**Media Release TERM 3 2016**

**The Top 5 Essay and Writing Mistakes of Local High School Students***According to data from <library name> tutoring service*

<Library name> noticed a <Percentage for library> % increase in demand for English and writing help compared to this time in 2015, from students using their online homework help service, YourTutor. Students who struggle with their written work are logging in online to ask for help from live experts more and more.

“Every day students have writing questions. Things like how to structure an essay or how to quote in the right way”, said <library name>’s spokesperson, <spokesperson name>. “We wanted to share the top 5 things local students are struggling with, so more of them can avoid these particular traps”.

**1. Failing to prepare means preparing to fail – The 80/20 rule**

Clear planning is the key to a great result. 80% of time spent on an essay should be planning the argument and structure. Actually writing it should only take about 20% of the time.

**2. Writing the introduction as the first step**   
When the final argument is not yet formed, it’s harder to draft the introduction. It helps to write it at the end, when the answer is clear and the main arguments are mapped out.

**3. Paragraph structure – remember to “Give me a SEC!”**

Individual paragraphs need to be structured, just like the essay itself. The “Give me a SEC!” method reminds students to use ‘Statement, Explain, Critique’*.* ‘Statement’ gives an answer to the question, ‘Explain’ provides evidence, like quotes or comparisons, and the ‘Critique’ presents thinking and learning.

**4.** **Quoting without understanding**Copy-pasted quotes don’t show understanding or engagement with sources. Try paraphrasing a quote or concept in your own words (still referring to the original source). Use both direct and indirect quotes, to bring the essay alive.

**5. Writing the last word means the essay is finished (four eyes see more than two)**

Proofreading is one of the most important steps. Simply read the essay a few times after finishing, and ask someone else to read it too.

<Library name>’s online study help service, YourTutor, can help with essay drafts, English and writing.

“To meet the growing demand, we’ve expanded the YourTutor service to include 24/7 English and writing feedback”, said <library spokesperson name>.

Students simply upload a draft of their essay or writing assignment and receive expert feedback in less than 24 hours. <Library name> provides this service for free to all their library members. To use YourTutor from home or from the library, <Library name> members just visit [www.yourtutor.com.au/connect](http://www.yourtutor.com.au/connect), find their library and log right in using their library card number.

**ENDS**

**Contact:**  
<Library Spokesperson Name>  
<Position>  
<Email>  
<Phone number>

**Factsheet**

**YourTutor *24/7 Writing Feedback*:**

* YourTutor’s 24/7 essay review service, provided for FREE by participating

libraries.

* Students simply log in through [www.yourtutor.com.au/connect](http://www.yourtutor.com.au/connect), find their library and upload their essay draft to receive expert feedback within 24 hours on how to make it better.

**YourTutor live online tutoring:**

* Students can also get live one-to-one tutoring help sessions from 3pm to 10pm, Sunday – Friday, by logging in for free with their library card number via [www.yourtutor.com.au/connect](http://www.yourtutor.com.au/connect)