

Academic A Writing

Introduction to Academic Essays

Christin Stephens

Table of Contents

Objectives	1
The Writing Process	3
Addressing the Prompt	5
Prewriting	9
Writing Skill: Development	17
Revising	23
Originality	27
Timed Writing (Expectations)	29
Integrated Writing (Writing Process)	33
Introduction to Academic Essays	37
Style	39
Shape	41
Organization	43
Introduction Paragraphs	45
Body Paragraphs	51
Conclusion Paragraphs	57
Example Essay 1	61
Example Essay 2	63
Timed Writing (The Prompt)	65
Integrated Writing (TOEFL Task 1)	69
Process Essays	73
Process Essay Example 1	75
Process Essay Example 2	77
Prewriting	79
Writing Skill: Unity	85
Revising	89
Revise A Process Essay	93

Timed Writing (Choose a Position)	95
Integrated Writing (TOEFL Task 2)	99
Comparison Essays	101
Comparison Essay Example 1	103
Comparison Essay Example 2	105
Prewriting	107
Writing Skill: Cohesion	113
Revising	119
Revise A Comparison Essay	123
Timed Writing (Plans & Problems)	125
Integrated Writing (Word Choice)	129
Problem/Solution Essays	135
Problem/Solution Essay Example 1	137
Problem/Solution Example Essay 2	139
Prewriting	141
Writing Skill: Summary	145
Revising	153
Revise A Problem/Solution Essay	157
Timed Writing (Revising)	159
Integrated Writing (Summary)	161
More Writing Skills	165
Punctuation	167
Simple Sentences	171
Compound Sentences	175
Complex Sentences Part 1	177
Complex Sentences Part 2	181
Using Academic Vocabulary	185
Glossary	189



Christin Stephens



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing.

Objectives

1. Writes level-appropriate* drafted and timed text.
 1. Writes in all major time frames.
 2. Writes multiple paragraph length text.
 3. Writes introductory paragraphs for multi-paragraph compositions.
 4. Writes thesis sentences with a clear controlling idea.
 5. Writes effective topic sentences for paragraphs.
 6. Writes logically organized paragraphs.
 7. Writes effective concluding sentences in paragraphs.
 8. Writes using transitions within and between paragraphs.
 9. Ends multi-paragraph compositions with an appropriate conclusion.
2. Responds in writing to spoken and written texts.
 1. Summarizes main ideas of texts.
 2. Summarizes major detail or key arguments in texts.
 3. Connects ideas and details among different texts.
3. Effectively implements appropriate writing strategies.
 1. Uses pre-writing to structure texts.
 2. Reads and rereads their own texts to identify and correct errors.
 3. Responds to teacher, tutor, and peer feedback.
4. Incorporates a variety of high frequency general and academic vocabulary in writing.
 1. Spells high frequency general vocabulary correctly.

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

Function: Students are able to meet all practical writing needs. They are usually able to write in all major time frames. They use basic vocabulary and syntax that typically corresponds to spoken language. They produce texts about personal topics, everyday events and situations in concrete terms, such as work and/or school experiences. They sometimes produce texts about personal topics in abstract terms. They are able to write in informal situations and in some formal situations.

Text: Students usually write texts with multiple paragraphs. They use some basic cohesive devices in texts to connect ideas within and between paragraphs.

Comprehensibility: Students can usually be understood by those unaccustomed to non-native writing, though there will likely be gaps in comprehension due to significant errors.



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/chapter_1.

The Writing Process



Writing can be hard work, and many students wonder where to start. Understanding the basic elements of the writing process can make your job easier and your written product better. The way you use the writing process depends on a lot of things: the task, the time and resources available, your experience with the topic, etc. Think about the writing process as a very fluid, spiraling cycle. You should use the writing process flexibly.

Addressing the Prompt
Prewriting
Writing Skill: Development
Revising
Originality
Timed Writing (Expectations)
Integrated Writing (Writing Process)



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/the_writing_process.

Addressing the Prompt

The first step to effective academic writing is ensuring that you fully understand what you are being asked to write about and who your audience will be.

Verbs

First, look carefully at the verb used in the prompt. This is a signal to you on how you write your essay. If you think carefully about the meaning of the verb, it will help you decide on your organization, and you can use it to check that you included all of the necessary information.

Example Prompt Verbs

- Describe the process of cooking your favorite meal.
 - This topic is more general. You will need to create a picture in the reader's mind of the steps, but there are many different ways you could do this. It does not narrow down what to describe like a more specific variation (ex *Describe the process of baking a carrot cake.*)
- Compare and contrast two parks in your city.
 - You need to explain similarities and differences. You must include both in order to completely respond to the prompt.
- Summarize the writer's thoughts about learning a second language.
 - In this response, your supporting ideas should be limited to the content in the original source. You should not have any of your own ideas mixed into this answer.

Content

Next, think about what supporting ideas you would need to include. The prompt may be very narrow because the topic is very specific.

- Ex. Do you think the ELC classes should be shorter? Why or why not?

In other cases, the prompt may be very general and allow you space to make personal decisions about what supporting ideas to include.

- Ex. What quality do you think is most important for being a good student?

Always remember to review the prompt throughout the writing process. Rereading the prompt often will help you check that you have included all the necessary information. It will also help your brain generate new ideas when you are stuck.

Example Content Breakdowns

- Describe the process of cooking your favorite meal.
 - This topic is more general. You could answer it by describing how to choose the ingredients and how to prepare them before cooking. You can include information about why the process needs to be in this order. However, it should all be focused on the process, not on the cultural importance of the meal.
- Compare and contrast two parks in your city.
 - Again, this topic can include a lot of different information. You know you need to talk about what is the same or different, but it could be about many different characteristics. You could talk about activities, physical descriptions, size, location, maintenance, etc.
- Summarize the writer's thoughts about learning a second language.
 - In this response, your supporting ideas should be limited to the content in the original source. You should not have any of your own ideas mixed into this answer. It also needs to only focus on the writer's thoughts about learning a second language, even if the reading includes thoughts about math or science as well. You should not be describing or defining second language learning, just focus on what the writer says about this topic.

Constraints

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

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

Exercises

Exercise 1: Prompt Analysis

1. Take a look at these [New York Times Writing Prompts](#)
2. Identify the prompt for three writing tasks.
3. Discuss what the prompt verb would require the writer to do? How would a successful response be organized?

Exercise 2: Writing Prompts

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



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at

https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/addressing_the_prompt.

Prewriting



Anything you do before you start writing is prewriting. You should always start your writing process by making sure you understand the assignment. Other activities you may do in this stage are brainstorming, choosing a focus, and outlining.

Understand the assignment

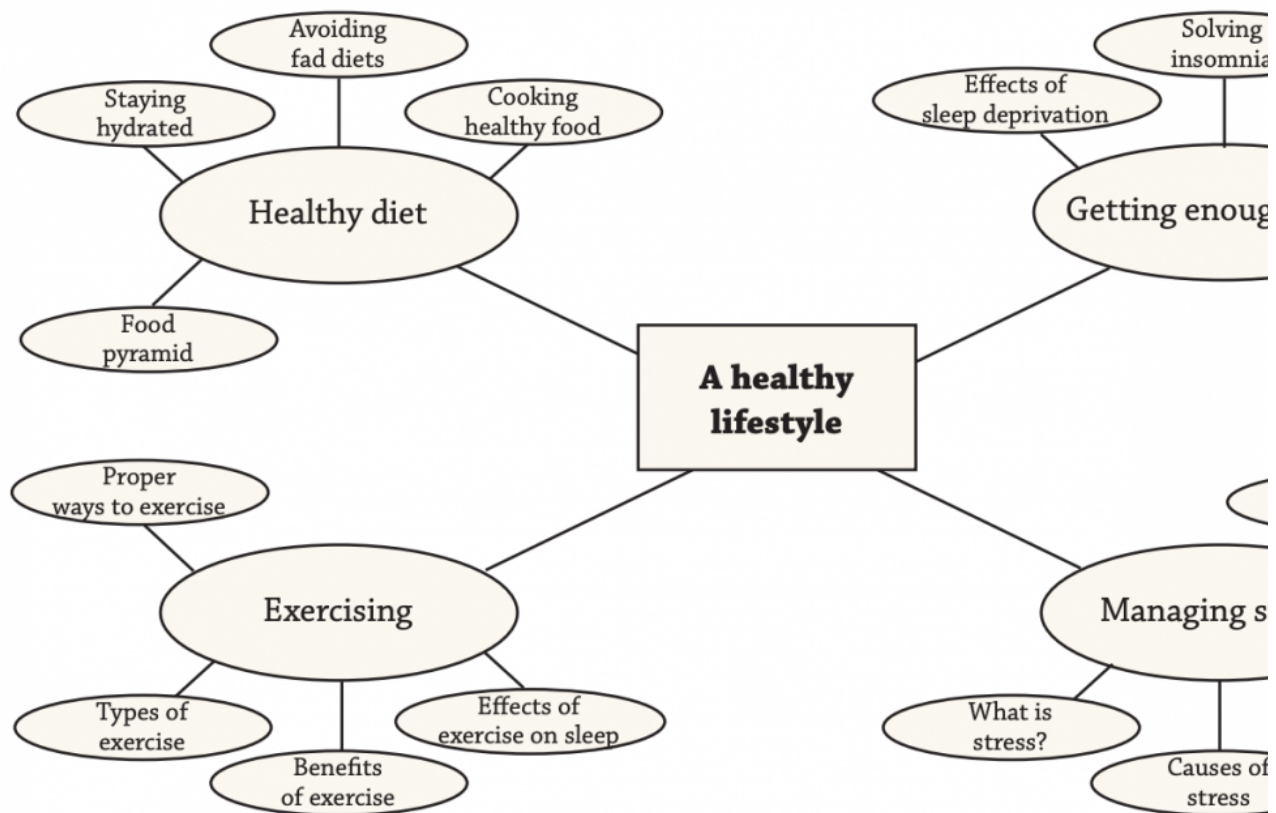
Make sure that you understand the requirements of the task. If there is a specific prompt you are supposed to use, make sure your writing addresses the prompt. Always clarify any requirements that you do not understand with your teacher.

Brainstorm

Sometimes you are given a specific prompt (e.g., Should colleges use online textbooks?), but sometimes you can choose your topic. If you can choose your topic, then brainstorming can help you generate ideas to write about.

There are many methods you can use for brainstorming.

- Discuss the topic with a partner - This is a good way to get your brain engaged. You may want to try recording the conversation so you can type up your ideas after.
- Do a free write - Open a new document or find a fresh piece of paper. Then just start writing what you are thinking. It doesn't matter at this point how related it is to the topic! You can then look through and underline what is useful or delete anything that is not.
- Make a list of ideas - Start making a list of every word or phrase that comes to your mind when you read the prompt. Do not worry about writing something that is not relevant. You can go through after and mark what you like best.
- Make an idea map (also known as an idea web) - An idea map starts with a word or phrase at the center. Draw lines out from that phrase to connect to related words and phrases. This will end with an image similar to a spider web that gives you an idea of connections and relationships you see between your ideas.
- Do a search on Google - Often one of the early steps in brainstorming is to do an internet search to see what other people have to say about the topic.



Choose a focus

If your topic is too broad, you need to narrow the topic down to a more specific focus.

For example, if you choose to write about the problems students face, you will probably need to focus on a few specific types of problems (e.g., financial problems). Repeating a brainstorming activity with a broad topic may help you choose your focus.

If you don't have a narrow focus, your writing may end up too general as you try to "cover" the entire topic. Without specific details and examples in your writing, your reader will not be able to understand your main idea clearly.

Tip: Choosing a Focus

It's often best to choose a topic you are most excited about. Drafted essays mean that you will spend weeks working on the same writing. This means you want to avoid getting tired of your topic over the weeks of working on it. Even a timed writing assignment will be easier to write if you start by choosing something you are invested in.

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

- I love sports. I will write about the process of the World Cup. I will explain how the location of the event is decided, how teams are selected, and how the countries can advance or be eliminated.
- My favorite thing to talk about is K-Pop! I will write about the process that idols and groups follow to become part of the industry. I will explain the audition, trainee, and debut steps.
- It is important to me to be healthy while I'm living in the United States. I will write about the process of maintaining a healthy diet as a student. I will explain the process of meal planning and preparing lunches for the week.
- I think that influencers on social media are interesting. I will write my essay about how to become an influencer. I will explain the process of choosing a focus for your account, building an audience, and promoting brands.

Outline

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

Not all outlines are the same. If you are writing a timed essay, your outline will be very simple. If you are writing a drafted essay, your outline may be more detailed.

To create your outline, think about the question that your essay answers (e.g., why is exercise important?). Answer the question. The supporting points in your answer will become your topic sentences (abbreviated TS). Write the main idea of your essay, your thesis (abbreviated TH), by summarizing your supporting points into one sentence.

The following outline is a simple outline for the example essay in this chapter. Look at the outline. How does it show the writer's plan to answer the question why is exercise important?

Example

I. Introduction

TH: Exercise is essential because it improves overall physical and mental health.

II. Body Paragraph 1

TS: Because it makes your body healthier, exercise is extremely important.

III. Body Paragraph 2

TS: Another compelling reason that exercise is crucial is that it improves mental health.

The basic outlines you have practiced in this section are the type of outline you can use when you are writing a timed essay (like the independent task on the TOEFL). Other essays may require a more detailed outline.

The amount of detail required in the outline depends on the purpose of the essay as well as the purpose of your outline. Your teacher may ask you for a very detailed outline of your essays so that you can show your whole plan. When you need to make an outline, be sure to ask how much detail your teacher expects you to include.

The following outline is a detailed outline for an example essay you will see later in this chapter.

Example

I. Introduction

Hook: It can be difficult to find time for exercise.

TH: Exercise is essential because it improves overall physical and mental health.

II. Body Paragraph 1

TS: Because it makes your body healthier, exercise is extremely important.

SS: Exercise > stronger muscles

EX: crunches, squats, push-ups

Exercise > lower heart rate

Exercise > lower blood pressure

CS: These are just some of the incredible health benefits of exercise.

III. Body Paragraph 2

TS: Another compelling reason that exercise is crucial is that it improves your mental health.

SS: Exercise is the healthiest way to deal with stress (which affects mental health)

Exercise > balanced chemicals

EX: Endorphins

Exercise > clear thoughts

More oxygen

CS: If you watch how you feel when you exercise, you will notice that your mood and mental clarity improve.

IV. Conclusion

TH: The mental and physical health benefits of exercise prove that exercise is absolutely crucial for our bodies.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Choose a focus

Choose a more specific topic for each general essay topic.

1. General topic: America vs. Japan
 1. Specific topic:
2. General topic: Hobbies
 1. Specific topic:
3. General topic: Robots
 1. Specific topic:

Exercise 2: Identify topic sentences and thesis statements

Which sentences are the topic sentences? Which sentence is the thesis? Label them TH or TS.

1. _____ Taco Bell is a popular place for students to eat on campus because it is healthy.
2. _____ Taco Bell is both inexpensive and healthy which makes it a popular restaurant on campus.
3. _____ Because of its inexpensive menu items, many students on campus choose to eat at Taco Bell.

Exercise 3: Evaluate and revise outlines

Evaluate and revise each of the outlines. Make sure the topic sentences support the thesis.

1. Prompt: What are some advantages of living in the city?
 1. TH: Living in the city makes it easier to get medical help and go to school.
 2. TS: Many people know that it is nice to live in the city.
 3. TS: A lot of teachers live in major cities.
2. Prompt: How has technology changed our lives?
 1. TH: Technology has many advantages in our modern lives.
 2. TS: Technology has made our modern lives easier.
 3. TS: Unfortunately, technology has also made our modern lives busier.
3. Prompt: Should schools require students to take tests?
 1. TH: Many students take tests.
 2. TS: Tests should be required because they hold students accountable for learning.
 3. TS: Another reason tests should be required is that they help measure improvement.
4. Prompt: What animals make the best kind of pet?
 1. TH: Dogs make the best pet because their owners are happier and healthier.
 2. TS: Having a pet makes people happy.
 3. TS: Dogs are very healthy pets.

Exercise 4: Create an outline

Use the templates below to create a basic outline to answer the prompt. Take 1-2 minutes to brainstorm after you read each prompt.

1. Prompt: What place in your country would you recommend that visitors see?

1. TH:

2. TS:

3. TS:

2. Prompt: What makes the ELC a good place to learn English?

1. TH:

2. TS:

3. TS:

3. Prompt: What is the best type of housing for students?

1. TH:

2. TS:

3. TS:



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/prewriting.

Writing Skill: Development



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

Many students find it easier to begin drafting the body paragraphs before drafting the introduction and conclusion paragraphs. This can be an excellent strategy to write more efficiently because the introduction and conclusion are based on what you write in the body paragraphs.

Development

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

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

Example: Body Paragraph (Little Development)

Many students who study and work have to balance their schedules carefully. They have to make time for a lot of things because they have a lot of things to do. They are really busy with all of these things. There are lots of tasks that they need to finish on time. It can be very difficult for students to make time for all of their obligations.

Example: Body Paragraph (Revised for Development)

Many students who study and work have to balance their schedules carefully. They have to make time to go to class, go to work, and also complete their homework. If they don't plan their time carefully, they may not be able to meet these obligations and then they will face serious consequences. They may lose money by not making time for work, or they may get bad grades in their classes by not having time to study. After these obligations are met, there are other activities many students enjoy, like spending time with friends, doing hobbies, or dating. They will not have time for these extra activities without balancing their schedules first. It can be very difficult for students to make time for all of their obligations, but it is essential to their success and well-being.

You can revise a paragraph that lacks development by adding or revising supporting sentences. Supporting sentences can give examples, explanations, details, descriptions, facts, reasons, etc. Which types of supporting sentences you use will depend on your topic.

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

The first example paragraph had poor development because the ideas stopped too soon. The writer said that students need to balance their schedules carefully because they are busy.

The revised body paragraph has better development. It stated that students need to balance their schedules carefully because they are busy, and it did not stop too soon. It gave lots of examples and relevant details.

In order to revise the paragraph, the author might have asked questions like this:

Students are busy.

- Question: Why are students busy?
 - Answer: Because they have many obligations.
- Question: What obligations?
 - Answer: School, work, homework.
- Question: Why should they fulfill all of these obligations?
 - Answer: So they don't face serious consequences.
- Question: Like what?
 - Answer: Losing money or getting bad grades.

Sometimes paragraphs that lack development have the length of a developed paragraph, but don't clearly develop an idea because the writer was trying to sound academic or add extra words to make a paragraph longer. **Good development is not the same thing as length.** You need to focus on supporting your ideas rather than making your sentences or paragraphs long. Compare the following paragraphs. Even though the second paragraph is a little shorter, the paragraph is more developed. The redundant words are crossed out.

Example: Body Paragraph (Poor Development)

Many students who study and work have to balance their schedules carefully. They have to make time to go to all of their different classes, go to work, and also complete their many various homework assignments. If they don't plan their time carefully, they may not be able to meet these obligations and then they will face serious and very large consequences. They may lose money by not making time for work or they may get bad and very poor grades in their classes by not having time to study. After these obligations are met, there are other activities many students enjoy like spending time with friends, doing hobbies, or dating. These are enjoyable activities for them. They will not have time for these extra activities without balancing their schedules first. It can be very difficult for students to make time for all of their obligations, but it is essential to their success.

Example: Body Paragraph (Revised for Development)

Many students who study and work have to balance their schedules carefully. They have to make time to go to ~~all of their different~~ classes, go to work, and also complete their ~~many various~~ homework ~~assignments~~. If they don't plan their time carefully, they may not be able to meet these obligations and then they will face serious ~~and very large~~ consequences. They may lose money by not making time for work or they may get bad ~~and very poor~~ grades in their classes by not having time to study. After these obligations are met, there are other activities many students enjoy like spending time with friends, doing hobbies, or dating. ~~These are enjoyable activities for them.~~ They will not have time for these extra activities without balancing their schedules first. It can be very difficult for students to make time for all of their obligations, but it is essential to their success.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Ask questions to generate supporting sentences.

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

Topic sentence: There are many reasons for people to travel abroad.

Question: Why should people travel abroad?

Answer:

Question:

Answer:

Question:

Answer:

Exercise 2: Ask questions to generate supporting sentences.

Write questions about the topic sentence. Use the answers to write a developed paragraph on a piece of paper.

EX: Topic sentence: Learning how to cook is a valuable skill.

Possible questions:

1. Why is cooking a valuable skill to learn?
2. Who should learn how to cook?
3. What happens to people that don't know how to cook?

Paragraph:

Learning how to cook is a valuable skill. Everyone needs to eat, so everyone should learn to cook a few basic dishes. The first reason that cooking is so valuable is because it can save money. People that don't know how to cook eat out or purchase prepared meals at the grocery store, which can be very expensive. Another reason that learning how to cook is so valuable is because it is often healthier. Many meals that are ready-to-go have preservatives and the ingredients aren't as fresh. Learning this skill is essential.

Practice with these topic sentences.

1. Topic sentence: People need to learn how to set goals.
2. Topic sentence: People should learn another language.

Exercise 3: Eliminate redundancy to improve development.

This body paragraph has poor development. Read the paragraph and revise it on a piece of paper.

Students who do not work may not have exactly all of the same stress that working students have, but they have other things to worry about. Some students need to plan a very careful budget in order to save as much money as they can and not spend too much money that they shouldn't spend because they don't have very much money to spend. Other students worry about maintaining very high grades so that their sponsor will see their diligence and allow them to continue studying. They spend a lot of time studying as much as possible and practicing the skills they learn in class so that they can do well on the exams and pass the exams and quizzes with very good scores. Passing the exams and quizzes is very important to them and so they spend a lot of time studying. This can cause significant stress in their lives. These are just some of the additional concerns students face when they are not working during the semester.



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/writing.

Revising



When you finish writing your essay, you should revise it. Revising your essay means that you make changes to your essay to improve it. After you revise what you wrote, you may need to return to either of the previous stages (prewriting or writing) to make improvements to your writing.

Many people divide the revising stage into revising and editing. When they make this distinction, **revising** focuses on making changes to improve the clarity of your ideas and organization. **Editing** focuses on making changes to improve the clarity of your grammar. Revising ideas, logic, and organization should generally be completed before editing grammar and mechanics.

Here are some questions you can use when you are revising your essays, giving feedback to a peer, or evaluating a sample essay:

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

Self-check

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

1. Start by simply reading through your essay for typos.
2. Look through your essay for basic grammar that you know well. For example, you can check to make sure every sentence has a subject and a verb (and that they agree).
3. If you are not writing for a test, try reading your writing out loud. This may help you identify more errors as you hear what your writing sounds like.

Get feedback and make changes

If you are not writing for a test, have a friend or a tutor review your writing before you submit it to your teacher. Then use the feedback you get to make changes.

Peer Review



Peer review is an activity you complete by reading something that one of your classmates has written and giving them feedback about their writing. Peer review can be a very powerful tool for you as a reviewer because you get to see how readers experience writing. You can see how ideas need to connect logically and you understand how a reader feels when there is not enough support.

It can also be useful for you as a writer because you get an outside perspective on your writing and you can find out where your ideas may not be connected or supported well enough.

As you give feedback, there are a few guidelines to keep in mind.

1. **Give specific feedback.** Don't say things like "This paragraph is confusing" or "This thesis is great." Give specific reasons or details when you are giving feedback like "This thesis statement is really clear. It is specific and matches the style of the essay really well."
2. **Focus on revising before editing.** Try to look past grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors to focus on the ideas in what you read. Look for how ideas are supported, developed, and connected.
3. **Find both positive and negative things to give feedback on.** Don't just focus on problems. Find things that were also done well.

