UNIVERSITY OF GHANA LANGUAGE CENTRE
ACADEMIC WRITING MANUAL

UGRC 110

TABLE OF CONTENTS   PAGE

1   The Nature of Academic Writing

1.1   Introduction

The Academic Writing course is meant to equip students with the communication skills that would enable them to succeed in the academic discourse community. As we will soon learn, the writing that is done in the university or college differs in many ways from what is done in high school. Students who enrol for the academic writing course need to be taken through lessons that will help them to write essays which meet the expectations of the academic discourse community.

1.2   Objectives

By the end of this module, the student should know the following:

   i.   What the academic discourse community is
  ii.   Who constitutes the academic discourse community
 iii.   Characteristics of academic writing, i.e. what makes a piece of academic writing different from other types of writing
 iv.   That reading and writing are inter-related. The type of material a student reads informs the quality of his writing

1.3   The Academic Discourse Community

The university may be described as an academic discourse community. It is a community which uses a language characteristic of a college or a university. Terms which are peculiar to the university or college environment are used here. These include terms such as: "associate professor", "credit hour", "add/drop courses" among others. Within the larger university community too, there are smaller discourse communities, which have their peculiar terms. A student who enters the university will therefore have to learn the language used in his discipline in order to use the terms appropriately. This is a core requirement if the student should survive and do well in his area of study. The Linguistics department of the University of Ghana for instance constitutes a discourse community within the larger discourse community of the university. Students of linguistics are expected to be familiar with terms like: "morpheme", "phoneme", "syllable" and "allophones". The linguistics student's knowledge and proper application of these and other linguistics terms in his writing will contribute to his success in his academic endeavour.

1.4   Characteristics of Academic Writing

The academic essay is a specific argument that has a theme, logically expressed from the beginning to the end. In the essay, relevant ideas must be clearly expressed. The academic essay tests the student's knowledge and understanding of a subject. It also tests the student's informed views on a subject, supported by his research.

The following summarises the characteristics of an academic essay:

- The academic essay has a defined structure: an introduction, middle/main section and a conclusion

- The tone of the writing is formal. The use of chatty, slang or 'text messaging' language is avoided. The use of contractions, e.g. "can't", "won't", etc., must be kept to an absolute minimum. The writer's language must be measured, and emotionalism should be avoided.
- Materials consulted in the academic essay are properly cited and acknowledged
- The passive voice is preferable
- The academic essay answers a question
- It develops a clear and sound argument
- It provides supporting evidence for the arguments made. Arguments are supported by example, quotation, statistics, explanation, reference and authority
- It illustrates an understanding of the subject by commenting on other people's ideas and views, and 'pulling them together'
- It uses appropriate evidence and relevant examples
- It selects appropriate quotations to back up ideas
- It uses the required referencing style with accuracy

1.5 The relationship between reading and writing

Reading and writing are parallel literary processes. Reading is described as the act of constructing meaning while transacting with text. Similarly, the process of writing is described as one which involves the construction of meaning while the writer is dealing with text.

The reader makes meaning through the combination of prior knowledge and previous experience, information available in text, the stance he or she takes in relationship to the text, and immediate, remembered, or anticipated social interaction and communication. When readers use information both from their own prior knowledge base and from information available in text, they are thus able to enter text with expectations or predictions that assist in constructing the intended meaning. World knowledge includes the total amount of information a person has accumulated through day-to-day living experience. Text knowledge on the other hand is the information accumulated from a reader's experiences with print. World knowledge and knowledge about text constitute a pool of information from which we produce written text. In writing, the writer makes meaning through the combination of prior knowledge and previous experience, information emerging from text and the stance the writer takes in relationship to the text.

A teacher who wanted to investigate the effect of his students' prior knowledge on their writing activities collected the entire class's lecture notes after a lecture. The teacher found large differences among individual notetakers. Students that had prior knowledge on the subject only concentrated their efforts on the nonredundant parts, and recorded only what they believe to be important. On the other hand, students who had very little knowledge or none at all on the subject matter copied almost verbatim what the lecturer said.

The same differences are found in other kinds of writing. Prior knowledge and previous experience therefore influence the content of our writing.

Reading and writing are therefore parallel literary processes which are interdependent.

If reading and writing truly are both "the act of constructing meaning while transacting with text" and we believe that the point of school is to make sense (to construct meaning), then students should do a lot of reading and writing in school.

It is often said in the lore of writing that one writes what one knows. Also if the content of a student's writing is a reflection of his knowledge about text, then it stands to reason that students do not only need to read a lot, but also to select what they read carefully.

Questions for practice

1. List four features of an academic piece of writing

2. Write down two sub-types of academic discourse communities found in the University of Ghana.

3. Write down five terminologies used within one of these communities.

4. Explain the five terminologies

5. Write down four ways by which your choice of reading material can affect your writing.

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2   Basic Issues in English Grammar

2.1 Introduction

We often find many errors in our writing. In most cases these errors could have been avoided if we were conscious of the basic grammatical structures and applied this knowledge when editing our work before submitting it finally. The words in a sentence have inherent lexical information and they have to occupy certain positions in the structure. This section will focus on basic issues in English grammar.

2.2 Objectives

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to;

1. Identify the grammatical classes to which words belong.

2. Identify the nominal group and the verbal group and their inherent features.

3. Use the knowledge to construct well-formed sentences.

2.3 Basic issues in English grammar

Grammar is the study of word classes, their inflections and how they function in relation to the sentence. A sentence has words which are classified into parts. These are: noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, pronoun and conjunction. Each of these has inherent semantic features. A good learner's dictionary provides information on the words that can be found in it. For example, the information assigned to a noun is count or non-count, concrete or abstract. A verb, on the other hand, may be transitive or intransitive etc. These pieces of lexical information are to guide us to use these words correctly in speech or in writing.

These 'parts of speech' combine or pattern to make a group or a phrase. The group may be combined to make a clause or a simple sentence.

2.3.1 Nominal Group

In English, a nominal group refers to persons- (Kofi, Grace) objects- (table, key) places- (stadium, laboratory) and names of actions- (swimming, dancing). When an entity is named in a sentence, information about how the entity is experienced or perceived is placed before it called the **Pre modifier.** It is possible for another modifier of the head to come after the noun. This is referred to as the **Post modifier**.

In the nominal groups below, the main item that named the entity in each of the following is in bold. It is the **head** of the group. The following heads are in each of the nominal groups below: fan, girl, water, and iron.

1. A new **fan** in the department.

2. The smart **girl** of the team.

3. The cold **water** for the visitors

4. The rusted **iron** on the verandah

This is clearly shown in the table below:

PRE MODIFIER	HEAD	POST MODIFIER
A new	**fan**	in the department
The smart	**girl**	of the team
The cold	**water**	for the visitors
The rusted	**iron**	on the shelf

The modifier describes the head in the group. They occur both before and after the head. The whole of the Nominal Group can be used as subject or object in a clause. When the Nominal Group is subject, it is followed by a Verbal Group.

Exercise one (Group work)

Use the following nouns in a nominal group with either a **pre modifier** or a **post modifier**: examination, computer, fertilizer, kerosene, spectacles, honesty, news, campaign, shadow.

2.3.2 Verbal Group
The verb is the Head in the verbal group. The first element, the auxiliary, helps to provide information about the Tense- (present or past), Number-(singular or plural), Modality-(a proposition that relates to ability, necessity, possibility etc.). A lexical verb can either stand alone or may be followed by an adverbial and in some cases by another Nominal group which is object to the verb.

5. is **moving** slowly.

6. **played** well.

7. can **eat** all the food.

8. must **dance** in the hall.

In (5) the auxiliary **is** provides the following information: Present, Singular. In (6), the

verbal group has only two elements <u>plays</u> and the post modifier which is an adverbial **well**.

In (7) the verbal group has a modal auxiliary **can** which shows ability and a nominal group

all the food which is the object to the head of the verbal group, **eat**. In (8), we have a

modal auxiliary **must**, which expresses obligation. This precedes the head, **dance**. This verbal group has a post modifier, **in the hall**, which is object to the head. This is illustrated in the table below.

AUXILIARY	HEAD	POST MODIFIER
is	**moving**	slowly
	played	well
can	**eat**	all the food
must	**dance**	in the hall

A verbal group provides information about the Nominal Group that is subject of a clause. It is essential for the completion of meaning. We can construct a clause by putting the Nominal group and the Verbal Group together.

Now let us do the following examples.

Exercise two (Group work)

i. Use the following verbs in a verbal group with either an auxiliary or a post modifier or both: give, carry, come, sing, find, eat, go, drive, feel, do.

ii. Make a list of all the special finites / modal auxiliaries in English and the parts. (Homework)

The importance of the verb in a clause

The verb is an important word in a clause. It determines the type of object and complement that can occur in a clause. The verb **punish** requires an object, the person who is punished. On the other hand, the verb, **give** will demand that we should have a subject that is animate (human) capable of giving, an **object** and a **recipient** of the item that is given. This is attested in sentences (9) and (10).

9. The officer **punished** the recruit.

10. The old man **gave** the mango to Kofi.

There are other verbs that will not accept an object but rather will select a complement. This may be an adverb or a prepositional phrase which is however not an obligatory entity in the clause. Sentences (11) and (12) are examples.

11. The lady **came** (yesterday).

12. The girl **laughed** (at the mad man).

Some learners' dictionaries provide information on verbs to help us construct well formed (grammatical) sentences. A verb is intransitive (v*i*) when it does not accept an object after it. It will however, have a time phrase or an adverbial as complement. A verb that requires an object after it is marked transitive (*vt*). Some verbs may require two objects, an indirect object and a direct object.

When we take note of these features we can construct well formed sentences.

Exercise three (Group work)

 i. Construct two sentences each using the verbs in Exercise two.

 ii. Using your own verbs, construct ten sentences, five of which will be verbs used transitively and five should be used intransitively.

 iii. Look for verbs that can be used ditransitively and use them in sentences (Homework).

 iv. Look for verbs that can belong to more than one group: intransitive, transitive, ditransitive (Homework).

The Verb: Tense and Aspect

The verb expresses action or state of being. One main feature of the verb is that it can be used to show the relationship between time and the event that is described. It can express this relation through the use of tense forms. The basic ones are Present, Past and Future. In the present tense, the present tense form of the verb is used. The 3rd Person Singular Present has –*s* suffixed to the stem of the verb. The past tense form of the verb is also used to express an action which is started and completed in the past. The future tense is formed by using *shall* or *will* with the base form of any verb.

Verbs which express actions have different realizations of these actions. With some verbs, the action happens suddenly (*break, explode*). Some verbs have temporal duration making the action to happen within a time span (*dry, melt*). There are others which are involuntary mental processes (*see, hear, understand*). All these influence the way the verb will be used in a sentence.

Exercise four (Homework)

i.   Write a list of verbs. Put them into the following groups: those that have regular past tense suffix –*ed* and those that have irregular forms. Write the past participle of each of them.

ii.   Write a list of verbs. Put them into the following groups: Those that express actions that happen suddenly, those verbs that express actions that have internal temporal duration and those verbs that express actions that are mental processes.

iii.   Find out what limitations this information will place on you in the construction of a grammatical sentence.

2.4 Common errors

This section focuses on some common errors found in the work of students. In section 2.3, we noted that a sentence should have a subject and a complete verb. The sentences we identify below as having errors are without one of these. Those that have it do not show any **agreement** relation between the **subject** and the **verb**.

1. I have dreamt about you all night. Hope you are alright.

2. The tree in the southern part of the garden.

3. Because we are all first year students in this university.

4. After we heard that terrible story in the night.

5. The trees in the botanical garden *has* attractive colours.

6. The sound of the birds *fill* the air.

7. The jury *disagrees* among themselves.

8. The staff *meet* every semester to appoint new heads.

9. Water and sunlight *is* essential to the growth of plants.

10. Gari and beans *are* my favourite food.

11. Either the boy or the girls *was* allowed to accompany the delegation to the party.

12. Not only the threats but also torture *were* used to intimidate opposition to his rule.

13. Talent, together with perseverance and practice, *make* a successful career possible.

14. The performers, as well as the audience, *departs* satisfied with the choral performance.

15. My mother *had dry* the dishes by the time my father arrived.

16. When the president resigned he *hold* office for three years.

17. Watching television, the screen suddenly went blank.

18. Sleeping soundly after a hard day's work, the alarm startled me into consciousness.

19. Nelson Mandela the former president of South Africa was freed from prison in 1990.

20. Bicycles unlike cars cause no pollution.

Comments on sentences 1-20 are provided below:
The second sentence in (1) is a fragment, that is, it does not have a subject. To complete the sentence, a subject should be added to agree with the verb, *hope*. Sentence (2) is also a sentence fragment without a complete verb. It is a singular noun phrase that is post modified with a prepositional phrase. A related verb phrase is required to make it

grammatical. A linking verb, for example, *is* or *lies* can be placed immediately after the head of the nominal group, *tree*.

Sentences (3) and (4) are fragments which are subordinate clauses. Both of them have a subordinator at initial position. Sentence (3) begins with *because* while (4) begins with *after*. One way of correcting each of the sentence fragments is to remove the subordinator to make the sentence an independent clause which can be on its own. Another way is to add a main clause to complete each of them.

Both sentences (5) and (6) have an agreement error. The subject of sentence (5) is separated from the verb by an intervening prepositional phrase. The head of the noun phrase which is subject in (5) is a plural noun, *trees*; while in Sentence (6) the head is a singular noun, *sound*. The verbs do not agree with their respective subjects.

In (7) and (8) collective nouns are used as subjects. It is important to note that if the collective noun refers to a group as a whole as in (8), a singular verb is needed. If, on the other hand, it refers to each member of the group individually as in (7), a plural verb should be used.

Sentences (9) and (10) are examples of a compound subject that is joined by *and*. In (9) the parts of the compound refer to different units, so a plural verb will make the sentence grammatical whereas in (10) the parts of the compound refer to the same thing, so a singular verb is required.

Sentences (11) and (12) are examples of a compound subject joined by a correlative conjunction: *Neither...nor, either ....or, not only ....but also*. etc. The second of the pair should agree with the subject closer to it.

When a subject of a sentence is sometimes separated from the verb by an intervening expression, - *as well as, in addition to, together with* – the expression does not change the number of the subject. In (13) the subject, *talent*, is a singular noun and it will select *makes* while in (14) *performers* is a plural noun that should select *depart*.

Sentences (15) and (16) indicate two past actions. One began and ended before the second past action. In (15), mother dried the dishes first, and second, the arrival of father. In (16), the president had held office for three years, second, the president resigned. The action that happened and ended first, should be stated in the past perfect tense. It is formed by using the past participle of a verb: *had dried, had held*.

In (17) and (18), the modifiers in initial position of the sentence do not logically seem to modify any word in the sentence. In (17), *watching television* cannot be said to modify *screen* and in (18), it is not logical to say that *Sleeping soundly after a hard day's work* modifies *the alarm.* The sentences therefore, should be rephrased.

If two noun phrases are placed next to each other and they refer to the same entity, the second is said to be *an appositive phrase*. The appositive phrase gives additional information about the first noun. In (19) the former president of South Africa gives additional information about Nelson Mandela and in (20) *unlike cars* refers to *Bicycles,* the noun in initial position. The appositive phrase should be bounded by a comma.

Below is the corrected version of each of the sentences from (21) to (40):

21. I have dreamt about you all night. The family hopes you are alright.

22. The tree in the southern part of the garden can be used to treat that disease. The tree *lies* in the southern part of the garden. The tree *is* in the southern part of the garden

23. Because we are all first year students in this university, we have to register for Academic Writing.

24. After we heard that terrible story in the night, it was difficult to go to bed unaccompanied.

25. The trees in the botanical garden *have* attractive colours.

26. The sound of the birds *fills* the air.

27. The jury *disagreed* among themselves.

28. The staff *meets* every semester to appoint new heads.

29. Water and sunlight *are* essential to the growth of plants.

30. Gari and beans *is* my favourite food.

31. Either the boy or the girls *were* allowed to accompany the delegation to the party.

32. Not only the threats but also torture *was* used to intimidate opposition to his rule.

33. Talent, together with perseverance and practice, *makes* a successful career possible.

34. The performers, as well as the audience, *depart* satisfied with the choral performance.

35. My mother *had dried* the dishes by the time my father arrived.

36. When the president resigned he *had held* office for three years.

37. Watching television, he realized that the screen suddenly went blank.

38. Sleeping soundly after a hard day's work, he was startled into consciousness.

39. Nelson Mandela, the former president of South Africa, was freed from prison in 1990.

40. Bicycles, unlike cars, cause no pollution.

3 Sentence Structure and Punctuation

3.1 Introduction

One of the ingredients of good writing is the variation of sentence structure and the application of punctuation marks in a way to accurately communicate the message of the writer. This section is devoted to the structure of the sentences in English, their functions and the effective use of punctuation marks.

3.2 Objectives

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify the constituents of the basic sentences in English.

