

# **University Prep Writing A**

Summer Semester





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# Objectives

You will be able to reach the following outcomes as you complete the essays that are outlined in this book. The objectives are repeated throughout the book to encourage you to master these objectives in a variety of essay types.

1. Writes level-appropriate\* drafted and timed text.
  - o Writes in all major time frames.
  - o Writes multiple paragraph length text.
  - o Writes introductory paragraphs for multi-paragraph compositions.
  - o Writes thesis sentences with a clear controlling idea.
  - o Writes effective topic sentences for paragraphs.
  - o Writes logically organized paragraphs.
  - o Adequately supports ideas with facts, examples, and reasons.
  - o Writes effective concluding sentences in paragraphs.
  - o Ends multi-paragraph compositions with an appropriate concluding paragraph.
  - o Uses a variety of cohesive devices.
  - o Adapts language to fit the audience, material, context, and time constraints.
2. Synthesizes information from written and spoken texts.
  - o Summarizes main ideas of texts.
  - o Summarizes major details or key arguments in texts.
  - o Responsibly use sources by evaluating and selecting appropriate supporting ideas.
  - o Connects ideas and details among different texts.
  - o Synthesizes information from sources as support for original ideas.
  - o Paraphrases sources without plagiarizing.
  - o Cites sources using appropriate formatting methods.
  - o Creates a list of sources using appropriate formatting methods.
3. Effectively implements appropriate writing strategies.
  - o Uses prewriting to build claims.
  - o Reads and rereads their own texts to identify and correct errors.
  - o Incorporates feedback from both writing and linguistic accuracy teachers.
  - o Responds to teacher, tutor, and peer feedback.
  - o Adheres to common academic formatting expectations
  - o Uses basic research tools to find appropriate sources.
4. Incorporates a variety of high frequency academic vocabulary in writing.

\*Writing for this level can be described by the following level descriptors:

## Function

Students are consistently able to meet a range of academic writing needs. They consistently write in all major time frames with good control. They use a wide range of academic syntax and vocabulary correctly. They produce personal, general, and academic texts in concrete terms and will sometimes produce texts about academic topics in abstract terms. Students have some success in adapting their language to fit the audience, material, context, and time constraints. They are able to write in most informal situations and in some formal situations.

## Text

Students use a variety of cohesive devices in texts that may include several well-organized and connected paragraphs. They incorporate organizational conventions of academic writing. They provide abundant language with some elaboration to support their writing.

## Comprehensibility

Students can be understood without difficulty by those unaccustomed to non-native writing. Errors do not interfere with understanding but may occasionally be distracting.



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# UP Textbook Guide

## Welcome to University Prep Writing!

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This textbook is a resource for teaching college-bound ESL students in an Intensive English Program. While much of the book can be geared toward traditional academic essays, we hope that you explore ways to implement the strategies and skills taught in this book in whatever format best serves your unique classroom needs.

### Scope & Sequence

The textbook begins with two units on the general process and products students will encounter in an English-medium university, regardless of what major they select. The remaining four units highlight [modes of writing](#) commonly used in academic contexts. Each unit includes mini-lessons to target timed and integrated writing. The appendices provide additional supplements commonly requested by teachers at this level.

It is up to the teacher to decide how to approach teaching the units. The textbook can easily be used in a linear fashion with the writing products being the traditional 5-paragraph essay. Alternative project-based writing options are provided at the beginning of each unit to demonstrate different applications of the strategies and skills found in the chapters. The exercises and examples found in the unit can be adjusted to fit the goal the teacher and students set.

This textbook aims to provide ample content for a semester at the BYU English Language Center (14-week semester). However, depending on student needs, teachers may need to supplement with additional texts or omit sections of the text.

### A Note

The writing excerpts included in this textbook are produced by previous students in the University Prep level, with their permission. While some have been altered to create revision exercises or to provide pristine examples, they are all representative of student work at various stages of drafting. This was an intentional decision by the authors to use writing samples that are truly at level. However, this means that errors may be present in the examples. We believe that these can be great opportunities to draw attention to issues your students may have in their own writing.

More teaching tips can be found at: [https://edtechbooks.org/UPWrtg\\_S\\_TG](https://edtechbooks.org/UPWrtg_S_TG) (in progress).





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# The Writing Process

Think about the writing process as a very fluid cycle. You should use the writing process flexibly, adapting it to what you need to write. The way you use the writing process depends on a lot of things: task type, time, resources available, your experience with the topic, etc. The guidelines here are meant as general guidelines.

Addressing the Prompt
Prewriting
Writing
Revising
Originality
Timed Writing (Writing Process)
Integrated Writing (Writing Process)



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# Addressing the Prompt

One of the most essential steps of writing is ensuring that you fully understand what you are being asked to write about.

## Verbs

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The verb used in the prompt is an important signal to you. It will tell you how you need to write your draft. If you think carefully about the meaning of the verb, it will help you decide on an organizational structure.

## Verbs Often Used in Writing Prompts

- Describe one of your hobbies. (Example: knitting)
  - The verb describe indicates that you will need to use details to help your reader understand your topic. Sometimes it is helpful to write as if your reader has never heard of your topic before. Remember to use many adjectives and characteristics when you see this verb.
    1. The materials needed for knitting (needles, yarn, scissors).
    2. The different kinds of projects that you can knit (stuffed animals, scarves, pillows)
    3. The different types of people who enjoy knitting (college students, people who love crafts, elderly people).
- Compare and contrast your hobby and a related hobby. (Example: knitting)
  - The verbs compare and contrast tell you that you will need to explain the similarities and differences between two things. Choose two things that will be easy to find similarities between.
    1. The differences and similarities between knitting and crocheting.
    2. The differences and similarities between two paddle sports such as tennis and pickleball.
    3. The differences and similarities between journaling and creative writing.
- Summarize the speaker's thoughts about hobbies. (Example: knitting)
  - The verb summarize tells you that you will **not** be writing your own opinion. Instead, you will read or listen to something written by someone else. Put the most important details of what you read or hear into your writing.
    1. Hobbies like knitting are helpful in increasing your focus.
    2. Knitting is an old-fashioned hobby and is boring.
    3. Having a creative hobby like knitting is better than having a passive hobby like reading.
- There is often a lot of social pressure to monetize hobbies as a "side hustle" to support yourself financially. Do you think that people should aim to turn their hobbies into a source of income? Support your position on this issue with reasons and examples. (Example: knitting)
  - The verb support tells you that you will need to add many examples and outside sources to supplement your opinion. You should find sources that will convince the reader that your opinion is correct.
    1. What examples are there of the importance of doing things just for fun?
    2. What does the research say about the impact of monetizing hobbies?
    3. What are the strong opposing arguments that you need to address in your answer?

## Content

Next, you will need to know what content you are expected to include. In some cases, you will only be able to write about a limited number of things because the prompt may be very narrow. In other cases, the prompt may be very general and allow you space to make personal decisions about which supporting ideas to include as you write.

**Always remember to review the prompt throughout the writing process to make sure that the focus of your essay matches the scope of the prompt.**

## Example Content Breakdowns

- Describe one of your hobbies.
  - This topic is more general. You could approach it by narrating how you started the hobby, explaining the process of doing the hobby, explaining variations of the hobby, or even the history behind its creation. If you have the opportunity, it would be wise to ask the teacher if there is a more specific explanation of what aspect of your hobby should be described.
- Compare and contrast your hobby and a related hobby.
  - This content is fairly broad. You need to talk about what is the same or different, but it could include a focus on many different attributes of the two hobbies. This requires you to do a little more than describe the characteristics of the two hobbies, you need to also make some judgments about them.
- Summarize the speaker's thoughts about hobbies.
  - In this response, your supporting ideas should be limited to the content in the original source. You should not have any of your own ideas mixed into this answer. It should also be limited to the opinion about the hobby, not about any additional activities or overly specific details.
- There is often a lot of social pressure to monetize your hobbies as a "side hustle" to support you financially. Do you think that people should aim to turn their hobbies into a source of income? Support your position on this issue with reasons and examples.
  - The content of this essay is restricted to hobbies that you can be paid to do, such as artistic or shareable skills. Your focus should be on the pros and cons associated with turning a leisure activity into a "job." Additionally, you need both reasons and examples as support. Excluding one of those types of support would result in an incomplete response.

## Constraints

Finally, you should also look at any limitations included in the prompt. Constraints could include

- time limits
- characters (letters, punctuation, and spaces)
- words
- revision tools (dictionaries, thesaurus, spell check)
- sources (required or no access)
- teacher, tutor, or peer review (required or no access)

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Prompt Analysis

1. Take a look at these [TOEFL Writing practice items from ETS](#).
2. Identify the prompt for each writing task.
3. Discuss what the prompt verb requires the writer to do. How would a successful response be organized?

## Exercise 2: Writing Prompts

1. Choose a topic for your partner to write about.
2. Choose a verb that identifies a specific task. You can use this resource ([UARK Verb chart](#)) to help select an appropriate verb for your prompt.
3. Write a prompt and exchange it with a partner.
4. Analyze your partner's prompt for the task and content that the writer should target.



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[https://open.byu.edu/up\\_writing\\_summer/addressing\\_the\\_promp](https://open.byu.edu/up_writing_summer/addressing_the_promp).

# Prewriting

Anything you do before you start writing is *prewriting*. You should always start by making sure you understand the assignment. Other activities that are frequently completed in this stage are researching, brainstorming, choosing a focus, and outlining.

## Understand the assignment

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Make sure that you understand the requirements of the task. If there is a specific prompt you are supposed to use, make sure your writing addresses the prompt.

## Research

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Doing research can be the hardest part of academic writing. Up until this point, the majority of the writing you have done shows what you *know or think* about a topic. Researched academic essays are more about what you have *learned*. You should not choose topics you know a lot about for research essays. Instead, choose topics you want to learn about.

It is very difficult to prewrite if you have not done some basic preliminary research. You will probably need to do research during the process of writing your research essay as well.

After you know about your assignment (e.g., write a classification essay), you may start searching online to find a topic (e.g., types of clouds). With the topic in mind, you will need to do more research (unless you are an expert on your topic) to know what to focus on (e.g., cirrus clouds, cumulonimbus clouds, stratus clouds, etc.). After you have your focus, you may need to do more research to create a good outline.

Keep track of the sources you use when you are researching. Save links to the websites you find or print sources. Saving information about these sources makes it easier to find quotes for your essay later.

You should not try to write the entire essay from your own experience and knowledge and then try to find research that agrees with your points. Research should be the starting point.

## Brainstorm

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Sometimes you are given a specific prompt (e.g., Research and describe a famous psychologist), but sometimes you can choose your topic. If you can choose your topic, then brainstorming can help you generate ideas to write about. There are many methods you can use for brainstorming. You can discuss the topic with a partner, do a free write, make a list of ideas, make an idea map, do a search on Google, etc.

## Choose your focus

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If your topic is really broad, you should narrow the topic down to have a more specific focus. For example, if you choose to write about the benefits of exercise, you will probably need to narrow down that topic to a few benefits of exercise

(e.g., physical and mental benefits of exercise). Researching online or repeating a brainstorming activity may help you choose your focus.

### Tip: Choosing a Focus

It's often best to choose a topic you are most excited about. Drafted essays are typically long-term projects, which means you want to avoid getting tired of your topic over the weeks of working on it. Even a timed writing assignment will be easier to write if you start by choosing something you are invested in.

Being invested in a topic looks different for everyone. Here are some examples of what it might look like for different students writing about hobbies:

- I really love soccer. I've always been a part of a team, and I enjoy being a fan of professional teams as well. I know a lot about the game, but I've never written about it formally and definitely not in English. It would help me stay motivated to write about something I'm passionate about in a different way.
- I enjoy watching makeup tutorials on TikTok. I think it's incredible how people can use their face as a canvas and create art and enhance their natural beauty. I do my own makeup, but I never realized that this could be a "hobby." I want to write about this topic so I can explore the culture of makeup as more "serious leisure" like Wikipedia describes.
- My roommates love hiking. I never really went hiking in my home country, but it's a very popular activity in Utah. I want to understand this hobby more. Maybe I will learn to enjoy it more if I understand it better?
- I love video games and I have competed in some competitions. There are a lot of negative opinions about video games that bother me. I want to write an essay to show how this hobby can be a positive thing in our lives.

## Outline

Making an outline is a prewriting activity you should do for everything you write. An outline is a plan that will ensure your essay easier to write and understand.

Not all outlines are the same. The amount of detail required in the outline depends on the purpose of the essay as well as the purpose of your outline. If you are writing a timed essay without research, your outline will be very simple. If you are writing a researched essay, your outline will probably be more detailed and may include some of your sources.

When you write an outline for a class, your teacher may ask you for a very detailed outline of your essay so that you can show your whole plan. When you need to make an outline, be sure to ask how much detail your teacher expects you to use in your outline.

At a minimum, every outline will at least state your thesis and topic sentences. To create your outline, think about the question that your essay answers (e.g., what is essential to have in every relationship?). Answer the question (e.g., trust and communication). The supporting points in your answer will become your topic sentences (abbreviated TS). Write the main idea of your essay, your thesis (abbreviated TH), by summarizing your supporting points into one sentence.

Look at the example outline below. This basic outline is the type of outline you could create when you are writing an essay without research that is based on what you know (the type of essay you write on the TOEFL). Notice how directly the topic sentences support the thesis.



## Example: Basic Outline

### I. Introduction

TH: Internships can be a very meaningful opportunity for students to gain perspective on careers.

### II. Body Paragraph 1

TS: Internships allow students to apply theory and skills they learned in a classroom.

### III. Body Paragraph 2

TS: Developing a professional network and securing a job offer is one of the benefits of an internship

### IV. Conclusion

TH: If an internship fulfills its intended purpose, it can truly be an eye-opening experience for individuals.

You can finish one of these basic outlines very quickly. In fact, for timed essays, you need to be able to write an outline like this in about two or three minutes.

On the other hand, planning a researched essay will take more time. A simple method for planning a researched essay starts with a basic outline. Then add questions to the outline for each topic sentence. Then find quotations in sources that answer each of your questions.

One of the reasons that this method is helpful is because it gives you direction in your research. You can research more quickly because instead of reading everything you can find out about your topic, you are reading to find the answers to a few questions. Researching first can help you to more effectively create an outline.

## Ask questions about each of your topic sentences.

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TS: Internships allow students to apply theory and skills they learned in a classroom.

- Q1: Do all majors have internships? Or are they more common in some areas of study?
- Q2: How do companies support learning during an internship?
- Q3: Why is it important to apply what you learn in a practical setting?

## Find sources that answer your questions. Copy the quote and put it in the outline.

---

TS: Internships allow students to apply theory and skills they learned in a classroom.

- Q1: Do all majors have internships? Or are they more common in some areas of study?
  - (I don't really want to look at every major. Maybe I should narrow my thesis to just be about internships in business school?)
- Q2: How do companies support learning during an internship?
  - "Hence, our findings suggest that schools have a comparative disadvantage in conveying most soft skills" (Bolli & Renold, 2017, p. 19).
- Q3: Why is it important to apply what you learn in a practical setting?
  - "Further, since internships affect incomes by increasing graduates' skill level, they are an important part of university curricula" (Bolli, Caves, et. al., 2021, p. 1199).

Sometimes your questions may be difficult to find answers for. Asking questions is a good strategy to focus your research, but don't hesitate to ask additional questions (or adjust your original questions) if you can't find sources to answer all of them. It may be that there are no sources to answer some of your questions, and that is okay. Let the research guide you.

Oftentimes as you research and become more familiar with your subject, you will ask better questions based off of things you read. It's also okay to adjust your outline based on the research that you conduct.

## Exercises

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### Exercise 1: Researching a Prompt

*For this practice, we will use a prompt from the "Addressing the Prompt" chapter of this textbook. However, you could practice this same step with a different prompt topic using the same steps.*

Prompt: Describe one of your hobbies.

1. Visit the [Wikipedia page on the topic of hobbies](#) to get a clear idea of what can be included in the content.
2. Click through to the linked page of the [list of hobbies](#).
3. Use a search engine to look for recent news articles about hobbies.
4. Use the BYU Library search or Google Scholar and search "hobby" or "hobbies"

## Exercise 2: Brainstorming for a Prompt

*For this practice, we will use a prompt from the "Addressing the Prompt" chapter of this textbook. However, you could practice this same step with a different prompt topic using the same steps.*

Prompt: Describe one of your hobbies.

1. Set a timer for 3 minutes. Make a list of everything you think about connected to the topic in that time.
2. Revisit one of the websites you visited for the previous exercise. Add notes to your paper of anything interesting that stands out to you from that page.
3. Describe is a big verb. Add ideas to your list of *how* you can describe the hobby. What would someone be interested to learn? What is most interesting to you about the idea of hobbies?
4. Set a timer for 10 minutes. Think about the prompt and draw. You don't need to be a confident artist, just draw.
5. Choose 5 of your items on your list. Draw 5 lines coming from each of those 5 items. Next to each line, write details, questions, or related ideas.
6. Set a timer for 3 minutes. Talk to a partner about your initial ideas. Then listen to your partner share his or her ideas. Write down any new thoughts you have during this discussion.

## Exercise 3: Focusing on the Prompt

*For this practice, we will use a prompt from the "Addressing the Prompt" chapter of this textbook. However, you could practice this same step with a different prompt topic using the same steps.*

Prompt: Describe one of your hobbies.

1. Take a highlighter or a pen and circle all of the ideas that feel interesting and broad enough to write an essay about.
2. Choose a specific hobby that you will focus your paper on.
3. Think about how the list items you circled best connect to that specific hobby.

## Exercise 4: Outlining a Prompt Response

1. With a partner, choose one of the example focused topics from the tip box above.
2. Write an outline of what the author might include in this essay to describe the hobby.
3. Switch your outline with another partner group.
4. Read through the outline.
5. Write a question for each topic sentence about what you would want to know about that aspect of the hobby.

## Sources

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Bolli, T. & Renold, U. (2017). Comparative advantages of school and workplace environment in skill acquisition: Empirical evidence from a survey among professional tertiary education and training students in Switzerland." *Evidence-Based HRM: A Global Forum for Empirical Scholarship*, 5(1), 6-29.

Bolli, T., Caves, K., Oswald-Egg, M. E. (2021). Valuable experience: How university internships affect graduates' income. *Research in Higher Education*, 62, 1198-1247. <https://doi-org.erl.lib.byu.edu/10.1007/s11162-021-09637-9>



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# Writing

The writing stage is often called **drafting**. When you draft, you should focus on ideas, rather than worrying about grammar. Use an outline as you draft so that you don't lose focus.

## Tip: Get it on Paper

As a writer, you must overcome the belief that everything you write has to be perfect. The first draft is exactly that, a draft. It should be improved upon and revised multiple times. Every time you come back to the essay to work on it, it will improve.

Watch this video clip of artists creating marble sculptures. Writing is a similar creative process. You need an outline and a clear idea of what you want your essay to be at the end. Keep in mind that the first steps of the creation process are very general. It isn't until later in the process that fine details are added.

When you are writing, think of your early drafts as the big cuts of marble. You don't need to worry about word choice or getting the grammar just right. Your focus should be getting the shape of the essay, the general ideas, and the organization.

## Using Quotations

When you are writing, you should not cut and paste several quotes 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.

Use your own words to

- connect quotes together
- introduce some of your research
- explain how a quote supports your topic sentence
- explain what a quote means
- 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.



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# Revising

When you finish writing your essay, you should revise it. After you revise it, you may need to return to either of the previous stages (prewriting or writing) to make improvements to your writing. You also may need to do additional drafting.

## Quote about Drafting

"The second draft is where the fun is. In a first draft, you get to explode. The objective (at least for me) is to get it down on paper, somehow. Battle through the laziness and the not-enough-time and the this-is-rubbish and everything else, and just get it written. Whatever it takes. The second draft is where you go and gather together the fragments of the explosion and figure out what it is you did, and make it look like that was what you always meant to do.

So you write it. Then you put it aside. Not for months, but perhaps for a week or so. Even a few days. Do other things. Then set aside some uninterrupted time to read, and pull it out, and pretend you have never read it before – clear it out of your head, and sit and read it. (I'd suggest you do this on a print-out, so you can scribble on it as you go.)"

- Author Neil Gaiman (2008)

<https://edtechbooks.org/-nkTg>

"My first draft was a haphazardly mowed path through a dark and scary overgrowth of trees and weeds; it took a dozen more drafts to prune and trim, plant new things, string up some lights—so I could arrive at something of a garden."

-Author Emily X. R. Pan

"First drafts are like practicing dance moves in your room alone in the dark; it doesn't matter what it looks like because it's just for you."

-Author Jen Wang

"I think and think and think, and then the first draft pours out on to the page, ready to be expanded in the direction I actually meant for it to go."

-Author E. K. Johnston

(Source: [Bustle](#))

Many people divide the revising stage into two parts: revising and editing. **Revising** focuses on making changes to improve the clarity of your ideas and organization. **Editing** focuses on making changes to improve your grammar. Revising should generally be completed before editing.

Here are some questions that you can ask yourself while you are revising an essay.

### Revision questions

1. Does the introduction provide the general information a reader needs in order to understand the topic?
2. Does the introduction end with an effective thesis? Does it match the style of the essay?
3. Do each of the body paragraphs begin with an effective topic sentence?
4. Are the body paragraphs sequenced in a logical order?
5. Look at each body paragraph. Do the supporting sentences support the topic sentence?
6. Look at each body paragraph. Are the supporting sentences sequenced in a logical order?
7. Look at each body paragraph. Is there enough development? Are there more details or examples that would help the reader?
8. Look at each body paragraph. Does the concluding sentence close the paragraph logically?
9. Does the conclusion paragraph start by restating the thesis?
10. Does the conclusion paragraph have a suggestion, prediction, or opinion at the end?

## Self-check

You should always read through your essay to identify mistakes. Try to finish your drafting with enough time to leave your essay, and then come back to it later to make revisions. As you revise your own work, you may need to add, delete, or move text. Mark any parts of your essay that you want to ask a friend/tutor to help you with. You should also proofread for mechanical errors (spelling, grammar, etc.). You may be surprised by how many errors you are able to identify on your own.

### Here are some strategies for proofreading:

1. Start by simply reading through your essay for typos. This is an easy way to clean up your mechanics and present a more professional essay.
2. Look through your essay to check for basic grammar errors. For example, you might check to make sure that every sentence has a subject and a verb (and that they agree).
3. If you are not writing for a test, try reading out loud. This may help you identify more errors. We often notice that something doesn't make sense when we hear it.
4. Read the essay backward (paragraph by paragraph).

## Get feedback and make changes

If you are not writing for a test, have a friend or a tutor review your writing before you submit it to your teacher. Then use the feedback you get to make changes. If your teacher gives you feedback on your draft before the final paper is due, make sure you use it to improve your essay.



## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Give Feedback

*Read this student's essay. What feedback would you give the student? Don't just look at superficial concerns like spelling and grammar. Consider the ideas and organization of the essay.*

**Prompt: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: A teacher's ability to relate well with students is more important than superior knowledge of the subject being taught. Give specific reasons and examples to support your answer.**

Response:

The relationship between students and teachers is important for learning. Every teacher has different abilities and talents. There are teachers with a lot of knowledge about a big number of topics, and there are teachers that are friends with their students. The ability to relate with others is crucial for teachers, to get the student's attention, interest and to use all their potential.

Learning is more than just get knowledge, it's get experience and abilities for future situations. Teachers have an important influence in every student, but the print that they let to them, depends on the teacher. Teaching to many students it could be hard, but it's part of teacher's job. Teach is more than bring knowledge, it means being an example and generate motivation among the students.

The way to study has been changing during the last years, our parents have told us that the relationship with teachers was more about afraid than respect. All the teachers should recognize that having a lot of knowledge could be useless if they don't have student's attention. There will be always a teacher that is remind more as a friend than someone letting homework. Nowadays, students pay more attention to their friends than their teachers and that is problem that should be solve.

Teaching is an ability or a talent that everyone can develop with time, it's more than just have a lot of knowledge about a topic. It's necessary to be creative, enthusiastic, educated and dedicated to be a good teacher. If every teacher tries to get student's attetion should start working with the aspect mentioned below. The way to teach needs to improve, there are a lot of good teachers and they should keep working on it.

### Exercise 2: Revise

Use the example essay from the previous exercise.

1. Based on the feedback you gave, revise the essay. For example, you could alter the topic sentences, add more development, change the order of supporting sentences, or add something that is missing.



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# Originality

It is expected that your writing is *your* writing. *Plagiarism* refers to the action of taking the words or ideas of another person and using those words or ideas like they are your own. This is viewed differently in different cultures. In some cultures, copying what another person wrote is a way to honor the original writer. In American educational settings, plagiarism is not viewed this way. Plagiarism in the United States is viewed as stealing another person's work. There are very serious consequences for stealing another person's words or ideas and using them in your writing. You should never plagiarize **any** part of **any** assignment in **any** of your classes.

There are many ways to plagiarize. You should be familiar with them so that you don't do it accidentally. Some examples of plagiarism include copying text word-for-word (or with a few changes) from something without citing the author, copying too much from one source, and improperly crediting the source. Compare the quote to the examples of plagiarism in the following box.

## Example: Types of Plagiarism

### Original Quote:

- o "When creating assignments, teachers must build in LMS components and provide purposeful reasons and objectives for students. Assignments should not be created just for the sake of using the LMS. There needs to be a clear and logical justification for their design" (Sagendorf, 2020, p. 41)

### Plagiarized Version: Copy and paste without source information

- o Teachers need to build in LMS components and provide purposeful reasons and objectives for students. Assignments should not be created just for the sake of using the LMS. There needs to be a clear and logical justification for their design. That will help students learn better.

### Plagiarized Version: Paraphrase the idea without source information

- o It is best for teachers to use the LMS to support purposeful activities, not to just use it because it is available.

### Plagiarised Version: Rewording the quote

- o Teachers creating in LMS components should give students purposeful reasons and objectives. The assignments they create should not just be for the purpose of using LMS.

\*You should never copy a quote and change just a few words (with or without the source information). Even if you include the source information and you have only changed a few words, this is not correctly paraphrasing and is still considered plagiarism.

When you include research in your essays, you need to properly quote, summarize, or paraphrase as well as include the proper citation. Each of these skills will be explained in this book.

## Exercises

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### Exercise 1: Plagiarism Discussion

*In a small group or with a partner, discuss the questions below:*

1. Why do you think the academic culture in the United States is so concerned about plagiarism?
2. Think about your past educational experiences.\* Is plagiarism something that your teachers were concerned about? How does that compare to the information in this chapter?
3. The paragraph above mentions that there are different ways to include research: a quote, a summary, or a paraphrase. What do you know about these different writing techniques? Which one do you think would be the most useful? Which one would be the most difficult?

\*As with many aspects of cultures, a difference does not mean one way of doing things is *better*. Culture simply means *the way we do things here*. We often have to adjust our actions or words to fit a context. The concern or lack of discussion of plagiarism in different cultures is just an interesting difference to be aware of and to adjust for. Even students growing up in the United States have to be specifically taught how to avoid plagiarism.

## Source

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Sagendorf, E. (2020). Teaching in the virtual age: The impact of the learning management system on teacher instruction. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 8(3-B).



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Access it online or download it at [https://open.byu.edu/up\\_writing\\_summer/originality](https://open.byu.edu/up_writing_summer/originality).

# Timed Writing (Writing Process)

Timed writing can take many forms, but there is always a limit on the amount of time you have to complete your writing. Timed writings most commonly occur in an exam situation, where the tester is evaluating how well you understand a topic and/or can explain your thoughts without external assistance. The amount of time and the expected length of your writing will vary based on the instructions.

You can expect to find a timed writing portion on a test or quiz in virtually any subject. It doesn't matter whether you plan to study business, engineering, music, or linguistics, Timed essays are used frequently to demonstrate how you analyze, argue, or create something with what you have learned.

Although this section is about timed writing in general, all of the timed writing tips in this textbook will help you with the 30-minute essay on the TOEFL.

## Step One: Recognize the constraints

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When you encounter a timed writing prompt, you should consider the time restraints and the requirements of the prompt. Ask yourself the questions below before you begin your timed writing.

- How much time do I have?
- What length of a response does the teacher expect?
- What aspect of my writing is most important to the teacher?
- Are there other sections of the test that I need to complete?
- Does the testing format provide spell check?

Usually, you will know in advance that there will be a timed writing component to an assessment so you can think about these questions beforehand. This will help you prioritize your time.

## Step Two: Organizing your ideas AND your time

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It is common for students to feel a sense of panic when they see a clock counting down the seconds during an exam. Because of this psychological pressure, it is easy to overlook a few important things.

First, an outline will *always* benefit you. You may think that the best idea is to immediately start writing because time is limited, but that could lead to a disorganized essay. Read the prompt carefully and make a brief outline of ideas. An outline will ensure that you address all parts of the prompt and that your most important details will be included.

Second, consider how to use time as your ally. Rather than allowing it to control you, think of how you can use the time to keep yourself on track. For example, if the essay is only a small part of the total grade, control the amount of time you give yourself to write the answer. You might do this by answering the essay in a certain amount of time, leaving yourself enough time to complete the rest of the test. Divide the time you have to work with so you can work smarter.

As an example, you may have 30 minutes to complete an essay. In order to work quickly, you could follow a time schedule like this:

Time (Counting down)	Task
30:00-27:00	Write your thesis and topic sentences (outline)
27:00-20:00	Write your first body paragraph
20:00-13:00	Write your second body paragraph
13:00-8:00	Write your introduction paragraph
8:00-3:00	Write your conclusion paragraph
3:00-0:00	Revise and edit your essay

You will obviously need to structure your time differently depending on the amount of time you have to work with. It may also be necessary to adjust the time you spend on certain aspects of your essay depending on what is most important to the teacher. For example, there may be a larger emphasis on accuracy, so you will need to give yourself more time to revise and edit.

### Example timed writing prompts

- Compare and contrast the similarities and differences between the marketing approach of two similar businesses. (Business Marketing)
- Read and analyze a poem for examples of rhetorical devices. (English Literature)
- Explain the geologic processes for the creation of igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary rocks. (Intro to Geology)
- Describe the effects of racism and prejudice and how it impacts both individuals and groups. (Intro to Psychology)
- Using examples from the text, discuss the principles of good inter-faith dialogue/interaction. (Survey of World Religions)

*Prompts are based on real writing requirements as described in BYU and Ensign College syllabi.*

# Exercises

## Exercise 1: Timed Writing

*Set a timer for 20 minutes. Write about one of the following topics. Be sure to fully address the prompt. Remember to practice prewriting and revising within the time limit. Your response should be between 250-300 words.*

- Describe an important place for you personally. Why does that place hold special significance for you?
- How do you see your life 10 years in the future? What specific events and accomplishments do you imagine will occur during the next 10 years? What skills do you imagine you will develop? How will your current situation impact that future?
- Cultural misunderstandings are a common difficulty that international students face during their time living abroad. What can an international student do to manage these situations? What can Americans do to better handle these cultural differences?
- What is one characteristic you think is key to being a good boss? Why do you think that characteristic is so vital? What are the consequences of not developing this characteristic?



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# Integrated Writing (Writing Process)

Integrated writing is an extremely common task type at the university level. In fact, almost all of the writing you will do may be considered "integrated" to some degree. Integrated writing means writing in response to ideas found in a reading or listening passage. You can use these passages to inform your writing. Integrated writing prompts may ask you to compare/contrast or provide your own opinion on the topic.

Because this is such a common expectation of academic writing, you can expect to see integrated tasks in potentially any college course you enroll in. Typically a true integrated task will allow you to refer to the original material (or at least the notes you took) while reading/listenign. However, there may be instances when there will be a constraint of time (such as on a quiz or test) and you cannot look back at the original passage.

Writing about a topic and drawing connections between different sources pushes you beyond passive understanding to recreating essential knowledge in your own words.

Although this section is about integrated writing in general, all of the writing tips in this textbook will help you with the integrated essay on the TOEFL.

## Step One: Review the source material

---

When you encounter an integrated writing prompt, you should first think about the content.

- Is there one required source material or multiple?
- Is the content written or spoken?
- How complex are the ideas presented?
- What connections can I draw between the content and other concepts discussed in this (or another) course?
- What connections are there between the various sources?
- What complexity of a response does the teacher expect?
- To what degree can I include my own opinion or background knowledge?
- Am I expected to include direct quotes/references to the text or to discuss it more abstractly?
- Is there a time limit for reviewing the source and/or writing my response?

Because integrated writing generally includes access to the source material before writing and during the writing process itself, this will feel more like a drafted task.

## Step Two: Organizing your ideas AND your time

---

An outline will *always* benefit you. You may think that the best idea is to immediately start writing, but that could lead to a very disorganized or unfocused answer. Read the prompt carefully and make a brief outline of ideas from the source(s) that are necessary to include in your answer. Ensure that you know how all parts of the prompt will be addressed. Outline all of the most important details that you will include. Identify any specific phrases or sentences you would want to include verbatim.

Second, be realistic about the time you have to work on this task. Review the source material to estimate the time it will take to read or listen to it. This may include multiple reviews and/or notetaking, which will add to the overall time. Next, consult the syllabus deadlines and your other commitments to set a personal timeline for working on this project. Will you have time to write multiple drafts? Is there time to have a classmate review your writing or to visit the campus Writing Center?

It may also be necessary to adjust times depending on what is most important to the teacher. For example, there may be a larger emphasis on accuracy, so you will need to give yourself more time to revise and edit. You will also want to consider how necessary it is for you to fully grasp the concepts. In other words, if this assignment is for a core course in your major or in a particularly challenging class, it will be worth scheduling additional time. However, if the assignment is a small percentage of your total grade, it may be fine to lower the priority for reviewing and drafting this essay.

### Examples of integrated writing prompts

- Read two articles about desegregation in the United States. Summarize the information from the two articles. Using that information, do you think the integration efforts were successful? Why or why not? (Intro to Education)
- Write a short biographical paper about a deceased ancestor. Use information from an interview with a living family member, newspapers, journals, and other records to tell the story of that individual's life. (Family History)
- Watch the video about "The Trolley Problem." How does this ethical situation relate to the reading from the textbook? (Intro to Philosophy)

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Integrated Writing

*Prompt: In the video, the speaker describes some of the issues we face when creating and understanding large amounts of data using infographics (or statistics). The article is from a textbook about media literacy. Using the information from the two sources, explain why data can be confusing and how to recognize what the information actually means. Be sure to fully address the prompt. Remember to practice prewriting and revising within the time limit. Your answer should be between 250-300 words. You may take notes.*

Video: [Truth and Fuzziness in Infographics](#)

Article: [6. Teacher and student guide to analyzing images](#)





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# Shape and Organization

When you first began writing for an academic English setting, you followed a very straightforward structure. This writing style may seem very direct, but it is expected for basic essays. That structure becomes more flexible with longer essays and more complex topics. The structure may also shrink to one or two paragraphs depending on the expectations for the task.

Regardless of how much writing you are expected to produce for the assignment, all writing will include the same basic structures. So while this textbook may imply a standard 5-paragraph essay length, the same principles will apply when you write a short answer.

A Shifting Structure
Introductions
Body Paragraphs
Conclusions
Reference Page
Example Writing
Timed Writing (Shape and Organization)
Integrated Writing (Shape and Organization)



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[https://open.byu.edu/up\\_writing\\_summer/essay\\_shape\\_and\\_orga](https://open.byu.edu/up_writing_summer/essay_shape_and_orga).



# A Shifting Structure

The common writing structure in the United States schools is sometimes referred to as a traditional “five-paragraph essay.” When you write a five-paragraph essay, your organization is very predictable. There is always one introduction paragraph with the thesis at the end, body paragraphs that each develop one topic related to the thesis, and a conclusion paragraph that begins with a restatement of the thesis. This structure is excellent to use when you write short essays (e.g., essays for AA/AB, the TOEFL independent essay, etc.).

By properly using a five-paragraph essay structure, you show that you understand the basics of American English writing. This foundation is important because once you can write a solid five-paragraph essay, then you can expand it without confusing your reader.

In longer academic essays, the structure has to become more flexible. Imagine an eight-page research paper with only five paragraphs. The topic and the length is too complex for a five-paragraph structure. Longer essays may have more than one paragraph for the introduction, headings may signal major parts of the essay, or one topic may be developed over several paragraphs.

In shorter writing tasks, the structure has to shrink to include only the essential information in a logical order. You may only have a one sentence introduction. Even if you are only writing a paragraph, you will use your understanding of introductions, body paragraphs, and conclusions to create your response.

Do not be surprised if your college writing teachers ask you to stop using the five-paragraph essay for your writing assignments.

Your college teachers may ask you to write something other than an essay (e.g., a literary analysis, reflection, chapter summary, etc.). Often, these other types of writing assignments will have an entirely different structure. One of the most essential steps to success when you write in college is to clearly understand the professor's expectations. If your professor shows you a sample of what you need to write, you should use the sample to help you understand what your professor expects.

One of the most essential steps to success when you write in college is to clearly understand the professor's expectations. If your professor shows you a sample of what you need to write, you should use the sample to help you understand what your professor expects.

Your college teachers may ask you to write something other than an essay (e.g., a literary analysis, reflection, chapter summary, etc.). Often, these other types of writing assignments will have an entirely different structure. This book emphasizes the importance of analyzing model writing because that will help you know how to write whatever you need to write in college, regardless of the structure of the assignment.

## Exercises

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### 1 Exercise: Analyze Example Essay

*Consider how the essay in the following chapter of this book starts to break the patterns of a typical five-paragraph essay. The structure is less predictable, but it still follows the same general principles of good essay writing that you have learned.*



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# Introductions

Your introduction paragraph should grab your reader's attention, introduce the topic of your essay, and present your thesis.

## Grab the reader's attention and introduce the topic

The very first sentence of your introduction should get your reader interested in your topic. Don't start out too general in your introduction paragraph. Also, don't state all of your specific main points individually in the introduction.

## Introduce the topic through background information

Focus on giving background information that your reader needs to understand the topic generally. The middle sentence of your introduction paragraph prepare your reader to understand your thesis statement.

To know what background information you should include, you need to consider your audience. You need to know who your audience is before you can start guessing what background information they already know and what background information you need to tell them for them to understand your thesis statement later.

### Example: Using Specific Knowledge

Are you writing an essay analyzing the features of 18th-century romantic poetry for your college English teacher?

If you are writing for a teacher in a class, assume that you are writing for a general audience unless your professor tells you otherwise. You should assume your audience knows general knowledge like "Romanticism is a poetry movement", but doesn't know specific things like, "the beginning of Romanticism comes from an opposing reaction to the logic and rationalism favored by the Enlightenment."

If you are not sure if a piece of information is general knowledge or specific knowledge, ask a friend who doesn't know about your topic to read your introduction. They can point out what information they don't understand as a general reader. Then, you can add background information about those points.

## Pro Tip:

Never use the phrase "Everyone knows..." in the background knowledge section because you need to assume the general audience doesn't know most of the things about your topic.

## Present your thesis

The thesis states the main idea, or focus, of the essay. The rest of the essay will give evidence and explanations that show why or how your thesis is true.

### An effective thesis—

- addresses the **prompt** if there is one\* (i.e., answers the question).
- is usually at the **end** of the introduction paragraph.
- controls the content of **all** of the body paragraphs.
- is a **complete** sentence.
- does **not announce** the topic (e.g., "I'm going to talk about public transportation.").
- should **not** simply be a **fact** (e.g., "Many people use public transportation.").
- should **not** be **too general** (e.g., "The use of public transportation is increasing.").
- should **not** be **too specific** (e.g., "Public transportation reduces greenhouse gas emissions, provides low-cost transportation options, allows for multitasking during the commute, relieves cities of overcrowded parking, and helps prevent traffic jams and gridlock.").
- may **state** or **imply** main points (e.g., "Public transportation should be free for the public and a comprehensive bus system should be put in place in all urban areas." vs. "Public transportation should be implemented in urban areas in a variety of ways.").

## Thesis Statements: Concision & Grammar

### Concision

- A [concise](#) thesis statement expresses the whole main idea in as few words as possible.

Why is important?

- The reader will be more engaged and will prevent the thesis statement from being confusing because of the long, unnecessarily complex sentences.
- Some main ideas are very complex and may take multiple sentences to say clearly, but most can be said in just one sentence.

Writing your main idea concisely is preferred in academic writing. Single-sentence thesis statements are generally more powerful than thesis statements that are multiple sentences long.

### Grammar

A thesis statement sentence needs to be grammatically correct.

One of the more common errors with student essay writing is comma splice sentences in the thesis statement.

- A **comma splice sentence** is a sentence that doesn't properly use conjunctions, connecting all the clauses with commas only.
  - Other common grammar errors include: run-on sentences, incorrectly placed periods, and a lack of commas.

Thesis statements are often only a single sentence long, but due to the complex grammar and need for specific wording, they can take more time to write than other sentences.

Thesis statements may also be revised multiple times to get the grammar and the wording just right to express your idea most clearly.

# Exercises

## Exercise 1: Background Information

**Part A:** Consider the prompt and the proposed thesis statement. Then answer this question: What background information would you need as a reader to understand the topic of this essay?

*Prompt:* Describe either the causes or effects of a topic. The topic may be a problem (e.g., poverty) or a good thing (e.g., economic stability).

*Thesis Statement:* Therefore, the causes of high inflation rates, high unemployment rates, and the excess of money circulating in the market lead the Fed to enact monetary policies that are designed to help the US economy.

**\*\*Don't read part B until you are done with part A. \*\***

**Part B:** Read the introduction below. Then answer the reflection questions below.

One of the most and respectful Central Banks in the world is the Fed, Federal Reserve Bank, located in the USA. This bank is recognized by having the most effective policies that have been turning the USA economy one of the most powerful economies in the world. Although the US economy had one of the most financially notable crises in the history during the Great Depression (during 1929 thru 1939), the US economy has been solid and stable for many years. Due to its stability in the economy, many foreign investors allocate their capitals to the US country in order to obtain their incomes. All these become possible because of the efficient actions done by the Fed. The Fed has the responsibility to control inflation, and other indicators that contribute to its economy. Therefore, the causes of high inflation rates, high unemployment rates, and the excess of money circulating in the market lead the Fed to enact monetary policies that are designed to help the US economy.

### Reflection Questions:

- Does the author answer the questions that you had?
- Do you feel confident that you would understand the essay's thesis statement based on the background information in the introduction? Why or why not?

## Exercise 2: Thesis Analysis

Using the points above, decide whether or not each of the following thesis statements is effective:

1. The effects of online dating are getting very dangerous and sometimes out of control. Some of the effects include mental harm, risk of shallow relationships, and fake profiles.
2. This paper will discuss the major causes of food waste that are supermarkets, restaurants and households.
3. Some of the main causes of telling lies are avoiding embarrassment in public, self-protection of punishment, and being polite in your own environment.
4. Not getting the right amount of sleep can lead to obesity as well as depression and anxiety, although sleep the necessary hours could prevent cancer.

### Exercise 3: Complex Main Idea Thesis Practice

*Below is a chart of common subordinating conjunctions or conjunctive phrases. Use this chart to help write a complex or complex compound thesis statement that answers the prompt. You will need to answer both questions from the prompt in only one sentence.*

#### Subordinating Conjunctions:

after, although, as	if, in order for
because, before	unless, until
even though, even if	where, whereas, while

#### Prompt:

Your university has decided to spend more money on sports and athletics than the campus library. You do agree or disagree with this action? What would the short-term and long-term effects of this decision be?

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### Exercise 4: Thesis Grammar Practice

*Revise these thesis statements to be more concise and grammatically correct. Write your best version of the thesis statements on the line.*

1. The Chernobyl accident caused irreparable environmental and social damages. This gave the people an opportunity to become stronger through their unity and their courage to serve no matter the consequences.

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2. Due to the fact that students need to be focused 100% at school in order to achieve their dreams. Universal education needs to be free for everyone.

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3. Testing on animals should be eliminated because it does not produce the benefits it promises, it is a technique that is not ethical, and it is socially unacceptable because there are viable alternatives.

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# Body Paragraphs

Body paragraphs should all work to support your thesis by explaining *why* or *how* your thesis is true. Every sentence in your body paragraphs should work toward supporting your thesis statement. Each body paragraph has three types of sentences.

## Topic sentences

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A topic sentence states the main idea, or focus, of the paragraph. The rest of the body paragraph will give evidence and explanations that show *why* or *how* your topic sentence is true. In many ways, a topic sentence is very similar to a thesis. The biggest differences will be the location of the sentence and the scope of the ideas.

### An effective topic sentence—

- clearly **supports** the thesis statement.
- is usually at the **beginning** of a body paragraph.
- controls the content of **all** of the supporting sentences in its paragraph.
- is a **complete** sentence.
- does **not announce** the topic (e.g., "I'm going to talk about public transportation.").
- should **not** be **too general** (e.g., "The use of public transportation is increasing.").
- should **not** be **too specific** (e.g., "Public transportation reduces greenhouse gas emissions, provides low-cost transportation options, and allows for multitasking during the commute.").

## Supporting sentences

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Your body paragraph needs to explain *why* or *how* your topic sentence is true. The sentences that support your topic sentence are called **supporting sentences**. You can have many types of supporting sentences. Supporting sentences can give examples, explanations, details, descriptions, facts, reasons, etc.

## Concluding sentences

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Your final statement should conclude your paragraph logically. Conclusion sentences can restate main idea of your paragraph, state an opinion, make a prediction, give advice, etc. New ideas should not be presented in your concluding sentence.

## Characteristics of Effective Body Paragraphs

All sentences in your body paragraph need to work together ***within the paragraph.***

All the paragraphs need to work together ***within the essay.***

As you draft and revise your paragraphs, you will need to write the sentences and paragraphs to be:

1. Unified
2. Developed
3. Cohesive

If the sentences and paragraphs have [unity](#), [development](#), and [cohesion](#), they will more likely work better together in the essay to express your main idea.



# Exercises

## Exercise 1: Body Paragraph Analysis

*Read this example body paragraph.*

- *Is the topic sentence effective?*
- *Do the supporting sentences directly connect to the topic sentence? Or are there unnecessary or overly specific details included?*
- *Does the concluding sentence effectively end the point?*
- *Is it logically organized?*

The culture, traditions, and identity of communities are represented by historic monuments. This is a reason why the conservation and preservation of historic monuments are fundamental for a country. Sometimes in the point of view of people the protection of historic monuments by the government can have some negative results. For example, they will have to pay a fee to enter a park or any historical monument, but if these places aren't protected there won't be a place to visit and also the payment of a fee to enter a park can help the economy of a country. That is why is important that the government protects historic monuments. Another reason is that shows and displays the culture of each town or community, people will be able to learn traditions and see how people used to live, or how things were back in antiquity (DOI US, nd, para. 1). Egypt and the pyramids are an example of this, because it shows the thinking of the people that build the pyramids and the style of architecture that was used in those times. The pyramids are full of culture and transcripts that exhibit the beliefs of Egyptians many years ago (Academy for cultural diplomacy, nd, para. 2). Just like Egypt, many countries have historical monuments that display their culture and if the government does not protect these monuments, it will be just a matter of time that one day they will disappear and along with them the culture of each country.

Sources:

Academy for Cultural Diplomacy. [https://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/academy/index.php?en\\_monuments-as-cultural-diplomacy](https://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/academy/index.php?en_monuments-as-cultural-diplomacy)

Walls et al. (2020).

<https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/sciadv.aay8523#:~:text=We%20find%20that%20monuments%20inc>

## Exercise 2: Drafting Practice

A body paragraph's job is to develop and give support to the main idea of the essay, the thesis statement. Read the introduction below and consider the bolded thesis statement. What support does it need for the reader to understand or come to agree with your main idea? Write a body paragraph that would fit in an essay with the introduction below.

### Introduction:

Homeschooling, teaching children in places such as their home, a library, etc. instead of enrolling them in public or private school, is something more parents are starting to choose. According to research by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics, there are 1.1 million children being homeschooled, which is a 2.2 percent increase from 1998, when there were only 850,000 students (Lips & Feinberg, 2008). As the research shows, homeschooling is growing more common in the United States.

**Homeschooling should be encouraged because of the following advantages: higher academic achievement, closer relationships between parents and children, and healthy social, emotional, and psychological characteristics of the students**

### Your Body Paragraph:

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Source: Lips, D. & Feinberg, E. (2008, April 3). Homeschooling: A growing option in American education. Retrieved from <https://www.heritage.org/education/report/homeschooling-growing-option-american-education>





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# Conclusions

Your conclusion paragraph should logically conclude your essay, just like your conclusion sentences logically conclude your body paragraphs. The conclusion paragraph should begin by restating your thesis, and then you should broaden back out to a general topic. End with a closing statement.

## Restate your thesis

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The first sentence of your concluding paragraph should restate your thesis.

### Example: Restated thesis

Thesis: It is obvious that COVID-19 changed everything. Mainly, this virus affects people in terms of schools, economy, and mental health.

Restated Thesis: In conclusion, people had gotten significant damages in terms of schools, economy, and mental health by coronavirus.

The thesis changed by implying the main points, instead of stating them directly. Even though the words were changed, the overall meaning did not change. Other ways to restate a thesis include reversing the order of the clauses or using different word forms (e.g., adjective to noun: essential > the importance).

## How to Paraphrase a Thesis Statement

A restated thesis statement says the ideas from the thesis statement again but in different words. It is a paraphrase of the original thesis statement.

### An Effective Paraphrase

- explains the most important parts of the original
- is written in your own words.
- keeps the original meaning.
- does not merely cut and copy from the original

### How to Make a Paraphrase

1. Determine your purpose.
2. Read or listen to what you will paraphrase
3. Make a list of the main points
4. Write the paraphrase.
5. Compare the paraphrase to the original

(Adapted from Stephen, n.d.)

## Apply your thesis to general contexts

There are a few options for the supporting sentences of a conclusion paragraph. All of these options build off the main idea from the restated thesis.

- You could summarize the most important supporting details from your essay.
  - This is done by paraphrasing your topic sentences effectively.
- You could mirror your introduction and connect your thesis back to the general topics you mentioned in your introduction.
  - This polishes off the essay in a refined way. Including the same ideas in the first paragraph and the last paragraph bookends the essay the same way the covers of a book contain a story.
- You could show the importance and impact of the main idea from the restated thesis statement by discussing that idea's effect on the real world.
  - This is usually done with a large scope in mind. How does your idea impact a larger community or the world? What impact will it have in the future?

## Give a closing statement

Your concluding statement is very similar to the concluding sentence of a body paragraph except that you will not restate your main idea at the very end of your paper. Your closing statement can be a prediction, suggestion, or opinion.

## A conclusion's role in an essay

The primary role, job, of a conclusion in an essay is to finish off the essay in a logical way. Just like if you listened to a song that stopped halfway through if you read an essay without a conclusion, it feels unfinished.

