|  |
| --- |
| ***October, 2019/2020*** |

***INTERMEDIATE WRITING skills COURSE handout***

***THE COMPOSING PROCESS*** (*pre-writing phase, drafting phase and post writing phase*)

***PRACTICING THE BASICS OF WRITING***: *starting the main idea, writing supporting sentences, common organizational strategies and achieving coherence*

***STRUCTURING AND ORGANIZING TEXT***: *definition of essay, essay structure*

***PRODUCING VARIOUS TYPES OF TEXT***: *narrative, descriptive, expository and argumentative essay*

***Metages Gebeyehu***

***Introduction***

Writing is very important part of your university study. You will write assignments that may range from one paragraph to essay; you will write answers on tests and exams that may be a few sentences or complete essay. In addition to that, you will write senior essay at the end of your university study to graduate from the university.

During this course, you will have many opportunities to study and discuss examples of English academic writing. I hope that what you learn in this course will help you throughout your academic studies and beyond. For that reason, you should come to your intermediate writing class every day with energy and willingness to work and learn. Your teacher and your classmates have a lot to share with you, and you have a lot to share with them. This course is stand upon with you by having the following objectives.

***Objectives of this course:***

* *Gathering information that is relevant to your compositions’ thesis*
* *Identifying parts and purposes of essay structures*
* *Identifying various methods of text development.*
* *composing effective paragraphs and essays with the four types of discourse*
* *editing their writings*
* *Stating and identifying central ideas and details of texts*

***UNIT ONE: THE COMPOSING/WRITING PROCESS***

Preparing to write can encompass three remarkable elements, namely *having the right attitude*, *interest* and *knowing the subject* well. In addition to these elements, every writer follows his or her own writing process. Often the process is a routine that comes naturally and is not a step-by-step guide to which writers refer. Being conscious of your own writing process is especially helpful when you find yourself struggling with a particularly tricky piece. Here are five steps towards creating or identifying your personal writing process. The process of writing begins with identifying areas of writing.

* 1. ***PRE-WRITING***

In writing process the first step is called prewriting. Prewriting is a way to get ideas. In this step, you choose a topic and collect ideas to explain the topic. Even during this initial step, writers must identify the task, the audience for whom they will be writing, and the purpose for writing.

* ***Task***: What am I being asked to write?
* ***Audience***: Who will read/hear my piece?
* ***Purpose***: What do I hope to accomplish by writing?

After choosing the topic that you know, the next step should be searching for possible ways of getting ideas down on the paper. You have to take time to spotlight your thought to generate ideas which will be organized into the skeleton of a composition. This procedure can be utilized at any time during writing process as far its focus is dominantly on generating idea that will be reused potential writing. Pre-writing involves gathering and organizing ideas about a topic and may include the following: listing/clustering, brainstorming, discussing, information gathering (library, research, interviews) and outlining. Generally, the prewriting stage includes *selecting a topic*, *narrowing* the topic and *gathering sufficient information*.

1. ***SELECTING A TOPIC***

A text (paragraph or essay) is a group of sentences that give information about a topic. Therefore, before you start writing, you should choose a topic for your writing. The first step in writing an effective paragraph is to select a topic that you are knowledgeable and comfortable writing about. It is worth spending time to think of possible topics and to discover what you know about each before making a selection and beginning to write.

*To write a good paragraph, you need a manageable topic, one that is the right size. Your topic must be general enough to allow you to add interesting details that will engage your reader. It must also be specific or narrow enough that you can cover it adequately in a few sentences. If your topic is too general, you will end up with a few unrelated details that do not add up to a specific point. If your topic is too narrow, you will not have enough to say.*

*Choose a topic that is appropriate for the time being that means, selecting the subject that is sensitive and influential for readers. In general the writers need to select the topic by considering the readers capability, interest or desire.*

1. ***NARROWING THE TOPIC***

Topics are important to both readers and writers. Identifying the topic of a paragraph helps readers to understand what it is about. Choosing focused topics helps writers focus their thoughts and organize their ideas. There are three strategies for narrowing a topic:

* ***Be more specific*:** To narrow your topic, think of ways to make your topic more specific by focusing on a *smaller aspect* of the topic, *one key component* of the topic, *a specific time period*, or perhaps *a specific location*.
* ***Ask questions***: ask yourself *who, what, when, where, why,* and *how*. Asking these questions will help you focus your ideas and help you consider new angles to your topic. As you answer these questions, you’ll notice that you still have a lot of information to sort through and a lot of decisions to make.
* ***Research***: even though research is listed third on this list, it doesn’t mean you have to research last. You might need to spend some time researching to learn more about your topic even before you figure out how to narrow a topic. And just because you research once to narrow your topic doesn’t mean the research is over. You might need to return to your narrowed topic and research it again to learn more about that topic. (I know. It feels like a never-ending process, doesn’t it?) As you research, look for specifics about a subject and check to see what others are writing about. You might just read something you hadn’t thought about that would make a great topic.

1. ***Gathering Information***
2. ***Brainstorming/Listing***

Brainstorming is defined as generating a group of thoughts or ideas on a particular subject that may be used in a piece of writing. Brainstorming is an immediate inspiration of ideas. The writer makes use of this scheme to first get his/her thought down on the paper either in *phrase* or *word form* and then scan the association among them for potential writing. Brainstorming has paramount significance to provide examples that will further build up composition in progress. It is a process of generating a lot of information within a short time.