2. Identify the kinds of sentences and their functions.

3. Apply punctuation marks to communicate effectively their intentions.

3.2 Basic Sentence Structure

English is basically a Subject Verb Object language. The subject refers to the person, or entity which the sentence is about. The verb is the constituent that expresses the action or the state of being of the subject. The verb may be followed by the object or an adverbial or a prepositional phrase. The occurrence of this depends on the number of grammatical elements that the verb accepts in a sentence. There are five basic sentence types. These are illustrated in the table below:

1 .**S I**	He	came		
2. **S I C**	He	walked	Slowly	
3. **S T O**	We	punished	the student	
4. **S T O C**	They	kicked	The ball	over the bar
5. **S T O O**	I	gave	the librarian	the books

In sentences (3), (4), and (5) where the verbs are used transitively, the subject is a willful performer of the action expressed by the verb and is carried over to the object. It is possible to transform these sentences in such a way that the object comes to initial position followed by a passive verb and then the performer of the action referred to as the agent. This is shown in table 2 below:

6. S P A	The student	was punished	by us	
7. S P A C	The ball	was kicked	by them	over the bar
8. S P A C	The books	were given	by me	to the librarian
9. S P O A	The librarian	was given	the books	by me

One important thing is that the subject in these passive sentences is not actually the performer of the action expressed by the verb. The actual subject comes after *by* and an object pronoun is used to express it. The verb in this structure is an auxiliary and the main verb with an *–en* suffix.

The passive structure is used when you want to lay emphasis on **the action** but not **the performer** of the action. Credit is given to writers who vary the structure of their sentences by blending active sentences with passive sentences.

Exercise One

1. Construct 10 sentences in the active voice and transform each of them into the passive. Drop the performers of the actions if they do not need to be identified.

2. Write a paragraph of ten sentences describing a process with which you are familiar. Use a combination of active and passive sentences in the paragraph.

3.3 Types of sentences

There are four types of sentences; namely, declarative, imperative, interrogative, and exclamatory.

A **declarative sentence** is used to make a statement. It is the type of sentence that is used most frequently in speaking and writing. It ends with a full stop. An **imperative sentence** is used to issue a command. It also ends with a full stop. It consists of the bare verb. There is no overt subject since it is understood and present when the command is given. An **interrogative sentence** is used to ask a question. It starts with a question word and ends with a question mark. Some questions start with the inversion of subject and auxiliary verb. An **exclamatory sentence** expresses strong emotion. This type of sentence starts with a *wh-* word followed by a nominal group and ends with an exclamation point. Below are examples:

- Declarative: The book is interesting.
- Imperative: Come here.
- Interrogative: What book are you going to read? Are you going there?
- Exclamatory: What a mess!

Exercise two

Write 10 sentences about a recent event in the university: an incident in the laboratory, a public function, or any other significant event. Remember to punctuate the sentences correctly.

Exercise three

In your workbook, rewrite the following passage correcting the errors in punctuation and capitalization.

<p style="text-align:center">A living Language</p>

Like all living languages English is continually changing the adoption of foreign words into English vocabulary called borrowing is not a new phenomenon in fact its been going on from the time the language first began to take shape English has been borrowing words from conquerors and conquered missionaries trading partners immigrants and a variety of other sources So when the events in the middle east commanded the worlds attention during the latter part of the twentieth century English simply borrowed the words it needed to describe what was happening in that region of the world the more often such words were used the less foreign they sounded and they came to be used routinely in speech and writing

4   Strategies for Vocabulary Development

4.1 Introduction

This section introduces students to some strategies for vocabulary development; namely, regular reading, use of vocabulary worksheets, and vocabulary study books.

4.2 Objectives

To teach students methods of vocabulary development while at the same time emphasizing the importance of having a wide range of vocabulary to meet their communicative needs and hence the need for them to decide that vocabulary development is an important goal.

4.3 Word formation processes in English

- Coinage – creation of new words e.g computer-computerize
- Borrowing – getting words from other languages e.g yorghut (Turkish), tycoon (Japanese), boss (Dutch)
- Compounding – joining of two separate words to produce a single form (cup+board = cupboard, text+book = textbook)
- Blending – joining of two separate words by taking the beginning of one word and joining it to the end of another (breakfast+lunch – brunch, television+broadcast = telecast)
- Clipping – when a word of more than one syllable is reduced to a short form often in casual speech (gasoline – gas, examination – exam, adverts – ads) (Source: Afreh Esther, (2006). *Grammar and Usage for Tertiary Students*)

4.3 Methods of developing your word power

- Regular reading – learn words by encountering them a number of times in a variety of sentences. Thus, develop a habit of reading newspapers daily as well as magazines that suit your interest. Additionally, read some books for pleasure including text books. Set aside a regular half an hour to one hour to read books rather than watch TV. If you have no reading books, ask your instructor

- Use of vocabulary worksheets (whenever reading you mark off words that you want to learn) – after accumulating a number of words from reading, you sit down with a dictionary and look up basic information about the words. Put this information on a worksheet as shown below:

Word: formidable Pronunciation: …………..

Meanings: (1) Feared or dreaded (2) Extremely difficult

Ensure that words are pronounced correctly. Study the main meanings of the word until you can say them without looking at them. Look at the example of the word in context. Follow the same process with the second, third etc words. After learning each new word, one should continue to test himself/herself on all the words studied.

- Vocabulary study books – there are vocabulary books and programs available that one can use. Such books and program present words in one or more contexts and then provide several reinforcement activities for each word. If one works with such books on a regular basis, they can greatly enhance your vocabulary.

Exercises

Activity 1: Paragraph 1(for learning vocabulary)

Electron-beam welding which is presently the most sophisticated form of fusion welding is still far from surpassing ultrasonic welding. Many metals that react to the vacuum which electron-beam requires for the generation of intense heat cannot be welded properly. Some metals that do react to a vacuum are magnesium, zinc, cadmium, and chromium. These metals can be welded with ultrasonic sound; however, in some instances, electron-beam welding can be used more when speed is not a major factor in production. It can be used with metals ranging in thickness from light gauge to heavy sections.

In this paragraph of welding, there are 17 words that you may need to understand before you can understand the meanings of the sentences and the paragraph. Of these seventeen, and others are not-technical words. State them

Technical	Non-technical
Electron-beam	Presently=currently/so far/until now
Welding	Sophisticated = refined/most modern/latest
Fusin welding	Far from = no where near close to
Ultrasonic	Surpassing = better than
Vacuum	Generation = producing
Gauge	Intense = severe/or extreme
Sections	React = respond/result in one action from another
	However = but
	Instances = cases (=metals)
	Process = series of steps/activities

Activity 2: Paragraph 2

Volumetric content of reservoir

The **volumetric** content of a reservoir for gas depends upon the structural **configuration,** the rock **porosity**, and the expected **residual** or **connate** water, and the **pressures used**. The volume of sand contained between the top of the Mt. Simon sand and each of the levels **corresponding** to the **contours** on the map is found by **planimetering** the scaled map along the contours. For each interval, the **mean area** multiplied by the sand thickness gives the volume, or the **trapezoidal formula** may be used. Before the gas content of a given space can be **computed**, the **gas gravity** must be known and the **compressibility** factors obtained. For a fully developed storage reservoir, the water level is obtained by **assuming** that it is **receding ideally**. The gas content is computed using the sand volume data, the gas content of a given space. Equalized pressure is assumed throughout the reservoir; that is, it is assumed that the water has drained down to the final **saturation** and the **gas-water contact** fits the various contour levels.

(Extract from *Natural Gas Engineering: Production and Storage* by Donald L. Katz and Robert L. Lee)

In this paragraph, except "corresponding to" and "assuming" all the other expressions are technical terms. You must first know what all these expressions mean before you can understand the paragraph.

Activity 3: Nuclear Energy-beneficial?

Nature has been ever ready with her abundant treasures. With time, man has used this for his survival and growth. With the help of energy sources he 'unearthed', he produces for himself heat, light and power. However, in his greedy race for control and supremacy, he has been using coal and petroleum products far too quicker than nature can make them available. Realizing this, he began to look for alternative sources.

Man found nuclear energy technology as an alternative source of energy and he proudly declared in the early 1950's: Atoms for peace! He also vouched that nuclear energy would be abundant, cheap, manageable and safe source of power.

Is the nuclear energy really what man proclaimed it to be? For instance, is it cheap? Obviously not. Nuclear electricity is no longer attractive because of its economic costs. France recently closed its superphenix nuclear breeder reactor because despite the high cost in building it, it produced electricity for only six months in a dozen years. In India, Kaigo nuclear plant in Karnataka has already swallowed more than three times its original cost. The department of atomic energy has spent annually between 15 and 25% of India's R&D budget but has produced only 2% of electricity. And in five decades of nuclear energy as a source, a mere 17% of electricity has been generated all over the world. Also handling, storage and supervision of nuclear wastes add crores of rupees to the real costs of a nuclear power station.

Is nuclear energy safe? Of course not. There have been several accidents. France closed its superphenix fast reactor after a series of accidents. Then there is the three mile island accident that occurred 20 years ago. Failure to cool highly radioactive wastes containing fission products will result in their drying out and in the consequent explosions. A serious fire broke out at the Narora nuclear power station on 31st March 1993.

Health also gets affected. Uranium mining workers suffered from lung cancer due to a by-product of uranium in the air of the mines. Many women engaged in painting by hand radium on the watch dials developed bone cancer. The children of plant workers at Alwaye in Kerala suffered from Down's syndrome. Workers at the Rajasthan Atomic Power Station were exposed to tritium concentrations in excess of 300 times the permissible level. Also people living in the nearby areas are also said to be affected. Six months after the conduct of nuclear tests in 1998 in Khetolai in Western Rajathan complaints of unusual health problems, particularly Khujli.

All nuclear plants continuously release radioactive substances. Hermann Muller a Nobel laureate, has predicted a reduction of the survival ability of the human species as several generations are exposed to radiation. Radiation can result in mutation and this genetic damage can be passed on from generation to generation. It can only damage an embryo or fetus in the uterus but also reduce fertility.

Meltdown or the explosion of the main reactor itself can release tons of radioactive particles into the atmosphere. Or the core of the reactor can melt into the earth and contaminate the water table. Released radioactive particles contaminate the soil, water and air. They can cut short our life span by 37 minutes. Cancer deaths result from the contaminated atmosphere.

Nature has always been and will be man's friend. It has these available for his use: solar energy, hydro energy, wind energy, ocean energy, geothermal energy and biomass energy. These are safe and cheap. But is man his own friend? At present, he appears to be his own enemy.

Learn these words from the above passage:

Unearthed, Alternative, Vouched, Declared, Proclaimed, Fission, Radioactive wastes, By product, Tritium, Radiation, Mutation, Contaminate, Genetic Fertility.

Activity 4: Dictionary Usage

Students to use the dictionary to find out the meaning of the following words:

1) Affiliation
2) Advent
3) Ardent
4) Booster
5) Confucius
6) Daze
7) Détente
8) Drone
9) Eaves
10) Egotism
11) Flamboyant
12) Gaudy
13) Grappling
14) Hefty
15) Penmanship
16) Phony
17) Prejudicial
18) Prevalent
19) Ramp
20) Rummage
21) Shrill
22) Slated
23) Sophisticated
24) Stunned
25) Stupendous
26) Symmetry
27) Tarnish
28) Versatility

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5   Paragraph Structure

5.1 Introduction

This section explains the features of a good paragraph and its function in a piece of writing. Related concepts such as paragraph unity, completeness, and coherence are discussed.

5.2 Objectives

Students are expected to have the following learning outcomes:

- Identify parts of a paragraph
- Use transitional words
- Write meaningful paragraphs

5.3   What is a Paragraph?

The word 'Paragraph' comes from the words *'para'* and *graphus*' glossed to mean 'to mark a change in writing or a subdivision of a bigger piece of writing'. The paragraph therefore is a group of related sentences that develop one idea or point. It is a unit of information. The paragraph is very crucial in writing essays or in writing compositions in English. In many ways the paragraph can be likened to an Atom. The Atom has been described as important in any chemical reaction. The Atom is also made up of protons, neutrons and electrons. The paragraph like the Atom, also has three components, the *topic sentence*, *supporting sentence*s and the *summary sentence* which can be isolated and analyzed for their roles and importance.

5.4   The Topic Sentence

The first component of a paragraph is the TOPIC SENTENCE. It is important to know that the Topic Sentence normally occurs at the beginning of the paragraph. However, it can occur at the middle or sometimes at the end of the paragraph. It is profitable to have the Topic Sentence at the beginning of the paragraph to guide the writer to be able to select ideas that support the Topic Sentence. The topic sentence tells us at a first glance what the whole paragraph is going to talk about. For example, if we say 'Kofi is irresponsible.' Immediately, and without reading the rest of the paragraph, we expect to read why Kofi is described as irresponsible.

The Topic Sentence also contains a central idea. In the case of our example above, issues related to Kofi's irresponsibility are what we are looking for. So, if Kofi has other qualities apart from being irresponsible, it is expected that such qualities would be discussed in another paragraph and not this present one. This central idea which limits what we want to discuss or explain in a paragraph is known as '*The Controlling Idea'*. The Controlling idea is 'the nucleus' of the topic sentence.

Exercise 1

Write two topic sentences and clearly identify and explain the controlling idea in each.

5.5 Supporting Sentences

The second component of the paragraph is known as 'Supporting Sentences' or 'Supporting Details'. These sentences add flesh to a claim made in the topic sentence These pieces of information further explain your controlling idea. The Supporting Sentences help readers to understand the writer. This means, the Topic Sentence cannot be left hanging or allowed to be in isolation. If we continue with our topic sentence above we may say:

> Kofi is irresponsible. He is the class president yet he hardly attends lectures. Last week, he intentionally broke a chair and he refused to own up when he was questioned by a lecturer. Yesterday, he slapped one of his mates, a girl, without provocation. From these assertions, can we not conclude that Kofi is irresponsible?

We can see from the example above that the paragraph has three quick sentences following our Topic Sentence. Each of these sentences shows instances of Kofi being irresponsible. For instance as a Class president, it is wrong for Kofi to slap one of his mates especially a girl! Besides, one expects a good leader to lead by example instead of breaking school property. Therefore, we regard these sentences to be lending 'support' to the claim in the topic sentence.

5.6 Major and minor supporting sentences

We can also subdivide the Supporting details into two: Major supporting sentences and minor supporting sentences.

Major Supporting Sentences provide new information or evidence which helps the Topic Sentence to be understood by readers. Minor Supporting Sentences on the other hand say more about the

Major Supporting Sentence. A minor supporting sentence usually provides an example of the major supporting sentence in order to make clearer the general point being made.

Exercise 2

Use one of the topic sentences you wrote earlier again and write out three **major** supporting sentences and their **minor** supporting sentences.

5.7 Summary sentences

Many paragraphs need a form of closure. The end of a paragraph need not be abrupt. The Summary sentence ties up what has been discussed or explained in a paragraph, or it simply makes a judgment about the issue that has been presented in the paragraph.

> The Adomi Bridge has structural defects. The main beam supporting it on one side is broken. This has put stress on the other beams which have begun to weaken. Also there are cracks on other parts of the bridge. ***The structural defects need urgent attention***.

Exercise 3

Write out another topic sentence and give it all the supporting sentences and a concluding sentence.

5.8 Paragraph Unity

The word 'Unity' refers to 'oneness'. Paragraph Unity thus refers to all the sentences in the paragraph working together as one whole. Each sentence is related to other sentences in the paragraph by the fact that they have 'one' controlling idea. If your topic sentence is "Accra is a very busy city" then your controlling idea is 'a very busy city' so all your sentences that will support the controlling idea should show elements of Accra being 'a busy place'. For instance, we can add the following sentences to our topic sentence:

> The roads of Accra are always busy. The shops are full of people from the time they open till the time they close. Most of Accra's restaurants and nightclubs are filled to capacity throughout the week. In fact there is an abundance of hustle and bustle in every sphere of life in Accra.

Note that each sentence reveals one aspect of the busy life in Accra. The sentences are therefore 'united' by the idea of 'busy'. Words or sentences that do not add to the idea that Accra is a busy place must be avoided.

5.9 Paragraph Completeness

A paragraph as mentioned earlier is meant to provide information on one well explained or argued point. Therefore, each paragraph must provide adequate and convincing evidence that supports the point made. The evidence can be facts, explanations, examples or other pieces of information that make the topic sentence and its controlling idea understandable and believable to the reader. The paragraph must be 'complete' such that little or no doubt can be raised against the point that has been made by the topic sentence.

5.10 Paragraph Coherence

Coherence is the third major feature of any effective paragraph, the others being Unity and Completeness. Coherence allow as the reader to follow a writer's train of thought without the reader straining to understand what the writer is saying. This is because the relationship between each sentence and the one before or after it is very clear. In other words, the content of sentences should lead the reader from the start of the paragraph to the end in a logical manner. Let us look at this example:

> My name is Nii Yemo Annang. From my name you realize I am a Ga. My grandparents are Gas and they came to Kumasi in the 50s. My community in Kumasi is called 'Nkrankrom' which means 'Ga Town' and indeed, the community is predominantly Ga in many aspects. We practise many Ga customs in my community and in my home. This morning I want to speak to you about four important Ga customs which have been retained in my community in spite of the fact that we live in the Ashanti Region of Ghana.