A conclusion is an idea that is reached after someone considers evidence about a topic. All the ideas, details, explanations, and reasonings build up to the conclusion.

Usually, this conclusion is stated in the restated thesis statement. The sentences after the restated thesis statement can either summarize the main reasons that support that conclusion or they can show the impact of that conclusion on the real world. The last sentence, the concluding sentence, should be memorable so that people remember the conclusion from the restated thesis statement. It is like the grand finale in a song that leaves a lasting impression.

All of these pieces build on the ideas from the previous paragraphs, so the reader understands at the end of the essay what the essay was all about, the main idea.

### **\*Note: Conclusion vs. Concluding**

"Conclusion" and "Concluding" are based on the word "Conclude" which has two different dictionary definitions: one about deciding based on evidence and another about ending something.

**Conclusion** means "something that you decide when you have thought about all the information connected with the situation".

**Concluding** means "[coming] to an end; [bringing] something to an end"

Sources for definitions:

1. <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/conclusion?q=conclusion+>
2. <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/conclude?q=concluding>

# Exercises

## Exercise 1: Paraphrasing Practice

*Pretend you are writing an essay to answer the prompt below. You have already written your thesis statement. You are now writing the restated thesis statement. To practice your paraphrasing skills, write three versions of the same restated thesis statement on the lines below. A completed example done with a different prompt has been given.*

**Prompt: What are the similarities and differences between e-books and textbooks?**

**Thesis:** Although e-books and textbooks have the same purpose, they are significantly different in cost, usability, and visual presentation.

1.

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2.

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3.

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**Completed Example:**

**Prompt:** Should schools teach foreign languages?

**Thesis:** *Schools need to teach different languages because it helps the youth to be better prepared for the future, having more opportunities and developing their skills.*

**Restated Thesis Versions:**

1. In conclusion, students are benefited in schools that teach a foreign language because they are not only better prepared for future opportunities but also they develop skills.
2. In closing, the preparation for future opportunities and skill development available to students in schools that teach a foreign language are two of the main reasons schools need to teach foreign languages.
3. In fine, there are many benefits for students learning a foreign language which is why schools should include these courses.



## Exercise 2: Concluding Paragraph Analysis

*Read the example student's thesis statement and concluding paragraph.*

- Does the paragraph appropriately restate the thesis?
- Does the author apply the main idea to general topics?
- Does the writer include a closing statement?
- Do you think this is effective as a concluding paragraph? Why or why not?

**Thesis Statement:** Electronic devices are bad for children because they affect kid's brains, their use is unsafe and it reduces children's interaction with the real world.

**Conclusion:**

The use of electronic devices in children leads to negative effects in their brains as it exposes infants to improper content and reduces their interaction with people and sensorial experiences. Screen time should be only necessary for specific and educational reasons, its use needs to be tracked by parents and teachers in order to only have its benefits for the kids. Once they grow up and are aware of the risks of them and the benefits of giving them adequate utilization, it should be fine to allow them more screen time. Smartphones or tablets will not disappear, contrary to this, they use will increment and their tools and characteristics will as well, that is why people should learn how to take advantage of them and provide children only the parts that are necessary in the correct designed time.

## Exercise 3: Consider the Cohesion

Analyze the conclusion paragraph from the example essay at the end of this chapter:

[Example Essay](#)

Consider these questions:

- Are all the parts of the conclusion paragraph included?
- How does this conclusion connect with the rest of the essay?
- What specific language does the author use that you could use in any conclusion?





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# Reference Page

As you write more advanced formal academic essays, you will need to include ideas from sources that you find through research. Learning ideas from other sources, connecting those ideas with your own ideas, and sharing your combined ideas with readers is one of the main purposes of academic writing. In order to show your readers where the ideas in your paper come from, you will need to include in-text citations and a list of information about each source you use.

## Different Types of Source Lists

The expectations for how ideas are attributed to their sources vary around the world and for different fields of work or study. For more about how idea attribution is perceived around the world and in the American education system, see the [Originality](#) section of this textbook. In the U.S., you can use other people's ideas and even words in your writing, but you need to tell who the original sources of those ideas were.

How you do this is different by field of study. For example, a psychologist will use APA style to say the source was (Jones, 2010, p. 5), but a literary critic will use MLA style to say the source was (Jones 5). The source they used was the same, but the information about the source is shown in a slightly different style.

Some common styles include:

Full Name	Commonly Called Name	Who Uses It
<a href="#">American Psychological Association Style</a>	APA	social scientists
<a href="#">Modern Language Association Style</a>	MLA	writers and scholars in the humanities
<a href="#">Chicago Style</a>	Chicago	historians and sometimes scholars of other fields
<a href="#">Turabian Style</a>	*Turabian	students

\*Turabian style is a version of Chicago style.

This textbook teaches and uses APA style, so the source list is called a "reference page". In other styles, it may be called something else like a "works cited". The **reference page** is the list of sources written in APA style found at the end of your essay.

## In-text Citations and Reference Pages Work Together

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The reference page and in-text citations work together to show your reader where you found your ideas and more importantly where they can find the ideas themselves.

The reference page should include certain information like the author's name, publishing year, title, doi (a permanent website link), etc. The reader needs this information so they can go look up the source themselves to find out more. This listed information is called a **citation**. Sometimes it is called a full citation or reference. It is often too long to include in your essay's paragraphs though because it would interrupt readers from reading your regular writing, so it is put at the end of the paper.

### Example Reference Page Citation

Barbier, E. B., & Cox, M. (2004). An Economic Analysis of Shrimp Farm Expansion and Mangrove Conversion in Thailand. *Land Economics*, 80(3), 389–407. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3654728>

Because the full citation is too long to put directly after the idea or words you used from the source, you will need to put an in-text citation instead. **In-text citations** are short versions of the information about the source that is written directly *in* the paragraphs of your essay. In-text citations are put in the essay right before or after the information you are citing to identify that information as being from another source for the readers.

Readers can then use that short version or mini citation to look up the rest of the information on the reference page. They can use the name, year, etc. to look up the full citation just as you would look up a word in a dictionary. Therefore, including matching in-text citations and reference page full citations is important.

### Examples of In-Text Citation

(Barbier & Cox, 2004)

(Barbier & Cox, 2004, p. 390)

## Basic Formatting Expectations

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The reference page is called a "page" because it starts on its own page. You may need to click 'enter' or 'return' a few times if your essay's conclusion paragraph ends at the top or in the middle of a page. You should label the reference page with the title "References" in regular font at the top center of your reference page.

You will then list the sources you used in alphabetical order by the author's last name (I.e. Hatter, J. would come before Smith, T.). Use the last names (family names) of the authors followed by their first name initial. Some sources don't have a person author and may use an organization instead or may use no author at all. The entries should still be in alphabetical order by whatever the first word of the entry is. This can be seen in the example below where "Dirt..." comes before "Grass..."

These sources will need to be listed with a hanging indent. The hanging indent keeps the first line of the citation starting at the left like normal, but moves any other lines over a little to the right. This makes it easy for readers to see the author

and year information to look up the source using the information from the in-text citation.

## Example Reference Page

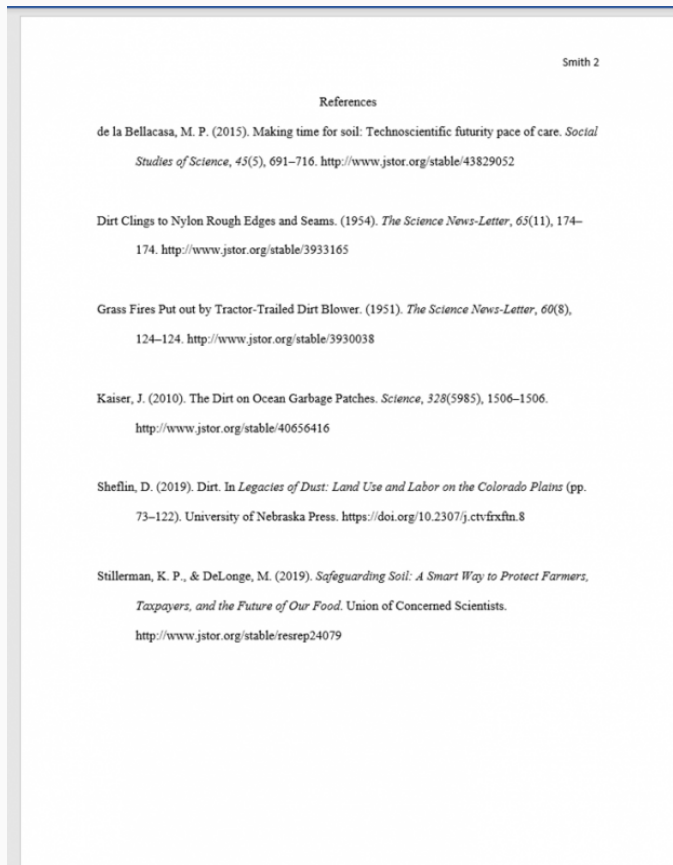


Image: Barraza 2022

There are many more rules and expectations for the formatting of each entry in the listed sources. For more about that information and formatting see [Appendix B: Using Sources](#). You will not be expected to memorize these rules; most people use tools to create the full citations for their reference pages rather than memorize the rules to make them.

## Tools for Creating Citations

There are very few times that you would ever need to write a citation by hand without any resources to help. Almost always, you will instead be able to tools like manuals, resource websites, citation machines, or writing tutoring centers to help you.

Some types of sources are easy to cite such as a website with one author, a clear publishing date, a title, etc. However some sources are more difficult like a transcript of a radio interview or an article with three authors and an editor, but no publishing date. Your college professors won't expect you to memorize what to do in every possible situation, but they will expect you to be able to use your resources to create accurate citations for these many possible situations.

## Resources and Tools for Citations

### Manuals:

- Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th edition)

### Resource Websites:

- <https://apastyle.apa.org/>
- [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/in\\_text\\_citations/](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/in_text_citations/)
- [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/reference\\_list\\_ba](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/reference_list_ba)
- <https://www.easybib.com/guides/citation-guides/apa-format/apa-citation/#:~:text=It%20includes%20a%20title%20page,about%20it%20is%20it%27s%20free!>

### Citation Machines:

- <https://www.citationmachine.net/apa>
- <https://www.easybib.com/> (MLA citing here is free, but APA requires a paid membership.)

### Writing Tutoring Centers:

Each university or college has different tutoring resources available for their students. You can find these resources by asking your teacher, a librarian, or a college information desk for information.

The main tutoring resource for BYU is...

- Research and Writing Center located in the Harold B. Lee Library (HBLL 3340)  
<https://lib.byu.edu/services/research-and-writing-center/>

### Other:

- <https://lib.byu.edu/services/bibliography-generators/>
- <https://www.purdueglobal.edu/blog/online-learning/apa-citation-apps-extensions/>

Whenever you use a tool like an online citation maker, you should also use your own knowledge of APA to double-check that it is accurate. Online citation makers are not perfect. They may miss information or put information in ALL CAPS etc. It is up to you as the writer to make the final decisions about your citations and your reference page.

## Exercises:

### Exercise 1: Find Formatting Faults

Look at the reference page below. There are 5 mistakes on this reference page. Can you find them?

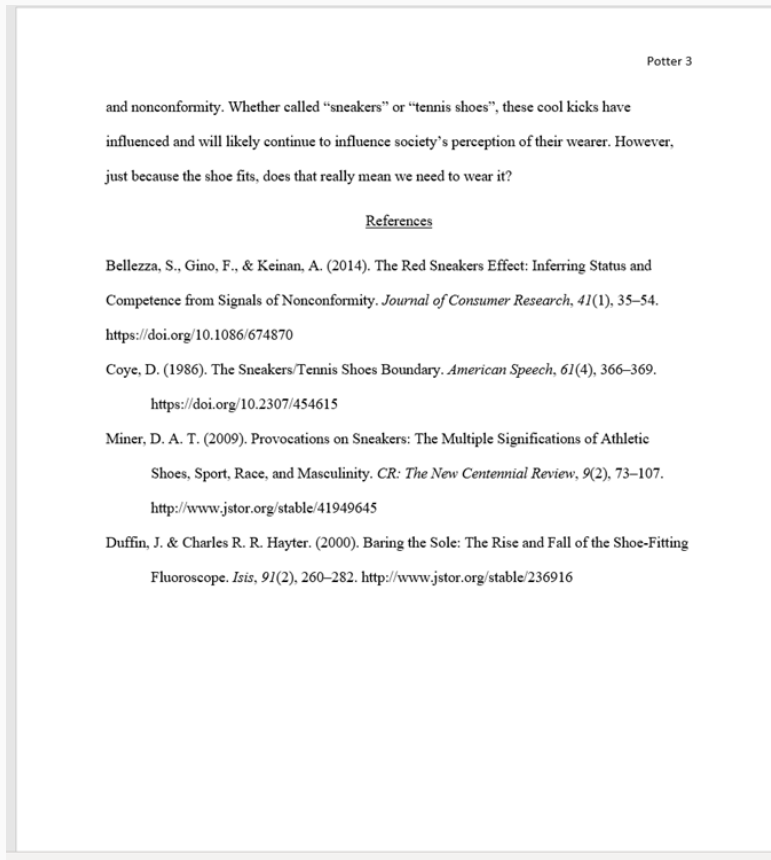


Image: Barraza 2022

### Exercise 2: Make a Reference Page

Use the sources below to make a reference page. You can use any of the tools for citation to help.

- <https://doi.org/10.2307/20094651>
- <https://lib.byu.edu/search/byu/record/edsbyu.edsfra.edsfra.1640344?holding=alw1kda6kfseuxq4>
- <https://www.britannica.com/animal/lion>
- <https://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/blog/lion-fact-sheet/>
- <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/five-lions-escape-enclosure-alarm-sydney-zoo-rcna55190>

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According to this website, "This guide for APA was adapted from: Hacker, D. (2003). *A Writer's Reference*. (5th ed.). Boston: St. Martin's. American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. (5th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association."

Purdue OWL. (2022). *MLA style Introduction*. MLA Style Introduction - Purdue OWL® - Purdue University. Retrieved December 16, 2022, from [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/mla\\_style/mla\\_style\\_introduction.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_style_introduction.html)

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University of Washington Library. (2022, July 12). *Library guides: Citation & writing guide: Chicago*. Chicago - Citation & Writing Guide - Library Guides at University of Washington Libraries. Retrieved December 16, 2022, from <https://guides.lib.uw.edu/c.php?g=344197&p=2318401>



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# Example Writing

## Effects of COVID-19

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What do you think when you hear about the "COVID-19"? I think most people start thinking about being isolated, wearing masks, and not visiting their families and friends. The COVID-19 has been affecting our everyday life in several ways, for example with the relationship with our families, having troubles to learn in our online classes, and the effects of being at home almost all the time such as being depressed, having anxiety, or being stressed. I think there are more effects that we can think about the pandemic provokes. The COVID-19 has been affecting people's mental health, increasing the economic problems in families, the food prices, tourism, and the quality of children's education.

One of the most impacting effects of COVID is people's mental health. For example, the Dr. Deborah Levine could notice that during the pandemic, the problems of people's mental health has been enlarged in adolescence ("Striking impacts", 2021). It shows us how the pandemic is affecting people's mental health especially in the youth. I think it is important to recognize this issue because if we do not take action to solve it, it will get bigger and bigger. In addition, it is important to recognize how people are being affected by COVID. Some of the impacts are "anxiety, frustration and boredom, loneliness" (QJM: An International Journal of Medicine, 2020, paragraph 11). They are some of the feelings people can have because of the pandemic, but it is important to know how the COVID provokes them. For example, they can increase anxiety because they are at home all day, stress because they do not have a job, or depression. Additionally, I think it is important to pay attention to these clues that people can present because these kinds of people will need professional care. As a result, the COVID has a big influence on the mental health of the people because it affects people around them.

Another effect of the pandemic is that the economic problems increase because of two reasons. The first one is that most of the families do not have enough money to survive because their parents have lost their jobs. Because of COVID, several companies do not need many men workers because they do not have enough room to respect the social distance between their workers. According to BBC news, "many people have lost their jobs or seen their incomes cut" (Brown, Jones, and Palumbo, 2021, paragraph 10). It means that most of the families have problems in their economic situation because their fathers do not have jobs to sustain their families with basic things such as clothing and food. The second reason why the economic problems in families are increasing is because there are problems in the economy based on the differences in gender equality in the labor market because of the COVID-19 ("The impacts", 2021, paragraph 1). It shows us how families' economies are being affected because of the demand of different kinds of genders in the labor market, and it is important to stand out that women are paid less than the men, and it has impacting results in their economies. As a result, these are the two most highlighting reasons why the families' economies are being affected by COVID-19.

A third impact is the food price. Because of the COVID-19 there are many companies that reduce their production or exportation to other countries. For example, "export areas experienced demand reduction from the pandemic" (Mead, 2020, paragraph 9). It can clearly show that because of the pandemic, the economy and the food prices are affected because there is no demand. Additionally, because people do not have jobs, they do not have enough resources or money to buy food, or they do not have enough money to buy nutritious food ("Our food system" Chriscaden, 2020). It is

clear that because of COVID people feeding is not good enough because the food prices are not reachable for most of the families, and they will have different impacts in their learning process, they do not have energy if they have to work, or they do not have a good mental health if they do not eat well. Food price is one of the biggest impacts of the pandemic.

Fourth, tourism has been affected. There are many countries that can offer jobs to the population with tourism, but “the impact of the pandemic on the travel tourism industry was significantly underestimated” (Porada-Rochon, Riberiro Soriano, and Skare, 2021, paragraph 3). It explains that even though the government can take different actions to solve some of the economic problems, there are more problems that affect everyday people’s lives because they do not have jobs, and they are used to working in tourism. Because of the pandemic, they do not have the people from other countries to buy, to visit, or to spend their money on their products or services. Additionally, countries receive specific instructions about travel and the risks the people are taking if the government or people who are responsible to measure the assessments are not aware of the controls that they need to take (UN 2020, paragraph 10). It explains that there are different controls and rules that do not allow you to visit other countries. Consequently, tourism is being affected by the pandemic, but it also affects the population economy.

Finally, the children's education quality is not the best. As we know, because of COVID-19 the government took different actions to give education to children, however, post-college labor results have been affected as we know it will be because of the pandemic because it has negative impacts on the students especially in their active participation (“Student experiences”, 2020, paragraph 6). It means even though the government tried to give the opportunities to learn to children, it is not enough to have a good quality in the learning process and having good quality in their learning process is essential. As a result, “adolescents have failed classes critical to their futures at higher rates than in previous years, affecting graduations and college prospects.” (New York Times, 2021) As the New York Times said, the adolescents are going down with their scores in school and it will directly impact their future because they will not learn the things they need to work or to be successful in their professions. It is something to not only be worried about, it is also important to take actions to change the impact it could have. As a consequence, the pandemic has been affecting the children’s education and it is a big problem that is not solved yet.

Therefore, children's education, tourism, food price, economic problems in families, and people's mental health are being affected by COVID-19 and they have big impacts on our society. Even though the government is taking different actions to decrease the impacts of the pandemic, they are still impacting everyone. Having more alternatives to avoid or solve these problems will help us as a community to be more active and not only leave these problems to the government. I think it is important to take actions, such as being aware of our children, or make donations for poor people, and be patient with our children and help them in their learning process.

## Exercises

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### Exercise 1: Supporting Ideas

*Before you complete this activity, read the entire essay.*

1. Scan the essay to find sources.
2. How is the source information used to support the topic sentence (or thesis, more generally)?
3. Are there any ideas in the essay that would be strengthened by bringing in an additional source? Why or why not?

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## Sources

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<https://abcnews.go.com/Health/striking-impact-covid-19-pandemic-adolescent-mental-health/story?id=81752276>  
Deliso, 2021, paragraph 1.

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<https://www.bbc.com/news/business-51706225> Brown, Jones, and Palumbo, 2021, paragraph 10.

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# Timed Writing (Shape and Organization)

This timed writing tip section and practice is focused specifically on the unique aspects of the TOEFL independent writing task (30-minute essay). As previously mentioned, all of the timed writing practice in this book will help you work toward success on the TOEFL writing section. However, there are some specific points that need to be made about the expectations for the writing on the test.

The TOEFL independent writing task requires you to explain and defend a position.

## Response format

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Your answer should look like a balanced essay. You should write a four or five paragraph essay with an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Choosing the number of body paragraphs will depend on your ability to write fluently and develop your ideas. Typically, it is easier for students to develop their ideas if they choose to write two body paragraphs. Writing two developed body paragraphs is better than writing three underdeveloped body paragraphs. An effective response is usually around 300 words. Remember that quality is more important than quantity in this instance.

Focus on what is possible for you to do well during the time limit without access to any additional help.

## Scoring

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This is the biggest difference between TOEFL timed writing and the others discussed in the previous section. Because the TOEFL is a *language* test, the emphasis in the grading will be on your language use. Your actual ideas are a secondary to the language you use to express the ideas. Therefore, while the TOEFL is imitating the type of writing you will do in a college setting, the task itself is different because of the rubric.

## Timed Writing Tips

Because students take the TOEFL at various points in the semester, here is a list of strategies that are discussed at other points in this textbook. All of these strategies are things to keep in mind as you prepare. You may want to skim through the textbook ahead of the class schedule to learn more about these points in more detail.

- Read the prompt carefully.
- Brainstorm your ideas for each part of the prompt.
- Organize your ideas into a logical outline.
- Decide on what is the most important to include.
- Write a thesis statement that directly answers the main part of the prompt.
- Write topic sentences for your main points.
- Write a restated thesis statement.
- Begin developing your ideas into full paragraphs. There are different approaches to this. Find what works for you.
  - Start with the point that is easiest to write, leaving the sections that are hardest for when you have some momentum to your writing. (Note: This may create a challenge if you are still stuck and have no time to revise)
  - Start with the body paragraphs and then work your way to the introduction and conclusion. (Note: This does not mean the introduction and conclusion are unimportant! Make sure to include them)
  - Start from the beginning and work to the end. (Note: Although this seems like the obvious way to approach writing, it can often lead to disorganized thoughts)
- Leave at least 5-10 minutes to review and revise your writing.
  - Before the test, look at feedback your writing teacher has given you on your writing. Are there patterns of organization, development, coherence, or unity errors? Meet with your teacher during office hours before if possible to get tips for how to recognize and resolve those errors during the test.
  - Also look at feedback your grammar teacher has given you on your accuracy errors. Are there patterns of errors with grammar structures that you can look for? Meet with your teacher during office hours before if possible to get tips for how to recognize and resolve those errors during the test.
- Any additional points in your brainstorm and outline can be added if there is time.

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: TOEFL Rubric

Take some time to look over the [TOEFL Independent Writing Rubric](#).

1. What will the test raters be focusing on as they assign a score to your essay?
2. How is this rubric similar or different from the rubrics your UP Writing teacher has used this semester?
3. Imagine a writing rubric for a class in your anticipated major. What similarities or differences would you expect there to be? Why would you see those differences?

## Exercise 2: Independent Question

*Prompt: The world we live in is becoming increasingly interconnected. What skill do you think is most important for an individual to develop in order to be successful in a globalized society? You have 30 minutes to respond to this prompt. Your answer should be around 300 words long.*



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# Integrated Writing (Shape and Organization)

In the first integrated writing practice, you learned that integrated writing is a common task at the college level. Because incorporating ideas from outside sources through summary and synthesis is so important, it is a task included on the TOEFL. This section of the integrated writing practice focuses on the unique differences between a normal integrated writing task and the very controlled version you will encounter on the TOEFL.

It is important to first note that the TOEFL integrated writing task is not a true essay as you have likely learned to create. There is no introduction. There is no conclusion. There is no room for your own personal reactions and opinions on the topic. You do not write a thesis statement. You don't need 5 paragraphs with 5 sentences each.

The TOEFL integrated writing structure is very prescribed, and the content is provided directly. The integrated writing task requires you to summarize and compare academic information.

## Task format

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You will have three minutes to **read** a passage about an academic topic. You should take notes about the main points that the author makes, but you do not need to write a lot because you will be able to see the reading again when it is time to write.

Then you will **listen** to a piece of an academic lecture that addresses the same topic that you read about. The professor that is speaking may have the same opinion as the author of the article you read, but the professor often has an opposing point of view. You need to take good notes during the listening. You can only listen one time. Make sure you listen for the main points you found in the reading.

You will have 20 minutes to **write** your response to the question.

Read the question carefully and address all the parts of the question. For example, in this example question, the primary task is to summarize the points made in the lecture. Then you should explain how they relate to points in the reading. Always answer both parts of the question.

### Example: TOEFL Integrated Writing Prompt

Summarize the points made in the lecture, being sure to explain how they challenge specific arguments made in the reading passage.

## Response format

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Your answer will not look like a traditional essay because this task is not an essay. This task is a summary. In order to summarize the information they give you, you will typically need four paragraphs. The first paragraph will state the

relationship between the reading and the listening (e.g., do they agree about the topic, or do they disagree?). The other three paragraphs will each focus on a specific point that was addressed in both the reading and the listening. You do not need a conclusion paragraph. An effective response will have approximately 200 words.

## Strategy

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Many students find it helpful to organize their notes with a “T-Chart.” On one side of the T chart, write down the main points from the reading. On the other side of the T-Chart, write down the corresponding points found in the listening. Even though the reading passage reappears on your screen while you write, taking notes on the reading is important. It can help you focus during the listening and give you something to listen for.

This is a sample T-Chart that could be used to show the points made in the example task.

Reading Passage	Lecture
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

These are two sample responses. The first response is a low-mid response because it has some of the details, but is missing significant points made in the lecture. It is not very developed and seems to focus a lot on the reading.

The second response is a high response because all of the main points are addressed, and the emphasis is on summarizing the listening and comparing it to the article, rather than summarizing every detail mentioned in both.

## Scoring

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In order to receive a high score on this section, you need to answer the question by writing about the important points from the reading and listening in a clear and accurate way.

The sample task on the following pages contains a reading passage, a lecture transcript, and a response that would receive high marks.

## Integrated Writing Tips

Because students take the TOEFL at various points in the semester, here is a list of strategies that are discussed at other points in this textbook. All of these strategies are things to keep in mind as you prepare. You may want to skim through the textbook ahead of the class schedule to learn more about these points in more detail.

- The prompt does not really change. The content will be different, but you will always be comparing two different perspectives.
- The reading will be visible when you write. Only take simple notes of the main points to make it easier to listen for the comparison point.
- Take careful notes during the listening.
- Organize your ideas into a logical outline.
  - Paragraph 1 What do the reading and lecture discuss?
  - Paragraph 2 What is the speaker's first point? How does it challenge the reading?
  - Paragraph 3 What is the speaker's second point? How does it challenge the reading?
  - Paragraph 4 What is the speaker's third point? How does it challenge the reading?
- Leave at least 5 to review and revise your writing.
  - Check your notes again. Did you accurately present the perspective of the lecture as it compares to the reading? Are all 3 main points included in your essay?
  - Before the test, look at feedback your writing teacher has given you on your writing. Are there patterns of organization, development, coherence, or unity errors? Meet with your teacher during office hours before if possible to get tips for how to recognize and resolve those errors during the test.
  - Also look at feedback your grammar teacher has given you on your accuracy errors. Are there patterns of errors with grammar structures that you can look for? Meet with your teacher during office hours before if possible to get tips for how to recognize and resolve those errors during the test.

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: TOEFL-Style Integrated Writing

1. *Read the passage.*
2. *Listen to the lecture.*
3. *Summarize the points made in the lecture, being sure to explain how they challenge specific arguments made in the reading passage.*

Teachers have access to the "Newspaper" Integrated Writing files on the ELC Curriculum Portfolio.



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# Descriptive Writing

Descriptive writing is focused on creating imagery for the reader. This is done through ample details and creative expressions of facts. Think of how events and people are described in news articles. Consider a book you recently read and the descriptions provided by the author to transport you to a new place or to surround you with new ideas. This is one of the great powers of good writing.

Outside of the language classroom, it is unlikely that you will be asked to write a purely descriptive essay during your college experience. Most of the time, descriptive writing is part of a larger writing task.

That being said, control over tense and aspect (narration) are essential parts of descriptions and this writing skill will be necessary throughout your English writing experience. Additionally, the ability to provide details through careful word choice and interesting clausal structures will add to your writing voice and the audience's connection to your purpose as a writer.

Alternative Project: Creative Writing
Example Descriptive Writing
Prewriting
Writing Skill: Word Choice
Sources: Quoting
Revising
Revise Descriptive Writing
Timed Writing (Descriptive)
Integrated Writing (Descriptive)





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# Alternative Project: Creative Writing

While there may be some educational and professional settings that will encourage creative writing, the purpose of this practice is more about developing your own voice in writing. Creation in your second language is an important part of both establishing your sense of self and extending your language finesse without the pressure of grades or rigid structure of academic writing.

## Organization

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Creative writing is an excellent opportunity to practice "breaking the rules" of writing. It is a common saying that you have to know the rules in order to know how to effectively ignore or change them for a specific task.

Writing follows a similar pattern. You begin by learning very strict rules about punctuation, organization, appropriate length, etc. However, as you practice and explore and gain skills, you will see that there are many opportunities to break from the rigid structure and expectations to create something that is uniquely designed to fit the task.

This all goes to show that although creative writing is very free and open, there are elements of organization patterns that will be familiar to you from your heavily structured academic writing experiences.

Before beginning the main exercise for this chapter of describing a fictional character, practice describing a classmate using the instructions below.

## Introduction to Creative Writing

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Creative writing is centered on the idea of expressing original ideas and reflecting on experiences. The most common purpose for creative writing is entertainment. This takes many forms, from novels to poetry to movie scripts to song lyrics to a personal history. In all of those forms (and many others), creative writing serves as a vehicle to share ideas and emotions with the audience.

Creative writing also often has the purpose of description and reflection, which further connect the audience to your ideas by painting a picture with words in such a way that the reader can see or feel that same experience second-hand. Finally, creative writing is often for the purpose of self-expression. In these cases, the potential audience is less important than you as a writer having a space to explore your internal world through your own words.

In other words, the purpose of creative writing is a varied as the product itself. Although there are many types of creative writing, in this chapter you will only practice creative fictional descriptions.

## Prewriting

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Although some creative writing can be spontaneous, for the purpose of this course, you will be producing planned and drafted creative work.

## Genre Selection

The first step is to decide what type of creative writing you will work on. This begins with deciding between fiction (not based on history or fact) and non-fiction (accurately presents true events). For this assignment, this becomes either a short story or a memoir.

*A short story is a fictional writing that focuses on an isolated event (or a simplified series of events) and typically has few characters, but it is fully developed and unified.*

*A memoir is a true (or at least assumed to be true) retelling of a lived experience. A short memoir is focused on an episode (scene, incident, occurrence).*

From here, you can decide on a more specific genre such as humor, romance, horror, action, drama, mystery, etc. Because this chapter is focused on *short* creative writing, you will want to choose the genre carefully so that you can fully develop your narrative in that amount of space. For example, you would not want to attempt to tell the whole story from beginning to end of how you and your significant other fell in love. Likewise, you would not want to try to fit the entirety of a complicated magic world into two pages of writing. Thinking of a specific situation (like an episode of a tv show) will help you to narrow down your ideas to a manageable story within your chosen genre.

## Character

Once the genre has been decided, brainstorming about character and setting begins. In order for creative writing to effectively connect with the audience, the reader needs to be able to visualize the story and understand the people involved. In a novel, you have plenty of space to describe physical appearance, give examples of personality in different situations, and describe the full, detailed world inhabited by the characters. However, in one paragraph, you can only communicate only the essential details.

Because of this limited space, take time to brainstorm details about the character. When you have a full mind map of everything you *could* include in the character, it will be much faster to identify the *essential* details.

## Short Story

From here, you can decide on a type of story to illustrate one of those characteristics. The character you have created may exist in a variety of fictional genres such as humor, romance, horror, action, drama, mystery, etc. Because this chapter is focused on *short* creative writing, you will not have the space to develop a narrative, but you can connect the way you describe the person and the story you include to the tone of the type of story it could exist in.

For example, you would not want to attempt to tell the whole story from beginning to end of how your character fell in love. However, it would be possible to describe a likeable person and demonstrate how pleasant and interesting he is by telling a short story of a first date that emphasizes these qualities. Thinking of a specific situation (like an episode of a tv show) will help you to show the reader important information about the character in a more meaningful way than reading a list of adjectives.

## Story Outlining

The importance of the outlining stage of writing becomes more clear when you have limited space. There is no room for extra ideas. You do not have the luxury of anything unnecessary. The shorter the word or page count, the more intentional you need to be about what details you will include.

Plot outlining begins with identifying the problem, conflict, or peak of drama at the center of the episode. This is known as the *story climax*, and it is the most critical part of the story because it answers both the question *what happened* and *why does it matter*. In a humorous story, this would be the *punchline* or the moment that makes you laugh. In a dramatic story, it may be the moment the main character realizes the truth of the situation. You can think of it as a late



thesis statement. It is the sentence, or sometimes paragraph, that is the whole purpose of the story. Everything before it builds up to this moment. The conclusion is the reaction to it.

Once the that point of the story has been established, you can work backward to brainstorm the steps leading up to it and the context of character and setting that create a sense of tension around that main point. Again, it may be easier to first write down all of the facts or minor events prior to the main event and all details from immediately after. Getting all of the ideas down on paper during the prewriting stage will clear your mind and you will be able to sort through the necessary and unnecessary.

## Writing

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Aside from the usual practice in presenting clear ideas and logically organized connections between those ideas, creative writing is an opportunity to continue practicing descriptive writing. Creative writing should push you to expand your vocabulary and to understand the connotations of synonyms. Finding a more interesting word that conveys an additional meaning (ex. speak vs whisper vs mumble vs rant) can add depth to understanding without using a significant amount of space. This skill transfers very well to academic writing, where you often have strict length limitations and you need to reduce your word count to be more precise.

The first writing skill that gets extra attention in creative writing is word choice. Creative writing should push you to expand your vocabulary and to understand the connotations of synonyms. Finding a more interesting word that conveys an additional meaning (ex. speak vs whisper vs mumble vs rant) can add depth to understanding without using a significant amount of space. This skill transfers very well to academic writing, where you often have strict length limitations and you need to reduce your word count to be more precise.

The other writing skill frequent in creative writing that can benefit you in academic writing as well is the use of literary devices. The main literary devices that often crossover between these two genres of writing are *analogy*, *metaphor*, and *simile*.

An *analogy* is a comparison between two different things that emphasizes the similarities to make a point. This comparison explains important attributes of the first thing by drawing connections with the second object or concept. An analogy is typically longer than a sentence or two because of the purpose of explaining with details.

- "O! be some other name: What's in a name? that which we call a rose / By any other name would smell as sweet; So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd" (*Romeo and Juliet*, William Shakespeare)
- "My mom always said life was like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're gonna get." (*Forrest Gump*)

A *metaphor* is a short analogy that does not require explanation, and uses equivalent language that x is y. The comparison is simple and the reader is expected to infer the meaning of the comparison without much difficulty.

- Her anger was a hurricane.
- The truth is a light in the darkness.

A *simile* is a different type of short analogy that also does not require explanation, but uses language for similarity such as x is like y or s is as y. Again, the comparison is simple and the reader is expected to infer the meaning of the comparison without much difficulty.

- He is as strong as an ox.
- The teenager was growing like a weed.

## Hook

Just as with an essay, a creative writing draft needs to begin with something that draws your attention. It is often very memorable and connects the reader immediately to the new world they have opened up. Take a little time to open a few

different novels, blog posts, or magazines. You should be able to immediately spot the hook that convinces the reader to continue.

## The problem/conflict

The problem or conflict in a story is similar to a thesis statement. Everything in the story centers around a main event, issue, or individual. All of the details surrounding that idea are given only to create a richer description of the world so that the problem/conflict feels real to the reader. The story will arrive at a moment when the problem reaches its peak (climax), such as the reveal of the villain, the moment when the character falls in love, or the point when a major decision is made that changes everything.

## The solution

The solution is like the conclusion of an essay. It reminds you of how the characters got to the moment where the main problem was solved. It should feel like a natural end, where all the major points (topic sentences) have been addressed. Sometimes the solution includes a message or a clarifying theme (an implied main idea) that emphasizes to the reader a lesson that should have been learned after the experience.

## Exercises

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### Exercise 1: Artistic Freedom

*A great example of this principle can be seen in the artwork of the famous painter Vincent van Gogh. Complete this exercise to learn more about artistic freedom in creative writing.*

1. Take a look at some of van Gogh's early work on [this page from the van Gogh Museum](#).
2. Then click through to see his later self-portraits, landscapes, and floral artwork on [this page from the van Gogh Museum](#).
3. Discuss the differences and similarities between his early artwork and the paintings and drawings he created later in life.
4. How does this relate to writing?

### Exercise 2: Describe a classmate

*Choose a classmate to work with on this assignment. You will write individual sentences using the prompts below. Then revise the paragraph for flow.*

1. What does your partner look like? What descriptive words would you use about your partner's appearance that would help a reader identify this person in a crowd?
2. How would you describe your partner's personality?
3. Write a few words about how your partner feels today and why.
4. Check your description to see if there are any words you can replace with more specific synonyms.

### Exercise 3: Creative prompt

*The first step of the process is to read and understand the prompt.*

Prompt: Describe a fictional character for a short story. The first paragraph should be a description of the physical and personality characteristics of the person. The second paragraph should be a short description of an event that highlights one of these characteristics.

### Exercise 4: Description brainstorm

*Write as many descriptive words as you can within 5 minutes. Check with a thesaurus to change any basic vocabulary for more specific words with more accurate connotations.*

Example brainstorm: giant, ugly, angry, greedy, monstrous, scary, lonely, pale skin, dark hair, moustache and beard, dirty/ripped clothes, loud voice, etc

### Exercise 5: Description paragraph

Use the brainstorm for your description to start creating a paragraph to describe your character.

### Exercise 6: Story brainstorm

*Decide how you want to illustrate an important characteristic of your character through a story. This part of the assignment is only a paragraph long, so consider the limits of how much story you can tell in that space.*

Example story: Instead of saying that this character is greedy, it would be better to give a simple descriptive story about stealing from the village and hiding the treasure in a cave. This is a fantasy story, so the genre becomes clear in this setting as well.

### Exercise 7: Creative Prewriting

1. Write your story climax sentence.
2. Choose about 2 moments that explain how the character arrived to that situation.
3. Decide how to explain the importance or impact of that situation.
4. Practice telling the story to a partner using only the remaining brainstorming details.
5. Add or delete any details based on your spoken draft.

## Exercise 8: Adding Detail

*Read this example of a character description and story. Add more descriptive language. Don't just focus on adding adjectives and adverbs. Think about how synonyms with more specific connotations can add interest to all of the parts of speech.*

Outside of the village lives an ugly giant. He is very tall, and he is so scary that the village people avoid him. His loud voice can be heard miles away. The giant's appearance is so terrible, but his behavior is even worse. There are many stories in the village of his anger and bad manners when he could not be avoided.

One of the stories is about a contest. The village held a contest for the heaviest pig. The farmer who won received a bag of gold. After winning the prize, the farmer returned home. He did not know that the giant was waiting in the dark. The giant stole the bag of gold and the pig too! The prize pig and treasure were taken far away and never seen again. The greed of the giant was never forgotten in the village.

## Exercise 9: Literary Devices

1. Add three literary devices (analogy, metaphore, or simile) to your draft.
2. Switch drafts with a partner and evaluate their literary devices.
3. Identify what literary device is used.
4. Give suggestions of how to integrate the phrase more fully into the story.

## Exercise 10: Creative Draft

*Write a draft of your character description.*

- 2 paragraphs (double-spaced)
  - First paragraph description of the character
  - Second paragraph story to highlight an attribute
- fiction
- descriptive language





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# Example Descriptive Writing

## Rain's Journey back to the Clouds

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Water is essential to sustain human life. Water is used for drinking, cooking, bathing, growing food, cooling, manufacturing (cement, glass, plastic, paper, etc.), and creating energy (hydroelectric and geothermal). This life-sustaining liquid covers 70% of the surface of our planet (Oki & Kim) and is found in the form of rivers, rain, glaciers, clouds, oceans, lakes, underground aquifers, snow, and even as dewdrops on the morning grass. What's interesting is that it doesn't stay in one form for too long. Snow melts, water vapor in the sky falls to Earth as rain, rivers flow into the ocean, ground water bubbles up to the surface through springs and geysers, and lakes constantly lose water into the atmosphere. This process of water changing from one form to another as it moves through the Earth's environmental systems is called the "water cycle" or the "hydrologic cycle" (Micklin, 1996, p. 285). The hydrologic cycle has many different parts but, simply put, it is a repeating process of evaporation, condensation, and precipitation.

Before examining each part of the water cycle, it is important to recognize the importance of the cycle and the conditions required to maintain it. Much of life is sustained with fresh water: humans need fresh water to drink and plants need fresh water in order to grow. However, a large majority of the Earth's water is found in the oceans, and ocean water is too salinated to meet many of the functions that we depend on water for (Micklin, 1996). Through the natural process of evaporation, ocean water is desalinated as it is taken from oceans into the atmosphere; as water in the atmosphere condenses and returns to Earth's surface as rain and snow, it returns as fresh water (Micklin, 1996), which can be used to meet the functions we need. In this way, "the water cycle may be thought of as a giant natural machine, running on solar energy..." (Micklin, 1996, p. 286) that makes it possible to use and reuse the precious water sources we have available.

The conditions required for the water cycle are having available water and the correct surface temperature. Many other planets, even if water existed on them, would not be able to sustain a hydrologic cycle because the temperatures are too extreme. "The Planet Earth has a particularly vigorous hydrology because [of] its surface temperature ...As a result of this circumstance, water in the Earth's hydrosphere occurs in all three phases and is readily transformed from one phase to another" (Dooce, 1984, p. 325). Thus Earth provides the perfect environment to be able to cycle and recycle water from one form to another, and as already mentioned, human life depends on the ability to do so. Each of the steps in the water cycle focuses on moving water through these phases. What follows is an explanation of each of the phases.

### Evaporation

Evaporation is how water molecules get into the atmosphere. Depending on various factors (temperature, humidity, wind speed, and radiation), water molecules found on the surface of the Earth absorb kinetic energy ("Water Cycle," 2014) and become part of the atmosphere in a gaseous state. It may not seem like a significant step of the water cycle because evaporation is not readily observable, but over 450,000 km<sup>3</sup> of water annually leave the oceans through evaporation (Micklin, 1996). This significantly contributes to the water in the atmosphere. Water also enters the atmosphere when ice and glaciers evaporate (called sublimation) or when plants release water through their leaves

(called transpiration), but these processes are typically referred to in a general sense as total evaporation (Micklin, 1996). These processes of evaporation form a large part of the hydrologic cycle, supplying water vapor for the next

### Condensation

The next phase of the water cycle is condensation. Once water molecules are in the atmosphere, they stay in a gaseous state until they lose energy and cool down. Water molecules condense as they transition to a liquid state ("Water Cycle," 2014). Condensation may be the simplest stage of the water cycle because it mainly occurs based on temperature. When moist air cools, the water molecules in the air turn from a gas into a liquid. Condensation happens in many places that are easily observed, like on a glass of water with very cold water in it. Sometimes drops of water will form on the outside of the glass because there was water in the air around the cup. The same thing happens on a larger scale with clouds. Water in the air cools and collects on particles of dust, dirt, or even smoke that are suspended in the atmosphere, forming clouds (U.S. Geological Survey, 2016). Condensed water molecules move around inside of clouds. These "cloud particles" often bump into one another and stick together until they form raindrops, snowflakes, or hailstones that are heavy enough to fall back to the Earth.

### Precipitation

Precipitation is the next stage of the water cycle. In this stage of the water cycle, water that was lost into the atmosphere via evaporation returns to the Earth via precipitation. There are many different forms of precipitation: rain, snow, hail, sleet, and mist. However, not all water that accumulates in clouds falls back to the Earth in the form of precipitation. Sometimes clouds will simply seem to disappear as the water that has condensed in them heats up and re-evaporates back into the atmosphere. This evaporated water has the potential to condense back into clouds later and fall as precipitation (USGS, 2016). The condensed water that does fall from clouds will eventually make its way back into the atmosphere either by transpiration or as it evaporates from the soil or ocean where it collects after it falls ("Water Cycle," 2014).

Sometimes precipitation may also start in one form, but change into another later. For example, if the temperature rises during a snowstorm, the snowflakes may melt as they fall and become rain or, if temperatures become cold enough during a rainstorm, the droplets may freeze in the air to form shards of ice (USGS, 2016). This complex process of precipitation is how the water cycle is able to repeat itself indefinitely, without needing additional water to be added into it.

### Conclusion

These phases of evaporation, condensation, and precipitation happen continually. They also happen simultaneously. As water evaporates into the atmosphere, there is already water condensing into clouds. As some clouds form, others are already beginning to precipitate. While water evaporates from some places more quickly than others and while some places on Earth receive more precipitation than others, the water cycle is, overall, very well balanced. It is so balanced that we've always had the same amount on our home planet. "The global water cycle is in balance, so that on average over the years precipitation equals evaporation....The hydrologic cycle for practical purposes is a closed system with the amount of water in it of fixed volume" (Micklin, 1996, p. 286). The process happens in such balanced proportions that our total amount of water is conserved without losing water. The cycle has been repeating itself for as long as the Earth has been in existence. Its existence is what makes humans' existence a possibility. In comparison to the other planets in the Milky Way, Earth has the right conditions to sustain a hydrologic cycle and keep humans and plants alive.

## Exercises

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## Exercise: Analyze an essay

Use these questions to evaluate the example essay

1. Does the introduction provide the general information a reader needs in order to understand the topic?
2. Does the introduction end with an effective thesis? Does it match the style of the essay?
3. Do each of the body paragraphs begin with an effective topic sentence?
4. Are the body paragraphs sequenced in a logical order?
5. Look at each body paragraph. Do the supporting sentences support the topic sentence?
6. Look at each body paragraph. Are the supporting sentences sequenced in a logical order?
7. Look at each body paragraph. Is there enough development? Are there more details or examples that would help the reader?
8. Look at each body paragraph. Does the concluding sentence close the paragraph logically?
9. Does the conclusion paragraph start by restating the thesis?
10. Does the conclusion paragraph have a suggestion, prediction, or opinion at the end?

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# Prewriting

## Understand the assignment

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In your essay, you will describe a famous person. This is similar to a writing task you might need to do for a history class. You can focus on describing the person itself or its achievements/accomplishments.

You can choose to either write a more formal essay about the person or write more creatively about it.

Your essay should be 1-2 pages long, double-spaced. This is **not** a traditional five-paragraph essay. The goal of this writing task is to provide as much description as possible in a limited amount of space. For this assignment focus on quality, not quantity. It is actually much harder to write in a shorter amount of space, so this is good practice for learning to write with academic concision.

## Research

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Remember that after you do enough preliminary research to brainstorm and choose your focus, you should do more detailed research about your topic so that you can make your outline.

## Brainstorm

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A Google search for “famous people” might be good place to start if you aren’t sure what you want to write about.

### Example topics could include the following:

- Artists
- Scientists
- Musicians
- Business owners
- Political leaders
- Religious leaders

If you prefer to write about someone you know personally, you can brainstorm as well.

### Example personal categories could include the following:

- Living family member
- Ancestor
- Community leader
- Local religious leader
- Employer or coworker/colleague
- Friend or roommate

## Choose your focus

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Because this essay will be a maximum of 2 pages long, make sure to focus in your description on one aspect of the event you will describe. You will not be able to describe every single detail about such a historical place in just 2 pages, so instead focus on describing **one** aspect really well. Do not attempt to include more than one of the following in an essay of this length.

### Focused description ideas

- Physical characteristics
- Personality
- Events
- Accomplishments
- Anecdote (short story that shows rather than tells us about the place)

## Outline

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Start with your thesis. What is the most important information you want to share about this person? Then consider how many paragraphs you will write (about 3 paragraphs total will fit in 2 pages double-spaced). What descriptions best support your thesis? Use those descriptions as your topic sentences.

Add questions or quotes to help you develop each of your ideas. Think specifically about how to introduce your audience to a person they do not know. Even if you chose a well-known person as your topic, approach your descriptive piece as if you know your audience has never heard of that person. Pretend that your descriptive piece is the first they have heard about it.

## Introduction

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Your introduction should start immediately with a thick description. A thick description means that rather than saying a simple fact with basic words, you will create an image with your words. You can paint a picture in the minds of the readers with the words you use to describe the event.

**Simple:** "Mrs. S cares about her students a lot."

**Thick Description:** "Mrs. S is the type of teacher that you always feel comfortable around, and you know she deeply cares about the success of each and every student."

Do not attempt to tell every single detail of the event in your short descriptive piece. Do not attempt to create an entire life history in your short essay.

You will need to give some background information on the topic in the introduction. However, keep the word count limit in mind and keep the background information general, so you have more room to describe the topic in detail in the body paragraphs.

At the end of your introduction paragraph, you should give your thesis. The thesis should describe the person in very specific terms.

**Example:**

Teaching can be a difficult career that many people are not capable of handling.

At the end of your introduction, you should state your thesis. The thesis should describe the person in specific terms.

*Mrs. S became a teacher and showed continued perseverance, consideration for her students, and determination in the way she taught.*

## Effective Thesis Statement Review

An effective descriptive thesis statement...

- addresses the **prompt** if there is one\* (i.e., answers the question).
- is usually at the **end** of the introduction paragraph.
- controls the content of **all** of the body paragraphs.
- is a **complete** sentence.
- does **not announce** the topic (e.g., "I'm going to talk about Genghis Khan Unifying the tribes of Mongolia.").
- should **not** simply be a **fact** (e.g., "Sugar plantations were in Hawaii.").
- should **not** be **too general** (e.g., "World War 1 had a large impact on history.").
- should **not** be **too specific** (e.g., "In 1867, Alaska was purchased to much derision from the press from Russia by the United States for around 7 million dollars which was about 2 cents an acre.").
- may **state** or **imply** main points (e.g., "The Chernobyl accident caused irreparable environmental and social damage, but this gave the people an opportunity to become stronger in their unity and courage to serve no matter what." vs. "The Chernobyl accident caused irreparable damage, but this gave the people an opportunity to become stronger.").

## Body

Your body paragraphs should give reasons and evidence to support your thesis. As you outline your body paragraphs, make sure you include clear topic sentences that support your thesis.

Shorter essays may only need 1-3 body paragraphs. Longer essays may need more body paragraphs.

**Consider the following example:**

- Thesis: *People remember Abraham Lincoln for his remarkable integrity.*
  - Topic sentence: *Abraham Lincoln made unpopular government decisions because he knew they were right.*
  - Topic sentence: *Lincoln was known for his honesty in his personal and work relationships.*

This short essay only has two body paragraphs. When you have a fewer number of body paragraphs it is especially important that they are well developed with detail. For an essay that needs to fit a short page limit, writing about one or two topics deeply is better than writing about many topics only shallowly.

