2-3 characteristics per category
- ☐ I have specific examples for each
- ☐ Categories are distinct (minimal overlap)
- ☐ All follow same classification principle
- ☐ I know why each category exists
- ☐ Categories are in logical order

If you checked all boxes → Start writing!

Last Updated: November 2024

Fill in this template before writing your classification essay!