Note that the speaker in this narration starts with his 'name', he then connects his name to his 'ethnic group'. The speaker also notes the relationship between his community and his ethnic group and finally the practice of customs which belong to the Ga ethnic group. In all, the speaker establishes that he is qualified to speak on Ga customs. The relationships that the speaker establishes infuse coherence into the text.

TRANSITIONAL WORDS

We have noted from our discussion on 'coherence' that there is the need to have links in the paragraph. The elements that help with the linking are referred to as 'Transitional Words'. Let us use our example once again to illustrate what transitional words are:

> My name is Nii Yemo Annang. From my name you realize I am a Ga. My grandparents are Gas and they came to Kumasi in the 50s. My community in Kumasi is called 'Nkrankrom' which means 'Ga Town' and indeed, the community is predominantly Ga in many aspects. We practise many Ga customs in my community and in my home. This morning I want to speak to you about four important Ga customs which have been retained in my community in spite of the fact that we live in the Ashanti Region of Ghana.

Repetition is a transitional device. So the word 'name' modified by 'my' is repeated in sentences 1 and 2. In sentences 1, 2, 3 and 4 the personal pronoun 'my' has been repeated to personalize the speech. In the last sentence, the speaker uses the words 'in spite of' to draw attention to the contrast between living in the Ashanti Region and the practice of Ga customs.

Transitional sentences are also known as 'connectors' and there are several of them which can also be categorized as follows:

- ADDITION: and, furthermore, moreover, likewise, also
- TIME: Next, shortly, after that, after, before, during, later on, thereafter, finally
- COMPARE AND CONTRAST: However, conversely, on the other hand, but
- CAUSE AND EFFECT: so, therefore, thus, consequently, as a result, hence , because of this.
- EMPHASIS: indeed, in fact, especially, most importantly

Exercise 4

Think of another interesting topic sentence with a clear 'controlling idea'. Write out the supporting details and ensure you have unity, completeness and coherence within that paragraph. Write out a concluding sentence.

6   Introductions and Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

This section explains the role of the introductory part of texts. A good introduction welcomes readers just like a good introduction of a guest speaker enables an audience to welcome him/her. The audience carries a perception about a speaker once he or she is introduced and wait to hear what he or she has to deliver. Thus, an introduction does the same thing to a reader; it creates ideas that the reader hopes to enjoy.

6.2 Objective

To introduce students to different types of introduction and to train students on writing good introductions that are attracting to readers using various techniques.

6.3   Introductory paragraph

This sets the stage and prepares readers for what lies ahead. A good introductory paragraph customarily accomplishes these things: it catches the interest of the reader; usually reveals the one central idea to be addressed (thesis statement); and relates clearly to the rest of the essay. Some guidelines can help you write better introductions:

➢ Engage your reader as quickly as possible by using a choice appropriate to your subject from the methods of introduction;

➢ Avoid too abrupt or bald statements of your thesis-readers need some background information between their ideas and yours;

➢ Try the formula-opening material → background material → thesis → lead in to first paragraph.

A good introduction welcomes readers, makes them comfortable with your subject, states your thesis, leads on to your first body paragraph. Thus a well written introductory paragraph should:

1. Attract the reader's interest, encouraging them to continue reading the essay.

2. Supply any background information that may be needed to understand the essay.

3. Present a thesis statement – a clear direct statement of the main idea of the paper usually appearing at the end of the introductory paragraph.

4. Provide a plan of development – the major supporting points for the thesis are listed in order in which they will be presented. In some cases, the thesis and plan of development appear in the same sentence. Some writers however, choose to omit the plan of development, relying on a general overview phrase that suggests the support and pattern of development for the essay.

5. Conclude with a transitional sentence leading the reader into the first body of the paragraph.

6.4 Common methods of introduction

1) Begin with a somewhat general statement of your topic and narrow it down to your thesis. This eases the reader into your thesis statement by first introducing the topic.

Thesis statement explained

Definition: expresses the central idea that controls and limits what the essay will cover. It contains: -

1. Topic: narrowed appropriately (assertion that conveys your point of view)
2. Focus: what you are saying about the topic
3. Purpose: give information and/or persuade readers to agree with you
4. Specific language: avoid vague words (use precise language)
5. Essay structure: briefly state the major subdivisions of the essay's topic.

Mostly, thesis statements are derived from the topic, for remember it is the *one ruling idea that is to be proposed about the topic.*

Let's look at some examples of how a thesis statement is derived from a topic.

Subject Area	Topic	Thesis Statement
Open admission to college	The success of open admission	1. The success of open admission in my large urban college can be measured by the effectiveness of our basic instruction in reading and writing. 2. Unconventional students admitted under a policy of open admission have had a positive influence on the education of traditional students.
A personal experience	My night in jail	1. After my night in jail, I will have more respect for prisoners' rights. 2. My night in jail helped to make me a safer driver.
Agricultural production	The effect of mechanization on farm employment	1. The typical farm employee has changed from a migrant laborer to a sophisticated regular with the skills to operate large machines. 2. Many migrant farm laborers have become the unskilled unemployable of the cities.

Limiting the scope of your thesis

A thesis that proves unworkable may suffer from too broad a scope and may need to be narrowed by replacing vague, general concepts with more definite ones. Let's look at some examples:

topic	Thesis too broad	Thesis improved
The popularity of garage sales	Garage sales reflect the terms we live in	Garage sales circulate goods during periods of high inflation and high unemployment. ['the times' are carefully defined]
A "Star Wars" missile defense system	We need to invest in a "Star Wars" missile defense system.	Although extremely costly, a "Star Wars" missile defence system may be our only safeguard against nuclear war. [consideration of cost and safeguarding our future are both expressed in the thesis]
Late marriages and the changing African family	Late marriages are creating a different kind of African family life.	Because marriages are often postponed to accommodate careers, Africans are creating a new kind of family in which parents are old enough to be their children's grandparents. [reasons for late marriage and a detailed explanation of "different" belong in the thesis]

Example

Bookstore shelves today are crammed with dozens of different diet books. The Canadian public seems willing to try any sort of diet, especially the ones that promise instant, miraculous results. And authors are more than willing to invent new fad diets to cash in on this craze. Unfortunately, some of these fad diets are ineffective or even unsafe. One of the worst fad diets is the "Zone Diet." It is expensive, doesn't achieve the results it claims, and is a sure route to poor nutrition.

2) Supply background information or context

Mostly used for subjects not considered general knowledge or common interest – professional courses assignments and future career writing tasks cover subject matter unfamiliar to readers, thus need to provide background information. Thus, use this method. Examples, explain an accounting method, analyze some technical process, evaluate a software's operation, etc. Ensure that as writer, you have to give enough information to make your thesis and support clear and understandable to readers.

Example

MP3 is a three-character code seen everywhere today—even phones have MP3 players. But what is an MP3? It is simply a compressed file containing audio data: music, speech, or sound effects. Sounds are compressed from earlier, larger wav files for quick downloading. MP3 compression matches twelve bytes of a wav with only a single byte in MP3 format; it removes sounds people's ears cannot usually hear. MP3s are an important part of the downsizing of media: they offer superior audio quality, they are divisible into cuts or sections, and they are very portable—just like cell phones.

3) Start with an idea or situation that is the opposite of the one you will develop

   This approach works because readers will be surprised, and then intrigued, by the contrast between the opening idea and the thesis.

   Example

   When I decided to return to school at age thirty-five, I wasn't at all worried about my ability to do the work. After all, I was a grown woman who had raised a family, not a confused teenager fresh out of high school. But when I started classes, I realized that those "confused teenagers" sitting around me were in much better shape for college than I was. They still had all their classroom skills in bright, shiny condition, while mine had grown rusty from disuse. I had to learn how to locate information in a library, how to write a report, and even how to speak up in class discussions.

4) Explain the importance of your topic to the reader

   Convince your readers that the subject in some way applies to them, or is something they should know about, for this will make them want to keep reading.

   Example

   Diseases like scarlet fever and whooping cough used to kill more young children than any other illness. Today, however, child mortality due to disease has been almost completely eliminated by medical science. Instead, car accidents are the number one killer of our children. And most of the children fatally injured in car accidents were not protected by car seats, belts, or restraints of any kind. Several steps must be taken to reduce the serious dangers car accidents pose to our children.

5) Use an incident or a brief story

   Stories are interesting and appeal to the reader's curiosity. They help to grab the attention of the reader right away. The story should be brief, and should be related to the main idea. The story can be something that happened to you, or have heard or read about.

   Example

On a Friday morning in a large Canadian mall, a woman buys two sweatshirts, jeans, a doormat, baby sleepers, and a leather backpack. Her bill comes to $650.00. She pays cheerfully with a platinum credit card, smiling at the clerk who sports several piercings and a headset. Not a single customer or clerk notices her. Why should they? Well, she is sixty-seven years of age, and except for the baby pajamas, she's shopping for herself at an apparently youth-oriented store. Consumer groups used to be fairly predictable. And in stores like The Gap, Old Navy, or Roots, where this woman just shopped, demographics should be even more predictable. But in the new millennium, consumer patterns are changing rapidly, and retailers must understand and respond to new age groups, new buying habits, and new merchandise mixes.

6) Ask one or more questions

Use of this means that you simply want the reader to think about possible answers, or you may plan to answer the questions later in the paper.

Example

What is love? How do we know that we are really in love? When we meet that special person, how can we tell that our feelings are genuine and not merely infatuation? And, if they are genuine, will these feelings last? Love, as we all know, is difficult to define. But most people agree that true and lasting love involves far more than mere physical attraction. Love involves mutual respect, the desire to give rather than take, and the feeling of being wholly at ease.

7) Use a quotation

A quotation can be something you have read in a book or article. It can also be something you have heard: a popular saying or a proverb, a current or recent advertising slogan, or a favorite expression used by friends or family e.g "my father always says …….". This lets you add someone else's voice to your own.

Example

"None but a mule deserves his family," says a Moroccan proverb. Last summer, when my sister and her family came to spend their two-week vacation with us, I became convinced that the proverb was right. After only three days of my family's visit, I was thoroughly sick of my brother-in-law's corny jokes, my sister's endless complaints about her boss, and their children's constant invasions of our privacy.

Other Strategies to adopt:

- Give a pertinent statistics or statistics
- Make an analogy
- Define a term used throughout the essay

Strategies to avoid:

- ***An obvious statement that refers to what the essay is about or will accomplish***, such as "In this essay I will prove that fast-food restaurants are taking the pleasure out of eating." [Thesis has to be approached not to be dropped on the reader's foot.]
- ***The 'little me' apology*** such as "After just eighteen years on this earth, I doubt that I have acquired enough experience to ay very much about the purpose of a college education" or "I am not sure this is right, but this is my opinion." [Is this going to wet the reader's appetite for the points that follow knowing that you are not competent?]
- ***The unneeded dictionary definition*** such as "The poem I have been asked to analyze is about lying. What is lying? According to the *Webster dictionary …*" [ls your reader actually in the dark about the meaning of the word?]
- ***Restatement of the assignment, usually with an unenthusiastic declaration of enthusiasm*** such as "It is interesting to study editorials in order to see whether they contain 'loaded' language." [Show interest by beginning with a thoughtful observation.]
- ***The solemn platitude*** such as "Conservation is a very important topic now that everyone is so interested in ecology." [Would you continue reading an essay with such a colorless sentence which does not ignite any interest in you?]

6.5 Concluding paragraph

The conclusion contains no new material. This is a paragraph that reminds your reader of your thesis idea, and brings the paper to a natural end, and allows the reader to 'return to their own thoughts.' In other words it serves to bring your discussion to an end, one that follows logically from your essay's thesis and paragraphs. Therefore, in writing the concluding paragraph you need to:

➢ Summarize your argument and the main themes

➢ State your general conclusions

➢ Make it clear why those conclusions are important or significant

➢ In your last sentence sum up your argument very briefly, linking it to the title.

Common methods to conclusion

The following methods and/or a combination of them can be used to round off your paper.

1) End with a summary and final thought

A three step formula must be followed:

➢ Tell the readers what you are going to tell them

➢ Tell them

➢ Tell them what you have told them

This means that after you have stated your thesis and supported it, you re-state the thesis and supporting points. Avoid using the exact wording used before; instead, reinforce how you arrived at your thesis.

2) Include a thought provoking question or short series of questions

Questions grab the reader's attention. It is a direct appeal to your reader to think further about what you have written. The questions if asked should follow logically from the points made in the paper. A question must deal with one of these areas:

➢ Why the subject of your paper is important

➢ What might happen in the future

➢ What should be done about this subject

➢ Which choice should be made

Your conclusion may provide an answer to your questions. However, one has to ensure that the question is closely related to the thesis.

3) End with a prediction or recommendation

Predictions and questions also involve readers. A prediction states what may happen in future, thus, looking ahead to the future.

Other strategies to adopt:

- Referring to the opening (that is, reemphasizing the central idea not in the same words as in the introduction)
- Using transition signals (in summary, to conclude, therefore, consequently…)
- Using quotation
- Asking questions
- Revealing the significance
- Summarizing the main points of the essay
- Asking for awareness, action, or a similar resolution from readers

Strategies to avoid:

- Introducing new ideas or facts that belong in the body of the essay
- Merely repeating your thesis statement
- Announcing what you have done, as in "In this paper, I have explained the drop in oil prices."
- Making absolute claims, as in "I have proven that oil prices do not affect gasoline prices."
- Apologizing, as in "Even though I am not an expert, I feel my position is correct" or "I may not have convinced you, but there is good evidence for my position."

Extensive exercises and/or examination questions

Activity 1

Below is a summary of the seven kinds of introduction. Read the introductions (1-3) that follow and, state the kind of introduction used in each case.
A. General to narrow
B. Starting with an opposite
C. Stating importance of topic
D. Incident or story
E. Questions
F. Quotation
G. Background Information

1.   The ad, in full colour on a glossy magazine page, shows a beautiful kitchen with gleaming counters. In the foreground, on one of the counters, stands a shiny new food processor. Usually, a feminine hand is touching it lovingly. Around the main picture are other, smaller shots. They show mounds of perfectly sliced onion rings, thin rounds of juicy tomatoes, heaps of matchstick-sized potatoes, and piles of golden, evenly grated cheese. The ad copy tells how wonderful, how easy, food preparation will be with a processor. Don't believe it. My processor turned out to be expensive, difficult to operate, and very limited in its use.

2.   People say, "You *can* often tell a book by its cover," and when it comes to certain paperbacks, this is true. When people browse in the drugstore or supermarket and see a paperback featuring an attractive young woman in a low-cut dress fleeing from a handsome dark figure in a shadowy castle, they know exactly what they're getting. Every romance novel has the same elements-. an innocent heroine, an exotic setting, and a cruel but fascinating hero.

3.   Canadians in the new millennium have become incredibly lazy. Instead of cooking a simple, nourishing meal, they pop a frozen dinner into the microwave. Instead of studying daily newspapers, they scan online versions or the capsule summaries on network news. Worst of all, instead of walking even a few blocks to the local convenience store, they jump into cars. This dependence on the automobile, even for short trips, has taken away a valuable experience—walking. If people drove less and walked more, they would save money, become healthier, and discover fascinating things about their surroundings.

Activity 2

Write introductory paragraphs on the following topics. Follow the guidelines discussed in class and use three different methods of introduction. Be sure your method suits your subject.

1) Computer viruses

2) Examination malpractices

3) Active learning

4) Analyzing an advertisement

5) Student newspapers

6) First-semester challenges

7) Online courses

8) The best things in life…..

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7   Methods of Development

7.1   Introduction

To help readers understand a piece of writing, authors try to present their details in a clearly organized way. Ideas are built up from sentence to paragraph to whole text. Authors might use any of several common patters to arrange their details. Sometimes authors may build a paragraph or longer passage exclusively on one pattern. Often, the patterns are mixed. As students, we need to know the common patterns used by authors to develop the information in a paragraph so that we can use them when writing our essays to help our readers understand the ideas we wish to put across. Some of the common patterns used in developing paragraphs are:

1.   Explanation/Reasons
2.   Time Relation
3.   Contrast
4.   Comparison
5.   Illustrations/Examples
6.   Cause and Effect/Result
7.   Process

7.2   Objectives

1. To train students to recognize different methods of development
2. To train students to develop the ability to write using different methods of development

7.3 The use of explanations or reasons

One way of developing a topic sentence into a paragraph is by giving reasons to support the topic sentence or explaining the topic sentence. When this method is used to develop a paragraph, transitional devices that show addition are used to link the sentences within the paragraph. These transitions indicate that the writer is presenting two or more ideas that continue along the same line of thought. The writer uses them to introduce ideas that add to the thought already mentioned.

Some of the transitional devices used to show addition are: also, another, in addition, next, furthermore, moreover, first of all, second, secondly.

7.4 The use of time relation

When a series of events are being presented, the order in which items are organized is crucial. In such cases, material is arranged in a time-order relationship. This is the pattern commonly used in narrative essays. Narrations deal with "telling a story" or "recounting an event". In this case, there is the need to follow the chronological order in which the events happen.

For this method of paragraph development, transitional devices that show time-order relations are used. These transitions "tell" the reader when something happened in relation to another.

Examples of these transitions are before, now, while, then, after, until, when, during, soon, later next.

