English Composition I

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FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE AND HERSCHEL SHEPARD

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PART I

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PART II

MODULE 1: THE WORDS WE USE, THE WORLDS WE DESCRIBE

3. Module 1: The Words We Use, The Worlds We Describe

Module Introduction

This module discusses the strange relationship between humans and language. After explaining how language is a symbiotic technology and what that means for communicating in general, formal and informal communicative contexts are discussed, as is the formal demand that communication be polite, concise, and coherent. Descriptive writing is then introduced as a way to understand general and specific ideas and their relation to one another. Examples are also provided of denotative and connotative meanings in order to better explain the important function an overall impression serves in descriptive writing. Writers rely on the five senses (seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, and feeling) to describe their experiences and surroundings; writers use those kinds of sensory details to convey feelings about a place, a taste, a sound, a texture or sensation, a person, and even themselves. The overall impression is what draws all of these disparate elements together and gives a description its general purpose. Finally, the prewriting strategy of listing is introduced as a way to generate ideas for a description. [1]

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the student will be able to:

- Explain why writing is a kind of symbiotic technology

- Identify formal and informal communicative contexts
- Identify denotative and connotative meanings
- Identify a piece of descriptive writing's overall impression
- Use listing to compose a descriptive paragraph using the five senses
- Apply the characteristics of effective descriptive writing [1]

Readings

- Online Learning Units

Course Introduction

Use this forum to introduce yourself to your professor and the class. Tell us a little about yourself, including some of the things you expect to get out of this course. This is an opportunity to meet others with whom you can connect and whom you can contact for support during this course.

This discussion is worth 10 points. This discussion does not have a rubric. [1]

Lecture Content

ENC1101 Learning Unit 1

The Curious Crossings of Language And Life

Most of us think of language as a tool we use to help us function in the world. However, close consideration reveals that our relationship with language is a lot more complicated than we think. And a lot, weirder, too.

Consider a job interview, for example. Such a situation is highly stressful for a number of very obvious reasons, but one source of discomfort is especially revealing in regard to language and its connection to who we are or, perhaps, want to be.

When a job interviewee sits across from his or her potential boss or is surrounded by a hiring committee or even sits at home and speaks into a phone or computer interface for a phone interview, a strange thing happens; he or she becomes someone else. Suddenly words erupt from the interviewee's lips that he or she rarely if ever speaks in casual conversation. Simple answers to questions become complex strings of formal prose as one seeks to sound "professional." Lies about motivations, desires, hopes, and dreams intersect with half-truths and polite banter about nothing.

The entire meeting is to some extent a charade, of course, a shadow play; the interviewers have read about the potential employee and know all about his or her professional background in advance. The interviewee has read about the company and obviously wants the job. But something else is going on here that has nothing to do with the announced purpose of the meeting: a job interview is, in a sense, a test of one's language programming. It is as much about the linguistic you, that enigmatic, spectral, secondary

nervous system of syntax and diction that speaks, as it is about your corporeal presence in the room.

Yes, the job interview is a kind of Turing test for potential employers. Except this is a Turing test in reverse.

The Turing test was a screening experiment developed by Alan Turing in the 1950's to test whether a machine was capable of demonstrating intelligent linguistic behavior. Variations of it have been depicted in science fiction movies like 1982's *Blade Runner* and 2015's *Ex Machina* as well as HBO's new series *West World* ; in all of these cases an interviewer solicits answers from incredibly human-like robots to determine the degree to which they have personhood and should be granted the rights that go along with such status.

In the case of the reverse Turing test performed at a job interview, employers are seeking to gage the extent to which the interviewee has been properly programmed by his or her culture; they want to determine whether the potential employee has developed the language necessary to function in a professional environment, has learned how to verbally navigate through the professional world.

Job interviews are so uncomfortable precisely because, as much as one prepares for them, one is at the mercy of the situation on both an external and internal level. Externally because one obviously can't control the room, the disposition of the interviewers, even to a large extent one's body as it appears to others (the sweat pouring from forehead and armpits, the nervous stomach, the tics and twitches of the face, the wild gestures of the hands). Internally, because one's language is itself largely out of one's conscious control.

Think about it: the more you concentrate on getting your words right, the more they often fail you; many times just considering what one is going to say leaves one without words or at the very least stammering for time and repeating inanities. To speak well, to say what one "really" means, then, is to let go and let that strange linguistic nervous system pipe up in one's place.

The strange case of the job interview reveals that far from being a common tool, language is in fact a *symbiotic technology* . In biology,

symbiosis is the state of two organisms living together as one, either with one living off of the other or both surviving in a condition of absolute interdependence. If you've ever read Spider-Man comics, you've probably also encountered Spidey's enemy Venom, who is a symbiote: reporter Eddie Brock is covered in a black alien substance that serves as a costume that gives him super powers but that forces him to eat people's brains for sustenance.

Language is our alien symbiotic partner, though it generally lives "inside" us and (hopefully) doesn't make us eat brains. It does, however, grant us super powers, enabling us to construct whole worlds in which we can communicate, engage in commerce, and suffer through job interviews. And in return we give it life, repeating it in sounds and on paper and on the internet.

Even if you are not exactly in control of this strange alien prosthesis that lives in and with you, that expresses you and sometimes even betrays you, you still have a great deal of influence upon it. And that's what this class is all about: influencing the language in you in such a way that you can more actively participate in the world. Ultimately, if you practice enough and understand the expectations the world has for you in terms of your academic and professional programming, you can start to get a handle on your linguistic self and coexist with it in a more harmonious way. [1]

Taming the Technological Symbiote: Where to Begin

Now that we understand the complex relationship we have with our language, we need to consider how to approach influencing that relationship in such a way that we might exert a modicum of control over it. Because we are so used to communicating, to speaking with others or writing quick text messages or otherwise signaling our thoughts to the world, language just seems to happen, erupting from us as a natural expression of our inner existence. However,

as the example of the anxiety of a job interview has shown, this natural relation to language sometimes appears strained depending upon our immediate situation. In other words, understanding the context within which we are communicating is the first key to understanding how to proactively influence the way we communicate.

Context means the circumstances we find ourselves in when we communicate. The more familiar we are with the context of a situation, the more at-ease we are with our language and the more spontaneous are our communicative acts (ironically, as we have seen, this means relinquishing control to our linguistic selves as we speak freely without worrying how we sound). When we hang out with our friends or spend quality time with beloved and trusted family members, we usually don't worry so much about what we say or how we say it.

As soon as that context shifts to, say, the classroom or the boardroom, we suddenly have cause for concern, especially when those contexts are new to us. Suddenly the world imposes expectations upon us in regard to how we express ourselves, expectations which we may not have fully internalized. Recognizing this shift in contexts is key, and it's the first step we take towards influencing our linguistic selves and taking control of the symbiotic technology of writing.

Thus, our first lesson is that *context* is key. Whether you are writing an essay for a college professor or a report for your business manager, you need to recognize the expectations placed upon you, the parameters by which your communication will be judged. If you related to the anxiety of the job interview situation discussed above, you are already well on your way to understanding the way context influences communication. Imagine someone who doesn't recognize such context and who approaches a job interview like it's just another everyday situation, perhaps one similar to a casual meeting with friends, and who communicates accordingly, perhaps cursing, telling off-color jokes, laughing, interrupting, and

otherwise carrying on. Sadly, steady employment is not on the horizon for this ignorer of context.

The context differences between the boardroom and the bedroom, the classroom and the club, can be generally qualified as the difference between *formal and informal communication contexts* . Formal communication requires careful consideration of a set of rules for engagement, rules regarding tone (how one "sounds"), point of view (how one expresses perspective, or the position from which one is communicating), diction (the words one chooses), and syntax (the way one forms sentences). Formal communication also requires the logical ordering of ideas; a formal speaker makes a general point and then elaborates upon it with specific examples and details. Thus, the more formal the context, the more one is expected to be polite, correct, and coherent. Informal communication, on the other hand, refers to the kind of loose, easy interplay we enjoy with close friends and loved ones. [1]

The Context of the Composition Classroom

The whole point of a composition course is to teach you how to communicate effectively in the classroom in order to prepare you for expressing yourself in the professional world. This is an important thing to keep in mind; even if writing isn't your "thing" or you have no interest in being an English major, learning to communicate on an academic and professional level is key to your success in the formal contexts of the world outside your inner circle of friends and family.

For the rest of the course we will be practicing how to live up to the formal expectations placed upon us by the institutions that govern our existence. As we go from module to module, we will learn strategies for organizing ideas and expressing them according to the formal parameters of the academic and professional worlds.

We will start at perhaps the most informal level we can in terms

of academic writing by focusing on narrative writing, also called storytelling, in module two. Given its creative potential and the fact that storytelling is the most common and entertaining form of communication, narrative writing is probably the kind of writing that students enjoy the most. It also allows for more freedom of expression than other kinds of writing as one is encouraged to create a world for readers to enjoy.

However, narrative writing itself relies upon another kind of writing to make the events it recounts truly come to life. Indeed, a good storyteller doesn't just relate events as they happen; he or she must describe the people who participate in the events and the places in which those events occur. Thus, before we write our first formal essay for the class (the narrative essay in module two), we will learn about *descriptive writing* and will put together a short descriptive paragraph to practice some of the formal writing principles to come.[1]

Descriptive Writing: Creating a World with Language

Descriptive writing is when a writer translates the five senses (touch, taste, hearing, smell, and sight) into language. Writers rely on sensory detail to describe their experiences and surroundings. When describing an experience to someone, writers use those kinds of sensory details to convey feelings about a place, a taste, a sound, a texture or sensation, a person, and even themselves.

Description lies at the heart of storytelling. Authors create believable worlds by describing the objects, places, and people that exist within them.

Effective description allows the reader to get "inside" the mind and spirit of the writer. When a writer does a good job describing a fine dinner, the reader should easily be able to imagine the smell, taste, and sight of each delicious bite. Likewise, when someone

meets a person for the first time at the airport, that person should be able to spot the traveler in the crowd based on the description of features or characteristics, such as height, skin tone, hair color, or type of clothing.

One of the most popular ways to use description is to describe a person, place, or object—one that is filled with memorable thoughts or feelings, sometimes pleasant or sometimes poignant. Writers use places, people, and objects to convey personal impressions or, as in fiction, to create a mood. Writers do this through the use of sensory detail. For example, one technique to make the description of a place more lifelike for the reader is to close one's eyes and imagine being in the place described. Another technique is to visit the place or look at an object and describe it as if one has never seen it before. [(1)]

Overall Impressions: How Descriptive Details Work Together

Arguably the most important thing to understand before developing any kind of writing is to consider the way in which *general* and *specific* ideas connect together, and descriptive writing is no exception. Simply put, academic and professional writers use a series of specific details and examples related to a topic—like the sensory details related to an object (how it looks, sounds, smells, etc.)— to convey a general point about it. In many of the more formal essays we will write later in the course, this general point will be explicitly stated as a sentence or series of sentences so that the reader knows exactly what the writer's overall purpose is, his or her reason for writing.

Descriptive and narrative writing, though, often convey a general point without announcing it to the reader. Instead, the details the writer provides imply what that general point is without openly expressing it. This is because descriptive and narrative writing often

engage the audience in a more playful exchange than more formal types of communication, relying upon the *connotation* of words as much or more than their *denotation* .

Connotation refers to the secondary level of meaning a word can have, its emotional or cultural significance. Denotation refers to its first level of meaning, the most basic way it can be defined (think of the "d" that starts "denotation" as the same "d" that starts "dictionary meaning").

For example, consider the word "motorcycle." Its first level of meaning might be something like "a two wheeled motorized vehicle." However, if a character is described as riding a motorcycle, a whole host of meanings might enter the reader's mind related to how motorcycles are understood by many of us in the Western world. Perhaps this character is an adrenaline junky, is affiliated with a group of outlaws, is a rebel or outsider; whatever the case, "motorcycle" is undoubtedly a loaded term, and its appearance can suggest a whole host of ideas that help express a writer's point without explicitly stating it.

Regardless of the power of such connotative meanings and the fact that many effective descriptions don't announce their general points, the writer of a description should himself or herself know what that general point is even if it doesn't appear in the final description. This general point is called a description's overall *impression* ; it's the overall idea a writer wants the reader to understand about the person, place, or object being described.

Consider the following description of a place:

> Shadows flickered against the cave wall as the dying fire coughed and spat embers like a sickly, sooty mouth. The wind moaned low as it passed through the cave opening, the very world itself crying for release. A stench hung over

> everything; decay and the sour sweat of bodies in decline congealed in a noxious haze.

This concise, consistent description never openly announces its overall impression, but it's not hard to understand what the writer is trying to convey: hopelessness and despair. We can gather that this is the case based on the use of certain comparisons ("like a sickly, sooty mouth," the inanimate world "crying for release" like a living being might) and other loaded words (the "dying fire," a "stench" that is made up of the "decay and the sour sweat of bodies in decline').

Directions: Select each example to reveal more information.

But consider the same passage with a few new descriptive details added:

> Shadows flickered against the cave wall as the dying fire coughed and spat embers like a sickly, sooty mouth. The wind moaned low as it passed through the cave opening, the very world itself crying for release. A stench hung over everything; decay and the sour sweat of bodies in decline congealed in a noxious haze. A bright white vase of flowers, perfectly picked tulips and daffodils, sat nearby, luxuriating in the warmth of the space. Next to them Jackson the puppy happily snored, his perfectly groomed fur practically glowing with the shine of good health and happy tidings. And at Jackson's feet sat a robust lettuce sandwich, perfectly constructed, its succulent, freshly baked bread housing vibrant green leaves promising nutrients galore.

Oh no! Suddenly the overall impression isn't so clear. Is this a foreboding place of disease and suffering or a peaceful and inviting domicile? Though the contrast of details is interesting, the overall

idea is obscured, and we would be justified in thinking that the writer is unsure of his or her general point.

Thus, it's important to know your overall impression before you start putting together a description. What do you want your readers to carry away from your description? Are you describing a courageous hero or dastardly villain, a dangerous item or a token of love, a comfortable home or an intimidating office building? Whatever you want your reader to understand about the subject you are describing is what your description's overall impression should be, and all of the details you provide should support that impression, whether or not you openly express the impression itself as an actual sentence in your writing. [1]

Prewriting Strategy: Listing

Throughout this course we will discuss various ways to generate ideas for a writing assignment; such methods for idea generation are called *prewriting* strategies. Every student prewrites differently, so you won't be required to use a particular method, but you should always spend some time coming up with ideas and playing around with their connections before committing to writing a draft. Otherwise, your final product won't be well-organized or well-supported.

For this first module, you are going to write **a short descriptive paragraph conveying a dominant impression of a person or place** in order to experiment with general and specific ideas and their interrelation. As we have discussed, effective descriptions have overall impressions that are conveyed through coherent specific details that complement one another. For such a detail-oriented assignment, listing is perhaps the most effective prewriting strategy one can use. Listing is exactly what it sounds like: you jot down whatever comes to mind about a particular topic for a few minutes,

and when you stop, you look back at the list and pick out those details that are most interesting and relevant.

Keep in mind that prewriting can be performed at various stages before drafting. Thus, you might list a bunch of ideas to come up with a specific subject to describe and then list ideas again to figure out what your overall impression is going to be. On the other hand, you might know immediately what your subject and impression are going to be (sometimes an assignment just clicks for you!), so you might then use listing to come up with the specific ideas that will support the overall impression you've decided to convey.

For this assignment, consider the following list of questions to help guide your prewriting. Whatever you may be trying to describe, it is effective to break the subject into parts or lists to make the description easier to imagine. In order to do this, imagine what that subject might be and answer the questions that are applicable to it.

- What can one see?
- What can one hear?
- What can one smell?
- What can one taste?
- What can one feel (with hands, feet, etc.)?
- What emotions can one feel? [1]

Attribution

ENC1101 Learning Unit 1.2

Framework: Thinking about Texts

Introduction

Reading other people's writing is always an effective way to get a better handle on a type of writing or even a particular writing assignment. In later modules we will provide you with various sample essays, some by professional writers, some by students, to help you grapple with each module as a whole and to help prepare for your own writing.

For this module, let's take a look at an essay by Elisa Ip, a student in her second year at the University of British Columbia in Canada. In this piece, Elisa does a fantastic job of using description at the beginning of the essay to hook the reader. Note how she uses a sometimes surprising selection of energized language to convey her experience of seeing something dart across her field of vision on a sunny day. [1]

Reading

Select and read this article, "A Wolf in the City" *by Elisa Ip* . [6]

Final Thoughts

As well as beginning the essay with some excellent descriptive moments, Elisa also makes a fantastic case for the power of writing

and its ability to make the world around us come to life. Elisa's symbiotic technology has infused her with the power to overcome what could have been a severe disadvantage (her "visual impairment") and turn it into a gift, for through her "loss" she has come to describe the world differently. Her writing is now her augmented vision, and through it she can construct fantastic sensory experiences that she can invite others to share with her.

We hope this course can help provide you with the same kind of creative power and the confidence to share your words. Writing with confidence truly does present a key to a whole new world. With patience and practice, you'll be exploring that world in no time. [1]

Attribution

ENC1101 Learning Unit 1.3

Grammar Learning Unit 1: Introduction

Why is it helpful to pay attention to grammar and punctuation, including in your own work?

There are several different types of English. While there are some obvious examples of different varieties (e.g., American and British English), there are other differing types, such as formal vs. informal English or verbal vs. written English. There are also different

varieties of English that are unique to cultural, societal, or professional groups.

While all of these types of English are equally dynamic and complex, each variety is appropriate in different situations. When you're talking to your friends, you could use slang and cultural references—if you speak in formal language, you can easily come off as rigid. If you're sending a quick, casual message—via social media or texting—don't worry too much about capitalization or strict punctuation.

However, in academic and professional situations you need to use what is called Standard American English. This English is used in such settings so that people can communicate and understand each other clearly and efficiently. How many times have you heard people of older generations ask just what *smh* or *rn* mean? While this online jargon is great for quick communication, it isn't formal; it isn't a part of the commonly accepted conventions that make up Standard American English.

Grammar is a set of rules and conventions that dictate how Standard American English works. These rules are simply tools that speakers of a language can use. When you learn how to use the language, you can craft your message to communicate exactly what you want to convey. [(2)]

Nouns and Pronouns

Nouns and pronouns are the "things" in our sentences that complete actions (or have things done to them). They are the most common words used in English. Nouns are words that refer to specific things or people, such as phones, umbrellas, or Nicki Minaj for example. Pronouns, on the other hand, stand in for a previous noun; the same word can refer to several different things. Pronouns include words like *those* , *them* , *I* , and *he* . Without the right context, it's impossible to tell just what a pronoun is referring to,

but when we use pronouns correctly, they can help us save time and space in our communication. [3]

Nouns

Nouns are a diverse group of words, and they are very common in English. Nouns are a category of words defining things:

- **People** (Dr. Sanders, lawyers)
- **Places** (Kansas, factory, home)
- **Things** (scissors, sheet music, book)
- **Ideas** (love, truth, beauty, intelligence) [3]

Pronouns

A pronoun stands in the place of a noun. Like nouns, pronouns can serve as the subject or object of a sentence; they are the things sentences are about. Pronouns include words like *he* , *she* , and *I* , but they also include words like *this* , *that* , *which* , *who* , *anybody* , and *everyone* . Before we get into the different types of pronouns, let's look at how they work in sentences.

Because a pronoun is replacing a noun, its meaning is dependent on the noun that it is replacing. This noun is called the **antecedent** . Let's look at the first sentence of this paragraph again:

Because a pronoun is replacing a noun, **its** meaning is dependent on the noun that **it** is replacing.

There are two pronouns here: *its* and *it* . Its and it both have the same antecedent: "a pronoun." Whenever you use a pronoun, you must also include its antecedent or make sure that the antecedent is otherwise obvious to the reader. Without the antecedent, your

readers (or listeners) won't be able to figure out what the pronoun is referring to. Let's look at a couple of examples:

- Jason likes when people look to him for leadership.
- Trini does her hair and makeup every day—with no exceptions.

So, what are the antecedents and pronouns in these sentences?

- ***Jason*** is the antecedent for the pronoun ***him*** .
- ***Trini*** is the antecedent for the pronoun ***her*** . [(4)]

Types of Pronouns

Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns may refer to the speaker of a sentence, the person being addressed by the speaker, or the person or thing that is being discussed by the sentence. The following sentences give examples of personal pronouns used with antecedents:

- **That man** looks as if **he** needs a new coat. (the noun phrase *that man* is the antecedent of *he*)
- **Kat** arrived yesterday. I met **her** at the station. (*Kat* is the antecedent of *her*)
- When **they** saw us, **the lions** began roaring (*the lions* is the antecedent of they)
- **Adam** and **I** were hoping no one would find us. (*Adam and I* is the antecedent of *us*)

Pronouns like *I* , *we* , and *you* don't always require an explicitly stated antecedent. When a speaker says something like "I told you

the zoo was closed today," it's implied that the speaker is the antecedent for *I* and the listener is the antecedent for *you* . [4]

Reflexive Pronouns

Reflexive pronouns are a kind of pronoun that is used when the subject and the object of the sentence are the same.

- **Jason** hurt **himself** . (*Jason* is the antecedent of *himself*)
- **We** were teasing **each other** . (*we* is the antecedent of *each other*)

This is true even if the subject is only implied, as in the sentence "Don't hurt yourself." You is the unstated subject of this sentence.

Reflexive pronouns include myself, ourselves, yourself, yourselves, himself, herself, itself, and themselves. They can only be used as the object of a sentence—not as the subject. You can say "I jinxed myself," but you can't say "Myself jinxed me."

When the first- or second-person reflexive pronoun is appropriate, object-case and reflexive pronouns can often be used interchangeably:

- The only person I'm worrying about today is **me** .
- The only person I'm worrying about today is **myself** .
- You don't need to make anyone happy except **you** .
- You don't need to make anyone happy except **yourself** . [4]

Indefinite Pronouns

Indefinite pronouns, the largest group of pronouns, refer to one

or more unspecified persons or things. For example: ***Anyone*** *can do that.*

These pronouns can be used in a couple of different ways:

- They can refer to members of a group separately rather than collectively. *(To* ***each*** *his or her own.)*
- They can indicate the non-existence of people or things. (***Nobody*** *thinks that.)*
- They can refer to a person, but are not specific as to first, second, or third person in the way that the personal pronouns are. (***One*** *does not clean* ***one's*** *own windows.)*

Note that all indefinite pronouns are singular. [4]

Relative Pronouns

There are five relative pronouns in English: *who* , *whom* , *whose* , *that* , and *which* . These pronouns are used to connect different clauses (groups of words that contain subjects and verbs) together. For example:

- Belen, **who** had starred in six plays before she turned seventeen, knew that she wanted to act on Broadway someday.
- My daughter wants to adopt the dog **that** doesn't have a tail.

These pronouns behave differently from the other categories we've studied. However, they are pronouns, and it's important to learn how they work. [4]

Possessive Pronouns

Possessive pronouns are used to indicate ownership of something (in a broad sense). Some must be accompanied by a noun: e.g., *my* or *your* , as in "I lost **my** wallet." This category of pronouns behaves similarly to adjectives. Others occur as independent phrases: e.g., *mine* or *yours* . For example, "Those clothes are **mine** ." [(4)]

Pronouns: Person and Number

Person

Person refers to the relationship that an author has with the text that he or she writes and with the reader of that text. English has three persons (first, second, and third):

- **First-person** is the speaker or writer him- or herself. The first person is personal (*I* , *we* , etc.)
- **Second-person** is the person who is being directly addressed. When an author uses second-person pronouns, he or she is writing directly to *you* , the listener or reader.
- **Third-person** is the most common person used in academic writing. The third person is used when an author is writing about other people or things and is not referring to him or herself or the reader. In the third person singular there are distinct pronoun forms for male (he, him, his), female (she, her, hers), and neutral (it, its) gender.

Number

There are two numbers: singular and plural. As we learned in when we discussed nouns, singular words refer to only one thing, while plural words refer to more than one of a thing (I stood alone while they walked together). [5]

Below are all of the personal pronouns in the English language. They are organized by person, number, and case:

First Person

Number

- Singular
- Plural

Subject

- I
- we

Object

- me
- us

Possesive

- my / mine
- our / ours

Second Person

Number

- Singular
- Plural

Subject

- you
- you

Object

- you
- you

Possesive

- your / your
- your / your

Third Person

Number

- Singular
- Plural

Subject

- he / she / it
- they

Object

- him / her / it
- them

Possesive

- his / hers / its
- theirs

Person and Number

Some of the trickiest agreements are with indefinite pronouns:

- Every student should do his or her best on this assignment.
- If nobody lost his or her scarf, then where did this come from?

As we learned earlier in this module, words like *every* and *nobody* are singular and demand singular pronouns. In these examples, the expression "his or her" instead is used instead of just "his" or "her" alone because the pronouns "every" and "nobody" don't refer to a specific gender, so the writer can't just assume that those words refer to a male or female. (5)

Case

You and I versus You and Me

Some of the most common pronoun mistakes occur when a writer has to decide between "you and I" and "you and me." People will

often say things like "You and me should go out for drinks." Or—thinking back on the rule that it should be "you and I"—they will say "Susan assigned the task to both you and I." However, both of these sentences are wrong. Remember that every time you use a pronoun, you need to make sure that you're using the correct case.

Let's take a look at the first sentence: "You and me should go out for drinks." Both pronouns are the subject of the sentence, so they should be in subject case: "You and I should go out for drinks."

In the second sentence ("Susan assigned the task to both you and I."), both pronouns are the object of the sentence, so they should be in object case: "Susan assigned the task to both you and me." [(5)]

An easy way to check such sentences is to say them in your head with just the personal pronouns alone. In the first example, "Me should go out for drinks" sounds very wrong, as does "Susan assigned the task to I" in the second example.

Attributions

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Writing Assignment: Writing a Descriptive Paragraph Hide Details

For this first module, you are going to write a short descriptive paragraph conveying a dominant impression of a person or place. You should develop at least a half page description, and your paragraph shouldn't be longer than a full page (double-spaced in both cases). Thus, your final submission should be between 150 and 250 words.

Download the attached Writing Assignment: Writing a Descriptive Paragraph

- Read the assignment carefully
- Complete the following steps:
  - Step 1: Pre-Writing
  - Step 2: Focusing and the Dominant Impression
  - Step 3: Organizing and Drafting
  - Step 4: Revising and Proofreading
  - Evaluation
- Compare your descriptive paragraph against the grading rubric
- Submit your descriptive paragraph using the assignment link

This assignment is worth 50 points. [(1)]

Module 1 Quiz

Open Quiz

4. A Wolf in the City

My body was alive with the hum that you get only after a good workout, and I hardly felt the sun that beat down the back of my neck. That was when it happened. Movement in the distance caught my attention and I waited to see what it was. It was something brown that seemed to lope closer.

With excitement I cried, "Look, a doggy!" There was a beat of absolute silence before my companion began to laugh. It wasn't a soft chuckle or a giggle; it was a throw-back-the-head type of laugh. Naturally, I hadn't a clue what was so funny. There was a dog, and I liked dogs. So what? I gave my companion a blank stare. Obviously she had gone totally insane.

When she regained her composure, she managed, "There's no dog." Perplexed, I tried to focus on the object again. When we were close enough for me to see it clearly, I began to laugh too. Score one for my companion: what I thought was a dog in the distance was in fact a man climbing up the stairs to our level. The dog was the brown hat he had perched at a jaunty angle on his head.

I spend so much time recounting this incident because it directly relates to my background and how I have come to be the writer that I am today. When I was three-and-a-half years old, a medical mishap resulted in me losing almost all of my senses. I couldn't move, couldn't see, couldn't speak. Many years of training changed that. I regained most of my senses, but my sight remained severely limited.

I am much like a wolf, experiencing the world through smell, sound, touch, and taste before sight.

I never gave my visual impairment much thought; it was just a part of me, something that couldn't go away. I lived with it and I grew up with it. That was until I entered Matt's first-year creative writing class. The topic was imagery. How could I write unexpected and striking imagery without using sight?

I argued this with Matt one day. His reply was as cryptic as they come: "Your greatest weakness is also your greatest gift." I left confused and frustrated. Matt seemed to respond without having understood what I was saying. It was not until I replayed his words again and again that they finally began to make sense.

Some may think my disability a loss. After all, we do so much through sight: read another's expression, enjoy a movie, take solace in nature. With sight gone, what would I have? I have a key to a whole different world. In summer, I hear the starlings argue hidden in dark foliage. I know my English teacher recently passed by a room by the scent of cologne that lingers in the air. I let my fingers find the grooves on the basketball, spinning it slightly as I leap and shoot, hearing the whispered swoosh as it passes through the net.

When you must rely on more than one sense to survive—listen to traffic to keep yourself safe while crossing the road, take in the smell of rushing water and the perfume of wildflowers on a hike, rely on your nose to tell you who is speaking to you, use what sight is left to you to stop seeing leaves as just a mass of green, instead noticing their patterns and the dappled shades they paint—then you start to live.

As I began to write, I recognized the gift I had received. My inability to see as well as the average person enhances my voice. I am forced to focus on sound, smell, taste, and touch. I also realized something else: without sight as my dominant sense, I live with greater intensity.

I am a lone wolf in the city. My disability forces me to hunt for opportunities to fulfill my potential, to live, and sometimes just survive in an environment filled with obstacles. Writing as myself, however, without trying to emulate those who can see, presents a key to a whole new world. It is time I open the door with it. I wonder what I will find.

—

Elisa Ip is in her second year at the University of British Columbia in Canada. She is equally passionate about literature, biology, and writing. A glimpse of her bookshelf would reveal titles from the

romantic poets, Orwell, Conrad, along with the latest biology research and Doctor Who. Elisa is a self-professed walking contradiction, for despite her physical and visual impairments, she enjoys rock climbing, football/soccer, and painting. She believes in living with intensity, to live every moment to the fullest and to find beauty in peace and adversity. For as Keats says:

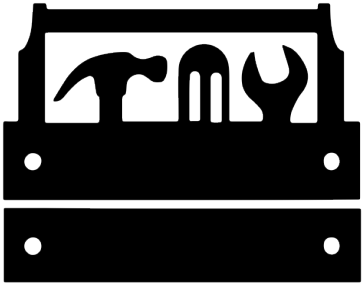
"beauty is truth, truth beauty
That is all ye know on earth and all ye need to know."

5. Introduction to Grammar

Why is it helpful to critique patterns of academic grammar and punctuation usage, including in your own work?

There are several different types of English. While there are some obvious examples of different varieties (e.g., American and British English), there are other differing types, such as formal vs. informal English or verbal vs. written English. There are also different varieties of English that are unique to cultural, societal, or professional groups.

While all of these types of English are equally dynamic and complex, each variety is appropriate in different situations. When you're talking to your friends, you should use slang and cultural references—if you speak in formal language, you can easily come off as stiff. If you're sending a quick casual message—via social media or texting—don't worry too much about capitalization or strict punctuation. Feel free to have five exclamation points standing alone, if that gets your point across.



However, there's this thing called Standard American English. This English is used in

professional and academic settings. This is so people can communicate and understand each other. How many times have you heard people of older generations ask just what *smh* or *rn* mean? While this online jargon is great for quick communication, it isn't formal: it isn't a part of the commonly accepted conventions that make up Standard American English.

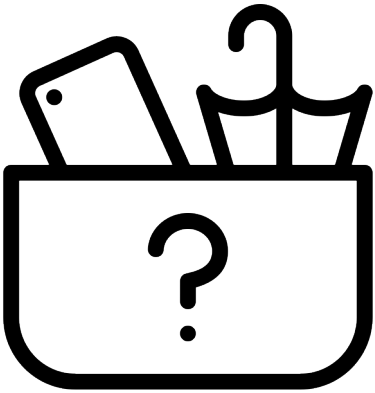
Grammar is a set of rules and conventions that dictate how Standard American English works. These rules are simply tools that speakers of a language can use. When you learn how to use the language, you can craft your message to communicate exactly what you want to convey.

Learning Outcomes

- Critique the use of nouns and pronouns.
- Critique the use of verbs.
- Critique the use other parts of speech, including adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions, and articles.
- Critique the use of common punctuation marks.
- Critique sentence structure and variety of sentences.
- Critique the use of both active and passive voices.

6. Outcome: Nouns and Pronouns

Critique the use of nouns and pronouns.



Nouns and pronouns are the "things" in our sentences—the things that complete actions (or have things done to them). They are the most common words used in English. Nouns are words that refer to specific things or people: for example, phones, umbrellas, or Nicki Minaj. Pronouns, on the other hand, stand in for a previous noun: the same word can refer to several different things. They include words like *those*, *them*, and *he*. Without the right context, it's impossible to tell just what a pronoun is referring to, but when we use pronouns correctly, they can help us save time and space in our communication.

In this outcome, we'll learn about the different types of nouns and pronouns, as well as how to correctly use them in English.

What You Will Learn to Do

- Critique the use of nouns
- Critique the use of different pronoun cases and types
- Critique passages for pronoun and antecedent clarity
- Critique passages for pronoun and antecedent agreement

7. Pronoun Cases and Types

A pronoun stands in the place of a noun. Like nouns, pronouns can serve as the subject or object of a sentence: they are the things sentences are about. Pronouns include words like *he*, *she*, and *I*, but they also include words like *this*, *that*, *which*, *who*, *anybody*, and *everyone*. Before we get into the different types of pronouns, let's look at how they work in sentences.

Because a pronoun is replacing a noun, its meaning is dependent on the noun that it is replacing. This noun is called the **antecedent**. Let's look at the first sentence of this paragraph again:

> Because a pronoun is replacing a noun, **its** meaning is dependent on the noun that **it** is replacing.

There are two pronouns here: *its* and *it*. *Its* and *it* both have the same antecedent: "a pronoun." Whenever you use a pronoun, you must also include its antecedent. Without the antecedent, your readers (or listeners) won't be able to figure out what the pronoun is referring to. Let's look at a couple of examples:

- Jason likes it when people look to him for leadership.
- Trini does her hair and make up every day—with no exceptions.

So, what are the antecedents and pronouns in these sentences?

- *Jason* is the antecedent for the pronoun *him*.
- *Trini* is the antecedent for the pronoun *her*.

Practice

Identify the antecedents and pronouns in the following examples:

1. Itzel and Camila were the top ranking doubles team at OSU. They hadn't been defeated all year.
2. People asked Jorge to review their papers so often that he started a small editing business.
3. Henry called his parents every week.

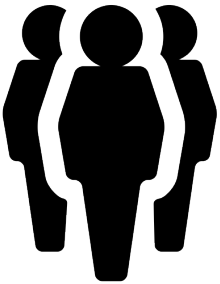
[reveal-answer q="554891"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="554891"]

1. **Itzel and Camila** is the antecedent for the pronoun **They**.
2. There are two pronoun/antecedent pairs in this sentence. **People** is the antecedent for **their**, and **Jorge** is the antecedent for **he**.
3. **Henry** is the antecedent for **his**.

[/hidden-answer]

So far, we've only looked at personal pronouns, but there are a lot of other types, including demonstrative, and indefinite pronouns. Let's discuss each of these types in further depth:

Personal Pronouns



The following sentences give examples of personal pronouns used with antecedents:

- **That man** looks as if **he** needs a new coat. (the noun phrase *that man* is the antecedent of *he*)
- **Kat** arrived yesterday. I met **her** at the station. (*Kat* is the antecedent of *her*)
- When **they** saw us, **the lions** began roaring (*the lions* is the antecedent of *they*)
- **Adam and I** were hoping no one would find **us**. (*Adam and I* is the antecedent of *us*)

> **Note:** Pronouns like *I*, *we*, and *you* don't always require an explicitly stated antecedent. When a speaker says something like "I told you the zoo was closed today," it's implied that the speaker is the antecedent for *I* and the listener is the antecedent for *you*.

Reflexive pronouns are a kind of pronoun that are used when the subject and the object of the sentence are the same.

- **Jason** hurt **himself**. (*Jason* is the antecedent of *himself*)

- **We** were teasing **each other**. (*we* is the antecedent of *each other*)

This is true even if the subject is only implied, as in the sentence "Don't hurt yourself." *You* is the unstated subject of this sentence.

Reflexive pronouns include *myself*, *ourselves*, *yourself*, *yourselves himself*, *herself*, *itself*, *themselves*. They can only be used as the object of a sentence—not as the subject. You can say "I jinxed myself," but you can't say "Myself jinxed me."

Note: When the the first- or second-person reflexive pronoun is appropriate, object-case and reflexive pronouns can often be used interchangeably:

- The only person I'm worrying about today is **me**.
- The only person I'm worrying about today is **myself**.
- You don't need to make anyone happy except **you**.
- You don't need to make anyone happy except **yourself**.

Why do you think this is? When would you use one or the other?

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]

Practice

Read at the following sentences. Should the reflexive pronoun be used? Why or why not?

1. Aisha let (her / herself) in when she arrived.
2. Feel free to let (you / yourself) in when you get here!
3. Alex asked Jada if she would let (him / himself) in when (she / herself) arrived.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="653330"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="653330"]

1. Aisha let **herself** in when she arrived.
    - Aisha is the subject and object of the sentence.
2. Feel free to let **yourself** in when you get here!
    - *You* is the implied subject of the sentence, so the reflexive *yourself* is appropriate as the object of the sentence.
3. Alex asked Jada if she would let **him** in when **she** arrived.
    - While *Alex* is the subject of the sentence, *Alex* is not the subject of the dependent clause that *him* appears in (if she would let him in). In this clause, *she* is the subject, so the reflexive pronoun cannot be used here.

- *She* is the subject of the clause "when she arrived." Since it's a subject, the reflexive cannot be used.

[/hidden-answer]

Pronouns may be classified by three categories: person, number, and case.

Person refers to the relationship that an author has with the text that he or she writes, and with the reader of that text. English has three persons (first, second, and third):

- **First-person** is the speaker or writer him- or herself. The first person is personal (*I*, *we*, etc.)
- **Second-person** is the person who is being directly addressed. The speaker or author is saying this is about you, the listener or reader.
- **Third-person** is the most common person used in academic writing. The author is saying this is about other people. In the third person singular there are distinct pronoun forms for male, female, and neutral gender.

There are two **numbers**: **singular** and **plural**. As we learned in nouns, singular words refer to only one a thing while plural words refer to more than one of a thing (*I* stood alone while *they* walked together).

English personal pronouns have two **cases**: **subject** and **object**. Subject-case pronouns are used when the pronoun is doing the action (*I* like to eat chips, but *she* does not). Object-case pronouns are used when something is being done to the pronoun (John likes *me* but not *her*).

Possessive pronouns are used to indicate possession (in a broad sense). Some must be accompanied by a noun: e.g., *my* or *your*, as

in "I lost **my** wallet." This category of pronouns behaves similarly to adjectives. Others occur as independent phrases: e.g., *mine* or *yours*. For example, "Those clothes are **mine**."

The table below includes all of the personal pronouns in the English language. They are organized by person, number, and case:

Person	Number	Subject	Object	Possessive	
First	Singular	I	me	my	mine
	Plural	we	us	our	ours
Second	Singular	you	you	your	yours
	Plural	you	you	your	yours
Third	Singular	he	him	his	his
		she	her	her	hers
		it	it	its	its
	Plural	they	them	their	theirs

Practice

In each sentence, fill in the blank with the correct pronoun. Identify why you selected the pronoun you did:

1. André told me that it was ___ box of cereal, but I couldn't remember having bought ___.
2. Amelia and Ajani still haven't arrived. I should make sure ___ texted ___.
3. You shouldn't be so worried about what other people think. The only person ___ need to please is ___.
4. George Washington was the first president of the United States. ___ set the standard of only serving

two terms of office. However, ___ wasn't illegal to serve over two terms until 1951.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="436221"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="436221"]

1. The context of the sentence gives hints that André thinks the box of cereal belongs to the speaker of the sentence. The correct sentence would be "André told me that it was **my** box of cereal, but I couldn't remember having bought **it**."
    - *My* is a possessive, singular, first-person pronoun. It is followed by the noun *box of cereal*, so it appears in its adjective form, rather than as *mine*.
    - *It* is a subject case, singular, neutral third-person pronoun.
2. There are two sentence that make sense here: "Amelia and Ajani still haven't arrived. I should make sure **I** texted **them,**" or "Amelia and Ajani still haven't arrived. I should make sure **they** texted **me**." The correct sentence depends on who did (or didn't do) the texting.
    - *I* is a subject case, singular, first-person pronoun.
    - *They* is a subject case, plural, third-person pronoun.
    - *Them* is a object case, plural, third-person pronoun.
    - *Me* is a object case, singular, first-person

pronoun.

3. You shouldn't be so worried about what other people think. The only person **you** need to please is **you**.
    - *You* is an subject case, singular, second-person pronoun.
    - *You* is an object case, singular, second-person pronoun. *Yourself* would also be ok here, since the subject and object of the sentence are the same.
4. George Washington was the first president of the United States. **He** set the standard of only serving two terms of office. However, **it** wasn't illegal to serve over two terms until 1951.
    - *He* is a subject case, singular, masculine third-person pronoun.
    - *It* is a subject case, singular, neutral third-person pronoun.

[/hidden-answer]

Demonstrative Pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns substitute for things being pointed out. They include *this*, *that*, *these*, and *those*. *This* and *that* are singular; *these* and *those* are plural.

The difference between *this* and *that* and between *these* and *those* is a little more subtle. *This* and *these* refer to something that is "close" to the speaker, whether this closeness is physical, emotional, or temporal. *That* and *those* are the opposite: they refer to something that is "far."

- Do I actually have to read all of *this*?
    - The speaker is indicating a text that is close to her, by using "this."
- *That* is not coming anywhere near me.
    - The speaker is distancing himself from the object in question, which he doesn't want to get any closer. The far pronoun helps indicate that.
- You're telling me you sewed all of *these*?
    - The speaker and her audience are likely looking directly at the clothes in question, so the close pronoun is appropriate.
- *Those* are all gross.
    - The speaker wants to remain away from the gross items in question, by using the far "those."

Note: these pronouns are often combined with a

noun. When this happens, they act as a kind of adjective instead of as a pronoun.

- Do I actually have to read all of *this* contract?
- *That* thing is not coming anywhere near me.
- You're telling me you sewed all of *these* dresses?
- *Those* recipes are all gross.

The antecedents of demonstrative pronouns (and sometimes the pronoun *it*) can be more complex than those of personal pronouns:

- **Animal Planet's puppy cam has been taken down for maintenance.** I never wanted *this* to happen.
- I love Animal Planet's panda cam. **I watched a panda eat bamboo for half an hour.** *It* was amazing.

In the first example, the antecedent for *this* is the concept of the puppy cam being taken down. In the second example, the antecedent for *it* in this sentence is the experience of watching the panda. That antecedent isn't explicitly stated in the sentence, but comes through in the intention and meaning of the speaker.

Practice

In the following sentences, determine if *this*, *that*, *these*, or *those* should be used.

1. Lara looked at her meal in front of her. "____

looks great!" she said.

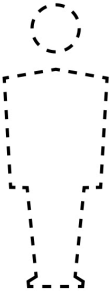
2. Tyesha watched the '67 Mustang drive down the street. "What I wouldn't give for one of ____."
3. "What do you think of ____?" Ashley asked, showing me the three paint samples she had picked out.

[reveal-answer q="727295"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="727295"]

1. Lara looked at her meal in front of her. "**This** looks great!" she said.
    - The meal is right in front of Lara, and there is only one meal. *This* is the correct pronoun.
2. Tyesha watched the '67 Mustang drive down the street. "What I wouldn't give for one of **those**."
    - The Mustang is far away (and getting further away as it drives off). The phrase "one of ____" requires a plural word in the blank. *Those* is the correct pronoun. A singular version of the sentence would be something like "What I wouldn't give to own **that**." *That* is the correct pronoun for singular things that are far away.
3. "What do you think of **these**?" Ashley asked, showing me the three paint samples she had picked out.
    - The paint samples are in immediate focus (whether Ashley is holding them or looking at them online), and there are three of them. *These* is the correct pronoun.

[/hidden-answer]

Indefinite Pronouns



Indefinite pronouns, the largest group of pronouns, refer to one or more unspecified persons or things, for example: ***Anyone*** *can do that.*

These pronouns can be used in a couple of different ways:

- They can refer to members of a group separately rather than collectively. (*To* ***each*** *his or her own.*)
- They can indicate the non-existence of people or things. (***Nobody*** *thinks that.*)
- They can refer to a person, but are not specific as to first, second or third person in the way that the personal pronouns are. (***One*** *does not clean* ***one's*** *own windows.*)

Please note that all of these pronouns are singular. The table below shows the most common indefinite pronouns:

anybody	anyone	anything	each	either	every
everybody	everyone	everything	neither	no one	nobody
nothing	nobody else	somebody	someone	something	one

Note: Sometimes third-person personal pronouns are sometimes used without antecedents–this applies to special uses such as dummy pronouns and generic *they*, as well as cases where the referent is implied by the context.

- You know what *they* say.
- *It's* a nice day today.

Practice

Identify the indefinite pronouns in the following sentences. Is the best indefinite used, or is there another indefinite that would fit better?

1. Everyone should take the time to critically think about what he or she wants out of life.
2. If I had to choose between singing in public and swimming with leeches, I would choose neither.
3. Yasmin knew everything was wrong, but she couldn't figure out what.
4. If nobody else enrolls in this class, it will be cancelled this semester.

[reveal-answer q="565632"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="565632"]

1. **Everyone** is the indefinite pronoun. *He or she* is a pronoun with the antecedent *everyone*.
2. The indefinite pronoun **neither** is used in this sentence. It is likely being used correctly, indicating that the speaker does not want to complete the actions stated earlier in the sentence. However, if the speaker thought that both singing in public and swimming with leeches were fun, the indefinite pronoun *either* would be the appropriate word to use.
3. The indefinite pronoun **everything** is used in this sentence. However, based on the rest of the sentence, it doesn't quite fit. If everything is wrong, you wouldn't need to figure out exactly what's happening. The indefinite pronoun *something* would fit better here.

