



Assiut University  
College of Education

# Writing II

For

## 2nd Year EFL Student Teachers

By

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## Writing II for 2<sup>nd</sup> Year EFL Student Teachers

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## PREFACE

Writing is a very important skill that should be mastered properly by university students, especially pre-service language teachers (e.g. EFL student teachers). In order to present their ideas efficiently in the context of their academic study, they have to be trained well on how to write meaningful pieces (e.g. essays, academic reports, summaries, critical reviews, etc.). Moreover, writing is an important skill that prospective English language teachers need to develop during their pre-service education (training) programmes.

**Course information** based on new regulations (college bylaws, recently modified in 2013):

<b>Code:</b> Curr213	<b>Course Title:</b> Writing (2)	<b>Level:</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> , year- 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester
<b>Major:</b> BA in Arts and Education (English Section)	<b>Number of Units:</b> <b>-Lecture (Theoretical Study): 1 hour</b> <b>-Workshops (Practical Sessions): 2 hours</b> <b>-Total: 3 hours</b>	

This *Writing II* course to 2<sup>nd</sup>-year EFL student teachers complements - and builds on - the *Writing I* course studied in the previous year by fresh student teachers. It gradually takes student teachers further from the **basic mechanical writing** skills studied in *Writing I* at the sentence and paragraph writing levels, into the more advanced **essay writing process**. Thus, it aims mainly to foster EFL student teachers' essay writing skills, and help them to identify different ways,

strategies and/or techniques used for writing a standard English essay (e.g. a comprehensive five-paragraph essay).

In this regard, it provides many examples, samples and illustrations of how to write different types of essays, and how to use various techniques to develop paragraphs, and thus explore, reinforce and develop the main topic. More specifically, by the end of the course, EFL student teachers are expected to be able to:

1. Identify an English essay and its main components;
2. Write an English essay accurately and adequately;
3. Identify a topic paragraph in an essay;
4. Write a topic paragraph (and topic sentences or thesis) in an essay;
5. Identify different genres and types of essays;
6. Write different types of essays (e.g. expository, academic, descriptive, and narrative);
7. Practice essay writing skills (e.g. pre-writing strategies such as brainstorming and free writing; summarizing and skimming skills; developing ideas in paragraphs; providing sufficient/supporting details; drafting/redrafting; reflection and revision; electronic writing skills, etc.); and
8. Identify different genres of essays online (e.g. fiction and literature; factual and realistic pieces; functional products; expository essays; reflective diaries; and academic essays)

### **Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs):**

#### ***1.1 Knowledge & Understanding:***

1.1.9 The student teacher recognizes the difference between the paragraph, the composition and the essay.

1.1.10 The student teacher recognizes the various modes and genres of writing, such as comparing and contrasting, cause and effect, argumentative and expository writing.

1.1.11 The student teacher recognizes how to revise and edit essays and check them for unity, order and coherence.

1.1.15 The student teacher recognizes the difference between translating the text and the context and the various stylistic devices used in social, political, medical and cultural contexts.

## **1.2 Intellectual Skills:**

1.2.6 The student teacher produces various writing genres (explanatory, expository, descriptive and narrative) accurately and fluently.

1.2.7 The student teacher initiates and terminates paragraphs or essays accurately.

1.2.8 The student teacher uses the process and product approach to writing paragraphs and/or essays.

1.2.9 The student teacher achieves unity and coherence in his/her writing through various devices.

1.2.10 The student teacher determines the audience or the purpose of an intended writing piece.

1.2.11 The student teacher prepares writing in a format (e.g. oral presentation, manuscript, and multimedia) appropriate to audience and purpose.

1.2.12 The student teacher revises and/or edits paragraphs and/or essays.

### **1.3 Professional Skills:**

1.3.1 The student teacher enjoys English as an international means of communication.

1.3.2 The student teacher feels that learning English facilitates travelling abroad and communicating with native speakers.

1.3.5 The student teacher thinks that studying English dispels self-consciousness.

1.3.6 The student teacher thinks that English is a worthwhile subject.

### **1.4 General Skills:**

1.4.1 The student teacher responds to specific situations and current conditions when implementing instructions.

1.4.2 The student teacher responds to the ideas and opinions of other speakers thoughtfully before uttering.

<b>3- Teaching and Learning Methods</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Lecturing</li><li>2. Discussion</li><li>3. Collaborative learning</li><li>4. Blended learning</li><li>5. Online learning</li></ol>
<b>4- Teaching and Learning Methods for Low Learners</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Online tutorials</li><li>2. Private interviews</li><li>3. Self-paced learning</li></ol>
<b>5- Evaluation:</b> Both forms of evaluation (i.e. formative and summative) are employed with student teachers throughout the whole semester.	

a) Tools	Writing tasks in workshops; oral/written presentations; formative assessment in workshops; and discussion in lectures
b) Time Schedule	<p>-Provisional scores are assigned for each student teacher every week in each workshop based on certain tasks.</p> <p>-A final total score is assigned for each one by the end of the semester based on total performance in both lectures and workshops.</p> <p>-Some time is devoted to online interactions with tutors and among student teachers themselves outside the frame of the formal schedule (e.g. a Facebook group or an online Blog).</p>
c) Grading System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Semester work</b> + <b>Oral production</b>: 20 marks</li><li>• <b>Final semester exam</b>: 80 marks</li><li>• <b>Total</b>: 100 marks</li></ul>

**Course Instructor:**

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCING ESSAY WRITING

### **1.1 Introduction**

While you are at university, '**good writing**' means being able to produce a clear, grammatical, logical argument to answer a question in an exercise, an essay or an exam. This is not the place to be innovative or poetic, unless you are studying literature or fiction. More often, chances to be creative with language are available elsewhere. **Academic writing** should be clear, clean and correct. It should **display** your knowledge and **express** your ideas.

**Good writing** is always aimed at a particular **audience**. Your audience is always the **teacher(s)** who will mark your work. Your teachers are highly qualified, and are likely to be the kind of people who have an obsessive interest in grammar and spelling. They will consider a **command of language** as important as any ideas you might want to share. If your grammar is so poor that it obscures your argument, you may fail the assessment. Markers cannot give credit for what they think you might have wanted to say. What is on the paper is all that counts.

In my opinion, the burden is **doubled** for you because you are studying the English language academically and professionally. In other words, **expectations** from you tend to be greater because you are required to produce **standard written English** that indicates a high level of **accuracy** and **fluency**. It should also reflect your **mastery** of (and competency in) the main **language skills** and

**aspects** (e.g. grammar, semantics, vocabulary, reading, and communication).

**Good writing** is not an optional extra to a degree; it is the **core** of the education system. Make this your primary goal at university. Everything that you study can be channelled towards making yourself a more perceptive reader and a more **accurate writer**. Get this right and you will understand more of what you read. You will also be able to express your own ideas with **force and clarity**.

In general, I view writing is an *exhausting* – and sometimes *challenging* - process that needs much effort and skill, especially when it is done in foreign or second language. The composition process that results in producing a readable satisfactory document involves a wide range of skills and competencies, which belong to the following categories:

1. Academic and linguistic skills (i.e. mastery of syntax, grammar, vocabulary, semantics, punctuation, and other linguistic aspects/skills);
2. Organisational skills (e.g. pre-writing and planning skills);
3. Thinking and reflective skills (e.g. reflection, establishing connection and developing ideas);
4. Reading skills (e.g. skimming, summarising and selection skills);
5. Computer skills (since you write electronically in most cases, you need to develop some basic digital skills associated with writing your document properly while using your Pc, mobile phone or tablet);

6. Communication skills (e.g. you need to know how to express and convey your ideas properly to the target audience)

Actually, there are many reasons for writing. In my opinion, we often write in order to:

- Develop our academic and professional skills;
- Communicate ideas to others;
- Reflect upon certain personal and social issues;
- Convey our understanding to others (e.g. tutors, instructors and examiners);
- Convince others and orient them;
- Express ourselves (e.g. interests, attitudes, opinions, etc.);
- Report something that has happened;
- Bring something into someone's attention;
- Seek feedback (e.g. correction, amendments, insightful reviews, etc.); and
- Help others, support them, and show them around.

In this regard, Dietsch (2009) argues that writing well is a skill that can improve the quality of your life, and that there are many benefits that one can gain by learning to write well; in particular writing

- Sharpens thinking skills;
- Opens opportunities to learn;
- Nurtures personal development;
- Helps to establish relationships; and
- Fosters success in college and the workplace.

## ***1.2 Purposes of Writing***

The writing process should be guided and informed by a **clear purpose** in mind. Dietsch (2009) identified both a **general** and a **specific** purpose for writing. As for the **general purpose**, we can assume that writing has **four** general purposes: to inform, to persuade, to express, or to entertain. Quite often those are **combined** together. For example, most **expository** writing is intended to **inform**, but it also has a **secondary persuasive** element: to convince the reader that it is **factual** and **reliable**. Some writing is primarily **expressive**, allowing the writer to reveal feelings and opinions, often by recalling experience, but might include some facts and objective points. **Expressive writing** may take the form of personal essays, journal writing, diaries, poetry, fiction, or plays. Further, although some **humorous writing** seems intended merely to **entertain**, it may also make a **serious** point.

On the other hand, the **specific purpose** may be implied or stated. In literature, for example, the **purpose** is invariably **implied** in a **theme** that permeates the piece. However, in **expository writing** the purpose is usually **stated directly** for clarity, either in a **topic sentence** or in the **thesis**.

We usually write letters, words, sentences, paragraphs, and essays, respectively. I perceive an **essay** is an **organised format** of writing; an **advanced form** that includes a final **product**. It is also defined as a short piece of writing that discusses, describes or analyses a topic. It commonly consists of - at least - **three** paragraphs. It can discuss a subject directly or indirectly, seriously or humorously. (see also:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/get-ahead-stay-ahead/writing/EssayWriting-Types-of-Essays.doc> ).

It can describe personal opinions, or just report information. An essay can be written from any perspective, but are most commonly written in the first person (I), or third person (subjects that can be substituted with the he, she, it, or they pronouns).

The theme or thesis of an essay is developed by some paragraphs which should represent three main components taking this sequence: (1) introduction, (2) body, and (3) conclusion.

### **1.3 Structure & Functions**

The 1st paragraph is also called '**thesis** paragraph' or '**topic** paragraph', since it includes a topic sentence that states the main **thesis** or **theme** that the whole essay will develop. Thus, its main function is to: (1) indicate the general theme; (2) introduce the circumstances necessary to a thorough understanding of the whole composition; and (3) attract the interest of the reader. This paragraph should start with a simple introductory sentence that attracts the reader's attention and encourages him/her to continue reading the rest of the essay.

Generally, any new paragraph after this (in the **body** section) is used to indicate a change of aspect. While each paragraph must be firmly and clearly connected to the theme as given in the title of the composition, it must contain **one** clear aspect that can be identified.

Thus, **body** paragraphs - usually **three** at least – includes the specific **content** that involves those details and aspects that **develop** the main theme of the essay.

The function of the last paragraph (**conclusion**) is to: (1) summarise and bring together the thoughts expressed in previous paragraphs; (2) draw some kind of conclusion; (3) leave the reader with some thoughts which s/he should have (if it is a composition of ideas or argument); and (4) leave the reader with a good impression after having finished reviewing all the ideas and supporting details.

In other words, ideally the **structure** of your essay should be obvious from your paragraphs. Each paragraph should be a **step forward** in your argument. Think of each paragraph as a **mini essay** in which you introduce a new idea, present some evidence to back it up, and draw a conclusion from it. Once you have done this, start a new one.

Within a section, you can link paragraphs together by **connective words and phrases**, such as ‘however’, ‘consequently’, and ‘moreover’. But make sure that these words really justify their presence. There is no use saying, ‘it follows that,’ if it is not obvious how one idea leads to the other. Similarly, **avoid pompous declarations** such as ‘it is the case that’ and ‘it is a useful observation to note that’ etc. **Avoid** starting paragraphs with **vague pronouns** such as ‘it’ and ‘this’. If you cannot use a real noun, you might want to stop and ask yourself exactly what you are talking about. If you want to pick up an idea from the last paragraph and explore it further,

make sure that you name this idea, so that the reader can see what you are doing. Be specific. Use nouns and verbs.

Markers are suspicious of paragraphs consisting of less than three sentences or rambling on for more than a page and a half. Read through your essay once you are finished. If you find any paragraphs that are **too long** or **too short**, consider **revising** where the breaks fall. **Do not** use novels or newspapers as **models** for paragraphing, which are aiming for very different effects. Journalists rarely have more than one sentence in a paragraph, and often do not write complete sentences. They are playing a different game altogether.

A paragraph should be **identified** by a **topic sentence**. These often come early in the paragraph, but they can be first, in the middle, or the last sentence. Make sure you can identify the topic sentence of every paragraph you write. Equally important are **transitions** between paragraphs. Writing flows more smoothly and is easier to understand when paragraphs are **connected** to one another. Thus the **last sentence** in a paragraph may introduce the topic of the following paragraph. Alternatively, the **first sentence** of a paragraph may refer to the topic of the previous paragraph, and take it forward a step to the new topic of the present paragraph.

**Indent** the start of every paragraph by hitting the tab key to the left of Q on the keyboard. Alternatively, **leave an empty line** (by pressing the ENTER key twice) after you have finished writing a paragraph to start the next one. This makes it very obvious where your paragraph starts. Do not indent your first paragraph or a new paragraph after a

subheading. Do not indent after a quotation, unless you are starting a new paragraph.

### ***1.4 Summarising and Taking Notes***

Summarising and taking notes have become very important writing skills in this information-loaded age in which one should be selective. We do not write something from scratch; sometimes we need to review many resources and read many written essays and pieces on the topic we are planning to deal with. Just copying and pasting without critical thinking is not a good practice. You need to be selective while reading. This requires some summarising and note-taking skills.

To summarise a text is to use as few words as possible to convey its main meaning or the information it contains in the most effective manner. Sometimes, it requires great skill besides a thorough understanding of the issues and of their relative importance. It is not enough to cut out all the irrelevances and the unnecessary words. It is also necessary to **condense**.

