ENG-001A: COMPOSITION AND READING



Jill Bonds
Coalinga College

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ENG-001A: Composition and Reading

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Dr. Jill Bonds, Ed.D

Coalinga College, August 2024



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ENG-001A: Composition and Reading

1.1: Detailed Licensing

Licensing

1: Chapter One- Introduction to Writing

1.1: Becoming a Successful Writer

1.2: Purpose, Audience, Tone, and Content

1.3: Using Sources

1.4: Writing Thesis Statements

1.5: Methods of Organizing Your Writing

1.6: Writing Paragraphs (Part 1)

1.7: Writing Paragraphs (Part 2)

2: Chapter Two-Academic Writing/The Thesis Statement

2.1: What is a Thesis Statement?

2.2: Exemplification- Using Examples to Support a Thesis

2.2.1: The Purpose of Using Exemplification in Writing

2.2.2: The Structure of an Exemplification Essay

2.2.3: Writing an Exemplification Essay

2.3: Introduction to Academic Writing

2.3.1: Post-Secondary Reading and Writing (Part 1)

2.3.2: Post-Secondary Reading and Writing (Part 2)

2.3.3: Developing Study Skills (Part 1)

2.3.4: Developing Study Skills (Part 2)

2.3.5: Becoming a Successful Writer

2.4: What Is "Academic" Writing?

2.4.1: Introduction- The Academic Writing Task

2.4.2: Myths about Writing

2.4.3: In College, Everything's an Argument- A Guide for Decoding College Writing Assignments

2.4.4: The Format of the Academic Essay

2.4.5: Conclusion

2.4.6: Discussion

3: Chapter Three- Researching, Annotating, and Critical Reading/Literacy Narratives

3.1: Pre-writing

3.1.1: Prewriting

3.1.2: Outlining

3.1.3: Drafting (Part 1)

3.1.4: Drafting (Part 2)

3.1.5: Revising and Editing (Part 1)
3.1.6: Revising and Editing (Part 2)
3.1.6.1: The Writing Process
3.1.6.1.1: Writing as a Process
3.1.6.1.2: Freewriting
3.1.6.1.3: Brainstorming
3.1.6.1.4: Journalist Questions
3.1.6.1.5: Listing
3.1.6.1.6: Clustering/Mapping
3.1.6.1.7: Outlining
3.1.6.1.8: Drafting
3.1.6.1.9: Revising
3.1.6.1.10: Creating Essay Titles
3.1.6.1.11: Editing/Proofreading
3.1.6.1.12: Final Revision Example
3.1.6.1.13: Essay Checklist

4: Chapter Four-Critical Reading
4.1: Introduction to Critical Reading
4.2: Types of Reading Material
4.3: Reading Strategies
4.4: Specialized Reading Strategies
4.5: Identifying Thesis Statements
4.6: Vocabulary
4.7: Logic and Structure
4.8: Supporting Claims
4.9: Summary Skills
4.10: Conclusion to Critical Reading

5: Chapter Five-The Writing Process
5.1: What is the Writing Process?
5.2: What is Prewriting?
5.3: How to Organize and Arrange?
5.4: How to Write a Rough Draft?
5.5: What is Revising?
5.6: What is Done During Editing, Proofreading, and Formatting?
5.7: What are Other Types of Academic Writing?

6: Chapter Six- Working toward the End Product
6.1: Working toward the End Product- Composing a Draft
6.1.1: Writing Body Paragraphs
6.1.2: Writing Introductory and Concluding Paragraphs

6.1.3: Drafting
6.1.4: End-of-Chapter Exercises
6.2: Writing a Research Paper
6.2.1: The Purpose of Research Writing
6.2.2: Choosing Your Topic
6.2.3: Managing Your Research
6.2.4: Gathering Your Sources (Part 1)
6.2.5: Gathering Your Sources (Part 2)
6.2.6: Evaluating and Processing Your Sources
6.2.7: Applying Your Research
6.2.8: Writing Your Draft
6.2.9: Revising Your Draft (Part 1)
6.2.10: Revising Your Draft (Part 2)
6.2.11: The Writing Process
6.2.11.1: Writing as a Process
6.2.11.2: Freewriting
6.2.11.3: Brainstorming
6.2.11.4: Journalist Questions
6.2.11.5: Listing
6.2.11.6: Clustering/Mapping
6.2.11.7: Outlining
6.2.11.8: Drafting
6.2.11.9: Revising
6.2.11.10: Creating Essay Titles
6.2.11.11: Editing/Proofreading
6.2.11.12: Final Revision Example
6.2.11.13: Essay Checklist
6.2.11.14: Thinking Critically About Research
6.2.11.14.1: What is “Research” and Why Should I Use It?
6.2.11.14.2: What’s Different about Academic Research?
6.2.11.14.3: Primary Research Versus Secondary Research
6.2.11.14.4: Scholarly versus Non-Scholarly Sources
6.2.11.14.5: Sources that are Both Scholarly and Non-Scholarly?
6.2.11.14.6: The Internet- The Researcher’s Challenge
6.2.11.14.7: Evaluating the Quality and Credibility of Your Research
6.2.11.15: The Research Essay
6.2.11.15.1: A “Research Essay” or a “Research Project” instead of a “Research Paper”
6.2.11.15.2: Getting Ready- Questions to Ask Yourself About Your Research Essay
6.2.11.15.3: Creating and Revising a Formal Outline
6.2.11.15.4: The Introduction

6.2.11.15.5: Background Information (or Helping Your Reader Find a Context)
6.2.11.15.6: Weaving in Evidence to Support Your Point
6.2.11.15.7: Antithetical Arguments and Answers
6.2.11.15.8: The Conclusion
6.2.11.15.9: “Works Cited” or “Reference” Information
6.2.11.15.10: A Student Example- “The Corruption Surrounding University Athletics” by Casey K. Copeman

7: Chapter Seven-Conducting Research
7.1: Documenting Your Source Material
7.2: MLA Citations
7.2.1: What is MLA,?
7.2.2: MLA Citation Examples
7.2.3: CMS Signal Phrases
7.2.4: MLA Signal Phrases
7.2.5: APA Citation Examples
7.2.6: APA Signal Phrases
7.3: Argument
7.3.1: What is Argument?
7.3.2: What are the Components and Vocabulary of Argument?
7.3.3: What is Logic?
7.3.4: What are the Different Types of Argument in Writing?
7.3.5: A Repository of Logical Fallacies
7.3.5.1: Writing to Persuade
7.3.5.1.1: Introduction to Argumentative Writing
7.3.5.1.2: Aristotelian (Classical) Argument Model
7.3.5.1.3: Rogerian Argument Model
7.3.5.1.4: Toulmin Argument Model
7.3.5.1.5: Proposal Argument Model
7.3.5.1.6: Putting It All Together- Basic Elements of an Argument Essay
7.3.5.1.7: Tips for Writing Academic Persuasive Essays
7.3.5.1.8: Sample Writing Assignments

8: Chapter Eight-Argumentative Writing
8.1: Persuasion
8.1.1: Types of Argumentation
8.1.1.1: Introduction
8.1.1.2: Features of an Argument
8.1.1.3: Failures in Evidence- When “Lots of Quotes” Can’t Save a Paper
8.1.1.4: Basic Structure and Content of Argument
8.1.1.5: Toulmin- Dissecting the Everyday Argument

8.1.1.6: Rogerian Argument
8.1.1.7: On the Other Hand- The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses
8.1.2: Types of Argumentation
8.1.2.1: Introduction
8.1.2.2: Features of an Argument
8.1.2.3: Failures in Evidence- When “Lots of Quotes” Can’t Save a Paper
8.1.2.4: Basic Structure and Content of Argument
8.1.2.5: Toulmin- Dissecting the Everyday Argument
8.1.2.6: Rogerian Argument
8.1.2.7: On the Other Hand- The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses
8.1.2.8: Unit III- Research and Argumentation
8.1.2.8.1: Situation and Analysis
8.1.2.8.1.1: What Does the Professor Want? Understanding the Assignment
8.1.2.8.1.2: Backpacks v. Briefcases- Steps Toward Rhetorical Analysis
8.1.2.8.1.3: Murder! Rhetorically Speaking

9: Chapter Nine-Rhetorical Analysis
9.1: Basic Questions for Rhetorical Analysis
9.2: Rogerian Argument
9.3: Toulmin’s Argument Model
9.4: Toulmin’s Schema
9.5: Persuasion

10: Chapter Ten-Writing to Think and Writing to Learn
10.1: Examining the Status Quo
10.2: Posing Productive Questions
10.3: Slowing Down Your Thinking
10.4: Withholding Judgment

11: Chapter Eleven- MLA Style
11.1: Citation Generators
11.2: Chapter Nine- MLA Formatting
11.2.1: Citations and Referencing
11.2.1.1: Supporting Your Ideas
11.2.1.2: Documenting Source Material
11.2.1.3: Making Your Quotes Fit
11.2.1.4: Citation Guidelines
11.2.1.5: Creating a References Page (Part 1)
11.2.1.6: Creating a References Page (Part 2)
11.2.1.6.1: Citing Sources
11.2.1.6.1.1: Read- Acknowledging Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism

11.2.1.6.1.2: When and How To Use MLA In-Text Citation
11.2.1.6.1.3: How to Cite YouTube

11.3: Citation Steps for Any Style

12: Chapter Twelve- Edits, Revising, and Publishing

12.1: Readings

12.1.1: Revising

12.1.1.1: A strategy for analyzing and revising a first draft
12.1.1.2: Checklist- Revision
12.1.1.3: How to- Be a Constructive Peer Reviewer

12.2: Citations and Referencing

12.2.1: Supporting Your Ideas
12.2.2: Documenting Source Material
12.2.3: Making Your Quotes Fit
12.2.4: Citation Guidelines
12.2.5: Creating a References Page (Part 2)
12.2.6: Creating a References Page (Part 1)

12.3: Peer Review and Final Revisions

12.3.1: Revision (Part 1)
12.3.2: Revision (Part 2)
12.3.3: Editing and Developing a Final Draft of a Research Paper (Part 1)
12.3.4: Editing and Developing a Final Draft of a Research Paper (Part 2)

13: Chapter Thirteen-Additional Readings

13.1: APA and MLA Documentation and Formatting

13.1.1: Formatting a Research Paper
13.1.2: Citing and Referencing Techniques
13.1.3: Creating a References Section (Part 1)
13.1.4: Creating a References Section (Part 2)
13.1.5: Using Modern Language Association (MLA) Style
13.1.E: APA and MLA Documentation and Formatting (Exercises)

13.2: Book- Writing Spaces- Readings on Writing, Vol. I (Lowe and Zemliansky)

13.2.1: Backpacks vs. Briefcases- Steps toward Rhetorical Analysis
13.2.2: Collaborating Online- Digital Strategies for Group Work
13.2.3: Composing the Anthology- An Exercise in Patchwriting
13.2.4: Finding the Good Argument OR Why Bother With Logic?
13.2.5: “Finding Your Way In”- Invention as Inquiry Based Learning in First Year Writing
13.2.6: From Topic to Presentation- Making Choices to Develop Your Writing
13.2.7: Introduction- Open Source Composition Texts Arrive for College Writers
13.2.8: “I need you to say ‘I’”- Why First Person Is Important in College Writing

13.2.9: Navigating Genres
13.2.10: Reflective Writing and the Revision Process- What Were You Thinking?
13.2.11: Reinventing Invention- Discovery and Investment in Writing
13.2.12: So You've Got a Writing Assignment. Now What?
13.2.13: Taking Flight- Connecting Inner and Outer Realities during Invention
13.2.14: The Inspired Writer vs. the Real Writer
13.2.15: What Is "Academic" Writing?
13.2.16: Why Visit Your Campus Writing Center?
13.2.17: Wikipedia Is Good for You!?

13.3: Nonfiction

13.3.1: Nonfiction
13.3.2: Nonfiction Exercises

13.4: 20 Most Common Grammar Errors

13.4.1: Wrong Word
13.4.2: Comma After Introductory Element
13.4.3: Documentation Common Error
13.4.4: Pronoun Reference
13.4.5: Spelling
13.4.6: Quotation Error
13.4.7: Unnecessary Comma
13.4.8: Capitalization
13.4.9: Missing Word
13.4.10: Faulty Sentence Structure
13.4.11: Missing Comma with Nonrestrictive Element
13.4.12: Verb Tense Shift
13.4.13: Missing Comma in Compound Sentence
13.4.14: Apostrophe Errors
13.4.15: Run-On Sentences
13.4.16: Comma Splice
13.4.17: Pronoun Agreement
13.4.18: Poorly Integrated Quote
13.4.19: Hyphens
13.4.20: Sentence Fragment
13.4.21: Try It Out
13.4.22: Putting It All Together
13.4.23: Time to Write

13.5: Grammar Essentials (Excelsior Online Writing Lab)

14: Chapter Fourteen-Practice Exercises

14.1: Comma

14.2: Comma Splice
14.3: Fact and Opinion
14.4: Fragment
14.5: Fused Sentence
14.6: Identifying Dependent and Independent Clauses
14.7: Logical Fallacy
14.8: Patterns
14.9: Proofreading
14.10: Pronoun
14.11: Pronoun/Antecedent Agreement
14.12: Subject Identification
14.13: Subject-Verb Agreement
14.14: Supporting Details
14.15: Grammar and Mechanics Mini-lessons
14.15.1: Grammar and Mechanics Mini-Lessons
14.15.2: Subjects and Verbs, Irregular Verbs, Subject Verb Agreement
14.15.3: Sentence Types
14.15.4: Fragments I
14.15.5: Run-ons and Comma Splices I
14.15.6: Comma Usage
14.15.7: Parallelism
14.15.8: The Apostrophe
14.15.9: Capital Letters
14.15.10: Grammar Practice- Interactive Quizzes
14.15.11: De Copia- Demonstration of the Variety of Language
14.15.12: Style Exercise- Voice

Index

Glossary

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1: CHAPTER ONE- INTRODUCTION TO WRITING

1.1: Becoming a Successful Writer

1.2: Purpose, Audience, Tone, and Content

1.3: Using Sources

1.4: Writing Thesis Statements

1.5: Methods of Organizing Your Writing

1.6: Writing Paragraphs (Part 1)

1.7: Writing Paragraphs (Part 2)

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1.1: Becoming a Successful Writer

In her book *On Writing*, Eudora Welty maintains: “To write honestly and with all our powers is the least we can do, and the most.” But writing well is difficult. People who write for a living sometimes struggle to get their thoughts on the page; even people who generally enjoy writing have days when they would rather do anything else. For people who do not like writing or do not think of themselves as good writers, writing assignments can be stressful or even intimidating. And, of course, you cannot get through college without having to write—sometimes a lot, and often at a higher level than you are used to. No magic formula will make writing quick and easy. However, you can use strategies and resources to manage writing assignments more easily. College will challenge you as a writer, but it is also a unique opportunity to grow.

Writing to Think and Communicate

One purpose of writing is to help you clarify and articulate your thoughts. Writing a list of points, both pro and con, on an issue of concern allows you to see which of your arguments are the strongest or reveals areas that need additional support. Putting ideas on paper helps you review and evaluate them, reconsider their validity, and perhaps generate new concepts. Writing your thoughts down may even help you grasp them for the first time.

Another important—and practical—function of writing is to communicate ideas. For your college classes you are required to write essays, research papers, and essay responses on tests. If you apply to other colleges or universities, you will have to compose letters of application, respond to specific questions, or write an autobiographical sketch. When you enter your chosen career you may have to send emails and write reports, proposals, grants, or other work-related documents. You must correspond with clients, business associates, and co-workers. And on a personal level, you want to contact friends and relatives. You may even find yourself responding to a community or national issue by writing a letter to the editor of your local newspaper. Writing is an essential skill you must have in order to function in the twenty-first century, but like any skill, it is something that can be acquired and refined. Some people just naturally express themselves better than others, but everyone can learn the basic craft of writing.

Overcoming Writer’s Block

At some point, every writer experiences writer’s block: staring at a blank page or computer screen without being able to put down even a single line. Your mind is blank, and panic sets in because writer’s block usually happens when you are working against a deadline such as in a timed writing assignment or for a paper that is due the next day. Even though there is nothing you can do to prevent writer’s block from happening, there are several techniques you can use to help you overcome its negative effects:

- **Don’t Procrastinate**: Give yourself as much time as possible to complete your assignment. Budget your time so you can write the assignment in sections and still have time to edit and revise. If you are in a timed writing situation, jot down ideas in a scratch outline and work from that.
- **Try Freewriting without Guilt**: Just start putting ideas down on paper. You don’t need to worry about whether or not you are making spelling and grammatical errors; you shouldn’t fret over organization. Keep in mind that you can always delete what you have written once your ideas begin to flow.
- **Follow Your Inspiration**: Begin by writing the section of the paper you feel best able to write. If you cannot start at the beginning, write the conclusion first, or begin writing the body of the paper. If you have an outline, you will already have the ideas and organization you need to write the body paragraphs.
- **Break the Writing Project into Parts**: Think of the paper as a series of short sections. Sometimes you can be overwhelmed by the prospect of writing a ten-page research paper, but if you break it up into manageable pieces, the assignment does not seem so daunting.
- **Review the Assignment**: Reread the instructions for the assignment to make sure you understand what you are expected to write. Look for keywords that you can research to give you insight into your topic. Often discussing the assignment with your professor can give you the clarity you need to begin writing.

- **Verbalize Your Ideas**: Discuss your ideas with a classmate, friend or family member. You can gain new insights and confidence by hearing what others have to say about your topic and sharing your misgivings with them.
- **Visualize a Friendly Audience**: Imagine you are writing the paper to a friend or someone you know well. Often the fear of rejection paralyzes your ability to start writing, so removing that obstacle should enable you to write without inhibition.
- **Take a Break**: Try working on another writing project or switch to a completely different activity. Often if you get bogged down on one subject, thinking about something else for a while might clear your brain so you can come back to the original project with a new perspective. And getting up from the computer usually unclogs any mental blocks: take a walk, wash the dishes, or play with the dog.
- **Change Locations**: Try moving to another area more conducive to your writing style. Some people write best in a noisy environment while others require a place with minimal distractions. Find what works best for you.

Remember that writer's block is only temporary—relax and start writing.

Selecting an Appropriate Voice

Whether you are writing an argumentative essay expressing your conviction that whale hunting should be abolished or a literary analysis of Kate Chopin's novel *The Awakening*, your paper should express a distinct point of view. Your purpose should be to convince your audience that you have something worthwhile to say. Gaining their approval depends to a large degree on their perception of the writer: you need to present yourself as educated, rational, and well-informed. But in doing so, you need to be careful not to lose your own voice. You should never use a wordy, artificial style in an attempt to impress your readers; neither should you talk down to them or apologize for your writing.

Choosing the Proper Pronoun Focus

One important consideration in selecting the appropriate voice for your paper is to choose the proper pronoun focus, and this is dependent upon the nature of the assignment. In some instances, the first person ("I") is acceptable: for example, if you are writing an autobiographical sketch for an application to a university, anything other than first person would sound odd. Likewise, if you are writing an extemporaneous essay that answers a question prompting a first person response, such as "Explain why you do or do not vote," again, first person would be the obvious choice. Even within the development of an essay that takes a third person approach, if you use an example from your personal experience to illustrate a point, you can discuss that isolated example using the first person. Most of the same arguments apply to the use of the second person pronoun ("you"). This textbook, for instance, utilizes the second person because of the unique relationship between the student/reader and the instructor/writer.

As discussed in The Use of I in Writing in this book's section on "Persuasive Essays," the appropriateness of the first-person pronoun in college writing is a topic of debate. But academic writing more often requires you to adopt a third-person focus, preferably in the plural form ("they"). Using third person enables you to avoid boring the reader by suggesting that the topic is of interest only to you; in other words, it broadens the audience appeal. Using third person in the plural form also allows you to avoid making pronoun agreement errors which might occur as the natural result of imitating spoken English which seems to favor the plural form instead of the more grammatically correct singular: for example, most people would say, "Everyone should have their book in class" instead of "Everyone should have his book in class," even though the former is technically incorrect. In addition, using third person plural eliminates the problem of sexist language and prevents the awkward use of "his/her."

Consider the following examples for their use of pronoun focus imagining they appeared in an essay about the validity of using source materials from the Internet:

Example 1.1.1:

Weak: As I surfed the Internet, I found a lot of articles that I couldn't trust because I didn't see any authors' names or sponsoring organizations.

Weak: As we surf the Internet, we frequently find articles we cannot trust because we do not find authors' names or sponsoring organizations.

Weak: As one surfs the Internet, one frequently finds articles one cannot trust because one cannot find authors' names or sponsoring organizations.

Stronger: Surfing the Internet for source information is unreliable because many articles do not indicate their authors or sponsoring organizations

The first example is too limited—who cares what you found on the Internet? The second example generalizes the focus better than the first, but it, too, restricts the audience. Changing the pronoun to "one" is also problematic because it is repetitious and awkward. The final example is the best to use in an essay because it emphasizes the point in an all-inclusive manner, without being redundant or sounding artificial.

Exercise 1.1.1

Rewrite the following sentences, changing the pronoun focus to best suit an essay written for your English Composition class:

1. I find that walking is one of the best forms of exercise because it helps me lose weight and improve my cardiovascular system while I can enjoy being outside in the fresh air.
2. One should always pay attention to the charges on one's credit card bills in order to identify if one's account number has been stolen and to avoid being charged for services one did not receive.
3. We believe that we should be able to eat healthy fruits and vegetables without our having to pay exorbitant prices for organically grown food.
4. Your best chance of making a lot of money for retirement is to diversify your portfolio, investing in a variety of options instead of putting all of your funds in just one account.

key takeaways

- Writing is an effective way to clarify, articulate, and communicate your thoughts.
- Writer's Block does not have to stall the writing process if you employ effective techniques to overcome it.
- Before you begin to write, adopt a voice and pronoun focus appropriate to your purpose in writing the essay.

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1.2: Purpose, Audience, Tone, and Content

Imagine reading one long block of text, with each idea blurring into the next. Even if you are reading a thrilling novel or an interesting news article, you will likely lose interest in what the author has to say very quickly. During the writing process, it is helpful to position yourself as a reader. Ask yourself whether you can focus easily on each point you make. Keep in mind that three main elements shape the content of each essay:

- **Purpose**: The reason the writer composes the essay.
- **Audience**: The individual or group whom the writer intends to address.
- **Tone**: The attitude the writer conveys about the essay's subject.

