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ABSTRACT

This instrument for describing writing is designed for use by teachers and researchers at the secondary and college levels. The two main sections are an outline of the complete instrument and the instrument itself. Various categories of the instrument can be used to describe general, descriptive, and explanatory prose; other categories are related to the writing process, writing behavior, and the written product. For most categories, examples are given and the author is cited. The instrument is designed to be self-contained and explicit, but it is presumed that its users have some knowledge of the measurement of writing ability, of the composing process, and of key works such as those by Walker Gibson, Francis Christensen, Janet Emig, Kellogg Hunt, and Frank O'Hare. (Author/AA)

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An Instrument for Describing Written Products

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## An Instrument for Describing Written Products

This document is designed for use by teachers and researchers at the secondary and college level. As an instrument for describing writing, it is designed to be self-contained and explicit. However, it presumes that its users have some knowledge of measurement of writing ability, of the composing process and more specifically of certain key works on these topics like those of Walker Gibson, Francis Christensen, Janet Emig, Kellogg Hunt, and Frank O'Hare.

The document is organized into two main sections: (1) An outline of the complete instrument designed to provide an overview and to assist the readers in finding descriptive categories that would interest them and (2) the instrument itself which defines and illustrates many ways of describing written products and stages in the composing process. The instrument is designed to be exhaustive and comprehensive. It is best viewed as a source for nearly all the available means of describing writing. A particular teacher or researcher would very likely have need for only a few of these kinds of descriptions at any one time. However, the instrument is not meant for evaluating papers or planning curriculum.

Some of the items in the instrument are followed by yes/no alternatives (i.e., the paper has the quality identified or does not), while others have grills in which the user would check () the appropriate spaces or have blank spaces in which the user would record a score. In most categories, examples are given and the author cited. Where there is no citation, the examples are mine. Various categories of the instrument can be used to describe general (GP), descriptive (DP), and explanatory prose (EP) in addition to writing process (WPS), behavior (WB), and product (WPT).

Documentation is presented A.P.A. style and consequently, all references can be located in the bibliography.

## An Instrument for Describing Written Products

### Outline

#### I. Roles of the writer

##### A. Voice

1. Talker
2. Writer

##### B. Tone

1. Formal
2. Informal
3. Distance of imagined speaker from listener

##### C. Attitude

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2. Pejorative adjectives
3. Intensifiers

#### II. Strategies in writing

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##### B. Intellectual strategies

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2. Contrast
3. Classification
4. Change
5. Time sequence
6. Logical sequence
7. Physical context

##### C. Pointing through detail

1. Writer tells

2. Writer shows (through)
  - a. Description
  - b. Adjectives that point
  - c. Detail using prepositional phrases
  - d. Comparisons using "like" or "as"
  - e. Sensual words

III. Writer as creator

A. Prewriting process

1. Writer begins with a total form in mind
2. Writer searches for a center for his material
3. Writer outlines before writing
  - a. Formal outline
  - b. Informal outline

B. Writing process

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2. Reflective
3. Dimensions of the composing process
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  - b. Planning
    - 1.) Oral
    - 2.) Written
  - c. Starting
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    - 1.) Vocalized hesitation phenomena
    - 2.) Silent activities
    - 3.) Projection and anticipation

4.) Transformational operations

5.) Program of style

e. Stopping

f. Contemplation of product

g. Reformulation

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2.) Revising

3.) Rewriting

C. Writing product

1. Identify themes

2. Language features

a. Centricity

1.) Egocentric

2.) Personal words

3.) Personal sentences

b. Writer involvement

1.) Participant

2.) Observer

c. Diction

1.) Abstract words

2.) Concrete words

3.) Accurate words

IV. Topic selection

A. Teacher assigned topic

B. Student selected topic from list

C. Student selects own topic

V. Topics of writing

A. Personal experience

B. Literature

C. Current events

D. Other

**VI. Type(s) of writing**

A. Poetry

B. Dramatic writing

C. Prose fiction

D. Business-practical

E. Sensory recording

F. Reporting

G. Personal writing

H. Generalizing and theorizing

**VII. Syntax**

A. Grammatical type

1. Simple

2. Compound

3. Complex

4. Compound-complex

B. Descriptive type

1. Loose

2. Periodic

C. Types of parallel constructions

1. Gerund

2. Participle

3. Infinitive

4. Clause

5. Phrase

6. Word

7. Sentence

8. Correlative

D. Sentence openers

1. Subject

2. Expletive

3. Coordinating conjunction

4. Adverb word

5. Conjunctive phrase

6. Prepositional phrase

7. Verbal phrase

8. Adjective or adjective phrase

9. Absolute

10. Front-shift

E. Some things to count

1. Number of T-units

2. Words per T-unit

3. Total number of words

F. Free modifiers and embeddings

1. Subordinate clause

2. Relative clause

3. Noun cluster

4. Verb cluster

5. Adjective, adverb cluster

6. Adjective series

7. Prepositional phrase

8. Absolute

**VIII. Paragraphs****A. Sentence functions**

1. **State**
2. **Restate**
3. **Expand**
4. **Particularize**
5. **Exemplify**
6. **Define**
7. **Describe**
8. **Narrate**
9. **Qualify**
10. **Concede**
11. **Support**
12. **Refute**
13. **Evaluate**
14. **Identify a cause or result**
15. **Compare or contrast**
16. **Summarize**
17. **Conclude**

**B. Organization and development**

1. **Uses introductory sentences**
2. **Strays from introduction**
3. **Acquaints reader with concepts to be discussed**
4. **Tells reader the order in which concepts will be discussed**
5. **Develops concepts adequately**
6. **Makes conclusive statements**

C. Level of generality

1. Coordination
2. Subordination
3. Completion

D. Transitional devices

1. To introduce
2. To add
3. To affirm
4. To point a contrast
5. To indicate a conclusion
6. To concede
7. To show cause
8. To show purpose
9. To restrict
10. To repeat
11. To show time, place