7.5 The use of contrast

The contrast pattern of development shows two things are different. The contrast between two things shows how they are not alike. The distinctions between them are highlighted. In using contrast to develop a paragraph, transitional devices that signal a change in direction of the writer's thought are used. These transitions "tell" the reader that a new idea will be different from the previous one.

Some examples of contrast transitions are:
But, in contrast, conversely, while, however, instead, nevertheless, on the contrary, yet still, even though, on the other hand although, in spite of, despite.

7.6 The use of comparison

Comparison shows how two things are alike. When using comparison as a method of developing your essay or paragraph, the material is organized to emphasize the similarities between two or more items or topics. Argument can be developed by analogy (i.e. when ideas are developed by comparison with a similar situation).

Some transitional devices used to point out the similarity between two items are like, likewise, similarly, in like manner, equally, just like, just as, in a similar fashion in the same way, correspondingly.

7.8 The use of illustrations or examples

Some writers develop content for their writing by providing examples to prove a print, or to substantiate a claim.

Examples of transitional devices used to give examples are: for example, such as, for instance, to illustrate, including, in other words.

7.9 The use of cause and effect

Some writers explore events by describing or discussing other events or actions that caused them. This means that they don't just tell what happened; they explain why they do. Cause and effect transitions tell the reader what happened or will happen because something else happened.

Some examples of these transitions are: thus, as a result, therefore, hence, because, consequently, since, accordingly.

7.10 The use of process

In this pattern, the information explains the steps in a particular procedure. The steps or stages show how a phenomenon functions or how a goal or end is achieved. This method is used in developing expository essays. The transitional devices used are the devices that show time – order relation.

7.11 The developmental paragraphs

As we studied in the previous weeks we have to write introductory paragraphs that are interesting to entice our readers to read our essays. Ideally, the first paragraph of an essay is the introductory paragraph and the last paragraph is the concluding paragraph.

Aside the introductory paragraph and the concluding paragraph, the rest of the paragraphs that form the essay are the developmental paragraphs. Developmental or mainstream paragraphs, which range in number in the typical student essay from about three to five, are the heart of the essay.

The function of the developmental paragraphs is to explain, illustrate, discuss or prove the thesis statement stated in the introductory paragraph. Because each developmental paragraph. Because each developmental paragraph discusses an aspect of the main topic expressed in the thesis statement, you need to break the thesis down logically into topics to form the developmental paragraphs of your essay.

How you break down your thesis into topics depends on your thesis statement. There are several principles for logically breaking down your thesis. You can break it into topics according to causes and effects, steps in a process, giving examples, points of comparison and contrast or reasons to support your points. Now, let us look at an example of how to break your thesis into topics that will form your developmental paragraphs.

Example:

Thesis statement:

The village is the ideal environment for one to live in.

Question:

What makes it the ideal environment?

Answers:

1.   cost of living is low
2.   lack of pollution
3.   cooperation among the people
4.   low crime rate.

The example given above shows you how to break your thesis into topics by asking yourself a question that will help you explain your thesis. The answers to the question are the topics that you would develop into paragraphs.

Take note of the following about development paragraphs:

1.   Each developmental paragraph should discuss one aspect of the thesis. For example, in writing an essay on the village as the ideal environment to live in each paragraph would discuss a different element of the environment that makes it attractive.

2.   The controlling idea of each developmental paragraph should echo the central idea stated in the thesis statement. In the example on the village as the ideal environment, it means that each developmental paragraph should have something to do with the village environment being ideal for human habitation.

3.   Each developmental paragraph should be coherent, unified and complete. These are the qualities of a good paragraph.

Exercises and Activities

Exercise 1

The objective of this exercise is to test students' ability to identify the main idea of a paragraph and the pattern of organization used to develop the main idea.

Instruction: For each paragraph, write the sentence number of the main idea in the space provided. Then, state the chief pattern of organization used to develop the main idea.

Note: Within a paragraph different transitional devices may be used. However the student should be able to state the overall pattern of development used to develop the main idea.

1. Some people spend much money each year to repair termite damage to their homes. However, much of that money could be saved if a few anti-termite precautions were observed. Firewood, a favorite snack of termites, should be stored on a metal platform well away from the house. Fences, playhouses and other wooden structures that touch the soil should be pre-treated with a protective coating. And tree stumps near the home should be removed.

    a. The sentence with the main idea is sentence----------------------

    b. The method of paragraph development used is--------------------

2. When I turned thirty last week, I couldn't help thinking about how I had changed over the last ten years. When I was twenty, I acted as if I was confident, but I was really filled with huge doubts. Now I really am somewhat confident, so I don't feel the need to impress others so much. At twenty I had girls on my mind day and night. Now that I'm married, I don't have to put all that energy into hustling up dates. I'm also emotionally calmer now. Ten years ago I wasted a lot of energy being angry at people. I realize now that I'm more likely to accept people the way they are. At least I don't blame them any more for my own problems.

    a. The sentence with the main idea is sentence----------------------

    b. The method of paragraph development used is--------------------

3. An altruistic person will help others even when he or she expects no benefits in return. Consider the example of one of the passengers on a plane that crashed into the Potomac River one cold January day in 1982. Most of the passengers died under the ice, but six passengers escaped into the icy waters. Every time a life preserver was lowered by a helicopter, one man passed it on to one of the other five. When the helicopter had lifted out all five, it returned to pick up that last survivor. But he had disappeared under the ice.

     a. The sentence with the main idea is sentence-----------------------------
     b. The method of paragraph development used is--------------------------

4. People often feel that domestic cats and their larger relatives, the jungle cats, are very different. In reality, however, cats at home and cats in the wild have many traits in common. Both have eyes suited for night vision, and both prefer to sleep by day and move about at night. Also, just as pet cats use their tails to keep their balance and to signal emotions, so do lions and other large cats. In addition, both kinds of cats can leap great distances. Pet cats are often found on top of bookcases or refrigerators. Similarly, the puma, the champion jumper of the cat family, has been known to jump twenty feet up and forty feet ahead. Finally, little cats are not the only ones that purr; the cheetah, puma, and snow leopard all purr when content.

     a. The sentence with the main idea is sentence-----------------------------
     b. The method of paragraph development used is--------------------------

5. Imagine a runner who has torn a leg muscle and is prescribed a drug to control the pain. She finds that the drug acts quickly to soothe her discomfort. As a result, she unconsciously begins to lower her level of "tolerable" pain. The memory of what the welcome rush of relief feels like leads her to take the medication for lower and lower pains level. She also takes the medication more and more often. A torn muscle may thus turn an injured runner into one of the many persons dependent upon legal, doctor-prescribed medications.

     a. The sentence with the main idea is sentence-----------------------------
     b. The method of paragraph development used is--------------------------

6. Gary began stealing liquor from his parents when he was fourteen, and by age seventeen he regularly came to school drunk. In his early twenties, he realized he was completely dependent on alcohol. Gary's moment of truth came at age twenty-five, when he narrowly escaped death in a drunk-driving accident. He soon committed himself to the local alcohol-

recovery center.   After an intensive four-week treatment and a ninety-day follow-up program, Gary was free of alcohol for the first time in over ten years. He then returned to college and received a degree. Now he works as a counselor in the same treatment center that gave him his second chance. Gary's story should inspire many of his own patients at the alcohol-recovery center.

    a. The sentence with the main idea is sentence-----------------------------

    b. The method of paragraph development used is--------------------------

7. Television advertising is what pays for much of television programming. But parents and other shave several objections to television advertising for children. First of all, some critics object to the whole idea of kids' commercials. Young children, they point out, do not understand the nature of advertising. They thus tend to simply accept ads as true. The promotion of war-related toys is another area of concern for many parents. Others complain about the many ads that promote sugar-coated cereals and other unhealthful "kiddie" foods. Still others campaign against TV ads that invite children to call special "900" telephone numbers to, for example, "hear a story from Santa." Parents have been horrified to find their children racking up huge phone bills calling these advertised numbers.

8. For 250 million years, reptiles – which appeared on earth long before the first mammals- have been fighting over territory. Today, human beings do battle over property as well. But the reptiles' way of fighting is generally more civilized and humane than the humans'. Lizards will take a few rushes at one another to test which one is stronger. After a few passes, the loser rolls over on his back to signal defeat. The winner allows him to leave unharmed. Rattlesnakes, similarly, will duel over territory. But they do it with the necks twined together so that they cannot injure each other with their fangs. Humans, of course, generally fight with the intent of injuring one another. The victor often seems to feel he hasn't really won until he's wounded and humiliated his opponent, if not killed him.

    a. The sentence with the main idea is sentence-----------------------------

    b. The method of paragraph development used is--------------------------

9. When you were younger, your mother cautioned you not to act like an animal. What Mother obviously didn't realize is that much of the rest of the world holds animals in such high regard that they use animals' names for their organizations and products. For instance, many professional sports teams, such the Tigers and Rams, have chosen animal names to suggest power. Also, cars are given names to make consumers associate them with speed and grace. Examples are the Jaguar, the Cougar, and the Bobcat. Even our political parties have adopted animals to represent them.

    a. The sentence with the main idea is sentence-----------------------------

    b. The method of paragraph development used is--------------------------

10. 'The essence of many perfumes comes from the oils in the petals of fresh flowers, such as the rose, carnation, and orange blossom. However, fragrances are not limited to the petal, but can come from the leaves of lavender, peppermint, and geranium. Also, the oils of cinnamon and balsam are derived from bark, while the oils of cedar come from its wood. The fragrance of ginger and sassafras comes from roots, whereas that of orange, lemon, and nutmeg comes from fruits and seeds. Thus, there are many sources from which to derive fragrances for perfumes.

    a.   The sentence with the main idea is sentence-----------------------------

    b.   The method of paragraph development used is--------------------------

Exercise 2

The objective of this exercise is to take students through some level of logical thinking and arrangement of thoughts/ideas in an order that makes it coherent and reflects a particular pattern method of paragraph development.

Instruction: Arrange the groups of scrambled sentences below into logical paragraphs in an order that makes sense. Then state the chief method of paragraph development used.

Group 1

1. For instance; body language - how we stand, sit, and move – carries messages

2. We also send messages by how close or far we stand from a person we're talking to.

3. Our nonverbal communication can often be as important as what we say.

4. If you went to a job interview, for instance, would you put your feet up on the desk?

5. If a person is standing too close to you, chances are he or she wants to become intimate with you.

Group 2

1. In some schools, teachers have officers, dining rooms and even toilets that are private, but students do not have such special places.

2. For example, we knock before entering our boss's office, but we walk into the office work area without hesitation.

3. Generally people with higher status are given more space and privacy.

4. To prove this point further, let's consider the military, greater space and privacy usually come with rank: privates sleep forty to a barracks, sergeants have their own rooms, and generals have bungalows with guards.

Group 3

1. The first step is to think positively.
2. Finally, visualize yourself standing in front of your audience feeling comfortable and relaxed.
3. Speaking before a group is more frightening to many than almost anything else.
4. Replace thoughts of failure with positive thoughts and build confidence in yourself.
5. But there are ways to overcome the fear of speaking and become an effective speaker.
6. It also helps to plan a speech with only two or three major points and try to speak naturally.

Group 4

1. This enables all parts of the body to get blood.
2. We can therefore conclude that one importance of physical exercise is that it enhances blood circulation in the body.
3. The work of the heart is greatly enhanced through regular exercise.
4. The secret about regular exercise is that it enables the heart to beat rapidly.
5. As a result of the rapid beating of the heart, it is always active and busy doing the "duty" requires of it – pumping blood.

Exercise 3

The objective of this exercise is to help students practise how to generate points that they can use to form the topic sentences of their paragraphs from their thesis statements. One way to break one's thesis logically into possible topics for one's developmental paragraphs is to turn the thesis statement into a question. The answers to this question might help one to come up with possible topics. This exercise can be given as a take-home assignment as well as a class exercise.

Instruction: Study the thesis statements below and state at least three possible breakdowns. An example is given below e.g.

Thesis statement: Physical exercise is good for our bodies.

Question: What makes it good for the body?

1. The invention of mobile phones has made communication easy.
2. There are many differences between Christianity and Islam.
3. Ghana has made great progress in deepening democracy for the past sixteen years.
4. Doing your master's degree in Ghana can be very frustrating.
5. Watching television is a waste of time.

Note: Instructors can ask students to develop the thesis statement together with the possible breakdown the students come up with into essays.

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 1 & 2

EXERCISE 1

1. a. The sentence with the main idea is sentence 2

    b. The method of paragraph development used is----------------- addition

2. a. The sentence with the main idea is sentence 1

    b. The method of paragraph development used is <u>comparison</u> and/or contrast.

3. a. The sentence with the main idea is sentence 1.

    b. The method of paragraph development used is <u>illustration</u> or example.

4. a. The sentence with the main idea is sentence 2.

    b. The method of paragraph development used is <u>comparison</u> and/or contrast.

5. a. The sentence with the main idea is sentence 6.

    b. The method of paragraph development used is <u>cause</u> and effect.

6. a. The sentence with the main idea is sentence 8.

    b. The method of paragraph development used is time order.

7. a. The sentence with the main idea is sentence 2.

    b. The method of paragraph development used is addition.

8. a. The sentence with the main idea is sentence 3.

    b. The method of paragraph development used is <u>comparison</u> and/or contrast.

9. a. The sentence with the main idea is sentence 2.

    b. The method of paragraph development is <u>illustration</u> or example.

10. a. The sentence with the main idea is sentence 5.

    b. The method of paragraph development used is addition.

EXERCISE 2

Group 1

Correct order 3,1,4,2,5

Method of paragraph development used <u>Illustration</u>/example.

Group 2

Correct order 3,2,1,4

Method used <u>contrast</u> and/or comparison.

Group 3

Correct order 3,5,1,4,6,2

Method used <u>process</u>

<u>Group 4</u>

Correct order 3,4,5,1,2

Method used <u>cause and effect.</u>

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Langan, J. Broderick B. (1993). Ten Steps to Building College Reading
        Skills : Instructor's Edition, New Jersey: Townsend Press.
Smalley of Rwetten (1995). Refining Composition Skills. New York: Heinle & Heinle.

8 Writing from sources: identifying and extracting information from sources

8.1 Introduction

This section deals with an important resource in the academic discourse community, that is, the library. It provides you with strategies for efficient use of the library and taking and making notes.

8.2 Objectives

By the end of this section you should be able to:

1. Use the library as an information resource effectively

2. Take and make notes effectively

8.3. The library

Even before your research essay is assigned, you should become acquainted with your university library. Every library has a different layout, and stacks and catalogs use various kinds of numbering systems. Ask yourself some of the following questions:

1. How are the books arranged?

2. Are the collections for the different disciplines housed in separate buildings?

3. Do you have access to all the stacks of books?

4. Is there a map of the reference room on the wall?

5. How are the guides and indexes arranged in the reference room?

6. Is there a list of all the periodicals owned by the library?

7. What are microcards?

8. Where are the microfilm and microcard readers, and how do you locate and sign out the cards and spools of film?

9. Is there a computerized database, and do you have access to it?

Although libraries are arranged differently, there are standard procedures for choosing the titles that you may want to examine. Suppose that you come to the library with a broad topic in mind: You plan to write an essay about *Prohibition,* the period between 1920 and 1933 when the Eighteenth Amendment prohibited the manufacture and sale of all alcoholic beverages in the

United States, you may use the CATALOGS, BOUND VOLUMES or ON-LINE DATABASES as the sources of your information.

THE CATALOGS

Until recently, libraries listed all their holdings on cards contained in narrow drawers: the *card catalog.*

BOUND VOLUMES

These are sheets with forty or more entries per page.

ON-LINE DATABASES

These are computerized catalogs which enable you to sit at a terminal and call up information on the screen.

Whatever form a library's catalog takes, it will probably list only the holdings of *that library*; later if you need to use another library to trace certain essential sources, you may encounter different methods of cataloging. However, despite these variables, certain conventions apply to most catalogs.

Libraries generally organize their listings of books in three ways: by *authors,* by *titles,* and by *subjects.* If a library uses a card catalog system, you will find three separate sets of drawers. If a library has a computerized database, you will be able to enter commands that search for information by author, title or subject.

THE SUBJECT CATALOG: In most cataloging systems, broad subjects are divided into narrower topics with entries grouped according to subtopics. For example, a typical grouping for "prohibition" could include the following subheadings, appearing on a series of cards or on computer screens:

Prohibition – Great Britain; Prohibition-Michigan; Prohibition-U.S.-History, etc.

This system enables you immediately to eliminate titles that are probably irrelevant. Other subject catalogs list all titles relating to a single broad topic alphabetically under one heading. You have to judge each book's usefulness by considering its title, length, and inclusion of a bibliography, and by consulting the "tracings" at the bottom of the entry card or screen. The tracings list other subjects under which the title is cross-listed and in this way suggest the contents of the book.

THE COMPUTERIZED CATALOGS

These are not cards. They have many terminals that students can use to locate subjects, authors, and titles. Each library system has slightly different commands that students can type in order to access information on the screen. The information that you see on this sample screen in response to a subject screen was accessed in response to a subject search for the broad topic.