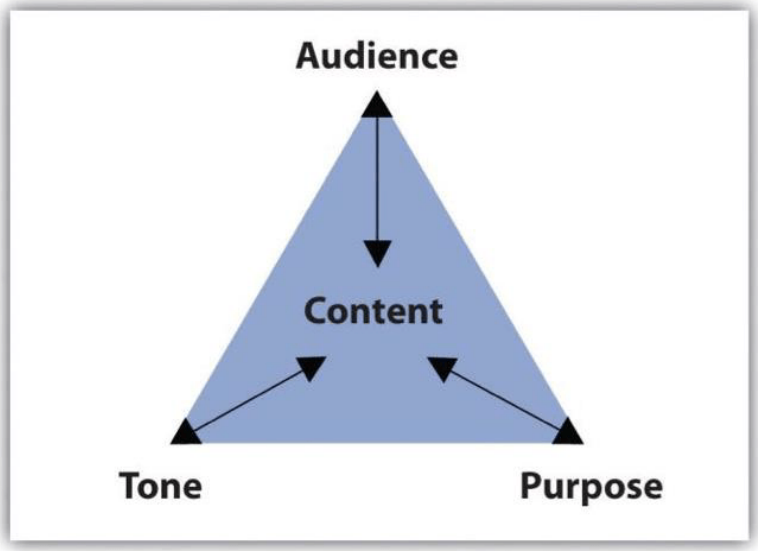


Figure 1.2.1

The assignment's purpose, audience, and tone dictate what each paragraph of the essay covers and how the paragraph supports the main point—the thesis.

Identifying Common Academic Purposes

The purpose for a piece of writing identifies the reason you write it by, basically, answering the question "Why?" For example, why write a play? To entertain a packed theater. Why write instructions to the babysitter? To inform him or her of your schedule and rules. Why write a letter to your congressman? To persuade him to address your community's needs.

In academic settings, the reasons for writing typically fulfill four main purposes:

- to summarize
- to analyze
- to synthesize
- to evaluate

A **summary** shrinks a large amount of information into only the essentials, using your own words; although shorter than the original piece of writing, a summary should still communicate all the key points and key support of the original document.

An **analysis**, on the other hand, separates complex materials into their different parts and studies how the parts relate to one another. In the sciences, for example, the analysis of simple table salt would require a deconstruction of its parts—the elements sodium (Na) and chloride (Cl). Then, scientists would study how the two elements interact to create the compound NaCl, or sodium chloride: simple table salt.

In an **academic analysis**, instead of deconstructing compounds, the essay takes apart a primary source (an essay, a book, an article, etc.) point by point. It communicates the main points of the document by examining individual points and identifying how the points relate to one another.

The third type of writing—**synthesis**—combines two or more items to create an entirely new item. Take, for example, the electronic musical instrument aptly named the synthesizer. It looks like a simple keyboard but displays a dashboard of switches, buttons, and levers. With the flip of a few switches, a musician may combine the distinct sounds of a piano, a flute, or a guitar—or any other combination of instruments—to create a new sound. The purpose of an academic synthesis is to blend individual documents into a new document by considering the main points from one or more pieces of writing and linking the main points together to create a new point, one not replicated in either document.

Finally, an **evaluation** judges the value of something and determines its worth. Evaluations in everyday life are often not only dictated by set standards but also influenced by opinion and prior knowledge such as a supervisor's evaluation of an employee in a particular job. Academic evaluations, likewise, communicate your opinion and its justifications about a particular document or a topic of discussion. They are influenced by your reading of the document as well as your prior knowledge and experience with the topic or issue. Evaluations typically require more critical thinking and a combination of summary, analysis, and synthesis skills.

You will encounter these four purposes not only as you read for your classes but also as you read for work or pleasure, and, because reading and writing work together, your writing skills will improve as you read. Remember that the purpose for writing will guide you through each part of your paper, helping you make decisions about content and style.

When reviewing directions for assignments, look for the verbs that ask you to summarize, analyze, synthesize, or evaluate. Instructors often use these words to clearly indicate the assignment's purpose. These words will cue you on how to complete the assignment because you will know its exact purpose.

Exercise 2

Read the following paragraphs about four films and then identify the purpose of each paragraph: to summarize, to analyze, to synthesize, or to evaluate.

1. This film could easily have been cut down to less than two hours. By the final scene, I noticed that most of my fellow moviegoers were snoozing in their seats and were barely paying attention to what was happening on screen. Although the director sticks diligently to the book, he tries too hard to cram in all the action, which is just too ambitious for such a detail-oriented story. If you want my advice, read the book and give the movie a miss.
2. During the opening scene, we learn that the character Laura is adopted and that she has spent the past three years desperately trying to track down her real parents. Having exhausted all the usual options—adoption agencies, online searches, family trees, and so on—she is on the verge of giving up when she meets a stranger on a bus. The chance encounter leads to a complicated chain of events that ultimately result in Laura getting her lifelong wish. But is it really what she wants? Throughout the rest of the film, Laura discovers that sometimes the past is best left where it belongs.
3. To create the feeling of being gripped in a vice, the director, May Lee, uses a variety of elements to gradually increase the tension. The creepy, haunting melody that subtly enhances the earlier scenes becomes ever more insistent, rising to a disturbing crescendo toward the end of the movie. The desperation of the actors, combined with the claustrophobic atmosphere and tight camera angles create a realistic firestorm, from which there is little hope of escape. Walking out of the theater at the end feels like staggering out of a Roman dungeon.
4. The scene in which Campbell and his fellow prisoners assist the guards in shutting down the riot immediately strikes the viewer as unrealistic. Based on the recent reports on prison riots in both Detroit and California, it seems highly unlikely that a posse of hardened criminals will intentionally help their captors at the risk of inciting future revenge from other inmates. Instead, both news reports and psychological studies indicate that prisoners who do not actively participate in a riot will go back to their cells and avoid conflict altogether. Examples of this lack of attention to detail occur throughout the film, making it almost unbearable to watch.
5. **Collaboration**: Share with a classmate and compare your answers.

Exercise 3

Group activity: Working in a group of four or five, assign each group member the task of collecting one document each. These documents might include magazine or newspaper articles, workplace documents, academic essays, chapters from a reference book, film or book reviews, or any other type of writing. As a group, read through each document and discuss the author's purpose for writing. Use the information you have learned in this chapter to decide whether the main purpose is to summarize, analyze, synthesize, or evaluate. Write a brief report on the purpose of each document, using supporting evidence from the text.

Exercise 4

Consider the essay most recently assigned to you. Identify the most effective academic purpose for the assignment.

My assignment: _____

My purpose: _____

Writing at Work

Thinking about the purpose of writing a report in the workplace can help focus and structure the document. A summary should provide colleagues with a factual overview of your findings without going into too much specific detail. In contrast, an evaluation should include your personal opinion, along with supporting evidence, research, or examples to back it up. To help determine a purpose for writing, listen for words such as summarize, analyze, synthesize, or evaluate when your boss asks you to complete a report.

Identifying the Audience

Imagine you must give a presentation to a group of executives in an office. Weeks before the big day, you spend time creating and rehearsing the presentation. You must make important, careful decisions not only about the content but also about your delivery. Will the presentation require technology to project figures and charts? Should the presentation define important words, or will the executives already know the terms? Should you wear your suit and dress shirt? The answers to these questions will help you develop an appropriate relationship with your audience, making them more receptive to your message.

Now imagine you must explain the same business concepts from your presentation to a group of high school students. Those important questions you previously answered may now require different answers. The figures and charts may be too sophisticated, and the terms will certainly require definitions. You may even reconsider your outfit and sport a more casual look. Because the audience has shifted, your presentation and delivery will shift as well to create a new relationship with the new audience.

In these two situations, the audience—the individuals who will watch and listen to the presentation—plays a role in the development of presentation. As you prepare the presentation, you visualize the audience to anticipate their expectations and reactions. What you imagine affects the information you choose to present and how you will present it. Then, during the presentation, you meet the audience in person and discover immediately how well you perform.

Although the audience for writing assignments—your readers—may not appear in person, they play an equally vital role. Even in everyday writing activities, you identify your readers' characteristics, interests, and expectations before making decisions about what you write. In fact, thinking about audience has become so common that you may not even detect the audience-driven decisions.

For example, you update your status on a social networking site with the awareness of who will digitally follow the post. If you

want to brag about a good grade, you may write the post to please family members. If you want to describe a funny moment, you may write with your friends' senses of humor in mind. Even at work, you send emails with an awareness of an unintended receiver who could intercept the message.

In other words, being aware of "invisible" readers is a skill you most likely already possess and one you rely on every day. Consider the following paragraphs. Which one would the author send to her parents? Which one would she send to her best friend?

Example 1.2.1:

Example A

Last Saturday, I volunteered at a local hospital. The visit was fun and rewarding. I even learned how to do cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or CPR. Unfortunately, I think caught a cold from one of the patients. This week, I will rest in bed and drink plenty of clear fluids. I hope I am well by next Saturday to volunteer again.

Example B

OMG! You won't believe this! My advisor forced me to do my community service hours at this hospital all weekend! We learned CPR but we did it on dummies, not even real peeps. And some kid sneezed on me and got me sick! I was so bored and sniffling all weekend; I hope I don't have to go back next week. I def do NOT want to miss the basketball tournament!

Most likely, you matched each paragraph to its intended audience with little hesitation. Because each paragraph reveals the author's relationship with the intended readers, you can identify the audience fairly quickly. When writing your own essays, you must engage with your audience to build an appropriate relationship given your subject. Imagining your readers during each stage of the writing process will help you make decisions about your writing. Ultimately, the people you visualize will affect what and how you write.

While giving a speech, you may articulate an inspiring or critical message, but if you left your hair a mess and laced up mismatched shoes, your audience would not take you seriously. They may be too distracted by your appearance to listen to your words. Similarly, grammar and sentence structure serve as the appearance of a piece of writing. Polishing your work using correct grammar will impress your readers and allow them to focus on what you have to say.

Because focusing on audience will enhance your writing, your process, and your finished product, you must consider the specific traits of your audience members. Use your imagination to anticipate the readers' demographics, education, prior knowledge, and expectations.

- **Demographics**: These measure important data about a group of people, such as their age range, their ethnicity, their religious beliefs, or their gender. Certain topics and assignments will require these kinds of considerations about your audience. For other topics and assignments, these measurements may not influence your writing in the end. Regardless, it is important to consider demographics when you begin to think about your purpose for writing.
- **Education**: Education considers the audience's level of schooling. If audience members have earned a doctorate degree, for example, you may need to elevate your style and use more formal language. Or, if audience members are still in college, you could write in a more relaxed style. An audience member's major or emphasis may also dictate your writing.
- **Prior knowledge**: This refers to what the audience already knows about your topic. If your readers have studied certain topics, they may already know some terms and concepts related to the topic. You may decide whether to define terms and explain concepts based on your audience's prior knowledge. Although you cannot peer inside the brains of your readers to discover their knowledge, you can make reasonable assumptions. For instance, a nursing major would presumably know more about health-related topics than a business major would.
- **Expectations**: These indicate what readers will look for while reading your assignment. Readers may expect consistencies in the assignment's appearance, such as correct grammar and traditional formatting like double-spaced lines and legible font. Readers may also have content-based expectations given the assignment's purpose and organization. In an essay titled "The Economics of Enlightenment: The Effects of Rising Tuition," for example, audience members may expect to read about the economic repercussions of college tuition costs.

Exercise 5

On your own sheet of paper, generate a list of characteristics under each category for each audience. This list will help you later when you read about tone and content.

1. Your classmates
   a. Demographics _____
   b. Education _____
   c. Prior knowledge _____
   d. Expectations _____
2. Your instructor
   a. Demographics _____
   b. Education _____
   c. Prior knowledge _____
   d. Expectations _____
3. The head of your academic department
   a. Demographics _____
   b. Education _____
   c. Prior knowledge _____
   d. Expectations _____
4. Now think about your next writing assignment. Identify the purpose (you may use the same purpose listed in Exercise 4), and then identify the audience. Create a list of characteristics under each category.
   a. My assignment: _____
   b. My purpose: _____
   c. My audience: _____
      i. Demographics _____
      ii. Education _____
      iii. Prior knowledge _____
      iv. Expectations _____
5. **Collaboration**: Please share with a classmate and compare your answers.

Exercise 6

At some point during your career, you may be asked to write a report or to complete a presentation. Imagine that you have been asked to report on the issue of health and safety in the workplace. Using the information in this section complete an analysis of your intended audience—your fellow office workers. Consider how demographics, education, prior knowledge, and expectations will influence your report and explain how you will tailor it to your audience accordingly.

Collaboration: Pair with a classmate and compare your answers.

Selecting an Appropriate Tone

Tone identifies a speaker's attitude toward a subject or another person. You may pick up a person's tone of voice fairly easily in conversation. A friend who tells you about her weekend may speak excitedly about a fun skiing trip. An instructor who means business may speak in a low, slow voice to emphasize her serious mood. Or, a coworker who needs to let off some steam after a long meeting may crack a sarcastic joke.

Just as speakers transmit emotion through voice, writers can transmit a range of attitudes and emotions through prose--from excited and humorous to somber and critical. These emotions create connections among the audience, the author, and the subject, ultimately building a relationship between the audience and the text. To stimulate these connections, writers intimate their attitudes and feelings with useful devices, such as sentence structure, word choice, punctuation, and formal or informal language. Keep in mind that the writer's attitude should always appropriately match the audience and the purpose.

Read the following paragraph and consider the writer's tone. How would you describe the writer's attitude toward wildlife conservation?

> Many species of plants and animals are disappearing right before our eyes. If we don't act fast, it might be too late to save them. Human activities, including pollution, deforestation, hunting, and overpopulation, are devastating the natural environment. Without our help, many species will not survive long enough for our children to see them in the wild. Take the tiger, for example. Today, tigers occupy just seven percent of their historical range, and many local populations are already extinct. Hunted for their beautiful pelts and other body parts, the tiger population has plummeted from one hundred thousand in 1920 to just a few thousand. Contact your local wildlife conservation society today to find out how you can stop this terrible destruction.

Exercise 7

Think about the assignment, purpose, and audience that you selected in previous exercises. Now, identify the tone you would use in the assignment.

My assignment: _____

My purpose: _____

My audience: _____

My tone: _____

Choosing Appropriate, Interesting Content

Content refers to all the written substance in a document. After selecting an audience and a purpose, you must choose what information will make it to the page. Content may consist of examples, statistics, facts, anecdotes, testimonies, and observations, but no matter the type, the information must be appropriate and interesting for the audience and purpose. An essay written for third graders that summarizes the legislative process, for example, would have to contain succinct and simple content.

Content is also shaped by tone. When the tone matches the content, the audience will be more engaged, and you will build a stronger relationship with your readers. Consider that audience of third graders. You would choose simple content that the audience will easily understand, and you would express that content through an enthusiastic tone. The same considerations apply to all audiences and purposes.

Exercise 8

Match the content of the following listed examples to the appropriate audience and purpose. On your own sheet of paper, write the correct letter in the blank next to the word "content."

A. Whereas economist Holmes contends that the financial crisis is far from over, the presidential advisor Jones points out that it is vital to catch the first wave of opportunity to increase market share. We can use elements of both experts' visions. Let me explain how.
B. In 2000, foreign money flowed into the United States, contributing to easy credit conditions. People bought larger houses than they could afford, eventually defaulting on their loans as interest rates rose.
C. The Emergency Economic Stabilization Act, known by most of us as the humongous government bailout, caused mixed reactions. Although supported by many political leaders, the statute provoked outrage among grassroots groups. In their opinion, the government was actually rewarding banks for their appalling behavior.

Audience: An instructor

Purpose: To analyze the reasons behind the 2007 financial crisis

Content: _____

Audience: Classmates

Purpose: To summarize the effects of the $700 billion government bailout

Content: _____

Audience: An employer

Purpose: To synthesize two articles on preparing businesses for economic recovery

Content: _____

Collaboration: Share with a classmate and compare your answers.

Exercise 9

Using the assignment, purpose, audience, and tone from Exercise 7, generate a list of content ideas. Remember that content consists of examples, statistics, facts, anecdotes, testimonies, and observations.

My assignment: _____

My purpose: _____

My audience: _____

My tone: _____

My content ideas: _____

key takeaways

- The content of each paragraph in the essay is shaped by purpose, audience, and tone.
- The four common academic purposes are to **summarize**, to **analyze**, to **synthesize**, and to **evaluate**.
- Identifying the audience's demographics, education, prior knowledge, and expectations will affect how and what you write.
- Devices such as sentence structure, word choice, punctuation, and formal or informal language communicate tone and create a relationship between the writer and his or her audience.
- Content may consist of **examples, statistics, facts, anecdotes, testimonies,** and **observations**. All content must be appropriate and interesting for the audience, purpose and tone.

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1.3: Using Sources

What are “sources” and how do you use them in college?

A source is anything that you didn’t write or create; a source is anything that you are using to build something that you are writing or creating. You’re probably used to thinking of sources for research papers, such as articles you found through library databases. But you will use sources for almost ALL of your writing in college. For example, the novel, poem, or play you’re reading in English is a source for the literary analysis paper you have to write; a website is a source for a market analysis in your business class; a newspaper editorial is a source for your response in a current events class; a film is the source for a film analysis; a source could be a quote you use to begin a paper in history class, and so on.

Any time that you use something that you did not write or create yourself, you are using a source.

What kinds of projects use sources?

Most of the writing that you will do here will use some kind of source. You will use sources not only in research papers and projects, but also in summaries, analyses, responses, presentations, video and audio projects, editorials, websites, blog posts, slide shows, and even personal essays. Basically, almost everything you write here will have to engage with sources in some way.

Why do you have to involve sources in your writing?

Depending on the size and scope of the writing project, you may have to build arguments based on sources you’ve read in class, you may have to write an argument based on research sources, you may have to write a personal response to a course text, you may have to summarize or analyze a course text, or you may have to present on a text in class. In short, you will need to support what you communicate in the college classroom. You will need evidence. Sources are that evidence.

There is a larger philosophical reason: **when you write in academia, you take part in a conversation that has gone on for centuries before you and will go on long after you**. Using sources is the main way you become involved in—and later help to shape— that conversation. You converse both with your colleagues and professors about sources, but you also converse *with* the sources, and that dialogue composes a large measure of your learning. In order to take part in that conversation, you need to understand the conventions of academic culture (even though you may be skeptical or critical of parts of that culture at times). These conventions are not only the conventions of American Standard English, but are also the conventions of good source use. This academic conversation is sometimes called the “Burkean Parlor,” for the philosopher Kenneth Burke, who describes academic dialogue in this way:

> Imagine that you enter a parlor. You come late. When you arrive, others have long preceded you, and they are engaged in a heated discussion, a discussion too heated for them to pause and tell you exactly what it is about. In fact, the discussion had already begun long before any of them got there, so that no one present is qualified to retrace for you all the steps that had gone before. You listen for a while, until you decide that you have caught the tenor of the argument; then you put in your oar. Someone answers; you answer him; another comes to your defense; another aligns himself against you, to either the embarrassment or gratification of your opponent, depending upon the quality of your ally's assistance. However, the discussion is interminable. The hour grows late, you must depart. And you do depart, with the discussion still vigorously in progress.[i]

What kinds of sources should you use, and what parts of them do you use?

The type of class and the assignment will determine what kinds of sources you use. Sometimes you’ll use texts that your professor has supplied, and other times, you’ll have to go and do research to find outside sources. When dealing with written sources, you’ll

either quote, paraphrase, or summarize.

- When you **quote**, you use the exact wording from the source.
- When you **paraphrase**, you put a passage or part of a text in your own words, being careful not to copy the sentence structure of the original source.
- When you **summarize**, you give a very broad overview of a passage or a text-- writing your summary in a 10th of the size of the original text.

How do you use sources well in your writing? Good source use means both ethical source use and well-integrated source use. They work together so that at the same time you are giving due credit to the creator of the source you're using or engaging, you are making it work well with your words and ideas.

Ethical Source Use means giving credit, and it also means providing the required information about the source. Giving credit in something you write may look a lot like the Burke example above, where Burke was introduced by name and then the quote was annotated. There are a number of valid ways to ethically use a source, and these often depend on what discipline you're writing in, such as English, psychology, journalism, or history.

Guidelines for Source Use

1. Make sure you have permission to use the source. How do you know? For the most part, you can use a small part of any written text in something you create for school, if you know you have permission and if you give proper credit. An exemption to the U.S. Copyright law says that using a small amount of a source is fine if you're using it "for commentary or scholarship."[1]
2. Properly cite the source. This means providing information that your reader can use to find the source. In the MLA and APA citation styles, proper citation includes both the in-text citation of the page number, year, and / or author of the source and the full citation at the end of the paper. Other styles, such as the Chicago style (used by historians) use footnotes instead of parenthetical in-text citations.
3. Include the full citation for the source at the end of your paper.

Explicating Sources

You can see examples of citations in Documenting Your Source Material in the chapter "Writing a Research Paper." In addition to properly citing the source, you need to integrate it well. This means both Introducing Cited Material Effectively with signal phrases and explicating quotations and paraphrases. You do not need to explicate summary, since you are giving a broad overview and don't have to explain it in detail.

In addition to properly introducing and documenting sources, writers need to explicate quotations and paraphrases. Explicating sources means justifying their place in your work. A good guideline to follow for explicating source material (in the form of quotations and paraphrases) is for every sentence of quotation or paraphrase that you use, follow it with three sentences of explication. Those sentences should include this information:

- **"In other words"**: Tell your readers what the quote or paraphrase means.
- **How it supports your argument**: Tell your readers how this quote or paraphrase is evidence that supports your argument.
- **Context**: Provide some context for this quote or paraphrase--where in the text did it come from--the beginning, middle, or end? What is the author of the source doing or trying to do in this section or passage?

tips

- Restrict direct quotations to when an author(s) says something that just can't be paraphrased, or when an author(s) says something in a unique way.
- Quote when authors say something especially relevant or meaningful.
- Use quotes sparingly. For most of the papers you write, you won't need very long quotes--a good guideline is to use no more than three sentences (which each need three sentences of explication) each time you quote.
- Do not rely on block quotes; use those only when absolutely necessary and follow your style's the formatting rules for block quotes.

References

[i] Burke, Kenneth. The Philosophy of Literary Form. Oakland: University of California Press, 1974. 110- 111.

1. For more information, see Stanford University's Fair Use legal resource: http://fairuse.stanford.edu/.

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1.4: Writing Thesis Statements

To be effective, all support in an essay must work together to convey a central point; otherwise, an essay can fall into the trap of being out of order and confusing. Just as a **topic sentence** focuses and unifies a single paragraph, the **thesis statement** focuses and unifies an entire essay. This statement is like a signpost that signals the essay's destination; it tells the reader the point you want to make in your essay, while the essay itself supports that point.

Because writing is not a linear process, you may find that the best thesis statement develops near the end of your first draft; however, creating a draft or working thesis early in the writing project helps give the drafting process clear direction. You should form your thesis before you begin to organize an essay, but you may find that it needs revision as the essay develops.

A thesis is not just a topic, but rather the writer's comment or interpretation of the question or subject. For whatever topic you select (for example, school uniforms, social networking), you must ask yourself, "What do I want to say about it?" Asking and then answering this question is vital to forming a thesis that is precise, forceful, and confident.

