**College of Social Sciences and Humanities**

**Department of English Language and Literature**

**Course: *Intermediate writing skills***

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Department of English Language and Literature

Intermediate writing ( EnLa 2043)

**Module Title: Reading and Writing Skills** (EnLaM2041)

Course description

This is a course designed to help students develop their writing skills. In the course, students will be exposed to the skills of organizing ideas, drafting and revising texts. The texts include paragraphs and essays which deal with various issues and discourse categories (description, argumentation, exposition and narration) and development of these with strategies like definition, exemplification, process, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, etc. The students will also develop a better understanding of the writing process and [master](javascript:openGlossaryWin('/courses/glossary/popup.aspx?termID=13799');) the basic [components](javascript:openGlossaryWin('/courses/glossary/popup.aspx?termID=13584');) of multi-paragraph compositions. At this level, the students will learn to gather, select, and organize information so as to produce effective, coherent, and complex texts in the form of essays, stories, and reports of medium length. The compositions they produce will focus on [concrete](javascript:openGlossaryWin('/courses/glossary/popup.aspx?termID=13587');), abstract, and theoretical topics that include structures ranging from simple to complex.

**Course objective**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

* gather information that are relevant to their compositions’ thesis.
* prepare multi-level drafts for their final written copy.
* identify parts and purposes of essay structures.
* compose paragraphs and essays that have clearly stated topic sentences and theses with adequate development.
* edit their writings for grammatical and mechanical errors.
* develop texts that demonstrate effective use of cohesive devices..
* identify central ideas and details of texts.
* analyse written texts written by others.
* detect fallacies in argumentative writings.
* synthesize ideas into paragraphs and then to essays.
* identify various methods of text development.

compose texts appropriately tailored to the level of audience and writing purpose.

Unit one: Writing as a process

**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.**

**1. 1. Prewriting**

**Prewriting identifies everything you need to do before you sit down to start your rough draft.**

Prewriting is the first stage of the writing process, and includes all the things you do before you are ready to write out the first version of your text. If your teacher is setting the writing assignment, make sure that you understand exactly what you have to do. Otherwise, the best way to start is to ask you the questions listed below:

**What shall I write about?**

This is a question about the **topic** or **theme** of your writing. If you choose something that moves you in some way, your writing is more likely to be interesting to the reader.

**Why do I want to write about it?**

This is a question about the **purpose** of your writing, and it is linked to the first question. Here are some of the possible purposes you may have for a piece of work:

* to explain
* to inform/instruct
* to describe
* to narrate
* to persuade
* to move
* to amuse/entertain

**What kind of writing shall I do?**

This is a question about the **genre** of your work. Here are some of the genres you could choose from:

* short story
* poem
* letter
* narrative
* news story
* essay
* book/film review
* report
* biography

**Who am I writing it for?**

This is a question about the **audience** for your writing. For example: Will it be posted on a bulletin board? Do you want to publish it in a school magazine? Is it a letter addressed to the leader of the student council?

When you have answered these questions, you are ready to start planning your writing. Depending on your topic, you can collect ideas and make notes by doing one or more of the following activities:

* thinking/brainstorming
* reading and researching\*
* observing
* interviewing
* discussing
* imagining/fantasizing
* note-taking

The final task of the prewriting stage is to organize your ideas and notes into a logical order, and this is what we usually call it outlining. You may find it helpful to write an outline or use some kind of chart or table to organize the information you have collected. You are now ready for the next stage of the writing process - drafting!

**The Outlining Process**

An effective thesis statement usually contains the main elements for an outline. As you examine your thesis, an organizational and developmental approach will begin to emerge. Assume, for example, that you have arrived at the following thesis statement:

"Many television commercials are disturbing because they are boring, insulting, or dangerous."