    - Yasmin knew **something** was wrong, but she couldn't figure out what.

    If everything is, in fact, wrong, perhaps the word *what* needs to be changed.

    - Yasmin knew everything was wrong, but she couldn't figure out **how it had happened**.
    - Yasmin knew everything was wrong, but she couldn't figure out **why**.

4. The indefinite pronoun **nobody else** is used in this sentence. If there are already some students enrolled in the class, then *nobody else* is being used correctly. If there aren't any students in the course, then *nobody* should be used instead.

[/hidden-answer]

Singular They

As we've just seen, indefinite pronouns demand singular pronouns, like in "To each his or her own." However, in informal speech, you'll often hear things like "To each their own" or "Someone is singing in the hallway. If they haven't stopped in five minutes, I'm going to have to take drastic measures." If you think about your own speech, it's very likely that you use *they* as a singular pronoun for someone whose gender you don't know.

So why do people use *they* this way, even though it's a plural? It likely stems from the clunkiness of the phrase "he or she." It is also possible that *they* is following the same evolution as the word *you*. In Early Modern English, *you* was used as either a plural, second-person pronoun or as a polite form for the more common, singular *thee*. However, *you* eventually overtook almost all of the second-person pronouns, both singular and plural.

While this use of the singular *they* is still not "officially" correct—and you definitely shouldn't use this in your English papers—it's interesting to watch English change before our very eyes.

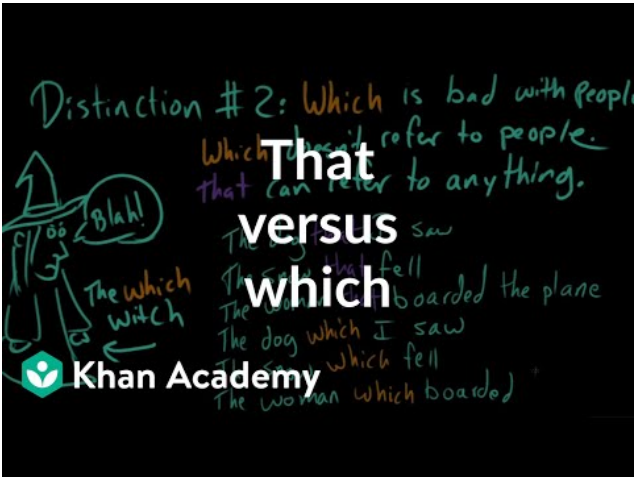
Relative Pronouns

There are five relative pronouns in English: *who*, *whom*, *whose*, *that*, and *which*. These pronouns are used to connect different clauses together. For example:

- Belen, **who** had starred in six plays before she turned seventeen, knew that she wanted to act on Broadway someday.
- My daughter wants to adopt the dog **that** doesn't have a tail.

These pronouns behave differently from the other categories we've seen. However, they are pronouns, and it's important to learn how they work. Two of the biggest confusions with these pronouns are *that* vs. *which* and *who* vs. *whom*. The two following videos help with these:

That vs. Which



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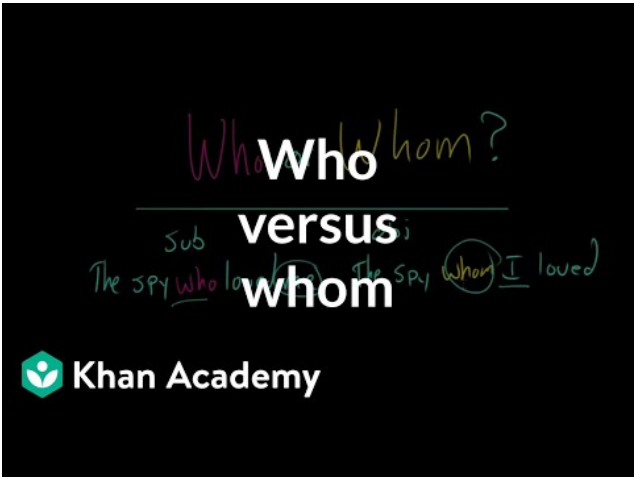
Who vs. Whom



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://fscj.pressbooks.pub/engcomp1/?p=31

Practice

Does the following paragraph use relative pronouns correctly? Explain why or why not for each relative pronoun.

> Katerina, whom had taken biology once already, was still struggling to keep the steps of cellular respiration straight. She knew the process took place in animals,

> which take in oxygen and put out carbon dioxide. She also knew that plants underwent the process of photosynthesis. However, the individual steps of the process seemed beyond her understanding.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="35641"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="35641"]There are three relative pronouns in this passage:

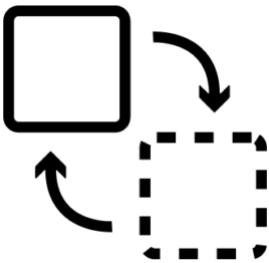
> Katerina, **whom** had taken biology once already, was still struggling to keep the steps of cellular respiration straight. She knew the process took place in animals, **which** take in oxygen and put out carbon dioxide. She also knew **that** plants underwent the process of photosynthesis. However, the individual steps of the process seemed beyond her understanding.

Whom is incorrect; the object case is not needed here. The sentence should start with "Katerina, who had taken biology once already. . . ." *Which* is used correctly. *Which* is appropriate to use with the noun *animals*, and the clause is set off with commas. *That* is used correctly. It connects *knew* with what she knew.

[/hidden-answer]

8. Pronoun Antecedents

Antecedent Clarity



We've already defined an **antecedent** as the noun (or phrase) that a pronoun is replacing. The phrase "antecedent clarity" simply means that is should be clear who or what the pronoun is referring to. In other words, readers should be able to understand the sentence the first time they read it—not the third, forth, or tenth. In this page, we'll look at some examples of common mistakes that can cause confusion, as well as ways to fix each sentence.

Let's take a look at our first sentence:

Rafael told Matt to stop eating his cereal.

When you first read this sentence, is it clear if the cereal Rafael's or Matt's? Is it clear when you read the sentence again? Not really, no. Since both Rafael and Matt are singular, third person, and masculine, it's impossible to tell whose cereal is being eaten (at least from this sentence).

How would you best revise this sentence? Type your ideas in the text frame below, and then look at the suggested revisions.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="654515"]**Show Possible Revisions**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="654515"]Let's assume the cereal is Rafael's:

- Rafael told Matt to stop eating Rafael's cereal.
- Matt was eating Rafael's cereal. Rafael told him to stop it.

What if the cereal is Matt's?

- Rafael told Matt to stop eating Matt's cereal.
- Matt was eating his own cereal when Rafael told him to stop.

These aren't the only ways to revise the sentence. However, each of these new sentences has made it clear whose cereal it is.

[/hidden-answer]

Were those revisions what you expected them to be?

Let's take a look at another example:

> Katerina was really excited to try French cuisine on her semester abroad in Europe. They make all sorts of delicious things.

When you read this example, is it apparent who the pronoun *they* is referring to? You may guess that *they* is referring to the French–which is probably correct. However, this is not actually stated, which means that there isn't actually an antecedent. Since every pronoun needs an antecedent, the example needs to be revised to include one.

How would you best revise this sentence? Type your ideas in the text frame below, and then look at the suggested revisions.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]

[reveal-answer q="654516"]**Show Possible Revisions**[/reveal-answer]

[hidden-answer a="654516"]Let's assume that is is the French who make great cuisine:

- Katerina was really excited to try French cuisine on her semester abroad in Europe. The French make all sorts of delicious things.
- Katerina was really excited to try the cuisine in France on her semester abroad in Europe. The French make all sorts of

delicious things.

- Katerina was really excited to try French cuisine on her semester abroad in Europe. The people there make all sorts of delicious things.
- One of the things Katerina was really excited about on her semester abroad in Europe was trying French cuisine. It comprises all sorts of delicious things.

[/hidden-answer]

As you write, keep these two things in mind:

- Make sure your pronouns always have an antecedent.
- Make sure that it is clear what their antecedents are.

Practice

Read the following passage, then re-write it using as many pronouns as possible, while still retaining clarity.

> Marina and Marina's twin sister Adriana often fought over small things. Marina frequently took Adriana's clothes without asking and never returned them. Adriana always ate the last piece of dessert, even if Mariana had saved it for Mariana. However, Mariana always made sure Adriana knew about the sales at Adriana's favorite stores, and Adriana baked Mariana's favorite cookies at least once a month.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="371426"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="371426"]Here is one possible solution:

Marina and **her** twin sister Adriana often fought over small things. Marina frequently took Adriana's clothes without asking and never returned them. Adriana always ate the last piece of dessert, even if Mariana had saved it for **herself**. However, Mariana always made sure Adriana knew about the sales at Adriana's favorite stores, and Adriana baked Mariana's favorite cookies at least once a month.

You could possibly say "Mariana made sure Adriana knew about the sales at her favorite stores," but there is still room for misinterpretation, so saying "Adriana's favorite stores" is more clear.

[/hidden-answer]

Antecedent Agreement

As you write, make sure that you are using the correct pronouns. When a pronoun matches the person and number of its antecedent, we say that it **agrees** with it antecedent. Let's look at a couple of examples:

- I hate it when Zacharias tells me what to do. **He**'s so full of **himself**.
- The Finnegans are shouting again. I swear you could hear **them** from across town!

In the first sentence, *Zacharias* is singular, third person, and masculine. The pronouns *he* and *himself* are also singular, third person, and masculine, so they agree. In the second sentence, *the Finnegans* is plural and third person. The pronoun *them* is also plural and third person.

When you select your pronoun, you also need to ensure you use the correct case of pronoun. Remember we learned about three cases: subject, object, and possessive. The case of your pronoun should match its role in the sentence. For example, if your pronoun is doing an action, it should be a subject:

- **He** runs every morning.
- **I** hate it when **she** does this.

However, when something is being done to your pronoun, it should be an object:

- Birds have always hated **me**.
- My boss wanted to talk to **him**.
- Give **her** the phone and walk away.

Practice

Replace each bolded word with the correct pronoun:

1. **Hannah** had always loved working with plants. **Hannah's** garden was the envy of **Hannah's** neighbors.
2. People often lost patience with **Colin**.
3. Justin was unsure how well **Justin** and Terry would together.

4. **Alicia and Katie** made a formidable team. **Alicia and Katie's** maneuvers always caught the opposing team off guard.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="697932"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="697932"]

1. **She** had always loved working with plants. **Her** garden was the envy of **her** neighbors.
    - *She* is a subject case, singular, feminine, third-person pronoun.
    - *Her* is a possessive, singular, feminine, third-person pronoun. In this case, the possessive is acting kind of like an adjective: it modifies *garden* and *neighbors*. The possessive pronoun *her* cannot stand on its own.
2. People often lost patience with **him**.
    - *Him* is an object case, singular, masculine, third-person pronoun.
3. Justin was unsure how well **he** and Terry would together.
    - *He* is a subject case, singular, masculine, third-person pronoun.
4. **They** made a formidable team. **Their** maneuvers always caught the opposing team off guard.
    - *They* is a subject case, plural, third-person pronoun.

- *Their* is a possessive, plural, third-person pronoun. In this case, the possessive is acting kind of like an adjective: it modifies *maneuvers*. The possessive pronoun *their* cannot stand on its own.

[/hidden-answer]

However, things aren't always this straightforward. Let's take a look at some examples where things are a little more confusing.

Person and Number

Some of the trickiest agreements are with indefinite pronouns:

- Every student should do his or her best on this assignment.
- If nobody lost his or her scarf, then where did this come from?

As we learned earlier in this outcome, words like *every* and *nobody* are singular, and demand singular pronouns. Here are some of the words that fall into this category:

anybody	anyone	anything	each	either	every
everybody	everyone	everything	neither	no one	nobody
nothing	one	somebody	someone	something	

Some of these may feel "more singular" than others, but they all are technically singular. Thus, using "he or she" is correct (while *they* is incorrect).

- Anyone going on this hike should plan on being in the

canyon for at least seven hours; he or she should prepare accordingly.

- I know somebody has been throwing his or her trash away in my dumpster, and I want him or her to stop.

However, as you may have noticed, the phrase "he or she" (and its other forms) can often make your sentences clunky. When this happens, it may be best to revise your sentences to have plural antecedents. Because "he or she" is clunky, you'll often see issues like this:

> The way each individual speaks can tell us so much about him or her. It tells us what groups they associate themselves with, both ethnically and socially.

As you can see, in the first sentence, *him or her* agrees with the indefinite pronoun *each*. However, in the second sentence, the writer has shifted to the plural *they*, even though the writer is talking about the same group of people. When you write, make sure your agreement is correct and **consistent**.

Practice

Here's a paragraph that uses "he or she" liberally:

> Every writer will experience writer's block at some point in his or her career. He or she will suddenly be unable to move on in his or her work. A lot of people have written about writer's block, presenting different strategies to "beat the block." However, different methods work for different people. Each writer must find the solutions that work best for him or her.

How would you best revise this paragraph? Type your

ideas in the text frame below, and then look at the suggested revisions.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="725756"]Show Possible Revisions[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="725756"]There are a couple of different ways you could revise this paragraph:

- Writers will all experience writer's block at some point in their careers. They will suddenly be unable to move on in their work. A lot of people have written about writer's block, presenting different strategies to "beat the block." However, different methods work for different people. Writers must find the solutions that work best for them.
- As a writer, you will experience writer's block at some point in your career. You will suddenly be unable to move on in your work. A lot of people have written about writer's block, presenting different strategies to "beat the block." However, different methods work for different people. You must find the solutions that work best for you.

Were those revisions what you expected them to be?

[/hidden-answer]

Case

You and I versus *You and Me*

Some of the most common pronoun mistakes occur with the decision between "you and I" and "you and me." People will often say things like "You and me should go out for drinks." Or—thinking back on the rule that it should be "you and I"—they will say "Susan assigned the task to both you and I." However, both of these sentences are wrong. Remember that every time you use a pronoun you need to make sure that you're using the correct case.

Let's take a look at the first sentence: "You and me should go out for drinks." Both pronouns are the subject of the sentence, so they should be in subject case: "You and I should go out for drinks."

In the second sentence (Susan assigned the task to both you and I), both pronouns are the object of the sentence, so they should be in object case: "Susan assigned the task to both you and me."

PART III

MODULE 2: THE WORDS WE ARE, THE STORIES WE TELL

9. Module 2: The Words We Are, The Stories We Tell

Module Introduction

This module discusses the stories we tell to make sense of the world. The importance of storytelling to human existence is explained. Narration is then introduced as another word for this storytelling, and its connection to other academic writing and description is discussed. Examples are provided of perspective and point-of-view, and the primary components of narrative writing (characters, conflict, and purpose) are introduced to help writers begin constructing their own stories. Chronological order, the ordering of events through time, is explained, as is the concept of the flashback, jumping backwards in time. The prewriting strategies of questioning and freewriting are introduced as ways to generate ideas for a narrative. Outlining is emphasized as necessary for the construction of logical, cohesive papers. Finally, the importance of using transitions (joining words) to connect ideas when composing is discussed. [1]

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the student will be able to:

- Explain what narration is and why it is central to human life
- Identify fiction and nonfiction writing, as well as the complications involved in such distinctions
- Explain the problem of perspective

- Identify the primary elements of a narrative: character, conflict, and narrative purpose
- Use chronological order and flashbacks to organize events in time
- Use questioning and freewriting to generate ideas
- Use outlining to prepare a narrative paper
- Compose a narrative piece of writing
- Use transitions to tie events together [1]

Readings

- Online Learning Units

Lecture Content

ENC1101 Learning Unit 2

Our Selves, Our Stories

Human beings are fundamentally storytelling creatures. Of all the ways we use words, perhaps the most important (and most typical) is to communicate who we are, where we have been, and where we are going. Think of all the times you use words to convey what has happened to you in a single day, even a single hour! Indeed, we spend most of our lives using our words to spin stories about ourselves; even our own sense of identity is a kind of story we tell ourselves to make sense of the world!

Because using words to tell stories is so fundamental to our

everyday experience, *narration* , a fancy word for storytelling, is the perfect place to start our composition course in earnest. For many students, a narrative essay, one which requires to writer to tell a story of some sort, is the most comfortable and enjoyable kind of assignment to tackle. This is especially true if you are interested in creative writing or have aspirations of publishing short stories, screenplays, or novels. Aside from being a familiar and creative kind of writing, narration is also a key component in many other kinds of essay writing, and as the course continues you'll see that narration comes in handy when you are trying to come up with interesting *hooks* to start papers or are looking to explain specific points about a topic with examples that help your reader understand your point of view. Finally, the kind of writing we did in the last module, *description* , the translation of the senses into words, plays a key part in all types of narrative writing; after all, to tell a good story, you have to provide details that help your reader become immersed in the world you are creating. [1]

Fiction, Nonfiction, and the Problem of Perspective

Before we begin discussing how to construct an effective narrative, we need to consider an important distinction that humans have to make when it comes to storytelling: the difference between nonfiction, or writing that purports to be true or "real," and fiction, or writing that announces itself as a fabrication, a "made-up" story told by the author to entertain or to make a hypothetical (believable yet fictional) point.

At first glance, this distinction might seem easy to make. However, the words we use are never equivalent to the world we experience; in some sense, whenever we tell a story, we are fabricating what happened. If we could simply communicate events as they happened, we wouldn't need words at all! This is why there

are so many arguments about news stories and the meaning of current events; we all recognize that any act of recalling what has happened is fraught with the problem of *perspective* , the point-of-view or position of the storyteller.

As we'll see in later modules, the problem of perspective is something that always haunts the composition classroom and writing in general, so it's important that we recognize the issue here at the beginning.

Philosophers have argued about the problems of language and truth since the dawn of civilization, and their battles rage on to this day. For the purpose of this module, however, we will have to accept that what we mean by *nonfiction writing* is storytelling that presumes to adhere to the world as *it happened to the author or other humans* and *fiction writing* as storytelling that *makes no such presumptions about its literal truth* .

Because all storytelling, be it fiction or nonfiction writing, is always caught up in the problem of perspective, the point-of-view of the writer, it is important to clarify exactly how this positioning makes itself known in a piece of writing.

Consider the following passage from a story:

> *I couldn't make out the shape in front of me; all I knew was that it made me at once weak-kneed and furious. A cold sliver of something shot through my shoulder muscles, and I collapsed in a heap. My head was reeling, my heart was racing, my mouth hung open in shock. This, this was what I had feared all along.*

Note that this passage uses *first person pronouns* (I, me, my) to convey the interior state of the author herself; it thus provides a *first-person point-of-view* . In doing so, it reveals the*emotional state* the author finds herself in (she is "weak-kneed and furious,"

feels "a cold sliver of something," experiences shock, and comes to understand what fear feels like); we thus could also say that it is a *subjective perspective* : a story that openly reveals the personal, emotional, singular experience of the writer in question. Such subjective perspectives often rely upon colorful descriptive language (many adjectives and adverbs) and surprising comparisons to establish their truths and engage the audience. Creative storytelling, whether its fiction or nonfiction, often relies upon such subjective perspectives to establish the emotional, spiritual conditions under which a character lives.

Now consider the following passage:

> *The incident occurred at 3:15 EST. The blonde female in question had brown hair, was approximately 5'3"and 115 pounds, and wore beige, knee-length pants, a light-blue shirt, and brown flats. Upon seeing Officer Wilson, she shrugged her shoulders and fell to her knees. She remained in a kneeling position for several minutes thereafter and exhibited signs of shock: her pupils dilated and her lower jaw dropped open.*

In contrast to the first passage, this one is told from the *third-person perspective* ; it uses the third-person pronouns "she" and "her" as well as the noun "female" to discuss the main character from the outside as she appears to other people. This passage is also an example of an *objective perspective* , one that strives to be as *factual* and *unbiased* (unemotional and even-handed; fair) as possible in order to construct a believable reality free from emotion. Much academic and professional writing is expected to be objective in order to establish trust with the reader and seek a truth that can be agreed-upon, not dictated by personal bias or emotional assumptions.

Whenever you set out to write a narrative, then, you need to

consider what perspective is most appropriate to tell your tale. Will you use a first-person narrator who will disclose his deepest personal feelings about the world? Will tell your story from the third-person, watching as the characters take action? Keep in mind that third-person stories can be subjective; you've likely read a short story or novel told from the third-person but full of colorful and emotional language. As we've seen, though, many third-person stories are objective and so can be very neutral and clinical: think of a news report for the Associated Press or the recounting of an experiment for a science journal. Whatever the case, it's up to you to decide from which position your story should be told. [1]

Two Elements that Make a Story Click

Every effective story has two key elements: character and conflict. *Characters* are the people that populate the world a writer creates. *Conflict* is what happens to those characters, the catalyst for their actions. Without characters, a world would have no actors; without conflict, characters would have no reason to take action.

Though a creative writing instructor would likely take issue with this simplification, for the sake of this class *characters* can be broken down into three types: main characters, side characters, and extras.

Main characters are the people on which a story centers, and a writer signals their importance by providing the most details about them, including what they look like, what they say, and possibly how they think or feel (depending upon how subjective the story's perspective is). Remember that a main character may even be the person telling the story if the writer is using the first-person perspective.

Side characters often accompany the main character as important acquaintances, friends, or enemies. Writers provide enough details about them for them to come alive, but they don't get as much

attention as the main characters. They are often essential to the conflict, however; for example, often the main character has an enemy who is a side character but whose presence forces the main character to take action.

Extras help fill out the world of a narrative, but they are just window-dressing. They appear in the background at parties or on busy city streets or in office settings. They are not important to the story's conflict, though they may be affected by it (think of all the extras in a Hollywood movie who run screaming from a giant monster's attack in a movie like*Godzilla*).

A story's *conflict* is the struggle that the main character must endure as the story proceeds, the obstacle that he or she must overcome. This conflict could involve another character, such as in classic confrontations of heroes and villains (Batman fighting the Joker or Captain America confronting the Red Skull). However, main characters may also experience less aggressive conflicts, such as facing a fear, performing a task, surviving a hostile environment, interviewing for a job, enduring a medical issue, or winning the heart of a love interest. Before you write your narrative, you need to have a clear understanding of what this conflict is so that you can build to a *climactic moment* when the conflict is resolved and the story's *purpose* is revealed. [(1)]

Narrative Purpose: Why Readers Love It When a Plan Comes Together

A story is interesting only insofar as it has some reason to exist. Conflicts get a story moving and give characters something to do, but the overall reason behind the story reveals itself when the conflict is resolved. Maybe a writer wants to show the importance of sticking with something, no matter how hard it seems; maybe he or she wants to emphasize the difficulty of loyalty or the insanity of the modern workplace. This purpose can be funny or moving,

and a story doesn't have to convey some deep moral message to be effective. However, a writer needs to consider how and why the conflict will resolve and what the implications of that resolution will be. This purpose is usually left unstated in narratives; readers don't like to be told what to think, so you shouldn't say something like, "The moral of this story is . . . ." Still, try to make it a point to write out the purpose in advance for yourself so you know what you are doing. This *purpose statement* might end up being slightly off the mark after the whole story comes together, especially since characters often have a way of taking on a life of their own and "doing" things the writer didn't expect. Still, having some idea where the story is going is essential to avoiding writer's block (when you get stuck and don't know what else to write) and keeping your narrative focused. [1]

Chronological Order: Tracking a Conflict through Time

Once you've figured out *who* your characters are, *what* your central conflict will be, and *why* you are telling your story (what its purpose is), you are just about ready to draft your story. However, you still need to figure out *how* you are going to organize your ideas into a cohesive narrative, and this crucial final step is actually a question of *when*: *when* does your story start, *when* does the climactic moment occur, and when does it end?

Because narratives chronicle events that happen to characters, they obviously track time. The organizational strategy that recounts a story as it occurs in time is called *chronological order* : typically, a narrative essay structured chronologically proceeds from the beginning of the story, the earliest important event, to its end, the final moment of the tale.

This sounds simple, but a writer must make many important decisions in order for chronological order to be an effective

organizing tool, especially when he or she is writing a short essay. Perhaps most importantly, a writer must remember that a good story starts as close to *the climactic moment of the conflict as possible* in order to be concise and consistently interesting.

For example, imagine that you are writing a story about betrayal: in it, the main character discovers that her best friend has been seeing her boyfriend behind her back. The climactic moment of the story is to take place at a party on a Saturday night. In order to be as concise, you decide to tell the story over the course of a single day, starting when the main character wakes up in the morning. Then you take the reader through the day, recounting the character's breakfast, her morning workout, her lunch, her afternoon workout, her brief shopping excursion . . .

Wait! Even though this sounds reasonable, is it really concise enough? Do all of these events serve to set up the party where the conflict will resolve? Do we really need to know about the character's breakfast and lunch? Maybe, so long as these events somehow relate to the main character's relationship with her friend (perhaps she meets the friend for lunch or even spends the day with her). However, if these moments are disconnected from the story's turmoil, if they just fill up space by describing moments in time, then they aren't necessary.

Now imagine an alternate strategy. Perhaps the writer decides to start the story in the early evening on that fateful Saturday, right before the main character (let's call her Susan) leaves for the fateful party. As Susan is getting dressed, she is recounting past moments she has spent with her best friend (let's call her Debbie), and these moments all emphasize the intense bond the two have forged together (each moment thus relating to the purpose of the story, the betrayal that the conflict will reveal). Now the story is *truly* starting very close to its climax, and every part serves the larger whole.

In addition, this example introduces the concept of *flashbacks* , moments within a chronology that jump backwards in time. In this story, these flashbacks occur as instances of Susan's memory and

are interspersed with the linear moments she is preparing for the party. Not all flashbacks have to be memories, though; if you've ever seen a movie or TV show that plays around with time, such as when a serialized TV show begins by showing a beloved central character in a dangerous situation that hasn't been explained, you know how interesting it can be for a story to start at a climactic moment and then jump back to the beginning in order to catch the audience up with the action. [1]

Prewriting Strategies: Questioning and Freewriting

In the last module, we discussed *listing* as a prewriting strategy for descriptive writing, and it's one that works very well for narrative writing, as well. However, perhaps the most natural kind of prewriting for storytelling is called *questioning* because it forces a writer to think about all of the important elements of a narrative by asking the classic "reporter's questions: "*who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, *and how* . In fact, it's impossible to put a narrative together without preliminarily asking at least some of these questions before you get started! Consider the following questions, for example:

- *Who* is the main character in the story?
- *What* is the story's conflict?
- *When* does the story take place?
- *Where* does the action happen?
- *Why* are you telling the story? (what is its main purpose)
- *How* does the story end?

Once you've answered at least some of these questions, another helpful prewriting strategy that many writers use is *freewriting* . This is when you set a time limit (usually around ten minutes) and write whatever comes to mind about your story (it's useful to do

a bit of questioning first so you at least know who your main character is and what the conflict will be, but it's possible to freewrite without any predetermined ideas, too, just to see what you come up with). This is also called *stream-of-consciousness writing* , and it's important to note that this is not like drafting the actual story, although you may use some of the stuff you come up with when you put the paper together. This kind of writing is meant to be totally free and disorganized; you don't worry about spelling, grammar, organization, or even logic. You just let yourself write, and when the time period is up, you look back at what you've come up with and see if anything useful has been created. Some writers freewrite multiply times, picking up certain ideas from one freewriting session and using them as the basis for another until they've come up with plenty of material that they can hammer into shape as an actual draft.

Whether you use a combination of listing, questioning, and freewriting or just one such strategy, make sure to do some initial creative work before you start planning your essay so you have a general idea of what your story is about to avoid getting stuck! [1]

Planning Your Narrative: The Imperative of Using an Outline

Once your prewriting is finished and you've figured out all the primary elements of your story, you might think you are ready to draft. However, there is still one more essential step you need to follow before drafting should happen: outlining.

Many students balk at using an outline; they often complain that outlining makes them feel boxed-in or that their writing is over-determined. In the academic and professional worlds, though, *organization and logic are everything* . Even a paper with relatively weak, uninspiring subject matter can be elevated if all of its ideas are logically presented and connected. Outlines ensure

that papers have this underlying logic and structure. What many students don't like about outlines is that they force writers to develop a kind of skeleton for their papers that holds them together, and creating this kind of infrastructure takes concentration and a critical eye.

Outlining helps differentiate *freewriting* from *drafting* . As we just learned, freewriting is completely free-form writing. When you freewrite, you never worry about structure: you just record your thoughts. Drafting, on the other hand, is the *meticulous construction of a paper based on already established ideas that have been thoughtfully joined together in advance* . This thoughtfulness is articulated in the planning stage between prewriting and drafting and usually takes the form of an outline that establishes the organizational structure of the paper.

In each of the modules going forward you'll be presented with an outline appropriate for the rhetorical mode (kind of writing) that you will be working on. As we have already discussed, narrative writing, this module's focus, is organized through time *chronologically* . Because of the possibility of flashbacks, this doesn't mean that a narrative essay has to proceed linearly from beginning to end, though many simple narratives do just that.

In most of the modules going forward you'll be presented with suggestions for how to develop an outline that is appropriate for the rhetorical mode (kind of writing) that you will be working on. As we have already discussed, narrative writing, this module's focus, is organized through time chronologically. Because of the possibility of flashbacks, this doesn't mean that a narrative essay has to proceed linearly from beginning to end, though many simple narratives do just that. Whatever the case, though, we know the following things about narrative structure:

Whatever the case, though, we know the following things about narrative structure:

- In a narrative, one event follows the next.
- An effective narrative is centered on a conflict and builds up to a climax, the moment when the conflict reaches its most intense point and is somehow resolved.
- An interesting narrative starts with a hook, a moment that inspires the reader to keep reading. This means you want to start with a great description or an exciting incident, all of which is tied to the first event of the story.
- After the climax of the story, there is usually some sort of resolution or final event that ties everything together and may help emphasize the story's purpose.

There are no rules for how many events to include in a narrative or for how many paragraphs a narrative (or any academic paper, for that matter) has to be. Thus, keep in mind that your outline can have as many major sections (designated by roman numerals) as you feel is necessary. Just make sure to adhere to the assignment's word count! [(1)]

Before You Begin: A Note about Transitions and Connecting Ideas Together

As you draft your narrative, keep in mind that moving a story through time involves more than just placing one event after another; you need to use *transitions* , connecting words, to help transport your reader.

Transitions

Words like **first, next, after that, later, before, during, meanwhile, upon, soon, now, finally, while, as soon as,** and **when** are all helpful expressions that can effectively tie events together and connect your ideas. [1]

Attribution

ENC1101 Learning Unit 2.2

Readings: the Words We Are, the Stories We Tell

Introduction

In this module we discussed how to tell compelling stories. Before you start writing your own narrative paper, though, it can be helpful to look at someone else's story to see how an effective narrative works. Thus, in this section you will find a piece of writing that exhibits all the elements of a classic narrative: it features a

protagonist embroiled in a conflict and tells his story through time using chronological order. [1]

Professional Essay

Remember that for a narrative to connect with an audience it needs to use vivid details to bring a character to life as he or she has to overcome some kind of obstacle. It also has to clearly transport us through time as we follow the main character through to the resolution of this conflict. As you read the following story, ask yourself the following *active reading questions* to make sure you understand how the narrative is working and why it is effective:

1. What is the essay's *central conflict* ? Is it established early or late in the story?
2. How does *description* function in the essay? Do the story's descriptive details help us understand the protagonist and his overall purpose?
3. How is the story *organized* ? Does it use *transitions* to help us navigate from beginning to end? Does it move back and forth in time?
4. How does the essay's *conclusion* resolve its conflict? [1]

Select and read this article, "Looking for My Father in the Atacama Desert" . [1]

Reading Reflections: Professional Essay

Let's reflect on the active reading questions we asked at the beginning to break the story down in detail. [1]

What is the essay's central conflict? Is it established early or late in the story?

In the very first sentence of the first paragraph, the narrator (who is also the story's central character or *protagonist*) announces that he "*never truly believed the stories my father told . . . about his adventurous youth* ." He says he has trouble matching up the dad he knew and the one who appeared in his dad's fanciful tales. After struggling with this lack of faith and fondly remembering nights he spent listening to his father's stories, he announces his central purpose: "*Some nights after my father's burial, as I sat on the porch alone looking through pictures now yellowed and ragged, I decided to go in search of both men* ." The "two men" he mentions here are opposing versions of his father: the " *neatly groomed man who wore a business suit every day except Saturday* " and " *the grinning, shaggy-headed chap featured in photographs of young men and muddy cars on road rallies in exotic, faraway places* ." At this moment, we realize the story's central conflict: the narrator wants to resolve the difference between these versions of his dad by following in his footsteps. He thus wants to better understand his father by setting off on his own journey to an "exotic, faraway" place. (1)

How does description function in the essay? Do the story's descriptive details help us understand the protagonist and his overall purpose?

Looking back at the first paragraph again, we can see how the author uses description to make the narrator's memories of his father come to life. Consider the vivid sensory details in the following passage:

> *After dinner, he and I would sit on the porch and watch the*

> *sun melt into the horizon. First, he would light a cigarette, filling the golden silence with the acrid scent of burning tobacco and dragon-like bursts of smoke from his nostrils. Before too long, he would open the evening's tale with a curious observation, something like, "Did you know snake meat is very tender?" At first, his voice was the same carefully modulated baritone that negotiated profitable deals with customers who came into his antique shop in town. But then his tone would change, and I would hear that young man from the photos.*

Here the author uses both smell (the "acrid scent of burning tobacco")and sound (his father's "carefully modulated baritone") to make the narrator's memories come to life, a savvy strategy given the important role both senses serve for human memory–think about how a cologne or perfume can transport you back to a faraway time or how hearing a recording makes the past come to life. In addition, the changing tone of his father's voice is the very thing that makes the narrator suspect that there may be truth to his father's words, so the descriptive details play a major role in establishing the story's thematic purpose.

The story is in fact riddled with vivid descriptive details from beginning to end. The second paragraph describes the narrator's son sitting "cross-legged" and watching as his dad works on a car, surprised that his father, an accountant, is doing such mechanical work; at the same time, the narrator describes his own surprise at the experience by mixing the aches and pains of his body with the imagined specter of his own father:

> *In those moments when my neck and back ached from leaning over the engine to replace a piston or tighten a belt, it seemed my father was there with me, leaning against the fender and nodding in approval.*

In this vivid moment we are presented with two sons encountering the mysteries of their fathers, building memories and encountering

ghosts. The specific details, such as the way the son is sitting or the pains of the narrator's body, bring us into the moment viscerally and also serve a larger purpose: indeed, as the narrator embarks on the quest for his father, he is also becoming like his father in relation to his own son, who is watching him much the way he used to watch his dad on the porch.

The third paragraph presents dialogue to emphasize dialect (the distinct way a person or group of people sound when they use language) to emphasize that the narrator has entered a world that has become increasingly alien to him:

> *The crew I hired to set up camp along the way encouraged me to buy a GPS unit. "Ees no seegnal," they said, their heavily accented English warning me I could not call for help if I got lost or the car broke down.*

The "heavily accented English" both literally warns him that he will be cut off from the rest of the world and figuratively reminds him that he is in a place where his own language is not primary: the details make clear that he is a stranger in a strange land.

In the next paragraph, the descriptive details help us understand the narrator's plight when his car breaks down:

> *At high noon exactly, the Triumph's radiator blew with a hiss and a pop. The car rolled to a stop, and I watched the plume of white steam disperse over the dry, cracked plateau. With temperatures near 45° C, I, too, felt ready to explode. I guzzled a bottle of water and then took a look at the radiator. Perspiration dripped into my eyes, and my hands were slick as I carefully poked and prodded the hoses and wires.*

He doesn't just say "my car broke down at noon the next day." Instead we hear the radiator blow "with a hiss and a pop" and watch "the plume of white steam disperse over the dry, cracked plateau." The author also merges the narrator's emotional state with his physical plight by having him say that he felt "ready to explode"

in the heat and then providing specific signs of distress: the narrator "guzzle[s]" water as he looks at the car's radiator (thus linking man and machine), and "perspiration drip[s]" into his eyes. No detail is glossed over; the narrator never just says "I was hot" or "I was frustrated" because those summary explanations would not engage the reader or link the protagonist's spirit with the details of his quest.

We are going to discuss the last paragraph when we get to question four, but for now consider the striking details related to the narrator's physical appearance as they appear at the end of the story:

> *Beneath the dust, my face was sunburned. My hair stuck to my head in damp clumps. My eyes were bright with accomplishment, and my smile was almost as wide as the desert I was crossing.*

Again, the author *shows* us what the narrator looks like so that we can fully experience his transformation, a change that is essential for us to recognize as the narrative's conflict is resolved. (1)

How is the story organized? Does it use transitions to help us navigate from beginning to end? Does it move back and forth in time?

As we have seen, the first paragraph is mostly a memory of the narrator's past, and what is being remembered (the narrator's experiences as a child with his father) is the earliest chronological point in the story as well as functioning as the catalyst for the rest of the story's action (the narrator's memories of his father are the whole reason he sets out on the quest). For the most part, the story proceeds chronologically from there. Here are the transitions

each paragraph (after the introduction) uses to help the reader understand what is happening:

Paragraph Two: "I spent a year restoring my father's Triumph." This sentence describes the lead-up to the race the narrator is going to participate in. During this time the narrator's son watches him work on the car.

Paragraph Three: "Instead of joining my family for our usual summer holiday at the coast, I took the Triumph to South America to retrace my father's favorite race circuit, a two-week rally that included a grueling stretch through Chile's Atacama Desert." This sentence establishes when the narrator participates in the race and obviously happens after he has worked on the car in the previous paragraph.

Paragraph Four: "Just as my father had done all those years ago, I navigated the route with a compass and map." Now the narrator has joined the race. At this point the story becomes more specific and focuses on the time of the race itself as the action reaches its climax.

Paragraph Five: "Two hours later, none of my efforts had resolved the problem." This transition is very specific; the narrator is in the midst of the race and at the most important point in his story. It places us two hours after the action of the previous paragraph, so we are very clear about when the last part of the story is happening.

Paragraph Six: "As the engine settled into a sluggish purr, I caught a glimpse of myself in the rearview mirror." This sentence places us right after the repairs performed in the previous paragraph. Since this last paragraph provides resolution for the whole story, it is very important that we know exactly when it is happening.

As for flashbacks, paragraph three presents us with a memory from the narrator's past. It is triggered by the following transition: "A memory rolled in, and I recalled going with my father to buy a new car." This flashback serves to emphasize just how much the narrator is haunted by the memory of his father and links that memory to the race he has just joined.[1]

How does the essay's conclusion resolve its conflict?

As we have seen, the last paragraph is largely made up of descriptive details regarding the appearance of the narrator after participating in the race through Chile's Atacama Desert. Besides just painting a vivid picture, these details are thematically important, as well. Specifically, when we see what the narrator now looks like (his sunburned face, sweaty hair, bright eyes, and big smile) we realize that he has transformed into the kind of person he used to see in his father's old photographs he described for us at the beginning of the story ("the grinning, shaggy-headed chap" who was his father). At this moment, the protagonist has accomplished what he set out to do; he has discovered the truth his father's two personas and so better understands who his dad was. He has also, in a sense, become his dad, for he, too, is a father who now is more than just an everyday businessman. He has thus resolved his search for the "two men" his dad once was and has discovered his own truth: that he, too, is both a family man and an adventurer. [1]

Attribution

ENC1101 Learning Unit 2.3

Common Punctuation Marks

Now that we've learned about the different types of words, it's time to learn about the rules of punctuation. These little marks can often be the cause of a lot of heartaches and headaches. Errors in punctuation can often result in unintended meanings. For example, consider the difference the comma makes in these two sentences:

- Let's eat, Grandpa.
- Let's eat Grandpa.

In the first instance, the writer is directly addressing his or her grandfather, and the comma indicates the separation between the suggestion being made and the addressee. In the second, however, grandfather is on the menu.

However, punctuation doesn't exist simply as a puzzling set of rules for writers; in fact, it was created to help guide readers through passages—to let them know how and where words relate to each other. When you learn the rules of punctuation, you equip yourself with an extensive toolset so you can craft language to better communicate the exact message you want. [7]

End Punctuation

There are three punctuation marks that come at the end of a sentence: the period (.), the question mark (?), and the exclamation point (!). A sentence is always followed by a single space, no matter what the concluding punctuation is.

Periods

Periods indicate a neutral sentence (one that isn't overly emotional or questioning anything), and as such they are by far the most common ending punctuation mark (they've been at the end of every sentence on this page so far). They occur at the end of statements. [8]

Question Marks

A question mark comes at the end of a question ("How was class today?"). Not all questions indicated by question marks are alike; for example, a rhetorical question is asked to make a point, and does not expect an answer. Some questions are used principally as polite requests ("Would you pass the salt?").

All of these questions can be categorized as direct questions, and all of these questions require a question mark at the end. [9]

Indirect Questions

Indirect questions do not have question marks at the end. They can be used in many of the same ways as direct questions, but they often emphasize knowledge or lack of knowledge:

- I can't guess **how Tamika managed it.**
- I wonder **whether I looked that bad.**
- Cecil asked **where the reports were.**

Notice how different word order is used in direct and indirect questions; in direct questions the verb usually comes before the subject, while in indirect questions the verb appears second. [9]

Exclamation Points

The exclamation point is a punctuation mark usually used after an interjection or exclamation to indicate strong feelings or high volume, and it often marks the end of a sentence. You've likely seen this punctuation mark overused on the internet.

While you shouldn't overuse exclamation points in academic or professional writing, there are appropriate ways and times to use them. A sentence ending in an exclamation mark may be an exclamation (such as "Wow!" or "Boo!"), may state an imperative ("Stop!"), or may indicate astonishment ("They were the footprints of a gigantic duck!").

The exclamation mark is sometimes used in conjunction with the question mark. This can be in protest or astonishment ("Out of all places, the watering hole?!").

Informally, exclamation marks may be repeated for additional emphasis ("That's great!!!"), but this practice is generally considered only acceptable in casual or informal writing, such as text messages or online communication with friends and family. [10]

Commas

Perhaps the best and most instructive way for us to approach the comma is to remember its fundamental function: it is a separator. Once you know this, the next step is to determine what sorts of things generally require separation. This list of things that should be separated includes most transition words, descriptive words or phrases, adjacent items, and complete ideas (complete ideas are word groups that contain both a subject and a verb). Commas are also used to separate similar items in lists. [11] [12]

Transition Words

Transition words add new viewpoints to your material; commas before and after transition words help to separate them from the sentence ideas they are describing. Transition words tend to appear at the beginning or in the middle of a sentence:

- *Therefore* , the natural gas industry can only be understood fully through an analysis of these recent political changes.
- The lead prosecutor was prepared, *however* , for a situation like this.

Remember, these words require commas when they appear at the beginning or middle of a basic sentence that expresses a single idea. When they appear between two complete ideas, however, a period or semicolon is required beforehand:

- Clint had been planning the trip with his kids for three months; *however* , when work called he couldn't say no.
- Sam was retired. *Nevertheless* , he wanted to help out.

As you can see from these examples, a comma is always required after transition words. [(11)] [(12)]

Descriptive Phrases

Descriptive phrases often need to be separated from the things that they describe. Descriptive phrases tend to come at the very beginning of a sentence, right after the subject of a sentence, or at the very end of a sentence:

- **Near the end of the eighteenth century,** James Hutton introduced a point of view that radically changed scientists'

thinking about geologic processes.
- James Lovelock, **who first measured CFCs globally,** said in 1973 that CFCs constituted no conceivable hazard.

In each example, the phrase separated by the comma could be deleted from the sentence without destroying the sentence's basic meaning. [(11)] [(12)]

Commas in Lists

Perhaps one of the most hotly contested comma rules is the case of the **serial comma** . The serial comma is the comma before the conjunction (*and* , *or* , and *nor*) in a series involving a parallel list of three or more things. For example, "I am industrious, resourceful, *and* loyal." MLA style requires the use of the serial comma—AP style highly recommends leaving it out.

The serial comma can provide clarity in certain situations. For example, such a comma can help clarify a writer's meaning if the *and* is part of a series of three or more phrases (groups of words) as opposed to single words:

- Medical histories taken about each subject included smoking history, frequency of exercise, current height and weight, and recent weight gain.

The serial comma can also prevent the end of a series from appearing to be a parenthetical, which means a clarification of an idea that comes right before the comma:

- I'd like to thank my sisters, Beyoncé and Rhianna.

Without the serial comma, it may appear that the speaker is thanking his or her two sisters, who are named Beyoncé and Rhianna (which could be possible, but isn't true in this case). By

adding the serial comma, it becomes clear that the speaker is thanking his or her sisters, as well as the two famous singers: "I'd like to thank my sisters, Beyoncé, and Rhianna."

By always using a comma before the *and* in any series of three or more, you honor the distinctions between each of the separated items, and you avoid any potential reader confusion. [11] [12]

Apostrophes

Possession

The apostrophe is used in combination with a "s" to represent that a word literally or conceptually possesses what follows it. Singular words, whether or not they end in s, are made possessive by adding an apostrophe + s. For plural words, we typically indicate possession simply by adding the apostrophe without an additional s. However, when dealing with a plural that does not end in an s (e.g., bacteria), we would add an apostrophe + s.

- a student's paper
- one hour's passing
- Illinois's law
- interviewees' answers
- her professors' office (an office shared by two of her professors; if it were just one professor we would write her professor's office) [11] [12]

Contractions

A contraction is a shortened phrase. He *will* becomes *he'll* , are not

becomes *aren't*, *would have* becomes *would've* , and it is becomes *it's* . In all of these cases, the apostrophe stands in for the missing letters.