As you receive feedback, there are also some guidelines you should keep in mind.

1. **Ask questions.** If there are sections you don't understand, ask the writer for clarification.
2. **Listen to understand before you revise.** You aren't necessarily going to take every suggestion that your peer gives you, but you should listen to understand all of the suggestions. Once you understand them, you can decide what you will use in your revisions.

If your teacher gives you feedback on a draft before the final draft of your essay is due, make sure you use it to improve your essay. Ask questions about feedback that you do not understand. More than just improving your essay, understanding feedback from a teacher will improve your ability to write in the future.

Many teachers use symbols like the following to mark specific types of errors. If your teacher uses codes, make sure you clearly understand what the codes mean and how to fix the error.

Symbol	Code
TH	Thesis
TS	Topic Sentence
SS	Supporting Sentence
CS	Concluding Sentence
UN	Unity
DEV	Development

CO	Cohesion
EX	Example
SP	Spelling
CL	Clarity



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/revising.

Originality



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

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

Typically at this level, your writing will not require sources*, so this book will not instruct you on proper citation methods. You should ensure that the ideas you include in your essays are your ideas and that you have not copied anything from anyone. Make sure you choose topics for your essays that do not require you to search for information on the internet.

*Summaries (or the TOEFL integrated task) are an exception. You will practice giving proper credit through introductory phrases. You should use phrases that show the source of what you are summarizing like "according to the professor..." or "the reading stated that..." This is not the same type of citation that is required for academic essays.



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/originality.

Timed Writing (Expectations)

Timed writing can take many forms, but the main requirement of this type of writing is a time limit to complete it. A time limit most commonly occurs in an exam situation. The tester is evaluating how well you understand a topic and/or can explain your thoughts without any help (ex. teacher, peer review, spell check, translator, etc). The amount of time and the expected length of your writing will depend on the instructions.

You could expect to find a timed writing portion of a test or quiz in any subject. It doesn't matter if you plan to study business, engineering, music, or linguistics. Timed essays are used frequently to get you to analyze, argue, or create something with what you have learned. Essays push you to show more than just recognizing a correct answer.

Timed Writing Expectations

The first strategy for timed writing is to fully understand the expectations. This means that when you have a timed writing prompt, you should first think about the context.

Questions to think about for timed writing

- How much time do you have?
- Who will be reading your answer and why are they reading it?
- What length of a response does the teacher expect?
- What about my writing is most important to the teacher?
- Are there other sections of the test (like multiple choice questions) that you need to complete in the time that is given?
- Does the test allow spell check?
- Is this test more focused on language accuracy or comprehension of the topic accuracy?

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

Examples of timed writing prompts & expectations

- Compare and contrast the similarities and differences between grocery shopping in the United States and in your home country. Choose at least three aspects in your comparison.
 - Time: 30 minutes
 - Audience: ELC writing teacher; evaluating thesis and topic sentences
 - Length: 4 paragraphs
 - Focus: Organization
 - Other sections: No
 - Help: No spell check, no dictionary/translator, no peer review, no help from teacher
 - Purpose: Accuracy in structure, not accuracy in grammar
- Read this opinion post from social media. Respond to it by agreeing or disagreeing and supporting your position.
 - Time: 10 minutes to read; 20 minutes to write
 - Audience: ELC writing teacher & reading teacher; evaluating supporting details and comprehension of reading
 - Length: 2 paragraphs
 - Focus: Comprehension of information; structure of argument
 - Other sections: Reading passage
 - Help: Peer discussion of article before writing, no additional support
 - Purpose: comprehension of article points and clarity of personal opinion
- Explain the process of applying for a job at BYU. What are the steps you should follow to be successful in getting a job?
 - Time: 40 minutes (not limited by the website, this is limited by the time you have)
 - Audience: online discussion board for other international students
 - Length: 300 words max
 - Focus: Clarity, accuracy
 - Other sections: 3 other essay prompts (separate time for each)
 - Help: You can use support, but it must still be your writing
 - Purpose: clear organization and accuracy that demonstrates readiness for college

Planning your Time

Think about how to use the time as a helper. Think about how you can use the time to keep yourself focused. For example, if the essay is only a small part of the total test grade, control the amount of time you give yourself to write the answer and use more of your time for the other questions. You might do this by answering that writing question first under a stricter time limit before you answer any of the multiple choice questions. Divide the time you have to work with so you can work smarter.

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

Minutes	Time (Counting down)	Task
3	30:00-27:00	Write your thesis and topic sentences (outline)
7	27:00-20:00	Write your first body paragraph

7	20:00-13:00	Write your second body paragraph
5	13:00-8:00	Write your introduction paragraph
5	8:00-3:00	Write your conclusion paragraph
3	3:00-0:00	Revise and edit your essay

You might wonder why this example starts with the body paragraphs instead of the introduction and conclusion. This is one suggestion of how to focus your time to develop your ideas and create a good organization for the main part of the essay. The introduction and conclusion are usually easier to write after you have the middle. If you run out of time, you would still have at least your thesis statement and restatement as the minimum expectation for the beginning and end of your essay.

There are other approaches to choosing which paragraph to start with:

- Start with the point that is easiest to write, leaving the sections that are hardest for when you have some momentum to your writing. (Note: This may create a challenge if you are still stuck and have no time to revise)
- Start from the beginning and work to the end. (Note: Although this seems like the obvious way to approach writing, it can often lead to disorganized thoughts)

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

Exercises

Exercise 1: LATs Rubric

Take some time to look over the writing rubric used for the Language Acquisition Test used at the ELC

1. What will the test raters be focusing on as they assign a score to your essay?
2. How is this rubric similar or different from the rubrics your AA Writing teacher is using this semester?

Exercise 2: Timed Writing Practice

Before you begin writing, ask your teacher questions about the expectations for this timed writing practice. Listen carefully and decide how you will focus your time to meet those expectations.

- What are three important or interesting things that you think people should know about you?

Set a timer for 20 minutes. Write about the above topic. Your response should be between 250-300 words.



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/timed_writing_1.

Integrated Writing (Writing Process)

Integrated writing is an very common type of writing, especially in college. In fact, almost all of the writing you will do can be considered at least partially "integrated."

Integration means using your reading and/or listening skills to help you write. When we read or listen and then answer a question with writing, we are using a receptive skill to support our ideas. In academic writing, you will often need to show that you understand. Sometimes integrated writing includes comparing/contrasting or providing your own opinion on the topic.

Because this common in academic writing, you can expect to see integrated tasks in possibly any college course you have. Usually, an integrated task allows you to look at the reading or review the listening (or at least the notes you took) when you write. However, there may be times when there is a time limit (like on a quiz or test). This means that you need to understand the first time you listen/read so you can begin writing quickly.

Integrated Writing Expectations

When you start an integrated writing assignment, there are two main things to think about: source content and task.

Source Content

Because you will be summarizing, comparing, or giving an opinion about the original material, you will first need to understand the sources. In addition to main ideas and major details, think about the following questions:

- Is there one required source material or multiple?
- Is the content written or spoken?
- How complex are the ideas presented?
- How does this connect to other ideas we have talked about in this class (or another class)? Should I include these connections in my writing, or can I only write about the source content given now?
- What connections are there between the different sources?

When you read and/or listen, ask yourself some questions to make sure you get all of the necessary information:

- Who is writing? Who is the audience? Are people being discussed? (who)
- What is the main idea? What important details are included? (what)
- Is place important to this topic? (where)
- Is time important to this topic? (when)
- What purpose does the author have in saying/writing this? (why)
- How is the information organized? (how)

These are all skills you will continue to refine in your listening and reading classes. Pay close attention to the strategies you learn there and practice writing summaries of what you understood after each class period to practice this skill.

Task

The next step is to make sure you understand what you need to do with the information you get from the sources.

Questions to think about for integrated writing

- Is one source more important than another?
- Is this a comparison, summary, opinion, or cause-effect task?
- What does the teacher expect in my answer?
- To what degree can I include my own opinion or background knowledge?
- Am I expected to include direct quotes/references to the text or to discuss it more indirectly through summary and paraphrase?
- Is there a time limit for reviewing the source and/or writing my response?

When you can look at or listen to the sources while you write, it will feel similar to a drafted essay. The difference is that you add supporting sentences that are not *your* ideas. Those supporting ideas are from the source.

However, on the TOEFL you cannot see the sources before you write and you have a limited amount of time to understand the ideas and connect them.

Examples of integrated writing prompts

- Explain the two authors' different opinions on child care. Choose at least three points in your comparison.
- Read the newspaper article and explain if the opinion has enough strong support to convince the reader.
- Read two paragraphs from the textbook, then listen to the professor's opinion on the same topic. What reasons does the professor give for disagreeing with the reading?

Writing with Time Limits

An outline will *always* benefit you. You may think that the best idea is to immediately start writing, but that could lead to a very disorganized or unfocused answer. Read the prompt carefully and make a simple outline of ideas from the source(s). Identify any specific words or phrases that you need to include.

Second, be realistic about the time you have to work on this task. Skim the source material to check the time it will take to read or listen to it. If the topic is complex or unfamiliar, you might want to take notes too. Next, look at the due date and your personal schedule and decide how much time you have to work on this project. Will you have time to write multiple drafts? Is there time to have a classmate review your writing or to visit the campus Writing Center?

You may need to use your time differently depending on what is important to your teacher. For example, sometimes grammar accuracy is very important and you need to give yourself more time to revise and edit. You will also want to consider how necessary it is for you to understand the ideas. In other words, some topics will be easy for you to write about because you are comfortable with them. You should also remember that if the assignment is a small part of your total grade, you might not want to use a lot of time working on this compared to other assignments.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Integrated Writing Practice

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

Teachers have access to the "The Loch Ness Monster" Integrated Writing files on the ELC Curriculum Portfolio.



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/integrated_writing_1.

Introduction to Academic Essays



In many academic

settings, the writer is more responsible than the reader for bringing clarity to the text. Understanding the normal conventions for style, shape, and organization will help you write clearly.

Style
Shape
Organization
Introduction Paragraphs
Body Paragraphs
Conclusion Paragraphs
Example Essay 1
Example Essay 2
Timed Writing (The Prompt)



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/introduction_to_acad.

Style



It is important to recognize that just like there are many distinct

styles of art or music, there are different styles of writing. Each style has its own unique characteristics and techniques.

Think about how distinct each of these pieces of writing is:

A newspaper article vs. a short story

A college application essay vs. a job resume

These differences may seem obvious, but there are also differences between academic writing assignments. A 40-page master's thesis will be structured very differently from a chemistry lab report, which will be structured differently from an 8-page research paper. In this class, you will learn a specific style of basic academic writing that is called a "five-paragraph essay." This is a very predictable nonfiction essay structure that is considered foundational to other, more advanced writing styles. A five-paragraph essay will be described in detail in the following sections.

There are a variety of benefits that come from learning how to write a five-paragraph essay. First, in order to write using other styles in the future, you need to know how to analyze an example text and base your writing off the structure you identified. Because five-paragraph essays are so straightforward, they make a good style of writing to learn this skill with. Similarly, it provides a simple context for mastering complicated skills that apply to a variety of writing styles like

logically connecting your ideas. Writing a five-paragraph essay is also a gateway skill to college admission for many students on timed exams like the TOEFL, GRE, LATs, etc. As such, most of your native-speaking peers have learned this structure in their high schools and you will have similar background knowledge to those peers as you enter the university.

You should be very careful to not assume that everything you write will always follow the structure of a five-paragraph essay. In fact, many college writing teachers will ask you to break the five-paragraph structure and use more complex structures. Your future writing will be better if you learn how to control this more prescriptive form of writing while applying the skills you will learn in this class (e.g., developing your ideas, using adequate support, etc.). You need to remember to be flexible in the way you approach writing assignments at the university. Always do a little background research before you begin writing something in a new style. That background research should include reading any resources your instructor gives you, especially a rubric or assignment description sheet.

As part of knowing the style you will use, you should understand that at this level, your essays should be based on your own knowledge and experiences (not facts you find from any outside sources). Using sources improperly can lead to plagiarism, which is a serious issue in the U.S.



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/style.

Shape

Before anyone reads your essay, you communicate something about your skill by the shape of your essay. You should divide your essay (more or less evenly) into paragraphs.

Typical formatting guidelines you should be aware of include using 12 pt font, Times New Roman font, double spacing, one inch margins, left-alignment, indented paragraphs, and not leaving a space between paragraphs.

If you are writing a timed essay on the computer, most of these formatting features are not within your control. You should however, still make an effort to divide your essay into paragraphs by either indenting at the beginning of the paragraph or leaving an empty line between paragraphs.





This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/shape.

Organization



Five-paragraph essays have very predictable organization.

These short, academic essays typically have four, five, or six paragraphs: one introduction paragraph; two, three, or four body paragraphs; and one conclusion paragraph. The number of body paragraphs you need can change depending on the topic or time requirement (but they are still generally referred to as “five-paragraph essays”).

The way you organize your ideas in a five-paragraph essay may be different from the way you normally organize your ideas. You should focus on one central idea, and that idea needs to be clearly stated multiple times. The essay should present reasons and evidence that support that one, central idea. You may have heard that American writers “tell you what they are going to tell you, they tell you, and then they tell you what they told you.” This is often true in a five-paragraph essay.

While it is often easier to draft your essay by beginning with the body paragraphs, the following section will present the organization of an essay to you in the order your reader should experience your writing. You should prepare them for the topic (in the beginning of the introduction), present your main idea (at the end of the introduction), provide explanations and evidence to support your main idea (in the body paragraphs), and summarize or extend your main idea (in the conclusion).

Introduction Paragraphs
Body Paragraphs
Conclusion Paragraphs
Example Essay 1
Example Essay 2



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/organization.

Introduction Paragraphs

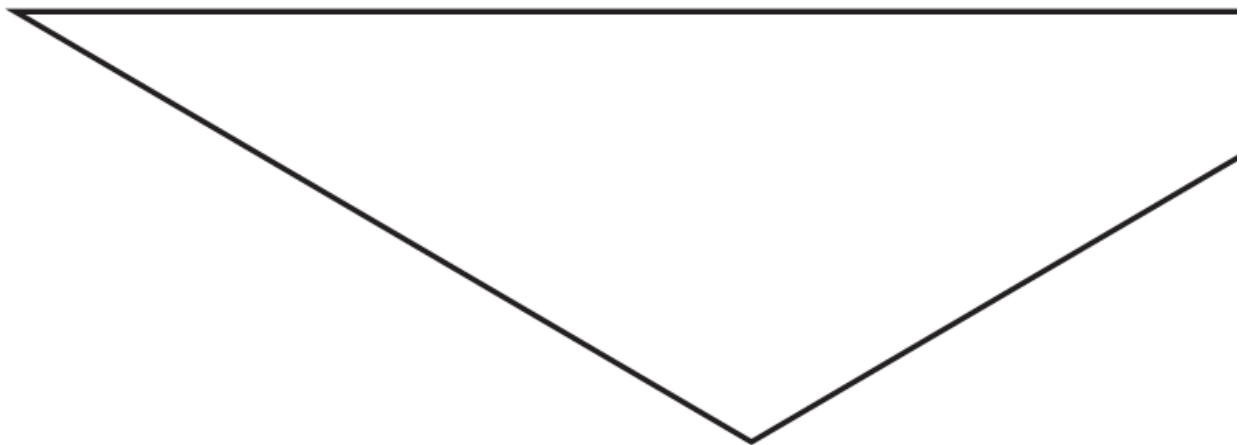
The introduction paragraph is the first paragraph of an essay. This paragraph helps your reader be ready to understand your main idea.

Your introduction paragraph should—

- *grab your reader's attention*
- *introduce the topic of your essay*
- *present your thesis*

You can visualize the ideas in your introduction paragraph by thinking about an inverted triangle. The ideas in the beginning of your introduction paragraph are general. Then you narrow down the topic to a specific idea.

General Topic: Exercise



Specific Idea: Exercise is essential because it
our overall physical and mental health

Grab the reader's attention and introduce the topic

The very first sentence of your introduction should get your reader interested in your topic. The first sentence of an introduction is called a "hook." There are many types of hooks: facts, questions, problems, descriptions, etc. There is not one "perfect" hook for each essay. Your hook can help you introduce the general topic of your essay.

Type of Hook	Example
Fact	Everyone needs to exercise
Question	Do you like to exercise?
Problem	It can be difficult to find time for exercise
Description	Exercise is a sweaty, tiring way to spend your time.

As you introduce your topic, make sure to give the reader enough background information about the topic that the reader will be able to understand the thesis.

Present your thesis

The thesis states the main idea, or focus, of the essay. The rest of the essay will give evidence and explanations that show why or how your thesis is true. Your reader will expect to find the main idea in the introduction paragraph, rather than later in the essay.

An effective thesis—

- addresses the **prompt** if there is one* (i.e., answers the question).
- is usually at the **end** of the introduction paragraph.
- controls the **content** of all of the body paragraphs.
- is a **complete** sentence.
- does **not announce** the topic (e.g., "I'm going to talk about exercise.").
- should **not** simply be a **fact** (e.g., "Many people exercise.").
- should **not** be **too general** (e.g., "Exercise is good.").
- should **not** be **too specific** (e.g., "Exercise decreases the chance of developing diabetes, heart disease, asthma, osteoporosis, depression, and anxiety.").
- may **state** main points (e.g., "Exercise is essential because it improves overall physical and mental health.").
- may **imply** main points (e.g., "Exercise is essential for improving our well-being.")

*In some essays you write, you will not have a specific question to answer. Instead, you may need to choose your own topic. Your essay should still answer a question (e.g., how are typical Japanese and Chinese birthday celebrations similar or different?).

Exercises

Exercise 1: Identify hooks and general topics.

Identify the type of hook used in each introduction paragraph as well as the general topic.

1. Working students deal with a lot of stress in their lives every day. Stress is very common for students while they are working because they have a lot of responsibilities to balance. They have a list of tasks for school and work that can overwhelm their schedules. Feeling stress is normal when there is not enough time to finish all of your responsibilities, but it can have negative results. Instead of avoiding stress, students simply need to learn how to manage it. In order for students to manage stress better, they need to prioritize their tasks, eat well, and get enough sleep.

Type of hook: _____ General topic of the paragraph: _____

2. Many business owners find that running a business is a lot harder than they thought it was. How business owners decide to manage their business will determine their future success. They have to make important decisions about how to manage their business every day. These decisions include hiring employees, the hours of operation, the products and services that will be provided, and the way the business will be advertised. These decisions impact a lot of people. Successful business owners need to make wise decisions that satisfy employees, customers, and investors.

Type of hook: _____ General topic of the paragraph: _____

Exercise 2: Analyze a thesis.

Read the introduction paragraph below to complete this exercise.

Prompt: Why is exercise important?

Thesis: Exercise is essential because it improves overall physical and mental health.

Use this list of criteria to evaluate the thesis.

1. Does the thesis address the prompt?
2. Is the thesis a complete sentence?
3. Does the thesis announce the topic?
4. Is the thesis simply a fact?
5. Is the thesis too general? Too specific?
6. Are the main points stated or implied?

Exercise 3: Identify effective thesis statements.

For each prompt, identify which thesis statement is more effective. Write an X on the line next to the more effective thesis statement.

1. Prompt: Describe your city.

1. ____ Thesis #1 Let's see all of the interesting things you can do in Rome.

2. ____ Thesis #2 Rome has a very unique cultural history.

2. Prompt: What are the qualities of an influential leader?

1. ____ Thesis #1 An influential leader is open-minded and humble.

2. ____ Thesis #2 Some people are born to be leaders and influence the world.

3. Prompt: How can young adults overcome feelings of homesickness?

1. ____ Thesis #1 There are some ways to solve feeling homesick.

2. ____ Thesis #2 Enjoying comforts from home can help combat homesickness.

4. Prompt: How is writing different from speaking in a foreign language?

1. ____ Thesis #1 Writing provides more time to plan and revise than speaking.

2. ____ Thesis #2 Many people around the world communicate through writing.

Exercise 4: Evaluate thesis statements.

Which sentences are effective thesis statements? Which sentences are not effective thesis statements? On a piece of paper, write "yes" if you think the thesis is effective or "no" if you think it is ineffective. Discuss why each thesis is (or is not) effective.

Prompt: Where is the best place for students to study?

1. Now I will show you the best place to study.

2. The benefits of studying in the library.

3. The library is the best place to study due to its many resources and quiet environment.

4. The BYU library is the best place to study because it is open very late most nights, usually until midnight, and students have busy schedules due to work, family, school, friends, and church activities.

5. Why study in the library?

6. Libraries are quiet

7. In this essay, we will see how libraries are useful for many students.

8. There are many features of typical libraries that make a library the best place for students to study.

9. Is because library spaces are quiet and comfortable.

10. Studying is important.

Exercise 5: Write a thesis.

On a piece of paper, write a thesis for each prompt. Make sure the thesis addresses the prompt clearly.

1. *What are weddings like in your country?*
2. *What problems do smartphones cause in our lives?*
3. *What are qualities of a true friend?*
4. *Should video games be prohibited?*



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/introduction_paragraph.

Body Paragraphs

Body paragraphs should all work to support your thesis by explaining why or how your thesis is true. There are three types of sentences in each body paragraph: topic sentences, supporting sentences, and concluding sentences.

Topic sentences

A topic sentence states the focus of the paragraph. The rest of the body paragraph will give evidence and explanations that show why or how your topic sentence is true. A topic sentence is very similar to a thesis. The thesis is the main idea of the essay; a topic sentence is the main idea of a body paragraph. Many of the same characteristics apply to topic sentences that apply to theses. The biggest differences will be the location of the sentence and the scope of the ideas.

An effective topic sentence—

- clearly **supports** the thesis statement.
- is usually at the **beginning** of a body paragraph.
- controls the content of **all** of the supporting sentences in its paragraph.
- is a **complete** sentence.
- does **not announce** the topic (e.g., "I'm going to talk about exercise.").
- should **not** be **too general** (e.g., "Exercise is good.").
- should **not** be **too specific** (e.g., "Exercise decreases the chance of developing diabetes, heart disease, asthma, osteoporosis, depression, and anxiety.").

Supporting sentences

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

Topic Sentence	Exercise improves you mental health.
Supporting Sentences	Exercise is the healthiest way to deal with stress.
	Exercise can influence the balance of chemicals in our bodies.
	Exercise also helps us think more clearly.

Concluding sentences

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

Type of Concluding Sentence	Example
Restatement of topic sentence	Because it makes your body healthier, exercise is extremely important.
Opinion	These health benefits show that exercise is not a waste of time.
Prediction	When people see these health benefits, they will want to exercise more.
Advice	Everyone should exercise regularly to obtain these amazing health benefits.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Analyze a topic sentence.

Read the example body paragraph below to complete this exercise on a piece of paper.

Prompt: Why is exercise important?

Thesis: Exercise is essential because it improves overall physical and mental health.

Because it makes your body healthier, exercise is extremely important. One of the physical benefits of exercise is having stronger muscles. The only way to make your muscles stronger is to use them, and exercises like crunches, squats, lunges, push-ups, and weight-lifting are good examples of exercises that strengthen your muscles. Another benefit of exercise is that it lowers your heart rate. A slow heart rate can show that our hearts are working more efficiently and they don't have to pump as many times in a minute to get blood to our organs. Related to our heart beating more efficiently, our blood pressure decreases. These are just some of the incredible health benefits of exercise.

Find the topic sentence. Use the following criteria to evaluate the topic sentence.