As you plan each of your body paragraphs, remember that using sources will make your writing more credible and interesting. Use sources properly so that you do not plagiarize.

## Conclusion

Your conclusion paragraph should start by restating your thesis. Then, you should write about the event in more general terms and apply their situation to the world more generally. End with a concluding statement.

## Exercises:

### Exercise 1: Analyze the Prompt

**Prompt:** Describe an important person from history. Your essay should be 1 page double spaced.

*Answer the following questions to fully understand the prompt above.*

1. What verbs are being used? What task is this prompt asking you to do?
2. How narrow or general is the content that this prompt is asking you to write?
3. What are the constraints of this prompt?

### Exercise 2: Evaluate thesis statements

*How effective are each of these thesis statements?*

1. Leonardo Da Vinci thought differently than others and I will show you how this is true in the following essay.
2. Walt Disney, a famous businessman who found Walt Disney Productions, did a lot of contribution that is very remarkable, such as motion-picture production, Innovative animator, and create the cartoon character Mickey.
3. Christopher Columbus was the first European person who discovered America continent with the help of the King and Queen of His discovery changed the life of the native people in America as well in the old world also, his discovery changed the world.
4. William Tyndale changed the world because he translated the Bible.
5. Mother Teresa will always be remembered as one of the most influential and loving people, even though she never married, but she served people and did many things to improve their lives and situations.

### Exercise 3: Short Essay Focus

*Read the following prompt and brainstormed ideas. Then choose a topic and create a short outline.*

**Prompt:** Describe an important person from history. Your essay should be 1 page double spaced.

**Brainstormed Ideas in No Particular Order:**

- "Michael Jordan" is one of the most influential person for many reasons.
- Ghandi was someone who promoted peace and freedom.
- Nowadays, people find Elon Musk to be a genius.
- The problems Cristiano Ronaldo faced did not stop him from being the best in soccer.

**Outline:**

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### Exercise 4: Restate a thesis

*Restate each thesis.*

1. Thesis: Winston Churchill was someone who believed in freedom and perseverance.
2. Thesis: Mother Teresa has been an influence for many people for generations.

### Exercise 5: Complete an outline

*This student wrote a descriptive paper about earthquakes. Use the thesis statement to complete the outline.*

Thesis: The formation of an earthquake involves high tectonic activity, a release of energy, and the production of seismic waves.

- TS 1:
- TS 2:
- TS 3:

Restated Thesis:

## Exercise 6: Peer Review

*Give advice to the author of this student outline.*

TH: William Tyndale is one of the most important people in the Reformation.

- TS: Tyndale was fearless in doing what he believed was right.
  - SD: Translating the New Testament
  - SD: Threatened and ultimately killed
- TS: William Tyndale is a well-respected person and his actions lead to significant changes within Christianity.
  - SD: Access to religious texts in English
  - SD: Development of new branches of Christianity
  - SD: The King James version of the Bible

TH = Thesis Statement, TS = Topic Sentence, SD = Supporting Detail



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# Writing Skill: Word Choice

Because descriptive writing is characterized by detailed and interesting illustrations, word choice is a very important writing skill for this type of writing. For this writing practice, we will focus on incorporating new and more specific words to emphasize your meaning.

A challenge with introducing new vocabulary into your writing is appropriately including a new word into a sentence. There are three important parts of word knowledge to consider before including the word: part of speech, connotations vs definitions, and collocations.

## Synonyms

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Think of how in the fictional books you read in English the word *said* might be replaced with *yelled*, *cried*, *declared*, *insisted*, *whimpered*, or *stated*. Although at the core these words are all used as verbs for speaking, they carry extra meaning that gives more information to the reader than a simple *said*.

Be aware that some vocabulary may also have an expression (phrase) that could be used instead of a single word. For example, someone may say *tired* or *exhausted*, but the expression *I'm beat* or *I'm worn out* or *I'm spent* also mean the same thing.

One step that may be helpful is making a list of adjectives and adverbs that more accurately describe the person and their impact on others. A thesaurus is a great place to look for synonyms:

- <https://edtechbooks.org/-xJldG>
- <https://www.thesaurus.com/>

## Part of Speech

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Most of the words you encounter when looking for synonyms or translating words from your first language will be in the same **part of speech**: noun, verb, adjective, adverb etc. However, it is possible that you will find a word that changes to a different word form.

Now that you've practiced looking at descriptive words and synonyms in isolation, you need to start thinking about how the words are actually used in sentences.

As mentioned in the previous exercise, it is important to check that the part of speech of your synonym is the same. This is the first step to knowing how to include it in a new sentence.

Sometimes, a synonym that uses a different part of speech is the best word for the job. Other times, you may find that the sentence you want to write would be most clear if you change the form of the word on your list.

## Examples

### Same Part of Speech:

(Less descriptive) We bought an inexpensive car.

(More descriptive) We bought a cheap car.

### Different Part of Speech:

(Less descriptive) We bought an inexpensive car.

(More descriptive) We bought a car at a **discount**.

(More descriptive) \*The car is **competitively priced**.

\*You may also use a phrase instead of a single word if it is more descriptive.

## Connotation

The word synonym can be deceptive. As mentioned with the word *said*, a synonym can add meaning. Sometimes this additional meaning, or **connotation**, is clear in the definition.

- For example, the additional meaning of *insist* compared to *said* is directly explained in the definition: to demand something forcefully.
- Take a look at the dictionary definitions of the words *said* and *state*. In this case, the difference is not as obvious.

## Connotations and Culture

An important note is that connotation is largely determined by culture. A direct translation of a word can often lose an intended connotation or gain one accidentally. An example of this can be seen within the general culture of the United States with words like *fat*, *chubby*, *skinny*, or *slim*. While the dictionary definition of these words may simply describe the physical shape of a person, there is often a cultural connotation to such descriptions that could be seen as offensive.

When the dictionary does not provide enough information to know the connotation of a new word, the additional meaning can often be found by viewing example sentences. Look at the example sentences below for *said* and *state*. Can you recognize a difference in meaning now?

- He *said* he will be home at 8.
- He *stated*his full address.

After looking at a few additional example sentences, you may come to the conclusion that *state* has an additional level of formality, usually used to talk about speaking in an official way.

## The Grammar of Vocabulary

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In addition to knowing the part of speech and full meaning of a word, you will need to be aware of any grammar patterns that are connected to that word. The part of speech is one step in this direction, but it does not give you the full information about how the word is commonly included in actual written English.

A **collocation** is a word that frequently occurs together with a target vocabulary word. Likely as you have memorized verbs, you will have noticed that there is a particular preposition that goes with it.

- For example: *decide to/on, depend on, come from, or laugh about*

There are also times that a collocation (particularly a preposition or adverb) can create a phrasal verb. A phrasal verb creates a completely new meaning when the words are found together.

- For example: *turn on, get out, take off, move in, go through, or drop out of*

Because a collocation can either be required to complete the grammatical unit or can signal a change in meaning, it is important to look for clues about a new vocabulary word before trying to include it in a sentence.

## Word Choice Review

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Throughout this chapter of the textbook, you have looked at how to select vocabulary that provides more specific detail than the low-hanging fruit\* of the most common words of English. As you write your short descriptive essay, pay special attention to the words you choose. Is the meaning clear and direct? Is the word form used appropriately for the grammar of your sentence? Have you checked to ensure any new vocabulary words match the intended meaning?

\*Low-hanging fruit: obvious or easy choice or action

### Descriptive Writing Tip

As a final note, it is important to remember that at the college level, your writing will have a main purpose other than to describe. The description adds to the overall impact of your writing, but there is such thing as too much description. Be careful not to overwhelm your reader with so much description that your actual purpose is lost.

Since the purpose of this essay is to isolate the language skills needed for descriptive writing, you do not need to worry too much about this here. However, look carefully at the feedback you receive from the teacher. Are there supporting ideas that are overdescribed? Are there additional places where descriptions would enhance the writing?

## Exercises

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## Exercise 1: Synonyms

*Make a list of words that could replace each word below. Try to choose more descriptive words that could replace each word.*

1. young

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2. big

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3. fast

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4. cup

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5. teacher

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6. sleep

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## Exercise 2: Vocabulary List

*Make a list of vocabulary that would be useful in describing the event you are writing about. Along with the list of words you already know, try making a new vocabulary list of synonyms that you can try to include in your writing.*

Example

*big: sizable, enormous, extensive, considerable, momentous, significant, major*

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### Exercise 3: Synonyms and Part of Speech

**Part A:** Practice making synonyms with the following words. Use a thesaurus to find a more descriptive synonym. Then use a dictionary to check its part of speech. Write a descriptive synonym for each word with the same part of speech. The first word has been done for you as an example.

Basic Word (Part of Speech)	Descriptive Synonym (Part of Speech)
<b>Example:</b> <i>pretty</i> (adjective)	<i>charming</i> (adjective)
<i>pretty</i> (adjective)	1. _____ (            )
<i>smart</i> (adjective)	2. _____ (            )
<i>share</i> (verb)	3. _____ (            )
<i>make</i> (verb)	4. _____ (            )
<i>easily</i> (adverb)	5. _____ (            )
<i>happily</i> (adverb)	6. _____ (            )

Notice how some words have different meanings in different parts of speech like “share” the verb meaning to give to many people and “share” the noun meaning a part of a company or business. When you look for a synonym, make sure the part of speech *and that* the meanings are the same.

## Exercise 4: Synonyms in Sentences

*Practice using the synonyms you found in the previous exercise in sentences. Rewrite the sentences below to use the synonyms you found. You may need to change the word order of the sentence or give more context to specify which meaning of the synonym you are using. Two examples have been done for you.*

**Example:** The decor at the restaurant was very **pretty**. The decor at the restaurant was very **charming**.

**Example:** Albert Einstein was very **smart**. \*Albert Einstein was very **quick**; his genius was well-known.

*\*More context was needed to clarify that the meaning of "quick" here was intelligent, not physically fast-moving.*

1. The sunrise over the mountains was **pretty**.

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2. The new solution addressed all the problems at a low cost, so we thought it was very **smart**.

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3. I **share** the cost of utilities like wifi with my roommates.

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4. The chef **made** a souffle in the oven.

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5. He **easily** outran the competition after training so hard.

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6. She **happily** played the piano during lunchtime.

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## Exercise 5: Changing part of speech

Practice changing the synonym you chose in the previous exercise to a different part of speech. This will let it be used in a different way in a sentence. If the synonym you chose in the previous exercise does not keep the same meaning when it changes the part of speech, then choose a new synonym word with a different part of speech. The first word has been done for you as an example.

Basic Word (Part of Speech)	Changed Synonym (Part of Speech)
<b>Example:</b> prettily (adverb)	charm (noun)
prettily (adverb)	1. _____ (            )
smartly (adverb)	2. _____ (            )
shared (adjective)	3. _____ (            )
made (adjective)	4. _____ (            )
easy (adjective)	5. _____ (            )
happy (adjective)	6. _____ (            )

## Exercise 6: Original Sentence

Write your own original sentence for each synonym you chose in the previous exercise. Try to use it in the sentence with the new part of speech. The first word has been done for you as an example.

**Example:** The **charm** of the city enchanted the tourists.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise 7: Recognizing connotation

1. Consider the connotations of the underlined words below. How does the meaning shift? Does the dictionary definition clearly show you the difference in use?

- The shoes were made of a **cheap** material and were unusable after one use.
- The shoes were **affordable** and so buying them was within my budget.
- The shoes were so **inexpensive**! They *were a steal*\* at that price!

2. Now check the connotations and definition differences between the provided synonyms and a synonym of your choice. How does the meaning shift? Does the dictionary definition clearly show you the difference in use?

- *pretty, charming*, and \_\_\_\_
- *share, bestow*, and \_\_\_\_
- *easy, effortless*, and \_\_\_\_

\*This expression is used for when something is so inexpensive that it feels like you didn't have to pay for them



## Exercise 8: Connotation Sentences

Read the words below. They have similar dictionary definitions but different connotations. Write a sentence for each word in the pair that demonstrates your understanding of the differences in meaning.

**Example:**

My brother is very **curious** and always looks out the window every evening.

My teacher is so **nosy** and is always sharing gossip with anyone who will listen.

1. *curious, nosy*

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2. *guest, visitor*

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3. *picky, selective*

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4. *persistent, stubborn*

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5. *childish, childlike*

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## Exercise 9: Collocations

1. *Practice finding collocations for the following words:*
  1. *catch* + noun
  2. *give* + preposition
  3. *ask* + preposition
  4. *keep* + noun
  5. *get* + adjective
2. *Take a look at these verbs and the phrasal verb form. How does the meaning change?*
  1. *hold*: *hold on* and *hold up*
  2. *fight*: *fight over* and *fight for*
  3. *pay*: *pay off* and *pay up*
  4. *hang*: *hang out* and *hang up*
  5. *get*: *get back at* and *get back to*

## Exercise 10: Collocation sentences

1. *Write a sentence for each of the 5 collocates from question 1 in Exercise 5.*
2. *Write a sentence for 5 of the phrasal verbs from question 2 in Exercise 5.*

## Exercise 11: Different Words. Same Meaning.

*You may use synonyms to rephrase (paraphrase) information from a source in your own words. A paraphrase uses different words and grammar to keep the same meaning as the original. Consider the paraphrases below. Choose the best paraphrase for each original quote:*

1. "It ripped through every economic level, race, religion, and culture" (Graf, 2018, "World War II," para. 1).
  - A. It tore through all economic levels, races, religious groups, and cultures (Graf, 2018).
  - B. It affected everybody. (Graf, 2018).
  - C. There was no economic, racial, religious or cultural group that was unaffected by it (Graf, 2018).
  - D. No groups (racial, cultural, or otherwise) wanted to touch it (Graf, 2018).
2. "The Renaissance gave us new light, pushing aside the Dark Ages when man was directed by superstition and fear" (Graf, 2018, "The Renaissance," para. 1).
  - A. Superstitious beliefs and fear drove man in the Dark Ages, but were replaced by new light during the Renaissance (Graf, 2018).
  - B. The Renaissance pushed aside the Dark Ages because of superstition and fear (Graf, 2018).
  - C. The Renaissance was pushy because the Dark Ages were a difficult time of fear and superstitious directions (Graf, 2018).
  - D. The Renaissance brought light to the Dark Ages when man was directed by superstition and fear (Graf, 2018).

## Exercise 12: Write a body paragraph

*The partial outline below includes a topic sentence, some developing questions, and some research (quotes and paraphrases). Use the information to create a body paragraph. This body paragraph would be part of an essay about the Great San Francisco Earthquake of 1906. Your paragraph should include rich description through word choice.*

Topic sentence: The 1906 earthquake was devastating.

- Q: How did the earthquake cause devastation?
- A: Fire and shaking
  - "In the public's mind, this earthquake is perhaps remembered most for the fire it spawned in San Francisco, giving it the somewhat misleading appellation of the "San Francisco earthquake". Shaking damage, however, was equally severe in many other places along the fault rupture" (USGS, n.d., para. 3).
- Q: What did the devastation include?
- A: Deaths and buildings
  - "The frequently quoted value of 700 deaths caused by the earthquake and fire is now believed to underestimate the total loss of life by a factor of 3 or 4. Most of the fatalities occurred in San Francisco, and 189 were reported elsewhere" (USGS, n.d., para. 3).
  - Deaths were estimated much lower originally than after further research; now the estimate is around 3,000 people. (USGS, n.d.)
  - Over half of the city's residents were homeless (USGS, n.d.).

Sources: Quoting



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# Sources: Quoting

There are many ways to include ideas from outside sources. In this section of the textbook, we will focus on quoting.

Sources are used to add credibility and emphasis to your essay. When you read about your topic to prepare to write, you will want to make notes of specific sources that influenced your position on the topic and the supporting details you chose for support. After you have decided that information from the original source would be best to include word-for-word, you will follow these steps.

## Choosing a quote

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The first step is to read about your topic in reputable sources. If you are unsure if a source is trustworthy, talk with either your writing or reading teacher.

While you are reading, create a system for saving the information that is helpful for creating your essay structure and developing your ideas. You may choose to do this with sticky notes, the copy/paste function in a word document, or highlighting. At this stage, you will find larger sections of text that you won't actually use directly in your writing.

Once you have created your essay outline, you can begin to connect these sources you identified as helpful to specific paragraphs.

For quoting, you will need to focus in a small section of the source (up to 40 words, but typically shorter) that will strengthen your main idea and supporting details. Quotes are best used when the original words from a source are:

- already fairly concise and does not need to be condensed
- best supports your topic sentence when preserving the author's original wording and authority
- not easily said in another way
- powerfully stated (highly persuasive or emotional)

You should not quote large blocks of text (more than 40 words), especially in a short essay. You want the majority of the writing in an essay to be your own words, not a quote of someone else.

Below is an example of an original paragraph-length source which was narrowed down to a relevant and precise quotation that could be added to a paragraph.

### Example: Original Passage

Abraham Lincoln is not only the most quoted president; he is the most quoted individual around the world. A few quotes of his quotes being, "Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power." This quotation is so important because even after Lincoln gained his power and fame, he stayed an honest, trustworthy man, and he didn't get power hungry like many presidents in the past have.

Reference:

*The first president Abraham Lincoln: [essay example], 1299 words.* GradesFixer. (2020, December 11). Retrieved April 14, 2023, from <https://gradesfixer.com/free-essay-examples/the-first-president-abraham-lincoln/>

### Example: Quote

"Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power." (Lincoln, 1861).

After you have chosen what part of the source to use for your quote, you will need to put those exact words in quotation marks " " and include the in-text citation in parentheses (Author, year, page/paragraph #). If you quote only a part of a sentence, you should use ellipses ... to show where there is information missing.

### Example: Quote with Ellipses

"Nearly all men can stand adversity, but ... give him power." (Lincoln, 1861).

## Introducing a quote

Even though the quotation uses someone else's words, the essay or written piece you are adding it to is still your writing. This means a quote should not just be dropped into the middle of a paragraph. There need to be transitions in and out of a quote to show that it is there for a specific purpose other than to meet the assignment rubric expectation of a certain number of sources. Good writing requires you to show that the source is used strategically to enhance your writing.

You will never just copy and paste a quote by itself. When you use a quote, it will be part of a sentence and will usually be followed by a sentence you wrote to explain its importance to the main idea in some way.<sup>6</sup>

## Example: Quote in context

**In recent years**, "dozens of giant landslides, some with debris extending more than 200 km from their source, have been recognized along the Hawaiian ridge and around other oceanic volcanoes" (Garcia, 2015, p. 13). **This situation provides excellent opportunities to study the cause of these landslides because they are so frequent.**

The introduction you decide to use for the quote will vary depending on your purpose in using those words. Here are some possible reasons why an author may choose to include a direct quote for support:

- The original author is well-known and respected, so using exact words inspires confidence. Additionally, the author's perspective on the matter is considered to be unique and relevant.
- The source emphasizes information in terms of chronology, meaning that the quote connects a supporting idea to a specific point in time.
- The location of the source adds depth to the position because of the narrow focus of the thesis or to show the scale of the topic.
- The information itself is clearly stated, concise, and strong (or uses very specialized terminology) and says something that needs to be said exactly that way.
- The idea is new, unexpected, or contrary to the common belief that it is necessary to show how it was originally said.

The reason for including the quote can often decide how it would be best introduced. Here are some examples of how each of the above purposes could be introduced based on purpose:

- Author:
  - The Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu once said...
  - A close friend of Jim Henson described him as...
- Time:
  - In 2008, the New York Times stated...
  - Just before the incident, an employee of NASA reportedly said that...
- Place:
  - Speaking of Apartheid South Africa, Nelson Mandela said...
  - Australian officials describe the negative impacts of holding the Olympics as...
- Precision:
  - In fact, some of the Taíno words we use today include...
  - He explained his writing best when he said...
- Uniqueness:
  - Surprisingly, some citizens opposed renaming the city in tribute to her because...
  - The correspondence that was recently discovered provided the following insight...

The introduction you choose to write will be outside of the quotation marks ". The exact words you are quoting will go inside the quotation marks ". See the example below.

### Example: Introduced Quote

In **recent years**, "dozens of giant landslides, some with debris extending more than 200 km from their source, have been recognized along the Hawaiian ridge and around other oceanic volcanoes" (Garcia, 2015, p. 13).

These introductions precede the quote to create a bridge between your own supporting ideas and the additional perspective of your source. By smoothly incorporating someone else's words into your own, you remain in control of the essay.

## Commenting on the quote

Just as you needed to create a bridge from your original thought into the direct quote using an introduction, you will need to transition back to your own words. The most effective way to do this is to elaborate on why this quote is relevant. Even if the reasons for including the source feel obvious to you as an author, the cohesion of the paragraph will be much stronger when you include a commentary or reaction to the source before moving into your next supporting thought.

Take a look at the the example quote in a complete context.

### Example: Quote in context

In recent years, "dozens of giant landslides, some with debris extending more than 200 km from their source, have been recognized along the Hawaiian ridge and around other oceanic volcanoes" (Garcia, 2015, p. 13). This situation provides excellent opportunities to study the cause of these landslides because they are so frequent.

Notice that the author does not simply summarize the quote or give an overly general "this is important" response. This quote is contextualized by showing that this fact focused on time and place fits into a larger discussion about causes. Even without seeing the topic sentence, this quote in context signals that the main idea of the paragraph (topic sentence) has to do with learning more about the causes of landslides.

At the beginning of this chapter about descriptive writing, you learned that academic descriptive writing is typically situated within a larger purpose. The use of descriptive supporting ideas and details is to add strength and interest to the thesis. This contextualized quote is an excellent example of how this can be done.



## Tips for quotations

- Do NOT change any of the words or punctuation
  - If a change is necessary for the integration of the quote into the grammar of your sentence, you can use brackets [*word*] around the word you need to change
- Quotes should not be more than 40 words\*
- Quotes should start and end with quotation marks "word"
- You should include a citation. See the citation section of this textbook for details on how to do this.
- The final punctuation (usually a period) should come after the final parenthesis in the citation
- If you quote only a part of a sentence, you should use ellipses (...) to show where there is information missing.
- Because the quote will be part of your sentence, you will not capitalize the first word of the quotation, even if capitalized in the original source.
- Quotes should come from multiple sources. Relying too heavily on one source can weaken your position.
- Quotes are just one form of including sources. An essay (or paragraph) should include a variety of integrated sources.

\*It is possible to include longer direct quotations, but that is not covered in this textbook.

## Exercises

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## Exercise 1: Choosing quotes

*The following quotes come from an article about James Cook, a famous British sailor in the 1700s. Read the example topic sentences below and choose short quotes from these paragraphs that could be used to support each topic sentence.*

1. James Cook is recognized for his remarkable work to prevent scurvy.
2. James Cook's voyages resulted in new geographical knowledge for England.
3. One of the noteworthy attributes of James Cook was his leadership at sea.

Source:

"After the Endeavour was grounded on the nearby Queensland coast and repaired, Cook sailed it back to England. He stopped briefly at Batavia (modern Jakarta) for supplies, and, although the crew had been remarkably healthy until then, 30 died of fever and dysentery contracted while on land. None of the crew, however, died of scurvy (a dietary disease, caused by a lack of ascorbic acid, that notoriously decimated the crews of ships on lengthy voyages in the 18th century). This was because, in addition to ensuring cleanliness and ventilation in the crew's quarters, Cook insisted on an appropriate diet that included cress, sauerkraut, and a kind of orange extract. The health in which he maintained his sailors in consequence made his name a naval byword" (Villiers, 2018, "Voyages and Discoveries," para. 2).

"... he successfully completed the first west–east circumnavigation in high latitudes, charted Tonga and Easter Island during the winters, and discovered New Caledonia in the Pacific and the South Sandwich Islands and South Georgia island in the Atlantic. He showed that a real Terra Australis existed only in the landmasses of Australia, New Zealand, and whatever land might remain frozen beyond the ice rim of Antarctica.

And, once again, not one of his crew died of scurvy. Back in England, he was promoted to captain at last, elected a fellow of the Royal Society, and awarded one of its highest honours, the gold Copley Medal, for a paper that he prepared on his work against scurvy" (Villiers, 2018, "Voyages and Discoveries," para. 4).

## Exercise 2: Introducing Quotes

*Choose one of the individuals below. After skimming the article, practice choosing and introducing a quote in each of the following ways:*

1. Time
2. Place
3. Precision
4. Author

[Sonia Sotomayor](#)

[Jorge Luis Borges](#)

[Marjane Satrapi](#)

[John James Audubon](#)

[Lupita Nyong'o](#)

[Hayao Miyazaki](#)

## Exercise 3: Create commentary

*The following quotes come from research about William Wilberforce. Add commentary for each of the quotes to connect them to the topic sentence. These quote commentaries should be independent of each other. You are not writing a paragraph.*

TS: William Wilberforce worked during his political career to end slavery in Britain.

1. "Wilberforce agreed to lead a parliamentary campaign to abolish the slave trade" (Andiruth, 2015, para. 6).
2. "In 1791, he introduced the first Bill to abolish the slave trade which was defeated..." (Andiruth, 2015, para. 7).
3. "...Wilberforce began a parliamentary campaign during which he introduced a motion in favour of abolition almost every year" (Andiruth, 2015, para. 7)
4. "The Slave Trade Act which abolished the slave trade in the British Empire was passed on 25 March 1807" (Andiruth, 2015, para. 7).

## Exercise 4: Integrating sources

*Imagine you are drafting a paragraph in an essay about the Black Death. Your paragraph lacks development, so you do additional research to add to the paragraph.*

*Read the quotes below and determine if there is any information that would support the topic sentence below. What information should probably not be used to support this topic sentence?*

Topic sentence: The Black Plague was one of history's most deadly epidemics.

1. "The 14th century epidemic of the "Black Death," also called the black plague or bubonic plague, across Europe and Asia, has become one of the most infamous events in history. The plague killed 30-60 percent of the entire population of Europe, claiming a grand total of anywhere between 75 to 200 million lives. Population growth did not resume until a full century later, and the world population did not recover until the 17th century" (Galbreath, 2016, "The Black Death," para. 1).
2. "The massive death toll caused an extreme labor shortage, which meant higher wages for the peasants and a greater choice of who they wanted to work for. The land was plentiful, and lords were forced to try and make conditions more attractive to the peasants. Serfdom all but disappeared as a result, and this "golden age" of prosperity would not be soon forgotten. Decades later, when the feudal lords tried to roll back these benefits and return to the old ways, the result was widespread peasant revolts. The Black Death also helped break the absolute authority of the Catholic Church" (Galbreath, 2016, "The Black Death," para. 2).
3. "Between 1918 and 1920 a disturbingly deadly outbreak of influenza tore across the globe, infecting over a third of the world's population and ending the lives of 20 – 50 million people. Of the 500 million people infected in the 1918 pandemic, the mortality rate was estimated at 10% to 20%, with up to 25 million deaths in the first 25 weeks alone. What separated the 1918 flu pandemic from other influenza outbreaks was the victims; where influenza had always previously only killed juveniles and the elderly or already weakened patients, it had begun striking down hardy and completely healthy young adults, while leaving children and those with weaker immune systems still alive" ("Masters in Public Health," n.d., "Flu Pandemic (1918)", para. 1).



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# Revising

Revising is an important step in writing. In fact, revising is *most* of what writers do. In this chapter, you will practice this skill with a focus on descriptive writing.

# Exercises

## Exercise 1: Word choice feedback

*Compare these two versions of a descriptive paragraph. The first paragraph includes underlined sections where the teacher suggested adding more detail or better word choice. The second paragraph is the revision the student wrote in response to the feedback.*

- What changes did the student make in terms of adding descriptions?
- What changes did the student make to word choice?
- What changes did the student decide not to make?
- What changes did the student make that were not suggested by the teacher?
- How do those changes impact the overall writing?

*Original with feedback underlines:*

Henrietta Leavitt was an astronomer at Harvard. Henrietta's job was recording the brightness of stars from the Harvard collection of images. At that time, women were prohibited from using telescopes, but they could look at the data. When Henrietta was working, she learned something interesting about the stars. Her work made it possible to measure distance between far away stars. This sounds like a small thing, but this knowledge made it possible to understand the universe beyond the Milky Way galaxy. Henrietta Leavitt's work was needed before other important research. She was nominated for the Nobel Prize, but she died before her work was fully recognized.

*Revised paragraph:*

Henrietta Leavitt was a talented astronomer who worked as a "computer" at Harvard in the late 1800s. Henrietta's assignment at the observatory was recording the brightness of stars from the Harvard collection of images. At that time, women were prohibited from using telescopes, but they could look at the data. When Henrietta was working on recording data, she discovered that there was a connection between the periods of time and the brightness of stars known as Cepheids variables. This important discovery is known as Leavitt's law, or the period-luminosity relationship for Cepheids, and was an essential step to measure distance between remote stars that were previously impossible to determine. This sounds like a small thing, but this knowledge made it possible to understand the universe beyond the Milky Way galaxy. Henrietta Leavitt's work was necessary before other important astronomy research. She was nominated for the Nobel Prize, but she died before her work was fully recognized. Even though the name of Henrietta Leavitt may not be well-known, her contributions to science were a foundation for many of the exciting discoveries we enjoy today.

## Exercise 2: Word choice revision

*Read through this paragraph. The student received feedback from the teacher that the paragraph is not descriptive enough for this assignment. Revise the paragraph by replacing the underlined sections with more specific vocabulary or phrases to provide a richer description.*

An important person in my life is Coach B. He was my soccer coach in high school. He was nice and helpful. Coach B made the team feel like friends. He told me to work hard. I learned a lot from him. I am a good soccer player because of his help. Everyone needs a strong teacher like Coach B to help them become better.

## Exercise 3: Feedback Comparison

*Read the student paragraph. What suggestions would you give the author?*

Third is the end of draft. During the Vietnam war, men of more than 18 years old drafted and they were forced to go to the war and sacrifice their life for the country. But after the Vietnam war, President Nixon decided to abolish the draft and change to all volunteer soldiers before the election of 1972. The end of the draft was a significant change for the US. Also, it was not just the abolishment of the draft, but the voting age also changed. When the draft was in place, 18 year olds could not vote. That was a problem that required an urgent solution. The president Nixon, like he promised, ended the draft. According to a CNN article, "This initial foray into 'wedge politics' would help Nixon win a controversial re-election in 1972 in a landslide" ("Five Ways the Vietnam War Changed America," para. 2). So, the law he changed also helped him win the election.

*Now compare your suggestions to the feedback given by a teacher.*

TS= Topic sentence; CIT = Citation; IR= Irrelevant; CS= Concluding Sentence

**TS** Third is the end of draft. During the Vietnam war, men of more than 18 years old drafted and they were forced to go to the war and sacrifice their life for the country. But after 1972, the Vietnam war, President Nixon decided to abolish the draft and change to all volunteer soldiers before the election of 1972. **CIT** The end of the draft was a significant change for the US. **IR** Also, it was not just the abolishment of the draft, but the voting age also changed. When the **(Why? How?)** draft was in place, 18 year olds could not vote. That was a problem that required an urgent solution. The president Nixon, like he promised, ended the draft. According to a CNN article, **IR** "This initial foray into 'wedge politics' would help Nixon win a controversial re-election in (CIT) 1972 in a landslide" ("Five Ways the Vietnam War Changed America," para. 2). So, the law hechanged also helped him win the election. **CS**

## Exercise 4: Peer feedback

*Read the student paragraphs. What suggestions would you give the authors?*

1. Firstly, Audrey Hepburn has been recognized by her work in many movies in Great Britain for many years. As a result, she was owner of many awards. As her life went on, she contributed to UNICEF and she took advantage of her fame in order to make many contributions to UNICEF (Ferrer and Dotti, 2017). Therefore, I think that she used wisely her fame and she was not selfish at all. She is an amazing example for all of us.
2. William Tyndale achievement was the English Bible number one to reflect straightly from Hebrew and Greek passages; moreover, was the first English Bible to adopt the word Jehovah referring to God, because the English Protestant Reformers rather that name. Tyndale's translation Bible was the first of the reformation, and was stamped using the printing press. For the hegemony, it was hard to preserve the decrees of England, and Roman Catholic Church while keeping the church's position after the Tyndale's accomplishment. The English Bible was not the only legacy of Tyndale. William also wrote The Practice of Prelates in 1530. Having as a fundament the Scriptures, Tyndale expressed his disagreement against to the breakup of Henry VIII's matrimony. William said: "I defy the Pope and all his laws. If God spare my life ere many years, I will cause the boy that drives the plow to know more of the scriptures than you" (Greatsite, 2016)

## Exercise 5: Check your own writing

*Use these questions to evaluate your essay.*

1. Do you include an effective thesis? Does it match the descriptive style of the essay or written piece?
2. Is the topic of your short descriptive essay focused? (not too general, not overly specific)
3. Do each of the body paragraphs begin with an effective topic sentence?
4. Are the body paragraphs sequenced in a logical order?
5. Look at each body paragraph. Do the supporting sentences support the topic sentence?
6. Look at each body paragraph. Are the supporting sentences sequenced in a logical order?
7. Look at each body paragraph. Is there enough development? Are there more details or examples that would help the reader?
8. Look at each body paragraph. Does the concluding sentence close the paragraph logically?
9. Does the conclusion paragraph include a restated thesis?
10. Do you use rich descriptions throughout the essay or written piece?

Revise Descriptive Writing







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# Revise Descriptive Writing

## Student Submission

The following is an example of a formal descriptive essay. Although you will not write one this length, take a look at the whole essay to get a feel for the purpose and style.

### **The Extraordinary Serena Williams**

---

Serena Williams is one of the most famous female tennis players in the world. She was born on September 26, 1981 in Michigan, United States (Britannica, 2022). During her initial years, Serena lived in a humble house with her five sisters and parents in Compton, where gangs abounded. Her father and coach, Richard Williams, encouraged her to practice tennis with her sister, Venus Williams, to become a professional tennis player, get out of this dangerous environment where they lived, and have a better life. Although a harsh background marked by poverty, Serena Williams is recognized as one of the most talented female tennis players in the whole world.

Serena Williams is one of the best female tennis players in history. She finally completed her goal to be in the top in her favorite sport. On July 8, 2002, she was ranked number one in the world of the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) for the first time in her career, at the age of 20 (CNN, 2022). During 2002-2003, she completed her first "Serena Slam", by winning all four Grand Slam titles: the French Open, Wimbledon, the US Open and the Australian Open, yet not all of them were in the same calendar year (The New York Times, 2022). When she won, she could not believe it. Her opponents were professionals, more experienced than her, despite all odds she managed to come out on

top. Today Serena is now a renowned tennis champion, but the journey to get there was long and full of challenges.

Serena Williams is recognized around the world for her incredible talent in tennis. Serena had a difficult life in the beginning of her career but she followed her dreams and continued to practice to complete her goal. Because of her success and resilience in tennis, Serena is considered to be an example for many women who want to one day be the best in their respective field like her. Unfortunately, Serena announced her retirement from tennis on her Instagram account because she wants to enjoy her life with her daughter and husband. One thing is certain, everyone is going to remember her as one of the first women in history to win twenty three Grand Slam.

## Exercises

---

### Exercise 1: Revise an essay

*Choose one paragraph from this example essay to revise. What suggestions would you give the author? Rewrite this paragraph by following your own revision suggestions.*

## References

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Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopedia (2022, September 22). *Serena Williams*. *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

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Cable News Network. (2022, August 9). This is the life of Serena Williams: titles, age, family, ranking and other data. *Cable News Network*. Retrieved from <https://cnnespanol.cnn.com/2022/08/09/serena-williams-vida-datos-familia-ranking-trax-slams-en-el-tenis-trax/>

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# Timed Writing (Descriptive)

## Word Choice

---

In this textbook chapter on descriptive writing, you learned about the importance of word choice. This writing skill should be kept in mind as you write under time constraints. Because timed writing often does not allow the comfort of access to a thesaurus or ample time for revision, this skill needs to be automatic in order to have a significant benefit.

Automaticity comes from practice. Whenever you practice incorporating new vocabulary into your drafted writing, you are steadily gaining new words that you will have access to when writing under a time limit. In fact, this skill does not only strengthen through active use of new words in drafted essays. When you read and listen with the intention of recognizing and learning new words and phrases, you can also expand your vocabulary. Sometimes these words and phrases can enter your vocabulary without intentional practice due to repeated exposure to them in context. In other words, automaticity of word choice is a skill you build just by practicing English as much as possible.

## Sentence Variation

---

Variety not only improves writing by including more descriptive and specific words and phrases. Even sentence structure choices can have an impact on the clarity of your ideas and the continued interest of a reader. There isn't a "better" or "best" grammatical structure for a sentence. Focus on learning how to use each type to best present your ideas. A more advanced writer does not over-rely on one type.

Like word choice, sentence variation will become natural for you over time as you write more. It will also be strengthened as you hear and read how others structure their ideas.

A **simple sentence** has just one independent clause (subject + verb). It is one complete idea.

- Genealogical DNA testing is the process of looking at an individual's DNA to find similarities to other populations.

**Compound sentences** have two independent clauses. This means that there are two separate and complete ideas that are combined using a connector word (also known as a *compound conjunction* or *FANBOYS*; ex. for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so).

- Genealogical DNA testing is the process of looking at an individual's DNA to find similarities to other populations, so it can be used to create a map of your heritage.

The third would be a **complex sentence** which has one independent clause and one (or more) dependent clause. The dependent clause is incomplete without the inclusion of an independent clause. You may have learned these in grammar class with a different names (such as *time clause*, *conditionals*, or *subordinating conjunctions*).

- Although genealogical DNA testing is the process of looking at an individual's DNA to find similarities to other populations, it can only give an estimate of ethnic makeup.

Finally, you can have a **compound-complex sentence** these sentences have both a compound conjunction and a subordinating conjunction.

- Because there are different processes that can be used to evaluate DNA relationships, genealogical DNA testing can only give an estimate of ethnic makeup, and the results can vary significantly between different companies.

## Revising for Variation

Although these skills will find their way into your writing naturally, your revision time is perfect for checking for variety. During a timed writing situation, you should always reserve some time to check your work before submitting. In this practice, you will focus on using that revision to look for words that are: repetitive, imprecise, basic, or weak. Additionally, you will revise by looking at grammatical structure of sentence to create a more interesting rhythm of ideas and restructure for clarity.

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Timed Writing (Revision Focus)

*For this timed writing practice, you will have 20 minutes to write on the topic. At the 20-minute timer, you will begin your revision time. You will have 5 minutes to revise for word choice and 5 minutes to revise for sentence variation.*

1. Your friend works for the BYU Daily Universe (university newspaper) and wants to know more about the ELC experience for an article she is writing. Explain to your friend what the process is like for an international student from making the decision to attend the ELC to starting the first day of the semester.
2. At a cultural celebration last week, you shared your favorite food from your country. One of the ELC teachers asked if you could send him the recipe. Write out the instructions for making the food. Make sure to use descriptive and precise words so that he knows what ingredients to buy and how to prepare them.
3. You have been assigned a presentation in your listening and speaking class. You need to record a "How to" video of a process with at least 10 steps. Your teacher has asked for you to choose a process that your classmates might not be familiar with. Prepare the script to use for your recording.



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# Integrated Writing (Descriptive)

Integrated writing assignments target listening and/or reading comprehension as well as your writing ability. One way to demonstrate advanced comprehension is to vary your word choice and sentence structure while maintaining the ideas.

## Simple Paraphrasing

---

An application of the strategies of word choice and sentence variation can be seen through the writing task of paraphrasing. You will learn more about paraphrasing in greater detail in a later chapter of this textbook. In this practice, you will see how these strategies can be used to do basic paraphrases.

**Paraphrasing** is to share the same meaning as what was originally stated using different words. A restated thesis is essentially a paraphrase because it retains the original meaning but says the information in a new way. Paraphrasing occurs in conversations when you ask someone to repeat what they said because we rarely repeat ourselves word for word.

Therefore, at its most basic, paraphrasing requires you to search for and use synonyms. Often, it requires an adjusted sentence structure as well. These changes provide clarity about what was most important in the original statement.

As discussed previously in this chapter, it is imperative not to alter the meaning of the original ideas when you restate them. You will need to pay particular attention to word choice so that there is no interference from connotations used in your paraphrase. Additionally, you will need to check the grammar of any restructured sentences to ensure that you have preserved the intention of the original.

### Integrated Writing Tip

It is common for an integrated writing assignment to include multiple original sources connected by the same topic. These sources may have the same position on the topic (supporting the same main idea and point of view), but they may present opposing opinions as well. This second option is most common on the TOEFL.

Some differences between author/speaker point of view may be more implicit and subtle. Use your understanding of connotation to recognize opposing viewpoints.

## Exercises

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### Exercise 1: Integrated Writing (Paraphrase Focus)

*Read the article and watch the video below. Using the information you learned from the sources, describe the similarities and differences between the ancient Greek democracy and the US democracy.*

[Greek Influence on U.S. Democracy](#)

[Athenian vs USA Democracy](#)



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# Personal Statements

Personal statements are writing tasks that require the writer to describe their experiences, characteristics, purpose, or plans. These types of writing are common for job and school applications. While there is a lot of variation in the prompts and expectations, there are some key things writers need to know about this style of writing.

Alternative Project: Formal Emails
Example Personal Statement
Types of Personal Statements
Organization for Comprehensive Personal Statement
Organization for Prompted Personal Statement
Writing Skill: Development
Revise a Personal Statement
Revising
Timed Writing (Personal Statements)
Integrated Writing (Personal Statements)



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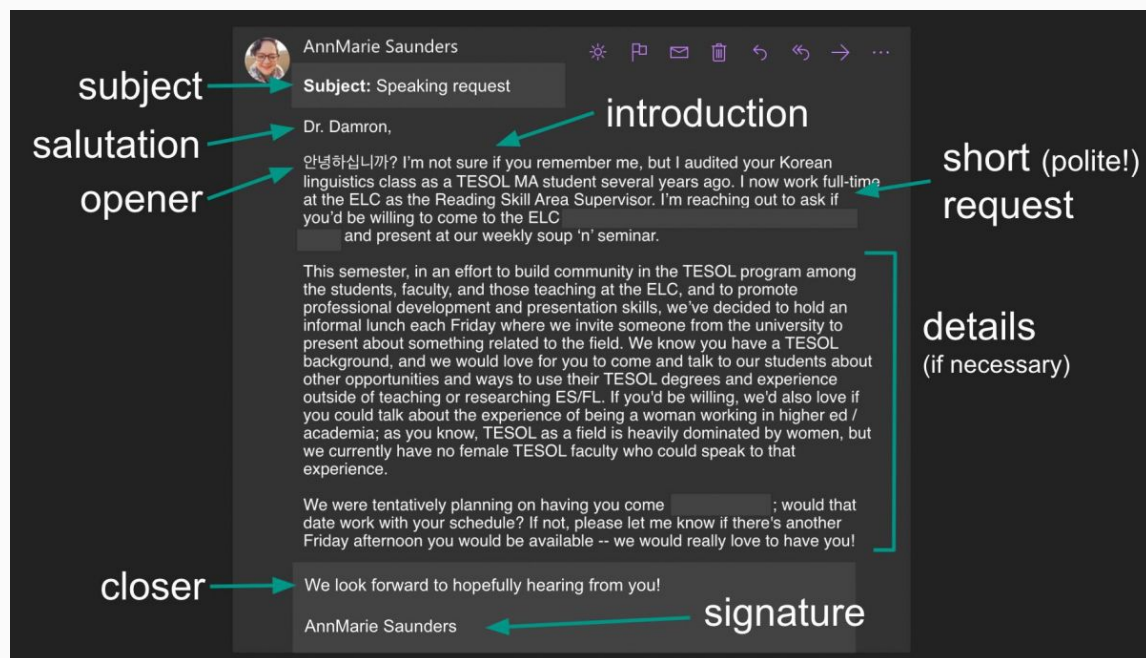
# Alternative Project: Formal Emails

One of the common types of writing you will encounter is writing emails in English. The expectations for formality and content vary dramatically in this format depending on to whom you are writing and the topic of the email. For this section of the course, we will focus on formal emails like the ones you will likely send in the future to professors or employers.

## The Structure

An email has a very different look than the other types of writing discussed in this text. However, there are still similarities when you are writing a formal email. The basic outline of a formal email is as follows:

### Example Breakdown



### 1. Subject line (similar to an essay title)

The *subject line* of an email is the short phrase that the receiver of your email will see before they open the email. It lets them know right away what the email will be about.

Although the subject line is similar to a title for a typical essay, it is important to keep the information limited to only what is necessary. This type of "title" is not meant to be creative, but rather to give the reader an immediate idea of the content of the email. Do not leave this field of the email blank. Keep the ideas brief, and put the most important information first. Doing this will help ensure that the recipient of your email knows quickly and easily what your email is about and can act accordingly.

Most purposes for emailing can be boiled down to a single noun phrase that highlights the most important information.

**Examples:**

- Essay Feedback Question
- Christmas Concert
- Absence

## 2. Salutation

The *salutation* is where you address the reader. You can use a greeting like "good afternoon" or the name of the person with their appropriate title. This is followed by a comma to give a slight pause before the person continues reading the email.

You should use the title that best shows the level of formality. If the reader has a title, be sure to use the appropriate form. Do not assume it is appropriate to use only a first name in the salutation.

Most Common English Titles (honorifics)

Mr.	all men
Miss	unmarried women
Mrs.	married women
Ms.	woman regardless of marital status
Dr.	someone with a PhD, a medical doctor, or veterinarian
Professor	*college teachers.
President/Principal/Dean/Director/Chief Executive	other titles specific to the job may also be used
To Whom it May Concern	when emailing to a general office/business account without knowing the name of the person to address your question to

Some formal salutations you may use include:

- [Title] + [full name of recipient only] ie. Chief Executive Johnson,
- Dear [full name of recipient] ie. Dear Hannah Clark,
- Good morning/afternoon
- Greetings

Some informal salutations include:

- Hello
- Hi

## Cultural Note

There are two interesting cultural notes regarding salutations:

- "Professor" by itself is used less frequently in the US than Dr. "Professor" is like President, Principal, Dean, etc. . It is a title that can be used to refer to the person's profession and show respect. However, it is usually used in combination with something else: the person's name or a salutation.
  - Dear Professor Jones,
  - Hello Professor,
  - Good Afternoon Professor,
  - Professor Jones,
  - Dr. Jones,
- Using "Dear" in writing is different than using "Dear" in speaking. When speaking "Dear" expresses familiarity, care, and affection. It is often used with family members. However, when used in writing, specifically letter writing, "Dear" is usually just a formality without any added emotional meaning. It has the same emotional neutrality as "To" when used in formal emails, so it can be used with anyone.
  - Dear Mrs. Smith,
  - Dear Hiring Manager,
  - Dear Aunt Suzie,
  - Dear Dr. Porter,

### 3. Opener (similar to an essay hook)

The *opener* is the first sentence of the email that is used to politely begin the email conversation.

The opener should match the level of formality of the email and reflect your relationship with the reader. In other words, a salutation such as "How's it going?" would only be appropriate in an email to a friend. A more common formal version of this would be "I hope this email finds you well."

Similarly to how a conversation in English begins with a pleasantry, or a polite question about your well-being that is not intended to get a true response, this opener exists only for the sake of manners. No one expects an actual response to the opener.

*Examples:*

- I hope this email finds you well.
- I hope you are doing well.
- I hope you are having an enjoyable summer break.

### 4. Introduction

At this point in the email, you will introduce yourself to the reader. This helps to create context for why you are sending the email. For example, you might mention the course you are taking or the department you work in. Unless you have communicated with the individual multiple times, it is helpful to use this space to help the reader identify you.

*Examples:*

- I am [your name], an undergraduate student majoring in Computer Science.
- I am [your name], and I am a resident of the Peach Tree apartments that your company manages.
- I was a student in your 8:30 English 202 class last semester.
- We met at the Rocky Mountain Research Conference last fall.

## 5. Short request (similar to an essay thesis)

After you have created this brief introduction, you can immediately introduce your purpose for the email. Remember to keep the request polite and clear. Include any references to specific times, places, or products involved in the request. In general, you should try to limit an email to one main idea.

At some point in your email, it is good to acknowledge that you are likely asking them to do additional work, adjust their schedule, or some otherwise inconvenient favor. Where possible, provide some flexibility in the request and emphasize gratitude.

You may use some hedging words or phrases to help show the politeness you intend. You only need a few to convey your politeness. If you use too many, it may make your message difficult to understand. Providing flexibility and showing gratitude is usually enough to show your consideration for the other person. You may want to keep in mind the culture of the recipient while you try to gauge how to be polite; some cultures are more roundabout and some are more direct. However many polite phrases you choose to use, keep your request short and clear.

*Examples:*

- Would you be able to meet Thursday at 6:45 pm to go over the project before we present? If not, what would be a time on Wednesday or Thursday that you could meet?
- Thank you for your consideration of my application.
- Thank you for your time and consideration.

## 6. Necessary details (similar to an essay supporting ideas)

You may need to include additional information about the request after it is clearly stated. For example, the reader may need to know about the topic of the presentation, concerns about a project, or an outline of the agenda for a meeting. The request should be separate enough to be quickly understood, and this section allows for the additional clarification of the situation. Again, remember to maintain appropriate distance from the reader by not oversharing beyond what is essential to know.

In this section of the email, it may be helpful to use a numbered or bulleted list to separate pieces of information related to the topic. This is a good way to create blank space in the email and to keep it focused on the essentials.

*Examples:*

- The meeting will be in room 415 of the ABC building from 3:00-4:30. We will review the project's progress, any questions the group has, and the projected completion date.

## 7. Closer (concluding sentence)

A *closer* is the ending sentence of your email. It is like a concluding sentence of a paragraph or essay.

As with a typical concluding sentence, it can be helpful to end your email with a sentence that states expectations or a call to action. The most common closers are either in the form of requesting a timely response or proposing a meeting time.

*Example:*

- I look forward to your reply.



## 8. Signature

A *signature* is your formal or official name written to say you wrote the email. It is usually preceded by an adverb or adverbial phrase to show how you wrote the letter. This is followed by a comma and then your name on the line below. The adverb/adverbial phrase is optional, but can add formality

Always remember to close the email with your name and any other identifying information. This could include a phone number (if needed) or your job title, but can also be as simple as just your name. Don't forget to use the form of your name that would be most easily recognizable to the reader.

*Examples:*

- Sincerely,

[your name]

- Best Regards,

[your name]

- Kate Smith
- Don Phillips

Department of Linguistics

\*There are other closing phrases such as "Cheers," "Yours truly," or "With love," but they are used in more informal situations.

## Polite Requests

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One of the important aspects of writing a formal email is using polite language to make requests. Culturally speaking, a request in English is more polite the less direct it is. Note the difference between someone saying "I would appreciate it if you would wash your hands before dinner." vs "Wash your hands."