IX. Verbs

A. Tense

1. Present
2. Past
3. Future
4. Other

B. Voice

1. Active
2. Passive

C. Type

1. Linking
2. Transitive
3. Intransitive

X. Revisions

- A. Spelling
- B. Syntax
- C. Diction
- D. Paragraphing
- E. Punctuation

XI. Deviations from standard English usage

- A. Spelling
- B. Punctuation
- C. Capitalization
- D. Wrong word
- E. Fragment
- F. Verb tense
- G. Run-on
- H. Plural
- I. Verb agreement
- J. Possessives
- K. Case pronouns
- L. Pronoun agreement
- M. Misplaced modifier
- N. Other

XII. Organization, sequence, detail, unity, coherence: overall  
and qualitative merit of the writing product

- A. Teacher or independent judge's evaluation
  - 1. Score from Diederich's scale
  - 2. The writer's paper paired and judged with a peer's paper
  - 3. Rank-ordering of the writer's papers with his group or school
  - 4. The place of the papers in the same mode on a discourse

quality scale

5. Rating from the National Assessment of Educational Progress Scale
  6. Comparison of pre and post writing samples
  7. Rating from a structural pattern analytic scale
  8. Examination of compositions to determine if they meet stated objectives for growth in writing ability
  9. Word or phrase that best summarizes the paper
  10. Written summary of teacher's comments
  11. Summary of teacher's spoken comments
- B. Peers' evaluation of the writing product
- C. Student's evaluation of his own writing product

## An Instrument for Describing Written Products

## I. Roles of the writer [GP/WPT]\*

## A. Voice (Choose 1)

1. Talker: Characterized by loose sentences, few parallel structures, use of active verbs, direct reference to the reader "you", contractions, closeness to the reader, (Gibson, 1969, p. 57) \_\_\_\_\_
2. Writer: Characterized by periodic sentences, many parallel structures, use of passive verbs, no second person pronoun, no contractions, detachment and distance from the reader. (Gibson, 1969, p. 57) \_\_\_\_\_

## B. Tone (Choose 1)

Language used for audience:

1. Formal: Characterized by detachment from the audience/reader, and a cohesive, pre-planned text (Joos, 1961, pp. 37-38); uses "writer" style (Gibson, 1969 p. 57) \_\_\_\_\_
2. Informal: Characterized by an absence of background information; pays the reader the compliment of supposing that he will understand the writer without the aid of background information; uses ellipsis and slang (Joos, 1961, p. 23); uses "talker" language (Gibson, 1969, p. 57) \_\_\_\_\_

\*Key to abbreviations: GP, general prose; DP, descriptive prose; EP, explanatory prose; WP, writing process; WB, Writing behavior; WPT, writing product.

3. Probable distance of imagined speaker to imagined listener  
 (E.T. Hall, 1959, Chap. 10)

Near (two feet) \_\_\_\_\_

Neutral (3-5 feet) \_\_\_\_\_

Public (over 8 feet) \_\_\_\_\_

C. Attitude

1. Honorific adjectives (e.g., wonderful, great, fantastic, good, terrific, marvelous, lovely, beautiful)

Yes	No	Paragraph or sentence number
_____	_____	_____

2. Pejorative adjectives (e.g., awful, terrible, bad, stupid, dreadful) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Intensifiers (e.g., really, very, truly, quite)  
 (Gibson, 1969, p. 65)

Comments:

II. Strategies in writing [GP, EP, DP/WPT]

A. Problem-solving

Yes      No

Paragraph  
Sentence  
Number

Writer tries to resolve dissonance in  
 his or reader's mind (e.g., The problem  
 of \_\_\_\_\_ deserves particular attention...)

Writer tries to anticipate points  
 where the audience may differ from him  
 (e.g., Now many of you will disagree  
 with this finding, but evidence shows  
 that...Many of you may have your

	Yes	No	Paragraph Sentence Number
own ideas of why _____ should be eliminated but the most convincing arguments are...)	—	—	—
Writer states a problem (e.g., The focus/concern of this paper is...)	—	—	—
Writer sticks to topic	—	—	—
Writer proposes a solution	—	—	—
Writer supports his solutions convincingly	—	—	—
<b>B. Intellectual strategies</b>			
<b>1. Focus</b>			
Writer changes grammatical subject (Underline the subject of each independent clause and note the pattern.)	—	—	—
Writer focuses on his understanding, preconception, experience with the world (e.g., Most people I know think that...It has been my experience... In my experiences...) (Odell & Cooper, in press)	—	—	—
<b>2. Contrast</b>			
Writer makes distinctions between two items (e.g., Through (1) connectors such as or, nor, else, best, otherwise, alternatively, but, however, nevertheless,			

Yes	No	Paragraph Sentence Number
-----	----	---------------------------------

despite (2) comparative and superlative forms such as more/most, less/least, -er/-est (3) negative words such as no, not, without, nothing, none (4) negative affixes such as anti-, im-, ir-, il-, a-, dis-, -less, un-, non- (5) lexicon such as noun, verb, adjective, and adverb forms of synonyms for such words as contrast, paradox, distinction, difference)  
(Odell & Cooper, in press)

### 3. Classification

Writer shows how an item is similar to other items and labels, groups, or compares it with other things (e.g., Through (1) syntax in which some form of the infinitive to be links a subject with a predicate nominative or sentences in which a common trait, action, or feeling is predicated on two or more items that are referred to in the subject slot(s) of the sentence: Both George and Lennie felt very hopeful of achieving their dream. (2) the use of phrases such as for example, an example, for instance, an instance (3) lexicon

Yes	No	Paragraph Sentence Number
-----	----	---------------------------------

such as noun, verb, adjective and adverb forms of synonyms for such words as similar, resemble, and class) (Odell & Cooper, in press)

#### 4. Change

Writer refers to change (e.g., Through (1) the use of some form of the word "change" or a synonym of that word (2) verb phrases in which we might plausibly introduce the word become; for example, realize → become aware) (Odell & Cooper, in press)