This is an exact thesis. It meets the necessary criteria: it clearly indicates the specific topic the writer will deal with; it imposes manageable limits on the topic; it suggests the organization of the resulting paper. In constructing this thesis, the writer answered the what, how and why questions:

What is my point? Many television commercials are disturbing.

How will I present it? By showing that some commercials are boring, that some are

insulting, and that some are dangerous.

Why is my point significant? Television touches the lives of most of us.

Your first task in creating a workable outline from your thesis is to examine the thesis itself carefully. The main point, "Many television commercials are disturbing” must have points to validate it, and, in fact, there are three such points in the thesis: some television commercials are boring, some are insulting, and some are dangerous. You can now perceive the relation between your main point and its bases of support:

MAIN POINT SUPPORTING COMPONENTS

Many television commercials some commercials are boring.

are disturbing. Some commercials are insulting.

Some commercials are dangerous.

The organizational approach for the outline and subsequent paper should now be apparent. Your main point depends on your developing the supporting components.

Your second task is to analyze each supporting components as specified in the thesis. Thus, you move to additional questions: What makes some television commercials boring? Why are some insulting? How can a commercial be dangerous? Questions such as these will enable you to discover the specific bases for your initial thoughts and attitudes on this topic. By questioning and answering, you can pinpoint organizational approaches that will support the thesis statement and develop the paper. The outline, dependent on the thesis and specifically on the method aspect of the thesis (How will I present my point?), begins to merge and grow:

I. Introduction

1. Main point: Many television commercials are disturbing.
2. Thesis statement: Many television commercials are disturbing because they are boring, insulting, or dangerous.

II. Body

1. Some television commercials become boring because of their frequency and triteness.
   1. Some commercials (cite examples) appear as many as three times in a thirty-minute program.
   2. The message employed in these commercials is often stated in clichés (cite examples).

Note that II A 1 supports and specifies one aspect (frequency) of point II A; II A 2 supports and specifies the other (triteness). Thus, there is coherence within the outlining process as one point or idea leads to another.

You can effectively employ the same basic process to develop the remaining two supporting components previously announced in the thesis: some television commercials are insulting; some television commercials are dangerous:

II. Body (cont'd).

1. Some of these commercials that have become so tiresome are also insulting because of their blatantly illogical claims.
2. We are asked to believe that product testimonials by "stars" constitute expert opinion (cite examples).
3. We are exposed to commercials that, through association, suggest a particular product that will enhance our glamour or sex appeal (cite examples).

As with points II A 1 and II A 2, point II B (some commercials are insulting) is supported by II B 1 and II B 2, which further specify that these same commercials are insulting "because of their blatantly illogical claims."

We can now deal with the last supporting component: many television commercials are dangerous:

II. Body (cont'd.)

1. Some of these commercials are even dangerous.
2. Some encourage the use of easy credit (cite examples).
3. Some advocate poor diet practices (cite examples).

An almost limitless number of variations are possible with this or any outline. You could, for example, construct additional points, sub points, and even sub-sub points, depending on the topic's complexity and the paper's projected length. And you would most likely include a conclusion (which would be point III in the above outline). You could also use different forms for your outline. For example, you might use an outline that simply lists key words or sentence that identify the main components of the paper. Or you might use a full outline, like the one above, containing brief phrases instead of sentences for each of the points and sub points.

Below is the finished outline.

I. Introduction

A. Main point: Many television commercials are disturbing.

B. Thesis statement: Many television commercials are disturbing because they are boring, insulting, or dangerous.

II. Body

A. Some television commercials become boring because of their frequency and triteness.

* 1. Some commercials (cite examples) appear as many as three times in a thirty-minute program.
  2. The message employed in these commercials is often stated in clichés (cite examples).

B. Some of these commercials that have become so tiresome are also insulting because of their blatantly illogical claims.

1. We are asked to believe that product testimonials by "stars" constitute expert opinion (cite examples).
2. We are exposed to commercials that, through association, suggest a particular product that will enhance our glamour or sex appeal (cite examples).