8.4 Cross-referencing

A single book may be useful for research on dozens of different topics. Including a separate entry for that book under every possible subject heading would create an overflowing catalog and an unmanageable system. Instead, most libraries use cross-referencing, matched to *a standardized set of subject headings* used to index library materials. An entry placed *only* under the subject heading that is most relevant to the book. In libraries with card catalogs, you will probably find a card listing cross-references at the beginning or at the end of the group of cards under a heading.

Libraries use two systems to organize their books:

The Dewey Decimal system, which uses *numbers* followed by letters and numbers.

The Library of Congress system, which uses *letters* followed by numbers and combinations of letters and numbers.

8.5 Indexes

If your research depends on consulting a variety of periodicals and newspapers – perhaps because your topic is contemporary and has not yet been discussed in book-length works – then you will need to spend some time in your library's reference room, using one or more of *the subject indexes that specifically relate to your topic.* For example, you could continue your research on, say, Prohibition, by consulting the *Social Sciences Index.* To find a listing of the articles published in any given year – 1988, for example – you locate the correct volume by checking the inclusive dates (187-89) on the binding.

Many libraries now have the most frequently used periodical indexes available on line, either through *laser discs* that you can access yourself at a terminal or through *on-line searches* that the librarians will provide at your request.

8.6 Taking notes

Note-taking is the necessary supplement to active listening. Active listening will ensure that you *understand* what is being said, while it is being said. Note-taking ensures that you will *remember* both what you heard *and* what you understood. Just as active listening is a learning experience, so is note-taking. If you are taking notes properly, you are doing more than simply recording the lecturer's words; you are learning about the subject. On the simplest level, note-taking is a *learning* process because the act of taking notes, all by itself, forces you to pay closer attention and become more familiar with the new material. On a higher level, note-taking requires you to organize, paraphrase and understand information. To do this, you need connections between this new information and your background knowledge. The process of note-taking becomes an important first step in thoroughly learning the new material.

NOTE-TAKING FUNDAMENTALS

Whichever of the formats described in the following section you choose to use for any particular lecture, there are several general guidelines you should always follow. Begin notes for each lecture on a new page. Date the page and record any other pertinent information you might need later – the speaker's name, the title of the lecture, the pages of the textbook it relates to, and so forth. Use symbols and abbreviations wherever possible.

NOTE-TAKING SYSTEMS

There are a number of well-known (and quite different) note-taking systems. Each has its own advantages and disadvantages. When you are deciding what to put in your notebook and how to put it there, three things should affect your decision. Most important, you should be writing down only the things you know you need to remember. A second consideration – which affects *how* you put it down – is a result of how the lecturer is presenting the material. Finally and only after you have made the best decision based on the first two factors – the form your notes take should make it as easy as possible for you to review and study them Do not sacrifice the first two considerations for the third. Later on, you can always revise and rearrange notes for efficient study. The important tasks during the lecture are active listening and efficient, accurate recording of essential facts and concepts.

Numeral-Letter Format: The oldest, most traditional note-taking technique is the numeral-letter format. This outline format is one you may already be familiar with from elementary or high school. Main ideas in this format are identified by roman numerals (I, II, III, etc.) and written closest to the left margin of the notebook page. Major details are identified by capital letters (A, B, C, etc.) and indented to the right below the roman numerals. Less important details (or examples) are identified by Arabic numerals and indented to the right below the capital letters.

Indented: Many students find the numeral-letter format of note-taking too restrictive to use with any but the most organized formal lectures. They also find it too hard to keep track of a sequence of numbers and letters. In addition, it causes a delay to flip back a page or two to check what the last major number or letter was. Many students find a simple indenting system, which does away with letters and numbers, more useful. In this format, main ideas are written next to the left margin of the page, major details are indented a few spaces to the right, and minor details or examples are indented further to the right. This format allows the student to make clearer the *relationship* of the items to one another. Both the numeral-letter and indented formats rely on the same idea – the further to the right the information is on the page, the more narrow or specific it is.0

In addition to the factual information that you will need for your bibliography, you should also write down a few preliminary notes about the probable usefulness of each work. This step takes place *after* you have *located* and briefly *examined* a source. These are not notes that you will use later in writing your essay, but, rather, comments indicating which sources merit closer examination and note-taking at a later stage of your research. You simply jot down your initial assessment of the work's scope and contents, strong or weak points, and possible relevance to your

topic, as well as any rough impression about the author's reliability as a source. Often, you can write down such comments just by examining the table of contents and leafing through the pages. *Don't trust your memory.* If you forget to note your reaction, weeks later you may find yourself wondering whether to return to the library to check what seems to be a likely looking title.

ANNOTATION

Annotation refers to the comments you write in the margins when you interpret, evaluate, or question the author's meaning, define a word or phrase, or clarify a point. You are annotating when you jot down short explanation, summaries, or definitions in the margin. You are also annotating when you note down an idea of your own: a question or counterargument, perhaps, or a point for comparison. Annotation is different from taking notes on a separate page. Not every reading deserves to be annotated.

Annotation also means that you insert a short comment after each item in your bibliography, describing the work's scope and specific focus and suggesting its relevance and usefulness to the development of your topic.

This is a more formal variation on annotating a text. The annotations in a bibliography are usually only a sentence or two, just enough to help your reader judge the importance of each source.

TWO EXAMPLES OF ANNOTATED LIST OF SOURCES CONSULTED

1. Espey, Richard. *The Politics of the Olympic Games.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979. Espey spends 8 or so pages on each of the modern Olympics up to 1976, with an emphasis on political motivation and the shift of emphasis from the athlete to the nation.

2. Kieran, John and Arthur Daley. *The Story of the Olympic Games 776 B.C.-1960 A.D.* Rev. Ed. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1961. Approximately 12 pages on each of the games up to 1960, with a concise and interesting narrative, but little interest in politics. The authors assume that the Olympics will always continue as they have.

Reference

Spatt, Brenda. (1991). *Writing from sources.3rd Edition.* New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc.

9   Synthesis and Analysis of Information 1: Writing a summary

9.1 Introduction

This section introduces you to the fundamental characteristics of the summary and summary writing skills.

9.2 Objectives

By the end of the unit, students should be familiar with summary writing skills and be able to apply them in exposition.

9.3 What is a summary?

A summary is seen generally as a shortened version of a text. A summary reduces a text to its most essential points. When you write a summary of someone else's writing, you will say exactly what the original writer has said, very briefly, and in your own words.

9.4 Key Characteristics of a Summary

A summary re-states

The summary must be exactly what the original writer has said. What you write as a summary must not be your comments, or your judgment of what the original writer has said. It must simply restate what the original writer has said. If I have not seen the original text, your summary of the original text must tell me exactly what I would see in the original text.

A summary is brief

A summary is brief. Brevity in a summary is achieved by focusing on the essential points only. Descriptive details and examples will not be included in a summary. A summary writer, therefore must be able to distinguish between essential point and illustrative details.

A summary must be in the summary writer's own words

When you write a summary, it must be in your own words. However, you must not 'borrow' the original writer's words and pass it off as a summary. Summary writing, thus, tests the summary writer's ability to do close attentive reading. It also tests the summary writer's understanding of the text, because if you really understand what you have read, you must be able to tell someone else using your own words.

9.5 Levels of summary writing

Summary writing may be examined at three levels: sentence level, paragraph level, and multiple paragraph level.

9.5.1 Sentence level summary

When a sentence goes beyond the simple, we are able to summarize it; we are able to reduce it to the most essential point made. Let us look at a few examples:

1. *The first people to invent "printing" were the Chinese, several hundred years earlier than in Europe.*

2. *Caxton's printing methods were very different from those used in a modern printing press, for everything had to be done by hand.*

3. *It is with the greatest possible regret that I write to let you know that I am unfortunately unable to accept your very kind invitation.*

What is the most important point the writer is making in each of sentences?

Sentence 1: The Chinese were the first to do printing.

Sentence 2: Caxton did his printing with the hands.

Sentence 3: I am sorry, but I cannot come.

You may have noted that illustrative details are usually not included in a summary. A summary may also require the summary writer to substitute illustrative details with a single word or phrase.

Practice:

1. Maid servants gazed out of upper windows, shopkeepers' wives stood on doorsteps; housewives ran out with babies in their arms; and little children, too young to know how to behave respectfully at the sight of a presidential motorcade, cheered merrily as it drove along.

2. No weapon ever invented is more deadly than hunger; it can spike guns, destroy courage, and break the will of the most resolute peoples; the finest armies in the world, courageous enough in the face of bombs or bullets, can be reduced by it to hopelessness and surrender.

3. Precisely as the church clock struck five, Mr. Lewisham, with a punctuality that was indeed almost too prompt for a really earnest student, shut his Horace, took up his Shakespeare, and descended the narrow curved uncarpeted staircase that led from his garret to the living room in which he had his tea with his landlady, Mrs. Munday.

4. The Mississippi, the Ganges, and the Nile, those journeying atoms from the Rocky Mountains, the Himmaleh, and the Mountains of the Moon—have a kind of personal importance in the annals of the world.

5. There was no time to take off dresses, and amid the flying sparks, and in and about the burning buildings, could be seen clowns, knights in armour, Indian Chiefs, jugglers in tights and spangles, rope walkers in fleshing—in fact, all the characters of the fair in full dress, striving with might and main to combat the flames.

9.5.2 Paragraph-level summary

Your knowledge of paragraph development will be of much help to you when you summarize a paragraph. Remember that a summary focuses on the essential point. You also remember that in a paragraph the topic sentence captures what the paragraph is about. You know also that the major supports explain the idea stated in the topic sentence, and the minor supports illustrate the idea. There may also be the concluding statement which sums up the discussion that was done within the particular paragraph. To summarize a paragraph you need to ask yourself and answer two very important questions after reading the text carefully and ensuring that you have understood it fully. These questions are:

1. What is this paragraph about? [Your answer to this question can be a single word or phrase]
2. What is this paragraph saying about this (what you say the paragraph is about)? [Your answer to this second question must necessarily be a statement.]

If you ask these questions and answer them properly, then you will have a good draft of a summary.

What to do:

1. Read the text carefully.
2. Take your eyes off the page.
3. Ask the first question: What is this paragraph about? The topic sentence will help you if you can identify it.
4. Read the text a second time. [This second reading should confirm (or prove you wrong) concerning your statement of the subject of the text.]
5. Write the draft of your summary.
6. Read the text again. Ensure that you have not left out an important point.
7. Rewrite your summary.

Here is an example.

1. Share-cropping was a very slow way of building up one's own barn. 2. After all the toil, one got only a third of the harvest. 3. But for a young man whose father had no yams, there was no other way. 4. And what made it worse in Okonkwo's case was that he had to support his mother and two sisters from his meagre harvest. 5. And supporting his mother also meant supporting his father. 6. She could not be expected to cook and eat while her husband starved. 7. And so at a very early age when he was striving desperately to build a barn through share-cropping, Okonkwo was also fending for his father's house. 8. It was like pouring grains of corn into a bag full of holes. 9. His mother and sisters worked hard enough, but they grew women's crops, like cocoyams, beans and cassava. 10. Yam, the king of crops, was a man's crop.

What is this paragraph about?

Can you identify the topic sentence? If you can, it will be easy for you. The topic sentence is sentence number 7: *And so at a very early age when he was striving desperately to build a barn through share-cropping, Okonkwo was also fending for his father's house*. The paragraph tells us why Okonkwo had difficulty building his own barn.

What does the paragraph tell us about this?

Draft 1: (an outline)

Why Okonkwo had difficulty building his own barn.

He had difficulty because:

1. He had to use share cropping. (sentence 1)
2. His father had no yams. (sentence 3)
3. He had to cater for his parents and siblings. (sentence 7)

Draft 2

Okonkwo had difficulty building his own barn because he had to use share cropping since his father had no yams. He also had to feed his parents and siblings.

Final Summary

Young Okonkwo had difficulty building his own barn. Since his father had no yams, he had to do share cropping which gave him only one-third of the harvest. In addition, he had to feed his parents and siblings from his harvest.

After a draft, you need to read your text again to ensure that you have not left out any important information. The final summary will also include transitions to achieve coherence.

Practice Exercises

Exercise 1

The truth about pigs is that their reputation for being dull and dirty is undeserved. 2. The pig is actually a curious and intelligent animal. 3. For instance, a pig will not take anything for granted; it will poke, and prod something until it arrives at a conclusion. 4. A pig's intelligence is so keen that the animal needs to do something only once – such as turn on an automatic drinking fountain – to know how to do it again. 5. Furthermore, pigs are basically no dirtier than any other farm animal.

6. Because pigs don't sweat, they seek out water in order to cool off. 7. On a farm, the water that a pig finds is usually in a mud puddle. 8. However, the pig would be just as happy splashing in a bathtub, since it is water, not dirt that pigs enjoy.

Exercise 2

So fierce was the Black Death that swept Europe in 1348 that people were driven to try some rather extraordinary remedies. 2. Certain of these bizarre cures were aimed at ridding the air of its "badness." 3. For example, towns would ring bells all day in the hope of scattering any plague gasses in the air. 4. People would also douse the walls of their homes with scent, hoping to offset the foulness of the disease with the sweetness of perfume. 5. Other unusual treatments involved animals. 6. Smelling a pig, for instance, was thought to help a person suffering from the disease, and toads were considered useful for extracting the poison from plague boils. 7. Perhaps the most curious of the remedies was that of writing the magical term "abracadabra" in exotic shapes on a card and hanging the card from a string worn around the neck. 8. In spite of their imaginativeness, though, none of these remedies proved to be at all effective.

Exercise 3

The great Pyramid of Cheops in Egypt is the lone survivor of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world. 2. Built approximately 4800 years ago, the monument covers thirteen acres at its base and has a perimeter of 3020 feet. 3. The foundation is almost perfectly level, and the four sides of the base align precisely with the points of the compass. 4. The pyramid's four triangular faces rise at equal angles from the ground and are supported by 2,500,000 limestone and granite blocks that weigh from two to seventy tons a piece. 5. These walls were originally wrapped in a 100-inch-thick mantle of beautifully polished limestone blocks, and atop them, 480 feet above the earth, sat a brilliant capstone made of either gold or silver. 6. Although it has been much scarred through the ages, the Great Cheops remains a true wonder of the world.

Exercise 4

Numerous societies have recognized in their own way the fundamental nature of freedom of expression. A Kazakh law from the Steppes, dating as far back as the 15th century, stipulated that one could cut off a man's head, but not his tongue. The Akans of Ghana underscore the supremacy of freedom of speech when they say: "Tekyerema da m'anum nkoaa dee meka bi." [As long as I have a tongue, I will take part in the debate.] This philosophy of freedom of speech was perhaps

not so far-removed from the distressing appeal of the English essayist who declared in 1721, that if a man cannot consider his tongue his property, what else can he consider his.

9.6 Single-sentence condensation

Let us practise focusing on a particular idea in the text. Use your own words in all the cases.

Exercise 5

Hailstones fell on the tin roof of the tax paper shanty. The neighbour's dog began to bark. The rumble of trucks on the highway contrasted feebly with the reverberating rolls of thunder in the distance. Several police sirens began to echo the shrill warning of the approaching fire engines. All in all, it was a sleepless night.

Question

What made the night a sleepless night? State this in one sentence.

Exercise 6

Health is one of the important things to consider in choosing a vocation. The person with a sickly nature or a weak body should avoid strenuous occupations calling for physical endurance. Telephone linemen, riveters, welders, and truckers need strength. On the other hand, persons with great strength and vitality may be unhappy in an indoor office job. Unhappiness, failure, destruction of health frequently result when a worker's strength doesn't fit the job. Don't make a wrong decision because a vocation seems exciting and adventurous. Before you make your final choice, check your health carefully against the job you want.

Question:

Why, according to the writer, is health an important factor in selecting a vocation?

Exercise 7

A talk written down on paper or printed in a book is never quite like the same talk given before a group. As the speaker delivers his prepared talk, he expands it or changes it as he wishes. Memorized talks are dull and dreary. The best speakers are those who have very definite ideas about what they want to say, but who speak naturally, without strain and without memorizing. In your talks try to do the same. Know your subject but talk naturally. If you wish, write out your speech before hand and make brief notes for use during your talk, but don't memorize.

Question:

Summarize what the writer considers the most important considerations in delivering a speech.

Exercise 8

Many studies have been made, and charts based on them are available for everyone to see, showing in dollars and cents the value of an education. The researchers who make the charts selected great numbers of elementary school, high school, and college graduates. They examined their records and their jobs years later. The figures prove that the more educated groups were making much more as a group than those with merely elementary school education. To be sure, for those who stay in school longer, it often takes a while to catch up, because while they have been spending their time at school, their friends in the business would have been going ahead. But after they have started, the better educated tend to catch up and pass their friends, the elementary school graduates. Of course, there are notable exceptions, men who have become successful with just the barest education. These exceptions are not the rule, though.

Question

What advantage do those who stay longer in school have over their counterparts with only elementary school education? State this in one sentence.