#### 5. Time sequence

Writer refers to his awareness of an item as occurring before, during, or after some other item (e.g., Through adverbial elements that indicated something existed before, during, or after a moment in time) (Odell & Cooper, in press)

#### 6. Logical sequence

Writer refers to the location of an item in a causal, purposive, or hypothetical sequence (e.g., Through words such as because, therefore, since, and the phrase

	Yes	No	Paragraph Number
--	-----	----	---------------------

if...then) (Odell & Cooper, in press)

#### 7. Physical Context

Writer refers to the sort of setting in which we find the item (e.g., Through nouns that referred to a geographical location [Salinas Valley], an object in a physical setting [A farm house, a tree] or some sensory property of a physical setting [the sound of word in the trees]) (Odell & Cooper, in press)

#### C. Pointing through detail [DP/WPT]

##### 1. Writer tells (e.g., My father is gentle.

My town is small. I found that my trip to see my fiancee was marvelous.)

(Macrorie, 1970, pp. 32-36)

##### 2. Writer shows through

a. Description (e.g., (1) My father walked to the far side of our pasture, found a cow with her new-born calf, and carried the calf home in his arms. (2) I hadn't realized how small my home town actually is until I received my absentee voter application from the township clerk today. He enclosed a note with the proper forms:

Yes No

Paragraph  
Sentence  
Number

Theo--Fill in balance of form  
and return in envelope pro-  
vided...

Be seeing you---

(signed) Grayson

(3) It was great being with my  
financee--even when his whole family  
watched us watch T.V. (Macrorie,  
1970, pp. 32-33)

b. Adjectives that point to qualities  
attributes of a thing (e.g., As the sword  
was withdrawn, the scabbard fell limp.

The gypsy was watching lazy-eyed. There  
he came, eyes open, ugly, watching the  
cape.) (Christensen, 1967, p. 31)

c. Detail using prepositional phrases most  
commonly beginning with "with", "without"  
or "in", a participle, or absolute phrases

(e.g., The bull charged in a scramble. The  
gypsy moved in a zig-azg. The bull, with  
his tongue out, his barrel heaving, was  
watching the gypsy.) (Christensen, 1967, pp.  
28-33)

	Yes	No	Paragraph or Sentence Number
--	-----	----	------------------------------

d. Comparisons using "like" or "as" phrases. (e.g., The bullfighter's cape swung out like a bellet dancer's skirt.

He wound the bull around him like a belt.) (Christensen, 1967, p. 30)

e. Sensual words and images that evoke pictures, smells, touches, tastes.

and noises) (D. Hall, 1973, p. 31)

### III. Writer as creator

Yes	No
-----	----

#### A. Prewriting process [WPS]

1. Writer begins with a total form of the writing product in mind before or as he writes, (Get from an interview or a written description of how the student composes. Sample statements are:

I can see in the flash of a single moment my composition in its absolute entirety, with every pertinent detail in its proper place.

I know what will be in my introduction, body, and conclusion before I even begin to write. I know how I will begin, develop, and end the piece before or as I write.

Basically, I know what I'm going to write and how I'm going to say it in this composition.

I have a clear picture of what my [finished] work will be like before I begin it. I have a conception of the end in mind as I work or

Yes No

[write]). (McElvain, 1968, pp. 128-132)

2. Writer searches for a center around which to converge his material. (Get from an interview or a written description of how the student composes. Sample statements are: I search for a basis around which to converge my material. I look for a center, idea, point of view, or pattern around which to build the piece of writing. I try to limit my subject to one idea and try to select relevant details to develop it. I develop my composition through one method perhaps cause and effect. I try to write from a particular point of view. Many relevant ideas come to me when my mind is wandering and freely associating. I don't have a clear idea of what I will write about, only an idea, focus, or emotion. I try to create order out of the many ideas and associations the subject that I write about evokes. When given a topic to write about, at first I'm totally lost; thus, I try to limit my subject to a size that I can handle).
- (McElvain, 1968, pp. 128-132)

Yes      No

3. Writer outlines before writing (Get from an interview or a written description of how the student narrows his topic or outlines).

(Kytle, 1970, pp. 380-385)

a. Formal outline (e.g., I use a structured outline to help me write.

I use roman numerals, and letters a, b, c. I use a topic sentence or phrase outline.)

b. Informal outline (e.g., I don't write anything on paper. I do it mentally. I only put down notes on key ideas that I will discuss in the paper. I write without an outline but I know what direction I'm going in.)

B. Writing process [WPS, WB]

1. Writer is reactive (Definition: Erratic problem solving strategies, the use of overt language to accompany prewriting and composing phrases, ideation that evolves in action-reaction couplets, proofreading at the word unit level, a need for immediate rehearsal in order to write, rare contemplation or reviewing of products,

Yes No

characterizations that exhibit general behaviors similar to their own, a lack of a sense of audience when writing, and an inability to use reasons beyond the affective domain in evaluating their writing.) (Graves, 1973, pp. 212-213)

2. Writer is reflective (Definition:

Little rehearsal before writing, little overt language to accompany writing, periodic rereadings to adjust small units of writing at the word or phrase level, growing sense of audience connected with their writing characterizations that exhibit general behaviors similar to their own in the expression of feelings, and the ability to give examples to support their reasons for evaluating writing.)