1. Does the topic sentence clearly support the thesis statement?
2. Is the topic sentence at the beginning of the body paragraph?
3. Does the topic sentence control the content of all the supporting sentences?
4. Is the topic sentence a complete sentence?
5. Does the topic sentence announce the topic?
6. Is the topic sentence too general? Is it too specific?

Exercise 2: Identify topic sentences.

Each group of sentences has three supporting sentences and one topic sentence. The topic sentence must be broad enough to include all of the supporting sentences. In each group of sentences, choose which sentence is the topic sentence. Write the letter of the topic sentence on the line given.

Group 1: Topic sentence: _____

- A. In southern Utah, hikers enjoy the scenic trails in Zion National Park.
- B. Many cities in Utah have created hiking trails in city parks for people to use.
- C. There are hiking paths in Utah's Rocky Mountains that provide beautiful views.
- D. Hikers all over Utah can access hiking trails and enjoy nature.

Group 2: Topic sentence: _____

- A. People in New York speak many different languages.
- B. New York is a culturally diverse city.
- C. People in New York belong to many different religions.
- D. Restaurants in New York have food from all over the world.

Group 3: Topic sentence: _____

- A. Websites like YouTube have video tutorials that teach many different skills.
- B. Computer programs like PowerPoint are used in classrooms to teach new concepts.
- C. Technology helps people learn things in today's world.
- D. Many educational apps have been created to help children in school.

Group 4: Topic sentence: _____

- A. Museums at BYU host events on the weekends for students.
- B. There are many fun activities for students at BYU on the weekends.
- C. There are incredible student concerts at BYU on Friday and Saturday nights.
- D. BYU clubs plan exciting activities for students to do on the weekends.

Group 5: Topic sentence: _____

- A. Some places have a scent that people remember when they think of that place.
- B. The smell of someone's cologne can trigger a memory of that person.
- C. Smelling certain foods can bring back memories of eating that food.
- D. Many different memories can be connected to specific smells.

Exercise 3: Write topic sentences

Read each paragraph. On a piece of paper, write a topic sentence on the line at the beginning of the paragraph.

1. _____ The first difference is that you have more privacy in a private room than in a shared room. You can go to your room to have a private phone call or Skype with your family and you are not bothered by other people. When you share your room, it can be hard to find private time when you can do things alone. Another difference is that it is lonelier in a private room than in a shared room. When you share your room with a roommate, you have someone that you can talk to. Frequently when you have a private room, you are alone more often. These two housing options are very different.

2. _____ People like to eat chocolate because it has many delicious flavors. For example, there are mint chocolates, milk chocolates, dark chocolates, white chocolates, chocolates with honey, and chocolates with nuts. Another reason people like to eat chocolate is because it reduces stress, which can help people to relax and feel better. The last reason people like to eat chocolate is because it can be cooked in many different ways. You can eat chocolate candies, mix chocolate with warm milk to drink, or prepare a chocolate dessert. These reasons are some of the reasons that people like to eat chocolate.

3. _____ A respectful roommate does not leave the main areas of the apartment messy after they use them. For example, they wash their dishes instead of leaving dirty pots and pans on the stove. They also don't borrow things from other roommates without asking to use them first. In addition to respecting everyone's need for space and their possessions, the ideal roommate is respectful of his or her roommate's schedule. For example, if one roommate is asleep and the other roommate needs to study, the ideal roommate goes to the kitchen or living room instead of waking up the sleeping roommate. These simple gestures of respect make a roommate an excellent person to share an apartment with.

Exercise 4: Identify good supporting sentences.

Read the topic sentence. Then circle which sentences would be good supporting sentences.

Topic Sentence: Eating pancakes for breakfast saves time and money.

- A. Pancakes can be prepared in large quantities and then frozen, so the time it takes to cook breakfast is only a few minutes.
- B. Pancakes are very inexpensive to make because you only need a few ingredients.
- C. Pancakes are delicious and can be prepared in a variety of flavors.
- D. Pancakes save money because you can buy a big box of mix and only make what you need; you don't waste money because you can save the extra mix for another time.
- E. Fresh fruit is a really quick breakfast because you only need to wash it and eat it.

Exercise 5: Identify good concluding sentences.

Read the topic sentence. Then circle which sentences would be good concluding sentences.

Topic Sentence: A shared room offers students a more social experience.

- A. Students who want more social interaction should have a shared room.
- B. A shared room is not good for students who work late.
- C. Everyone loves having a shared room.
- D. These examples illustrate how much more social a shared room can be.
- E. Really social students will enjoy having a shared room.

Exercise 6: Write concluding sentences.

On a piece of paper, write a concluding sentence at the end of each paragraph.

1. New York is a culturally diverse city. This culture is continually broadened because people immigrate from all over the world bringing different religions, food, and languages with them. This city has people that speak over 30 languages, including Arabic, Mandarin, Urdu, Russian, and Polish. There are also more than 20 major religions represented by citizens of New York. These citizens brought more than their language and religion with them, however. They also brought traditional foods from their countries. _____

2. Technology helps people learn things in today's world. This educational technology includes various websites, apps, programs, and many more things. Popular websites that are used for education include YouTube, TED, Canvas, and CrashCourse. Similarly, there are a variety of educational apps. These apps help users learn languages, history, math, and other practical skills. Computer programs are yet another way to use technology as a way to help people learn. Programs like PowerPoint are frequently used in classrooms as a means to deliver visual support to a lecture or presentation. This visual support aids learning and retention. _____



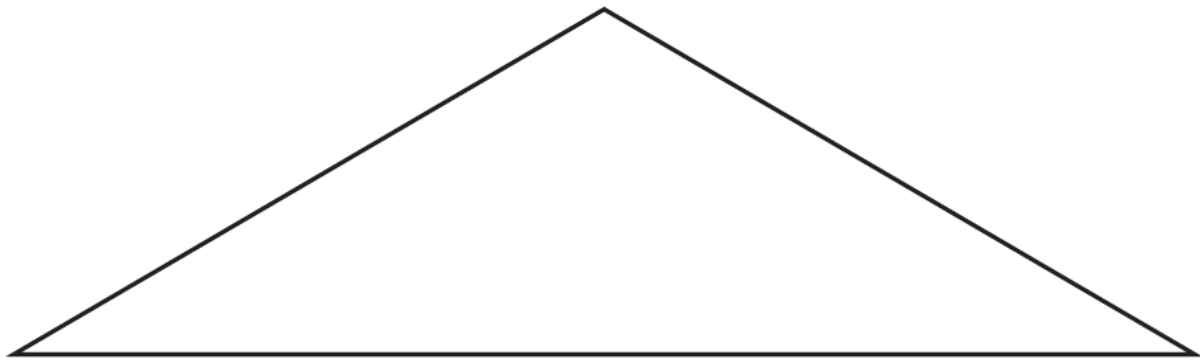
This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/body_paragraphs.

Conclusion Paragraphs

Your conclusion paragraph should logically conclude your essay, just like your concluding sentences logically conclude your body paragraphs. The conclusion paragraph should begin by restating your thesis, and then you should broaden back out to a general topic. End with a closing statement. This paragraph looks like the reverse of your introduction paragraph, going from specific to general.

Specific Idea: Exercise is essential because it improves our overall physical and mental health.



General Topic: Exercise

Restate your thesis

The first sentence of your conclusion paragraph should restate your thesis. A restated thesis expresses the same idea, but the words are different. Remember that the meaning of your thesis should not change. Compare the thesis with the restatement below.

Thesis: Exercise is essential because it improves overall physical and mental health.

Restated: Due to the mental and physical health benefits of exercise, it is absolutely crucial for our bodies.

You can restate your thesis by

- changing the order of the phrases
- using synonyms (e.g., essential > crucial)
- stating main points directly instead of implying them (or vice versa)
- using different word forms (e.g., adjective > noun)

Apply your thesis to general contexts

Connect your thesis back to the general topics you mentioned in your introduction.

Give a closing statement

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

Exercises

Exercise 1: Identify effective restated thesis statements

Read the thesis statement. Choose the best restated thesis from the options below.

Thesis: Apartment complexes should provide quiet study rooms for residents so they can study without distractions.

- A. Study rooms are important for students to study in.
- B. Apartment managers should build quiet places to study for residents.
- C. Now we can see that study rooms are valuable for students who live in apartments.
- D. It is important for apartments to provide their residents with quiet study areas.

Exercise 2: Restate a thesis

On a piece of paper, rewrite each thesis statement as you would at the beginning of a conclusion paragraph.

1. In order for students to manage stress better, they need to prioritize their tasks, eat well, and get enough sleep.
2. Even though Salt Lake City and Madrid may seem similar based on climate, their major religions, language, and food are distinct.
3. Business owners need to make decisions that satisfy employees, customers, and investors.
4. Increasing your vocabulary is easy if you try to notice new words in context, review them often, and use them as much as you can.

Exercise 3: Write a conclusion paragraph

Read the introduction paragraph and then finish writing the conclusion paragraph on a piece of paper.

Prompt: Describe how to write an essay.

Introduction:

Many writers feel overwhelmed when they write an essay. They are unsure of where to start or how to be successful. However, the process is very basic. There are simple steps that can simplify the process and make writing a good essay possible for anyone. In order to write an impactful essay, it is essential that writers plan, draft, and share their writing.

Exercise 4: Identify types of paragraphs.

Identify whether each paragraph is an introduction, body, or conclusion paragraph.

1. *Type of paragraph:* _____

Touchscreen technology, wireless charging, and a better camera are the best features on the new iPhone. These qualities all encourage customers to consider buying this phone because it is easier to use, more convenient, and more useful than other models. When you start looking for your upgrade, you should ask yourself if your new phone should have these features. The new iPhone does. What are you waiting for? You won't regret upgrading to the new iPhone.

2. *Type of paragraph:* _____

A successful restaurant requires many workers, each with specific jobs that help things run smoothly. Cooks in the kitchen skillfully prepare the food. Servers take orders, deliver meals, and ensure the customers are satisfied. The hostess greets the customers as they enter the restaurant and sets the tone for the customer's experience. All of these people are necessary to make a restaurant successful.

3. *Type of paragraph:* _____

All year long, the scenery in Utah Valley is amazing. In the winter, the valley is covered with a blanket of snow. In the spring, the trees blossom with flowers. The summer weather beckons hikers to discover the stunning vistas in the canyons. The Rocky Mountains then take on beautiful shades of red, orange, and yellow in the fall. As each season changes, the beauty of the area is evident. While all of the seasons are stunning, the most beautiful season in Utah is the autumn.

Exercise 5: Analyze an essay

Read one of the following example essays on the following pages to complete this exercise.

1. Label the introduction paragraph, the body paragraphs, and the conclusion paragraph.
2. Circle the hook.
3. What is the general topic of the essay?
4. Underline the thesis.
5. Underline each of the topic sentences.
6. Do each of the topic sentences support the thesis?
7. Does the conclusion paragraph start by restating the thesis?



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/conclusion_paragraph.

Example Essay 1

Benefits of Exercise

It can be difficult to find time to exercise. This is because there are many demands on our time. We have work, school, family, and leisure activities that we want to do. Sometimes because of these demands, we do not have very much time to work out. However, making time for exercise brings unique benefits to our lives that are difficult to get in other ways. Exercise is essential because it improves our overall physical and mental health.

Because it makes your body healthier, exercise is extremely important. One of the physical benefits of exercise is having stronger muscles. The only way to make your muscles stronger is to use them, and exercises like crunches, squats, push-ups, and weightlifting are good examples of exercises that strengthen your muscles. Another health benefit of exercise is that it lowers your heart rate. A slow heart rate shows that our hearts are working more efficiently and they don't have to pump as quickly to get blood to our organs. Related to our heart beating more efficiently, our blood pressure decreases. These are just some of the incredible health benefits of exercise.

Another compelling reason that exercise is crucial is that it improves your mental health. First, exercise is the healthiest way to deal with stress. When we have too much stress, our mental and emotional health is affected negatively. Exercise can reduce this impact. Exercise can also influence the balance of chemicals we have inside our bodies. Exercise releases endorphins into our bodies and that can help us feel better or not be depressed. These emotional benefits are very helpful. Exercise also helps us think more clearly because it brings more oxygen to the brain. If you watch how you feel when you exercise, you will notice that your mood and mental clarity improve.

Due to the mental and physical health benefits of exercise, it is absolutely crucial for our bodies. There is not a good substitute for exercise, so spending our time exercising is very valuable. While people have many demands on their time, the other activities we do cannot replace exercise in our lives. People should make exercise a priority in their daily schedules. If they do, their body and mind will thank them.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Analyze an essay.

Read one of the two Process Example Essays on the following pages to complete this exercise.

1. Label the introduction paragraph, the body paragraphs, and the conclusion paragraph.
2. Circle the hook.
3. What is the general topic of the essay?
4. Underline the thesis.
5. Underline each of the topic sentences.
6. Do each of the topic sentences support the thesis?
7. Does the conclusion paragraph start by restating the thesis?



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/example_essay_1.

Example Essay 2

An Extraordinary Musician

What makes one musician amazing while another is simply average? Some musicians seem to have special qualities that make their music exceptional. These qualities go beyond knowing how to play an instrument. Certainly any musician needs to have training of some kind to play an instrument with skill. However, an excellent musician is not simply a musician with more knowledge than others. An extraordinary musician is dedicated and proactive.

An extraordinary musician is dedicated to practice. When a musician is dedicated to practice, he practices consistently, even when practice may be boring. This dedication makes him exceptional because he fine-tunes his skills and perfects his techniques through consistent practice. An example of a specialized skill that can be perfected through consistent practice is playing mordents on a piano. A lot of musicians can avoid playing them or replace them with easier notes. A dedicated musician will practice mordents until he can play them consistently. Being dedicated is a necessary characteristic of being excellent as a musician.

Another quality of an extraordinary musician is being proactive. A proactive musician will ask other musicians for feedback or advice without waiting for someone to approach her. This will make her an excellent musician because she will improve more than she would if she were on her own. She will know what to work on if she gets advice and help on her technique, her form, her speed, or her posture. Some of these things, especially posture, would be hard to improve without seeking feedback from someone. By seeking feedback, a proactive person will be an exceptional musician.

Proactivity and dedication are qualities of an extraordinary musician. These qualities set an excellent musician apart from average musicians because an excellent musician uses these qualities to refine his skills. Almost any musician will know how to play his instrument, but knowledge alone isn't enough. With dedication and proactivity, a musician can reach the highest levels of skill in performance. When these musicians play, the audience can see their skill and be moved by the performance.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Analyze an essay.

Read one of the two Process Example Essays on the following pages to complete this exercise.

1. Label the introduction paragraph, the body paragraphs, and the conclusion paragraph.
2. Circle the hook.
3. What is the general topic of the essay?
4. Underline the thesis.
5. Underline each of the topic sentences.
6. Do each of the topic sentences support the thesis?
7. Does the conclusion paragraph start by restating the thesis?



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/example_essay_2.

Timed Writing (The Prompt)

Time is always a limited resource. Sometimes you will write with a time limit because you only have an hour to take a test and there is a short essay section. But the most common timed writing occurs because you can only plan a limited amount of time to work on a paper because of your other commitments. Learning how to manage your time in these assignments will help you to keep a balance between your homework assignments and your personal life.

When you are working with a limited amount of time, it is extra important to organize your time so that you can create a complete response. You do not have time to waste. Sometimes a time limit creates stress (especially in a test environment), so here are some tips to reduce your stress and focus the time you have in a productive way.

The Prompt

One of the challenges of timed writing is making quick decisions about content and organization. The brainstorming stage is limited and requires you to move swiftly into creating your paragraphs. Unlike most writing situations, you don't have weeks of preparation time to research ideas, revise, and get feedback on your essay.

First, you need to be clear on what the prompt is asking you. This is true in any assignment, but it is especially important when you have limited time to make corrections. You need to recognize the type of writing (compare, describe, argue, explain) and create a thesis statement and supporting points that make a clear road map for what you will say. Additionally, you need to check the prompt to make sure that you are addressing all of the points.

Once you have analyzed the prompt, you should be able to start creating your outline so you have all of the necessary pieces.

Make a short list of the parts of the prompt if there are multiple questions. That is a good first step for creating a thesis and topic sentences that cover all of the necessary information.

Understanding and including all of the parts of the prompt is important for two reasons.

The first reason is that the question is specifically designed to get you to write about the topic for a specific reason. A multi-part question signals to you the degree of complexity that the audience expects to find in your response. If you miss information from your response, your reader might assume that this means you don't know the information.

Second, your audience may attribute missing information to a lack of language ability. This is especially true in a standardized test like the TOEFL or the GRE where the reader knows nothing about your ability other than what you show on the test. The reader might think that you chose not to write about part of the question because you do not have the grammar or vocabulary to explain your ideas. This unfortunately might be your college professor's assumption as well, especially if a professor in a large class does not get many opportunities to speak with you one on one.

Therefore, it's in your best interest to carefully read through the prompt and dissect it. Once you know what the reader expects, you can write a stronger response with more purposeful organization.

Outline Ideas

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

Your outline should include the important basics you will practice throughout this semester:

Timed Outlining

- Read the prompt carefully.
- Brainstorm your ideas for each part of the prompt.
- Organize your ideas into a logical outline.
- Decide on what is the most important to include.
- Write a thesis statement that directly answers the main part of the prompt.
- Write topic sentences for your main points.
- Write a restated thesis statement.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Analyze Timed Writing Prompt

Read the prompts below. Identify the linguistic task. Break the prompt down into the individual parts.

1. Parks are created to protect natural spaces for future generations and for citizens to enjoy the outdoors. Why do you think society values separating these places and controlling them? Do you think that there is equal value in parks in rural areas like Yellowstone and parks in large cities like Central Park in New York? Why or why not?
2. Compare your home city to Provo. What are the similarities and differences? Be careful not to include your opinion about which one is better.
3. What piece of technology do you think has the biggest impact on your everyday life? Why is that technology so important? What features does it have that support your daily activities? Do you think this technology is equally important to others your age? Why or why not?

Exercise 2: Timed Writing Practice

You have 30 minutes to respond to this prompt. Your answer should be around 300 words long. Before you begin, think about how you will use your timer to complete the task

Prompt: Describe an important holiday or tradition that you celebrate. This may be something specific to your family or something celebrated more widely in your country. Be sure to include details about *when*, *why*, and *how* you celebrate.



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/timed_writing_2.

Integrated Writing (TOEFL Task 1)

Sharing ideas that you learn from reading or listening is an important part of writing. Because it is an important part of college writing, it is a task included on the TOEFL. The first writing task in the TOEFL has very specific requirements. This chapter will explain how to be successful in this type of integrated writing.

The TOEFL integrated writing task is not a true essay like you practice in other parts of this textbook. There is not a full introduction. There is no conclusion. There is no place for your own personal feelings and opinions on the topic. Your thesis statement is not creative. You don't need 5 paragraphs with 5 sentences each.

Task format

You will have three minutes to **read** a few short paragraphs from a textbook. You should take notes about the major details that the author explains. Your notes do not need to be very detailed because you can see the reading again when you start writing. The textbook will usually:

- Introduce the main idea
- Give support for the main idea with three major details

Next, you will **listen** to part of a lecture. The professor who give the lecture will talk about the same topic as the reading. There are two usual organizations for the lecture:

- The professor disagrees with the textbook and explains why the three points are wrong
- The professor agrees with the textbook and adds more detail to the three points

The order of the major details will be the same in the reading and lecture.

You need to take good notes during the listening. You can only listen one time.

You will have 20 minutes to **write** your response to the question. You will focus your answer on the lecture and explain how it connects to the textbook. Include all three of the major details.

Example: TOEFL Writing Prompt 1

The TOEFL Writing Task 1 will always ask you to summarize the lecture and compare it to the reading passage.

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

Response format

This question asks for a summary. The easiest organization is to have 4 paragraphs. The first paragraph will explain the relationship between the reading and the listening (e.g., do they agree about the topic, or do they disagree?). The other three paragraphs will explain each major detail. You do not need a conclusion paragraph. An effective response will have approximately 200 words. Do NOT include your own opinion or any outside information.

Paragraph 1: Introduction	A brief introduction with a comparison thesis statement. There is probably no hook. The background information is more of a summary of the listening and reading passages.
Paragraph 2: Point #1	A summary of the listening and reading passages. You may want to use a comparative/contrastive cohesive device to transition from summarizing one source to the next source.
Paragraph 3: Point #2	A summary of the listening and reading passages. You may want to use a comparative/contrastive cohesive device to transition from summarizing one source to the next source.
Paragraph 4: Point #3	A summary of the listening and reading passages. You may want to use a comparative/contrastive cohesive device to transition from summarizing one source to the next source.

Scoring

You can get a high score on this section, if you write about the important points from the reading and listening in a clear and accurate way.

Strategy

A T-Chart is a good way to organize your notes. On the left, you will write the three major details from the reading. The professor will talk about the same ideas in the same order. The T-Chart helps you know what to expect when you take notes.

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

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

TOEFL Integrated Writing Tips

Every student will feel ready to take the TOEFL at a different time. Here are some strategies to help you prepare when you are ready.

- The prompt does not really change. The topic will be different, but you will always be comparing the reading with the listening.
- You can see the reading when you write. Only take simple notes of the major details to make it easier to listen for how the professor agrees or disagrees with that point.
- Take careful notes during the listening.
- Organize your ideas into a logical outline.
 - Paragraph 1 What do the reading and lecture discuss?
 - Paragraph 2 What is the speaker's first point? How does it connect to the reading?
 - Paragraph 3 What is the speaker's second point? How does it connect to the reading?
 - Paragraph 4 What is the speaker's third point? How does it connect to the reading?
- Leave a few minutes read your writing and make changes.
 - Look at your notes again. Did you explain the ideas from both the reading and the listening?
 - Before the test, look at feedback your writing teacher gives you about your writing. Go to your writing teacher's office hours to get advice.
 - You should also look at feedback your grammar teacher gives you about your writing. Go to your grammar teacher's office hours to get advice.

Exercises

Exercise 1: TOEFL Writing Task 1

1. Read the passage.

2. Listen to the lecture.

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

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





This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/integrated_writing_2.

Process Essays

In this chapter, you will write a process essay. To write a process essay, think about things that you know how to do. How would you teach someone to do one of those things?

A process essay is written to teach the reader how to do something (e.g., how to break a bad habit). This essay should describe any steps that are necessary in order to complete the process.

Process Essay Example 1
Process Essay Example 2
Prewriting
Writing Skill: Unity
Revising
Revise A Process Essay
Timed Writing (Choose a Position)
Integrated Writing (TOEFL Task 2)



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/process_essays.

Process Essay Example 1

How to Live a Happy Life

People are always searching for things that make them happy. For example, many people work very hard to improve their employment because they want to find a better job to make themselves happy. Other people search for happiness by purchasing things they want. It is not bad to search for happiness, but many people do not understand that lasting happiness does not depend on having certain things. It doesn't depend on the circumstances of a person's life. It depends more on how life is lived and people are loved. There are things that people can do to live a happy life regardless of their situation. In order to live a happy life, people should build relationships, be grateful, and help others.

The first thing that people should do to live a happy life is build relationships with other people. Building relationships can include both making new friends and strengthening relationships that already exist with friends and family members. These relationships lead to greater happiness because people who have strong connections with other people are less lonely, especially in difficult times. They have people who they can talk to and people who can offer comfort to them. Another reason that strong connections can increase happiness is that they create a network of people who can offer advice. Knowing that there are friends who can offer this advice to help solve a problem can help people feel happier. Strong relationships also lead to greater feelings of belonging and security, which in turn, lead to greater happiness. Building these relationships is an essential step to living a happy life.