You may find yourself being steered away from using contractions in your papers. While you should write to your teacher's preference, keep in mind that leaving out contractions can often make your words sound overly formal and stilted. Also, you shouldn't eliminate contractions in your papers just to up your word count!) [(11)] [(12)]

Your Versus *You're*

- Your vs. you're
- Its vs. it's
- Their vs. they're

All three of these pairs are the same kind of pair: the first word in each example is a possessive pronoun and the second is a contracted version of a pronoun (*you're = you are*; *it's = it is*; *they're = they are*) . These are easy to mix up (*especially its/it's*) because—as we've learned—an apostrophe + s usually indicates possession. The best way to use these correctly is to remember that possessive pronouns (*its*, *hers*, *his*, *ours*, *yours*, *theirs*) never have an apostrophe: if there's an apostrophe with a pronoun, it's a contraction, not a possessive. [(11)] [(12)]

Quotation Marks

Quotation marks are can be used in a number of ways. One way is fairly self-explanatory: you use quotation marks when you're making a direct quote.

- He said, “I’ll never forget you.” It was the best moment of my life.
- Yogi Berra famously said, “A nickel ain’t worth a dime anymore.”

Note that you usually put a comma right before a direct quotation if you first write out who is speaking.

If you’re just writing an approximation of something a person said, you would not use quotation marks:

- She told me about Pizza, the three-toed sloth, yesterday.
- He said that he would be late today.

Another way to use quotation marks is to call attention to a word. For example:

- I can never say “Worcestershire” correctly.
- How do you spell “definitely”?

Where do Quotation Marks Go?

Despite what you may see practiced, periods and commas always go inside the quotation marks. (The rules in British English are different, which may be where some of the confusion arises.)

- **Correct:** The people of the pine barrens are often called “pineys.”
- **Incorrect:** The people of the pine barrens are often called “pineys”.

The semicolon, colon, dash, question mark, and exclamation point can fall inside or outside of the quotation marks, depending on whether the punctuation is a part of the original quote:

- This measurement is commonly known as “dip angle”; dip

angle is the angle formed between a normal plane and a vertical.

- Built only 50 years ago, Shakhtinsk—"minetown"—is already seedy.
- When she was asked the question "Are rainbows possible in winter?" she answered by examining whether raindrops freeze at temperatures below 0°c. (Quoted material has its own punctuation.)
- Did he really say "Dogs are the devil's henchmen"? (The quote is a statement, but the full sentence is a question.) (11) (12)

Parentheses

Parentheses are most often used to identify material that acts as an aside (such as this brief comment) or to add incidental information.

Other punctuation marks used alongside parentheses need to take into account their context. If the parentheses enclose a full sentence beginning with a capital letter, then the end punctuation for the sentence falls inside the parentheses.

For example:

> Typically, suppliers specify air to cloth ratios of 6:1 or higher. (However, ratios of 4:1 should be used for applications involving silica or feldspathic minerals.)

If the parentheses indicate a citation at the end of a sentence, then the sentence's end punctuation comes after the parentheses are closed:

> In a study comparing three different building types, respirable dust concentrations were significantly lower in the open-structure building (Hugh et al., 2005).

Finally, if the parentheses appear in the midst of a sentence (as in

this example), then any necessary punctuation (such as the comma that appeared just a few words ago) is delayed until the parentheses are closed.

You can also use parentheses to provide acronyms (or full names for acronyms). For example, "We use the MLA (Modern Language Association) style guide here" or "The Modern Language Association (MLA) style guide is my favorite to use."

Remember, parentheses always appear in pairs. If you open a parenthesis, you need another to close it! (11) (12)

Ellipses

An ellipsis (plural *ellipses*) is a series of three periods.

As with most punctuation marks, there is some contention about its usage. The main point of contention is whether or not there should be a space between the periods (. . .) or not (...). MLA, APA, and *Chicago* , the three most common style guides for students, support having spaces between the periods. Others you may encounter, such as those guides used in journalism, may not. (13)

Quotes and Ellipses

You will primarily see ellipses used in quotes. They indicate a missing portion in a quote. Look at the following quote for an example:

> " *Camarasaurus* , with its more mechanically efficient skull, was capable of generating much stronger bite forces than *Diplodocus* . This suggests that *Camarasaurus*was capable of chomping through tougher plant material than *Diplodocus* , and was perhaps even capable of a greater degree of oral processing before digestion. This actually ties

> in nicely with previous hypotheses of different diets for each, which were based on apparent feeding heights and inferences made from wear marks on their fossilized teeth."
>
> " *Diplodocus* seems to have been well-adapted, despite its weaker skull, to a form of feeding known as branch stripping, where leaves are plucked from branches as the teeth are dragged along them. The increased flexibility of the neck of *Diplodocus* compared to other sauropods seems to support this too."

It's a lengthy quote, and it may contains more information than you want to include. Here's how to cut it down:

> " *Camarasaurus* , with its more mechanically efficient skull, was capable of generating much stronger bite forces than *Diplodocus* . This suggests that *Camarasaurus*was capable of chomping through tougher plant material than *Diplodocus* . . . . This actually ties in nicely with previous hypotheses of different diets for each, which were based on apparent feeding heights and inferences made from wear marks on their fossilized teeth."
>
> " *Diplodocus* seems to have been well-adapted . . . to a form of feeding known as branch stripping, where leaves are plucked from branches as the teeth are dragged along them."

In the block quote above, you can see that the first ellipsis appears to have four dots. ("This suggests that *Camarasaurus* was capable of chomping through tougher plant material than *Diplodocus* . . .") However, this is just a period followed by an ellipsis. This is because ellipses **do not** remove punctuation marks when the original punctuation still is in use; they are instead used in conjunction with original punctuation. This is true for all punctuation marks, including periods, commas, semi-colons, question marks, and exclamation points.

> By looking at two sympatric species (those that lived together) from the fossil graveyards of the Late Jurassic of North America . . . , [David Button] tried to work out what the major dietary differences were between sauropod dinosaurs, based on their anatomy.

One of the best ways to check yourself is to take out the ellipsis. If the sentence or paragraph is still correctly punctuated, you've used the ellipsis correctly. (Just remember to put it back in!) [14]

Attributions

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[13] Ellipses. **Provided by:** Lumen Learning. **License:** CC BY: Attribution 4.0

[14] Modification of They might be giants, but how could they live

with each other?. **Authored by:** Jon Tennant. **Provided by:** European Geosciences Union. **Located at**http://blogs.egu.eu/network/palaeoblog/2015/03/05/they-might-be-giants-but-how-could-they-live-with-each-other . **Project:** Green Tea and Velociraptors. **License:** CC BY-NC-SA: Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0

Writing Assignment: Writing a Narrative Essay

Your assignment for this module is to write a narrative essay. You may base this story on an experience you have had or create a completely fictional story; regardless, make sure your narrative centers on a compelling conflict that propels the action forward. Use description to effectively flesh out the characters that appear in the story and to make the settings in which it takes place come alive. Use chronological order to present your experience in a logical manner; you may also use flashbacks (or perhaps even flash forwards) to jump around in time, but make sure the reader can easily follow the action of the story. Use transitions to effectively tie events together and connect your ideas. Your final paper should be 2-4 typed, double spaced pages (approximately 500 to 1000 words). **Download the attached Writing Assignment: Writing a Narrative**

- Read the assignment carefully
- Complete the following steps:
    - Step 1: Pre-Writing (Questioning & Freewriting)
    - Step 2: Focusing, Outlining, and Drafting (You may submit your outline via the "Narrative Outline" discussion for feedback from your instructor).
    - Step 3: Revising, Editing, and Proofreading
    - Step 4: Evaluation

This assignment is worth 100 points. [1]

Discussion Board

Once you have figured out your outline, you are encouraged to post it in the Module 2 "Narrative Outline" discussion so that your instructor can give you some feedback before you begin drafting. You can either attach it to a thread as a Word file or just type it into the thread itself. After you've finished outlining and hopefully received some feedback, you are ready to draft the actual paper.

This posting is **optional** ; it does not count toward any grade points. [1]

Module 2 Quiz

Open Quiz

10. Module 2 Writing Assignment: Writing a Narrative

Your assignment for this module is to write a narrative essay. In other words, you are tasked with telling a compelling story. You may base this story on an experience you have had or create a completely fictional story; regardless, make sure your narrative centers on a compelling conflict that propels the action forward. Use description to effectively flesh out the characters that appear in the story and to make the settings in which it takes place come alive. Use chronological order to present your experience in a logical manner; you may also use flashbacks (or perhaps even flash forwards) to jump around in time, but make sure the reader can easily follow the action of the story. Transitions such as first, next, after that, later, before, during, meanwhile, upon, soon, now, finally, while, as soon as, and when can effectively tie events together and connect your ideas. Your final paper should be 2- 4 typed, double spaced pages (approximately 500 to 1000 words).

Step 1: Pre-Writing (Questioning and Freewriting)

As we discussed in the module, the most natural kind of prewriting for storytelling is asking the classic "reporter's questions:"who, what, when, where, why, and how.

- Who is the main character in the story?
- What is the story's conflict?
- When does the story take place?
- Where does the action happen?
- Why are you telling the story (what is its main purpose)?
- How does the story end?The module also mentions freewriting as a prewriting option; this is the process of writing freely

without worrying about grammar, spelling, and sentence structure. When you are trying to write a narrative and are looking for ideas, you might imagine a scenario or think about an important moment in your own life and then just write whatever comes to mind for about ten minutes. Then you should step away from your writing for a break to clear and refresh your mind. When returning, read what you wrote and identify the possibilities for the paper topic.

Step 2: Focusing, Outlining, and Drafting

In order to make all the moments fit together well, you need to create a basic outline before you start drafting that sets up the order of events in your story. As we discussed in the module itself, a narrative is usually organized using chronological

order and proceeds from the beginning of the story, the earliest important event, to its end, the final moment of the tale. As you organize your story's moments, remember that a good story starts as close to the climactic moment of the conflict as possible; if you start too far back in time, you will lose your focus by including a lot of events that don't have any connection to the conflict at the heart of your tale. In essence, you will be wasting valuable space with events that don't matter.

There are no absolute rules for putting a narrative together since you might use flashbacks and flash forwards along the way. However, keep these basic points from the module in mind as you go:

- In a narrative, one event follows the next.
- An effective narrative is centered on a conflict and builds up to a climax, themoment when the conflict reaches its most intense point and is somehow

  resolved.
- An interesting narrative starts with a hook, a moment that inspires thereader to keep reading. This means you want to

start with a great description

or an exciting incident, all of which is tied to the first event of the story.

- After the climax of the story, there is usually some sort of resolution or finalevent that ties everything together and may help emphasize the story's purpose.

Here's a very basic outline to get you started; the idea is to write out a quick summation of the different sections on the lines provided. Remember that this outline is just a suggestion, for you can include as many events as you want as long as you stay within the assignment's length requirements:

I. Event #1 (use description to make it lively and to hook the reader):_____

II. Event #2 (rising action):_____

III. Event #3 (rising action):_____

IV. Climactic Event (conflict explodes):_____ V. Final Event (story resolves):_____

Once you've figured out your outline, you are encouraged to post it in the Module 2 "Narrative Outline" discussion board in the Discussions area of Blackboard so that your instructor can give you some feedback before you begin drafting. You can either attach it to a thread as a Word file or just type it into the thread itself.

After you've finished outlining and hopefully gotten some feedback, you are ready to draft the actual paper.

Step 3: Revising, Editing, and Proofreading

Once your draft is finished, step away from it for at least a few hours so you can approach it with fresh eyes. It is also a very good idea to email it to a friend or fellow classmate or otherwise present it to a tutor or trusted family member to get feedback. Remember, writing doesn't happen in a vacuum; it is meant to be read by an audience, and a writer can't anticipate all of the potential issues an outside reader might have with an essay's structure or language.

Whatever the case, after getting some feedback from others, read your essay over and consider what you might alter to make it clearer or more exciting.

Consider the following questions:

- Does the essay have a central conflict that is resolved by the end?
- Does it have enough description in it so that main characters and importantplaces come to life in the reader's mind?
- Are there any awkward sentences or spelling errors that need correction?
- Are the sentences complete?
- Are there any run-on sentences or comma splices?
- Does the essay follow the formatting requirements?Step 4: Evaluation

  After completing these steps, submit the essay to the instructor, who will evaluate it according to the grading criteria. (1)

11. Outcome: Punctuation

Critique the use of common punctuation marks.

Now that we've learned about the different types of words, it's time to learn punctuation. These little marks can often be the cause of a lot of heartaches and headaches. Errors in punctuation can often have unintended meanings. For example consider the difference the comma makes in these two sentences:

- Let's eat, Grandpa.
- Let's eat Grandpa.

However, punctuation doesn't exist simply to cause problems; in fact, it was created to help communication. These marks were invented to guide readers through passages—to let them know how and where words relate to each other. When you learn the rules of punctuation, you equip yourself with an extensive toolset so you can better craft language to communicate the exact message you want.

As we mentioned at the beginning of this module, different style guides have slightly different rules for grammar. This is especially true when it comes to punctuation. This outcome will cover the MLA rules for punctuation, but we'll also make note of rules from other styles when they're significantly different.

What You Will Learn to Do

- Critique the use of end punctuation: periods, question marks, exclamation marks
- Critique the use of commas
- Critique the use of semicolons and colons
- Critique the use of hyphens and dashes
- Critique the use of apostrophes and quotation marks
- Critique the use of brackets, parentheses, and ellipses

12. End Punctuation

There are three punctuation marks that come at the end of a sentence: the period (.), the question mark (?), and the exclamation point (!). A sentence is always followed by a single space, no matter what the concluding punctuation is.

Periods

Periods indicate a neutral sentence, and as such are by far the most common ending punctuation mark. They've been at the end of every sentence on this page so far. They occur at the end of statements.

Question Marks

A question mark comes at the end of a question (How was class today?). A rhetorical question is asked to make a point, and does not expect an answer. Some questions are used principally as polite requests (Would you pass the salt?).

All of these questions can be categorized as direct questions, and all of these questions require a question mark at their ends.

Indirect Questions

Indirect questions do not have question marks at their ends. They can be used in many of the same ways as declarative ones, but they often emphasize knowledge or lack of knowledge:

- I can't guess **how Tamika managed it**.
- I wonder **whether I looked that bad**.
- Cecil asked **where the reports were**.

Notice how different word order is used in direct and indirect questions: in direct questions the verb usually comes before the subject, while indirect questions the verb appears second.

Exclamation Points

The exclamation point is a punctuation mark usually used after an interjection or exclamation to indicate strong feelings or high volume, and often marks the end of a sentence. You've likely seen this overused on the internet.

While this kind of statement is excessive, there are appropriate ways to use exclamation points. A sentence ending in an exclamation mark may be an exclamation (such as "Wow!" or "Boo!"), or an imperative ("Stop!"), or may indicate astonishment: "They were the footprints of a gigantic duck!"

The exclamation mark is sometimes used in conjunction with the question mark. This can be in protest or astonishment ("Out of all places, the water-hole?!").

Informally, exclamation marks may be repeated for additional emphasis ("That's great!!!"), but this practice is generally considered only acceptable in casual or informal writing, such as text messages or online communication with friends and family.

Practice

Are ending punctuation marks used appropriately in these sentences? Explain why or why not. The sentences have been numbered to aid in your comments:

> (1) One famous eighteenth-century Thoroughbred racehorse was named Potoooooooo, or Pot-8-Os! (2) He was a chestnut colt bred by Willoughby Bertie, 4th Earl of Abingdon, in 1773, and he was known for his defeat of some of the greatest racehorses of the time. (3) With a well-to-do background like this, where do you suppose his strange name came from.
>
> (4) The horse once has a stable lad, who facetiously misspelled *Potatoes*. (5) Apparently, the owner thought the misspelling was funny enough to adopt it as the horse's real name!

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="621098"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="621098"]The exclamation point at then end of sentence 1 isn't needed. While the name is strange, we haven't yet discussed the horse enough to warrant an exclamation point.

Sentence 3 should end with a question mark: it's a direct question.

Sentence 5 may or may not need an exclamation point. It depends on two different things: the context of the writing and the amount of emphasis you want to put on the sentence. How much emphasis you want is up to you: do you think the fact is amusing enough to have an

exclamation point? The context you're writing in will be a more objective criterion to help you make your decision. In a formal academic setting, such as an English paper, the exclamation point would likely feel out of place. However, if you were writing on your personal semi-professional blog, the exclamation point would probably fit in just fine.

[/hidden-answer]

Punctuation Clusters

Occasionally, you'll come across an instance that seems to require multiple punctuation marks right next to each other. Sometimes you need to keep all the marks, but other times, you should leave some out.

You should never use more than one ending punctuation mark in a row (period, question mark exclamation point). When quoting a question, you would end with a question mark, not a question mark and a period. If an abbreviation, like *etc.*, ends a sentence, you should only use one period.

- Carlos leaned forward and asked, "Did you get the answer to number six?"
- I think we'll have enough food. Mary bought the whole store: chips, soda, candy, cereal, etc.

However, you can place a comma immediately after a period, as you can see above with *etc.* This rule also applies to the abbreviations *e.g.* and *i.e.*

Note: For those who are curious, *e.g.* stands for *exempli gratia*, which means "for example," and *i.e.* stands for *id est*, which means "that is."

Periods and parentheses can also appear right next to each other. Sometimes the period comes after the closing parenthesis (as you can see earlier in this section), but sometimes it appears inside the parentheses. (This is an example of a sentence where the period falls within the parentheses.) We'll learn more about this in Text: Brackets, Parentheses, and Ellipses.

Practice

Identify punctuation errors in the following sentences. Type the corrected sentences in the text frame below:

1. Dana had a lot of skills: reading, writing, note-taking, listening, etc..
2. My sister looked over and asked, "Why do you have so many grapes in the shopping cart?."
3. Lucinda was the reigning Spring Queen (i.e. she had won the student vote at the last spring dance).

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="26521"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="26521"]

1. Dana had a lot of skills: reading, writing, note-taking, listening, etc.

    - There should only be one period at the end of a sentence.

2. My sister looked over and asked, “Why do you have so many grapes in the shopping cart?”

    - Since a question mark can mark the end of a sentence, there is no need for a period here.
    - If you wanted to change this sentence to an indirect question, you could re-write it like this: My sister looked over and asked why I had so many grapes in the shopping cart.

3. Lucinda was the reigning Spring Queen (i.e., she had won the student vote at the last spring dance).

    - There should be a comma following the second period of the abbreviation *i.e.*

[/hidden-answer]

13. Commas

Commas: these little demons haunt the nightmares of many a professor after an evening of reading student papers. It seems nearly impossible to remember and apply the seventeen or so comma rules that seem to given out as the standard.

Perhaps the best and most instructive way for us to approach the comma is to remember its fundamental function: *it is a separator*. Once you know this, the next step is to determine what sorts of things generally require separation. This includes most transition words, descriptive words or phrases, adjacent items, and complete ideas (complete ideas contain both a subject and a verb). Commas are also used to separate similar items in lists.

Transition Words

Transition words add new viewpoints to your material; commas before and after transition words help to separate them from the sentence ideas they are describing. Transition words tend to appear at the beginning or in the middle of a sentence:

- *Therefore*, the natural gas industry can only be understood fully through an analysis of these recent political changes.
- The lead prosecutor was prepared, *however*, for a situation like this.

Note: As was mentioned, these words require commas at the beginning or middle of a sentence. When they appear between two complete ideas, however, a period or semicolon is required beforehand:

- Clint had been planning the trip with his kids for three months; *however*, when work called he couldn't say no.
- Sam was retired. *Nevertheless*, he wanted to help out.

As you can see from these examples, comma is *always* required after transition words.

Descriptive Phrases

Descriptive phrases often need to be separated from the things that they describe. Descriptive phrases tend to come at the very beginning of a sentence, right after the subject of a sentence, or at the very end of a sentence:

- **Near the end of the eighteenth century**, James Hutton introduced a point of view that radically changed scientists' thinking about geologic processes.
- James Lovelock, **who first measured CFCs globally**, said in 1973

that CFCs constituted no conceivable hazard.
- All of the major industrialized nations approved, **making the possibility a reality**.

In each example, the phrase separated by the comma could be deleted from the sentence without destroying the sentence's basic meaning. If the information is necessary to the primary sentence meaning, it should **not** be set off by commas. Let's look at a quick example of this:

- Jefferson's son, Miles, just started college.
- Jefferson's son Miles just started college

You would write the first sentence if Jefferson only has one son and his name is Miles. If Jefferson only has one son, then *Miles* is not needed information and should be set off with commas.

You would write the second sentence if Jefferson has multiple sons, and it is his son Miles who just got into college. In the second sentence, *Miles* is necessary information, because until his name is stated, you can't be sure which of Jefferson's sons the sentence is talking about.

This test can be very helpful when you're deciding whether or not to include commas in your writing.

Adjacent Items

Adjacent items are separated so that the reader can consider each item individually.

The river caught fire on July 4, 1968, in Cleveland, Ohio.

The dates (July 4, 1968) and places (Cleveland, Ohio) are juxtaposed, and commas are needed because the juxtaposed items are clearly different from each other. This applies to countries as well as states: "Paris, France, is beautiful this time of year."

Practice

The commas have been removed from the following sentences. Re-type them, adding the correct commas back in.

1. Sergi Sousa the top-ranked shoe designer in Rhode Island is going to be at the party tonight.
2. Sergi only wears shoes that he created himself.
3. Nevertheless he is incredibly courteous and polite to everyone he meets.
4. He was born in Barcelona Spain on April 19 1987.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="20588"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="20588"]

1. Sergi Sousa, the top-ranked shoe designer in Rhode Island, is going to be at the party tonight.
    - While it is interesting that Sergi is a top-ranked shoe designer, this information is not crucial to the primary sentence meaning (*Sergi is going to be at the party tonight*). Thus, this information should be set off with commas.
2. The sentence is correct as it is: "Sergi only wears shoes that he created himself."
    - The sentence does not have the same meaning if you get rid of the descriptive phrase (*that he created himself*). Thus, no commas are needed.

3. Nevertheless, he is incredibly courteous and polite to everyone he meets.
    - *Nevertheless* is a transition word, so a comma is required after it.
4. He was born in Barcelona, Spain, on April 19, 1987.
    - There should be commas around *Spain*, and before 1987. These are adjacent items, and they should be set off with commas.

[/hidden-answer]

Coordinating Conjunctions: FANBOYS

We learned about coordinating conjunctions earlier in the course. These are words that join two words or phrases of equal importance. The mnemonic FANBOYS helps us remember the seven most common: *for*, *and*, *nor*, *but*, *or*, *yet*, and *so*.

When these conjunctions join two words or phrases, no comma is necessary (for more than two, take a look at "Commas in Lists" just below). However, hen these conjunctions are used to join two complete ideas, however, a comma is required:

- Paula and Lucca had a great time on their date.
- Danny studied the lifespan of rhinoceroses in their native Kenya and the lifespan of rhinoceroses in captivity.
- Minh turned off the lights but left the door unlocked.
- We could write this as two separate sentences, but we've chosen to join them together here.

Commas in Lists

Perhaps one of the most hotly contested comma rules is the case of the **serial comma**. MLA style (as well as APA and *Chicago*) requires the use of the serial comma—AP style highly recommends leaving it out. But what is the serial comma?

The serial comma is the comma before the conjunction (*and*, *or*, and *nor*) in a series involving a parallel list of three or more things. For example, "I am industrious, resourceful**, *and*** loyal." The serial comma can provide clarity in certain situations. For example, if the *and* is part of a series of three or more phrases (groups of words) as opposed to single words:

> Medical histories taken about each subject included smoking history, frequency of exercise, current height and weight, and recent weight gain.

The serial comma can also prevent the end of a series from appearing to be a parenthetical:

> I'd like to thank my sisters, Beyoncé and Rhianna.

Without the serial comma, it may appear that the speaker is thanking his or her two sisters, who are named Beyoncé and Rhianna (which could be possible, but isn't true in this case). By adding the serial comma, it becomes clear that the speaker is thanking his or her sisters, as well as the two famous singers: "I'd like to thank my sisters, Beyoncé, and Rhianna."

By always using a comma before the *and* in any series of three or more, you honor the distinctions between each of the separated items, and you avoid any potential reader confusion.

> **Note:** Some professors and many academic journals prefer to leave out the serial comma (for the journals, it is literally cheaper to print fewer commas). Because of

this, the serial comma is not recommend in AP style.

Practice

The commas have been removed from the following sentences. Re-type them, adding the correct commas back in.

1. Victor and Ava were housesitting for Ava's uncle while he was on vacation.
2. Ava had purchased food at a grocery store and Victor decided to cook Ava one of her favorite meals.
3. Ava's favorite meals are cauliflower soup steak and eggs lasagna and chicken parmigiana.
4. Victor thought about the work needed for each meal. Unfortunately his skills are mostly limited to eating buying or serving food.
5. Victor and Ava decided to choose a restaurant and go out to eat.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area] [reveal-answer q="859484"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer] [hidden-answer a="859484"]

1. The sentence is correct as it stands: "Victor and Ava were housesitting for Ava's uncle while he was on vacation."
2. Ava had purchased food at a grocery store, and Victor decided to cook Ava one of her favorite meals.

    - There are two complete ideas in this sentence. They need to be separated by a comma and a coordinating conjunction.

3. Ava's favorite meals are cauliflower soup, steak and eggs, lasagna, and chicken parmigiana.

    - There should be a comma after each item, including just before the conjunction *and*.
    - *Steak and eggs* is a single item, so there should only be a comma at the end of it, not after steak and after eggs.

4. Victor thought about the work needed for each meal. Unfortunately, his skills are mostly limited to eating, buying, or serving food.

    - *Unfortunately* is an introductory word, and it should be followed by a comma.
    - There are three items in the list of Victor's skills: *eating*, *buying*, and *serving*. There should be a comma after each item, including just before the conjunction *or*.

5. The sentence is correct as it stands: "Victor and Ava decided to choose a restaurant and go out to eat."

[/hidden-answer]

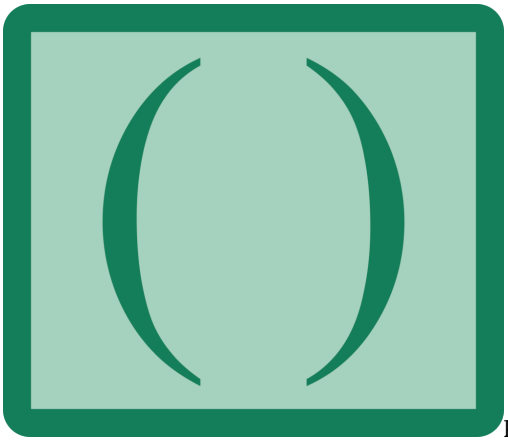
Just as it is common for someone to have to look up the same tricky word dozens of times before committing its proper spelling to memory, you may need to reference comma rules multiple times before they feel natural to use. As with spelling, commas (or the absence of commas) must be repeatedly challenged in your writing.

As you perfect your comma usage, you will learn to recognize and

reevaluate your sentence patterns, and the rewards are numerous. There is no foolproof or easy way to exorcise all of your comma demons, but a great place to start is reminding yourself of the comma's basic function as a separator and justifying the separation of elements. In the end, you simply must make a habit of reading, writing, and revising with comma correctness in mind.

14. Brackets, Parentheses, and Ellipses

Parentheses



Parentheses are most often used to identify material that acts as an aside (such as this brief comment) or to add incidental information.

Other punctuation marks used alongside parentheses need to take into account their context. If the parentheses enclose a full sentence beginning with a capital letter, then the end punctuation for the sentence falls *inside* the parentheses. For example:

> Typically, suppliers specify air to cloth ratios of 6:1 or higher. (However, ratios of 4:1 should be used for applications involving silica or feldspathic minerals.)

If the parentheses indicate a citation at the end of a sentence, then the sentence's end punctuation comes after the parentheses are closed:

> In a study comparing three different building types,

respirable dust concentrations were significantly lower in the open-structure building (Hugh et al., 2005).

Finally, if the parentheses appear in the midst of a sentence (as in this example), then any necessary punctuation (such as the comma that appeared just a few words ago) is delayed until the parentheses are closed.

You can also use parentheses to provide acronyms (or full names for acronyms). For example, "We use the MLA (Modern Language Association) style guide here" or "The Modern Language Association (MLA) style guide is my favorite to use."

Remember, parentheses always appear in pairs. If you open a parenthesis, you need another to close it!

Note: In technical writing, there are additional rules for using parentheses, which can be more nuanced. While we won't discuss those rules here, it's important to bear their existence in mind, especially if you're considering going into a more technical field.

Practice

Have the parentheses been used correctly in the following sentences? Correct any errors you find.

1. (Escobar et al., 2014) wrote about this phenomenon in their most recent paper.
2. NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) just announced three new initiatives.
3. Michael lost the wrestling competition. (He also

lost his temper).

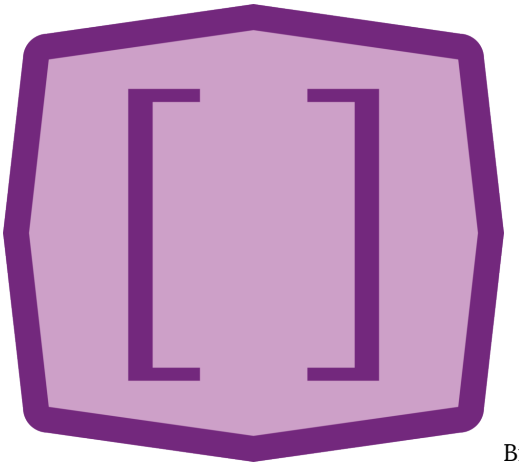
4. Helena took the chocolate bars (her favorites) and gave Davi the sour candies.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="456802"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="456802"]

1. No. Even parentheses are only used to cite information at the end of a sentence. A corrected version of the sentence would look something like these:
    - Escobar et al. wrote about this phenomenon in their most recent paper (2014).
    - A recent paper discussed this phenomenon (Escobar et al., 2014).
2. Yes. Parentheses can be used to enclose the full name of an acronym.
3. No. The second sentence is entirely in parentheses, so the period should be inside as well.
    - Michael lost the wrestling competition. (He also lost his temper.)
4. Yes. The phrase *her favorites* is a brief aside that can be enclosed by parentheses.

[/hidden-answer]

Brackets



Brackets are a fairly uncommon punctuation mark. Their main use is in quotations: they can be used to clarify quotes. For example, say you want to quote the following passage:

> "I finally got to meet Trent today. I had a really great time with him. He was a lot taller than expected, though."

However, you only want to relay the fact that Trent was taller than the speaker expected him to be. In order to do this, you would write the following: "[Trent] was a lot taller than expected."

The brackets let the reader know that while the word *Trent* wasn't in the original quote, his name was implied there. When using brackets, you need to be careful not to change the original meaning of the quote.

Another use of brackets is when there is a spelling or informational error in the original quote. For example, "Gabriel sat down on the river bank to fed [*sic*] the ducks." (The term *sic* means that the typo was in the original source of this quote.)

Practice

Read the following passages. Imagine you want to quote the numbered sentences. Each sentence would appear separately. Use brackets to indicate the best way to do so.

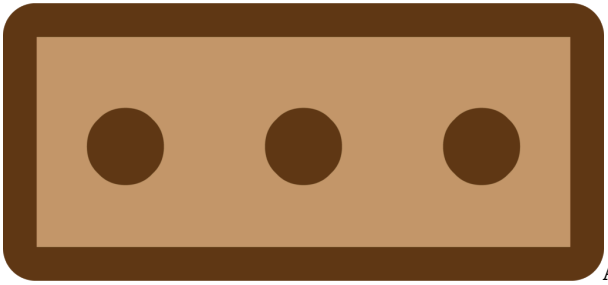
> (1) Mont Vesuvius is a stratovolcano in the Gulf of Naples, Italy, about 5.6 mi east of Naples and a short distance from the shore. It is one of several volcanoes which form the Campanian volcanic arc. (2) It consists of a large cone partially encircled by the steep rim of a summit caldera caused by the collapse of an earlier and originally much higher structure.
>
> (3) Mount Vesuvius is best known for its eruption in CE 79 that led to the burying and destruction of the Roman cities of Pompeii, Herculaneum, and several other settlements.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="510117"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="510117"]

1. Mont Vesuvius [*sic*] is a stratovolcano in the Gulf of Naples, Italy, about 5.6 mi east of Naples and a short distance from the shore.
2. [Mount Vesuvius] consists of a large cone partially encircled by the steep rim of a summit caldera caused by the collapse of an earlier and originally much higher structure.
3. This quote would not need any brackets.

[/hidden-answer]

Ellipses



An ellipsis (plural *ellipses*) is a series of three periods, as you can see in the icon to the right.

As with most punctuation marks, there is some contention about its usage. The main point of contention is whether or not there should be a space between the periods (. . .) or not (...). MLA, APA, and *Chicago*, the most common style guides for students, support having spaces between the periods. Others you may encounter, such as in journalism, may not.

Quotes

Like the brackets we just learned about, you will primarily see ellipses used in quotes. They indicate a missing portion in a quote. Look at the following quote for an example:

> *Camarasaurus*, with its more mechanically efficient skull, was capable of generating much stronger bite forces than *Diplodocus*. This suggests that *Camarasaurus* was capable of chomping through tougher plant material than *Diplodocus*, and was perhaps even capable of a greater degree of oral processing before digestion. This actually ties in nicely with previous hypotheses of different diets for each, which were based on apparent feeding heights and

> inferences made from wear marks on their fossilized teeth.
>
> *Diplodocus* seems to have been well-adapted, despite its weaker skull, to a form of feeding known as branch stripping, where leaves are plucked from branches as the teeth are dragged along them. The increased flexibility of the neck of *Diplodocus* compared to other sauropods seems to support this too.

It's a lengthy quote, and it contains more information than you want to include. Here's how to cut it down:

> *Camarasaurus*, with its more mechanically efficient skull, was capable of generating much stronger bite forces than *Diplodocus*. This suggests that *Camarasaurus* was capable of chomping through tougher plant material than *Diplodocus*. . . . This actually ties in nicely with previous hypotheses of different diets for each, which were based on apparent feeding heights and inferences made from wear marks on their fossilized teeth.
>
> *Diplodocus* seems to have been well-adapted . . . to a form of feeding known as branch stripping, where leaves are plucked from branches as the teeth are dragged along them.

In the block quote above, you can see that the first ellipsis appears to have four dots. ("They are instantly recognized by their long, sweeping necks and whiplashed tails. . . .") However, this is just a period followed by an ellipsis. This is because ellipses **do not** remove punctuation marks when the original punctuation still is in use; they are instead used in conjunction with original punctuation. This is true for all punctuation marks, including periods, commas, semicolons, question marks, and exclamation points.

> By looking at two sympatric species (those that lived together) from the fossil graveyards of the Late Jurassic of North America . . . , [David Button] tried to work out what

> the major dietary differences were between sauropod dinosaurs, based on their anatomy.

One of the best ways to check yourself is to take out the ellipsis. If the sentence or paragraph is still correctly punctuated, you've used the ellipsis correctly. (Just remember to put it back in!)

Practice

Quote the following passage, using ellipses to remove the bolded portions and using brackets for clarity where necessary.

> Sauropod dinosaurs are the biggest animals to have ever walked on land. They are instantly recognized by their long, sweeping necks and whiplashed tails, **and nearly always portrayed moving in herds, being stalked by hungry predators**. In recent years, **a huge amount of taxonomic effort from scientists has vastly increased the number of known species of sauropod. What we now know is** that in many areas we had two or more species co-existing alongside each other. A question that arises from this, is how did we have animals that seem so similar, and with such high energy and dietary requirements, living alongside one another? Was there some sort of spinach-like super plant that gave them all Popeye-like physical boosts, or something more subtle?

[practice-area rows="6"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="3662"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]

[hidden-answer a="3662"]The first ellipsis should follow a period, and the second should follow a comma. There are a couple of phrases that could be used in brackets, but we've chosen the phrase "research has shown."

> Sauropod dinosaurs are the biggest animals to have ever walked on land. They are instantly recognized by their long, sweeping necks and whiplashed tails. . . . In recent years, . . . [research has shown] that in many areas we had two or more species co-existing alongside each other. A question that arises from this, is how did we have animals that seem so similar, and with such high energy and dietary requirements, living alongside one another?

[/hidden-answer]

The ellipsis can also indicate . . . a pause. This use is typically informal, and is only be used in casual correspondence (e.g., emails to friends, posts on social media, texting) or in literature. Because this use occurs in literature, you may find yourself quoting a passage that already has an ellipsis in it. For example, look at this passage spoken by Lady Bracknell, in *The Importance of Being Ernest*.

> Well, I must say, Algernon, that I think it is high time that Mr. Bunbury made up his mind whether he was going to live or to die. This shilly-shallying with the question is absurd. Nor do I in any way approve of the modern sympathy with invalids. I consider it morbid. Illness of any kind is hardly a thing to be encouraged in others. Health is the primary duty of life. I am always telling that to your poor uncle, but he never seems to take much notice . . . as far as any improvement in his ailment goes. I should be much obliged if you would ask Mr. Bunbury, from me, to be kind enough

> not to have a relapse on Saturday, for I rely on you to arrange my music for me. It is my last reception, and one wants something that will encourage conversation, particularly at the end of the season when every one has practically said whatever they had to say, which, in most cases, was probably not much.

If you were to quote the passage, it may appear that something has been removed from the quote. So how can we indicate that this is not the case? If you think back to the bracket rules we just discussed, you may remember that [*sic*] can be used to show that an error was in the original. In a similar practice, we can enclose the ellipsis in brackets to show it appeared in the original work:

> Well, I must say, Algernon, that I think it is high time that Mr. Bunbury made up his mind whether he was going to live or to die. This shilly-shallying with the question is absurd. Nor do I in any way approve of the modern sympathy with invalids. I consider it morbid. Illness of any kind is hardly a thing to be encouraged in others. Health is the primary duty of life. I am always telling that to your poor uncle, but he never seems to take much notice [. . .] as far as any improvement in his ailment goes. I should be much obliged if you would ask Mr. Bunbury, from me, to be kind enough not to have a relapse on Saturday, for I rely on you to arrange my music for me. It is my last reception, and one wants something that will encourage conversation, particularly at the end of the season when every one has practically said whatever they had to say, which, in most cases, was probably not much.

PART IV

MODULE 3: THE WAYS WE EXPLAIN, THE EXAMPLES WE CHOOSE

15. Module 3: The Ways We Explain, The Examples We Choose

Module Introduction

This module focuses on the examples we use to explain our positions. In our previous modules, you practiced both using specific sensory details to convey an impression and selecting specific events to tell a story. In both cases you were using examples to illustrate a point and guide your reader to a conclusion. As we further explore academic writing, you will find that harnessing the power of such examples is the key to persuading audiences of the legitimacy of your perspective. Examples may be descriptions, narrations of short events, or facts from observation or research.

As we proceed, you will learn about writing essays that use examples to support a thesis, the statement that clearly expresses your perspective on a topic. You will see how writing clear, focused examples to support general statements helps interest or persuade readers. You will also evaluate the examples included in both professional and student writing. Finally, you will use these skills to write an example essay. [1]

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the student will be able to:

- Identify the characteristics of effective writing using examples

- Identify general and specific information and explain how these levels interrelate
- Identify emphatic order as an effective organization strategy for example writing
- Describe how authors use examples to make a point, given a model essay
- Compose an example essay using the steps of the writing process [1]

Readings

- Online Learning Units

Lecture Content

ENC1101 Learning Unit 3

The Basics of Writing with Examples

Just as we all use narratives to tell stories about who we are and what we are doing, we routinely use examples in conversation to make ideas clear to others. In both your academic and professional life you will be expected to provide such examples in writing to clarify and support your respective points of view. As we saw in the last module, given the complexity of language and its connection to the world (by its nature our words are never an exact replication of the universe we inhabit), every time we communicate we are establishing a *perspective* that we are asking others to believe. In

writing, examples illustrate general observations and thesis statements in a more interesting, persuasive way. Good writers use many examples that relate to a reader's experiences, hoping to convince them that the points they are making are believable.

- Examples can be used throughout the essay: in the *introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion* . They are usually most prominently discussed in the body paragraphs which make up the majority of a paper.
- Examples are used in all essays to help support general statements
- Examples describe or illustrate major points
- Examples may be facts, descriptions, or narratives (events)
- Examples should be *specific and relevant* to the general statement that they illustrate [1]

Building a Better Wordhouse: General and Specific Information

In order to truly understand how examples can help persuade an audience to believe a persuasive point, it is necessary to understand the difference between *general and specific*information. Indeed, an example essay can be thought of as a collection of these kinds of information: general claims are the large points a writer makes, while specific examples and details explain those points.

The largest general statement a writer will make is his or her *thesis statement* , the main idea that a whole paper is trying to get across. This is the statement that expresses the*persuasive perspective* that ties everything together. We can liken a thesis to the foundation of a house: everything rests on it and is connected to it in some way. Because it is making a general claim about something, such as "The Funjammer Playcore is the best video game console in its price range" or "Tennessee is a surprisingly fun and

affordable place for a winter vacation," it is not itself an example but is the statement to which all the other information in a paper must relate.

The purpose of the more *specific* information that populates the rest of an essay is to shed light on this thesis statement; to go back to our house construction analogy, the examples make up the framing that sits on the thesis's foundation and provides structure. If we want to carry this comparison even further, we could say that the specific details that explain the examples are the interior decorating that makes a house a home. [1]

My Dinner with Allison: Making a Case for your Cousin's Cooking Using General and Specific Information

For example, let's say you want to write a simple piece explaining how well your cousin Allison cooks. Your thesis, then, could be something like, "My cousin Allison is a masterful cook." One way to explain that someone is a great cook is by including an example to illustrate this general statement, so you could offer the following: "One reason Allison is a great cook is because she always adds something new to old recipes."

Which of the three following more *specific details* supports the general statement?

- Allison is a great caterer.
- Allison's macaroni and cheese casserole is one of her specialties.
- Allison adds asiago cheese to her macaroni and cheese casserole.

The last statement is the correct answer because it is most relevant to the general example statement. Now you would need to

explain *why* this recipe is such a stunning creative choice and perhaps couple it with some other specific details about Allison's surprising additives to persuade your reader that she is indeed so gifted in the culinary arts!

Let's break down what we've just come up with in simple outline form to get a handle on what it looks like to plan a persuasive example paper.

Example Outline

I. **Thesis Statement:** "My cousin Allison is a masterful cook."

ii. **General Example #1:** "One reason Allison is a great cook is because she always adds something new to old recipes."

a. **Specific Detail:** "Allison adds asiago cheese to her macaroni and cheese casserole."

Thesis Statement

Remember the *thesis statement* (Roman Numeral I on the outline) is the most general statement in the entire paper. In typical academic and professional writing the thesis appears early on in the paper to give the reader a very clear understanding of what the main point of the entire piece is supposed to be, so you see it listed first here. On the outline its importance is also visually suggested by being at the left-most margin; everything else "hangs" off of it, thus suggesting how very important it is and how interconnected everything else in the outline must be.

Topic Sentence

The next line of the outline (Roman Numeral ii) is the first general example statement explaining what makes Allison awesome; this statement is also called a *topic sentence* because it announces the topic that this whole section of the paper is going to discuss. In this case, the general idea that Allison's greatness in the kitchen stems in part from her ability to spice up old recipes is what is under discussion. Note that this general example directly relates to the thesis statement: it is a reason that Allison is a masterful cook. It is thus hanging from the outline, and its secondary position is visually indicated by its indention from the left margin.

Specific Detail

The third position on the outline (lower case letter "a") is indented the furthest over from the left to show just how specific it is ; it hangs from the general example statement and occupies the least horizontal space in order to show its relative size in terms of specificity. This is the specific detail about the casserole that explains the assertion that Allison is skilled at sprucing up old recipes.

Descriptive Details

Now, if you were actually going to turn this basic outline into a paper, one of the things you would need to do is more fully explain your point here. In other words, though the reader can now understand a reason that Allison is a great cook and has access to a *particular detail* about that cooking (the casserole), it's up to you as a writer to flesh out what you mean. In this case, what

you might do is spend a little time *narrating* the time in March when Allison made this dish, focusing on the difference between what you expected to eat and what you actually experienced and *describing* the succulent taste of the dish. This narration and description would thus flesh out your details and make your point truly persuasive. Your outline might then look like this:

I. **Thesis Statement:** "My cousin Allison is a masterful cook."

ii. **General Example #1:** "One reason Allison is a great cook is because she always adds something new to old recipes."

a. **Specific Detail:** "Allison adds asiago cheese to her macaroni and cheese casserole." (add narrative and descriptive details about meal in March)

Note that we've added the further *specific details* in parentheses after our specific detail to remind us to add that information.

In writing with examples, choose to write a paragraph with many short examples to support a topic sentence, or decide to use only one or two examples that are thoroughly explained. For our example about Allison, we could develop an entire paper that builds up examples about her fabulous cooking skills:

Short Examples

I. **Thesis Statement:** "My cousin Allison is a masterful cook."

ii. **General Example #1:** "One reason Allison is a great cook is because she always adds something new to old recipes."

a. **Specific Detail:** "Allison adds asiago cheese to her macaroni and cheese casserole." (add narrative and descriptive details about meal in March)

b. **Specific Detail:** "She also uses whiskey instead

of rum to her holiday fruitcake." (add narrative about the cake she made this year and describe its succulent taste)

iii. **General Example #2:** "Another reason Allison is such a wonderful culinary

a. **Specific Detail:** "Allison can pick up fruits and vegetables and somehow know which is freshest and perfectly aged." (add narrative about time we went shopping for supplies in August)

b. **Specific Detail:** "She is also incredibly well-read about food companies and constantly researches online and by networking to learn what products are best." (Describe the process Allison has for researching a new dish)

If you are just writing a short paper, this already might be enough information to fill out the essay's *body* , which is what we call all of the paragraphs that house the general examples and the specific details that go with them. Basically, everything that comes after the thesis statement, which comes near the end of the *introduction* of the paper (its first part, which we'll discuss in a minute), and before the paper's *conclusion* (the very last section, which we'll come back to, as well), is considered the paper's *body* . This is the longest part of an essay and could be any number of paragraphs. The paper based on the above outline might have two body paragraphs, one for each one of the general examples that are listed, but those general examples might themselves get broken up into separate paragraphs if they start getting long.