Two ways that grammar can support creating a polite request is through the use of modals and *if* clauses. In the example above, the word *would* is used to soften the request. This can also be done using modals like *could*, *might*, and *can*. Dependent clauses with *if* soften a request as well by focusing on the reader's ability to decline the request and the writer's awareness of the potential disruption the request may cause.

*Examples:*

- "I would appreciate it if you could [request]."
- "It would be [adj] if you could [request]."
- "If you could [request], that would be [adj]."
- "Can/Could you/I [request]?"
- "Would you/I be able to [request]."
- "Would [time/request] work for you?"
- "If possible..." / "Would it be possible to [request]?"
- "Do/would you mind [request]?"
- "Would you be willing to [request]?"

Other common words used to demonstrate politeness are known as hedging adverbs. These are words such as *just*, *only*, *possibly*, *maybe*, and *perhaps*. Writers will include these to increase the courtesy felt in a request.

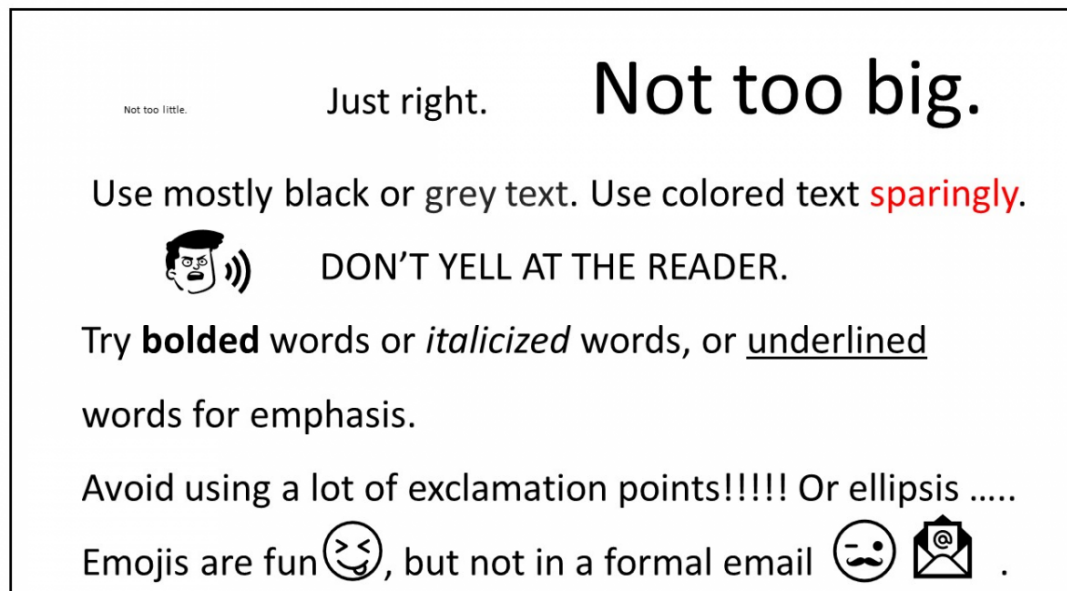
- I am just emailing to ask if you could check the budget report attached in this email.
- Would you possibly be available for me to interview for my career development course? It would only take twenty minutes, I know you are very busy.

## Formatting

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Formal emails follow many of the same conventions of formatting and style as an essay. It should be written in an easy to read font in a 10-12pt size. Colorful text should be avoided unless necessary to draw attention to something (such as a deadline).

Do not use ALL CAPITAL LETTERS at any point in your email because the internet culture designates this as yelling (angry). Instead, it's better to use **bolded**, *italicized*, or underlined text to emphasize information. Expressive punctuation (e.g., using multiple exclamation points [!!!] or ellipsis [.....]) and emojis (e.g., 😊 , 😞 , etc) should also be avoided.



*Image: Barraza 2022 (made with PowerPoint and PowerPoint Icons and Cartoon People)*

The main formatting difference between an email and an essay is that an email does not need to be indented, and can instead just be left-aligned.

## Responding to a formal email

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The advice here applies to responding to a formal email, not just when you initiate the conversation yourself. In some cases, someone in higher authority may not begin the conversation in a formal manner, but you should still maintain the standards here unless told otherwise. For example, a professor may ask students to call her by her first name rather than her last name or an office environment may frequently use emojis. Once you are aware of the expectations for that context, you are able to adjust your writing accordingly.

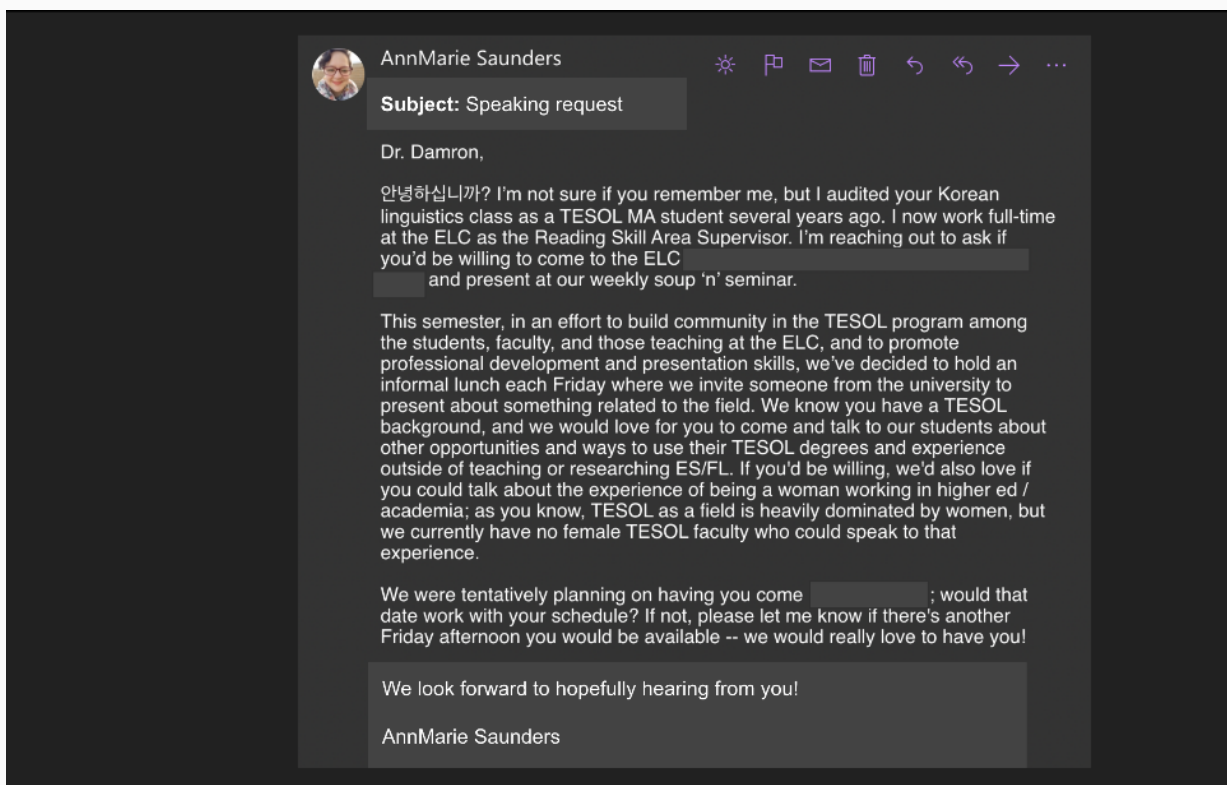
## Exercises

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## Exercise 1: Skimming

Skim the example below. Read it quickly without looking at the fine details. Answer these questions to guide your skimming:

1. Are there any noticable headings?
2. Are there any images? What do those images tell you about this example?
3. What are the first and last lines about?
4. What are the first lines of each paragraph about?
5. Do you notice any key words?
6. What is this example about?
7. What do you notice that is unique to emails compared to essays?



## Exercise 2: Complete the Outline

*Read the situation below and finish the outline to show how you would organize the email.*

You have worked at the company for a couple of years and a higher position just opened up for hiring. You are interested in the new role and want to ask your current manager to recommend you for the job.

- Subject Line: Supervisor Opening
- Dear Emily
- Opener: As you know, I have worked in this position for two years...
- Intro: Noticed an opening for a better job in the company
- Request: Provide a recommendation
- Necessary Details:
  - 
  - 
  - 
  -
- Closer: I know that you are very busy this time of year. I appreciate ...
- Signature: Sincerely, [name]

## Exercise 3: Outline

*Read the situation below and create an outline to show how you would organize your email.*

Your boss mentioned a new project when you were talking in the break room. After talking to your team, you want to suggest that your department take the lead on developing this project. Write an email to ask for the assignment and explain why your team is qualified for the task.

## Exercise 4: Draft an email

*Read the situation below and create an email draft explaining the situation and offering a solution.*

You are president of a club on campus. You had previously called the scheduling office to reserve a space for your club to host a party. However, you checked online and saw that the reservation is not listed on the schedule. Write an email to the scheduling office employees to resolve the issue.

## Exercise 5: Polite requests

*Your teacher will assign a partner to you. With your partner, practice 2-3 different ways of making a polite request in each of the following scenarios:*

- No one in your study group understood the topic in yesterday's lecture and you would like the professor to explain it again
- You want to meet with the professor outside of the scheduled office hours for the course
- You need a response to an email you sent to a coworker about

## Exercise 6: Draft an email

*Read the situation below and create an email draft explaining the situation and offering a solution.*

You were asked to present to a group of managers at your work on a product your team has been working on. However, you have a personal emergency and cannot be at work on the scheduled day. Write an email to your boss explaining the situation and offering a solution.

## Exercise 7: Choose a prompt

*Choose one of the prompts below as your situation for an email that you will submit as your final assignment. Remember to explain the situation, propose solutions, and maintain an appropriate level of formality.*

- You are considering a new major and want to meet with the advisor
- Contact a potential employer about your interest in applying for a job (no job is currently open)
- You and your friend requested to be roommates on your housing contract, but you have been assigned to different apartments
- Ask for a letter of recommendation
- Request time off from work for a family matter





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## Example Personal Statement

I have found in animation the perfect way to tell a story. I have always been passionate about art. Since I was a child I found myself drawing and creating stories about magical places and extraordinary characters. It was a way to challenge reality and to expand my artistic creativity. As most children, I loved animated movies. They allowed me to dream, and to learn about simple but powerful things. The characters, the story, the music, the colors. Everything was wonderful. I wanted to be part of that. I wanted to do something that could give me the freedom to use all my creative skills in order to one day be part of the animated world. To be part of the memories of thousands of children and, since animation is not only for kids, luckily I can make all kinds of people feel the magic of an animated film. I am confident that I can grow significantly using my creative skills in [Name of Program].

I have two big passions that have developed with me as I have grown up. The first one is drawing. I have tons of notebooks full of doodles and sketches that I have filled out all my life. It is hard for me not to draw or doodle when I have paper and pencil in my hands, it is just natural to me. The second one is writing stories. I remember making short clips with my friends as a teenager with the stories I wrote or just being in my room, thinking of these funny characters and fantasy universes. I am also an enthusiastic learner, when I am passionate about something I put all of my effort into it. I acquired all my skills and knowledge of the field through self-study. I am very sure that I can make amazing progress once I am accepted. In addition to this I enjoy teamwork, which I know is essential during all the animation process. Even though I know my skills I can also recognize others' good ideas and strengths. It is necessary to have vision for this career and to be able to put all your ideas in a single artistic film.

My skills and personal experiences make me useful for this [Name of Program] as it would considerably conduct me to achieve my goals. There are a lot of things I know I can do with the learning environment and creative process during [Program Coursework]. This [Name of Program] is the ideal for me, I want to be part of its community. I know from very talented artists and animators who passed here. I know I can be successful like them. I am aware of my strengths and abilities, which will lead me to be part of animated projects that will represent a role in the childhood and memories of a lot of people.

## Exercises

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### Exercise 1: Analyze a personal statement

1. How is the writer introduced?
2. What information do you think the prompt asked for?
3. Are the ideas sequenced in a logical order?
4. Is there a clearly stated purpose (conclusion) in this personal statement?
5. What suggestions would you give this writer to improve the personal statement?



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# Types of Personal Statements

There are different situations that would require a personal statement, each of which would have slightly different approaches. The most common types of personal statements are: cover letters, admissions essays, and statements of purpose. In all three of these situations, you as a writer are trying to convince the reader to invest in you by showing evidence of your ability and potential.

While the exact specifications of these writing tasks will vary, all of them expect the writer to disclose personal information and respond to the prompt clearly and fully. The idea of sharing details about your life or "bragging" about your qualities can feel deeply uncomfortable for many people. It is therefore important to remember the purpose of a personal statement. This type of writing exists to provide the reader with relevant information about you that would set you apart from others. A personal statement stands in conjunction with the rest of an application and transforms that data into a full picture of you as a person and how you would fit into the institution.

[The Purdue Online Writing Lab](#) has some excellent personal statement advice and examples.

## Admissions Essay

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An admission essay is part of the application to a college or university. The school will have access to a lot of information about you from the rest of your application, but this is your opportunity to present your full self. Think of it as a written interview where you get to provide more details about yourself that add to their understanding of how you would fit in the college environment.

The admissions essay typically prompts you to talk about a specific aspect of yourself that they would not know about from just your transcript and demographic information. The question may be about your goals, overcoming past challenges, service, or any other attribute the college views as being essential for success in that specific school.

Every university will have different expectations for how many admission essays you submit. They will also have varying word or character counts. It is important for you to use that limited space wisely to really persuade the reader that you are an ideal future student.

## Examples of admission essay prompts include:

1. Many students submit applications to several colleges. What will determine which one you will choose to attend? Please be specific in your response.
2. Describe a specific time when you were aware of a need in your family, school, or community. How did you respond to that need?
3. Tell us about a time when you did not achieve a goal or experienced a difficult challenge. How did you recover from this experience? What did you learn from this and how will it influence your future reactions to challenges?
4. Discuss an area of interest that you find really engaging. Why is this topic so fascinating to you? What do you do to learn more about this topic?

## Cover Letter

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Cover letters serve a similar function to an admissions essay. This type of personal statement goes along with your resume or curriculum vitae to give a more complete description of you and why you would be the best choice for the position. Again, it serves as a written interview that allows a potential employer to narrow down the search to candidates that would be most competitive.

In today's world of online submitted job applications, the resume or CV will get you through the initial sorting of applicants if the necessary experience is listed and certain buzz words are mentioned. The cover letter then discriminates between the applicants based on their character and personal alignment with the business.

Therefore, it is important to fully research the business you are applying for and to tailor your cover letter to the specific company. You can do this by looking at the mission or vision statements on the company website's About Us page. You can also learn about specific current projects and reference them in your cover letter. The cover letter is your way of showing that you really understand what the business is about and how you could contribute to it.

Cover letters do not generally have specific prompts. However, if the prompt were to be articulated, it would be something along the lines of:

- How do your experience and your skills qualify you for this role and why should we choose you instead of the many other applicants?

That being said, some specialized careers may include a short written response to a question. For example, a teacher may be asked to provide their philosophy on learning.

## Statement of Purpose

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Finally, there are times when you may be asked to write a more general personal statement. This might be as part of an application for a scholarship, a nomination to receive an award, a promotion, or an investment pitch. It may also be part of your personal goal setting routine.

The statement of purpose is slightly different than the other two personal statements because it is more focused on the present and future goals rather than your past experience. Like a cover letter, there is unlikely to be a specific prompt to respond to. However, you can approach a statement of purpose by thinking about these questions:

- Where do you see yourself in (number) years?
- How do you plan to achieve your goals?

## Exercises

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### Exercise 1: Admissions Essay Brainstorm

1. Choose a school to apply to or program you would be interested studying. Even if you are not planning on studying at a US college, you can choose a technical training or certification program that would be of interest to you.
2. Take a look at the website for the program/school to get a general idea of the purpose/mission and the expectations for enrolled students.
3. Make a list of talents, skills, experiences, etc that you already have that would fit the purpose/mission and help you be successful in meeting the expectations for students.
4. Make an additional list of features or aspects of the program/school that appeal to you. What will you gain from this specific learning opportunity?
5. Once you have your list, choose the ideas that feel like the strongest or most unique points from your brainstorm.
6. Think of how you can show these ideas instead of telling your audience. Is there a story you can share that demonstrates these ideas in a more interesting way?

### Exercise 2: Cover Letter Brainstorm

1. Search for a job online. Look for one you would actually be interested in applying for.
2. Read through the description and the qualifications (required and desired/preferred).
3. Make a list of all of the characteristics and skills you currently have that meet the job description.
4. Make another list of the characteristics and skills you do not think you already have.
5. With the "not yet" list, think of how to put a positive spin on your lack of experience in these areas. Do you learn new things quickly? Are you open to adapting to a different company culture? Have you ever had to quickly learn how to complete tasks in a previous job?
6. Think about what items on the list will be most important to highlight in your cover letter. A cover letter is always used together with a resume or curriculum vitae (CV), so you don't want it to just list experience. You are telling a story.
7. Next to those most important highlights, write how you would choose to present that information in a memorable way.

### Exercise 3: Statement of Purpose Brainstorm

For this practice, you will write the statement tied to your purpose for applying for an academic achievement scholarship.

1. Make an honest list of all of the reasons you are qualified for a scholarship.
2. Make a list of the benefits you imagine for your future self because of this scholarship. Be specific about how the scholarship will make that future ideal self possible.
3. Make a list of the challenges you have faced in your academic experience.
4. If there is a specific story from your educational experience that demonstrates both the highs and lows of reaching for this goal, write down some of the key points.



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# Organization for Comprehensive Personal Statement

To write a personal statement, let's begin with a general, comprehensive approach. This means that rather than develop your statement for a specific purpose, you will consider how you would respond to the three main personal statement types in general.

## Shifting Structure in Personal Statements

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Personal statements follow a looser, more flexible structure than traditional five-paragraph essays you may have studied for the TOEFL test or in school. You don't need to have exactly 5 paragraphs developed in 3rd person with X number of cited sources. That is NOT what the admissions officers or hiring committees are looking for.

Timed writing tests like the TOEFL independent task evaluate whether you know the parts of an essay, can write grammatically with accurate word choice, and can effectively use essay structure. Admissions essays and cover letters generally are not evaluated for essay grammar, word choice, or structure with points for a score. Admissions officers read admissions essays to determine if you as a person are a good fit for their program and have the qualities they want their students to have like diligence or creativity. Hiring managers want to know if you are a good fit for their company. Having good development, grammar, and word choice is still important, but only because having those things will make it easier for admissions officers and hiring managers to understand your ideas and for them to know that you can communicate well.

The same is true for the essay structure. Admissions officers and hiring managers are not going to grade you like a teacher and give points on whether you had a concluding sentence at the end of a body paragraph or used X number of details in the introduction. They don't expect five-paragraph TOEFL-style essays. However, following the principles of good structure will help your ideas be more easily understood by the admissions officers and hiring managers reading them. Your essay will still have a beginning where you need to state your main idea, a middle where you develop your idea, and an end where you remind the reader of your main idea.

How you use different types of sentences like hooks, thesis statements, topic sentences, supporting sentences, concluding sentences, restated thesis statements etc. is your choice. If you are writing a personal statement for a writing teacher teaching you personal statements, they may grade you as part of school. But, otherwise, it is up to you as a writer to decide what type of sentences and organization are needed to express your ideas best. You are still expected to have a main idea and to develop it through support, but how you do that is your choice.

## The Hook

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A personal statement needs a hook, just like any other type of writing. In fact, a personal statement is almost more in need of getting the reader's attention early because you want to be memorable among the many statements the reviewers will see.

While this can be done in the usual ways you have learned for writing hooks, one of the most common types is the use of an anecdote. An anecdote is simply an interesting and relevant true story. A personal statement often uses a specific story to illustrate important attributes or to create an organization for highlighting experience.

## Anecdote Example

Essay Prompt: <https://edtechbooks.org/-AHdW>

I hesitated to learn English because of the difficulties of learning a new language. In fact, the path that I chose to learn English was quite challenging. Yet, I found a profound joy when I came to know cultures in America and met new people. People from outside of my country had many differences in their manners, how they talk with family, and in how to be friends. These differences opened me up to new perspectives and helped me to develop love towards everyone. Thinking about continuously learning about and from others motivates me greatly.

## The Thesis

Your personal statement should have a clear sentence that directly expresses your purpose. Your goal should be abundantly clear in this sentence and all other points in your personal statement need to support this main idea.

While the rest of the personal statement may loosely use what you have learned in your writing classes so far, the thesis statement will still need to be strong and effective. Because this is a *personal* statement, you can use 1st person.

## Effective Thesis Statement Review

An effective thesis statement...

- addresses the **prompt** if there is one\* (i.e., answers the question).
- is usually at the **end** of the 1st paragraph.
- controls the content of **all** of the body paragraphs.
- is a **complete** sentence.
- does **not announce** the topic (e.g., "I'm going to talk about why I am a great fit for your company.").
- should **not** simply be a **fact** (e.g., "Many people have goals.").
- should **not** be **too general** (e.g., "Education is good.").
- should **not** be **too specific** (e.g., "My pursuit of higher education was inspired by my 99-year-old grandmother from Madrid who always came to visit for the holidays with homemade cookies and told me that an education is the key to business success because she had not finished school but made her own business that struggled until she decided to save up and sacrifice her time to go back to school for higher education which led to her having her own successful bakery.").
- may **state** or **imply** main points (e.g., "Attending X college will help me achieve my goal of becoming a financial advisor" vs. "Attending X college will help me achieve my goal of becoming a financial advisor through X's internship program and X's student-focused approach.").

## Supporting Ideas

The remainder of your personal statement should focus on clearly establishing your qualifications and experience, demonstrating your character and personal qualities, and indicating your potential for growth. This may be done with a variety of examples or one extended description that highlights all of the necessary traits that set you apart.

You can use what you learned about anecdotes for the hook and apply it to the middle section of your personal statement. You might have many personal examples that are relevant true stories, or you might tell one longer personal example that is a relevant true story. You don't *have to* use anecdotes for the supporting details; you can use any other type of supporting detail if you think it will better support your main idea.

The examples that you give should clearly support the main idea you are trying to express to the reader. They should be unified, developed, and cohesive. If the example(s) that you use and how you write them is clear enough in its connection to the main idea, then you may leave the interpretation to the reader. The reader can then infer important ideas and connections. If the example(s) that you use and how you write them is not obviously connected or clear, you will need to add 1-2 sentences explaining how that experience connects to the main idea of the personal statement. This is like adding commentary or explanation after a quote you use in a regular school essay. It helps your reader to understand why you included the example. Why did the experience you described matter in regard to answering the prompt?

While it is good to focus on strengths, you may sometimes need to write about your weaknesses. This may be because it was specifically requested such as when a college asks you to write about how you overcame a weakness, or it may come up naturally even when not requested by a prompt. For example, if you are a recent high school or college graduate with little work experience for the job you are applying for, you may want to acknowledge that weakness in your cover letter. Then, you will have the opportunity to spin it to be a strength.

Spin is where you present information that would be perceived one way, so that it is instead perceived in a different way. Spin can be positive (I am new, but I am eager to learn.) or negative (He has 40 years of experience, but that means he's old and probably out of touch with current trends). Usually, you will use positive spin. Just like how an influencer wants to use the best lighting for their photos and videos to look good, you want to show yourself in the best light. Keep in mind that it is okay to spin weaknesses into strengths, but you should still be truthful. No metaphorical photoshopping allowed.

## Conclusion

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Finally, your comprehensive statement should have a concluding sentence that recommends you to the reader. This final sentence should be memorable and emphasize your purpose in sending this information.

The conclusion for personal statements may be difficult to write because it requires reflection and writing about abstract topics.

You should answer these questions in your conclusion:

- Why does this information I told you, the reader, matter?
- How does this show I am a good candidate for your college, business, or program?

## Writing a Comprehensive Personal Statement

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Here are some things to keep in mind as you write this general form of a personal statement.

1. The terms *general* and *comprehensive* here are about purpose, not content. This version is meant to be a starting point for you to use when you are called on to provide a personal statement. Therefore, the examples, reasons, and descriptions should be powerful, clear, and detailed. Once you have a comprehensive statement you are happy with, it will be easier to make adjustments to it for a specific situation.
2. Because it is a *personal* statement, remember to focus on yourself and present yourself honestly and fully. You do not need to adhere to the same rigid writing style as the typical academic writing.
3. Your writing should be full of energy. You want to present the best version of yourself in the writing. If you think of this as a preliminary interview, you can imagine the combination of positivity and professionalism you would want to present. Especially if you are sharing an experience that had some negative aspects, remember to focus on the positive side and the lessons learned.
4. Make it stand out! Imagine sitting in an office for hours looking at short essay after short essay. You are trying to narrow down the search for a new employee. As a writer, you need to pop off of the page and share something that will stay with the reader.

## Exercises

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### Exercise 1: Most Relevant

**Part A:** A student is applying for a college program that doesn't have a specific essay prompt, but still requires a statement of purpose. He has already decided to highlight his leadership skills. Now he is deciding what anecdote would be most relevant to his main idea. Read the options he brainstormed and choose the one you find the most relevant.

**Prompt:** None

**Goal:** Show my leadership skills

1. Volunteering at a local animal shelter
2. Working with my high school leadership council
3. Learning to communicate with my classmates at the ELC
4. Collaborating with my classmates to complete a project
5. Showing initiative and making changes to a process that wasn't working well in my job

**Part B:** Discuss your decision with a partner.

- Did you choose the same option or different options?
- Why did you choose the option that you did?
- How would you use it in an essay?



## Exercise 2: Storytelling

Personal stories are a useful tool for showing your points rather than listing them.

Look at the list of points below and write a short story (5 sentences or less) that illustrates your character, skills, or potential. Try to start your story with a strong hook to pull the reader into the story and clearly relate it to the desired qualifications.

1. Customer service skills
2. Prioritizing tasks, managing a heavy workload
3. Trustworthiness
4. Persistence in difficult circumstances
5. Analytical and problem-solving skills

## Exercise 3: Discussion

Discuss the following questions with a partner.

- How do you establish your qualifications? Why would your previous experience matter?
- How can you demonstrate your character or personal qualities? Can't you just say, "I'm hardworking?" or "I'm honest."?
- How can you show your potential for growth?

## Exercise 4: Explain to Add Cohesion

A student decided to develop a cover letter using the anecdote idea about working with with teams. She has already written about her experience with working for sports summer camps and being involved in her church youth group. Her goal is to illustrate her good communication skills in teamwork situations.

This is a cover letter, so there is no prompt. But, all jobs have the implied prompt of "Why should we hire you?"

Write 2-3 sentences that show why the experience of working for sports summer camps highlights her good communication skills with teams.

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## Exercise 5: Showing Weaknesses in a Positive Light

Think of an academic or professional weakness you have. You can also see the list of points below for ideas. Brainstorm ways to show that weakness in a positive light.

Spin your weakness into a strength. Write 1-2 sentences to show your positive character, skill, or potential.

1. Customer service skills
2. Prioritizing tasks, managing a heavy workload
3. Trustworthiness
4. Persistence in difficult circumstances
5. Analytical and problem-solving skills

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# Organization for Prompted Personal Statement

Once you have your more general personal statement, you will need to tailor it for specific audiences. This means that whenever you are asked to submit a statement, you make adjustments to your personal statement to fit the requirements, expectations, or tone of the unique situation.

## Specific Prompts

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There may be times when you will need to start from scratch because there is a specific prompt or the circumstance renders the general statement irrelevant, but you will usually have at least some part of the general statement that you can use as a starting point. This will typically be the case when the person or organization requesting the personal statement is looking for specific information that would not be included in a resume that is necessary for the applicant.

Examples of information they would try to find through providing a specific prompt would be:

- How you respond to challenges
- Your philosophy on a topic and whether or not it aligns with their own
- Intentions and long-term perspective
- Signals that indicate how well you would mesh with an existing team

When you face a specific personal statement prompt, be sure to look at each part of the question and consider:

1. What does the reviewer expect to learn from my answer?
2. How would my answer separate me in a positive way from other applicants?
3. How to I show myself in the best light in this question?
4. What information is not included in my personal data and resume that they already have access to?

## Brainstorming

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Before you begin writing, break down the prompt into the individual pieces. Make sure that you fully understand what it is asking and that you include answers to every part of it. Once you have the prompt broken down into pieces, begin your brainstorm. Your brainstorm should give you a chance to write down all ideas you have about each section.

At this stage, nothing is good or bad. The only purpose of the brainstorm is to get all of the ideas out of your head and onto paper. Then you can begin to look for patterns and evaluate the strength of the different points. You may want to mark the ideas you like so that they stand out. Then, review your general personal statement and identify any parts of it that would be useful in responding to this particular prompt.

## Development

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Once you know what the reviewer wants to know and have brainstormed your ideas of your response, you need to consider how to develop those ideas further. To do this, consider the points in your brainstorm in terms of your

motivation, your qualifications, and the expectations of the reviewer. Choose a limited number of items from your brainstorm to include. Because a personal statement is so brief, you want to thoughtfully construct your ideas.

As you develop your ideas, you may find yourself writing much more than you can actually include in your final product. This is ok during the drafting stage. You want to fully build a mental image for your reader, but you also want to discard the irrelevant points later. After you have drafted your ideas, think about these questions to eliminate the extra thoughts.

1. Does the reader *need* to know this?
2. Is anything here sufficiently included in the materials I have already submitted?
3. How does this sentence add to the reader's understanding of me?
4. Is the information memorable and unique?
5. Do I fully answer the question?

Your supporting ideas should be relevant to answering the question.

## Cohesion

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The most important thing to remember as you finalize your personal statement is that it should feel very clear and direct. It should be obvious to the reader why you included specific details. Every idea needs to point back to the prompt. The response should show unity in the tone and content. You do not have room for any stray ideas in this short of a writing task. After you think you have answered the question as completely as you can, give yourself time to look over it again for cohesion and/or ask for someone to review it for you.

## Exercises

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### Exercise 1: Analyze the Prompt

*Before you begin writing, you always need to be sure you fully understand the question so that you include all of the necessary details. Use the questions below to analyze the prompt.*

Prompt: Our university has a high number of applicants, but only a few can be accepted to this very competitive program. Why should you be selected to attend this school? What makes you a uniquely strong applicant? Please do not include references to your transcript as we already have access to that information.

1. What does the reviewer expect to learn from my answer?
2. How would my answer separate me in a positive way from other applicants?
3. How to I show myself in the best light in this question?
4. What information is not included in my personal data and resume that they already have access to?

## Exercise 2: Most Relevant

**Part A:** A student is applying for a college that uses the admissions essay prompt shown below. He has already decided to highlight his ability creatively solve problems. Now he is deciding what anecdote would be most relevant to his main idea. Read the options he brainstormed and choose the one you find the most relevant.

**Prompt:** "We are looking for applicants that are innovative in their field of study. Tell us about a time when you innovated in your work."

**Goal:** Illustrate my ability to creatively solve problems

1. Winning a prize in a local art contest
2. Organizing a fundraiser when a school dance needed a larger budget
3. Redecorating the break room at work to improve motivation
4. Creating a school club for volunteer work in the city
5. Developing a promotion to bring in more customers during a slow month at the restaurant

**Part B:** Discuss your decision with a partner.

- Did you choose the same option or different options?
- Why did you choose the option that you did?
- How would you use it in an essay?

(Prompt excerpt from <https://edtechbooks.org/-AHdW>)

## Exercise 3: Give Feedback on Development

*Here is an example body paragraph from a student's application essay to an international relations program at a US college. Use the questions from the development section of this chapter to give feedback to the writer about the development of this idea.*

I have had the opportunity to visit the United States and [country name], where I learned a lot about international cultures. Both countries I have many international friends, which made me gain an understanding of their behavior, how they like to work or study, and their treatment with others. Besides that, I am a very open minded person, so I have the ability to acquire knowledge about how I will understand people's cultures based on their financial conditions, countries, or families. And this is because I have really good friends from other countries who are close to me and tell me their strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, I can contribute a great deal to many cultures where the government has difficulties in how to connect with their people and other nations.

## Exercise 4: Give Feedback on Cohesion

Here is an example body paragraph from a student's application essay to a psychology program at a US college. Be prepared to discuss how the writer effectively creates cohesion in this paragraph or how the writer can improve this paragraph to clearly tie it back to the prompt (Why do you want to study psychology at this university?).

Besides this when I worked for [company] back in [country name], I was able to encounter people from all over the world, and working with customers gave me the experience of listening to what they had to say in order to fix and solve their requests or problems. I learned how to be emphatic to give them the best solution and I had to put myself in their place so I can know how to treat them because of their emotional state. I also learn to pay attention to detail, whether it be from people's body language or something in their tone of voice, or the system that was used to fulfill the procedures for the [company], and I learned to prevent any problem that could delay the [company's] operation. These abilities are useful in psychology, especially when people don't want to open up, persistence and empathy can help people feel understood so they can feel that they can trust you. When people open up, I can use my listening skills to help them overcome their problems in an accurate way and treatment.



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# Writing Skill: Development

Writing is developed when the ideas are explained in sufficient detail. You need to show that you have thought about the topic and that you have something meaningful to say. Paragraphs that lack development often sound too general or are redundant.

You can develop a paragraph by adding supporting sentences. Supporting sentences can give examples, explanations, details, descriptions, facts, reasons, etc. Which types of supporting sentences you use will depend on your topic. In researched essays, using and explaining sources can also help you develop your ideas.

Compare the examples below. The first body paragraph is not developed well. The ideas are repeated and there are no solid examples, details, reasons, etc. Find the supporting sentences in the revised version that help develop the ideas.

## Example 1: Body Paragraph (Little development)

One of the most common causes of tsunami is an earthquake. National Geographic explains that "a tsunami is a series of great sea waves caused by an underwater earthquake, landslide, or volcanic eruption" (National Geographic, 2004, p. 6)

## Example 2: Body Paragraph (Better development)

One of the most common causes of tsunami is an earthquake. National Geographic explains what causes a Tsunami and says this: a tsunami is a series of great sea waves caused by an underwater earthquake, landslide, or volcanic eruption" (National Geographic, 2004, p. 6). These events cause an earthquake because the ocean floor rises or falls and it spreads the water above and generate rolling waves. The International Tsunami Information Center explains that tsunamis caused by earthquakes within a mile of beach and close to sea levles can be the most dangerous (International Tsunami Information Center, 2023, p. 4). These tsunamis do not allow for enough time for evacuation since earthquakes cannot be predicted and the proximity to the coast means the waves can reach land within minutes. Tsunamis caused by earthquakes are potentially very dangerous.

References:

<https://edtechbooks.org/-KHJJ>

<https://edtechbooks.org/-BdFH>

The first example paragraph had poor development because the ideas stopped too soon. The writer basically only said that tsunamis can be caused by earthquakes and other events, but that didn't really support the topic sentence. Because the ideas in the 1st paragraph stop too soon and didn't give enough information, the reader feels like the paragraph is repetitive and obvious.

The revised body paragraph has better development. It also stated that tsunamis can be caused by earthquakes, but it did not stop too soon. It provides more details about the impact of this type of tsunami and how they are caused. The 2nd paragraph gives enough information to explain the main idea, so the reader isn't confused.

## Problems with Development

Two common problems with development are

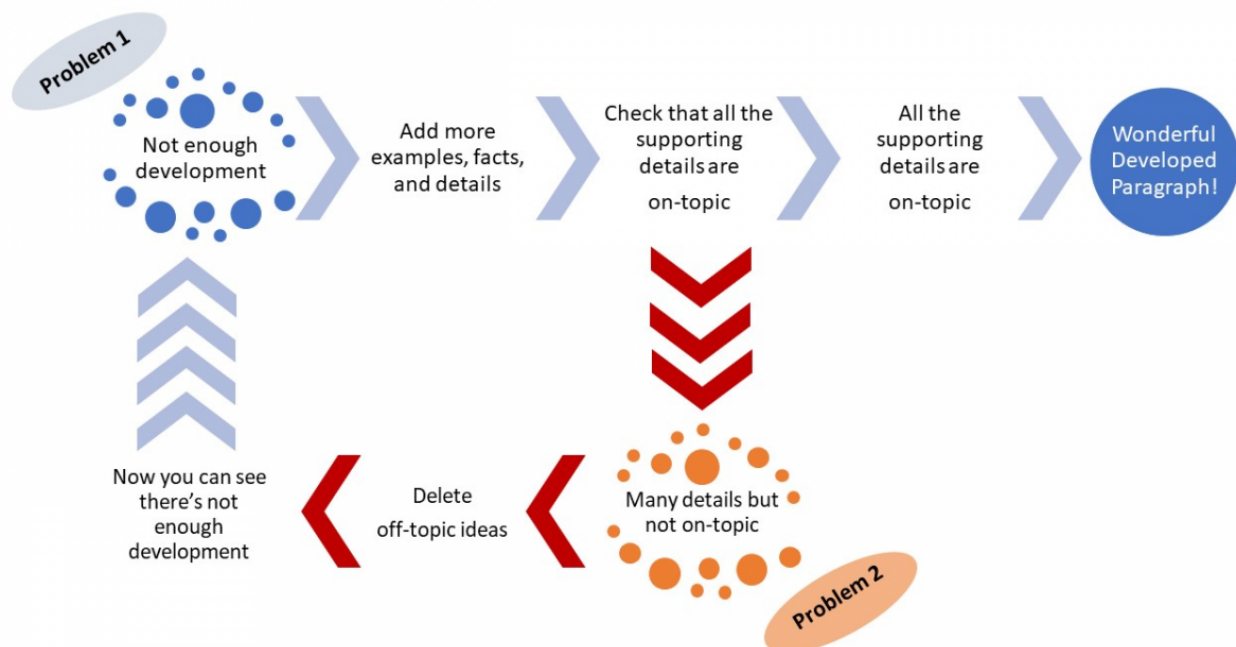
1. the obvious lack of development due to missing details
2. the less obvious lack of development due to off-topic details.

The first may be thought of as a matter of quantity; there is not a variety of details to explain the main idea. The second may be thought of as a matter of quality; the details written don't actually support the main idea.

The first problem is easy to see when you look at a paragraph. The paragraph itself may be smaller or shorter because there just aren't any supporting sentences written. Or, the paragraph may look long visually, but the sentences just repeat the same idea over and over, so there is actually only one or two supporting details instead of many. The reader can't understand the main idea well because the supporting details that would explain it are so limited.

The second problem might be more difficult to see because when you look at the paragraph, it visually looks full. It *seems* like there are many details supporting the main idea. However, many of the sentences aren't actually about the main idea, so they don't count. The reader can't understand the main idea well, because there aren't really that many details explaining it. Once you get rid of the off-topic sentences, you may notice that you don't have many sentences with on-topic sentences left. This brings you back to problem 1: not having enough development.

See the flow chart below for more about these problems.





## Developing Questions

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You can revise a paragraph that lacks development by adding supporting sentences. In order to know what supporting details the reader needs to understand your main idea, you can ask developing questions. Developing questions are questions that help you think like a reader to find where to add support.

You can start revising a paragraph by asking questions about the topic sentence (or the other supporting sentences). Ask questions like "Why?" "Like what?" and "How?" The answers to these questions can give you ideas to include that will develop your paragraph.

In order to revise the paragraph, the author might have asked questions like the ones below.

*Sentence Being Considered: One of the most common causes of tsunami is an earthquake.*

- Question: What does that mean?
  - Answer: There is a cause-effect relationship between earthquakes and tsunamis
- Question: How do earthquakes cause tsunamis?
  - Answer: It moves the water suddenly and creates a big wave
- Question: Why do earthquakes cause dangerous tsunamis?
  - Answer: Because you can't predict them and they create waves quickly.
- Question: Do all earthquakes create a tsunami?
  - Answer: No. It needs to be close to the coast

## Exercises

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### Exercise 1: Discussion

*After reading the 2 examples about tsunamis and earthquakes, discuss the following questions with a partner.*

1. What do you feel as a reader when you read the 1st example?
2. What questions do you have as a reader when you read the 1st example?
3. Why does the 2nd example have better development?

## Exercise 1: Ask questions to generate supporting sentences

*Write questions about this topic sentence or the answers to the questions you write.*

Topic sentence: Uniforms have a positive impact on education because they promote school unity, prevent bullying, and improve focus on learning.

- Question:
  - Answer:
- Question:
  - Answer:
- Question:
  - Answer:

Revise a Personal Statement



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# Revise a Personal Statement

My passion for law started when I was in high school. During this time, important influences in my life helped me to realize that my major desire is becoming a lawyer. My [family member], who is a lawyer, always told me everything about her job. But when I turned [age], I started to show more interest in it. She had told me how her job can be so versatile. For instance, she can be defending someone in court, doing divorce papers, or just checking that some processes are within the legal framework. This made me interested in law because I want to be someone that can work in different areas so I can develop different skills. Also, the idea of interacting with others excited me and I know that being a lawyer is a way to help people and bring justice to our society. Another big influence in my life was [teacher] from high school. He led me to find passion in topics related to law such as civil rights, politics, sociology, economics, etc. Now that I know what my passion is, my next step is to apply it to my career and become a successful lawyer.

My skills and passion will lead me to become a successful lawyer one day. One of the things I am always looking for in my life and my community is justice. I have strong feelings about helping others and doing what is right to bring justice to our society, which conviction motivates me to help the people who need it the most. Besides, thanks to experiences from school involving classes on civil rights, politics, and the debates that I was part of, now I feel I can express myself in a better way, which would help me to be someone that can positively influence others with my opinions and thoughts. Also, I consider myself someone that finds joy when I can develop myself in other areas. For example, I am always trying to learn new skills or hobbies, which is why working in such a versatile career would be the best for me. I participated in activities at school where I was chosen to be a leader and I needed to talk with a lot of people. These helped me to learn how to interact, be patient, and have empathy with others, skills that I believe would lead me to success in my career.

Being able to develop my skills and grow as a lawyer would help me to reach my goal of contributing to the wellness of people in my community. I hope to be the voice of those who are silenced because of the injustices in society and help with little actions to create a better world. I believe that this community will be benefited by my enthusiasm and commitment in classes. Also, thanks to my creativity, I can solve problems quickly and bring new ideas, which can be a great tool too. Law is a set of principles and norms that look for ideas of justice and order, and I want to be part of it.

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Analyze a personal statement

1. How is the writer introduced?
2. What information do you think the prompt asked for?
3. Are the ideas sequenced in a logical order?
4. Is there a clearly stated purpose (conclusion) in this personal statement?
5. What suggestions would you give this writer to improve the personal statement?

## Exercise 2: Revise an essay

*Revise this student's essay. Ignore bracketed information [ ] in your editing efforts.*



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# Revising

## Review the Prompt

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One strategy for revision that may help you is to highlight the different points of the prompt in different colors. Then use those same colors to highlight the sentences in your response that relate to those parts of the prompt. For example, a prompt may ask you to describe an award you received, what you did to earn it, and what resources you used to achieve success. You may mark any ideas in your writing that relate to the purpose of the award in yellow, the narrative/process sentences in green, and the resources in blue. This will help you recognize if there are any unmarked sentences that might not address the prompt. It can also help you to see if ideas are repeated or underdeveloped.

### Example

*Prompt: Describe how attending Ensign College will help you reach your educational and professional goals.*

Attending LDS Business college will be one of my greatest blessings because it will help me get an excellent education and be ready for my future career. The unique environment will help me to increase my spiritual knowledge about the Savior as I become more self-reliant. And learn skills to help me in my business career. The most important to me is that with my education, I will be able to help others reach their own goals.

Although the student addresses both parts of the prompt, only the educational benefits are explained specifically. The reader can recognize from this paragraph how education will benefit the applicant, but the career impact is only mentioned briefly and generally. The paragraph will need to be revised or an additional paragraph will need to be added in order to fully answer the prompt.

## Word Choice

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Because personal statements are often limited in terms of character or word count, you want to be sure that you get the most impact out of the words you choose to use. Choosing a word that is more precise in its meaning and connotation will help you to use the space wisely.

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Revise a Paragraph

*Read this example student paragraph from a personal statement. This was a general college application essay without a specific prompt. What general advice would you give the writer? What specific advice would you give about word choice?*

Later, on my own country I was applying for a university, but the situation became hard I was not accepted in at least four universities. I imagined that college was not for me, but I remembered that experience and I looked for a different college, but I had to pay too much money for that and I had to take brakes because I needed to work more money for it, that was crazy I can remember the time where I was thinking what I need to do now, many of my classmates finished before than me, but I still on the way and finally I did it. When I finished the college, I was able to apply in a better job where I could earn more money and I could do the stuff of my career, later I feel stuck because I was thinking that I should approach better my time and I decided to study a master that was difficult because the time for studying was not enough, but I did it. Later, a dream which I had about studying in America appears again, but he problem was English, so the way looks far away of me because I did not speak English.

### Exercise 2: Revise Your Writing

*Follow the steps below to revise your personal statement.*

1. Open your essay and save a copy called "Revision."
2. Choose two or three colors to represent your main points. If you have more than that many points, you can choose more colors. However, it will be good to think about whether or not the additional points actually add strength to your essay or use space that could be better used for something else.
3. Change the text color for all sentences connected to each of those two or three points.
4. Look at any sentences that are still in black. Are they necessary? Should they be connected more clearly to your thesis and supporting details?
5. Select the highlighter in yellow.
6. Highlight any sections of your essay where words repeat too frequently or you use too many words to express an idea. Is there another way to say these points?
7. Make changes based off of this review of your draft.





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# Timed Writing (Personal Statements)

## Audience

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One of the first steps in all writing is to recognize your audience. When you are thinking about your audience, it may help to ask yourself some questions.

- *Who will be reading?*
- *What does the reader need to know?*
- *In what context (where) is the reader connecting with your writing?*
- *When (under what conditions) would this information be important for the reader?*
- *Why would the reader be reading this?*
- *How will you most effectively express the information to this audience?*

Unfortunately, many college writers simply write because it is a required task and do not think carefully about the audience. If you were to ask a student working on an essay about their audience, you would most likely hear the simple response "My professor" or "The TA, I guess." While it may be true that the paper will only be read by the instructor for the course, do not assume that you can ignore the question of audience. These questions about the intention of your audience are equally valuable when considering your instructor.

If you receive a writing assignment that does not provide a specific audience, you can work with the assignment description, rubric, and your knowledge of the instructor to understand your audience. Ask yourself some additional questions like the following:

- *What knowledge or skill is the instructor evaluating through this assignment?*
- *What information do I not need to address directly because it is foundational (or too basic) for this specific assignment?*
- *How do the rubric categories and possible points indicate what is important to the reader?*
- *Were any example essays provided?*
- *What real-life situation does this particular writing assignment prepare me for?*

Thinking through your audience before you write can help you frame an effective thesis statement and choose supporting details that would have the greatest impact on your reader.

To use an analogy, considering your audience for writing is like going to a tailor. Many times you can buy clothes from the store and wear them exactly as they were sold. There may be small problems with the fit, but you can still wear them. However, spending a little extra time and money to have the too-long pants altered to fit your height can be worth it. And there are times when the occasion for the clothes (such as a nice dress or a suit) is more formal or important and that extra effort is of greater value. Similarly, there are times when a "one size fits all" essay will be fine, and there are times when that extra attention to your audience will make a big impact on the final outcome.

# Register

Continuing with the clothing analogy, different situations have different social expectations for dress code. The dress code at BYU is more strict than the outfit expectations at a birthday party. And there are obvious differences between what you wear to the gym and what you wear as a guest to a wedding.

*Register* is the word used to describe the language differences we notice in different contexts. There are differences between written and spoken English, and there are many differences in the language we use depending on our audience. Here are some writing register differences you may have noticed:

- When you use contractions (informal writing)
- When you use acronyms like TBH or IDK (texting, social media)
- When you use hedging (formal writing)

Adjusting the words and phrases you write depending on your audience is likely a strategy you already use without thinking about it too carefully. In this section, you will learn a little more about the strategy of hedging.

## Hedging

A simple definition of linguistic hedging in academic writing is to phrase a point carefully to soften a point. This is common in college writing because hedging acknowledges that the writer is not an expert. You are reporting what you have learned, but you allow for correction.

Here are some examples of how hedges can be used in writing

Hedge type	Examples	Hedging examples
Verbs:	appear, seem, suggest, argue, claim, tend, believe, think, looks like, assume, consider, indicate	<u>Many</u> people <u>assume</u> that...
Modals:	may, might, could, can	<u>Based on</u> this evidence, it is <u>possible</u> that...
Adjectives:	likely, unlikely probable, possible, some, many, much	<u>Generally</u> speaking, this does not <u>seem</u> to <u>be the case</u> ...
Adverbs:	probably, not necessarily, potentially, perhaps, apparently, evidently, presumably, relatively, occasionally, sometimes, generally, usually, often, seldom	<u>According to</u> lead researchers, this <u>may</u> change...
Phrases:	based on, according to, in light of, in the view of, it could be the case that, to some extent, when compared to, in the context of, in certain situations, as shown/indicated by	<u>Often</u> opponents <u>claim</u> that...

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Timed Writing (Hedging Focus)

*Write for 30 minutes about the following topic. Use one hedging word from each of the hedge type categories above to soften your claims.*

1. Your work wants to participate in a charitable event in the community. Write an email to your coworkers explaining why the company should choose to volunteer at the local homeless shelter instead of just donating money like last year.
2. A friend is studying abroad in Australia in the summer and writes you an email saying she is thinking about not going back to finish her degree. Respond to her email explaining why she should return to campus at the end of the study abroad.
3. Your professor assigned a group project and you were asked to comment on the contributions of your partners. Your partners were difficult to work with and often said unkind things to you about your culture/country. Write an explanation of the situation and why your partners should lose points for their behavior.



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# Integrated Writing (Personal Statements)

## Audience & Register

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Just as with all writing, integrated writing is more successful when you have considered the intended audience and appropriate register for the assignment. The added challenge here is that the audience and register of the original sources may differ from your assignment and may even vary between the sources themselves.

This means that as you mentally prepare to write for your specific audience, you need to consider the audience of the source and make some adjustments to fit a new context. As you learned in the last integrated writing chapter, you can change the wording through paraphrase, but you should not change the meaning itself.

## Exercises

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### Exercise 1: Identify Audience and Register Differences

*Take a look at these different sources. Who is the audience for each of these? How do you know? What differences in register do you notice?*

- [Wikipedia - Crystals](#)
- [Oprah Dailey - Meaning of Crystals.](#)
- [National Geographic - Cave of Crystals](#)
- [USA Today Fact Check - Salt Crystals](#)
- [Britannica - Crystals](#)
- [Trip Savvy - Crystals](#)

## Exercise 2: Integrated Writing (Audience/Register Focus)

1. Watch this video from BYU Dining Services explaining the on campus food services.
2. Below is a link to an opinion article written for the BYU newspaper The Daily Universe about the Cannon Center, which is one of the popular cafeterias on BYU campus. Read through the article. You may take notes on the main points to use as a reference.