In addition to nurturing relationships, people who want to be happy should be grateful. People who are grateful open their eyes to see all of the good things in their lives, and they express gratitude to people who help them. Many people have noticed that by opening their eyes to see the good things they have and choosing to have gratitude, their perspective changes. They spend more time focusing on positive thoughts instead of focusing on things that are negative or difficult. Thoughts create perspective, so intentionally creating positive thoughts will lead to a more positive perspective. Regardless of struggles they have, they choose to focus on the gifts they can see. Gratitude can change people's perspective and help them be happier, regardless of their situation.

Finally, serving others can make people happier. Serving others can include doing simple things like listening to a friend who is having a hard time or preparing a meal to share with someone who is sick. These simple acts not only improve another person's life, but they also bring happiness to the person who is serving. This happiness is a natural result of lifting another person's burden. Helping others also helps in the other areas of building happiness: it strengthens relationships with others and it helps people feel more gratitude. When people serve others, they can become good friends by showing how much they care and want to help. People feel more gratitude because when they see the problems other people face, they find ways that their life is blessed. Serving others is an essential key to living a happier life.

If people want to have a happier life, they should serve others, be grateful, and strengthen their relationships with other people. Each of these things focuses on people and perspective rather than money and material possessions. People bring joy to other people in a way that possessions can never imitate. Perspective can make a lasting impact on a person's life in a way that a promotion simply can't. Regardless of the circumstances of an individual's life, that individual can choose to focus on happiness in a real, genuine way if he wants to. Finding lasting happiness is really a

simple search. That search begins as soon as people start looking beyond temporary things that only bring temporary happiness.

Exercises

Exercise: Analyze an essay

Read one of the two Process Example Essays on the following pages to complete this exercise.

1. Label the introduction paragraph, the body paragraphs, and the conclusion paragraph.
2. Circle the hook.
3. What is the general topic of the essay?
4. Underline the thesis.
5. Underline each of the topic sentences.
6. Do each of the topic sentences support the thesis?
7. Does the conclusion paragraph start by restating the thesis?



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at

https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/process_essay_exemplar.

Process Essay Example 2

A Successful Job Interview

Job interviews can be very scary experiences, even for people who have gone through the process many times. To pass the interview, candidates must present themselves well and show that in addition to being the most qualified for a certain position, they are also able to explain why. The interviewers sit across a large desk and take notes on every answer that is given. Performance in the job interview frequently determines if a candidate will get the job. Because the job interview is so important, it must be carefully prepared for, especially in very competitive fields. There are a few basic steps that anyone can take to be prepared for a job interview.

The first step is to research the company carefully. Before job candidates ever go into a job interview, they should look up any information they can find about the company online. One reason for this is a very practical one: it can help the job candidates make sure that they want to work for a particular company or that they have the necessary skills for the job they are applying for. If the company feels like the right fit, doing research about the company will also give job candidates an advantage in the interview. It is easy for the interviewer to know if a job candidate is informed about the company during the job interview because the interviewer will typically be someone who has experience in the company. Researching the company will also help job candidates prepare a few questions of their own. Questions to research could include what the company sells, who the leaders are, where they do business, if they have been in the news (and why), or how the company stocks are doing. The initial step of doing some research about the company is crucial to being ready for an interview.

After job candidates have done some research online and decided to move forward with the job application, the next thing they should do is prepare a resume. The resume first needs to fit the job description and show any experience that job candidates have that would make them a good candidate for the job. For example, if a job candidate is applying for a job as a receptionist, it is better to include work experience from an office job than work experience from a job in a restaurant. In addition to work experience, the resume should include any skills that job candidates have that would be useful in the job they are applying for. Sometimes these skills are listed specifically in the job description as required skills. Sometimes they are listed as preferred skills. In either case, listing relevant skills will help potential employers understand who is most qualified for a certain job. Finally, the resume should look very professional. The fonts should be easy to read and the spelling and grammar should not have mistakes. An accurate, carefully written resume will put any job candidate one step closer to being ready for a job interview.

Finally, job candidates should practice for the interview. Lists of interview questions are widely available online, and by practicing before going into an interview, candidates can feel more confident in the interview. While interview questions cannot be perfectly anticipated, many common mistakes can be avoided by having time to think about the answer before candidates are put on the spot. For example, some interviewers may ask a job candidate to describe one of his weaknesses. That topic can be especially difficult to talk about if a job candidate has never thought about it before because it will typically be associated with negative feelings. Even if candidates don't practice the questions that are asked in the interview, having the experience of answering questions intelligently will increase their confidence and help them appear more relaxed in the interview. This final step will help job candidates be ready for an interview.

While they may seem simple, these steps will help job candidates be ready for their next job interview. Researching the company will give them the background knowledge they need, polishing their resume will give the company hiring committee the background information they need, and practicing for the interview will help candidates show their strengths. Job interviews will still cause some nervousness, but they don't need to cause job candidates crippling fear. With the right preparation, even if it's your first interview, you'll be ready.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Analyze an essay

Read one of the two Process Example Essays on the following pages to complete this exercise.

1. Label the introduction paragraph, the body paragraphs, and the conclusion paragraph.
2. Circle the hook.
3. What is the general topic of the essay?
4. Underline the thesis.
5. Underline each of the topic sentences.
6. Do each of the topic sentences support the thesis?
7. Does the conclusion paragraph start by restating the thesis?



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at

https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/process_essay_exemplz.

Prewriting

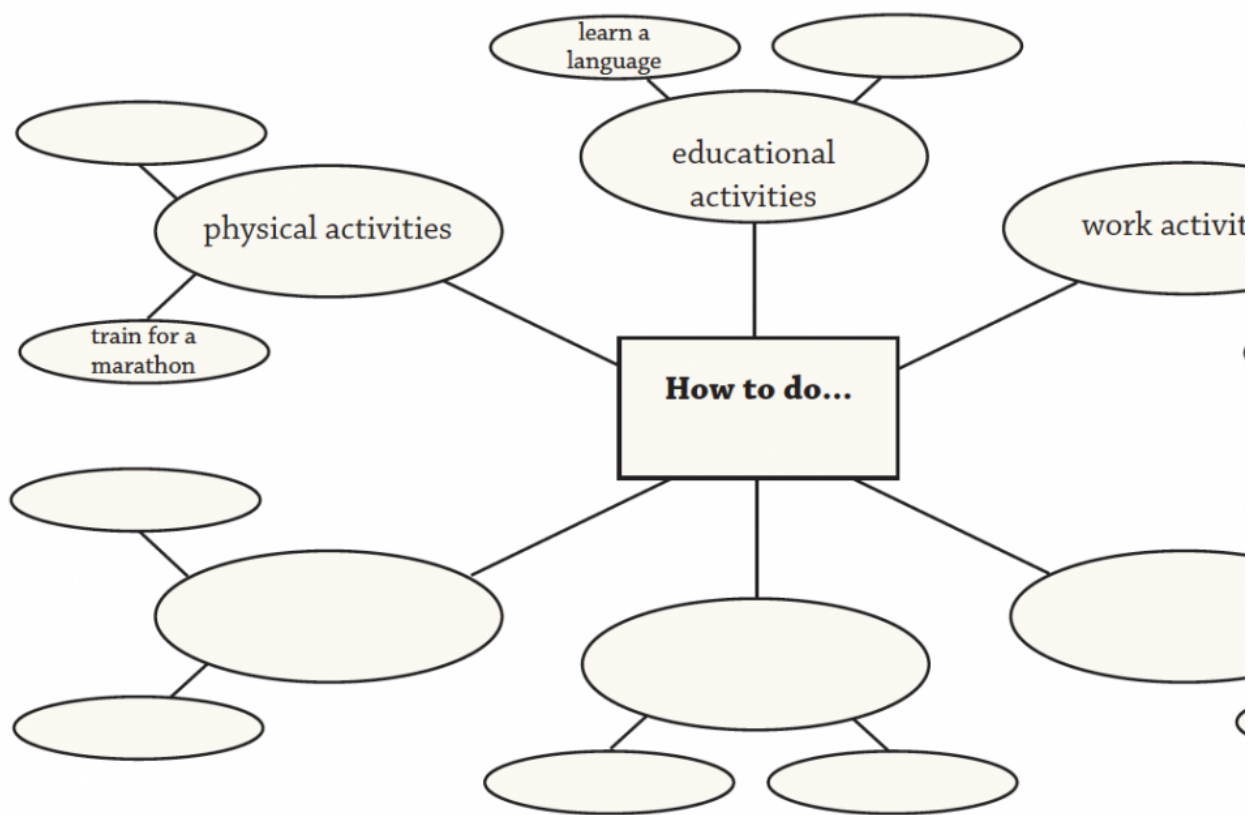
Understand the assignment

In your essay, you will describe a process. Many processes have a sequence of chronological actions or steps (e.g., how to prepare for a job interview) that are typically done in a specific order. Some processes do not have a specific sequence of actions that must be followed (e.g., how to live a happy life). These processes may be more like a list of advice. Either type of process can be used.

In more academic process essays that require research, a scientific process is usually explained (e.g., the Water Cycle). You should write about a topic you know about because you will NOT be including research in your essay.

Brainstorm to find a topic

Think of processes you know about. You can start by having a discussion about the question “What can you teach someone to do?” or “How does ____ happen?” You can also use an idea map like the one below to help you.



Choose a focus

If the process you chose is complex, you may need to combine steps or focus on one specific part of the process.

Process: Apply to a university in the U.S.		
Decide which university to apply to	-->	1. Decide which university to apply to
Find out what the deadlines are		2. Find out what the deadlines and requirements are
Find out what the requirements are		3. Make a plan to finish everything by the deadlines
Make a plan to finish everything by the deadlines		
Prepare for the TOEFL		
Register for the TOEFL		

Take the TOEFL
Prepare for the ACT
Register for the ACT
Take the ACT

Outline

A process essay follows typical essay organization with an introduction paragraph, body paragraphs, and a conclusion paragraph.

Introduction

Your introduction should describe in general terms the process you will describe in your essay. At the end of your introduction paragraph, write your thesis. The thesis may state the purpose of your process, give the result of your process, or even list the steps.

Writing an effective essay is simple if you follow the right steps.

In order to find the perfect apartment, you should consider the location, decide on your price range, and compare the different features that apartments have to offer.

Here are some phrases that are useful for writing a process thesis:

In order to pass the TOEFL...

*When upgrading your phone, you **should**...*

*Making a budget **is easy if you** follow three simple steps.*Body

Your body paragraphs should describe the steps of your process. You will typically need a body paragraph for each step in your process. However, it is okay to group steps together into a more general step. For example, the writing process has many small steps (brainstorming, choosing a topic, brainstorming about your topic, making an outline, drafting, etc.) that can be divided into three general steps: prewriting, writing, and revising. You can group steps together if needed.

Conclusion

Your conclusion paragraph should start by restating your thesis. You should talk about the result of your process and end with a closing statement that in some way makes a prediction, suggestion, opinion, or asks a question. Many process essays will end by suggesting that readers try the process for themselves.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Write steps in a process

On a piece of paper, brainstorm a list of steps in your process. If you have a long list of steps, either combine steps or choose a section of the process to focus on.

Process:

Steps:

Exercise 2: Revise thesis statements

On a piece of paper, revise these thesis statements to be more effective for a process essay.

1. Finding a job.
2. Choosing a major is something that all college students have to do.
3. To start your own band, I will teach you the three supreme tips for success.
4. There are different ways to throw a party, such as a costume party, Halloween party, and birthday party.

Exercise 3: Make an outline

On a piece of paper, make an outline for one of the example essays in this chapter.

Choose one of the essays. Create an outline that includes the thesis statement and topic sentences.

Exercise 4: Finish an outline

Use the topic sentences to create the thesis for this outline on a piece of paper.

- TH:
- TS: First, you need to decide how much money you want to spend on your vacation.
- TS: Then you should find vacation options that are in your price range.
- TS: Finally, you should let everyone vote for the place they want to visit the most.
- TH:

Exercise 5: Finish an outline

Make an outline for the essay by writing three topic sentences to support the thesis and restated thesis.

- TH: Deciding what to do with your friends on Friday night is easy to do.
- TS:
- TS:
- TS:
- TH: These steps make it easy to decide on fun weekend activities.

Exercise 6: Make an outline

In a word document, make an outline for your essay.

Remember to organize your ideas logically. Your topic sentences should directly connect to and support your thesis statement.



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/prewritingZ.

Writing Skill: Unity

Now that your planning stage is complete, you can begin writing your draft. Your writing should be organized, developed, accurate, and original.

Unity

Writing has unity when the supporting sentences all work together to support the topic sentences. Paragraphs that lack unity are confusing to the reader because some ideas do not seem to belong.

Compare the examples below. The first paragraph has poor unity because there are sentences that do not support the topic sentence. The topic sentence is about the various places in Utah where there are hiking trails for people to enjoy nature.

Example: Body Paragraph (Poor Unity)

Hikers all over Utah can access hiking trails and enjoy nature. Hiking is a good way to get exercise. In southern Utah, hikers enjoy the scenic trails in Zion's National Park. In northern Utah, trails have been made to showcase the beauties of nature like Waterfall Canyon. Waterfalls all over the world are beautiful. There are hiking paths in Utah's Rocky Mountains as well that provide beautiful views. But you don't have to go up to the mountains or drive up the canyon to access hiking trails in Utah. Many cities in Utah have created hiking trails in city parks for people to use that are closer to home. If you like to spend time hiking in nature, there are many hiking trails you can access in Utah.

Example: Body Paragraph Revised for Unity

Hikers all over Utah can access hiking trails and enjoy nature. ~~Hiking is a good way to get exercise.~~ In southern Utah, hikers enjoy the scenic trails in Zion's National Park. In northern Utah, trails have been made to showcase the beauties of nature like Waterfall Canyon. ~~Waterfalls all over the world are beautiful.~~ There are hiking paths in Utah's Rocky Mountains as well that provide beautiful views. But you don't have to go up to the mountains or drive up the canyon to access hiking trails in Utah. Many cities in Utah have created hiking trails in city parks for people to use that are closer to home. If you like to spend time hiking in nature, there are many hiking trails you can access in Utah.

You can revise a paragraph that lacks unity by removing any sentences that do not support the topic sentence.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Write a body paragraph

Remember that a body paragraph has three types of sentences: topic sentences, supporting sentences, and concluding sentences. All of the sentences below belong to a paragraph about applying to a university in the U.S. First label each type of sentence (TS, SS, CS) on the first line provided. Then, put them in a logical sequence by writing a number on the second line provided.

- ____ ____ A. In your investigation, there are many questions you need to ask.
- ____ ____ B. First, you need to make a list of universities that you would like to attend.
- ____ ____ C. Of the universities left on the list, consider which university you like the best based on any other personal reasons (location, atmosphere, etc.).
- ____ ____ D. For example, you need to find out what programs they offer, how much they cost, and what the entrance requirements are.
- ____ ____ E. Deciding which university you want to apply to is simple, but not easy.
- ____ ____ F. After you have all of the information you need, then cross off any universities that don't match your goals or fit with your situation.
- ____ ____ G. Then, investigate each university on the list.
- ____ ____ H. If you follow these steps, deciding on a university is a simple step in the process of applying to a university in the U.S.

Exercise 2: Write a body paragraph

Choose one of the topic sentences below. On a piece of paper, write a body paragraph using that topic sentence.

1. Breaking a bad habit starts with identifying the habit that you want to break.
2. First, you need to decide how much money you want to spend on your vacation.
3. In order to choose the right diet for you, you need to know what foods you typically eat.

Exercise 3: Complete an introduction paragraph

Use the hook and thesis statement to finish an introduction paragraph. Write your complete paragraph on a piece of paper.

Hook: Cars are a modern convenience that allow for greater independence.

Thesis: Learning how to drive requires practice, learning the driving rules, and knowing how to operate a car.

Exercise 4: Revise for unity

Read the paragraphs. Cross out sentences that are not connected to the topic sentence.

1. It is dangerous to preserve old buildings. According to some engineers, every building has a lifetime, and after the building reaches its lifetime, it is dangerous to keep those buildings. It also becomes more expensive. In addition, if the city is in a seismically active area, the problems that old buildings create will become worse because those buildings will not resist an earthquake. Some people say that old buildings can be used as tourist places and people enjoy visiting a historic location. It is clear that old buildings are not very safe.
2. There are many varieties of English spoken today in the world. American English British English, Indian English, and Australian English are just a few of these varieties, and they are all a little distinct. Pronunciation is one obvious difference, but other things vary as well, like vocabulary and even grammar. The word *shiela* is the Australian word for *girl*. English may be a global language, but it isn't exactly the same all over the world.
3. The environment is something that can affect students positively or negatively. For example, if classmates are sleeping or talking during classes, that environment can make it difficult for students to concentrate. A noisy, dirty, or distracting environment can have a similar impact. Some roommates never help clean the apartment. On the contrary, an environment that is clean and has no distractions will make it much easier to focus on homework. It is important to recognize the impact that the environment can have on students.
4. Students like to listen to music in many different situations. Students listen to different types of music. Many students listen to music while they are studying because it helps them concentrate. Some people like to be quiet while they study. Some students listen to music while they work. Some enjoy listening to music while they walk to work or school. There are many different places where students enjoy listening to music.





This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/writingQ.

Revising

When you finish writing your essay, you should revise it. After you revise it, you may need to return to either of the previous stages (prewriting or writing) to make improvements to your writing. For example, you may need to do more brainstorming if you don't have enough ideas to write about. You also may need to do additional drafting if you decide to delete one of your body paragraphs.

Many people divide the revising stage into revising and editing. **Revising** focuses on making changes to improve the clarity of your ideas and organization. **Editing** focuses on making changes to improve the clarity of your grammar. Revising should be completed before editing so that you do not spend time fixing the grammar in sentences you may delete when you begin revising.

Self-check

You should always read through your essay to identify mistakes you have made. As you revise your own work, you may need to add, delete, or move text. Write down or mark anything about your essay that you want to ask a friend/tutor to help you with.

Here is a general list of questions you can use to check your essays:

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

When you look for errors, you may be surprised how many errors you are able to identify on your own. Here are some strategies specific to proofreading your essay for errors in grammar and mechanics.

Apply Strategies

Start by simply reading through your essay for typos. Then look through your essay for basic grammar that you know well. For example, you can check to make sure every sentence has a subject and a verb (and that they agree).

Read your essay out loud. You may notice mistakes that you didn't see before.

Try to finish your drafting and revising with enough time to give yourself some distance from what you wrote. After you finish writing, do something active that doesn't involve writing and then come back to your essay and read through it again.

Get feedback and make changes

If you are not writing for a test, have a friend or a tutor review your writing. Then use the feedback you get to make changes.

Understand coding symbols

Many teachers use coding symbols like the following to mark specific types of errors. If your teacher uses codes, make sure you clearly understand what the codes mean and how to fix the error.

Symbol	Code
TRS	Transitions
WF	Word form
WC	Word choice
SV	Subject-Verb agreement
VT	Verb tense
TS	Topic sentence
TH	Thesis statement
CS	Concluding sentence
CL	Clarity
FR	Fragment
UN	Unity

IR	Irrelevant
SS	Supporting sentences
RR	Repetitive

Exercises

Exercise 1: Check your essay

Remember to complete a self-check questions below for your essay before you ask someone for feedback. Good luck with your revisions!

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

Exercise 2: Analyze and revise a body paragraph

Read the student paragraph and answer the questions below to guide you in revising it. Write your revised paragraph on a piece of paper.

The first thing that you should do to find a good book is to ask someone for a recommendation. They can help you if you do not know which book would be interesting to you. You can ask a sibling, your parents, your best friends, or your teachers. Friends or family with whom you have things in common can often recommend an excellent book. Also, small, local bookstores often have amazing recommendations. There are many people in the world who love reading. You should ask for recommendations to help you choose a good book.

1. Do the supporting sentences support the topic sentence?
2. Are the supporting sentences sequenced in a logical order?
3. Is there enough development? Are there more details/examples that would help the reader?
4. Does the concluding sentence close the paragraph logically?
5. Revise the body paragraph.



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/revisingZ.

Revise A Process Essay

How to Throw a Good Party

Every year, lots of people have lots of things to celebrate. People get together and enjoy some quality time. To celebrate certain events, people frequently throw some kind of a party. They invite friends and family members to celebrate with them. Some people don't like to plan parties because they think that planning a party is difficult. However, good parties can be easy to plan. You will host a good party.

First, to host a successful party, you have to know the purpose of the party. You will have to ask why you are throwing a party. For example, you can have a birthday party, a wedding reception, or a baby shower. A theme is also important. For example, for a child's birthday party, you can choose to have Disney as your theme. With this theme, you can have balloons that are shaped like Disney's characters or other kinds of decorations. Once you know the purpose of your party, you will be on the right path toward throwing a successful party.

In addition, to throw a successful party, you will have to make a list of the details carefully. Write down the date, a list of the guests, the food you want, and the activities you will do at the party. First, you have to find the perfect date to throw your party. After that, you will have to know who and how many people are going to attend your party. After listing who are attending your party, you will have to find a good location to host your party. For example, you will pick a place depending on how many people are attending or if it is a convenient location. After that, you will have to know what kind of food you want to serve. You can choose your dishes based on the theme of your party. For example, if it is a Hawaiian party, then you will have Hawaiian dishes. If you are having a party and cannot find a date that's convenient for you and your guests, then planning the party will be a waste of time. Finally, you will have to list the activities you want to have during your party. It will be possible to throw a successful party if you follow these few steps.

First, you will have to prepare the music you want to play for the party. Preparing a playlist is always good if you don't have a DJ. Also, it is better to have the music ready before the party so you will not have to stress about it during the party. After that, you will need to prepare the food. If you are going to cook for the party, then you should make it way before the party starts. Cooking usually takes a lot of time that is why it is better to prepare everything before. After preparing the food, you will have to prepare the activities you have planned. For example, you should prepare the things you will need for the activities. All of these things will help you be prepared.

In conclusion, if you know the purpose of your party, plan it carefully, and prepare everything before the actual date, then you will host a successful party. Planning a good party is going to work if you follow these steps. People, in general, like to have parties because they can enjoy themselves with people they love. These celebrations can be even more enjoyable if they have been planned well because the party will be more successful. The next time you need to plan a party, follow these steps and you will have a great party!

Exercises

Exercise 1: Revise an essay

Read the process essay. What revisions could be made to improve the essay?

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



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/revise_process_essay.

Timed Writing (Choose a Position)

One of the most common types of timed writing you will encounter is giving your opinion with support. This type of timed essay is used for tests because it requires critical thinking of complex issues and advanced language use. In this section, you will learn strategies for quickly and effectively choosing a position.

Position

The first thing to remember when you are asked to explain your opinion on a topic in a short time is that there is no "wrong" opinion. Your reader is not grading your response based on if you choose the correct position. Think about this on the most basic level. There is no actual correct answer if someone asks you what your favorite season is. This is why you should not use a lot of time choosing the position that is "best."

One strategy for choosing your position is to go with your first thought. Often, it will be easiest for you to explain your ideas when you go with that first reaction. It is likely that you have already gathered information over time to support that position, which is why it is so quick to think of when you read the question.

Another option is to write about the position that is easiest to support. This does not mean to be dishonest. It just means that if you do not have a strong personal belief about the question, the best thing to do is to explain the opinion that you understand or can think of most clearly. For example, maybe you personally do not have strong feelings about transportation in Provo, so you just choose to explain why we need more buses because it was the one you understand the supporting ideas for.

Rather than stressing and losing time thinking about which option to choose or which position to take, decide quickly and focus your time and energy on supporting.

Examples of Choosing a Position

Prompt 1: Describe your ideal job. Why does that job interest you?