(Graves, 1973, pp. 212-213) [Note: Graves' study involved seven year old children]

3. Dimensions of the composing process

(Get from an interview of the student, a written description by the student or your observation of how the student does the following)

a. Writer prewrites; writer begins

to perceive selectively certain

Yes No

features of his inner and/or outer environment with a view to writing about them (Emig, 1971, p. 39); writer thinks about what elements to include in the product (Emig, 1971, p. 34)

b. Writer plans before writing

1.) Planning is oral

2.) Planning is written

(e.g., jottings, informal

list of words, phrases

topic outline) (Emig, 1971,

p. 34)

c. Writer starts to write with ease;

writer places first element down

in the product quickly (Emig, 1971,

p. 54)

Writer starts to write with

difficulty; writer experiences

a block to writing that prevents

him from putting elements on

paper (Emig, 1971, p. 56)

[Note: Perhaps the most

significant feature of

starting that can be readily

Yes      No

observed is what element the writer first places on paper, and where in the finished piece that element occurs, if at all. Emig, 1971, p. 40]

d. Writer composes aloud

1. Exhibits vocalized hesitation behaviors (e.g., makes filler sounds, makes critical comments, expresses feelings or attitudes toward the self as writer or the reader, engages in ego-enhancing or discourse related digressions, repeats elements)

(Emig, 1971, p. 42 and pp. 62-66)

2. Exhibits silent activities (e.g., physical writing, silent reading, and "unfilled" pauses in which the writer may be engaged in very important nonexternalized thinking and composing) (Emig, 1971, p. 42 and p. 62)

3. Projects and anticipates; foresees parts of the written product (e.g.,

Yes      No

Yeah, I can sort of wrap it up here by saying like, "throughout the interview which involved the math test" -ah, "he still remained sunny," and then I can just say, "After having worked there for two weeks, he's still smiling and for anyone to have a phony smile for that long, he's either got terrific endurance, or he's sincere." Then I could end it there.) (Emig, 1971, p. 57)

4. Uses transformational operations  
(e.g., by rightbranching or left-  
branching addition, deletion, re-  
ordering/substitution, or embedding)  
(Emig, 1971, p. 35)

} Example:

1 He dances

2 with an expression of utter bliss

on his face (Prepositional phrase)

3 his arms help open in greeting

• (Absolute)

4 directly in the path of anyone

(Prepositional phrase)

5 entering the front door

(verb cluster)

Yes      No

[One could say that the essential, or base, operation is that of a right-branching addition: that the movement of the sentence is essentially left-to-right.] (Emig, 1971, p. 58)

5. Displays a "program" of style; prefers/favors various lexical, syntactical, imagaic transformations (Emig, 1971, p. 35); follows stylistic principles that direct his choices among options. (Emig, 1971, p. 59) — — —

Examples:

1. The shop was yellow. The shop was orange. The yellow-and-orange dress shop. (Emig's subject Lynn preferred, hyphenated adjectives, a syntactic transformation).
2. I was directed by a frigid sales-lady to the hard-working manager at his desk in the back. The first thing that struck me about Mr. Hobeck was his resemblance to the next-door neighbor on the old Burns and Allen television series. (Emig's subject Lynn uses synonyms to prevent lexical repetition) (Emig, 1971, p. 47 and pp. 59-60)

Yes      No

- e. Writer stops when his personal sense of closure occurs (e.g., I've said all that I can on this subject. Well, here it is I guess that does it. I'm finished.) (Emig, 1971, p. 87)
- f. Writer contemplates his product; looks upon part or all of his creation and finds /judges it - good? uneven? poor? (Emig, 1971, p. 44)
- g. Writer reformulates by correcting, revising and/or rewriting.
1. Correcting is a small affair and consists of eliminating discrete mechanical errors and stylistic infelicities (Emig, 1971, p. 43)
  2. Revising is a larger task involving the reformulation of larger segments of discourse and in more major organic ways-- a shift of point of view toward the material in a piece, major reorganizations, and restructuring. (Emig, 1971, p. 43)
  3. Rewriting is the longest of the three, often involving total reformulation of a piece in all its parts; or the scrapping of a given piece, and the writing of a fresh one. (Emig, 1971, p. 43)

Yes      No

## C. Writing product [GP, EP/WPT]

## 1. Identity themes or implicit world view or ego structure

[Note: Identify themes emerge after the writer has written

several pieces] (Holland, 1973, pp. 76-78) \_\_\_\_\_

Writer relates his writing to self

Writer divulges self, perceptions of  
self and others, or points of view  
through thematic patterns

## 2. Language features

## a. Centricity

1. Writing is egocentric (e.g., use of  
words such as I, me, my, mine) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Writing includes personal words  
(e.g., (1) All first, second,  
and third person pronouns except  
the neuter pronouns it, its, itself,  
and they, them, their, theirs,  
themselves if referring to things  
rather than people. (2) All  
words that have masculine or  
feminine natural gender:

John Jones, Mary, father, sister,  
iceman, actress. Do not count  
common gender words like teacher,  
doctor, employee, assistant, spouse.

Yes      No

(3) The group words, people with  
the plural verb and folks. (Flesch, 1949, pp. 214-215)

3. Writing includes personal sentences

(e.g., (1) Spoken sentence, marked  
by quotation marks or otherwise,  
often including speech tags like  
"he said," set off by colons or  
commas: I doubt it, We told him,  
"You can take it or leave it."  
"That's all very well," he replied,  
showing clearly that he didn't  
believe a word of what we said.

(2) Questions, commands, requests  
and other sentences directly addressed  
to the reader: Does this sound  
impossible? Imagine what this means.  
Do this three times. You shouldn't  
overrate these results. This is a point  
you must remember. It means a lot  
to people like you and me. But  
don't count sentences that are  
only indirectly or vaguely addressed  
to the reader: This is typical of  
our national character. You never  
can tell. (3) Exclamations: It's  
unbelievable!

Yes No

(4) Grammatically incomplete  
sentences whose full meaning has  
to be inferred from the context:

Doesn't know a word of English.

Handsome, though. Well, he wasn't.