In the majority of essays, a thesis is one sentence long and appears toward the end of the introduction. It is specific and focuses on one to three points of a single idea—points that are able to be demonstrated in the body. It forecasts the content of the essay and suggests how you will organize your information. Remember that a thesis statement does not summarize an issue but rather dissects it.

Working Thesis Statements

A strong thesis statement must have the following qualities:

- **It must be arguable**: A thesis statement must state a point of view or judgment about a topic. An established fact is not considered arguable.
- **It must be supportable**: The thesis statement must contain a point of view that can be supported with evidence (reasons, facts, examples).
- **It must be specific**: A thesis statement must be precise enough to allow for a coherent argument and remain focused on the topic.

Example 1.4.1: Appropriate Thesis Statements

1. Closing all American borders for a period of five years is one solution that will tackle illegal immigration.
2. Compared to an absolute divorce, no-fault divorce is less expensive, promotes fairer settlements, and reflects a more realistic view of the causes for marital breakdown.
3. Exposing children from an early age to the dangers of drug abuse is a sure method of preventing future drug addicts.
4. In today's crumbling job market, a high school diploma is not significant enough education to land a stable, lucrative job.
5. Shakespeare's use of dramatic irony in Romeo and Juliet spoils the outcome for the audience and weakens the plot.
6. J. D. Salinger's character in Catcher in the Rye, Holden Caulfield, is a confused rebel who voices his disgust with phonies, yet acts like a phony on many occasions.
7. The societal and personal struggles of Troy Maxson in the play Fences symbolize the challenge of black males who lived through segregation and integration in the United States.

Pitfalls to Avoid:

- A thesis is weak when it is simply a declaration of your subject or a description of what you will discuss in your essay.
  - **Weak thesis statement**: My paper will explain why imagination is more important than knowledge.
- A thesis is weak when it makes an unreasonable or outrageous claim or insults the opposing side.
  - **Weak thesis statement**: Religious radicals across America are trying to legislate their Puritanical beliefs by banning required high school books.
- A thesis is weak when it contains an obvious fact or something that no one can disagree with or provides a dead end.
  - **Weak thesis statement**: Advertising companies use sex to sell their products.
- A thesis is weak when the statement is too broad.
  - **Weak thesis statement**: The life of Abraham Lincoln was long and challenging.

Exercise 10

Read the following thesis statements. On a separate piece of paper, identify each as weak or strong. For those that are weak, list the reasons why. Then revise the weak statements so that they conform to the requirements of a strong thesis.

1. The subject of this paper is my experience with ferrets as pets.
2. The government must expand its funding for research on renewable energy resources in order to prepare for the impending end of oil.
3. Edgar Allan Poe was a poet who lived in Baltimore during the nineteenth century.
4. In this essay, I will give you lots of reasons why slot machines should not be legalized in Baltimore.
5. Despite his promises during his campaign, President Kennedy took few executive measures to support civil rights legislation.
6. Because many children's toys have potential safety hazards that could lead to injury, it is clear that not all children's toys are safe.
7. My experience with young children has taught me that I want to be a disciplinary parent because I believe that a child without discipline can be a parent's worst nightmare.

Thesis Statement Revision

Your thesis statement begins as a working thesis statement, an indefinite statement that you make about your topic early in the writing process for the purpose of planning and guiding your writing. Working thesis statements often become stronger as you gather information and form new opinions and reasons for those opinions. Revision helps you strengthen your thesis so that it matches what you have expressed in the body of the paper.

Ways to Revise Your Thesis:

You can cut down on irrelevant aspects and revise your thesis by taking the following steps:

- **Pinpoint and replace** all nonspecific words, such as *people, everything, society*, or *life*, with more precise words in order to reduce any vagueness.
  - **Working thesis**: Young people have to work hard to succeed in life.
  - **Revised thesis**: Recent college graduates must have discipline and persistence in order to find and maintain a stable job in which they can use and be appreciated for their talents.
  - **Explanation**: The original includes too broad a range of people and does not define exactly what success entails. By replacing those general words like *people* and *work hard*, the writer can better focus his or her research and

gain more direction in his or her writing. The revised thesis makes a more specific statement about success and what it means to work hard.

- **Clarify ideas** that need explanation by asking yourself questions that narrow your thesis.
  - **Working thesis**: The welfare system is a joke.
  - **Revised thesis**: The welfare system keeps a socioeconomic class from gaining employment by alluring members of that class with unearned income, instead of programs to improve their education and skill sets.
  - **Explanation**: A *joke* means many things to many people. Readers bring all sorts of backgrounds and perspectives to the reading process and would need clarification for a word so vague. This expression may also be too informal for the selected audience. By asking questions, the writer can devise a more precise and appropriate explanation for *joke* and more accurately defines his or her stance, which will better guide the writing of the essay.
- **Replace any linking verbs with action verbs**. Linking verbs are forms of the verb *to be*, a verb that simply states that a situation exists.
  - **Working thesis**: Kansas City schoolteachers are not paid enough.
  - **Revised thesis**: The Kansas City legislature cannot afford to pay its educators, resulting in job cuts and resignations in a district that sorely needs highly qualified and dedicated teachers.
  - **Explanation**: The linking verb in this working thesis statement is the word *are*. Linking verbs often make thesis statements weak because they do not express action. Rather, they connect words and phrases to the second half of the sentence. Readers might wonder, "Why are they not paid enough?" But this statement does not compel them to ask many more questions. Asking questions will help you replace the linking verb with an action verb, thus forming a stronger thesis statement that takes a more definitive stance on the issue:
    - Who is not paying the teachers enough?
    - What is considered "enough"?
    - What is the problem?
    - What are the results?
- **Omit any general claims** that are hard to support.
  - **Working thesis**: Today's teenage girls are too sexualized.
  - **Revised thesis**: Teenage girls who are captivated by the sexual images on MTV are conditioned to believe that a woman's worth depends on her sensuality, a feeling that harms their self-esteem and behavior.
  - **Explanation**: It is true that some young women in today's society are more sexualized than in the past, but that is not true for all girls. Many girls have strict parents, dress appropriately, and do not engage in sexual activity while in middle school and high school. The writer of this thesis should ask the following questions:
    - Which teenage girls?
    - What constitutes "too" sexualized?
    - Why are they behaving that way?
    - Where does this behavior show up?
    - What are the repercussions?

Exercise 11

On a separate sheet of paper, write a thesis statement for each of the following topics. Remember to make each statement specific, precise, demonstrable, forceful and confident. Then choose one of the topics and create a list of supporting points that could be developed into one or more paragraphs each.

1. Texting while driving
2. The legal drinking age in the United States
3. Steroid use among professional athletes
4. Abortion
5. Racism

key takeaways

- Proper essays require a thesis statement to provide a specific focus and suggest how the essay will be organized.
- A thesis statement is your interpretation of the subject, not the topic itself.
- A strong thesis is specific, precise, forceful, confident, and is able to be demonstrated.
- A strong thesis challenges readers with a point of view that can be debated and can be supported with evidence.

- A weak thesis is simply a declaration of your topic or contains an obvious fact that cannot be argued.
- Depending on your topic, it may or may not be appropriate to use first person point of view.
- Revise your thesis by ensuring all words are specific, all ideas are exact, and all verbs express action.

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1.5: Methods of Organizing Your Writing

The method of organization for essays and paragraphs is just as important as content. When you begin to draft an essay or paragraph, your ideas may seem to flow from your mind in a seemingly random manner; however, your readers, who bring to the table different backgrounds, viewpoints, and ideas, need you to clearly organize these ideas to help them draw connections between the body and the thesis. A solid organizational pattern not only helps readers to process and accept your ideas, but also gives your ideas a path that you can follow as you develop your essay (or paragraph). Knowing how you will organize your paragraphs allows you to better express and analyze your thoughts. In addition, planning the structure of your essay before you choose supporting evidence helps you conduct more effective and targeted research. This section covers three ways to organize both essays and paragraphs: chronological order, order of importance, and spatial order.

Chronological Order

Chronological arrangement has the following purposes:

- To explain the history of an event or a topic
- To tell a story or relate an experience
- To explain how to do or to make something
- To explain the steps in a process

Chronological order is mostly used in expository writing, which is a form of writing that narrates, describes, informs, or explains a process. When using chronological order, arrange the events in the order that they actually happened, or will happen if you are giving instructions. This method requires you to use words such as *first, second, then, after that, later,* and *finally*. These transition words guide you and your reader through the paper as you expand your thesis. For example, if you are writing an essay about the history of the airline industry, you would begin with its conception and detail the essential timeline events up until present day. You would follow the chain of events using words such as *first, then, next,* and so on. Keep in mind that chronological order is most appropriate for the following purposes:

- Writing essays containing heavy research
- Writing essays with the aim of listing, explaining, or narrating
- Writing essays that analyze literary works such as poems, plays, or books

When using chronological order, your introduction should indicate the information you will cover and should also establish the relevance of the information. Your body paragraphs should then provide clear divisions or steps in chronology. You can divide your paragraphs by time (such as decades, wars, or other historical events) or by the same structure of the work you are examining (such as a line-by-line explication of a poem).

Exercise 12

Choose an accomplishment you have achieved in your life. The important moment could be in sports, schooling, or extracurricular activities. On your own sheet of paper, list the steps you took to reach your goal. Try to be as specific as possible with the steps you took. Pay attention to using transition words to focus your writing.

Exercise 13

On a separate sheet of paper, write a paragraph that describes a process you are familiar with and can do well. Assume that your reader is unfamiliar with the procedure. Remember to use the chronological key words, such as *first, second, then,* and *finally*.

Order of Importance

Order of importance is best used for the following purposes:

- Persuading and convincing
- Ranking items by their importance, benefit, or significance
- Illustrating a situation, problem, or solution

Most essays move from the least to the most important point, and the paragraphs are arranged in an effort to build the essay's strength. Sometimes, however, it is necessary to begin with the most important supporting point, such as in an essay that contains a thesis that is highly debatable. When writing a persuasive essay, it is best to begin with the most important point because it immediately captivates your readers and compels them to continue reading.

For example, if you were supporting your thesis that homework is detrimental to the education of high school students, you would want to present your most convincing argument first, and then move on to the less important points for your case. During your career, you may be required to work on a team that devises a strategy for a specific goal of your company, such as increasing profits. When planning your strategy you should organize your steps in order of importance. This demonstrates the ability to prioritize and plan. Using the order of importance technique also shows that you can create a resolution with logical steps for accomplishing a common goal.

Exercise 14

On a separate sheet of paper, write a paragraph that discusses a passion of yours. Your passion could be music, a particular sport, filmmaking, and so on. Your paragraph should be built upon the reasons why you feel so strongly. Briefly discuss your reasons in the order of least to greatest importance.

Spatial Order

Spatial order is best used for the following purposes:

- Helping readers visualize something as you want them to see it
- Evoking a scene using the senses (sight, touch, taste, smell, and sound)
- Writing a descriptive essay

Spatial order means that you explain or describe objects as they are arranged around you in your space, for example in a bedroom. As the writer, you create a picture for your readers, and their perspective is the viewpoint from which you describe what is around you. The view must move in an orderly, logical progression, giving the reader clear directional signals to follow from place to place. The key to using this method is to choose a specific starting point and then guide the reader to follow your eye as it moves in an orderly trajectory from your starting point. Pay attention to the following student's description of her bedroom and how she guides the reader through the viewing process, foot by foot.

> Attached to my back bedroom wall is a small wooden rack dangling with red and turquoise necklaces that shimmer as I enter. Just to the right of the rack, billowy white curtains frame a large window with a sill that ends just six inches from the floor. The peace of such an image is a stark contrast to my desk, sitting to the right of the window, layered in textbooks, crumpled papers, coffee cups, and an overflowing ashtray. Turning my head to the right, I see a set of two bare windows that frame the trees outside the glass like a three-dimensional painting. Below the windows is an oak chest from which blankets and scarves are protruding. Against the wall opposite the billowy curtains is an antique dresser, on top of which sits a jewelry box and a few picture frames. A tall mirror attached to the dresser takes up much of the lavender wall.

The paragraph incorporates two objectives covered in this chapter: using an implied topic sentence and applying spatial order. Often in a descriptive essay, the two objectives work together. The following are possible transition words to include when using spatial order:

- Just to the left or just to the right
- Behind
- Between
- On the left or on the right
- Across from
- A little further down
- To the south, to the east, and so on
- A few yards away
- Turning left or turning right

Exercise 15

On a separate sheet of paper, write a paragraph using spatial order that describes your commute to work, school, or another location you visit often.

Collaboration: Please share with a classmate and compare your answers.

key takeaways

- The way you organize your body paragraphs ensures you and your readers stay focused on and draw connections to your thesis statement.
- A strong organizational pattern allows you to articulate, analyze, and clarify your thoughts.
- Planning the organizational structure for your essay before you begin to search for supporting evidence helps you conduct more effective and directed research.
- Chronological order is most commonly used in expository writing. It is useful for explaining the history of your subject, for telling a story, or for explaining a process.
- Order of importance is most appropriate in a persuasion paper as well as for essays in which you rank things, people, or events by their significance.
- Spatial order describes things as they are arranged in space and is best for helping readers visualize something as you want them to see it; it creates a dominant impression.

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1.6: Writing Paragraphs (Part 1)

Imagine reading one long block of text, with each idea blurring into the next. You are likely to lose interest in a piece of writing that is disorganized and spans many pages without breaks. Paragraphs separate ideas into logical, manageable chunks, each paragraph focusing on only one main idea and presenting coherent sentences to support that one point. Because all the sentences in one paragraph support the same point, a paragraph may stand on its own. For most types of informative or persuasive academic writing, writers find it helpful to think of the paragraph analogous to an essay, as each is controlled by a main idea or point, and that idea is developed by an organized group of more specific ideas. Thus, the thesis of the essay is analogous to the topic sentence of a paragraph, just as the supporting sentences in a paragraph are analogous to the supporting paragraphs in an essay.

In essays, each supporting paragraph adds another related main idea to support the writer's thesis, or controlling idea. Each related supporting idea is developed with facts, examples, and other details that explain it. By exploring and refining one idea at a time, writers build a strong case for their thesis. Effective paragraphing makes the difference between a satisfying essay that readers can easily process and one that requires readers to mentally organize the piece themselves. Thoughtful organization and development of each body paragraph leads to an effectively focused, developed, and coherent essay.

An effective paragraph contains three main parts:

- a topic sentence
- body, supporting sentences
- a concluding sentence

In **informative** and **persuasive** writing, the *topic sentence* is usually the first sentence or second sentence of a paragraph and expresses its main idea, followed by supporting sentences that help explain, prove, or enhance the topic sentence. In **narrative** and **descriptive** paragraphs, however, topic sentences may be implied rather than explicitly stated, with all supporting sentences working to create the main idea. If the paragraph contains a concluding sentence, it is the last sentence in the paragraph and reminds the reader of the main point by restating it in different words. The following figure illustrates the most common paragraph structure for informative and persuasive college essays.

Paragraph Structure Graphic Organizer

Topic Sentence (topic + comment/judgment/interpretation):

_____ _____

Supporting Sentence 1: _____
_____

Supporting Sentence 2: _____
_____

Supporting Sentence 3: _____
_____

Supporting Sentence 4: _____
_____

Supporting Sentence 5: _____
_____

Supporting Sentence 6: _____
_____

Concluding Sentence (summary of comment/judgment/interpretation):

_____ _____

Note

The number of supporting sentences varies according to the paragraph's purpose and the writer's sentence structure.

Creating Focused Paragraphs with Topic Sentences

The foundation of a paragraph is the topic sentence, which expresses the main idea or point of the paragraph. The topic sentence functions two ways: it clearly refers to and supports the essay's thesis, and it indicates what will follow in the rest of the paragraph. As the unifying sentence for the paragraph, it is the most general sentence, whereas all supporting sentences provide different types of more specific information, such as facts, details, or examples.

An effective topic sentence has the following characteristics:

- **A topic sentence provides an accurate indication of what will follow in the rest of the paragraph**.
  - **Weak example**: First, we need a better way to educate students.
    - **Explanation**: The claim is vague because it does not provide enough information about what will follow, and it is too broad to be covered effectively in one paragraph.
  - **Stronger example**: Creating a national set of standards for math and English education will improve student learning in many states.
    - **Explanation**: The sentence replaces the vague phrase "a better way" and leads readers to expect supporting facts and examples as to why standardizing education in these subjects might improve student learning in many states.
- **A good topic sentence is the most general sentence in the paragraph and thus does not include supporting details.**
  - **Weak example**: Salaries should be capped in baseball for many reasons, most importantly so we don't allow the same team to win year after year.
    - **Explanation**: This topic sentence includes a supporting detail that should be included later in the paragraph to back up the main point.
  - **Stronger example**: Introducing a salary cap would improve the game of baseball for many reasons.
    - **Explanation**: This topic sentence omits the additional supporting detail so that it can be expanded upon later in the paragraph, yet the sentence still makes a claim about salary caps – improvement of the game.
- **A good topic sentence is clear and easy to follow**.
  - **Weak example**: In general, writing an essay, thesis, or other academic or nonacademic document is considerably easier and of much higher quality if you first construct an outline, of which there are many different types.
    - **Explanation**: The confusing sentence structure and unnecessary vocabulary bury the main idea, making it difficult for the reader to follow the topic sentence.
  - **Stronger example**: Most forms of writing can be improved by first creating an outline.
    - **Explanation**: This topic sentence cuts out unnecessary verbiage and simplifies the previous statement, making it easier for the reader to follow. The writer can include examples of what kinds of writing can benefit from outlining in the supporting sentences.

Location of Topic Sentences

A topic sentence can appear anywhere within a paragraph or can be implied (such as in narrative or descriptive writing). In

college-level expository or persuasive writing, placing an explicit topic sentence at the beginning of each paragraph (the first or second sentence) makes it easier for readers to follow the essay and for writers to stay on topic, but writers should be aware of variations and maintain the flexibility to adapt to different writing projects. The following examples illustrate varying locations for the topic sentence. In each example, the topic sentence is underlined.

Topic Sentence Begins the Paragraph (General to Specific)

> After reading the new TV guide this week I wondered why we are still being bombarded with reality shows, a plague that continues to darken our airwaves. Along with the return of viewer favorites, we are to be cursed with yet another mindless creation. Prisoner follows the daily lives of eight suburban housewives who have chosen to be put in jail for the purposes of this fake psychological experiment. A preview for the first episode shows the usual tears and tantrums associated with reality television. I dread to think what producers will come up with next season and hope that other viewers will express their criticism. These producers must stop the constant stream of meaningless shows without plotlines. We've had enough reality television to last us a lifetime!

The first sentence tells readers that the paragraph will be about reality television shows, and it expresses the writer's distaste for these shows through the use of the word bombarded. Each of the following sentences in the paragraph supports the topic sentence by providing further information about a specific reality television show and why the writer finds it unappealing. The final sentence is the concluding sentence. It reiterates the main point that viewers are bored with reality television shows by using different words from the topic sentence.

Paragraphs that begin with the topic sentence move from the general to the specific. They open with a general statement about a subject (reality shows) and then discuss specific examples (the reality show *Prisoner*). Most academic essays contain the topic sentence at the beginning of the first paragraph.

Topic Sentence Ends the Paragraph (Specific to General)

> Last year, a cat traveled 130 miles to reach its family, who had moved to another state and had left their pet behind. Even though it had never been to their new home, the cat was able to track down its former owners. A dog in my neighborhood can predict when its master is about to have a seizure. It makes sure that he does not hurt himself during an epileptic fit. Compared to many animals, our own senses are almost dull.

The last sentence of this paragraph is the topic sentence. It draws on specific examples (a cat that tracked down its owners and a dog that can predict seizures) and then makes a general statement that draws a conclusion from these examples (animals' senses are better than humans'). In this case, the supporting sentences are placed before the topic sentence and the concluding sentence is the same as the topic sentence. This technique is frequently used in persuasive writing. The writer produces detailed examples as evidence to back up his or her point, preparing the reader to accept the concluding topic sentence as the truth.

When the Topic Sentence Appears in the Middle of the Paragraph

> For many years, I suffered from severe anxiety every time I took an exam. Hours before the exam, my heart would begin pounding, my legs would shake, and sometimes I would become physically unable to move. Last year, I was referred to a specialist and finally found a way to control my anxiety—breathing exercises. It seems so simple, but by doing just a few breathing exercises a couple of hours before an exam, I gradually got my anxiety under control. The exercises help slow my heart rate and make me feel less anxious. Better yet, they require no pills, no equipment, and very little time. It's amazing how just breathing correctly has helped me learn to manage my anxiety symptoms.

In this paragraph, the underlined sentence is the topic sentence. It expresses the main idea—that breathing exercises can help control anxiety. The preceding sentences enable the writer to build up to his main point (breathing exercises can help control

anxiety) by using a personal anecdote (how he used to suffer from anxiety). The supporting sentences then expand on how breathing exercises help the writer by providing additional information. The last sentence is the concluding sentence and restates how breathing can help manage anxiety. Placing a topic sentence in the middle of a paragraph is often used in creative writing. If you notice that you have used a topic sentence in the middle of a paragraph in an academic essay, read through the paragraph carefully to make sure that it contains only one major topic.

Implied Topic Sentences

Some well-organized paragraphs do not contain a topic sentence at all, a technique often used in descriptive and narrative writing. Instead of being directly stated, the main idea is implied in the content of the paragraph, as in the following narrative paragraph:

> Heaving herself up the stairs, Luella had to pause for breath several times. She let out a wheeze as she sat down heavily in the wooden rocking chair. Tao approached her cautiously, as if she might crumble at the slightest touch. He studied her face, like parchment, stretched across the bones so finely he could almost see right through the skin to the decaying muscle underneath. Luella smiled a toothless grin.

Although no single sentence in this paragraph states the main idea, the entire paragraph focuses on one concept—that Luella is extremely old. The topic sentence is thus implied rather than stated so that all the details in the paragraph can work together to convey the dominant impression of Luella's age. In a paragraph such as this one, an explicit topic sentence would seem awkward and heavy-handed. Implied topic sentences work well if the writer has a firm idea of what he or she intends to say in the paragraph and sticks to it. However, a paragraph loses its effectiveness if an implied topic sentence is too subtle or the writer loses focus.

Exercise 16

In each of the following sentence pairs, **choose the more effective topic sentence**.

1. a. This paper will discuss the likelihood of the Democrats winning the next election.
   b. To boost their chances of winning the next election, the Democrats need to listen to public opinion.
2. a. The unrealistic demands of union workers are crippling the economy for three main reasons.
   b. Union workers are crippling the economy because companies are unable to remain competitive as a result of added financial pressure.
3. a. Authors are losing money as a result of technological advances.
   b. The introduction of new technology will devastate the literary world.
4. a. Rap music is produced by untalented individuals with oversized egos.
   b. This essay will consider whether talent is required in the rap music industry.