- My first thought is to write about being a veterinarian. I don't really know what I want to do after I study at the ELC, and there are many different jobs I could write about. But I am going to start brainstorming and organizing my ideas about this topic so I can begin writing sooner.

Prompt 2: What is something you are afraid of? How could you work to overcome that fear?

- This topic makes me feel uncomfortable. I don't want to write about my actual answer to this question because it feels too personal. Instead, it would be easiest for me to write about a less awkward like being afraid of public speaking. This answer is also true, but it was *not* my immediate thought and will be easier for me to write about comfortably.

Can I use "I" in my response?

This depends on the task for a class. Your teacher/professor might have clear expectations for this, or you may need to ask before writing your first paper for that instructor. You may also need to look at the prompt or examples of writing for that area of study. For example, a biology lab write up would probably be an inappropriate place to use first person pronouns. However, a reflection for a marketing class might allow for that informality.

For academic college writing, many professors will ask you to avoid personal pronouns, so you may need to clarify with your instructor what you should use in your essays for class.

Supporting Ideas

Time is limited. This means you will not be able to include as many supporting details, examples, and explanations as in a drafted essay. It also means you have less time to refine your writing to make sure it is very clear.

When you choose your supporting ideas, make sure that they are the strongest points. You do not have the time or space to include anything unnecessary like a story. Be simple, but be intentional so that your points have an impact on the reader.

Finally, make sure you read the complete prompt and consider the expectations. Do you need to talk about short-term and long-term impacts of your choice? Do you need to acknowledge the opposite point of view? Are there multiple questions in the prompt? As you write, be sure to double-check the prompt to make sure your supporting ideas have addressed everything the reader expects you to explain.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Timed Writing Discussion

Discuss the prompt below with a partner. What position would you choose? What strategy did you use to quickly make that decision? Make a list of 2 topic sentences that could support each of your positions.

Prompt: Do you think that cell phones should be allowed in high school classrooms? Explain why or why not.

Exercise 2: Timed Writing Practice

You have 20 minutes to respond to this prompt. Your answer should be around 200 words long. Make a quick decision and focus your time on supporting your ideas.

Prompt: You have received a gift of \$100. You have the option to save the money or spend it now. What will you do with the money? Why did you choose that option?



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/timed_writing_3.

Integrated Writing (TOEFL Task 2)

In July 2023, the TOEFL writing section changed. This change to the TOEFL shows a change in the college classroom because of new technology. The second TOEFL writing prompt now asks for students to participate in an academic discussion. This does not have *a lot* of integrating, but it is more like integrated writing than independent writing.

Task format

The academic discussion is like a discussion board assignment on Canvas. This is used in many college classes to work like a conversation in class. It looks a little like a social media post.

1. There are instructions for the writing, like with all TOEFL questions.
2. The discussion board has an opinion question from the professor that you need to answer.
3. You can see answers from two other students.
4. You have **10 minutes** to explain and support your opinion.

Response format

You will not write an essay for this question. You will write a short response of about 100 words. This is more like a short paragraph.

You only have 10 minutes to read the other posts on the discussion board and add your answer. You need to think quickly.

Your paragraph should start with a 1 sentence clear statement of your opinion (like a thesis statement). The other sentences should provide reasons and examples for your opinion.

You can use the two student example answers as guides for how to organize your ideas. However, you should be careful to add unique thoughts to your post. You do not want to repeat what someone else has already said. You can respond to their answers with a sentences like *I agree with James* or *My perspective is similar to Emily's post*. However, your ideas and language should be clearly different from what they said.

Scoring

In the TOEFL rubric, it explains that an answer will receive a high score if it is clearly connected to the professor's question and the supporting ideas are explained well.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Rubric

Review the TOEFL rubric for the second writing task "[Writing for an Academic Discussion.](#)" Then discuss the following questions with a partner:

1. Why do you think the TOEFL has added this type of writing question?
2. What similarities and differences are there between the expectations for writing task 1 and 2?
3. What challenges do you expect with this type of writing?

Exercise 2: Discussion Board Practice

Add to the discussion board conversation about trends in your Canvas course. Your teacher will provide the question and two example student responses. Set a timer for 10 minutes. Your addition to the discussion board should be about 100 words.



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/integrated_writing_3.

Comparison Essays

In this chapter you will write a comparison essay. To write a comparison essay, think about two things that you can compare. What makes them similar? What makes them different?

A comparison essay is written to show the reader how two topics are similar or different. This essay should describe specific qualities that can be compared between the two topics.

Comparison Essay Example 1
Comparison Essay Example 2
Prewriting
Writing Skill: Cohesion
Revising
Revise A Comparison Essay
Timed Writing (Plans & Problems)
Integrated Writing (Word Choice)



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/comparison_essays.

Comparison Essay Example 1

Soccer and American Football

Not everyone thinks about the same thing when they hear “football.” Depending on where you live, “football” might be one of two different games. When most people in the United States hear the word “football,” they think of players throwing, catching, or kicking a brown ball. They picture a large field with tall goalposts on both ends of the field. They can hear cheerleaders and coaches yelling from the sidelines. For the rest of the world, “football” usually means watching players kick, pass, and shoot a round ball with their feet. They imagine a large field with goals on each end. They picture players from their national team competing in the World Cup. These two very different games are imagined by saying the same word: “football.” Even though they share a name, the equipment, the scoring system, and the rules of American football and soccer are different.

The equipment is the first major difference between American football and soccer. In American football, the players need to wear protective clothing because it can be a dangerous game to play. The players need to wear helmets to protect their heads, mouth guards for their teeth, and large pads for their shoulders and backs. The players use a brown ball that is pointed on the ends. On the other hand, soccer players do not need to wear helmets and lots of protective pads. The players just have pads to protect their shins, and the goalie wears gloves. The ball they use in soccer is round. The ball is usually a bright color like white. It is easy to see that soccer and American football definitely require different equipment.

Another big difference between soccer and American football is how points are scored. The scoring system in soccer is very simple. In soccer, a point is scored every time the ball makes it past the goalie into the net behind him. However, the score for American football is not as simple. In American football, players get points for touchdowns, PAT’s, and field goals. A “touchdown” is when a player with the ball runs across the 0-yard line. That is worth six points. After a touchdown is scored, the team who got the touchdown gets to kick the ball between the goal posts for one point. “Field goals” are worth three points. You get a field goal when you kick the ball between the goal posts without getting a touchdown. There are even more ways to score points for safety and conversions. With the simplicity of soccer’s scoring system and the complexity of American football’s scoring system, it is clear these two sports have very different scoring methods.

Finally, the rules of the two sports are very distinct. In American football, players can carry, kick, or throw the ball. The quarterback decides who to throw the ball to. He throws the ball and the player who catches the ball tries to run to the end of the field. The other players try to steal the ball or tackle the player with the ball. In soccer, only the goalie can touch the ball with his hands. The other players try to kick and pass the ball to each other with their feet. The forwards try to pass the ball to each other as they travel to the end of the field. When players get close to the goal, they try to kick the ball into the goal. Players don’t try to tackle each other in soccer like they do in American football. Soccer seems to have much simpler rules than American football.

It’s easy to see how American football and soccer are different from one another in three areas: the rules, scoring, and equipment. It is interesting that such different sports came to be known by the same name. Both sports are very popular, even though American football is not as widely played internationally. The next time you hear someone say the

word “football,” which pictures will come to your mind? Players in helmets? Goalies jumping to block the ball? Tall goalposts? Your national team? Maybe all of these pictures will come into your mind. After all, it’s all football.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Analyze an essay

Read one of the two Process Example Essays on the following pages to complete this exercise.

1. Label the introduction paragraph, the body paragraphs, and the conclusion paragraph.
2. Circle the hook.
3. What is the general topic of the essay?
4. Underline the thesis.
5. Underline each of the topic sentences.
6. Do each of the topic sentences support the thesis?
7. Does the conclusion paragraph start by restating the thesis?



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at

https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/comparison_essay_exa.

Comparison Essay Example 2

Sao Paulo and New York

Two of the biggest, most famous cities in the world are Sao Paulo, Brazil and New York, New York. They are busy cities with cultural, and historical importance. They are also business centers in their respective countries. They differ from each other in many ways. These cities are on opposite hemispheres and have different languages, food, and cultures. Their climates and economies are also very distinct from one another. With all of these obvious differences, you may be surprised that there are also many similarities that these two large cities share. Both cities have a lot of immigration, attract many tourists, and have a high cost of living.

One similarity between Sao Paulo and New York is that they both have many immigrants. There are various reasons why both New York and Sao Paulo receive many immigrants. The first reason many immigrants go to these cities is to find more work opportunities. Since Sao Paulo and New York both have large, international companies that require many employees, it is easier to get a job in these cities than in smaller cities or rural areas. It is also easier to get a job there because in large cities with large populations, there are many people who need to go shopping, go to restaurants, travel, and so forth. Each of these businesses needs many employees to meet the needs of the population. The second reason that immigrants go to these cities is for education. Schools are easier to access in large cities that host universities and job training programs. For these reasons, immigrants go to Sao Paulo and New York.

Another similarity between the two cities is their tourism. New York and Sao Paulo have both attracted many tourists from all parts of the world. When visiting these cities, people can choose from many fun activities to do with friends or as a family. They can go shopping, visit famous museums, attend cultural entertainment events, and so forth. Tourists in New York often want to experience famous places like Broadway, Times Square, The Rockefeller Center, and the Statue of Liberty. People plan trips and vacations around these places because they are so famous. Tourists in Sao Paulo also have many famous sites they can visit, like the Sao Paulo Museum of Art, Paulista Avenue, and Ibirapuera Park. These fascinating places encourage many tourists to visit Sao Paulo. Both cities are home to aquariums, zoos, and restaurants that encourage tourism within these countries as well. With all of the notable attractions in both cities, it is easy to see that they are similar in tourism.

The high cost of living is a final way that these two cities are similar. Because many people want to live in these cities, there is a lot of competition for housing and food, which increases the cost of living there. It can be more expensive to rent a tiny apartment in New York than it is to rent an entire house in a suburb away from the city. Shopping in Sao Paulo makes it very apparent that there are many people in competition for the commodities there. Even though the cost of living is so high, salaries do not always match this increased cost because there are so many people willing to work in these cities that companies can pay their employees less. Many workers in both cities have to work multiple jobs to earn enough money to support their families. The high cost of living is very comparable between Sao Paulo and New York.

Due to the high cost of living, the tourism, and immigration, Sao Paulo and New York are two cities that are very similar to each other. There are differences that are easy to identify, but these cities are more similar than people might think initially. A visitor to one city may be able to feel that she has already experienced the other city because they share

so many traits, even though the people in each city are speaking a different language, eating different food, and are used to different weather.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Analyze an essay

Read one of the two Process Example Essays on the following pages to complete this exercise.

1. Label the introduction paragraph, the body paragraphs, and the conclusion paragraph.
2. Circle the hook.
3. What is the general topic of the essay?
4. Underline the thesis.
5. Underline each of the topic sentences.
6. Do each of the topic sentences support the thesis?
7. Does the conclusion paragraph start by restating the thesis?



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at

https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/comparison_essay_exaw.

Prewriting

Understand the assignment

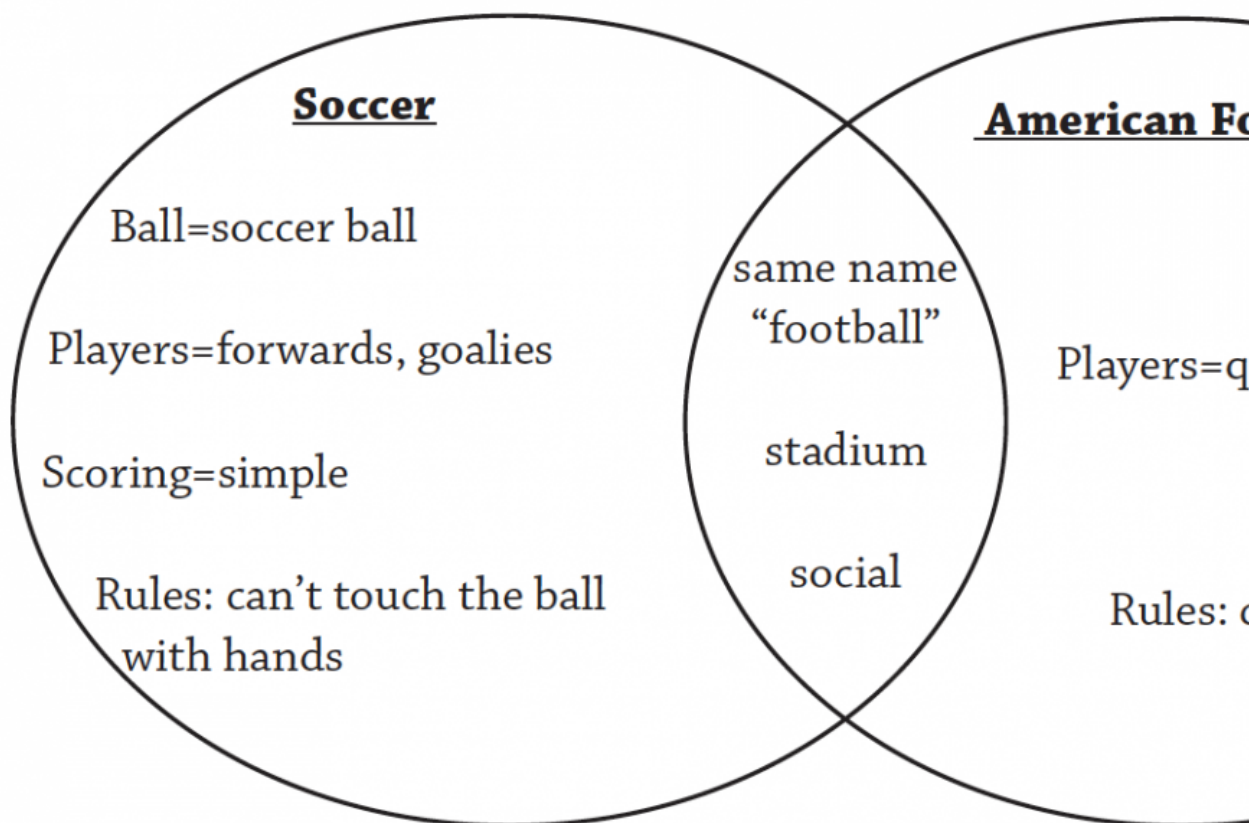
In your essay, you will compare two topics that are related (but you are not arguing for which topic is better; just show their similarities/differences). You should write about topics you know about because you will not be including research in your essay.

Brainstorm to find a topic

Start thinking of things you could write about by participating in a discussion with other students about an interesting question (e.g., how is the culture in the United States different from your culture?), doing a free write, or using an idea map.

Choose a focus

With a specific comparison in mind (e.g., soccer vs. American football), choose the specific comparisons you want to include in your essay. You may need to do a little more brainstorming in order to choose your focus. A Venn diagram can be an excellent way to brainstorm your specific points of comparison. In one circle, list all of the qualities of one of your topics. In the other circle, list the qualities of the other topic. In the middle, list qualities both topics share.



Outline

Once you have chosen your focus, make an outline for your essay. A comparison essay follows typical essay organization with an introduction paragraph, body paragraphs, and a conclusion paragraph.

Introduction

Your introduction should describe in general terms the two topics that you will be comparing.

At the end of your introduction paragraph, you should write your thesis. The thesis can list the categories that will be used for the comparisons in your body paragraphs. The thesis can also simply highlight the fact that they are different or similar. Here are two examples:

While British English and American English have many similarities, they have several significant differences.

Even though comic strips and graphic novels seem very different, they both use lots of images, rely primarily on dialogue, and have the purpose to entertain the reader.

Here are some phrases that are useful for writing a comparison thesis:

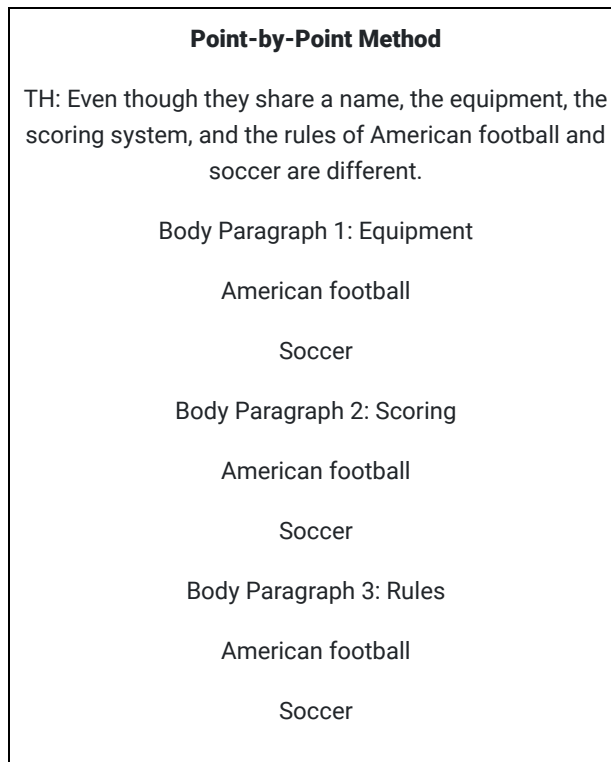
Even though they seem similar, Mexican and Peruvian food are different.

Laptops and tablets are both portable, **but** their programs, hardware, and operating systems are different.

Buying your first car and buying your first house may seem quite different at first, **but they are both** significant milestones that open up new freedoms.

Body

Your body paragraphs should compare your two topics. In short compare/contrast essays, the easiest way to organize the body of your essay is often by writing about one point of comparison in each body paragraph.



If you are writing a detailed outline, you may include supporting sentences and concluding sentences. Consider this student outline for a body paragraph that is comparing two phones.

- TS: Price
- SS: The Samsung Galaxy S8 is cheaper than the iPhone X.
- SS: Even though the iPhone X is more expensive, many people buy it.
- CS: There is a big gap between the price of both cell phones.

This outline does not have an effective topic sentence; it's only a topic. Without a clear topic sentence, it is hard to know if the supporting and concluding sentences are effective. Remember that starting with a good outline is key to writing a good essay.

Conclusion

Your conclusion paragraph should start by restating your thesis. Then you should discuss your topics more generally and connect to what you described in the introduction. End your conclusion with a closing statement.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Brainstorm

Choose a question below to discuss with another student.

1. How is technology today different from technology ten years ago?
2. What are the similarities/differences between learning English in the US and learning English in your country?
3. Compare two types of dance that you know about.

Exercise 2: Evaluate thesis statements

Discuss each thesis statement with a partner. Which sentences are effective thesis statements for a comparison essay? Which sentences are not effective thesis statements? In the box next to each thesis write "yes" if you think the thesis is effective or "no" if you think it is ineffective. Discuss why each thesis is (or is not) effective.

1. Let's see the differences between an American and a Japanese car.
2. Manual and automatic cars have similarities and differences.
3. Doing business in Japan is very different from doing business in the US.
4. Sixty-nine years ago, North Korea and South Korea were one country for 2000 years. In the passing 70 years, many things were differentiated.
5. Why are these types of movies different?
6. Learning to play the piano and learning to play the guitar are very different skills because of the instrument, the music, and the performing context.
7. The differences between reading the news and watching the news.
8. Human being is much better than artificial intelligence, so the following passages will compare what is different between their advantages.

Exercise 3: Make an outline for an existing essay.

Use one of the example essays and create an outline using the opposite style of organization (i.e., if the essay was written using the block method, create a point-by-point outline for it).

Exercise 4: Finish an outline.

Finish each outline on a piece of paper.

1. Prompt: How are oil paintings and watercolor paintings similar/different?

TH:

TS: Oil paintings and watercolor paintings have distinct styles.

TS: The techniques that are used in oil paintings and watercolor paintings are very different.

TS: The tools that are required for oil paintings and watercolor paintings are also different.

TH:

2. Prompt: Compare laptop computers and tablets.

TH: Laptops and tablets are both portable, but their programs, hardware, and operating systems are different.

TS:

TS:

TS:

TH:

Exercise 5: Make an outline for your essay.

Create an outline for your own topic. Remember to make it as detailed as you can. This will make it easier to create your paragraphs later. It will also help you to see if everything connects clearly and if the organization is correct.





This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/prewritingB.

Writing Skill: Cohesion

Now that your planning stage is complete, you can begin writing your draft. Your writing should be organized, developed, accurate, and original. As you draft, be careful to make sure you are not arguing for which topic is better; you are simply comparing them.

Cohesion

Writing has cohesion when the ideas logically flow from one to the next. Writing paragraphs that have good sequencing will help your readers understand your ideas more clearly. Sometimes you will have a clear order that relates to time. Sometimes the order is more flexible and there is not one “perfect” way to sequence the sentences.

Cohesive Devices

One way to improve the cohesion of your writing is by using cohesive devices properly. There are many types of cohesive devices: pronouns, adjectives, determiners, prepositions, conjunctions, repeated words, transition words, etc.

Some cohesive devices show certain relationships between ideas, like showing contrast or a cause/ effect relationship.

Showing Addition	
Another	Another reason to use public transportation is that it is reliable.
Also	Public transportation is also reliable.
Besides	Besides being efficient, public transportation is reliable.
In addition	In addition to being efficient, public transportation is reliable.
First, second, etc.	Second , public transportation is reliable.

Showing Similarity	
Both	The two sports share both a wide fan base and a name.
Likewise	The two sports share a wide fan base. Likewise , they share a name.
Similarly	The two sports share a wide fan base. Similarly , they share a name.

Showing Contrast	
However	The reading states that research distracts from teaching. However , the professor feels that research enhances it.

In contrast	The reading states that research distracts from teaching. In contrast , the professor feels that research enhances it.
On the other hand	The reading states that research distracts from teaching. On the other hand , the professor feels that research enhances it.
Whereas	Whereas the reading states that research distracts from teaching, the professor feels that research enhances it.
Yet	The reading states that research distracts from teaching, yet the professor feels that research enhances it.

Giving Examples

An example of	Squats are an example of exercises that strengthen our muscles.
For instance	Many exercises strengthen our muscles. For instance , squats are an...
To illustrate	Many exercises strengthen our muscles. To illustrate , consider how exercises like squats strengthen your muscles.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Match supporting sentences to a topic sentence

Use the topic sentences below to decide which paragraph supporting sentences A-E belong in.

Body Paragraph #1: Some Americans think that Chinese take-out and Mexican take-out food represent authentic food from China and Mexico.

Body Paragraph #2: Both Chinese take-out and Mexican take-out food are typically made with American ingredients instead of authentic ingredients and appeal to American consumers

- A. Authentic Mexican food frequently uses ingredients only found in Mexico rather than the substitutes used in Mexican take-out.
- B. Many Americans will tell you they've eaten real Chinese food, even though they have only gone to Panda Express in the U.S.
- C. Many Americans think fortune cookies are customary at the end of a meal in China, but they were actually created for Chinese take-out restaurants in America.
- D. Beef and Broccoli are both popular ingredients in many Chinese take-out restaurants because Americans like the taste, even though these ingredients are not very popular in a typical Chinese diet.
- E. Nachos, burritos, and hard shell tacos are all foods that many Americans think come from Mexico because they have eaten them in a "Mexican" restaurant in the U.S.

Exercise 2: Write a developed body paragraph

Use the topic sentence to write a developed body paragraph on a piece of paper.

Learning grammar in your first language is very different from learning grammar in your second language.

Exercise 3: Analyze conclusion paragraphs

As you draft your conclusion, review the information in chapter 1 about writing a good conclusion paragraph. Read these conclusion paragraphs. Which is most effective?