Note-taking helps to concentrate attention during lectures, and for some people, is of great assistance to learning. Different people have different reasons for taking notes. There is a difference according to whether notes are being taken from:

- a book or journal;
- a school lecture;
- a university lecture;
- a public lecture.

Incidentally, when taking notes, most people invent their own abbreviations. Everyone knows that '*wld*', '*shld*', '*thru*', '*govt*' or '&' stand for '*would*', '*should*', '*through*', '*government*' or '*and*'.

### ***1.5 Discovering and Developing Ideas***

The **prewriting stage** is so critical for producing a strong essay. Mystery novelist Agatha Christie often paused while washing dishes to jot down ideas for a story. In this regard, Dietsch (2009) argues that the beauty of prewriting is that you can capture ideas however you like – on paper, at a keyboard, or with a voice recorder or other devices. The purpose is simply to **pin down** ideas before they flit away.

Thus, the first stage of the writing process is a time of discovery – you search for wisps of ideas. Prewriting can condense swirling thoughts into words. Prewriting can help you **find a topic** or **narrow down** a broad topic. In this first stage of writing, there is no need to think about order or correctness. To find out which prewriting strategy works best for you, you might try all (e.g. free-writing, brainstorming, clustering, questioning, and keeping a journal). Some students like to free-write:

**Free-writing** (uncensored writing in fragments or sentences) is a good way to find a topic and details. Just **turn off** your **internal editor** and jot down ideas. Free-writing is a **simple process** that is

the basis for other discovery techniques. Basic free-writing follows these guidelines:

- Write **nonstop** for a set period of time (10–20 minutes);
- Do not worry about making corrections as you write;
- Keep writing, even if you have to write something like, "I don't know what to write."
- Write whatever comes into your mind;
- Do not judge or **self-censor** what you are writing;

Free-writing has these **benefits**:

- It makes you more comfortable with the act of writing;
- It helps you bypass the "inner critic" who tells you that you cannot write;
- It can be a valve to release inner tensions;
- It can help you (as language learners) to discover things to write about.
- It can indirectly improve your formal writing;
- It can be fun. (New Readers Press, 2012).

Some final suggestions for free writing:

- Use the writing tool that is most comfortable for you— pencil, computer, or whatever.
- Don't cross anything out: Write the new idea down; leave the old one.
- Drop all punctuation. That can make free-writing faster and more fluent.

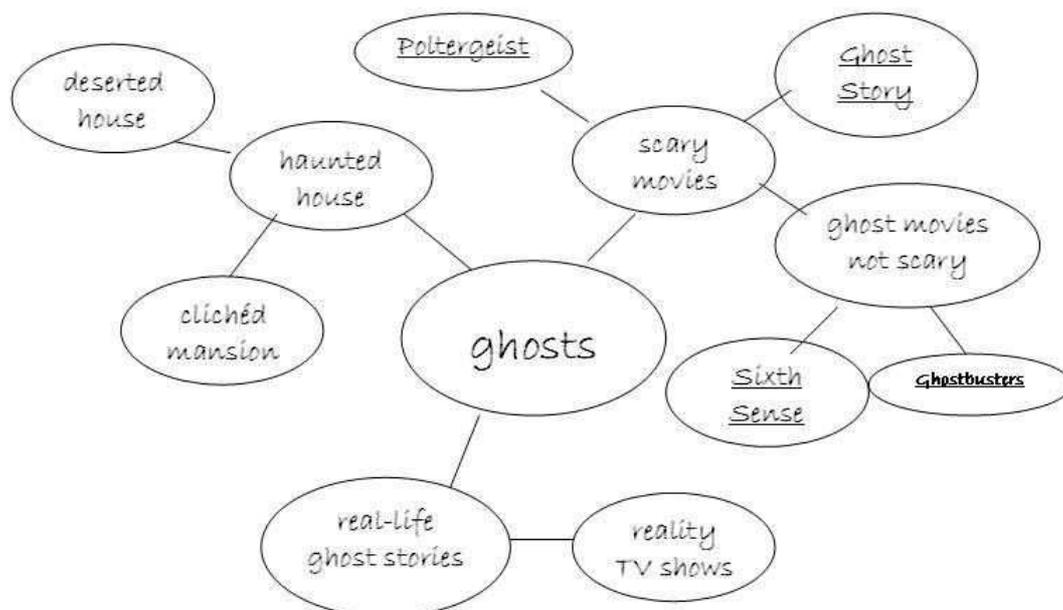
**Brainstorming** is often used to create new products, improve existing ones, or solve problems. By brainstorming for a class paper, you can find a topic, narrow it, and discover details to develop it. You might start by listing down possible topics then jotting down ways to narrow or to branch off. For a group, using a chalk-board is helpful to record ideas and trigger more. *The secret of successful brainstorming is to think fast and forgo criticism.* All ideas are respected, no matter how wild or irrelevant they might be. Remarks such as "*That won't work!*" dampen enthusiasm and dam the stream of ideas.

**Clustering**, devised by Gabriele Rico, is uncensored brainstorming combined with doodling. To begin, take a fresh sheet of paper and write a **general subject** in the **centre**. Then, **circle** the word. As each *new thought* bursts forth, jot it near the word that **prompted** it. Circle the new word. Next, **draw a line** between the two. Repeat the procedure. The central idea will branch out, leading to other specific topics. Connect new words to previous ones with lines; when you feel you have exhausted a particular avenue of associations, *go back* to your central word and begin again.

Clustering is also called *mind mapping* or *idea mapping*. It is a strategy that allows you to explore the relationships between ideas. Put the subject in the centre of a page. Circle or underline it. As you think of other ideas, link the new ideas to the central circle with lines. As you think of ideas that relate to the new ideas, add to those in the same way.

The result will look like a **web** on your page. Locate clusters of interest to you, and use the terms you attached to the **key ideas** as departure points for your paper.

Clustering is especially useful in determining the **relationship** between ideas. You will be able to distinguish how the ideas fit together, especially where there is an abundance of ideas. **Clustering** your ideas lets you see them visually in a different way, so that you can more readily understand possible directions your paper may take (also see this: <http://writing.ku.edu/prewriting-strategies>).



**Questioning** can be used – along with thoughtful reflection – to take notes on a significant incident or event and transform them into an essay. You can ask questions like: "How did this event influence me? What did I learn?" Questions like these can prod your thinking toward a meaningful conclusion. Whenever your writing stalls, ask more questions to restart the flow of details. The traditional "five Ws and an H" can be expanded to full-fledged questions:

- Who was involved?
- What happened?
- When did it happen? Where?
- How did it happen? Why?
- What can be learned?
- What is the subject like or unlike?
- How has it changed over time?

**Keeping a journal** is useful for recording incidents, observations, impressions, and reactions. A journal is similar to a diary but includes more details. A journal can include anecdotes, quotations, funny stories, poems, or speculation. Any of these may jump-start ideas for writing.

***Making a plan:*** A plan should operate as a **skeleton** for your essay. Ideally it should be possible for a reader to reconstruct your plan from the finished article. This is basically what you are doing when you take lecture notes. Paying attention to how this process works will make planning your own written work a lot easier. Most lecturers think carefully about how they want to present material to

the class. It might seem random, but if you listen they will give you markers about what the main headings are, and when they are filling out these sections. Look over your lecture notes and think about some of the techniques lecturers use. Try to see the shape of the lecture. Is the lecturer moving outward from the text to the wider historical context? Or perhaps they are focusing in, beginning with background information, looking at a particular political problem or cultural issue, and then exploring how one text contributes to this debate. Alternatively, are they working through the text section by section? Or are they offering a spectrum of views on the text? These are all **approaches** you can use in **structuring** your written work. A clear plan makes it easier to fulfil your intentions.

***Introductions and conclusions:*** Have one of each in every piece of work. Avoid repeating the question (thesis) in the introduction, but do offer an **outline** of the areas you will discuss. If you have a particularly juicy quote or fascinating fact, this may be a good place to show it off. Do not make wild generalizations about the topic at hand. This is usually the hardest bit of an essay to get right. Imagine you are answering this question: **Explore the connection between marriage and money in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.**

A weak introduction would be something like this:

Marriage and money are important themes in <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> . This essay explores the connection between marriage and money in Jane Austen's novel. First I will look at the theme of marriage, followed by the theme of money. Then I will look at the connection between the two. From this we will be able to see what Austen is trying to say about the link between them.
--

There is nothing really wrong with this introduction, but it does not open up the question in an interesting way or provide anything to **grab** the reader's **attention**. A better alternative offers a sense of where the essay will go, such as:

The connection between marriage and money lies at the heart of *Pride and Prejudice*. From the opening sentence to Elizabeth and Darcy's engagement, this novel highlights the desirability of financial security in marriage. However, the novel also shows the dangers of marrying purely for gain. This essay will explore the different models of marriage which Austen presents in *Pride and Prejudice*: marrying for money without love, marrying for love without money, and marrying with both. These models allow Austen to examine the place of the marriageable woman within the society of her period.

This **introduction** demonstrates a knowledge of the text and some intelligent thought on the question. It also maps out the **plan** of the essay that is going to follow. If you can do this in advance then your way ahead will be much clearer. However, it is always worth **going back** to look at your introduction once you have finished the essay. Does it promise something that is not in the essay? Or could you flag up an interesting idea in a more stylish way? Most good writers rewrite their introductions after they finish the conclusion. Think of this as the **shop-window** for your work. Show what you have in store in a way that will encourage a closer look.

**Conclusions** are also hard to handle gracefully, but it is better to try than to ignore the problem. **Return** to the issues which were raised by the question and show how what you have said proves your point. Avoid introducing any new ideas or material here. Do not save up your main idea as a punch-line. Similarly avoid repeating what you said earlier, although you can, of course, refer back. As with the introduction, a short, well-chosen quote can help. Although it looks

good if you explore a range of arguments during the essay itself, a conclusion should always conclude. Push your thinking towards some sort of **resolution**. Do not just sit on the fence. Answer the question one way or the other (Main reference: The Good Writing Guide).

### ***1.6 For Writing Workshops***

#### **Generating Ideas through Pre-writing**

- Pre-writing strategies help develop ideas on a topic. They are useful in helping learners narrow down a topic that is too big or broaden a topic that is too small. There are several different, and useful, pre-writing techniques. Two of the simplest types are brainstorming and clustering.
- Brainstorming is simply writing on paper all the ideas that come to mind about a topic. There is no right or wrong way to brainstorm. Learners just write anything they think of in no particular order or sequence.
- ***How to Brainstorm a Topic:***
  1. Have learners choose the topic they're interested in writing about and write it at the top of the paper. Write as many words, phrases, or sentences as they can think of underneath the topic.
  2. Once they've finished writing down as many ideas as they can, examine the ideas to see if any of them have

anything in common. They're likely to see that some of the ideas are related and have things in common.

3. Have them identify these relationships, or similarities, and create several categories for the ideas.
  4. Write those on the backside of the paper.
  5. Have learners look at the brainstorming list and lump the ideas into the categories.
- **Clustering** is an idea web. Once learners have their topics, clustering can help generate ideas about that topic and recognize relationships between ideas. These relationships become categories that eventually could make up the bulk of an essay. Clustering will also help learners weed out ideas that are weak and spotlight ideas that are strong.
  - ***How to Cluster a Topic:***
    1. Ask learners to write their topic on the top of the page. Generate ideas by writing down everything that comes to mind about that topic and circle those ideas. They should be scattered over the page.
    2. Once learners have finished generating ideas, have them examine what they've written and draw lines between those ideas that share a connection. Any connection will

do, and they may add new ideas to the cluster if they come up with more while making connections.

3. Single out those ideas that have the most lines connecting them to other ideas. Learners should aim for three or more.
4. Learners should ask themselves what the relationships or connections are between the ideas they chose. These become categories. Aim for three or more categories and write them on a separate page.
5. Beneath each category, have learners write the ideas that they felt fell into each category. These categories and ideas can be used later to make up the paragraphs of the essay.

## CHAPTER TWO: HOW TO WRITE AN ENGLISH ESSAY

### *2.1 Standard Essay Writing*

There are many ways to write an essay. However, the standard essay form follows the same basic patterns as discussed in this 'how to'. Most essays take a repetitive form sometimes known as the "hamburger essay" (see this: <http://shopyaari.com/blog/essay-in-english-language>).

What this means is that the *introductory* and *concluding* paragraphs are very similar, whereas the most important information is found in the body of the essay. Think of a hamburger: The buns cover the top and the bottom - the introduction and conclusion - and provide a nice covering for the most important part of the meal.

1. Select the **topic** of your essay: e.g. *Development of Information Technology*
2. Choose the **central idea**, or **thesis**, of your essay. For example: *Information technology has revolutionized the way we work.*
3. **Outline** your essay into introductory, body and summary paragraphs.
4. The **introductory** paragraph begins with an interesting sentence. For example: Home workers have grown from 150,000 to over 12 million in the past 5 years thanks to the wonders of the computer.

There are a number of types of introductions: Interesting statistics, a quote from a famous person, or a rhetorical question such as "Did you know that ...".

5. After this first sentence, add your *thesis statement* from above. The thesis clearly outlines what you hope to express in the essay.
6. Use one sentence to *introduce every body paragraph* to follow. This linking to ideas you will develop further in your body paragraphs provides structure to your essay.
7. Finish the introductory paragraph with a short summary or goal statement. For example: *Technological innovation has thus made the traditional workplace obsolete.*
8. In each of the body paragraphs (usually two or three) the ideas first presented in the introductory paragraph are developed. Remember that referring to ideas first introduced in the initial paragraph provides structure to your essay.
9. Develop your body paragraphs by giving *detailed information* and examples. For example: *When the Internet was first introduced it was used primarily by scientists, now it is common in every classroom.*
10. **Body** paragraphs should develop the *central idea* and finish with a *summary* of that idea. There should be at least two examples or facts in each body paragraph to support the central idea.
11. The *summary paragraph* summarizes your essay and is often a reverse of the introductory paragraph.

