

# Writing

The “writing” stage is often called **drafting**. When you draft, you should be focused mainly on ideas, rather than worrying too much about your grammar. Use your outline as you draft to make sure you don’t lose your focus.

## Tip: Get it on Paper

One of the challenges we often have as writers is overcoming the belief that what we write needs to be good. The first draft is exactly that. It's a first version. Every time you come back to the essay to work on it, it will improve.

Watch this video clip of a designer creating a dress. Writing is a similar creative process. You need an outline, a clear idea of what you want it to be at the end. However, the first steps of the creation are very general. In fact, for most of this video, the pieces of fabric look like they could be part of anything. It isn't until later in the process when details come in. Notice how the designer will work on one part, but will return to it later multiple times. It is not finished before working on anything else.

So, when you are writing, think of the early drafts as the big cuts of fabric. Think about how this designer works from the biggest parts to the smallest parts. You don't need to worry as much about specific word choice or getting the grammar just right. Your focus should be getting the shape of the essay, the general ideas and organization.

You should not simply paste several quotes together into one body paragraph. Consider which pieces of your quotes are necessary to support and develop the topic sentence. This means that some pieces of quotes may be unnecessary because they don't support the topic sentence. It's also okay to divide large quotes into smaller quotes that focus on smaller ideas.

You will also need use your own words to connect quotes together. You will use your commentary to introduce some of your research, explain how a quote supports your topic sentence, explain what a quote means, or show how quotes are connected together.

After you use a quote, don't simply summarize it; remember to justify or clarify the reason for using the quote.

## Exercise 1: Outline to Body Paragraph

Below is an example of section of an outline with questions and sources for one topic sentence. Discuss how the writer combined this information. How do you think the outline helped the writer prepare for this first draft of the paragraph?

Outline:

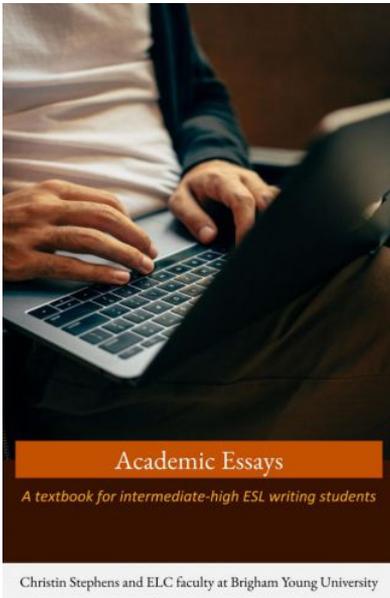
- TS: Learning vocabulary in a second language is faster than learning vocabulary as a child.
  - Q1: How long does it take to learn vocabulary in a second language?
    - (Couldn't find anything definitive to answer this question).
  - Q2: How long does it take to learn vocabulary as a child?
    - "During the second year of life, children start learning approximately one word per week, and then one word per day" (Gleason, 2017, p. 112).
    - "Children do not acquire a language more quickly

than adults and with lots of time to devote to language acquisition, adults can learn a second language to a high level of proficiency in the same amount of time it takes a baby to learn its first 20 words" (Brown & Larson-Hall, 2012, p. 15-16).

- Q3: Why is it faster to learn as an adult?
  - "Adults bring life experience and a lot of experience with language to the classroom. They are able to learn explicitly, using rules... This is not to say that adults can't learn implicitly, but adult students may be in a hurry to learn, and rules (and strategy use) might facilitate learning for them." (Brown & Larson-Hall, 2012, 2012, p. 17)

#### Body Paragraph:

Learning vocabulary in a second language is faster than learning vocabulary as a child. Within the first year of life, children learn "...approximately one word per week, and then one word per day" (Gleason, 2014, p. 112). This is amazingly slow, when compared to how quickly an adult can learn a language. While it is relatively unknown how long it takes adults to learn new words, they "...can learn a second language to a high level of proficiency in the same amount of time it takes a baby to learn its first 20 words" (Larson, 2015, p. 15). The difference is partially due to the resources that adults have. According to Larson (2015), "Adults have greater cognitive abilities that enable them to learn new words faster. They are also able to use strategies to help them learn" (p. 15). Thus, when adults learn a second language, they can appeal to these strategies to learn faster than they would if they were learning as a child. These results clearly show that adults learn faster than children when learning vocabulary.



Stephens, C. (n.d.). *Academic B Writing*. BYU Open Textbook Network.  
[https://open.byu.edu/academic\\_b\\_writing\\_p](https://open.byu.edu/academic_b_writing_p)