- A. Even though they started out as the same country, now there are clear differences between South Korea and North Korea in politics, economy, and language. First, the two countries have different politics. For example, people in South Korea can vote for their leaders, but people in North Korea don't. They each have different economic systems because South Korea is capitalist and North Korea is communist. Finally, the language is different because they have distinct vocabulary. It is clear that much more than a physical border separates these two countries from each other.
- B. Even though they started out as the same country, now there are clear differences between South Korea and North Korea in politics, economy, and language. These differences are evident in the election of their leaders, their economic systems, and the different vocabulary words that have developed. People need to be aware of these differences because it helps them to appreciate and understand news about Korea or the Korean people they meet. It is clear that much more than a physical border separates these two countries from each other.
- C. Even though they started out as the same country, now there are clear differences between South Korea and North Korea in politics, economy, and language. Many people that live in other parts of the world may be unaware of the major differences between these countries and think that they are the same. It is clear that much more than a physical border separates these two countries from each other.

Exercise 4: Identify logical order of sentences

Each of these sentences combine to make a paragraph. Write a number by each sentence A-H to show a logical order for sequencing the supporting sentences.

TOPIC SENTENCE: Making pancakes is easy to do.

- _____ A. Pour about 1/4 cup of the mixture onto a hot frying pan.
- _____ B. First, put the pancake mix and water in a bowl.
- _____ C. Then add an egg and stir again.
- _____ D. You can check the bottom after a minute to find out if it is cooking.
- _____ E. Heat the frying pan.
- _____ F. When bubbles start to rise to the surface and pop, turn it over with a spatula.
- _____ G. Stir the mix and water together.
- _____ H. When both sides of the pancake have cooked fully, they will look light brown.

CONCLUDING SENTENCE: Then you are ready to enjoy your pancakes!

Exercise 5: Insert a sentence.

The bolded numbers represent places that the bolded sentence could be inserted into the paragraph. Choose the most logical place to insert the bolded sentence.

1 French toast is another breakfast food that is easy to make. **2** Season the mixture with cinnamon. **3** To prepare the toast, quickly dip a slice of bread into the mixture and put it on a hot pan to cook. **4** When the toast has turned light brown, it's ready to eat. **5** You can top the toast with butter, syrup, and powdered sugar. **6** Making French toast is as easy as that! **7**

Make an egg mixture by cracking a few eggs into a bowl and stirring in some milk.

Exercise 6: Revise for logical order of sentences.

These paragraphs lack cohesion. Identify the sentences that break the logical flow of the ideas. Explain your answer to a partner.

1. Reading is a popular hobby for people of many ages. Children often enjoy reading for entertainment. Other adults enjoy reading because they have found specific authors or genres that move them and they can create a connection with the story. Teenagers enjoy reading as a hobby because they are able to learn about other places and cultures by reading about them. Little children may also enjoy reading because they enjoy spending time with their parents. Young adults may enjoy reading for a hobby because it can help them socialize with other young adults who are reading the same stories. Some adults read to relax after a long day at work. It is obvious that reading is such a popular hobby due to the reasons people of all ages choose to read.

2. However, reading is more than a hobby; it is also a great tool for education. If people want to learn new skills, they can learn about those skills in books. If people want to understand history, they can learn it in a book. If they want to learn how scientific processes occur, there are books that can explain them. The education you can gain from a book can include skills, history, science, and even how to succeed in business. If people want to learn about successful business practices, there are also books that can teach about that topic. Reading can open the door to learn many new things.

3. Reading stories that were written by people from a different culture helps the reader understand that culture better. The culture of a group of people includes their beliefs and traditions, which are frequently included in the stories they write. For example, many people have written stories to teach a lesson that shows the importance of a certain characteristic. The Little Red Hen is one such story in American culture. Many other cultures have similar types of stories that show pieces of their cultures. This story teaches the value of hard work, which is traditionally valued highly in America. Thus, by reading, people can learn more about other cultures.

Exercise 7: Add Cohesive Devices.

Add cohesive devices to the essay.

Many students take the TOEFL every year as part of the requirements to be admitted to an American University. This test is often used as a way to measure a student's English proficiency. Since the result of getting a low score can mean that students are not able to go to the college they desire to attend, it is important to prepare well for this exam. In order to prepare for the exam, students need to improve their knowledge of English, become familiar with the format of the exam, and practice.

_____ students need to learn English. The English skills that need to be learned are reading, listening, speaking, writing, and grammar (especially as those skills are used in academic settings). Learning grammar is different on the TOEFL from what you might think. Other types of English exams include a written grammar test to measure students' knowledge of grammar. _____ the TOEFL uses a different grammar assessment. Grammar is measured by the application of grammar knowledge in context. When a test taker speaks and writes on the test, the grammar they use is evaluated. It takes time to improve your English, so do as much as you can to build your vocabulary, grammar, and fluency in each of the skills.

_____ learning the format of the test is essential. Even a native speaker would not be able to score perfectly if they were unfamiliar with the format of the test. First, you need to know about the timing of the test. You should _____ be familiar with the types of questions you will be asked. _____ element of the format you should be familiar with is how the test will be scored. _____ there are some questions on the reading section that are worth two points instead of one point.



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/writingH.

Revising

Review: Introduction

Remember that the introduction is like an inverted triangle. The beginning of your introduction paragraph is general (e.g., establishes what you will compare). Then you narrow down the topic to a specific idea (e.g., what the differences or similarities are).

Hook

Don't forget to catch your reader's interest by starting your introduction with a hook. There are many types of hooks: facts, questions, problems, descriptions, etc. There is not one perfect hook for each essay.

Type of Hook	Example
Fact	There many differences between beach and city vacations.
Question	Have you ever wondered which is better: a beach or city vacation?
Problem	Many people don't take the time to think about what type of vacation will be the most fun and relaxing for them.
Description	A beach vacation can be very relaxing, while a city vacation can be full of interesting things to do.

Thesis

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

An effective thesis—

- addresses the **prompt** if there is one* (i.e., answers the question).
- is usually at the **end** of the introduction paragraph.
- controls the content of **all** of the body paragraphs.
- is a **complete** sentence.
- does **not announce** the topic (e.g., "I'm going to talk about my wedding day.").
- should **not** simply be a **fact** (e.g., "Many people get married.").
- should **not** be **too general** (e.g., "Marriage is good.").
- should **not** be **too specific** (e.g., "Most people spend thousands of dollars on their wedding day to make it special.").
- may **state** main points (e.g., "My wedding day was the happiest day of my life because of my family, the ceremony, and my husband.").
- may **imply** main points (e.g., "My wedding day was the happiest day of my life.").
-
- **REVIEW: Body Paragraphs**

Review: Body Paragraphs

Don't forget that the body paragraphs for comparison should focus on one similarity or difference between the two topics. Divide your ideas either by talking about the two topics and that point (point-by-point) or by talking about each topic individually (block). Also, make sure each body paragraph is complete with a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence.

Topic sentence

A topic sentence is the first sentence of a paragraph. It states the main idea of the paragraph. The topic sentence will contain a topic and an idea about the topic, called a "controlling idea." The controlling idea controls, or limits, the amount of information you will write about the topic in your paragraph.

Supporting sentences

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

Concluding sentences

The last sentence in a body paragraph is your concluding sentence. Your concluding sentence should end your paragraph logically. Concluding sentences can restate the main idea of your paragraph, state an opinion, make a prediction, give advice, etc. New ideas should not be presented in your concluding sentence.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Check your essay.

Remember to complete a self-check questions below for your essay before you ask someone for feedback. Good luck with your revisions!

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

Exercise 2: Revise for unity.

Revise the body paragraph for unity. Write your changes on a piece of paper.

Corn and wheat are the most important base ingredient in Mexican and American food, respectively, which distinguishes these two types of food. Wheat is used in many popular American dishes. For example, many kinds of sandwiches are popular (e.g., subs, hamburgers, croissant breakfast sandwiches, etc.) and pastas are made from wheat flour. The best example is the hamburger; however, it has other ingredients like tomatoes, lettuce, mayonnaise. These vegetables are an essential part of the American diet. On the other hand, corn is the most important ingredients in Mexican food. Corn is used to make traditional food like tamales, sopes, and tortillas. American and Mexican food are different due to the principal ingredients used in each.

Revise A Comparison Essay





This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/revisingK.

Revise A Comparison Essay

Electric Cars versus Gasoline Cars

Did you know that you can save a lot of money using an electric car instead of a gasoline car? Some people think that electric cars will not be successful because they are weaker cars, but the truth is that some electric cars have more power and speed than gasoline power. Sooner or later, gasoline cars will be history. What are the main differences between these cars that could lead to the extinction of the gasoline engine? First, efficiency, and second, emissions.

The reason that electric vehicles are a lot more efficient than gasoline cars is because their electric engine is very small and does not need oil changes and the transmission just has one gear instead of eight or ten gears. They are also more efficient because they can recycle energy. For example, when you are going down a hill or braking, the car absorbs that energy, and sends it to the main battery. Buying electricity is also a lot cheaper than gasoline, so people can save money on fuel. In the world efficiency ranking, electric cars are in the top of that list, as you know, efficiency is the key to success.

The second reason why electric cars will become highly popular is because people prefer to buy cars that are good for the environment, and their emissions are not dangerous for people and animals in the environment. Smoke and oil waste are some of the dangerous pollutants that gasoline cars are producing right now. Gasoline engines release harmful chemicals like carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide into the air constantly, so the air quality is worse because of gasoline engines. Electric cars on the other hand, do not have dangerous gas emissions or use oil, so oil pollution is also eliminated. Electric cars don't leave smoke behind or let out dangerous exhaust. Electric cars are friends with the ecosystem; consequently they are the top one in zero pollution in the world.

In conclusion, electric cars are more efficient and produce fewer emissions than gasoline engines do. These are major differences between the two types of vehicles. These differences may lead to future changes in the popularity of these vehicles, especially as people become more environmentally concerned, or as people are looking to save a little extra money on gasoline.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Revise an essay.

Read the compare/contrast essay at the end of this chapter.

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



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at

https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/revise_comparison_es.

Timed Writing (Plans & Problems)

You should always start your writing with a plan. Having an outline will help you to stay focused and use your time well. However, things do not always go as planned. In this section, you will learn some strategies for how to be flexible when the unexpected happens.

Problems with Following an Outline

First, let's think about some of the reasons you might need to change your outline. These problems might also happen in your drafted writing, but timed writing does not give you much time to adjust.

1. A topic sentence is harder to support than you thought it would be.
2. You realize you aren't happy with the position you decided on.
3. The place you are taking the test is distracting you.
4. Your typing skills with an American English keyboard (QWERTY) are not strong.
5. You took longer than planned to write the outline.
6. The test is long and you are starting to feel tired and lose focus.
7. The test is important and your stress is making it hard to do your best.
8. You have taken the test before and didn't get the writing score you wanted and you are worrying that will happen again.

Problems 1-5 are all writing-based concerns and can be solved with a few simple strategies.

1. If a point is too hard to develop, you can start writing about your next point. Leave the difficult one to work on later. If you can't think of how to continue writing that paragraph, you can choose to leave it incomplete to show that you did start a new idea, or you can delete it. Sometimes it is better to show that you tried to write more and ran out of time. Sometimes it would be inappropriate to have an incomplete idea. Think about what is best for that assignment.
2. Your position usually does not matter in timed writing. The teacher wants to see your ability to explain and defend using clear reasons and support. The teacher wants to know what you learned from class and how you connect that to your other knowledge. This means it is rare that you would lose points for choosing "the wrong side." If you decide you don't like the position, it doesn't really matter. What matters is writing a well-organized response. Don't start over!
3. There is very little you can do to change the test environment. Some testing centers (like the ELC during end of semester testing) are filled with many people taking the test. Taking a test at home can provide different distractions. The best thing you can do is practice in similar environments as much as you can before the actual test. If you experience test anxiety, you can ask for accommodations. The professor may be able to give you more time or let you take the test in a quiet place. Some accommodations might require a doctor's note.
4. There is not a true shortcut for typing. While there may be times that you will have timed writing questions on a paper test, it is becoming less and less common in university settings. Practice with typing instruction websites and practice with the keyboard as much as you can.
5. One thing that will help you to adjust to this problem is to organize your outline with your strongest and easiest points at the beginning. By organizing it this way, you know that you have the thesis and restatement as a minimum introduction and conclusion, and you will begin the most important supporting idea first. That way, if you run out of time, you can delete what you didn't get to.

As you can see from examples 6-8, not all of the problems you might have are just about organization or time. Anxiety and stress about a test or the environment of the testing room can impact your ability to do your best. Instead of making those problems worse by panicking, acknowledge the feelings and make a new plan. Take another look at your outline and see what you can delete. What is still necessary to explain? What points would just be an extra to include if you have time? Let yourself put your focus on the essentials and minimum expectations. You should have time to write those parts. Anything more you have time to do just improves your writing, but you will know that you accomplished the most important parts of the tasks.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Reflection

Write a short reflection (1 paragraph) to answer the question below.

What problems do you face when you are asked to do timed writing? How do you overcome those problems?
What strategy would you like to try?

Exercise 2: Timed Writing Practice

You have 30 minutes to respond to this prompt. Your answer should be around 300 words long. Before you begin, think about how you will use your strategies if you have an obstacle with following your plan.

What makes someone a good friend? Explain why the characteristic(s) you chose are important.



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/timed_writing_4.

Integrated Writing (Word Choice)

Integrated writing means using ideas from other sources. You are taking the same idea that you hear or read and including it in your own writing.

Sometimes you will use a direct quotation. A direct quotation means that you will use the exact words from the reading or listening passage. You will need to write the exact words in quotation marks (these " " are quotation marks).

However, there are many times when you will want to write the idea, but you will not be able to or want to use the exact words from the source. When we use our own words to explain an idea from another source, we call this summarizing or paraphrasing. We can also call it restating.

The most important skill for summarizing and paraphrasing is choosing vocabulary. You will want to use words with the same meaning. Words with the same (or very similar) meaning are called synonyms. Synonyms often have some difference in meaning.

In this part of the textbook, you will practice understanding the original source and choosing good words to explain the ideas in your own writing.

Comprehension

In your reading and listening classes, you practice understanding the main idea and major details. These are the same skills you need for integrated writing. In integrated writing, you do not need every detail. You are listening and/or reading with a specific purpose. That purpose will help you know what information you want to include in your writing.

Example

For example, a student is writing about service animals. The student knows general information. She knows that dogs can be trained to help people who are blind. However, she thinks there is probably more specific information about the types of service animals.

The student finds this website: [ADA: Service Animals](#)

The teacher says this is a good source because it is an official government agency. The student uses the website to learn information about service animals.

- Dogs are the only service animals on this website.
- Service animals can be "trained to retrieve objects."
- Dogs can "remind [people] to take their medication."
- A dog can be "trained to detect the onset of a seizure and then help that person remain safe."

The information is excellent, but the student wants to explain the ideas in her own words.

When you read or listen to the source, you will choose the important information. The easiest way to think about comprehension for integrated writing is with questions. In the example, the student had a specific question in her mind "*What types of service animals are there?*" and she used this question to find information that will help her write.

Even TOEFL integrated writing gives you specific questions to think about. In the integrated writing, you are listening for three supporting reasons or details and comparing those to the reading. That comparison of specific details helps you to focus and choose ideas.

Choosing How Much to Use

When you have chosen the ideas that help answer your question, you need to decide how much you need to write to explain the idea clearly. Look at the example below:

Example

There are a few options for how much information the student can include in her writing about service animals. The student will make this decision using the organization of the whole assignment.

Option 1: General Ideas

If the actions the service animals do are not specifically important, she can describe their training more generally. This gives her more space in her essay to talk about service animals in a general way.

- Service animals are dogs that are trained to help people who have a disability to do tasks that are challenging for them.

This sentence explains the idea that connects all of the information she learned on the website. It is very general. This is good if the student wants to use more space in her writing to talk about the rules for service animals, how someone can get a service animal, and/or how the dogs are trained.

Option 2: Specific Examples

The student could also choose to use more specific details and ideas from the original source. This adds strength to the essay by giving more description, but it can use space that the writer could use for other supporting ideas.

- Dogs can be trained to be service animals for people who have seizures to help keep them safe.

This is a great way to explain the same ideas, but now the supporting idea is very specific. The reader will expect more details about this example or for the same type of service animal to be described in the whole essay.

Option 3: General and Specific

Of course, there is a way to combine the first two options. This is easiest to do in two sentences, but it can be done in one long sentence. You will just need to be careful with grammar.

- Service animals are dogs that are trained to help people who have a disability to do tasks that are challenging for them. For example, they can be trained to remind people to take their medicine.
- Service animals can be trained to help people with disabilities, like the dogs who can remind a person to take their medicine.

Word Choice

When you are using the ideas from the source, but not a direct quotation, you will use synonyms. There are two parts of synonyms that are important to think about:

1. What is the dictionary definition?
2. When are the words used?

Sometimes a word might look like it has the same meaning. The internet dictionary might tell us that a word is a synonym, but there is a small difference in the meaning. For example, the word *state* is a little stronger than *say*. There is also a difference in when the two words are used. *State* is more formal and almost always in writing. *Say* can be used in speaking or writing and is more common.

Example

The source about service animals uses some words that the student wants to change. Look at the list below and her notes on the vocabulary.

- retrieve (is this very formal?)
- trained (used too many times)
- "detect the onset" (what does this mean?)
- remain (more common word?)

Now look at the table to see her decisions on what words to use in her explanation of the ideas.

Original Word	Option(s)	Decision
Retrieve	bring back, fetch, recover	I will use <i>bring items</i> to explain the same idea as <i>retrieve objects</i> . <i>Fetch</i> can also be used for a game that dogs play, and I don't want this to be confusing. <i>Recover</i> doesn't have the same meaning in this sentence.
Trained	taught, qualified	The best option is to say that dogs <i>are taught</i> instead of using <i>trained</i> a lot of times. <i>Qualified</i> can work in this sentence, but it sounds too formal for dogs in my mind.
Detect the onset	observe, identify, catch, the start, the beginning	This phrase can be replaced best with <i>identify the start</i> . I think <i>observe</i> and <i>catch</i> are both good options. I just feel more comfortable with the word <i>identify</i> . <i>Beginning</i> sounds more formal.
Remain	continue, keep, stay	For this context, I like the word <i>keep them safe</i> because it feels more natural. <i>Continue</i> would need me to change the grammar, and that would be difficult for me to do. <i>Stay</i> is also a good choice.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Word Choice

Read the example sentences for integrated writing below. Change the underlined word for a synonym. Be careful not to change the meaning of the sentence.

1. Nobody wants to have a relationship with someone who is reliable, so one of the best ways to connect with someone is by serving others.
2. There is also a high probability that the person will overexert himself before or during the marathon and will not be able to finish it successfully
3. In conclusion, the physical characteristics between carnivores and herbivores are different and there are some advantages for each type of animal.

Exercise 2: Restate the Ideas

You are writing about the Inca civilization. Read the example source information to learn more about interesting facts about this history. Write the ideas in your own words. You should write one focused on the general ideas and one focused on a specific example.

Source: [Inca Civilization](#) Use only the "Fast Facts" section of the reading.

Exercise 3: Integrated Writing Practice

Watch the video and take notes on the main idea and any major details. Then click on the museum article and read that source. You have 20 minutes to answer the prompt. Your answer should be around 200 words long.

Prompt: According to the sources, how can you develop a talent? Why do the speaker and writer think that it is important to develop a talent?

Video:

Reading: [How to Discover Your Talents](#)



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/integrated_writing_4.

Problem/Solution Essays

In this chapter you will write a problem/solution essay. To write a problem/solution essay, think about a problem that you have experienced and how it could be fixed.

A problem/solution essay is written to explain the solution(s) for a problem. This essay can describe multiple solutions or one “ideal” solution to the problem you describe.

Problem/Solution Essay Example 1
Problem/Solution Example Essay 2
Prewriting
Writing Skill: Summary
Revising
Revise A Problem/Solution Essay
Timed Writing (Revising)
Integrated Writing (Summary)



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/problemsolution_essa.

Problem/Solution Essay Example 1

No More Traffic Jams

There is nothing worse than being trapped in your car, waiting in the middle of a traffic jam. It is frustrating, knowing that there is nothing you can do and that you are going to be late to work. Traffic jams often occur during rush hour or right after a large event because there are more cars on the road than normal. Traffic jams can also be caused by car accidents or road construction. They usually occur on major roads that many people use to travel to work or school. Traffic jams are a problem because they make people late for work or school, they can cause car accidents, and they are frustrating. How can we reduce the number of traffic jams? Possible solutions include carpooling or using public transportation. The best way to solve traffic jams is by using public transportation because it will be efficient, economical, and reliable.

First, using public transportation is efficient. A bus is a very efficient way to move lots of people from one place to another using only one vehicle. Instead of having one vehicle for each person on the road, busses take many cars off the road as people ride together. Trains are even more efficient at reducing the number of cars on the road. Because trains have their own dedicated rail system to get people around, all of the cars are eliminated without adding any more traffic to the roads. Not only are busses and trains more efficient at carrying passengers, but time spent on a bus or a train is more efficient for the passenger. This encourages more people to use public transportation. It is easy to see how efficient public transportation is and the impact that it has on reducing traffic.

Another reason that public transportation is the best solution to traffic jams is because it is so economical. People want to use public transportation instead of driving their own car because they can save money. Public transportation usually does not cost very much, especially for people who use it often. There are discounts for seniors and students, which makes it an even more economical way for these groups to travel around town. Using public transportation also eliminates the need to pay for parking, car insurance, and car maintenance, not to mention gasoline. All of the expenses related to owning a car are replaced with one simple fare. Because it is so economical, public transportation is a good solution to traffic jams by encouraging more people to travel together and reduce the number of cars on the road.

Finally, public transportation is the best solution because it is reliable. Many people set up carpools to reduce traffic, but this is only a temporary solution. Every time someone has a change in their schedule, the carpool needs to be adjusted. For example, if someone has to go to the doctor or sleeps in, the carpool will not work that day. If someone changes jobs or transfers to a new school, the carpool will need to be adjusted again. Public transportation, on the other hand, is more reliable. The bus and train schedules don't change every time that one rider needs to go to the doctor. The schedules are set and people can plan on them. People who use public transportation will find that it is reliable and can help limit the number of cars on the road.

Because it is efficient, economical, and reliable, public transportation is the best way to reduce the number of traffic jams. There are other possible ways to address this problem, but using public transportation is clearly the best. Traffic jams during very busy hours on the road can be reduced and more people can get to work on time and avoid the frustration caused by sitting in the middle of a long line of cars. Cities and governments should consider ways to

improve their public transportation system and encourage more people to use it. If they do, they will surely see fewer traffic jams on their roads and much happier drivers.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Analyze an essay

Read one of the two Process Example Essays on the following pages to complete this exercise.

1. Label the introduction paragraph, the body paragraphs, and the conclusion paragraph.
2. Circle the hook.
3. What is the general topic of the essay?
4. Underline the thesis.
5. Underline each of the topic sentences.
6. Do each of the topic sentences support the thesis?
7. Does the conclusion paragraph start by restating the thesis?



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at

https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/problemsolution_essac.

Problem/Solution Example Essay 2

Conversation Confidence

Conversations happen everywhere: work, school, church, stores, dates, and even the gym. Conversations are such a common part of daily life that people often don't think about how difficult they can be, or the anxiety they can cause, if all of these conversations are happening in another language. Many international students avoid participating in conversations, especially with native speakers of English. This avoidance is a serious problem for international students who study English because participating in conversations is crucial for developing their language skills. Avoiding conversations can also cause international students to struggle making friends and make them feel more isolated. While it is natural to feel nervous about participating in conversations, international students need to find ways to be more confident in their ability to participate in a conversation. International students can choose from various solutions to stop avoiding conversations and feel more confident.