12. Begin the summary paragraph by quickly *restating* the principal ideas of your body paragraphs. For example: *The Internet in the home, benefits and ease of use of modern computer systems...*
13. The penultimate sentence should *restate your basic thesis* of the essay. For example: *We have now passed from the industrial revolution to the information revolution.*
14. Your *final statement* can be a future prediction based on what you have shown in the essay. For example: *The next step: The complete disappearance of the workplace.*

### **Tips:**

1. Use strong verbs and avoid modals to state your opinion. It is better to write: The workplace has evolved than The workplace seems to have evolved
2. Do not apologize for what you are saying. An essay is about your opinion.
3. Do not translate from your mother tongue. It will quickly get you into trouble!

## **2.2 How to Develop Paragraphs in an Essay**

In composition, **development** refers to the process of **adding** informative and illustrative **details** to support the main idea in a paragraph or essay. Depending on the writing genre and type of composition, I think that there are many ways through which body paragraphs can develop the theme or main idea (i.e. topic sentence):

(1) developing the theme through **examples**; (2) developing the theme through **description**; (3) developing the theme through **contrast**; (4) developing the idea through **comparison**; and (5) developing the essay through **narration**.

I think that the main idea here is that the **topic** sentence alone is **not sufficient** to provide a complete argument. The reader might need to see more details which would definitely explore the topic more to clarify it. This **elaboration** might take the form of examples, description, contrast, etc.

### **A-Paragraph development by examples**

Sometimes a paragraph is **developed by examples**. The example paragraph is a kind of **list paragraph**, in which **example sentences** closely **support** the topic sentence. According to Rosa & Eschholz (2012), illustration is the use of **examples** to make ideas more concrete and to make generalizations more specific and detailed. **Examples** enable writers not just to tell but to show what they mean.

Examine the following paragraphs:

- **Example 1:**

***Effective Writing: A Must in Universities***

*The **ability to write** well organised, concise paragraphs is **essential** to a student's success in almost all university courses. In preparing scientific reports of laboratory experiments, a student must present his findings in a **logical order** and **clear language** in order to receive a favourable evaluation of his work. To write successful answers to essay*

*questions on history or anthropology examinations, a student must arrange the relevant facts and opinions according to some accepted pattern of paragraph structure. And certainly when a student writes a book report for English, or a critique for political studies, or a term paper for sociology, style and organisation are often as important as content. Clearly skill in expository writing is crucial to successful achievement in most university subjects.*

The key words or ideas in the first two sentences of the paragraph are in **bold**.

- **Example 2 (a paragraph written by a student):**

***My Morbid Imagination***

*My family is convinced **that I inherited my imagination from Edgar Allan Poe**. For example, when I was in kindergarten, I dreamed that my sister killed people with a television antenna and disposed of their bodies in the woods across the street from my house. For three weeks after that dream I stayed with my grandparents until they finally convinced me that my sister was harmless. Not long afterward, my grandfather died, and that sparked new fears. I was so terrified that his ghost would visit me that I put two brooms across the doorway of my bedroom at night. Fortunately, my little trick worked. He never came back. More recently, I was terribly frightened after staying up late one night to watch *The Ring*. I lay awake until dawn clutching my cell phone, ready to dial 911 the moment that spooky little girl stepped out of my TV. Just thinking about it now gives me goose bumps.*

- **Example 3 (a model essay developed by examples):**

### **The Successful Interview**

*To be successful in a job interview (or for that matter in almost any interview situation), you should demonstrate certain personal and professional qualities. You need to create a good image in the limited time available, usually from 30 to 45 minutes. Furthermore, you must make a positive impression which the interviewer will remember while he interviews other applicants. At all times, you should present your most attractive qualities during an interview.*

*You should, for example, take care to appear well-groomed and modestly dressed, avoiding the extremes of too elaborate or too casual attire. On the positive side, clothes may be a good leveller, putting you on a par with other applicants and requiring the interviewer to consider more important qualifications. On the other hand, clothes which are too informal may convey the impression that you are not serious about the job or that you may be casual about your work as well as your dress. Clothes which are too elaborate, too colourful, or too expensive suggest that you do not understand what behaviour is appropriate for the job or that you are snobbish or frivolous. The right clothes worn at the right time, however, gain the respect of the interviewer and his confidence in your judgement. It may not be true that 'clothes make the man,' but the first and often lasting impression of you is determined by the clothes you wear.*

*Besides care for personal appearance, you should pay close attention to your manner of speaking. Since speech is a reflection of personality, you*

*should reflect confidence by speaking in a clear voice, loud enough to be heard without being aggressive or overpowering. Your speech should not call attention to itself, but it should reveal the individuality and ability of the speaker. Obviously, you must speak without grammatical or dialect differences for which you might be criticised or which might cause embarrassment to the employer. Although there are cultural differences with respect to the formality of the job interview, your speech must show you to be a friendly and pleasant person.*

*Speaking without a subject worth talking about will not impress anyone. You should be prepared to talk knowledgeably about the requirements of the position for which you are applying in relation to your own professional experiences and interests. Knowing something about the position enables you ask intelligent questions about the work and the requirements for the job. The interviewer can decide from the questions asked whether you are genuinely interested or knowledgeable. You can comment on your own training, experience, and other qualifications in relation to the specific tasks of the position. The interviewer can determine whether your background and potential seem to fit the position. The position for which you are applying is not only the safest topic for discussion, it is essential that you demonstrate your understanding of the requirements and your abilities in meeting these requirements.*

*Finally, to be really impressive, you must convey a sense of self-confidence and enthusiasm for work. As already indicated, you demonstrate self-confidence by your manner of speech and dress. You further show it by being prepared for the interview with information*

*and questions about the position. In addition, the way you enter the room, sit, look at the interviewer, and fill out application forms and other papers may express self-confidence. The eagerness with which you discuss the job rather than the salary may reveal your enthusiasm for work. You may express it also through your questions and comments about working conditions and facilities. And, of course, your previous experiences and success will tell the interviewer about your enthusiasm for work. Both of these qualities – self-confidence and enthusiasm for work – are valued highly by all interviewers.*

*The appropriately dressed job applicant indicates his sound judgement. His manner of speaking suggests his friendliness and competence. His curiosity and information about the position he is seeking demonstrate his sincerity and potential in the job. He exhibits self-confidence through his knowledge, and he shows his enthusiasm for work. If you display these characteristics, with just a little luck, you will certainly succeed in the typical personnel interview.*

### **Outline & Analysis**

#### **The Successful Interview**

#### **Important personal and professional qualities**

**A good image in a short time**

**A lasting impression**

**Attractive qualities**

**TP**

#### **Well-groomed and modestly dressed**

**Not too elaborate**

**Not too casual**

**EP1**

**Right clothes gain respect**

**Manner of speaking**

**Clear and loud enough**

**Without grammatical or dialect differences**

**Friendly and pleasant**

**EP2**

**Know something about the job**

**Requirements for the position**

**Experience and knowledge**

**EP3**

**Self-confidence and enthusiasm**

**Be prepared for the interview**

**Show your interest in the job**

**EP4**

**Dress**

**Speech**

**Sincerity**

**Self-confidence**

**(Succeeding in the interview)**

**RP**

**Abbreviations:** **TS** (Topic Sentence); **TP** (Topic Paragraph); **EP** (Example Paragraph); and **RP** (Restatement Paragraph).

**B-Paragraph development by comparison**

A comparison paragraph, as its name indicates, compares similar aspects or qualities of two subjects. Two different procedures are followed while writing down comparison paragraphs:

1. An example related to one subject (A) alternates with an example related to another subject (B);
2. All examples of subject A are listed together, followed by all examples of subject B.

In addition to the topic sentence (TP), the example sentence (E), and the restatement sentence (RS), additional sentence types may be used in writing comparison paragraphs:

1. A **topic introducer (TI)** might be used, followed by TS that states more specifically the basis of comparison;
2. **Transition sentences (Tr)** may be used to change from one point of view to another; from one set of ideas to another; or from one subject to another

- **Example 1: (1<sup>st</sup> procedure: alternating examples of A & B)**

***From Paragraph to Essay***

*Despite their obvious differences in length, the paragraph and the essay are quite similar structurally. For example, the paragraph is introduced by either a topic sentence or a topic introducer followed by a topic sentence. In the essay, the first paragraph provides introductory material and establishes the topic focus. Next, the sentences in the body of a paragraph develop the topic sentence. Similarly, the body of an essay consist of a number of paragraphs that expand and support the ideas presented in the introductory paragraph. Finally, a terminator – whether a restatement, conclusion, or observation – ends the paragraph. The essay, too, has a device which brings the ideas to a logically and psychologically*

*satisfying completion: the concluding paragraph. Although exceptions to these generalisations may be observed in modern creative writing, most well written expository paragraphs and essays are comparable in structure.*

Now discuss this: **Does this paragraph include the necessary parts discussed – topic sentence, developers, and terminator? Identify them!**

- **Example 2: (2<sup>nd</sup> procedure: listing all examples of A followed by those of B)**

### ***The Objective Test and the Essay Exam***

*In college and university courses, the objective test and the essay exam are two contrasting methods of evaluation commonly used to measure a student's grasp of subject matter. The objective test usually consists of a large number of unrelated questions that require the student to demonstrate mastery of details. It often leads to rote memorisation of isolated facts during the pre-test period of study. Since the questions on the objective test are presented in true-false or multiple choice form, the student may be encouraged to guess answers for which he has no accurate knowledge. The essay exam, on the other hand, usually consists of a few broadly stated questions that require the student to organise his response in essay form. Such questions force the student to give proof of his ability to handle general concepts. This type of exam also relies on factual information, but there is far greater necessity for the student to demonstrate analytical and compositional skills. Mere guessing at answers is reduced to a minimum. Although the objective test and*

*the essay exam have similar goals – the assessment of a student's academic achievement – the techniques (and very often the results) of the two types of examination differ significantly.*

### **C-Paragraph development by contrast**

**Unlike** the **comparison** paragraph, which compares **similar** aspects of two subjects, the **contrast** paragraph compares **dissimilar** aspects of two subjects. **Like** the **comparison paragraph**, however, the **two procedures** may be followed in writing the contrast paragraph. The first method **alternates** examples of **subject A** with examples of **subject B**; the contrasts may be in the **same** sentence, or they may be in **consecutive** sentences. The other method presents **all** subject A **examples together**, then all subject B **examples together**.

In writing **comparison** paragraphs, **transitional** words such as **similarly, also, too, both** are used. For contrast paragraphs, however, other transitional words and phrases are employed: **unlike, on the other hand, in contrast**, etc.

- **Example**

#### ***Where to Study***

*One major decision which faces the American student ready to begin higher education is the choice of attending a large university or a small college. The large university provides a wide range of specialised departments, as well as numerous courses within such departments. The small college, however, generally provides a limited number of courses and specialisations but offers a better student-faculty ratio, thus permitting individualised attention to students. Because of its*

*large, cosmopolitan student body (often exceeding 20,000) the university exposes its students to many different cultural, social, and extra-curricular programmes. On the other hand, the smaller, more homogeneous student body of the small college affords greater opportunities for direct involvement and individual participation in such activities. Finally, the university closely approximates the real world; it provides a relaxed, impersonal, and sometimes anonymous existence. In contrast, the intimate atmosphere of the small college allows the student four years of structured living in which s/he contemplates and prepares for the real world. In making his choice among educational institutions, the student must, therefore, consider many factors.*

#### **D-Paragraph development by narration and specific details**

Sometimes, a paragraph is developed by narration; this means telling more - in the form of a story - to clarify and support the topic sentence. Past events and specific details sometimes elaborate on a specific idea to strengthen it. For example, a story might emphasise the idea that someone is careless or strange, like in the example below:

***My friend Jones is not a very practical person.*** *Driving along a main way one dark night, he suddenly had a flat tyre. Even worse, he discovered that he did not have a spare wheel in his car trunk! Jones waved to passing cars and lorries, but none of them stopped. Half an hour later, he was almost in despair. At last, he waved to a car just like his own. To his surprise, the car actually stopped and a well-dressed*

*young woman got out. Jones was terribly disappointed: How could a person like this possibly help him? The lady, however, offered him her own spare wheel, but Jones had to explain that he had never changed a wheel in his life! She set to work at once and fitted the wheel in a few minutes while Jones looked on in admiration.*

### **2.3 Good Presentation of Ideas**

Having decided on what to say (or write), say it **neatly** (precisely or adequately), clearly, simply, coherently, and consistently. Presentation is very important as it makes reading faster and easier. It shows concern for the reader and it always pays to take the trouble.

#### **A-Write neatly**

Try to be as much legible as you can! Neatness is particularly important when filling in forms or writing job application letters. The way you write such documents will make a better impression on a prospective employer than a messy one. Also, neatness of presentation matters a great deal in examinations. Neatness is not a substitute of knowledge, but a messy presentation can lower the marks which the answers (e.g. written essays) receive.

#### **B-Write clearly**

Clarity is very important; so, keep sentences short and try your best to avoid complicated constructions with unnecessary subordinate clauses. It is far better to cut long sentences into short ones by the use of punctuation. The following example taken from a Government

publication illustrates the case of a very long sentence which could be written better:

*"In turn, India is exporting increased quantities of non-traditional goods like engineering products, machinery, components, equipment, electronic goods, etc for which there is a growing demand among the non-aligned countries, and which India offers not only at a competitive price, but on comparatively easier financial terms and with facilities of after-sale service."*

It would be much better to write it this way:

*"India is exporting increased quantities of non-traditional goods like engineering products, machinery, components, equipment, electronic goods, etc. There is a growing demand for such goods among the non-aligned countries. India offers competitive prices, comparatively easier financial terms and facilities for after-sale service."*

Thus, **one** long sentence has been cut into **THREE**, and made simpler and clearer.

### **C-Plan your paragraphs**

Paragraphs are key aids to clarity:

- Paragraphs break the text into units, and this makes reading and understanding easier;
- There should be only one theme (topic) per paragraph. Therefore, paragraphs help the organisation of one's thoughts;
- Each paragraph has to contain a topic sentence; that is a sentence stating the theme of the paragraph. This sums up for the reader what the writer is trying to say;

- Each paragraph should end on a transition which introduces the next paragraph. This helps the reader to follow the reasoning structure.