Exercise 17

Read the following statements and evaluate each as a topic sentence.

1. Exercising three times a week is healthy.
2. Sexism and racism exist in today's workplace.
3. I think we should raise the legal driving age.
4. Owning a business.
5. There are too many dogs on the public beach.

Exercise 18

Create a topic sentence on each of the following subjects. Write your responses on your own sheet of paper.

1. An endangered species
2. The cost of fuel
3. The legal drinking age
4. A controversial film or novel

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1.7: Writing Paragraphs (Part 2)

Developing Paragraphs

If you think of a paragraph as a sandwich, the supporting sentences are the filling between the bread. They make up the body of the paragraph by explaining, proving, or enhancing the controlling idea in the topic sentence. The overall method of development for paragraphs depends upon the essay as a whole and the purpose of each paragraph; thus paragraphs may be developed by using examples, description, narration, comparison and contrast, definition, cause and effect, classification and division. A writer may use one method, or combine several methods.

Writers often want to know how many words a paragraph should contain, and the answer is that a paragraph should develop the idea, point, or impression completely enough to satisfy the writer and readers. Depending on their function, paragraphs can vary in length from one or two sentences, to over a page; however, in most college assignments, successfully developed paragraphs usually contain approximately one hundred to two hundred and fifty words and span one-fourth to two-thirds of a typed page. A series of short paragraphs in an academic essay can seem choppy and unfocused, whereas paragraphs that are one page or longer can tire readers. Giving readers a paragraph break on each page helps them maintain focus.

This advice does not mean, of course, that composing a paragraph of a particular number of words or sentences guarantees an effective paragraph. Writers must provide enough supporting sentences within paragraphs to develop the topic sentence and simultaneously carry forward the essay's main idea.

Example 1.7.1:

In a descriptive paragraph about a room in the writer's childhood home, a length of two or three sentences is unlikely to contain enough details to create a picture of the room in the reader's mind, and it will not contribute in conveying the meaning of the place. In contrast, a half page paragraph, full of carefully selected vivid, specific details and comparisons, provides a fuller impression and engages the reader's interest and imagination. In descriptive or narrative paragraphs, supporting sentences present details and actions in vivid, specific language in objective or subjective ways, appealing to the readers' senses to make them see and experience the subject. In addition, some sentences writers use make comparisons that bring together or substitute the familiar with the unfamiliar, thus enhancing and adding depth to the description of the incident, place, person, or idea.

In a persuasive essay about raising the wage for certified nursing assistants, a paragraph might focus on the expectations and duties of the job, comparing them to that of a registered nurse. Needless to say, a few sentences that simply list the certified nurse's duties will not give readers a complete enough idea of what these healthcare professionals do. If readers do not have plenty of information about the duties and the writer's experience in performing them for what she considers inadequate pay, the paragraph fails to do its part in convincing readers that the pay is inadequate and should be increased. In informative or persuasive writing, a supporting sentence usually offers one of the following:

- **Reason**: The refusal of the baby boom generation to retire is contributing to the current lack of available jobs.
- **Fact**: Many families now rely on older relatives to support them financially.
- **Statistic**: Nearly 10 percent of adults are currently unemployed in the United States.
- **Quotation**: "We will not allow this situation to continue," stated Senator Johns.
- **Example**: Last year, Bill was asked to retire at the age of fifty-five.

The type of supporting sentence you choose will depend on what you are writing and why you are writing. For example, if you are attempting to persuade your audience to take a particular position, you should rely on facts, statistics, and concrete examples, rather than personal opinions. Personal testimony in the form of an extended example can be used in conjunction with the other types of support.

Consider the elements in the following paragraph:

Topic sentence: There are numerous advantages to owning a hybrid car.

Sentence 1 (statistic): First, they get 20 percent to 35 percent more miles to the gallon than a fuel-efficient gas-powered vehicle.

Sentence 2 (fact): Second, they produce very few emissions during low speed city driving.

Sentence 3 (reason): Because they do not require gas, hybrid cars reduce dependency on fossil fuels, which helps lower prices at the pump.

Sentence 4 (example): Alex bought a hybrid car two years ago and has been extremely impressed with its performance.

Sentence 5 (quotation): "It's the cheapest car I've ever had," she said. "The running costs are far lower than previous gas powered vehicles I've owned."

Concluding sentence: Given the low running costs and environmental benefits of owning a hybrid car, it is likely that many more people will follow Alex's example in the near future.

Sometimes the writing situation does not allow for research to add specific facts or other supporting information, but paragraphs can be developed easily with examples from the writer's own experience.

Farheya, a student in a freshman English Composition class, quickly drafted an essay during a timed writing assignment in class. To practice improving paragraph development, she selected the body paragraph below to add support:

Topic: Would you be better off if you didn't own a television? Discuss.

Original paragraph:

Lack of ownership of a television set is also a way to preserve innocence, and keep the exposure towards anything inappropriate at bay. From simply watching a movie, I have seen things I shouldn't have, no matter how fast I switch the channel. Television shows not only display physical indecency, but also verbal. Many times movies do voice-overs of profane words, but they also leave a few words uncensored. Seeing how all ages can flip through and see or hear such things make t.v. toxic for the mind, and without it I wouldn't have to worry about what I may accidentally see or hear.

The original paragraph identifies two categories of indecent material, and there is mention of profanity to provide a clue as to what the student thinks is indecent. However, the paragraph could use some examples to make the idea of inappropriate material clearer. Farheya considered some of the television shows she had seen and made a few changes.

Revised paragraph:

Not owning a television set would also be a way to preserve innocence and keep my exposure to anything inappropriate at bay. While searching for a program to view, I have seen things I shouldn't have, no matter how fast I switched the channel. The synopsis of Euro Trip, which describes high school friends traveling across Europe, leads viewers to think that the film is an innocent adventure; however; it is filled with indecency, especially when the students reach Amsterdam. The movie Fast and Furious has the same problem since the women are all half-naked in half tops and mini-skirts or short-shorts. Television shows not only display physical indecency, but also verbal. Many television shows have no filters, and the characters say profane words freely. On Empire, one of the most viewed dramas today, the main characters Cookie and Lucious Lyon use profane words during their fights throughout entire episodes. Because The Big Bang Theory is a show about a group of science geeks and their cute neighbor, viewers might think that these science geniuses' conversations would be about their

> current research or other science topics. Instead, their characters regularly engage in conversations about their personal lives that should be kept private. The ease of flipping through channels and seeing or hearing such things makes t.v. toxic for the mind, and without a television I wouldn't have to worry about what I may accidentally see or hear.

Farheya's addition of a few examples helps to convey why she thinks she would be better off without a television.

Consider the paragraph below on the topic of trauma in J. D. Salinger's work, noticing how examples are used to develop the paragraph.

Thesis: Author J.D. Salinger relied primarily on his personal life and belief system as the foundation for the themes in the majority of his works.

Supporting Point/Topic Sentence: Salinger, a World War II veteran, suffered from posttraumatic stress disorder, a disorder that influenced themes in many of his works.

Examples 1 - 3: A title and description of each work are used to establish support for the topic sentence.

> Salinger, a World War II veteran, suffered from posttraumatic stress disorder, a disorder that influenced the themes in many of his works. He did not hide his mental anguish over the horrors of war and once told his daughter, "You never really get the smell of burning flesh out of your nose, no matter how long you live." His short story **"A Perfect Day for Bananafish"** details a day in the life of a WWII veteran who was recently released form an army hospital for psychiatric problems. The man acts questionably with a little girl he meets on the beach before he returns to his hotel room and commits suicide. Another short Story, **"For Esme – with Love and Squalor,"** is narrated by a traumatized soldier who sparks an unusual relationship with a young girl he meets before he departs to partake in D-Day. Finally, in Salinger's only novel, **The Catcher in the Rye**, he continues with the theme of posttraumatic stress, though not directly related to war. From a rest home for the mentally ill, sixteen-year-old Holden Caulfield narrates the story of his nervous breakdown following the death of his younger brother.

Concluding Sentences

An effective concluding sentence draws together all the ideas raised in your paragraph. It reminds readers of the main point—the topic sentence—without restating it in exactly the same words. Using the hamburger example, the top bun (the topic sentence) and the bottom bun (the concluding sentence) are very similar. They frame the "meat" or body of the paragraph.

Compare the topic sentence and concluding sentence from the first example on hybrid cars:

Topic Sentence: There are many advantages to owning a hybrid car.

Concluding Sentence: Given the low running costs and environmental benefits of owning a hybrid car, it is likely that many more people will follow Alex's example in the near future.

Notice the use of the synonyms *advantages* and *benefits*. The concluding sentence reiterates the idea that owning a hybrid is advantageous without using the exact same words. It also summarizes two examples of the advantages covered in the supporting sentences: low running costs and environmental benefits.

Writers should avoid introducing any new ideas into a concluding sentence because a conclusion is intended to provide the reader with a sense of completion. Introducing a subject that is not covered in the paragraph will confuse readers and weaken the writing.

A concluding sentence may do any of the following:

- Restate the main idea.
  Example: Childhood obesity is a growing problem in the United States.
- Summarize the key points in the paragraph.
  Example: A lack of healthy choices, poor parenting, and an addiction to video games are among the many factors contributing to childhood obesity.
- Draw a conclusion based on the information in the paragraph.
  Example: These statistics indicate that unless we take action, childhood obesity rates will continue to rise.

- Make a prediction, suggestion, or recommendation about the information in the paragraph.
  Example: Based on this research, more than 60 percent of children in the United States will be morbidly obese by the year 2030 unless we take evasive action.
- Offer an additional observation about the controlling idea.
  Example: Childhood obesity is an entirely preventable tragedy.

Paragraph Length

Although paragraph length is discussed in the section on developing paragraphs with supporting sentences, some additional reminders about when to start a new paragraph may prove helpful to writers:

- If a paragraph is over a page long, consider providing a paragraph break for readers. Look for a logical place to divide the paragraph; then revise the opening sentence of the second paragraph to maintain coherence.
- A series of short paragraphs can be confusing and choppy. Examine the content of the paragraphs and combine ones with related ideas or develop each one further.
- When dialogue is used, begin a new paragraph each time the speaker changes.
- Begin a new paragraph to indicate a shift in subject, tone, or time and place.

Exercise 19

Use one of the topic sentences created in Exercise 18 and develop a paragraph with supporting details.

Exercise 20

Identify the topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence in the following paragraph.

The desert provides a harsh environment in which few mammals are able to adapt. Of these hardy creatures, the kangaroo rat is possibly the most fascinating. Able to live in some of the most arid parts of the southwest, the kangaroo rat neither sweats nor pants to keep cool. Its specialized kidneys enable it to survive on a miniscule amount of water. Unlike other desert creatures, the kangaroo rat does not store water in its body but instead is able to convert the dry seeds it eats into moisture. Its ability to adapt to such a hostile environment makes the kangaroo rat a truly amazing creature.

Collaboration: Pair with another student and compare your answers.

Exercise 21

On your own paper, write one example of each type of concluding sentence based on a topic of your choice.

Improving Paragraph Coherence

A strong paragraph holds together well, flowing seamlessly from the topic sentence into the supporting sentences and on to the concluding sentence. To help organize a paragraph and ensure that ideas logically connect to one another, writers use a combination of elements:

- **A clear organizational pattern**: chronological (for narrative writing and describing processes), spatial (for descriptions of people or places), order of importance, general to specific (deductive), specific to general (inductive)
- **Transitional words and phrases**: These connecting words describe a relationship between ideas.
- **Repetition of ideas**: This element helps keep the parts of the paragraph together by maintaining focus on the main idea, so this element reinforces both paragraph coherence and unity.

In the following example, notice the use of transitions (underlined) and key words (red):

Owning a hybrid car benefits both the owner and the environment. First, these cars get 20 percent to 35 percent more miles to the gallon than a fuel-efficient gas-powered vehicle. Second, they produce very few emissions during low speed city driving. Because they do not require gas, hybrid cars reduce dependency on fossil fuels, which helps lower prices at the pump. Alex bought a hybrid car two years ago and has been extremely impressed with its performance. "It's the cheapest car I've ever had," she said. "The running costs are far lower than previous gas-powered vehicles I've owned." Given the low running costs and environmental benefits of owning a hybrid car, it is likely that many more people will follow Alex's example in the near future.

Words such as *first* and *second* are transition words that show sequence or clarify order. They help organize the writer's ideas by showing that he or she has another point to make in support of the topic sentence. The transition word *because* is a transition word of consequence that continues a line of thought. It indicates that the writer will provide an explanation of a result. In this sentence, the writer explains why hybrid cars will reduce dependency on fossil fuels (because they do not require gas).

In addition to transition words, the writer repeats the word *hybrid* (and other references such as *these cars*, and *they*), and ideas related to *benefits* to keep the paragraph focused on the topic and hold it together.

To include a summarizing transition for the concluding sentence, the writer could rewrite the final sentence as follows:

> In conclusion, given the low running costs and environmental benefits of owning a hybrid car, it is likely that many more people will follow Alex's example in the near future.

Although the phrase "in conclusion" certainly reinforces the idea of summary and closure, it is not necessary in this case and seems redundant, as the sentence without the phrase already repeats and summarizes the benefits presented in the topic sentence and flows smoothly from the preceding quotation. The second half of the sentence, in making a prediction about the future, signals a conclusion, also making the phrase "in conclusion" unnecessary. The original version of the concluding sentence also illustrates how varying sentences openings can improve paragraph coherence. As writers continue to practice and develop their style, they more easily make these decisions between using standard transitional phrases and combining the repetition of key ideas with varied sentence openings.

The following table provides some useful transition words and phrases to connect sentences within paragraphs as well as to connect:

Table of Common Transitional Words and Phrases

Transitions That Show Sequence or Time		
after	before	later
afterward	before long	meanwhile
as soon as	finally	next
at first	first, second, third	soon
at last	in the first place	then
Transitions That Show Position		
above	across	at the bottom
at the top	behind	below
beside	beyond	inside
near	next to	opposite
to the left, to the right, to the side	under	where
Transitions That Show a Conclusion		
indeed	hence	in conclusion
in the final analysis	therefore	thus
Transitions That Continue a Line of Thought		

consequently	furthermore	additionally
because	besides the fact	following this idea further
in addition	in the same way	moreover
looking further	considering..., it is clear that	
Transitions That Change a Line of Thought		
but	yet	however
nevertheless	on the contrary	on the other hand
Transitions That Show Importance		
above all	best	especially
in fact	more important	most important
most	worst	
Transitions That Introduce the Final Thoughts in a Paragraph or Essay		
finally	last	in conclusion
most of all	least of all	last of all
All-Purpose Transitions to Open Paragraphs or to Connect Ideas Inside Paragraphs		
admittedly	at this point	certainly
granted	it is true	generally speaking
in general	in this situation	no doubt
no one denies	obviously	of course
to be sure	undoubtedly	unquestionably
Transitions that Introduce Examples		
for instance	for example	
Transitions That Clarify the Order of Events or Steps		
first, second, third	generally, furthermore, finally	in the first place, also, last
in the first place, furthermore, finally	in the first place, likewise, lastly	

Exercise 22

Using your own paper, write a paragraph on a topic of your choice. Be sure to include a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence and to use transitional words and phrases to link your ideas together.

Collaboration: Share your paragraph with another student or your writing group.

key takeaways

- A paragraph contains three distinct components: a topic sentence, body, and concluding sentence.
- The topic sentence expresses the main idea of the paragraph.
- Good topic sentences are general enough to cover the supporting sentences and limited enough to be developed well.
- Topic sentences are clear and easy to follow, and provide an accurate indication of what will follow in the rest of the paragraph.

- Topic sentences may be explicit or implied. They are usually explicit in informative and persuasive essays, whereas they are often implied in narrative and descriptive writing.
- Topic sentences may be placed at the beginning, middle, or end of a paragraph. In most academic essays, the topic sentence is placed at the beginning of a paragraph.
- Supporting sentences help explain, prove, or enhance the topic sentence by offering facts, reasons, statistics, quotations, or examples.
- Concluding sentences summarize the key points in a paragraph and reiterate the main idea without repeating it word for word.
- Transitional words and phrases help organize ideas in a paragraph and show how these ideas relate to one another.
- Repetition of keywords helps keep paragraphs focused and coherent.

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2: CHAPTER TWO-ACADEMIC WRITING/THE THESIS STATEMENT

2.1: What is a Thesis Statement?

2.2: Exemplification- Using Examples to Support a Thesis

2.2.1: The Purpose of Using Exemplification in Writing

2.2.2: The Structure of an Exemplification Essay

2.2.3: Writing an Exemplification Essay

2.3: Introduction to Academic Writing

2.3.1: Post-Secondary Reading and Writing (Part 1)

2.3.2: Post-Secondary Reading and Writing (Part 2)

2.3.3: Developing Study Skills (Part 1)

2.3.4: Developing Study Skills (Part 2)

2.3.5: Becoming a Successful Writer

2.4: What Is “Academic” Writing?

2.4.1: Introduction- The Academic Writing Task

2.4.2: Myths about Writing

2.4.3: In College, Everything’s an Argument- A Guide for Decoding College Writing Assignments

2.4.4: The Format of the Academic Essay

2.4.5: Conclusion

2.4.6: Discussion

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2.1: What is a Thesis Statement?

Once the topic has been narrowed to a workable subject, then determine what you are going to say about it; you need to come up with your controlling or main idea. A **thesis** is the main idea of an essay. It communicates the essay's purpose with clear and concise wording and indicates the direction and scope of the essay. It should not just be a statement of fact nor should it be an announcement of your intentions. It should be an idea, an opinion of yours that needs to be explored, expanded, and developed into an **argument** .

A thesis statement:

- tells the reader how you will interpret the significance of the subject matter under discussion.
- is a road map for the paper; in other words, it tells the reader what to expect from the rest of the paper.
- is an interpretation of a question or subject, not the subject itself. The subject, or topic, of an essay might be World War II or *Moby Dick* ; a thesis must then offer a way to understand the war or the novel.
- makes a claim that others might dispute.
- is usually a single sentence somewhere in the introductory paragraph that presents the writer's argument to the reader. However, as essays get longer, a sentence alone is usually not enough to contain a complex thesis. The rest of the paper, the body of the essay, gathers and organizes evidence that will persuade the readers of the logic of their interpretation.

If an assignment asks you to take a position or develop a claim about a subject, you may need to convey that position or claim in a thesis statement near the beginning of your draft. The assignment may not explicitly state that the writer needs a thesis statement because the instructor may assume the writer will include one. When an assignment asks you to analyze, to interpret, to compare and contrast, to demonstrate cause and effect, or to take a stand on an issue, it is likely that you are being asked to develop a thesis and to support it persuasively.

How do I get a thesis?

A thesis is the result of a lengthy thinking process. Formulating a thesis is not the first thing you do after reading an essay assignment. Before you develop an argument on any topic, you have to collect and organize evidence, look for possible relationships between known facts (such as surprising contrasts or similarities), and think about the significance of these relationships. **(See chapter on argument for more detailed information on building an argument.)** Once you have done this thinking, you will probably have a "working thesis," a basic or main idea, an argument that you can support with evidence. It is deemed a "working thesis" because it is a work in progress, and it is subject to change as you move through the writing process. Writers use all kinds of techniques to stimulate their thinking and to help them clarify relationships or comprehend the broader significance of a topic to arrive at a thesis statement.

For example, there is the question strategy. One way to start identifying and narrowing a thesis idea is to form a question that you want to answer. For example, if the starting question was "Do cats have a positive effect on people with depression? If so, what are three effects?

The question sends you off to explore for answers. You then begin developing support. The first answer you might find is that petting cats lowers blood pressure, and, further question how that works. From your findings (research, interviews, background reading, etc.), you might detail how that happens physically or you might describe historical evidence. You could explain medical research that illustrates the concept. Then you have your first supporting point — as well as the first prong of your thesis: Cats have a positive effect on people with depression because they can lower blood pressure....

When you start with a specific question and find the answers, the argument falls into place. The answer to the question becomes

the thesis, and how the answer was conceived becomes the supporting points (and, usually, the topic sentences for each point).

How do I know if my thesis is strong?

If there is time, run it by the instructor or make an appointment at the **Writing Center** (https://tinyurl.com/ybqafrbf) to get some feedback. Even if you do not have time to get advice elsewhere, you can do some thesis evaluation of your own.

When reviewing the first draft and its working thesis, ask the following:

To create a thesis statement simply follow this formula:

TOPIC + CLAIM = THESIS STATEMENT

Examples:

(https://tinyurl.com/y8sfjale).

Exercise: Creating Effective Thesis Statements

Using the formula, create effective thesis statements for the following topics:

Then have a partner check your thesis statements to see if they pass the tests to be strong thesis statements.

Once a working thesis statement has been created, then it is time to begin building the body of the essay. Get all of the key supporting ideas written down, and then you can begin to flesh out the body paragraphs by reading, asking, observing, researching, connecting personal experiences, etc. Use the information from below to maintain the internal integrity of the paragraphs and smooth the flow of your ideas.

Animals + Dogs make better pets than cats. =When it comes to animals, dogs make better pets than cats because they are more trainable, more social, and more empathetic.

Movies & Emotions + *Titanic* evoked many emotions. = The movie *Titanic* evoked many emotions from an audience.

Arthur Miller & *Death of a Salesman* + Miller's family inspired the Loman family. = Arthur Miller's family and their experiences during the Great Depression inspired the creation of the Loman family in his play *Death of a Salesman*.

Fake News

Drone Technology

Fast Food

Homework

Helicopter Parents

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2.2: EXEMPLIFICATION- USING EXAMPLES TO SUPPORT A THESIS

2.2.1: The Purpose of Using Exemplification in Writing

2.2.2: The Structure of an Exemplification Essay

2.2.3: Writing an Exemplification Essay

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2.2.1: The Purpose of Using Exemplification in Writing

To illustrate or exemplify means to show or demonstrate something clearly. An effective illustration or exemplification essay clearly demonstrates and supports a point through the use of evidence.

As you learned earlier, the controlling idea of an essay is called a thesis. A writer can use different types of evidence to support his or her thesis. Using scientific studies, experts in a particular field, statistics, historical events, current events, analogies, and personal anecdotes are all ways in which a writer can illustrate a thesis. Ultimately, you want the evidence to help the reader "see" your point, as one would see a good illustration in a magazine or on a website. The stronger your evidence is, the more clearly the reader will consider your point.

Using evidence effectively can be challenging, though. The evidence you choose will usually depend on your subject and who your reader is (your audience). When writing an illustration essay, keep in mind the following:

- Use evidence that is appropriate to your topic as well as appropriate for your audience
- Assess how much evidence you need to adequately explain your point depending on the complexity of the subject and the knowledge of your audience regarding that subject.

For example, if you were writing about a new communication software and your audience was a group of English-major undergrads, you might want to use an analogy or a personal story to illustrate how the software worked. You might also choose to add a few more pieces of evidence to make sure the audience understands your point. However, if you were writing about the same subject and you audience members were information technology (IT) specialists, you would likely use more technical evidence because they would be familiar with the subject.