One solution for students to develop more conversational confidence is to learn about current, relevant news. Many international students don't join conversations because they aren't sure what to talk about or what other people would be interested in. The Internet makes it very easy to find out what everyone else in the community is talking about; with this knowledge, students can be prepared for conversations because they know what people are generally talking about and can even look up the vocabulary words they need. Students can start this preparation by following a university's social media pages or listening to locally produced news. Learning about current events is an easy way to be ready for a casual conversation.

Students can also prepare for common conversational topics if they want to be more active participants in conversations. While almost every conversation is different, there are some things that come up frequently, and those topics can be practiced. For example, many people might ask international students about their family, their country, their job, their reason for studying English, or their hobbies. Students can practice responding to these types of questions while they are working or preparing dinner by talking to themselves. As topics come up in conversations that they are not able to speak about, they can add those topics to their list to practice. By thinking about and practicing responses to common conversational questions, international students can have more confidence to participate in conversations.

Another way to feel more confident is by listening to conversations. This solution helps students hear how native speakers start (or end) a conversation, as well as how they change topics. Examples of conversations that are easy to find include television shows. These shows, especially if they can be paused and replayed, can be helpful because there is no pressure for the student to participate in the conversation or to understand everything the first time. Other conversations that are easy to watch happen in news broadcasts between the featured stories. These conversations are a little more formal than conversations in TV shows, which can be an advantage because students can observe the similarities and differences between casual and more formal conversations. This listening practice can really help students overcome any anxiety about participating in conversations.

A final way to overcome the habit of avoiding conversations is to refine language skills and prepare questions. By improving their vocabulary, fluency, grammar, and pronunciation, students will not only be more confident in

conversations, but they will look forward to them as an opportunity to practice. Many students are hesitant to speak because they do not want to make mistakes, so by refining their language, they can reduce that concern. However, students should not wait until their language is perfect before they speak. An easy way to start is to listen to questions that people ask and create some grammatically correct questions to ask in a conversation. These questions can be practiced and memorized to make sure the language is correct. With these questions and continued improvement in their language skills, international students can be more actively involved in conversations.

In conclusion, students have many options to solve the problem of avoiding conversations. Choosing to work through one of these solutions will help students improve their English skills and help them build stronger relationships with others. They will be able to take advantage of the time they spend studying in the United States. Since conversations are part of everyday life and can't be entirely avoided, it is better to conquer the fear through preparation than to limit self-expression. Whether students are talking to a supervisor, a classmate, a roommate, or a date, they will feel empowered to be better conversational partners.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Analyze an essay

Read one of the two Process Example Essays on the following pages to complete this exercise.

1. Label the introduction paragraph, the body paragraphs, and the conclusion paragraph.
2. Circle the hook.
3. What is the general topic of the essay?
4. Underline the thesis.
5. Underline each of the topic sentences.
6. Do each of the topic sentences support the thesis?
7. Does the conclusion paragraph start by restating the thesis?



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at

https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/problemsolution_exam.

Prewriting

Understand the assignment

In your essay, you will describe how to solve a problem.

Brainstorm to find a topic

Start thinking of possible topics by talking with other students about problems that students commonly face, doing a free write, or making an idea map.

Choose a focus

With a specific problem in mind (e.g., heavy traffic), think about solutions for that problem. If you feel there is one solution that is the best, choose a few reasons that illustrate why. If there are many solutions that could work, then choose a few solutions to describe.

Outline

A problem/solution essay follows typical essay organization with an introduction paragraph, body paragraphs, and a conclusion paragraph.

Introduction

Your introduction should start by briefly describing the problem. You should give the reader any background information they need to be able to understand the problem. Consider where or when the problem occurs, who is affected by the problem, and what can happen if the problem is not solved.

At the end of your introduction paragraph, you should give your thesis. The thesis should respond to the problem by either presenting various solutions that may solve the problem or giving reasons that show why one solution is the best. Consider the examples below.

- Reasons to defend the best solution:
 - *The best way to solve heavy traffic is by using public transportation because it is more efficient, economical, and sustainable.*
- Various solutions:
 - *Knowledge and preparation can help international students participate actively in conversations rather than avoiding them.*

Remember that it is possible to write a thesis that implies the main points rather than listing them.

Here are some phrases that are useful for writing a problem/solution thesis:

- Public transportation and carpooling **can solve** traffic jams.
- Students who have a lot of stress **should**....
- Using public transportation **is the best solution** to solve traffic jams.
- **The most effective way** for students to deal with stress is....

Body

Your body paragraphs should respond to the problem by describing the solution(s). If you chose to write about multiple solutions, describe a different solution in each body paragraph. If you chose one solution, describe different reasons why your solution is good in each body paragraph. Look at the examples below and compare them to the example essays for this chapter.

One Ideal Solution	Various Solutions
TH: The best way to solve heavy traffic is by using public transportation because it is more efficient, economical, and reliable.	TH: Knowledge and preparation can help international students participate actively in conversations rather than avoiding them.
TS: Because public transportation is efficient, it is the best solution for traffic jams.	TS: One solution for students to develop more conversational confidence is to learn about current, relevant news.
TS: Another reason public transportation is the best solution for traffic is because it is economical.	TS: Students can also prepare for common conversational topics if they want to be more active participants in conversations.
TS: The third reason that public transportation is the best solution for traffic jams is because it is reliable.	TS: Another way to feel more confident is by listening to conversations.
	TS: A final way to overcome the habit of avoiding conversations is to refine language skills and prepare questions.

Conclusion

Your conclusion paragraph should start by restating your thesis. Then you should discuss your problem more generally and apply the solutions to the general context you established in your introduction. You can end with a closing statement that is a suggestion, prediction, opinion, or question. You can think of this part of a problem/solution essay as encouraging your reader to go make a change.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Brainstorm (free write)

Write for 10 minutes about problems you or your friends have experienced.

This writing does not need to have a specific structure or shape; your goal is simply to think of as many problems as you can think of.

Exercise 2: Revise thesis statements

Revise the thesis statements to be more effective for a problem/solution essay on a piece of paper.

1. Noisy roommates.
2. Eating healthily in college is difficult.
3. Cell phones should be prohibited in class.
4. Falling asleep while driving is a big cause of car accidents.
5. It causes many people to lose their family because they drive under the influence of alcohol and abuse drugs.

Exercise 3: Evaluate an outline.

Evaluate the outline. Is the thesis effective? Are the topic sentences effective? Be prepared to explain your answer.

- TH: Possible solutions are finding compatibility between roommates before moving in, setting clear rules, and talking.
- TS: First of all, finding compatible roommates.
- TS: Secondly, setting clear rules beforehand can help to have a healthier relationship between roommates.
- TS: Communicating seems logical, but in reality, it can be difficult.
- TH: To conclude, roommates aren't only difficult for international students.

Exercise 4: Make an outline.

On a piece of paper, make a simple outline for one of the problems below. Use the thesis that is given or make one of your own.

Problem	The computer lab closes at 5:00 p.m.
TH	Students who need computers for their homework should go to the BYU library to complete their assignments.
Problem	Students struggle to manage their time.
TH	In order to manage their time properly, students should either buy a paper planner to use, get a scheduling app for their phone, or use a Google calendar.

Exercise 5: Make an outline.

Make an outline for your essay in a word document.

Remember to make your outline as detailed as possible. This will make creating the paragraphs easier for you later.



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/prewritingV.

Writing Skill: Summary

Now that your planning stage is complete, you can begin writing your draft. Your writing should be organized, developed, accurate, and original.

Summary

Writing a summary is a very important academic skill. When you write a summary, you explain the most important parts of something you read or listened to with your own words.

Read the example paragraph and the summary of the example paragraph. Notice that the summary is much shorter and only talks about the major ideas from the paragraph.

Example: Paragraph

Many students who study and work have to balance their schedules carefully. They have to make time to go to class, go to work, and also complete their homework. If they don't plan their time carefully, they may not be able to meet these obligations and then they will face serious consequences. They may lose money by not making time for work or they may get bad grades in their classes by not having time to study. After these obligations are met, there are other activities many students enjoy like spending time with friends, doing hobbies, or dating. They will not have time for these extra activities without balancing their schedules first. It can be very difficult for students to make time for all of their obligations, but it is essential to their success.

An effective summary:

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

Here is an overview of some simple steps you can follow in order to create a summary:

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

Determine your purpose

The purpose of your summary will help you determine which details you should include. Typically, your summaries for academic writing have a similar purpose: you need to explain academic information.

Read/listen

Read or listen carefully so you understand the source well enough to summarize it.

Make a list of the main points

As you read/listen, pay attention to the main ideas and major details of the source material. You should make a list of these main points either while you read/listen or just after. If you can write on the text (or your notes), it may help to underline main points or cross out minor details. As you write your list, focus on ideas rather than copying the exact words from the source. Compare the example paragraph and the example list below.

Example: Paragraph

Many students who study and work have to balance their schedules carefully. They have to make time to go to class, go to work, and also complete their homework. If they don't plan their time carefully, they may not be able to meet these obligations and then they will face serious consequences. They may lose money by not making time for work or they may get bad grades in their classes by not having time to study. After these obligations are met, there are other activities many students enjoy like spending time with friends, doing hobbies, or dating. They will not have time for these extra activities without balancing their schedules first. It can be very difficult for students to make time for all of their obligations, but it is essential to their success.

Example: List

- Students who work need to balance their schedules
- They need time for work, class, homework
- Not planning can cause problems
- They won't have time for other activities if they don't plan carefully

Write the summary

Without looking at/listening to the original, use your list to write your summary. Again, it is important to focus on the ideas. Use your own words.

Example: List

- Students who work need to balance their schedules
- They need time for work, class, homework
- Not planning can cause problems
- They won't have time for other activities if they don't plan carefully

Example: Summary

In order to avoid problems that come from not meeting their work and school obligations and be able to participate in other activities, working students need to plan their time wisely.

Notice how the items on the list are not just copied and pasted together into one big sentence. The ideas are connected together carefully.

students who work	-->	working students
not planning can cause problems	-->	in order to avoid problems
have time for	-->	be able to participate in

Compare to the original

Make sure that you have not changed the meaning of the ideas.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Analyze introduction paragraphs

As you draft your introduction, review the information in the chapter "The Writing Process" about writing introduction paragraphs. You should start generally but not too generally. If you start too generally, you may fail to clearly describe the problem. Read the introduction and the revised introduction below and compare them. Why is the revised introduction more effective?

Introduction

There are many new experiences for international students in the United States, and some of them cause a lot of anxiety. Arranging finances, housing, and legal papers in another language are some examples. However, those experiences are not typically ongoing; once the arrangements are made, they are usually stable for at least a semester. Other stressful experiences are repeated on a daily basis, like having a conversation with a native speaker of English. Many international students avoid these conversations, but that is a serious problem for them. Knowledge and preparation can help international students participate actively in conversations rather than avoiding them.

Revised introduction

Conversations happen everywhere: work, school, church, stores, dates, and even the gym. Conversations are such a common part of daily life that people often don't think about how difficult they can be, or the anxiety they can cause, if all of these conversations are happening in another language. Many international students avoid participating in conversations, especially with native speakers of English. This avoidance is a serious problem for international students who study English because participating in conversations is crucial for developing their language skills. Avoiding conversations can also cause international students to struggle making friends and make them feel more isolated. While it is natural to feel nervous about participating in conversations, international students need to find ways to be more confident in their ability to participate in a conversation. International students can choose from various solutions to stop avoiding conversations and feel more confident.

Exercise 2: Evaluate summaries

Evaluate the summaries. Which summary is most effective for each original paragraph?

1. Original: The equipment is the first major difference between American football and soccer. In American football, the players need to wear protective clothing because it can be a dangerous game to play. The players need to wear helmets to protect their head, mouth guards for their teeth, and large pads for their shoulders and back. The players use a brown ball that is pointed on the ends. On the other hand, soccer players do not need to wear helmets and lots of protective pads. The players just have pads to protect their shins, and the goalie wears gloves. The ball they use in soccer is round. The ball is usually a bright color like white. Soccer and American football definitely require different equipment to play them.

- Summary #1: American football and soccer have different clothing, which is the biggest difference between the two sports when people play them.
- Summary #2: The equipment is different.
- Summary #3: American football and soccer are different due to the equipment required to play each one, namely the protective clothing (helmets and pads) and the ball that is used to play.

2. Original: Exercise is important because it improves your mental health. First, exercise is the healthiest way to deal with stress. When we have too much stress, our mental and emotional health is affected negatively. Exercise can reduce this impact. Exercise can also influence the balance of chemicals we have inside our bodies. Exercise releases endorphins into our bodies and that can help us feel better or not be depressed. These emotional benefits are very helpful. Exercise also helps us think more clearly because it brings more oxygen to the brain. If you watch how you feel when you exercise, you will notice that your mood and mental clarity improve.

- Summary #1: Exercise improves your mental health.
- Summary #2: Due to mental health benefits like reducing stress, balancing chemicals, releasing endorphins, and helping us think more clearly, exercise is essential.
- Summary #3: Exercise improves your mental health. First, exercise is the healthiest way to deal with stress. Exercise can also influence our chemical balance. Exercise also helps us think more clearly because it brings more oxygen to the brain.
- Summary #4: Exercise is important because your mental health is more important than your physical health and exercise is effective at improving your mental health.

Exercise 3: Identify major ideas

Identify the details or examples that are not major ideas. Be prepared to explain your choices.

Dinner groups are a great solution for people who hate to cook for themselves. A dinner group is a group of friends that decides to eat dinner together every night. The job of being the cook rotates every day that the group meets for dinner. Most college dinner groups meet Monday through Thursday, to allow group members time on the weekends to go on dates and visit friends. If there are four people, everyone cooks dinner one day each week from Monday to Thursday. If you are only in charge of cooking one meal each week, you can simply go to someone's house on the other days each week and not need to spend time cooking. Dinner groups allow busy students to eat healthy meals every night, but only cook once a week. This is an excellent way to eat healthier and maybe even make a new friend.

Exercise 4: Evaluate and revise a summary

Read the original paragraph and the summary.

Original:

Getting married in the United States often involves many different types of parties. Some couples have an engagement party, which is for family and friends to express congratulations to the couple after they get engaged. The bride typically is invited to a bridal shower, which is a party for all of her friends (usually only female friends) to celebrate the upcoming wedding with her. After the wedding ceremony, there is usually a wedding reception, which is another large party. The wedding reception includes many traditional activities, like cutting the cake and throwing the bouquet. All of these different parties are part of many American weddings.

Summary:

Getting married in the United States has many different events, such as engagement parties for some people where friends and family congratulate the couple and a wedding reception which is a party where there are many traditional things like throwing the bouquet to find the next bride and cutting the cake for the bride and the groom; then the couple is very tired!

Evaluate the summary based on the following criteria:

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

Revise the summary on a piece of paper.

Exercise 5: Write a summary.

Choose a paragraph to summarize. Write your summary on a piece of paper.

#1: Serving others

Serving others can help make people happier in any situation. When people are feeling stressed or unhappy, it is often because they are focused on their problems and worries. Focusing on our own problems and worries makes us feel more stressed about them. When we focus on helping other people with their problems, we feel happier because we are not focused on ourselves. Helping others also helps in the other areas of building happiness: it strengthens our relationships with others and it helps us feel more gratitude. When we serve others, we can become good friends with the people we help because they see how much we care about them. We feel more gratitude because we see the problems other people face and we realize that we are not the only ones who struggle with certain problems. Serving others is an essential key to living a happier life.

#2: Online classes

Online classes, on the other hand, do not offer face-to-face interaction and they are more limited in their instruction methods, yet they offer greater flexibility for scheduling. The interaction between teachers and students in an online class is typically time-delayed, meaning that students send an email and wait for a response. Interaction with classmates is less personal than it would be in a traditional class because when student-to-student interaction is required, it is typically limited to email or an online discussion board. The method of instruction in online classes is typically limited to videos and reading articles that can be sent to students electronically. Many of the hands-on experiences that students get in a traditional class are virtually impossible to have in an online class. Rather than being able to touch and feel rocks in the geology class, students will be limited to videos or pictures of rocks. The scheduling is very flexible. Students typically enroll in online classes because they need the ability to take classes at night, early in the morning, or even during their lunch break at work. The pace of online classes is typically determined by the students, so their personal and work schedules do not need to be completely changed. While the interaction and instruction may be limitations of an online class, the scheduling is very flexible.



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/writingHj.

Revising

Review: Thesis Statement

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

Review: Body Paragraph Parts

Don't forget to write all three types of sentences in each body paragraph: topic sentences, supporting sentences, and concluding sentences.

Topic Sentence

Don't forget that a topic sentence is the first sentence of a paragraph. It states the topic and an idea about the topic, called a "controlling idea." The controlling idea controls, or limits, the amount of information you will write about the topic in your paragraph.

An effective topic sentence—

- is a **complete** sentence.
- is usually at the **beginning** of a body paragraph.
- clearly **supports** the thesis statement (topic of essay + one controlling idea).
- does **not announce** the topic (e.g., "This paragraph is about natural phenomena.").
- should **not** be **too general** (e.g., "Natural phenomena are interesting.").
- should **not** be **too specific** (e.g., "Yellowstone has over 500 geysers.").

Supporting Sentences

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

To finish your body paragraph, make sure your last sentence is your concluding sentence. Concluding sentences can restate the main idea of your paragraph, state an opinion, make a prediction, give advice, etc. New ideas should not be presented in your concluding sentence.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Check your essay.

*Remember to complete a self-check questions below for your essay before you ask someone for feedback.
Good luck with your revisions!*

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

Exercise 2: Revise this paragraph.

On a piece of paper, revise this example paragraph.

Limiting time on social media can improve relationships and academic performance. Social media can be a great way to contact people who live far away, but it can also push away people who are physically present with us. Limiting time on social media can help us make time for the people in our lives. Limiting time on social media gives us more time for our studies. People can limit their time on social media by getting an app that will control the time for you. They can also make their own rules like not using social media between specific hours when they should be working. Families can set rules like not allowing phones at the table during meals. We can solve the problems of having poor relationships and poor grades by limiting time on social media.

Revise A Problem/Solution Essay





This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/revisingzl.

Revise A Problem/Solution Essay

Cooking for One

Cooking is a lot of work. It takes a lot of time to buy the ingredients, prepare the food, and wash the dishes after the meal is over. It can take hours to finish the tasks associated with one meal. Because cooking takes so much work, many people are not motivated to cook if they are only going to cook for themselves. Cooking for one person just doesn't seem to be worth all of the work involved. That is a problem because it creates bad eating habits like eating fast food, skipping meals, or eating frozen dinners. College students think it is too much work to cook for just one person.

Dinner groups are a great solution for people who hate to cook for themselves. A dinner group is a group of friends that decides to eat dinner together every night. The job of being the cook rotates every day that the group meets for dinner. Most college dinner groups meet Monday through Thursday, to allow group members time on the weekends to go on dates and visit friends. Sometimes group members even meet people who introduce them to their friends, so dinner groups are a great way to make friends (and maybe even find dates!). If there are four people, everyone cooks dinner one day each week from Monday to Thursday. If you are only in charge of cooking one meal each week, you can simply go to someone's house on the other days each week and not need to spend time cooking. Dinner groups allow busy students to eat healthy meals every night, but only cook once a week. This is an excellent way to eat healthier and maybe even make a new friend.

Here is another option to help college students eat well if they don't enjoy cooking. Meals that are prepared in bulk and then frozen to cook later are called "freezer meals," and they are very popular for people with busy schedules. Lots of people like to make these meals. You can buy all of the ingredients when they are on sale and instead of only buying one portion, you buy an extra one. You cook one and put one in the freezer to cook later. This method of preparing meals allows you to spend time preparing the food and cleaning up one time for two meals, so it is more efficient.

Instead of preparing one meal and saving one, students can cook extra food when they cook and save the leftovers. If there is a meal that you like, you can cook two portions on one day and save the extra portion to eat the next day for dinner. Making leftovers is another excellent way to eat healthy if you don't like to cook for one person.

Saving leftovers, making freezer meals, and organizing a dinner group are three ways to solve the problem of unhealthy eating habits for students who don't like to cook one meal at a time. These methods make cooking more efficient, while still being able to prepare healthy food. Students need to eat healthy, and there are ways to overcome bad eating habits so that they can eat the nutrients they need. Cooking healthy meals will still take work, but it is worth it to find ways to eat well while in college.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Give feedback.

Read the problem/solution essay. What revisions could be made to improve the essay? After identifying areas to improve, respond to your own feedback by making the corrections.

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



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/revise_a_problemsolu.

Timed Writing (Revising)

Time limits mean that you do not have much time to review your work and make changes. However, even just 5 minutes at the end can make a big difference. Don't be tempted to submit an essay before the time is up when those remaining minutes could help you catch some easy to fix mistakes.

Writing Revisions

Before you take a test with a timed writing question, look at feedback your writing teacher has given you on your writing.

- Has your teacher given you feedback on an organization mistake more than once?
- Have you been given comments about problems with developing and supporting ideas?
- Is there feedback that shows you that your ideas are not clear on the first draft?
- Does your teacher comment frequently about sentences being unconnected to the rest of the paragraph?

Use the feedback you have received in the past to focus the few minutes at the end of your time to look for the mistakes you have made in other first drafts. Timed writing is a first draft experience, so the feedback on first drafts is a good place to start. Meet with your teacher during office hours before a test to get tips for how to recognize and resolve those errors during the test.

Grammar Revisions

In addition to the writing feedback you have been given, take some time to review the feedback you get from your grammar teacher about your grammar accuracy in writing.

- Are there patterns of errors with specific grammar structures that you can look for?

Meet with your grammar teacher during office hours before to get tips for how to recognize and resolve those errors during a timed test. It might be as simple as checking that all of your sentences start with a capital letter or looking for subject-verb agreement. Knowing your common mistakes can empower you to make quick changes.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Review Feedback

For this exercise, you will need to have access to recent feedback on your writing and/or grammar assignments.

- What do the comments say about your organization, development, clarity, and unity?
- What types of grammar corrections do you frequently receive?

Exercise 2: Timed Writing Practice

You have 30 minutes to respond to this prompt. Your answer should be around 300 words long. Remember to save the last 5 minutes to check your writing.

Prompt: What is a skill you want to develop? Explain why that skill would be valuable for your life. Be sure to use examples and clear explanations.



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/timed_writing_5.

Integrated Writing (Summary)

Integrated writing (especially on the TOEFL writing task 1) is all about comparison and summarizing. You are taking what you learn from different places and bringing it all together. Your explanation of the reading and listening will be much shorter and will only have the most important and relevant information.

Important & Relevant

When you are summarizing the information from the sources, you must first decide what information is most important for understanding the topic. This means you need to think about the purpose you have for writing.

The information you choose needs to be directly connected to the prompt. The information should clearly support your ideas and make sense in the organization of your writing. Do not include something in your summary that is just *interesting* but not *important* and *relevant*.

	TOEFL Integrated	Class Integrated
Audience	The TOEFL raters want to see that you can explain each source as much as possible in the time limit. The listening is more important than the reading.	Does your reader need more information to understand your topic? What can you expect your reader to understand without you including it directly?
Your Writing	You cannot include any additional information from your background knowledge on the topic.	Your thesis and topic sentences will help you know if general or specific information is needed.
Content	There is always the same structure. There is a main idea. There are three major details in each source. The details either agree or disagree.	You need to decide if a very specific piece of knowledge (like a percentage or place name) is important to support <i>your</i> own ideas.