Paragraphs can have many sentences, so long as the unity of the theme is preserved. There should be only one theme per paragraph. If the paragraph is a long one, it may be desirable to put the topic sentence at the beginning. However, there is no hard or fast rule; the topic sentence can go wherever it fits.

#### **D-Avoid long and unnecessary words**

It is a golden piece of advice to avoid long and unnecessary words. Long words interrupt the flow of thought and the reader may not understand them. Here are a few examples of long words, each followed by a short word which would be better to use: *abbreviated/short*; *necessitate/need*; *prevaricate/quibble*; *desiccate/dry-up*; *circumscribe/limit*; *multi-faceted/many-sided*; and *tendermindedness/tenderness*.

However, in some cases, the long word is better because it describes the meaning more accurately. Moreover, there are occasions when long words are called for, because they either add to the meaning or improve the rhythm of the sentence. For example: "***The moon-landing was a significantly memorable achievement***" is stronger than: "***The moon-landing was a great feat to remember***".

**Unnecessary words** are those words which add nothing to the meaning of the sentence. Sometimes, we – as English learners – add some empty or unnecessary words that would add nothing to the

meaning of the sentence. Some of us, for example, would prefer to start writing, especially when introducing a topic, with specific phrases or starters, such as: 'As a matter of fact.....', 'There is no doubt that .....', 'Generally speaking .....', and 'Needless to say.....'. Those starters can be removed or replaced by shorter ones (or just a single word) to convey the same meaning. Sometimes, we repeat ourselves by writing many synonyms (Don't panic! All of us – as Arabic speakers – did this!). For example, we might write down a sentence like this: *The Maths test was so **hard, difficult, complicated and tricky!*** Perhaps, just one of the above adjectives is sufficient to do the job.

### **E-Be coherent and consistent**

To be **coherent** is to make sense, and to be easy to follow and understand. More specifically, it means:

- Putting the words of each sentence in the right place;
- Putting the sentences in the right order; and
- Avoiding ambiguity.

In other words, the basic unit for the written expression of thought is the **sentence**. To be complete and meaningful, the sentence must have at least **one verb** and **one subject**; the subject, however, can be implied.

Naturally, as the sentences become more complicated, the **order of words** becomes more important. For example: "*I am wearing the dress my mother made for my birthday*" does not mean the same thing as "*I am wearing for my birthday the dress my mother made*"! The **difference** in meaning comes from the place of 'for my birthday'.

**Keep together** the words which belong together; failure to do so may yield some very odd results:

***"He took out his gun, blew his nose, wiped it clean, put it in his pocket and wondered whether it would go off!"***

The sentence was not meant to be funny; its author simply forgot to keep together the words which belonged together. It was **the gun** he wiped clean, not his nose; the sentence ought to run like this: ***"He blew his nose: took out his gun, wiped it clean, put it in his pocket and wondered whether it would go off."***

With sentences, as with words, it is very important to keep to the **logical order**. It is equally important to use short, simple sentences with **one thought** per sentence.

**Avoid ambiguity:** Ambiguity is not lack of coherence, but obscurity. **Faulty construction** can lead to misunderstanding or to nonsense. See this: ***"I will eat at my home which is in London on Sunday"***. As if home was not in London during the week. Had the words which **belonged together** been **kept together**, there would have been no ambiguity! So, see this modified one: ***"On Sunday, I will eat at my home which is in London"*** or ***"I will eat on Sunday at my home which is in London"***.

Nothing is more irritating than to find the same word spelt in different ways. If one spells 'Muslim' with a 'u' and an 'i', one must not switch to 'Moselm' with an 'o' and an 'e'. The same applies to

Koran/Quran, and to English words like cheque/check, through/thru, and rhyme/rime.

### **F-Consider 'register' (suitable language & tone)**

Writing well involves presenting your material in a **tone appropriate** to your audience and to the task in hand. You would use different styles of language for a business letter, a newspaper report, a letter to a friend or a short story. It is important to develop a **suitable tone**, or register, for your written work.

A university essay is a **formal document** and requires a **formal register**. Students often struggle to find a balance between formal, intellectual language and open, accessible English. Many reputable scholars struggle with this too, which is why some academic books are so hard to understand. However, even the most complicated ideas can be articulated clearly. Your marker will be delighted to see complex thought presented in plain English. They will also notice if you dress up weak thinking in flowery language. Pay attention to the register of your writing and remember who will read your work.

Pay attention to the way academic writers, for example, use language. If it seems too dense and formal then do not copy their style. However, if you find a book that is lucid, interesting and readable, try to work out what makes it so clear.

**Avoid being too personal:** Your name appears on the front of your essay, therefore your marker already knows that everything in the essay is your opinion. **Do not keep saying ‘in my opinion’** or ‘it seems to me that’ etc. Have the courage of your convictions and state what you think. If you can back up your views with evidence from sources, there is no need to apologise or hesitate. You do not need to fear the first person, but don’t overdo it. Present your work as a piece of cohesive thought rather than as collection of your own responses. Avoid using phrases such as, ‘I want to look at’ – just get on with it.

**Avoid being too clever:** Some of the worst grammatical errors are caused by trying to write long, complex sentences. A short sentence is the most powerful way to make a cogent point. However, one short declarative after another quickly rings wooden. Similarly, do not use words that you *think* you understand. If in doubt, look them up instead of leaving them out.

**Avoid slang:** This does not just cover words and phrases. It also applies to informal expressions and sentence constructions. Do not say, ‘Cicourel’s analysis of juvenile delinquency blew me away. You know what I mean?’ You can express the same idea by saying, ‘Cicourel’s analysis is vivid and engaging,’ or, ‘Cicourel’s observational research demands a strong response from the reader.’ Avoid using ‘you’ or ‘us’ for the reader of the text. ‘One’ sounds formal in everyday speech, but it is very useful in this setting.

***Tenses:*** Use the past tense for anything that happened in the past. If you use the present tense to refer to an author's argument ('Bruce says x, y. Brewer argues that ...') then stick with that consistently. The present tense may be the most appropriate for certain generalizations ('Social stratification exists in every known society.'), but make sure that they really do apply to the present day.

### **G-Watch your grammar**

If you want to express interesting ideas, then a sound **grasp of grammar** is essential. Your understanding of grammar may be more developed than you realise. If you have studied a foreign language, you may have a very sophisticated knowledge of how it works. Most speakers use grammar well without knowing all the terms for the techniques they are using. This is fine when it works, but it can help to stop and think about what you are doing. Markers tend to use technical, grammatical terms when pointing out problems in your work, which is not much use to you if you do not know what they are talking about.

This section will point out a few common problems, and offer definitions of some terms that may crop up in your markers' comments. If you have serious problems with the English grammar used in academic writing, you have to work hard to solve them. If your markers consistently complain about your **syntax**, sentence structure, tenses, pronouns and the like, you probably need some help from specialised sources on syntax and grammar.

**Syntax** is the order of elements. English is an 'SVO' language, which means the normal order of elements is subject-verb-object. 'The man bit the dog,' is clear in its meaning, if weird. Problems can develop, however, when a writer starts to pile various modifying elements (subordinate clauses, temporal phrases, etc.) at the beginning of a sentence. Then it is possible to lose track of the subject, the verb, and the object (complement).

### **H-Watch your punctuation**

Punctuation is very important; without it, words would follow each other in an endless stream and the meaning would be lost. The role of punctuation is to make meaning clear. I remember a funny famous example (perhaps it was a joke about what male students wrote, and what female students in the same classroom wrote) that shows the importance of punctuation:

***A woman without her man is nothing!*** (without punctuation). If left as it is, the sentence would bear two contrasted interpretations:

1. A woman: without her, man is nothing.
2. A woman, without her man, is nothing.

A **full-stop** (.) is needed to end the sentence, when a complete meaning has been reached. However, **three** full-stops (...) placed one after the other mean that words have been left out in a quotation; '*Let me tell you ... I hope you agree.*' Or to indicate that the sentence has been left unfinished deliberately, '*I could go on and on...*'

The **colon** is used to introduce the words which follow it. '**My shopping list reads:** 12 eggs, 1 lb butter, 2 lbs sugar...' To introduce direct speech or a quotation. **Then he said: 'After all ...'**

The **semi-colon** is very useful, especially because it is less final than a full-stop. It can be used between sentences which are complete in themselves, to indicate that there is a connection between their meaning: '**I disliked her at first sight; she looked sloppy in her jeans and her kinky hair dyed green was unkempt**'. A full-stop after '**sight**' would cut off the trend of thought while the insertion of 'because' would weaken the meaning.

Because the **semi-colon** is less than a **full-stop**, but more than a **comma**, it is useful to break up long sentences which already have commas in them. Here is an example taken from Samuel Johnson:

**'The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early had been kind; but it has been delayed until I am indifferent, and cannot impart it; till I am known and do not want it'**.

If Samuel Johnson had used full-stops instead of semi-colons, he would have destroyed the dignity of this passage by making it jerky. Instead, by using semi-colons, he adds weight to each of his reasons.

The **comma** is a useful stop, especially when reading out loud; it gives you time to breathe. There are as many different ways of using commas as there are styles of writing. However, here are 9 different cases when commas must be used:

- **Before and after speech:** ‘I must ask you to repeat these words,’ said the priest, ‘before I can pronounce you man and wife.’
- **When listing things,** qualities, ideas or clauses: ‘Fear, love, hate, hunger and death are man’s lot’. ‘His dedication to office, his endless energy, his honesty and his generosity will long be remembered.’
- **To separate words of *the same* part of speech:** Look at these examples:
  1. ‘He advanced slowly, steadily, silently.’ (adverbs)
  2. ‘He is tall, dark, fat yet handsome.’ (adjectives)
  3. ‘He lied, stole, killed and fled.’ (verbs)
  4. ‘in walked the sailor, the soldier, the pilot...’ (nouns)
- **To separate** from the rest of the sentence **qualifying words** not essential to its meaning: ‘Napoleon, the French Emperor, was defeated at Waterloo.’
- **To separate** from the rest of the sentence a **non-defining clause:** ‘The battle of Waterloo, which you have read about, is one of the most important events in history.’
- **Between words repeated for *emphasis*:** ‘It was much, much too hot.’
- **Instead of ‘or’ and ‘and’:** For example: ‘Give me apples, pears and prunes.’ (I want all three) – ‘Give me apples, pears or prunes.’ (I want only one of them)
- **Usually after and around ‘however’:** ‘However, you must forgive him.’ – ‘Let us look at the facts, however, lest we do him an injustice.’

Moreover, there are many ***other punctuation marks*** can be used for different purposes. These include:

- **Question marks (?)**
- **Inverted commas** (which are commonly used to single out words or letters, or to indicate that the words between them are a quotation, part of speech, title of a book, etc.)
- **Brackets** (which are sometimes used to introduce words which do not affect the meaning of the text; or to set out numbers or letters of the alphabet used to enumerate lists; e.g. (i), (ii), (a), (b), (c), etc.)
- **Hyphens** (which are mainly used to make ***compound words*** ‘vice-president’, ‘son-in-law’, and ‘know-how’; to unite two or more words in order to make them into an adjective: ‘***never-to-be-forgotten*** event’; after certain Latin prefixes: ‘anti-English’, ‘ex-Prime Minister’, etc.)
- **Dashes** (which are used to: (1) summarise a list already given; and (2) emphasise the end of a sentence.)
- **Exclamation marks (!)**

## ***2.4 Editing and Revising Paragraphs and Essays***

It should be clear that getting your thoughts down on paper is not the final stage of writing a good paragraph or essay. There remains the rewriting of the first draft so as to shape your ideas into a carefully styled composition. Nowadays, computers and other electronic devices and software have made the editing and redrafting process even easier and more manageable. Ordinarily, editing involves

changes at three points: between sentences, within sentences, and in individual words.

At the word level, spelling and capitalisation are checked, but more creatively, words are often changed. A different word may be substituted for the original word because it is easier to understand, is more colourful, gives a more precise meaning, or provides variety.

At the sentence level, phrases may be put in a different order, structures of modification revises, different verb structures selected, or the length of phrases or whole sentences may be altered.

Finally, for smoothness and balance, changes are made between sentences or paragraphs. Such changes, designed to clarify relationships between ideas, are often accomplished by punctuating more adequately, by introducing more effective transitional devices, or by restating or removing awkward phrases and sentences. Editing then – the self-conscious appraisal and revision of your own work – usually makes the difference between a merely acceptable and a truly superior piece of writing.

## CHAPTER THREE: TYPES & GENRES OF ENGLISH ESSAYS

There are many different kinds of essays. The following are some of the most common ones:

### **3.1 Expository**

The function of the expository essay is to explain something to the reader by giving directions or instructions, or to acquaint your reader with knowledge about how to complete a task or how something is done. You are demonstrating your own knowledge and explaining with facts, not your opinion. It is very important that your tone be reasonable and that your presentation be factual and believable.

#### ***Samples & Examples:***

*Every country of course has its own customs, and those customs can sometimes worry the visitor from another country. I hope my few words of advice will be helpful to foreign visitors coming to Britain (UK).*

*What do British people usually do when they are first introduced to each other? They usually smile a little and say: 'How do you do?' And the reply is the same, 'How do you do?' That's simple enough, isn't it? They may shake hands, of course, particularly if it is a public introduction, but we don't shake hands as often as people in many other countries do. And we don't shake hands with men and women we see often. Only when we first meet, or when someone is going away for a long time, or when we meet someone after a long time. If you aren't sure, just wait for the other person to make the first move. When we*

*meet the same people again and again, incidentally, we usually say 'Good morning', or 'Good afternoon' or 'Good evening', according to the time of the day. Or if we want to be more informal – just 'Hello'.*

*Now what about conversation? The British are said to be cold, hard to get to know, even unfriendly. It's true that we don't often talk to strangers in trains or buses. Look around in a crowded city bus or train and you'll see more people reading their newspapers than talking to their neighbours. Perhaps we think too much talk is an unnecessary waste of time. And each person likes his own private life and doesn't like to disturb the privacy of others. But this doesn't mean they are unfriendly; if you need help, just say 'Excuse me' and ask for it, and it will be given gladly. And while I'm on the subject of trains and buses, a gentleman still offers his seat to a lady or an aged person, although I must confess that there seem to be fewer gentlemen about nowadays.*

*Finally, a word about punctuality. If you arrange to meet somebody or call them at a certain time, then don't be late. Allow plenty of time for the journey, and if necessary, arrive a little early rather than be late. It just isn't polite to arrive late, and people get very annoyed if they have to wait for long. This is particularly important in business, where time is money. Punctuality isn't only a British custom, of course, and British people themselves are sometimes late, but on the whole, we don't like unpunctuality. This reminds me of a meeting I was arranging in India. I suggested nine o'clock in the morning. A young Indian friend looked at me with a twinkle in his eye. 'Indian time, or British time?' he asked.*

### **3.2 Compare and Contrast**

The essay could be an unbiased discussion, or an attempt to convince the reader of the benefits of one thing, person, or concept. It could also be written simply to entertain the reader, or to arrive at an insight into human nature. The essay could discuss both similarities and differences, or it could just focus on one or the other. A **comparison** essay usually discusses the similarities between two things, while the **contrast** essay discusses the differences.