[Daily Universe: Opinion Article](#)

3. Consider the services presented by BYU Dining and the complaint written by a BYU student. Write a response to this opinion article for the school newspaper. Do you agree with the student that the dining services at BYU are insufficient or inconvenient for students? Why or why not? Offer a solution to the problem presented in this opinion article.



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# Comparison Writing

Have you ever thought about how you are similar to your parents? Maybe you have the same nose as your Dad or the same laugh as your Mom. There are probably many differences between you and your parents as well. Maybe you have different hair colors, or you like different activities. It is natural to make comparisons. Comparisons are how you understand the world around you and gain a deeper knowledge of yourself and others. Often, we use comparisons in our writing.

**Comparison essays** point out the similarities and differences between two things. The purpose of a comparison essay is to help your audience gain a deeper understanding of two topics in a similar category.

In this chapter, you will write a comparison essay examining two academic topics.

Alternative Project: Reviews
Example Comparison Writing
Prewriting
Writing Skill: Unity
Sources: Summarizing
Revise Comparison Writing
Revising
Timed Writing (Comparison)
Integrated Writing (Comparison)





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# Alternative Project: Reviews

In most cases, reviews will not be part of your academic writing experience. The majority of your evaluation writing will occur in the form of a reflection or a critical reading analysis. That being said, there will be many situations in your life that call for a review of a product or experience. For that reason, this chapter will focus on preparing you to write effectively for the purpose of review.

## Purpose

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Reviews exist to give potential future consumers or participants of a product or experience an idea of what to expect from the service based on your own experience. The review can also benefit the provider by giving them feedback on what was successful or what needs to be improved.

For this chapter, when the word product is used, it is referring to items or articles that are typically purchased:

- items such as electronics, books, clothing, games, software, artwork, movies etc
- consumable substances such as food, drinks, candy, beauty supplies, art and craft supplies etc

When the words experience is used, it includes either a place/event or treatment and assistance from a specialized workers :

- places like hotels, vacation resorts, salons, businesses, etc
- events like concerts, art shows, festivals, university courses, etc
- services like repair or maintenance work, healthcare, customer support, public transportation, education, application processes etc

As you can see, there are many different contexts that can lead to either formal or informal reviews.

You are often prompted to leave a review after purchasing a product online. While not required, your insight can be very beneficial. Reviews can also be given for experiences like a performance, vacation, or even a course. The majority of these situations allow you to choose whether or not you give feedback. However, in a context like the English Language Center, you are required to give end of semester feedback.\*

Because the feedback you provide on the product or service can have a strong influence for change, it is important to carefully craft a review so that it reaches the widest audience and provides focused feedback.

\*This is because the ELC is a lab school, meaning many of the teachers are in training and need to get input from the students to improve their teaching. It is also because the administrators are constantly trying to improve the student experience and need to hear directly from the target audience.

## Prewriting

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Before you begin to write a review, you need to brainstorm about your own experience. Remember that a brainstorm does not require complete sentences, it only requires you to make a list of ideas to help you begin the writing process.

To create your brainstorm, you can try asking yourself the questions below to generate your list:

1. Why did you choose this product or experience?
2. Describe your perspective of it. Focus on choosing your adjectives carefully.
3. Did the product or experience live up to your expectations?
4. What are the positive aspects? (pros)
5. What are the negative points? (cons)
6. Do you think others should participate or purchase this?

Once you have your list of ideas, it helps to read through it and mark the most important points. This narrows down the scope of your review and keeps it at paragraph length instead of feeling like an essay. Writing

When writing a review, it is always important to keep your intended and unintended audience in mind. An intended audience would be the people you expect to read the review. This could be a potential consumer before committing to the product or experience. An unintended audience is often an employee over online customer service for the related company. This person is monitoring the customer satisfaction levels based on this feedback and reports back trends or patterns (both positive and negative). Remembering that your review will be read by both types of audience is key to writing an effective review.

An effective review is defined by four main characteristics

1. Honesty: Submitting a review that inaccurately presents your experience is both unethical and unhelpful. You should avoid purposefully inflating the popularity or effectiveness of something as well as purposefully damaging a reputation without cause. Simply limit your review to truth without exaggeration.
2. Clarity: If a review is not clear in presenting ideas, it will be disregarded completely. Your opinion, advice, and/or recommendation should all be easily recognizable.
3. Specificity: The brainstorm helps to refine your focus so that your review does not ramble with unnecessary detail or overlook needed support.
4. Politeness: Always remember that a review is communication, so on the otherside of your often anonymous review is an actual reader. Especially when dealing directly with a company, recognize that your review may have an impact on someone. This understanding should not come at the cost of being honest, but it should influence your tone.

## Organization

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The review should begin with a brief description of the context for the use of the product or your experience. For example, knowing that your negative review of a flight is given in the context of an unexpected snowstorm gives the readers context of how much of your review is applicable to their situation. Another example would be if you used a security camera inside a building instead of outside, it can help a reader know if your context is similar. Keep this section short and specific.

Your thesis statement for this type of writing will be your overall opinion, advice, or recommendation. This should be very clear and obvious.

Next, explain both the positives and negatives you identified in your brainstorm. These points should highlight the parts of your own experience that you think someone needs to know before continuing. Online reviews will often include bullet points to list the pros and cons. This simplifies reading the review and makes it easier for someone to process. Bulleted items will often be reduced to phrases rather than sentences. For example, the bulleted pros and cons list of a review for a camera battery might say: *lasts for seven hours, takes too long to charge, not worth the cost* etc.

Remember to restate your thesis so that your purpose in writing the review is abundantly clear to the readers.

The length of a review response should be around a paragraph. If the paragraph is any longer, readers will either skim or move to a different review. A longer response typically does not narrow the focus enough on the most important ideas to share with a reader.

In some online review contexts, photos or videos can be helpful additions to clarify your bullet point pros/cons. For example, describing a festival as well-attended or organized will not be as powerful to a reader as seeing videos or pictures that show crowds of people or short lines.

## Exercises

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### Exercise 1: Online shopping reviews

*Work with a partner to discuss the following questions.*

1. Do you read reviews before buying something online? Do you read the reviews before agreeing to a service or experience? Why or why not?
2. Do you follow any social media influencers? Why do you follow them?
3. Have you ever purchased a product or experience because of a review? Why or why not?
4. How often do you write reviews (your native language included) about products or experiences you purchased? How often do you review them informally (such as in a conversation or social media post)?

### Exercise 2: Reviewing reviews

*As a group, choose a product or experience that you are either familiar with or are interested in knowing more about. Follow the steps below to complete this exercise.*

1. Search online to find reviews.
2. Read one positive review (4 or 5 stars, 9/10 or 10/10, etc).
3. Read one negative review (1 star, 0/10 or 1/10, etc).
4. Discuss what details, examples, or other points in the two reviews had the most influence over your opinion.
5. After reading the reviews, do the members of your group feel more or less confident in the product or experience?

### Exercise 3: Brainstorm

*As a class, you will choose a general product or experience that everyone is familiar with. For example, you may choose cellphones or your experience traveling to the United States.*

Use the questions above to create a brainstorm for your review. Compare your brainstorm with a partner.

## Exercise 4: Write a product review

*Choose a product that you recently purchased to use as the focus of this review.*

1. Decide on your intended audience, but keep the unintended audience in mind.
2. Brainstorm using the questions in this chapter.
3. Write a product review draft

## Exercise 5: Write an experience review

*Choose an experience that you recently participated in to use as the focus of this review.*

1. Decide on your intended audience, but keep the unintended audience in mind.
2. Brainstorm using the questions in this chapter.
3. Write a product review draft



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# Example Comparison Writing

## Writing without Words

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What could two cultures separated from one another by hundreds of years and thousands of miles ever have in common with one another? How could the Pharaohs of Egypt, ruling their desert kingdom from the banks of the Nile River in Africa be similar to the kings of the ancient Mayan civilizations found deep in the jungles of Central America? The answer might surprise you. While the Egyptians and the Maya have many obvious differences and come from two very unique and varied cultures, they shared several interesting similarities. Some surprising commonalities between these two ancient civilizations include the construction of massive stone pyramids, the creation and use of complex astrological calendars, and even a common belief in certain traditional myths and certain aspects of their respective religions. However, one of the most intriguing similarities between ancient Egyptian and Mayan culture is their use of hieroglyphs in their writing. Egyptian and Mayan hieroglyphs were used in similar ways to represent language and they died in similar ways because they were closed systems that became so exclusive in their use that after conquerors arrived, they were lost.

First, it is important to understand hieroglyphs generally. Hieroglyphs, or using certain symbols instead of writing words, was a common practice among several civilizations in the past. For example, the ancient Babylonian empire wrote with wedge-shaped cuneiform symbols, Vikings used Nordic runes, members of the Chinese dynasties of antiquity used symbols similar to the Hanzi still used today, and several ancient American groups like the Inca, Aztec, and Olmec people all relied on glyphs in their pictorial writing systems (Hamann, 2008). There's plenty of evidence to support the idea that several civilizations used to utilize a set of specific symbols to record their stories, traditions, laws, ceremonial rites, and communication with one another, but Egyptian and Mayan hieroglyphs are uniquely similar.

One of the main similarities between Mayan and Egyptian hieroglyphs is that both systems of writing use glyphs that represent physical objects like animals, parts of the human body, plants, the sun, the moon, stars, food, mountains, and much more (Hamann, 2008). Other languages like cuneiform, Norse runes, and ancient Chinese used symbols in their writing, but these symbols were mostly abstract in nature and did not represent any physical item in the real world (Hamann, 2008). In Egyptian and Mayan writing, these pictorial images largely represented what they looked like. For example, a vulture included in a series of carvings found in an Egyptian tomb could simply represent exactly what it was carved to look like: a vulture (Jespersen & Reintges, 2008). These pictorial symbols that represent exactly what they look like are called "ideograms" when they refer to Egyptian symbols and "logograms" for Mayan inscriptions (Thomas, 1893). These ideograms are one type of hieroglyph, representing an entire word. However, Egyptian and Mayan writing was much more than an overly complex game of pictiography.

A second type of glyph found in both Mayan and Egyptian hieroglyphs was used to represent sounds, rather than entire words. These glyphs are symbols found in both Egyptian and Mayan archaeological sites that do not look like a physical object (e.g., a bird), or the pictorial glyphs are used in a way that seems to suggest "that these characters were something more than mere conventional symbols" (Thomas, 1893, p. 242). When referencing these symbols in Egyptian, they are usually called "phonograms" and the Mayan symbols are usually called "syllabograms" (Thomas, 1893). These glyphs are commonly combined with other glyphs to form words or ideas because they don't seem to hold meaning on their own.

The two writing systems died in a similar fashion due to the fact they were both closed systems. The Egyptian and Mayan writing systems were very well adapted to recording information with both types of glyphs, but only within their own language. In contrast, other ancient writing systems, like the Babylonian cuneiform, could be used to record information from a variety of sources (Houston, Baines, & Cooper, 2003), instead of being limited to Babylonian. This meant that a writing system like cuneiform could be termed as an open writing system which could easily serve the needs of many diverse cultures and languages (Houston, Baines, & Cooper, 2003). Egyptian and Mayan scripts were "far more 'closed,' and, in the Maya case, exceptionally clumsy in recording other languages" (Houston, Baines, & Cooper, 2003, p. 457). The Egyptians and Mayans were both relatively isolated groups of people who had little contact with other civilizations, so their development of closed language systems is not surprising.

In addition to being closed, the use of the systems became more exclusive, which contributed to their decline. Archaeologists and other researchers have noted that Egyptian hieroglyphs were not used by common people of lower social classes in their day to day writing or communications but that "...the monumental, pictorial form which is now seen as emblematic of Egypt, was used essentially for display among the elite (including communication with the gods)" (Houston, Baines, & Cooper, 2003, 439). As time progressed, it is apparent that Egyptian hieroglyphs became even more temple-oriented and Mayan glyphs, in a similar fashion, became more restricted in their use "...with a near-total attenuation of public functions. Mayan glyphs were identified, at least in their non-calendrical portion, with a religious system...similarly, Egyptian writing was closely linked to traditional religion" (Houston, Baines, & Cooper, 2003, 467). As both Egyptian and Mayan hieroglyphs became more restricted in their use, another force was introduced into their culture that forever changed the way these two groups communicated: invaders. When the Roman Empire invaded Egypt they brought their own language with them, just like the Spanish conquistadors did when they arrived in the new world and set about subjecting the native American people, including the Maya.

With the arrival of conquerors, different writing systems were introduced into the culture, replacing the previously used hieroglyphs. The use of the native languages and hieroglyphic writing systems became highly stigmatized. Researchers have noted that both cultures now had alternative writing systems, "often connected to dominant groups and languages...Greek in Egypt, Spanish among the Maya - that did not have problematic connections to languages and...cultures of diminished interest" (Houston, Baines, & Cooper, 2003, 467). Eventually the meaning of the Egyptian and Mayan writing system was lost, only leaving a handful of clues carved into stone monuments and painted on temple walls for future anthropologists to try and decipher their original meanings.

While the Mayan and Egyptian cultures seem very different from one another, the two cultures actually share several things in common with one another. One of the most interesting similarities between these two ancient civilizations is their use of a hieroglyphic writing system that was both symbolic and phonetic. Both writing systems were "closed" or, in other words, highly specific to their own language and culture. Because of this, and an increasingly exclusive use of hieroglyphs, both languages died out with the arrival of foreign conquerors. Their pyramids remain among the most visible wonders of the world in places like Giza and Chichen Itza, but their hieroglyphic systems, shrouded in mystery, easily slip into the forgotten, dusty annals of the past.

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# Exercises

## Exercise 1: Analyze an essay

Use these questions to evaluate the example essay below.

### Introduction

1. Does the introduction provide the general information a reader needs in order to understand the topic?
2. Does the introduction end with an effective thesis? Does it match the style of the essay?

### Body Paragraphs

1. Do each of the body paragraphs begin with an effective topic sentence?
2. Are the body paragraphs sequenced in a logical order?
3. Look at each body paragraph. Do the supporting sentences support the topic sentence?
4. Look at each body paragraph. Are the supporting sentences sequenced in a logical order?
5. Look at each body paragraph. Is there enough development? Are there more details or examples that would help the reader?
6. Look at each body paragraph. Does the concluding sentence close the paragraph logically?

### Conclusion

1. Does the conclusion paragraph start by restating the thesis?
2. Does the conclusion paragraph have a suggestion, prediction, or opinion at the end?



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# Prewriting

In the prewriting stage of a researched essay, you will do a lot of reading and information gathering. In this stage of the process, you should keep your information organized carefully so that you can find it when it comes time to write your essay.

## Understand the assignment

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In your essay, you will describe how two topics are similar to and different from each other. You are not arguing that one is better than the other; you are simply drawing comparisons between them.

## Brainstorm

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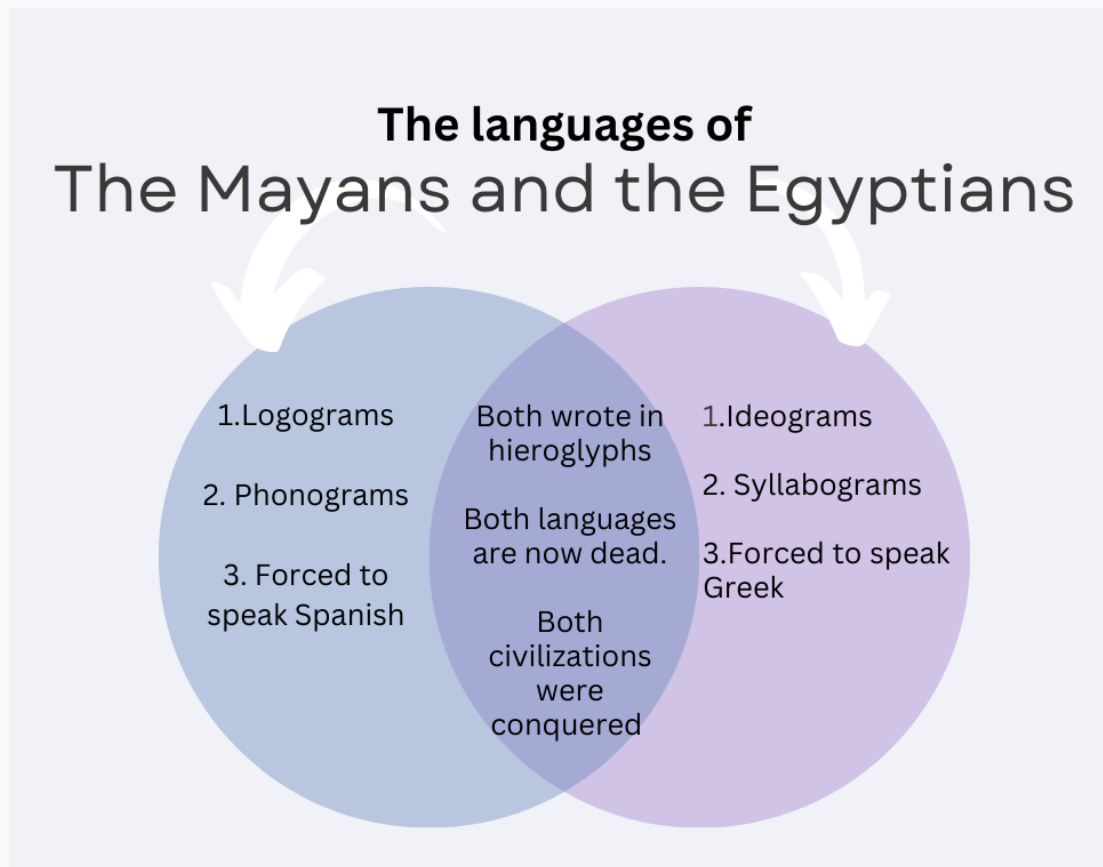
You can start brainstorming for a comparison essay by thinking about a category of things you are interested in (e.g., ancient civilizations, languages, advertising styles, etc.).

## Helpful Tip

A Venn diagram or a T-chart are both great ways to brainstorm for a comparison essay!

A Venn diagram is a chart with overlapping circles. In one circle, write your first topic, in the other, write your second topic. In the overlap of the two circles, write any similarities between the two topics.

Look at the example below:



## Research

Choose a topic you are interested in and type “types of \_\_\_\_” in a Google search (e.g., Types of natural disasters). Look at a list and choose two (e.g., hurricanes and tsunamis) to compare. Encyclopedias can also be an excellent source of information on your two topics. Example topics could include the following:

- Neurology and psychology
- Buddhism and Hinduism
- Diabetes and hypoglycemia
- Chitin and cellulose
- Surrealism and impressionism
- Gothic architecture and Baroque architecture

Finding sources to support your ideas can be a challenge. Here is a list of the type of information you might want to find from a source:

- Descriptions (ex. define the two topics, physical descriptions, explain impact)
- Statistics (ex. sales, effectiveness, usage, etc.)
- Stories (ex. experiences that highlight sameness or difference)

Depending on your topics, an internet search for "differences between \_\_ and \_\_" or "similarities between \_\_ and \_\_" might give you helpful results.

Remember that after you do enough preliminary research to brainstorm and choose your focus, you should do more detailed research about your topic so that you can make your outline.

## Choose a focus

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Make sure the topic isn't too broad to cover in your essay. You should be able to find concrete examples of similarities and differences between your two topics.

## Thesis

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At the end of your introduction paragraph, you should write your thesis. The thesis may list the categories that will be used for the comparisons in your body paragraphs. It may simply argue that the two topics are distinct. Note examples of comparison theses:

At the end of your introduction paragraph, you should write your thesis. The thesis may list the categories that will be used for the comparisons in your body paragraphs. It may simply argue that the two topics are distinct.

### Example Comparison Thesis Statements

1. While endoskeletons and exoskeletons both serve the same structural purposes in organisms, they are made of different materials.
2. Laissez-faire capitalism maximizes profits by removing tariffs and economic liberalism promotes business by emphasizing the importance of competition, although both seek to minimize governmental influence in trade.

### Here are some phrases that are useful for writing a comparison thesis:

- **Even though** they seem different, X and Y are both...
- X and Y are both \_\_\_\_\_, **but**...
- X and Y may share similar functions, **yet**...

# Outline

Start with your topic sentences and thesis. Add questions or quotes to help you develop each of your ideas. The organizational pattern you choose may depend on how much information you have for each topic. Each topic sentence should support your thesis. You may have several paragraphs that explain just one point of your thesis.

The outline for a comparison essay can be very flexible. Read the example thesis below and compare it to each of the outlines. Each outline could be effective for this thesis.

## Example Outlines

**TH: Carbohydrates differ from proteins in the way they are consumed, stored, and used.**

### Outline #1

- TS: Carbohydrates and proteins are consumed through different food.
- TS: Carbohydrates are stored in the liver and muscles whereas protein is not stored.
- TS: Carbohydrates are used to give energy.
- TS: Proteins are used to build muscles.

### Outline #2

- TS: Carbohydrates are consumed by eating bread, pasta, and fruit.
- TS: Proteins are consumed by eating eggs, nuts, and meat.
- TS: Carbohydrates are stored in the liver and muscles whereas protein is not stored.
- TS: Carbohydrates are used to give energy.
- TS: Proteins are used to build muscles.

### Option #3

- TS: Carbohydrates are consumed by eating bread, pasta, and fruit.
- TS: Proteins are consumed by eating eggs, nuts, and meat.
- TS: Carbohydrates are stored in the liver and muscles.
- TS: Protein is not typically stored.
- TS: Carbohydrates are used to give energy.
- TS: Proteins are used to build muscles.

### Option #4

- TS: Carbohydrates are consumed by eating bread, pasta, and fruit.
- TS: Carbohydrates are stored in the liver and muscles.
- TS: Carbohydrates are used to give energy.
- TS: Proteins are consumed by eating eggs, nuts, and meat.
- TS: Protein is not typically stored.
- TS: Proteins are used to build muscles.

### Option #5

- TS: Carbohydrates and proteins are consumed through different food.
- TS: Storage methods vary between carbohydrates and proteins.
- TS: Carbohydrates and proteins are used differently.

Your body paragraphs should explain how or why your thesis sentence is true. You can organize your body paragraphs in two general ways: the block method or the point-by-point method.

**1. The block method** organizes your body paragraphs by keeping everything about one topic (e.g., freshwater fish: diet, habitat, size) together before transitioning to the second topic (e.g., saltwater fish: diet, habitat, size).

In shorter academic essays that follow the block method of organization, there is often only one paragraph for each of the topics. When writing a longer academic essay, think of the block method not as one large paragraph about each topic but as a section of your paper, made up of several paragraphs that relate to the same topic.

**2: The point-by-point method** alternates between both topics in every body paragraph (e.g., habitat of both freshwater and saltwater fish, then their diets).

## Block Method

### Example 1: Education

Thesis:

*While Zoom classes and in-person learning are very different learning experiences, they are both viable ways to help students reach their potential.*

#### Body Paragraph 1: Zoom classes

*Students learn through Self-directed learning out of class (teacher).*

*Learning through Zoom is easily accessible for all students.*

#### Body Paragraph 2: In-person classes

*Students have physical interpersonal interaction and support*

*Students build relationships with professors.*

## Point-by-Point Method

### Example 1: Education

Thesis:

*While Zoom classes and in-person learning are very different learning experiences, they are both viable ways to help students reach their potential.*

#### Body Paragraph 1: Learning

*Zoom classes*

*In-person classes*

#### Body Paragraph 2: Student relationships

*Zoom classes*

*In person classes*

### Example 2: Facial hair

Thesis: Although mustaches and beards are very similar, there are some surprising differences between them.

#### Body Paragraph 1: Mustaches

*Convenient*

*Good for people with sparse facial hair*

*Easy to maintain*

#### Body Paragraph 2: Beards

*Require special products*

### Example 2: Facial hair

Thesis: Although mustaches and beards are very similar, there are some surprising differences between them.

#### Body Paragraph 1: Maintenance

*Mustaches*

*Beards*

#### Body Paragraph 2: Public Perception

*Mustaches*

*Beards*

*Are a popular style*

*Easy to decorate*

\*Optional Opposite POV Body Paragraph 3: more similar than different.

*Both are better than having to shave everyday*

*Both require special oils for maintenance*

*Both are a classy style for men.*

Restated Thesis:

*Although Mustaches and beards are very different, they also share many essential characteristics.*

Body Paragraph 3: Eating

*Mustaches*

*Beards*

Restated Thesis:

*Although Mustaches and beards are very different, they also share many essential characteristics.*

Your body paragraphs should explain how or why your thesis sentence is true. You can organize your body paragraphs in two general ways: the block method or the point-by-point method.

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## Block Method

Example 1: Education

Thesis:

*While Zoom classes and in-person learning are very different learning experiences, they are both viable ways to help students reach their potential.*

Body Paragraph 1: Zoom classes

*Students learn through Self-directed learning out of class (teacher).*

*Learning through Zoom is easily accessible for all students.*

Body Paragraph 2: In-person classes

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Example 1: Education

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*Beards*

Body Paragraph 2: Public Perception

*Mustaches*

*Beards*

Body Paragraph 3: Eating

*Mustaches*

*Beards*

Restated Thesis:

*Although Mustaches and beards are very different, they also share many essential characteristics.*

## Exercises

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### Exercise 1: Revising thesis statements:

Revise these thesis statements to be more effective for a comparison essay.

1. There are three differences that make introverts better than extroverts.
2. Hurricanes and tornadoes are not the same kinds of storms.
3. Even though gastritis and stomach cancer are not the same disease, there are many similarities that doctors should know to give an accurate diagnosis.
4. These three aspects, although they may seem simple and general, can help us to understand more clearly each one in order to learn about the social impact they have today among the world's population.
5. Though baroque and romantic music are very similar, we will see the differences in style and instruments.
6. Pizarro and Cortés were conquerors of the new world.

### Exercise 2: Evaluate an outline

What advice would you give to the author of the following student outline? Is it an effective outline for a comparison essay?

- TH: Although both foxes belong to the same family, their environment, eating habits, and characteristics are different.
- TS: There are different living environments for foxes.
- TS: Just because they both have fox in their names, these foxes actually have different eating habits.
- TS: These foxes both have characteristics that help them survive.



### Exercise 3: Complete an outline.

Some preliminary research about Venus and Earth is presented in the T-chart below. Using the information, create a thesis for a comparison essay. Then write as many different outlines for your thesis as you can. Experiment with both block and point-by-point organization.

Venus	Earth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The atmosphere is mostly carbon dioxide (97%).</li><li>• The average temperature is 461 degrees Celsius.</li><li>• There are no moons.</li><li>• It takes 225 days to go around the sun.</li><li>• Rotates clockwise</li><li>• The diameter is 12,104 km.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The atmosphere is mostly nitrogen (78%) and oxygen (21%).</li><li>• The average temperature is 14 degrees Celsius.</li><li>• There is one moon.</li><li>• It takes 365 days to go around the sun.</li><li>• Rotates counterclockwise</li><li>• The diameter is 12,756 km.</li></ul>

### Exercise 4: Organization

There are two different ways that you can organize a comparison essay.

Directions:

1. Choose one of the prompts below.
2. Create an outline for a comparison essay using the **point-by-point** method. When you have finished, rewrite your outline so that it is in the **block** method. How do the two outlines differ? What are the advantages of each organizational style?

#### Comparison writing prompts:

1. Soccer players vs. basketball players
2. You and your best friend
3. Androids vs. iPhones
4. Your culture vs. American culture

## Exercise 5: Write your own thesis

After brainstorming ideas, write a thesis using the examples from the chapter as a model. Remember that your thesis can follow many structures, and does not necessarily need to follow a five-paragraph format.

## Exercise 6: Make your own outline

Brainstorm some of your own ideas for a comparison essay! You can do this with a t-chart, Venn diagram, or any other graphic organizer.



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# Writing Skill: Unity

Now that you have an outline or idea of what you want to write, you can begin writing your draft. While you write your draft you should make sure that all of your main ideas (the thesis for the essay as a whole and the topic sentences for the individual paragraphs) have support that is unified in helping the reader understand that main idea.

**Unity** is the idea that many parts combine together or are all connected to one idea. Writing has unity when the supporting sentences all work together to support the topic sentences and all the paragraphs work together to support the thesis statement. Paragraphs that lack unity are confusing to the reader because some ideas do not seem to belong.

Compare the examples below. The first paragraph has poor unity because there are sentences that do not support the topic sentence.

## Example: Body Paragraph (Poor Unity)

Chopin was a musical prodigy. While many people are aware of the great pieces he wrote, not as many people are aware of how young he was when he began his musical career. Chopin published one of his first pieces at the age of seven and one year later performed in a public concert (Plantinga & Hendley, 2018). At an astonishingly young age, he truly showed great musical talent in both of these things. While it may be hard to imagine, his interest in music may have begun even earlier. "In infancy Chopin was always strangely moved when listening to his mother or eldest sister playing the piano" (Plantinga & Hendley, 2018, "Life," para. 1). Many children show some response to music in their infancy. This early sensitivity may have helped his early desire to create and perform. It is clear that he was musically gifted very early in life.

## Example: Body Paragraph (Revised for Unity)

Chopin was a musical prodigy. While many people are aware of the great pieces he wrote, not as many people are aware of how young he was when he began his musical career. Chopin published one of his first pieces at the age of seven and one year later performed in a public concert (Plantinga & Hendley, 2018). At an astonishingly young age, he truly showed great musical talent in both of these things. While it may be hard to imagine, his interest in music may have begun even earlier. "In infancy Chopin was always strangely moved when listening to his mother or eldest sister playing the piano" (Plantinga & Hendley, 2018, "Life," para. 1). ~~Many children show some response to music in their infancy.~~ This early sensitivity may have helped his early desire to create and perform. It is clear that he was musically gifted very early in life.

## When should I start a new paragraph?

1. **When you begin a new idea or point.** New ideas should always start in new paragraphs. If you have an extended idea that spans multiple paragraphs, each new point within that idea should have its own paragraph.
2. **To contrast information or ideas.** Separate paragraphs can serve to contrast sides in a debate, different points in an argument, or any other difference.
3. **When your readers need a pause.** Breaks in paragraphs function as a short "break" for your readers—adding these in will help your writing more readable. You would create a break if the paragraph becomes too long or the material is complex.
4. **When you are ending your introduction or starting your conclusion.** Your introductory and concluding material should always be in a new paragraph. Many introductions and conclusions have multiple paragraphs depending on their content, length, and the writer's purpose.

<https://www.palomar.edu/pages/eminamide/wp-content/uploads/sites/36/2013/02/Crafting-Effective-Paragraphs.pdf>

## Unity In and Across the Parts of an Essay

You will need to have unity within paragraphs and between paragraphs. Having unity *within* paragraphs means that your supporting sentences in a particular paragraph all support the topic sentence of that paragraph. Having unity *between* paragraphs means that your paragraphs all support the thesis statement of the essay. Consider how you can draft your essays to have unity within and between paragraphs as you read about drafting the parts of a cause/effect essay below.

### Introductions

As you write your introduction, think about the information your reader needs to understand your topic so they feel ready for the thesis when they read it. Read the following thesis. What information would help a reader understand the general topic so he is ready for the thesis?

*TH: Positive urban development is the result of careful planning, wise investing, and a good understanding of the needs of the area.*

The reader needs to know what the author means by "positive urban development" so that when they read the thesis, they will be ready to learn about the causes of this type of development. The introduction may start discussing how cities change generally and then introduce the idea of positive changes like growth, stability, and safety. Then the reader should feel prepared for this thesis.

The ideas in the background information are all connected to the topic of the thesis statement. They support the reader's understanding of the thesis statement. All of the background sentences should be unified with the main idea of the essay: the thesis statement. The introduction paragraph is unique; it has a hook, not a topic sentence. The main idea of the introduction is instead found in the thesis statement. That is the main idea the background information should connect to and prepare the reader to understand.

## Body Paragraphs

As you write your body paragraphs, keep your focus on explaining how and why your topic sentences are true. It can be easy to get distracted when incorporating research into body paragraphs, but make sure everything you write supports the topic sentence.

If a detail doesn't obviously support the topic sentence of a body paragraph, add 1-2 sentences to explain how in your mind it does connect to and support the main idea OR delete it. If a whole body paragraph doesn't obviously support the thesis statement of the essay, revise the word choice, cohesive device choice, or source used to show how in your mind it does connect to and support the main idea OR delete the paragraph. If a sentence or paragraph doesn't support the main idea it will just confuse the reader.

## Conclusion Paragraphs

As you write your conclusion paragraph, you should keep your focus on your restated thesis statement. It is the same idea as the thesis statement just in different words, so it is the same idea as the main idea of the whole essay. You maybe will summarize your essay which will focus on that main idea. Or, you may extend the essay in the conclusion to a broader community and the main idea's global impact, but your supporting sentences should still be about the main idea. Be careful not to lose that main idea at the very end. Even your concluding sentence should connect back to the restated thesis statement in some way.

## Exercises

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## Exercise 1: Revise for unity.

*Revise the paragraphs for unity.*

1. The vegetarian diet is one that eliminates animal meat from your diet. The benefits of a vegetarian diet include the low intake of saturated fats as well as the null contribution of cholesterol (King, 2014). In addition, with the vegetarian diet, we can include a greater amount of fiber, and even more, if we consume whole grains, which have been associated with a lower prevalence of some diseases (Taringa, 2015). On the other hand, the disadvantages that people who have a vegetarian diet have are a greater risk of suffering deficiencies of some micronutrients since the high consumption of fiber can prevent a correct absorption of minerals and also, some nutrients are scarce or none at all the vegetable kingdom.
2. Stress has external causes which includes financial problems, life events, and work pressure. We spend lot of time at workplace. A survey published by the American Psychological Association (APA) in 2012 found that as many as 70% of Americans reported suffering from workplace stress. In addition, according to APA, workplace stress costs 300 billion dollars annually to US companies. Second, financial worries, almost everyone has. These worries occur when we feel insecurity in financial circumstances. Kanner's Hassles Scale found that "a feeling of not being able to pay bills and live comfortably, as well as the burden of supporting others financially to be a key strain in our everyday lives" (Kanner et al, 1981). Third, Holmes and Rahe (1967) developed a questionnaire called the Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS) for identifying major stressful life events. According to them, a death, divorce, or major personal injury are higher among other stressful life event causes.

## Exercise 2: Write a body paragraph.

*Use the quotes below to draft a timed paragraph about volcanoes. Use at least one paraphrase in your paragraph.*

"Cinder cones are the simplest type of volcano. They are built from...congealed lava ejected from a single vent. As the gas-charged lava is blown violently into the air, it breaks into small fragments that solidify and fall as cinders around the vent to form a circular or oval cone. Most cinder cones have a bowl-shaped crater at the summit and rarely rise more than a thousand feet or so above their surroundings. Cinder cones are numerous in western North America as well as throughout other volcanic terrains of the world" (USGS, 2011, "Cinder Cones," para. 1).

"Shield volcanoes...are built almost entirely of fluid lava flows....building a broad, gently sloping cone of flat, domical shape, with a profile much like that of a warrior's shield. They are built up slowly by the accretion of thousands of highly fluid lava flows...that spread widely over great distances, and then cool as thin, gently dipping sheets....the largest of the shield volcanoes (and also the world's largest active volcano), projects 13,677 feet above sea level, its top is over 28,000 feet above the deep ocean floor" (USGS, 2011, "Shield Volcanoes," para. 1).

### Exercise 3: Write a body paragraph.

*This body paragraph has a topic sentence, two paraphrases, and a concluding sentence. On a piece of paper, add commentary and explanation in order to develop the body paragraph.*

#### DNA vs RNA

- DNA and RNA are structurally different.
- DNA is made up of a double-helix backbone, whereas RNA is made up of only a single strand (Eisen, 2017).
- Also, the nitrogenous bases are different. In DNA, the bases include A, T, C, and G; for RNA, the bases are A, C, G, and U (Eisen, 2017).

From these examples, we can see that DNA and RNA differ from each other structurally.

Sources: Summarizing

Revise Comparison Writing



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# Sources: Summarizing

When you summarize information, you explain the most important parts of a source text in your own words. You typically summarize something to make it shorter. The page number is not required in the in-text citation for a summary.

## An effective summary—

- explains the most important parts of the original.
- is written in your own words.
- keeps the original meaning.
- does not merely “cut” and “copy” from the original.
- is shorter than the original.

Below is an excerpt from a website article that describes genetically modified (GM) food. This example will be used on the next several pages to illustrate how to write a summary.

## Original Source

“GM crops are engineered for tolerance to synthetic pesticides and herbicides and for resistance to organic threats. They are developed for faster growth rates, to withstand environmental stressors, and for increased productivity. GM foods are also designed to produce consistently tastier products.”

Genetically Modified Food. (2021). In Gale Opposing Viewpoints Online Collection.

## Example Summary

Scientists created GM crops in order to provide more food in less space, to improve the taste of the crops, and to protect them from damage by environmental conditions, insects, and other plants (*Genetically Modified Food*, 2021).

## Here are some simple steps you can follow in order to create a summary:

1. Determine your purpose.
2. Read or listen to what you will summarize.
3. Make a list of the main points.
4. Write the summary.
5. Compare the summary to the original.

## Determine your purpose

The purpose of your summary will help you determine which details you should include. Compare the example summaries below. The first summary focuses on the reason for prohibiting GM foods in many countries. The second summary focuses on the disagreement between different groups on this topic. While both include only information found in the original source, the two summaries signal different points of view on the topic.

### Example Source

"Scientists and regulatory bodies agree that human consumption of GM foods is safe. But widespread consumption of GM foods has occurred for less than twenty years. Therefore, concern exists that unintended health hazards have yet to be determined. Activist campaigns have led thirty-eight countries to prohibit the cultivation of GM crops."

*Genetically Modified Food*. (2021). In Gale Opposing Viewpoints Online Collection.

### Example: Student Summary 1

The young history of GM modified foods doesn't allow us to properly understand the consequences on human health which leads to postponing its use in different countries (*Genetically Modified Food*, 2021).

### Example: Student Summary 2

Although there are anti-GM activists that claim these foods should be banned because there is not enough data to know what impact GM foods have on our bodies long term, food regulation organizations and scientists maintain that it is safe to eat GM foods (*Genetically Modified Food*, 2021).

## Read/listen

Read or listen carefully so you understand the source well enough to summarize it.

## Make a list

As you read/listen, pay attention to the main ideas and major details of the source material. In some cases, there may be sections of the original source that are not relevant to the point you want to support in your paragraph. Be careful not to change the meaning or misrepresent the original author's intent when excluding any details from the original source in your paraphrase. For this example, the entire original source will be paraphrased.

You should make a list of the main points. Compare the example paragraph and the example list below.

Example: Original Source	Example: List
Proponents of GM foods argue that biotechnology can produce disease- and infestation-immune crops. They say that these crops will grow in difficult environments. They will also provide much-needed nutritional supplements able to correct widespread global hunger. One such example is Golden Rice. This rice is enriched with beta-carotene for the purpose of eliminating illness and death caused by vitamin A deficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Pro-GM groups assert that the modifications lead to stronger, healthier crops.</li><li>-GMs can survive harsh environments.</li><li>-Global hunger can be remedied with nutrient-rich GMs.</li><li>-The vitamin A enriching modification to Golden Rice is an example of the potential health benefits of a GM.</li></ul>

## Write the summary

Without looking at/listening to the original, use your list to write your summary. Again, it is important to focus on the ideas. Use your own words to write your summary.

Example: List	Example Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Pro-GM groups assert that the modifications lead to stronger, healthier crops.</li><li>-GMs can survive harsh environments.</li><li>-Global hunger can be remedied with nutrient-rich GMs.</li><li>-The vitamin A enriching modification to Golden Rice is an example of the potential health benefits of a GM.</li></ul>	Pro-GM groups assert that modifications lead to stronger that can survive harsh environments and global hunger can be remedied with nutrient-rich GMs, as in the case of the vitamin A enriching modification to Golden Rice ( <i>Genetically Modified Food</i> , 2021).

Notice how the items on the list are not just copied and pasted together into one big sentence. The ideas are connected together carefully. The order is changed a little and some of the ideas are condensed. There are different synonyms used and there are new sentence structures.

## Compare to the original

After you write your summary, you should compare it to the original. Make sure that the ideas have not been changed, but that the words/syntax are distinct. Make revisions as necessary.

### Example: Original Source

Proponents of GM foods argue that biotechnology can produce disease- and infestation-immune crops. They say that these crops will grow in difficult environments. They will also provide much-needed nutritional supplements able to correct widespread global hunger. One such example is Golden Rice. This rice is enriched with beta-carotene for the purpose of eliminating illness and death caused by vitamin A deficiency.

### Example: Summary

Pro-GM groups assert that modifications lead to stronger that can survive harsh environments and global hunger can be remedied with nutrient-rich GMs, as in the case of the vitamin A enriching modification to Golden Rice (*Genetically Modified Food*, 2021).

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Summarize

Using the tips in this chapter, practice summarizing the following ideas.

Original Source: Food loss occurs for many reasons, with some types of loss—such as spoilage—occurring at every stage of the production and supply chain. Between the farm gate and retail stages, food loss can arise from problems during drying, milling, transporting, or processing that expose food to damage by insects, rodents, birds, molds, and bacteria. At the retail level, equipment malfunction (such as faulty cold storage), over-ordering, and culling of blemished produce can result in food loss. Consumers also contribute to food loss when they buy or cook more than they need and choose to throw out the extras (See Buzby et al (2014)).

Source: USDA. (n.d.). Food waste FAQs. *United States Department of Agriculture*.  
<https://www.usda.gov/foodwaste/faqs>.

## Exercise 2: Summarize

Using the tips in this chapter, practice summarizing the following ideas.

Original Source: During procrastination, individuals anticipate that the task they should do is much more aversive than they actually perceive it when they are engaging in it. Therefore, they may not feel well during procrastination because of guilt feelings or because the alternative activity is not diverting (e.g., cleaning the kitchen) but there still might be a (negative) reinforcement effect by avoiding a task, which they *expect* to be even more unpleasant than the feeling they experience in the moment of procrastination.

Source: Gort, C., Marcusson-Clavertz, D., & Kuehner, C. (2021). Procrastination, affective state, rumination, and sleep quality: Investigating reciprocal effects with ambulatory assessment. *Journal of Rational-Emotive & Cognitive-Behavior Therapy*, 39, 58-85.

Source:

"Organic Food." *Gale Opposing Viewpoints Online Collection*, Gale, 2019. *Gale In Context: Opposing Viewpoints*, [link.gale.com/apps/doc/PC3010999057/OVIC?u=byuprovo&sid=bookmark-OVIC&xid=ce61adfb](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/PC3010999057/OVIC?u=byuprovo&sid=bookmark-OVIC&xid=ce61adfb). Accessed 30 Mar. 2022.



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# Revise Comparison Writing

## Veggie and Omnivore Diets

In the current social scheme of humankind we can see that there might be some differences between what a vegetarian diet can do for humanity and the popular favorite omnivore diet. Whether by personal preference or due to medical reasons, a person can choose between them two, and see different benefits. These diets can accommodate nutritional demands, personal preference in regard to taste, affordability, accessibility for the consumer and convenience for the environment as well.

The vegetarian diet has a variety of benefits, some of which include personal, agricultural, and global. Adopting a vegetarian diet has been proven to lower and prevent disease in people in all stages of life, young or old. Some of these diseases include diabetes, cancer, depression, and heart disease. It has been proven that by adding more legumes, seeds, roots, vegetables, and fruits to a diet one's health will become more stable and healthy. It is important to note that to notice these changes the diet must be consistent and long lasting. "!"

Whereas if a large population partakes in this diet, the agricultural real will see great growth and change. Because much of today's agriculture is dedicated to growing food for cattle, there has been a decrease in the amount of greens available for human consumption and production compared to industrial farming. Research has shown that in the United States "27% of crop land is used for direct human consumption, whereas 67% is used for animal feed" (1). By looking at these numbers agriculturists have come to the conclusion that to grow the percentage of human consumption, animal feed consumption therefore animal consumption should be reduced by adopting a more vegetarian diet.

When it comes to the global impact of vegetarianism it is easy to note that to allow for more crop growth and consumption farmers need to reduce the amount of animal feed crops; however, to do this world populations must first lessen the animal consumption. Besides this there is another reason vegetarianism is incentivised by the UN and other international organizations. That is the fact that Animal Agriculture has a big impact on the total amount of greenhouse gas emissions. Many agriculturists have come to the conclusion that "about 80% of these greenhouse gas emissions are related to three sectors, transportation, power production, and industries."(2)

On the other hand, omnivore diets that easily fit most pockets are simply convenient since its widespread consumption of ingredients around the world. A high percentage of communities and cultures from the world's population consume foods that include meat, an important missing ingredient for its vegetarian counterpart. Despite the differences between these two diets, both vegetarian and omnivore diets allow for nutritional benefits, personal preferences, and impacts on the environment.

## Exercises

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### Exercise 1: Revise an essay

Read the student essay. What suggestions would you give the author?

## References

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<https://www.vox.com/2014/8/21/6053187/cropland-map-food-fuel-animal-feed>

[https://www.usdairy.com/news-articles/dairy-farmers-advance-environmental-practices-get-results?gclid=CjwKCAjwwdWVBhA4EiwAjcYJEEVBHfhONOCdaJtYu\\_OZ0SdNXv5gF9s037mf-X50vSSYLClQ590KfxoCv2MQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.usdairy.com/news-articles/dairy-farmers-advance-environmental-practices-get-results?gclid=CjwKCAjwwdWVBhA4EiwAjcYJEEVBHfhONOCdaJtYu_OZ0SdNXv5gF9s037mf-X50vSSYLClQ590KfxoCv2MQAvD_BwE)

[https://www.humaneamerica.org/farm-animal-welfare?gclid=CjwKCAjwwdWVBhA4EiwAjcYJEOCPc49YpnCX5KAg7SZ-kb3ocGto5a8PPiUzqjDVGMuLYIKsrddaxoCYLAQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.humaneamerica.org/farm-animal-welfare?gclid=CjwKCAjwwdWVBhA4EiwAjcYJEOCPc49YpnCX5KAg7SZ-kb3ocGto5a8PPiUzqjDVGMuLYIKsrddaxoCYLAQAvD_BwE)

<https://foodprint.org/blog/climate-change-report/>

[https://www.beamup.charity/post/benefits-of-a-whole-food-plant-based-diet?gclid=CjwKCAjwwdWVBhA4EiwAjcYJEG4nfX1TihZUvQzpURhtr9CKyYBjVtoXv04QBLw5kjU9u8lwSpTbqhoCxXcQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.beamup.charity/post/benefits-of-a-whole-food-plant-based-diet?gclid=CjwKCAjwwdWVBhA4EiwAjcYJEG4nfX1TihZUvQzpURhtr9CKyYBjVtoXv04QBLw5kjU9u8lwSpTbqhoCxXcQAvD_BwE)

[https://www.usdairy.com/news-articles/dairy-farmers-advance-environmental-practices-get-results?gclid=CjwKCAjwwdWVBhA4EiwAjcYJEEVBHfhONOCdaJtYu\\_OZ0SdNXv5gF9s037mf-X50vSSYLClQ590KfxoCv2MQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.usdairy.com/news-articles/dairy-farmers-advance-environmental-practices-get-results?gclid=CjwKCAjwwdWVBhA4EiwAjcYJEEVBHfhONOCdaJtYu_OZ0SdNXv5gF9s037mf-X50vSSYLClQ590KfxoCv2MQAvD_BwE)

<https://www.vox.com/2014/8/21/6053187/cropland-map-food-fuel-animal-feed>



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# Revising

## 1 Exercise: Check your essay

*Use these questions to evaluate the example essay*

1. Does the introduction provide the general information a reader needs in order to understand the topic?
2. Does the introduction end with an effective thesis? Does it match the style of the essay?
3. Do each of the body paragraphs begin with an effective topic sentence?
4. Are the body paragraphs sequenced in a logical order?
5. Look at each body paragraph. Do the supporting sentences support the topic sentence?
6. Look at each body paragraph. Are the supporting sentences sequenced in a logical order?
7. Look at each body paragraph. Is there enough development? Are there more details or examples that would help the reader?
8. Look at each body paragraph. Does the concluding sentence close the paragraph logically?
9. Does the conclusion paragraph start by restating the thesis?
10. Does the conclusion paragraph have a suggestion, prediction, or opinion at the end?

## 2 Exercise: Revise a student introduction paragraph.

*Read the student introduction paragraph and evaluate how effective it is (see page 8 to review qualities of an effective introduction). Suggest revisions to the author.*

The first and second world wars have been two of the most cited and studied by historians and experts in literature during the last ten years. Both events represented two of the largest armed movements in human history leaving in their wake modifications and countless material and human losses. (Royde, 2007). It is interesting to study the causes, the development and the way in which these wars concluded, bringing with them a number of changes that continue to affect the current rhythm of life of people in the world today. At the same time, another important aspect is the comparison between World War I and World War II. Even when most people know about these events, few people know the true differences between them. There is a great list of comparisons between war and war but lately, we can conclude that there are three main aspects to compare between these famous wars. First, we can compare the causes, this means the real reasons and ambitions that different leaders in the world had and which in turn originated each one of these bellicose movements. (Tongue, 2016; Hammer, 2005). Second, because both wars took place at different times, it is possible to compare the strategies and innovations that each war had, as well as the advantages that favored the victory for some nations and the disadvantages that determined the failure of others. (Royde, 2007; Tongue, 2016). Finally, the causes, advantages, and disadvantages influenced the final results of each war, an aspect that is very comparable and cited in our days in books and historical articles. (Tongue, 2016; Sanchez, 2014). This is how we can see the differences between WWI and WWII.



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# Timed Writing (Comparison)

## The Prompt

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One of the challenges of timed writing is making quick decisions about content and organization. The brainstorming stage is limited and requires you to move swiftly into composing your paragraphs. A luxury of drafted writing is that you can spend time exploring different supporting ideas before revising and finalizing your essay.

With timed writing, a thorough understanding of the prompt is first needed. You need to recognize the linguistic task (compare, describe, argue, explain) and create a thesis statement and supporting points that make a clear road map for what you will say. Additionally, you need to check the prompt to ensure that you are addressing all of the points.

Once you have analyzed the prompt, you should be able to start structuring your outline to ensure you have all of the necessary components.

Making a brief list of the parts of the prompt that are most important to respond to or include is a great first step for creating your thesis statement, topic sentences, and overall outline.

Understanding and including all of the parts of the prompt is important for two reasons.

The first reason is that the question is specifically designed to get you to write about the target content. A multi-part question indicates the degree of complexity that the audience expects to find in your response. If you miss information from your response, it can be interpreted as missing knowledge about an important concept for the course.