The minute you walked out. (Flesch,  
1949, pp. 215-216)

b. Writer involvement

1. Writer is participant (e.g., Uses "I",  
"we", or other indicators that he is  
involved or participating)

2. Writer is observer (e.g., Uses "he",  
"they", "it", or other indicators  
that he is a spectator, he is on the  
outside, and he is not involved )

c. Diction

1. Writer uses abstractions (e.g., emotion,  
love, courage, responsibility, girl, tree,  
farm implements) (D. Hall, 1973, pp. 55-56)

2. Writer uses concrete words (e.g., Nancy  
elm, rake and hoe.) (D. Hall, 1973,  
pp. 55-56)

3. Writer chooses accurate rather than fancy  
word or phrasing, (e.g., Writer avoids

(1) Verbs with present participles:

"They met to discuss" instead of "They  
were meeting to discuss"; "He clears his

Yes      No

throat" instead of "He is clearing his throat" (2) Verbs of be/is/are and has/have in combination with nouns and adjectives: "I know it" instead of "I am aware of this fact"; "He looked outside and saw..." instead of "He looked outside and became aware of the fact..."; "We met" instead of "We had a meeting"; "They decided to..." instead of "They were decisive about the question of..." (3) Verbs that are too specific: "she said" instead of "he whimpered", "she snapped"; "Passengers squeezed through the barriers" instead of "Passengers gushed through the barriers"

(4) Fancy verbs: "paint", "draw" or "describe" instead of "depict"; "copy" instead of "endeavor"

(5) Made-up verbs ending in "-ize" that are made from nouns and adjectives:

"scrutiny" instead of "scrutinize"; "finish", "end" instead of "finalize";

(6) Clichés: "The door yawned open", "The door beckoned" (7) Euphemisms:

Yes      No

"used car" instead of "previously owned"; "I had a tooth pulled" instead of "I had a tooth extracted"

(8) Vogue/slang words: "dig", "heavy", "cool".

(9) Fancy nouns: "end", "finish" instead of "finalization"; "scrutiny" instead of "scrutinization"; "house" instead of "domicile") (D. Hall, 1973, pp. 33-48)

**IV. Topic selection (Choose as many as applicable)**

A. Teacher assigns or suggests topic

B. Student selects topic from a list or group  
of topics

C. Student selects his own topic

**V. Topics of writing (Choose as many as applicable)**

A. Personal experience

B. Literature

C. Current events

D. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**VI. Type(s) of writing (Choose as many as applicable)**

A. Poetry

B. Dramatic Writing

C. Prose fiction

D. Business-practical

	Yes	No
E. Sensory recording	_____	_____
F. Reporting	_____	_____
G. Personal writing	_____	_____
H. Generalizing and theorizing	_____	_____
(Moffett, 1973, pp. 283-500)		

VII. Syntax [GP, EP, DP/WPT]	Yes	No	Frequency
A. Grammatical type			
1. Simple	_____	_____	_____
2. Compound	_____	_____	_____
3. Complex	_____	_____	_____
4. Compound-Complex	_____	_____	_____

**Examples:**

Sentences are classified,  
according to the number  
and kind of clauses they  
contain, as (1) simple,  
(2) compound, (3) complex,  
or (4) compound-complex.

A simple sentence (with the  
exception of imperative) is  
made up of one main clause.

**SIMPLE SENTENCES:** One part  
of the TV screen carried the  
football game. The other part  
showed the launching countdown.

A compound sentence has two  
or more main clauses.

**COMPOUND SENTENCE:** One part of the TV screen carried the football game, and the other part showed the launching count-down.

A complex sentence has one main clause and at least one subordinate clause.

**COMPLEX SENTENCE:** While one part of the TV screen carried the football game, the other part showed the launching countdown.

A compound-complex sentence is made up of two or more main clauses and at least one subordinate clause.

**COMPOUND-COMPLEX SENTENCE:** The Saturday afternoon program was like a two-ring circus; while one part of the TV screen carried the football game, the other part showed the launching countdown. (Hodges & Whitten, 1967, pp. 22-23)

B. Descriptive type	Yes	No	Frequency
1. Loose	_____	_____	_____
2. Periodic	_____	_____	_____

Examples:

## DAVID COPPERFIELD (Periodic)

Whether I shall turn out to be  
the hero of my own life, or whether  
that station will be held by any-  
body else, these pages must show.

To begin my life with the begin-  
ning of my life, I record that I  
was born (as I have been informed  
and believe) on a Friday, at twelve  
o'clock at night. It was remarked  
that the clock began to strike,  
and I began to cry simultaneously.

In consideration of the day and  
hour of my birth, it was declared by  
the nurse and by some sage women in  
the neighborhood who had taken  
lively interest in me several months  
before there was any possibility of  
our becoming personally acquainted,  
first that I was destined to be un-  
lucky in life; and secondly, that I  
was privileged to see ghosts and spir-  
its: both these gifts inevitably  
attaching, as they believed, to all  
unlucky infants of either gender born  
towards the small hours on a Friday  
night. (Gibson, 1969, pp. 53-54)

## HOLDEN CAUFIELD (Loose)

If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you'll probably want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap, but I don't feel like going into it, if you to know the truth.

In the first place that stuff bores me, and in the second place, my parents would have about two hemorrhages apiece if I told anything pretty personal about them. They're quite touchy about anything like that, especially my father. They're nice and all -- I'm not saying that -- but they're also touchy as hell. Besides, I'm not going to tell you my whole goddam autobiography or anything. I'll just tell you about this madman stuff that happened to me around last Christmas before I got pretty rundown and had to come out here and take it easy.

(Gibson, 1969, p. 54)

[What are some observations we can make about Copperfield's uses of words that make him as a character distinct from Caulfield? Look once more at that opening sentence. "Whether I... or whether I... these pages must show." We have two fairly elaborate subordinate clauses, and then, finally, at the very end of the sentence, comes the main subject-verb pattern.