### **3.3 Cause and Effect**

The **cause/effect essay** explains why or how some event happened, and what resulted from the event. This essay is a study of the relationship between two or more events or experiences. The essay could discuss both causes and effects, or it could simply address one or the other. A **cause essay** usually discusses the reasons why something happened. An **effect essay** discusses what happens after a specific event or circumstance. Sources are often required in a **cause/effect paper**, and your choice of these sources is important as they reflect on the validity of your argument.

### **3.4 Argumentative (Persuasive)**

An **argumentative essay** is one that attempts to persuade the reader to the writer's point of view. The writer can either be serious or funny, but always tries to convince the reader of the validity of his or her opinion. The essay may argue openly, or it may attempt to subtly persuade the reader by using irony or sarcasm. Your approach is to take a stand on an issue and use evidence to back up your stance, not to explore an unresolved topic.

You must choose a side, make a case for it, consider and refute alternative arguments, and prove to the undecided reader that the opinion it presents is the best one. You must be aware of other sides and be fair to them; dismissing them completely will weaken your own argument. It is best to take a side that you believe in, preferably with the most supporting evidence. It can often be educational to adopt a different position from what you might normally choose (debating requires this kind of flexibility).

### **3.5 Informal**

Written mainly for enjoyment. This is not to say that it cannot be informative or persuasive; however, it is less a formal statement than a relaxed expression of opinion, observation, humour or pleasure. A good informal essay has a relaxed style but retains a strong structure, though that structure may be less rigid than in a formal paper.

The informal essay tends to be more personal than the formal, even though both may express subjective opinions. In a formal essay the writer is a silent presence behind the words, while in an informal essay the writer is speaking directly to the reader in a conversational style. If you are writing informally, try to maintain a sense of your own personality. Do not worry about sounding academic, but avoid sloppiness.

### **3.6 Critical Review**

This type of essay can be either formal or informal, depending on the context. Its goal is to evaluate a work such as an article or book. Your personal, informed, *opinion* plays a significant role in the process. However, a certain objective standard needs to be

maintained and, as in an argumentative essay, your assertions need to be proved.

The formality of the review will be determined by how much of the essay is analysis, how much is summary and how much is your reaction to the work you are reviewing. A more formal review will not only discuss the work on its own merits but also place it in context. Newspapers and popular magazines often review in terms of finance: is this CD or film worth spending your money on? Critical journals will attempt to determine whether a new novel or play has achieved something new and significant. A good review will discuss both the qualities and the importance of a given work.

### **3.7 Research (Analytical)**

The *research essay* leads you into the works of others and asks you to compare their thoughts with your own. Writing a research paper involves going to source material and synthesising what you learn from it with your own ideas. You must find texts on the subject and use them to support the topic you have been given to explore. Because it is easy to become lost in a wilderness of source material, you must take particular care to narrow your topic. A research paper should demonstrate what you have learned, but it should also show that you have a perspective of your own on the subject.

The greatest danger inherent in the research essay is *plagiarism*. If your paper consists of a string of quotations or paraphrases with little input of your own, you are not synthesising but copying, and you should expect a low grade. If any of the borrowings are

unacknowledged, you are plagiarising, and the penalties can be severe.

### **3.8 Literary**

In the *literary essay*, you are exploring the meaning and construction of a piece of literature. This task is more complicated than reviewing, though the two are similarly evaluative. In a review you are discussing the overall effect and validity of written work, while in a literary essay you are paying more attention to specifics. A literary essay focuses on such elements as structure, character, theme, style, tone and subtext. You are taking a piece of writing and trying to discover how and why it is put together the way it is. You must adopt a viewpoint on the work in question and show how the details of the work support your viewpoint.

A literary essay may be your own interpretation, based only on your reading of the piece, or it may be a mixture of your opinions and references to the criticism of others, much like a research paper. Again, be wary of plagiarism and of letting the opinions and ‘voices’ of more experienced writers swamp your own response to the work. If you are going to consult the critics, you should reread the literary work you are discussing and make some notes on it based on your own viewpoint before looking at any criticism.

Also see this online: [http://esl.about.com/cs/writing/ht/ht\\_essay.htm](http://esl.about.com/cs/writing/ht/ht_essay.htm)

### **3.9 For Writing Workshops**

- Choose one type of essay writing and complete an essay on a topic of choice that best exemplifies the chosen type of writing.

- Create an **outline** for a ***persuasive essay***. The outline must follow a formal outline set-up. Choose a controversial topic that is relevant in today's society, for example, universal health care.

## CHAPTER FOUR: FUNCTIONAL WRITING

### 4.1 Introduction

Generally, functional writing is writing that is meant to *fulfil real life purposes*, such as: making a request or giving advice, inviting someone for a visit or to a function, applying for something. That is, the writing activities carried out resemble those done in real life for practical purposes.

**Functional** writing is different to **personal** writing in that you have far less freedom in the way you *approach* the task. There are certain standards and accepted ways of writing letters, reviews, reports etc.. You may have an opportunity to be somewhat creative, but you must abide by the rules. Creative writing is more for self-expression and pleasure.

In essence, *functional-pragmatic writing* is so important for many social purposes like *describing* people to give an account of someone; for *business* purposes like writing a proposal or a report; and academic purposes like writing a dissertation, term papers or theses.

### 4.2 Why and How Do We Write Functionally and Pragmatically?

In daily life, you come across different situations wherein you need to write. More specifically, we may write *describe* people for various purposes. Sometimes you have to:

- Introduce someone to another through a letter by describing the person;
- Give an account about someone as an eyewitness about a robber or a person involved in a road accident;
- Give a short account of a dead person in an obituary note in a newspaper or a journal;
- Write a brief sketch of a celebrity, giving an account of life, his/her achievements or rewards (i.e. personal profile or a short biography).

At other times, you might be involved in electronic ***online social-networking activities*** that might require you to write down something to someone in order to:

- Thank him/her for something (e.g. favour) s/he has already done for you;
- Invite him/her to do something (e.g. play cards online or visit you at home);
- Suggest something for him/her to do (e.g. visit a specific website, watch a certain movie, or read a book);
- Apologise for something that went wrong (e.g. losing his/her file);
- Console him/her in writing after the death of a close person;
- Advise him/her on the best way of doing something (e.g. removing a mal-ware or ad-ware programme out of a computer);

Sometimes we write in order to ***express ourselves*** (i.e. writing for self-expression). Thus, we write in order to:

- Communicate to others our views about something (e.g. personal accounts and explanations);
- Express our understanding of something (e.g. writing a critical review);
- Give a summary of something we have read;
- Express our likes and dislikes;
- Relate our way of thinking to others;
- State in writing what one really feels towards someone or something;
- Write some personal reflections as entries in a diary;
- Provide a written feedback when prompted;

Sometimes we need to write for *academic and recruitment* purposes, such as:

- Writing a curriculum vitae (CV) to present to a manager;
- Filling in a job application form;
- Taking notes while listening to or watching something (e.g. a lecture, short talk, etc.);
- Communicating in writing with a course instructor to ask for clarification;

At other times, we might write to report something:

- Composing a report on an event;
- Making a police statement;
- Creating a report of a problem that has occurred while using a machine.

### **4.3 Types of Functional-Pragmatic Writing Products**

Moreover, there are *many products* that we might be required to produce through writing. These include:

- Letters and e-mails (both formal and informal)
- Memorandum (memo);
- Explanations and personal accounts
- Advertisement (ad);
- Reports;
- Shopping lists;
- Brochure or Leaflet;
- News article;
- Instructions & Directions
- Reviews
- Diaries

### **4.4 What Are the Key Requirements of Functional Writing?**

The six key requirements of Functional Writing are that you:

1. use language with an appropriate **register**. This means that you must write in an appropriate tone and with appropriate vocabulary for the specific task and audience;
2. have a clear sense of **who** you are writing for;
3. write with a strong sense of **purpose**;
4. give your writing a shape or **layout** that conforms to accepted standards (e.g. for a letter, the placing of the address in the top right hand corner);
5. **punctuate** accurately and observe the **rules of grammar**;
6. keep your **content relevant to the question**;

In other words, you need to ask yourself the following questions:

*Who am I writing for?* [**Audience**]

They could be the public, principal, teacher, friend, company manager, town council etc.

*Why am I writing this?* [**Purpose**]

To give an account of something I witnessed, to complain about something, to explain, inform. instruct, convince and persuade, sell, etc.

*How is this piece to be written?* [**Format**]

report, letter, account, article. statement, review. speech etc.

*What is the tone I should use?* [**Language**]

formal, informal, persuasive, informative, argumentative etc.

## CHAPTER FIVE: ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES OF COMPOSITION

There are some important principles that any writer of composition of any type should consider (*main reference: William Strunk, 1999, The Elements of Style*)

### **5.1 Make the paragraph the unit of composition: one paragraph to each topic.**

If the subject on which you are writing is of slight extent, or if you intend to treat it very briefly, there may be no need of subdividing it into topics. Thus a brief description, a brief summary of a literary work, a brief account of a single incident, a narrative merely outlining an action, the setting forth of a single idea, any one of these is best written in a single paragraph. After the paragraph has been written, it should be examined to see whether subdivision will not improve it.

Ordinarily, however, a subject requires subdivision into topics, each of which should be made the subject of a paragraph. The object of treating each topic in a paragraph by itself is, of course, to aid the reader. The beginning of each paragraph is a signal to him that a new step in the development of the subject has been reached.

The extent of subdivision will vary with the length of the composition. For example, a short notice of a book or poem might consist of a single paragraph. One slightly longer might consist of two paragraphs:

- A. Account of the work.
- B. Critical discussion.

A report on a poem, written for a class in literature, might consist of seven paragraphs:

- A. Facts of composition and publication.
- B. Kind of poem; metrical form.
- C. Subject.
- D. Treatment of subject.
- E. For what chiefly remarkable.
- F. Wherein characteristic of the writer.
- G. Relationship to other works.

The contents of paragraphs C and D would vary with the poem. Usually, paragraph C would indicate the actual or imagined circumstances of the poem (the situation), if these call for explanation, and would then state the subject and outline its development. If the poem is a narrative in the third person throughout, paragraph C need contain no more than a concise summary of the action. Paragraph D would indicate the leading ideas and show how they are made prominent, or would indicate what points in the narrative are chiefly emphasized.

A novel might be discussed under the heads:

- A. Setting.
- B. Plot.
- C. Characters.
- D. Purpose.

A historical event might be discussed under the heads:

- A. What led up to the event.
- B. Account of the event.
- C. What the event led up to.

In treating either of these last two subjects, the writer would probably find it necessary to subdivide one or more of the topics here given.

As a rule, single sentences should not be written or printed as paragraphs. An exception may be made of sentences of transition, indicating the relation between the parts of an exposition or argument.

In dialogue, each speech, even if only a single word, is a paragraph by itself; that is, a new paragraph begins with each

change of speaker. The application of this rule, when dialogue and narrative are combined, is best learned from examples in well-printed works of fiction.

***5.2 As a rule, begin each paragraph with a topic sentence; end it in conformity with the beginning.***

Again, the object is to aid the reader. The practice here recommended enables him to discover the purpose of each paragraph as he begins to read it, and to retain the purpose in mind as he ends it. For this reason, the most generally useful kind of paragraph, particularly in exposition and argument, is that in which

- D. the topic sentence comes at or near the beginning;
- E. the succeeding sentences explain or establish or develop the statement made in the topic sentence; and
- F. the final sentence either emphasizes the thought of the topic sentence or states some important consequence.

Ending with a digression, or with an unimportant detail, is particularly to be avoided.

If the paragraph forms part of a larger composition, its relation to what precedes, or its function as a part of the whole, may need to be expressed. This can sometimes be done by a mere

word or phrase (*again; therefore; for the same reason*) in the topic sentence. Sometimes, however, it is expedient to precede the topic sentence by one or more sentences of introduction or transition. If more than one such sentence is required, it is generally better to set apart the transitional sentences as a separate paragraph.

According to the writer's purpose, he may, as indicated above, relate the body of the paragraph to the topic sentence in one or more of several different ways. He may make the meaning of the topic sentence clearer by restating it in other forms, by defining its terms, by denying the converse, by giving illustrations or specific instances; he may establish it by proofs; or he may develop it by showing its implications and consequences. In a long paragraph, he may carry out several of these processes.