Second, your audience may attribute missing information to a lack of language. This is especially true in a language test like the TOEFL where the audience knows nothing about your ability other than what you show. Not writing about part of the question could be an avoidance strategy because you do not have the vocabulary or grammar control necessary to respond. This may also be an unfortunate assumption at the college level as well, especially if your professor has minimal interaction with you.

Therefore, it's in your best interest to carefully read through the prompt and dissect it. This strategy will lead to a stronger response with more purposeful organization.

## Exercises

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## Exercise 1: Analyze Timed Writing Prompt

*Read the prompts below. Identify the linguistic task. Break the prompt down into the individual parts.*

1. Many people claim that a healthy diet is more important than exercise, while others believe that exercise has a larger impact on your overall health. Which do you think has a more significant impact on our overall physical well-being: the food we consume or the exercise we do? What do you think the short-term and long-term impacts of your choice are on an individual's health.
2. A significant problem for many people is the rising cost of living. Why do you think this is a prevalent issue in modern society? What solutions do you propose for closing the gap between the average income and the average cost of living? Be sure to address solutions at the individual, family, and societal levels.
3. Imagine the ideal future workplace. What does this work experience look like and how is it different from the one you live in now? Be sure to discuss both the differences in the physical spaces, the tasks that are done, and the expectations of employers. Do you think this ideal is possible? Why or why not?

## Exercise 2: Timed Writing (Prompt Focus)

*Choose one of the prompts below. Set a timer for 30 minutes. Write your response to the question. Remember to leave time for revision.*

1. Do you think that banning books from high school classrooms has a positive or negative impact on society? Why do you think that? What process should be followed to find a balance between student, parent, and educator opinions on this issue?
2. Your city council is considering changing the city ordinances to allow for more lighting in the downtown area. Part of the community is excited about this change because of the increased safety it provides for people living and working in that area. Others are concerned about higher light pollution in the city and the impact that will have on the environment. Write a short opinion article for the local newspaper explaining your position on this issue. Explain the short-term and long-term impacts of the change on the city. Try to persuade undecided readers to support your point of view.



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# Integrated Writing (Comparison)

## The Prompt

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Integrated writing prompts are also important to read and interpret. Just as with other writing assignment prompts, you need to recognize the linguistic task (compare, describe, argue, explain) and create a thesis statement and supporting points that make a clear road map for what you will say.

The difference with integrated writing prompts is that they may indicate if there is a hierarchy to the sources. Although integration tasks by nature require references to a set number of sources, that does not mean that the audience requires equal focus on each one.

The TOEFL integrated writing task, for example, places a priority on explaining the position of the lecture speaker and only using the reading to show contrast in the support. Therefore, your body paragraph should center on the listening source.

Check your prompt to see if any preference is shown for a source compared to others.

Once you have analyzed the prompt, you should be able to start structuring your outline to ensure you have all of the necessary components.

Making a brief list of the parts of the prompt that are most important to respond to or include is a great first step for creating your thesis statement, topic sentences, and overall outline.

Understanding and including all of the parts of the prompt is important for two reasons.

The first reason is that the question is specifically designed to get you to write about the target content. A multi-part question indicates the degree of comprehension and synthesis that the audience expects to find in your response. If you miss information from your response, it can be interpreted as an issue of listening and/or reading comprehension.

Second, your audience may attribute missing information to a lack of language. This is especially true in a language test like the TOEFL where the audience knows nothing about your ability other than what you show. Not writing about part of the question could be an avoidance strategy because you do not have the vocabulary or grammar control necessary to respond. This may also be an unfortunate assumption at the college level as well, especially if your professor has minimal interaction with you.

Therefore, it's in your best interest to carefully read through the prompt and dissect it. This strategy will lead to a stronger response with more purposeful organization.

# Exercises

## Exercise 1: Integrated Writing (Prompt Focus)

You have recently found yourself in conversations about water conservation in Utah. This is not a topic you are familiar with, especially since you recently moved to this state. You are hearing various points of view on the topic, but realize you need to learn more about it before you form your own opinions.

*Read one of the passages.*

[Wet winter is a 'gift,' but Utahns still need to conserve water, Cox says](#)

[Utah Rivers Council](#)

[KUTV Water Conservation](#)

*Now watch the video.*

[Who's really using up the water in the American West?](#)

*Set a timer for 20 minutes. Write your response to the question below. Remember to leave time for revision.*

- *In order to think through what you might say the next time this conversation comes up, write a short explanation of the issue (1 paragraph) and how you think Utah should respond to this concern (1 paragraph). Include any specific details or facts from the passage you selected and how it compares with the information presented in the video.*



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# Persuasive Writing

What is an opinion that you have? Why should a reader agree with your opinion? What is a course of action people should take? Why? Questions like these can lead to a persuasive essay. A **persuasive essay** is a type of opinion writing that not only gives your opinion and support but also tries to convince the reader to agree with you (WritingCity, n.d.). In this chapter, you will write a persuasive essay that uses research to support your ideas.

## Reference:

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Alternative Project: Reflections
Example Persuasive Writing
Prewriting
Writing Skill: Cohesion
Sources: Paraphrasing
Revising
Revise Persuasive Writing
Timed Writing (Persuasive)
Integrated Writing (Persuasive)





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# Alternative Project: Reflections

In the majority of this text, academic writing relies heavily on summaries and demonstrating a clear understanding of an issue. However, some academic writing you will encounter at the college level will have a different purpose and therefore requires a different approach.

## Purpose

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A reflection essay is primarily used by professors to hold students accountable for out of class learning. By requiring you to reflect about what you read or listened to as part of your homework, the reader is able to quickly identify three important outcomes from that homework:

- The student is prepared for the class discussion and/or to participate in a learning experience that requires background knowledge.
- The student understands key information and is attempting to integrate this new knowledge.
- The student can identify and explain questions, lack of understanding, or disagreement with the content.

The first of these outcomes is important because many courses will expect you to come to class with foundational knowledge in place so the professor can focus on the more challenging skills of applying, creating, evaluating, or analyzing. By holding you responsible for that initial learning, everyone in the class can take full advantage of the limited face-to-face time.

The second point is important because information does not exist in isolation. All new knowledge should connect to things you previously learned or what you are currently learning in other courses. Finding connections allows you to think more critically about the content and also improves the likelihood that you will retain the knowledge.

Finally, a reflection gives you time to think through your questions or your counterarguments. The professor can either prepare for the course by reading reflections in advance to anticipate questions or it can simply save time by having ready made comments and questions instead of losing time while you try to figure out what it is you don't understand and/or agree with.

As a last note about the purpose of reflections, there may be times when the assignment asks for **self-reflection**. This is a reflection where the student thinks about themselves rather than reading or listening to a source. In this type of reflection, the purposes are different from the three described above. Mostly your teacher wants to encourage reflection as a learning tool for you. The act of reflecting itself can help you to realize things about yourself and your learning. When reading self-reflection responses, your teacher will be looking to see that you answered the prompt and met the word count requirement. An example of a self-reflective prompt would be "How have you grown academically this semester?". If any self-reflection prompt seems too personal for you to answer, discuss the assignment and your concerns with your professor to find a solution. Most self-reflection questions should be more neutral though. For self-reflection assignments, use the activity for introspection and write something meaningful.

## Prewriting

Before you can begin writing your reflection, you must first prepare for the learning experience you are going to reflect on. One idea for preparing to write a reflection is using an adapted KWL chart. A typical KWL chart has a column for *know*, *want to know*, and *learned*. These are often used with reading assignments because it encourages students to connect to their background knowledge before learning something new. For this purpose of this assignment, the *want to know* column has been removed and *reflect* has been added. Look at the chart below and the prewriting questions in each column to help you understand what notes you might add there.

Know	Learned	Reflect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What do you already know about this topic?</li><li>• What beliefs (if any) do you have connected to this topic?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What about the experience stands out to you?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How did what you learn add to and/or change your understanding or opinions?</li><li>• What questions (if any) do you have after the learning experience?</li></ul>

## Writing

As stated previously, a reflection should not be a summary of the material. Rather, the reflection is focused on your feelings, reactions, beliefs, understanding, and other aspects of your experience during the learning process. This is meant to be more personal and subjective than other writing. This means that your reflection will vary from the others that are submitted because it is specific to you.

Although it is personal, it should still be academic in the tone. This should not sound like a social media post or an email with informal language. Remember that this is still an essay that will be reviewed by a professor and/or teaching assistant. So while personal pronouns may occur more frequently, the ideas should be expressed appropriately.

### Examples

#### Personal, but academic:

"After reading this chapter, I realized that my previous understanding of this idea didn't account for alternative viewpoints. I think that the variety of perspectives is interesting."

#### Personal, but too informal:

"Bro, I just read the chapter, and I had known about this idea before, but wow. People think some crazy different things about this topic than I do. Interesting. :)"

In many cases, a reflection-style essay will include some questions to prompt your writing. However, if the assignment does not include any specific questions to guide your reflection, you can use the example questions below to help you develop your ideas.

## General guiding questions for a reflection

- Does the reading, lecture, or experience challenge you socially, culturally, emotionally, or theologically? If so, where and how? Why does it bother you or catch your attention?
- Has the reading, lecture, or experience changed your way of thinking? Did it conflict with beliefs you held previously, and what evidence did it provide you with in order to change your thought process on the topic?
- Does the reading, lecture, or experience leave you with any questions? Were these questions ones you had previously or ones you developed only after finishing?
- Did the author, speaker, or those involved in the experience fail to address any important issues? Could a certain fact or idea have dramatically changed the impact or conclusion of the reading, lecture, or experience?
- How do the issues or ideas brought up in this reading, lecture, or experience mesh with past experiences or readings? Do the ideas contradict or support each other?

SOURCE: <https://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Reflection-Paper>

Depending on the length, complexity, and familiarity of the content you are reflecting on, you may have more ideas than you can develop in the limited space given for this assignment. In this case, it is important to carefully choose the ideas that most clearly demonstrate that you completed the work and have considered the implications of that learning.

On the other hand, you may find that your ideas for the reflection are encapsulated in one major idea. This is also appropriate as long as it can be fully developed and fulfill the purpose of the assignment.

## Organization

The organization of a reflection paper is generally dictated by the number of points you decide to include. In the case of multiple points of reflection, you may have topic sentences that separate your ideas into three or four paragraphs. If you only have one main idea, your essay may have more of a traditional thesis statement that expresses this overarching theme from the learning experience.

Most reflection essays range from about 300-700 words, which is about 1-2 pages double spaced.

### College Tip

While this chapter reviews the genre of reflections generally and gives examples of guiding reflection questions and common word count expectations, reflection requirements will vary by class.

Some teachers will just say "Write a reflection." and leave it to you to determine what type of guiding question to use to write your reflection. Some teachers will give specific prompts for you to reflect on particular aspects of what you learned or guide you to make specific connections etc. They may expect 300-700 words, or they may give a different word limit.

Always check with your teacher or the class syllabus to determine what the specific requirements for reflections in a course are.

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Evaluate

*You are now the teacher. You assigned your students to read this article, "[Oil Removal from US Pipeline Spill to Take Days](#)" (Reuters, 2022). They then needed to write a reflection about 1) what they learned, 2) any connections they made, and 3) any questions they had.*

*Read the two student reflections below and decided if they read the assignment, made connections, and what questions you, the teacher, would address in the next class.*

#### **Student 1:**

This news article was about an oil spill in Kansas. It was a really large oil spill, like more than 14,000 barrels of oil. The oil spilled into a creek which is a small river in Kansas. The oil pipeline goes from Canada to the U.S., and it has leaked before. This is the third time the pipeline has had a leak. The Environmental Protection agency of the United States is working to clean up the oil spill. It was a really large oil spill, so it might take a long time to clean up.

The company that owns the pipeline might be responsible for the damages made by the leak. There are U.S. laws, the Clean Water Act and the Oil Pollution act that deal with situations like this. The pipeline also might be closed for a while which could affect storage and pricing. But, the U.S. administration in charge okayed the reopening of the pipeline.

#### **Student 2:**

From this article I learned that a crude oil pipeline from Canada to the U.S. has had multiple spills since 2010; the most recent was a spill in Kansas. The oil spill or leak is being cleaned up and may take a while, but due to U.S. laws, the company may be responsible for paying for that. I didn't know about the Clean Water Act or the other laws before, but it is understandable for the company that damaged the area to pay to clean it.

This story reminded me of the large oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. That oil spill happened in an ocean, not in a creek like the spill in Kansas. The ocean spill affected a lot of wildlife and local fishermen. I wonder what the Kansas oil spill's effect on the local wildlife will be and how the local fishers and farmers will be affected. Even though the article said that local farmers were taking precautions, oil spills can have long-term effects. What will be the longterm effects for those farmers and other locals? What could be done to prevent these oil leaks from happening in the future?

## Exercise 2: Self-Reflection

Write a 100-150 word reflection to answer one of the prompts below. You may choose which prompt to answer.

- What is the most important thing you have learned this semester?
- What was the most difficult thing for you to learn this semester?
- What is one way you have grown as a person since entering school?
- How has what you experienced this semester impacted your future goals?
- What would you say is the best strategy to succeed in this class?
- What has or hasn't been effective for your study this semester?
- Do you want to keep learning about this subject? If so, why? If not, why not?
- How will your current studies affect the people you interact with now or in the future?

## Exercise 3: Make a KLR Chart

Pretend your professor assigned you this Ted Talk video, "[Do you really need 8 hours of sleep every night?](#)", to watch for class. Make a Know, Learned, Reflect chart to prewrite for a reflection on this topic.

Video:

Know	Learned	Reflect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What do you already know about this topic?</li><li>• What beliefs (if any) do you have connected to this topic?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What about the experience stands out to you?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How did what you learn add to and/or change your understanding or opinions?</li><li>• What questions (if any) do you have after the learning experience?</li><li>• </li></ul>

Know	Learned	Reflect

## Exercise 4: Academic Tone

*Rewrite the following sentences from reflections to have a more academic tone. How would you write these for a professor or teaching assistant to read them?*

1. After watching the video, I gotta say that my opinion is not changed. Not that the video didn't have cool ideas, but I still think that cell phones are better for everyone. They make life easier and just...better. I do think that the way they are made and the marketing could change though. That could fix some of the problems the video pointed out.

2. I think that the author of this chapter had no clue about how some other stuff would change some things about this topic. Like people's money situation, you know. If a person comes from a different socioeconomic situation, then it could change what things they think are most important, so it's not like they don't care about the topic. It's just that they gotta deal with other stuff like rent first, then deal with abstract topics like this after.

3. Supply and demand is all messed up right now, so everything is more expensive. The connection I made with this chapter is actually how expensive housing and building housing is. My parents are redoing part of their home, and it has taken *forever* for them to get materials, and they have had to pay a lot more than normal for things like wood and pipe and stuff. So, there is a lot of demand but little supply because there actually is little supply or because the transportation of the supply is off, so everything costs more.

## Exercise 5: Limited Space

Write 50 words to reflect on the following Ted Talk video:

["What is the smartest age?"](#)

## Exercise 6: Complete a Reflection Outline

*Complete the outline below for a reflection on this video:*

[50 Years Since Humans Set Foot on the Moon](#)

**TS:** I think that the efforts to return to the moon are helping further the development of technology which may have implications for Earth.

**SD1:**

**SD2:**

**SD3:**

**CS:** The current missions to the moon both continue work being done by NASA and leads to other groups creating new technology that benefit the moon missions and life here on Earth.

\*TS= topic sentence, SD= supporting detail, CS= concluding sentence

## Exercise 7: Write a Short Reflection

*Write a reflection about 1)how the ideas from these two sources interact and 2) what your thoughts on this topic are:*

- <https://www.britannica.com/technology/gable>
- <https://youtu.be/QW0ydAMVQ2w>

*Your reflection should be 150-200 words (or the word limit your teacher directs)*

## Exercise 8: Revise a Reflection

*A student wrote a reflection using the prompt below. Revise the student's reflection to improve it. Rewrite the improved reflection on the lines provided.*

**Prompt:** Read this BYU article by Katie Child, "[Dead trees in Utah forests are a wildfire hazard; BYU researchers found a way to use them as biomass for power plants](#)". Then, write a reflection about comparing the ideas in the article to ideas about the topic you may have had previous to reading. Your reflection should also include any questions you have about this topic.

### Reflection Draft:

This article by Katie Child on reusing trees killed by bark beetles as fuel for coal plants connects with a few things I knew as background knowledge before reading, and I have a few questions now about points within this article.

Firstly, some of the ideas from the article were similar to ideas I had previously known. For example, I knew that Utah and many other western states have been experiencing worsening wildfires.

This information about the bark beetles was one of the new things I learned that contrasted my previous knowledge about these topics. I had thought that the increase in wildfires was mostly due to climate change and the megadrought of the western U.S. I didn't know that trees could be used as fuel for coal plants. I guess coal is carbon and trees are carbon so that'll probs work out.

However, using dead trees for coal plant fuel does raise a few issues that I have questions about.

These are the comparisons and questions I have about this article.

### Revised Draft:

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## Exercise 9: Write a Longer Reflection

*Write a reflection about this source:*

["Journalists Sense Turmoil in Their Industry Amid Continued Passion for Their Work"](#) by Pew Research Center

*Your reflection should be 500-700 words (or the word limit your teacher directs)*

## Exercise 10: Longer Self-Reflection

*Write a reflection to answer one of the prompts below. You may choose which prompt to answer.*

- What is the most important thing you have learned this semester?
- What was the most difficult thing for you to learn this semester?
- What is one way you have grown as a person since entering school?
- How has what you experienced this semester impacted your future goals?
- What would you say is the best strategy to succeed in this class?
- What has or hasn't been effective for your study this semester?
- Do you want to keep learning about this subject? If so, why? If not, why not?
- How will your current studies affect the people you interact with now or in the future?

*Your reflection should be 500-700 words (or the word limit your teacher directs)*

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# Example Persuasive Writing

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## Music Education

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On January 22, 2017, many news writers reported about the future of music and art education. President Donald Trump, the President of the United States of America and his administrative team seemed intent on “[eliminating] the National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities programs” (Rubinstein, 2017, para. 1). This is a very controversial topic that a lot of people are discussing. Some people agree with him and some people do not. Many recognize that music is important, but question if it is important enough for students to learn in school, or if schools should require students to continue to receive music education. Some people might have asked if another subject would be more important such as, math or science. Some people might also think that music education should be optional for students, and that students should not be required to have music education in school. However, there is very convincing evidence pointing to the fact that all students should be required to learn music in school, and that every school should have a music program because of the benefits that students receive from a music education.

First, Music education helps children cognitively. According to Norman M. Weinberger, a member of the Center for the Neurobiology of Learning and a professor of the Department of Psychobiology at the University of California, “Learning and performing music actually exercise the brain” (2003, p. 38). He also claimed that music education can also play a major part in strengthening the synapses between our brain cells. Recently, research in neuroscience strongly supports that synapses grow stronger through use and become weakened through disuse (Weinberger, 2003). Music is a beneficial way to use and build those synapses. Many major functional systems of the human brain depend on our synaptic strength including the “cognitive system which is symbolic, linguistic, and reading, the sensory and perceptual system including auditory, visual, tactile, and kinesthetic, planning movement, feedback and evaluation of actions, and learning memory” (Weinberger, 2003, p. 38). These are a few examples of how music strengthens synapses. Moreover, the benefits of music also affect many parts of the brain and the brain as a whole.

Music benefits the brain in other ways as well. It has been found that music directly helps to improve the brain. Music improves and develops “imagination, focus and concentration, children’s IQ, productivity, language learning, whole-brain thinking, mathematical learning, writing skills, memory, and overall learning” (Ungrangsee, 2011, p.14). According to both Weinberger and Ungrangsee, we can understand the importance of music for the brain. According to these examples of the benefits, we can know that without music in school, children will struggle more with math and also science. With music education in the schools, we can have more confidence that children will be able to not only succeed, but excel because of the benefits of music education.

Second, music education helps children physically. It does not just improve our health but also can heal us in a lot of ways. One of these is that music can reduce blood pressure (Ungrangsri, 2011). Another benefit is that music has been found to improve the quality of sleep in students and adults (Harmat, Takacs, Bodizs, 2008, para. 1). We can learn from this research why music is important and absolutely vital for our well-being. In 2002, a study conducted at Willamette University discovered that music helps the immune system (Hatmat, L., Takacs, J., & Bodizes, R. (2008).). As

incredible as better sleep and stronger immune systems are, there are even more benefits. Music has been found to help relieve stress, improve energy levels, fight fatigue, combat eating disorders, improve vision, and improve the effects of ADHD (Ungrangsri, 2011). These health benefits are varied and difficult to obtain in other

Third, music education helps children psychologically. We may notice many times when we feel sad or moody, we turn to music, such as classical music, and we will feel so much better. That is how music plays a big role. Music has directly helps and creates happiness. Moreover, music does not help just that. There are a lot more benefits that not a lot of people know. For example, music dramatically improves the mental health of people with depression (Moratoes, Crawford, Procter, 2011, para. 1). Ungrangsri (2011) also supported them by saying that music education helps “relieve anger, relieve anxiety, create emotional calm, improve mood, decrease pain perception, and also Alzheimer’s disease therapy” (p.18). According to this research, we can know that there are a lot of benefits of music, especially for children. Music does not just help children to be positive and happy, but music also helps prevent anxiety and depression. These are three main reasons that we really need to do something to make sure that every student receives music education, whether they are rich or poor, girls or boys.

Recently, some people have made the argument that music is not important compared to some subjects like math or science. It is sad that even the leaders of our society question the value of music education. The government has a plan to withdraw a great amount of funding from art and music education in public schools. The statistics are very alarming to a lot of people. “Funding for these national endowments amount to a meager 0.004% of the \$4 trillion budget, with both the NEA and NEH receiving \$148 million in 2016” (Rubinstein, 2017, para. 2). This change will affect music education in schools, programs, educators and artists around the country.

According to these recent news sources and many examples that have been provided in this article, there is an urgent sense that we need to do something. This is not just for individual problems; this is for the society and nation-wide problems that we need to solve. We need to learn about how vital music is to human life and how it helps us cognitively, physically, and psychologically. We should encourage and support music and art education. We should definitely do something more. We can start within our homes. We can encourage people in our family to learn the importance of music and enable them to play or participate in musical activities. We can also send our thoughts to the government to support the need for music in our societies, and absolutely, in our schools. Imagine what will happen with this generation and the next generations to come if we do not do something now; as the news writer Jon Blistein (2017) stated, “Love of music and the arts brings us together, and celebrates the richness of American culture and our spirit of curiosity and creativity” (para. 1) According to Blistein, we all know that music plays a large part in this country and who we are as a people. We must each ponder carefully and choose wisely so that the regulations we endorse today don’t negatively impact our nation tomorrow.

# Exercises

## Exercise 1: Annotate an Essay

*Scan the essay below and annotate it according to the following directions.*

### Introduction

1. Draw a star next to the hook.
2. Draw a box around the background information.
3. Underline the thesis.
4. Circle the word or phrase that shows the thesis is an opinion.

### Body Paragraphs

1. Underline the topic sentences that show the main idea or each section or paragraph.
2. Draw an arrow to show the words that show how the topic sentences support the thesis statement. Draw the arrow from the word(s) in the topic sentence to the word(s) in the thesis statement.
3. Number the supporting detail ideas. (1, 2, 3...) How many supporting details did the author use to explain their main idea?
4. Circle the cohesive device words and phrases
5. Highlight all in-text citations.
6. Draw an arrow from each in-text citation to their matching full citation on the reference page.

### Conclusion

1. Underline the restated thesis.
2. Circle the key words that are kept from the thesis statement or that are replaced with synonyms.
3. Box the background information, summary, or global extension.
4. Draw a star next to the concluding sentence.
5. Label the concluding sentence. What type is it?

### Reference Page

1. Underline the name of the section "Reference".
2. Circle the author's last name(s)
3. Draw a star by the year of publication.
4. Draw a box around the title of the article, website, or book.
5. Label the source. What type is it? Is it an article from a journal or newspaper, website, or other?

## Exercise 2: Analyze an Essay

1. Does the introduction provide the general information a reader needs in order to understand the topic?
2. Does the introduction end with an effective thesis? Does it match the style of the essay?
3. Do each of the body paragraphs begin with an effective topic sentence?
4. Are the body paragraphs sequenced in a logical order?
5. Look at each body paragraph. Do the supporting sentences support the topic sentence?
6. Look at each body paragraph. Are the supporting sentences sequenced in a logical order?
7. Look at each body paragraph. Is there enough development? Are there more details or examples that would help the reader?
8. Look at each body paragraph. Does the concluding sentence close the paragraph logically?
9. Does the conclusion paragraph start by restating the thesis?
10. Does the conclusion paragraph have a suggestion, prediction, or opinion at the end?

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# Prewriting

## Understand the assignment

In your essay, you will state an opinion about an academic topic and persuade readers to agree with your opinion.

## Research

Remember that after you do enough preliminary research to brainstorm and choose your focus, you should do more detailed research about your topic so that you can make your outline.

When you research for an argumentative essay, look for the opinions of the supporters, but also look for the opinions the opponents. To best support your opinion, you will need to consider all of your audience, even those who have different opinions. A strong argument often acknowledges the opposite point of view.

## Brainstorm

You can use a mind map, a free write, general internet search, or a discussion group if you are having a difficult time thinking of things to write about.

### Example topics could include the following:

- Should teenagers have a limit on smartphone use?
- Should universities offer mentoring programs for new students?
- Should medical researchers be allowed to experiment with living organisms?
- Should governments be focused on finding new places to drill for oil or better ways to reduce oil consumption?
- Ikjh
- Choose a topic that you have a strong interest in. Do you have a debatable opinion about that topic?

## Brainstorming Guiding Questions

As you brainstorm, you may want to consider the following questions:

1. Opinion: What do I think?
2. Reason: Why do I think it?
3. Evidence: How do I know?
4. Appeal: How can I convince my reader of my opinion?

Questions 1-3 adapted from (Sedita, 2017, para. 7)

## Note: Switching Topics

While it is okay to choose a personally difficult or sensitive topic to write your essay on if given the choice of choosing your own topic, you may find it more difficult as you continue researching, writing, and revising. It is okay in those situations to talk with your teacher and switch your essay topic to a different one. If you feel comfortable writing about the topic, feel free to continue to do so, but if dealing with that topic becomes too much, it is okay to change topics.

## Choose your focus

Make sure the topic isn't too broad to cover in your essay. If you choose to state a broad opinion, you will need *a lot* of evidence to support the broad opinion that you have. Furthermore, when you have a broad topic, your readers will likely have more doubts about your opinion because they can think of more exceptions or other reasons that your opinion might not be true. Therefore, it is easier to defend an opinion with a more narrow focus and to do so with the time and word count restraints of a school assignment.

## Find Your Focus

You can use these questions to find the focus of your essay:

- What opinion do you have about the topic in the prompt?
- What reasons do you have for believing that opinion?
- Of those reasons which are the **strongest** reasons that would convince the reader the best?

As you determine your focus, also determine which of the effective rhetoric appeals would best help you support the narrowed topic you choose. Would ethos, pathos, or logos best convince your reader that your opinion is right? You can



use one, two, or all three appeals if you think it will help your argument. For more information on effective rhetoric [Purdue OWL's resources](#) on this topic.

## Outline

Also begin an outline for your essay. As you research about your topic, start organizing your findings. Some people begin an outline by listing topics and quotes. Others write topic sentences and supporting sentences. A persuasive essay follows typical essay organization, but you may find the body paragraphs don't always follow the regular 5-paragraph essay rules. You may need to plan for more or fewer body paragraphs depending on the support you need for your opinion.

## Introduction

Your introduction should start by describing any background that will be important for the reader to know.

Here are some questions that can help you think about background information that the reader needs to be able to understand the problem:

- Who typically supports my opinion? What reasons do they have?
- Who typically opposes my opinion? What reasons do they have?

At the end of your introduction paragraph, you should give your thesis. The thesis should clearly state the opinion that you will defend in your essay.

### Example

Although many people feel the choice to smoke in public places is completely an individual matter, the government should monitor and restrict smoking in public places for the safety of the public.

Review the characteristics of an effective thesis as needed. For a persuasive essay, it is especially important that you don't simply state a fact; your thesis should be an opinion. You can tell if it is an opinion by asking if someone else could have a different opinion on the topic. For example, "Dogs are animals." is a fact, but "Dogs are the best pets ever." is an opinion. Someone else could think that cats or some other animal are the best pets, so you can tell it is an opinion.

## Effective Thesis Statement Review

An effective thesis statement...

- addresses the **prompt** if there is one\* (i.e., answers the question. Includes an opinion.)
- is usually at the **end** of the 1st paragraph.
- controls the content of **all** of the body paragraphs.
- is a **complete** sentence.
- does **not announce** the topic (e.g., "I'm going to talk about why pandas should be protected.").
- should **not** simply be a **fact** (e.g., "There are many animals on the endangered species list.").
- should **not** be **too general** (e.g., "Preservation is good.").
- should **not** be **too specific** (e.g., "Animals with limited populations whose habitats are threatened by primarily human actions such as pandas, polar bears, and elephants should be protected at the local, national, and international level in order to preserve these species so that future generations of people will be able to live in a world full of biodiversity.")
- may **state** or **imply** main points (e.g., "Certain animals should be protected by multiple levels of government and organizations." vs. "Certain animals, namely endangered animals, should be protected by local, national, and international governments and organizations. ")

## Body

Your body paragraphs should give reasons that support your thesis. As you plan your essay, you should think about what type of appeal you will use to convince your reader your opinion is correct. You will need to use effective rhetoric to convince the reader.

**Rhetoric** is "the art of speaking or writing effectively" using principles of composition made by ancient critics to communicate and persuade (Merriam-Webster, 2022). Rhetoric was created by the ancient Greeks to effectively communicate and persuade (Sloane and Perelman, 2022). Aristotle, a famous Greek philosopher, divided rhetorical appeals into what we now call ethos, pathos, and logos (Sloane and Perelman, 2022).

**Ethos** is the appeal to authority. This is where you use experts or show yourself to be an expert in order to get the reader to trust you and believe your opinion.

**Pathos** is the appeal to emotion. This is where you use the emotions of the reader, specifically their emotional response to what you write, to convince them to agree with your opinion

**Logos** is the appeal to logic. This is where you use logical reasoning and evidence to show readers why they should believe your opinion. This is one of the most common appeals you will use in academic writing.

## Examples

Watch this video from Texas A & M University Writing Center. Can you identify the different examples of ethos, pathos, and logos in the video?

## Examples

Appeal	Example
Ethos	An ad for a toothpaste brand that claims 4 out of 5 dentists recommend it.
Pathos	A teenage asks his parents for a new car saying that if they cared about his safety, they would get him an updated car.
Logos	Using statistics about recent oil pollution to prove that drilling oil in the ocean is harmful for the environment.

As you try to persuade your reader, you can use these appeals to convince them. You can use one, two, or all of the appeals in the defense of your opinion.

### Optional Opposition Paragraph

Another way to support your opinion in the body paragraphs is actually to add a **counterargument** that shows how other people may disagree with you. This is optional in a persuasive essay. You follow this counter-argument with your reply or **rebuttal** about why your opinion is still good despite what the other opinion may be. This can be done in its own paragraph(s) or worked into the supporting paragraphs. A counterargument is usually followed by evidence for the counterargument and then a rebuttal with evidence for the rebuttal. When writing the counterargument, make sure you keep a respectful tone in your writing.

### Example Opposition Paragraph:

1. Counterargument	Some people say that regulations on guns are unwise because....
2. Evidence	The evidence they offer in opposition to these regulation includes....
3. Rebuttal	However, ...
4. Evidence	There is evidence to support this such as...

If you use a counterclaim, you will want your counterclaim to be strong so your rebuttal can stand out and give really good support to your opinion. If you give a good rebuttal to a strong and fairly presented counterclaim, your opinion will be even more convincing to the reader.

## Conclusion

Your conclusion paragraph should start by restating your thesis to remind your reader of your main idea, your opinion. Then you should discuss your problem more generally and apply your opinion to the general context you established in

your introduction. The middle part of your conclusion could be a summary or it could build on the information from your body paragraphs to apply the ideas of your essay to a bigger community.

You can end with a closing statement that is a suggestion, prediction, or opinion. For persuasive essays, you might also try using a **call to action**, asking your readers to join you in your cause.

**Call to Action Examples:**

- To continue progressing, humanity should dedicate more resources to space exploration and scientific investigation.
- Let us grow to be more considerate of our neighbors by learning about their culture by trying the traditional foods of their countries.
- This is a serious issue that the government and its citizens should address.
- It is not just people who live near beaches who should be concerned about pollution; everyone should be concerned about the negative effects of polluting waterways, shores, and oceans and do their part to reduce pollution in everyday ways.

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Make an Outline

Make an outline for the example essay "Music Education" at the start of this unit.

### Exercise 2: Build an Outline

*Make an outline for an essay with the following prompt.*

**Prompt:**

*Your outline could include any of the following parts in the order that you think would be most effective for convincing people of your opinion.*

- Thesis Statement
- Topic Sentence(s)
- Supporting Detail(s)
- Restated Thesis Statement
- Call to Action/Conclusion etc.

*Optional*

- Counterclaim(s)
- Rebuttal(s)

### Exercise 3: Revise Thesis Statements

*Revise thesis statements to be more effective for a comparison essay.*

1. Many people think that education is the key of having a better society and as a consequence, will abolish poverty and crime. 2. I am in favor of the death penalty, for which I will refer to three important points. 3. There are many reasons people want to start their own companies and the results from starting these companies have been positive. 4. This is the reason why smoking in public places should be banned because it is affecting a giant of humans nowadays and probably in the past. 5. There are some authors that describe this stage of life as one of the hardest that a person can experience because of the nature of itself, there are others that define parenthood as a "dramatic change" (Rehel, 2014, p. 110) since mothers and fathers experience a new life from one day to another. 6. Online dating killed romance because 1) People can not meet one to other in the best way. 2) People use this tool for cheat their couples. 3) People can not show their affective part as humans. 7. Technology makes people feel more alone for several reasons. 8. New discoveries have shown that spanking can create long lasting traumas among children that are exposed to those types of corrections or punishments. way to adjust childrens behavior. New discoveries have shown that Spanking create long lasting traumas among children that are exposed to those types of corrections or punishments. II. Section 1 TS: Research show that Children that have been experienced physical punishment like spanking in their lives show are most likely to develop negative socio-emotional outcomes in their adult life. Q1:What are the negative outcomes in adulthood? Q2:How many children have experienced spanking as a behavioral correction in the USA? III. Section 2 TS:There are other ways to correct behavior in children which will help parenting be more effective Q1: What are some alternative ways to correct children's behaviour ? Q2: Are the new methods effective? IV. Section 3 TS: There is a fine line between spanking and abuse. Q1:How can be spanking from abuse differentiated? Q2: What is the motivation behind this type of correction? V: Conclusion TH: Many children are exposed to spanking as a method to correct behaviour. However, this method can cause long lasting traumas later in life and during their development. It is acknowledged that children need teaching and correction. Thus, there are other ways to correct behaviour that can guarantee more positive outcomes.

### Exercise 4: Practice Thesis Statements

*Read the titles of persuasive essays below. Consider the topic of the essay, and then write an effective thesis sentence for each one. Your thesis statement should clearly state your opinion.*

1. Technology Makes People Feel More Alone
2. Is Graffiti Art?
3. Why a College Education Should Be Necessary

## Exercise 5: Identify the Appeal

Identify which appeal is being used in each sentence. Write **E** for ethos, **P** for pathos, and **L** for logos. If more than one appeal is being used, you can write more than one letter.

1. \_\_\_\_ Graffiti is writings or drawings in public places. It helps the community look beautiful. Sometimes, when a tourist comes to visit a town, they will take pictures with graffiti art and artists.
2. \_\_\_\_ Research compiled by analysts from NASA, as well as organizations from five other nations with space programs, suggests that a moon colony is viable with international support.
3. \_\_\_\_ I'm not just invested in this community - I love every building, every business, every hard-working member of this town.
4. \_\_\_\_ More than one hundred peer-reviewed studies have been conducted over the past decade, and none of them suggests that this is an effective treatment for hair loss.
5. \_\_\_\_ If my 20 years as a Marine taught me anything, it's that caution is the best policy in this sort of situation.
6. \_\_\_\_ Where would we be without this tradition? Ever since our forefathers landed at Plymouth Rock, we've celebrated Thanksgiving without fail, making more than cherished recipes. We've made memories.

## Exercise 6: Appeal to the Audience

*Write a topic sentence to answer the prompt below as though you were writing a persuasive paragraph. Then write 1-2 sentences of support for your opinion using ethos, pathos, and logos.*

**Prompt: Artificial Intelligence is gaining popularity and is becoming more and more capable. In your opinion, should we allow developers to keep fully developing AI, or should there be some regulations in place?**

Ethos:

---

---

Pathos:

---

---

Logos:

---

---

## Exercise 7: Rebuttal

*Write a rebuttal for the counterclaim below.*

**Thesis Opinion:** College education should be mandatory because it will help people become better citizens, give them more opportunities, and help them develop their strengths and skills.

**Counterclaim:** College itself is not a measure of success. There are many successful people who didn't study in college, like Steve Jobs.

**Rebuttal:**

---

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## Exercise 8: Call to Action

*Read the titles of essays below and write a call to action for each one.*

1. Face-to-Face Courses Cannot Be Replaced by Online Learning

---

2. Aircrafts' Excess Weight Charges Need to be Prohibited.

---

3. Elon Musk: Brilliant Mind or Insane Person?

---

4. Digital World Cybersecurity

---

## Exercise 9: Evaluate an Outline

Read the outline for an essay about technology. Evaluate it. What would make the outline more effective? Revise the outline to better support an opinion.

- **TH:** Despite the advantages, technology could make us more alone by affecting our time, relationships, and independence.
  - **TS:** Relying on technology could reduce people's overall enjoyment of life.
  - **TS:** The use of technology could reduce the time that people spent with family and friends.
  - **TS:** Technology has made people more dependent on their phones.
  - **TS:** Technology could be used to reach people and share information considered important. Also, technology facilitates creativity.
- **RTH:** Although the use of technology has brought many advantages, the excessive use of this could lead to negative effects like loneliness.

TH = thesis statement, TS = topic sentence, RTH = restated thesis statement

## Exercise 10: Evaluate an outline

*What advice would you give to the author of the following student outlines?*

Outline #1: Government involvement online

- TH: The government should monitor cyberspace for many reasons.
- TS: The government will provide protection from harmful information.
- TS: The government will provide protection from crime
- TH: People should be responsible for the actions on the Internet.

Outline #2: Salary differences by gender

- TH: The gap between women's and men's remuneration does not respect education background, time or race.
- TS: First, even though women are more educated than men, they are less paid.
- TS: Second, researches show that women are currently paid 23% lower than men.
- TS: Third, the gap remuneration between women and men is even bigger when talking about Afro American and Hispanics.

## Exercise 11: Make an outline.

*Go to [procon.org](http://procon.org) and choose a topic that can be debated easily from two points of view. Briefly read about the topic and create two outlines: one outline in support of the issue and one outline in opposition to the issue. (Alternatively, you could work with a partner and each take one side of the issue). Compare your outlines.*





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## Writing Skill: Cohesion

Now that you have an outline or idea of what you want to write, you can begin writing your draft. Your writing should be organized, developed, accurate, and original. It is always important to develop your ideas with accurate details, but in a persuasive essay, it is especially important that your development and ideas are organized in a logical way. You will need good cohesion for your reader to best understand your opinion and support that opinion.

**Cohesion** is when the ideas in writing logically flow from one idea to the next idea. Writing paragraphs that have good sequencing will help your readers understand your ideas more clearly. Sometimes you will have a clear order that relates to time. Sometimes you will have an order from least important or impactful to most important or impactful. Sometimes the order is more flexible and there is not one perfect way to sequence the sentences.

Cohesion may happen at the sentence, paragraph, or essay level. You will need cohesion between parts of a sentence, between sentences in a paragraph, and between paragraphs in an essay. Compare the examples of paragraph-level cohesion below. The first paragraph has poor cohesion. Some details may seem to suddenly appear or the ideas may seem to jump around.

### Example: Body Paragraph (Poor Cohesion)

Food, housing, and industry are important in our society. If we do not have those, it will be much harder for us to live. As much as human life is important, animal lives are important, too. I think preserving land for endangered animals is more important than the human need for land. Mostly, if human beings decide to use the land for food production, housing, or industry, it is mostly difficult to reuse that land again. If humans do something on the land, it can be said that the land is no longer able to remain.

### Example: Body Paragraph (Revised for Cohesion)

Food, housing, and industry are important in our society. If we do not have those, it will be much harder for us to live. **However**, as much as human life is important, animal lives are important, too. **We should consider the long-term effects of our use of lands on endangered species. To be more precise**, if human beings decide to use the land for food production, housing, or industry, it is **more** difficult to reuse that land again. If humans do something on the land, it can be said that the land is no longer able to remain **in its true nature**.

## Cohesion throughout Your Essay

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To write with cohesion, you will need to write with 'logical flow'. However, 'logical flow' may be different by culture. In American-style academic essays, the flow of an argument is very direct. It is like a straight river from point A to point B. There are no bends or deviations. Maybe the river is long; it might be from point A to point Z, but it will still flow directly. This can be seen at the essay level getting from the introduction ideas to the conclusion ideas, or it can be seen at the paragraph level going from the topic sentence to the concluding sentence. It can also be seen at the sentence level going from one idea in a word, phrase, or clause to the next idea in a word, phrase or clause.

## Logical Flow

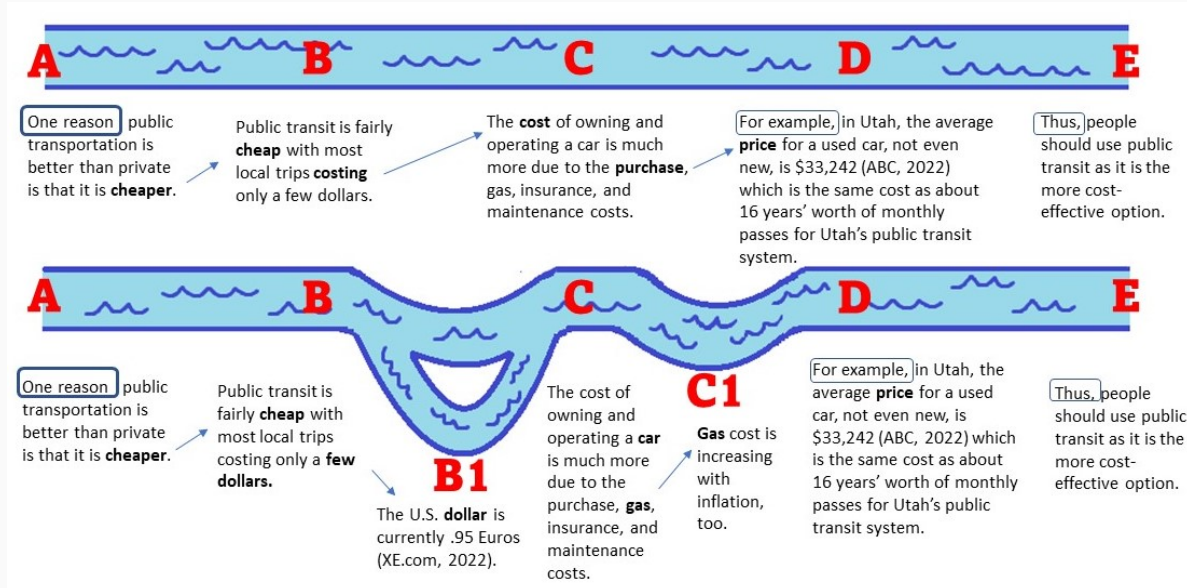


Image: 2022 Barraza

Here you can see two paragraphs as rivers.

The first paragraph has clear cohesion between all the sentences. The idea that ends the sentence starts the next one as shown with the arrows. Where help understanding the connection is needed a cohesive device is used as shown with the boxed words. There is even cohesion with what would be other paragraphs because "one reason" implies that the other body paragraphs will look at other reasons public transportation is good.

The second version of the paragraph has all the same sentences as the first, but it also has two extra sentences, B1 and C1. These sentences seem a little connected with the topics of the previous sentences; they talk about dollars and gas. However, they don't really connect with the sentence that follows after them. So the reader may be confused why the writer went in a different direction for a while if it didn't really help the main idea of the paragraph.

There is also one last pattern of poor cohesion that is not shown in this image which is when the paragraph goes completely off-topic. For example, if the paragraph started talking about conversion rates between the dollar and the Euro and then what factors contribute to that and how the Euro compares to the Yen and so on. This leaves the main idea behind and is like a separate river splitting off to go in a different direction.

For an American-style academic essay, try to keep the river of thought flowing directly to the conclusion.

Let's look at how sentences might have cohesion with one another.

### Example using sequencing

- 1) Sentence 1 = idea A then idea B. Children should not have access to social media before the age of 5.
- 2) Sentence 2 = idea B then idea C. Accessing social media before the age of 5 can expose children to inappropriate content.
- 3) Sentence 3 = idea C then idea D. Inappropriate content can harm children.

Notice how the idea that finishes one sentence starts the next sentence. If we were to take out sentence 2 and just say "Children should not have access to social media before the age of 5. Inappropriate content can harm children.", the reader *might* infer the connection between the two sentences. However, the sentences in this example are simple sentences with simple ideas. With longer more complex sentences containing many ideas, your reader might not be able to infer the connection and would just be confused. It would seem like you jumped from one idea to a completely unrelated idea.

The sentences connect through the order or sequencing of ideas. The B idea of the first sentence is repeated or referenced in some way at the start of the next sentence to show how the ideas are connected. If an idea isn't repeated or the next sentence is just idea C, then a cohesive device (word or phrase such as those from the list below) is needed to show how the ideas connect.

### Example with cohesive device

- 1) Sentence 1 = idea A then idea B. Children should not have access to social media before the age of 5.
- 2) Sentence 2 = idea C. Children can be exposed to inappropriate content **through this.**
- 3) Sentence 3 = idea C then idea D. Inappropriate content can harm children.

In this version, there is no repeat or reference to idea B, so a cohesive device is needed. While students often think cohesive devices can only be adverbs or subordinating conjunctions, there are also many other possibilities such as the demonstrative pronoun "this" used in this sentence. "this" shows that the experience being talked about in sentence 2 is the same experience, studying abroad, from sentence 1. This shows the connection between the ideas of sentence 1 and the ideas of sentence 2. The preposition "through" also helps to explain what exactly the relationship is between learning new perspectives and the experience.

For more information about cohesive devices, see "Cohesive Devices" at the end of this section.

# Cohesive Devices

One way to improve the cohesion of your writing is by using cohesive devices properly. There are many types of cohesive devices: pronouns, adjectives, determiners, prepositions, conjunctions, repeated words, transition words, etc.

Some cohesive devices show certain relationships between ideas, like showing contrast or a cause/ effect relationship.

## Showing Addition

Another	<b>Another</b> reason students go into debt is to attend university.
Also	Attending university is <b>also</b> a reason students go into debt.
Besides	<b>Besides</b> affording living experiences, attending university is a reason students go into debt.
In addition	<b>In addition</b> affording living experiences, attending university is a reason students go into debt.
First, second, etc.	<b>Second</b> , attending university is a reason students go into debt.

## Showing Similarity

Both	The Eiffel Tower and Tokyo Tower share <b>both</b> a similar design and notoriety.
Likewise	The Eiffel Tower and Tokyo Tower share a similar design. <b>Likewise</b> , they share notoriety.
Similarly	The Eiffel Tower and Tokyo Tower share a similar design. <b>Similarly</b> , they share notoriety.

## Showing Contrast

However	Meat is known to be high in protein. <b>However</b> , fruit is not.
In contrast	Meat is known to be high in protein. <b>In contrast</b> , fruit is not.
On the other hand	Meat is known to be high in protein. <b>On the other hand</b> , fruit is not.
Whereas	<b>Whereas</b> meat is known to be high in protein, fruit is not.

Yet	Meat is known to be high in protein, <b>yet</b> fruit is not.
<b>Show Cause/Effect</b>	
Thus	The <i>Titanic</i> had very few lifeboats to save its passengers, <b>thus</b> federal authorities now require ships to carry enough lifeboats to save everyone.
As a consequence	The <i>Titanic</i> had very few lifeboats to save its passengers. <b>As a consequence</b> , federal authorities now require ships to carry enough lifeboats to save everyone.
Therefore	The <i>Titanic</i> had very few lifeboats to save its passengers. <b>Therefore</b> , federal authorities now require ships to carry enough lifeboats to save everyone.
As a result	The <i>Titanic</i> had very few lifeboats to save its passengers. <b>As a result</b> , federal authorities now require ships to carry enough lifeboats to save everyone.
Consequently	The <i>Titanic</i> had very few lifeboats to save its passengers. <b>Consequently</b> , federal authorities now require ships to carry enough lifeboats to save everyone.
<b>Giving Examples</b>	
An example of	The Treaty of Versailles is an <b>example of</b> a treaty that ended a war.
For instance	Many treaties have ended wars over time. <b>For instance</b> , the Treaty of Versailles was a treaty that formally ended World War I.
To illustrate	Many treaties have ended wars over time. <b>To illustrate</b> , the Treaty of Versailles was a treaty that formally ended World War I.



## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Identify logical order of sentences

*Each of these sentences combine to make a paragraph. On a piece of paper, write a number for each sentence A-E to show a logical order for sequencing the supporting sentences.*

**Topic Sentence:** Homework can affect students in their social life.

A. For example, someone who is working for long hours in any kind of activity or project is doomed to feel fatigued, and this can lead to increased stress.

B. When students are given excessive assignments to be done at home, they may lose the opportunity to interact and meet with other students.

C. Having good habits balancing social life and school is very fundamental for students (Ralf Heibutzki, 2008).

D. As a consequence, this person may miss some enjoyable opportunities to make friends, have fun and distractive moments, and forget problems and concerns (Oxford Learning, 2016).

E. Time to bond with other students is precious because it can make their academic burdens lighter.

**Conclusion Sentence:** Interacting socially is a part of life for everyone, and a lack of personal interaction can increase the chances of causing either physical or mental health problems.

Order: \_\_\_\_\_

### Exercise 2: Insert a Sentence

*The underlined numbers represent places that the bolded sentence could be inserted into the paragraph. Choose the most logical place to insert the bolded sentence below.*

**Sentence:** They discovered that performance in MOBAs and IQ tests act similarly as team members get older.

1. According to a study, video games can act like IQ tests because they trigger many neuro sensors linked to strategic thinking. 2. In these games, quick reactions are being stimulated at a higher rate, making this a multi-area effective stimulus (Drummond, 2014). 3. The study investigated the effects of two popular video games. 4. The first one was a first-person shooter (FPS) named Destiny and the second one, was a multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) named Defence of the Ancients 2 (DOTA 2). 5. Researchers claim there is a connection between ability in action-strategy video games such as DOTA 2 and an elevated IQ. 6. This is comparable to the correlation seen in more traditional strategy games like chess. 7.