C. Some of these commercials are even dangerous.

* 1. Some encourage the use of easy credit (cite examples).
  2. Some advocate poor diet practices (cite examples).

III. Conclusion

A. Recommendations: what can be done about television commercials?

1. Explore the advantages of public television and support public television with donations.
2. Explore pay television.
3. Encourage people to seek entertainment in books, radio, and records.

B. Predication: The continued abuse of the television viewer's intelligence will, I hope, result in a buyers' boycott.

A careful examination of this outline reveals a logical, specific, and unified writing plan. Points II A 1 and 2, II B 1 and 2, II C 1 and 2 arise from the method implied in the thesis statement ( to show that commercials are boring, insulting, and dangerous). Thus, the components are directly subordinated to the paper's main point ("Many television commercials are disturbing").

1.2. Drafting Phase

Drafting occurs when you put your ideas into sentences and paragraphs. Here you concentrate upon explaining and supporting your ideas fully. Here you also begin to connect your ideas. Regardless of how much thinking and planning you do, the process of putting your ideas in words changes them; often the very words you select evoke additional ideas or implications.

Don’t pay attention to such things as spelling at this stage.

This draft tends to be writer-centered: it is you telling yourself what you know and think about the topic.

* 1. Post writing Phase( Revising and editing)

Post writing phase is the stage at which the writer revises, edits and publishes his/her work. The major activities under this stage of writing are the first two – revising and editing. Let’s have a look at these two in detail.

1. Revising

Revision is the key to effective documents. Here you think more deeply about your readers’ needs and expectations. The document becomes reader-centered. How much support will each idea need to convince your readers? Which terms should be defined for these particular readers? Is your organization effective? Do readers need to know X before they can understand Y?

We usually use the A\_R\_R\_R approach during revising in which each letter stands identified activity.

A stands for adding: If there are some important points left out from your notes in the outline, you add or include those points. **The average novel has between 60,000 and 100,000 words. Does your book have enough words to be considered a novel? Have you given your readers all the information they need to make sense of your story? If not, go back to your notebook that you kept for additional scenes and any additional details.**

The first R stands for “Rearrange’ which means analyzing the way you arranged your draft and restructure it in a better way in a way you feel the ideas to be sequenced.Consider the flow, pacing and sequencing of your story. Would the plot be better served if some of the events occur in a different order?

The second R stands for ‘Remove’ which involves deleting some irrelevant points and ideas in your draft.After making additions to your story, how is your word count now? Are your readers experiencing information overload? You may need to eliminate passages that don’t quite fit.

The third R stands for ‘Replace’ that involves replacing the removed ideas with better ones.

At this stage you also refine your prose, making each sentence as concise and accurate as possible. Make connections between ideas explicit and clear.

1. Editing

Check for such things as grammar, mechanics, and spelling. The last thing you should do before printing your document is to spell check it.

Note: Don’t edit your writing until the other steps in the writing process are complete.

**Unit 2: Practicing the basics of writing**

2.1. Stating the main idea

**The main idea is the point of the paragraph through which the writer states what he/she wants to say about the subject. It is the most important thought about the topic.** Main points in a paragraph are stated using a topic sentence and using a thesis statement in an essay.

2.1.1. Ways a thesis statement and the topic sentence are similar

1. They are **full sentences** that communicate a full idea

How people can improve employability (Not a full sentence)

1. They should state or **show, rather than announce** the main idea

This essay will discuss the importance of learning a new language. (Announces)

This section will analyze the benefits to learning a new language. (Announces)

1. They should **not be too broad** or **too narrow**

Learning a new language is good. (Too broad)

I learned Spanish in high school. (Too narrow)

1. They **explain** what **the main ideas** are of your essay (thesis statement) or paragraph (topic sentence)

Examples:

* Learning a second language can be a helpful way to improve your employability, cultural understanding, and ability to communicate when you travel abroad.
* Even a basic language course can improve your ability to communicate abroad.