<p><b>1</b> Now, to be properly enjoyed, a walking tour should be gone upon alone.</p>	<p><b>1</b> Topic sentence.</p>
<p><b>2</b> If you go in a company, or even in pairs, it is no longer a walking tour in anything but name; it is something else and more</p>	<p><b>2</b> The meaning made clearer by denial of the contrary.</p>

<p>in the nature of a picnic.</p>	
<p><b>3</b> A walking tour should be gone upon alone, because freedom is of the essence; because you should be able to stop and go on, and follow this way or that, as the freak takes you; and because you must have your own pace, and neither trot alongside a champion walker, nor mince in time with a girl.</p>	<p><b>3</b> The topic sentence repeated, in abridged form, and supported by three reasons; the meaning of the third ("you must have your own pace") made clearer by denying the converse.</p>
<p><b>4</b> And you must be open to all impressions and let your thoughts take colour from what you see.</p>	<p><b>4</b> A fourth reason, stated in two forms.</p>
<p><b>5</b> You should be as a pipe for any wind to play upon.</p>	<p><b>5</b> The same reason, stated in still another form.</p>
<p><b>6</b> "I cannot see the wit," says Hazlitt, "of walking and talking at the same time.</p>	<p><b>6-7</b> The same reason as stated by Hazlitt.</p>
<p><b>7</b> When I am in the country, I wish to vegetate like the country," which is</p>	

<p>the gist of all that can be said upon the matter.</p>	
<p><b>8</b> There should be no cackle of voices at your elbow, to jar on the meditative silence of the morning.</p>	<p><b>8</b> Repetition, in paraphrase, of the quotation from Hazlitt.</p>
<p><b>9</b> And so long as a man is reasoning he cannot surrender himself to that fine intoxication that comes of much motion in the open air, that begins in a sort of dazzle and sluggishness of the brain, and ends in a peace that passes comprehension.— Stevenson, <i>Walking Tours</i>.</p>	<p><b>9</b> Final statement of the fourth reason, in language amplified and heightened to form a strong conclusion.</p>

<p><b>1</b> It was chiefly in the eighteenth century that a very different conception of history grew up.</p>	<p><b>1</b> Topic sentence.</p>
<p><b>2</b> Historians then came to believe that their task was not so much to paint a</p>	<p><b>2</b> The meaning of the topic sentence made clearer; the new conception of history</p>

<p>picture as to solve a problem; to explain or illustrate the successive phases of national growth, prosperity, and adversity.</p>	<p>defined.</p>
<p><b>3</b> The history of morals, of industry, of intellect, and of art; the changes that take place in manners or beliefs; the dominant ideas that prevailed in successive periods; the rise, fall, and modification of political constitutions; in a word, all the conditions of national well-being became the subjects of their works.</p>	<p><b>3</b> The definition expanded.</p>
<p><b>4</b> They sought rather to write a history of peoples than a history of kings.</p>	<p><b>4</b> The definition explained by contrast.</p>
<p><b>5</b> They looked especially in history for the chain of causes and effects.</p>	<p><b>5</b> The definition supplemented: another element in the new conception of history.</p>
<p><b>6</b> They undertook to study</p>	<p><b>6</b> Conclusion: an</p>

in the past the physiology of nations, and hoped by applying the experimental method on a large scale to deduce some lessons of real value about the conditions on which the welfare of society mainly depend.—Lecky, <i>The Political Value of History</i> .	important consequence of the new conception of history.
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In narration and description the paragraph sometimes begins with a concise, comprehensive statement serving to hold together the details that follow.

The breeze served us admirably.

The campaign opened with a series of reverses.

The next ten or twelve pages were filled with a curious set of entries.

But this device, if too often used, would become a mannerism. More commonly the opening sentence simply indicates by its subject with what the paragraph is to be principally concerned.

At length I thought I might return towards the stockade.

He picked up the heavy lamp from the table and began to explore.

Another flight of steps, and they emerged on the roof.

The brief paragraphs of animated narrative, however, are often without even this semblance of a topic sentence. The break between them serves the purpose of a rhetorical pause, throwing into prominence some detail of the action.

### **5.3 Use the active voice.**

The active voice is usually more direct and vigorous than the passive:

I shall always remember my first visit to Boston.

This is much better than

My first visit to Boston will always be remembered by me.

The latter sentence is less direct, less bold, and less concise. If the writer tries to make it more concise by omitting "by me,"

My first visit to Boston will always be remembered,

it becomes indefinite: is it the writer, or some person undisclosed, or the world at large, that will always remember this visit?

This rule does not, of course, mean that the writer should entirely discard the passive voice, which is frequently convenient and sometimes necessary.

The dramatists of the Restoration are little esteemed to-day.

Modern readers have little esteem for the dramatists of the Restoration.

The first would be the right form in a paragraph on the dramatists of the Restoration; the second, in a paragraph on the tastes of modern readers. The need of making a particular word the subject of the sentence will often, as in these examples, determine which voice is to be used.

The habitual use of the active voice, however, makes for forcible writing. This is true not only in narrative principally concerned with action, but in writing of any kind. Many a tame sentence of description or exposition can be made lively and emphatic by substituting a transitive in the active voice for

some such perfunctory expression as *there is*, or *could be heard*.

There were a great number of dead leaves lying on the ground.	Dead leaves covered the ground.
The sound of the falls could still be heard.	The sound of the falls still reached our ears.
The reason that he left college was that his health became impaired.	Failing health compelled him to leave college.
It was not long before he was very sorry that he had said what he had.	He soon repented his words.

As a rule, avoid making one passive depend directly upon another.

Gold was not allowed to be exported.	It was forbidden to export gold (The export of gold was prohibited).
He has been proved to have been seen entering the building.	It has been proved that he was seen to enter the building.

In both the examples above, before correction, the word properly related to the second passive is made the subject of the first.

A common fault is to use as the subject of a passive construction a noun which expresses the entire action, leaving to the verb no function beyond that of completing the sentence.

A survey of this region was made in 1900.	This region was surveyed in 1900.
Mobilization of the army was rapidly carried out.	The army was rapidly mobilized.
Confirmation of these reports cannot be obtained.	These reports cannot be confirmed.

Compare the sentence, "The export of gold was prohibited," in which the predicate "was prohibited" expresses something not implied in "export."

#### **5.4 Put statements in positive form.**

Make definite assertions. Avoid tame, colorless, hesitating, non-committal language. Use the word *not* as a means of denial or in antithesis, never as a means of evasion.

He was not very often on time.	He usually came late.
He did not think that studying Latin was much use.	He thought the study of Latin useless.
<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i> is rather weak in spots. Shakespeare does not portray Katharine as a very admirable character, nor does Bianca remain long in memory as an important character in Shakespeare's works.	The women in <i>The Taming of the Shrew</i> are unattractive. Katharine is disagreeable, Bianca insignificant.

The last example, before correction, is indefinite as well as negative. The corrected version, consequently, is simply a guess at the writer's intention.

All three examples show the weakness inherent in the word *not*. Consciously or unconsciously, the reader is dissatisfied with being told only what is not; he wishes to be told what is. Hence, as a rule, it is better to express a negative in positive form.

not honest	dishonest
not important	Trifling
did not remember	Forgot
did not pay any attention to	Ignored
did not have much confidence in	distrusted

The antithesis of negative and positive is strong:

Not charity, but simple justice.

Not that I loved Caesar less, but Rome the more.

Negative words other than *not* are usually strong:

The sun never sets upon the British flag.

### **5.5 Omit needless words.**

Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts. This requires not that the writer make all his sentences short, or that he avoid all detail and treat his subjects only in outline, but that every word

tell.

Many expressions in common use violate this principle:

the question as to whether	whether (the question whether)
there is no doubt but that	no doubt (doubtless)
used for fuel purposes	used for fuel
he is a man who	He
in a hasty manner	Hastily
this is a subject which	this subject
His story is a strange one.	His story is strange.

In especial the expression *the fact that* should be revised out of every sentence in which it occurs.

owing to the fact that	since (because)
in spite of the fact that	though (although)
call your attention to the fact that	remind you (notify you)
I was unaware of the fact that	I was unaware that (did not know)

the fact that he had not succeeded	his failure
the fact that I had arrived	my arrival

*Who is, which was,* and the like are often superfluous.

His brother, who is a member of the same firm	His brother, a member of the same firm
Trafalgar, which was Nelson's last battle	Trafalgar, Nelson's last battle

As positive statement is more concise than negative, and the active voice more concise than the passive, many of the examples given illustrate this rule as well.

A common violation of conciseness is the presentation of a single complex idea, step by step, in a series of sentences which might to advantage be combined into one.

Macbeth was very ambitious. This led him to wish to become king of	Encouraged by his wife, Macbeth achieved his ambition and realized the
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Scotland. The witches told him that this wish of his would come true. The king of Scotland at this time was Duncan. Encouraged by his wife, Macbeth murdered Duncan. He was thus enabled to succeed Duncan as king. (55 words.)	prediction of the witches by murdering Duncan and becoming king of Scotland in his place. (26 words.)
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### **5.6 Avoid a succession of loose sentences.**

This rule refers especially to loose sentences of a particular type, those consisting of two co-ordinate clauses, the second introduced by a conjunction or relative. Although single sentences of this type may be unexceptionable, a series soon becomes monotonous and tedious.

An unskilful writer will sometimes construct a whole paragraph of sentences of this kind, using as connectives *and*, *but*, and less frequently, *who*, *which*, *when*, *where*, and *while*, these last in non-restrictive senses (see under Rule [3](#)).

The third concert of the subscription series was given last evening, and a large audience was in attendance.
--

Mr. Edward Appleton was the soloist, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra furnished the instrumental music. The former showed himself to be an artist of the first rank, while the latter proved itself fully deserving of its high reputation. The interest aroused by the series has been very gratifying to the Committee, and it is planned to give a similar series annually hereafter. The fourth concert will be given on Tuesday, May 10, when an equally attractive programme will be presented.

Apart from its triteness and emptiness, the paragraph above is bad because of the structure of its sentences, with their mechanical symmetry and sing-song. Contrast with them the sentences in the paragraphs quoted under Rule 10, or in any piece of good English prose, as the preface (*Before the Curtain*) to *Vanity Fair*.

If the writer finds that he has written a series of sentences of the type described, he should recast enough of them to remove the monotony, replacing them by simple sentences, by sentences of two clauses joined by a semicolon, by periodic sentences of two clauses, by sentences, loose or periodic, of three clauses—whichever best represent the real relations of the thought.

### **5.7 Express co-ordinate ideas in similar form.**

This principle, that of parallel construction, requires that expressions of similar content and function should be outwardly similar. The likeness of form enables the reader to recognize more readily the likeness of content and function. Familiar instances from the Bible are the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, and the petitions of the Lord's Prayer.

The unskilful writer often violates this principle, from a mistaken belief that he should constantly vary the form of his expressions. It is true that in repeating a statement in order to emphasize it he may have need to vary its form. For illustration, see the paragraph from Stevenson quoted under Rule 10. But apart from this, he should follow the principle of parallel construction.

Formerly, science was taught by the textbook method, while now the laboratory method is employed.	Formerly, science was taught by the textbook method; now it is taught by the laboratory method.
---	---

The left-hand version gives the impression that the writer is undecided or timid; he seems unable or afraid to choose one form of expression and hold to it. The right-hand version shows that the writer has at least made his choice and abided by it.

By this principle, an article or a preposition applying to all the members of a series must either be used only before the first term or else be repeated before each term.

The French, the Italians, Spanish, and Portuguese	The French, the Italians, the Spanish, and the Portuguese
In spring, summer, or in winter	In spring, summer, or winter (In spring, in summer, or in winter)

Correlative expressions (*both, and; not, but; not only, but also; either, or; first, second, third; and the like*) should be followed by the same grammatical construction. Many violations of this rule can be corrected by rearranging the sentence.

It was both a long ceremony and very tedious.	The ceremony was both long and tedious.
A time not for words, but action	A time not for words, but for action
Either you must grant his request or incur his ill will.	You must either grant his request or incur his ill will.
My objections are, first, the	My objections are, first,

injustice of the measure; second, that it is unconstitutional.	that the measure is unjust; second, that it is unconstitutional.
--	--

It may be asked, what if a writer needs to express a very large number of similar ideas, say twenty? Must he write twenty consecutive sentences of the same pattern? On closer examination he will probably find that the difficulty is imaginary, that his twenty ideas can be classified in groups, and that he need apply the principle only within each group. Otherwise he had best avoid the difficulty by putting his statements in the form of a table.

### ***5.8 Keep related words together.***

The position of the words in a sentence is the principal means of showing their relationship. The writer must therefore, so far as possible, bring together the words, and groups of words, that are related in thought, and keep apart those which are not so related.

The subject of a sentence and the principal verb should not, as a rule, be separated by a phrase or clause that can be transferred to the beginning.

Wordsworth, in the fifth book of <i>The Excursion</i> , gives a minute description of this church.	In the fifth book of <i>The Excursion</i> , Wordsworth gives a minute description of this church.
Cast iron, when treated in a Bessemer converter, is changed into steel.	By treatment in a Bessemer converter, cast iron is changed into steel.

The objection is that the interposed phrase or clause needlessly interrupts the natural order of the main clause. This objection, however, does not usually hold when the order is interrupted only by a relative clause or by an expression in apposition. Nor does it hold in periodic sentences in which the interruption is a deliberately used means of creating suspense (see examples).

The relative pronoun should come, as a rule, immediately after its antecedent.

There was a look in his eye that boded mischief.	In his eye was a look that boded mischief.
He wrote three articles about his adventures in Spain, which were published in <i>Harper's</i>	He published in <i>Harper's Magazine</i> three articles about his adventures in Spain.

<i>Magazine.</i>	
This is a portrait of Benjamin Harrison, grandson of William Henry Harrison, who became President in 1889.	This is a portrait of Benjamin Harrison, grandson of William Henry Harrison. He became President in 1889.

If the antecedent consists of a group of words, the relative comes at the end of the group, unless this would cause ambiguity.

The Superintendent of the Chicago Division, who	
A proposal to amend the Sherman Act, which has been variously judged	A proposal, which has been variously judged, to amend the Sherman Act
	A proposal to amend the much-debated Sherman Act
The grandson of William Henry Harrison, who	William Henry Harrison's grandson, Benjamin Harrison, who

A noun in apposition may come between antecedent and relative, because in such a combination no real ambiguity can arise.

The Duke of York, his brother, who was regarded with hostility by the Whigs

Modifiers should come, if possible next to the word they modify. If several expressions modify the same word, they should be so arranged that no wrong relation is suggested.

All the members were not present.	Not all the members were present.
He only found two mistakes.	He found only two mistakes.
Major R. E. Joyce will give a lecture on Tuesday evening in Bailey Hall, to which the public is invited, on "My Experiences in Mesopotamia" at eight P. M.	On Tuesday evening at eight P. M., Major R. E. Joyce will give in Bailey Hall a lecture on "My Experiences in Mesopotamia." The public is invited.