* Start with the key word of your title.
* For predetermined period of time, write all the thought that this key word brings to your mind either in a word or phrase form.
* Write a list of all associations you can think of during time period.

***NB*.** Never judge these preliminary thoughts and try to correct them. Feel free and inhabited in your thinking since you will have sufficient time to look over what you have written and make a decision on what is useful and not.

1. ***Clustering***

As it can be conceptualized from the term itself, clustering is making group or association among *things*, *ideas*, *concepts*, etc. It is sometimes called mapping/mind mapping. So, clustering is the technique which is often used to make connections among ideas so as to install visual map of the thoughts about the topic prior to starting writing the actual paper. Draw a circle in the middle of your paper with your topic written inside. Draw straight lines out from the circle like spokes on a wheel, adding more circles at the end of each line. Within these you will write your supporting ideas. You will draw more lines and circles out from each of those, adding more thoughts or ideas in wherever appropriate.

To cluster,

* Start by writing a key word from your topic at the middle of the page, and draw a circle around it.
* Draw a line from the circle and write ideas associated with the topic. Circle these ideas again and draw another line and write more ideas associated to it.
* Continue this process until you cannot think of other ideas or reach present time limit.

***Example:***

Literature

Painting

TEFL

English

**Favorite subject**

Photographing ing

Art

Linguistics

Music

Economics

COTM

Accounting

Civil

Engineering

FBE

**Good for job**

Management

Mechanical

1. ***Free-writing***

Again as the word itself implies, free-writing can simply be defined as writing without stopping. It is writing whatever comes to your mind without perturbing/disturbing about whether the ideas make sense or grammatically precise. It is analogous with brainstorming since the center of attention is only on generating ideas that will be exploited to write the actual text. The difference is we write continuously either in the form of sentence or partial sentence in free-writing while phrase or word form is utilized in the case of brainstorming. Free-writing involves filling pure paper with junks of ideas that will be refined and reused to prose the final version of your paper. It forces you to write so quickly that you are unable to edit any of your ideas.

This is one of the most productive ways to begin a piece - just sit down on your chair and start writing. Don’t spend time thinking about the flow of ideas; don’t stop to check your spelling or punctuation. Don’t even try to make full sentences; simply put whatever comes to mind on the paper. You will be surprised how quickly the ideas flow and the amount of creative thoughts you find yourself producing. When you complete your free-writing, take a break, and when you return you can start organizing your information and backfilling in all the details.

1. ***Asking Journalistic Questions***

This technique engrosses asking yourself as many WH-questions as possible, such as *who, how, what, when, where, why, which, whom,* etc., to produce ideas that will be used to note down the first draft. This system is highly indispensable to view your topic from different perspectives since each question raises different issues about the same topic.

***5. Outlining***

An outline is a list of information you will put/incorporate in your writing. An outline is a helpful way to plan a paper or to analyze it. An outline shows at a glance the point of a paper and a numbered list of the items that support the point. Before writing an outline, you must not go through the other process gathering ideas, editing them and deciding topic for your writing. Writing an outline can be a very useful way of organizing your ideas and seeing how they will work together. The consideration that the writer needs to consider while he/she outline:

* *Being with the topic sentence/thesis statement of the writing*
* *Tell what idea will discuss show which comes first, second…*
* *End with the conclusion*

Purposes of outlining

* *Show you what to write before you actually being writing*
* *Help make your writing well organized and clear focused*
* *Keep you from forgetting any important points*
  1. ***DRAFTING***

Drafting is the first phase in writing the actual paper. It is similar with free-writing except it involves using *outline as a guide*. It is writing freely without worrying about *content*, *organization* and *language* *errors* such as *spelling, punctuation, capitalization*, *grammar*…. The center of attention is largely on getting ideas down on the paper rather than striving for grammatical accuracy since there are other steps to think about accuracy.

* 1. ***EDITING***

Editing involves *revising* and *reviewing*. The revision process can seem overwhelming. When you edit, you read through each paragraph of your essay a number of times, paying careful attention to your sentences and the words that comprise them. It focuses on *correcting content* and *organization* *errors*, and *grammatical* problems. This is the most important stage at which you look at the overall content of the paper and judge the effectiveness of your argument. Of course, you can still add new ideas if you think of something else while you are reading your first draft. During editing you have to focus on the following tasks:

* *Add idea to support your topic sentence/thesis statement*
* *Cut irrelevant ideas*
* *Replace parts you have cut*
* *Move sentences, clauses, words, etc. around*
  1. ***PROOFREADING***

This is reading for the last time to grasp errors which were not observed while reviewing and revising. It is advisable for you to take time at this stage since you will have room to see your paper with new eyes. Letting others read your paper before submitting is also vital since different people see things from different perspectives.

Proofread your final draft several times, putting as much time between the last two readings as possible. Fresh eyes catch more typographical or careless errors. Most importantly, at this stage the writers should check/ proof the coherence of the writing. Remember that typing errors even the simple transposing of letters can change the meaning of an entire thought and occasionally bring unintended humor to your prose.

* 1. ***REWRITING/******POST WRITING PHASE***

This is the final stage of your paragraph/essay writing. And at this stage you write your prose in the formal manner to submit, publish….

***Activity: Complete the following blank apace, submersing the steps of writing process.***

***Pre-learning activities:*** the following words are important to understand writing process. Match words with their definition.