A sentence organized in this way is called a periodic sentence; it forces us to wait, in a kind of suspense, before we learn what the sentence is saying. It is of course a technique far more characteristic of writer-style than of talker-style. People simply do not speak casually to one another in periodic sentences; instead, they state their case immediately (subject-verb), qualifying it afterward with modifying phrases and clauses. That last sentence is a good example, and so is the one you are reading right now. Such sentences are called loose.] (Gibson, 1969, pp. 54-55)

C. Types of parallel constructions	Yes	No	Frequency
1. Gerund	_____	_____	_____
2. Participle	_____	_____	_____
3. Infinitive	_____	_____	_____
4. Clause	_____	_____	_____
5. Phrase	_____	_____	_____
6. Word	_____	_____	_____
7. Sentence	_____	_____	_____
8. Correlative	_____	_____	_____

**Examples:**

**Gerund:** He talked to any passerby,

proving he was friendly and showing off his  
cultural background.

**Participle:** Tired, exhausted, and sunburnt,

the band of men trudged through the  
desert.

**Infinitive:** To see, to want, and to buy is the essence  
of the American Consumer. His desires were few:  
To live on the ocean, to spend at least a portion  
of each day sketching the sea-birds, to sleep  
alone, and to cook for himself only.

**Clause:** He hoped that she could come and that she would  
wear the blue dress.

Although the sun had gone down more than twenty  
minutes ago, and although shadows thickened in  
the field, he kept on plowing.

**Phrase:** Without schooling, without friends, without money, without the accent that is necessary for success in Britain, he arrived in London.

**Word:** Through wind, sleet, and snow we travelled. (noun)  
From a distance he looked tall, gray, well-dressed, and foreign. (adjective)

He parked the car, slammed the door, and ran to the bustop. (verb)

**Sentence:** The boss was cruel, the pay was meager, and the work was dangerous.

**Correlative:** Either she committed the crime or someone else did.

They ran not only to the grocer, but also to the florist.

She neither ironed all morning nor watched television.

(D. Hall, 1973, pp. 113-123)

D. Sentence openers	Yes	No	Frequency
1. Subject (e.g., John broke...)	____	____	____
2. Expletive (e.g., It is...There...)	____	____	____
3. Coordinating conjunction (e.g., and, I, but)	____	____	____
4. Adverb word (e.g., first, thus)	____	____	____
5. Conjunctive phrase (e.g., on the other hand, as a consequence)	____	____	____
6. Prepositional phrase (e.g., after the game, in the morning)	____	____	____
7. Verbal phrase (e.g., participial, gerundive, or infinitive phrase)	____	____	____

Yes	No	Frequency
-----	----	-----------

## 8. Adjective or adjective phrase (e.g.,

Tired but happy, we left) \_\_\_\_\_

9. Absolute phrase (e.g., The ship having  
arrived safely, we...)

## 10. Front-shift (e.g., inverted word order:

The expense we could not bear)

Corbett, 1971, p. 457)

## E. Some things to count

1. Number of T-units (Count each main clause plus any subordinate clause or nonclausal structure that is attached or embedded in it as a T-unit.)

2. Words per T-unit (Divide the number of words by the number of T-units.) (Hunt, 1965, pp. 6-53;  
O'Hare, 1973, p. 49)

3. Total number of words (Barch, 1956-57, pp. 192-193)

Yes	No	Position (Initial, Medial, Terminal)
-----	----	--

I	M	T
---	---	---

## F. Free modifiers and embeddings

1. Subordinate clause (SC) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Relative clause (RC) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Noun cluster (NC) \_\_\_\_\_

4. Verb cluster (VC) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Adverb, adjective cluster (AC) \_\_\_\_\_

6. Adjective series (A+A) \_\_\_\_\_

7. Prepositional phrase (PP) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Absolute (ABS) \_\_\_\_\_

Examples:

1

- 1 He dipped his hands in the bichloride solution and shook them,
- 2 a quick shake, (NC)
- 3 fingers down, (Abs)
- 4 like the fingers of a pianist above the keys. (PP)

Sinclair Lewis

2

- 2 Calico-coated, (AC)
- 2 small-bodied, (AC)
- 3 with delicate legs and pink faces in which their mismatched eyes rolled wild and subdued, (PP)
- 1 they huddled,
- 2 gaudy motionless and alert, (A+A)
- 2 wild as deer, (AC)
- 2 deadly as rattlesnakes, (AC)
- 2 quiet as doves. (AC)

William Faulkner

3

- 1 It is with the coming of man that a vast hole seems to open in nature,
- 2 a vast black whirlpool spinning faster and faster, (NC)
- 3 consuming flesh, stones, soil, minerals, (VC)
- 3 sucking down the lightning, (VC)
- 3 wrenching power from the atom, (VC)

4 until the ancient sounds of nature are drowned out  
in the cacophony of something which is no longer  
nature, (SC)

5 something instead which is loose and knocking at  
the world's heart, (NC)

5 something demonic and no longer planned -- (NC)

6 escaped, it may be -- (VC)

6 spewed out of nature, (VC)

6 contending in a final giant's game against  
its master. (VC)

Loren Eiseley

4  
1 In a shoebox stuffed in an old nylon stocking/  
Sleeps the baby mouse I found in the meadow,/

2 Where he trembled and shook beneath a stick/  
Till I caught him up by the tail and brought  
him in,/ (RC)

3 Cradled in my hand,/ (VC)

3 a little quaker, (NC)

4 the whole body of him trembling, (Abs)

3 His absurd whiskers sticking out like a cartoon  
mouse,/ (Abs)

3 His feet like small leaves,/ (Abs)

4 Little lizard-feet,/ (NC)

4 Whitish and spread wide when he tried to struggle  
away,/ (AC)

5 Wriggling like a minuscule puppy. (VC)

1 Now he's eaten his three kinds of cheese and drunk from  
his bottle-cap watering trough--/

2 So much he just lies in one corner, / (AC)

3 His tail curled under him, (Abs)

3 His belly big/As his head, (Abs)

3 His bat-like ear/Twitching, (Abs)

4 tilting toward the least sound. (VC)

Theodore Roethke

5

2 In the same way, (PP)

1 you were happy in spring,

2 with the half colors of quarter-things, (PP)

3 The slightly brighter sky, (NC)

3 the melting clouds, (NC)

3 the single bird, (NC)

3 the obscure moon -- (NC)