Keeping in mind your subject in relation to your audience will increase your chances of effectively illustrating your point.

tip

You never want to insult your readers' intelligence by over explaining concepts the audience members may already be familiar with, but it may be necessary to clearly articulate your point. When in doubt, add an extra example to illustrate your idea.

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2.2.2: The Structure of an Exemplification Essay

The thesis belongs at the beginning of the essay. Evidence is then presented in the essay's body paragraphs to support the thesis. You can start supporting your main point with your strongest evidence first, or you can start with evidence of lesser importance and have the essay build to increasingly stronger evidence.

The time transition words are also helpful in ordering the presentation of evidence. Words like *first, second, third, currently, next*, and *finally* all help orient the reader and sequence evidence clearly. Because an exemplification essay uses so many examples, it is also helpful to have a list of words and phrases to present each piece of evidence.

Phrases of Exemplification

case in point	for example
for instance	in particular
in this case	one example/another example
specifically	to illustrate

tip

Vary the phrases of exemplification you use. Do not rely on just one. Variety in choice of words and phrasing is critical when trying to keep readers engaged in your writing and your ideas.

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2.2.3: Writing an Exemplification Essay

First, decide on a topic that you feel interested in writing about. Then create an interesting introduction to engage the reader. The main point, or thesis, should be stated at the end of the introduction.

Gather evidence that is appropriate to both your subject and your audience. You can order the evidence in terms of importance, either from least important to most important or from most important to least important. Be sure to fully explain all of your examples using strong, clear supporting details.

key takeaways

- An exemplification essay clearly explains a main point using evidence.
- When choosing evidence, always gauge whether the evidence is appropriate for the subject as well as the audience.
- Organize the evidence in terms of importance, either from least important to most important or from most important to least important.
- Use time transitions to order evidence.
- Use phrases of exemplification to call out examples

Examples of Essays

- “Homeless,” by Anna Quindlen
- “Black Men and Public Space,” by Brent Staples
- “The Dark Side of Web Fame,” by Jessica Bennet
- “That’s So Mysto: What Makes Slang Stick,” by Juliet Lapidos

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2.3: INTRODUCTION TO ACADEMIC WRITING

2.3.1: Post-Secondary Reading and Writing (Part 1)

2.3.2: Post-Secondary Reading and Writing (Part 2)

2.3.3: Developing Study Skills (Part 1)

2.3.4: Developing Study Skills (Part 2)

2.3.5: Becoming a Successful Writer

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2.3.1: Post-Secondary Reading and Writing (Part 1)

Learning Objectives

- Understand the expectations for reading and writing assignments in post-secondary (university, college, institute) courses
- Understand and apply general strategies to complete post-secondary-level reading assignments efficiently and effectively
- Recognize specific types of writing assignments frequently included in post-secondary courses
- Understand and apply general strategies for managing post-secondary-level writing assignments
- Determine specific reading and writing strategies that work best for you individually

In a post-secondary environment, academic expectations change from what you may have experienced in high school. The quantity of work you are expected to do is increased. When instructors expect you to read pages upon pages or study hours and hours for one particular course, managing your workload can be challenging. This chapter includes strategies for studying efficiently and managing your time.

The quality of the work you do also changes. It is not enough to understand course material and summarize it on an exam. You will also be expected to seriously engage with new ideas by reflecting on them, analyzing them, critiquing them, making connections, drawing conclusions, or finding new ways of thinking about a given subject. Educationally, you are moving into deeper waters. A good introductory writing course will help you swim.

Table 1.1: High School versus Post-Secondary Assignments summarizes some of the other major differences between high school and university assignments.

Table 1.1 - High School versus Post-Secondary Assignments

High School	Post-Secondary
Reading assignments are moderately long. Teachers may set aside some class time for reading and reviewing the material in depth.	Some reading assignments may be very long. You will be expected to come to class with a basic understanding of the material.
Teachers often provide study guides and other aids to help you prepare for exams.	Reviewing for exams is primarily your responsibility.
Your grade is determined by your performance on a wide variety of assessments, including minor and major assignments. Not all assessments are writing based.	Your grade may depend on just a few major assessments. Most assessments are writing based.
Writing assignments include personal writing and creative writing in addition to expository writing.	Outside of creative writing courses, most writing assignments are expository.
The structure and format of writing assignments is generally stable over the high school years.	Depending on the course, you may be asked to master new forms of writing and follow standards within a particular professional field.
Teachers often go out of their way to identify and try to help students who are performing poorly on exams, missing classes, not turning in assignments, or just struggling with the course. Often teachers will give students many “second chances.”	Although teachers want their students to succeed, they may not always realize when students are struggling. They also expect you to be proactive and take steps to help yourself. “Second chances” are less common.

This chapter covers the types of reading and writing assignments you will encounter as a post-secondary student. You will also learn a variety of strategies for mastering these new challenges—and becoming a more confident student and writer.

Throughout this chapter, you will follow a first-year student named Crystal. After several years of working as a saleswoman in a

department store, Crystal has decided to pursue a degree in elementary education and become a teacher. She is continuing to work part time, and occasionally she finds it challenging to balance the demands of work, school, and caring for her four-year-old son. As you read about Crystal, think about how you can use her experience to get the most out of your own experience.

Setting Goals

By planning carefully and following through on her daily and weekly goals, Crystal was able to fulfill one of her goals for the semester. Although her exam scores were not as high as she had hoped, her consistently strong performance on writing assignments tipped her grade from a B+ to an A–. She was pleased to have earned a high grade in one of the required courses for her major. She was also glad to have gotten the most out of an introductory course that would help her become an effective teacher.

How does Crystal's experience relate to your own post-secondary educational experience?

To do well in the post-secondary environment, it is important to stay focused on how your day-to-day actions determine your long-term success. You may not have defined your career goals or chosen a major yet. Even so, you surely have some overarching goals for what you want out of your studies to expand your career options, to increase your earning power, or just to learn something new. In time, you will define your long-term goals more explicitly. Doing solid, steady work, day by day and week by week, will help you meet those goals.

discussion 2.3.1.1

With your group, discuss the following issues and questions:

Introduce yourself: Who are you? Why are you taking the course? Where are you living now?

- How do you feel about writing in general? (You will not be judged on this.)
- Identify one long-term goal you would like to have achieved by the time you complete your diploma or degree. For instance, you might want a particular job in your field.
- Identify one semester goal that will help you fulfill the long-term goal you just set.
- Review **Table 1.1, High School versus Post-Secondary Assignments** and answer the following questions:
- In what ways do you think post-secondary education will be rewarding for you as a learner?
- What aspects of post-secondary education do you expect to find most challenging?
- What changes do you think you might have to make in your life to ensure your success in a post-secondary learning environment?

Reading Strategies

Your post-secondary courses will sharpen both your reading and your writing skills. Most of your writing assignments—from brief response papers to in-depth research projects—will depend on your understanding of course reading assignments or related readings you do on your own. And it is difficult, if not impossible, to write effectively about a text that you have not understood. Even when you do understand the reading, it can be hard to write about it if you do not feel personally engaged with the ideas discussed.

This section discusses strategies you can use to get the most out of your reading assignments. These strategies fall into three broad categories:

- Planning strategies to help you manage your reading assignments
- Comprehension strategies to help you understand the material
- Active reading strategies to take your understanding to a higher and deeper level

Planning Your Reading

Have you ever stayed up all night cramming just before an exam? Or found yourself skimming a detailed memo from your boss five minutes before a crucial meeting? The first step in handling your reading successfully is planning. This involves both managing your time and setting a clear purpose for your reading.

Managing Your Reading Time

You will learn more detailed strategies for time management in Section 1.2: Developing Study Skills, but for now, focus on setting aside enough time for reading and breaking your assignments into manageable chunks. For example, if you are assigned a 70-page chapter to read for next week's class, try not to wait until the night before to get started. Give yourself at least a few days and tackle one section at a time.

Your method for breaking up the assignment will depend on the type of reading. If the text is very dense and packed with unfamiliar terms and concepts, you may need to read no more than 5 or 10 pages in one sitting so that you can truly understand and process the information. With more user-friendly texts, you will be able to handle longer sections—20 to 40 pages, for instance. And if you have a highly engaging reading assignment, such as a novel you cannot put down, you may be able to read lengthy passages in one sitting.

As the semester progresses, you will develop a better sense of how much time you need to allow for the reading assignments in different subjects. It also makes sense to preview each assignment well in advance to assess its difficulty level and to determine how much reading time to set aside.

Tip

Instructors at the post-secondary level often set aside reserve readings for a particular course. These consist of articles, book chapters, or other texts that are not part of the primary course textbook. Copies of reserve readings are available through the university library, in print, or more often, online. When you are assigned a reserve reading, download it ahead of time (and let your instructor know if you have trouble accessing it). Skim through it to get a rough idea of how much time you will need to read the assignment in full.

Setting a Purpose

The other key component of planning is setting a purpose. Knowing what you want to get out of a reading assignment helps you determine how to approach it and how much time to spend on it. It also helps you stay focused during those occasional moments when it is late, you are tired, and when relaxing in front of the television sounds far more appealing than curling up with a stack of journal articles.

Sometimes your purpose is simple. You might just need to understand the reading material well enough to discuss it intelligently in class the next day. However, your purpose will often go beyond that. For instance, you might also read to compare two texts, to formulate a personal response to a text, or to gather ideas for future research. Here are some questions to ask to help determine your purpose:

How did my instructor frame the assignment? Often instructors will tell you what they expect you to get out of the reading. For example:

Read Chapter 2 and come to class prepared to discuss current theories related to conducting risk assessments.

Read these two articles and compare Smith's and Jones's perspectives on the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982).

Read Chapter 5 and think about how you could apply these guidelines to the first stages of onsite patient assessment.

How deeply do I need to understand the reading? If you are majoring in emergency management and you are assigned to read Chapter 1, "Introduction to Emergency Management," it is safe to assume the chapter presents fundamental concepts that you will be expected to master. However, for some reading assignments, you may be expected to form a general understanding but not necessarily master the content. Again, pay attention to how your instructor presents the assignment.

How does this assignment relate to other course readings or to concepts discussed in class? Your instructor may make some of these connections explicitly, but if not, try to draw connections on your own. (Needless to say, it helps to take detailed notes both when in class and when you read.)

How might I use this text again in the future? If you are assigned to read about a topic that has always interested you, your reading assignment might help you develop ideas for a future research paper. Some reading assignments provide valuable tips or summaries worth bookmarking for future reference. Think about what you can take from the reading that will stay with you.

Improving Your Comprehension

You have blocked out time for your reading assignments and set a purpose for reading. Now comes the challenge: making sure you actually understand all the information you are expected to process. Some of your reading assignments will be fairly straightforward. Others, however, will be longer or more complex, so you will need a plan for how to handle them.

For any expository writing—that is, nonfiction, informational writing—your first comprehension goal is to identify the main points and relate any details to those main points. Because post-secondary-level texts can be challenging, you will also need to monitor your reading comprehension. That is, you will need to stop periodically and assess how well you understand what you are reading. Finally, you can improve comprehension by taking time to determine which strategies work best for you and putting those strategies into practice.

Identifying the Main Points

In your courses, you will be reading a wide variety of materials, including the following:

- Textbooks. These usually include summaries, glossaries, comprehension questions, and other study aids.
- Nonfiction trade books. These are less likely to include the study features found in textbooks.
- Popular magazines, newspapers, or web articles. These are usually written for a general audience.
- Scholarly books and journal articles. These are written for an audience of specialists in a given field.

Regardless of what type of expository text you are assigned to read, your primary comprehension goal is to identify the main point: the most important idea that the writer wants to communicate and often states early on. Finding the main point gives you a framework to organize the details presented in the reading and relate the reading to concepts you have learned in class or through other reading assignments. After identifying the main point, you will find the supporting points, details, facts, and explanations that develop and clarify the main point.

Some texts make that task relatively easy. Textbooks, for instance, include the aforementioned features as well as headings and subheadings intended to make it easier for students to identify core concepts. Graphic features such as sidebars, diagrams, and charts help students understand complex information and distinguish between essential and inessential points. When you are assigned to read from a textbook, be sure to use available comprehension aids to help you identify the main points.

Trade books and popular articles may not be written specifically for an educational purpose; nevertheless, they also include features that can help you identify the main ideas.

Definition

Trade books. Many trade books include an introduction that presents the writer's main ideas and purpose for writing. Reading chapter titles (and any subtitles within the chapter) will help you get a broad sense of what is covered. It also helps to read the beginning and ending paragraphs of a chapter closely. These paragraphs often sum up the main ideas presented.

Popular articles. Reading the headings and introductory paragraphs carefully is crucial. In magazine articles, these features (along with the closing paragraphs) present the main concepts. Hard news articles in newspapers present the gist of the news story in the lead paragraph, while subsequent paragraphs present increasingly general details.

At the far end of the reading difficulty scale are scholarly books and journal articles. Because these texts are aimed at a specialized, highly educated audience, the authors presume their readers are already familiar with the topic. The language and writing style is sophisticated and sometimes dense.

When you read scholarly books and journal articles, try to apply the same strategies discussed earlier for other types of text. The introduction usually presents the writer's thesis—the idea or hypothesis the writer is trying to prove. Headings and subheadings can help you understand how the writer has organized support for the thesis. Additionally, academic journal articles often include a summary at the beginning, called an abstract, and electronic databases include summaries of articles too.

Monitoring Your Comprehension

Finding the main idea and paying attention to text features as you read helps you figure out what you should know. Just as important, however, is being able to figure out what you do not know and developing a strategy to deal with it.

Textbooks often include comprehension questions in the margins or at the end of a section or chapter. As you read, stop occasionally to answer these questions on paper or in your head. Use them to identify sections you may need to reread, read more carefully, or ask your instructor about later.

Even when a text does not have built-in comprehension features, you can actively monitor your own comprehension. Try these strategies, adapting them as needed to suit different kinds of texts:

Summarize. At the end of each section, pause to summarize the main points in a few sentences. If you have trouble doing so, revisit that section. (You will learn more about this in Chapter 3.)

Ask and answer questions. When you begin reading a section, try to identify two to three questions you should be able to answer after you finish it. Write down your questions and use them to test yourself on the reading. If you cannot answer a question, try to determine why. Is the answer buried in that section of reading but just not coming across to you? Or do you expect to find the answer in another part of the reading?

Do not read in a vacuum. Look for opportunities to discuss the reading with your classmates. Many instructors set up online discussion forums or blogs specifically for that purpose. Participating in these discussions can help you determine whether your understanding of the main points is the same as your peers'.

These discussions can also serve as a reality check. If everyone in the class struggled with the reading, it may be exceptionally challenging. If it was easy for everyone but you, you may need to see your instructor for help.

As a working mother, Crystal found that the best time to get her reading done was in the evening, after she had put her four-year-old to bed. However, she occasionally had trouble concentrating at the end of a long day. She found that by actively working to summarize the reading and asking and answering questions, she focused better and retained more of what she read. She also found that evenings were a good time to check the class discussion forums that a few of her instructors had created.

Exercise 1.1

Choose any text that that you have been assigned to read for one of your courses. In your notes, complete the following tasks:

1. Summarize the main points of the text in two to three sentences.
2. Write down two to three questions about the text that you can bring up during class discussion.

Tip

Students are often reluctant to seek help. They feel like doing so marks them as slow, weak, or demanding. The truth is, every learner occasionally struggles. If you are sincerely trying to keep up with the course reading but feel like you are in over your head, seek help. Speak up in class, schedule a meeting with your instructor, or visit your university learning centre for assistance.

Deal with the problem as early in the semester as you can. Instructors respect students who are proactive about their own learning. Most instructors will work hard to help students who make the effort to help themselves.

Taking It to the Next Level: Active Reading

Now that you have acquainted (or reacquainted) yourself with useful planning and comprehension strategies, your reading assignments may feel more manageable. You know what you need to do to get your reading done and make sure you grasp the main points. However, the most successful students in are not only competent readers but active, engaged readers.

There are two common strategies for active reading:

- Applying the four reading stages
- SQ3R

Both will help you look at a text in depth and help prepare you for when you have to study to use the information on an exam. You should try them both and decide which works better for you.

Four Reading Stages

Everyone reads and retains (or not) information in different ways. However, applying the following four stages of reading whenever you pick up material will not only help you understand what you are reading, but will also increase the changes of your actually remembering what you have read. While it may seem that this strategy of four reading stages takes a lot of time, it will become more natural for you as you continue applying it. Also, using these four stages will actually save you time because you will already have retained a lot, if not all, of the content, so when it is time to study for your exam, you will find that you already know the material.

Effective academic reading and study seeks not only to gain an understanding of the facts, opinions, and beliefs presented in a text, but also of the biases, assumptions, and perspectives underlying the discussion. The aim is to analyze, interpret, and evaluate the text, and then to draw logical inferences and conclusions.

The four reading strategies you will need to sharpen in order to get through your material are:

- Survey reading
- Close reading
- Inquiry reading

- Critical reading

These four strategies all stress “reading as thinking.” You will need to read actively to comprehend and remember what you are reading, for both your own and your instructor’s purposes. In order to do that, you need to think about the relevance of ideas to one another and about their usefulness to you personally, professionally, and academically.

Again, this differs from our usual daily reading activities, where interest often determines what we choose to read rather than utility. What happens when we are really not interested in what we are reading or seeing? Our eyes move down the page and our minds are elsewhere. We may read anywhere from one paragraph to several pages and suddenly realize we do not have the foggiest idea what we have just read. Clearly focusing our reading purpose on surveying, reading closely, being inquisitive, and reading critically, means we are reading for specific results: we read faster, know what we want, and read to get it.

Survey reading

Surveying quickly (2 to 10 minutes if it is a long chapter) allows you to see the overall picture or gist of what the text is sharing with you. Some of the benefits of surveying are listed below:

- It increases reading rate and attention because you have a road map: a mental picture of the beginning, middle, and end of this journey.
- In helps you create a mental map, allowing you to organize your travel by highlighting key topics and getting impressions of relevance, which in turn helps in the business or remembering.
- It aids in budgeting study time because you know the length and difficulty of the material. Usually you read study material to find out what is there in order to go back later and learn it. With surveying you accomplish the same in one-tenth the time.
- It **improves concentration** because you know what is ahead and how what you are reading fits into the total picture.

Technique for survey reading

For a text or chapter, look at introductions, summaries, chapter headings, bold print, and graphics to piece together the main theme and its development.

Practical uses

Magazines, journals, books, chapters, sections of dense material, anything that allows for an overview.

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2.3.2: Post-Secondary Reading and Writing (Part 2)

Close Reading

Close reading allows you to concentrate and make decisions now about what is relevant and what is not. Its main purpose is to help ensure that you understand what you are reading and to help you store information in a logical and organized way, so when you need to recall the information, it is easier for you to do so. It is a necessary and critical strategy for academic reading for the following reasons:

- You read as if you were going to be tested on it immediately upon completion. You read to remember at least 75 to 80 percent of the information.
- You clearly identify main concepts, key details, and their relationships with one another. Close reading allows you to summarize effectively what you read.
- Your ability to answer essay questions improves because the concepts are more organized and understood rather than merely memorized.
- You become more confident because your understanding improves which, in turn, increases your enjoyment.

Technique for close reading

Survey for overall structure; read, annotating main theme, key points, and essential detail; summarize the important ideas and their development.

Practical uses

Any reading that requires 80 percent comprehension and retention of main points and supporting detail.

Inquiry reading

Inquiry reading tends to be what we do with material we are naturally interested in. We usually do not notice we are doing this because we enjoy learning and thinking about it. *Discovery reading* is another term that describes this type of reading. Some of its benefits to the study process include:

Increased focus: By asking interpretative questions, determining relevance, and searching for your answers, you are involved and less likely to be bored or distracted.

Retention: Memory of the material is improved because of increased involvement.

Stimulation of creativity: This involvement will raise new questions for you and inspire further research.

Matching instructor expectations: Instructors are usually seeking deeper understanding as well as basic memory of concepts.

Technique for inquiry reading

Increase the volume and depth in questions while reading informational, interpretative, analytical, synthesizing, and evaluating kinds of questions.

Practical uses

Any material that requires both thorough comprehension and needs or inspires examination

Critical reading

Critical reading is necessary in order to determine the salience (or key points) of the concepts presented, their relevance, and the accuracy of arguments. When you read critically, you become even more deeply involved with the material, which will allow you to make better judgments about what is the more important information.

People often read reactively to material—especially debate, controversy, and politics. When readers react, they bring a wealth of personal experience and opinion to the concept to which they are reacting. But critical reading requires thinking—as you would expect—critically about the material. Critical thinking relies on reason, evidence, and open mindedness and recognizes the biases, assumptions, and motives of both the writer and the reader.

Learning to read critically offers these advantages:

- By substantiating arguments and interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating those supporting the concept moves mere reaction into critical reading and deepens your understanding.
- By analyzing relationships between the material read and other readings or experience, you can make connections.
- By making connections, you will increase your concentration and confidence in being able to discuss and evaluate what you read.

Technique for critical reading

Understand and analyze the material in terms of writer's purpose and results, relevance to readers, and value to the field at large.

Practical uses

Any material that requires evaluation.

Your memory of facts and concepts will be enhanced by surveying and close reading. Interpretation, relevance, application, and evaluation of presented facts and concepts require deeper questioning and involvement. Inquiry and critical reading are more applicable at these stages. We will be discussing this in the next section: SQ3R.

Using the SQ3R Strategy

Another strategy you can use to become a more active, engaged reader is SQ3R, which is a step-by-step process to follow before, during, and after reading. You could use SQ3R for a variety of reading purposes:

- Getting main concepts only
- Flushing out key details
- Organizing concepts
- Writing a coherent summary of significant points and their development

This is not a new or unfamiliar process; SQ3R is only a new name. It describes surveying various resources (e.g., papers, journals, other relevant sources) for whatever project we are working on; generating questions to shape our understanding of the topic; reading the material; marking, reciting, or, in some way, logging what is critical to our task; and reviewing on what we have read.

You may already use some variation of SQ3R. In essence, the process works like this:

- Survey the text in advance.
- Form questions before you start reading.
- Read the text.
- Recite and/or record important points during and after reading.
- Review and reflect on the text after you read.

Each of these elements is discussed below.

Survey

Before you read, first survey or preview the text. As noted earlier, reading introductory paragraphs and headings can help you begin to figure out the author's main point and identify what important topics will be covered. However, surveying does not stop there. Flip through the text and look for any pictures, charts or graphs, the table of contents, index, and glossary. Scan the preface and introduction to each chapter Skim a few paragraphs. Preview any boldfaced or italicized vocabulary terms. This will help you form a first impression of the material and determine the appropriateness of the material.