You might be wondering in what order you should present the examples you have come up with for an example paper. Perhaps the most effective way to organize your examples is*emphatic* order; this is when you discuss your examples based on their importance, moving from your least important or convincing point to your most important or impactful one. Emphatic order is effective because it

helps you build a case for your main point; just as a lawyer builds up evidence in a jury trial and ends with the most convincing piece so that the jurors have this final point on their minds when they deliberate, a writer using emphatic order leaves his or her readers with the major example that best supports the essay's thesis.

This means that you need to carefully consider the *audience* that you are trying to reach. By what do you think your readers will be most affected? When you are using personal experiences as examples, often the example you have the most to say about, the one that has the most specific details attached to it, is the one that is most emotionally important to you and is the one that will translate as most important to your readers.

Another way to develop an example paper involves using one long example to illustrate the thesis statement; this particular technique is referred to as an *extended example* . For instance, sometimes a writer may use a single, heavily detailed narrative to persuade readers of a point, making sure to focus on those moments of the story that best illustrate his or her perspective. Unlike the narratives we discussed in the last module, though, this kind of narrative/example writing hybrid usually has a more traditional introduction and an overt thesis statement instead of an implied narrative purpose. If you choose to just use one example to illustrate your point, make sure that all of the specific details you present relate specifically back to your thesis statement. If not, you might get off topic, and your paper will lack focus. [(1)]

Beginnings and Endings: What Introductions and Conclusions Need to Do

In the last section we discussed the different levels of information that a writer must manage when organizing an example essay. In order to understand how general and specific information fit together, we took a look at two essential parts of example essays

that will be of the upmost importance moving forward in this course: *thesis statements* and *body paragraphs*. To recap, a thesis statement is *the most general statement* in an entire essay: it states the writer's *main idea* and is the foundation for everything else that is written. On the other hand, an essay's body is where all of the examples that explain the thesis are housed. Another way to say this is that the body paragraphs are where a writer puts the *reasons* he or she has for believing his or her thesis, reasons that must then be explained with specific details to convince an audience to believe, as well.

We briefly touched on two other essential parts of an example essay, as well: the *introduction* and the *conclusion*. Much like the first paragraph of a narrative essay, the introduction for an example essay needs to get the reader's attention and start a conversation with the audience. Because stories are so appealing to readers, many writers will use a short narrative as a hook; the catch is that this story needs to relate specifically to the thesis statement that will eventually appear at the *end of the introduction*. For example, thinking back to the essay we were developing about cousin Allison and her cooking, we might offer the following tale as a hook.

Hook

When I first started college, I had just moved to Birmingham, Alabama and was very lonely; it was the first time I had ever lived alone, and I had trouble making friends. Luckily, my cousin Allison lived there, too, and would often visit me during the week and would cook me dinner (she insisted). Besides being a wonderful friend and conversationalist, Allison also literally brought something else to the table: her superb cooking. I had never been much of a "foodie" before, but that was because I never had truly been exposed to an artist in the kitchen. Allison's incredible dishes lifted my spirits and enraptured my taste buds. I was in awe of her talents, and in short order I learned

that brilliant cooking involves not only a creative flare and passion for trying new things but must also an intense understanding of recipes and their fundamental ingredients. Indeed, my cousin Allison is a masterful cook.

Another primary function that introductions can serve is to provide important background information on a topic. For example, the above paragraph deftly lists the standards by which cooks can be judged: "a creative flare and passion for trying new things" and "an intense understanding of recipes and their fundamental ingredients." These standards set the stage for proving that Allison herself is a masterful cook (as we have seen, the body paragraphs will provide examples of exactly these two qualities as they are exhibited by Allison!)

Remember that you should avoid blurting out your thesis at the very beginning of the introduction, as that will make for an abrupt opening and will blindside your readers with a main point before they are prepared for your perspective. A good introduction serves as both a lead-in to the essay's main idea as well as provides viable information related to the topic itself so that the audience is fully vested in the subject and is eager to proceed.

Shockingly, the conclusion is . . . the final part of the essay. Many students have been taught to end a short writing assignment by summing up everything that they already have explained, but this is a bad idea because your reader just has read all of your examples in your body paragraphs, so if you just repeat this information, your audience will be bored and possibly even insulted that you think so little of their reading comprehension. Instead, your conclusion should tell your audience why the essay you just wrote matters. Just ask yourself these kinds of questions:

- why is my take important?
- what do I want my reader to understand?
- do I want the audience to go and do something now?

Your answers to these questions should be enough to generate a

few compelling sentences that will put a satisfying spin on your essay. Consider this concluding paragraph below.

Paragraph Example

E*ver since Allison's visits in college my mind and palette have broadened significantly when it comes to everyday dining. I now can appreciate not only the artistry behind the meals I eat but the way those meals can serve as dedicated expressions of love and companionship as well as vehicles for nutrition. For many of us, taste is our least developed sense, but I urge you to learn more about cooking, if only to better appreciate those around you who have mastered the art.* [(1)]

Directions: Select each topic below to reveal more information on each topic.

Prewriting Strategy: Mapping

In our previous modules we discussed listing, questioning, and freewriting as possible prewriting strategies for developing ideas. As we now prepare to tackle our example essay, let's consider another such strategy, this time one that works very well for visual learners who like to represent their thoughts graphically. *Mapping* is an excellent visual approach to writing an essay. When mapping, students select a topic and place it in a circle in the middle of a sheet of paper. Then they draw lines radiating out from the center to other circles to represent subcategories. Finally, they select the best ideas from the map to plan the essay. This kind of exercise can help you not only to find a good thesis statement but also to discover the examples that will help you persuade your audience that your thesis is true. [(1)]

Attribution

ENC1101 Learning Unit 3.2

Readings: the Ways We Explain, the Examples We Choose

Introduction

In this module we discussed how to explain our positions with examples. Before you begin writing your own example paper, it will be useful to examine some essays that use examples to make a point. Thus, in the following sections you will find both a professional essay and a student essay that are kinds of *critiques* , judgments based on standards. This is the kind of example essay you will write for this module, so seeing how such an essay works will likely help you imagine how to proceed. [1]

Professional Essay

It's important to remember that professional essays don't always look like the kinds of essays you are asked to produce in college. However, they share many of the same traits, even if they aren't necessarily organized in as straightforward a manner as student

pieces. Moreover, because professional writers are talented communicators, we can learn lessons from their work.

The first essay we are going to examine is a critique of a book. Remember, a critique is basically a review; its purpose is to be critical of a subject and to ultimately persuade the reader of its value. In some cases, critiques warn readers to avoid something entirely. In other cases, critiques urge readers to experience something because of its excellence. In some other cases, especially in professional reviews, critiques point out both the successes and the flaws of something and have an ambivalent message; in other words, they may not definitively rule for or against their subjects but instead seek to provide a better understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, and it is up to each reader to decide whether the "thing" under discussion is worth encountering.

As you read, ask yourself the following *active reading questions* to make sure you are engaging thoughtfully with the essay:

1. Does the essay have a *thesis statement* ? If so, where is it?
2. Does the essay provide a summary of the book it is discussing? If so, where is it?
3. What *points* does the author make about the book to support her main idea?
4. Is the article ambivalent? In other words, does it have mixed emotions about its subject matter? If it is, where does it present those mixed emotions?
5. How does the essay's *conclusion* reinforce its main idea? [1]

Select and read this essay, "Review: *The Fishermen by Chigozie Obioma* " [28]

Reading Reflections: Professional Essay

Now that you've read it over, let's return to the active reading

questions we asked at the beginning in order to get a better sense of how this essay works.

Question 1. Does the essay have a *thesis statement* ? If so, where is it?

Although some professional essays lack an overt thesis and make their case by articulating many excellent examples and implying a main point, this one makes a fairly direct central claim.

Look back at the first two paragraphs:

The first impression of Chigozie Obioma's The Fishermen, shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize, is that of a car spluttering on starting up. The first two chapters are descriptive to the point of fastidiousness, and the characters and incidents, although ordinary, are presented almost with affectation.

This doesn't change. Obioma's language aims to be as elaborate as possible. But as the ingenious plot unfolds, reading does become pleasant, interesting, and eventually engaging. Yet it's difficult to shed that first impression.

The first sentence compares the first impression the book The Fisherman makes on readers to "a car spluttering on starting up." The rest of the first paragraph continues lamenting aspects of the novel, saying that its first chapters are "descriptive to the point of fastidiousness" (which means they are overdone) and that the "ordinary" characters and incidents in the book "are presented almost with affectation." Affectation means a kind of pretentious artificiality; in other words, the author of the essay is saying that the writer of The Fishermen overdoes his descriptions to the point that his art seems forced and unnatural.

Then, in the second paragraph the book is presented in a slightly better light, as the essay writer calls the book's plot "ingenious" and says that reading the book becomes "engaging" as it goes on.

However, the last sentence of the second paragraph says that "it's difficult to shed that first impression" of the novel (that it is like "a car spluttering on starting up"). Thus, this last sentence, taken with the rest of the essay's introduction, acts as the essay's thesis: Morosetti (the essay's writer) is saying that the book never completely recovers from its shortcomings. [1]

Reading Reflections: Professional Essay (Continued)

Question 2. Does the essay provide a summary of the book it is discussing? If so, where is it?

This essay's third paragraph provides an overall summary of the book it is discussing. Summaries are very important when you write a critique of a narrative, be it a novel, a TV show, a movie, or even a story-driven video game like a role playing game, because they help readers understand the basic gist of what is being discussed. Notice, however, that the summary here is short and to the point; most of the essay is comprised of specific points the author is making about the novel she is discussing that explain why it succeeds or fails.[1]

Professional Essay (Continued)

Question 3. What *points* does the author make about the book to support her main idea?

Paragraphs four through ten all make points that contribute to the author's main idea. Briefly speaking, we could break them down like this:

Click each tab to reveal the content under each one.

Paragraph four

Paragraph 4 argues that *The Fishermen* tries and fails to establish a connection between its antagonist Abulu and the "white man" who opposes the main character Okonkwo in the classic book *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe. This paragraph thus offers a negative point about the book.

Paragraph five

Paragraph 5 compliments the novel and says that the "impending doom" in the book is "compellingly conveyed" with impressive language. Remember that in the second paragraph of the essay, the author says that *The Fishermen* ultimately becomes "engaging," so this paragraph helps to prove this point.

Paragraph six

Paragraph 6 says that "the novel is marred by improbability," meaning that some of its integral moments are hard to believe. It then provides examples of this improbability, which is very important to make the case to the reader. This is another knock against the work.

Paragraph seven

Paragraph 7 says that the "weaknesses" of the novel are "most evident" in its second half. It goes on to explain some of those

weaknesses and provides examples to back up the claim, which, again, is always important in an example essay.

Paragraph eight

Paragraph 8 takes issue with the portrayal of the younger siblings in the novel and thus makes another negative point about the book.

Paragraph nine

Paragraph 9 criticizes *The Fishermen*'s "general search for the symbolic" and says that this tendency is "particularly damaging." When Morosetti (the essay's author) says that the book features "scenes designed to create climaxes at the expense of credibility," it reminds us of when she said much of the book was "presented almost with affectation" in the very first paragraph.

Paragraph ten

Paragraph 10 makes a complicated point; it argues that the audience for the book does not line up with the audience the author claims he is addressing (the nation of Nigeria) in some interviews about the book. Morosetti argues here that the book seems written for an international audience instead of for a uniquely African one, and she provides an example to help make her point. This again is presented as a failing of the book and lines up with the essay's main point that it never is able to shed its negative first impression. [1]

Reading Reflections: Professional Essay (Continued)

Question 4. Is the article ambivalent? In other words, does it have mixed emotions about its subject matter? If it is, where does it present those mixed emotions?

As we have seen, most of the essay is a negative review of *The Fishermen* . However, paragraph five has nice things to say about the book, and the second paragraph says that over time it becomes "engaging" for the reader. Also, the concluding paragraph says that it is "highly ambitious and makes for interesting reading" and that it has "some of the ingredients of a remarkable work." Thus, even though it leans to the negative, the review also suggests that the book has its positive points, so we could make a case that it is an ambivalent critique. (1)

Reading Reflections: Professional Essay (Continued)

Question 5 . How does the essay's *conclusion* reinforce its main idea?

The last paragraph of the essay says that though the book is "remarkable" in some ways, it "suffers, heavily, from its very own cleverness." That "cleverness" is what Morosetti alluded to early in the first paragraph when she said the book was "presented almost with affectation;" she thinks it overreaches and can be too artificial or hung up on its clever wordplay and intellectual ideas when it needs to be believable and relatable. This all hearkens back to the last sentence of the second paragraph, which argues that "it's difficult to shed that first impression" of the book, the negative impression she discusses at the very beginning of the whole essay. Thus, the conclusion ties everything together. (1)

Student Essay

Now let's take a look at a student critique. As you read, notice the annotations that we've provided pointing out the essay's important parts, like its thesis statement and topic sentences. You'll notice that this essay isn't ambivalent; it provides a glowing review of an ex-pro football player, Lester Hayes. It proceeds in a clear and logical way, providing a hook at the beginning, a thesis statement at the end of the introduction, several body paragraphs full of examples and details to help prove its various points, and a conclusion that urges readers to appreciate the player in question.

Select and read this essay, "Lester Hayes: My Favorite Raider" [1]

Attributions

ENC1101 Learning Unit 3.3

Verbs

A **verb** is a word that conveys an action (*bring*, *read*, *walk*, *run*, *learn*) , an occurrence (*happen*, *become*) , or a state of being (*be*, *exist*, *stand*) .

- I **washed** the car yesterday.

- The robot **is** self-aware.
- John **studies** English and French.
- Lucy **enjoys** listening to music.

Verb Types

There are three basic types of verbs: active verbs, linking verbs, and helping verbs. Each type is determined by the kinds of words that accompany it and the relationship those words have with the verb itself.

Verb Type #1: Active Verbs

Active verbs are the simplest type of verb: they simply express some sort of action: e.g., *contain*, *roars*, *runs*, *sleeps* . Active verbs can be broken up into two categories: intransitive verbs and transitive verbs. (15)

Intransitive Verb

An intransitive verb is an active verb that does not have a direct object. In other words, these verbs never directly affect anything in the sentence; they just tell us what the subject of the sentence is doing. Consider the sentence "The sun rises." Here we learn what the sun does, but the action is not affecting something else. If we try to put another thing right after the word "rises," we end up with a nonsensical group of words ("The sun rises the town" is incorrect). Intransitive verbs may be followed by an adverb (a word that addresses how, where, when, and how often) or a prepositional

phrase, or they may end a sentence. For example: "The woman *spoke* softly." "The athlete ran faster than the official." "The sun rose over the mountain." "*The boy wept.*" [16]

Transitive Verbs

Unlike intransitive verbs, transitive verbs directly affect objects or people. A transitive verb is followed by a noun or noun phrase. These noun phrases are not called predicate nouns but are instead called direct objects because they refer to the object or person that is being acted upon. If you can put a noun right after an active verb, it is a transitive verb. For example: "My friend *read* the newspaper." "The teenager *earned* a speeding ticket."

One way to identify a transitive verb is to invert the sentence, making it passive. If the resulting sentence makes sense, you know you are dealing with a transitive verb. For example: "The newspaper *was read* by my friend." "A speeding ticket *was earned* by the teenager." [17]

Verb Type #2: Linking Verbs

A linking verb is a verb that links a subject to the rest of the sentence. There isn't any "real" action happening in the sentence. Sentences with linking verbs are similar to math equations because the verb acts as an equal sign between the items it links.

While *to be* verbs are the most common linking verbs (*is*, *was*, *were*, *etc.*) , there are other linking verbs as well.

Here are some illustrations of other common linking verbs:

- Since the oil spill, the beach **has smelled** bad.
    - Similarly, one could also read this as "Since the oil spill, the

beach = smelled bad." If you can replace the verb with an equal sign and the logic of the sentence makes sense, you know you are dealing with a linking verb.

- That word processing program **seems** adequate for our needs.
    - Here, the linking verb is slightly more nuanced, though the sentence construction overall is similar. (This is why we write in words, rather than math symbols, after all!) Still, it basically makes sense that what is meant here is that the program=adequate! [17]

Verb Type #3: Helping Verbs

Helping verbs (sometimes called *auxiliary verbs*) are, as the name suggests, verbs that help other verbs. They provide support and add additional meaning. Here are some examples of helping verbs in sentences:

- Mariah **is** looking for her keys still.
- Kai **has** checked the weather three times already.

As you just saw, helping verbs include words like *is* and *has* . Let's look at some more examples to examine exactly what these verbs do. Take a look at the sentence "I have finished my dinner." Here, the main verb is *finish* , and the helping verb have helps to express tense. Let's look at two more examples:

- By 1967, about 500 U.S. citizens **had** received heart transplants.
    - While *received* could function on its own as a complete thought, the helping verb *had* emphasizes the distance in time of the date in the opening phrase.
- **Do** you want tea?
    - *Do* is a helping verb accompanying the main verb *want* ,

used here to form a question. [18]

Verb Tenses and Agreement

Tenses

There are three standard tenses in English: past, present, and future. All three of these tenses have simple and more complex forms. For now we'll just focus on the simple present (things happening now), the simple past (things that happened before), and the simple future (things that will happen later).

- **Simple Present:** work(s)
- **Simple Past:** worked
- **Simple Future:** will work [19]

Tense Agreement

The basic idea behind sentence agreement is pretty simple: all the parts of your sentence should match (or **agree**). Verbs need to agree with their subjects in **number** (singular or plural) and in **person** (first, second, or third). In order to check agreement, you simply need to find the verb and ask who or what is doing the action of that verb. For example:

- **I** really **am** (first-person singular) vs. **We** really **are** (first-person plural)
- The **boy sings** (third-person singular) vs. The **boys sing** (third-person plural)

Compound subjects are plural, and their verbs should agree. Look at the following sentence for an example:

- A pencil, a backpack, and a notebook **were** issued to each student.

Verbs will never agree with nouns that are in phrases. To make verbs agree with their subjects, follow this example:

The direction of the three plays is the topic of my talk.

NOT

The direction of the three plays **are** the topic of my talk.

The subject of the sentence is *the direction* , not *plays* , which is part of the prepositional phrase "of the three plays" that just provides extra information about the subject. Thus, the verb should be singular (is) instead of plural (are). [20]

Consistency

One of the most common mistakes in writing is a lack of tense consistency. Writers often start a sentence in one tense but ended up in another. In fact, if you look back at the sentence you just read, you will notice an error in verb tense consistency:

> Writers often start a sentence in one tense but ended up in another.

The first verb **start** is in the present tense, but **ended** is in the past tense. The second verb needs to match up in tense with the first one. The correct version of the sentence would be"*Writers often start a sentence in one tense but end up in another.*"

These mistakes often occur when writers change their minds halfway through writing a sentence or when they come back and make changes but only end up changing half the sentence. It is very important to maintain a consistent tense, not just in a sentence

but across paragraphs and pages. Decide if *something happened* , *is happening* , or *will happen* and then stick with that choice. (21)

Non-Finite Verbs

Non-finite verbs are words that *look* similar to verbs we've already been talking about, but they *act* quite different from those other verbs.

By definition, a non-finite verb cannot serve as the main verb in an independent clause. In practical terms, this means that they don't serve as the action of a sentence. They also don't have a tense. While the sentence around them may be past, present, or future tense, the non-finite verbs themselves are neutral. There are three types of non-finite verbs: gerunds, participles, and infinitives. (22)

Gerunds

Gerunds all end in *-ing*: *skiing*, *reading*, *dancing*, *singing*, etc. Gerunds act like nouns and can serve as subjects or objects of sentences. They can be created using active or helping verbs:

- I like swimming.
- Being loved can make someone feel safe.
- Do you fancy going out?
- Having read the book once before makes me more prepared.

Often the "doer" of the gerund is clearly signaled:

- We enjoyed singing yesterday (we ourselves did the singing)
- Tom likes eating apricots (Tom himself eats apricots)

However, sometimes the "doer" must be overtly specified, typically in a position immediately before the non-finite verb:

- We enjoyed their singing. (they did the singing)
- We were delighted at Bianca being awarded the prize. (Bianca was being awarded) [23]

Participles

A participle is a form of a verb that is used in a sentence to modify a noun, noun phrase, verb, or verb phrase, and then plays a role similar to an adjective or adverb. It another nonfinite verb form.

The two types of participle in English are traditionally called the present participle (forms such as *writing*, *singing* and *raising*) and the past participle (forms such as written, sung and raised).

The Present Participle

Even though they look exactly the same, gerunds and present participles do different things. As we just learned, the gerund acts as a noun: e.g., "I like *sleeping* "; " *Sleeping* is not allowed." Present participles, on the other hand, act similarly to an adjective or adverb: e.g., "The *sleeping* girl over there is my sister"; " *Breathing* heavily, she finished the race in first place."

The Past Participle

Past participles often look very similar to the simple past tense of a verb: *finished*, *danced*, etc.

Past participles are used in a couple of different ways:

- as an adjective phrase: *The chicken **eaten** by the children was contaminated.* ("eaten by the children" describes the chicken)
- adverb: ***Seen** from this perspective, the problem presents no easy solution.* ("seen" is describing how the problem can appear so difficult to solve)
- in construction with a subject: *The task **finished** , we returned home.* ("finished" here is defining the state of the task)

The past participle can also be used with the helping verb *to have* to form a type of past tense. *The chicken has **eaten** .* It is also used to form the passive voice: *Tianna was **voted** as most likely to succeed.*

When the passive voice is used following a relative pronoun (like *that* or *which*) we sometimes leave out parts of the phrase:

- He had three things **that were** taken away from him
- He had three things taken away from him

In the second sentence, we removed the words *that were* . However, we still use the past participle *taken* . The removal of these words is called *elision* . Elision is used with a lot of different constructions in English; we use it shorten sentences when things are understood. However, we can only use elision in certain situations, so be careful when removing words! [(24)]

Nature vs. Nurture

> "To be or not to be, that is the question."

—Hamlet

The infinitive is the basic dictionary form of a verb, usually preceded by *to* (when it's not, it's called the **bare infinitive** , which we'll discuss more later). Thus *to go* is an infinitive. There are several different uses of the infinitive. They can be used alongside verbs, as a noun phrase, as a modifier, or in a question.

With Other Verbs

The *to* -infinitive is used with other verbs (we'll discuss exceptions when we talk about the bare infinitive):

- I aim **to convince** him of our plan's ingenuity.
- You already know that he'll fail **to complete** the task.

You can also use multiple infinitives in a single sentence: "Today, I plan to run three miles, to clean my room, and to update my budget." All three of these infinitives follow the verb*plan* . Other verbs that often come before infinitives include *want*, *convince*, *try*, *able*, and *like* .

As a Noun Phrase

The infinitive can also be used to express an action in an abstract, general way: " **To err** is human"; " **To know** me is **to love me** ." No one in particular is completing these actions. The infinitives act as the subjects of these sentences.

Infinitives can also serve as the object of a sentence. One common construction involves a dummy subject (*it*): "It was nice to **meet** you." (25)

As a Modifier

An infinitive can be used as an adjective (e.g., "A request **to see** someone" or "The man **to save** us") or as an adverb (e.g., "Keen **to get** on," "Nice **to listen** to," or "In order **to win**").

Split Infinitives

One of the biggest controversies among grammarians and style writers has been the appropriateness of separating the two words of the **to** -infinitive as in "to **boldly** go." Despite what a lot of people have declared over the years, there is absolutely nothing wrong with this construction. It is 100 percent grammatically sound.

Part of the reason so many authorities have been against this construction is likely the fact that in languages such as Latin, the infinitive is a single word, and cannot be split. However, in English the infinitive (or at least the **to** -infinitive) is two words, and a split infinitive is a perfectly natural construction. [25]

Try To Versus Try And

One common error people make is saying "try and" instead of "try to," as in "I'll try and be there by 10:00 tomorrow." However, try requires a to-infinitive after it, so using "and" is incorrect. While this construction is acceptable in casual conversation, it is not grammatically correct and should not be used in formal situations. [25]

Adjectives and Adverbs

Now that we've learned about the most common parts of speech–nouns, pronouns, and verbs we're ready to move onto the other parts of speech.

Next, we have adjectives and adverbs, which are different types of modifiers (i.e., they modify other words). For example, compare the phrase "the bear" to "the harmless bear" or the phrase "run" to "run

slowly." In both of these cases, the adjective (harmless) or adverb (slowly) changes how we understand the phrase. [26] [27]

Comparing Adjectives and Adverbs

Adjectives and adverbs act in similar but different roles. A lot of the time this difference can be seen in the structure of the words. *Clever* is an adjective, and *cleverly* is an adverb.

Although recognizing the *–ly* ending is helpful, not all words that end in *–ly* are adverbs: *lovely*, *costly*, *friendly*, etc. Additionally, not all adverbs end in *-ly*: *here*, *there*, *together*, *yesterday*, *aboard*, *very*, *almost*, etc.

Some words can function both as an adjective and as and adverb:

- Fast is an adjective in "a fast car" (where it modifies the noun car), but an adverb in "he drove fast" (where it modifies the verb drove).
- *Likely* is an adjective in "a likely outcome" (where it modifies the noun *outcome*) but an adverb in "we will likely go" (where it modifies the verb go). [26] [27]

Confusing Adjectives and Adverbs

One common mistake with adjectives and adverbs is substituting one in place of the other. For example, in the sentence "I wish I could write as neat as he can," *neat* should be replaced with *neatly* , an adverb, since it is modifying the verb "write.' ("That's real nice of you" is also incorrect; it should be "That's *really* nice of you.")

Remember, if you're modifying a noun or pronoun, you should use an adjective. If you're modifying anything else, you should use an adverb. [26] [27]

Adjectives

An adjective modifies a noun; that is, it provides more detail about a noun. Adjectives can provide information about anything from color to size to temperature to personality. Adjectives usually occur just before the nouns they modify, but they can also follow a linking verb (in these instances, adjectives can modify pronouns as well).

- The generator is used to convert **mechanical** *energy* into **electrical** *energy* .
- The kids' *schoolhouse* was **red** . (here the linking verb "was" links "red" to the schoolhouse). [26]

Adverbs

Adverbs can perform a wide range of functions: they can modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. They can come either before or after the word they modify. An adverb may provide information about the manner, place, time, frequency, certainty, or other circumstances of the activity indicated by the verb. In the following sentences, the adverbs are in bold, while the words they modify are in italics.

- Suzanne sang **loudly** (*loudly* modifies the verb *sang* , indicating the manner of singing)
- We left it **here** . (*here* modifies the verb phrase *left it* , indicating place)
- I worked **yesterday** (*yesterday* modifies the verb *worked* , indicating time)
- You **often** make mistakes (*often* modifies the verb phrase *make mistakes* , indicating frequency)
- He **undoubtedly** did it (*undoubtedly* modifies the verb phrase *did it* , indicating certainty)

Adverbs can also modify noun phrases, prepositional phrases, or whole clauses and sentences, as in the following examples. Once again the adverbs are in bold, while the words they modify are in italics.

- I bought **only** the fruit (*only* modifies the noun phrase *the fruit*)
- Roberto drove us **almost** to the station (*almost* modifies the prepositional phrase to *the station*)
- **Certainly** we need to act (*certainly* modifies the sentence as a whole)

Adverbs may also undergo comparison, taking comparative and superlative forms. This is usually done by adding *more* . and *most* before the adverb (*more slowly*, *most slowly*). However, there are a few adverbs that take non-standard forms, such as *well* , for which *better* and *best* are used (i.e., "He did **well** , she did **better** , and I did **best** "). [27]

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Course Assignment

For this module, you will develop a type of an example essay known as a critique, which is when you judge something by a set of standards.

Your assignment is to write just such a critique by judging any movie, TV show, video game, book, product, service, job, or travel

experience with which you are intimately familiar. Remember, this should be an opinion-piece – your purpose is to convince your audience to see the film or show, play the game, buy the product, use the service, or travel to the place. Your final paper should be 2-4 typed, double spaced pages (approximately 500 to 1000 words).

Download the attached assignment: Writing an Example Essay

- Read the assignment carefully
- Complete the following steps:
  - Step 1: Pre-Writing (Questioning, Freewriting, & Mapping)
  - Step 2: Focusing, Outlining, & Drafting
  - Step 3: Revising, Editing, & Proofreading
  - Step 4: Evaluation

This assignment is worth 200 points. (1)

Discussion Board

Use this link to access the discussion board.

Post your "Example Essay Outline" to the discussion board so that your instructor can give you some feedback before you begin drafting. You can either attach it to a thread as a Word file or just type it into the thread itself. After you have finished outlining and received some feedback, you are ready to draft the actual paper.

This posting is worth 10 points. (1)

Module 3 Quiz

Open Quiz

16. Module 3 Writing Assignment: Writing an Example Essay

Example essays are the most typical kind of academic writing, and they come in all shapes and sizes. For this module, your assignment is to develop an example essay type known as a critique, which is when you judge something by a set of standards. Our example in the module you just read about Allison is this type of example writing; we used examples in order to persuade our audience that she is a "masterful cook." In so doing, we also revealed exactly what a masterful cook "looks like:" remember, we showed that such cooks try creative new recipes and have a knack for (and understanding of) ingredients. These are the standards by which we judged our cousin, and she came out on top! Your assignment, then, is to write just such a critique by judging any movie, TV show, video game, book, product, service, job, or travel experience with which you are intimately familiar. Remember, this should be an opinion-piece – your purpose is to convince your audience to see the film or show, play the game, buy the product, use the service, or travel to the place.

Step 1: Pre-Writing (Questioning, Freewriting, and Mapping)

Any of the prewriting techniques we have discussed so far in the class are fair game for this assignment. You might use the reporter's questions again: ask yourself who, what, when, where, why, and how in relation to the subject you want to critique.

You might also use freewriting (the process of writing freely without worrying about grammar, spelling, and sentence structure) to generate ideas about your subject, focusing on your feelings about it (positive or negative) and the specific parts of your experience that make you feel that way about it (these parts could become the examples you use to prove your point).

We also discussed mapping in this module; to map effectively, you would put the subject of your critique in a circle in the middle of a sheet of paper and then draw lines radiating out from it to other circles to represent examples related to it. For example, if your subject was going to be a restaurant, you might put "service," "food," and "cost" in these circles. For each of these subcircles, you could draw more lines to more circles that connect to each example ("prompt delivery of food," "knowledgeable about menu," "friendly and articulate" might all be in circles related to "service"). This kind of exercise can help you break your topic up into points and to discover exactly how to persuade your audience that your thesis is true.

Step 2: Focusing, Outlining, and Drafting

Once you've come up with your subject, your overall opinion of it (whether you are going to critique it positively or negatively; in other words, whether you are going to recommend it or not) and the examples that are going to help prove your point, it is very, very important for you to organize your ideas in an outline just the way we did in the module when we were discussing Allison's cooking ability. An example essay succeeds or fails based on how well organized it is, and an outline will help ensure that your logic is sound and that you smoothly move from general to specific information.

As you fill out the outline, remember that you should move from your weakest idea and end with your strongest as if you were

arguing to a jury. You want your reader to remember your most important point, and if you put it last, he or she will be most likely to have that point in mind as he or she considers your overall recommendation.

Here's a basic outline to get you started; the idea is to write out a quick summation of the different sections on the lines provided. When you go to write a full draft based on the outline, you will add a hook at the beginning to flesh out your introduction (which should end in your thesis statement), and each of your general examples will become body paragraphs. You will also need to add a conclusion explaining why your overall point is important.

Remember that this outline is just a suggestion, for you can include as many examples and body paragraphs as you want as long as you stay within the assignment's length requirements:

I. Thesis statement:

ii. General Example #1: a. Specific Detail: b. Specific Detail:

iii. General Example #2: a. Specific Detail: b. Specific Detail:

iv. General Example #3: a. Specific Detail: b. Specific Detail:

Once you've figured out your outline, you are encouraged to post it in the "Example Essay Outline" discussion board so that your instructor can give you

some feedback before you begin drafting. You can either attach it to a thread as a Word file or just type it into the thread itself.

After you've finished outlining and hopefully gotten some feedback, you are ready to draft the actual paper.

Step 3: Revising, Editing, and Proofreading

Once your draft is finished, step away from it for at least a few hours so you can approach it with fresh eyes. It is also a very good idea to email it to a friend or fellow classmate or otherwise present it to a tutor or trusted family member to get feedback. Remember, writing

doesn't happen in a vacuum; it is meant to be read by an audience, and a writer can't anticipate all of the potential issues an outside reader might have with an essay's structure or language.

Whatever the case, after getting some feedback from others, read your essay over and consider what you might alter to make it clearer or more exciting.

Consider the following questions:

- Does the essay have a clear thesis that explicitly recommends the subject or dissuades an audience from it?
- Does each section of the body focus on a clear example that relates back to the main point?
- Does each example have plenty of specific details to back it up and make it convincing?
- Does the conclusion explain the essay's importance and avoid repeating information?
- Are there any fragments, run-on sentences, or comma splices?
- Does the essay follow the formatting requirements?

Step 4: Evaluation

After completing these steps, submit the essay to the instructor, who will evaluate it according to the grading criteria. (1)

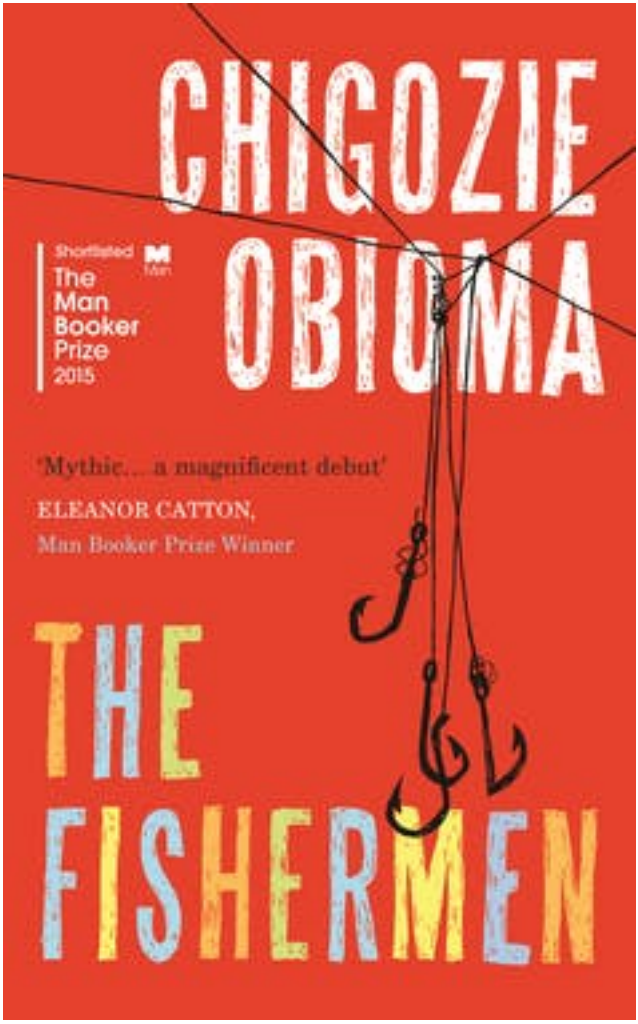
17. Review: The Fishermen by Chigozie Obioma

The first impression of Chigozie Obioma's The Fishermen, shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize, is that of a car spluttering on starting up. The first two chapters are descriptive to the point of fastidiousness, and the characters and incidents, although ordinary, are presented almost with affectation.

This doesn't change. Obioma's language aims to be as elaborate as possible. But as the ingenious plot unfolds, reading does become pleasant, interesting, and eventually engaging. Yet it's difficult to shed that first impression.

The Fishermen is the story of four brothers (Ikenna, Boja, Obembe and Benjamin) whose lives are destroyed by an encounter with Abulu, a madman whose terrible prophecies of people in Akure, a city in south-western Nigeria where they live, have come to be held as true. The madman predicts that Ikenna will be killed by a "fisherman", supposedly one of his brothers, since they have started going fishing on the nearby Omi-Ala river. In the absence of their father, who has moved away, and under the intangible but devastating influence of the madman, the family faces a destiny as grim as it seems unavoidable, as in the best traditions of tragedy.

The novel also openly refers to Chinua Achebe's classic Things Fall Apartwhen proposing a comparison between Abulu as the brothers' "enemy" and the white man that the character Okonkwo has to fight. In truth, the parallel hardly stands. The madman, although presented as dangerous, is only as threatening as superstition allows. Betraying the influence of yet another Nigerian writer, Amos Tutuola, Abulu is ascribed almost supernatural powers. But it is on a defenceless man that the brothers' revenge ultimately falls, thus making the parallel with Okonkwo the more inappropriate.



This said, the impending doom is compellingly conveyed, rich with graphic detail and the extensive use of varied and sometimes beautiful similes and metaphors. Each chapter opens on a definition: the father (chapter three) is an "eagle", the older brother (chapter four) is a "python", and so on – an interesting choice that recalls storytelling techniques. The domino effect caused by the prophecy is accurately and forcefully described, tragedy falling hard

upon tragedy. The picture that comes out of this is vivid, dark and haunting, the characters' psychology undergoing passionate and subtle scrutiny.

But the novel is marred by improbability (like the idea of a mother struck by bereavement and madness making a recovery in just four months) and shows some surprising inconsistencies at rather crucial moments – there are continuity problems such as characters knowing things they hadn't been told, for example.

It is in the second half of the novel that its weaknesses are at their most evident. Despite events that stride towards a powerful conclusion, the rhythm of the narration is slowed down by repetitions that are at times awkward, as when we learn that the father's "map of dreams, soon died despite how much he guarded it", and then again that "his map of dreams … was gone". The parents in particular are stuck in a destiny they do not understand, let alone able to fight against. But what the father has imagined for his children in the past is mentioned throughout the novel too frequently. Readers are reminded of lost opportunities with an insistence that gets annoying.

Also debatable is the role of the four brothers' younger siblings, David and Nkem, who, despite being presented as "unscathed" by tragedy so as to keep with the chosen metaphor of the egrets, "the wool-white birds that appear in flocks after a storm", are nonetheless variously described both during and after tragedy as profoundly affected by that storm.

It is this general search for the symbolic, with scenes designed to create climaxes at the expense of credibility, that is particularly damaging. This is the case with the rather startling moment when Benjamin, the narrator, after speculating on Abulu and his powers for several chapters and tracing back all events to his prophecy, has what is presented as an epiphany that the responsibility for all that happened may fall to no other than Abulu. Who knew?

It is Obembe that then suggests to Benjamin the parallel between Abulu and the white man in Things Fall Apart. But while it may be tempting to see the brothers' destiny as a mirror of that of

Nigeria – as in Achebe's novel – one may also wonder what the audience for this parallel is. Obioma has declared The Fishermen "a wake-up call to a dwindling nation", and yet, when the Harmattan must be described as "a season when the dry dusty wind from the Sahara desert of northern Nigeria travelled south and covered most of sub-Saharan Africa" it is doubtful whether it is Africans (let alone Nigerians) that are being addressed here. This is a very internationally aimed work.

All in all, The Fishermen is a highly ambitious novel and makes for interesting reading. But despite having some of the ingredients of a remarkable work, it suffers, heavily, from its very own cleverness.

18. Verb Types

Active Verbs

Active verbs are the simplest type of verb: they simply express some sort of action: e.g., *contain*, *roars*, *runs*, *sleeps*.

Transitive and Intransitive Verbs

Active verbs can be divided into two categories: transitive and intransitive verbs. A **transitive verb** is a verb that requires one or more objects. This contrasts with intransitive verbs, which do not have objects.

It might be helpful to think of it this way: transitive verbs have to be *done to* something or someone in the sentence. Intransitive verbs only have to be done *by* someone.

Let's look at a few examples of transitive verbs:

- We are going to **need** a bigger boat.
    - The object in this sentence is the phrase "a bigger boat." Consider how incomplete the thought would be if the sentence only said "We are going to need." Despite having a subject and a verb, the sentence is meaningless without the object phrase.
- She hates **filling out** forms.
    - *Hates* is also a transitive verb. Without the phrase "filling

out forms," the phrase "She hates" doesn't make any sense.

Intransitive verbs, on the other do not take an object.

- John **sneezed** loudly.
  - Even though there's another word after *sneezed*, the full meaning of the sentence is available with just the subject *John* and the verb *sneezed*: "John sneezed." Therefore, *sneezed* is an intransitive verb. It doesn't have to be done to something or someone.
- My computer completely **died**.
  - Again, *died* here is enough for the sentence to make sense. We know that the computer (the subject) is what died.

Note: there are some verbs that can act as both transitive and intransitive verbs. Here are a few examples:

Intransitive	Transitive
The fire has **burned** for hundreds of years.	Miranda **burned** all of her old school papers.
Don't let the engine stop **running**!	Karl **ran** the best horse track this side of the river.
The vase **broke**.	She **broke** the toothpick.

Practice

Read the following sentences. Are the verbs in each transitive or intransitive? How can you tell?

1. Alba fell out of the car.
2. Ian has written over four hundred articles on the subject.
3. Javier sings really well.
4. Marton wondered about a lot of things.
5. Cate gave great gifts.

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[reveal-answer q="981308"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="981308"]

1. Alba **fell** out of the car. *Fell* is intransitive; it doesn't require an object.
2. Ian **has written** over four hundred articles on the subject. *Has written* is transitive; it has an object: *articles*.
3. Javier **sings** really well. *Sings* is intransitive; it doesn't require an object.
    - Note that *sings* can also be a transitive verb. In the sentence "Lorena sang three songs in the show last night," the verb *sing* has the object *songs*.
4. Marton **wondered** about a lot of things. *Wondered* is intransitive; it doesn't require an object.
5. Cate **gave** great gifts. *Gave* is transitive; it has an object: *gifts*.

[/hidden-answer]

Multi-Word Verbs

Multi-word verbs a subclass of active verbs. They are made up of multiple words, as you might have guessed. They include things like *stirfry*, *kickstart*, and *turn in*. Multi-word verbs often have a slightly different meaning than their base parts. Take a look at the difference between the next two sentences:

- Ben carried the boxes out of the house.
- Ben carried out the task well.

The first sentence uses a single word verb (*carried*) and the preposition *out*. If you remove the preposition (and its object), you get "Ben carried the boxes," which makes perfect sense. In the second sentence, *carried out* acts as a single entity. If you remove *out*, the sentence has no meaning: "Ben carried the task well" doesn't make sense.

Let's look at another example:

- She's been shut up in there for years.
- Dude, shut up.

Can you see how the same principles apply here? Other multi-word verbs include *find out*, *make off with*, *turn in*, and *put up with*.

Linking Verbs

A linking verb is a verb that links a subject to the rest of the sentence. There isn't any "real" action happening in the sentence. Sentences with linking verbs become similar to math equations. The verb acts as an equal sign between the items it links.

While *to be* verbs are the most common linking verbs (*is*, *was*, *were*, etc.), there are other linking verbs as well. Here are some illustrations of other common linking verbs:

- Over the past five days, Charles **has become** a new man.
    - It's easy to reimagine this sentence as "Over the past five days, Charles = a new man."
- Since the oil spill, the beach **has smelled** bad.
    - Similarly, one could also read this as "Since the oil spill, the beach = smelled bad."
- That word processing program **seems** adequate for our needs.
    - Here, the linking verb is slightly more nuanced than an equals sign, though the sentence construction overall is similar. (This is why we write in words, rather than math symbols, after all!)

Helping Verbs

Helping verbs (sometimes called *auxiliary verbs*) are, as the name suggests, verbs that help another verb. They provide support and add additional meaning. Here are some examples of helping verbs in sentences:

- Mariah **is** looking for her keys still.
- Kai **had** checked the weather three times already.

As you just saw, helping verbs include things like *is* and *had* (we'll look at a more complete list later). Let's look at some more examples to examine exactly what these verbs do. Take a look at the sentence "I have finished my dinner." Here, the main verb is *finish*, and the helping verb *have* helps to express tense. Let's look at two more examples:

- By 1967, about 500 U.S. citizens **had** received heart transplants.
    - While *received* could function on its own as a complete thought here, the helping verb *had* emphasizes the distance in time of the date in the opening phrase.
- **Do** you want tea?
    - *Do* is a helping verb accompanying the main verb *want*, used here to form a question.
- Researchers **are** finding that propranolol is effective in the treatment of heartbeat irregularities.

- The helping verb *are* indicates the present tense, and adds a sense of continuity to the verb *finding*.

The following table provides a short list of some verbs that can function as helping verbs, along with examples of the way they function. A full list of helping verbs can be found here.

Helping Verb	Function	Examples
be	Express tense and a sense of continuity.	He **is** sleeping.
	Express tense and indicate the passive voice	They **were** seen.
can	Express ability	I **can** swim. Such things **can** help.
could	Express possibility	That **could** help.
do	Express negation (requires the word *not*)	You **do** not understand.
	Ask a question	**Do** you want to go?
have	Express tense and a sense of completion	They **have** understood.
might	Express possibility	We **might** give it a try.
must	Express confidence in a fact	It **must** have rained.
should	Express a request	You **should** listen.
	Express likelihood	That **should** help.
will	Express future tense	We **will** eat pie. The sun **will** rise tomorrow at 6:03.
would	Express future likelihood	Nothing **would** accomplish that.

The negative forms of these words (*can't*, *don't*, *won't*, etc.) are also helping verbs.

Note: The helping verbs *to be*, *to have*, and *would* are used to indicate tense. We'll discuss exactly how they function in more depth in Text: Complex Verb Tenses.

Practice

Read the following sentences. In each sentence, identify the active, linking, and helping verbs.