### Exercise 3: Identify misplaced sentences

*Read the original paragraph. Identify the sentences that seem to be out of place. Then compare the original to the revised version.*

Original:

Some of the benefits of family planning are the easy accessibility to the birth control pill, treatments from doctors, and also inexpensive payments. In some parts of Europe, family planning centers can be visited by a 14-year-old teenager with a possible unwanted pregnancy, or just to receive the birth control pill. It is important to mention that these centers are free, including medical attention. Such centers have some benefits like anonymity, free psychological and medical attention, free birth control pills, and information about other contraceptives. Family planning is a free program where women of all ages can benefit. "If you keep having side effects that bother you after using the pill for 3 months, talk with your nurse or doctor about trying another brand of pill or another birth control method" (Planned Parenthood, 2019. Pa 3). In such centers, patients are anonymous and doctors can prescribe the pill with just a questionnaire filled out by the patient. While patients are able to easily access birth control pills, the supervision of a doctor is needed when taking these pills. Only the doctor can know if the patient needs to change or stop taking the pill before it creates big problems or imbalances in her body.

Revision:

Some of the benefits of family planning are the easy accessibility to the birth control pill, treatments from doctors, and also inexpensive payments. Family planning is a free program where women of all ages can benefit. In some parts of Europe, family planning centers can be visited by a 14-year-old teenager with a possible unwanted pregnancy, or just to receive the birth control pill. Such centers have some benefits like anonymity, free psychological and medical attention, free birth control pills, and information about other contraceptives. In such centers, patients are anonymous and doctors can prescribe the pill with just a questionnaire filled out by the patient. It is important to mention that these centers are free, including medical attention. While patients are able to easily access birth control pills, the supervision of a doctor is needed when taking these pills. "If you keep having side effects that bother you after using the pill for 3 months, talk with your nurse or doctor about trying another brand of pill or another birth control method" (Planned Parenthood, 2019. Pa 3). Only the doctor can know if the patient needs to change or stop taking the pill before it creates big problems or imbalances in her body.

## Exercise 4: Revise for cohesion

*Revise the paragraph for cohesion. This is the second body paragraph from an essay about practical uses of space technology.*

Space exploration has brought new technologies and discoveries. NASA has created technology that led to light emitting diodes, ventricular assist devices, anti-icing systems, video enhancing and analysis systems, fire resistant reinforcement, firefighter gear, enriched baby food, and water purification (Spanff, 2008). Furthermore, the Digital Image Sensor was invented when NASA required to miniaturize cameras for interplanetary missions. This technology we can commonly find when we use the famous GoPro Hero camera. Firefighters use tanks for oxygen to breathe that are similar to packs used in rocket designs. Also, this camera system is used in medical imaging and dental X-ray devices (Bryan, 2016). Most of these inventions have helped the humanity to advance into a new future, not only in space, but for the society too.

## Exercise 5: Identify Connectors

*1. The following information comes from an article by McMahan, 2023. If you wanted to include all of this information in a body paragraph, what kind(s) of cohesive device could you use? Write the type(s) of cohesive device on the line below.*

1. Bulking up can be as dangerous as the drastic weight loss associated with more frequently discussed eating disorders such as anorexia.
2. Associated risky behaviors of skewed nutrient intake and excessive exercise are dangerous.
3. A growing teen may have energy deficits from either not enough caloric intake or too much exercise.
4. **They're not getting adequate nutrition to match the energy they're exerting either through exercise or their baseline metabolic needs.**

2. ...

3. ...

## Exercise 6: Draft a body paragraph

*Fill in between the sources with your own commentary to draft a body paragraph about why the federal minimum wage should be increased. Use cohesive devices to connect your commentary to the ideas in each source.*

TS: While the current federal minimum wage may have worked for past generations, it is becoming clear that an increase is necessary for workers to afford for their basic needs.

- "Raising the minimum wage to \$15 would help ensure that more low-wage workers are paid enough to cover basic living expenses, i.e., a wage providing a modest yet adequate standard of living. As of 2021, in virtually all urban and rural areas of the country, a single adult without children working full time must earn more than \$15 per hour to have enough to pay for housing and other basic living expenses. For individuals with children, year-round work at a \$15 wage in 2025 will still be inadequate to achieve basic economic security" (David Cooper, Zane Mokhiber, and Ben Zipperer, "Raising the Federal Minimum Wage to \$15 by 2025 Would Lift the Pay of 32 Million Workers," epi.org, Mar. 9, 2021).
- "[H]igher minimum wages do not have adverse effects on employment, or the weeks or hours worked among minimum wage workers — even four years after minimum wages are increased. We didn't find adverse employment effects among women and minority groups, either. As a result, we determined that the United States can raise pay to \$15 an hour by 2024 without hurting jobs, even in low-wage states" (Anna Godøy and Michael Reich, "The US Can Raise the Minimum Wage to \$15 without Hurting Jobs," cnn.com, July 11, 2019).
- "Economic inequality continues to increase in the United States. The richest 1 percent control almost 40 percent of our country's wealth, while people earning the federal minimum of \$7.25 per hour are living near or below the poverty line in almost every state. Women, who make up two-thirds of the minimum wage workforce, are most severely impacted" (Sarita Gupta, "Why Women Fight for \$15 Minimum Wage," Women's Media Center, Jan. 10, 2018).

## Exercise 7: Revise for cohesion

*Revise the paragraph for cohesion.*

1. Nowadays education should be free for every individual. Many people are having troubles getting academic education for many reasons one of them is having not enough money to afford it. There are many countries that nowadays are having troubles to provide good places and good resources for the students. Education helps the people to improve themselves. People can't get a good education without financial resources.

## Exercise 8: Identify false connectors

*Read each paragraph and locate connections that are not made logically.*

According to a survey in 2008, the American Psychological Association proved that “the number of people with physical and emotional symptoms due to stress was is increasing.” Therefore, an adequate routine of exercise in your life will permit that your body inside has an excellent oxygenation. However, you do not have to put it in extremes routines.

Currently, many companies, such as Volkswagen and Porsche, are looking to change the normal fuel engine for an electrical engine, creating excellent sport cars, that accelerate from 0-60 mph below 3.5 seconds (Philip, 2015). This has indicated that an electrical engine can bring excellent benefits to the ecosystem.

Sources: Paraphrasing



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# Sources: Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is restating something. It is very similar to a summary; the most obvious difference between them is length. You typically use summaries for text that is too long to paraphrase. A paraphrase will usually be approximately the same length as the original source text. The page number is not required in the in-text citation for a paraphrase, but it is encouraged.

## An effective paraphrase—

- is written in your own words.
- keeps the original meaning (does not add or take away important ideas or relationships).
- does not keep the structure of the original while only changing some words for synonyms.
- is approximately the same length as the original.

Below is an excerpt from a science article that describes an impact of light pollution.

## Original Source

In the near term, it appears that artificial light emission into the environment will continue to increase, further eroding Earth's remaining land area that experiences natural day-night light cycles. This is concerning, because artificial light is an environmental pollutant. In addition to threatening the 30% of vertebrates and more than 60% of invertebrates that are nocturnal (35), outdoor artificial light also affects plants and microorganisms (36, 37) and is increasingly suspected of affecting human health (8, 38).

Kyba et al. (2017). Artificially lit surface of Earth at night increasing in radiance and extent. *Science Advances*. 3(11) <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/sciadv.1701528>

## Example: Paraphrase

The amount of artificial light pollution is anticipated to rise, which can have an adverse impact on a significant number of lifeforms (Kyba et al., 2017).

## General steps for writing a paraphrase:

1. Read or listen to what you will paraphrase.
2. Divide the sentence into parts and make sure you understand what each part means.
3. Identify any logical connectors (e.g., *because*, *and*, *while*, *in contrast*, etc.).
4. Rephrase each of the parts of the sentence (using synonyms, word forms, etc.).
5. Put the sentence back together.
6. Compare the paraphrase to the original.

## Read/Listen to source

As with a summary, before you can write an effective paraphrase, you need to have a solid understanding of the source text. You should look up any new words in the original text if possible.

## Divide the sentence

Many English sentences combine clauses and phrases together, and you will need to understand each of the clauses before you can paraphrase a sentence. Start by dividing the sentence into clauses (a clause has a subject and a verb). If you can't look at the sentence and find the main verbs quickly, you can try crossing out or simplifying phrases that don't have verbs or that you can identify as adjective clauses. Remember that your goal is to find the verbs so you can find the clauses.

## Identify any logical connectors

The way that two clauses are joined shows you the relationship that they have. Here are some common connectors and their general relationship:

cause/effect:	because, since, due to, as a result, consequently, thus, therefore
contrast:	however, but, in contrast, on the other hand, whereas, although
example:	for example, for instance
time/order:	when, before, after, while, during, since, until, then, next, last, first, second
possibility:	if
alternative:	or
addition:	and

## Rephrase each part

Here are some strategies for rephrasing clauses and phrases. Most paraphrases combine several strategies.



### 1. Use synonyms

- EX: the environmental **impact** > the **influence** on the environment
- Use equal transition words/conjunctions (if possible)
  - EX: however > but
- Change from active to passive voice
  - EX: Most people in the world **eat** rice. > Rice **is eaten** by most people in the world.
- Change word forms
  - EX: Changing your diet isn't **easy**. > Changing your diet doesn't happen **easily**.
- Change the subject
  - EX: **You** can be successful. > **Success** is possible.
- Change an adjective into an adjective clause
  - EX: **new** types of concerns for parents > types of concerns for parents **that are new**

Return to the example given and look at how each part of the sentence was changed.

## Put the sentence back together

---

After you have changed the sentence parts, you can put it back together. Many people change the order of the clauses at this point. Make sure that the structure of the paraphrase is different than the original structure.

## Compare to the original

---

Make sure you changed the structure, but not the meaning.

You now know how to use sources in three ways. You can use quotes, paraphrases, and summaries. These ways to use sources are similar in some ways and different in others.

A paraphrase	the source in your <b>own words</b> and about the same length as the original
A quote	the source in the <b>author's exact words</b>
A paraphrase	the source in your own words and about the <b>same length</b> as the original
A summary	the source in your own words and <b>shorter</b> than the original

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Choose the best paraphrase

*Choose the best paraphrase for each original quote:*

#1. Original: "The outflow of energy from the central regions of the star provides the pressure necessary to keep the star from collapsing under its own weight, and the energy by which it shines" (NASA, n.d.).

- A. Pressure and energy from deep inside the star prevent it from collapsing and helps it generate light (NASA, n.d.).
- B. The output of light and heat from the middle of the star makes the pressure required to prevent the star from dying, and the energy it needs to shine (NASA, n.d.).
- C. Stars shine because they have a lot of pressure and energy inside of them (NASA, n.d.).
- D. Stars have pressure and energy that they provide to prevent the collapse of the universe (NASA, n.d.).

#2. Original: "Artificial intelligence and automation are bringing changes to higher education that will challenge, and may even threaten, in-person learning" (Kak, 2018)

- A. Advances in technology are happening because higher education is threatening in-person learning (Kak, 2018).
- B. In-person learning is challenging new technologies like artificial intelligence and automation (Kak, 2018).
- C. Traditional classes may be endangered by the ways that higher education is changing due to artificial intelligence and automation (Kak, 2018).
- D. Technology is replacing teachers and regular in-person classroom experiences with artificial intelligence (Kak, 2018).

#3 Original: "There are some commonly mentioned disadvantages of these open offices like a lack of concentration, a reduction of personal privacy and an increase in distraction" (Blok et al., 2009).

- A. Blok et al. says that a lack of concentration is a major disadvantage to offices and employees.
- B. A few of the disadvantages facing open office layouts include problems in concentration, privacy, and distraction (Blok et al., 2009).
- C. While there may be many advantages to working in an office, there are also many disadvantages like limited personal privacy (Blok et al., 2009).
- D. A lack of concentration, restricted privacy, and an abundance of distraction are the biggest challenges facing open office layouts (Blok et al., 2009).

## Exercise 2: Write paraphrases

*Write a paraphrase for the original sentences below. You do not need to paraphrase the entire original source.*

1. Original: "Back in the Netherlands, Mr Paumen describes himself as a "biohacker" - someone who puts pieces of technology into his body to try to improve his performance. He has 32 implants in total, including chips to open doors and imbedded magnets" (Latham, 2022, para. 32).

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2. Original: "Atlantium is one of more than a hundred micronations across the world. A micronation is a self-proclaimed sovereign state that lacks a legal basis for its existence. As a consequence, micronations are not recognised by established nation states, but that does not deter them from assuming the ceremony, pomp and even governance structures of them"(Muddit, 2022, para. 2).

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3. Original: "Far more than just linking us to our past, the world's mature and old-growth forests perform amazing ecological feats, even as they face all new threats. They support a greater diversity of life, hold cleaner water, and host surprisingly complicated communication networks made of fungi that relay messages between trees underground—even trees of different species" (Welch, 2022, para. 3).

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4. Original: "We identify three big changes that education should make post COVID: curriculum that is developmental, personalized, and evolving; pedagogy that is student-centered, inquiry-based, authentic, and purposeful; and delivery of instruction that capitalizes on the strengths of both synchronous and asynchronous learning" (Zhao & Watterston, 2021, para. 1).

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### Exercise 3: Write a quote, summary, or paraphrase

Using the paragraph below, write a quotation, a summary, and a paraphrase. For the quotation and the paraphrase, choose one sentence. For the summary, summarize the entire paragraph. Include the correct citation for each.

Author: Ross

Year: 1995

Paragraph: 2

*"Children of the poor at the turn of the century received little if any emotional or intellectual nurturing from their mothers, whose main charge was family survival. Working for and organizing household subsistence were what defined mothering. Next to this, even the children's basic comfort was forced into the background" (Ross, 1993).*

### Exercise 4: Write a quote, summary, or paraphrase

Using the paragraph below, write a quotation, a summary, or a paraphrase. For the quotation and the paraphrase, choose one sentence. For the summary, summarize the entire paragraph. Include the correct citation.

Author: Susan Cain

Year: 2012

Paragraph: page 93, para. 3

*"The way forward, I'm suggesting, is not to stop collaborating face-to-face, but to refine the way we do it. For one thing, we should actively seek out symbiotic introvert-extrovert relationships, in which leadership and other tasks are divided according to people's natural strengths and temperaments. The most effective teams are composed of a healthy mix of introverts and extroverts, studies show, and so are many leadership structures" (Cain, 2012).*

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# Revising

While revising you may look for areas to improve the unity, cohesion, and development of your essay. Furthermore, you can check that all the parts of the essay such as the thesis statement are effective.

You might also check that your essay does not misuse ethos, pathos, and logos in a fallacious way. **Fallacies** are problems or weaknesses in explaining or defending your opinion. There are many fallacies you learn about in your reading class. These fallacies might also have multiple names (an English name and a Latin name). The practice in this section will focus on some of the most frequent.

## Common Fallacies:

These are some of the more common fallacies and some examples of them.

**ad hominem:** This is a personal attack on someone with a different opinion than you rather than their actual opinion

- "You have no idea what you're talking about; you've only lived here for six months."

**post hoc ergo propter hoc:** This is when something happens before something else and so a cause/effect relationship is assumed. It says that because thing A happened before thing B, thing B happened *because* of thing A. It ignores other possible causes.

- "Henry received a vaccine and became ill. Therefore, the vaccine caused his illness."

**ad populum:** This is when you say that your opinion is the best or right because it is popular. *Everyone* thinks this or *everyone* does this, so your reader should think or do it too.

- "The crowds at my Rallies are far bigger than they have ever been before, including the 2016 election. Never an empty seat in these large venues, many thousands of people watching screens outside." - Donald Trump, Oct. 12, 2018

**slippery slope:** This is when you say that event A leads to event B which leads to event C and so on. Usually, this is a series of events that get progressively worse, but occasionally it can be a series of events that get progressively better.

- "Eliminating tolls will keep more money in tourists' pockets, which they'll spend on local attractions while they're here."
- "Lowering the voting age to 16 will make 14-year-olds want to vote, and then once we lower it to 14, we'll find ourselves asking if we should lower it again to 12 or even 10."

Lastly, be careful to use true information in your support. You could use great ethos, pathos, or logos, but if the information is untrue, then your opinion isn't really supported. As an academic writer, it is important to be honest and fair when supporting your opinion. Your goal is to use true support with effective rhetorical appeals for your opinion.

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Discussion

*Discuss the questions below with a partner or group.*

1. Have you read, watched, or listened to anything that had a fallacy in it?
2. When you read or watch something with fallacies, what do you feel or think as the audience?
3. Are you more convinced by fallacious support or fair support as a reader?
4. Do you tend to use any fallacies in your own writing or speaking?

### Exercise 2: Matching

*Match the fallacy to its example. Write the letter of the example next to the correct fallacy.*

Fallacy	Example
1. ____ ad hominem	A. "Yesterday I ate blackberries, and today I have a stomach ache. The blackberries must have caused this stomach ache."
2. ____ post hoc ergo propter hoc	B. "First they'll allow residents to keep chickens in their yards, then they'll start allowing people to keep pigs and sheep. Soon, this entire neighborhood will be one giant livestock farm."
3. ____ slippery slope	C. "It must be a really good car because so many people have bought one"
4. ____ ad populum	D. "Well, it's pretty obvious that your political party doesn't know how to be fiscally responsible, so I wouldn't expect you to be either."



### Exercise 3: Revising for fallacies

*Revise the sentences below to avoid fallacies. Use strong, true rhetorical appeals instead.*

1. It is pretty clear that Martin's data is defective because he never completed his college degree.

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2. You must have a bad grade in the class because you only take notes on your laptop.

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3. All of the research seems to suggest that owning a cat can improve your mental health overall.

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### Exercise 4: Revise for unity and development review

*Review this student introduction paragraph for unity and development.*

**Prompt:** Should economic globalization continue?

Today, globalization is the main topic for global trading and global politics. It connects billions of people on Earth. We can see the issues and solutions made by globalization. It brings benefits and disadvantages in many ways. Start with the prehistoric migration 100,000 years ago, through the era of Alexander the Great and the Genghis Khan Empire. It continued in the great British Empire and the United States after WWII. Until today, globalization never stops.

## Exercise5: Revise for cohesion

*Review this student's paragraph for cohesion. The paragraph has been broken into groups of two sentences. How would you improve the cohesion between these groups of sentences? Make any feedback or editing markings on the groups of sentences. Then, write the complete revised version of the paragraph on the lines below.*

**Prompt:** Should testing on animals be allowed to continue?

1. Mammals like dogs, sheep, and mice have similar body systems to humans. If people study a body of an animal, they can find out how something will work on a human body.
2. Some studies can only be conducted on a living organism. Scientists and researchers have been searching for appropriate medical treatments without risks.
3. Animal testing is a possibility for this. Animals and mammals have similar body structures to humans.
4. They have a similar muscular system, skeletal system, and nervous system. Most animals are biologically similar to humans.
5. "This similarity means that nearly 90% of the veterinary medicines that are used to treat animals are the same as, or very similar to, those developed to treat human patients" (The Animal Model, 2018). For example, 99% of human DNA is the same as that of mice.


## Exercise 6: Revise a paragraph

*Read the student paragraph and offer suggestions to the author. Is the body paragraph effective? Consider organization, using adequate sources, avoiding logical fallacies, etc.*

Many people sustain that electric vehicles are going to be the only cars that are going to be sold in the market, but this is not true because of the high number of gasoline cars that are in production today. Recently, Volvo claimed that after 2019, gasoline cars are going to disappear, and the electric vehicles are going to be in the roads all over the world (CNN,2017). Furthermore, there were sold around 873,000 electric vehicles worldwide in 2016, helping that the number of electric vehicle use goes up to 1,2019,000 around the world (CNN, 2017; Statista, 2017). This looks to be a good number for a project that started a few years ago. On the other hand, the typical fuel car has been on top of the market for more than 50 years. Starting in 1901 with the first Mercedes car, designed by Wilhelm Maybach (History.com, 2010), companies are trying to build more and more of these cars. At the beginning of the 21st century, car companies' worldwide production was 58,374,162 cars, where the USA produced 21.93% of them (OICA, 2000). Since 2000, the car production arose 62.7%, with China producing only 29.6% of them (OICA, 2016). Based on this numbers, electric vehicles seem to have a long trial to walk in order to win the market and the production of a normal fuel car. Thus, gasoline cars are not going to disappear in 2019.

## Exercise 7: Peer Review

Read a partner's essay and review its use of rhetorical appeals.

- Do you see any good uses of ethos, pathos, and/or logos?
- Do you see any fallacies or misuses of ethos, pathos, and/or logos?

Mark and label any effective rhetorical appeals or fallacies you find in their writing.

## Exercise 8: Check your essay

1. Does the introduction provide the general information a reader needs in order to understand the topic?
2. Does the introduction end with an effective thesis? Does it clearly show your opinion?
3. Do each of the body paragraphs begin with an effective topic sentence?
4. Are the body paragraphs sequenced in a logical order?
5. Look at each body paragraph. Do the supporting sentences support the topic sentence?
6. Look at each body paragraph. Are the supporting sentences sequenced in a logical order?
7. Look at each body paragraph. Is there enough development? Are there more details or examples that would help the reader?
8. Look at each body paragraph. Does the concluding sentence close the paragraph logically?
9. Does the conclusion paragraph start by restating the thesis?
10. Does the conclusion paragraph have a suggestion, prediction, or opinion at the end?
11. Do you have any grammar errors that interfere with the reader understanding your ideas?
12. Do you include cited sources accurately? Do you have in-text citations for all summaries, paraphrases, and quotes? Do you list all the sources you used on the reference page?

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Revise Persuasive Writing



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# Revise Persuasive Writing

## Environmental Sustainability in Mexico

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What would be the future of Mexico in terms environmental sustainability? The United Nations in 2015 established 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UNDP, 2022). These goals were adopted by country members and in different parts of the world. Mexico, as a member, adopted in its agenda some goals which are relevant to the sustainable development in Mexico in terms of the national energetic system. The Mexican energy agenda for 2022 to 2032 includes the goal 7-accessible energy and non-contaminants, 11-sustainable cities, and communities, and 13-action against climate change from the United Nations. Many experts argue that if the Mexican Ministry of Energy carries out the established agenda, Mexico would accomplish with its national and international energetic commitments. Through the development of the sustainable agenda Mexico would ensure energetic supply, reduce the carbon footprint, and support the energetic self-supply.

First, sustainable plan ensures energetic supply. According to the President of Mexico, it is important to consider the use of energy at these times and the future generations (SENER, 2021). New energy production methods should guarantee that the production would satisfy the demand. Mexico represents 1.7% of the oil consumption globally but its commitments are to reduce that consumption and satisfying the supply of energy for future generation. According to the Ministry of Energy (SENER, 2021) the energetic mix is 86.9% fossil fuels, 2% nuclear, and 10.3% renewable energies. Among the renewable's energies are solar, wind, bioenergy, and geothermal. Those energies have the capacity to totally replace the use of fossil fuels. Mexico has a large opportunity to support renewable energies. Of course, many will probably disagree with this assertion that the development of renewable energies in Mexico is high because actually is low (NREL, 2022). Although it is granted in Mexico there are 54 projects of investment in solar fields, wind energy, and cogeneration plants, which could increase the energy production and ensure the future supply. There is a cooperation between public, private and social sectors to contribute with the national supply and increase the use of renewable energies to decrease the exploitation of fossil fuels that in the future won't be enough to satisfy the energetic demand.

Second, the development of sustainable goals in Mexico would reduce the carbon footprint. The implementation of new technology can significantly impact in the greenhouse gases emissions. Mexico was responsible of 1.2% of the emissions globally in 2021. Therefore, some actions are taken to reduce its collaboration. Those actions are related to the use of oil in liquid fuels. Some scholarships are given to students to develop research about the potential use of biofuels. Alternatively, this fact could be viewed as something that still needs support. Recent studies have shown that still the renewable energies and liquid fuels pollute even more than fossil fuels. Due to the fact that there are still some hotspots about the government is considering the renewable energies evaluation through a life cycle methodology (FOŁĘGA et al., 2022). An approach says that any kind of renewable energy is still less comparing the emissions of the fossil fuels (Woolcock & Brown, 2013).

Finally, the energetic self-supply is an indirect effect of the development of the sustainable agenda. The production of fuels in Mexico let other countries to intervene in its supply and exploitation of the natural resources. However, Mexico is looking for energy sovereignty through the development of sufficient infrastructure in the life cycle of the production of energy. This includes fossil, renewable, and nuclear energy. It is reported an increasing capacity in

science, technology, industry, and automatic process that allow Mexico to generate its own energy. Many people claim that the storage of energy is one of the main issues to let a country satisfy its own demand. Nevertheless, if the country develops new technologies independently from other countries, the potential of powering energy can be enough to satisfy the national demand and do not let other countries to intervene.

Mexico, as member of the United Nations program, has national and international commitments aligned to the 2030 Agenda. The energetic plan for the coming years impacts positively in the energetic supply, reduction of emissions, energetic self-supply environmental issues. Still there are some downsides to consider regarding science, technology, and industry to implement its actions. However, the future in terms of environment is considered by the government supporting renewable energies and the transition of energy supply.

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## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Evaluate an essay

*Read the student essay. Evaluate the essay using these questions:*

- Does the essay clearly state an opinion?
- Does the essay follow a general essay structure?
- Are the thesis statement, topic sentences, and restated thesis statement effective?
- Are the ideas of the essay developed so that you understand the main idea of the essay?
- Are all the sentences in the essay unified within and between paragraphs?
- Are the sentences and paragraphs organized to have a logical flow?
- Are there any words, phrases, or sentences that you notice are confusing for you as the reader?

## Exercise 2: Give feedback

*Read the student essay. Then, give the author feedback by answering the question below.*

- What suggestions would you give the author who wrote this?

## Exercise 3: Revise an essay

Read the student essay. Evaluate the essay to determine what needs to change to make the essay better. Decide how you are going to make those changes. Then, make the changes to revise the essay.

You may do this on paper, on a computer, or as your teacher directs.



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# Timed Writing (Persuasive)

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Throughout this textbook you have practiced the writing process: prewriting, writing, and revising. No matter what you are writing or under what conditions it occurs, you should experience these three stages of writing. Even a text message is drafted mentally, written, and then often reviewed quickly, if for no other reason than to catch failed autocorrections.

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In formal, academic writing contexts, the prewriting stage holds extra significance. Prewriting is when you check your understanding of the prompt, decide the direction you want to take on the topic, and put limits on what you will include. This stage can often make or break an essay.

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## Scope

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As part of prewriting, you will need to consider the scope of your writing. The word **scope** is used to describe extent and relevance. In the context of writing, you determine scope through your thesis statement and topic sentences. Your thesis controls what ideas will be relevant in the overall essay, and each topic sentence dictates the limits of that one point that you are addressing. In other words, scope is seen at the paragraph and the essay level.

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Effective control of scope in an essay means that you will have unity of ideas and cohesion. Again, this unity and cohesion should be evident at the sentence, paragraph, and essay level.

---

In timed writing, you need to decide very quickly what your scope will be. While this is partially set by the requirements of the prompt, there will always be some degree of freedom with the scope you choose. For example, a TOEFL prompt requiring you to propose a solution to a problem may allow the freedom of choosing one solution and describing at length why it is the best option or suggesting multiple solutions that are described in less detail.

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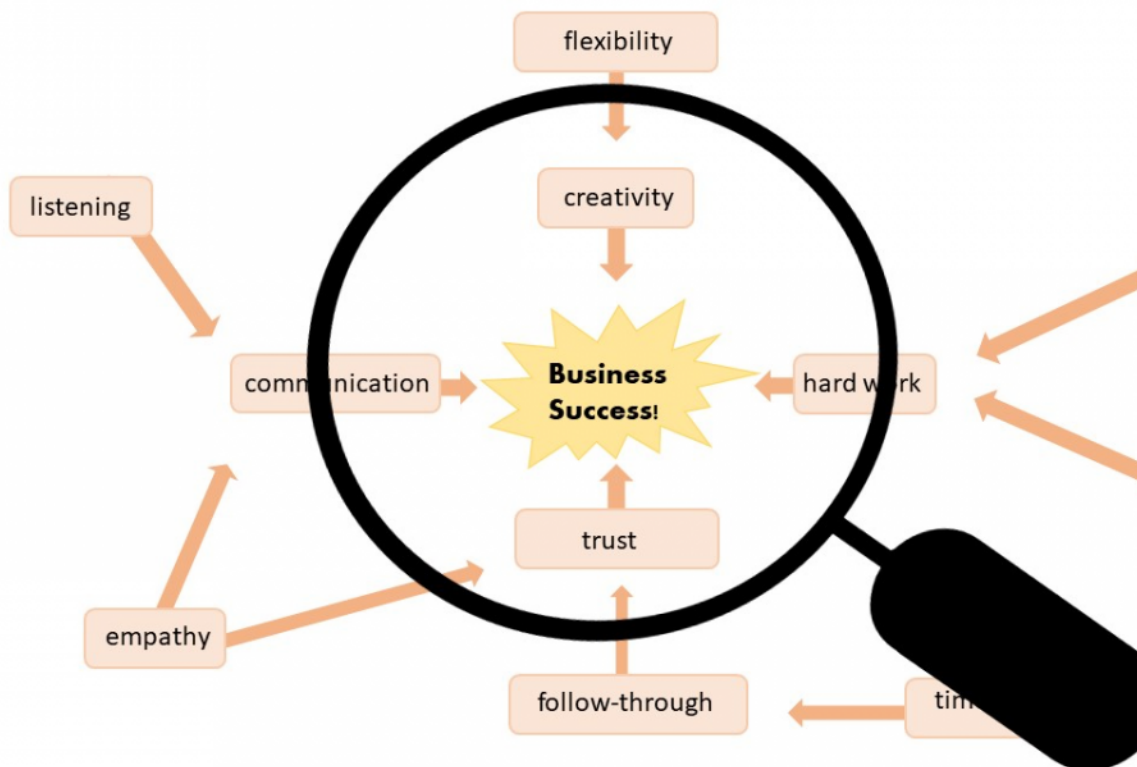
Scope can be thought of as a wide focus or a big magnifying glass. You are still focused on one topic for the main idea, but are using multiple shallowly explained examples or reasons for the body paragraphs about that topic.

## Examples

The 1st scope below includes four ideas about business success: creativity, hardwork, trust, and communication. Each of these four ideas would probably be described or explained a little. The student could choose an even wider scope to include other factors of business success such as foresight or organization etc.. The wider the scope, the less likely you will be able to develop each idea deeply. You will probably describe these ideas shallowly and rely on the variety of topics of the body paragraphs to hopefully explain your main idea instead.

The 2nd scope below includes one idea about business success: trust. This is a narrow scope. If this one idea is only described in one shallow body paragraph, it will not be enough for the reader to understand the main idea. Therefore, this idea will likely be developed with a deeper scale than the four topic version and include multiple paragraphs of examples or explanation about that one idea: trust between the company and customer, trust between the company and other companies, and trust between employer and employee. Essays with a narrow scope make up for the lack of variety by having a deep scale of information about the few topics they do include.

### Scope 1:



*Image: Barraza 2022 (made with PowerPoint and PowerPoint Icons)*

### Scope 2:

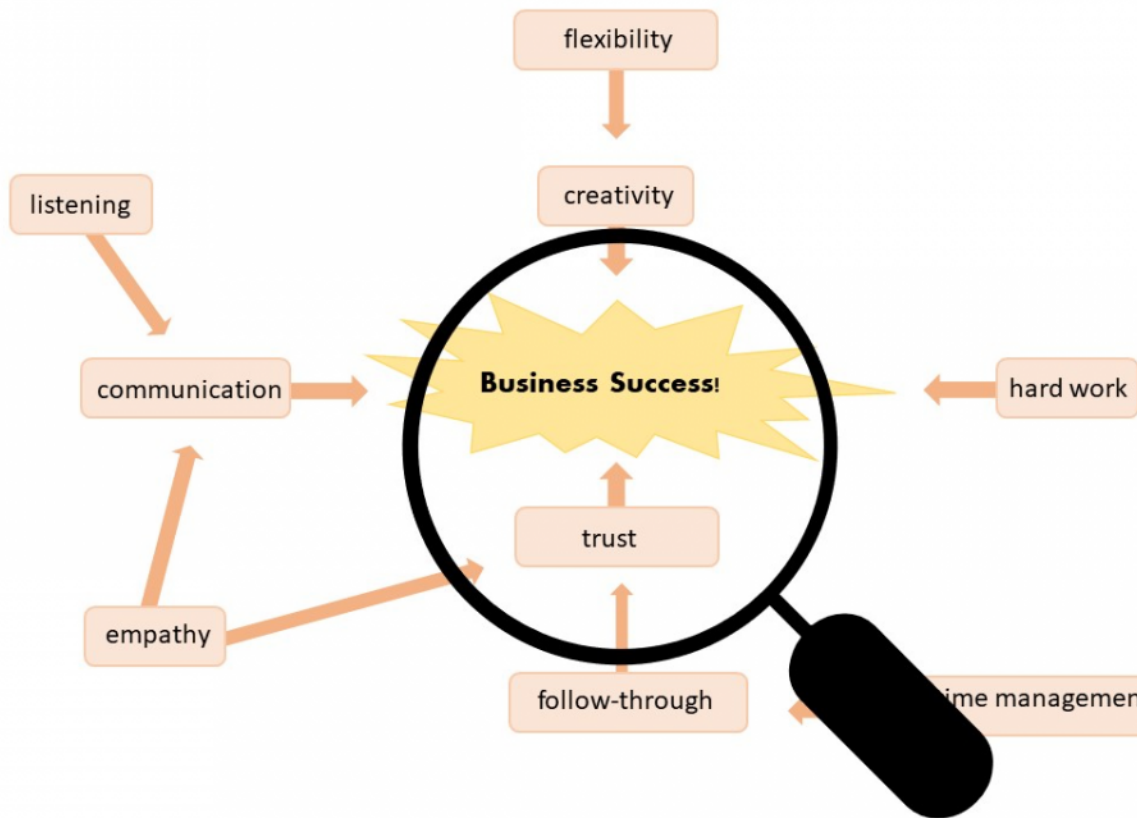


Image: Barraza 2022 (made with PowerPoint and PowerPoint Icons)

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## Scale

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A concept that goes hand in hand with scope is the idea of *scale*. **Scale** in writing focuses on how much you will say about a topic. At first glance, this may seem very similar to the definition of scope. However, the difference here is that scale is more connected to the development of those united and cohesive ideas.

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Scale comes down to how many body paragraphs are needed and how many supporting ideas are best for each paragraph. You do not want to overwhelm your reader by including too much information, but you also do not want to undersupport your ideas.

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When you brainstorm, the scale of your writing is also controlled by your thesis and topic sentences. Additionally, any bullet points you add in that brainstorm will help you remember your scale.

---

For example, the scale reminders for the outlines in the first exercise in this chapter would be to include both short- and long-term effects. Without including that scale of time, you miss part of the prompt. Outline 1 includes both national and global impacts of declining populations, which expands the scale for the essay by location as well. Outline 2, however, keeps a smaller scale on the topic by only mentioning the effects at the national level.

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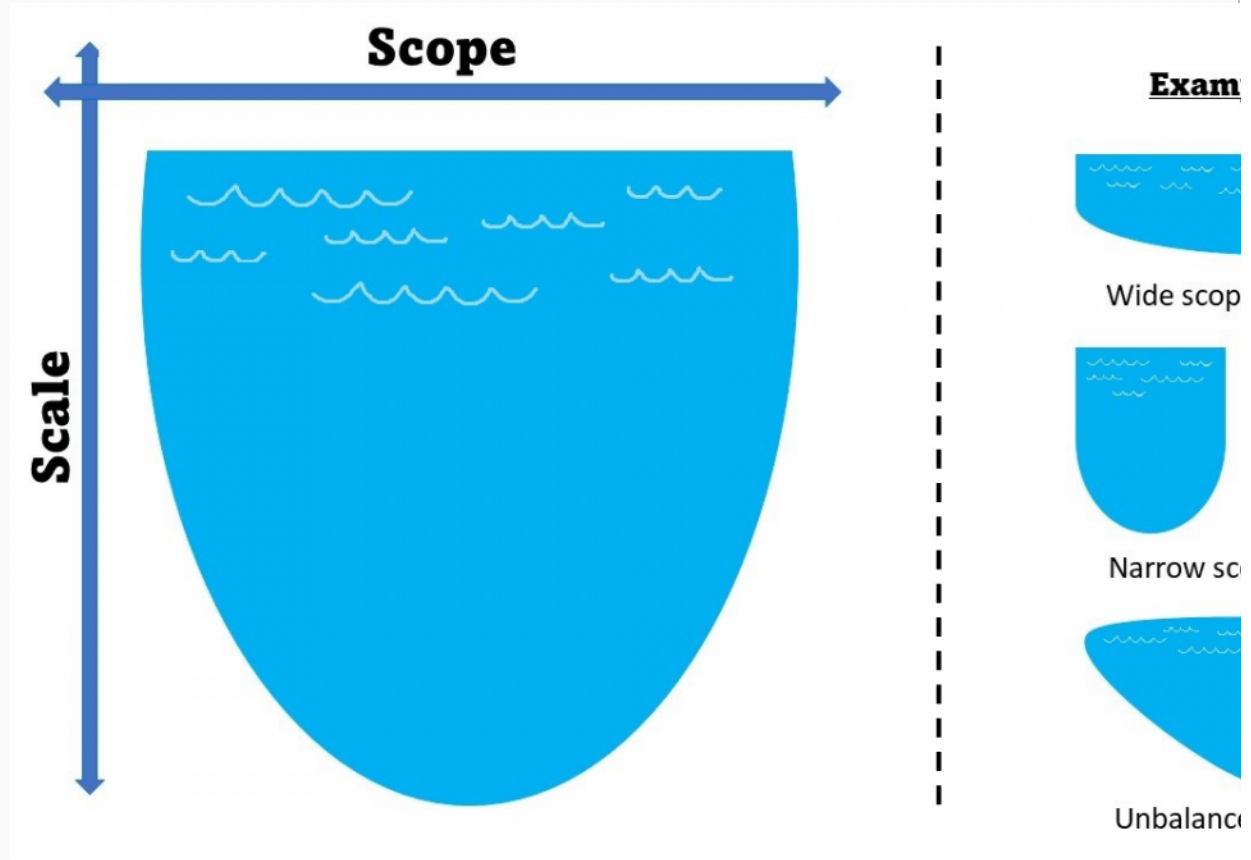
Scale can be thought of as a narrow focus or a small magnifying glass. You are still focused on one topic for the main idea, and are using one deeply explained example or reason for the body paragraphs about that topic.

---

You may use different scope and scale depending on the task and the constraints of an assignment. A 5-10 page research essay written over many weeks has the room and time for you to have both a wide scope and a deep scale. A 1-2 page essay written in 30 minutes will likely have a smaller scope or shallower scale. You can either write an essay with wide scope or an essay with deep scale, but it is difficult to do both in only 30 minutes. You will need to consider the time constraints when making decisions about what you will be realistically able to write well in 30 minutes.

## The Scope and Scale Lake

You can think of scope and scale in an essay like a lake. The lake may be large (broad focus) or small (narrow focus). The lake may be shallow (lightly developed) or deep (thoroughly developed). You may have use any combination of scope and scale including medium scope and medium scale. It is your choice.



*Image: Barraza 2022*

You will need to consider the questions of scope and scale when planning your essay. What scope can you realistically write about given the constraints of the assignment? What scale would best develop your ideas for the reader?

As you answer these questions keep in mind that your essay should be balanced. You should have a similar scale accross all body paragraphs. Either the whole lake is shallow or the whole lake is deep. If the scale of the essay switches part way through, the reader will think that you tried to write a deep essay but ran out of time or will just be confused about your organization.

## Examples

Here are two example essays. One essay has a broad scope, but a shallow scale. The other essay has a narrow scope, but a deep scale.

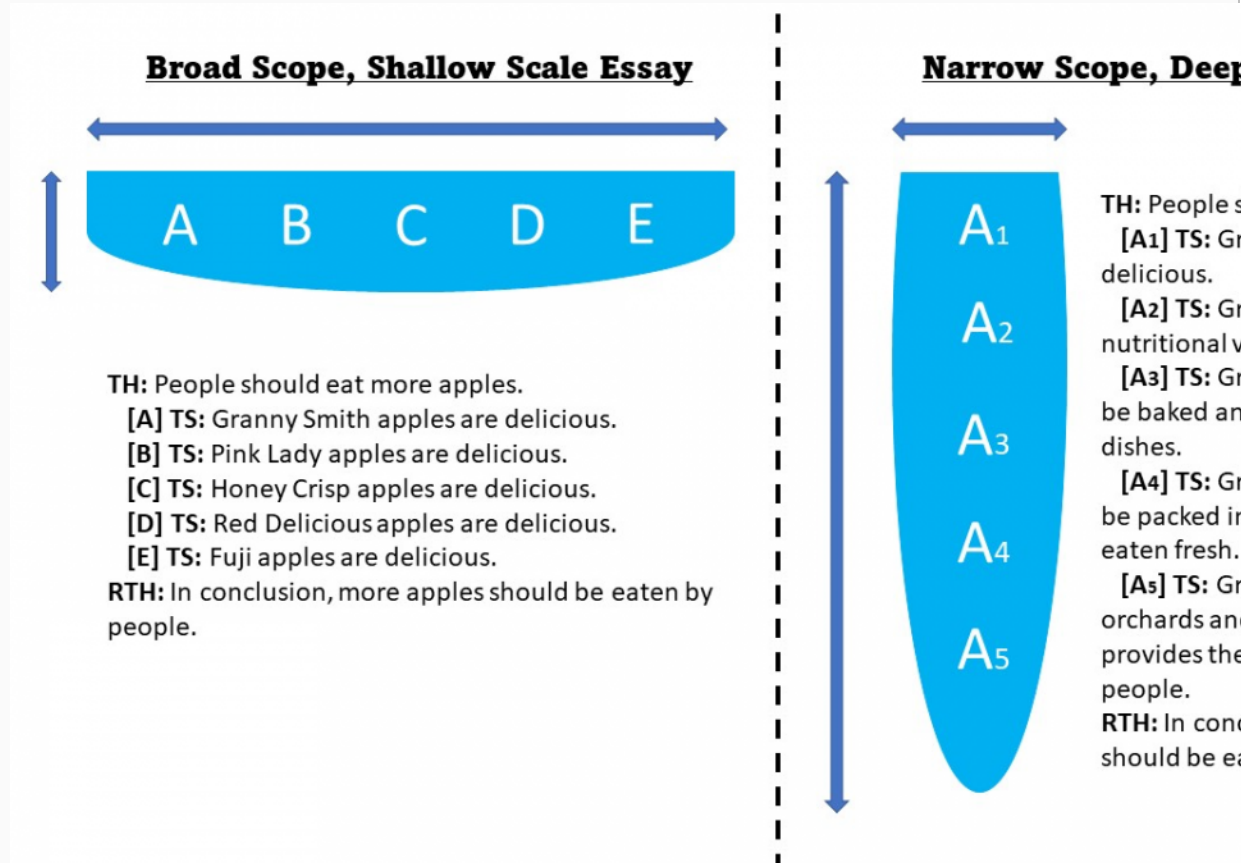


Image: Barraza 2022

TH = thesis, TS = topic sentence, RTH = restated thesis statement

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## Exercises

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### Exercise 1: Outlines (Scope)

*Compare the two outlines for the same timed essay below. Answer these questions:*

1. *What are the advantages and disadvantages of each outline?*
2. *Which would you prefer to use with a time limit of 30 minutes? Why?*
3. *What changes (if any) would you make to these outlines?*

Prompt: What is the most important skill for students to develop before they attend college? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Outline 1	Outline 2
TH: Making quick decisions should be listed as one of the most important skills for two different reasons.	TH: Being a good writer and thinking critically are two necessary skills you will use throughout your college experience.
TS1: First of all, the ability to make quick decisions could help students to deal with assignments and quizzes in school more easily and efficiently.	TS1: Writing skills will be useful for students who are going to be required to write essays since the first year of study.
TS2: Moreover, the ability to make the right decision within a short period of time can help students prepare for their future career.	TS2: Another skill that students needs to be develop before college is to be critical thinker.
RTH: In all, the ability to make quick and right decisions will benefit students for both their study at school and future career.	RTH: Being a critical-thinker and having good writing practices before starting college will help students to develop well in college.

---

### Exercise 2: Identify the Scope

*Compare outline 1 and outline 2 from Exercise 1. Then, answer these questions:*

1. What is the scope of outline 1?
2. What is the scope of outline 2?

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### Exercise 3: Identify the Scale

*Compare outline 1 and outline 2 from Exercise 1. Then, answer these questions:*

1. What is the scale of outline 1?
2. What is the scale of outline 2?

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### Exercise 4: Outline (Scale)

*Create an outline for the same prompt used in the previous exercise. Do not copy the sentences from that exercise, and try not to use any of the supporting ideas if possible.*

*As you write your thesis and topic sentences, pay close attention to your scale. After you complete the outline, compare with a partner to see different approaches to the same prompt.*

Prompt: What is the most important skill for students to develop before they attend college? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.



## Exercise 5: Timed Writing (Scope & Scale)

**Part A:** Choose one of the prompts below. Set a timer for 30 minutes and write about the topic. Be sure to outline your essay first with specific emphasis on controlling your scope and scale.

- Your community is considering eliminating the recycling service. This is because the majority of citizens do not follow the recycling guidelines and products are included in the recycling which contaminate the waste that could be recycled, making this service a waste of time and money for the city. Write an email to the city council explaining your support or disapproval of this decision.
- There is a debate about whether the minimum wage should be increased. Some people believe that raising the minimum wage will allow people to live more comfortably and contribute more to the economy. Others believe that a higher minimum wage would cause all prices to increase due to inflation. Do you think that minimum wage should be increased? Why do you think that?
- You have been asked to write a short op-ed article for your university newspaper. The topic you were assigned is whether all general education courses should be offered as online classes instead of in-person. Although the student readers are the primary audience for this article, the newspaper editor said that you are welcome to address the professors who read the paper as well.

**Part B:** After writing your essay, reflect on your use of scope and scale by answering the questions below.

1. What was the scope of your essay?

---

2. What was the scale of your essay?

---



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# Integrated Writing (Persuasive)

## Integrated Content

---

Because integrated writing depends on including support from an outside source, the strategies of quoting, summarizing, and paraphrasing are essential for success. But before you can utilize this strategy, you must first identify the most relevant information from the sources.

Just like the discussion of scope and scale in the Timed Writing 6 chapter, outlining your essay first will set you up for success. The outline will establish if your writing is more focused on a summary comparison or synthesis. In other words, are the sources meant to work together to support the same ideas? Or are you meant to find and explore differences? That scope will be clear from the prompt, but the scale of the detail that you need for your writing is often open.

This means that it is up to you to recognize important information as you read or listen. In highly controlled integrated writing tasks like you see on the TOEFL, the sources and task are always structured the same and require minimal effort in the choosing.

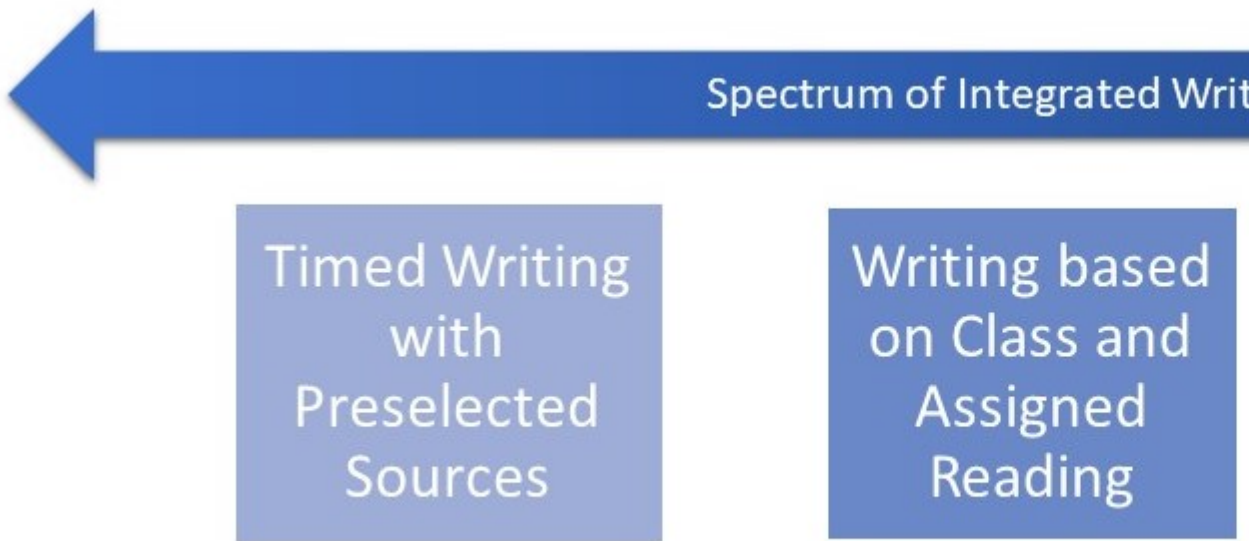
### Typical TOEFL Integrated Writing Source Structure

Clearly stated position in reading	↔	Clearly stated <b>opposing</b> position in listening
Supporting statement 1 + limited detail	↔	Opposing statement 1 + limited detail
Supporting statement 2 + limited detail	↔	Opposing statement 2 + limited detail
Supporting statement 3 + limited detail	↔	Opposing statement 3 + limited detail

As you can see, the structure in the two sources is exactly parallel. The same points are given in the same order, with the only variation being the point of view on the topic. The listening passage with *usually* disagree with the reading passage. This is not always the case, so they may agree sometimes. However, usually the listening will have an opposing or opposite opinion than the reading. The points being discussed will be in the same order for both. This allows you to focus on creating your contrasting organization without requiring multiple reviews of the original source.

However, most real-life integrated tasks will have greater expectations for sifting through the available resources and choosing what to include. At the most extreme end of this process of choosing content, consider the process you went through to find, read, and use sources to support the essays you worked on throughout the semester. Many of your college courses will expect this degree of research and critical thinking about source material.

The middle point of this spectrum is the most frequent. This integration is pulling from the readings assigned from the class (e.g. textbook or articles) and the lectures. The majority of your writing tasks will expect you to find connections between those primary sources.