The final stage of surveying occurs once you have identified which chapters are relevant. Quickly look at any headings as well as the introduction and conclusion to the chapter to confirm the relevance of the information.

Sometimes, this survey step alone may be enough because you may need only a general familiarization with the material. This is also when you will discover whether or not you want to look at the book more deeply.

Question

If you keep the question of why you are reading the material in mind, it will help you focus because you will be actively engaged in the information you are consuming. Also, if there are any visual aids, you will want to examine what they are showing as they probably represent important ideas.

Next, start brainstorming questions about the text. What do you expect to learn from the reading? You may find that some questions come to mind immediately based on your initial survey or based on previous readings and class discussions. If not, try using headings and subheadings in the text to formulate questions. For instance, if one heading in your textbook is **Conditional Sentence** and another is **Conditional Release**, you might ask yourself these questions:

What are the major differences between these two concepts?

Where does each appear in the sentencing process?

Although some of your questions may be simple factual questions, try to come up with a few that are more open ended. Asking in-depth questions will help you stay more engaged as you read. Once you have your questions in mind, you can move to the next step of actively reading to see if you can come up with an answer.

Read

The next step is simple: read. As you read, notice whether your first impressions of the text were correct. Are the author's main points and overall approach about the same as what you predicted—or does the text contain a few surprises? Also, look for answers to your earlier questions and begin forming new ones. Continue to revise your impressions and questions as you read.

Recite

While you are reading, pause occasionally to recite or record important points. It is best to do this at the end of each section or when there is an obvious shift in the writer's train of thought. Put the book aside for a moment and recite aloud the main points of the section or any important answers you found there. You might also record ideas by jotting down a few brief notes in addition to, or instead of, reciting aloud. Either way, the physical act of articulating information makes you more likely to remember it.

After you have finished reading, set the book aside and briefly answer your initial question by making notes or highlighting/underlining. Try to use your own words as much as possible, but if you find an important quote, you can identify it as well. If there are any diagrams, makes notes from memory on what information they are giving. Then look back at the diagrams to make sure you were accurate.

Repeat this questioning, reading, and reciting process for the rest of the chapter. As you work your way through, occasionally pause and really think about what you have read; it is easy to work through a section or chapter and realize that you have not actually absorbed any of the material.

Review and reflect

Once you have looked at the whole chapter, try to put each section into the context of the bigger picture. Ask yourself if you have really answered each question you set out with and if you have been accurate in your answers. To make sure that you really remember the information, review your notes again after about one week and then again three or four weeks later. Also, if the textbook includes review questions or your instructor has provided a study guide, use these tools to guide your review. You will want to record information in a more detailed format than you used during reading, such as in an outline or a list.

As you review the material, reflect on what you learned. Did anything surprise you, upset you, or make you think? Did you find yourself strongly agreeing or disagreeing with any points in the text? What topics would you like to explore further? Jot down your reflections in your notes. (Instructors sometimes require students to write brief response papers or maintain a reading journal. Use these assignments to help you reflect on what you read.)

Tip

As you go through your future readings, practise this method considering these points:

From memory, jot down the key ideas discussed in the section you just read. If you need it, use a separate piece of paper. Look

back through the text and check your memory with what you jotted down. How did you do?

Choose one section from the chapter and write a summary from memory of what you learned from that section.

Now review that section. Identity what corresponds and what you omitted. How are you doing? When you read that section, did you consciously intend to remember it?

Although this process may seem time-consuming, you will find that it will actually save time. Because you have a question in mind while reading, you have more of a purpose while looking for the important information. The notes you take will also be more organized and concise because you are focused, and this will save you time when it comes to writing essays. Also, since you have reviewed throughout the process, you will not need to spend as much time reviewing for exams because it is already stored in your memory.

Exercise 1.2

Choose another text that that you have been assigned to read for a class. Use the SQ3R process to complete the reading. (Keep in mind that you may need to spread the reading over more than one session, especially if the text is long.)

Be sure to complete all the steps involved. Then, reflect on how helpful you found this process. On a scale of 1 to 10, how useful did you find it? How does it compare with other study techniques you have used?

Using Other Active Reading Strategies

The SQ3R process encompasses a number of valuable active reading strategies: previewing a text, making predictions, asking and answering questions, and summarizing. You can use the following additional strategies to further deepen your understanding of what you read.

- Connect what you read to what you already know. Look for ways the reading supports, extends, or challenges concepts you have learned elsewhere.
- Relate the reading to your own life. What statements, people, or situations relate to your personal experiences?
- Visualize. For both fiction and nonfiction texts, try to picture what is described. Visualizing is especially helpful when you are reading a narrative text, such as a novel or a historical account, or when you read expository text that describes a process, such as how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- Pay attention to graphics as well as text. Photographs, diagrams, flow charts, tables, and other graphics can help make abstract ideas more concrete and understandable.
- Understand the text in context. Understanding context means thinking about who wrote the text, when and where it was written, the author's purpose for writing it, and what assumptions or agendas influenced the author's ideas. For instance, two writers might both address the subject of health care reform, but if one article is an opinion piece and one is a news story, the context is different.
- Plan to talk or write about what you read. Jot down a few questions or comments in your notebook so you can bring them up in class. (This also gives you a source of topic ideas for papers and presentations later in the semester.) Discuss the reading on a class discussion board or blog about it.

As Crystal began her first semester of elementary education courses, she occasionally felt lost in a sea of new terms and theories about teaching and child development. She found that it helped to relate the reading to her personal observations of her son and other kids she knew.

Writing at Work

Many courses require students to participate in interactive online components, such as a discussion forum, a page on a social

networking site, or a class blog. These tools are a great way to reinforce learning. Do not be afraid to be the student who starts the discussion.

Remember that when you interact with other students and teachers online, you need to project a mature, professional image. You may be able to use an informal, conversational tone, but complaining about the workload, using off-colour language, or "flaming" other participants is inappropriate.

Active reading can benefit you in ways that go beyond just earning good grades. By practising these strategies, you will find yourself more interested in your courses and better able to relate your academic work to the rest of your life. Being an interested, engaged student also helps you form lasting connections with your instructors and with other students that can be personally and professionally valuable. In short, it helps you get the most out of your education.

Common Writing Assignments

Writing assignments at the post-secondary level serve a different purpose than the typical writing assignments you completed in high school. In high school, teachers generally focus on teaching you to write in a variety of modes and formats, including personal writing, expository writing, research papers, creative writing, and writing short answers and essays for exams. Over time, these assignments help you build a foundation of writing skills.

Now, however, your instructors will expect you to already have that foundation. Your composition courses will focus on writing for its own sake, helping you make the transition to higher-level writing assignments. However, in most of your other courses, writing assignments serve a different purpose. In those courses, you may use writing as one tool among many for learning how to think about a particular academic discipline.

Additionally, certain assignments teach you how to meet the expectations for professional writing in a given field. Depending on the class, you might be asked to write a lab report, a case study, a literary analysis, a business plan, or an account of a personal interview. You will need to learn and follow the standard conventions for those types of written products.

Finally, personal and creative writing assignments are less common at the post-secondary level than in high school. College and university courses emphasize expository writing—writing that explains or informs. Often expository writing assignments will incorporate outside research, too. Some classes will also require persuasive writing assignments in which you state and support your position on an issue. Your instructors will hold you to a higher standard when it comes to supporting your ideas with reasons and evidence.

Table 1.2: Common Types of Writing Assignments lists some of the most common types assignments you will encounter at the post-secondary level. It includes minor, less formal assignments as well as major ones. Which specific assignments you will be given will depend on the courses you take and the learning objectives developed by your instructors.

Table 1.2 - Common Types of Writing Assignments

Assignment Type	Description	Example
Personal response paper	Expresses and explains your response to a reading assignment, a provocative quote, or a specific issue; may be very brief (sometimes a page or less) or more in depth	For a labour management course, students watch and write about videos of ineffective management/staff interactions.
Summary	Restates the main points of a longer passage objectively and in your own words	For a psychology course, students write a one-page summary of an article about a man suffering from short-term memory loss.

Assignment Type	Description	Example
Persuasive/ position paper	States and defends your position on an issue (often a controversial issue)	For a criminal justice course, students state their positions on capital punishment using research to support their argument.
Problem-solution paper	Presents a problem, explains its causes, and proposes and explains a solution	For an emergency management course, a student presents a plan for implementing a crisis communications strategy.
Critique/ literary analysis	States a thesis about a particular literary work and develops the thesis with evidence from the work and, sometimes, from additional sources	For a literature course, a student analyzes a short story by Ian Rankin and how it relates to the field of criminology OR compares multiple works by analyzing commonalities and differences.
Research/ literature review	Sums up available research findings on a particular topic	For a course in criminology, a student reviews the past 20 years of research on whether violence in television and movies is correlated with violent behaviour.
Case study or case analysis	Investigates a particular person, group, or event in depth for the purpose of drawing a larger conclusion from the analysis	For a health science course, a student writes a case study demonstrating the successful treatment of a patient experiencing congestive heart failure.
Laboratory report	Presents a laboratory experiment, including the hypothesis, methods of data collection, results, and conclusions	For a psychology course, a group of students presents the results of an experiment in which they explored whether sleep deprivation produced memory deficits in lab rats.
Research journal	Records a student's ideas and findings during the course of a long-term research project	For a capstone project, a student maintains a journal throughout a semester-long research project within the local fire department.
Research paper	Presents a thesis and supports it with original research and/or other researchers' findings on the topic; can take several different formats depending on the subject area	For a criminology course, a student chooses a topic/thesis on de-escalation techniques and conducts background research on existing evidence then creates his or her own research tool to measure the effectiveness of such techniques.

Writing at Work

Part of managing your education is communicating well with others at your institution. For instance, you might need to email your instructor to request an office appointment or explain why you will need to miss a class. You might need to contact administrators with questions about your tuition or financial aid. Later, you might ask instructors to write recommendations on your behalf.

Treat these documents as professional communications. Address the recipient politely; state your question, problem, or request clearly; and use a formal, respectful tone. Doing so helps you make a positive impression and get a quicker response.

key takeaways

Post-secondary-level reading and writing assignments differ from high school assignments, not only in quantity but also in quality.

Managing reading assignments successfully requires you to plan and manage your time, set a purpose for reading, practise effective comprehension strategies, and use active reading strategies to deepen your understanding of the text.

Post-secondary writing assignments place greater emphasis on learning to think critically about a particular discipline and less emphasis on personal and creative writing.

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2.3.3: Developing Study Skills (Part 1)

Learning Objectives

- Use strategies for managing time effectively
- Understand and apply strategies for taking notes efficiently
- Determine the specific time management, study, and note taking strategies that work best for you individually

By now you have a general idea of what to expect from your courses. You have probably received course syllabi, started on your first few assignments, and begun applying the strategies you learned about in Section 1.1.

At the beginning of the semester, your workload is relatively light. This is the perfect time to brush up on your study skills and establish good habits. When the demands on your time and energy become more intense, you will have a system in place for handling them.

This section covers specific strategies for managing your time effectively. You will also learn about different note-taking systems that you can use to organize and record information efficiently.

As you work through this section, remember that every student is different. The strategies presented here are tried-and-true techniques that work well for many people. However, you may need to adapt them to develop a system that works well for you personally. If your friend swears by her smartphone, but you hate having to carry extra electronic gadgets around, then using a smartphone will not be the best organizational strategy for you.

Read with an open mind, and consider what techniques have been effective (or ineffective) for you in the past. Which habits from your high school years or your work life could help you succeed now? Which habits might get in your way? What changes might you need to make?

Understanding Yourself as a Learner

To succeed in your post-secondary education—or any situation where you must master new concepts and skills—it helps to know what makes you tick. For decades, educational researchers and organizational psychologists have examined how people take in and assimilate new information, how some people learn differently than others, and what conditions make students and workers most productive. Here are just a few questions to think about:

- What is your learning style? For the purposes of this chapter, **learning style** refers to the way you prefer to take in new information, by seeing, by listening, or through some other channel. (For more information, see the section on learning styles.)
- What times of day are you most productive? If your energy peaks early, you might benefit from blocking out early morning time for studying or writing. If you are a night owl, set aside a few evenings a week for schoolwork.
- How much clutter can you handle in your workspace? Some people work fine at a messy desk and know exactly where to find what they need in their stack of papers; however, most people benefit from maintaining a neat, organized space.
- How well do you juggle potential distractions in your environment? If you can study at home without being tempted to turn on the television, check your email, fix yourself a snack, and so on, you may make home your workspace. However, if you need a less distracting environment to stay focused, you may be able to find one on campus or in your community.
- Does a little background noise help or hinder your productivity? Some people work better when listening to background music or the low hum of conversation in a coffee shop. Others need total silence.
- When you work with a partner or group, do you stay on task? A study partner or group can sometimes be invaluable. However, working this way takes extra planning and effort, so be sure to use the time productively. If you find that group study sessions turn into social occasions, you may study better on your own.
- How do you manage stress? Accept that at certain points in the semester, you will feel stressed out. In your day-to-day routine, make time for activities that help you reduce stress, such as exercising, spending time with friends, or just

scheduling downtime to relax.

Learning Styles

Most people have one channel that works best for them when it comes to taking in new information. Knowing yours can help you develop strategies for studying, time management, and note taking that work especially well for you.

To begin identifying your learning style, think about how you would go about the process of assembling a piece of furniture. Which of these options sounds most like you?

You would carefully look over the diagrams in the assembly manual first so you could picture each step in the process.

You would silently read the directions through, step by step, and then look at the diagrams afterward.

You would read the directions aloud under your breath. Having someone explain the steps to you would also help.

You would start putting the pieces together and figure out the process through trial and error, consulting the directions as you worked.

Now read the following explanations of each option in the list above. Again, think about whether each description sounds like you.

- If you chose 1., you may be a **visual learner**. You understand ideas best when they are presented in a visual format, such as a flow chart, a diagram, or text with clear headings and many photos or illustrations.
- If you chose 2., you may be a **verbal learner**. You understand ideas best through reading and writing about them and taking detailed notes.
- If you chose 3., you may be an **auditory learner**. You understand ideas best through listening. You learn well from spoken lectures or books on tape.
- If you chose 4., you may be a **kinesthetic learner**. You learn best through doing and prefer hands-on activities. In long lectures, fidgeting may help you focus.

Your learning style does not completely define you as a student. Auditory learners can comprehend a flow chart, and kinesthetic learners can sit still long enough to read a book. However, if you do have one dominant learning style, you can work with it to get the most out of your classes and study time. Table 1.3: Learning Style Strategies lists some tips for maximizing your learning style.

Table 1.3 - Learning Style Strategies

Learning Style	Strategies
Visual	• When possible, represent concepts visually—in charts, diagrams, or sketches. • Use a visual format for taking notes on reading assignments or lectures. • Use different coloured highlighters or pens to colour code information as you read. • Use visual organizers, such as maps and flow charts, to help you plan writing assignments. • Use coloured pens, highlighters, or the review feature of your word processing program to revise and edit writing.

Learning Style	Strategies
Verbal	• Use the instructional features in course texts—summaries, chapter review questions, glossaries, and so on—to aid your studying. • Take notes on your reading assignments. • Rewrite or condense reading notes and lecture notes to study. • Summarize important ideas in your own words. • Use informal writing techniques, such as brainstorming, freewriting, blogging, or posting on a class discussion forum to generate ideas for writing assignments. • Reread and take notes on your writing to help you revise and edit.
Auditory	• Ask your instructor's permission to tape record lectures to supplement your notes. • Read parts of your textbook or notes aloud when you study. • If possible, obtain an audiobook version of important course texts. Make use of supplemental audio materials, such as CDs or DVDs. • Talk through your ideas with other students when studying or when preparing for a writing assignment. • Read your writing aloud to help you draft, revise, and edit.
Kinesthetic	• When you read or study, use techniques that will keep your hands in motion, such as highlighting or taking notes. • Use tactile study aids, such as flash cards or study guides you design yourself. • Use self-stick notes to record ideas for writing. These notes can be physically reorganized easily to help you determine how to shape your paper. • Use a physical activity, such as running or swimming, to help you break through writing blocks. • Take breaks during studying to stand, stretch, or move around.

Tip

The material presented here about learning styles is just the tip of the iceberg. There are numerous other variations in how people learn. Some people like to act on information right away while others reflect on it first. Some people excel at mastering details and understanding concrete, tried-and-true ideas while others enjoy exploring abstract theories and innovative, even impractical, ideas. For more information about how you learn, visit your school's academic resource centre.

Time Management

In university or college, you have increased freedom to structure your time as you please. With that freedom comes increased responsibility. High school teachers often take it upon themselves to track down students who miss class or forget assignments. Your instructors now, however, expect you to take full responsibility for managing yourself and getting your work done on time.

Getting Started: Short- and Long-Term Planning

At the beginning of the semester, establish a weekly routine for when you will study and write. A general guideline is that for every hour spent in class, you should expect to spend another two to three hours on reading, writing, and studying for tests. Therefore,

if you are taking a biology course that meets three times a week for an hour at a time, you can expect to spend six to nine hours per week on it outside of class. You will need to budget time for each class just like an employer schedules shifts at work, and you must make that study time a priority.

That may sound like a lot when taking several classes, but if you plan your time carefully, it is manageable. A typical full-time schedule of 15 credit hours translates into 30 to 45 hours per week spent on schoolwork outside of class. All in all, a full-time student would spend about as much time on school each week as an employee spends on work. Balancing school and a job can be more challenging, but still doable.

In addition to setting aside regular work periods, you will need to plan ahead to handle more intense demands, such as studying for exams and writing major papers. At the beginning of the semester, go through your course syllabi and mark all major due dates and exam dates on a calendar. Use a format that you check regularly, such as your smartphone or the calendar feature in your email. (In Section 1.3, you will learn strategies for planning major writing assignments so you can complete them on time.)

Tip

The two- to three-hour rule may sound intimidating. However, keep in mind that this is only a rule of thumb. Realistically, some courses will be more challenging than others, and the demands will ebb and flow throughout the semester. You may have trouble-free weeks and stressful weeks. When you schedule your classes, try to balance introductory-level classes with more advanced classes so that your work load stays manageable.

Crystal knew that to balance a job, classes, and a family, it was crucial for her to get organized. For the month of September, she drew up a week-by-week calendar that listed not only her own class and work schedules but also the days her son attended preschool and the days her husband had off from work. She and her husband discussed how to share their day-to-day household responsibilities so she would be able to get her schoolwork done. Crystal also made a note to talk to her supervisor at work about reducing her hours during finals week in December.

Exercise 1.3

Now that you have learned some time management basics, it is time to apply those skills. For this exercise, you will develop a weekly schedule and a semester calendar.

Working with your class schedule, map out a week-long schedule of study time. Try to apply the two to three-hour rule. Be sure to include any other nonnegotiable responsibilities, such as a job or child care duties.

Use your course syllabi to record exam dates and due dates for major assignments in a calendar (paper or electronic). Use a star, highlighting, or other special marking to set off any days or weeks that look especially demanding.

Staying Consistent: Time Management Dos and Do Not's

Setting up a schedule is easy. Sticking with it, however, may be challenging. A schedule that looked great on paper may prove to be unrealistic. Sometimes, despite students' best intentions, they end up procrastinating or pulling all-nighters to finish a paper or study for an exam.

Keep in mind, however, that your weekly schedule and semester calendar are time management tools. Like any tool, their effectiveness depends on the user: you. If you leave a tool sitting in the box unused (e.g., you set up your schedule and then forget about it), it will not help you complete the task. And if, for some reason, a particular tool or strategy is not getting the job done, you need to figure out why and maybe try using something else.

With that in mind, read the list of time management dos and don'ts. Keep this list handy as a reference you can use throughout the semester to troubleshoot if you feel like your schoolwork is getting off track.

Do:

Do set aside time to review your schedule and calendar regularly and update or adjust them as needed.

Do be realistic when you schedule study time. Do not plan to write your paper on Friday night when everyone else is out socializing. When Friday comes, you might end up abandoning your plans and hanging out with your friends instead.

Do be honest with yourself about where your time goes. Do not fritter away your study time on distractions like email and social networking sites.

Do accept that occasionally your work may get a little off track. No one is perfect.

Do accept that sometimes you may not have time for all the fun things you would like to do.

Do recognize times when you feel overextended. Sometimes you may just need to get through an especially demanding week. However, if you feel exhausted and overworked all the time, you may need to scale back on some of your commitments.

Do make a plan for handling high-stress periods, such as final exam week. Try to reduce your other commitments during those periods—for instance, by scheduling time off from your job. Build in some time for relaxing activities, too.

Do Not:

Do not procrastinate on challenging assignments. Instead, break them into smaller, manageable tasks that can be accomplished one at a time.

Do not fall into the trap of “all or nothing” thinking. (e.g. “There is no way I can fit in a three-hour study session today, so I will just wait until the weekend.”) Extended periods of free time are hard to come by, so find ways to use small blocks of time productively. For instance, if you have a free half hour between classes, use it to preview a chapter or brainstorm ideas for an essay.

Do not let things slide and then promise yourself, “I will do better next week.” When next week comes, the accumulated undone tasks will seem even more intimidating, and you will find it harder to get them done.

Do not rely on caffeine and sugar to compensate for lack of sleep. These stimulants may temporarily perk you up, but your brain functions best when you are rested.

Exercise 1.4

The key to managing your time effectively is consistency. Completing the following tasks will help you stay on track throughout the semester.

Establish regular times to “check in” with yourself to identify and prioritize tasks and plan how to accomplish them. Many people find it is best to set aside a few minutes for this each day and to take some time to plan at the beginning of each week.

For the next two weeks, focus on consistently using whatever time management system you have set up. Check in with yourself daily and weekly, stick to your schedule, and take note of anything that interferes. At the end of the two weeks, review your schedule and determine whether you need to adjust it.

Review the list of dos and don’ts.

Identify at least two habits from the dos list that you could use to improve your time management skills.

> Identify the habit from the don’ts list that you are most likely to slip into as the semester gets busier. What could you do to combat this habit?

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2.3.4: Developing Study Skills (Part 2)

Writing at Work

If you are part of the workforce, you have probably established strategies for accomplishing job-related tasks efficiently. How could you adapt these strategies to help you be a successful student? For instance, you might sync your school and work schedules on an electronic calendar. Instead of checking in with your boss about upcoming work deadlines, establish a buddy system where you check in with a friend about school projects. Give school the same priority you give to work.

Note-Taking Methods

One final valuable tool to have in your arsenal as a student is a good note-taking system. Just the act of converting a spoken lecture to notes helps you organize and retain information, and of course, good notes also help you review important concepts later. Although taking good notes is an essential study skill, many students have never received guidance on note taking.

Marking, note making, or note taking is a matter of personal preference in terms of style. The most important thing is to do *something*. Again we stress that reading is like a dialogue with an author. The author wrote this material. Pretend you are actually talking to the author.