**Thesis statements:**

− Help to let the reader know what the purpose or main idea of an essay is

− Outline how you will support that main idea

− Use a path statement to refer to supporting points you will be using. A **path statement** is like a sneak peak at your main supporting ideas. Paragraphs supporting these points in your essay will appear in the same order as they are listed in the path statement.

**Here is an example of a path statement**:

Taking the time to learn a second language has a lot of advantages*, such as improved brain function, career opportunities and greater cultural understanding.*

• The 1st paragraph will be about improved brain functioning, the 2nd paragraph will be about career opportunities, and the 3rd paragraph will be about greater cultural understanding.

**Topic Sentences**:

− Help to let the reader know what points you will focus on in a paragraph

− Can be used to stay focused on one topic at a time in a paragraph

− Connect your paragraphs to your thesis.

− **Do not use path statements.**

Once you have a clear topic sentence for your paragraph, each of the sentences in your paragraph should be clearly related in some way to your topic sentence. You can check this by working through your paragraph sentence by sentence to edit any sentences which are not clearly related to your topic.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| A good topic sentence of a paragraph contains two elements**: the topic** and the **controlling idea**. |  |
|  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **The topic** = the subject of the paragraph | **The controlling idea** = this limits the topic, and shows the reader how the writer feels about the topic/how the writer will limit the topic |
| ***Adjusting to Canadian winters*** | ***has been a real challenge for me.*** |
| This part of the sentence tells the reader the paragraph will be about adjusting to Canadian winters. This is the topic (subject). | Then it tells the reader that this has been a challenge. This is the controlling idea. |

2.1.2. **The Difference between Thesis Statements and Topic Sentences**

* A **thesis statement** (the main point of a whole essay) is usually found at the **end of an introduction** where as a **topic sentence** (the main point of a paragraph) is usually at the **beginning of a paragraph**.
* The thesis statement tells what the whole paper is about. The topic sentence, however, shows only what the paragraph it is attached to is about.
* The thesis statement tells the reader what the rest of the paper is about. A thesis statement is a fact you want to prove or a fact you want to explain. The rest of your paper’s job is to prove or explain what you just wrote in your thesis statement.
* The topic sentence indicates the reader what the sentences in a paragraph are all about.

**Writing a thesis statement:**

Example:

**There are several ways for college students to improve their study habits.**

This thesis statement tells me a couple things:

1. The paper is about **college students’ study habits**.

2. The rest of the paper will show me ways to **improve** study habits.

The thesis statement is the big idea of your whole paper! The rest of the paper is facts about how your thesis statement is true.

**Writing a topic sentence:**

The topic sentence is different from your thesis statement.

Let’s look at the following example:

Your thesis statement was “There are several ways for college students to improve their study habits.”

These are a few ideas of how college students can improve their study:

1. Study in a quiet environment.

2. Pay attention in class.

3. Manage their time well.

All three of these ideas could be discussed further, and they all explain the thesis statement. What are the ways students can improve their study habits? By studying in a quiet environment, paying attention in class, and managing their time well.

Each of these three ideas can become a **topic sentence.** This means that for each idea, there will be a paragraph that explains it.

Change each of the three ideas into a complete sentence.

Example: “Study in a quiet environment” can become **“Studying in a quiet environment helps students improve their study habits.”**

Look at the following example:

**“Studying in a quiet environment helps students improve their study habits.** For example, studying in a quiet place like a library allows students to get away from distracting noises. Also, students are able to think better when they can hear their own thoughts. Students will do better in their classes if they find a silent place to do their homework.”

The first sentence was the **topic sentence.** It told me what the paragraph was about, and the rest of the sentences **explained** the topic sentence.