1. Step 1. Check pieces of writing for errors
2. Topic 2. A group of related sentences
3. Gathering 3. One serious things you do in writing
4. Organizing 4. Subject; what the piece of writing about
5. Paragraph 5. Change or correct a piece of writing
6. Essay 6. A short piece of writing, at least three paragraph long
7. Proofreading 7. Arrange in a clear and logical way
8. Editing 8. Find and collect together
9. ***PRE-WRITING:***

Step one: choos\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Step two: narrow a topic by

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Step three: gathering information using

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. ***DRAFTING***

Step one: write \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. ***EDITING***
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The last step: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Select one topic by yourself then narrow, cluster it and writ the first draft at paragraph level.

***UNIT TWO: PRACTICING THE BASICS OF WRITING***

***2.1. STARTING THE MAIN IDEA***

The topic sentence/thesis statement of paragraph/essay has two parts: the topic/subject and the controlling idea. The topic is the subject of the writing that the entire writing is talk for. Chief point an author is making about a topic. It sums up the author’s primary message. The controlling idea states what the writer will be developing about the subject of the paragraph (the boundary of the writer), and it contain the *writer’s attitude* toward the subject. The controlling idea limits what you can say about the topic subject so that you don’t stray to other subjects or ideas. The main idea is the most important piece of information that the author wants to readers know about the concept of that writing. When authors write they have an idea in mind that they are trying to get across. An author organizes each discourse’s main idea and supporting details in support of the topic or central theme, and each paragraph supports the paragraph preceding it.

A writer will state his/her main idea explicitly somewhere in the paragraph/essay. That main idea may be stated at the beginning of the paragraph, in the middle, or at the end. The sentence in which the main idea is stated is the topic sentence of that paragraph. On the other said, the main idea of the essay is stated in the thesis statement of the essay that always stated at the end of the introductory paragraph of the essay.

***Example***

*In a movie, music often enhances a romantic atmosphere.*

The subject is “*music*.” The controlling idea is “*often enhances a romantic atmosphere*.” The attitude is “*often enhances*.” In a paragraph with this topic sentence, the controlling idea about the music is that it is romantic. The writer cannot talk about other aspects of the movie, such as violence, comedy, production costs, advertising, or attendance figures. The controlling idea forces the writer to talk about only those features of the music that developed the romantic aspects of the movie.

***Activity***: Write topic sentences/thesis statement for the following subjects. Don’t forget to add the controlling idea.

1. University life

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Presidential elections

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. First love

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***2.2. WRITING SUPPORTING SENTENCES***

Support sentences/paragraph follows the topic sentence/thesis statement and develops the subject using specific *examples*, *details*, and *facts*. These support ideas must be consistent with the controlling idea. In other words, the controlling idea unifies the paragraph by determining the kind of support ideas you can use in the support sentences. Supporting details provide information to *clarify*, *prove*, or *explain* the main idea. These details demonstrate the validity of the main idea. They often list parts, aspects, steps, or examples of the main idea. Sometimes they may list the causes of it, effects from it, or ways in which it shows itself to be true. In a unified paragraph, all of the sentences directly support the main idea or topic sentence. The supporting details in a sentence or a paragraph MIGHT begin with some of the following words:

*for example, for instance, in addition, another, in fact, furthermore, moreover, therefore, as a result, consequently, first, second, third, next, then, last, finally, etc…*

There are two types of supporting details: major and minor

***Major Details***

The major details are the primary points that support the main idea.

* explain the main idea.
* are more specific than the main idea.
* provide the examples, reasons, statistics and studies that help make the main idea clear and convincing.
* answer readers’ questions about the main idea.

***Minor Details***

Paragraphs often contain minor details as well. While the major details explain and develop the main idea, they, in turn are expanded upon the minor supporting details.

* explain a major detail.
* are even more specific than major details.
* repeat key points and add colorful detail.
* may or may not be important enough to include in reading notes.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Example***:  I really like apples. They are sweet, crisp, and juicy and just filling enough to take the edge off my appetite. When I eat apples, I also think of the vitamins and minerals they contain, and the fiber they supply to keep me healthy. | ***Main Idea***: I like apples (for the following reasons).  ***Major Detail***: They are crisp, juicy, and filling.  ***Major Detail***: They provide healthy vitamins, minerals, and fiber. |

***The Purpose of Supporting Details:***

1. Keep the reader focused on the main idea of the paragraph
2. Demonstrate that your topic sentence or main idea is accurate and believable
3. Make your meaning clear and forceful with concrete, specific information

***Questions to Consider:***

1. Does this sentence directly explain the topic sentence or main idea? What new information does it add?
2. Would any essential information be lost if this sentence were deleted? If not, delete it.
3. Is this information distracting or unimportant? If so, delete it.

***Types of Supporting Details:***

1. ***Reasons***: explanations that tell why an opinion is valid
2. ***Facts***: statements that can be proved
3. ***Statistics***: facts expressed in numbers
4. ***Examples***: specific instances that explain or demonstrate a point
5. ***Sensory Details***: appeals to one or more of the physical senses
6. ***Anecdotes***: brief stories about a character or event

***Guidelines for Supporting Details***

1. Focus on who, what, when, where, why, and how questions.
2. Name names.
3. Use action verbs.
4. Use descriptive language that appeals to the senses (smell, touch, taste, sound, sight).
5. Use adjectives and adverbs.

***2.3. Common Organizational Strategies***

Essay organization doesn’t stop, however, with the underlying assertion support structure and an outline. A number of effective strategies can organize your information and ideas, comprising a logical, easy-to-understand flow for your essay.

