

Learning from History

Impulses for historical and civic education

Eight editorial rules for an essay for www.learning-from-history.de

Learning from History asks that discussion papers and presentations of projects, teaching materials, etc., be written in the form of an essay. To help you prepare your contribution, we have put together some guidelines on what we expect from an essay.

1. The essay should set out its central thesis early on, without a long preamble. In the course of the text, that thesis should be discussed from a range of different perspectives. The essay should clearly set out your own opinion. In order to stimulate and facilitate discussion, an essay needs to be informative, and at the close you should clarify your own stance on the key points.
2. The essay should be written in a journalistic style – that is, it should be easy to read and not overloaded with details. This distinguishes it from a scholarly paper. Don't try to pack in too much information: present fewer points, and organise them in a clear, accessible way.
3. Because our contributions aim to reach a wide audience, we ask you to use technical terms only when necessary. Please give explanations of any technical terms you do use.
4. Active constructions instead of passive ones often make a text easier to read.
5. Please avoid using an abstract style in your essay: put your point as concretely and specifically as possible. Again, this distinguishes the essay form from a scholarly paper. For example, “High-quality learning institutions are a key precondition for the facilitation of the learning process” is less accessible than “To learn effectively, children need good schools”.
6. Please avoid excessively long sentences.
7. The careful use of paragraphs will make your text easier to read, by structuring your content and arguments for the reader. Please ensure that you group your points clearly into paragraphs.
8. Please use gender-neutral language.