1. Guilherme should arrive in the next three minutes.
2. Raymond is a fantastic boss.
3. Gina had smelled like chrysanthemums and mystery.
4. Damian can't work tonight. Do you want his shift?
5. Tim exercises a lot. His standard work out has three different circuits.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="400700"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="400700"]

1. Guilherme **should arrive** in the next three minutes.
    - *Should* is a helping verb. It expresses likelihood.
    - *Arrive* is the active (main) verb in this sentence. It is intransitive.
2. Raymond **is** a fantastic boss.

- *Is* is a linking verb in this sentence: Raymond = a fantastic boss.

3. Gina **smelled** like chrysanthemums and mystery.

    - *Smelled* is a linking verb in this sentence. There is no active action occurring in the sentence; the sentence is simply stating the way Gina smells.

4. Damian **can't work** tonight. **Do** you **want** his shift?

    - *Can't* accompanies *work*. In this sentence it is used to express ability (in this case, the *not* turns it into a lack of ability).
    - *Work* is an active verb. It is intransitive.
    - *Do* accompanies *want*. In this sentence, it is used to make a question.
    - *Want* is an active verb. It is transitive: its object is "his shift."

5. Tim **exercises** a lot. His standard work out **has** three different circuits.

    - *Exercises* is an active verb. It is also intransitive.
    - *Has* is an active verb. It is transitive: its object is "three different circuits."

[/hidden-answer]

19. Verb Tenses and Agreement

Tenses

There are three standard tenses in English: past, present and future. All three of these tenses have simple and more complex forms. For now we'll just focus on the simple present (things happening now), the simple past (things that happened before), and the simple future (things that will happen later).

- **Simple Present:** work(s)
- **Simple Past:** worked
- **Simple Future:** will work

The singular third person requires a slightly different present then other persons. Look at the tables below to see the correct tenses for each person:

Person	Past	Present	Future
I	verb + *ed*	verb	will verb
We	verb + *ed*	verb	will verb
You	verb + *ed*	verb	will verb
He, She, It	verb + *ed*	verb + s (or *es*)	will verb
They	verb + *ed*	verb	will verb

Let's look at the verb *to walk* for an example:

Person	Past	Present	Future
I	walked	walk	will walk
We	walked	walk	will walk
You	walked	walk	will walk
He, She, It	walked	walks	will walk
They	walked	walk	will walk

Practice

Identify the tense of the following sentences. You can type your answers in the text field below:

1. Alejandra directed a play.
2. Lena will show me how to use a microscope.
3. Isaac eats a lot of steaks.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="474778"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="474778"]

1. *Directed* is in the past tense; the word ends with an *-ed*.
2. *Will show* is in the present tense; the first part of the two-word verb is *will*.
3. *Eats* is in the present tense; the only ending it has is indicating that Isaac is a third-person subject of the sentence.

[/hidden-answer]

Irregular Verbs

There are a lot of irregular verbs. Unfortunately, there's a lot of memorization involved in keeping them straight. This video shows a few of the irregular verbs you'll have to use the most often (*to be*, *to have*, *to do*, and *to say*):

A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://fscj.pressbooks.pub/engcomp1/?p=57

Here are the tables for *to be* and *to have* for a quick reference:

To be

Person	Past	Present	Future
I	was	am	will be
We	were	are	will be
You	were	are	will be
He, She, It	was	is	will be
They	were	are	will be

To have

Person	Past	Present	Future
I	had	have	will have
We	had	have	will have
You	had	have	will have
He, She, It	had	has	will have
They	had	have	will have

Here's a list of several irregular past tense verbs.

Practice

Change the tense of each sentence as directed below. You can type your answers in the text field below:

1. Make this sentence present tense: Ysabella was really good at getting others to open up.
2. Make this sentence past tense: Rodrigo will have a

B+ in his math class.

3. Make this sentence future tense: Amanda said she didn't want to go to the party.
4. Make this sentence past tense: Jordan does five hundred sit-ups.
5. Make this sentence present tense: Marcela ran a car wash down the street from my house.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="474777"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="474777"]

1. Ysabella **is** really good at getting others to open up.
2. Rodrigo **had** a B+ in his math class.
3. Amanda **will say** she **doesn't** want to go to the party.
    - Notice that when the tense of the first verb changed, the tense of the second verb did as well.
4. Jordan **did** five hundred sit-ups.
5. Marcela **runs** a car wash down the street from my house.

[/hidden-answer]

Tense Agreement

The basic idea behind sentence agreement is pretty simple: all the parts of your sentence should match (or **agree**). Verbs need to agree with their subjects in **number** (singular or plural) and in **person** (first, second, or third). In order to check agreement, you simply need to find the verb and ask who or what is doing the action of that verb, for example:

- **I** really **am** (first-person singular) vs. **We** really **are** (first-person plural)
- The **boy sings** (third-person singular) vs. The **boys sing** (third-person plural)

Compound subjects are plural, and their verbs should agree. Look at the following sentence for an example:

A pencil, a backpack, and a notebook **were** issued to each student.

Verbs will never agree with nouns that are in phrases. To make verbs agree with their subjects, follow this example:

The direction of the three plays **is** the topic of my talk.

The subject of "my talk" is *the direction*, not *plays*, so the verb should be singular.

In the English language, verbs usually come after subjects. But when this order is reversed, the writer must make the verb agree with the subject, not with a noun that happens to precede it. For example:

Beside the house **stand** sheds filled with tools.
The subject is *sheds*; it is plural, so the verb must be *stand*.

Practice

Choose the correct verb to make the sentences agree:

1. Ann (walk / walks) really slowly.
2. You (is / am / are) dating Tom?
3. Donna and April (get / gets) along well.
4. Chris and Ben (is / am / are) the best duo this company has ever seen.

[reveal-answer q="813087"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="813087"]

1. Ann **walks** really slowly.
    - *Ann* is a singular, third-person subject.
2. You **are** dating Tom?
    - *You* is a singular, second-person subject.
3. Donna and April **get** along well.
    - *Donna and April* is a plural, third-person subject.
4. Chris and Ben **are** the best duo this company has ever seen.
    - *Chris and Ben* is a plural, third-person subject.

[/hidden-answer]

Consistency

One of the most common mistakes in writing is a lack of tense consistency. Writers often start a sentence in one tense but ended up in another. Look back at that sentence. Do you see the error? The first verb *start* is in the present tense, but *ended* is in the past tense. The correct version of the sentence would be "Writers often start a sentence in one tense but end up in another."

These mistakes often occur when writers change their minds halfway through writing the sentence, or when they come back and make changes but only end up changing half the sentence. It is very important to maintain a consistent tense, not just in a sentence but across paragraphs and pages. Decide if something happened, is happening, or will happen and then stick with that choice.

Read through the following paragraphs. Can you spot the errors in tense? Type your corrected passage in the text frame below:

If you want to pick up a new outdoor activity, hiking is a great option to consider. It's a sport that is suited for a beginner or an expert—it just depended on the difficulty hikes you choose. However, even the earliest beginners can complete difficult hikes if they pace themselves and were physically fit.

Not only is hiking an easy activity to pick up, it also will have some great payoffs. As you walked through canyons and climbed up mountains, you can see things that you wouldn't otherwise. The views are breathtaking, and you will get a great opportunity to meditate on the world and your role in it. The summit of a mountain is unlike any other place in the world.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]

[reveal-answer q="792647"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]

[hidden-answer a="792647"]As we mentioned earlier, you want to make sure your whole passage is consistent in its tense. You may have noticed that the most of the verbs in this passage are in present tense; we've edited the passage be consistently in the present tense. All edited verbs have been bolded:

If you want to pick up a new outdoor activity, hiking is a great option to consider. (1) It's a sport that can be suited for a beginner or an expert—it just **depends** on the difficulty

hikes you choose. However, even the earliest beginners can complete difficult hikes (2) if they pace themselves and **are** physically fit.

(3) Not only is hiking an easy activity to pick up, it also **has** some great payoffs. (4) As you **walk** through canyons and **climb** up mountains, you can see things that you wouldn't otherwise. (5) The views are breathtaking, and you **get** a great opportunity to meditate on the world and your role in it. The summit of a mountain is unlike any other place in the world.

Here's each original sentence, along with an explanation for the changes:

1. It's a sport that is suited for a beginner or an expert—it just **depended** on the difficulty hikes you choose.
    - *depended* should be the same tense as *is*; it just **depends** on the difficulty
2. if they pace themselves and **were** physically fit.
    - *were* should be the same tense as *pace*; if they pace themselves and **are** physically fit.
3. Not only is hiking an easy activity to pick up, it also **will have** some great payoffs.
    - *will have* should be the same tense as *is*; it also **has** some great pay offs
4. As you **walked** through canyons and **climbed** up mountains
    - *walked* and *climbed* are both past tense, but this doesn't match the tense of the passage as a whole. They should both be changed to present tense: As you **walk** through canyons and **climb** up mountains.

5. The views are breathtaking, and you **will get** a great opportunity to meditate on the world and your role in it.

    - *will get* should be the same tense as *are*; you **get** a great opportunity

[/hidden-answer]

Practice

Read the following sentences and identify any errors in verb tense. Type your corrections in the text frame below:

1. Whenever Maudeline goes to the grocery store, she had made a list and stick to it.
2. This experiment turned out to be much more complicated than Felipe thought it would be. It ended up being a procedure that was seventeen steps long, instead of the original eight that he had planned.
3. I applied to some of the most prestigious medical schools. I hope the essays I write get me in!

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="615298"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="615298"]

1. *had made* and *stick* do not match the present tense that was set up by *goes*. The sentence should read, "Whenever Maudeline goes to the store, she **makes** a list and **sticks** to it."
2. This sentence is correct.
3. *applied* and *write* do not match tense. If you've already applied, hopefully you've already written your

essays as well! The sentences should read, “I applied to some of the most prestigious medical schools. I hope the essays I **wrote** get me in!”

[/hidden-answer]

20. Agreement (linguistics)

Agreement or **concord** (abbreviated **agr**) happens when a word changes form depending on the other words to which it relates.[1] It is an instance of inflection, and usually involves making the value of some grammatical category (such as gender or person) "agree" between varied words or parts of the sentence.

For example, in Standard English, one may say *I am* or *he is*, but not "I is" or "he am". This is because the grammar of the language requires that the verb and its subject agree in *person*. The pronouns *I* and *he* are first and third person respectively, as are the verb forms *am* and *is*. The verb form must be selected so that it has the same person as the subject.

The agreement based on overt grammatical categories as above is **formal agreement**, in contrast to notional agreement, which is based on meaning.[2][3]For instance, in American English the phrase *the United Nations* is treated as singular for purposes of agreement even though it is formally plural.

By category

Agreement generally involves matching the value of some grammatical category between different constituents of a sentence (or sometimes between sentences, as in some cases where a pronoun is required to agree with its antecedent or referent). Some categories that commonly trigger grammatical agreement are noted below.

Person

Agreement based on grammatical person is found mostly between verb and subject. An example from English (*I am* vs. *he is*) has been given in the introduction to this article.

Agreement between pronoun (or corresponding possessive adjective) and antecedent also requires the selection of the correct person. For example, if the antecedent is the first person noun phrase *Mary and I*, then a first person pronoun (*we/us/our*) is required; however, most noun phrases (*the dog*, *my cats*, *Jack and Jill*, etc.) are third person, and are replaced by a third person pronoun (*he/she/it/they* etc.).

Number

Agreement based on grammatical number can occur between verb and subject, as in the case of grammatical person discussed above. In fact the two categories are often conflated within verb conjugation patterns: there are specific verb forms for first person singular, second person plural and so on. Some examples:

- *I really am* (1st pers. singular) vs. *We really are* (1st pers. plural)
- *The boy sings* (3rd pers. singular) vs. *The boys sing* (3rd pers. plural)

Again as with person, there is agreement in number between pronouns (or their corresponding possessives) and antecedents:

- *The girl did her job* vs. *The girls did their job*

Agreement also occurs between nouns and their specifier and modifiers, in some situations. This is common in languages such as French,

where articles, determiners and adjectives (both attributive and predicative) agree in number with the nouns they qualify:

- *le grand homme* ("the great man") vs. *les grands hommes* ("the great men")

In English this is not such a common feature, although there are certain determiners that occur specifically with singular or plural nouns only:

- *One big car* vs. *Two big cars*
- *Much great work* vs. *Many great works*

Gender

In languages in which grammatical gender plays a significant role, there is often agreement in gender between a noun and its modifiers. For example, in French:

- *le grand homme* ("the big man"; *homme* is masculine)
  vs. *la grande chaise* ("the big chair"; *chaise* is feminine)

Such agreement is also found with predicate adjectives: *l'homme est grand* ("the man is big") vs. *la chaise est grande* ("the chair is big"). (However, in some languages, such as German, this is not the case; only attributive modifiers show agreement.)

In the case of verbs, gender agreement is less common, although it may still occur. For example, in the French compound past tense, the past participle agrees in certain circumstances with the subject or with an object (see *passé composé* for details). In Russian and most other Slavic languages, the form of the past tense agrees in gender with the subject.

There is also agreement in gender between pronouns and antecedents. Examples of this can be found in English (although

English pronouns principally follow natural gender rather than grammatical gender):

- *The man reached his destination* vs. *The ship reached her/its de stination*

For more detail see Gender in English.

Case

In languages that have a system of cases, there is often agreement by case between a noun and its modifiers. For example, in German:

- *der gute Mann* ("the good man", nominative case)
  vs. *des guten Mann(e)s* ("of the good man", genitive case)

In fact the modifiers of nouns in languages such as German and Latin agree with their nouns in number, gender and case; all three categories are conflated together in paradigms of declension.

Case agreement is not a significant feature of English (only personal pronouns and the pronoun *who* have any case marking). Agreement between such pronouns can sometimes be observed:

- *Who came first – he or his brother?* vs. *Whom did you see – him or his brother?*

By language

Languages can have no conventional agreement whatsoever, as in Japanese or Malay; barely any, as in English; a small amount, as in

spoken French; a moderate amount, as in Greek or Latin; or a large amount, as in Swahili.

English

Modern English does not have a particularly large amount of agreement, although it is present.

Apart from verbs, the main examples are the determiners "this" and "that", which become "these" and "those" respectively when the following noun is plural:

this woman – these women
that dog – those dogs

All regular verbs (and nearly all irregular ones) in English agree in the third-person singular of the present indicative by adding a suffix of either -s or -*es*. The latter is generally used after stems ending in the sibilants *sh*, *ch*, *ss* or *zz* (e.g. *he rushes*, *it lurches*, *she amasses*, *it buzzes*.)

Present tense of *to love*:

Person	Number	
	Singular	**Plural**
First	*I love*	*we love*
Second	*you love*	*you love*
Third	*he/she/it love***s**	*they love*

There are not many irregularities in this formation:

- *to have*, *to go* and *to do* render *has*, *goes* and *does*.

The highly irregular verb *to be* is the only verb with more agreement than this in the present tense.

Present tense of *to be*:

Person	Number	
	Singular	**Plural**
First	*I am*	*we are*
Second	*you are*	*you are*
Third	*he/she/it is*	*they are*

In English, defective verbs generally show no agreement for person or number, they include the modal verbs: *can*, *may*, *shall*, *will*, *must*, *should*, *ought*.

In Early Modern English agreement existed for the second person singular of all verbs in the present tense, as well as in the past tense of some common verbs. This was usually in the form *-est*, but *-st* and *-t* also occurred. Note that this does not affect the endings for other persons and numbers.

Example present tense forms: *thou wilt*, *thou shalt*, *thou art*, *thou hast*, *thou canst*. Example past tense forms: *thou wouldst*, *thou shouldst*, *thou wast*, *thou hadst*, *thou couldst*

Note also the agreement shown by *to be* even in the subjunctive mood.

Imperfect subjunctive of *to be* in Early modern English

Person	Number	
	Singular	**Plural**
First	*(if) I were*	*(if) we were*
Second	*(if) thou wert*	*(if) you were*
Third	*(if) he/she/it were*	*(if) they were*

However, for nearly all regular verbs, a separate *thou* form was no longer commonly used in the past tense. Thus the auxiliary verb *to do* is used, e.g. *thou didst help*, not **thou helpedst*.

Latin

Compared with English, Latin (and Romance languages like Spanish and Italian) is an example of a highly inflected language. The consequences for agreement are thus:

Verbs must agree in person and number, and sometimes in gender, with their subjects. Articles and adjectives must agree in case, number and gender with the nouns they modify.

Sample Latin (Spanish) verb: the present indicative active of *portare* (*llevar*), to carry:

port*o* (llev*o*) – I carry
port*as* (llev*as*) – you [singular] carry
port*at* (llev*a*) – he carries
port*amus* (llev*amos*) – we carry
port*atis* (llev*áis*) – you [plural] carry
port*ant*, (llev*an*) – they carry

Note also that the inflectional endings mean it is not necessary to include the subject pronoun, except for emphasis, or to avoid ambiguity in complex sentences. For this reason, Latin is described as a null-subject language.

French

Spoken French always distinguishes the second person plural, and the first person plural in formal speech, from each other and from the rest of the present tense in all verbs in the first conjugation (infinitives in -er) other than *aller*. The first person plural form and pronoun (*nous*) are now usually replaced by the pronoun *on* (literally: "one") and a third person singular verb form in Modern French. Thus, *nous travaillons* (formal) becomes *on travaille*. In most verbs from the other conjugations, each person in the plural can be distinguished among themselves and from the

singular forms, again, when using the traditional first person plural. The other endings that appear in written French (i.e.: all singular endings, and also the third person plural of verbs other than those with infinitives in -er) are often pronounced the same, except in liaison contexts. Irregular verbs such as *être*, *faire*, *aller*, and *avoir*possess more distinctly pronounced agreement forms than regular verbs.

An example of this is the verb *travailler*, which goes as follows (the single words in italic type are pronounced /tʁa.vaj/):

- je *travaille*
- tu *travailles*
- il *travaille*
- *nous travaillons*, or on *travaille*
- *vous travaillez*
- ils *travaillent*

On the other hand, a verb like *partir* has (the single words in italic type are pronounced /paʁ/):

- je *pars*
- tu *pars*
- il *part*
- *nous partons*, or on *part*
- *vous partez*
- *ils partent*

The final S or T is silent, and the other three forms sound differently from one another and from the singular forms.

Adjectives agree in gender and number with the nouns that they modify in French. As with verbs, the agreements are sometimes only shown in spelling since forms that are written with different agreement suffixes are sometimes pronounced the same (e.g. *joli*, *jolie*); although in many cases the final consonant is pronounced in feminine forms, but silent in masculine forms

(e.g. *petit* vs. *petite*). Most plural forms end in -s, but this consonant is only pronounced in liaison contexts, and it is determinants that help understand if the singular or plural is meant. The participles of verbs agree in gender and number with the subject or object in some instances.

Articles, possessives and other determinants also decline for number and (only in the singular) for gender, with plural determinants being the same for both genders. This normally produces three forms: one for masculine singular nouns, one for feminine singular nouns, and another for plural nouns of either gender:

- Definite article: *le*, *la*, *les*
- Indefinite article: *un*, *une*, *des*
- Partitive article: *du*, *de la*, *des*
- Possessives (for the first person singular): *mon*, *ma*, *mes*
- Demonstratives: *ce*, *cette*, *ces*

Notice that some of the above also change (in the singular) if the following word begins with a vowel: *le* and *la* become *l'*, *du* and *de la* become *de l'*, *ma*becomes *mon* (as if the noun were masculine) and *ce* becomes *cet*.

Hungarian

In Hungarian, verbs have polypersonal agreement, which means they agree with more than one of the verb's arguments: not only its subject but also its (accusative) object. Difference is made between the case when there is a definite object and the case when the object is indefinite or there is no object at all. (The adverbs do not affect the form of the verb.) Examples: S*zeretek* (I love somebody or something unspecified), *szeretem* (I love him, her, it, or them, specifically), *szeretlek* (I love you); *szeret* (he loves me, us, you,

someone, or something unspecified), *szereti* (he loves her, him, it, or them specifically). Of course, nouns or pronouns may specify the exact object. In short, there is agreement between a verb and the person and number of its subject and the specificity of its object (which often refers to the person more or less exactly).

See Definite and indefinite conjugations

The predicate agrees in number with the subject and if it is copulative (i.e., it consists of a noun/adjective and a linking verb), both parts agree in number with the subject. For example: A *könyv**ek** érdekes**ek** volt**ak*** "The books were interesting" ("a": the, "könyv": book, "érdekes": interesting, "voltak": were): the plural is marked on the subject as well as both the adjectival and the copulative part of the predicate.

Within noun phrases, adjectives do not show agreement with the noun, e.g. *a szép könyv**eitekkel*** "with your nice books" ("szép": nice): the suffixes of the plural, the possessive "your" and the case marking "with" are only marked on the noun.

Scandinavian languages

In Scandinavian languages, adjectives are declined according to the gender, number, and definiteness of the noun they modify. In some cases, predicativeadjectives appear to disagree with their subjects. This phenomenon is referred to as pancake sentences. In New Norwegian and Swedish, the past participle must agree in gender and number. In Norwegian bokmål and Danish it is required to decline in number but often optional to decline certain words in gender as well as number.

Slavic languages

Most Slavic languages are highly inflected, except for Bulgarian and Macedonian. The agreement is similar to Latin, for instance between adjectives and nouns in gender, number, case and animacy (if counted as a separate category). The following examples are from Serbian:

> *živim u malom stanu* "I live in a small apartment" (masculine inanimate, singular, locative)
> *živim u maloj kući* "I live in a small house" (feminine, singular, locative)
> *imam mali stan* "I have a small apartment" (masculine inanimate, singular, accusative)
> *imam malu kuću* "I have a small house" (feminine, singular, accusative)
> *imam malog psa* "I have a small dog" (masculine animate, singular, accusative)

Verbs have 6 different forms in the present tense, for three persons in singular and plural. As in Latin, subject is frequently dropped.

Another characteristic is agreement in participles, which have different forms for different genders:

> *ja sam jela* "I was eating" (female speaking)
> *ja sam jeo* "I was eating" (male speaking)

Swahili

Swahili, like all other Bantu languages, has numerous noun classes. Verbs must agree in class with their subjects and objects, and adjectives with the nouns that they qualify. For example: ***Ki****tabu* ***ki****moja* ***ki****tatosha* (One book will be enough), ***M****chungwa* ***m****moja* ***u****tatosha* (One orange-tree will be enough), *Chungwa moja* ***li****tatosha* (One orange will be enough).

There is also agreement in number. For example: ***Vi****tabu* ***vi****wili* ***vi****tatosha* (Two books will be enough), ***Mi****chungwa* ***mi****wili* ***i****tatosha* (Two orange-trees will be enough), ***Ma****chungwa* ***ma****wili* ***ya****tatosha* (Two oranges will be enough).

Class and number are indicated with prefixes (or sometimes their absence), which are not always the same for nouns, adjectives and verbs, as illustrated by the examples.

See also

- Attraction (grammar)
- Case government
- Declension
- Inflection
- Redundancy (linguistics)
- Sequence of tenses – sometimes called **agreement of tenses**
- Synthetic language

References

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External links

- Agreement: A bibliography

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21. Non-Finite Verbs

Just when we thought we had verbs figured out, we're brought face-to-face with a new animal: non-finite verbs. These words *look* similar to verbs we've already been talking about, but they *act* quite different from those other verbs.

By definition, a non-finite verb cannot serve as the main verb in an independent clause. In practical terms, this means that they don't serve as the action of a sentence. They also don't have a tense. While the sentence around them may be past, present, or future tense, the non-finite verbs themselves are neutral. There are three types of non-finite verbs: gerunds, participles, and infinitives.

Gerunds

Gerunds all end in *-ing*: *skiing*, *reading*, *dancing*, *singing*, etc. Gerunds **act like nouns** and can serve as subjects or objects of sentences. They can be created using active or helping verbs:

- I like **swimming**.
- **Being loved** can make someone feel safe.
- Do you fancy **going out**?
- **Having read the book once before** makes me more prepared.

Often the "doer" of the gerund is clearly signaled:

- We enjoyed **singing** yesterday (we ourselves sang)
- Tomás likes **eating** apricots (Tomás himself eats apricots)

However, sometimes the "doer" must be overtly specified, typically in a position immediately before the non-finite verb:

- We enjoyed their **singing.**
- We were delighted at Bianca **being** awarded the prize.

Practice

Identify the gerunds and their roles in the following sentences:

1. Sam was really bad at gardening.
2. Studying is one of Jazz's favorite things to do.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="274304"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="274304"]

1. Sam was really bad at **gardening**.
    - *Gardening* is the object of the prepositional phrase "bad at gardening."
2. **Studying** is one of Jazz's favorite things to do.
    - *Studying* is the subject of the sentence.

[/hidden-answer]

Participles

A **participle** is a form of a verb that is used in a sentence to modify a noun, noun phrase, verb, or verb phrase, and then plays a role similar to an adjective or adverb. It is one of the types of nonfinite verb forms.

The two types of participle in English are traditionally called the **present participle** (forms such as *writing*, *singing* and *raising*) and the **past participle** (forms such as *written*, *sung* and *raised*).

The Present Participle

Even though they look exactly the same, gerunds and present participles do different things. As we just learned, the gerund acts as a noun: e.g., "I like *sleeping*"; "*Sleeping* is not allowed." Present participles, on the other hand, act similarly to an adjective or adverb: e.g., "The *sleeping* girl over there is my sister"; "*Breathing* heavily, she finished the race in first place."

The present participle, or participial phrases (clauses) formed from it, are used as follows:

- as an adjective phrase modifying a noun phrase: *The man* ***sitting*** *over there is my uncle.*
- adverbially, the subject being understood to be the same as that of the main clause: ***Looking*** *at the plans, I gradually came to see where the problem lay. He shot the man,* ***killing*** *him.*
- more generally as a clause or sentence modifier: *Broadly* ***speaking****, the project was successful.*

The present participle can also be used with the helping verb *to be* to form a type of present tense: *Marta was* ***sleeping***. (We'll discuss this further in Text: Complex Verb Tenses.) This is something we learned a little bit about in helping verbs and tense.

The Past Participle

Past participles often look very similar to the simple past tense

of a verb: *finished*, *danced*, etc. However, some verbs have different forms. Reference lists will be your best help in finding the correct past participle. Here is one such list of participles. Here's a short list of some of the most common irregular past participles you'll use:

Verb	Simple Past	Past Participle
to be	was/were	been
to become	became	become
to do	did	done
to go	went	gone
to know	knew	know
to see	saw	seen
to speak	spoke	spoken
to take	took	taken
to write	wrote	written

Past participles are used in a couple of different ways:

- as an adjective phrase: *The chicken* ***eaten*** *by the children was contaminated.*
- adverbially: **Seen** *from this perspective, the problem presents no easy solution.*
- in a nominative absolute construction, with a subject: *The task* ***finished****, we returned home.*

The past participle can also be used with the helping verb *to have* to form a type of past tense (which we'll talk about in Text: Complex Verb Tenses): *The chicken has* ***eaten****.* It is also used to form the passive voice: *Tianna was* **voted** *as most likely to succeed.* When the passive voice is used following a relative pronoun (like *that* or *which*) we sometimes leave out parts of the phrase:

- He had three things **that were** taken away from him
- He had three things taken away from him

In the second sentence, we removed the words *that were*. However, we still use the past participle *taken*. The removal of these words is called *elision*. Elision is used with a lot of different constructions in English; we use it shorten sentences when things are understood. However, we can only use elision in certain situations, so be careful when removing words! (We'll discuss this further in Text: Using the Passive Voice.)

Practice

Identify the participles in the following sentences, as well as the functions they perform:

1. Tucker had always wanted a pet dog.
2. Rayssa was practicing her flute when everything suddenly went wrong.
3. Having been born in the 1990s, Amber often found herself surrounded by nostalgia.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="397305"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="397305"]

1. The past participle is *wanted*. In this case, it is used alongside the helping verb *had* to form the past tense.
2. *Practicing* is the present participle. It, along with the helping verb *was*, create a sense of continuity or process.
3. *Having been born in the 1990s* is a present participle phrase. It is used adverbially, and the subject is the same as the subject of the main phrase: Amber. Additionally, *been* is the past participle. It is used

alongside the helping verb *having* to give a sense of the past tense.

[/hidden-answer]

Infinitives

> To be or not to be, that is the question.
> –Hamlet

The infinitive is the basic dictionary form of a verb, usually preceded by *to* (when it's not, it's called the **bare infinitive**, which we'll discuss more later). Thus *to go* is an infinitive. There are several different uses of the infinitive. They can be used alongside verbs, as a noun phrase, as a modifier, or in a question.

With Other Verbs

The *to*-infinitive is used with other verbs (we'll discuss exceptions when we talk about the bare infinitive):

- I aim **to convince** him of our plan's ingenuity.
- You already know that he'll fail **to complete** the task.

You can also use multiple infinitives in a single sentence: "Today, I plan **to run** three miles, **to clean** my room, and **to update** my budget." All three of these infinitives follow the verb *plan*. Other verbs that often come before infinitives include *want*, *convince*, *try*, *able*, and *like*.

As a Noun Phrase

The infinitive can also be used to express an action in an abstract, general way: "**To err** is human"; "**To know** me is **to love me**." No one in particular is completing these actions. In these sentences, the infinitives act as the subjects.

Infinitives can also serve as the object of a sentence. One common construction involves a dummy subject (*it*): "It was nice **to meet** you."

As a Modifier

Infinitives can be used as an adjective (e.g., "A request **to see** someone" or "The man **to save** us") or as an adverb (e.g., "Keen **to get** on," "Nice **to listen** to," or "In order **to win**").

In Questions

Infinitives can be used in elliptical questions as well, as in "I don't know where **to go**."

> **Note:** The infinitive is also the usual dictionary form or citation form of a verb. The form listed in dictionaries is the bare infinitive, although the *to*-infinitive is often used in referring to verbs or in defining other verbs: "The word *amble* means 'to walk slowly'"; "How do we conjugate the verb *to go*?"

Certain helping verbs do not have infinitives, such *will*, *can*, and *may*.

Split Infinitives?

One of the biggest controversies among grammarians and style writers has been the appropriateness of separating the two words of the *to*-infinitive as in "to *boldly* go." Despite what a lot of people have declared over the years, there is absolutely nothing wrong with this construction. It is 100 percent grammatically sound.

Part of the reason so many authorities have been against this construction is likely the fact that in languages such as Latin, the infinitive is a single word, and cannot be split. However, in English the infinitive (or at least the *to*-infinitive) is two words, and a split infinitive is a perfectly natural construction.

Try to versus Try and

One common error people make is saying *try and* instead of *try to*, as in "I'll try and be there by 10:00 tomorrow." However, *try* requires a to-infinitive after it, so using *and* is incorrect. While this construction is acceptable in casual conversation, it is not grammatically correct and should not be used in formal situations.

The Bare Infinitive

As we mentioned previously, the infinitive can sometimes occur without the word *to*. The form without *to* is called the **bare infinitive** (the form with *to* is called the ***to*-infinitive**). In the following sentences both *sit* and *to sit* would each be considered an infinitive:

- I want **to sit** on the other chair.
- I can **sit** here all day.

Infinitives have a variety of uses in English. Certain contexts call for the *to*-infinitive form, and certain contexts call for the bare infinitive; they are not normally interchangeable, except in occasional instances like after the verb *help*, where either can be used.

As we mentioned earlier, some verbs require the bare infinitive instead of the *to*-infinitive:

- The helping verb *do*
  - Does she **dance**?
  - Zi doesn't **sing**.
- Helping verbs that express tense, possibility, or ability like *will*, *can*, *could*, *should*, *would*, and *might*
  - The bears will **eat** you if they catch you.
  - Lucas and Gerardo might **go** to the dance.
  - You should **give** it a try.
- Verbs of perception, permission, or causation, such as *see*, *watch*, *hear*, *make*, *let*, *and have* (after a direct object)
  - Look at Caroline **go**!
  - You can't make me **talk**.
  - It's so hard to let someone else **finish** my work.

The bare infinitive can be used as the object in such sentences like

"What you should do is **make** a list." It can also be used after the word *why* to ask a question: "Why **reveal** it?"

The bare infinitive can be tricky, because it often looks exactly like the present tense of a verb. Look at the following sentences for an example:

- You **lose** things so often.
- You can **lose** things at the drop of a hat.

In both of these sentences, we have the word *lose*, but in the first sentence it's a present tense verb, while in the second it's a bare infinitive. So how can you tell which is which? The easiest way is to try changing the subject of the sentence and seeing if the verb should change:

- She **loses** things so often.
- She can **lose** things at the drop of a hat.

Practice

Identify the infinitives in the following sentences, as well as their functions:

1. Paulina will be the girl to beat.
2. What you should do is stop talking for a moment and listen.
3. It was really nice to hear from you again.
4. Why walk when I could run?

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="875706"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="875706"]

1. Paulina will **be** the girl **to beat**.
    - There are two infinitives in this sentence: *be* and *to beat*.*Be* works with the verb *will*. The infinitive *to beat* acts as an adjective, describing what kind of girl Paulina is.
2. What you should do is **stop** talking for a moment and **listen**.
    - There are two infinitives in this sentence: *stop* and *listen*. They are both the objects of the sentence. This sentence also includes the gerund *talking*, which the object in the phrase "stop talking."
3. It was really nice **to hear** from you again.
    - The infinitive *to hear* is used in this instance. It acts as the object of the sentence.
4. Why **walk** when I could **run**?
    - There are two infinitives in this sentence: *walk* and *run*. *Walk* follows the word *why*, and it is asking a question. *Run* works with the helping verb *could*.

[/hidden-answer]

Now that we've learned how to use each of the different non-finite verbs, let's take a look at how they're used together. This practice will help you distinguish non-finite verbs from each other (as well as distinguishing them from the "normal" verbs we learned about previously in this outcome).

Practice

The Australian magpie is a medium-size black and white bird native to Australia. Feeding magpies is a common practice among households around the country, and there generally is a peaceful co-existence. However, in the spring a small minority of breeding magpies (almost always males) become aggressive and swoop and attack passersby. Being unexpectedly swooped while cycling can result in loss of control of the bicycle, which may cause injury. Cyclists can deter attack by attaching a long pole with a flag to a bike. Using cable ties on helmets has become common as well, and it appears to be an effective deterrent.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="306830"]Show Gerunds[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="306830"]Here is the passage with all the gerunds bolded:

> The Australian magpie is a medium-size black and white bird native to Australia. **Feeding** magpies is a common practice among households around the country, and there generally is a peaceful co-existence. However, in the spring a small minority of breeding magpies (almost always males) become aggressive and swoop and attack passersby. **Being** unexpectedly swooped while **cycling** can result in loss of control of the bicycle, which may cause injury. Cyclists can deter attack by **attaching** a long pole with a flag to a bike. **Using** cable ties on helmets has become common as well, and it appears to be an effective deterrent.

1. *Feeding magpies* is the subject of this sentence.
2. *Being unexpectedly swooped* is the subject of this sentence.
3. *While cycling* is a prepositional phrase. *Cycling* is the object of this phrase.
4. *By attaching a long pole with a flag to a bike* is a prepositional phrase. *Attaching* is the object of this phrase.
5. *Using cable ties on helmets* is the subject of this sentence.

[/hidden-answer]

[reveal-answer q="306880"]Show Participles[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="306880"]Here is the passage with all the participles bolded. Past particles have also been italicized.

> The Australian magpie is a medium-size black and white bird native to Australia. Feeding magpies is a common practice among households around the country, and there generally is a peaceful co-existence. However, in the spring a small minority of **breeding** magpies (almost always males) become aggressive and swoop and attack passersby. Being unexpectedly ***swooped*** while cycling can result in loss of control of the bicycle, which may cause injury. Cyclists can deter attack by attaching a long pole with a flag to a bike. Using cable ties on helmets has become common as well, and it appears to be an effective deterrent.

1. *Breeding* is a present participle serving as an adjective. It modifies the noun *magpies*.

2. *Swooped* is a past participle. It works with the gerund *being* as a part of the subject of the sentence: *Being unexpectedly swooped while cycling*. "Being swooped" is a passive voice construction, so it requires the past participle.

[/hidden-answer]

[reveal-answer q="306835"]Show Infinitives[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="306835"]Here is the passage with all the infinitives bolded:

> The Australian magpie is a medium-size black and white bird native to Australia. Feeding magpies is a common practice among households around the country, and there generally is a peaceful co-existence. However, in the spring a small minority of breeding magpies (almost always males) become aggressive and swoop and attack passersby. Being unexpectedly swooped while cycling can **result** in loss of control of the bicycle, which may **cause** injury. Cyclists can **deter** attack by attaching a long pole with a flag to a bike. Using cable ties on helmets has become common as well, and it appears **to be** an effective deterrent.

1. *Result* is the bare-infinitive. It works with the verb *can*. *Can* indicates a possibility in this sentence.
2. *Cause* is the bare-infinitive. It works with the verb *may*. *May* indicates a possibility in this sentence.
3. *Deter* is the bare-infinitive. It works with the verb *can*. *Can* indicates a possibility in this sentence.
4. *To be* is the *to*-infinitive. It works with the

verb *appears*.

[/hidden-answer]

PART V

MODULE 4: TIMED WRITING

22. Module 4: Timed Writing

Module Introduction

In our first module, we discussed the anxiety that living with our symbiotic technology, language, can cause us when we are in situations like job interviews when we have to communicate in specialized ways and so must suddenly be aware of how that technology is functioning. One way to get a handle on such situations is to develop a clear understanding of what is expected and then to practice that kind of specialized communication. The last two modules, which focused on narration and example writing, were meant both to inform you about the kinds of writing you often perform in college and the workplace and to help you practice how to develop that writing. This unit will put the skills you've developed so far to the test in a kind of "real world" simulation of communicating under pressure.

College students often have to write an essay based on a prompt or question within a limited time period. For example, an essay question on a test in a humanities class may require a short, timed essay without the benefit of resources. Moreover, many job interviews involve writing projects that require applicants to prove their ability to think under time constraints, and of course at work deadlines are always looming, so writing under pressure is an important skill to master.

This course requires students to write, and receive a passing grade on, one timed essay at a testing site. You will have 60 minutes to compose an essay on one of two prompts without benefit of references or resources. Refer to the syllabus for information about scheduling this essay.

The essay must be 400 to 500 words long and consist of four or five paragraphs including 1)an introductory paragraph with a thesis

statement, 2) body paragraphs supporting the thesis statement, and 3) a concluding paragraph. Prewriting and outlining (the first two steps of the writing process we've discussed over the last two modules) can help you develop the key components that need to be included in these paragraphs; for example, the introductory paragraph should include your hook and thesis statement. A grading rubric is included in this module to help you understand how the timed essay will be evaluated.

In this module, you will learn techniques that will help you to succeed at timed writing, such as how to budget time, organize ideas, write an effective thesis statement, and proofread your essay. If you will approach your essay as a process and go through the recommended steps, you can avoid writer's block and draft with confidence! [1]

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the student will be able to:

- List the planning steps for writing a timed essay
- Differentiate grades for a timed essay, based on the criteria in the grading rubric
- Compose an essay within 60 minutes, applying the steps of the writing process adapted for timed writing [1]

Readings

- Online Learning Unit

Lecture Content

ENC1101 Learning Unit 4

Planning for the Timed Essay

The most important part of writing a timed essay is *time management* . Study the following three-step strategy to prepare for writing the timed essay required in this course. Students may revise this strategy to accommodate their own writing style.

Step 1. 10 Minutes to Plan

- Choose one of the prompts from the two provided and come up with a *working thesis* based on the language of the prompt
- Quickly list or map the major points to develop the topic (this is the prewriting step)
- Rearrange these points in a logical order on a simple outline; for example, list them in their *order of importance* , also known as *emphatic order* (this is the outlining step)
- Draft a more developed thesis statement that might include an *essay map*

Step 2. 40 Minutes to Write

- Write the essay using double spaces or, if using notebook paper, write on every other line of the paper to allow room for

revision
- Write carefully and legibly
- Use an outline or map as a guide, but add and delete as new ideas and examples emerge

Step 3. 10 Minutes to Revise, Edit, and Proofread

- Read the essay for content, and add or delete material as necessary, making certain that the paper remains legible and reads smoothly overall
- Read for appropriate sentence structure and vocabulary; revise as needed
- Correct grammar and spelling errors [1]

Looking at the First Step in More Detail

First, study the prompts given on the test. Choose the one that immediately strikes you as the more interesting or the one which relates the most to your life; this is your symbiotic technology kicking in and letting you know the right choice. The kind of assignment we are dealing with here is meant to generate a personal experience paper rather than an academic report, so all of the essay's specific information is going to be based on your life and knowledge, so in this case your familiarity with or interest in the topic is going to make a massive difference.

An important rule to remember is that once you have selected a topic based on your instincts, **don't return to the other topic**. Pretend the only topic is the one you have picked so you don't end up wasting time by questioning yourself and going back to the planning stage. Once you've made your choice, live with it!

Another important thing to remember is to immediately develop

a very basic thesis statement based on the language of the prompt you choose; this will give you a starting point for your prewriting and will ensure that you have a main idea for your paper.

For example, imagine you were given the following two prompts:

> A *sandwich you most regret making*
> or
> A *fictional character you would like to be*

These topics give you language on which to build your basic thesis. You might say:

> "That tuna sandwich I made last Tuesday is one I most regret.."
> or
> "Harry Potter is the fictional character I would most like to be."

Now, these thesis statements aren't great; their language is very basic, and they sound generic. However, they can help you clarify your main idea and develop your examples. Then, after you come up with the specific information you are going to use to support these ideas, you can refine them. We'll come back to this in a minute.

After you've come up with your basic thesis (and this should happen pretty quickly), it's time to do some prewriting. In our earlier modules we discussed several different prewriting strategies, and for timed writing the most effective ones are probably *listing and mapping* (*freewriting* is a bit too time-intensive). Questioning can also work if you are writing a narrative, but keep in mind that you are likely going to be writing example essays for in-class college assignments, so you will probably not be writing a long narrative unless it serves as an extended example (one big example story that supports your thesis statement).

Once you've generated a bunch of ideas to support your thesis (the reasons you are going to provide that will persuade your reader of your point), you should make sure to outline your paper. This is

very important. Many students will neglect to outline an in-class essay because they fear running out of time, but *not outlining* can actually lead to more time-related issues because you are likely to get confused as you draft without having a plan of some sort. Remember, *organization is everything* when you are writing academic or professional essays, and outlining makes sure you stay organized!

As you begin filling out your outline, a major decision you need to make is in what order to put your general examples to best support your thesis. In some cases, chronological order might work; for example, in the above example about the tuna sandwich, you might have come up with a number of reasons the sandwich was a regrettable choice, and those reasons might have happened one after the other. Maybe the first reason is that the bread you got out of the pantry was old and moldy. Maybe another reason is the nasty condiments you then put on the bread from the fridge, and the final reason is the cheap and sickly tuna itself that you ended up spreading on that bread. In this silly and very basic example, each element of the sandwich was added in sequential order, so you could actually take the reader through the process chronologically, ending with the final sad step when the questionable tuna was added to the concoction.

A likely more effective organizational strategy for an in-class example essay is to use *emphatic* order to present your idea, which we discussed in our last module. This is when you move from your least important point to your most powerful reason. Sometimes when you are planning an in-class essay, this level of importance can be hard to identify, so ask yourself this question: about which of the main points I am trying to make do I have the most to say? If you look at your prewriting and you have developed a bunch of specific ideas about one of your major examples, it's a safe bet that the example in question is the one that should go last. [1]

Grading Criteria for the Timed Essay

The timed essay will be scored according to the grading criteria below. [1]

The A Paper

- The essay presents or implies a thesis that is developed with noticeable coherence and provides convincing, specific support.
- The writer's ideas are usually substantive, sophisticated, and well developed.
- The writer's choice of language and structure is precise and purposeful, often to the point of being polished.
- Control of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics, despite an occasional flaw, contributes to the writer's ability to communicate the purpose.
- The writer demonstrates correct usage of quotations and paraphrases.

The B Paper

- The essay presents a thesis and often suggests a plan of development, which is usually carried out.
- The writer provides enough supporting detail to accomplish the purpose of the paper.
- The writer makes competent use of language and sometimes varies the sentence structure.
- Occasional errors in sentence structure, usage, and mechanics do not interfere with the writer's ability to communicate the purpose.

- The writer demonstrates correct usage of quotations and paraphrases.

The C Paper

- The essay presents a thesis and often suggests a plan of development, which is usually carried out.
- The writer provides support that tends towards generalized statements or lists. In general, the support is neither sufficient nor clear enough to be convincing.
- Sentence structure tends to be pedestrian and often repetitious. Errors in sentence structure, usage, and mechanics sometimes interfere with the writer's ability to communicate the purpose.
- Mistakes in quotations and paraphrasing lead to some awkwardness.

The D Paper

- The writer presents a poorly written thesis.
- The writer provides support that tends to be sketchy and/or illogical.
- Sentence structure may be simplistic and disjointed. Errors in sentence structure, usage, and mechanics frequently interfere with the writer's ability to communicate the purpose.
- The writer uses quotations or paraphrases incorrectly.

The F Paper

- The essay presents a thesis that is vaguely worded or weakly asserted.
- Support, if any, tends to be rambling and/or superficial.
- The writer uses language that often becomes tangled, incoherent, and thus confusing.
- Errors in sentence structure, usage, and mechanics frequently occur.
- The writer tends to use quotations or paraphrases incorrectly.

Assignment: Proctored Timed Writing

Given two topics from which to choose, you will have 60 minutes to compose an essay without the benefit of references or resources. This assignment is worth 100 points. The timed essay will take place in a proctored exam setting.

Instructions for scheduling the timed writing and site guidelines are included in the Blackboard Tools & Resources area.

The timed essay will be completed in Blackboard.

The essay must be 400 to 500 words long and consist of four or five paragraphs including:

1. an introductory paragraph with a thesis statement
2. body paragraphs supporting the thesis statement
3. a concluding paragraph

Prewriting and outlining (the first two steps of the writing process we've discussed over the last two modules) can help you develop the key components that need to be included in these paragraphs; for example, the introductory paragraph should include your hook and thesis statement.