Here is a complete example of how the thesis statement and topic sentences work together in an essay:

Students face many challenges in their college years, and one of those challenges is studying adequately for their classes. Students who struggle finding time and energy to study may feel like there is no solution to their problem. However, **there are several ways for college students to improve their study habits. (thesis statement)**

**Studying in a quiet environment helps students improve their study habits. (topic sentence 1)** For example, studying in a quiet place like a library allows students to get away from distracting noises. Also, students are able to think better when they can hear their own thoughts. Students will do better in their classes if they find a silent place to do their homework

**Paying attention in class helps students improve their study habits. (topic sentence 2)**

When students are alert in the classroom, they will remember the class lectures better than those who did not listen attentively. Also, students who take good notes in class will not have missing information when they are studying for tests and quizzes. Successful students find that good studying starts in the classroom.

**Managing their time well helps students improve their study habits. (topic sentence 3)**

Students who set a time aside each day for study will give them enough time to get their homework done. Students who choose to party every night rather than work on assignments will not have a chance to meet deadlines. Furthermore, students who use a planner to schedule their homework time will have a better idea of what they need to do to succeed.

In conclusion, many options are available to students who truly want to develop better study skills. Studying is not an easy activity, and it takes planning, determination, and attentiveness to study well. Fortunately, students who apply themselves to these study techniques will be happy with the results.

Note that

* *Thesis Statement is a (big idea)*
* *Topic Sentences explain the thesis statement. Each begins a new paragraph and tells the reader what the paragraph will be about. (smaller reasons)*
* *The sentences after the topic sentence in each paragraph explain the topic sentence. (small details that support the smaller reasons)*

EXERCISE:

Write what you know about thesis statements and topic sentences in your own words.

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How are they similar?

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How are they different?

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

Where does the topic sentence go?

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

How many thesis statements are there?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How many topic sentences are there?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Unit 3: Structuring and Organizing Text**

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

A compare and contrast text is a writing that explains the way two subjects are similar in some ways and different in the other ways.

When we compare the subjects, we talk about their similarities and explain their differences when we contrast them.

Key words used in comparison (when we talk about similarities)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Key expressions | Example sentences |
| Both | **Both** Canada and England have a queen. |
| Like | **Like** Canada, England has many immigrants. |
| Similarly | In England, they speak English. Similarly, in Canada, many people speak English. |
| In comparison | In England, they speak English. **In comparison**, in Canada, many people speak English. |
| In the same way | In England, they speak English. **In the same way**, in Canada, many people speak English. |
| Likewise | In England, they speak English. **Likewise**, in Canada, many people speak English. |
| Similar to | Female are **similar to** males in their potential to learn something new. |
| The same as | Female **are the same as** males in their potential to learn something new. |

Exercise

1. England is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the USA in their English usage.
2. In England, people speak English. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in USA, people speak English.
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ England, the USA is very multicultural.

Key Expressions used for contrast( talking about differences)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Key word | Examples |
| Unlike | **Unlike** girls, boys are expected to cut their hair shot. |
| In contrast | Girls keep their hair long. **In contrast**, boys keep it short. |
| While | Girls grow their hair long **while** boys cut it short. |
| Where as | Girls grow their hair long **where as** boys cut it short. |
| But | Boys are sometimes violent, **but** girls are usually decent. |
| However | Boys are sometimes violent. **However**, girls are usually decent.  Boys are sometimes violent; **however**, girls are usually decent.  Boys are sometimes violent. Girls are usually decent, **however**. |

**Compare and contrast writing styles**

There are two ways of writing compare and contrast essay:

1. Block style which some scholars call object by object, All of one/ all of other

In this pattern, each item is discussed separately. The block approach explains aspects of one topic in a paragraph, then compares or contrasts the same kinds of things about another item in the next paragraph. A Block Format is good for creating shorter and less detailed essays. Notice the example organization of block style below for comparison of two types of cars known as Speed Demon and Road Runner.