1. ***Chronological/Sequential***

One way to organize your material is by chronology, or time sequence. Put ideas in the order in which they happened, should happen, or will happen. This method works best when you are narrating or describing an experience, procedure, or process. At the time of using this method you will list the earliest details first in your paragraph and the latest or most recent details toward the end of your paragraph. The details in a writing of this kind tend to answer such questions as what happens first. This means that the events or steps are told in the order that they happen.

***Connecting words – connecting through time.***

*later on, afterward, years ago, when, after earlier, before, next, first, second, third, suddenly, now, sometime later, once, often, yesterday, today, tomorrow, then, in the past, thereafter, former, latter, in the first place, in the next place, further, previously, when, at last…*

***Example***

*Sunday was a long day. I had to get up at 5:00 am to attend an Easter sunrise service .Then I had duties at the church the rest of the morning. In the afternoon, I visited the Manor Rest Home and talked to shut–ins who seldom has visitors. Then I went to my aunt’s for dinner and played cards with Uncle Herman until about 9:00 pm. Then I drove up in to the hills with my family for a special Easter midnight chapel service in the pines. We stayed in a mountain cabin with ten other people that night and did not get to sleep until after 2:00 am. I was exhausted after twenty-one hours of activity.*

1. ***Spatial***

Ideas can also be organized according to spatial principles, from top to bottom, side to side, or inside to outside, for example. This organizational method is particularly useful when you are describing an item or a place. You’d use this strategy to describe the structure of an animal or plant, the room where an important even took place, or a place that is important to you.

The key to using spatial organization effectively is to move around the space or object logically. You are using words to relate something that exists physically or visually, and must help your reader understand your ideas. Descriptive and expository paragraphs can be written in place order. This means that the details are described in the order that they are found (from top to bottom, left to right, outside to inside).

***Linking words that show place order****: above, below, between, on, over, near, under, by, against, inside, through*

***Example***

*As you enter the library, you are greeted by paintings on each side of the door. The painting on the right is of the town’s high school, and on the left is a watercolor of the town’s city hall. There are several other works of art in the main body of the building. As you face the archway on the left, you discover pieces of pottery enclosed in a glass case. A ceiling mural appears over the archway, and on the right a wall hanging has been hung. The entire library is filled with works of art.*

1. ***Sequence in Importance***

Persuasive and expository paragraphs/essay, along with narrative paragraphs/essay that tells news stories, can all be written in importance order. This means that the writing begins with the most important or main idea and the supporting details are organized from the most to least important.

***Example****:*

*Our department needs lots of fixing-up. Though it may be difficult to fix-up all of them at the same time, we have got to fix the leaky roof* ***first*** *before the September rains come.* ***Next****, we need to patch the big holes in the bed room walls and then strip the peeling paint off the walls.* ***Then*** *we can repaint the apartment.* ***After*** *the walls are painted, we can work on replacing the linoleum squares in the kitchen that are loose or cracked.* ***Later****, the living room carpet needs shampooing, and we should replace that old swaybacked sofa.* ***Then*** *we won’t be embarrassed to have company over once in a while.*

***2.4. ACHIEVING COHERENCE***

The text of your paragraph/essay needs to forge a coherent unity from the many diverse elements of language and thought that go to make it. Coherence is achieved when sentences and ideas are connected and flow together smoothly. An essay without coherence can inhibit a reader’s ability to understand the ideas and main points of the essay. Coherence allows the reader to move easily throughout the essay from one idea to the next, from one sentence to the next, and from one paragraph to the next. Following are several methods that can be used to achieve coherence in writing:

***Use Repetition to Link Ideas, Sentences, and Paragraphs:*** Repeating key words or phrases helps connect and focus idea(s) throughout the essay.Repetition also helps the reader remain focused and headed in the right direction.

***Example****: Most students are intimidated by the works of Tewodros Kassahun. They believe Tewodros’s sonnets and plays are far to complicated to listen and understand.*

***Pronouns***: Since each pronoun must refer to an antecedent, a pronoun and its antecedent form a link. You can often make a paragraph coherent merely by using pronouns properly. On the other hand, incorrectly used pronouns can weaken coherence.

***Transitional markers***: Transitional terms make a paragraph coherent by relating ideas. They are referred to as the ‘glue’ to hold ideas together. Like pronouns, many of these terms come to mind automatically, but you should carefully choose among them. The commonest markers are the simple connectives and, or but, for, which serve as a bridges over which the reader may easily pass from one sentence or clause to the next. Others sometimes called transitional connectives - indicate the direction, which the new sentence is about to take and to prepare the reader for what is to follow. Here is a partial list of common transitional terms:

***Time***: *next, then, after, before, during, while, following, shortly, thereafter, later on, the next day, secondly, finally*

***Place***: *over, above, inside, to the left, just behind, beyond*

***Contrast***: *however, but, on the other hand, nevertheless, nonetheless, notwithstanding, on the contrary, conversely, yet.*

***Cause - effect***: *so, therefore, thus, accordingly, consequently, as a result, hence, because of this.*

***Addition****: and, furthermore, moreover, likewise, similarly, in a like manner, too, also*

***Emphasis***: *indeed, in fact, especially, most important*

***Summary***: *in other words, in short, to sum up, in conclusion, to conclude, all in all, in a nut shell, generally, in general, finally, at last, etc.*

***Example***: *for instance, for example, that is, in particular*

***Use Synonyms to Link Ideas and Create Variety:*** Synonyms are words that have the same or nearly the same meaning as another word. They provide alternative word choices that can add variety to an essay and can help eliminate unnecessary repetition.