A grading rubric is included in this module's Learning Unit to help you understand how the timed essay will be evaluated. [1]

PART VI

MODULE 5: THE WORDS WE WIELD TO WORK FOR PEACE – ARGUMENTATION PART I

23. Module 5: The Words We Wield to Work for Peace- Argumentation Part I

Module Introduction

In module two we discussed how narration, the telling of stories, is perhaps the most typical way that humans interact with language and so is probably the most comfortable mode of writing for many because it comes so "naturally" to us. We also considered perspective when we talked about storytelling; every person approaches the world from a certain point-of-view, and the words he or she uses to express that position both construct that perspective (after all, language is the vehicle for our thoughts) and reveal it to others. When we tell stories, we invite others to experience our point-of-view and to empathize with our perspective. In other words, language serves as the great connective tissue that allows us to commune together and build understanding.

And yet, even as language pulls us together, the singular nature of perspective pulls us apart. Though we share the world, each of us only truly experiences it from our specific position, and it's impossible for us to truly inhabit another person's point-of-view (that's why language is necessary in the first place!). This distance can lead to misunderstandings, especially because our words can be interpreted in a variety of ways that we can't control.

Moreover, we are not simply communicating beings that forge communities; we are also physical bodies struggling to survive and competing for resources. When that struggle intensifies, our singular perspective focuses more and more on self-preservation. In the direst of such circumstances, physical conflict and violence

erupt as we act on the world in order to defend our place in it. Even when overt physical conflict can be avoided, communication becomes difficult under duress because our perspective is in jeopardy; though we often are quick to express how we feel about important issues that affect our well being and are desperate for others to understand our position, we are less likely to listen to others when we fear for our survival. In these moments we wield our words like weapons; we shout for our space and refuse to acknowledge the perspectives of others whom we now perceive as threats rather than fellow storytellers.

In these moments it's easy to forget that each and every one of us has survived thanks largely to a community forged on language and mutual understanding. Human infants must be nurtured, for we cannot fend for ourselves in our early years. Thanks to the cooperation that language has afforded us, we have built societies where successful child rearing, though always difficult and never perfect, is commonplace. In other words, our perspectives that contest for survival are themselves indebted to the negotiation, cooperation, and compromises language allowed our forbears to make. When we lash out without discussion or deliberation, emphasizing our individual power at the expense of others, we forget our communal roots and risk everything. When language breaks down, society is at risk. When society is at risk, human survival in general is jeopardized. However, as mortal beings we live in danger and seek self-preservation, often at the expense of others. How can we reconcile these uncomfortable truths?

An absolute reconciliation is impossible, for existence costs and sometimes survival instincts override our best intentions. However, for the sake of the human species, and in the honor of those who have built the cultures and institutions that we inhabit (and due to which we persist), we must not abandon our responsibility to communicate. This module will explain just how that responsibility takes shape in a specific kind of writing: argumentation.

Argumentation means taking a position on a social or political issue while directly engaging other points of view. Of all the writing

types we've encountered so far, this one is perhaps the most difficult because it requires that we detach from our primordial desire to overcome obstacles by using force. In other words, though writing an argument, like all writing, expresses an author's perspective and in some sense imposes that perspective on an audience, it also requires that the author directly entertain perspectives other than his or her own in order to build community. This is as difficult as it is uncomfortable, for it requires not only that we explain why we believe something (and often we have trouble establishing our own reasons for thinking a certain way!) but also that we understand why someone else believes otherwise.

In addition, once we have considered what others think and why, effective argumentation requires that we figure out what kinds of examples might build consensus for our perspective. When we are arguing about important social and political issues, it is often not enough to merely explain our own personal experiences as evidence for our beliefs. Thus, argumentative writing also entails documenting outside sources to augment one's position and persuade readers to agree. This module will discuss some of the kinds of evidence that are most convincing; the next module will focus on exactly how to present that evidence in a paper. [1]

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the student will be able to:

- Identify the characteristics of argumentation, including the interplay between logic and emotion
- Identify enthusiastic, undecided, and contentious audiences and how each shapes a writer's argument
- Identify the importance of integrating an opposing viewpoint as a persuasive tactic
- Identify the kinds of evidence used to support the reasons that

explain an argumentative thesis
- Identify fallacies, including ad hominem attacks, either or arguments, post hoc fallacies, and hasty and sweeping generalizations
- Compose an argument using the steps of the writing process [1]

Readings

- Online Learning Units

Lecture Content

ENC1101 Learning Unit 5:

Academic Argumentation: Constructive Collisions vs. Everyday Bickering

Arguments in general aren't uncommon at all. We use our language to conflict with those around us all the time; we argue about food, sports, in-laws, entertainment options, scheduling, money issues, and just about every other element of our lives, and we do so constantly, largely because our perspectives on life don't line up. These everyday arguments don't usually lead to agreement, for most people insist on the correctness of their point-of-view, and many of these small-scale conflicts end with neither party being satisfied and the louder or more insistent arguer being the "winner" by default.

Academic arguments are similar to these commonplace "real

world" scuffles in that they are also emotional affairs. However, unlike everyday arguments, academic argumentation requires that such emotional investment be counterbalanced by clear-headed explanations of an arguer's *logic* , the reasons for his or her position, and the presentation of the*evidence* that supports those reasons. When we bicker with each other outside the classroom or boardroom, we often raise our voices and express our passion without caring much to truly explain ourselves, sometimes because we secretly realize that our reasoning is faulty or that we don't really know why we feel so strongly about an issue. Because academic and professional argumentation is civil and attempts either to build consensus or to elicit understanding (or perhaps both), this kind of illogical, unfounded aggression is out-of-bounds. [1]

Arguing to an Audience: Three Types of Readers

Though the "rules" of academic argumentation are meant to promote civility, argument itself assumes controversy and opposing points of view about matters of political and social importance, so emotions are still very much a part of the picture. The amount of emotion you pour into a written argument, however, largely depends upon the audience you are trying to reach. Keep in mind, though, that every academic argument must to some extent include sound reasoning and appropriate evidence, regardless of its receiver. The right*balanced* of that emotion, logic, and evidence, however, will vary according to your anticipated reader(s). Let's consider the *three types of audiences* you can expect to approach in your academic and professional careers, as well as the balance of emotion, reasoning, and evidence required for each. [1]

Enthusiastic Audience

An *enthusiastic audience* is one that already agrees with your point-of-view. In reaching out to these readers, you are trying to fire them up about the subject and perhaps encourage them to take action on your side's behalf. Imagine a politician giving a speech specifically to his or her base and you'll get a bit of an idea how this might look (though when writing an academic argument you are likely to be more concerned with evidence and reasoning than many politicians are when giving speeches!). When writing to an enthusiastic audience, you can rely heavily upon emotional language, and the burden of proof for your reasoning is much lighter; though you should still explain your logic, you can do so without presenting quite as much evidence and can include more personal experiences to support your claims. This is obviously the easiest audience to convince, but it is also one that you are least likely to confront in college or at work (alas, life often works that way). [1]

Contentious Audience

On the other hand, a *contentious audience* intensely disagrees with your main idea. Contentious readers are hard to reach because they are easy to upset and require a massive amount of convincing; just imagine your own reaction to those who disagree with your most cherished beliefs, and you will have a sense of how these readers will approach your writing. Whereas an enthusiastic audience will enjoy the passion you feel for your position, a contentious audience will resent your emotional connection to it. Thus, you must rely almost entirely on your reasoning and your evidence when writing to contentious readers if you want to make any inroads with them,

and usually the most you can hope for is that they will at least consider your perspective. [1]

Undecided Audience

Finally, and perhaps most importantly when it comes to academic and professional writing, the *undecided audience* is one that on the whole has not made up its collective mind. You should assume that an undecided audience is capable of considering both sides of an issue and that is likely to ask questions that anticipate an opposing point-of-view in regard to the reasons you give for your position. However, this audience has an open mind and is willing to consider your perspective as long as it is presented in a reasonable, well-supported manner. You can be emotional with such an audience up to a point; indeed, you want them to know how important the issue is, and you want them to stay interested, so passionate writing has a place here. On the other hand, you don't want to overdo it or this audience will see you as being overly biased and may stop trusting you. You thus have to walk a fine line with the undecided audience, carefully balancing your emotions with a clear explanation of your logic while providing plenty of relevant evidence to support your cause. Unless you are explicitly told otherwise, this is the audience to whom you should address your academic and professional work. [1]

How to Start Developing an Effective Academic Argument

In many ways, argumentation is another kind of example essay; you will have a main point (a topic sentence) that makes a claim about an issue (your subject matter), and you will support that claim with

examples and specific details. You also likely will use emphatic order (building to your most important point, like arguing to a jury) to best convince your reader of your position.

However, unlike basic example writing, academic argumentation requires that you provide more than just personal experiences as evidence for your claim. This is because you are writing about a controversial topic that evokes strong feelings, and educated audiences will want to see factual evidence for your position before they are willing to believe you; readers, especially contentious or undecided ones, won't be satisfied with just personal stories about the topic, even if they are relevant ones.

In addition, academic argumentation necessitates a discussion of the opposing point-of-view so that your writing doesn't seem overly biased. Remember, since you are likely writing to an undecided audience that is smart enough to question everything and to consider both sides, you want to make sure to get ahead of the game and appear both knowledgeable and studious.

In fact, because you need to understand both sides of an issue before you start writing, it's a good practice not to throw in too quickly with one side or another. Unlike, say, developing your thesis statement for a piece of critique writing or for an in-class essay, coming up with a main idea for an argument paper should not stem just from a gut reaction you have about the topic. That can provide a starting place, of course, but before you truly commit to your main point, you should read up on the issue and seek out plenty of information from sources that are as unbiased as possible and then decide on your thesis statement.

Now we come back to the tricky logic of perspective that we've been discussing since module two: every written or otherwise reported account about the world always represents a particular point-of-view. Even the most careful reporter or scientist is still approaching the world under a particular set of circumstances and with a particular agenda; such is the fate of humanity. In a sense we live in a hall of mirrors in which we ourselves are mirrors, too, all of our reports reflecting the light of the world back and forth, with

the origin of that light source lost to us. Some of those mirrors are more distorted than others; in current media, for example, most of us know that Fox News refracts a conservative political perspective, while MSNBC refracts liberal America's point-of-view. Though both sources claim to tell the truth, if you watch the one you don't agree with, you will be quick to see bias in everything that's presented. Just remember that someone who has a different political perspective will see the same bias in your favorite news channel!

That's not to say that nothing on Fox or MSNBC is worth watching or even worth mentioning in your paper, but keep in mind that as soon as you cite from one such source, a well-informed reader will immediately have misgivings about that information if you don't balance it with, say, a mention of the other organization's take on your topic.

As a general rule, academic audiences are likely to be less troubled by information provided by the Associated Press (a news organization that provides stories to other news outlets all over the world and that prides itself on being as objective and unbiased as possible) and by .org and .edu websites (which are run by non-profit and/or educational institutions) than by information from .com sites that seek to generate "clicks" and receive advertising dollars in return for traffic. In addition, information gleaned from peer-reviewed articles published in academic journals is considered highly believable because it is vetted by experts in the disciplines for which those articles are written. Many of these excellent sources can be found in your college library's database system, which you can think of as a curated collection of sources that work well as evidence for argumentative assignments. [1]

Fallacies: Dodging Devious Discourse

Some of the more biased sources of information you may encounter might rely upon *fallacies* to convince you of their positions. Fallacies

are illogical arguments disguised to look like sound reasoning. Salacious arguers have a vast number of such fallacies at their disposal to trick readers into believing their claims. In order to help you avoid falling for these kinds of tricks, a list of some common fallacies, along with explanations and examples, is provided below.

ad hominem attack

This fallacy occurs when an arguer attacks the character of an opponent rather than his or her ideas. Example: *Mr. Smith's tax policy is obviously unsound because it is proposed by a man who is a serial adulterer with an alcohol problem.*

either/or fallacy

This fallacy occurs when someone insists that a decision can only have one of two choices even though the situation is far more complicated than such a forced choice implies. Example: *Taking military action in the Middle East comes down to this—either you support our brave troops going into battle or you are a coward who hates the United States.*

post hoc fallacy

This fallacy takes place when someone assumes that one thing *caused* another thing just because it *preceded* that thing. This kind of reasoning ignores all of the complicated factors that can affect a situation. For example, imagine that after a casino moves into an area, a large number of break-ins are reported at

convenience stores. It *might* be true that people drawn to the casino are causing these crimes, but just assuming this is true might ignore other developments, such as the new police reporting system that makes reporting a crime easier and that enables police officers to keep better records, a system that was implemented right after the casino moved in.

sweeping generalization

This is when someone makes a claim that haphazardly groups a massive number of people or things into a single category. Any time an argument begins with "all" or "every" or tries to make an argument about a group that is widely diverse, it is immediately questionable. Example: *Women are dangerous drivers.*

hasty generalization

This fallacy is similar to a sweeping generalization, but it is when someone makes a giant claim based on very slight evidence. For example, imagine that in a low-income area where residents have lived in poverty for decades and many have suffered and died with little to no hope for success, a single resident has gone on to become the CEO of a major company. Arguing that *this person's success definitively proves that poverty plays no role in one's chances for success* completely ignores the much more common struggles faced by the vast majority of the people who have lived there throughout the area's history, most of whom have not improved their station.

These are just some of the fallacies you may encounter as you read up on the topic for an argument paper and attempt to construct your thesis. Be careful to question everything, and make sure not

to use fallacies in your own arguments; if you do, savvy readers will stop trusting you, and your character will be compromised. [1]

ENC1101 Learning Unit 5.2

Reading: the Words We Wield to Work for Peace – Argumentation Part I

Introduction

In this module we discussed how to take a position on a social or political issue while also engaging other points of view. This is a difficult kind of writing, so it will be very helpful to see some effective examples. For this module and the next, we have included students' argumentative essays so that you can see not only how well-written academic arguments are constructed but also what the formatting of such papers look like. The essay in this module follows the APA format; the one in module six will follow the MLA format. [1]

Reading

Select and read this argumentative essay, " Concealed Carry on Campus ." [1]

What to Look for

Just reading over the essay in this module will be an enlightening experience, for you will not only be able to follow the logic of the paper as it builds its case but you will also be able to see citation in action. The author uses various methods to bring outside sources into her argument, sometimes to present evidence and sometimes to directly engage other academic voices who are involved in the discussion over the controversy in question. You will notice that every time such an outside voice is presented, the author includes all of the necessary information to give that voice proper credit and to inform the reader about the source; this is called in-text citation. Then, at the end of the paper, a references page is included listing all of the information readers need in case they want to find and read those sources themselves. [1]

The Essay's Introduction

The organization of an argument should be clear from the outset, and this paper is very well organized. Note that it has a *two paragraph introduction* ; the first paragraph provides the essay's hook, presenting a short narrative related to the topic in order to get readers interested. The second paragraph provides basic background on the controversy being discussed, and the last sentence of the second paragraph clearly presents the paper's thesis:

Thus, though allowing students to openly carry weapons would be a mistake, they should be allowed to carry concealed weapons on campus if they complete an annual training course set in place by the school and adhere to a set of specific standards. [1]

The Essay's Body Paragraphs

After the two paragraph introduction, the next four paragraphs make up the paper's *body* . Each one of the paragraphs presents one of the author's persuasive points. Take note of the transitions used to help lead the reader from paragraph to paragraph:

- Paragraph two starts with *first of all* , indicating that the author is going to make her first point.
- Paragraph three starts with *secondly* , indicating that the author is moving to her second point.
- Paragraph four starts with *on the other hand* , indicating a shift to the opposite point of view (what the opposing side thinks about the issue).
- Paragraph four starts with a reference to *the next step* that must be taken if her ideas are to be put into action, further clarifying how committed she is to the process she is laying out here.

Pay close attention to the evidence and reasoning in these body paragraphs; in each one the author clearly presents a point about the controversy and then cites sources and explains the logic behind her thoughts. This combination of logical explanation and in-text citation, combined with the emotional appeals she makes to the reader, help build the essay's persuasive power. The essay also takes advantage of emphatic order; she builds her case as she goes, interacts with and refutes her opposition's points (especially in paragraph four where she meets the other side head-on), and ends the body by pointing out practical advice for moving forward after implementing her policy recommendation. [1]

The Essay's Conclusion

The essay's concluding paragraph reiterates its main point without being repetitive. It also offers a final citation that relates a published author's emotional statement to the essay's overall claim, thus lending even more credibility to the position being taken. However, the author is very careful not to be overly biased or insulting to the other side; the very first sentence of the conclusion admits that there "will be no perfect solution" to the problem being discussed. In this way, she is able to be civil and build community with her audience, even if many of her readers may disagree with her premise. Remember, argumentative papers don't have to completely persuade their audiences to be successful; if they can help establish understanding between the two sides and present possible solutions that at least seem plausible, they have served an important purpose.

You may want to come back to this short overview after you have read the essay in order to deepen your understanding of the paper and thus of argumentation in general. With practice, you, too, can build a credible argument and help maintain civility in our increasingly hostile world. [1]

ENC1101 Learning Unit 5.3

Sentence Structure

Language

Language is made up of words, which work together to form

sentences, which work together to form paragraphs. This module will focus on how sentences are made and how they behave. Sentences help us to organize our ideas–to identify which items belong together and which should be separated.

So just what is a sentence? Sentences are simply collections of words. Each sentence has a subject a verb which may express an action or may link the subject to more information, and punctuation. These basic building blocks work together to create endless amounts and varieties of sentences. [29]

Parts of a Sentence

Every sentence has a subject and a predicate. The **subject** of a sentence is the noun, pronoun, or phrase or clause the sentence is about, and the *predicate* is the rest of the sentence after the subject.

- Einstein's general **theory** of relativity *has been subjected to many tests of validity over the years* .

- In a secure landfill, the **soil** on top and the cover *block storm water intrusion into the landfill* . ***(compound subject)***
  - There are two subjects in this sentence: *soil* and *cover* .
  - Notice that the introductory phrase, "In a secure landfill," is not a part of the subject or the predicate.

- The **pressure** *is maintained at about 2250 pounds per square inch then lowered to form steam at about 600 pounds per square inch* . ***(compound predicate)***
  - There are two predicates in this sentence: "is maintained at about 2250 pounds per square inch" and "lowered to form steam at about 600 pounds per square inch".

- *Surrounding the secure landfill on all sides are* impermeable

barrier **walls** . ***(inverted sentence pattern)***

- In an inverted sentence, the predicate comes before the subject. You won't run into this sentence structure very often as it is pretty rare. Most of the time you will find the subject at the beginning of the sentence. [30] [31]

Direct and Indirect Objects

Direct Object

A direct object—either a noun or a pronoun or a phrase or clause acting as a noun—takes the action of the main verb (e.g., the verb is affecting the direct object). A direct object can be identified by putting *what*? , *which*? , or *whom*? in its place.

The housing assembly of a mechanical pencil contains the mechanical **workings** of the pencil.

- In this sentence the *workings* are **what** the pencil contains.

Lavoisier used curved glass **discs** fastened together at their rims, with wine filling the space between, to focus the sun's rays to attain temperatures of 3000° F.

- In this sentence the *discs* are **what** Lavoisier used.

The dust and smoke lofted into the air by nuclear explosions might cool the earth's **atmosphere** some number of degrees.

- In this sentence the *atmosphere* is **what** might be cooled.

A 20 percent fluctuation in average global temperature could

reduce biological **activity** , shift weather **patterns** , and ruin **agriculture** . (compound direct object) [30] [31]

- In this sentence the *activity* , *patterns* , and *agriculture* are **what** could be reduced.

Indirect Object

An indirect object—either a noun or pronoun, or a phrase, or clause acting as a noun—receives the direct object expressed in the sentence, so it is only *indirectly* affected by the sentence's verb. It can be identified by inserting *to* or *for* .

The company is designing senior **citizens** a new walkway to the park area.

- The company is not designing new models of senior citizens; they are designing a new walkway *for* senior citizens. Thus, senior citizens is the indirect object of this sentence.

Please send the personnel **office** a resume so we can further review your candidacy.

- You are not being asked to send the office somewhere; you're being asked to send a resume *to* the office. Thus, the personnel office is the indirect object of this sentence. [30][31]

Note: Objects can belong to any verb in a sentence, even if the verbs aren't in the main clause. For example, let's look at the sentence "When you give your teacher your assignment, be sure to include your name and your class number."

- *Your teacher* is the indirect object of the verb *give* ; the assignment is *for* the teacher.
- *Your assignment* is the direct object of the verb *give* ; it is what

is being given.

- *Your name* and *your class number* are the direct objects of the verb *include* ; they are what must be included. [30] [31]

Phrases and Clauses

Phrases and clauses are groups of words that act as a unit and perform a single function within a sentence. Neither phrases nor *dependent* clauses are complete ideas. A phrase may have a partial subject or verb but not both; a dependent clause has both a subject and a verb (but is not a complete sentence). Here are a few examples (not all phrases are highlighted because some are embedded in others):

Phrase

Electricity has to do **with those physical phenomena** involving electrical charges and their effects when **in motion** and when **at rest** . (*involving electrical charges and their effects*is also a phrase.)

In 1833 , Faraday's experimentation **with electrolysis** indicated a natural unit of **electrical charge** , thus **pointing to a discrete rather than continuous charge** . (to a discrete rather than continuous charge is also a phrase.)

Clauses

Electricity manifests itself as a force of attraction, independent of gravitational and short-range nuclear attraction, **when two oppositely charged bodies are brought close to one another** .

Since the frequency is the speed of sound divided by the wavelength , a shorter wavelength means a higher wavelength.

There are two types of clauses– dependent and independent:

- A dependent clause is *dependent* on something else: it cannot stand on its own.
- An independent clause, on the other hand, is free to stand by itself. (30) (31)

Common Sentence Structures

Basic Sentence Patterns

Subject + Verb

The simplest of sentence patterns is composed of a **subject** and **verb** without a direct object or subject complement. It uses an **intransitive verb** , that is, a verb requiring no direct object. In the following sentences, note that only the subjects and verbs are highlighted. The other words are non-essential phrases or modifiers:

- Control **rods remain** inside the fuel assembly of the reactor.
- The **development** of wind power practically **ceased** until the early 1970s.

Subject + Verb + Direct Object

Another common sentence pattern uses the **direct object** :

- **Silicon conducts electricity** in an unusual way.
- The anti-reflective **coating** on the silicon cell **reduces reflection** from 32 to 22 percent.

Subject + Verb + Indirect Object + Direct Object

The sentence pattern with the **indirect object** and **direct object** is similar to the preceding pattern. Note that if a sentence has an indirect object, it always appears in front of the direct object:

- **I am writing her** about a number of **problems** that I have had with my computer.
- **Austin, Texas, has** recently built its **citizens** a **system** of bike lanes.

Compound Predicates

A **predicate** is everything in the verb part of the sentence after the subject (unless the sentence uses inverted word order). A *compound* **predicate** is two or more predicates joined by a coordinating conjunction. Traditionally, the conjunction (joining word) in a sentence consisting of just two compound predicates is not punctuated.

- Another library media specialist **has been using Accelerated Reader for ten years and has seen great results** .
    - Note that there is no comma in front of and here because it is joining compound predicates.

- This cell phone app lets users **share pictures instantly with friends** and **categorize photos with hashtags** .

    - Note that there is no comma in front of *and* here because it is joining compound predicates.

Compound Sentences

A compound sentence is made up of two or more *independent clauses* joined by either a **coordinating conjunction** (and, or, nor, but, yet, for) and a comma, an adverbial conjunction and a semicolon, or just a semicolon. Always remember that a semicolon has to separate complete ideas. If you use one, read the word groups on either side to make sure each one is a complete idea (all independent clauses are complete ideas!).

- In sphygmomanometers,too narrow a cuff can result in erroneously high readings, **and** too wide a cuff can result in erroneously low readings.
- Cuff size thus has a major effect on blood pressure results; therefore, one must be careful when setting the apparatus up.
    - In this sentence, *therefore* is an adverbial conjunction that follows the semicolon.
- Some cuffs hook together; others wrap or snap into place. (30) (31)

Run-on Sentences

Run-on sentences occur when two or more independent clauses are improperly joined. One type of run-on that you've probably heard of is the *comma splice* , in which two independent clauses are joined by a comma without a coordinating conjunction (*and*, *or*, *but*, etc.).

Let's look at two examples of run-on sentences:

- Choosing a topic for a paper can be the hardest part but it gets a lot easier after that.
- Sometimes, books do not have the most complete information, it is a good idea then to look for articles in specialized periodicals.

Each of these has two independent clauses. Each clause should be separated from the other with a period, a semicolon, or a comma and a coordinating conjunction:

- Choosing a topic for a paper can be the hardest part, but it gets a lot easier after that.
- Sometimes, books do not have the most complete information; it is a good idea then to look for articles in specialized periodicals. [32] [33]

Common Causes of Run-On Sentences

We often write run-on sentences because we sense that the sentences involved are closely related and dividing them with a period just doesn't seem right. We may also write them because the parts seem too short to need any division, like in "She loves skiing but he doesn't." However, "She loves skiing" and "he doesn't" are both independent clauses, so they need to be divided by a comma and a coordinating conjunction. Thus, this sentence should be written like this: "She loves skiing, but he doesn't." [32] [33]

Correcting Run-On Sentences

Before you can correct a run-on sentence, you'll need to identify the problem. When you write, carefully look at each part of every

sentence. Are the parts independent clauses, or are they dependent clauses or phrases? Remember, only independent clauses can stand on their own. This also means they they can't run together without correct punctuation.

Let's take a look at a few run-on sentences and their revisions:

1. Most of the credit hours I've earned toward my associate's degree do not transfer, however, I do have at least some hours the University will accept.
2. Some people were highly educated professionals, others were from small villages in underdeveloped countries.

Let's start with the first sentence. This is a comma-splice sentence. The adverbial conjunction *however* is being treated like a coordinating conjunction. There are two easy fixes to this problem. The first is to turn the comma before *however* into a period. If this feels like too hard of a stop between ideas, you can change the comma into a semicolon instead.

- Most of the credit hours I've earned toward my associate's degree do not transfer. However, I do have at least some hours the University will accept.
- Most of the credit hours I've earned toward my associate's degree do not transfer; however, I do have at least some hours the University will accept.

The second sentence has two independent clauses. The two clauses provide contrasting information. Adding a conjunction could help the reader move from one kind of information to another. However, you may want that sharp contrast. Here are three revision options:

- Some people were highly educated professionals, while others were from small villages in underdeveloped countries.
- Some people were highly educated professionals, but others were from small villages in underdeveloped countries.
- Some people were highly educated professionals. Others were

from small villages in underdeveloped countries. [32] [33]

Sentence Fragments

Fragments are simply grammatically incomplete sentences—they are phrases and dependent clauses. These are grammatical structures that cannot stand on their own: they need to be connected to an independent clause to work in writing. So how can we tell the difference between a sentence and a sentence fragment? And how can we correct fragments when they already exist?

Keep in mind that length is not very helpful when determining if a sentence is a fragment or not. Both of the items below are fragments:

- Before you go.
- Ensuring his own survival with his extensive cache of supplies (food, water, rope, tarps, knives, and a first aid kit). [34] [35]

Common Causes of Fragments

Part of the reason we write in fragments is because we often use them when we speak. However, there is a difference between writing and speech, and it is important to write in full sentences. Additionally, fragments often come about in writing because a group of words may already seem too long even though it is not grammatically complete.

Non-finite verbs (gerunds, participles, and infinitives) can often trip people up as well. Since non-finite verbs don't act like verbs, we don't count them as verbs when we're deciding if we have a phrase or a clause. Let's look at a few examples of these:

- Running away from my mother.
- To ensure your safety and security.
- Beaten down since day one.

Even though all of the above have non-finite verbs, they're phrases, not clauses. In order for these to be clauses, they would need an additional verb that acts as a verb in the sentence. [34] [35]

Correcting Sentence Fragments

Let's take a look at a couple of examples:

1. Ivana appeared at the committee meeting last week. And made a convincing presentation of her ideas about the new product.
2. The committee considered her ideas for a new marketing strategy quite powerful. The best ideas that they had heard in years.

Let's look at the first example. "And made a convincing presentation of her ideas about the new product" is just a phrase. There is no subject in this phrase, so the easiest correction is to simply delete the period and combine the two statements:

- Ivana appeared at the committee meeting last week **and** made a convincing presentation of her ideas about the new product.

Let's look at the second example. The phrase "the best ideas that they had heard in years" is simply a phrase—there is no main verb contained in the phrase. By adding "they were" to the beginning of this phrase, we have turned the fragment into an independent clause, which can now stand on its own:

- The committee considered her ideas for a new marketing strategy quite powerful; they were the best ideas that they had

heard in years. [34] [35]

Parallel Structure

What exactly is parallel structure? It's simply the practice of using the same structures or forms multiple times:, making sure each part is written in a similar way. Parallel structure can be applied to a single sentence, a paragraph, or even multiple paragraphs. Compare the following sentences:

- Yara loves running, to swim, and biking.
- Yara loves running, swimming, and biking.

The second sentence is a smoother read than the first because it uses parallelism—all three verbs are gerunds (running, swimming, biking). On the other hand, in the first sentence contains two gerunds (running and biking) and one infinitive (to swim). While the first sentence is technically correct, it's easy to stumble over the mismatching items. The application of parallelism improves writing style and readability, and it makes sentences easier to process.

Compare the following examples:

- **Lacking parallelism:** "She likes cooking, jogging, and to read."
- **Parallel:** "She likes cooking, jogging, and reading."
- **Parallel:** "She likes to cook, jog, and read."

Once again, the examples above combine gerunds and infinitives. To make them parallel, the sentences should be rewritten with just gerunds or just infinitives. [34] [35]

Course Assignment: Writing an Argumentative Essay

This assignment relies upon information provided in both modules five and six, so make sure you read module six online Learning Unit on citing academic sources before you get too far along. However, we wanted to give you the assignment now so that you have its requirements in the back of your mind as you learn about how to bring sources into your paper correctly.

Using the information in modules five and six as a guide, write a 2 to 4 page (500-1000 word) argumentative essay about the use of social media in contemporary society. You may either argue that it is beneficial to modern life or that it is destructive. To do so effectively, you must:

- explain the controversy over social media in your introduction (give necessary background information)
- present a clear thesis statement that announces your position on the issue
- present the reasons you believe your position to be true in your body paragraphs
- support those reasons with fair and convincing examples and evidence from your personal experience and from the sources you have read
- address at least one of the opposition's points (perhaps using information from the sources to do so)
- cite at least two of the outside sources with which you have been provided (below), using either the MLA format or the APA format for in-text citations; your paper should have at least two effective and correct citations total (if you only have two, each one should come from a different source)
- include a works cited page or a references page (depending upon whether you are using the MLA or APA format)

Here are the links to and the basic citation information for the provided sources:

POSITIVE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Title: "Is it time for science to embrace cat videos?"
Author name: George Vlahakis
Website Title: futurity.org
Date Published: 17 June 2015
Source URL: http://www.futurity.org/cat-videos-943852/

Title: "#Snowing: How Tweets Can Make Winter Driving Safer"
Author Name: Cory Nealon
Website Title: futurity.org
Date Published: 2 December 2015
Source URL:http://www.futurity.org/twitter-weather-traffic-1060902-2/

NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Title: "Using Lots of Social Media Accounts Linked to Anxiety"
Author: Allison Hydzik
Date Published: 19 December 2016
Source URL:http://www.futurity.org/social-media-depression-anxiety-1320622-2/

Title: "People Who Obsessively Check Social Media Get Less Sleep"
Author: Allison Hydzik
Date Published: 16 January 2016
Source URL:http://www.futurity.org/social-media-sleep-1095922/

Download the attached Writing Assignment: Writing an Argumentative Essay

- Read the assignment carefully and be certain to read modules five and six Learning Units
- Complete the following steps:
    - Step 1: Pre-Writing (Questioning, Freewriting, and Mapping)
    - Step 2: Focusing, Outlining, and Drafting
    - Step 3: Revising, Editing, and Proofreading
    - Step 4: Making Your Works Cited or References Page
    - Step 5: Evaluation (1)

Module 5 Quiz

Open Quiz

24. Modules 5 & 6 Writing Assignment: Writing an Argumentative Essay

As module five hopefully made clear, an argumentative essay is very similar to an example essay; it has a main point (a thesis statement) that makes a claim about a controversial issue (your subject matter), and you will support that claim with examples and specific details. You also likely will use emphatic order (building to your most important point, like arguing to a jury) to convince your reader of your position. The difference, as you now know after reading the module, is that argumentative essays require outside evidence, so you can't just rely upon your personal experiences to provide examples to back up your points. Also, when writing an argumentative essay you must openly deal with the opposing point of view on your topic so that you don't appear biased. This is because your writing to an undecided reader (in this case, your instructor) who is wary but curious and will question everything, so you want to appear fair and balanced even as you make sure to argue for your side of the issue.

If this kind of writing sounds like it requires a lot of work to get right, well, it is. Happily, since we know this is perhaps your first attempt at writing such a paper, we are going to make your life a bit easier by providing you with all of the outside sources you need to develop it. That's right; you won't have to do any outside research other than reading over the sources we provide (see step 4 of the writing process for links to the sources). Of course, you must still make sure to use those sources effectively in your actual essay and to cite them when appropriate! You also must provide a works cited or references page (depending upon whether you are using the MLA or APA format) at the end of the paper that lists the publishing

information for whichever of these sources you decide to use. You should use at least two of the sources.

This assignment relies upon information provided in both modules five and six, so make sure you read over module six on citing academic sources before you get too far along. However, we wanted to give you the assignment now so that you have its requirements in the back of your mind as you learn about how to bring sources into your paper correctly.

With all of that out of the way, let's get down to the assignment itself. Using the information in modules five and six as a guide, write a 2 to 4 page (500-1000 word) argumentative essay about the use of social media in contemporary society. You may either argue that it is beneficial to modern life or that it is destructive. To do so effectively, you must:

• explain the controversy over social media in your introduction (give necessary background information)

- present a clear thesis statement that announces your position on the issue
- present the reasons you believe your position to be true in your body

  paragraphs
- support those reasons with fair and convincing examples and evidence from

  your personal experience and from the sources you have read
- address at least one of the opposition's points (perhaps using information

  from the sources to do so)
- cite at least two of the outside sources with which you have been provided,

  using either the MLA format or the APA format for in-text citations; your paper should have at least two effective and

correct citations total (if you only have two, each one should come from a different source)
- include a works cited page or a references page (depending upon whether you are using the MLA or APA format)

Step 1: Pre-Writing (Questioning, Freewriting, and Mapping)

After you read over the four sources we have provided (see step 4 at the end of this document for the links to them), it's time to start developing your ideas. Any of the prewriting techniques we have discussed so far in the course can be used to generate ideas for your argument. You might use the reporter's questions again: ask yourself who, what, when, where, why, and how in relation to social media. For example, you might ask:

- who is affected by it and in what ways/ for what reasons?
- when is it typically used? how often?
- where is it typically used?
- why is it so popular? why are people concerned/excited/ angry/obsessed

  about it?
- how has it changed our personal and professional lives?

You might use freewriting (the process of writing freely without worrying about grammar, spelling, and sentence structure) to generate ideas about social media, focusing on its benefits and negative traits, which will probably be easy to do since it is likely you use some form of it quite frequently.

You could also use mapping, putting a main idea in a large circle and then connecting other circles to that circle to represent general points of comparison or contrast related to each one. For example, you might put "social media benefits"

in a large circle. In each subcircle connected to it you could insert one way that social media helps its uses (helps users stay connected over distance, helps users to maintain business contacts, etc). This kind of exercise can help you break your topic up into points and to discover exactly how to persuade your audience that your thesis is true.

Step 2: Focusing, Outlining, and Drafting

Once you've come up with the thesis (which should clearly take a side on the issue) and the examples and details that are going to help you prove it, you also need to consider the opposition's point of view. In fact, you might want to go back and generate ideas for the opposing side in much the same way you did for your own side so that you better understand the opposition's perspective. Ultimately you are required to discuss at least one of the opposing side's points, so you need to have a good grasp of both positions.

Because this paper is complex, it is very, very important for you to organize your ideas in an outline. Perhaps more than any other essay in the course, an argumentative essay needs to be logical, and all of its components need to fit together in a way that is easy to understand for the reader. If an argument is not well organized, the reader will not find it to be credible and will likely remain unconvinced about the position the writer is taking. An outline will help ensure that you logically express your points while also explaining and perhaps refuting an opposing point-of-view.

As you fill out the outline, remember to choose an organizational plan before you start.

Here are two basic outlines to get you started. The first is the most common way to write an argumentative essay and proceeds by first addressing an opposing point of view in the first body paragraph and then providing all of your own points in favor of your position in the rest of the body paragraphs. You put the opposition

first because you want to weigh your own ideas more heavily and you want the reader to finish the paper by thinking about your side, not the opposing side. The (perhaps more difficult) second outline follows a different strategy; each one of its body paragraphs addresses an opposing point and then uses evidence to show why it is wrong or misguided. This can be very convincing, but you must remember to clearly show why you disagree with the opposing point and then use evidence to back up your argument!

Note that you will either fill out the first or second outline, not both. As you know by now, the idea is to write out a quick summation of the different sections on the lines provided. When you go to write a full draft based on the outline you've chosen, you will add a hook at the beginning to flesh out your introduction (which should end in your thesis statement), and each of your general example sections will become body paragraphs. You will also need to add a conclusion explaining why your overall point is important.

Remember that these outlines are just suggestions, and you can include as many examples and body paragraphs as you want as long as you stay within the assignment's length requirements:

Basic Argumentative Pattern I. Thesis Statement:
ii. Opposing Point:
a. Evidence for
b. Evidence against (refute the point!)
iii. General Point #1: a. Evidence: b. Evidence:
iv. General Point #2: a. Evidence: b. Evidence:
v. General Point #3: a. Evidence: b. Evidence:
Alternative Argumentative Pattern I. Thesis Statement:
ii. Opposing Point:
a. Evidence for
b. Evidence against (refute the point!)
iii. Opposing Point:
a. Evidence for
b. Evidence against (refute the point!)

iii. Opposing Point:

a. Evidence for

b. Evidence against (refute the point!)

Post your "Argumentative Essay Outline" to the discussion board so that your instructor can give you some feedback before you begin drafting. You can either attach it to a thread as a Word file or just type it into the thread itself.

After you've finished outlining and received some feedback, you are ready to draft the actual paper.

As you're drafting, remember that you have to accurately cite the sources inside your paper whenever information comes from one of them; this is called in-text citation. Module six explains how to do this, so read it over thoroughly.

Step 3: Revising, Editing, and Proofreading

Once your draft is finished, step away from it for at least a few hours so you can approach it with fresh eyes. It is also a very good idea to email it to a friend or fellow classmate or otherwise present it to a tutor or trusted family member to get feedback. Remember, writing doesn't happen in a vacuum; it is meant to be read by an audience, and a writer can't anticipate all of the potential issues an outside reader might have with an essay's structure or language.

Whatever the case, after getting some feedback, read your essay over and consider what you might alter to make it clearer or more exciting.

Consider the following questions:

- Does the introduction provide a hook and explain the general controversy being discussed?
- Does the essay clearly take a position on the issue in a thesis statement?
- Does the essay address an opposing point-of-view (POV)

without being

insulting or unfair?

- If an opposing POV is discussed, is it refuted? In other words, do you show

how it is wrong or why it is not convincing?

- Does each section have plenty of supporting evidence? Does at least some of

this evidence come from the outside sources?

- Are clear and correct in-text citations used to identify outside source

material?

- Are plenty of transitions used to help the reader navigate through the parts

of the essay?

- Does the conclusion avoid merely repeating information and instead answer

the question, "what is important about all of this?" and/or "what should the
reader do about this issue?"

- Are there any fragments, run-on sentences, or comma splices?
- Does the essay follow the formatting requirements?

Step 4: Making Your Works Cited or References Page

Before you are ready to submit your final draft, you need to make sure you have completed the list of sources (either your works cited page or your references page depending on your format) that goes at the end of your paper on a separate page.

You might want to make this list first because it can help you provide accurate in- text citations; after all, the first information you list for each source (usually the

author's name) is what you must tell the reader about when you cite it in the text. Regardless, make sure to put your list together at some point in the process.

For our purposes you can classify each of these sources as a "page on a website" (what the MLA calls such sources) or a "nonperiodical web document" (what the APA calls such sources).

For the MLA, the information for this kind of works cited entry is as follows:

Author last name, Author first name. "Article Name." Website title, date published, full URL (web address).

For the APA, the information for this kind of references page entry is as follows:

Author last name, First Initial. (date published). Article name. Retrieved from full URL (web address).

Look at the sample papers at the end of modules five and six to see examples of these pages. Format your papers according to the one that uses either the MLA or APA (whichever formatting style you are using for your own paper)

Here are the links to and the basic citation information for the provided sources:

Positive Effects of Social Media

Title: "Is it time for science to embrace cat videos?"

Author name: George Vlahakis

Website Title: futurity.org

Date Published: 17 June 2015

Source URL: http://www.futurity.org/cat-videos-943852/

Title: "#Snowing: How Tweets Can Make Winter Driving Safer"

Author Name: Cory Nealon

Website Title: futurity.org

Date Published: 2 December 2015

Source URL: http://www.futurity.org/twitter-weather-traffic-1060902-2/

Negative Effects of Social Media

Title: "Using Lots of Social Media Accounts Linked to Anxiety"

Author: Allison Hydzik

Date Published: 19 December 2016

Source URL: http://www.futurity.org/social-media-depression-anxiety-1320622-2/

Title: "People Who Obsessively Check Social Media Get Less Sleep"

Author: Allison Hydzik

Date Published: 16 January 2016

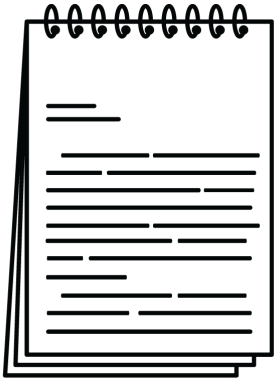
Source URL: http://www.futurity.org/social-media-sleep-1095922/

Step 5: Evaluation

After completing these steps, submit the essay to the instructor, who will evaluate it according to the grading criteria. (1)

25. Outcome: Sentence Structure

Critique sentence structure and variety of sentences



Language is made up of words, which work together to form sentences, which work together to form paragraphs. In this outcome, we'll be focusing on sentences: how they're made and how they behave. Sentences help us to organize our ideas–to identify which items belong together and which should be separated.

So just what is a sentence? Sentence are simply collections of words. Each sentence has a subject, an action, and punctuation. These basic building blocks work together to create endless amounts and varieties of sentences.

In this outcome, we'll look at the different parts that work together to create sentences and at the different types of sentences that work together to create variety in your writing.

What You Will Learn to Do

- Critique the use of common sentence structures
- Critique the use of common sentence punctuation patterns
- Critique passages, revising for run-on sentences
- Critique passages, revising for sentence fragments
- Critique the use of parallel structure

26. Parts of a Sentence

Every sentence has a subject and a predicate. The **subject** of a sentence is the noun, pronoun, or phrase or clause the sentence is about, and the predicate is the rest of the sentence after the subject:

- Einstein's general **theory** of relativity has been subjected to many tests of validity over the years.
- In a secure landfill, the **soil** on top and the **cover** block storm water intrusion into the landfill. (*compound subject*)
    - There are two subjects in this sentence: *soil* and *cover*.
    - Notice that the introductory phrase, "In a secure landfill," is not a part of the subject or the predicate.
- The **pressure** is maintained at about 2250 pounds per square inch then lowered to form steam at about 600 pounds per square inch. (*compound predicate*)
    - There are two predicates in this sentence: "is maintained at about 2250 pounds per square inch" and "lowered to form steam at about 600 pounds per square inch"
- Surrounding the secure landfill on all sides are impermeable barrier **walls**. (*inverted sentence pattern*)
    - In an inverted sentence, the predicate comes before the subject. You won't run into this sentence structure very often as it is pretty rare.

Practice

Identify the subject and predicate of each sentence:

1. Daniel and I are going to go to Hawaii for three weeks.
2. Raquel will watch the dogs while we're on vacation.
3. She will feed the dogs and will make sure they get enough exercise.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="510252"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="510252"]

1. "Daniel and I" is the subject. The rest of the sentence, "are going to go to Hawaii for three weeks," is the predicate.
2. "Raquel" is the subject. The rest of the sentence, "will watch the dogs while we're on vacation," is the predicate.
3. "She" is the subject. The rest of the sentence, "will feed the dogs and will make sure they get enough exercise," is the predicate. This is a compound predicate: it has two different actions in it.
    - will feed the dogs
    - will make sure they get enough exercise

[/hidden-answer]

A predicate can include the verb, a direct object, and an indirect object.

Direct Object

A direct object—a noun, pronoun, phrase, or clause acting as a

noun—takes the action of the main verb (e.g., the verb is happening to the object). A direct object can be identified by putting *what*?, *which*?, or *whom*? in its place.

- The housing assembly of a mechanical pencil contains the mechanical **workings** of the pencil.
- Lavoisier used curved glass **discs** fastened together at their rims, with wine filling the space between, to focus the sun's rays to attain temperatures of 3000° F.
- The dust and smoke lofted into the air by nuclear explosions might cool the earth's **atmosphere** some number of degrees.
- A 20 percent fluctuation in average global temperature could reduce biological **activity**, shift weather **patterns**, and ruin **agriculture**. (*compound direct object*)

Indirect Object

An indirect object—a noun, pronoun, phrase, or clause acting as a noun—receives the action expressed in the sentence. It can be identified by inserting *to* or *for*.

- The company is designing senior **citizens** a new walkway to the park area.
    - The company is not designing new models of senior citizens; they are designing a new walkway *for* senior citizens. Thus, senior citizens is the indirect object of this sentence.
- Please send the personnel **office** a resume so we can further review your candidacy.
    - You are not being asked to send the office somewhere; you're being asked to send a resume *to* the office. Thus, the personnel office is the indirect object of this sentence.