*Image: Barraza 2022*

So how do you know what is important from the reading and lectures? This is where the skills and strategies you are learning and developing in your Listening & Speaking and Reading classes come in as essential to your improving as an academic writer. Look at the box below for some tips on how to recognize important information:

## Tips for Receptive Skills

Receptive skills is the term used for language that you receive from either listening or reading. This often *seems* like a "passive" side of language learning and use where you are not actively doing an action, and therefore they are skills that get less attention from learners. Listening and reading being passive skills could not be further from the truth of what is truly happening as you engage those skills. While you are reading and listening, you are very active in using English skills and strategies to understand what you are reading and listening to. Here are some reminders of skills and strategies you discuss in these courses that are extremely valuable for integrated writing:

Reading	Listening
Understanding main ideas and major details	Understanding main ideas and major details
Noticing repetition of words	Noticing repetition of words
Skimming	Understanding the use and purpose of suprasegmentals like pausing, intonation and stress
Scanning	Making inferences
Making inferences	Recognizing use and meaning of vocabulary (connotation)
Recognize organizational structures and purpose	Effective use of selective listening
Using grammar and word part knowledge to understand unfamiliar words	

## Choosing Content

Below you will find a step-by-step explanation of how to choose content. Because this process has been integrated into the practice you have done throughout the semester, none of this should feel like completely new information. Instead, this should function as a reminder of the writing skills you have worked to develop over the past few months.

### The prompt

It should come as no surprise that the first step to appropriately choosing content to integrate into your writing begins with understanding the prompt. You must first understand what you are meant to write about before you can move any further.

### The thesis

Depending on the context and parameters of the assignment, there are two different approaches. The first approach would be to first read through the material you have been given or have gathered to decide on the position you wish to take in your thesis. The second option would be to create your thesis statement based off of your initial thoughts on the prompt and then to look at the sources. The latter is only advisable if you are familiar enough with the topic to have an informed opinion before evaluating the existing writing on the issue.

## Supporting ideas

The advice here is the same as number two. You would do best to first see what strong supporting ideas already exist. Use the reading and the listening to inform your own supporting organization. It is possible to decide on your supporting ideas before carefully reading through the sources, but this may lead to a loss of time or a weak position if you find that little has been written or said that aligns with what you believed you wanted to say.

## Exploration

Once you have completed the first three steps, explore your sources as thoroughly as possible given the constraints of the assignment. Read with a highlighter in hand. Listen and read multiple times. Check transcripts or dictionaries if needed. If this is not possible because of testing center limitations, give all of your focus to the source when it is available to you. It should always be possible for you to take notes on a pad of paper or in an open document.

## Connections

If you based your thesis and supporting ideas off of what you learned while exploring the sources, it will be much easier to make connections between the notes and highlights you created in step 4 to your outline.

## Evaluation

Decide which sources to integrate by assessing the strength. Strength is decided by relevance and by how compelling that point is in supporting or developing your own ideas.

## Integration

The next step is to decide if you will incorporate that supporting information from a source as a quote, summary, or paraphrase. You can revisit those sections of this textbook if you need a reminder of the conditions where these different uses are best implemented.

Be sure to introduce, credit, and respond to the source appropriately as explained in those three chapters. The source should feel like part of the paragraph, not like a copy and paste addition.

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Integrated Writing (Choosing Focus)

*You received an email at work asking for your opinion about a possible company change to better support employees with children. The company is considering three options: providing an on-site day care, adding a benefit for childcare subsidy, or allowing for employees to work remotely with flexible hours. Before responding to the email, you decide you should learn more about the pros and cons of the options. First watch the video for context about this topic within the United States. Then read the article to explore the options presented by your employer. You may take notes and/or highlight. You are welcome to discuss the ideas with a partner as part of your brainstorm.*

*You must respond to the email by tomorrow. Include references to both the article and video you watched to support your position. Because you have many other tasks to complete, set a timer for 20 minutes to write your response using your notes.*

[America's Childcare Criss - The Daily Show \(Video\)](#)

[Childcare is a Business Issue - Harvard Business Review \(Article\)](#)



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## Appendix A: Sentence Variety

Your writing should include a combination of different types of sentences. This keeps your writing interesting. It adds more detail, and the detail helps to develop your ideas. A paragraph with only one type of sentence can either be very boring or very confusing.

You should always consider your audience and the purpose of your writing when you begin writing. Just because you *can* use a variety of grammar structures doesn't mean you *should*. For example, the author of a children's story will focus on simple sentences because they are easy to understand and keep the audience's attention. However, someone writing an analysis for a college course is better served by using all of the writing structures as needed.

Think of your sentence types as tools. Each tool fills a specific purpose and helps express a clear idea.

Simple Sentences
Compound Sentences
Complex Sentences Part 1
Complex Sentences Part 2
Compound-Complex Sentences



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# Simple Sentences

## Sentence Structure



A simple sentence must include a subject and a verb.

## Subjects

---

Subjects are the nouns (person, place, thing) that *does* the verb.

- I sing.
- Ana shops.
- Emelie dances.
- The school is good.
- My house is blue.
- The store has clothes.

## Verbs

---

The verb is the action or state.

- I sing.
- Ana shops.
- Emelie dances.
- The school is good.
- My house is blue.
- The car stops.

It is also possible to have two or more subjects and/or two or more verbs.

- I sing and dance.
- We see, hear, smell, taste, and feel.
- Ana and Emelie shop.
- Your parents, sister, and brother visit.

## Complement

---

A simple sentence can have a complement. The complement is a word or phrase that adds more information about a part of the sentence.

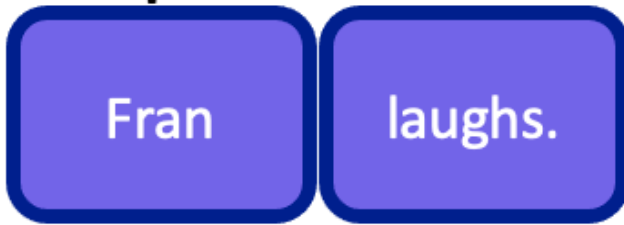
A simple sentence can have an object as a complement. The object is the noun that receives the action. A sentence can have two or more objects.

- We eat lunch.
- We eat lunch and dinner.
- Yuri buys clothes.
- Yuri buys clothes, shoes, and hats.
- They listen to music.
- The university has many students.
- My friend calls me.
- Charlie throws the ball to me.
- The book gives the instructions.

A simple sentence can also have other words or phrases as a complement. The other words or phrases might include adjectives, prepositions, or adverbs.

- We eat lunch quickly.
- Yuri buys clothes at the store.
- They listen to music on their phones.
- The university has many students.
- My friend calls me after class.
- The book gives the instructions to make cookies.

### Example 1



### Example 2



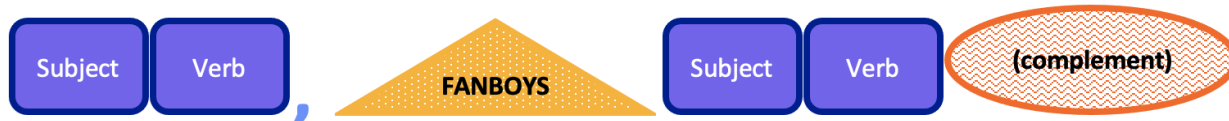
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# Compound Sentences

## Sentence Structure



## Independent Clauses

A simple sentence can also be called an independent clause. An independent clause is a subject and verb that is a complete idea. It does not need more information to complete the thought.

You can connect separate independent clauses (simple sentences) using a coordinating conjunction. Coordinating conjunctions are words that connect the two sentences together. You use them when the ideas in the sentences are connected.

- I have a dog, and I want another dog.

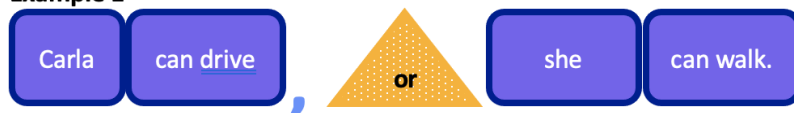
See that both sentences are complete. You can separate them with a period. However, the meaning of the sentences is connected, so you can use a coordinating conjunction to make the connection clear. When a sentence has more than one independent clause, it is called a compound sentence.

## Coordinating Conjunctions

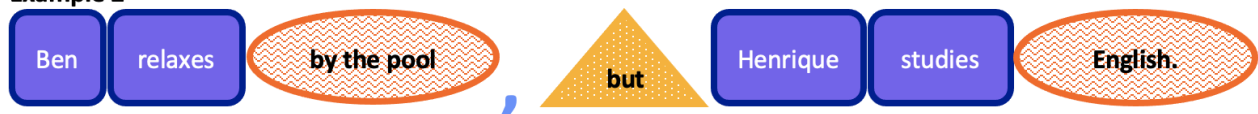
Coordinating conjunctions in English are *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so*. We often use the word *FANBOYS* to remember these words. When you use a coordinating conjunction (*FANBOYS*), you will use a comma before the second independent clause.

- F – Bring an umbrella, for it will rain this afternoon.
  - This word shows a cause or reason connection.
  - This is more formal and not common.
- A – Reading class is first, and writing class is second.
  - This word shows addition, time order, or cause/reason.
- N – I never liked broccoli, nor will I ever like it.
  - This shows that both clauses are not true or do not happen.
  - This is use more in formal English.
- B – Rei was late to class, but he did participate.
  - This shows a difference connection.
- O – My classmates are going to karaoke, or they are going bowling.
  - This word shows a choice between the clauses.
  - It is often used in questions.
- Y – I did the homework, yet I still have many questions.
  - This word is used like *but* to show a difference connection.
- S – We need money, so we will get jobs.
  - This conjunction shows a cause or reason connection like *for*.

#### Example 1



#### Example 2



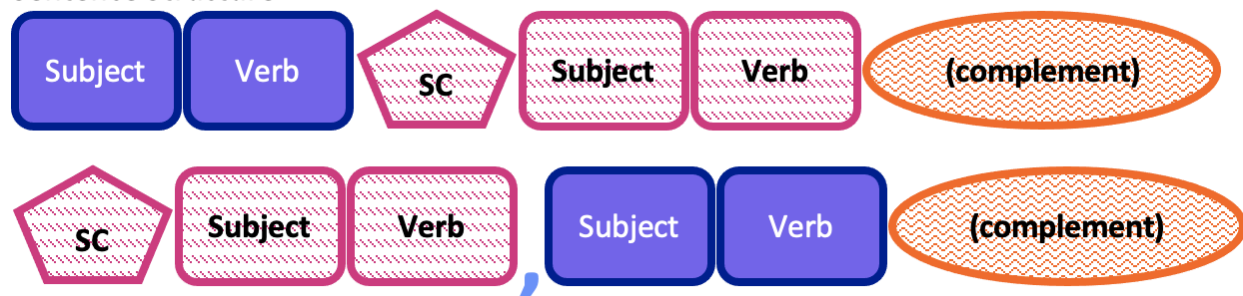
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# Complex Sentences Part 1

## Sentence Structure



## Dependent Clauses

A dependent clause is an idea that is not complete. It has a subject and verb, but it also has a word that requires more detail.

*Because* is a clear example of a word that makes an idea a dependent clause. A clause that begins with *because* cannot be used alone. You need to connect it to an independent clause for the idea to be complete.

- Because I don't like to swim. (*Incomplete*)
- Because I don't like to swim, I do not go to the pool. (*Complete*)

When a sentence has a dependent clause and an independent clause, it is called a complex sentence. There are many different types of dependent clauses. We use the different clauses to show different connections between ideas.

## Time Clauses

A specific type of dependent clause is a time clause. These clauses have a time word that requires more information to show the sequence of actions. Common time words are *after*, *before*, *when*, *while*, *whenever*, *since*, and *until*.

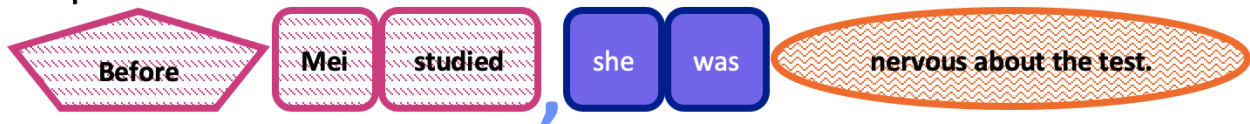
When you start a sentence with the dependent clause, you need a comma to connect the clauses.

- After – After she exercises, she goes to school.
  - The dependent clause is the first action in time.
- Before – Before I go to bed, I brush my teeth.
  - The dependent clause is the second action in time.
- When – When he drives, he listens to music.
  - The dependent clause is the first action in time.
- While – While I was studying at the ELC, I met my best friend.
  - The dependent clause started first but continues during the second action.
- Whenever – Whenever Bryan hears this song, he misses his home.
  - The dependent clause is the first action and causes the second action.
- Since – Since we started the semester, we have been classmates.
  - The dependent clause is the first action. The focus is on the period of time, usually between the first action and the present.
- Until – Until they graduate, they will need to focus on studying.
  - The dependent clause is the second action. The focus is on the period of time, usually between the present moment and the second action.

#### Example 1



#### Example 2



When you start the sentence with the independent clause, you do not need a comma to connect the sentences.

- After – She goes to school after she exercises.
- Before – I brush my teeth before I go to bed.
- When – He listens to music when he drives.
- While – I met my best friend while I was studying at the ELC.
- Whenever – He misses his home whenever Bryan hears this song.
- Since – We have been classmates since we started the semester.
- Until – They will need to focus on studying until they graduate.

#### Example 3



#### Example 4





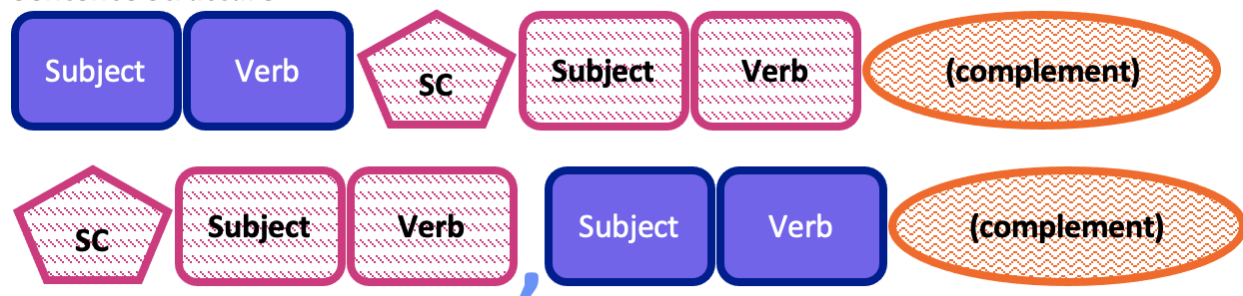
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## Complex Sentences Part 2

### Sentence Structure



## Subordinating Conjunctions

There are many different names that we use to describe grammar. In previous ELC writing textbooks, we used the term time clause to talk about dependent clauses that show the sequence relationship between two actions. Those time clauses started with words like *after*, *before*, *when*, *while*, *whenever*, *since*, and *until*.

The general name for words that connect two clauses is conjunction.

As explained in the other section of this chapter, a coordinating conjunction connects two independent clauses. Both of those ideas are complete on their own, but the writer chooses to emphasize how they are connected using a coordinating conjunction.

A subordinating conjunction is a word that makes an idea incomplete as soon as it is added to the beginning of a clause. Time clauses are a specific type of subordinating conjunction. Subordinating conjunctions make an idea dependent, meaning it requires another clause. When you have both a dependent and independent clause, the sentence is called a complex sentence.

Additional common subordinating conjunctions are: *although*, *even if*, *even though*, *if*, *though*, and *whether*.

- Although – Although she loves pizza, she does not want to eat it tonight.
  - The dependent clause contrasts with the independent clause.
- Even if – Even if it rains tomorrow, the soccer game will happen.
  - The possible action in the dependent clause does not change the action in the independent clause.
- Even though – Even though you were tired, you were able to finish your homework.
  - The action in the dependent clause does not change the action in the independent clause.
- If – If I miss the lecture, I can watch the Zoom recording later.
  - The dependent clause is a condition, the independent clause is the consequence.
- Though – Though they practiced every day, they did not play well at the concert.
  - The dependent clause contrasts with the independent clause.
- Whether – Whether it is sunny tomorrow or not, we will have a picnic.
  - The two possibilities in the dependent clause do not impact the independent clause action.

### Example 1



The order of the clauses can change. If the independent clause is first, the comma is not necessary.

- Although – She does not want to eat pizza tonight although she loves it.
- Even if – The soccer game will happen even if it rains tomorrow.
- Even though – You were able to finish your homework even though you were tired.
- If – I can watch the Zoom recording later if I miss the lecture.
- Though – They did not play well at the concert though they practiced every day.
- Whether – We will have a picnic whether it is sunny tomorrow or not

### Example 2



## Relative Clauses

### Sentence Structure



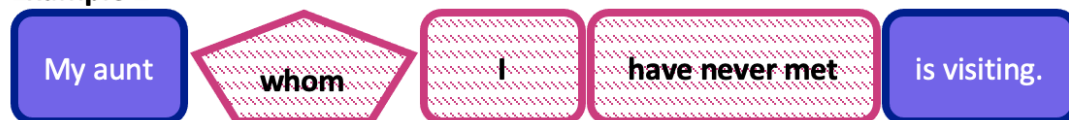
Sometimes a dependent clause is used within a sentence to add more information about a noun or noun phrase. This is called a relative clause. Instead of using a subordinating conjunction, the relative clause uses a relative pronoun to introduce the dependent clause. Relative pronouns include *which*, *that*, *who*, *whom*, and *whose*.

- Which – The ELC, which is a language school in Provo, is in the University Parkway Center.
- That – The car that passed me on the freeway was pulled over by a police officer.
- Who – I am going to visit my sister who lives in Las Vegas.
- Whom – The person whom I like is not at the party.
  - This is more commonly reduced because it sounds dumb.
- Whose – Will the person whose car is blocking the driveway please move it?

Sometimes we do not write the relative pronoun, and this is called a reduced clause. A relative clause can only be reduced if the information is not required.

- Which – The soup which she cooked yesterday is delicious.
  - The soup she cooked yesterday is delicious.
- That – The hat that I'm wearing looks exactly like yours.
  - The hat I'm wearing looks exactly like yours.
- Who – The doctor who she goes to doesn't have any availability today.
  - The doctor she goes to doesn't have any availability today.
- Whom – The person whom I like is not at the party.
  - The person I like is not at the party.
- Whose – not possible

#### Example 1



#### Example 2



#### Example 3



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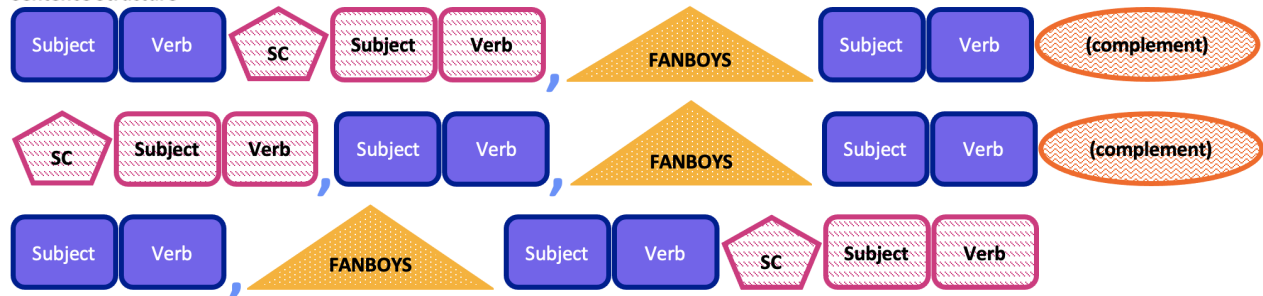
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# Compound-Complex Sentences

## Sentence Structure



Sometimes you will need to express a complex combination of ideas. A compound-complex sentence includes at least two independent clauses and at least one dependent clause. In other words, it uses both compound and complex sentence structures together to express one big idea.

This type of sentence should be used carefully. Because this type of sentence includes multiple clauses, it requires the most control over grammar accuracy. For example, pronouns in a compound-complex sentence can be unclear. Overuse of the compound-complex sentence type will also make it difficult for your reader to follow your ideas. This is not to suggest that you avoid the sentence structure all together. You just want to be intentional in the way you use them.

- Dr. Castro, whose research is widely cited, is the plenary speaker for the conference, and he will be speaking about advances in genetic testing.
- Although the textbook explains the concept clearly, I would like to see more examples, so I asked the professor some questions.
- Amy will do an internship next semester, or she will study abroad because she wants a wider range of experiences before graduation.

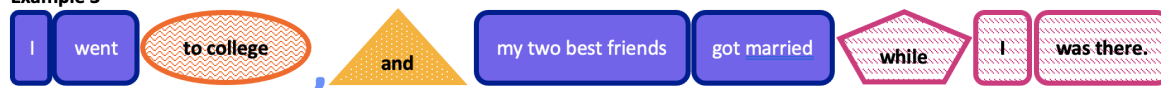
## Example 1



## Example 2



## Example 3



There are many different ways to construct a compound-complex sentence. Here we only give examples of two independent clauses combined with one dependent, but it is possible to create other patterns.

Look for other examples as you read. And always remember to consider your audience and purpose when you decide which sentence types to employ in your writing.



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## Appendix B: Using Sources

Academic writing often requires sources. You will use sources to support your main idea. Using good sources makes your writing more credible. It is an appeal to ethos. By citing others you show that others share or support your idea too and, hopefully, that those other people are experts in some way about the topic. You also show that you have researched the topic and have become an expert on the topic yourself.

You need to be very careful when you use sources so that you do not plagiarize someone else's work. Quoting, summarizing, and paraphrasing are the most common ways to use sources.

Finding Sources
In-text Citations
More about Reference Pages



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# Finding Sources

You can look in many different places to find credible sources. Print books, newspapers, journal articles, and websites are some of the more frequently used, but you can also use video, radio broadcasts, interviews, and many other types of sources as well. Websites and journal articles will likely be some of your most frequently used sources, so most of this unit will focus on them.

## Finding Other Sources

Sources are often gathered at university libraries and are usually free to use. University librarians are happy to help students become familiar with the sources stored at their libraries and in their library databases.

If you have questions about using other sources,

- ask your teacher.
- ask a librarian (university or public).
- See this webpage: <https://guides.lib.byu.edu/c.php?g=216340&p=1428398> .
- See this webpage: [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/index.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/index.html) .

## Using Website Sources

There are some websites that are useful to cite in academic papers, but there are many websites that you shouldn't use as a source for an academic paper. Websites you may cite in a researched essay include sites like The United States Department of Commerce or NASA. Sites that are not good to use are sites like personal blogs, social media, open-source websites, or forums.

A website URL can tell you a lot about the credibility of a source. If you are on a government website (.gov), people usually feel that the information is more credible than what is written on a commercial website (.com). Educational websites (.edu) and organization websites (.org) are sometimes credible, but you should be careful. You can narrow a Google search by domain extension if you simply type the extension after your search term (e.g., Poverty .gov) in the Google search bar.

**Good**

. gov

.edu

.org

**Use with Caution**

.com

.co

.net

The website domain extension alone isn't enough to know if the site is a good source. For example, many newspapers and encyclopedias use the .com extension and can still be good sources.

Other things you can look at are references, authors, and dates. If you read an educational website that lists references, that is an extra level of confidence that you can trust what they say is true. If you see an author, that is also usually a good sign. Finally, look for a date of publication. If the website was last updated in 1990, using that website probably isn't a good idea. Look for things that are more current, or are at least updated regularly.

## What about Wikipedia?

Wikipedia is an excellent place to begin your preliminary research for a topic (but not a source you should cite). Wikipedia can offer background knowledge that will help you decide quickly if you are interested in a topic. You can also use wikipedia to mine for other, better sources. If there are references listed at the end of the article, those references would be an excellent place to start looking for sources you can cite.

### Ways to Mine for Better Sources:

1. Click the hyperlinked [#] in the text or full links at the bottom of the page.
2. Read the titles of any articles/books included on the page. Would they be useful? If so, copy and paste them into an internet or library search bar to find the original source.
3. Are there any names that are frequently repeated? These names might be prominent experts on this topic. Copy and paste those names into a search bar to see if you can find out who they are and if they made any sources you could use.



Use these methods to avoid having to cite Wikipedia. Avoid citing Wikipedia mountain by mining for the gems of trustworthy sources.

Most teachers will ask you not to cite Wikipedia for several reasons. First, it can change (and does change) frequently. When you write an essay and list references, people should be able to look up your references for more information. If someone looks up a Wikipedia article, it may be different from when you wrote your essay. Second, it can be edited by anyone, so you don't know if the information there is completely accurate. It is a good place to start, but you will need more credible sources for your essay.

## Academic Searches

Journal articles (especially those from a respected journal) and books are often considered much more credible than general websites, so it will strengthen your writing to use them.

You may find that journal articles and books are very difficult to understand. It is helpful to start by reading the abstract of an article before you read the entire article. The abstract will give a brief summary of the article. Some students skip the abstract and start reading with the beginning of the introduction, but this will slow you down in your research.

In order to find academic research articles, you should use a library database or Google Scholar.

### Databases

Databases are collections of academic sources. Some databases you could use include:

- <https://lib.byu.edu/>
- <https://lib.byu.edu/journals/>
- <https://scholar.google.com/>
- <https://www.jstor.org/>
- <https://link-gale-com.byu.idm.oclc.org/apps/menu>
- <https://byu.on.worldcat.org/discovery>

For a full list of databases available to BYU students see: <https://lib.byu.edu/databases/>

The trick to finding research when you use an academic database is limiting your search to find useful results. You can use quotation marks, asterisks, or boolean search terms (e.g., AND) to refine your search. For example, if you want to write an essay and describe various types of earthquakes, you will get different results if you use these different search terms:

funding for music education =	any articles that use the words <i>funding</i> , <i>for</i> , <i>music</i> , or <i>education</i>
"funding for music education" =	only articles that use the exact phrase <i>funding for music education</i>
funding AND music =	any articles that mention BOTH <i>funding</i> and <i>music</i>

fund\* AND music\* =

any articles that use the words *fund* or *funding* as well as *music*, *musical*, etc.

For more information and practice finding and understanding academic sources, check out the research tutorials at <https://ysearch.lib.byu.edu>.

### Tip: Keeping Track of Sources

There are many different ways to keep track of your sources. For this exercise, you will practice using a table or spreadsheet.

1. Create a table in your word document or create a separate spreadsheet that looks like the one below.
2. In the first column, make a list of possible search terms you might use to find sources.
3. As you use the search terms, click on articles with titles that sound relevant.
4. Read only the abstract. If you need more information, the introduction and conclusion may be helpful at this stage.
5. If the article abstract sounds connected to your thesis, copy and paste the names of the article in the second column.
6. Add the name of the journal or website in the third column.
7. In the fourth column, you can make a note of what part of your outline the source would best support (ex. the first topic sentence, the opposite point of view, introducing a definition of the topic, etc).
8. Later, when you have time, you will read the article and add notes and any quotes you may want to use in the final column.

This is a helpful way to keep all of your outside information organized. It will be easier to create your reference page later and to add support from sources as you write your body paragraphs.

Search Term	Name of Article	Name of Journal/Website	Section of Essay I Think It Will Support	Notes and Quotes After Reading



## Exercise 1: Find Sources

Using a table like the one below, find **THREE** sources to support the following thesis statement:

- There have been many different ways for which pollution has impacted society, some of those include health and the environment.

Search Term	Name of Article	Name of Journal/Website	Section of Essay I Think It Will Support

## References

BYU Library. (2022, July 6). *Finding books and print resources - step-by-step guide & research ...* guides.lib.byu.edu. Retrieved December 16, 2022, from <https://guides.lib.byu.edu/c.php?g=216340&p=1428398>

Purdue OWL. (2022). *Apa formatting and style guide (7th edition)*. APA Formatting and Style Guide (7th Edition) - Purdue OWL® - Purdue University. Retrieved December 16, 2022, from [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/index.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/index.html)



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# In-text Citations

When you use information you found in your sources, you need to mark that information to show that the ideas are not your ideas. This will help the reader to find the matching entry on the reference page, so they can use that information to go read or listen to the original source if they want to. You need in-text citations in your paragraphs, when you use the ideas or words from another person or organization. In other words, you will need a citation in any of these situations:

- A direct quote
- A summary
- A paraphrase
- Any time you use ideas that aren't general knowledge

Source material is marked in your essay using in-text citations. The exact format of your citation will vary a little depending on the style guide you are using. All of the citations in this book use the APA style guide, but there are other style guides you may need to use in college. Your teacher will usually tell you which style guide they expect you to use.

Three basic types of information are required for an in-text citation:

1. The author's last name
2. The year that the information was published
3. The page number (or for some electronic sources, the paragraph number)

## Example: In-Text Citation

(Walker, 2015, p. 10).

The in-text citation is split if you use a phrase to introduce the source material that includes the author's name. The year goes in parentheses directly after the name of the author, and the page number goes in parentheses at the end of the source material. See example below.

## Example: In-Text Citation with an Introductory Phrase

According to Walker (2015), "Several districts had sufficient resources to provide some funding for elementary arts but not enough to establish a high-quality, sequential program staffed by fully qualified professionals." (p. 10).

The way you use ideas or words from the source will also determine how much information you need to give the reader for them to find the source. The main difference is that if you use the exact words from the source, you need to give the page or paragraph number for the reader to be able to find those exact words in the source.

	Author/Organization	Year Published	Page/Paragraph #
<b>Quote</b>	needed	needed	needed
<b>Summary</b>	needed	needed	<i>optional</i>
<b>Paraphrase</b>	needed	needed	<i>optional</i>
<b>Other</b>	needed	needed	<i>optional</i>

## Examples

Example	
<b>Quote</b>	(Walker, 2015, p. 10)
<b>Summary</b>	(Walker, 2015)
<b>Paraphrase</b>	(Walker, 2015)

## Variations

You may need to adjust the in-text citation for some of your sources, depending on the information that is available. Some of the more frequent situations you may encounter are shown below. For more information about these or other situations you encounter while trying to create citations, check out

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/in\\_text\\_citations\\_author\\_](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/in_text_citations_author_)

## No author?

If there is no author listed because something was written by an organization, include the organization's name. If the organization has a widely-recognized acronym, you can use it after the first in-text citation (e.g., NASA).

### Example: In-Text Citation with a Group as the Author

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2022) explains that "People infected with RSV usually show symptoms within 4 to 6 days after getting infected." (para. 1). While there are a wide range of symptoms for adults, for "...very young infants with RSV, the only symptoms may be irritability, decreased activity, and breathing difficulties." (CDC, 2022).

If there is no author or organization name, (as is the case with many encyclopedias or dictionaries), you should use the first few important words of the article's title with quotation marks.

### Example: In-Text Citation without an Author

"Acid reflux occurs when the sphincter at the base of the esophagus isn't working well, allowing fluid from the stomach to enter the esophagus. The worst foods for reflux can worsen painful symptoms, while other foods can soothe them, says UH gastrointestinal surgeon Leena Khaitan, MD." ("The Best and Worst Foods for Acid Reflux", 2014, para. 2).

## Two authors?

In parentheses, use the ampersand (&) between the names. In an introductory phrase, write the word *and*.

### Example: In-Text Citation with Two Authors

Recent research has concluded that "...progress in fuel efficiency may be perceived as a smokescreen hiding the dramatic increase in absolute fuel burnt and thus aviation's impact on climate." (Dobruszkes & Ibrahim, 2022, p. 10).

## More than two authors?

You only need to list the first author's last name and et. al. for every citation. This is an update for the 7th edition APA style guide.

### Example: In-Text Citation with Three Authors

As explained by Shadinger et al., "having students recite aloud a self-affirming statement in unison immediately prior to delivery of a required speech or presentation provides a greater reduction in performance anxiety than not doing so." (Shadinger et al., 2020, p. 1).

## No page number?

---

The paragraph number should be used with the abbreviation *para*. If there are headings in the text, use the name of the heading before the paragraph number. Put the name of the heading in quotation marks. (Some headings may be very long. In that case, you can use a shortened version.)

### Example: In-Text Citation without Page Number

"Color photography started to become popular and accessible with the release of Eastman Kodak's "Kodachrome" film in the 1930s. Before that, almost all photos were monochromatic – although a handful of photographers, toeing the line between chemists and alchemists, had been using specialized techniques to capture color images for decades before." (Cox, 2022, para. 6).

### Example: In-Text Citation without Page Number

"Today, T.E. Lawrence remains one of the most iconic figures of the early 20th century. His life has been the subject of at least three movies—including one considered a masterpiece—over 70 biographies, several plays and innumerable articles, monographs and dissertations. His wartime memoir, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, translated into more than a dozen languages, remains in print nearly a full century after its first publication." (Anderson, 2014, para. 9).

## No year?

---

Use the abbreviation *n.d.* (no date).

### Example: In-Text Citation without Year

William Adams "...was an English navigator who in 1600 was the first of his nation to reach Japan." ("The Life of William Adams," n.d., para. 1).

## Other variations?

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Check a complete APA citation style guide like the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.) or the OWL online.

## Exercises

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## Exercise 1: Create Citations

Create citations for the following sources. While this chapter focuses on using APA format, you are welcome to cite your sources in a different way if you prefer. The important skill here is to give credit to the original author for the ideas and to understand how to avoid plagiarism. You will have plenty of time in a university setting to learn how to correctly use the style guide for your area of study.

1. Search for these articles on the BYU Library website or Google Scholar to find any other necessary information.
2. Write the citation that would be used in an essay paragraph.

### The anguish of Mykola Hohol a.k.a. Nikolai Gogol

 Book / Luckyj, George S. N. (1919–2001)

1998, Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, English

BYU Library Bookshelves / Floor 5–C

**PG 3335 .L83 1998**

[Browse nearby items](#)

**Available for Checkout — 1 copy**

On shelf, see map below

# Snow country tales

Life in the other Japan

 Book / [Suzuki, Bokushi \(1770–1842\)](#)

*1987, New York; Tokyo: Weatherhill, English*

BYU Library Bookshelves / Floor 1–N


**DS 894.59 .N54 S9513 1987**

[Browse nearby items](#)

**Available for Checkout** — 1 copy

On shelf, see map below

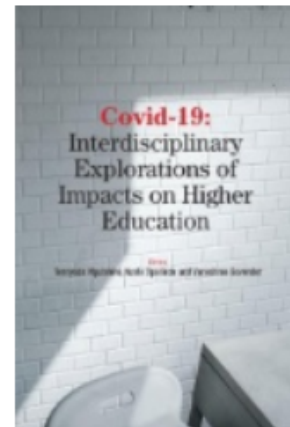
## Covid-19: Interdisciplinary Exlorations of Impacts on Higher Education

 E-book (Online) / [Tennyson  
Mgutshini; Kunle Oparinde;  
Vaneshree Govender; Tennyson  
Mgutshini; Kunle Oparinde; Vaneshree Govender](#)  
[Show less](#)

*2021, Covid-19: Interdisciplinary Exlorations of Impacts on  
Higher Education*

[ebscohost.com](https://www.ebscohost.com) →

*eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*





## Exercise 2: Create More Citations

Create citations for the following sources. While this chapter focuses on using APA format, you are welcome to cite your sources in a different way if you prefer. The important skill here is to give credit to the original author for the ideas and to understand how to avoid plagiarism. You will have plenty of time in a university setting to learn how to correctly use the style guide for your area of study.

1. Open these links to articles to find any other necessary information.
  2. Write the citation that would be used in an essay paragraph.
- [Signs of Arrival](#)
  - [Culture in the Seminar Room of Poetry: Poetic Insights for Cultural Psychology](#)
  - [How to learn a heritage language](#)

## References

Walker, L. N. (2015). Do You Really Want to Know? Elementary Music Personnel and Potential in Utah. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 116(4), 201–213. <https://doi-org.byu.idm.oclc.org/10.1080/10632913.2014.944968>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022, October 24). *Symptoms and Care of RSV*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/rsv/about/symptoms.html>.

*The Best and Worst Foods for Acid Reflux*. (2014, April 15). *The Best and Worst Foods for Acid Reflux*. – What to Eat and Avoid | University Hospitals. Retrieved from <https://www.uhhospitals.org/blog/articles/2014/04/best-and-worst-foods-for-acid-reflux>

Dobruszkes, F., & Ibrahim, C. (2022). “High fuel efficiency is good for the environment”: Balancing gains in fuel efficiency against trends in absolute consumption in the passenger aviation sector. *International Journal of Sustainable Transportation*, 16(11), 1047–1057. <https://doi-org.byu.idm.oclc.org/10.1080/15568318.2022.2106463>

Shadinger, D., Katsion, J., Myllykangas, S., & Case, D. (2020). The Impact of a Positive, Self-Talk Statement on Public Speaking Anxiety. *College Teaching*, 68(1), 5–11. <https://doi-org.byu.idm.oclc.org/10.1080/87567555.2019.1680522>

Cox, S. (2022, December 19). *Introduction to photography: The universal language*. Photography Life. Retrieved from <https://photographylife.com/what-is-photography>

Magazine, Smithsonian. (2014, July 1). *The true story of lawrence of arabia*. Smithsonian.com. Retrieved from <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/true-story-lawrence-arabia-180951857/>

*The life of William Adams*. (2023, January 21). Retrieved from <https://www.williamadams.fr/the-life-of-william-adams/>





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Access it online or download it at [https://open.byu.edu/up\\_writing\\_summer/citations](https://open.byu.edu/up_writing_summer/citations).

## More about Reference Pages

You will need to include a reference page at the end of your essay. The **reference page** is a page at the end of your paper where you list information about any of the sources you cited in your paper. Sources that you quoted, summarized, and/or paraphrased need to be listed on your reference page.

Only sources cited in your paper can be put on a reference page. If you didn't cite the source with an in-text citation somewhere in your paper, then you can't put it on your reference page. If you used a source and want to put it on your reference page, but didn't cite it somewhere in your essay with an in-text citation that is a problem that needs to be fixed. If you used even just ideas from a source, it should be cited. Find the place you used the source in your essay, cite it with an in-text citation, and then you can add the source properly to your reference page.

The reference page serves several purposes. If a reader is interested in your paper and wants to read the sources that you read, they can look in your references and find them. The reference list can also add to your credibility as an academic writer. It can show that you have done enough research that your reader can believe what you wrote.

When you build a reference page, you need to know what type of sources you used. Books have a different format than journal articles; newspaper articles have a different format than websites. The following pages include a series of sources you may use in your researched essays. Each source will include the type of source (e.g., newspaper article) and a general citation format. In addition to the general information, an example will be provided of the source and how that source should be cited.

The format of your reference page (as well as your in-text citations) depends on which style guide you are using. Style guides are a list of rules about how to format your writing. Common style guides include APA, MLA, Chicago, and Turabian. Your college professors will tell you which style guide to use. You will learn what a reference page for APA looks like in this section of the book, but there are other style guides to be aware of. You do not need to memorize the rules for any particular style guide, but you **do** need to know where to find them and how to use them. As with the in-text citations, there are many rules about how to format your reference page, and this section of the book is not comprehensive. If you have a source that is not explained in this section of the book, you can look up the APA Publication Manual (7th edition) or the [Purdue OWL](#).

To cite your source you will need to do the following:

1. You need to know the style required by your teacher: APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.
2. You need to know what type of source you are citing: website, journal, book, etc. The type of source determines the exact information you will need and the order of that information in its own special format.
3. Use a citation website or style guide to help you format the information about your source into the correct order.

## How to Make a Reference Page

1. Start with the word "References" centered on the first line.
2. Organize your references in alphabetical order.
3. Use a "hanging indent". This means that the first line of the entry will start at the left margin, but the subsequent lines will be indented in .5" from the margin.
4. Double-space between each entry on the entire reference page.
5. The reference page should be included on a separate page after the body of the essay.

The information you include in each individual reference will vary by style and by source type. There are entire books and websites dedicated to each style that include pages upon pages of specific instruction for each source type and possible variation. So, for specific guidelines, you will need to look up how to cite your specific type of source in one of those style guides. However, there are a few citation formatting tips you can use for how to cite sources in general.

1. Last Name and 1st initial of the author(s)/Organization
2. Year of publication
3. Title of the article, chapter, or website
4. Title of the journal or book
5. Edition, volume, and/or page number
6. Publication location (city, state, etc) or website information

### Example

Culhane, E. C. (2019). Hearing Absence: Shusaku Endo's Silence and the Dark Night of the Soul. *Religion & Literature*, 51(2), 23-45. Retrieved from <https://doi-org.byu.idm.oclc.org/10.1353/rel.2019.0030>

## Example Breakdown

Culhane, E. C. (2019). Hearing Absence: Shusaku Endo's Silence and the Dark Night of the Soul. *Religion & Literature*, 51(2), 23-45. Retrieved from <https://doi-org.byu.idm.oclc.org/10.1353/rel.2019.0030>

Culhane, E. C.	Author's Name(s)
(2019).	Publication Year
Hearing Absence: Shusaku Endo's Silence and the Dark Night of the Soul.	Title
<i>Religion &amp; Literature</i> ,	Journal Name
51(2), 23-45.	Volume number, Issue number, and page numbers
Retrieved from <a href="https://doi-org.byu.idm.oclc.org/10.1353/rel.2019.0030">https://doi-org.byu.idm.oclc.org/10.1353/rel.2019.0030</a>	website information

## Example: References

Culhane, E. C. (2019). Hearing Absence: Shusaku Endo's Silence and the Dark Night of the Soul. *Religion & Literature*, 51(2), 23-45. Retrieved from <https://doi-org.byu.idm.oclc.org/10.1353/rel.2019.0030>

Guerber, H. A. (1895). *Stories of the Wagner Operas*. New York: Dod, Mead and Company.

Arponen, V. et al. (2019). Between natural and human sciences: On the role and character of theory in socio-environmental archeology. *The Holocene*, 29(10), 1671–1676.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0959683619857226>

NOAA, (n.d.). *What is the difference between a hurricane and a typhoon?*. Para 2. Retrieved from <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/cyclone.html>

Lieth, P. (n.d.). *Pru Lieth's Raspberry Blancmange*. The Great British Bake Off. Retrieved from <https://thegreatbritishbakeoff.co.uk/recipes/all/prue-leith-raspberry-blancmange/>

## Journal Article with DOI

A doi is a digital object identifier. This number acts as a permanent link to be able to find a copy of a specific article on the internet. Journal articles sometimes have a doi assigned to them. If the journal article you use has a doi, you should include it in the citation.

### General format:

Surname, Initial. (Year). Title of article. Title of Journal, volume(issue), pages. doi: #####

Kaye, D. & Gray, J. E. (2021). Copyright Gossip: Exploring copyright opinions, Theories, and Strategies on YouTube. *Social Media + Society*, 7(3). doi: 10.1177/20563051211036940

## Journal Article without DOI

As mentioned in the previous example, a doi acts as a permanent link to help people find a copy of a specific article on the internet. If the journal article you use does not have a doi, you should include the URL you got the article from.

### General format:

Surname, Initial. (Year). Title of article. Title of Journal, volume(issue), pages. Retrieved from <http://site>

Bailey, C. et al. (2023). Retire the Conventional Laryngoscope?. *American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology*, 91(1), 39-45. Retrieved from <https://www.aana.com/publications/aana-journal>

## Book

There are slight variations in requirements for citing chapters of books, books with editors, and books that have several editions. The following is a general format.

### General format:

Surname, Initial. (Year). Title of book. Location: Publisher.

Guerber, H. A. (1895). *Stories of the Wagner Operas*. New York: Dod, Mead and Company.

## Newspaper Articles

Journal articles take time to develop, review, and publish. If you are looking for information about an event of current interest (especially in quickly changing fields like technology and politics) a reputable newspaper can be a good source.

### General format:

Surname, Initial. (Year, Month Date). Title of article. Title of Newspaper. Retrieved from <http://site>

If you use a paper copy of a newspaper article, replace the website with the page numbers of the article.

Heyward, G. (2023, February 16). *Larry the Cat celebrates 12 yeasers of dutiful service at No. 10 Downing St.* National Public Radio. Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/2023/02/16/1157507569/larry-cat-no-10-downing-street-british>

## Entry in an Online Reference

Online references include dictionaries and encyclopedias. These words frequently do not list an author or a date of publication. If they do list the author, then you should list the author's name like you usually would.

### General format:

Search term (n.d.). In Title of reference. Retrieved from <http://site>

Antidisestablishmentarianism, (n.d.) Cambridge University Press & Assessment. Retrieved from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/antidisestablishmentarianism>

If you cite a website with an organization listed (e.g., NASA, EPA, etc.) instead of an author, the or- ganization should be listed as the author. If there is not an organization, write the title of the article in the author's position. (If there is no article title, write the name of the website). The article or website title does not need to be italicized. If the date, month, and year are included on the website, list all of them. If not, just use the year.

## General Websites

If you cite a website with an organization listed (e.g., NASA, EPA, etc.) instead of an author, the organization should be listed as the author. If there is not an organization, write the title of the article in the author's position. (If there is no article title, write the name of the website). The article or website title does not need to be italicized. If the date, month, and year are included on the website, list all of them. If not, just use the year.

### General format:

Surname, Initial. (Year). Title of article. Retrieved from <http://site>

National Council of Teachers of English (2001, Novermber 30). *Resolution on Teaching in a Time of Crisis.* Retrieved from <https://ncte.org/statement/teachingtimeofcrisis/>

## Exercise 1: Find Citable Information


Look at the screenshots of possible sources below and answer the following questions.

- What information could you use to add to a citation for each source?
- What information is missing for a citation about each source?


1.

**Wiley Online Library**


Search




**NATIONS AND NATIONALISM**  
JOURNAL OF THE ASSOCIATION  
FOR THE STUDY OF ETHNICITY  
AND NATIONALISM  
AS EN

ARTICLE |  Open Access | 

### The nation in bronze and granite: Creating national monuments in post-Soviet Bishkek

Moira O'Shea 

First published: 28 February 2023 | <https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12934>

 SECTIONS  PDF  TOOLS  SHARE

#### Abstract

Scholars of nationalism have long looked to material forms of symbolic power to understand the politics and cultures of nations, and national monuments specifically have been studied as reflections of ideological programmes of political regimes.

2.





Est. 1828

**Dictionary**

Thesaurus

×
🔍

Games & Quizzes

**Dictionary**

**Definition**

Did you know? 💡

Example Sentences

Word History

Podcast

Entries Near

Show More ▾

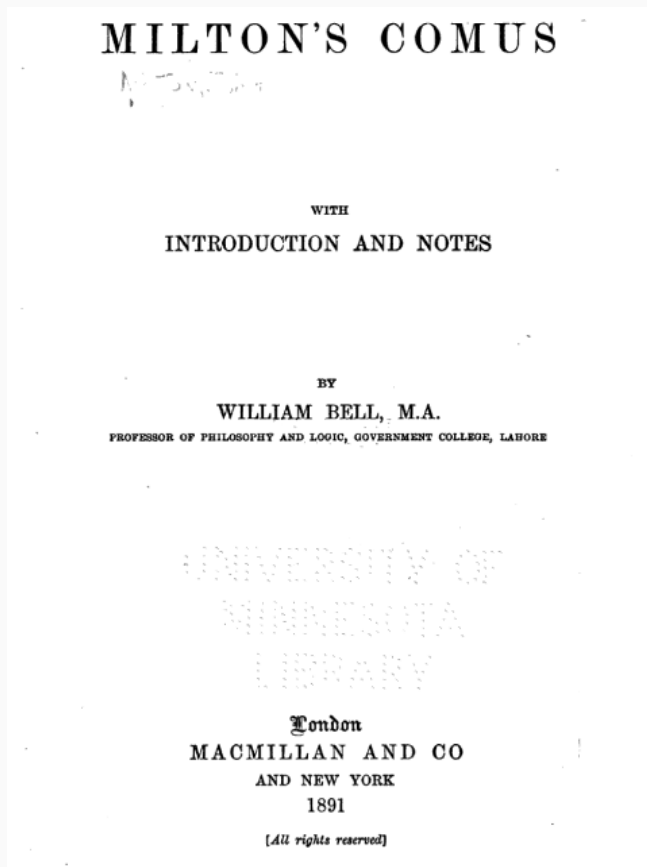
# altruism noun

al·tru·ism    'al-trü-,i-zəm

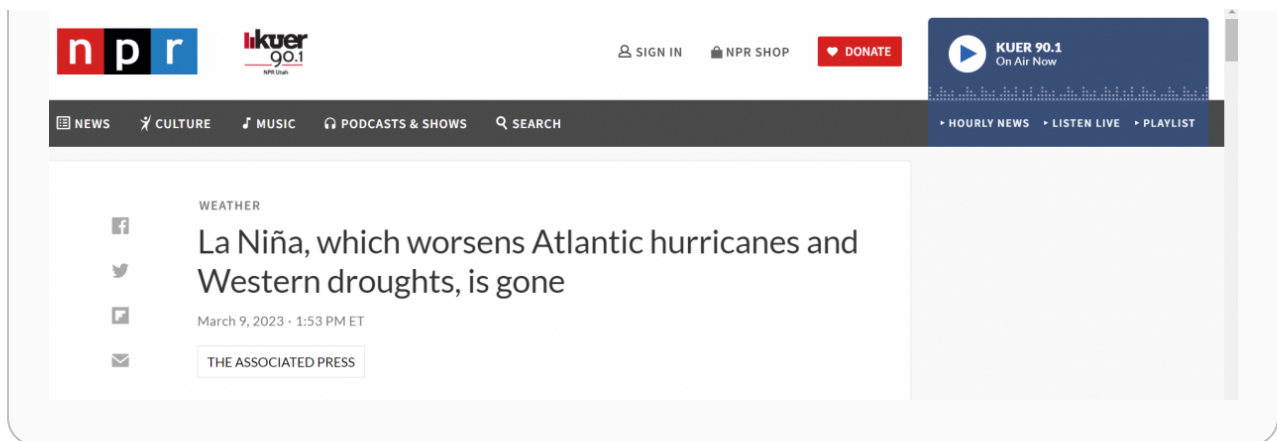
[Synonyms of \*altruism\*](#) >

- : unselfish **regard** for or devotion to the welfare of others  
| charitable acts motivated purely by *altruism*
- : behavior by an animal that is not beneficial to or may be harmful to itself but that benefits others of its species

3.



4.



## Exercise 2: Make Reference Page Entries

Write a reference page entry on the lines for the following quotes, summaries, and paraphrases used in an essay about the life of Dieter F. Uchtdorf. You can do this by hand or use the [Citation Machine](#) website to make your entries.

1. Quote: "To avoid suspicion, the rest of the family would not be able to travel together. They would have to make the attempt separately" (Nelson, July 2008, para. 1).

Source: <https://edtechbooks.org/-KQGU>

---

2. Summary: The faith in the family started with the faith of President Uchtdorf's grandmother. She was in a standing line for food following the end of the War, when an elderly sister with no family invited her to the church (Holland, 2005).

Source: <https://edtechbooks.org/-ZSCX>

---

3. Paraphrase: Harriet was still single when Uchtdorf returned from serving in the military, and he managed to capture her heart (Hill, 2004).

Source: <https://edtechbooks.org/-JLvX>





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