Exercise 9

The reading of novels and the criticism of novels are not two different activities although the two words—"reading" and "criticism"—give the impression that they are. Many people think that anyone can read a novel but that only a few highly selected and trained individuals with special gifts can criticize one. Reading and criticism are, however, one process. An aware reader is more or less a critic. A critic then is to my way of thinking not different from a reader in kind but in quality. Criticism is the articulation of the reader's experience. If you are aware of the intention of the novelist, of the nature of the novel and what evoked the experience, you are a critic. The quality of your awareness determines your quality as a critic.

Question:

   i.   How, according to the writer, is the critic different from the reader? State this in one sentence.

   ii.   Why, according to the writer, are "reading" and "criticism" one process? State this in one sentence.

Exercise 10

Read the following passage carefully and answer in your own words as far as possible, the questions that follow.

Of the many inter-related problems facing humanity in the last quarter of this turbulent century, the rapid rate of population growth is a major one. Because of a reduction in the deaths of infants and children, due to better sanitation and the control of diseases, increasing numbers survive to reach their reproductive years and, being human, they reproduce. The rate of population growth is immense. In 1776, the population of the world was about 1000million. In 1885, one hundred years later, it had risen to 1500 million and by the year 2000, it is likely to reach 65000 million, unless a global disaster occurs before that time. All these people need to be able to eat adequately, to receive some education, to find some form of employment and have some enjoyment of life.

In the rich developed nations of the world, the population growth has diminished as couples have chosen to have fewer children and, by using birth control methods have been able to have smaller families. By contrast, in most of the poor, hungry, developing nations, the birth rate remains high, and only a few couples limit the size of their families. This is because children are seen as valuable in societies in which social welfare measures are few and provision for old age almost non-existent because of poverty. Children are also esteemed as they demonstrate the masculinity of their father, and provide extra hands in rural communities. But even in these nations, surveys show that women want fewer children than they actually have, so that the desire to limit the size of the family is present in most women. In all nations, women are beginning to realize that they need no longer be condemned to a life of constant child-bearing and child-rearing, but are increasingly able to choose how many children or how few children, they want to have.

Finally, planning is inevitable to help individuals and couples to choose if and when they will have a child. The choices depend on a complicated mixture of social, cultural and psychological influences; and today, for the first time in history, men and women have reliable methods to enable them to make that choice freely and relatively easily.

(a) In <u>one</u> sentence of your own, state why the world's population is always on the increase.
(b) In <u>four</u> short sentences, one for each point, state why the birth rate is high in developing countries.

9.7 Summarizing the multiple-paragraph text

The simple thing to do when summarizing a text of a number of paragraphs is to tackle the text paragraph by paragraph. Remember that the whole text is on a specific subject. This subject is likely to be given a focus in the thesis statement. The introductory paragraph, therefore, should give you what the text is about, generally, and what specific things the text will discuss (the thesis) in the body. Then every paragraph will develop one specific idea.

Here are steps to follow when you summarize a multiple-paragraph text.

1. Read the text from the beginning to the end using your usual reading speed. (Do not worry about words and expressions you have not met before.)

2. Take your eyes off the page.
3. Ask yourself: What is this text about?
4. Write this down.
5. Read the first paragraph of the text.
6. Take your eyes off the page.
7. Ask yourself: What does this paragraph tell me about the subject (what I say the text is about)?
8. Write this down.
9. Read every paragraph and ask the same question about each.
10. This will be your first draft, and it can be in the form of an outline.
11. Read the original text again. Have you left out any relevant piece of information?
12. Your final summary must be one paragraph only. Ensure that there is coherence in your summary: use the transitions.

In sum:

When summarizing a text comprising a number of paragraphs do the following:

i. Skim the text to get the general focus of the text, e.g., the concept discussed in the text.

ii. Scan the text to get the ideas used in support of, or explaining the concept.

iii. Put these down in outline form, as much as possible in your own words. Be sure you do not distort the original author's ideas, or impose your own ideas as you do this.

iv. Read the text again to ensure that you did not leave out any relevant support. If you did, include it in your outline.

v. Write out your outline putting on flesh in the form of intra-paragraph link devices as first, next, in addition, finally, etc.

vi. Edit your final write out paying special attention to coherence and grammatical errors.

Exercise 11

Summarize in your own words, the advantages and disadvantages of owning a television. Your account should not be more than 120 words.

With the invention of the television, many forms of entertainment have been replaced. Lively programs like television serials and world news, have removed from us the need to read books or papers, to listen to radios or even to watch movies. In fact, during the 1970s, when television sets were first introduced, cinema theatres suffered great losses as many people chose to stay in the comforts of their homes to watch their favorite programs.

Indeed, the television brings the world into our house. Hence, by staying at home and pressing some buttons world happenings are immediately presented before us. Children nowadays develop faster in language, owing to the early exposure to television programs. At such tender age, it would be difficult for them to read books or papers. Thus, television programs are a good source

of learning for them. Furthermore, pronunciations by the newscasters, actors or actresses are usually standardized, hence young children watching these programs will learn the 'right' pronunciations too. Owning a television is also extremely beneficial to working parents who are usually too busy or tired to take their kids out for entertainments. Surrounded by the comforts of their home, the family can have a chance to get together and watch their favorite television programs.

Of course, we should not be too carried away by the advantages of the television and overlook its negative points. Watching television programs takes away our need to read. Why bother to read the papers when we can hear them from the television news reports? Why read books when exciting movies are screened? The lack of reading is unhealthy especially to younger children as they will grow up only with the ability to speak but not write. I have a neighbor whose six-year-old child can say complete sentences like "I like cats," but when told to write out the sentence, is unable to do so. Not only are the writing skills of children affected, their thinking capacities are also handicapped. Television programs remove the need to think. The stories, ideas and facts are woven in the way television planners wanted. Exposure to such opinions and the lack of thinking opportunities will hinder the children's analyzing ability.

Despite the disadvantages of watching television programs, personally, I think that choosing the 'middle path', which is to do selective television viewing and not over indulging in the habit should be the best solution to reconcile both the merits and demerits of owning a television.

Write your own summary before looking at the model. The model is not perfect. You may have used words and expressions that have not been used in this model. That does not necessarily mean that your summary is not correct. The only reason your summary will be incorrect is when your summary distorts the original writer's ideas, or makes statements that the original writer has not made.

Answer: The television keeps us informed of world affairs. Early exposure to television programs helps to develop language skills of young children. These children can also learn to pronounce words accurately because of the standardized pronunciation in the programs. In a family where both parents are working, the television provides the family an opportunity to get together at leisure times. One disadvantage of watching television programs is that we do less reading and hence our writing skills are affected. Younger children may learn to speak but not write from television programs. Furthermore, television programs often spare viewers, especially the young ones, from pondering upon opinions presented before them, which will in turn handicap their ability to analyze facts.

Practice Exercises

Exercise 12

The term "domestic violence" is used to describe a variety of actions and omissions that occur in different relationships. The term is used narrowly to cover incidents of physical attack,

when it may take the form of physical and sexual violations, such as punching, choking, stabbing, throwing boiling water or acid over and setting on fire; the result of which can range from bruising to killing.

Some people use the term "domestic violence" to include psychological or mental violence, which can consist of verbal abuse; confinement; and deprivation of physical, financial and personal resources. Contact with family members and friends may be controlled. The forms of violence may vary from one society and cultures to another.

Other people use the term to describe violence against women in the family only, and for others it is a general label to cover any violation where the victim and perpetrator have some form of personal relationship in the past. Used in the wider sense, domestic violence encompasses child abuse, be it physical, psychological or sexual, violence between siblings, abuse or neglect of the elderly and abuse by children of parents. Here, however, the "domestic violence" means physical or mental assault of women by their male partners in many countries the term "wife abuse" is used for this type of behaviour.

Summarize the characteristics of domestic violence.

Exercise 13

The United Nations made a promise to children when they put together the Rights of the Child (1990). Article 19 asks that countries take "All appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical and mental violence, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse."

In the Solomon Islands most people know child sex abuse happens. They hear it, they see it, but they do not report it. "In custom days," says Jimmy, a thirty-four-year-old Malaitan with an enviable knowledge of traditional ways, "a man who played around with a child would be beaten up. Then his tribe would put him into exile. Now, because of Christianity, that kind of thinking has changed."

His colleague, Peter, who comes from Guadalcanal province follows a less aggressive traditional approach." We'd put the two parties together, the man's tribe and the child's tribe. Everyone would sit down and eat together. Later, we would exchange custom money and shake hands. That solves the problem and it gives us peace," he explains.

Recently Peter stopped a woman from reporting her husband to the police for sexually abusing a six-year-old girl relative who was living with them. "If you take a man to the police," Peter explains, "and report what he's done, it shows you are not forgiving him. It's true that the law guides us and gives us peace, but if you go to the police, the problem is still not solved. There is the court case and the man goes to prison and is going to stay cross with you." Peter believes the exchange of custom money, food and his church's approach of prayer and forgiveness are the answer.

Summarize the text in about 50 words.

Exercise 14

People use words, of course, to express their thoughts and feelings. And as everyone knows who has tried to write, choosing just the right word to express an idea can be difficult. Nevertheless, it is important to choose words carefully, for words can suggest meanings not intended at all; words can also be used to deceive. In order to express ourselves accurately and to understand what other people express, we must be aware that words can camouflage real attitudes; English is full of examples.

Experts at camouflage are those in advertising. Advertisers obviously want to emphasize the virtues of their products and detract from their faults. To do this, they use carefully chosen words designed to mislead the unwary customer. Carl P. Wrighter in his book *I Can Sell You Anything* has dubbed these expressions "weasel words," which the Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines as words "used in order to evade or retreat from a direct or forthright statement or position." Let's say, for example, that the advertiser wants you to think that using his product will require no work or trouble. He cannot state that the product will be trouble free because there is usually no such guarantee; instead, he suggests it by using the expression "virtually," as in this product is "virtually trouble free." The careless listener will ignore the qualifier "virtually" and imagine that the product is no trouble at all. Another misleading expression is "up to." During a sale a car dealer may advertise reductions of "up to 25 percent." Our inclination again is to ignore "up to" and think that most of the reductions are 25 percent, but too often we find that only a few cars are reduced this much. The other day I saw a sign on a shoe store advertising "up to 40 percent off" for athletic shoes. Needing some walking shoes and wanting a good bargain, I went in, only to find that there were only a few shoes marked down by 40 percent; most of the shoes weren't even on sale.

Just as "weasel words" are use to engender favourable impressions, so are euphemisms. A euphemism is defined as "the substitution of an agreeable or inoffensive expression for one that may offend or suggest something unpleasant." We often use euphemisms when our intentions are good. For instance, it is difficult to accept that someone we love has died, so people use all kinds of euphemisms for death, such as "She passed away," "He's gone to meet his maker," or "She is no longer with us." To defend against the pain of such a reality some use the humorous euphemism, "He's kicked the bucket." To make certain jobs sound less unappealing, people use euphemisms. A janitor is now a "custodial worker" or "maintenance person." A trash man may be called a "sanitation engineer." Such euphemisms are not harmful, but sometimes euphemisms can be used to camouflage potentially controversial or objectionable actions. For example, instead of saying we need to raise taxes, a politician might say we need "revenue enhancement measures." When psychologists kill an animal they have experimented with, they prefer to use the term "sacrifice" the animal. Doctors prefer "terminate a pregnancy" to "abort the foetus."

What many find objectionable today is sexist language. Sexist language refers to expressions that demean females in some way. For instance, when someone refers to a grown woman as a "girl," the implication is that she is still a child. Therefore, instead of an employer saying, "I'll have my girl type that," what should be said is "I'll have my assistant (or secretary) type that." Other offensive expressions include "young thing," as in "She's a cute young thing." The proper term, "girl" should be used in this case, since the "thing" is a young female. Further, the names of many jobs suggest women should not fill these positions. Thus, we use "chair" or "chairperson" instead of the sexist "chairman." Likewise, a "foreman" should be called a "supervisor."

We must always be careful to choose the words that convey what we really mean. If we do not want to give offence, then we should always be on guard against sexist (as well as racist) language. If we do not want to be misled by advertisements, we must keep our ears open for weasel words. Finally, when we use a euphemism, we should be aware that we are trying to make an idea more acceptable. At times this may be preferable, but let's not forget that euphemisms camouflage reality. After all, "colouring the truth" is still lying.

Summarize the text in about 80 words

10 Synthesis and Analysis of Information 2: Writing a paraphrase

10.1 Introduction

This section extends the techniques involved in synthesizing and analyzing information from multiple sources. Specifically, it focuses on strategies for paraphrasing sources effectively.

10.2 Objectives

By the end of this section you should be able to:

1. Read and extract relevant information from multiple sources

2. Apply the techniques of paraphrasing effectively

10.3 Writing a paraphrase

Like the summary, the paraphrase involves writing another person's ideas in your own words.

The paraphrase and summary are indispensable tools in essay writing because they allow you to include other people's ideas. Then you do not have to use a lot of direct quotations.

The paraphrase is especially useful if you need to explain a difficult concept, or make a complex text easier for your audience to understand.

Here are some steps to follow when you write a paraphrase:

1. Read the text and make sure you understand it
2. Take note of the important ideas or complex concepts that need to be made clearer for the audience.
3. Find words and phrases that are explanatory of the concepts, and make them easier to understand.
4. Do not change technical words; explain them.
5. Change the sentence structure and vocabulary of your sentences so that they do not follow the structure of the original.
6. Keep your sentences short and simple; they are more easily understood.
7. In your paraphrase, indicate who, is doing what, why, when, where, to express the meaning of the original completely and accurately.

Examples
Here are examples of illegitimate and legitimate paraphrase. The original passage is from Oliver Sacks' essay "An Anthropologist on Mars":

The cause of autism has also been a matter of dispute. Its incidence is about one in a thousand, and it occurs throughout the world, its features remarkably consistent even in extremely different cultures. It is often not recognized in the first year of life, but tends to become obvious in the second or third year. Though Asperger regarded it as a biological defect of affective contact—innate, inborn, analogous to a physical or intellectual defect—Kanner tended to view it as a psychogenic disorder, a reflection of bad parenting, and most especially of a chillingly remote, often professional, "refrigerator mother." At this time, autism was often regarded as "defensive" in nature, or confused with childhood schizophrenia. A whole generation of parents — mothers, particularly — was made to feel guilty for the autism of their children.

What follows is an example of illegitimate paraphrase:

The cause of the condition autism has been disputed. It occurs in approximately one in a thousand children, and it exists in all parts of the world, its characteristics strikingly similar in vastly differing cultures. The condition is often not noticeable in the child's first year, yet it becomes more apparent as the child reaches the ages of two or three. Although Asperger saw the condition as a biological defect of the emotions that was inborn and therefore similar to a physical defect, Kanner saw it as psychological in origin, as reflecting poor parenting and particularly a frigidly distant mother. During this period, autism was often seen as a defense mechanism, or it was misdiagnosed as childhood schizophrenia. An entire generation of mothers and fathers (but especially mothers) was made to feel responsible for their offspring's autism (Sacks 247-48).

Note:
> Most of these sentences do little more than substitute one phrase for another. An additional problem with this passage is that the only citation occurs at the very end of the last sentence in the paragraph. The reader might be misled into thinking that the earlier sentences were not also indebted to Sacks' essay.

The following represents a legitimate paraphrase of the original passage:

In "An Anthropologist on Mars," Sacks lists some of the known facts about autism. We know, for example, that the condition occurs in roughly one out of every thousand children. We also know that the characteristics of autism do not vary from one culture to the next. And we know that the condition is difficult to diagnose until the child has entered its second or third year of life. As Sacks points out, often a child who goes on to develop autism will still appear perfectly normal at the age of one (247).

Sacks observes, however, that researchers have had a hard time agreeing on the causes of autism. He sketches the diametrically opposed positions of Asperger and Kanner. On the one hand, Asperger saw the condition as representing a constitutional defect in the child's ability to make meaningful emotional contact with the external world. On the other hand, Kanner regarded autism as a consequence of harmful childrearing practices. For many years confusion about this condition reigned. One unfortunate consequence of this confusion, Sacks suggests, was the burden of guilt imposed on so many parents for their child's condition (247-448).

Note:

Notice that this passage makes explicit right from the beginning that the ideas belong to Sacks, and the passage's indebtedness to him is signaled in more than one place. The single parenthetical note at the end of each paragraph is therefore all the citation that is needed. The inclusion of explicit references to Sacks not only makes the job of providing citations easier. It also strengthens the passage by clarifying the source of its facts and ideas. And it adds an analytical dimension to the paragraph: the passage doesn't just reiterate the points in Sacks' passage but lays out the structure of his argument. Note that the paraphrase splits the original into two separate paragraphs to accentuate the two-part structure of Sacks' argument. Finally, notice that not all the details from the original passage are included in the paraphrase.

[From: Jerry Plotnick. UC Writing Handouts: Paraphrase and Summary. (2008). http://www.utoronto.ca/ucwriting/paraphrase.html]

Further examples:

a. Paul Ekman from the University of California has conducted a long series of experiments on how nonverbal behaviour may reveal real inner states.
   Paul Ekman who works at the University of California has performed a sequence of investigations on the way nonverbal behaviour may disclose real internal conditions.
b. There are reckoned to be over 4,000 plant species used by forest dwellers as food and medicine alone.
   There are calculated to be more than 4,000 plant species utilised by forest inhabitants just as foodstuffs and drugs.
c. Memory is the capacity for storing and retrieving information.
   Memory is the facility for keeping and recovering data.
d. Research and publications are accumulating in each of the four fields of anthropology at an exponential rate.
   Studies and books are gathering in all of the four areas of anthropology at a very fast speed.
e. It is worth looking at one or two aspects of the way a mother behaves towards her baby.
   It is useful to observe several features of how a mother acts when she is with her small child.