Point by point style

In the point-by-point style, you write about one point or aspect of two or more items, identifying their differences and similarities in one or two paragraphs, before moving on to explore the next point of comparison. Point-by-Point is better for writing more complex essays.

Look at the following two essays in the form of the two styles:

Block style

Before the advancement of technology people used to travel and move their things from place to place on foot, on horseback or by boats. These tiresome and time taking travels were improved by the introduction of the products of science which are more comfortable and faster means of transportation like buses and airplanes. A buns and an airplane have some similarities and differences as well.

To begin with their similarities, both bus and airplane are modern means of transportation. They are by far faster, safer and more comfortable that the traditional means of transportation. A bus and an airplane have human professionals who operate them. Moreover, they both use fuels to move.

A bus and an airplane also have striking differences. **A bus is a land means of transportation which can’t go across rivers, seas and oceans unless there is a bridge. A bus cannot carry over sixty to seventy passengers at a time. It takes a bus over two hour’s time to complete a one hundred kilometer distance the coast of which can’t exceed fifty birr per a passenger. The coast of a bus is affordable that individuals can purchase.** In contrast, an airplane is an air means of transport. It can fly over rivers, seas and oceans without much difficulty. An air plane has a larger carriage capacity than a bus. For example, The Airbus A380 800, made in France, can accommodate up to 853 passengers at a time. An air plane can cover a hundred kilometer distance within less than ten minutes. An airplane is also too coasty that individuals hardly afford to purchase it. Its cost of transportation is also much more expensive than that that of a bus.

In conclusion a bus and an air plane are the modern means of transport that eased human life. Although they have some similarities the two means of transportation have fundamental differences in their carriage capacity, speed, expense and coat of transportation.

Point by point style

Before the advancement of technology people used to travel and move their things from place to place on foot, on horseback or by boats. These tiresome and time taking travels were improved by the introduction of the products of science which are more comfortable and faster means of transportation like buses and airplanes. A buns and an airplane have some similarities and differences as well.

To begin with their similarities, both bus and airplane are modern means of transportation. They are by far faster, safer and more comfortable that the traditional means of transportation. A bus and an airplane have human professionals who operate them. Moreover, they both use fuels to move.

In contrast, a bus and an air plane differ in their level of limitation. A bus is a land transportations that is limited by the geographical locations and sceneries like hills, mountains, rivers, seas and oceans where as an air plane is never limited by such difficult sceneries. It can fly over high mountains and across rivers, seas and oceans easily.

These means of transport also differ in their carriage capacity. A big bus cannot accommodate more than sixty to seventy passengers while an air plane, for example The Airbus A380 800, made in France, can accommodate up to 853 passengers at a time.

Moreover, a bus and an air plane are different in their speed. An air plane is much faster than a bus. For instance, it takes a bus from 2: 00 – 2:30 hours to cover a hundred kilometer distance where as an air plane can cover the same distance only within seven to eight minutes.

In addition, a bus and an air plane differ in their price and cost of transport. A bus is affordable to be purchase by individuals while an air plane is too expensive that it can’t be afforded by individuals. The cost of transport by an air plane is by far more expensive than that of the bus.

In contrast, a bus and an air plane differ in their level of limitation. A bus is a land transportations that is limited by the geographical locations and sceneries like hills, mountains, rivers, seas and oceans where as an air plane is never limited by such difficult sceneries. It can fly over high mountains and across rivers, seas and oceans easily.

Additional examples on Block and point by point essays

Block and Point-by-Point Comparison

1. (In Block Format)

The compare and contrast essay is used to compare all sorts of things on any number of points. A common example is two items compared on three points, such as the movies *Star Wars* and *Avatar* compared on their visuals, stories, and soundtracks. People often wonder how to organize the comparison of their points. There are two typical formats: Block and Point-by-Point. Because of the ways Block and Point-by-Point differ in the format of their paragraphs, the organization of their comparisons, and how detailed they are, Block Format is good for creating shorter and less detailed essays, while Point-by-Point is better for writing more complex essays.