**5.9 In summaries, keep to one tense.**

In summarizing the action of a drama, the writer should always use the present tense. In summarizing a poem, story, or novel, he should preferably use the present, though he may use the

past if he prefers. If the summary is in the present tense, antecedent action should be expressed by the perfect; if in the past, by the past perfect.

An unforeseen chance prevents Friar John from delivering Friar Lawrence's letter to Romeo. Juliet, meanwhile, owing to her father's arbitrary change of the day set for her wedding, has been compelled to drink the potion on Tuesday night, with the result that Balthasar informs Romeo of her supposed death before Friar Lawrence learns of the nondelivery of the letter.

But whichever tense be used in the summary, a past tense in indirect discourse or in indirect question remains unchanged.

The Legate inquires who struck the blow.

Apart from the exceptions noted, whichever tense the writer chooses, he should use throughout. Shifting from one tense to the other gives the appearance of uncertainty and irresolution.

In presenting the statements or the thought of some one else, as in summarizing an essay or reporting a speech, the writer should avoid intercalating such expressions as "he said," "he stated," "the speaker added," "the speaker then went on to say," "the author also thinks," or the like. He should indicate clearly

at the outset, once for all, that what follows is summary, and then waste no words in repeating the notification.

In notebooks, in newspapers, in handbooks of literature, summaries of one kind or another may be indispensable, and for children in primary schools it is a useful exercise to retell a story in their own words. But in the criticism or interpretation of literature the writer should be careful to avoid dropping into summary. He may find it necessary to devote one or two sentences to indicating the subject, or the opening situation, of the work he is discussing; he may cite numerous details to illustrate its qualities. But he should aim to write an orderly discussion supported by evidence, not a summary with occasional comment. Similarly, if the scope of his discussion includes a number of works, he will as a rule do better not to take them up singly in chronological order, but to aim from the beginning at establishing general conclusions.

#### ***5.10 Place the emphatic words of a sentence at the end.***

The proper place for the word, or group of words, which the writer desires to make most prominent is usually the end of the sentence.

Humanity	has	hardly	Humanity, since that time,
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advanced in fortitude since that time, though it has advanced in many other ways.	has advanced in many other ways, but it has hardly advanced in fortitude.
This steel is principally used for making razors, because of its hardness.	Because of its hardness, this steel is principally used in making razors.

The word or group of words entitled to this position of prominence is usually the logical predicate, that is, the *new* element in the sentence, as it is in the second example.

The effectiveness of the periodic sentence arises from the prominence which it gives to the main statement.

Four centuries ago, Christopher Columbus, one of the Italian mariners whom the decline of their own republics had put at the service of the world and of adventure, seeking for Spain a westward passage to the Indies as a set-off against the achievements of Portuguese discoverers, lighted on America.
With these hopes and in this belief I would urge you, laying aside all hindrance, thrusting away all private aims, to devote yourselves unswervingly and unflinchingly to the vigorous and successful

prosecution of this war.

The other prominent position in the sentence is the beginning. Any element in the sentence, other than the subject, becomes emphatic when placed first.

Deceit or treachery he could never forgive.

So vast and rude, fretted by the action of nearly three thousand years, the fragments of this architecture may often seem, at first sight, like works of nature.

A subject coming first in its sentence may be emphatic, but hardly by its position alone. In the sentence,

Great kings worshipped at his shrine,

the emphasis upon *kings* arises largely from its meaning and from the context. To receive special emphasis, the subject of a sentence must take the position of the predicate.

Through the middle of the valley flowed a winding stream.

The principle that the proper place for what is to be made most prominent is the end applies equally to the words of a

sentence, to the sentences of a paragraph, and to the paragraphs of a composition.

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## **Appendix**

### **Models & Samples of Good English Essays**

#### ***Why I Write***

**By George Orwell, 1947**

From a very early age, perhaps the age of five or six, I knew that when I grew up I should be a writer. Between the ages of about seventeen and twenty-four I tried to abandon this idea, but I did so with the consciousness that I was outraging my true nature and that sooner or later I should have to settle down and write books.

I was the middle child of three, but there was a gap of five years on either side, and I barely saw my father before I was eight. For this and other reasons I was somewhat lonely, and I soon developed disagreeable mannerisms which made me unpopular throughout my schooldays. I had the lonely child's habit of making up stories and holding conversations with imaginary persons, and I think from the very start my literary ambitions were mixed up with the feeling of being isolated and undervalued. I knew that I had a facility with words and a power of facing unpleasant facts, and I felt that this created a sort of private world in which I could get my own back for my failure in everyday life. Nevertheless the volume of serious -- i.e. seriously intended -- writing which I produced all through my childhood and boyhood would not amount to half a dozen pages. I wrote my first poem at the age of four or five, my mother taking it down to dictation. I cannot remember anything about it except that it was about a tiger and the tiger had "chair-like teeth" -- a good enough phrase, but I fancy the poem was a plagiarism of Blake's "Tiger, Tiger." At eleven, when the war or 1914-18 broke out, I wrote a patriotic poem which was printed in the local newspaper, as was another,

two years later, on the death of Kitchener. From time to time, when I was a bit older, I wrote bad and usually unfinished "nature poems" in the Georgian style. I also attempted a short story which was a ghastly failure. That was the total of the would-be serious work that I actually set down on paper during all those years.

However, throughout this time I did in a sense engage in literary activities. To begin with there was the made-to-order stuff which I produced quickly, easily and without much pleasure to myself. Apart from school work, I wrote *vers d'occasion*, semi-comic poems which I could turn out at what now seems to me astonishing speed -- at fourteen I wrote a whole rhyming play, in imitation of Aristophanes, in about a week -- and helped to edit a school magazines, both printed and in manuscript. These magazines were the most pitiful burlesque stuff that you could imagine, and I took far less trouble with them than I now would with the cheapest journalism. But side by side with all this, for fifteen years or more, I was carrying out a literary exercise of a quite different kind: this was the making up of a continuous "story" about myself, a sort of diary existing only in the mind. I believe this is a common habit of children and adolescents. As a very small child I used to imagine that I was, say, Robin Hood, and picture myself as the hero of thrilling adventures, but quite soon my "story" ceased to be narcissistic in a crude way and became more and more a mere description of what I was doing and the things I saw. For minutes at a time this kind of thing would be running through my head: "He pushed the door open and entered the room. A yellow beam of sunlight, filtering through the muslin curtains, slanted on to the table, where a match-box, half-open, lay beside the inkpot. With his right hand in his pocket he moved across to the window. Down in the street a tortoiseshell cat was chasing a dead leaf," etc. etc.

This habit continued until I was about twenty-five, right through my non-literary years. Although I had to search, and did search, for the right words, I seemed to be making this descriptive effort almost against my will, under a kind of compulsion from outside. The "story" must, I suppose, have reflected the styles of the various writers I admired at different ages, but so far as I remember it always had the same meticulous descriptive quality.

When I was about sixteen I suddenly discovered the joy of mere words, i.e. the sounds and associations of words. The lines from *Paradise Lost* --

So hee with difficulty and labour hard  
Moved on: with difficulty and labour hee.

which do not now seem to me so very wonderful, sent shivers down my backbone; and the spelling "hee" for "he" was an added pleasure. As for the need to describe things, I knew all about it already. So it is clear what kind of books I wanted to write, in so far as I could be said to want to write books at that time. I wanted to write enormous naturalistic novels with unhappy endings, full of detailed descriptions and arresting similes, and also full of purple passages in which words were used partly for the sake of their own sound. And in fact my first completed novel, *Burmese Days*, which I wrote when I was thirty but projected much earlier, is rather that kind of book.

I give all this background information because I do not think one can assess a writer's motives without knowing something of his early development. His subject matter will be determined by the age he lives in -- at least this is true in tumultuous, revolutionary ages like our own -- but before he ever begins to write he will have acquired an emotional attitude from which he will never completely escape. It is his job, no doubt, to

discipline his temperament and avoid getting stuck at some immature stage, in some perverse mood; but if he escapes from his early influences altogether, he will have killed his impulse to write. Putting aside the need to earn a living, I think there are four great motives for writing, at any rate for writing prose. They exist in different degrees in every writer, and in any one writer the proportions will vary from time to time, according to the atmosphere in which he is living. They are:

1. **Sheer egoism.** Desire to seem clever, to be talked about, to be remembered after death, to get your own back on the grown-ups who snubbed you in childhood, etc., etc. It is humbug to pretend this is not a motive, and a strong one. Writers share this characteristic with scientists, artists, politicians, lawyers, soldiers, successful businessmen -- in short, with the whole top crust of humanity. The great mass of human beings are not acutely selfish. After the age of about thirty they almost abandon the sense of being individuals at all -- and live chiefly for others, or are simply smothered under drudgery. But there is also the minority of gifted, willful people who are determined to live their own lives to the end, and writers belong in this class. Serious writers, I should say, are on the whole more vain and self-centered than journalists, though less interested in money .
2. **Aesthetic enthusiasm.** Perception of beauty in the external world, or, on the other hand, in words and their right arrangement. Pleasure in the impact of one sound on another, in the firmness of good prose or the rhythm of a good story. Desire to share an experience which one feels is valuable and ought not to be missed. The aesthetic motive is very feeble in a lot of writers, but even a pamphleteer or writer of textbooks will have pet words and phrases

which appeal to him for non-utilitarian reasons; or he may feel strongly about typography, width of margins, etc. Above the level of a railway guide, no book is quite free from aesthetic considerations.

3. **Historical impulse.** Desire to see things as they are, to find out true facts and store them up for the use of posterity.
4. **Political purpose** -- using the word "political" in the widest possible sense. Desire to push the world in a certain direction, to alter other peoples' idea of the kind of society that they should strive after. Once again, no book is genuinely free from political bias. The opinion that art should have nothing to do with politics is itself a political attitude.

It can be seen how these various impulses must war against one another, and how they must fluctuate from person to person and from time to time. By nature -- taking your "nature" to be the state you have attained when you are first adult -- I am a person in whom the first three motives would outweigh the fourth. In a peaceful age I might have written ornate or merely descriptive books, and might have remained almost unaware of my political loyalties. As it is I have been forced into becoming a sort of pamphleteer. First I spent five years in an unsuitable profession (the Indian Imperial Police, in Burma), and then I underwent poverty and the sense of failure. This increased my natural hatred of authority and made me for the first time fully aware of the existence of the working classes, and the job in Burma had given me some understanding of the nature of imperialism: but these experiences were not enough to give me an accurate political orientation. Then came Hitler, the Spanish Civil War, etc. By the end of 1935 I had still failed to reach a firm decision. I remember a little poem that I wrote at that date, expressing my dilemma:

A happy vicar I might have been  
Two hundred years ago  
To preach upon eternal doom  
And watch my walnuts grow;

But born, alas, in an evil time,  
I missed that pleasant haven,  
For the hair has grown on my upper lip  
And the clergy are all clean-shaven.

And later still the times were good,  
We were so easy to please,  
We rocked our troubled thoughts to sleep  
On the bosoms of the trees.

All ignorant we dared to own  
The joys we now dissemble;  
The greenfinch on the apple bough  
Could make my enemies tremble.

But girl's bellies and apricots,  
Roach in a shaded stream,  
Horses, ducks in flight at dawn,  
All these are a dream.

It is forbidden to dream again;  
We maim our joys or hide them:  
Horses are made of chromium steel  
And little fat men shall ride them.

I am the worm who never turned,  
The eunuch without a harem;  
Between the priest and the commissar  
I walk like Eugene Aram;

And the commissar is telling my fortune  
While the radio plays,  
But the priest has promised an Austin Seven,  
For Duggie always pays.

I dreamt I dwelt in marble halls,  
And woke to find it true;  
I wasn't born for an age like this;  
Was Smith? Was Jones? Were you?

The Spanish war and other events in 1936-37 turned the scale and thereafter I knew where I stood. Every line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly, *against* totalitarianism and *for* democratic socialism, as I understand it. It seems to me nonsense, in a period like our own, to think that one can avoid writing of such subjects. Everyone writes of them in one guise or another. It is simply a question of which side one takes and what approach one follows. And the more one is conscious of one's political bias, the more chance one has of acting politically without sacrificing one's aesthetic and intellectual integrity.

What I have most wanted to do throughout the past ten years is to make political writing into an art. My starting point is always a feeling of partisanship, a sense of injustice. When I sit down to write a book, I do

not say to myself, "I am going to produce a work of art." I write it because there is some lie that I want to expose, some fact to which I want to draw attention, and my initial concern is to get a hearing. But I could not do the work of writing a book, or even a long magazine article, if it were not also an aesthetic experience. Anyone who cares to examine my work will see that even when it is downright propaganda it contains much that a full-time politician would consider irrelevant. I am not able, and do not want, completely to abandon the world view that I acquired in childhood. So long as I remain alive and well I shall continue to feel strongly about prose style, to love the surface of the earth, and to take a pleasure in solid objects and scraps of useless information. It is no use trying to suppress that side of myself. The job is to reconcile my ingrained likes and dislikes with the essentially public, non-individual activities that this age forces on all of us.

It is not easy. It raises problems of construction and of language, and it raises in a new way the problem of truthfulness. Let me give just one example of the cruder kind of difficulty that arises. My book about the Spanish civil war, *Homage to Catalonia*, is of course a frankly political book, but in the main it is written with a certain detachment and regard for form. I did try very hard in it to tell the whole truth without violating my literary instincts. But among other things it contains a long chapter, full of newspaper quotations and the like, defending the Trotskyists who were accused of plotting with Franco. Clearly such a chapter, which after a year or two would lose its interest for any ordinary reader, must ruin the book. A critic whom I respect read me a lecture about it. "Why did you put in all that stuff?" he said. "You've turned what might have been a good book into journalism." What he said was true, but I could not have done otherwise. I happened to know, what very few people in England

had been allowed to know, that innocent men were being falsely accused. If I had not been angry about that I should never have written the book.

