One of the most common errors I see when grading narrative papers is the tense usage by the author.

Directions: Read the information below and highlight/annotate what it important…

The **present tense** is used to express anything that is happening now or occurring in the present moment. The present also communicates actions that are ongoing, constant, or habitual. For example:

I'm working on an essay for my English class.
Brevity is the soul of wit.
John loves music.
I run four miles every morning.

Use the **past tense** to indicate past events, prior conditions, or completed processes. For example:

I voted last week.
Ancient Romans believed basil was poisonous.
The fortress crumbled to ruin during the last century.

The **future tense** indicates actions or events that will happen in the future. For example:

I will write my paper this weekend.

<http://depts.washington.edu/engl/askbetty/tenses.php>

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Present Tense | Past Tense | Future Tense |
| What do you do to the verbs? |  |  |  |
| Example (use the clip from Major Payne to help you) |  |  |  |