Note: Objects can belong to any verb in a sentence, even if the verbs aren't in the main clause. For example, let's look at the sentence "When you give your teacher your assignment, be sure to include your name and your class number."

- *Your teacher* is the indirect object of the verb *give*.
- *Your assignment* is the direct object of the verb *give*.
- *Your name* and *your class number* are the direct objects of the verb *include*.

Practice

Identify the objects in the following sentences. Are they direct or indirect objects?

1. The cooler temperatures brought about by nuclear war might end all life on earth.
2. On Mariners 6 and 7, the two-axis scan platforms provided much more capability and flexibility for the scientific payload than those of Mariner 4.
3. In your application letter, tell the potential employer that a resume accompanies the letter.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]

[reveal-answer q="963665"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="963665"]

1. The cooler temperatures brought about by nuclear war might end **all life** on earth.
    - *All life* is the direct object of the verb *might end.*
2. On Mariners 6 and 7, the two-axis scan platforms provided much more **capability** and **flexibility** for **the scientific payload** than those of Mariner 4.
    - *Capability* and *flexibility* are the direct objects of the verb *provided.*
    - *The scientific payload* is the indirect object of the verb *provided.*
3. In your application letter, tell the **potential employer** that a resume accompanies **the letter**.
    - *Potential employer* is the indirect object of *tell.*
    - *The letter* is the direct object of the verb *accompanies.*

[/hidden-answer]

Phrases and Clauses

Phrases and clauses are groups of words that act as a unit and perform a single function within a sentence. A phrase may have a partial subject or verb but not both; a dependent clause has both

a subject and a verb (but is not a complete sentence). Here are a few examples (not all phrases are highlighted because some are embedded in others):

Phrases	Clauses
Electricity has to do **with those physical phenomena** involving electrical charges and their effects when **in motion** and when **at rest**.(*involving electrical charges and their effects* is also a phrase.)	Electricity manifests itself as a force of attraction, independent of gravitational and short-range nuclear attraction, **when two oppositely charged bodies are brought close to one another**.
In 1833, Faraday's experimentation **with electrolysis** indicated a natural unit **of electrical charge**, thus **pointing to a discrete rather than continuous charge**. (*to a discrete rather than continuous charge* is also a phrase.)	**Since the frequency is the speed of sound divided by the wavelength**, a shorter wavelength means a higher wavelength.
The symbol that denotes a connection **to the grounding conductor** is three parallel horizontal lines, each of the lower ones **being shorter than the one above it**.	Nuclear units planned or in construction have a total capacity of 186,998 KW, **which, if current plans hold, will bring nuclear capacity to about 22% of all electrical capacity by 1995**. (*if current plans hold* is a clause within a clause)

There are two types of clauses: dependent and independent. A dependent clauses is dependent on something else: it cannot stand on its own. An independent clause, on the other hand, is free to stand by itself.

So how can you tell if a clause is dependent or independent? Let's take a look at two the clauses from the table above:

- when two oppositely charged bodies are brought close to one another
- Since the frequency is the speed of sound divided by the wavelength
- which, if current plans hold, will bring nuclear capacity to about 22% of all electrical capacity by 1995

These are all dependent clauses. As we learned in Text: Conjunctions, any clause with a subordinating conjunctions (like *when* or *since*) is a dependent clause. For example "I was a little girl in 1995" is an independent clause, but "Because I was a little girl in 1995" is a dependent clause. Clauses that start with relative pronouns, like *which*, also become dependent clauses.

Practice

In each of the following sentences, identify their phrases, dependent clauses, and independent clauses:

1. Because Dante won the steamboat competition, he let Maxwell win the rowing race.
2. Swimming across the English Channel in nearly twenty-three hours, Laís set a new personal record.
3. Whenever I see Alice and Armando's Instagram account, *The Two of Us*, I'm overwhelmed with feelings.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="674149"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="674149"]

1. This sentence is made up of a dependent clause and an independent clause. There are two phrases within the sentence.
    - "Because Dante won the steamboat competition" is a dependent clause; the conjunction *because* turns an independent clause into a dependent.
    - "He let Maxwell win the rowing race" is an

independent clause.
    - Here are the phrases:
        - "the steamboat competition"
        - "win the rowing race"

2. This sentence is made up of a phrase and an independent clause:
    - "Swimming across the English Channel in nearly twenty-three hours" is a phrase; there is only a subject, not a verb. (Remember, *swimming* in this phrase is a gerund, which acts as a noun, not a verb!)
    - "Laís set a new personal record" is an independent clause.

3. This sentence is made up of a dependent clause and an independent clause. There are also three phrases within the sentence.
    - "Whenever I see Alice and Armando's Instagram account, *The Two of Us*" is a dependent clause; the conjunction *whenever* turns an independent clause into a dependent.
    - "I'm overwhelmed with feelings" is an independent clause
    - Here are the phrases:
        - "Alice and Armando's Instagram account, *The Two of Us*"
        - "*The Two of Us*"
        - "overwhelmed with feelings"

[/hidden-answer]

27. Common Sentence Structures

Basic Sentence Patterns

Subject + verb

The simplest of sentence patterns is composed of a **subject** and **verb** without a direct object or subject complement. It uses an **intransitive verb**, that is, a verb requiring no direct object:

- Control **rods** **remain** inside the fuel assembly of the reactor.
- The **development** of wind power practically **ceased** until the early 1970s.
- The **cross-member** exposed to abnormal stress eventually **broke**.
- Only two **types** of charge **exist** in nature.

Subject + verb + direct object

Another common sentence pattern uses the **direct object**:

- **Silicon** **conducts** **electricity** in an unusual way.
- The anti-reflective **coating** on the the silicon cell **reduces** **reflection** from 32 to 22 percent.

Subject + verb + indirect object + direct object

The sentence pattern with the **indirect object** and **direct object** is similar to the preceding pattern:

- **I am writing her** about a number of **problems** that I have had with my computer.
- **Austin, Texas**, **has** recently **built** its **citizens** a **system** of bike lanes.

Practice

Identify the basic sentence pattern of the sentences below. What are the different parts of each sentence?

1. All amplitude-modulation (AM) receivers work in the same way.
2. The supervisor mailed the applicant a description of the job.
3. We have mailed the balance of the payment in this letter.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="77635"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="77635"]

1. This is a subject + verb sentence:
    - All amplitude-modulation (AM) **receivers work** in the same way.
2. This is a subject + verb + indirect object + direct

object sentence:

    - The **supervisor** **mailed** the **applicant** a **description** of the job.

3. This is a subject + verb + direct object sentence:

    - **We** **have** **mailed** the **balance** of the payment in this letter.

[/hidden-answer]

Sentence Types

Simple Sentences

A simple sentence is one that contains a **subject** and a **verb** and no other independent or dependent clause.

- **One** of the tubes **is** **attached** to the manometer part of the instrument indicating the pressure of the air within the cuff.
- There **are** basically two **types** of stethoscopes.
    - In this sentence, the subject and verb are inverted; that is, the verb comes before the subject. However, it is still classified as a simple sentence.
- To measure blood pressure, a **sphygmomanometer** and a **stethoscope** **are** **needed**.
    - This sentence has a compound subject—that is, there are two subjects—but it is still classified as a simple sentence.

Command sentences are a subtype of simple sentences. These sentences are unique because they don't actually have a subject:

- **Clean** the dishes.
- **Make** sure to take good notes today.
- After completing the reading, **answer** the following questions.

In each of these sentences, there is an implied subject: *you*. These sentences are instructing the reader to complete a task. Command sentences are the only sentences in English that are complete without a subject.

Compound Predicates

A **predicate** is everything in the verb part of the sentence after the subject (unless the sentence uses inverted word order). A *compound predicate* is two or more predicates joined by a coordinating conjunction. Traditionally, the conjunction in a sentence consisting of just two compound predicates is not punctuated.

- Another library media specialist **has been using Accelerated Reader for ten years** and **has seen great results**.
- This cell phone app lets users **share pictures instantly with followers** and **categorize photos with hashtags**.

Compound Sentences

A compound sentence is made up of two or more *independent clauses* joined by a coordinating conjunction (and, or, nor, but, yet, for) and a comma, an adverbial conjunction and a semicolon, or just a semicolon.

- In sphygmomanometers, too narrow a cuff can result in erroneously high readings, and too wide a cuff can result in erroneously low readings.
- Some cuff hook together; others wrap or snap into place.

Command sentences can be compound sentences as well:

- Never give up; never surrender.
- Turn the handle 90 degrees and push the button four times.

When you have a compound command sentence with a coordinating conjunction, you do not need to include a comma, because the two have the same subject.

Practice

Identify the type of each sentence below. Why is each type of sentence useful in each instance?

1. The sphygmomanometer is usually covered with cloth and has two rubber tubes attached to it.
2. There are several types of sentences; using different types can keep your writing lively.
3. Words, sentences, and paragraphs are all combined to create a book.
4. Before giving up, take a deep breath and look at things from a different perspective.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area] [reveal-answer q="745490"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer] [hidden-answer a="745490"]Put Answer Here

1. This sentence has a compound predicate—that is,

there are two predicates, joined with the conjunction *and*: "is usually covered with cloth" and "has two rubber tubes attached to it."

    - Without the use of the compound predicate, you would need two separate sentences with the same subject. Using a compound predicate reduces needless repetition.

2. This is a compound sentence. There are two independent clauses joined together by a semicolon.

    - Combining the independent clauses with a semicolon indicates that the two ideas are closely related. Putting a period between the two clauses and dividing them into two separate sentences would separate the ideas as well.

3. This is a simple sentence with a compound subject. The subject is "Words, sentences, and paragraphs," and the predicate is "are all combined to create a book."

    - Without a compound predicate, it would be very difficult to convey this idea.

4. This is a command sentence with a compound predicate—that is, there are two predicates, joined with the conjunction *and*: "take a deep breath" and "look at things from a different perspective"

    - This sentence doesn't have an explicitly stated subject, just the implied *you*. You do not need a comma before *and*.

[/hidden-answer]

Punctuation Patterns

While your sentence's punctuation will always depend on the content of your writing, there are a few common punctuation patterns you should be aware of.

Simple sentences have these punctuation patterns:

- _____.
- _____, _____.

Compound predicate sentences have this punctuation pattern: _____ _____ and _____.

Compound Sentences have these punctuation patterns:

- _____, and _____.
- _____; _____.

As you can see from these common patterns, periods, commas, and semicolons are the punctuation marks you will use the most in your writing. As you write, it's best to use a variety of these patterns. If you use the same pattern repeatedly, your writing can easily become boring and drab.

Practice

The sentences in this passage follow a single punctuation pattern: _____. Revise the passage to create variety.

> Johann Sebastian Bach wrote six Cello Suites. The Cello Suites are suites for unaccompanied cello. They are some of the most frequently performed and recognizable solo compositions ever written for cello. Each movement is based around a baroque dance type. This basis is standard for a Baroque musical suite. The cello suites are structured in six movements each. Each includes a prelude; an allemande; a courante; a sarabande; two minuets, two bourrées, or two gavottes; and a final gigue. The Bach cello suites are considered to be among the most profound of all classical music works.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area] [reveal-answer q="318161"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer] [hidden-answer a="318161"]There are an infinite number of revisions for this passage. As you compare your work with ours, keep these things in mind:

1. When combining sentences into complex or compound sentence, make sure you use punctuation and conjunctions correctly.
2. When there is redundant information, you can easily remove it and combine the other parts of a sentence together.

Johann Sebastian Bach's six Cello Suites, written

for unaccompanied cello, are some of the most frequently performed and recognizable solo compositions ever written for cello. As is standard for a Baroque musical suite, each movement is based around a baroque dance type. The cello suites are structured in six movements each: a prelude; an allemande; a courante; a sarabande; two minuets, two bourrées, or two gavottes; and a final gigue. The Bach cello suites are considered to be among the most profound of all classical music works.

[/hidden-answer]

28. Run-on Sentences

Run-on sentences occur when two or more independent clauses are improperly joined. (We talked about clauses in Text: Parts of a Sentence.) One type of run-on that you've probably heard of is the *comma splice*, in which two independent clauses are joined by a comma without a coordinating conjunction (*and*, *or*, *but*, etc.).

Let's look at a few examples of run-on sentences:

- Choosing a topic for a paper can be the hardest part but it gets a lot easier after that.
- Sometimes, books do not have the most complete information, it is a good idea then to look for articles in specialized periodicals.

All three of these have two independent clauses. Each clause should be separated from another with a period, a semicolon, or a comma and a coordinating conjunction:

- Choosing a topic for a paper can be the hardest part, but it gets a lot easier after that.
- Sometimes, books do not have the most complete information; it is a good idea then to look for articles in specialized periodicals.

Note: Caution should be exercised when defining a run-on sentence as a sentence that just goes on and on. A run-on sentence is a sentence that goes on and on **and** isn't correctly punctuated. Not every long

sentence is a run-on sentence. For example, look at this quote from *The Great Gastby*:

> Its vanished trees, the trees that had made way for Gatsby's house, had once pandered in whispers to the last and greatest of all human dreams; for a transitory enchanted moment man must have held his breath in the presence of this continent, compelled into an aesthetic contemplation he neither understood nor desired, face to face for the last time in history with something commensurate to his capacity for wonder.

If you look at the punctuation, you'll see that this quote is a single sentence. F. Scott Fitzgerald used commas and semicolons is such a way that, despite its great length, it's grammatically sound, as well. Length is no guarantee of a run-on sentence.

Common Causes of Run-Ons

We often write run-on sentences because we sense that the sentences involved are closely related and dividing them with a period just doesn't seem right. We may also write them because the parts seem to short to need any division, like in "She loves skiing but he doesn't." However, "She loves skiing" and "he doesn't" are both independent clauses, so they need to be divided by a comma and a coordinating conjunction—not just a coordinating conjunction by itself.

Another common cause of run-on sentences is

mistaking adverbial conjunctions for coordinating conjunctions. For example if we were to write, "She loved skiing, however he didn't," we would have produced a comma splice. The correct sentence would be "She loved skiing; however, he didn't."

Fixing Run-On Sentences

Before you can fix a run-on sentence, you'll need to identify the problem. When you write, carefully look at each part of every sentence. Are the parts independent clauses, or are they dependent clauses or phrases? Remember, only independent clauses can stand on their own. This also means they have to stand on their own; they can't run together without correct punctuation.

Let's take a look at a few run-on sentences and their revisions:

1. Most of the hours I've earned toward my associate's degree do not transfer, however, I do have at least some hours the University will accept.
2. The opposite is true of stronger types of stainless steel they tend to be more susceptible to rust.
3. Some people were highly educated professionals, others were from small villages in underdeveloped countries.

Let's start with the first sentence. This is a comma-splice sentence. The adverbial conjunction *however* is being treated like a coordinating conjunction. There are two easy fixes to this problem. The first is to turn the comma before *however* into a period. If this feels like too hard of a stop between ideas, you can change the comma into a semicolon instead.

- Most of the hours I've earned toward my associate's degree do not transfer. However, I do have at least some hours the University will accept.

- Most of the hours I've earned toward my associate's degree do not transfer; however, I do have at least some hours the University will accept.

The second sentence is a run-on as well. "The opposite is true of stronger types of stainless steel" and "they tend to be more susceptible to rust." are both independent clauses. The two clauses are very closely related, and the second clarifies the information provided in the first. The best solution is to insert a colon between the two clauses:

> The opposite is true of stronger types of stainless steel: they tend to be more susceptible to rust.

What about the last example? Once again we have two independent clauses. The two clauses provide contrasting information. Adding a conjunction could help the reader move from one kind of information to another. However, you may want that sharp contrast. Here are two revision options:

- Some people were highly educated professionals, while others were from small villages in underdeveloped countries.
- Some people were highly educated professionals. Others were from small villages in underdeveloped countries.

Practice

Identify the run-on sentences in the following paragraph. Type a corrected version of the paragraph in the text frame below:

> I had the craziest dream the other night. My cousin Jacob and I were on the run from the law. Apparently we were wizards and the law was cracking down on

> magic. So, we obviously had to go into hiding but I lost track of Jacob and then I got picked up by a cop. But I was able to convince him that the government was corrupt and that he should take me to my escape boat.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="877848"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="877848"]The first two sentences are grammatically sound. The next sentence, however, is not.

> Apparently we were wizards and the law was cracking down on magic.

This sentence just needs a comma inserted before the word *and*: Apparently we were wizards, and the law was cracking down on magic.

Let's look at the next sentence:

> So, we obviously had to go into hiding but I lost track of Jacob and then I got picked up by a cop.

This is also a run-on sentence. While *So* at the beginning of the sentence is technically fine, it's unnecessary, and many teachers dislike it as a transition word. There are three clauses in this run-on sentence, so there are a few different ways you could rework it:

- We obviously had to go into hiding, but I lost track of Jacob. After that, I got picked up by a cop.
- We obviously had to go into hiding. Unfortunately, I had lost track of Jacob and had gotten picked up by a cop.

Let's look at the final sentence:

> But I was able to convince him that the government was corrupt and that he should take me to my escape boat.

This sentence is technically okay, but the *but* at the start of the sentence is unnecessary, and it could be removed without affecting the meaning of the sentence. Additionally, it may be helpful to clarify who *he* is:

> I was able to convince the cop that the government was corrupt and that he should take me to my escape boat.

[/hidden-answer]

29. Sentence Fragments

Fragments are simply grammatically incomplete sentences—they are phrases and dependent clauses. We talked about phrases and clauses a bit in Text: Parts of a Sentence. These are grammatical structures that cannot stand on their own: they need to be connected to an independent clause to work in writing. So how can we tell the difference between a sentence and a sentence fragment? And how can we fix fragments when they already exist?

As you learn about fragments, keep in mind that length is not very helpful when determining if a sentence is a fragment or not. Both of the items below are fragments:

- Before you go.
- Ensuring his own survival with his extensive cache of supplies (food, water, rope, tarps, knives, and a first aid kit).

Let's dive in and see just what makes these both fragments.

Common Causes of Fragments

Part of the reason we write in fragments is because we often speak that way. However, there is a difference between writing and speech, and it is important to write in full sentences. Additionally, fragments often come about in writing because a fragment may already seem too long.

Non-finite verbs (gerunds, participles, and infinitives) can often trip people up as well. Since non-finite verbs don't act like verbs, we don't count them as verbs when we're deciding if we have a phrase or a clause. Let's look at a few examples of these:

- Running away from my mother.

- To ensure your safety and security.
- Beaten down since day one.

Even though all of the above have non-finite verbs, they're phrases, not clauses. In order for these to be clauses, they would need an additional verb that acts as a verb in the sentence.

Words like *since*, *when*, and *because* turn an independent clause into a dependent clause. For example "I was a little girl in 1995" is an independent clause, but "Because I was a little girl in 1995" is a dependent clause. This class of word includes the following:

after	although	as	as far as	as if	as long as	as soon as
as though	because	before	even if	even though	every time	if
in order that	since	so	so that	than	though	unless
until	when	whenever	where	whereas	wherever	while

Relative pronouns, like *that* and *which*, do the same type of thing as those listed above.

Coordinating conjunctions (our FANBOYS) can also cause problems. If you start a sentence with a coordinating conjunction, make sure that it is followed a complete clause, not just a phrase!

As you're identifying fragments, keep in mind that command sentences are *not* fragments, despite not having a subject. Commands are the only grammatically correct sentences that lack a subject:

- Drop and give me fifty!
- Count how many times the word *fragrant* is used during commercial breaks.

Fixing Sentence Fragments

Let's take a look at a couple of examples:

1. Ivana appeared at the committee meeting last week. And made a convincing presentation of her ideas about the new product.
2. The committee considered her ideas for a new marketing strategy quite powerful. The best ideas that they had heard in years.
3. She spent a full month evaluating his computer-based instructional materials. Which she eventually sent to her supervisor with the strongest of recommendations.

Let's look at the phrase "And made a convincing presentation of her ideas about the new product" in example one. It's just that: a phrase. There is no subject in this phrase, so the easiest fix is to simply delete the period and combine the two statements:

> Ivana appeared at the committee meeting last week and made a convincing presentation of her ideas about the new product.

Let's look at example two. The phrase "the best ideas they had heard in years" is simply a phrase—there is no verb contained in the phrase. By adding "they were" to the beginning of this phrase, we have turned the fragment into an independent clause, which can now stand on its own:

> The committee considered her ideas for a new marketing strategy quite powerful; they were the best ideas that they had heard in years.

What about example three? Let's look at the clause "Which she eventually sent to her supervisor with the strongest of recommendations." This is a dependent clause; the word *which* signals this fact. If we change "which she eventually" to "eventually, she," we also turn the dependent clause into an independent clause.

> She spent a full month evaluating his computer-based

instructional materials. Eventually, she sent the evaluation to her supervisor with the strongest of recommendations.

Practice

Identify the fragments in the sentences below. Why are they fragments? What are some possible solutions?

1. The corporation wants to begin a new marketing push in educational software. Although, the more conservative executives of the firm are skeptical.
2. Include several different sections in your proposal. For example, a discussion of your personnel and their qualifications, your expectations concerning the schedule of the project, and a cost breakdown.
3. The research team has completely reorganized the workload. Making sure that members work in areas of their own expertise and that no member is assigned proportionately too much work.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="361665"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="361665"]Here are some possible revisions for the sentences. Remember, there are multiple solutions. Pay attention to the principles used to create the revised sentence.

1. In the fragment "Although, the more conservative executives of the firm are skeptical," the subordinating conjunction *although* is being used as an adverbial conjunction in this sentence. There are two simple revision to resolve the fragment.

- Change *although* to be an adverbial conjunction: "The corporation wants to begin a new marketing push in educational software. However, the more conservative executives of the firm are skeptical."
- Move the fragment to the beginning of the sentence and link it to the independent clause with a comma after it: "Although the more conservative executives of the firm are skeptical, the corporation wants to begin a new marketing push in educational software."

2. The first sentence is a command; it is a correct sentence. The second sentence is a fragment, however. The simplest change is to switch the period before "for example" out for a colon. Colons can be followed by a phrase or dependent clause.

    - Include several different sections in your proposal: for example, a discussion of your personnel and their qualifications, your expectations concerning the schedule of the project, and a cost breakdown.

3. The second sentence is a fragment. You can either change *making* to "they made" and have two sentences, or you can change *making* to "in order to make sure." *In order to* is a subordinating conjunction, so it does not require a comma beforehand:

    - The research team has completely reorganized the workload. They made sure that members work in areas of their own expertise

and that no member is assigned proportionately too much work.

- The research team has completely reorganized the workload in order to make sure that members work in areas of their own expertise and that no member is assigned proportionately too much work.

[/hidden-answer]

PART VII

MODULE 6: CITATION—HOW WE ESTABLISH CREDIBILITY FOR THE EVIDENCE WE PROVIDE – ARGUMENTATION PART II

30. Module 6: Citation – How We Establish Credibility for the Evidence We Provide – Argumentation Part II

Module Introduction

In our last module, we discussed the kinds of outside sources that best support a writer's position on an issue. The best sources are the most objective, least biased ones, and they usually are written by specialists in specific fields of study or are produced by journalists who have a professional history of being fair and well informed. Although to some extent all evidence presents a perspective on the world and so cannot be considered absolutely true, most scientists and many journalists and academic writers strive to be as objective as possible when they present information, and they stake their reputations on that objectivity. We have discussed the kinds of organizations that present these writers' work and where to find these types of sources; now we need to consider how best to include the information we want to use in the papers we write.

Once you have found unbiased (or at least very well researched) sources which present relevant information, you must clearly explain what those sources are and where they come from. Indeed, as a writer who seeks to build consensus on a controversial topic, you are expected both to find accurate and viable sources and to cite those sources accurately and clearly. This is how you build credibility with your audience and avoid plagiarism, which is when you use other people's ideas and information without giving them the proper credit. Plagiarism is considered a major ethical breach

when it comes to academic and professional writing; if you don't cite properly, you may be given a failing grade or even lose your job. This module will help you understand the basics of how citation works so that you can strengthen your academic arguments and steer clear of plagiarism. Keep in mind that this will only be a brief overview, and as you move on to more research-intensive courses you will need to familiarize yourself with the nuances of citation. [1]

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the student will be able to:

- Differentiate between the APA and MLA format
- Identify correct in-text citation strategies, including quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing
- Identify situations that call for indirect citation
- Identify correctly formatted works cited and references pages
- Compose an argumentative essay featuring correct in-text citations and an appropriate source list (works cited page or references page) [1]

Readings

- Online Learning Units

Lecture Content

ENC1101 Learning Unit 6

MLA and APA Citation

One reason using sources is confusing for students is that different disciplines abide by different sets of rules for documenting information. For example, most English and humanities classes use what is called the MLA *format* (MLA stands for the Modern Language Association), while science and business classes typically use the APA *format* (APA stands for the American Psychological Association). There are other formatting styles, as well, but because this chapter is meant to serve as a very basic general overview, we are only going to touch on these two formats. Always remember to ask your instructor (or your boss if you are writing for your job) which format to use as you begin your research. [1]

In-text Citation and Source Lists (Works Cited and References Pages)

Regardless of whether you are using the MLA or APA format, you need to understand from the very start of your writing project that you are responsible for citing your sources in*two ways* : you have to explain what source you are using *at the moment you introduce its information inside the paper* , which is called *in-text citation* , and you have to list all of the pertinent publication information for all of your sources *at the end of your paper* on a list of sources. This list

is called a *works cited* page if you are using the MLA format and a references page if you are using the APA format.

Most researchers build their lists of sources (their works cited pages or references pages) as they compile research material. Again, this list goes at the very end of the paper on a separate page titled either "Works Cited" or "References."

After they've constructed these pages, writers can use them to help them accurately create the in-text citations that must be included *each time* one of the sources from the list is used in their papers. You can think of the in-text citations as notes to readers that let them know which source from the list at the paper's end is being used. [1]

Three Ways to Use a Source: Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing

Quoting

Writers can cite a source in a number of ways. The first is to quote it. This is when a writer takes the exact words of a source and repeats them verbatim in his or her paper. When you quote a source, you have to put its words inside quotation marks. Let's take a look at examples of quoting in both the MLA and APA formats:

MLA: According to philosopher Mark Stephens, "understanding what the best course of action may be requires analyzing both the action's context and the ethical framework within which the judge of that action is operating" (456).

APA According to Stephens (2015), "understanding what the best course of action may be requires analyzing both the action's context and the ethical framework within which the judge of that action is operating" (p. 456).

In both cases, the quote itself ("understanding what the best course of action may be requires analyzing both the action's context and the ethical framework within which the judge of that action is operating") is introduced by a *signal phrase* , a group of words that *signal* to the reader that a specific source is being used. When a source has a clear author, you provide at least that *author's last name* (in the MLA you can provide his or her first name, as well) so that the reader can look it up on the works cited or references page at the end of the paper. Also, the APA requires that you list *the year* the source was published; in a signal phrase, you put that year *in parentheses right after the author's name* . Notice that a page number is provided at the end of both examples, as well. When you use the MLA format, you don't put a "p." in front of that number, but you need to include it if you are using the APA format.

Note that *if you provide an author's name in a signal phrase, you do not need to mention it in the parentheses at the end of the sentence.* This is true for all of the different kinds of in-text citation, including paraphrasing and summarizing. [1]

Paraphrasing

Another way to cite a source is to *paraphrase* it. Paraphrasing is when you put a source's information in your own words without using any of the source's original phrasing. Many instructors consider paraphrasing to be the most effective way to cite because it shows that a student has a clear understanding of the source material. Also, when you put source material in your own words, it blends nicely with the rest of your paper.

Paraphrasing is not easy to do well. This is because you have to make sure that you don't use any of the original's language; your version has to sound significantly different in order for you to avoid plagiarizing the source. In addition, many students forget that *paraphrasing requires just as much citation as quoting* . **This is**

because you are using someone else's ideas and information, so it does not belong to you, regardless of whether you used your own words to state it.

Here are two basic examples of paraphrasing. In both cases, a printed source with a single author is being cited. The original source material is also provided so you can see how different the paraphrased versions look.

Original Source: When an essential ethical decision must be made, understanding what the best course of action may be requires analyzing both the action's context and the ethical framework within which the judge of that action is operating.

MLA: Philosopher Mark Stephens explains that making a truly ethical choice must involve familiarity with the situation within which that choice must be made and awareness of the ethical standards of the system that the decider is using to make the choice (456).

APA: Stephens (2015) says that every important ethical choice necessitates an awareness both of the situation's background factors and also of the principles the chooser holds dear (p. 456). [1]

Summarizing

The final way to cite a source inside your paper is to condense it down to its main ideas and explain its overall point or importance; this is called summarizing a source. Unlike paraphrasing, which is when you rewrite a particular portion of a source in your own words, summarizing involves summing up an entire source (or at least a large section of it) in a short burst of language. Like paraphrasing, though, you must use your own words when you summarize; you must avoid using the original's language unless you want to quote the source's words. Also, just like quoting and paraphrasing, summarizing requires that you clearly explain what

source you are using and provide author information and page numbers. Here are two examples:

MLA: Philosopher Mark Stephens focuses on all of the factors that go into ethical decision-making in his article "We Are What We Choose;" he ultimately argues that there will never be a perfect algorithm for making existential choices and that being human means never knowing whether a choice is absolutely good or just (450-465).

APA: Stephens (2015) emphasizes the complexity of all existential decisions and defines personhood as the capacity to choose coupled with the inability to foresee a given choice's ethical ramifications (p. 450-465).

Note in both cases the page range is provided so that a reader knows exactly what part of the original work is being summarized. Though we cannot reprint the whole span of pages here, reading them would reveal that neither example used the exact language of the original. Finally, notice that the publication year is provided in the APA example. [(1)]

Indirect Citation: Citing a Source That is Inside Another Source

One very confusing situation that often comes up when you are citing a source occurs when you want to quote the exact words of someone who is already being quoted by the source you are using! In other words, the words you are quoting are not those of your source's author but of someone that author is quoting him or herself. For example, imagine that this is the part of a source you are interested in using:

> The effects of solitary confinement can be catastrophic, and health care professionals argue vehemently for its abolition. Dr. Murray Baker, who has worked with prisoners for

> decades, argues that "confinement like this for long periods is quite simply the cruelest, most debilitating kind of torture a society could deign to practice. Its use is unconscionable."
>
> -Andrea Skate, from her 2013 book *The Cruelest Cage* , p173

Citing a source like this (which often is called an *embedded source* since it is embedded or housed inside another source) is called creating an *indirect citation* , and the MLA and APA formats have different rules for doing it. [1]

MLA Format

If you are using the ***MLA format*** , you can explain the details of the embedded source in your signal phrase and then provide the information about the source where you found it (the *secondary source* , if we want to be technical) in the parenthetical citation at the sentence's end. Thus, if we were citing the example above, our citation might look like this:

> According to Dr. Murray Baker, who has years of experience working with prisoners, solitary confinement "is quite simply the cruelest, most debilitating kind of torture a society could deign to practice" (qtd. in Skate 173).

Notice that in the parentheses at the end of the sentence, the abbreviation "qtd. in" appears, meaning that Baker was "quoted in" the book by Skate. The page number of Skate's book where Baker's words originally appeared is then provided.

For clarity's sake, let's break this down once more. Dr. Murray Baker is the *embedded source* whose words appear in Andrea Skate's *secondary source* , the book *The Cruelest Cage*. In our citation, we mentioned Baker (the embedded source) in our signal

phrase, and then provided the pertinent information about Skate's source (the secondary source) in our parenthetical citation at the end of the sentence. [1]

APA Format

The process is similar if you are using the **APA *format*** , but it looks slightly different. It will be easiest if we go ahead and look at an APA example of an indirect citation and then break it down, so here's a citation of the above source again, this time in the APA format:

> According to Baker, solitary confinement "is quite simply the cruelest, most debilitating kind of torture a society could deign to practice" (as cited in Skate, 2013, p. 173).

Again, Dr. Baker's name appears in the signal phrase at the beginning of the sentence, and the secondary source's information is included in the parenthetical citation at the end. Notice, however, that the APA format uses the words "as cited in" instead of the abbreviation "qtd. in" and includes the secondary source's publication date as well as a "p." in front of the page number, and all of this information is separated by commas. [1]

Citing Sources without Authors and/or without Page Numbers

Another confusing situation arises when a source you want to cite either has no author attributed to it or, because it is an online source, it has no page numbers.

In the case of a source without an author, both the MLA and APA formats require you to mention the next most important piece of information about that source when you create an in-text citation.

This piece of information will typically end up being the first thing you list for that source on the list of sources at the end of your paper (your works cited or references page).

If you are dealing with a book, the *book's title* will usually be what you will mention in an in-text citation. Book titles always appear in italics when you cite them.

If you are dealing with a *magazine, newspaper, or journal article, the article title* is the thing you will mention. If you are citing a web page, usually *the title of the page you are citing* (not the overall website but the specific page or article you are referencing on that site) is what you will mention. In the case of all such articles, you put the titles inside quotation marks. [1]

Examples

Book with no author, MLA:

According to *Science and Service* , there are well over 200,000 science-based jobs being performed in the military (25).

Book with no author, APA:

According to *Science and Service* (2015), there are well over 200,000 science-based jobs being performed in the military (p. 25).

Article with no author, MLA:

The article "Controversies in Online Communities" breaks down several ways that online communication becomes toxic, including

"micro-aggression, gas lighting, race basting, breaking the sacred, personal information dumps, friend forging, and triggering" (127).

Article with no author, APA:

The article "Controversies in Online Communities" (2016) breaks down several ways that online communication becomes toxic, including "micro-aggression, gas lighting, race basting, breaking the sacred, personal information dumps, friend forging, and triggering" (p. 127).

Note that the APA versions include dates (and the "p." in front of the page numbers). [1]

As for sources without page numbers like web-based articles, the MLA does not require any additional work; you just present the author or book/article title (if there is no author) in the signal phrase or parenthetical citation. The APA, however, requires that you list paragraph numbers if the paragraphs are numbered in the source (usually you will see those numbers in the right margin). If no paragraph numbers are provided, you are required to provide the section of the source in which the cited material appears and then count the paragraphs from the beginning of that section and present that number, too.

Examples

Source with no page numbers, MLA:

According to Dr. Charles Millen, a specialist in Western myth and popular culture, "today's superheroes embody a strange

combination of elevated archetypal dignity and a base tendency to engage in hyper-violence due to the commercial interests that control their destinies."

Source with no page numbers but with paragraph numbers, APA:

According to Millen (2016), "today's superheroes embody a strange combination of elevated archetypal dignity and a base tendency to engage in hyper-violence due to the commercial interests that control their destinies" (para. 7).

Source with no page or paragraph numbers, APA:

Marshall (2016) argues that "resistance can't take the form of the very thing it resists, for it then becomes a hypocritical play of force that threatens the integrity of the resistor" (Violence in Context section, para. 3). [1]

There are many, many more in-text citation situations that you will encounter as you write research papers in college and beyond. We can only provide a basic overview here, and as you move forward with your education, you will likely want to purchase the MLA Handbook or the Publication Manual of the APA, depending on which format your discipline uses. Many online resources are available, as well. [1]

Creating Source Lists: Works Cited Pages (MLA) and References Pages (APA)

As we mentioned at the beginning of this module, every research paper must include a list of the sources that are used within the paper. This list appears as the very last page of a paper (it should always be on its own page). The MLA calls this list a works cited page, while the APA calls it a references page.

We have included both a sample works cited page in this module 6 and a sample references page in module 5. Pay close attention to the way the sources are formatted on those sample pages. You will notice the following general attributes of both MLA and APA source lists based on these examples.

- the title of the pages (Works Cited or References) appears at the top and is centered; it is NOT bolded, underlined, or italicized, and it has the same font size as the rest of the paper.
- the pages are double-spaced, just like the formatting of the rest of the paper.
- each entry on the page is listed in alphabetical order according the first letter of whatever starts the entry. There are no bullets or numbers in the list!
- each entry that is longer than one line has a hanging indent; this means that the second (and all subsequent) lines are indented half of an inch from the left margin.

Because there are so many different kinds of sources, we will only be able to discuss a few examples in this module in order to provide you with a general idea of the information you need to include on an accurate works cited or references page. More information and examples are available in the course shell.

A Print Book with a Single Author

This is the simplest kind of source to include on a source list. For the **MLA** , you need to include the author's name (last name and then first name), followed by the title of the book, the publisher's name, and the publication date.

For the **APA** , you need to include the author's name (last name and first initial), followed by the publication date in parentheses, the book's title, the place of its publication, and the name of the publisher. Note the capitalization and punctuation differences in the examples below.

MLA Example:

Matysik, Larry. Drawing Heat the Hard Way. ECW Press, 2009.

APA Example:

Matysik, L. (2009). Drawing heat the hard way. Toronto, Ontario: ECW Press. [(1)]

A Print Article in an Academic Journal with a Single Author

For the **MLA** , include the author's name (last and then first), the title of article, the title of the journal (in italics), the volume number, and the issue number if it is available. Include the year and page numbers at the end of the entry.

For the **APA** , include the author's name (last name and first initial), the title of article, the title of the periodical, the volume number (with the issue number in parentheses), and the pages on which the article appears.

MLA Example:

Abdous, M'hammed. "A Process-Oriented Framework for Acquiring Online Teaching Competencies." *Journal of Computing in Higher Education* , vol. 23, no. 1, 2011, pp. 60-77.

APA Example:

Abdous, M. (2011). A process-oriented framework for acquiring online teaching competencies. Journal of Computing in Higher Education, 23(1), 60-77. [1]

There are many, many more in-text citation situations that you will encounter as you write research papers in college and beyond. We can only provide a basic overview here, and as you move forward with your education, you will likely want to purchase the MLA Handbook or the Publication Manual of the APA, depending on which format your discipline uses. Many online resources are available, as well.

ENC1101 Learning Unit 6.2

Reading: How We Establish Credibility for the Evidence We Provide – Argumentation Part II

Introduction

At the end of the last argumentation module we looked at a student argument that followed the APA format. For this module, we will examine one that follows the MLA format. [1]

Reading

Select and read this argumentative essay, "Toxic Locks: What Is Hiding in Your Shampoo?" [1]

What to Look for

Like the last student example, this one also tackles a controversial issue, and its author provides citations from various sources to bolster her claims. However, where many of the citations in the APA paper arguing about guns on campus involved expert opinions with which the author either agreed or took issue, this MLA paper's citations are focused largely on factual evidence. In fact, you will notice that these citations start almost immediately in the introductory paragraph as the author seeks to use evidence early on to win over her audience. Also, note that while the author of the APA paper in the last module chose to use *direct quotes* to cite her sources, this author prefers to use *paraphrasing* to present outside evidence; in other words, she reworded the information from outside sources using her own language and sentence structure. Regardless, she was still very careful to cite every sentence in which outside information appears in her paper in order to avoid plagiarism and to lend credibility to her position. Take some time to study the various moments in the essay when sources are presented, and focus on the way signal phrases and parenthetical citations work. You will also want to pay attention to the way different kinds of sources are used; for instance, this essay cites a credible source that has no author. Note how it appears in the in-text citations. [1]

Course Assignment

Overview

This assignment relies upon information provided in both modules

five and six, so make sure you read module six online Learning Unit on citing academic sources before you get too far along.

Using the information in modules five and six as a guide, write a 2 to 4 page (500-1000 word) argumentative essay about the **use of social media in contemporary society** . You may either argue that it is beneficial to modern life or that it is destructive. To do so effectively, you must:

- explain the controversy over social media in your introduction (give necessary background information)
- present a clear thesis statement that announces your position on the issue
- present the reasons you believe your position to be true in your body paragraphs
- support those reasons with fair and convincing examples and evidence from your personal experience and from the sources you have read
- address at least one of the opposition's points (perhaps using information from the sources to do so)
- cite at least two of the outside **sources with which you have been provided (below)** , using either the MLA format or the APA format for in-text citations; your paper should have *at least two* effective and correct citations total (if you only have two, each one should come from a different source)
- include a works cited page or a references page (depending upon whether you are using the MLA or APA format)

Here are the links to and the basic citation information for the provided sources:

POSITIVE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Title: "Is it time for science to embrace cat videos?"

Author name: George Vlahakis
Website Title: *futurity.org*
Date Published: 17 June 2015
Source URL: http://www.futurity.org/cat-videos-943852/

Title: "#Snowing: How Tweets Can Make Winter Driving Safer"

Author Name: Cory Nealon
Website Title: *futurity.org*
Date Published: 2 December 2015
Source URL: http://www.futurity.org/twitter-weather-traffic-1060902-2/

NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Title: "Using Lots of Social Media Accounts Linked to Anxiety"

Author: Allison Hydzik
Date Published: 19 December 2016
Source URL: http://www.futurity.org/social-media-depression-anxiety-1320622-2/

Title: "People Who Obsessively Check Social Media Get Less Sleep"

Author: Allison Hydzik
Date Published: 16 January 2016
Source URL: http://www.futurity.org/social-media-sleep-1095922/

Download the attached Writing Assignment: Writing an Argumentative Essay

- Read the assignment carefully and be certain to read modules five and six Learning Units
- Complete the following steps:
  - Step 1: Pre-Writing (Questioning, Freewriting, and Mapping)
  - Step 2: Focusing, Outlining, and Drafting
  - Step 3: Revising, Editing, and Proofreading
  - Step 4: Making Your Works Cited or References Page
    - Additional writing resources (MLA & APA) are available in the Blackboard "Tools & Resources" area
  - Step 5: Evaluation [1]

Module 6: Argumentative Essay Outline Discussion

Post your "Argumentative Essay Outline" to the discussion board so that your instructor can give you some feedback before you begin drafting. You can either attach it to a thread as a Word file or just type it into the thread itself.

After you've finished outlining and received some feedback, you are ready to draft the actual paper.

This posting is worth 10 points. [1]

31. Is it time for science to embrace cat videos?

Watching cat videos online, from Lil Bub to Grumpy Cat, does more than just entertain us–it boosts our energy and positive emotions and decreases negative feelings.

That's according to a new study by assistant professor Jessica Gall Myrick of the Indiana University Media School, who surveyed almost 7,000 people about their viewing of cat videos and how it affects their moods.

via GIPHY

The findings appear in the journal *Computers in Human Behavior*. Lil Bub's owner, Mike Bridavsky, who lives in Bloomington, Indiana, helped distribute the survey via social media.

"Some people may think watching online cat videos isn't a serious enough topic for academic research, but the fact is that it's one of the most popular uses of the internet today," Myrick says. "If we want to better understand the effects the internet may have on us as individuals and on society, then researchers can't ignore internet cats anymore.

"We all have watched a cat video online, but there is really little empirical work done on why so many of us do this, or what effects it might have on us," adds Myrick, who owns a pug but no cats. "As a media researcher and online-cat-video viewer, I felt compelled to gather some data about this pop culture phenomenon."

For each participant who took the survey, Myrick donated 10 cents to Lil Bub's foundation, raising almost $700. The foundation, Lil Bub's Big Fund for the ASPCA, has raised more than $100,000 for needy animals. (Credit: Mike Bridavsky/www.lilbub.com)

2 million cat videos

Internet data show there were more than 2 million cat videos posted on YouTube in 2014, with almost 26 billion views. Cat videos had more views per video than any other category of YouTube content.

> "Researchers can't ignore internet cats anymore."

In Myrick's study, the most popular sites for viewing cat videos were Facebook, YouTube, Buzzfeed, and I Can Has Cheezburger.

Among the possible effects Myrick hoped to explore: Does viewing cat videos online have the same kind of positive impact as pet therapy? And do some viewers actually feel worse after

watching cat videos because they feel guilty for putting off tasks they need to tackle?

Of the participants in the study, about 36 percent described themselves as a "cat person," while about 60 percent said they liked both cats and dogs.

Guiltless pleasures

Participants in Myrick's study reported:

- They were more energetic and felt more positive after watching cat-related online media than before.
- They had fewer negative emotions, such as anxiety, annoyance, and sadness, after watching cat-related online media than before.
- They often view internet cats at work or during studying.
- The pleasure they got from watching cat videos outweighed any guilt they felt about procrastinating.
- Cat owners and people with certain personality traits, such as agreeableness and shyness, were more likely to watch cat videos.
- About 25 percent of the cat videos they watched were ones they sought out; the rest were ones they happened upon.
- They were familiar with many so-called "celebrity cats," such as Nala Cat and Henri, Le Chat Noir.

Overall, the response to watching cat videos was largely positive.

"Even if they are watching cat videos on YouTube to procrastinate

or while they should be working, the emotional pay-off may actually help people take on tough tasks afterward," Myrick says.

The results also suggest that future work could explore how online cat videos might be used as a form of low-cost pet therapy, she says.

For each participant who took the survey, Myrick donated 10 cents to Lil Bub's foundation, raising almost $700. The foundation, Lil Bub's Big Fund for the ASPCA, has raised more than $100,000 for needy animals.

32. #Snowing: How tweets can make winter driving safer

When the snow starts to fall, hashtags like #snow and #weather start to pop up on Twitter. Experts think it might be possible to track all that data to manage traffic during storms and make winter driving a little safer.

"It doesn't matter if someone tweets about how beautiful the snow is or if they're complaining about unplowed roads. Twitter users provide an unparalleled amount of hyperlocal data that we can use to improve our ability to direct traffic during snowstorms and adverse weather," says Adel Sadek, director of the Institute for Sustainable Transportation and Logistics at the University at Buffalo.

Traffic planners rely on models that analyze vehicular data from cameras and sensors, as well as weather data from nearby weather stations. While the approach works, its accuracy is limited because traffic and weather observations don't provide information on road surface conditions. For example, the model doesn't consider ice that lingers after a storm, or that snowplows have cleared a road.

[Tweets from big cities show location still matters]

Twitter can help address this limitation because its users often tweet about the weather and road surface conditions, and many opt to share their location via GPS.