- **Do not** let an idea pass without noting it.
- **Do not** let an ambiguity go by without questioning it.
- **Do not** let a term slip away if context does not help you understand it; look it up!
- **Engage** and you will both understand and remember.

Tip

Put small checks in pencil where you would normally underline. When you finish a section, look back and see what you really need to mark. (If you check over 50 percent of the page, you probably are marking to go back and learn later versus thinking about what is really important to learn now!)

Use consistent symbols to visually help you identify what is happening on the page:

- Circle central themes or write at the beginning of the section if it is not directly stated.
- [Bracket] main points.
- Underline key words or phrases for significant details.
- Put numbers 1, 2, 3 for items listed.
- Put square brackets or highlights for key terms when the definition follows.
- Use stars (*), question marks (?), or diagrams in the margins to show relevance.
- Use key word outlines in the margins for highlighting.
- Write questions in the margin that test your memory of what is written right there.
- Use blank spaces indicating the number of ideas to be remembered, forcing you to test yourself versus just rereading.

The following sections discuss different strategies you can use to take notes efficiently. No matter which system you choose, keep these general note-taking guidelines in mind.

General Note-Taking Guidelines

Before class, quickly review your notes from the previous class and the assigned reading. Fixing key terms and concepts in your

mind will help you stay focused and pick out the important points during the lecture.

Come prepared with paper, pens, highlighters, textbooks, and any important handouts.

Come to class with a positive attitude and a readiness to learn. During class, make a point of concentrating. Ask questions if you need to. Be an active participant.

During class, capture important ideas as concisely as you can. Use words or phrases instead of full sentences, and abbreviate when possible.

Visually organize your notes into main topics, subtopics, and supporting points, and show the relationships between ideas. Leave space if necessary so you can add more details under important topics or subtopics.

Record the following:

Ideas that the instructor repeats frequently or points out as key ideas

Ideas the instructor lists on a whiteboard or transparency

Details, facts, explanations, and lists that develop main points

Review your notes regularly throughout the semester, not just before exams.

Organizing Ideas in Your Notes

A good note-taking system needs to help you differentiate among major points, related subtopics, and supporting details. It visually represents the connections between ideas. Finally, to be effective, your note-taking system must allow you to record and organize information fairly quickly. Although some students like to create detailed, formal outlines or concept maps when they read, these may not be good strategies for class notes because spoken lectures may not allow time for to create them.

Instead, focus on recording content simply and quickly to create organized, legible notes. Try one of the following techniques.

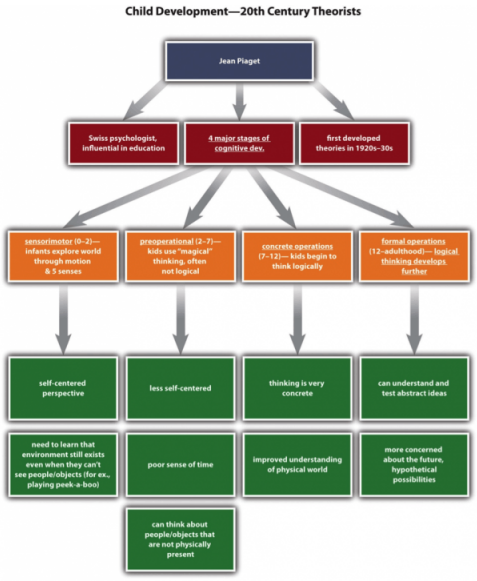
Modified Outline Format

A modified outline format uses indented spacing to show the hierarchy of ideas without including roman numerals, lettering, and so forth. Just use a dash or bullet to signify each new point unless your instructor specifically presents a numbered list of items.

The first example shows Crystal's notes from a developmental psychology class about an important theorist in this field. Notice how the line for the main topic is all the way to the left. Subtopics are indented, and supporting details are indented one level further. Crystal also used abbreviations for terms like development and example.

Mind Mapping/Clustering

If you are a visual learner, you may prefer to use a more graphic format for notes, such as a mind map. The next example shows how Crystal's lecture notes could be set up differently. Although the format is different, the content and organization are the same.



Charting

If the content of a lecture falls into a predictable, well organized pattern, you might choose to use a chart or table to record your notes. This system works best when you already know, either before class or at the beginning of class, which categories you should include. The next figure shows how this system might be used.

THEORIST	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	YEARS ACTIVE	STAGES OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT
Jean Piaget	Switzerland	1920s through 1970s	1. sensorimotor (0–2) 2. preoperational (2–7) 3. concrete operational (7–12) 4. formal operational (12–adulthood)
Erik Erikson	Denmark (studied in Austria, emigrated to US in 1930s)	1930s through 1980s	1. trust vs. mistrust (infants) 2. autonomy vs. shame and doubt (toddler) 3. initiative vs. guilt (preschool-K) 4. industry vs. inferiority (elementary school) 5. identity vs. role confusion (teen years) ***See also stages of adult development.

The Cornell Note-Taking System

In addition to the general techniques already described, you might find it useful to practise a specific strategy known as the Cornell note-taking system. This popular format makes it easy not only to organize information clearly but also to note key terms and summarize content.

To use the Cornell system, begin by setting up the page with these components:

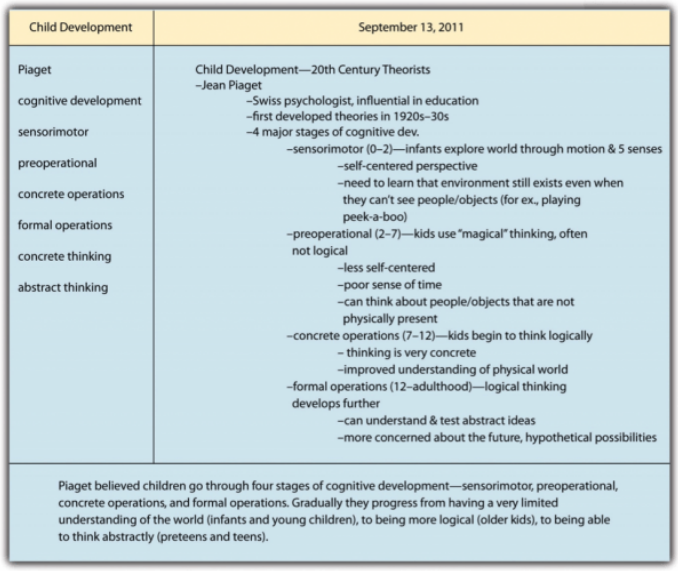
- The course name and lecture date at the top of the page
- A narrow column (about two inches) at the left side of the page

- A wide column (about five to six inches) on the right side of the page
- A space of a few lines marked off at the bottom of the page

During the lecture, you record notes in the wide column. You can do so using the traditional modified outline format or a more visual format if you prefer.

Then, as soon as possible after the lecture, review your notes and identify key terms. Jot these down in the narrow left-hand column. You can use this column as a study aid by covering the notes on the right-hand side, reviewing the key terms, and trying to recall as much as you can about them so that you can mentally restate the main points of the lecture. Uncover the notes on the right to check your understanding. Finally, use the space at the bottom of the page to summarize each page of notes in a few sentences.

The next figure shows what Crystal's notes would look like using the Cornell system.



Child Development	September 13, 2011
Piaget cognitive development sensorimotor preoperational concrete operations formal operations concrete thinking abstract thinking	Child Development—20th Century Theorists –Jean Piaget –Swiss psychologist, influential in education –first developed theories in 1920s–30s –4 major stages of cognitive dev. –sensorimotor (0–2)—infants explore world through motion & 5 senses –self-centered perspective –need to learn that environment still exists even when they can't see people/objects (for ex., playing peek-a-boo) –preoperational (2–7)—kids use "magical" thinking, often not logical –less self-centered –poor sense of time –can think about people/objects that are not physically present –concrete operations (7–12)—kids begin to think logically – thinking is very concrete –improved understanding of physical world –formal operations (12–adulthood)—logical thinking develops further –can understand & test abstract ideas –more concerned about the future, hypothetical possibilities
Piaget believed children go through four stages of cognitive development—sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operations, and formal operations. Gradually they progress from having a very limited understanding of the world (infants and young children), to being more logical (older kids), to being able to think abstractly (preteens and teens).	

Writing at Work

Often, at school or in the workplace, a speaker will provide you with pre-generated notes summarizing electronic presentation slides. You may be tempted not to take notes at all because much of the content is already summarized for you. However, it is a good idea to jot down at least a few notes. Doing so keeps you focused during the presentation, allows you to record details you might otherwise forget, and gives you the opportunity to jot down questions or reflections to personalize the content.

Exercise 1.5

Over the next few weeks, establish a note-taking system that works for you.

If you are not already doing so, try using one of the aforementioned techniques. (Remember that the Cornell system can be combined with other note-taking formats.)

It can take some trial and error to find a note-taking system that works for you. If you find that you are struggling to keep up with lectures, consider whether you need to switch to a different format or be more careful about distinguishing key concepts from unimportant details.

If you find that you are having trouble taking notes effectively, set up an appointment with your school's academic resource centre.

key takeaways

- Understanding your individual learning style and preferences can help you identify the study and time management strategies that will work best for you.
- To manage your time effectively, it is important to look both at the short term (daily and weekly schedules) and the long term (major semester deadlines).
- To manage your time effectively, be consistent about maintaining your schedule. If your schedule is not working for you, make adjustments.

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2.3.5: Becoming a Successful Writer

Learning Objectives

- Identify strategies for successful writing
- Demonstrate comprehensive writing skills
- Identify writing strategies for use in future classes

In the preceding sections, you learned what you can expect from your courses and identified strategies you can use to manage your work and to succeed. This section covers more about how to handle the demands placed on you as a writer at the post-secondary world. The general techniques you will learn will help ensure your success on any writing task, whether you complete an exam in an hour or an in-depth research project over several weeks.

Putting It All Together: Strategies for Success

Writing well is difficult. Even people who write for a living sometimes struggle to get their thoughts on the page. Even people who generally enjoy writing have days when they would rather be doing anything else. For people who do not like writing or do not think of themselves as good writers, writing assignments can be stressful or even intimidating. And of course, you cannot get through post-secondary courses without having to write—sometimes a lot, and often at a higher level than you are used to.

No magic formula will make writing quick and easy. However, you can use strategies and resources to manage writing assignments more easily. This section presents a broad overview of these strategies and resources. The remaining chapters of this book provide more detailed, comprehensive instruction to help you succeed at a variety of assignments.

Using the Writing Process

To complete a writing project successfully, good writers use some variation of the following process.

The Writing Process

Prewriting. The writer generates ideas to write about and begins developing these ideas.

Outlining a structure of ideas. The writer determines the overall organizational structure of the writing and creates an outline to organize ideas. Usually this step involves some additional fleshing out of the ideas generated in the first step.

Writing a rough draft. The writer uses the work completed in prewriting to develop a first draft. The draft covers the ideas the writer brainstormed and follows the organizational plan that was laid out in the first step.

Revising. The writer revisits the draft to review and, if necessary, reshape its content. This stage involves moderate and sometimes major changes: adding or deleting a paragraph, phrasing the main point differently, expanding on an important idea, reorganizing content, and so forth.

Editing. The writer reviews the draft to make additional changes. Editing involves making changes to improve style and adherence to standard writing conventions—for instance, replacing a vague word with a more precise one or fixing errors in grammar and

spelling. Once this stage is complete, the work is a finished piece and ready to share with others.

Chances are you have already used this process as a writer. You may also have used it for other types of creative projects, such as developing a sketch into a finished painting or composing a song. The steps listed above apply broadly to any project that involves creative thinking. You come up with ideas (often vague at first), you work to give them some structure, you make a first attempt, you figure out what needs improving, and then you refine it until you are satisfied.

Most people have used this creative process in one way or another, but many people have misconceptions about how to use it to write. Here are a few of the most common misconceptions students have about the writing process:

“I do not have to waste time on prewriting if I understand the assignment.” Even if the task is straightforward and you feel ready to start writing, take some time to develop ideas before you plunge into your draft. **Freewriting**—writing about the topic without stopping for a set period of time—is one prewriting technique you might try in that situation.

“It is important to complete a formal, numbered outline for every writing assignment.” For some assignments, such as lengthy research papers, proceeding without a formal outline can be very difficult. However, for other assignments, a structured set of notes or a detailed graphic organizer may suffice. The important thing is to have a solid plan for organizing ideas and details.

“My draft will be better if I write it when I am feeling inspired.” By all means, take advantage of those moments of inspiration. However, understand that sometimes you will have to write when you are not in the mood. Sit down and start your draft even if you do not feel like it. If necessary, force yourself to write for just one hour. By the end of the hour, you may be far more engaged and motivated to continue. If not, at least you will have accomplished part of the task.

“My instructor will tell me everything I need to revise.” If your instructor chooses to review drafts, the feedback can help you improve. However, it is still your job, not your instructor’s, to transform the draft to a final, polished piece. That task will be much easier if you give your best effort to the draft before submitting it. During revision, do not just go through and implement your instructor’s corrections. Take time to determine what you can change to make the work the best it can be.

“I am a good writer, so I do not need to revise or edit.” Even talented writers still need to revise and edit their work. At the very least, doing so will help you catch an embarrassing typo or two. Revising and editing are the steps that make good writers into great writers.

Tip

The writing process also applies to timed writing tasks, such as essay exams. Before you begin writing, read the question thoroughly and think about the main points to include in your response. Use scrap paper to sketch out a very brief outline. Keep an eye on the clock as you write your response so you will have time to review it and make any needed changes before turning in your exam.

Managing Your Time

In Section 1.2, you learned general time management skills. By combining those skills with what you have learned about the writing process, you can make any writing assignment easier to manage.

When your instructor gives you a writing assignment, write the due date on your calendar. Then work backward from the due date to set aside blocks of time when you will work on the assignment. Always plan at least two sessions of writing time per assignment, so that you are not trying to move from step 1 to step 5 in one evening. Trying to work that fast is stressful, and it does not yield great results. You will plan better, think better, and write better if you space out the steps.

Ideally, you should set aside at least three separate blocks of time to work on a writing assignment: one for prewriting and outlining, one for drafting, and one for revising and editing. Sometimes those steps may be compressed into just a few days. If you have a couple of weeks to work on a paper, space out the five steps over multiple sessions. Long-term projects, such as research

papers, require more time for each step.

Tip

In certain situations you may not be able to allow time between the different steps of the writing process. For instance, you may be asked to write in class or complete a brief response paper overnight. If the time available is very limited, apply a modified version of the writing process (as you would do for an essay exam). It is still important to give the assignment thought and effort. However, these types of assignments are less formal, and instructors may not expect them to be as polished as formal papers. When in doubt, ask the instructor about expectations, resources that will be available during the writing exam, and if he or she has any tips to prepare you to effectively demonstrate your writing skills.

Each Monday in Crystal's Foundations of Education class, the instructor distributed copies of a current news article on education and assigned students to write a one-and-a-half to two-page response that was due the following Monday. Together, these weekly assignments counted for 20 percent of the course grade. Although each response took just a few hours to complete, Crystal found that she learned more from the reading and got better grades on her writing if she spread the work out in the following way:

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Article response assigned.		Read article, prewrite, and outline response paper.		Draft response.		Revise and edit response.

Exercise 1.6

In this exercise, make connections between short– and long–term goals.

Review the long- and short-term goals you set for yourself for the discussion at the beginning of the module. Brainstorm a list of stepping stones that will help you meet that goal, such as "doing well on my midterm and final exams" or "talking to Professor Gibson about doing an internship." Write down everything you can think of that would help you meet that semester goal.

Identify one action from Step 3 that you can do today. Then do it.

Using Available Resources

One reason students sometimes find post-secondary courses overwhelming is that they do not know about, or are reluctant to use, the resources available to them. There is help available; your student fees help pay for resources that can help in many ways, such as a health centre or tutoring service. If you need help, consider asking for help from any of the following:

Your instructor: If you are making an honest effort but still struggling with a particular course, set a time to meet with your instructor and discuss what you can do to improve. He or she may be able to shed light on a confusing concept or give you strategies to catch up.

Your academic counsellor. Many institutions assign students an academic counsellor who can help you choose courses and ensure that you fulfill degree and major requirements.

The academic resource centre: These centres offer a variety of services, which may range from general coaching in study skills to tutoring for specific courses. Find out what is offered at your school and use the services that you need.

The writing centre: These centres employ tutors to help you manage your writing assignments. They will not write or edit your paper for you, but they can help you through the stages of the writing process. (In some schools, the writing centre is part of the academic resource centre.)

The career resource centre: Visit the career resource centre for guidance in choosing a career path, developing a resumé, and finding and applying for jobs.

Counselling services: Many schools offer psychological counselling for free or for a low fee. Use these services if you need help coping with a difficult personal situation or managing depression, anxiety, or other problems.

Students sometimes neglect to use available resources due to limited time, unwillingness to admit there is a problem, or embarrassment about needing to ask for help. Unfortunately, ignoring a problem usually makes it harder to cope with later on. Waiting until the end of the semester may also mean fewer resources are available, since many other students are also seeking last minute help.

Exercise 1.7

Identify at least one resource you think could be helpful to you and that you would like to investigate further. Schedule a time to visit this resource within the next week or two so you can use it throughout the semester.

Summary

You now have a solid foundation of skills and strategies you can use to succeed in university or college. The remainder of this book will provide you with guidance on specific aspects of writing, ranging from grammar and style conventions to how to write a research paper.

For any writing assignment, use these strategies:

- **Plan ahead**. Divide the work into smaller, manageable tasks, and set aside time to accomplish each task in turn.
- **Make sure you understand the assignment requirements.** If necessary, clarify the requirements with your instructor. Think carefully about the purpose of the writing, the intended audience, the topics you will need to address, and any specific requirements of the writing form.
- **Complete each step of the writing process**. With practice, using this process will come automatically to you.
- **Use the resources available to you**. Remember that most schools have specific services to help students with their writing.

key takeaways

- Following the steps of the writing process helps students complete any writing assignment more successfully.
- To manage writing assignments, it is best to work backward from the due date, allotting appropriate time to complete each step of the writing process.
- Setting concrete long- and short-term goals helps students stay focused and motivated.
- A variety of resources are available to help students with writing and with other aspects of post-secondary life.

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2.4: WHAT IS “ACADEMIC” WRITING?

2.4.1: Introduction- The Academic Writing Task

2.4.2: Myths about Writing

2.4.3: In College, Everything’s an Argument- A Guide for Decoding College Writing Assignments

2.4.4: The Format of the Academic Essay

2.4.5: Conclusion

2.4.6: Discussion

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2.4.1: Introduction- The Academic Writing Task

L. Lennie Irvin

As a new college student, you may have a lot of anxiety and questions about the writing you'll do in college.* That word "academic," especially, may turn your stomach or turn your nose. However, with this first year composition class, you begin one of the only classes in your entire college career where you will focus on learning to write. Given
the importance of writing as a communication skill, I urge you to consider this class as a gift and make the most of it. But writing is hard, and writing in college may resemble playing a familiar game by completely new rules (that often are unstated). This chapter is designed to introduce you to what academic writing is like, and hopefully ease
your transition as you face these daunting writing challenges.

So here's the secret. Your success with academic writing depends upon how well you understand what you are doing as you write and then how you approach the writing task. Early research done on college writers discovered that whether students produced a successful piece of writing depended largely upon their representation of the writing task.
The writers' mental model for picturing their task made a huge difference. Most people as they start college have wildly strange ideas about what they are doing when they write an essay, or worse—they have no clear idea at all. I freely admit my own past as a clueless freshman writer, and it's out of this sympathy as well as twenty years of teaching college writing that I hope to provide you with something useful. So grab a cup of coffee or a diet coke, find a comfortable chair with good light, and let's explore together this activity of academic writing you'll be asked to do in college. We will start by clearing up some of those wild misconceptions people often arrive at college possessing. Thenwe will dig more deeply into the components of the academic writing situation and nature of the writing task.

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2.4.2: Myths about Writing

Though I don't imagine an episode of MythBusters will be based on the misconceptions about writing we are about to look at, you'd still be surprised at some of the things people will believe about writing. You may find lurking within you viral elements of these myths—all of these lead to problems in writing.

Myth #1: The "Paint by Numbers" myth

Some writers believe they must perform certain steps in a particular order to write "correctly." Rather than being a lock-step linear process, writing is "recursive." That means we cycle through and repeat the various activities of the writing process many times as we write.

Myth #2: Writers only start writing when they have everything figured out

Writing is not like sending a fax! Writers figure out much of what they want to write as they write it. Rather than waiting, get some writing on the page—even with gaps or problems. You can come back to patch up rough spots.

Myth #3: Perfect first drafts

We put unrealistic expectations on early drafts, either by focusing too much on the impossible task of making them perfect (which can put a cap on the development of our ideas), or by making too little effort because we don't care or know about their inevitable problems. Nobody writes perfect first drafts; polished writing takes lots of revision.

Myth #4: Some got it; I don't—the genius fallacy

When you see your writing ability as something fixed or out of your control (as if it were in your genetic code), then you won't believe you can improve as a writer and are likely not to make any efforts in that direction. With effort and study, though, you can improve as a writer. I promise.

Myth #5: Good grammar is good writing

When people say "I can't write," what they often mean is they have problems with grammatical correctness. Writing, however, is about more than just grammatical correctness. Good writing is a matter of achieving your desired effect upon an intended audience. Plus, as we saw in myth #3, no one writes perfect first drafts.

Myth #6: The Five Paragraph Essay

Some people say to avoid it at all costs, while others believe no other way to write exists. With an introduction, three supporting paragraphs, and a conclusion, the five paragraph essay is a format you should know, but one which you will outgrow. You'll have to gauge the particular writing assignment to see whether and how this format
is useful for you.

Myth #7: Never use "I"

Adopting this formal stance of objectivity implies a distrust (almost fear) of informality and often leads to artificial, puffed-up prose. Although some writing situations will call on you to avoid using "I" (for example, a lab report), much college writing can be done in a middle, semi-formal style where it is ok to use "I."

The Academic Writing Situation

Now that we've dispelled some of the common myths that many writers have as they enter a college classroom, let's take a moment to think about the academic writing situation. The biggest problem I see in freshman writers is a poor sense of the writing situation in general. To illustrate this problem, let's look at the difference between speaking and writing.

When we speak, we inhabit the communication situation bodily in three dimensions, but in writing we are confined within the two-dimensional setting of the flat page (though writing for the web—or multimodal writing—is changing all that). Writing resembles having a blindfold over our eyes and our hands tied behind our backs: we can't see exactly whom we're talking to or where we are. Separated from our audience in place and time, we imaginatively have to create this context. Our words on the page are silent, so we must use punctuation and word choice to communicate our tone. We also can't see our audience to gauge how our communication is being received or if there will be some kind of response. It's the same space we share right now as you read this essay. Novice writers often write as if they were mumbling to themselves in the corner with no sense that their writing will be read by a reader or any sense of the context within which their communication will be received.

What's the moral here? Developing your "writer's sense" about communicating within the writing situation is the most important thing you should learn in freshman composition.