***Example***: Teenagers face an enormous amount of peer pressure from friends and schoolmates. As a result, many young adults are exhibiting signs of severe stress or depression at an early age.

***Activity:*** Write an effective paragraph using one of the following titles.

* *Characteristics of Effective persons*
* *Habitats of Wild animals*
* *Incomes of some Developing countries*

***Unit 3: Structuring and Organizing Text***

* 1. ***What is an essay?***

An essay is a piece of writing that is written to convince someone of something or to simply inform the reader about a particular topic. In order for the reader to be convinced or adequately informed, the essay must include several important components to make it flow in a logical way. The main parts (or sections) to an essay are the intro, body, and conclusion. In a standard short essay, five paragraphs can provide the reader with enough information in a short amount of space. For a research paper or dissertation, however, it is essential that more than five paragraphs are present in order not to overwhelm the reader with too much information in one paragraph.

* 1. ***Essay structure***

An essay is a group of paragraphs written about a single topic and central idea. An essay is a piece of writing that is written to convince someone of something or to simply inform the reader about a particular topic. In order for the reader to be convinced or adequately informed, the essay must include several important components to make it flow in a logical way. It must have at least three paragraphs, but a five-paragraph essay is common length for academic writing. A basic essay consists of three main parts: *introduction*, *body*, and *conclusion*. Following this format will help you write and organize an essay.

* + 1. ***Introduction***

An introductory paragraph is the first paragraph of an essay. The introduction guides your reader into the paper by introducing the topic. It should begin with a hook that catches the reader’s interest. This hook could be a quote, an analogy, a question, etc. After getting the reader’s attention, the introduction should give some background information on the topic. The ideas within the introduction should be general enough for the reader to understand the main claim and gradually become more specific to lead into the *thesis statement*.

***3.2.1.1. Common Methods of Introduction***

Here are some common methods of introduction. Use any one method, or a combination of methods, to introduce your subject in an interesting way.

1. ***Broad statement*:** Begin with a broad, general statement of your topic and narrow it down to your thesis statement. Broad, general statements ease the reader into your thesis statement by providing a background for it.

*In "My Job in an Apple Plant," Gene writes generally on the topic of his worst jobs and then narrows down to a specific worst job.*

1. ***Contrast*:** Start with an idea or situation that is the opposite of the one you will develop. This approach' works because your readers will be surprised, and then intrigued, by the contrast between the opening idea and the thesis that follows it. Here is an example of a "contrast" introduction:

*When I was a girl, I never argued with my parents about differences between their attitudes and mine. My father would deliver his judgment on an issue, and that was usually the end of the matter. Discussion seldom changed his mind, and disagreement was not tolerated. But the situation is different with today's parents and children. My husband and I have to contend with radical differences between what our children think about a given situation and what we think about it. We have had disagreements with all three of our daughters, Stephanie, Diana, and Gisel.*

1. ***Relevance:***Explain the importance of your topic. If you can convince your readers that the subject applies to them in some way, or is something they should know more about, they will want to continue reading. The introductory paragraph of "Sports-Crazy America" (page 243) provides an example of a "relevance" introduction.
2. ***Anecdote:*** Use an incident or brief story. Stories are naturally interesting. They appeal to a reader's curiosity. In your introduction, an anecdote will grab the reader's attention right away. The story should be brief and should be related to your central idea. The incident in the story can be something that happened to you, something that you have heard about, or something that you have read about in a newspaper or magazine. Here is an example of a paragraph that begins with a story:

*The husky man pushes open the door of the bedroom and grins as he pulls out a .38 revolver. An elderly man wearing thin pajamas looks at him and whimpers. In a feeble effort at escape, the old man slides out of his bed and moves to the door of the room. The husky man, still grinning, blocks his way. With the face of a small, frightened animal, the old man looks up and whispers, "Oh God, please don't hurt me." The grinning man then fires four times. The television movie cuts now to a soap commercial, but the little boy who has been watching the set has begun to cry. Such scenes of direct violence on television must surely be harmful to children for a number of psychological reasons.*

1. ***Questions:*** Ask your readers one or more questions. These questions catch the readers' interest and make them want to read on. Here is an example of a paragraph that begins with questions:

*What would happen if we were totally honest with ourselves? Would we be able to stand the pain of giving up self-deception? Would the complete truth be too much for us to bear? Such questions will probably never be answered, for in everyday life we protect ourselves from the onslaught of too much reality. All of us cultivate defense mechanisms that prevent us from seeing, hearing, or feeling too much. Included among such defense mechanisms are rationalization, reaction formation, and substitution.*

Note, however, that the thesis itself must not be a question.

1. ***Quotation:*** A quotation can be something you have read in a book or an article. It can also be something that you have heard: a popular saying or proverb ("Never give advice to a friend"); a current or recent advertising slogan ("Reach out and touch someone"); a favorite expression used by your friends or family ("My father always says ..."). Using a quotation in your introductory paragraph lets you add someone else's voice to your own. Here is an example of a paragraph that begins with a quotation:

*"Evil," wrote Martin Buber "is lack of direction." In my school days as a fatherless boy, with a mother too confused by her own life to really care for me, I stayed down a number of dangerous paths. Before my eighteenth birthday, I had been a car thief, a burglar, and a drug seller.*

***Introduction should***

* contain an attention grabber for the reader or at least make the essay sound interesting, may begin with a quote about the particular topic
* Ensure that the introduction moves from the general to the specific in regards to the topic
* Provides the reader with a “road map” of the essay in a logical order
* At the end there should be what is called *a thesis statement*, arguably the most important component of the introduction
* The thesis statement states the aim of the paper and may give insight into the author’s examples and evidence

***3.2.2. Thesis Statement***

The thesis statement concisely states the main idea or argument of the essay, sets limits on the topic, and can indicate the organization of the essay. The thesis works as a road map for the entire essay, showing the readers what you have to say and which main points you will use to support your ideas.