For a new study, published in the journal *Transportation Research Record*, researchers examined more than 360,000 tweets in the Buffalo Niagara region from 19 days in December 2013 and identified roughly 3,000 relevant tweets by tagging keywords such as "snow" and "melt."

Next, they refined the data via a method they call Twitter Weather Events Observation which put events into two categories:

- Weather utterances, like "The roads are a hot mess out in the burbs all over. Snowing like CRAZY up in here … drive safe everyone."

- Weather reports, like #BuffaloNY #Weather #Outside. #Cold #Snowing #Windy. @Parkside Candy http://t.co/IfyzICtGPW

Once the number of events reach a threshold for a given time, they are counted as a "Twitter weather event." Researchers tested the reliability of these events through metrics designed to eliminate tweets that don't match actual weather. Because tweets contain geographic coordinates, researchers were able to map the exact locations of where the inclement weather was reported.

Next, they looked at the timing of the tweets and saw a pattern. When snow falls, the number of weather-related tweets increases, the average motor vehicle speed drops, and traffic volumes slowly decrease.

[We use less slang after a hashtag on Twitter]

Researchers then inserted the Twitter data into a model containing traffic and weather information and found that the incorporation of such data improved the accuracy of such models. In particular, researchers found Twitter data to be more effective during the day (when more people tweet), and where the population is bigger (in the study's case, Buffalo has roughly five times more people than Niagara Falls, New York).

More precise models can usher in a host of improvements to freeways during inclement weather, the researchers say. For example, they can help traffic planners recommend better safe

driving speeds, which roads need to be cleared of snow or avoided, and expected arrival times for motorists.

Researchers plan to continue improving their model by acquiring additional Twitter data for longer periods of time and at different locations.

The Transportation Informatics Tier I University Transportation Center provided funding for the study.

33. Using lots of social media accounts linked to anxiety

New research links the number of social media platforms a person uses with risk of depression and anxiety.

The analysis, published in the journal *Computers in Human Behavior*, shows that people who report using seven to 11 social media platforms had more than three times the risk of depression and anxiety than their peers who use zero to two platforms, even after adjusting for the total time spent on social media overall.

"This association is strong enough that clinicians could consider asking their patients with depression and anxiety about multiple platform use and counseling them that this use may be related to their symptoms," says lead author and physician Brian A. Primack, director of the University of Pittsburgh Center for Research on Media, Technology and Health and assistant vice chancellor for health and society in Schools of the Health Sciences.

Selfie 'lurking' could lower your self-esteem

"While we can't tell from this study whether depressed and anxious people seek out multiple platforms or whether something about using multiple platforms can lead to depression and anxiety, in either case the results are potentially valuable."

11 most popular platforms

In 2014, Primack and his colleagues sampled 1,787 US adults ages 19 through 32, using an established depression assessment tool and questionnaires to determine social media use.

The questionnaires asked about the 11 most popular social media platforms at the time: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Google Plus, Instagram, Snapchat, Reddit, Tumblr, Pinterest, Vine, and LinkedIn.

Participants who used seven to 11 platforms had 3.1 times the odds of reporting higher levels of depressive symptoms than their counterparts who used zero to two platforms. Those who used the most platforms had 3.3 times the odds of high levels of anxiety symptoms than their peers who used the least number of platforms. The researchers controlled for other factors that may contribute to depression and anxiety, including race, gender, relationship status, household income, education, and total time spent on social media.

Most time on social media is just people-watching

Primack, who also is a professor of medicine, emphasized that the directionality of the association is unclear.

"It may be that people who suffer from symptoms of depression or anxiety, or both, tend to subsequently use a broader range of social media outlets. For example, they may be searching out multiple avenues for a setting that feels comfortable and accepting," says Primack. "However, it could also be that trying to maintain a presence on multiple platforms may actually lead to depression and anxiety. More research will be needed to tease that apart."

Three possible explanations

Primack and his team propose several hypotheses as to why multi-platform social media use may drive depression and anxiety:

- Multitasking, as would happen when switching between platforms, is known to be related to poor cognitive and mental health outcomes.

- The distinct set of unwritten rules, cultural assumptions, and idiosyncrasies of each platform are increasingly difficult to navigate when the number of platforms used rises, which could lead to negative mood and emotions.

- There is more opportunity to commit a social media faux pas when using multiple platforms, which can lead to repeated embarrassments.

"Understanding the way people are using multiple social media platforms and their experiences within those platforms—as well as the specific type of depression and anxiety that social media users experience—are critical next steps," says coauthor and psychiatrist César G. Escobar-Viera, a postdoctoral research associate at the University of Pittsburgh's Health Policy Institute and at CRMTH. "Ultimately, we want this research to help in designing and implementing educational public health interventions that are as personalized as possible."

34. People who obsessively check social media get less sleep

Young adults who spend a lot of time on social media during the day or check it frequently throughout the week often get less sleep than their peers who use social media less, a new study suggests.

The findings, published in the journal *Preventive Medicine*, indicate that doctors should consider asking young adult patients about these media habits when assessing sleep issues.

"This is one of the first pieces of evidence that social media use really can impact your sleep," says lead author Jessica C. Levenson, a postdoctoral researcher in the psychiatry department at the University of Pittsburgh. "And it uniquely examines the association between social media use and sleep among young adults who are, arguably, the first generation to grow up with social media."

For the study, researchers sampled 1,788 US adults ages 19 through 32, using questionnaires to determine social media use and an established measurement system to assess sleep disturbances.

[Sleepy teens wake at night to check social media]

The questionnaires asked about the 11 most popular social media platforms at the time: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Google Plus, Instagram, Snapchat, Reddit, Tumblr, Pinterest, Vine, and LinkedIn.

On average, the participants used social media a total of 61 minutes a day and visited various social media accounts 30 times a week. The assessment showed that nearly 30 percent of the participants had high levels of sleep disturbance.

The participants who reported most frequently checking social

media throughout the week had three times the likelihood of sleep disturbances, compared with those who checked least frequently. And participants who spent the most total time on social media throughout the day had twice the risk of sleep disturbance, compared to peers who spent less time on social media.

"This may indicate that frequency of social media visits is a better predictor of sleep difficulty than overall time spent on social media," Levenson says. "If this is the case, then interventions that counter obsessive 'checking' behavior may be most effective."

[4 reasons why people can't quite quit Facebook]

More study is needed, particularly to determine whether social media use contributes to sleep disturbance, whether sleep disturbance contributes to social media use—or both, says senior author Brian A. Primack, assistant vice chancellor for health and society.

For example, social media may disturb sleep if it is:

- Displacing sleep, such as when a user stays up late posting photos on Instagram.
- Promoting emotional, cognitive, or physiological arousal, such as when engaging in a contentious discussion on Facebook.
- Disrupting circadian rhythms through the bright light emitted by the devices used to access social media accounts.

Alternatively, young adults who have difficulty sleeping may subsequently use social media as a pleasurable way to pass the time when they can't fall asleep or return to sleep.

"It also may be that both of these hypotheses are true," Primack says. "Difficulty sleeping may lead to increased use of social media, which may in turn lead to more problems sleeping. This cycle may be particularly problematic with social media because many forms

involve interactive screen time that is stimulating and rewarding and, therefore, potentially detrimental to sleep."

PART VIII

MODULE 7: COMPARE AND CONTRAST- HOW WE DISCUSS MULTIPLE SUBJECTS AT ONCE

35. Module 7: Compare and Contrast- How We Discuss Multiple Subjects at Once

Module Introduction

As we start our final module, we should take stock of what we've accomplished so far in this course. After coming to terms with our strange relation to the symbiotic technology of language, we set out to learn how to interact with that technology more deliberately. Starting with descriptive writing (translating the five senses into words), we have progressed through narrative writing, example writing, and argumentative writing, focusing on how to organize our ideas effectively and how to support those ideas with compelling details. Now we turn to one more kind of discourse, comparison/contrast writing. Though this kind of writing is quite similar to example writing, comparison/contrast writing differs in one very important way: it requires a writer to discuss two subjects together rather than focusing on just one. Luckily, the thought process behind comparison/contrast writing is an extremely familiar one for almost everybody.

We use comparisons to make important decisions every day. Whether we are choosing a career to work toward, a school to attend, a product to buy, or a political figure to elect, we narrow our choices and examine them side-by-side. Indeed, making important decisions involves both *comparing* and *contrasting* at least two choices that are in the same category.*Comparing* means examining how things are similar, while *contrasting* means looking at the ways things differ. For instance, if you wanted to choose which of two schools to attend, you would need to *compare* the similarities

and *contrast* the differences of the two educational institutions. When making such a decision, you are evaluating based on *comparison*and *contrast* .

It's safe to say that every one of us has had to compare or contrast two subjects or topics to gain insights about them, and we are compelled to do so on a regular basis. For example, we often compare or contrast two personal experiences, two bosses, two teachers, or two friends in order to make better sense of our world and even to justify our belief systems.

In college, students often contrast or compare two books, two stories or poems, two songs, or two paintings. When students engage in such comparative thinking, they are gaining insights about these topics. It is important, however, to realize that when writing a simple comparison/contrast paper, students *either* compare **or** contrast topics, typically not both. In other words, though you will often consider both the similarities and differences among subjects, when you write your essay for this module, you will discuss **either** the subjects' similarities (thereby writing a comparison paper) **or** their differences (thus writing a contrast paper). In this module, students will learn how to construct a comparison or contrast essay in order to evaluate, gain insight, or to make a choice. [1]

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the student will be able to:

- Use a points-of-reference chart to compare or contrast topics
- Identify the methods of comparing and contrasting used by the authors
- Use appropriate transitional words for comparing and contrasting essays and topics
- Evaluate the effectiveness of comparison and contrast

methods, given model essays
- Compose a compare or contrast essay by using the steps of the writing process [1]

Readings

- Online Learning Units

Lecture Content

ENC1101 Learning Unit 7

The Basics of Comparison and Contrast

Whether you are writing an essay for a college course or making a life decision, the skill of comparing and contrasting is essential. At the heart of this skill is the ability to logically consider two subjects at once in order to make an interesting claim about their relationship or choose one over the other. Two tools can help you develop a comparison/contrast analysis: a points-of-reference chart and transition words. [1]

Points-of-Reference Chart

One method used to compare and contrast choices is a *points-of-reference chart* , a simple example of which is shown in Table 1.

The points-of-reference are those criteria most crucial in making a decision.

As we have seen in our other modules, planning is always key to developing a logical claim or argument, and the same is true for making a careful decision. For instance, imagine a situation in which you have to choose which college to attend. How does one make such a momentous (and expensive) decision? Comparing or contrasting the colleges is essential to thinking this choice through, but in order to do so effectively, you will have to imagine what *criteria* to consider to lead you to the best choice.

For many college students, three factors are primary when it comes to selecting a school: its location, its educational offerings, and its overall cost.

The section below presents these three criteria as the *points-of-reference* listed in the middle column of the chart. We call them *points-of-reference* because we will *refer* to each factor when we think about each one of the schools we have to consider, and they indicate the three *points* we think are most important when considering our decision. On either side of these points you will find columns listing our thoughts regarding going to a community college (the left-hand column) vs. going to a state university (the right-hand column). The table thus provides an easy way to group important factors and to consider how each subject relates to the other; by reading across the chart, for instance, one can easily see that how the local community college's location stacks up against that of the state university. [1]

Points-of-Reference Example Comparing Similarities and Differences of Two Colleges through the se of Three Criteria: Location, Program of Study, and Cost.

Community College

Points of Reference

Location

- Close to home, 10 minute commute
- Prolongs dependence on family if living at home is an option
- Proximity means no major life changes and thus discourages adventuring

Programs of Study

- Offers Associates of Arts degree in general biology
- Offers general education courses needed to transfer junior year to 4-year university for Bachelor of Science (BS), if desired
- Faculty are well-credentialed and have excellent reputation for being student-centered

Cost

- Lowest, affordable tuition Proximity to home eliminates food and housing expenses
- Commute will incur gas and parking costs

State University

Points of Reference

Location

- Several hours from home, distance too far to commute
- Is far enough away that living on one's own will be a challenge
- Distance from home means school becomes an opportunity for exploring a new place

Programs of Study

- Offers Bachelor of Science degree in marine biology—the program of most interest
- Attendance as a freshman and sophomore means getting to know the faculty with whom one will work during rigorous upper level courses
- Faculty are well-published in field and have international reputations

Cost

- Tuition is low, but higher than local community college
- Distance from home will incur food and housing costs
- Relocation and transfer costs

Developing a points-of-reference chart like this one is a great way to prewrite for a comparison/contrast essay, and it is especially useful once you've either used questioning or listing to come up with a bunch of ideas related to your topic (in the case we've been

considering, the topic was "which college should I attend?"). The points-of-reference chart will help you establish the main categories you will use to make your decision (the chart's "points-of-reference"), and then you can drop the ideas you've come up with to either side of those main points. As you will soon see, this kind of planning is especially useful when you decide to organize your essay using the point-by-point method, which we will discuss below. [1]

Transitional Words

The use of transitional words can be combined with the points-of-reference chart when you transform the information on the chart into useful evidence for a paper. That is, transitional words can be used to write sentences comparing or contrasting the reference points. The following is an example of this type of sentence: *The community college has the lowest tuition (cost),* ***but*** *it doesn't offer marine biology as a degree (program of study).* In this example, but is the transitional word used to contrast two points-of-reference– *cost*and *program of study* . [1]

In Table 2, each transitional word is listed with its purpose–to compare or contrast.

Table: Transitional Words Used to Compare or Contrast

Although	Contrast
However	Contrast
But	Contrast
Even	Compare

Using transitions in this way will help your reader follow your train of thought, for it will help you balance the two subjects in an easily understandable way. Keep these important words in mind as we discuss two ways you can organize your comparison/contrast essay: the *point-by-point* method or the *block method* . [1]

Point-by-Point Method

This organizational strategy is much like that of a traditional example essay; each of your essay's body "sections" will focus on one of the points-of-reference and will explain it in relation to each subject. Thus, in the example above, one body section would cover location, one would cover program of study, and one would cover cost. In each of these sections you would discuss both subjects together; like a typical example essay, each part of the essay's body would thus make a specific point, and the specific details would be the information about each subject (in this example, the community college and the state university) relevant to that point. Take a look at the following outline as a guide for this method of organization.

Thesis: Although both schools offer exceptional educational opportunity, the state university's program of study and prospects for personal growth outweigh the lower price and convenience of the local community college.

I. Cost
    A. Community College
        1. Low tuition
        2. Proximity to home cuts expenses
        3. Commute means gas and parking costs
    B. State University
        1. Reasonable tuition but more expensive than comm. college

    2. Housing cost will be substantial, even if dorm available
    3. Relocation and transfer costs will be expensive

II. Location

  A. Community College

    1. Close to home
    2. Proximity encourages prolonged dependence on family
    3. Few chances for adventure/ personal growth outside school

  B. State University

    1. Distance too far to commute
    2. Distance from home will require increase in personal
    3. growth/responsibility

III. Program of Study

  A. Community College

    1. Offers Associate of Arts degree in general biology
    2. Offers general education courses needed to 4-year university for Bachelor of Science (BS)
    3. Faculty are well-credentialed and have excellent reputation for being student-centered

  B. State University

    1. Offers Bachelor of Science degree in marine biology (program of most interest to applicant)
    2. Attendance as a freshman and sophomore means getting to know the faculty with whom one will work during rigorous upper level courses
    3. Faculty are well-published in field and have international reputations

Note that the writer has reorganized the points of reference here and moves from what he or she considers the least important point (cost) to the most important (program of study). If a student were more concerned about price, the cost would have come last and the

community college would have been the overall choice indicated in the thesis. Thus, the point-by-point method is typically combined with *emphatic order* (least to most important) so that the essay builds its case and ends with a bang. [1]

Block Method

Another way to organize a comparison/contrast paper is to use the block method to write about the two subjects in separate parts of the paper. In this type of essay, you discuss everything about your first subject in the first section of your essay, and then you discuss the second topic in the second "section," making sure to refer back to the information you've mentioned about the first topic in order to make your points. Remember, the overall goal is to show how the two topics relate.

Here's a block method outline for a paper on the two schools we've been discussing:

Thesis: Although both schools offer exceptional educational opportunity, the state university's program of study and prospects for personal growth outweigh the lower price and convenience of the local community college.

I. Community College
    A. Cost
        1. Low tuition
        2. Proximity to home cuts expenses
        3. Commute means gas and parking costs
    B. Location
        1. Close to home
        2. Proximity encourages prolonged dependence on family
        3. Few chances for adventure/ personal growth outside

school

C. Program of Study

1. Offers Associate of Arts degree in general biology
2. Offers general education courses needed to 4-year university for Bachelor of Science (BS)
3. Faculty are well-credentialed and have excellent reputation for being student-centered

II. State University

A. Cost

1. Reasonable tuition but more expensive than comm. college
2. Housing cost will be substantial, even if dorm available
3. Relocation and transfer costs will be expensive

Note that all of the points are presented in the same order for each subject (cost is first, followed by location and program of study). This assures an orderly progression of ideas so that it's easy for the reader to follow along. When actually drafting a block method paper, the writer must use transitions when he or she gets to the second subject. This is especially important when the paper shifts to the second subject. In the above example, for instance, you might start off talking about the state university with the transition "On the other hand, the state university is a costly option that requires fundamental life changes" in order to help the reader follow along with your shift.

When writing a contrast paper like this one, that is, choosing one subject as the best option, it is usually a good idea to end with the subject of one's choosing; that way you are again building up to your choice, and as you discuss the second subject you can relate back to what you explained in the first part of the paper (the info you gave about the first subject) in order to emphasize the reasons the second choice wins out. [1]

ENC1101 Learning Unit 7.2

Readings: Compare and Contrast- How We Discuss Multiple Subjects at Once

Introduction

In this module we discussed how to write about two subjects together, either by showing how they are similar (comparison writing) or how they are different (contrast writing). Whether you are comparing or contrasting subjects, you will use either the *point-by-point method* or the *block method* to organize your ideas. In this section we will examine two essays written by the same author that contrast the same two subjects (self-motivated and unmotivated students) but that use different methods to do so. The first uses the point-by-point method, while the second uses the block method. [1]

Readings

Point-by-Point Method

Select and read this essay, "Negative or Positive Learning Experience: It's Up to You" by M. K. Connor, written using point-by-point method.

Block Method

Select and read this essay, "Negative or Positive Learning Experience: It's Up to You" by M. K. Connor, written using block method.

What to Look for: Point-by-Point Essay

While reading this essay, you should first be able to locate the thesis statement that appears (as is so often the case) at the end of the introduction (the first paragraph).

Thesis Statement

Indeed, while unmotivated students often contribute to their negative educational experiences by failing to engage with their classes and instructors and making excuses to avoid work, self-motivated students will seek to make the best of their experiences and will learn in spite of the obstacles they may face.

This thesis makes its central point clear by naming the two subjects being contrasted: unmotivated students and self-motivated students. It also indicates the purpose behind the writing; it is going to show how someone can "make the best" of an educational experience by adopting the tactics of the self-motivated students.

The rest of the essay then explains the differences between unmotivated and self-motivated students, proceeding on point-by-point basis. In other words, each body paragraph makes a specific point and relates it to both kinds of students. Here is how that logic proceeds.

Body Paragraph #1

Main point – *unmotivated and self-motivated students approach mandatory courses differently*

Body Paragraph #2

Main point – *unmotivated and self-motivated students approach course types/formats differently*

Body Paragraph #3

Main point – *unmotivated and self-motivated students approach problematic instructors differently*

In order to stay in line with the essay's thesis, each one of these paragraphs shows not only how each type of student's approach is different but also how self-motivated student approaches positively affect learning.

Finally, note that the final paragraph, the essay's conclusion, draws everything together without simply repeating points, ultimately recalling the essay's purpose (to encourage readers to be self-motivated). It reinforces the fact that the essay as a whole is much more than just a list of points about two subjects; it makes an overall suggestion about life that could have a positive impact on its audience. [1]

What to Look for: Block-style Essay

The second essay is very similar to the first one and makes the exact same point. Note that the introductions to both essays are exactly the same, as are their thesis statements. What differentiates this essay from the previous one is its organizational method. Here, the author chooses to discuss everything about unmotivated students in the first part of the body, and then she discusses everything about self-motivated students in the second part, sometimes referring back to things she has said about the unmotivated students to clarify her purpose and to unify her ideas.

Note the major transition she uses to begin the second half of the body: *on the other hand* . This signals to the reader that she has shifted from one subject to the other. Moreover, pay attention to the way she presents points in the same order when she discusses both subjects separately. When she explains how unmotivated students tend to behave in the first half of the essay, she discusses their attitudes about mandatory courses, course formats, and instructors, and when she discusses how self-motivated students behave, she discusses their attitudes about the same three topics in the same sequence. This helps everything to hold together logically and makes the essay easy to read. [1]

ENC1101 Learning Unit 7.3

Active and Passive Voice: Voice

Voice is used to describe more than one thing when it comes to writing. It can refer to the general "feel" of a piece of writing, or it can be used in a more technical sense. In this module, we will focus on the technical side as we discuss active and passive voice.

You've probably heard of the passive voice—perhaps in a comment from an English teacher or in the grammar checker of a word processor. In both of these instances, you were (likely) guided away from the passive voice. Why is this the case? Let's investigate. [36]

Active and Passive Voice

There are two main "voices" in English writing: the active voice and the passive voice. You've probably heard a lot about them—and you've probably been warned not to use the passive voice. But what exactly distinguishes the active voice from the passive voice?

In the simplest terms, an active voice sentence is written in the form of "A does B." (For example, "Carmen sings the song.") A passive voice sentence is written in the form of "B is done by A." (For example, "The song is sung by Carmen.") Both constructions are grammatically sound and correct. Let's look at a couple more examples of the passive voice:

- I've been hit! (*or* , I have been hit!)
- Jasper was thrown from the car when it was struck from behind.

You may have noticed something unique about the previous two sentences: the subject of the sentence is not the person (or thing) performing the action. The passive voice "hides" who does the action. Despite these sentences being completely grammatically sound, we don't know who hit "me" or what struck the car.

The passive is created using a form of the verb *to be* and the past participle. When identifying passive sentences, remember that forms of the verb *to be* (like *am* , *is* , *are* , *was* , and*were*) have other uses than just creating the passive voice. "She was falling" and "His keys were rusty" are not passive sentences. In the first, *to be* is a continuous past verb, and in the second *to be* is a past tense linking

verb. There are two key features that will help you identify a passive sentence:

1. Something is happening (the sentence has a verb that is not a linking verb).
2. The subject of the sentence is not doing that thing. [37][38]

Usage

As you read the two sentences below, think about how the different voice may affect the meaning or implications of each one:

- **Passive voice:** The rate of evaporation is controlled by the size of an opening.
- **Active voice:** The size of an opening controls the rate of evaporation.

The passive voice slightly emphasizes "the rate of evaporation" in the first sentence, while the active voice emphasizes "the size of an opening" in the second sentence. Both of these sentences are relatively clear and easy to understand. However, some passive constructions can produce grammatically tangled sentences such as this:

> Groundwater flow is influenced by zones of fracture concentration, as can be recognized by the two model simulations (see Figures 1 and 2), by which one can see . . .

The sentence is becoming a burden for the reader, and probably for the writer, too. As often happens, the passive voice here has smothered potential verbs and kicked off a runaway train of prepositions. But the reader's task gets much easier in the revised version below:

> Two model simulations (Figures 1 and 2) illustrate how zones of fracture concentration influence groundwater flow. These simulations show . . .

To revise the above, all we did was look for the two buried things (simulations and zones) in the original version that could actually do something, and we made the sentence clearly about these two nouns by placing them in front of active verbs. This is the general principle to follow as you compose in the active voice: place concrete nouns that can perform work in front of active verbs. [37][38]

Revising passive voice sentences

Now you've seen how sometimes the passive voice can cover up its source, that is, who is doing the acting. Here's another example:

- **Passive:** The papers **will be graded** according to the criteria stated in the syllabus.
  - *Graded by whom?*
- **Active: The teacher** will grade the papers according to the criteria stated in the syllabus. [37][39]

Using the Passive Voice

There are several different situations where the passive voice is more useful than the active voice:

When you don't know who did the action: *The paper had been moved.*

- The active voice would be something like this: "Someone had

moved the paper." While this sentence is technically fine, the passive voice sentence has a subtler element of mystery, which can be especially helpful in creating a mood in fiction.

When you want to hide who did the action: *The window had been broken.*

- The sentence is either hiding who broke the window, or indicates that the writer does not know who broke it. Again, the sentence can be reformed to say "Someone had broken the window," but using the word *someone* clearly indicates that someone (though we may not know who) is at fault. Using the passive puts the focus on the window rather than on the person who broke it, as he or she is completely left out of the sentence.

When you want to emphasize the person or thing the action was done to: *Caroline was hurt when Kent broke up with her.*

- We automatically focus on the subject of the sentence. If the sentence were to say "Kent hurt Caroline when he broke up with her," then our focus would be drawn to Kent rather than Caroline.

When the active version of a sentence would feature a subject that can't actually do anything: *Caroline was hurt when she fell into the trees.*

- While active voice version of the sentence would say "The trees hurt Caroline," they didn't actually do anything. Thus, it makes more sense to have Caroline as the subject rather than saying "The trees hurt Caroline when she fell into them." [(40)(41)]

Writing Assignment: Writing a Comparison or

Contrast Essay

The final essay assignment requires you to make a choice: do you want to compare two subjects (show how they are similar) or contrast them (show how they are different)?

As you read in the module, it is important to remember that for a basic comparison/contrast assignment, although you will consider both the similarities and differences among subjects as you gather your ideas, your essay itself will discuss **either** the subjects' similarities **or** their differences, not both. You can write about any two subjects you want; just make sure you make an overall point about them. Your essay should ultimately evaluate how the subjects are alike or different, offering some kind of surprising insight about them or helping readers make a choice between the two. Whatever the case, just make sure that your essay **makes an intriguing point** ; don't just compare two things that are obviously similar or contrast two items that are obviously completely different.

Some *possible* subjects to consider are:

- two kinds of art or artists
- two products or services
- two movies you've seen
- two traveling experiences you've had
- a book and its cinematic adaptation
- an original song and a "cover" version of it
- two restaurants
- two fictional characters or real-life celebrities
- two sports teams or athletes

Download the attached assignment: Writing a Comparison or Contrast Essay

- Read the assignment carefully
- Complete the following steps:

- Step 1: Pre-Writing (Questioning, Freewriting, and Mapping)
- Step 2: Focusing, Outlining, and Drafting
- Step 3: Revising, Editing, and Proofreading
- Step 4: Evaluation

This assignment is worth 200 points. [1]

Discussion: Comparison/Contrast Essay Outline

Once you've figured out your outline, you are encouraged to post it in the Module 7 "Comparison/Contrast Essay Outline" discussion so that your instructor can give you some feedback before you begin drafting. You can either attach it to a thread as a Word file or just type it into the thread itself.

After you've finished outlining and hopefully received some feedback, you are ready to draft the actual paper.

This posting is **optional** ; it does not count toward any grade points. [1]

Module 7 Quiz

This quiz consists of 10 multiple choice and true/false questions worth 2 points each for a total of 20 points. This quiz evaluates your knowledge of the content presented in module seven Learning Units. You will have 2 opportunities and 20 minutes to complete the quiz. [1]

Open Quiz

36. Module 7 Writing Assignment: Writing a Comparison or Contrast Essay

Our final essay assignment requires you to make a choice: do you want to compare two subjects (show how they are similar) or contrast them (show how they are different)? As you read in the module, it is important to remember that for a basic comparison/contrast assignment, although you will consider both the similarities and differences among subjects as you gather your ideas, your essay itself will discuss EITHER the subjects' similarities OR their differences, not both. You can write about any two subjects you want; just make sure you make an overall point about them. Your essay should ultimately evaluate how the subjects are alike or different, offering some kind of surprising insight about them or helping readers make a choice between the two. Whatever the case, just make sure that your essay makes an intriguing point; don't just compare two things that are obviously similar or contrast two items that are obviously completely different.

Some possible subjects to consider are:

- two kinds of art or artists
- two products or services
- two movies you've seen
- two traveling experiences you've had
- a book and its cinematic adaptation
- an original song and a "cover" version of it
- two restaurants
- two fictional characters or real-life celebrities

- two sports teams or athletes

Step 1: Pre-Writing (Questioning, Freewriting, and Mapping)

Any of the prewriting techniques we have discussed so far in the course can be used to generate ideas for this assignment. You might use the reporter's questions again: ask yourself who, what, when, where, why, and how in relation to the two subjects you want to compare or contrast.

You might also use freewriting (the process of writing freely without worrying about grammar, spelling, and sentence structure) to generate ideas about your subjects, focusing on how they are similar and/or different and what those similarities or differences mean (is one better than the other? are the two surprisingly similar in ways many people don't expect? are they different than they may initially appear?).

Another possible prewriting choice is mapping, putting the two subjects in a large circle and then connecting other circles to that circle to represent general points of comparison or contrast related to each one. For example, if one subject was heavy metal music and the other was classical music, two music types, you might put "highly technical players," "passionate and insulated fan bases" and "complex musical arrangements" in these circles. For each of these subcircles, you could draw more lines to more circles that connect to each example (the names of highly technical heavy metal and classical musicians might be attached to the "highly technical players" circle). This kind of exercise can help you break your topic up into points and to discover exactly how to persuade your audience that your thesis is true.

Step 2: Focusing, Outlining, and Drafting

Once you've come up with your subjects, your overall point (whether you are going to compare or contrast them, and for what purpose you are going to do so), and the examples that are going to help prove your point, it is very, very important for you to organize your ideas in an outline just the way we did in the module when we were discussing going to a community college and going to a state university. Like the other essays you've completed, a comparison or contrast essay succeeds or fails based on its organization, and an outline will help ensure that you logically express your points while navigating between the two subjects being discussed.

As you fill out the outline, remember to choose an organizational plan before you write and then stick to it. If you're going to write a point-by-point essay, always move from one of the subjects to the other, and be consistent about the order you use (whichever subject you mention first in your thesis should be mentioned first for every point you make). If you are going to write a one-side-at-a-time style essay (where you discuss everything about one subject, and then do the same for the next one), remember not to mix up your discussion of one thing with points about the other. Finally, remember to use transitions to bridge the logical gap between one idea and the next!

Here are two basic outlines to get you started; note that you will either fill out the point-by-point outline or the one-side-at-a-time outline, not both. As you know by now, the idea is to write out a quick summation of the different sections on the lines provided. When you go to write a full draft based on the outline you've chosen, you will add a hook at the beginning to flesh out your introduction (which should end in your thesis statement), and each of your general example sections will become body paragraphs. You will also need to add a conclusion explaining why your overall point is important.

Remember that these outlines are just suggestions, and you can

include as many examples and body paragraphs as you want as long as you stay within the assignment's length requirements:

Point-by-Point Pattern I. Thesis Statement:

ii. General Point #1:

a. Specific Detail (subject #1): b. Specific Detail (subject #1): c. Specific Detail (subject #2): d. Specific Detail (subject #2):

iii. General Point #2:

a. Specific Detail (subject #1): b. Specific Detail (subject #1): c. Specific Detail (subject #2): d. Specific Detail (subject #2):

iv. General Point #3:

a. Specific Detail (subject #1): b. Specific Detail (subject #1): c. Specific Detail (subject #2): d. Specific Detail (subject #2):

One-Side-at-a-Time Pattern I. Thesis Statement:

ii. Subject #1:

a. Specific Detail (subject #1): b. Specific Detail (subject #1): c. Specific Detail (subject #1): d. Specific Detail (subject #1):

iii. Subject #2:

a. Specific Detail (subject #2): b. Specific Detail (subject #2): c. Specific Detail (subject #2): d. Specific Detail (subject #2):

Once you've figured out your outline, you are encouraged to post it in the "Comparison/Contrast Essay Outline" discussion board in the Discussions area of Blackboard so that your instructor can give you some feedback before you begin drafting. You can either attach it to a thread as a Word file or just type it into the thread itself.

After you've finished outlining and hopefully gotten some feedback, you are ready to draft the actual paper.

As you are drafting, you might consider using some of these transitions to help you navigate between subjects and essay parts:

Comparison Transitions:

one similarity another similarity similarly

like

both

Contrast Transitions:

one difference another difference in contrast

now/ then
unlike
while

Step 3: Revising, Editing, and Proofreading

Once your draft is finished, step away from it for at least a few hours so you can approach it with fresh eyes. It is also a very good idea to email it to a friend or fellow classmate or otherwise present it to a tutor or trusted family member to get feedback. Remember, writing doesn't happen in a vacuum; it is meant to be read by an audience, and a writer can't anticipate all of the potential issues an outside reader might have with an essay's structure or language.

Whatever the case, after getting some feedback, read your essay over and consider what you might alter to make it clearer or more exciting.

Consider the following questions:

- Does the essay clearly compare subjects OR contrast them? If it does both, something is wrong.
- Does the essay have a clear thesis that makes a clear point about the two subjects you are examining?
- Does each section of the body relate back to the main point?
- Does each section have plenty of specific details to back it up and make it

  convincing?
- If it's a point-by-point essay, does each body paragraph clearly discuss both

  subjects and provide a fairly equal amount of information for each one?

- If it's a one-side-at-a-time essay, is each section arranged in a

similar way (does each section discuss its subject's points in the same order as the other section on the other subject)?
- Are plenty of transitions used to help the reader navigate between the subjects being discussed and between the parts of the essay?
- Are there any fragments, run-on sentences, or comma splices?
- Does the essay follow the formatting requirements?

Step 4: Evaluation

After completing these steps, submit the essay to the instructor, who will evaluate it according to the grading criteria. (1)

37. Outcome: Voice

Critique the use of both active and passive voices

Voice is a nebulous term in writing. It can refer to the general "feel" of the writing, or it can be used in a more technical sense. In this course, we will focus on the latter sense as we discuss active and passive voice.

You've probably heard of the passive voice—perhaps in a comment from an English teacher or in the grammar checker of a word processor. In both of these instances, you were (likely) guided away from the passive voice. Why is this the case? Why is the passive voice so hated? After all, it's been used twice on this page already (three times now).

In this outcome, we'll learn about active and passive voices, their construction, and their correct use.

What You Will Learn to Do

- Critique the use of active voice

- Critique the use of passive voice

38. Active and Passive Voice

There are two main "voices" in English writing: the active voice and the passive voice. You've probably heard a lot about them—and you've probably been warned away from the passive voice. But what exactly are they?

In the simplest terms, an active voice sentence is written in the form of "A does B." (For example, "Carmen sings the song.") A passive voice sentence is written in the form of "B is done by A." (For example, "The song is sung by Carmen.") Both constructions are grammatically sound and correct. Let's look at a couple more examples of the passive voice:

- I've been hit! (*or*, I have been hit!)
- Jasper was thrown from the car when it was struck from behind.

You may have noticed something unique about the previous two sentences: the subject of the sentence is not the person (or thing) performing the action. The passive voice "hides" who does the action. Despite these sentences being completely grammatically sound, we don't know who hit "me" or what struck the car.

The passive is created using the verb *to be* and the past participle. When identifying passive sentences, remember that *to be* has other uses than just creating the passive voice. "She was falling" and "His keys were lost" are not passive sentences. In the first, *to be* is a continuous past verb, and in the second *to be* is past tense linking verb. There are two key features that will help you identify a passive sentence:

1. Something is happening (the sentence has a verb that is not a linking verb).
2. The subject of the sentence is not doing that thing.

Usage

As you read at the two sentences below, think about the how the different voice may affect the meaning or implications of the sentence:

- **Passive voice:** The rate of evaporation is controlled by the size of an opening.
- **Active voice:** The size of an opening controls the rate of evaporation.

The passive choice slightly emphasizes "the rate of evaporation," while the active choice emphasizes "the size of an opening." Simple. So why all the fuss? Because passive constructions can produce grammatically tangled sentences such as this:

> Groundwater flow is influenced by zones of fracture concentration, as can be recognized by the two model simulations (see Figures 1 and 2), by which one can see . . .

The sentence is becoming a burden for the reader, and probably for the writer too. As often happens, the passive voice here has smothered potential verbs and kicked off a runaway train of prepositions. But the reader's task gets much easier in the revised version below:

> Two model simulations (Figures 1 and 2) illustrate how zones of fracture concentration influence groundwater flow. These simulations show . . .

To revise the above, all we did was look for the two buried things (simulations and zones) in the original version that could actually *do* something, and we made the sentence clearly about these two nouns by placing them in front of active verbs. This is the general principle to follow as you compose in the active voice: Place concrete nouns that can perform work in front of active verbs.

Practice

Are the following sentences in the active or passive voice? How can you tell?

1. The samples were prepared in a clean room before being sent out for further examination.
2. Karen was dancing with Joshua when she suddenly realized she needed to leave.
3. Carlos was a very serious scientist with unique interests.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="206851"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="206851"]

1. This sentence uses the passive voice. The action (**prepared**) was done to the subject of the sentence (**samples**). If this sentence were written in the active it would be something like this: "[Actor] prepared the samples in a clean room before sending them out for further examination." Since we do not know who prepared the samples, the active sentence is incomplete.
2. This sentence uses the active voice. In this case *was* indicates that the sentence happened in the past; it does not indicate the passive voice.
3. This sentence uses the active voice. In this case *was* is acting as a linking verb. It links **Carlos** with the phrase *very serious scientist*.

[/hidden-answer]

Revise Weak Passive-Voice Sentences

As we've mentioned, the passive voice can be a shifty operator—it can cover up its source, that is, who's doing the acting, as this example shows:

- **Passive:** The papers **will be graded** according to the criteria stated in the syllabus.
    - *Graded by whom though*?
- **Active: The teacher** will grade the papers according to the criteria stated in the syllabus.

It's this ability to cover the actor or agent of the sentence that makes the passive voice a favorite of people in authority—policemen, city officials, and, yes, teachers. At any rate, you can see how the passive voice can cause wordiness, indirectness, and comprehension problems.

Passive	Question	Active
Your figures **have been reanalyzed** in order to determine the coefficient of error. The results **will be announced** when the situation is judged appropriate.	Who analyzes, and who will announce?	**We** have reanalyzed your figures in order to determine the range of error. **We** will announce the results when the time is right.
With the price of housing at such inflated levels, those loans **cannot be paid** off in any shorter period of time.	Who can't pay the loans off?	With the price of housing at such inflated levels, **homeowners** cannot pay off those loans in any shorter period of time.
After the arm of the hand-held stapler **is pushed** down, the blade from the magazine **is raised by** the top-leaf spring, and the magazine and base.	Who pushes it down, and who or what raises it?	After **you** push down on the arm of the hand-held stapler, **the top-leaf spring** raises the blade from the magazine, and the magazine and base move apart.
However, market share **is being lost by** 5.25-inch diskettes as is shown in the graph in Figure 2.	Who or what is losing market share, who or what shows it?	However, **5.25-inch diskettes** are losing market share as the graph in **Figure 2** shows.
For many years, federal regulations concerning the use of wire-tapping **have been ignored**. Only recently **have** tighter restrictions **been imposed** on the circumstances that warrant it.	Who has ignored the regulations, and who is now imposing them?	For many years, **government officials** have ignored federal regulations concerning the use of wire-tapping. Only recently has **the federal government** imposed tighter restrictions on the circumstances that warrant it.

Practice

Convert these passive voice sentences into the active voice. Why is the active voice a better choice for each of these sentences?

1. The process, which was essential for the experiment's success, was completed by Enzo.
2. The cake that I worked on all day long is being eaten by Justin.
3. After the pattern has been applied to the fabric, work on the embroidery can be started.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="529218"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="529218"]

1. Enzo completed the process, which was essential for the experiment's success.
    - In the passive sentence, the *which*-clause makes the subject of the sentence excessively long. By converting the sentence to the active voice, the clause is moved to the predicate, which makes the sentence easier to understand.
2. Justin is eating the cake that I worked on all day long.
    - The active voice works better in this sentence for the same reasons as sentence one. It is also likely that you would want to put emphasis on

Justin in this sentence. After all, he's doing something that is (most likely) inconsiderate.

3. After you apply the pattern to the fabric, you can start working on the embroidery.
    - This sentence is likely found in a set of instructions, which are usually written directly to the reader. Addressing "you" and avoiding the passive voice will make the instructions feel more natural and accessible.

[/hidden-answer]

Don't get the idea that the passive voice is always wrong and should never be used. It is a good writing technique when we don't want to be bothered with an obvious or too-often-repeated subject and when we need to rearrange words in a sentence for emphasis. The next page will focus more on how and why to use the passive voice.

39. Using the Passive Voice

There are several different situations where the passive voice is more useful than the active voice.

- When you don't know who did the action: *The paper had been moved.*
    - The active voice would be something like this: "Someone had moved the paper." While this sentence is technically fine, the passive voice sentence has a more subtle element of mystery, which can be especially helpful in creating a mood in fiction.
- When you want to hide who did the action: *The window had been broken.*
    - The sentence is either hiding who broke the window or they do not know. Again, the sentence can be reformed to say "Someone had broken the window," but using the word *someone* clearly indicates that someone (though we may not know who) is at fault here. Using the passive puts the focus on the window rather than on the person who broke it, as he or she is completely left out of the sentence.
- When you want to emphasize the person or thing the action was done to: *Caroline was hurt when Kent broke up with her.*
    - We automatically focus on the subject of the sentence. If the sentence were to say "Kent hurt Caroline when he broke up with her," then our focus would be drawn to Kent rather than Caroline.
- A subject that can't actually *do* anything: *Caroline was hurt when she fell into the trees.*
    - While the trees hurt Caroline, they didn't actually do anything. Thus, it makes more sense to have Caroline as the subject rather than saying "The trees hurt Caroline

when she fell into them."

Note: It's often against convention in scholarly writing to use *I*. While this may seem like a forced rule, it also stems from the fact that scholars want to emphasize the science or research as opposed to the author of the paper. This often results in the passive voice being the best choice. This is not the case in other formal settings, such as in resumes and in cover letters.

Practice

Consider the following instances. In each case, determine why the writers might want to use active or passive voice. Write an example sentence based on their circumstances.

1. Antonella made an error in her calculations that ruined an experiment. This error ended up costing both time and materials. She has to write a report to her boss. What might she say about the experiment?
2. Isabel is writing a supernatural thriller. Her main character, Liam, notices that his keys aren't where he left them. How might Isabel word this realization?
3. Thiago is writing a cover letter to apply for a new job. He is listing out tasks that he does at his current job. How would he want to word these items?

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]

[reveal-answer q="176375"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="176375"]

1. Antonella would likely want to write in the passive voice. Even if her boss knows she made the error, writing in the passive will draw attention away from that fact. She might say something like this:
    - An error was made that ended up costing time and resources. The experiment will have to be repeated with new materials.
2. Isabel could use either the passive or the active. It depends on the emphasis she wants. The passive voice subtly hints at a mysterious actor. The active voice blatantly states it:
    - Liam's keys had been moved when he wasn't looking.
    - Something—or someone—had moved Liam's keys when he wasn't looking.
3. Thiago would want to use the active voice. Since he's apply for a job, he would want to emphasize the fact that he is accomplishing the tasks: the fact that he's doing them is more important than the simple fact that the things were done. He might write something like the following:
    - I currently work as a teaching assistant for a linguistics professor. I organize her mail, flagging important items so she knows what needs immediate attention; I aid her in her research, finding interesting articles and studies; and I often help her students when her

attention is needed elsewhere.

[/hidden-answer]

Using the Passive

Now that we know there are some instances where passive voice is the best choice, how do we use the passive voice to it fullest? The answer lies in writing direct sentences—in passive voice—that have simple subjects and verbs. Compare the two sentences below:

- Photomicrographs were taken to facilitate easy comparison of the samples.
- Easy comparison of the samples was facilitated by the taking of photomicrographs.

Both sentences are written in the passive voice, but for most ears the first sentence is more direct and understandable, and therefore preferable. Depending on the context, it does a clearer job of telling us what was done and why it was done. Especially if this sentence appears in the "Experimental" section of a report (and thus readers already know that the authors of the report took the photomicrographs), the first sentence neatly represents what the authors actually did—took photomicrographs—and why they did it—to facilitate easy comparison.

Practice

Read the following sentences. Are they using the passive effectively? If there are any errors, rewrite the sentences accordingly.

1. The machine needs to be reset at 10:23, 11:12, and 11:56 every night.
2. The final steps, which need to be finished before the sun sets over the mountains, are going to be completed by Kajuana.
3. The difficult task of measuring minute fluctuations in weight was made easier by the use of a new digital scale.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="72415"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="72415"]

1. Yes. In this case, it doesn't matter who accomplishes the action; it simply needs to be done. If this sentence appears in an academic article, the passive may be even more appropriate, as that style often demands the actor be left out of the sentence.
2. No. This would be better in the active voice. There are a lot of different parts to the sentence, and by converting the sentence to the active voice, they come in a more logical order that is easier to understand:
    - Kajuana is going to complete the final steps,

which need to be finished before the sun sets over the mountains.

3. No. This passive construction is very convoluted. An active sentence would serve well here:

    - A new digital scale made it easier to measure minute fluctuations in weight.

[/hidden-answer]

As we mentioned in Text: Non-Finite Verbs, the passive voice can also be used following relative pronouns like *that* and *which*.

- I moved into the house **that was built** for me.
- Adrián's dog loves the treats **that are given** to him.
- Brihanna has an album **that was signed** by the Beastie Boys.

In each of these sentences, it is grammatically sound to omit (or *elide*) the pronoun and *to be*. Elision is used with a lot of different constructions in English; we use it shorten sentences when things are understood. However, we can only use elision in certain situations, so be careful when removing words! You may find these elided sentences more natural:

- I moved into the house **built** for me.
- Adrián's dog loves the treats **given** to him.
- Brihanna has an album **signed** by the Beastie Boys

PART IX

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