4 The obscure moon lighting an obscure world of  
things that would never be quite expressed, (NC)

5 where you yourself were never quite yourself  
and did not want nor have to be, (RC)

6 desiring the exhilarations of changes (VC)

7 the motive for metaphor (NC)

6 shrinking from the weight of primary noon, (VC)

7 the ABC of being, (NC)

7 the ruddy temper, (NC)

7 the hammer of red and blue, (NC)

7 the hard sound -- (NC)

8 steel against intimation -- (NC)

7 the sharp flash, (NC)

7 the vital, arrogant, fatal dominant X. (AC)

Wallace Stevens

(Christensen, 1967, pp. 9-21)

## VIII. Paragraphs [GP, EP/WPT]

#### A. Sentence functions

1. State--make a major assertion about the subject of the paragraph (possibly giving the thesis of the paragraph)
  2. Restate--put into different words, for purposes of clarification or adjustment of emphasis, an assertion already made
  3. Expand --state at greater length, or more comprehensively (to clarify or embrace more instances) an idea already expressed
  4. Particularize--enumerate the specific facts or details implied or summarized in a previous (or subsequent) statement
  5. Exemplify--give an illustration of what is meant by a previous statement, or a concrete instance that will help to make the statement credible or vivid
  6. Define--state the meaning of a word or words used in a sentence that precedes or follows
  7. Describe--give one or more details of an object, to help the reader imagine the object precisely or understand it fully
  8. Narrate--name an event (or a chronological series of events) simply to assert that it occurred or to help particularize a previous statement
  9. Qualify--restrict the meaning of an assertion already made

## Paragraph or Section

10. Concede--acknowledge the presence of a fact or opinion that might militate against the acceptability of a previous sentence
  11. Support--offer reasoning or evidence to help establish the truth of an assertion
  12. Refute--introduce reasoning or evidence to demonstrate the falsity of a previous statement
  13. Evaluate--make some judgments about an event or condition named in a previous sentence (or sentences)
  14. Identify a cause or result--point out what produced the event referred to in a previous sentence or what effects that event produced
  15. Compare or contrast--introduce objects or events to be examined alongside each other, for the purpose of clarifying or emphasizing features of them or evaluating them
  16. Summarize--bring together the principal ideas already introduced in the paragraph
  17. Conclude--show that the facts and opinions previously cited lead to new knowledge or judgments (Larson, 1967, pp. 16-17)

## B. Organization and development

1. Writer uses introductory sentences that point the way for the development of the paragraph
  2. Writer strays from introduction
  3. Writer acquaints reader with concepts to be discussed in paper
  4. Writer tells reader the order in which concepts will be discussed
  5. Writer develops concepts adequately in paper
  6. Writer makes conclusive, concluding statements summarizing major sections of the paper (Grady, 1971, pp. 348-354)

**Yes**      **No**

## VIII. Paragraphs (cont'd.)

## Sentences in Paragraph

## C. Level of generality

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

## 1. Coordination (Examine sentences

for parallel structures at the beginning of sentences and likenesses between sentences.

Christensen, 1967, p. 61) (Examine sentences for grammatical and semantic coordination. One of the clearest signs of grammatical coordination is parallel structure as, for example, in anaphoric repetition. More often than not, grammatical parallelism will contain semantic parallelism, as in antithetical sentences, but if grammatical clues [for example, the repetition of similar syntactic structures such as nominals, prepositional phrases, or various kinds of clauses] are not present, then look for semantic groupings of examples, reasons, details, and consider sentences which contain these groupings as coordinate.

D'Angelo, 1974, p. 390)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

VIII. Paragraphs (cont'd.)

2. Subordination (Examine sentences  
for unlike grammatical structures  
at the beginning of sentences.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 !

Christensen, 1967, p. 61)

(Examine sentences for grammatical  
and semantic subordination. Some

typical examples of grammatical  
subordination include: the use of  
a pronoun in one sentence to re-

fer to a noun in the previous  
sentence; the use of transitional  
markers such as "therefore",  
"nevertheless", "thus," and the  
like to tie sentences together;

the repetition of a word or a part  
of a word, based on the same root,  
in a subsequent sentence to link  
it to a similar word in the pre-  
vious sentence; and the use of a  
synonym to refer to an equivalent  
word in a previous sentence.

Semantic relationships...are  
determined by noting the deductive  
or inductive movement of the mean-  
ing relationships in a discourse.

Thus a sentence which gives an example,

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VIII. Paragraphs (cont'd.)

a reason, a statistic, a fact, or a detail is considered to be subordinate to a more general statement which precedes it. D'Angelo, 1974, pp. 389-390.)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

3. Completion (Examine sentences at the end of each paragraph for summative, commentary remarks)

(Karrfalt, 1968, pp. 211-212)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Example:

1 With the dawn of each generation comes the threat of revolutionary changes

2 That is the way changes seem to parents, because they have convinced themselves that they are now living in a better manner than ever in history.

3 That is the way changes seem to grandparents who have similarly convinced themselves.

4 However, the bright new minds of the "now" generation see the corruption and demand purification.

5 This is the situation now, and as history repeats itself this will be the situation when I am an adult. (Karrfalt, 1968, p. 213)

	Yes	No	Frequency
D. Transitional devices			
1. To introduce an illustration (e.g., thus, for example, for instance, to illustrate, in fact)	—	—	—
2. To add another phase of the same idea (e.g., secondly, in the second place, next, moreover in addition, similarly, again, also, too finally, and furthermore)	—	—	—
3. To affirm (e.g., sometimes, indeed)	—	—	—
4. To point a contrast or qualification (e.g., on the other hand, nevertheless, despite this fact, on the contrary, still, however, but, yet, notwithstanding)	—	—	—
5. To indicate a conclusion or result (e.g., therefore, in conclusion, to sum up, consequently, so, as a result, accordingly, in other words)	—	—	—
6. To concede (e.g., although, though, while)	—	—	—
7. To show cause or to indicate a re- lationship in time (e.g., then, since, as)	—	—	—
8. To show purpose (e.g., so that, in order that)	—	—	—
9. To restrict (e.g., provided that, in case that)	—	—	—