***3.2.3. SUPPORTING PARAGRAPHS/body paragraphs***

Most essays have three supporting points, developed in three separate paragraphs. (Some essays will have two supporting points; others, four or more.) Each of the supporting paragraphs should begin with a topic sentence that states the point to be detailed in that paragraph. Just as the thesis provides a focus for the entire essay, the thesis statement provides a focus for each supporting paragraph. The body of the essay supports the main points presented in the thesis. Each point is developed by one or more paragraphs and supported with specific details. These details can include support from research and experiences, depending on the assignment.

***Body should***

* Includes the evidence and support of the paper in addition to the author’s ideas
* Paragraphs must include a topic sentence which relates the discussion back to the thesis statement
* Logical ordering of ideas: 3 types of order

1. Chronological order---order of time, good for narratives
2. Spatial order-good for descriptions of locations; top to bottom, e.g.
3. Emphatic order-least important to most important; most common for college writing

* Ensure that transition sentences are present to create a good flow to the essay
* Include substantial examples and evidence to support your argument and remember to cite, cite, cite!
* Make sure each example is relevant to your particular topic

***3.2.4. Conclusion***

The conclusion brings together all the main points of the essay. It refers back to the thesis statement and leaves readers with a final thought and sense of closure by resolving any ideas brought up in the essay. It may also address the implications of the argument. In the conclusion, new topics or ideas that were not developed in the paper should not be introduced.

***Conclusion should***

* This section should wrap all of your arguments and points
* Should restate the main arguments in a simplified manner
* Ensure that the reader is left with something to think about, particularly if it is an argumentative essay

***Unit 4: Producing various types of texts***

Effectively writing different types of essays has become critical to academic success. There are four types of essays. However, rest assured, the number is actually more manageable. Essentially there are four major types of essays, with the variations making up the remainder.

Distinguishing between types of essays is simply a matter of determining the writer’s goal. Does the writer want to tell about a personal experience, describe something, explain an issue, or convince the reader to accept a certain viewpoint? The four major types of essays address these purposes:

***4.1. Narrative Essays (Telling a Story)***

In a narrative essay, the writer tells a story about a real-life experience. It is concerned with a sequence of happenings over a period of time. The author writes to record an event/serious of events usually in the order they occurred or in chronology. Narratives can be either simple-narratives of facts/events-which have occurred really such as diary, journals, autobiography, biography, anecdotes, adventures and historical incidents or plotted-fictional which are the results of invention and ingenuity such as novel, short story, and novella. It can also be personal or institutional.

***Sample paragraphs***

Yesterday, I wake up early in the morning to go to office. First, I got dressed smartly and had a breakfast with my wife. Then, I got into my car and drove to work. As soon as I reached to office, I parked my car and walked to my office….

***Activity*: Write an effective essay using one of the following titles.**

* My auto-biography
* The reign of Atse Tewodros

***4.2. Descriptive Essays (Painting a Picture)***

A cousin of the narrative essay, a descriptive essay paints a picture with words. A writer might describe a person, place, object, or even memory of special significance. However, this type of essay is not description for description’s sake. The descriptive essay strives to communicate a deeper meaning through the description. In a descriptive essay, *the writer should show*, not tell, through the use of colorful words and sensory details. The best descriptive essays appeal to the reader’s emotions, with a result that is highly evocative.

***Methods of writing descriptive writing:***

As we write descriptive essay, the best way to create a vivid experience for your readers is to focus on the following:

* ***Appealing-to-the-Senses Description***: Let the reader see, smell, hear, taste, and feel what you write
* ***Spatial-Order Description***: Show the reader where things are located from your perspective.
* ***In addition***, we may include at least three examples of figurative language (Similes, metaphors and personification).

Similes can make our language more descriptive and enjoyable. Writers, poets, and songwriters make use of similes often to add depth and emphasize what they are trying to convey to the reader or listener. Similes can be funny, serious, mean, or creative. Following are some more examples of similes regularly used in writing:

1. You were as brave as a lion.
2. They fought like cats and dogs.
3. He is as funny as a barrel of monkeys.
4. This house is as clean as a whistle.
5. He is as strong as an ox.
6. Your explanation is as clear as mud.
7. Watching the show was like watching grass grow.
8. That is as easy as shooting fish in a barrel.
9. This contract is as solid as the ground we stand on.
10. That guy is as nutty as a fruitcake.
11. Don't just sit there like a bump on a log.
12. Well, that went over like a lead balloon.
13. They are as different as night and day.
14. She is as thin as a rake.

A metaphor is a comparison between two unlike things not using the word “like” or “as.” In descriptive writing, the writer should use in his/her writing to make it vivid.