Exercise 1

Rewrite the paraphrases done above using your own words.

Exercise 2

Write a paraphrase of the following:

a. Many invertebrates, on the other hand, such as snails and worms and crustacea, have a spiral pattern of cleavage.

b. Similarly, the muscles will not grow in length unless they are attached to tendons and bones so that as the bones lengthen, they are stretched.

c. Besides being a theory about the basis and origin of knowledge and the contents of our minds in general, empiricism is also sometimes a methodology.

d. As opposed to this, Locke is often supposed to be saying that, in addition to properties, things have a "substratum" which "supports" their properties.

e. Consequently in a sense one may speak of the Common Law as unwritten law in contrast with Statute Law, which is written law.

f. Given the extent to which deforestation increased markedly in the four southern states during 1987 and 1988, it is heartening news that during the early part of the 1989 dry season the burning seemed to have been curtailed somewhat, due to a combination of policy changes, better controls on burning, and most important of all an exceptionally wet "dry" season. [From http://www.uefap.com/writing/report.repfram.htm]

g. "At some point in the assimilation to the new way, the immigrant child realizes that his or her parents are no longer sources of real knowledge about the new society. Their information and their way of life are no longer the way to success, and as soon as the child understands this, his or her attitude towards the parents changes. Though some people consider such changes to be a betrayal, they are an inevitable part of assimilation." (Adam Khutorsky, "Immigrants Adapting")

h. "The undermining of self, of a woman's sense of her right to occupy space and walk freely in the world, is deeply relevant to education. The capacity to think independently, to take intellectual risks, to assert ourselves mentally, is inseparable from our physical way of being in the world, our feelings of personal integrity. If it is dangerous for me to walk home late from the library, *because I am a woman and can be raped*, how self-possessed, how exuberant can I feel as I sit working in the library? How much of my working energy is drained by the subliminal knowledge that, as a woman, I test my physical right to exist each time I go out alone?" (Adrienne Rich, "Taking Women Students Seriously")

i. "Email's intoxicating qualities are now well known: It's convenient, efficient, simple, and informal, a way to stay connected to more people, a democratizing force in the workplace and less intrusive than the telephone. But as email proliferates, its more pernicious effects are increasingly evident. Much as it facilitates the conduct

of business, email is threatening to overrun people's lives." (Tony Schwartz, "Going Postal") [from www.middlesex.edu/faculty/Robert_Roth/ParaphraseEx.htm]

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11   Synthesis and Analysis of Information 3: Writing a Synthesis

11.1. Introduction

In this section, we apply the knowledge and skills you have learnt so far to essay writing. Academic essays hardly depend on one source of information. Often, they are dependent on a variety of sources. The challenge for the student is to be able to map out the range of information, align similar views on one side and opposing views on the other, and at the same time be able to differentiate middle ground positions. This section introduces you to strategies for doing this.

11.2. Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Organize material from different sources

2. Different views and positions of authors

3. Place your own views in the context of multiplicity of views

4. Write a synthesis essay

11.3. Definition

Here are some definitions of the word 'synthesis':

1. Etymologically it is from the Latin word which means 'collection' (Encarta, 2009). The Greek word 'suntithenai' also means to put together.
2. It is the result of combination: a new unified whole resulting from the combination of different ideas, influences, or objects.
3. It involves combining various components into a whole: the process of combining different ideas, influences, or objects into a new whole.
4. [Chemistry] It is the formation of chemical compounds: the formation of compounds through one or more chemical reactions involving simpler substances.

All definitions of the word suggest some kind of combination. Obviously, when you synthesize you combine one or more ideas of others with your own.

When you do this, your audience must recognize your ideas and those of the other sources. You must also acknowledge the other sources appropriately.

11.4 Two kinds of Synthesis

The Explanatory Synthesis

An explanatory synthesis must help your audience to understand the subject. In this kind of synthesis organize the material from the various sources into divisions and present each of the divisions into orderly, easily understandable units for the audience. Be objective. Present the material as the original writers have done it; your main aim is to ensure easy understanding of the issues raised by the various sources, at a glance.

The Argumentative Synthesis

The argumentative synthesis will present your own point of view. This will be based on evidence drawn from the sources which should be made clear in your argument. You will be stating why you do or do not agree with source A; why you think source B is more credible, dependable, etc.

It is obvious that there can hardly be an exclusively argumentative synthesis; there will be some amount of explanation in such a synthesis. In the same way, there will be something of what you think when you do the explanatory synthesis.

General considerations

1. There are two or more ideas.
2. There is the need to bring these ideas together.
3. The new idea must be a unified whole.
4. The new idea must make complete sense.

Skills needed:

1. Your ability to:
    a. Do close attentive reading
    b. Distinguish essential from non-essential information:
        i. Your ability to summarize is essential
        ii. Being able to paraphrase is equally helpful in making a synthesis
    c. Establish relationships among the bits of information gathered:
        i. Does source A state a view that is similar to (or different from) source B?
        ii. Does source A discuss the economic whilst source C dwells on political issues?

Here are some helpful steps:

1. Get all the texts on the subject or issue you need to synthesize.
2. Read carefully and ensure you understand the argument of each source.
3. Identify and summarize the points you need to bring together from the different sources.
4. Make a note of the meaning relationships among the sources; for example:
    a. Source A differs from Source B with regard to approach,
    b. Source A is similar to Source C with regard to conclusions drawn,

      c. Source B differs from Source C with regard to subjects used in the investigation, etc.

5. Put your notes together.
6. When you begin writing your synthesis, your thesis statement must state clearly your purpose: for example, *that no two researchers agree completely over the issue of the extent of the influence of the mother tongue in learning a second language*; or, *that all researchers agree that the first language has some influence in the second learning situation*.
7. In your synthesis, state clearly similarities and differences that exist among the various sources, and your own point of view.
8. Be accurate and objective when you state your views of the other sources.
9. Acknowledge your sources fully.
10. In your conclusion, sum up your thesis and state any questions or issues that may still need to be resolved.

The ability to synthesize helps the university student to write such academic essays as the report, term papers, and dissertations. For example, when you write the literature review of your long essay, you may necessarily need to synthesize the various sources you have consulted.

However, it is often a requirement to write a synthesis essay as part of the academic writing course. This is usually to test your ability and preparedness to do a synthesis in longer essays such as the long essay.

11.5 Organizing the synthesis essay (from material written by Rebecca Moore Howard and Sandra Jamieson)

The introduction (usually one paragraph)

1. Contains a one-sentence statement that sums up the focus of your synthesis.
2. Also introduces the texts to be synthesized:
   (i) Gives the title of each source (following the citation guidelines of whatever style sheet you are using);
   (ii) Provides the name of each author;
   (ii) Sometimes also provides pertinent background information about the authors, about the texts to be summarized, or about the general topic from which the texts are drawn.

The body of a synthesis essay:
This should be organized by theme, point, similarity, or aspect of the topic. Your organization will be determined by the assignment or by the patterns you see in the material you are synthesizing. The organization is the most important part of a synthesis, so try out more than one format.

Be sure that each paragraph:
1. Begins with a sentence or phrase that informs readers of the topic of the paragraph;
2. Includes information from more than one source;
3. Clearly indicates which material comes from which source using lead in phrases and

in-text citations. [Beware of plagiarism: Accidental plagiarism most often occurs when students are synthesizing sources and do not indicate where the synthesis ends and their own comments begin or vice verse.]

4. Shows the similarities or differences between the different sources in ways that make the paper as informative as possible;

5. Represents the texts fairly—even if that seems to weaken the paper! Look upon yourself as a synthesizing machine; you are simply repeating what the source says, in fewer words and in your own words. But the fact that you are using your own words does not mean that you are in any way changing what the source says.

Conclusion

When you have finished your paper, write a conclusion reminding readers of the most significant themes you have found and the ways they connect to the overall topic. You may also want to suggest further research or comment on things that it was not possible for you to discuss in the paper. If you are writing a background synthesis, in some cases it may be appropriate for you to offer an interpretation of the material or take a position (thesis). Check this option with your instructor before you write the final draft of your paper.

Bibliography

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12   Referencing Skills, Documentation Formats, and Avoiding Plagiarism

12.1 Introduction

The understanding of a written work is dependent on its relationship with what exists in the real world. Readers accept an idea because it is consistent with what they know about the world in general. Readers' knowledge of the world may come from their previous personal experience, new observations, common sense, scientific experiments, or from other research findings (Bazerman, 1981). In an academic environment, people need credibility on whatever topic they explore. This credibility calls for writers to incorporate the outcome of what has been observed, the results of scientific experiments or research findings into their work and still remain the authors of what they have written. It takes the writer to learn certain referencing skills in order to effectively incorporate the external sources into his/her work. These referencing skills will enable him/her to avoid plagiarizing people's ideas and works. In an attempt to avoid plagiarism, it is necessary to acquaint himself/herself with the documentation styles available in the various disciplines.

12.2. Objectives

The objectives of this section are to help students to:

- acquire the techniques of referencing
- identify the significance of referencing
- define the concept of plagiarism
- examine the techniques of avoiding plagiarism
- demonstrate an understanding of a documentation style.

12.3 Referencing

Reference is the detailed description of a document from which information is obtained. British Standards BS1629: 1976 and BS5605: 1990 define a bibliographical reference as: " a set of data or elements describing a document, or part of a document, and sufficiently precise and detailed to enable a potential reader to identify and locate it." Referencing is the acknowledgement within a text the document from which information has been obtained.

Reference sources

Reference sources are books or electronic sources that provide information. There are some sources that provide background information and detailed coverage of a topic. These sources are primarily encyclopedias. There are other sources that answer quick questions such as who, where,

when and how much and these include dictionaries (both abridged and unabridged), almanacs (a collection of facts, figures, dates, biographical data, vital statistics and other bits of information), atlases (a collection of maps) and thesauruses (books containing synonyms for commonly used words) (Grolier Educational Corporation, 1978). Reference sources answer quick questions and provide background information and detailed coverage of a topic.

Referencing skills

These are the techniques that a writer uses in acknowledging sources. These skills include the effective ways of paraphrasing, summarizing, quoting, incorporating sources into one's work, and the effective ways of acknowledging or documenting sources.

12.4   Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of copying or including in one's own work, without adequate acknowledgement, intentionally or unintentionally, the work of another, for one's own benefit. Plagiarism is taking someone else's ideas or words and using them as if they were your own.(Based on *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 5th Edition, 1995)

It is the use of someone else's ideas or language as your own accidentally or deliberately. Ebest, et al. (2003: 32) looks at plagiarism as "using someone else's words, graphics, or ideas without giving credit." Plagiarism is equated with theft but the stolen goods are intellectual rather than material (Spatt, 1991).

Buranen and Roy (1999: 212) see plagiarism as simply stealing. According to them, "plagiarism is literary – or artistic or musical – theft. It is the false assumption of authorship: the wrongful act of taking the product of another person's mind, and presenting it as one's own."

Plagiarism is "using someone else's ideas or phrasing and representing those ideas or phrasing as our own, either on purpose or through carelessness." (*Guide to Writing Research Papers*, 2010: 1). The key words or phrases are explained as follows:

- "ideas or phrasing" includes written or spoken material, or course – from whole papers and paragraphs to sentences, and, indeed, phrases – but it also includes statistics, lab results, art work, etc.
- "someone else" can mean a professional source, such as a published writer or critic in a book, magazine, encyclopedia, or journal; an electronic resource such as material we discover on the World Wide Web; another student at our school or anywhere else; a paper-writing "service" (online or otherwise) which offers to sell written papers for a fee.

Instances of plagiarism have been recorded at both the Political Science and Sociology departments at the University of Ghana. In a word of *Plagiarism* (accessed 2010), instances of plagiarism have been given: In 2006 the Red Hot Chilli Peppers were accused of plagiarising an earlier Tom Petty song, but Petty decided not to pursue a legal action against them. Madonna, however, was found guilty of plagiarism by a Belgian court in 2006. As a result, Sony EMI Warner were forced to stop television and radio broadcasts of the song 'Frozen', and copies of both the single and its album 'Ray of Light' were withdrawn from record shops in Belgium.

Sources or causes of plagiarism

Plagiarism most often occurs through:

- Failure to place quoted passages in quotation marks and provide source information.
- Failure to identify the source from which a material is paraphrased or summarized.
- Failure to give credit to any creative ideas borrowed from any original source.
- Replacement of words of the original text with one's own by maintaining the same sentence structure during paraphrasing.
- Failure to acknowledge the source when topics or subtopics are borrowed from authors.
- Failure to recognize author's unique way of saying something.
- Having no adequate knowledge of documentation style.

Avoiding plagiarism

The following strategies as suggested by Rasmussen (2004: 12) can be used as a means of avoiding plagiarism:

- Place all quoted passages in quotation marks and provide source information, even if it is only one phrase.
- Identify the source from which you have paraphrased or summarized ideas, just as you do when you quote directly.
- Give credit for any creative ideas you borrow from an original source. For example, if you use an author's anecdote to illustrate a point, acknowledge it.
- Replace unimportant language with your own, and use different sentence structures when you paraphrase or summarize.
- Acknowledge the source if you borrow any organizational structure or headings from an author. Do not use the same subtopics, for example.
- Put any words or phrases you borrow in quotation marks, especially an author's unique way of saying something.
- Learn a documentation style relevant to your discipline – testifying that you did your research and assuring your reader that your sources and quotations are not fictitious.

If writers/students follow Rasmussen's (2004) suggested solutions to plagiarism, they will adopt good academic habits (academic honesty) that meet agreed academic conventions and thereby avoid the various forms of academic misconduct (Moon, 2005). According to Moon, knowledge is built up by combining, rejecting, integrating and adapting the ideas of others. Based on agreed academic conventions (academic honesty), people come to value new ideas as properties some people own. If you use someone else's ideas without acknowledging them, you are effectively stealing (Moon, 2005).

Examples of plagiarized references:

1. **Original text**
   The World Wide Web makes world-wide publishing possible to anyone who is able to arrange disk space on a server and has some basic knowledge of how pages are created. (Carol Lea Clark, *A Student's Guide to Internet*. In Rasmussen, 2004:13)

2. **Plagiarized Paraphrase**
   World Wide Publishing is possible for anyone who has access to server disk-space

   and who has knowledge of how web pages are made. (Clark, 1977. In Rasmussen, 2004: 13)

The paraphrase contains too much language from the original source.

3. **Acceptable Paraphrase**
   With the basis of Web-page construction and storage space on a network server, Clark tells us that anyone can publish at least potentially, for audiences around the world.

This example translates source language into the writer's own language.

(Rasmussen, 2004: 13).

In the *Guide to Writing Research Papers* (accessed 2010:1-3), practical examples of plagiarism have been given as follows:

1. Original text from Elaine Tyler May's *Myths and Realities of the American Family*:

> *Because women's wages often continue to reflect the fiction that men earn the family wage, single mothers rarely earn enough to support themselves and their children adequately. And because work is still organized around the assumption that mothers stay home with children, even though few mothers can afford to do so, child-care facilities in the United States remain woefully*

inadequate.

2. Plagiarized paraphrase (Version A)

> *Since women's wages often continue to reflect the mistaken notion that men are the main wage earners in the family, single mothers rarely make enough to support themselves and their children very well. Also, because work is still based on the assumption that mothers stay home with children, facilities for child care remain woefully inadequate in the United States.*

Comments:

There is too much direct borrowing in sentence structure and wording. The writer changes some words, drops one phrase, and adds some new language, but the overall text closely resembles May's. Even with a citation, the writer is still plagiarizing because the lack of quotation marks indicates that Version A is a paraphrase, and should thus be in the writer's own language.

3. Plagiarized paraphrase (Version B)

> *As Elaine Tyler May points out, "women's wages often continue to reflect the fiction that men earn the family wage" (588). Thus many single mothers cannot support themselves and their children adequately. Furthermore, since work is based on the assumption that mothers stay home with children, facilities for day care in this country are still "woefully inadequate." (May 589).*

Comments:

The writer now cites May, so we are closer to telling the truth about our text's relationship to the source, but this text continues to borrow too much language so it is a plagiarized text.

4. Plagiarized paraphrase (Version C)

> *By and large, our economy still operates on the mistaken notion that men are the main breadwinners in the family. Thus, women continue to earn lower wages than men. This means, in effect, that many single mothers cannot earn a decent living. Furthermore, adequate day care is not available in the United States because of the mistaken assumption that mothers remain at home with their children.*

Comments:

Version C shows good paraphrasing of wording and sentence structure, but May's original ideas are not acknowledged. Some of May's points are common knowledge (women earn less than men, many single mothers live in poverty), but May uses this common knowledge to make a specific and original point and her original conception of this idea is not acknowledged.