Writing the Summary

When you write your summary, make a list of the ideas that were most important and relevant. Making that short bullet list helps you to see the information in the most basic form.

In the TOEFL writing task 1, you should always present the information in the same order that you see and hear it the original sources. The structure follows the point-by-point comparison format not the block style.

In other integrated writing, you need to think about *where* the summary goes in a paragraph and *why* you want to include it. The summary should transition easily from your own sentences. This is easiest if the first point from the summary matches the last idea in the sentence immediately before.

- ex. If my sentence before the summary is "One reason some languages are not used now is international business." Then your summary should begin with the idea of international business as a cause.

The purpose of the summary should be clear. What is the purpose of including that summary? What reason, detail, example, description, etc does it support?

- ex. If my sentence is "A balanced diet is more important for good health than exercise," my summary should use information from a source that supports the phrase *more important*. So, if my source explains that diet has more health benefits than exercise, this would be a good point to use in my summary.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Review

Practice explaining the connection between writing a summary and integrated writing. If possible, share an example with the class.

Exercise 2: Integrated Writing Practice

Watch the video and take notes on the main idea and any major details. Then click on the article and read that source. You will then use your notes to answer the prompt. You will have 30 minutes to write your response. You should have at least 300 words in your answer.

Prompt: Describe the characteristics of a good listener using the points from the video. What benefits do the video and article explain result from really listening? Use at least one specific example from the reading to illustrate this concept.

Article: [How Stuff Works: Continents](#) (Read the *introduction* and the *continents FAQs*. You do not need to read the *What makes a continent a continent* section.)



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/integrated_writing_5.

More Writing Skills

Your writing needs to show good development, unity, and cohesion in addition to being organized and accurate. This chapter mainly focuses on how to achieve development, unity, and cohesion in your body paragraphs.

Punctuation
Simple Sentences
Compound Sentences
Complex Sentences Part 1
Complex Sentences Part 2
Using Academic Vocabulary



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/refining_writing.

Punctuation

Sentence Ending Punctuation

Periods, exclamation points, and question marks are sentence-final punctuation. You should not have a space after the last letter of a word before one of these punctuation marks. You should have one space after these punctuation marks before the first letter of the next word.

Period	.	Used to end most declarative sentences
Exclamation point	!	Used to end declarative sentences with great emotion
Question mark	?	Used at the end of a question

Listing Punctuation

A **colon** (:) is used to introduce a list if there is a complete sentence before the list.

There are two main types of books: fiction and nonfiction.

When you finish your essay, you should check it for the four features of good writing: organization, development, accuracy, and originality.

Commas (,) and **semicolons** (;) are used for separating items in a list.

1. Commas are used to separate items in a list without punctuation. If several adjectives are listed to describe a noun, a comma separates them.

I have lived in California, Utah, and Texas.

The beautiful, new building was finished this summer..

2. Semicolons are used to separate items in a list when the items contain commas. When we write cities and states in English, a comma always separates the city and the state.

I have lived in San Diego, California; Provo, Utah; and Houston, Texas.

*If we used commas in a list that already has commas, it would be very confusing.

I have lived in San Diego, California, Provo, Utah, and Houston, Texas. (Incorrect)

1 Exercise: Revise listing punctuation.

Revise the sentences that are written incorrectly.

1. Interesting buildings on BYU campus: The Wilkinson Center, the Museum of Art, and the Fine Arts Center.
2. If you have clear organization, you have a clear, controlling thesis, specific, connected topic sentences, and a logical flow between your ideas.
3. April, June, September, and November each have 30 days.
4. We will write three major essays this semester: a problem/solution essay, a comparison essay, and a process essay.
5. New students attend an informative helpful orientation at the beginning of the semester.

Sentence Linking Punctuation

Comma + Coordinating Conjunction You can link two independent clauses (complete sentences) together with a comma if you also use a coordinating conjunction. These conjunctions are sometimes referred to as FANBOYS (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so).

There are many ways students use commas, but not all of those ways are correct.

Notice that there are two complete sentences:

There are many ways students use commas.

Not all of those ways are correct.

****Remember that you only need a comma if you are joining two COMPLETE sentences together.**

I need to print my essay tonight, and ask my study buddy to give me some feedback. (Incorrect)

I need to print my essay tonight and ask my study buddy to give me some feedback. (Correct)

Semicolon

Another way to link two complete sentences is by using a semicolon.

There are many ways students use commas; not all of those ways are correct.

Notice that there are two complete sentences again:

There are many ways students use commas.

Not all of those ways are correct.

A comma combined with a coordinating conjunction does the same thing in this situation, but a semicolon shows a stronger connection between the sentences. Writing this type of sentence can also add variety to your writing. If you use a semicolon, NO conjunction is necessary.

2 Exercise: Revise linking punctuation.

Revise the sentences that are written incorrectly. If there are multiple ways to correct the sentence, write all of the possible corrections.

1. Personality tests can tell you a lot about a person, but they aren't a perfect measure of what people are really like.
2. BYU has lots of fun activities for students, you will never be bored on the weekends.
3. Amazon is one of the most popular websites for online shopping; and you can find a wide variety of products that ship quickly to your home.
4. Electricity was one of the most important inventions in the nineteenth century and it led to other important inventions.
5. The United States fought a revolutionary war against England and won their independence.

Variety and Avoiding Linking Errors

Variety in sentence length is important for your writing. Some sentences should be short, while some can be linked to other sentences to create variety.

When you link independent clauses, you need to be careful to avoid run-on sentences.

A run-on sentence either has no punctuation between independent clauses, or splices two independent clauses together by only using a comma. (This type of run-on sentence is called a "comma splice sentence".)

He will help her prepare for the TOEFL and she will practice every day. (Incorrect)

He will help her prepare for the TOEFL, she will practice every day. (Incorrect)

He will help her prepare for the TOEFL, and she will practice every day. (Correct)

He will help her prepare for the TOEFL; she will practice every day. (Correct)

He will help her prepare for the TOEFL. She will practice every day. (Correct)

Remember that even if you are correctly linking independent clauses together, do not link too many together because it will make your writing harder to read.

3 Exercise: Revise run-on sentences.

Revise the punctuation in the student paragraph.

Parents do not control what their children do; children's behavior is affected more by television, movies, and other influences from outside the home, this is a terrible thing that sociologists have noticed, but fortunately, parents are still interested in trying to teach their children, parents should teach their children about good behaviors and parents will see improvements in the behavior of their children.



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/punctuation.

Simple Sentences

Sentence Structure



A simple sentence must include a subject and a verb.

Subjects

Subjects are the nouns (person, place, thing) that *does* the verb.

- I sing.
- Ana shops.
- Emelie dances.
- The school is good.
- My house is blue.
- The store has clothes.

Verbs

The verb is the action or state.

- I sing.
- Ana shops.
- Emelie dances.
- The school is good.
- My house is blue.
- The car stops.

It is also possible to have two or more subjects and/or two or more verbs.

- I sing and dance.
- We see, hear, smell, taste, and feel.
- Ana and Emelie shop.
- Your parents, sister, and brother visit.

Complement

A simple sentence can have a complement. The complement is a word or phrase that adds more information about a part of the sentence.

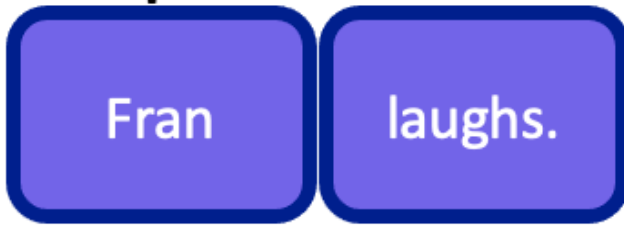
A simple sentence can have an object as a complement. The object is the noun that receives the action. A sentence can have two or more objects.

- We eat lunch.
- We eat lunch and dinner.
- Yuri buys clothes.
- Yuri buys clothes, shoes, and hats.
- They listen to music.
- The university has many students.
- My friend calls me.
- Charlie throws the ball to me.
- The book gives the instructions.

A simple sentence can also have other words or phrases as a complement. The other words or phrases might include adjectives, prepositions, or adverbs.

- We eat lunch quickly.
- Yuri buys clothes at the store.
- They listen to music on their phones.
- The university has many students.
- My friend calls me after class.
- The book gives the instructions to make cookies.

Example 1



Example 2

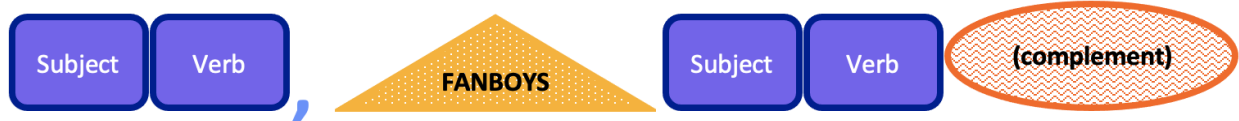


This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/simple_sentences.

Compound Sentences

Sentence Structure



Independent Clauses

A simple sentence can also be called an independent clause. An independent clause is a subject and verb that is a complete idea. It does not need more information to complete the thought.

You can connect separate independent clauses (simple sentences) using a coordinating conjunction. Coordinating conjunctions are words that connect the two sentences together. You use them when the ideas in the sentences are connected.

- I have a dog, and I want another dog.

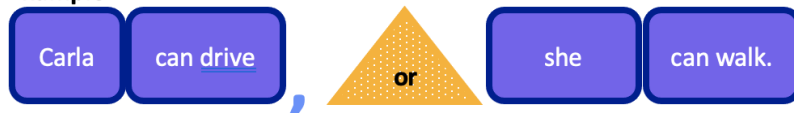
See that both sentences are complete. You can separate them with a period. However, the meaning of the sentences is connected, so you can use a coordinating conjunction to make the connection clear. When a sentence has more than one independent clause, it is called a compound sentence.

Coordinating Conjunctions

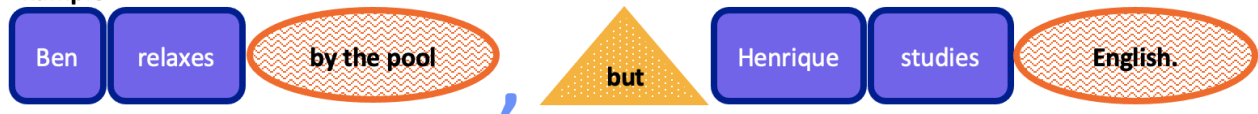
Coordinating conjunctions in English are *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so*. We often use the word *FANBOYS* to remember these words. When you use a coordinating conjunction (*FANBOYS*), you will use a comma before the second independent clause.

- F – Bring an umbrella, for it will rain this afternoon.
 - This word shows a cause or reason connection.
 - This is more formal and not common.
- A – Reading class is first, and writing class is second.
 - This word shows addition, time order, or cause/reason.
- N – I never liked broccoli, nor will I ever like it.
 - This shows that both clauses are not true or do not happen.
 - This is use more in formal English.
- B – Rei was late to class, but he did participate.
 - This shows a difference connection.
- O – My classmates are going to karaoke, or they are going bowling.
 - This word shows a choice between the clauses.
 - It is often used in questions.
- Y – I did the homework, yet I still have many questions.
 - This word is used like *but* to show a difference connection.
- S – We need money, so we will get jobs.
 - This conjunction shows a cause or reason connection like *for*.

Example 1



Example 2

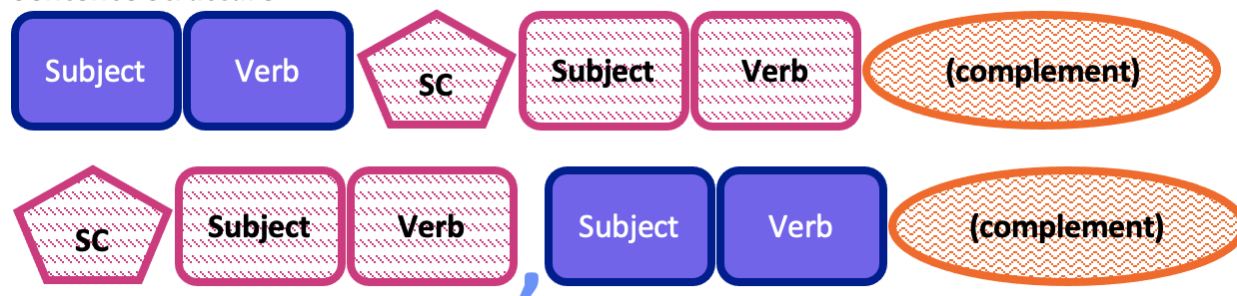


This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/compound_sentences.

Complex Sentences Part 1

Sentence Structure



Dependent Clauses

A dependent clause is an idea that is not complete. It has a subject and verb, but it also has a word that requires more detail.

Because is a clear example of a word that makes an idea a dependent clause. A clause that begins with *because* cannot be used alone. You need to connect it to an independent clause for the idea to be complete.

- Because I don't like to swim. (*Incomplete*)
- Because I don't like to swim, I do not go to the pool. (*Complete*)

When a sentence has a dependent clause and an independent clause, it is called a complex sentence. There are many different types of dependent clauses. We use the different clauses to show different connections between ideas.

Time Clauses

A specific type of dependent clause is a time clause. These clauses have a time word that requires more information to show the sequence of actions. Common time words are *after*, *before*, *when*, *while*, *whenever*, *since*, and *until*.

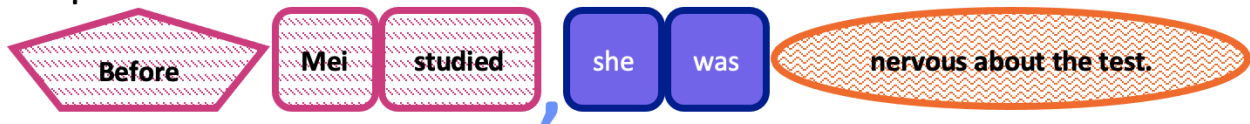
When you start a sentence with the dependent clause, you need a comma to connect the clauses.

- After – After she exercises, she goes to school.
 - The dependent clause is the first action in time.
- Before – Before I go to bed, I brush my teeth.
 - The dependent clause is the second action in time.
- When – When he drives, he listens to music.
 - The dependent clause is the first action in time.
- While – While I was studying at the ELC, I met my best friend.
 - The dependent clause started first but continues during the second action.
- Whenever – Whenever Bryan hears this song, he misses his home.
 - The dependent clause is the first action and causes the second action.
- Since – Since we started the semester, we have been classmates.
 - The dependent clause is the first action. The focus is on the period of time, usually between the first action and the present.
- Until – Until they graduate, they will need to focus on studying.
 - The dependent clause is the second action. The focus is on the period of time, usually between the present moment and the second action.

Example 1



Example 2



When you start the sentence with the independent clause, you do not need a comma to connect the sentences.

- After – She goes to school after she exercises.
- Before – I brush my teeth before I go to bed.
- When – He listens to music when he drives.
- While – I met my best friend while I was studying at the ELC.
- Whenever – He misses his home whenever Bryan hears this song.
- Since – We have been classmates since we started the semester.
- Until – They will need to focus on studying until they graduate.

Example 3



Example 4





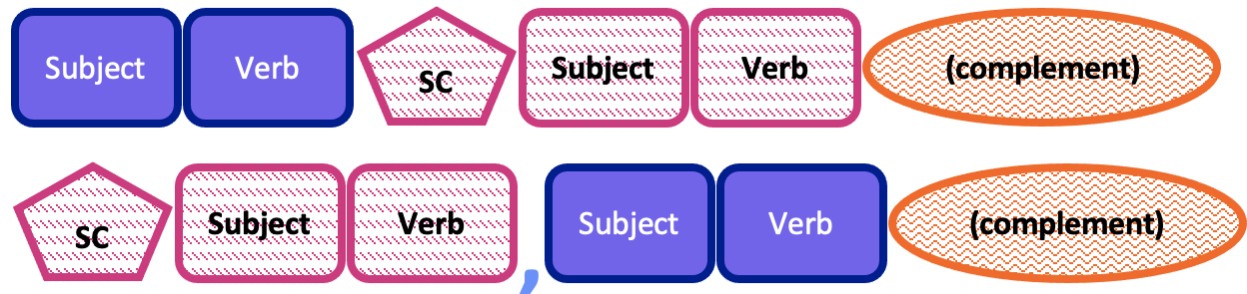
This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at

https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/complex_sentences_part_1.

Complex Sentences Part 2

Sentence Structure



Subordinating Conjunctions

There are many different names that we use to describe grammar. In previous ELC writing textbooks, we used the term time clause to talk about dependent clauses that show the sequence relationship between two actions. Those time clauses started with words like *after*, *before*, *when*, *while*, *whenever*, *since*, and *until*.

The general name for words that connect two clauses is conjunction.

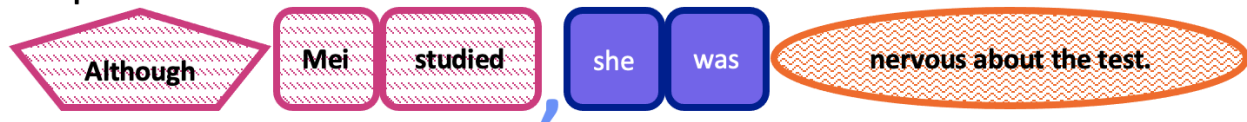
As explained in the other section of this chapter, a coordinating conjunction connects two independent clauses. Both of those ideas are complete on their own, but the writer chooses to emphasize how they are connected using a coordinating conjunction.

A subordinating conjunction is a word that makes an idea incomplete as soon as it is added to the beginning of a clause. Time clauses are a specific type of subordinating conjunction. Subordinating conjunctions make an idea dependent, meaning it requires another clause. When you have both a dependent and independent clause, the sentence is called a complex sentence.

Additional common subordinating conjunctions are: *although*, *even if*, *even though*, *if*, *though*, and *whether*.

- Although – Although she loves pizza, she does not want to eat it tonight.
 - The dependent clause contrasts with the independent clause.
- Even if – Even if it rains tomorrow, the soccer game will happen.
 - The possible action in the dependent clause does not change the action in the independent clause.
- Even though – Even though you were tired, you were able to finish your homework.
 - The action in the dependent clause does not change the action in the independent clause.
- If – If I miss the lecture, I can watch the Zoom recording later.
 - The dependent clause is a condition, the independent clause is the consequence.
- Though – Though they practiced every day, they did not play well at the concert.
 - The dependent clause contrasts with the independent clause.
- Whether – Whether it is sunny tomorrow or not, we will have a picnic.
 - The two possibilities in the dependent clause do not impact the independent clause action.

Example 1



The order of the clauses can change. If the independent clause is first, the comma is not necessary.

- Although – She does not want to eat pizza tonight although she loves it.
- Even if – The soccer game will happen even if it rains tomorrow.
- Even though – You were able to finish your homework even though you were tired.
- If – I can watch the Zoom recording later if I miss the lecture.
- Though – They did not play well at the concert though they practiced every day.
- Whether – We will have a picnic whether it is sunny tomorrow or not

Example 2



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at

https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/complex_sentences_part_2.

Using Academic Vocabulary

At a minimum, you need to know the meaning, the part of speech, and the collocates.

Meaning

Make sure you know what words mean. Sometimes when you use words incorrectly, it is because you don't fully understand what it means.

Part of Speech

You also need to know what part of speech it is.

A noun...	
	...is a person, place, thing, or idea.
	...can be described with adjectives.
	...frequently follows determiners.
	*common suffixes include "sion/tion" (condition); "ance/ence" (difference); "ment" (development); "ity" (activity)
A verb...	...is a word that shows action.
	...can be described with adverbs.
	...follows subjects (or comes before objects).
	...can be changed to show past or future tense.
	*common suffixes include "ate" (indicate); "ize" (recognize); "ify" (identify)
An adjective...	
	...is a word that describes a noun.
	...usually comes before a noun or after a verb like BE.
	*common suffixes include "ive" (effective); "ful" (useful); "ic" (specific)
An adverb...	
	...is a word that describes verbs, adjectives, and sentences.

...can be in many different places in a sentence.

Collocations

A collocate is a word that is frequently used with another word. Sometimes when you use academic vocabulary, your teacher will tell you that you have a “word choice” error or your roommate may tell you that it “sounds funny.” That is often because you used a word that is not a collocate. You should memorize a couple of collocates with each new word you learn. You can find lists of collocates on the LEAP dashboard, wordandphrase.info, in collocation dictionaries, and in your LEAP vocabulary packet. Using these lists while you make sentences will help you remember the words in a natural context.

Look at the chart below. You will notice that some words have a noun, verb, adjective, and adverb form that are all a little different. Some words do not. Some words even have the same form for two different parts of speech.

Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
expression	express	expressive	expressively
respect	respect	respectful	respectfully
honesty	be honest	honest	honestly
confidence	be confident, have confidence	confident	confidently

1 Exercise: Identify word forms.

Fill in the word forms that you know.

Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
			developmental
	support		
sustainability			-----
		explanatory	-----
			sequentially
part	-----		
		collective	
	expect		

You need to be careful in your writing to use the correct word form.

2 Exercise: Revise for word form errors.

Find the word form errors.

The homework assignment looked easy, but I did not know how to completely it. I asked my study buddy to help me because he is so intelligence. Apparent, he is really good at learning languages, because he is learning three languages at BYU. I know one day he will be famously. I respectful him a lot.



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at

https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/using_academic_vocab.

Glossary

Body Paragraph (n)

A paragraph with one central idea that is usually located in the middle of an essay. A body paragraph typically has a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence.

Brainstorm (v)

To think of ideas.

Cohesion (n)

The quality of flowing logically from one idea to another.

Compare/contrast essay (n)

An essay that is written to show the similarities/differences between two subjects.

Concluding sentence (n)

The last sentence of a body paragraph. A conclusion sentence should bring a paragraph to a logical close.

Conclusion paragraph (n)

The final paragraph of an essay. A conclusion paragraph should bring an essay to a logical close.

Development (n)

Adequate details, reasons, examples, and explanation that clearly illustrate an idea.

Draft (v)

To write.

Edit (v)

To make changes to the grammar, spelling, and vocabulary of a piece of writing.

Essay (n)

A multi-paragraph composition on a subject. Often called a "paper."

Free write (v)

To write without worrying about structure. This is frequently a strategy for brainstorming.

Hook (n)

The first sentence of an introduction paragraph that is written to catch a reader's attention.

Idea Map (n)

A visual picture that shows connected ideas with a central topic and subtopics that branch out from the center. Making an idea map is frequently a strategy for brainstorming.

Introduction paragraph (n)

The first paragraph of an essay. An introduction paragraph provides background information that the reader needs and clearly states the main idea of the essay.

Outline (n)

A plan for an essay that shows the basic organization or structure that a piece of writing will follow.

Paragraph (n)

A group of sentences that develop one idea.

Plagiarism (n)

Using another person's words or ideas without properly giving credit to the author.

Prewriting (n)

Activities completed before drafting an essay.

Problem/solution essay (n)

An essay that is written to describe the solution(s) to a problem.

Process Essay (n)

An essay that is written to show how something is done.

Revise (v)

To make changes to improve the clarity or effectiveness of an essay.

Summary (n)

A brief expression of the main ideas or major details from a source text (spoken or written)

Supporting sentence (n)

A sentence that provides details, examples, explanations, reasons, etc. to support a topic sentence.

Thesis (n)

The main idea of an essay.

Topic sentence (n)

The main idea of a paragraph.

Unity (n)

The quality of having all of the supporting sentences in a piece of writing support the topic sentence.



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/academic_a_writing/glossary.