In one form or another this problem comes up again. The problem of language is subtler and would take too long to discuss. I will only say that of late years I have tried to write less picturesquely and more exactly. In any case I find that by the time you have perfected any style of writing, you have always outgrown it. *Animal Farm* was the first book in which I tried, with full consciousness of what I was doing, to fuse political purpose and artistic purpose into one whole. I have not written a novel for seven years, but I hope to write another fairly soon. It is bound to be a failure, every book is a failure, but I do know with some clarity what kind of book I want to write. Looking back through the last page or two, I see that I have made it appear as though my motives in writing were wholly public-spirited. I don't want to leave that as the final impression. All writers are vain, selfish, and lazy, and at the very bottom of their motives there lies a mystery. Writing a book is a horrible, exhausting struggle, like a long bout of some painful illness. One would never undertake such a thing if one were not driven on by some demon whom one can neither resist nor understand. For all one knows that demon is simply the same instinct that makes a baby squall for attention. And yet it is also true that one can write nothing readable unless one constantly struggles to efface one's own personality. Good prose is like a windowpane. I cannot say with certainty which of my motives are the strongest, but I know which of them deserve to be followed. And looking back through my work, I see that it is invariably where I lacked a political purpose that I wrote lifeless books and was betrayed into purple passages, sentences without meaning, decorative adjectives and humbug generally.

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## Model Expository Essay

### *Important Inventions in the Past*

(Available at: <http://www.academicenglishcafe.com/model-essay-3.html>)

"Necessity is the mother of invention." This quote is commonly used to explain how another miraculous invention was discovered. Throughout history, many inventions have been created. The Industrial Revolution started in the late 1700s, and since then humankind has been developing at an exponential rate. Truly amazing and useful devices, such as the steam engine and telegraph, were invented. In the last 100 years, many inventions and innovations have been created that make society's life better, and four devices stand out as the most useful: the jet airplane, the television, the laptop computer, and the cell phone.

The first most useful invention is the airplane, invented in 1903 by the Wright brothers. The airplane has transformed not only this society, but also the entire world. Airplanes make it possible to travel long distances in a few hours, whereas before it took days or weeks to travel by horseback. In fact, a plane enables people to

travel over high mountains and deep oceans with ease. It is as if the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans were small rivers and the Himalaya and Rocky Mountains were tiny hills to jump over. In addition, with the invention of the plane, the world is smaller because a person can now effortlessly travel from one country to another to work, study, or take vacations.

The second most important invention in the last century is the computer, and specifically the laptop computer with an internet connection. The computer was invented in the mid-1900s, but in the 1980s the personal computer transformed how people use it. Because a laptop computer is small, portable, and can store large amounts of data, it is useful for business and study. From email to ecommerce and from e-books to downloading movies and games, the personal computer has transformed everyone's life. Computer software programs make it possible to keep track not only of business accounting and inventory, but also to buy and sell online. The Internet connects computers with a network of websites, and people can

communicate on the computer with email, blogs, wikis, and even phone conversations.

This leads into the third most useful invention, the cell phone. Popularized in the 1990s, the cell phone keeps people safer and more connected. People can talk or send text messages to friends and family when they are far away, even in another country. Other examples of the cell phone's usefulness are that drivers can call to let someone know they will be delayed if they get stuck in traffic or call for help if their car breaks down. In addition, phones often have Internet browsers, so people can stay up-to-date with news and events. Also, with camera phones people can take and share pictures of friends and family easily.

The fourth most useful invention is the television. With many channels to choose from, and literally thousands of programs, the learning possibilities are endless. Although not all programs are educational, many programs are, and people can learn encyclopedic amounts of knowledge and information. News is available 24 hours a day, so when important events happen in another part of the world,

people can find out easily. This is in contrast to the past when it took days, months, or even years to find out the news from faraway places. Also, comedy and dramatic shows let us enjoy the funny moments in life and deal more effectively with the serious ones.

In conclusion, the airplane, television, laptop computer and cell phone are all useful inventions. Although there are many inventions to choose from, these four have dramatically transformed the world. All these inventions are connecting people to other people, places, and ideas. It will be interesting to see what is invented in the future!

## Narrative Writing

(Source: <http://examples.yourdictionary.com/narrative-essay-examples.html>)

### *Remember: Essential Elements of Narrative Essays*

The focus of a narrative essay is the plot, which is told using enough details to build to a climax. Here's how:

- It is usually told chronologically.
- It usually has a purpose, which is usually stated in the opening sentence.
- It may use dialogue.
- It is written with sensory details and vivid descriptions to involve the reader. All these details relate in some way to the main point the writer is making.

All of these elements need to seamlessly combine. A few examples of narrative essays follow. Narrative essays can be quite long, so instead of a full length example of an entire essay, only the beginnings of essays are included:

### **Learning Can Be Scary**

*This excerpt about learning new things and new situations is an example of a personal narrative essay that describes learning to swim.*

“Learning something new can be a scary experience. One of the hardest things I've ever had to do was learn how to swim. I was always afraid of the water, but I decided that swimming was an important skill that I should learn. I also thought it would be good exercise and help me to become physically stronger. What I didn't

realize was that learning to swim would also make me a more confident person.

New situations always make me a bit nervous, and my first swimming lesson was no exception. After I changed into my bathing suit in the locker room, I stood timidly by the side of the pool waiting for the teacher and other students to show up. After a couple of minutes the teacher came over. She smiled and introduced herself, and two more students joined us. Although they were both older than me, they didn't seem to be embarrassed about not knowing how to swim. I began to feel more at ease.”

### **The Manager. The Leader.**

*The following excerpt is a narrative essay from a story about a manager who was a great leader. Notice the intriguing first sentence that captures your attention right away.*

“Jerry was the kind of guy you love to hate. He was always in a good mood and always had something positive to say. When someone would ask him how he was doing, he would reply, "If I were any better, I would be twins!" He was a unique manager because he had several waiters who had followed him around from restaurant to restaurant. The reason the waiters followed Jerry was because of his attitude. He was a natural motivator. If an employee was having a bad day, Jerry was there telling the employee how to look on the positive side of the situation.”

## **The Climb**

*This excerpt from the climb also captures your attention right away by creating a sense of mystery. The reader announces that he or she has "this fear" and you want to read on to see what that fear is.*

"I have this fear. It causes my legs to shake. I break out in a cold sweat. I start jabbering to anyone who is nearby. As thoughts of certain death run through my mind, the world appears a precious, treasured place. I imagine my own funeral, then shrink back at the implications of where my thoughts are taking me. My stomach feels strange. My palms are clammy. I am terrified of heights. Of course, it's not really a fear of being in a high place. Rather, it is the view of a long way to fall, of rocks far below me and no firm wall between me and the edge. My sense of security is screamingly absent. There are no guardrails, flimsy though I picture them, or other safety devices. I can rely only on my own surefootedness—or lack thereof."

## **Disney Land**

*The following narrative essay involves a parent musing about taking her kids to Disney Land.*

"It was a hot sunny day, when I finally took my kids to the Disney Land. My son Matthew and my daughter Audra endlessly asked me to show them the dream land of many children with Mickey Mouse and Snow-white walking by and arousing a huge portion of emotions. Somehow these fairy tale creatures can make children happy without such "small" presents as \$100 Lego or a Barby's

house in 6 rooms and garden furniture. Therefore, I thought that Disney Land was a good invention for loving parents.”

## **The Sacred Grove of Oshogbo (by Jeffrey Tayler)**

*The following essay contains descriptive language that helps to paint a vivid picture for the reader of an encounter with a man.*

“As I passed through the gates I heard a squeaky voice. A diminutive middle-aged man came out from behind the trees — the caretaker. He worked a toothbrush-sized stick around in his mouth, digging into the crevices between algae'd stubs of teeth. He was barefoot; he wore a blue batik shirt known as a buba, baggy purple trousers, and an embroidered skullcap. I asked him if he would show me around the shrine. Motioning me to follow, he spat out the results of his stick work and set off down the trail.”

## **Playground Memory**

*The first excerpt from, “Playground Memory”, has very good sensory details.*

“Looking back on a childhood filled with events and memories, I find it rather difficult to pick on that leaves me with the fabled “warm and fuzzy feelings.” As the daughter of an Air Force Major, I had the pleasure of travelling across America in many moving trips. I have visited the monstrous trees of the Sequoia National Forest, stood on the edge of the Grande Canyon and have jumped on the beds at Caesar’s Palace in Lake Tahoe. However, I have discovered that when reflecting on my childhood, it is not the trips that come to mind, instead there are details from everyday doings; a deck of cards, a silver bank or an ice cream flavour. One

memory that comes to mind belongs to a day of no particular importance. It was late in the fall in Merced, California on the playground of my old elementary school; an overcast day with the wind blowing strong. I stood on the blacktop, pulling my hoodie over my ears. The wind was causing miniature tornados; we called them “dirt devils”, to swarm around me.”

## **Christmas Cookies**

*The second of the two narrative essay examples is an excerpt from “Christmas Cookies.”*

“Although I have grown up to be entirely inept at the art of cooking, as to make even the most wretched chef ridicule my sad baking attempts, my childhood would have indicated otherwise; I was always on the countertop next to my mother’s cooking bowl, adding and mixing ingredients that would doubtlessly create a delicious food. When I was younger, cooking came intrinsically with the holiday season, which made that time of year the prime occasion for me to unite with ounces and ounces of satin dark chocolate, various other messy and gooey ingredients, numerous cooking utensils, and the assistance of my mother to cook what would soon be an edible masterpiece. The most memorable of the holiday works of art were our Chocolate Crinkle Cookies, which my mother and I first made when I was about six and are now made annually.”

### ***Tips on Writing a Narrative Essay***

When writing a narrative essay, remember that you are sharing sensory and emotional details with the reader.

- Your words need to be vivid and colourful to help the reader feel the same feelings that you felt.
- Elements of the story need to support the point you are making and you need to remember to make reference to that point in the first sentence.
- You should make use of conflict and sequence like in any story.
- You may use flashbacks and flash forwards to help the story build to a climax.
- It is usually written in the first person, but third person may also be used.

Remember, a well-written narrative essay tells a story and makes a point.

## **Experiential Learning (Learning by Doing)**

There is really only one way to learn how to do something and that is to do it. If you want to learn to throw a football, drive a car, build a *mousetrap*, *design* a building, cook a *stir-fry*, or be a *management consultant*, you must *have a go* at doing it. Throughout history, youths have been *apprenticed* to masters in order to learn a *trade*. We understand that learning a *skill* means eventually *trying your hand at* the skill. When there is no real harm in simply trying we allow novices to "*give it a shot*."

Parents usually teach children in this way. They don't give a *series of lectures* to their children to prepare them to walk, talk, climb, run,

play a game, or learn how to behave. They just let their children do these things. We **hand** a child a ball to teach him to throw. If he throws poorly, he simply tries again. Parents **tolerate** sitting in the **passenger seat** while their teenager tries out the driver's seat for the first time. It's **nerve-wracking**, but parents **put up with** it, because they know there's no better way.

When it comes to school, however, instead of allowing students to learn by doing, we create courses of **instruction** that tell students about the **theory** of the task without concentrating on the doing of the task. It's not easy to see how to **apply apprenticeship** to **mass education**. So in its place, we **lecture**.

**Experiential learning** is the process of making meaning from direct **experience**. Simply put, it is learning from experience. As we are involved in direct contact with real experience in life, we usually learn. Aristotle once said, "For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by **doing** them." **Experiential learning** is learning through **reflection on doing**, which is often **contrasted with rote** or **didactic learning**. Experiential learning is related to, but not **synonymous with, experiential education, action learning, adventure learning, free choice learning, cooperative learning, and service learning**.

**Experiential learning** focuses on the learning **process** for the individual (unlike experiential education, which focuses on the trans-active process between teacher and learner). An example of experiential learning is going to the zoo and learning through

***observation and interaction*** with the zoo environment, ***as opposed to*** reading about animals from a book. Thus, one makes ***discoveries*** and ***experiments*** with knowledge ***firsthand***, instead of hearing or reading about others' experiences.

Experiential learning requires no teacher and relates ***solely*** to the meaning making process of the individual's direct experience. However, though the gaining of knowledge is an ***inherent*** process that occurs naturally, for a genuine learning experience to occur, there must exist certain elements. According to David A. Kolb, an American educational theorist, knowledge is ***continuously gained*** through both personal and environmental experiences. He states that in order to gain ***genuine*** knowledge from an experience, certain abilities are required:

- the learner must be willing to be actively involved in the experience;
- the learner must be able to ***reflect on*** the experience;
- the learner must possess and use ***analytical skills*** to ***conceptualize*** the experience; and
- the learner must possess ***decision making*** and ***problem solving skills*** in order to use the new ideas gained from the experience.

Experiential learning can be a highly ***effective educational method***. It engages the learner at a more ***personal level*** by addressing the needs and wants of the individual. Experiential learning requires qualities such as ***self-initiative and self-evaluation***. For experiential learning to be truly effective, it should employ the whole learning ***wheel***, from ***goal setting***, to experimenting and observing, to

*reviewing*, and finally *action planning*. This complete process allows one to learn new skills, new *attitudes* or even *entirely* new ways of thinking.

Most educators understand the important role experience plays in the learning process. While a *fun* learning environment, with *plenty of laughter* and respect for the learner's abilities, also fosters an effective experiential learning environment, it is important not to confuse experiential learning simply with having fun, laughing, and being respected. While those factors may improve the *likelihood* of experiential learning occurring, it can *occur* without them, for example, *prison inmates* may benefit from experiential learning in the absence of fun, laughter, or respect. Rather, what is vital in experiential learning is that the individual is encouraged to directly involve themselves in the experience, and then to reflect on their experiences using analytic skills, in order to gain a better understanding of the new knowledge and *retain* the information for a longer time.

According to learning consultants, experiential learning is about *creating an experience* where learning can be facilitated, a requirement shared with any pedagogic theory. And while it is the learner's experience that is most important to the learning process, it is also important not to forget the wealth of experience a good *facilitator* also brings to the situation. However, while a "facilitator", traditionally called a "teacher", may improve the likelihood of experiential learning occurring, a "facilitator" is not essential to experiential learning. Rather, the *mechanism* of experiential learning

is the learner's *reflection* on experiences using analytic skills. This can occur without the presence of a facilitator, meaning that experiential learning is not defined by the presence of a facilitator.