1. Her skin was made of cream and her hair of the finest silk.
2. The man was a beast.
3. His whole life had been a roller coaster ride.
4. The detective listened to her tales with a wooden face.
5. She was fairly certain that life was a fashion show.
6. The typical teenage boy’s room is a disaster area.
7. What storms then shook the ocean of my sleep.
8. The children were roses grown in concrete gardens, beautiful and forlorn.
9. Kisses are the flowers of love in bloom.
10. His cotton candy words did not appeal to her taste.

Personification is the act of giving non-living things human characteristics. Here is a sample of a short paragraph that uses personification to describe a house.

*Our house is an old friend of ours. Although he creeks and groans with every gust of wind, he never fails to protect us from the elements. He wraps his arms of bricks and mortar around us and keeps us safe. He’s always been a good friend to us and we would never leave him.*

***Useful adjectives for describing a person's appearance***

***Age****: young, middle-aged, old, elderly; in his/her early thirties / mid-forties / late fifties etc.*

***Face****: long, round, oval, attractive, beautiful, un-shaven*

***Hair****: long, medium-length, short; straight, curly, wavy; dark, black, blonde, gray, fair, white, plaited, bald*

***Forehead****: high, low*

***Eyes****: blue, brown, gray*

***Ears****: big, small*

***Nose****:* *long, pointed, turned-up*

***Body Build***: tall, short, fat, plump, over -weight, thin, slim, slender, skinny, under-weight, broad-shouldered, muscular

***Clothes***: cotton, woolen, hand-woven, leather, traditional, western, colorful

***General appearance***: handsome, good-looking; beautiful, lovely, pretty, attractive, well-dressed, smartly-dressed, dressed

***Useful adjectives for describing a person's personality***

happy, cheerful unhappy, sad, miserable friendly, pleasant, amusing unfriendly, unpleasant, kind unkind, cruel, hard-working lazy, reliable, trustworthy unreliable, polite, well-mannered impolite, rude, ill-mannered, honest, truthful dishonest, crafty, unselfish, generous selfish, mean, clever, intelligent, wise stupid, silly, dull, quiet talkative, shy confident modest, humble proud, boastful, arrogant…

***Sample Paragraph:*** **Harar**

*My favorite place in Ethiopia is Harar in the east of the country. It is the center of Muslim and situated approximately 1800m altitude. For this reason, the climate is temperate. There are many amenities in Harar, including cafes, restaurants, shops, markets, churches, mosques, and tourist attractions such as Rimbaud House, the old town and Harar Beer Factory. The Muslim influence is strong in Harar. People communicate in different languages, for example, Harari and Afan Oromo. The atmosphere in the town is lively and busy. To sum up, the climate, facilities and atmosphere make Harar the best town foe me in Ethiopia!*

***Activity*: Write an effective essay using one of the following titles.**

* *My best friend*
* *My bag*
* *My university*

***4.3. Expository Essays (Just the Facts)***

The expository essay is an informative piece of writing that presents a balanced analysis of a topic. In an expository essay, the writer explains or defines a topic, using facts, statistics, and examples. Expository writing encompasses a wide range of essay variations, such as the comparison and contrast essay, the cause and effect essay, and the “how to” or process essay. Because expository essays are based on facts and not personal feelings, writers don’t reveal their emotions or write in the first person.

***4.4. Persuasive Essays (Convince Me)***

While like an expository essay in its presentation of facts, the goal of the persuasive essay is to convince the reader to accept the writer’s point of view or recommendation. The writer must build a case using facts and logic, as well as examples, expert opinion, and sound reasoning. The writer should present all sides of the argument, but must be able to communicate clearly and without equivocation why a certain position is correct. Argumentation or persuasive writing has its own step.

Steps

* Stating the opponents view
* Stating the arguments of the opponents idea
* Refusing the opponent’s view-show the opponent’s argument is wrong
* Stating your personal view
* Stating your arguments (claims as strong as possible)
* Concluding remarks in relation to your argument

At the time being there may fallacies in persuasive writing. This topic discusses common logical fallacies that you may encounter in your own writing or the writing of others. The topic provides definitions, examples, and tips on avoiding these fallacies.

***Arguments***

Each argument you make is composed of premises (this is a term for statements that express your reasons or evidence) that are arranged in the right way to support your conclusion (the main claim or interpretation you are offering). You can make your arguments stronger by:

1. **using good premises** (ones you have good reason to believe are both true and relevant to the issue at hand),
2. making sure your premises **provide good support for your conclusion** (and not some other conclusion, or no conclusion at all),
3. checking that you have **addressed the most important or relevant aspects** of the issue (that is, that your premises and conclusion focus on what is really important to the issue), and
4. **not making claims that are so strong or sweeping that you can’t really support them**.

***What are fallacies?***

Fallacies are defects that weaken arguments. By learning to look for them in your own and others’ writing, you can strengthen your ability to evaluate the arguments you make, read, and hear. It is important to realize two things about fallacies: first, fallacious arguments are very, very common and can be quite persuasive, at least to the casual reader or listener. You can find dozens of examples of fallacious reasoning in newspapers, advertisements, and other sources. Second, it is sometimes hard to evaluate whether an argument is fallacious. An argument might be very weak, somewhat weak, somewhat strong, or very strong. An argument that has several stages or parts might have some strong sections and some weak ones. The goal of this handout, then, is not to teach you how to label arguments as fallacious or fallacy-free, but to help you look critically at your own arguments and move them away from the “weak” and toward the “strong” end of the continuum.

***Activity*: Write an effective essay using one of the following topic sentence.**

* *Women are inferior to men*
* *Country life is better than city life*
* *Drinking alcohol is evil*

***4.5. Techniques of Paragraph Development***

There are different techniques that are used to develop paragraph: definition, exemplification, classification, cause and effect, compare and contrast, process.