In the body of the essay (ignoring introduction and conclusion), Block **Format** presents its comparison and contrast in two or more paragraphs depending on how many items are being compared and contrasted to each other. In the example of any *two* movies being compared, no matter how many points of comparison there are between each movie, a Block Format essay would have *two* body paragraphs, one for each movie. Then Block Format **organizes** the information in an uneven way: in the *first* body paragraph, the first item is described on all three of the comparison points without actually comparing it to the second item. In the *second* body paragraph, Block Format describes the second item *only* by comparing it to the first. This can make Block Format essays less **detailed** because covering so many points in each paragraph can leave less room for well-developed analysis.

In comparison to Block Format, Point-by-Point **Format** requires more paragraphs. This format requires paragraphs based on the points of comparison instead of on the items being compared, so an essay with *three* points of comparison between two items will have *three* body paragraphs, not two. No matter how many items are being compared, the number of *paragraphs* will always be the number of *points*. In contrast, with Block Format, *two* items would mean *two* paragraphs, no matter how many comparison points were covered. Also, Point-by-Point Format **organizes** information in a more equal way than Block Format because it compares all items equally, one point at a time, repeating the process from paragraph to paragraph until all points have been fully explored. This leads to point by point being naturally more detailed than block because point by point gives each point its own paragraph, allowing more development of ideas for each point.

In conclusion, when it comes to the two types of essay format, Block tends to make essays shorter and Point-by-Point tends to make them longer. It is also often the case that Block makes essays less detailed, while Point-by-Point tends to make them more detailed, so Point-by-Point is the format generally preferred for college-level writing. In the end, the format a writer chooses for a comparative analysis depends on the best way to serve the purpose of the essay.

1. In Point-by-Point Format

The compare and contrast essay is used to compare all sorts of things on any number of points. A common example is two items compared on three points, such as the movies *Star Wars* and *Avatar* compared on an analysis of their visuals, stories, and soundtracks. People often wonder how to organize the comparison of their points. There are two typical formats: Block and Point-by-Point. Because of the ways Block and Point-by-Point differ in the format of their paragraphs, the organization of their comparisons, and how detailed they are, Block Format is good for creating shorter and less detailed essays, while Point-by-Point is better for writing more complex essays.

In the body, Block **Format** arranges the comparison of items into paragraphs depending on *how many items* are being compared and contrasted to each other. In the example of *two* movies being compared on three points of comparison, a Block Format essay would have *two* body paragraphs, one for each movie, and it would cover all three points of comparison twice, one for each paragraph. This means that, while Block would have as many paragraphs as items being compared, Point-by-Point would have as many paragraphs as there were *points to be made about the items*. So Point-by-Point will almost always have more paragraphs than Block format. This tends to make the Point-by-Point essay longer than the Block essay.

When it comes to the actual analysis, Block Format **organizes** the information in the first paragraph by describing one item on all points without mentioning the second item. Then in the next paragraph, Block Format *only* compares the second item to the first. The second item is never described without comparison to the first. Point-by-Point Format organizes information in a more equal way than Block Format because Point-by-Point analyzes both items on only one point at a time per paragraph, repeating the process from paragraph to paragraph until all points have been fully compared. Within any paragraph, the items are always seen together in comparison and contrast, never without each other.

Furthermore, Block Format essays often can be less **detailed** than Point-by-Point. In Block Format, looking at the first item with all points of comparison at once makes readers more likely to think about it as a whole. As a result the point could be compressed or over simplified because they are not placed side by side with those of the other items. This is unlike point by point, where details are more easily recognized by taking points one at a time. The step by step analysis point-by-point offers writers chance to look at items carefully and to develop their ideas about them.