5. Acceptable paraphrase (Version D)

> *Women today still earn less than men – so much less that many single mothers and their children live near or below the poverty line. Elaine Tyler May argues that this situation stems in part from "the fiction that men earn the family wage" (588). May further suggests that the American workplace still operates on the assumption that mothers with children stay home to care for them (589).*

Comments:

The writer makes use of the common knowledge in May's work, but acknowledges May's original conclusion and does not try to pass it off as his or her own. The quotation is properly cited.

Common knowledge

Many writers are confused about the difference between common knowledge and plagiarism. Common knowledge, according to a word on *Plagiarism* (accessed 2010), is   information that is so generally accepted and commonly known that it cannot be claimed to be the idea or property of one person or source. The following examples differentiate between common knowledge and someone else's ideas (Plagiarism, 2010).

A. These statements are common knowledge, so they may not be referenced:
   - The chemical formula for water is H_2O.
   - The sky is blue.
B. These statements are not common knowledge and must therefore be referenced:
   - The University of Bristol spends £2,300 a day on water. (University of Bristol, 2008)
   - The sky is blue due to a process called Rayleigh scattering. Short wavelength light, which is blue in colour, is absorbed by gas molecules in the atmosphere and then scattered across the sky, so the sky looks blue. (Science Made Simple, 1997)

12.5 Documentation Formats

There are many ways of crediting sources. Each discipline has its own way of crediting sources. Based on various disciplines, there are, among others, the following documentation styles:

a) American Psychological Association – APA style
b) American Chemical Society – ACS style
c) American Institute of Physics – AIP style
d) Modern Language Association – MLA style
e) Chicago Manual of Style – CMS style
f) Council of Biology Editors – CBS style

This paper focuses on two out of the above listed styles: MLA, and APA. In this discussion the following format is used:

- General information about the style adopted.
- Conventions
- Samples

12.5.1 Documenting Sources: MLA Style

General Information about MLA Style

The Modern Language Association (MLA) is a professional organization of language teachers that was founded in the United States in 1883. Its purpose is to support the study and teaching of languages or literature

The MLA published its first handbook in 1977, and since then the book has become a widely accepted guide to rules for writing research papers in the US. The MLA Handbook focuses on the mechanics of academic writing, including punctuation, quotation and documentation of sources. In addition, the MLA guidelines are used outside the classroom by academic journals, newsletters, magazines, and university presses in both the United States and Canada (and the world at large). Recently, translated versions have also appeared in Japan and China.

MLA Style uses 'Works Cited' for the details of sources acknowledged.

Conventions: MLA style (Ref. Rasmussen, 2004: *Writer's Guide to Research and Documentation*)

a. **for In-text Citation**
- in-text citations identify ideas and information borrowed from other writers.
- They refer readers to the works cited list at the end of the paper.
- The in-text citation focuses on writers and the internal qualities of text, hence the use of author's name, text titles and page numbers.

b. **for Endnotes and Footnotes**
- Notes are used primarily to offer comments, explanations, or additional information that cannot be smoothly or easily accommodated in the text of the paper.
- They are used to cite several sources within a single context if a series of in-text references might detract from the readability of the text.
- Notes are indicated by raising (superscript) numeral at the reference point in the text; introduce the note itself with a corresponding raised numeral, and indent it.

Samples

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:1em;">

<p style="text-align:center;">GENERAL FORMAT FOR BOOKS</p>

one space   **one space**   **one space**   **one space**

Author (s). *Book Title*. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of publication.

<p style="text-align:center;">GENERAL FORMAT FOR JOURNAL ARTICLES</p>

Author (s). "Author Title." *Journal Title* volume number year of publication:

    inclusive page numbers.

<p style="text-align:center;">GENERAL FORMAT FOR MAGAZINE AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES</p>

Author (s). "Article Title." *Publication Title* date of publication: inclusive page

    numbers.

</div>

Source: Rasmussen, 2004: 25

Sample pages using MLA documentation system

TITLE

CENTERED,

ONE-THIRD

DOWN

PAGE

<div align="center">The Two Freedoms of Henry David Thoreau</div>

<div align="center">by</div>

NAME   Andrew Turner

INSTRUCTOR: Professor Stephany

COURSE   English 2

DATE   3 October 2002

<div align="center">↑</div>

<div align="center">1''</div>

<div align="center">↓</div>

Source: Rasmussen, 2004: 47

TITLE IS REPEATED FROM THE TITLE PAGE.

↑

1"

↓

**DOUBLE
SPACED**

The Two Freedoms of Henry David Thoreau

Henry David Thoreau led millions of people throughout the world to think about individual freedom in a new way **[WRITER OPENS WITH THESIS]**. During his lifetime, he attempted to live free of unjust governmental constraints as well as contentional social expectations. In his 1849 essay "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience," he makes his strongest case against governmental interference in the lives of citizens. In his 1854 book Walden, or, Life in the Woods, he makes the case for living free from social conventions and expectations. **[WRITER IDENTIFIES TWO WORKS TO BE EXAMINED]**

Thoreau opens "Civil Disobedience" with his statement that "that government is best which governs not at all" (222) **[ONLY THE PAGE NUMBER IS NEEDED WHEN SOURCE IS INTRODUCED IN THE SENTENCE]**. He argues that a government should allow its people to be as free as possible, providing for the needs of the people without infringing on their daily lives. Thoreau explains, "The government does not concern me much, and I shall bestow the fewest possible

thoughts on it. It is not for many moments that I live under a government" (Civil" 238) **[SHOR TITLE IS ADDED TO PAGE NUMBER BECAUSE TWO WORKS BY SAME AUTHOR APPEAR ON WORKS CITED PAGE].** In other words, in his daily life he attends to his business of eating, sleeping, and earning a living and not dealing in any noticeable way with an entity called "a government."

Because Thoreau did not want his freedom overshadowed by governmental regulations, he tried to ignore them. However, the American government of 1845 would not let him. He was arrested and put in the Concord jail for failing to pay his poll tax-a tax he believed unjust because it supported the government's war with Mexico as well as the immoral institution of slavery. Instead of protesting his arrest, he celebrated it and explained its

meaning by writing "Civil Disobedience," one of the most famous English language essays ever written. In it, he argued persuasively that "Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison" (230) **[PAGE NUMBER ONLY IS USED BECAUSE THE CONTEXT IDENTIFIES THE WORK]**. Thus the doctrine of passive resistance was formed, a doctrine that advocated protest against the government by nonviolent means:

> How does it become a man to behave toward this American
> government today? I answer that he cannot without disgrace be
> associated with it. I cannot for an instant recognize that political
> organization as my government which is the slave's government also.
> (224) **[QUOTATION OF MORE THAN 4 LINES IS
> PRESENTED IN BLOCK FORMAT AND INDENTED 10
> SPACES]**

According to Charles R. Anderson, Thoreau's other writings, such as "Slavery in Massachusetts" and "A Plea for Captain John Brown," show his disdain of the "northerners for their cowardice on conniving with such an institution" (28) **[PARTIAL QUOTATION IS WORKED INTO SENTENCE IN A GRAMMATICALLY CORRECT WAY].** He wanted all free American citizens, north and south, to revolt and liberate the slaves.

Source: Rasmussen, 2004: 48-49

Sample of MLA reference style: Works Cited

<div style="border:1px solid black;padding:1em;">

Works Cited

Anderson, Charles Roberts, ed. *Thoreau's Vision: The Major Essays.*Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice

   Hall, 1973.

Spiller, Robert E., et al. *Literary History of the United States: History*. 3rd ed. New York: Macmillan,

   1963.

Thoreau, Henry David. "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience." *Walden and Civil Disobedience*. New

   York: NAL, 1960

…….. *Walden, or, Life in the Woods. Walden and Civil Disobedience*. New York: NAL, 1960.

</div>

   Source: Rasmussen, 2004: 50

12.5.2 Documenting Sources: APA style

General information about the APA Style

The American Psychological Association (APA) is the largest psychological organization in the world. Instructors of social science, communications, education, and business usually prefer a documentation style that emphasizes the author and the year of publication, in part because the style makes it easy to tell if the sources cited are current. It is basically a scientific and professional organization which has more than 155,000 members. It supports and advances in psychological research and in the practice of psychology. It is an accepted guide for writers in many areas of science, not just psychology. Its publication manual (5th Edition) is concerned with the mechanics of academic writing. It is useful in helping students prepare and present scientific facts and figures, and it contains special sections on how to construct tables, how to present statistics, and how to cite scientific references.

APA emphasizes in-text citation and list of references.

Conventions

a) **For In-Text Citations**
- Each quotation, paraphrase or summary in the text must be given the author's last name and the date of the source.
- For direct quotation provide specific page numbers, if applicable.
- Provide page references as a convenience to your readers whenever you suspect they might want to consult a source you have cited.
- Use colons or the abbreviations 'p' or 'pp' to precede the page or pages.
- Put the author's name, publication date and page number in parentheses.
- Use the ampersand (&) to join authors' names in parentheses, etc

b) **For Footnotes**
- Use footnotes to provide additional information that cannot be worked into the main text.
- The footnotes should be as brief as possible.
- It is better to present the footnotes in an appendix.
- They should be numbered consecutively, and should follow the References list on a page headed "Footnotes." They should be double spaced.

Samples

Sample pages using APA documentation system

NEW RESEARCH

The most recent breakthrough in breast cancer research has discovered a gene called BRCAL that has been linked to breast cancer through heredity. A woman increases her lifetime risk of developing breast cancer by 85% if she has the BRCAL gene, and she will usually develop cancer at a younger age (American Cancer Society, 1997). Some women diagnosed with the gene feel that the risks are too great and choose, consequently, to have a preventative mastectomy (the complete removal of the breast). Laversen and Stukane (1996) indicate that since research is underway to develop a drug which will treat the mutation on the BRCAL gene many women in the future will not have to resort to such invasive techniques.

But even if a woman does not have any of the known risk factors for breast cancer, she may not be out of danger. The National Institutes of Health reveal that most women who develop breast cancer have never had a family history of the disease, nor do they fall into any of the other high-risk categories (1997).

Women are therefore urged to undergo yearly mammograms once they reach the age of 40, and earlier if they suspect they may be at risk. A mammogram uses low-dose radiation to take an x-ray of the breast. In the 1990s mammograms use as little as 1/40 of the radiation of the 1960s and therefore are considered safe (Cancer Information Service, personal communication, March 21, 1997). But mammograms are not fool-proof: Radiologists estimate that 10 − 15% of cancers may be missed (American Association of Retired Persons [AARP], 1991).

Source: Rasmussen, 2004: 79 - 80

References of the passage read

REFERENCES

American Association of Retired Persons [AARP]. (1991). *Chances are you need a mammogram: A Guide for midlife and older women* [Brochure]. Washington, DC:Author.

American Cancer Society. (1997). *Cancer facts & figures 1997* [Home page]. Retrieved October 20, 1998 from the World Wide Web: http://www.cancer.org/abacs.html.

Laversen, N. H., & Stukane, E. (1996). *The complete book of breast care*. New York: Ballantyne Books.

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Source: Rasmussen, 2004: 80

Sample reference style

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:10px;">

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    volunteers. *The Wall Street Journal*, p. B1

Carlson, L., Grove, S. J., & Kangun, N. (1993). A content analysis of environmental
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Decker, C., and Stammer, L. (1989, March 4). Bush asks ban on CFC

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Do people allow themselves to be that gullible? (1994, September).

    Earth First! 9, 6. Don't you wish we could just do this to CFC's

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The ecology channel (1996). [on-line]. Available

   http://ww.ecology.com/

Fogel, B. (1985). *Energy: choices for the future*. New York: Franklin

    Watts.

From this day onward I will restore the earth where I am. (1994,

    November-December). [Chevrolet advertisement]. *Audubon*, 11 –

    12, 18 – 19.

Kennedy, D., & Grumbly, T. P. (1988). Automotive emissions

    research. In A. Watson, R. R. Bates, & D. Kennedy (Eds), *Air*

    pollution, the automobile, and public health (pp. 3 – 9). Cambridge,

    MA: National Academy Press.

</div>

Source: Rasmussen, 2004: 81

NOTE:

1. Authors are listed alphabetically, and lines are double spaced (though not as listed above)

2. Only first word and proper names are capitalized in article title

3. Initials are used for first and middle names.

4. Date follows author (or title, if NO author is identified)

5. The second and following lines are indented 5 spaces.

6. "P" or "PP" is used for page numbers in books or popular periodicals.

7. "P" or "PP" is NOT used to indicate pages in a professional journal.

8. Sometimes colon is used before the page number.

9. Book and periodical titles are italicized.

Some Examples of MLA and APA Documentation styles

Generally:

MLA: **Author (surname 1ˢᵗ & other name). Title. Place of publication: Publisher, year of publication**

e.g. Lewy, Adison. *The International Encyclopedia of Curriculum*. New York: Pergamon Press, 1991

APA: **Author (surname &abbreviation). Year (in brackets). Title. Place of publication: Publisher**.

e.g. Lewy, A. (1991). *The International Encyclopedia of Curriculum*. New York: Pergamon Press.

Some specific references

1. A book of one, two or three authors: use the same format as above.
2. A book of more than three authors: use the surname of one and add 'et al.' and then follow the same format.

3. organization (group, commission, corporation, whose members are not identified): use the organization as author:
   e.g. MLA: Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies. *Making Histories:*

   Studies in History Writing and Politics. London: Hutchinson,

   1982.

   APA: Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (1982). *Making Histories:*

   Studies in History Writing and Politics. London: Hutchinson,

   .

4. Preface, foreword, introduction, or afterward: foreword writer's name first and author's full name last:
   e.g. MLA: Crawford, Richard. Foreword. *The Jazz Tradition*. By Martin

   Williams. NY: Oxford UP. 1993

   .

   APA: Crawford, R. (1993). Foreword. *The Jazz Tradition*. By Martin

   Williams. NY: Oxford UP.

5. The Bible: underline/italicize the Bible version; editor's name (if any) then publication information;
   e.g. MLA: *New American Standard Bible*. La Habra: Lockman foundation,

   1995

   e.g. APA: *New American Standard Bible* (1995). La Habra: Lockman

   Foundation,

6. Unknown author: begin with the citation/title. If articles like 'A,' 'An,' 'The' are included, use the first major word so that you can alphabetize it.
   e.g. MLA: *Webster's College Dictionary*. New York: Random (New York:

   McGraw) 1991.

e.g. APA: *Webster's College Dictionary (*1991). New York: Random (New

York: McGraw).

7. Article in a newspaper: the writer (if identified); title; the newspaper; day; month; year; edition named (if any); section designation (if any) number; page number
e.g. MLA: Blumenthal, Ralph. "Satchmo with His Tape Recorder

Running." New York Times. 3 Aug. 1999, No 13,678 : 1, 3

e.g. APA: Blumenthal, Ralph. (1999, August 3) "Satchmo with His Tape

Recorder Running." *New York Times*. (No 13,678), pp. 1, 3.

8. Article in a Journal: the writer; year; title; journal; number; series; page
e.g. MLA: Huberman Adison. School Improvement Strategies that Work:

Some Scenarios. *Educational Leadership*. 1983, 41 (3), 23 – 27

e.g. APA: Huberman Adison (1983). School Improvement Strategies that

Work: Some Scenarios. *Educational Leadership*. 41 (3), 23 – 27

9. Online: the writer; year; title; electronic source; date accessed
e.g. MLA: Martin, Moore. SparkNotes on Macbeth.

http://www.sparknotes.com/Macbeth. 2006, (accessed May 30).

e.g. APA: Martin, M. (accessed May 30, 2006,). SparkNotes on Macbeth.

http://www.sparknotes.com/Macbeth. 2006.

10. Pamphlet: same format as a book but if no name begin with the tile

11. Conference Proceedings – cite as you would a book; include information about the conference if it is not in the title.

EXERCISES

1. Write an essay on a topic of your interest and effectively integrate at least ten (10) external sources [through paraphrasing, summarizing or quoting] into your work. Prepare a referenced list of the sources acknowledged in your essay. Your essay should be about 400 words.

2. **(a)** What is plagiarism?
   (b) State at least five causes of plagiarism and suggest ways of solving them.

3. Kofi wrote an article for publication in the national newspapers. You happened to proof read the material before publication. During the proof reading you realised that Kofi incorporated in his work the ideas of five authors without acknowledging them. As a student who has been taught the importance of acknowledging sources, advise Kofi on the following:
   (a) The significance of referencing skills.
   (b) The effective ways of incorporating external sources.

4. With practical examples, differentiate between the documentation styles of the American Psychological Association (APA) and the Modern Language Association (MLA).

5. Write a reference list in the APA or MLA style using the information provided below:
   (a) A book with the title An international Encyclopedia of curriculum was written by Lewy Armstrong in 1991. The book was published in New York by Pergamon Press.
   (b) Five people in a company called Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies wrote a book entitled Making histories: Studies in history writing and politics in 1982. The book was published in London by Hutchinson.
   (c) Martin Williams wrote the book The jazz tradition. The foreword was written by Richard Crawford. The book was published by Oxford University Press and it was written in 1993.

6. With practical examples illustrate the meaning of in-text citation.

7. Differentiate, with practical examples, between footnotes and endnotes.

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