1. ***Definition***

It is a process of explaining concepts or terms or ideas or giving meaning. It is a method of restricting, making clear or identifying the meaning of a word/phrase.

Purposes of Definition

* To identify the scope or meaning of concept
* To avoid ambiguity (not to be interpreted in different way)
* To illustrate clearly the meaning that you intended to transmit.

There are three main types of definition: formal, naming and extended.

* 1. **Formal**

It is structured with concept + class + special features

e.g. Economics is a field of study which deals with how a society organizes its money, trade and industry.

A sociologist is a person who studies the nature and development of society & social behavior.

**2. Naming**

It is structured with class + special features + concept

e.g. A field of study which deals with how a society organizes its money, trade and industry is called economics.

A person who studies the nature and development of society & social behavior is named as a sociologist.

**3. Extended**

It is a method that gives more details by providing additional information and examples as well as the meaning of the term. Two methods of expanding definitions are giving additional information and providing specific examples.

E.g. A disease is a medical problem which affects humans, animals and plants. It is often caused by protozoan, bacterial, or viral infections. Good examples are malaria, meningitis and cancer.

1. ***Exemplification***

A technique used to support a controlling idea by giving example of what we mean. Examples can be either factual or fabricated, but the purpose is to develop illustration.

Types of examples

* 1. Single key-example (one example)
  2. Multiple examples (several)
  3. Explanatory

*Tourist attractions in Ethiopia*

Ethiopia has many tourist attractions to be visited by foreigners and domestic people. Some of the tourist attractions found in the northern part of the country includes Axum, Lalibela, Bahir Dar and Semein Mountains of Gondar. The southern part of Ethiopia has many tourist sites like wild lives, lakes, parks, pillars of Konso and traditional tribal people. Besides these, the eastern part has also tourist sites. For example, ‘Ertale’ is one incredible creature. The western part has also many parks, rivers and Abay Dam. Moreover, there are also endemic animals such as Walia Ibex, Semein fox, Nyala, and Gelada Baboon that are visited by many tourists. Many hotels, resorts and restaurants have been built to accommodate visitors, especially in most popular tourist areas. Swimming pools, sport facilities, internet services and beauty salons including shops and markets are also found. In general, Ethiopia has many tourist attractions.

1. ***Classification***

It is a process of putting people or things into a group according to characteristics they have in common. It explains how several things are similar because of one or more characteristics they have in common or discusses how things differ from each other on the basis of one or more distinctions. It is a process of clustering or grouping or categorization based on certain qualities.

Types of vegetables

There are main types of vegetables. These are root, green, salad and squash. Root vegetables have root like carrot and potato. Green vegetable are vegetables in which their leaves are eaten such as cabbage and spinach. Salad vegetables are used for salad like lettuce and tomato. Squash vegetables include zucchini.

1. ***Compare and contrast***

Comparison and contrast shows similarities and differences between two or more persons or things or groups.

Sample paragraph

Ethiopia and Djibouti have some similarities and differences. The two countries are located in east Africa. Ethiopia gains income from agriculture; whereas Djibouti gains its income from industry. Both of the countries are members of African Union (AU). The principal exports of Ethiopia are coffee, chat, hide…etc. however, the principal exports of Djibouti are semi-processed goods. The major trade partner of Ethiopia is China but the major trade partner of Djibouti is France.

1. ***Cause and effect***

Cause=the reason

Effect=the situation created or the consequences

Cause-effect r/n ship effect-cause r/n ship

-caused -be caused by

-lead to -be due to

-result in -results from

-bring about -the result/effect of

-be responsible for

Sample Paragraph

What children eat can affect their health. Children who do not eat enough foods containing vitamin A can develop serious nutritional disorders. Of the effects caused by Vitamin A deficiency, those involving eye diseases are the most pronounced and widespread. Several thousand children become blind each year because of this dietary deficiency which is most prevalent in poor, non-industrialized countries. Another result of vitamin a is skin dryness.

**Causes and effects of deforestation**

Deforestation can be caused by different things. One is the demand for fire or fuel. In addition, it is also due to expansion of agricultural lands and for construction purposes. It is also needed for lumbering and timber production. It is bring about overgrazing and hunting. Deforestation results in desertification, drought, migration, pollution and flooding.

1. ***Process***

A technique that is used to shows the steps or procedures to do something. Everything should be ordered in chronology. There are sequence markers such as first, second, then, next, following that, after that, finally…etc.

**Sample paragraph**

**Coffee ceremony**

Coffee can be produced by using the following steps. First, extinguish fire and collect the necessary materials. Then, wash the coffee beans. After that, roast the beans on the charcoal burner. Next, pass the beans around so that everyone can appreciate the smell (aroma). Then, crush the beans with pestle and mortar. Next to this, boil water and add the powder carefully into the coffee pot. Then, settle it for a while and then add sugar and stir it. Finally, serve it in three rounds.

***How to learn new vocabulary effectively***

There are six basic steps in the process of learning vocabulary. First, look the meaning in a dictionary. Then, the new word would be recorded in vocabulary notebook with the part of speech (noun, verb, adjective and adverb). After that, an example sentence would be written for the new word to show the meaning in context. Next, the word will be memorized for a short time. Following that, cover up the words and note them down from memory. Finally, check your knowledge by comparing your note with the original version in the vocabulary notebook.