In conclusion when it comes to the two types of essay format, Block tends to make essays shorter and Point-by-Point tends to make them longer. It is also often the case that Block makes essays less detailed, while Point-by-Point tends to make them more detailed, so Point-by-Point is the format generally preferred for college-level writing. In the end, the format a writer chooses for a comparative analysis depends on the best way to serve the purpose of the essay.

**Developing cause and effect texts**

**What is cause and effect text**?

A cause and effect text is a writing that explains occurrence or incidents that made the others to happen and clearly states the happenings that resulted due to the causes. Some useful variations used in cause and effect writings although ‘because’ is obviously used.

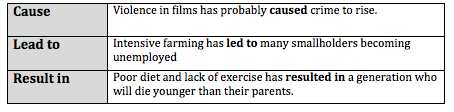


**Notes**

1. “because” , ‘as a result’ and “as a consequence” are used with a verb and “because of”, “as a result
2. of” and “as a consequence of” with a noun.
3. “due to” is normally used with negative situations and “thanks to with “positive situations”

### Cause verbs

A useful variation is to use “because” as a verb. Here are the 3 main variations:



**Exercise 1**

**Fill in the blanks with the suitable language from the options provided below.**

**Options = cause of      due to      Likewise      means      One**

Top of Form

There are a number of reasons why children are more obese nowadays. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** is that they eat too much fast food. This unhealthy diet **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** that they put on weight unnecessarily.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ their parents do not supervise what they are eating **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** their own busy life-styles. Another related **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** childhood obesity is lack of exercise. Children usually get too fat when they eat much but do not do physical exercise regularly.

Bottom of Form

Exercise 2

Fill in the blanks in the short paragraph below with the correct cause and effect language from the options provided.

**Options = due to      Likewise      means      One      related cause**

Top of Form

There are a number of different reasons why young professionals from developing countries choose emigrate. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** is that the poor economic climate where they live **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** that there are not many job opportunities. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** it is difficult to earn enough to survive **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** the low level of salaries on offer compared to wealthier countries. Another **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** of emigration is that they are tempted by the life-style possible in countries such as the United States.

Exercise 3

Complete the sentence by filling in a cause or an effect as required. Circle what was needed to complete each sentence: cause or effect.

1. Fenet did not go to school because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. cause/effect
2. Due to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Jinenus was

late for work again. Cause/effect

1. Since Jalane bought all the chocolates in the shop, Sifan \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Cause/ effect
2. If \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, there won’t be enough space in the car. Cause/effect
3. Kulani begins work early every Friday so that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Cause/effect

1. Since Roba’s parents found out about the party he hosted without their permission, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Cause/effect

1. Owing to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, the tickets were all sold out. cause/effect

Bottom of Form

Exercise 4: Look at the following cause and effect passage and write a similar text about your own experience.

I woke up late this morning **because** my alarm clock did not ring. **As a result**, I had to rush to get ready for school and I made a huge mess all over the house. I missed the bus **because** I had to go back home to fetch my cell phone. **Consequently**, I was late for school, and my lecturer was not pleased with me at all. **Due to the fact that** my day had been going so badly, I was in a bad mood and I shouted at my friends. **Since** I was in such a bad mood, they didn’t want to hang out with me and they left. After they left, my day only got worse. **In view of** all that happened today, I’ve decided that I need two alarm clocks instead of one, to make sure I wake up on time in the mornings.

**Exercise 5:** Write an essay on one of the following topics:

* What is the effect of family vacations on family relationships?
* **What Are The Causes and Effects Of Air Pollution?**
* **What Are The Causes and Effects Of Stress?**
* What Effect Does Divorce Have On Families?
* The Causes And Effects Of Domestic Violence
* The Impact Of Stress On Health
* The Cause And Effect Of Cheating In Examinations

3.1. What is an essay?

3.2. Essay structure

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

**4.1. Writing Expositions**

**4.2. Writing Descriptions**

**4.3. Writing Narration**

**4.4. Writing Argumentation**

**2. Writing**