Yes	No	Frequency
-----	----	-----------

10. To repeat (e.g., ideas restated,  
key words repeated, pronouns  
referring to words or ideas in  
the preceding paragraph) \_\_\_\_\_
11. To show time, place, or demonstra-  
tion with adverbs (e.g., then,  
now, there, after) (Hagen, 1971,  
pp. 192-193) \_\_\_\_\_

#### IX. Verbs [GP, EP, DP/WPT]

##### A. Tense

- 1. Present \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Past \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Future \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

##### Examples:

PRESENT TENSE: see--used with all subjects except third  
person singular ones

sees--used only with third-person singular  
subjects

He sees me daily. (Habitual action)

Tomorrow I see my lawyer. (Used for future)

The Spaniards see their Armada defeated.

(Historical present)

Men see that death is inevitable.

(Universal truth)

**PAST TENSE: saw**

He saw me yesterday. (Past action at a specific time stated or implied)

**FUTURE TENSE: will see, shall see**

Tomorrow he will see his lawyer.

**PRESENT PERFECT: have seen--used with all subjects except third-person singular**

has seen--used with third-person singular subjects

Have you ever seen a mermaid? (Past action at any time before now)

Myra has seen the fair (Before now)

**PAST PERFECT: had seen**

I had seen him before the game started. (Past action completed before another past action) (Hodges & Whitten, 1967, p. 67)

Yes	No
-----	----

**B. Voice****1. Active**

--	--

**2. Passive**

--	--

**Examples:****ACTIVE VOICE****PASSIVE VOICE**

Priscilla chose John.

John was chosen by Priscilla

Ed must learn that.

That must be learned.

[Only verbs have voice. A verb having a direct object is in the active voice. When the direct object is converted to a subject, as is done in the sentences below, the verb is in the passive voice. A passive verb is always a verb phrase containing a part of the verb be as an auxiliary plus

a past participle. The subject of an active verb acts.

The subject of a passive verb does not act.] (Hodges & Whitten, 1967, p. 461)

C. Type	Yes	No
1. <b>Linking</b>	—	—
2. <b>Transitive</b>	—	—
3. <b>Intransitive</b>	—	—

**Examples:**

**Linking verb:** A verb which relates the subject complement. Words commonly used as linking verbs are become, seem, appear, feel, taste, smell, and parts of the verb be.

The tires look good. The surface feels rough.

Did she become a nurse? What could that be?

**Transitive verb:** A verb that requires an object to complete its meaning. Transitive verbs can usually be changed from active to passive voice.

The general laid a wreath on the tomb.

**Intransitive verb:** A verb, such as go or sit, that does not have an object to complete its meaning, is intransitive. Linking verbs, which take subject complements, are intransitive.

I was in New York last Christmas.

She has been waiting patiently for hours.

The same verb may be transitive in one sentence and intransitive in another.

Transitive: Lydia reads novels. (Object: Novels)

Intransitive: Lydia reads well. (No object) (Hodges &

Whitten, 1967, pp. 453-460)

X. Revisions [GP, EP, DP/WPT]

Writer changes:	Yes	No	Frequency
A. Spelling	—	—	—
B. Syntax	—	—	—
C. Diction	—	—	—
D. Paragraphing	—	—	—
E. Punctuation	—	—	—

(Stallard, 1974, pp. 208-218)

XI. Deviations from standard English

Usage [GP, EP, DP/WPT]

A. Spelling	—	—	—
B. Punctuation	—	—	—
C. Capitalization	—	—	—
D. Wrong Word	—	—	—
E. Fragment	—	—	—
F. Verb tense	—	—	—
G. Run-on	—	—	—
H. Plural	—	—	—
I. Verb agreement	—	—	—
J. Possessives	—	—	—
K. Case pronouns	—	—	—
L. Pronoun agreement	—	—	—
M. Misplaced modifier	—	—	—
N. Other: _____	—	—	—

(Kirschner & Poteet, 1973, pp. 351-355)

XII. Organization, sequence, detail, unity, coherence: Overall and qualitative merit of the piece of writing [GP,EP,DP/WPT]

A. Teacher or independent judge's evaluation

1. Score from an analytic scale for exposition \_\_\_\_\_

(Diederich, 1974, pp. 53-58)

2. Paired with a peer's paper on the same topic,

the writer's paper is chosen \_\_\_\_\_ better or \_\_\_\_\_

worse (O'Hare, 1971, pp. 49-52)

3. The place of the paper in a rank-ordering of all papers in the writer's group or school is \_\_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_\_

(Diederich, 1974, pp. 13-19)

4. The place of the paper on a whole discourse quality scale made up of a series of ten or twelve graded papers in the same mode is \_\_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_\_ (Judine, 1965, pp. 159-160)

5. Rating from the National Assessment of Educational Progress analytic scale (N.A.E.P., 1975)

6. Amount of improvement when prewriting samples and post-writing samples are compared is significant \_\_\_\_\_ yes or \_\_\_\_\_ no. (Sanders & Littlefield, 1975, pp. 145-153)

7. Rating from an analytic scale of structural characteristics of factual-descriptive compositions (Stahl, 1974, pp. 184-205)

8. The compositions fulfill stated instructional objectives for growth in writing ability \_\_\_\_\_ yes or \_\_\_\_\_ no (Cooper, 1975, pp. 114-115)

9. Word or phrase that best summarizes the paper (Elbow, 1973, pp. 85-87)

10. Written summary of teacher comments on student's  
piece of writing:

11. Summary of spoken comments teachers make about student's  
piece of writing:

B. Peers' evaluation of the student's piece of writing:  
(oral & written comments)

C. Student's evaluation of his piece of writing:  
(oral & written comments) (Corbett, 1971, pp. 450-458)

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