Figure 1, depicting the writing situation, presents the best image I know of describing all the complexities involved in the writing situation.

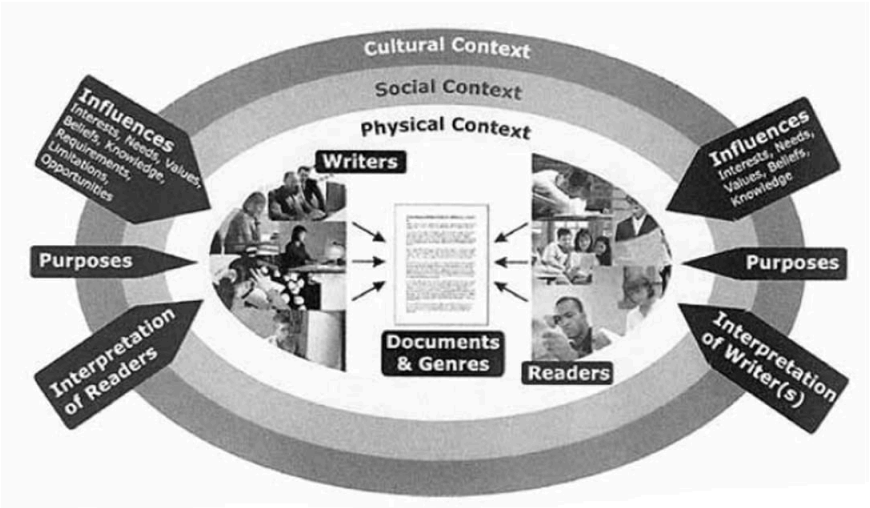


Figure 1. Source: "A Social Model of Writing." Writing@CSU. 2010. Web. 10 March 2010. Used by permission from Mike Palmquist.

Looking More Closely at the "Academic Writing" Situation

Writing in college is a fairly specialized writing situation, and it has developed its own codes and conventions that you need to have a keen awareness of if you are going to write successfully in college. Let's break down the writing situation in college:

Who's your audience?	Primarily the professor and possibly your classmates (though you may be asked to include a secondary outside audience).
What's the occasion or context?	An assignment given by the teacher within a learning context and designed to have you learn and demonstrate your learning.
What's your message?	It will be your learning or the interpretation gained from your study of the subject matter.
What's your purpose?	To show your learning and get a good grade (or to accomplish the goals of the writing assignment).
What documents/ genres are used?	The essay is the most frequent type of document used.

So far, this list looks like nothing new. You've been writing in school toward teachers for years. What's different in college? Lee Ann Carroll, a professor at Pepperdine University, performed a study of student writing in college and had this description of the kind of writing you will be doing in college:

> What are usually called 'writing assignments' in college might more accurately be called 'literacy tasks' because they require much more than the ability to construct correct sentences or compose neatly organized paragraphs with topic sentences. . . . Projects calling for high levels of critical literacy in college typically require knowledge of research skills, ability to read complex texts, understanding of key disciplinary concepts, and strategies for synthesizing, analyzing, and responding critically to new information, usually within a limited time frame. (3–4)

Academic writing is always a form of evaluation that asks you to demonstrate knowledge and show proficiency with certain disciplinary skills of thinking, interpreting, and presenting. Writing the paper is never "just" the writing part. To be successful in this kind of writing, you must be completely aware of what the professor expects you to do and accomplish with that particular writing task. For a moment, let's explore more deeply the elements of this college writing "literacy task."

Knowledge of Research Skills

Perhaps up to now research has meant going straight to Google and Wikipedia, but college will require you to search for and find more in-depth information. You'll need to know how to find information in the library, especially what is available from online databases which contain scholarly articles. Researching is also a process, so you'll need to learn how to focus and direct a research project and how to keep track of all your source information. Realize that researching represents a crucial component of most all college writing assignments, and you will need to devote lots of work to this researching.

The Ability to Read Complex Texts

Whereas your previous writing in school might have come generally from your experience, college writing typically asks you to write on unfamiliar topics. Whether you're reading your textbook, a short story, or scholarly articles from research, your ability to write well will be based upon the quality of your reading. In addition to the labor of close reading, you'll need to think critically as you read. That means separating fact from opinion, recognizing biases and assumptions, and making inferences. Inferences are how we as readers connect the dots: an inference is a belief (or statement) about something unknown made on the basis of something known. You smell smoke; you infer fire. They are conclusions or interpretations that we arrive at based upon the known factors we discover from our reading. When we, then, write to argue for these interpretations, our job becomes to get our readers to make the same inferences we have made.

The Understanding of Key Disciplinary Concepts

Each discipline whether it is English, Psychology, or History has its own key concepts and language for describing these important ways of understanding the world. Don't fool yourself that your professors' writing assignments are asking for your opinion on the topic from just your experience. They want to see you apply and use these concepts in your writing. Though different from a multiple-choice exam, writing similarly requires you to demonstrate your learning. So whatever writing assignment you receive, inspect it closely for what concepts it asks you to bring into your writing.

Strategies for Synthesizing, Analyzing, and Responding Critically to New Information

You need to develop the skill of a seasoned traveler who can be dropped in any city around the world and get by. Each writing assignment asks you to navigate through a new terrain of information, so you must develop ways for grasping new subject matter in order, then, to use it in your writing. We have already seen the importance of reading and research for these literacy tasks, but beyond laying the information out before you, you will need to learn ways of sorting and finding meaningful patterns in this information.

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2.4.3: In College, Everything's an Argument- A Guide for Decoding College Writing Assignments

Let's restate this complex "literacy task" you'll be asked repeatedly to do in your writing assignments. Typically, you'll be required to write an "essay" based upon your analysis of some reading(s). In this essay you'll need to present an argument where you make a claim (i.e. present a "thesis") and support that claim with good reasons that have adequate and appropriate evidence to back them up. The dynamic of this argumentative task often confuses first year writers, so let's examine it more closely.

Academic Writing Is an Argument

To start, let's focus on argument. What does it mean to present an "argument" in college writing? Rather than a shouting match between two disagreeing sides, argument instead means a carefully arranged and supported presentation of a viewpoint. Its purpose is not so much to win the argument as to earn your audience's consideration (and even approval) of your perspective. It resembles a conversation between two people who may not hold the same opinions, but they both desire a better understanding of the subject matter under discussion. My favorite analogy, however, to describe the nature of this argumentative stance in college writing is the courtroom. In this scenario, you are like a lawyer making a case at trial that the defendant is not guilty, and your readers are like the jury who will decide if the defendant is guilty or not guilty. This jury (your readers) won't just take your word that he's innocent; instead, you must convince them by presenting evidence that proves he is not guilty. Stating your opinion is not enough—you have to back it up too. I like this courtroom analogy for capturing two importance things about academic argument: 1) the value of an organized presentation of your "case," and 2) the crucial element of strong evidence.

Academic Writing Is an Analysis

We now turn our attention to the actual writing assignment and that confusing word "analyze." Your first job when you get a writing assignment is to figure out what the professor expects. This assignment may be explicit in its expectations, but often built into the wording of the most defined writing assignments are implicit expectations that you might not recognize. First, we can say that unless your professor specifically asks you to summarize, you won't write a summary. Let me say that again: don't write a summary unless directly asked to. But what, then, does the professor want? We have already picked out a few of these expectations: You can count on the instructor expecting you to read closely, research adequately, and write an argument where you will demonstrate your ability to apply and use important concepts you have been studying. But the writing task also implies that your essay will be the result of an analysis. At times, the writing assignment may even explicitly say to write an analysis, but often this element of the task remains unstated.

So what does it mean to analyze? One way to think of an analysis is that it asks you to seek How and Why questions much more than What questions. An analysis involves doing three things:

1. Engage in an open inquiry where the answer is not known at first (and where you leave yourself open to multiple suggestions)

2. Identify meaningful parts of the subject

3. Examine these separate parts and determine how they relate to each other

An analysis breaks a subject apart to study it closely, and from this inspection, ideas for writing emerge. When writing assignments call on you to analyze, they require you to identify the parts of the subject (parts of an ad, parts of a short story, parts of Hamlet's character), and then show how these parts fit or don't fit together to create some larger effect or meaning. Your interpretation of how these parts fit together constitutes your claim or thesis, and the task of your essay is then to present an argument defending your interpretation as a valid or plausible one to make. My biggest bit of advice about analysis is not to do

it all in your head. Analysis works best when you put all the cards on the table, so to speak. Identify and isolate the parts of your analysis, and record important features and characteristics of each one. As patterns emerge, you sort and connect these parts in meaningful ways. For me, I have always had to do this recording and thinking on scratch pieces of paper. Just as critical reading forms a crucial element of the literacy task of a college writing assignment, so too does this analysis process. It's built in.

Three Common Types of College Writing Assignments

We have been decoding the expectations of the academic writing task so far, and I want to turn now to examine the types of assignments you might receive. From my experience, you are likely to get three kinds of writing assignments based upon the instructor's degree of direction for the assignment. We'll take a brief look at each kind of academic writing task.

The Closed Writing Assignment

- Is Creon a character to admire or condemn?
- Does your advertisement employ techniques of propaganda, and if so what kind?
- Was the South justified in seceding from the Union?
- In your opinion, do you believe Hamlet was truly mad?

These kinds of writing assignments present you with two counter claims and ask you to determine from your own analysis the more valid claim. They resemble yes-no questions. These topics define the claim for you, so the major task of the writing assignment then is working out the support for the claim. They resemble a math problem in which the teacher has given you the answer and now wants you to "show your work" in arriving at that answer.

Be careful with these writing assignments, however, because often these topics don't have a simple yes/no, either/or answer (despite the nature of the essay question). A close analysis of the subject matter often reveals nuances and ambiguities within the question that your eventual claim should reflect. Perhaps a claim such as, "In my opinion, Hamlet was mad" might work, but I urge you to avoid such a simplistic thesis. This thesis would be better: "I believe Hamlet's unhinged mind borders on insanity but doesn't quite reach it."

The Semi-Open Writing Assignment

- Discuss the role of law in Antigone.
- Explain the relationship between character and fate in Hamlet.
- Compare and contrast the use of setting in two short stories.
- Show how the Fugitive Slave Act influenced the Abolitionist Movement.

Although these topics chart out a subject matter for you to write upon, they don't offer up claims you can easily use in your paper. It would be a misstep to offer up claims such as, "Law plays a role in Antigone" or "In Hamlet we can see a relationship between character and fate." Such statements express the obvious and what the topic takes for granted. The question, for example, is not whether law plays a role in Antigone, but rather what sort of role law plays. What is the nature of this role? What influences does it have on the characters or actions or theme? This kind of writing assignment resembles a kind of archeological dig. The teacher cordons off an area, hands you a shovel, and says dig here and see what you find.

Be sure to avoid summary and mere explanation in this kind of assignment. Despite using key words in the assignment such as “explain,” “illustrate,” analyze,” “discuss,” or “show how,” these topics still ask you to make an argument. Implicit in the topic is the expectation that you will analyze the reading and arrive at some insights into patterns and relationships about the subject. Your eventual paper, then, needs to present what you found from this analysis—the treasure you found from your digging. Determining your own claim represents the biggest challenge for this type of writing assignment.

The Open Writing Assignment

- Analyze the role of a character in Dante’s The Inferno.
- What does it mean to be an “American” in the 21st Century?
- Analyze the influence of slavery upon one cause of the Civil War.
- Compare and contrast two themes within Pride and Prejudice.

These kinds of writing assignments require you to decide both your writing topic and you claim (or thesis). Which character in the Inferno will I pick to analyze? What two themes in Pride and Prejudice will I choose to write about? Many students struggle with these types of assignments because they have to understand their subject matter well before they can intelligently choose a topic. For instance, you need a good familiarity with the characters in The Inferno before you can pick one. You have to have a solid understanding defining elements of American identity as well as 21st century culture before you can begin to connect them. This kind of writing assignment resembles riding a bike without the training wheels on. It says, “You decide what to write about.” The biggest decision, then, becomes selecting your topic and limiting it to a manageable size.

Picking and Limiting a Writing Topic

Let’s talk about both of these challenges: picking a topic and limiting it. Remember how I said these kinds of essay topics expect you to choose what to write about from a solid understanding of your subject? As you read and review your subject matter, look for things that interest you. Look for gaps, puzzling items, things that confuse you, or connections you see. Something in this pile of rocks should stand out as a jewel: as being “do-able” and interesting. (You’ll write best when you write from both your head and your heart.) Whatever topic you choose, state it as a clear and interesting question. You may or may not state this essay question explicitly in the introduction of your paper (I actually recommend that you do), but it will provide direction for your paper and a focus for your claim since that claim will be your answer to this essay question. For example, if with the Dante topic you decided to write on Virgil, your essay question might be: “What is the role of Virgil toward the character of Dante in The Inferno?” The thesis statement, then, might be this: “Virgil’s predominant role as Dante’s guide through hell is as the voice of reason.” Crafting a solid essay question is well worth your time because it charts the territory of your essay and helps you declare a focused thesis statement.

Many students struggle with defining the right size for their writing project. They chart out an essay question that it would take a book to deal with adequately. You’ll know you have that kind of topic if you have already written over the required page length but only touched one quarter of the topics you planned to discuss. In this case, carve out one of those topics and make your whole paper about it. For instance, with our Dante example, perhaps you planned to discuss four places where Virgil’s role as the voice of reason is evident. Instead of discussing all four, focus your essay on just one place. So your revised thesis statement might be: “Close inspection of Cantos I and II reveal that Virgil serves predominantly as the voice of reason for Dante on his journey through hell.” A writing teacher I had in college said it this way: A well tended garden is better than a large one full of weeds. That means to limit your topic to a size you can handle and support well.

Three Characteristics of Academic Writing

I want to wrap up this section by sharing in broad terms what the expectations are behind an academic writing assignment. Chris Thaiss and Terry Zawacki conducted research at George Mason University where they asked professors from their university what they thought academic writing was and its standards. They came up with three characteristics:

1. Clear evidence in writing that the writer(s) have been persistent, open-minded, and disciplined in study. (5)

2. The dominance of reason over emotions or sensual perception. (5)

3. An imagined reader who is coolly rational, reading for information, and intending to formulate a reasoned response. (7)

Your professor wants to see these three things in your writing when they give you a writing assignment. They want to see in your writing the results of your efforts at the various literacy tasks we have been discussing: critical reading, research, and analysis. Beyond merely stating opinions, they also want to see an argument toward an intelligent audience where you provide good reasons to support your interpretations.

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2.4.4: The Format of the Academic Essay

Your instructors will also expect you to deliver a paper that contains particular textual features. The following list contains the characteristics of what I have for years called the “critical essay.” Although I can’t claim they will be useful for all essays in college, I hope that these features will help you shape and accomplish successful college essays. Be aware that these characteristics are flexible and not a formula, and any particular assignment might ask for something different.

Characteristics of the Critical Essay

“Critical” here is not used in the sense of “to criticize” as in find fault with. Instead, “critical” is used in the same way “critical thinking” is used. A synonym might be “interpretive” or “analytical.”

1. It is an argument, persuasion essay that in its broadest sense MAKES A POINT and SUPPORTS IT. (We have already discussed this argumentative nature of academic writing at length.)

2. The point (“claim” or “thesis”) of a critical essay is interpretive in nature. That means the point is debatable and open to interpretation, not a statement of the obvious. The thesis statement is a clear, declarative sentence that often works best when it comes at the end of the introduction.

3. Organization: Like any essay, the critical essay should have a clear introduction, body, and conclusion. As you support your point in the body of the essay, you should “divide up the proof,” which means structuring the body around clear primary supports (developed in single paragraphs for short papers or multiple paragraphs for longer papers).

4. Support: (a) The primary source for support in the critical essay is from the text (or sources). The text is the authority, so using quotations is required. (b) The continuous movement of logic in a critical essay is “assert then support; assert then support.” No assertion (general statement that needs proving) should be left without specific support (often from the text(s)). (c) You need enough support to be convincing. In general, that means for each assertion you need at least three supports. This threshold can vary, but invariably one support is not enough.

5. A critical essay will always “document” its sources, distinguishing the use of outside information used inside your text and clarifying where that information came from (following the rules of MLA documentation style or whatever documentation style is required).

6. Whenever the author moves from one main point (primary support) to the next, the author needs to clearly signal to the reader that this movement is happening. This transition sentence works best when it links back to the thesis as it states the topic of that paragraph or section.

7. A critical essay is put into an academic essay format such as the MLA or APA document format.

8. Grammatical correctness: Your essay should have few if any grammatical problems. You’ll want to edit your final draft carefully before turning it in.

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2.4.5: Conclusion

As we leave this discussion, I want to return to what I said was the secret for your success in writing college essays: Your success with academic writing depends upon how well you understand what you are doing as you write and then how you approach the writing task. Hopefully, you now have a better idea about the nature of the academic writing task and the expectations behind it. Knowing what you need to do won't guarantee you an "A" on your paper—that will take a lot of thinking, hard work, and practice—but having the right orientation toward your college writing assignments is a first and important step in your eventual success.

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2.4.6: Discussion

1. How did what you wrote in high school compare to what you have/will do in your academic writing in college?

2. Think of two different writing situations you have found yourself in. What did you need to do the same in those two situations to place your writing appropriately? What did you need to do differently?

3. Think of a writing assignment that you will need to complete this semester. Who's your audience? What's the occasion or context? What's your message? What's your purpose? What documents/genres are used? How does all that compare to the writing you are doing in this class?

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3: CHAPTER THREE- RESEARCHING, ANNOTATING, AND CRITICAL READING/LITERACY NARRATIVES

3.1: Pre-writing

3.1.1: Prewriting

3.1.2: Outlining

3.1.3: Drafting (Part 1)

3.1.4: Drafting (Part 2)

3.1.5: Revising and Editing (Part 1)

3.1.6: Revising and Editing (Part 2)

3.1.6.1: The Writing Process

3.1.6.1.1: Writing as a Process

3.1.6.1.2: Freewriting

3.1.6.1.3: Brainstorming

3.1.6.1.4: Journalist Questions

3.1.6.1.5: Listing

3.1.6.1.6: Clustering/Mapping

3.1.6.1.7: Outlining

3.1.6.1.8: Drafting

3.1.6.1.9: Revising

3.1.6.1.10: Creating Essay Titles

3.1.6.1.11: Editing/Proofreading

3.1.6.1.12: Final Revision Example

3.1.6.1.13: Essay Checklist

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3.1: PRE-WRITING

If you think that a blank sheet of paper or a blinking cursor on the computer screen is a scary sight, you are not alone. Many writers, students, and employees find that beginning to write can be intimidating. When faced with a blank page, however, experienced writers remind themselves that writing, like other everyday activities, is a process. Every process, from writing to cooking, bike riding, and learning to use a new cell phone, will get significantly easier with practice.

Just as you need a recipe, ingredients, and the proper tools to cook a delicious meal, you also need a plan, resources, and adequate time to create a well-written composition. In other words, writing is a process that requires following steps and using strategies to accomplish your goals.

Effective writing can be simply described as good ideas that are expressed well and arranged in the proper order. This chapter will give you the chance to work on all these important aspects of writing.

3.1.1: Prewriting

3.1.2: Outlining

3.1.3: Drafting (Part 1)

3.1.4: Drafting (Part 2)

3.1.5: Revising and Editing (Part 1)

3.1.6: Revising and Editing (Part 2)

3.1.6.1: The Writing Process

3.1.6.1.1: Writing as a Process

3.1.6.1.2: Freewriting

3.1.6.1.3: Brainstorming

3.1.6.1.4: Journalist Questions

3.1.6.1.5: Listing

3.1.6.1.6: Clustering/Mapping

3.1.6.1.7: Outlining

3.1.6.1.8: Drafting

3.1.6.1.9: Revising

3.1.6.1.10: Creating Essay Titles

3.1.6.1.11: Editing/Proofreading

3.1.6.1.12: Final Revision Example

3.1.6.1.13: Essay Checklist

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3.1.1: Prewriting

Loosely defined, prewriting includes all the writing strategies employed **before** writing your first draft. Although many more prewriting strategies exist, the following section covers: using experience and observations, reading, freewriting, asking questions, listing, and clustering/idea mapping. Using the strategies in the following section can help you overcome the fear of the blank page and confidently begin the writing process.

Choosing a Topic

In addition to understanding that writing is a process, writers also understand that choosing a good general topic for an assignment is an essential first step. Sometimes your instructor will give you an idea to begin an assignment, and other times your instructor will ask you to come up with a topic on your own. A good topic not only covers what an assignment will be about, but it also fits the assignment's **purpose** and its **audience**.

In the next few sections, you will follow a writer named Mariah as she explores and develops her essay's topic and focus. You will also be planning one of your own. The first important step is for you to tell yourself **why** you are writing (to inform, to explain, or some other purpose) and **for whom** you are writing. Write your purpose and your audience on your own sheet of paper, and keep the paper close by as you read and complete exercises in this chapter and write the first draft.

My purpose: _____

My audience: _____

Prewriting Techniques: Brainstorming

Brainstorming refers to writing techniques used to:

- Generate topic ideas
- Transfer your abstract thoughts on a topic into more concrete ideas on paper (or digitally on a computer screen)
- Organize the ideas you have generated to discover a focus and develop a working thesis

Although brainstorming techniques can be helpful in all stages of the writing process, you will have to find the techniques that are most effective for your writing needs. The following general strategies can be used when initially deciding on a topic, or for narrowing the focus for a topic: **Freewriting, Asking questions, Listing**, and **Clustering/Idea Mapping**.

In the initial stage of the writing process, it is fine if you choose a general topic. Later you can use brainstorming strategies to narrow the focus of the topic.

Experience and Observations

When selecting a topic, you may want to consider something that interests you or something based on your own life and personal experiences. Even everyday observations can lead to interesting topics. After writers think about their experiences and observations, they often take notes on paper to better develop their thoughts. These notes help writers discover what they have to say about their topic.

Reading

Reading plays a vital role in *all* the stages of the writing process, but it first figures in the development of ideas and topics. Different kinds of documents can help you choose and develop a topic. For example, a magazine cover advertising the latest research on the threat of global warming may catch your eye in the supermarket. This subject may interest you, and you may consider global warming as a topic. Or maybe a novel's courtroom drama sparks your curiosity of a particular lawsuit or legal controversy.

After you choose a topic, critical reading is essential to the development of a topic. While reading almost any document, you evaluate the author's point of view by thinking about his main idea and his support. When you judge the author's argument, you discover more about not only the author's opinion but also your own. If this step already seems daunting, remember that even the best writers need to use prewriting strategies to generate ideas.

Prewriting strategies depend on your critical reading skills. Reading, prewriting and brainstorming exercises (and outlines and drafts later in the writing process) will further develop your topic and ideas. As you continue to follow the writing process, you will see how Mariah uses critical reading skills to assess her own prewriting exercises.

Freewriting

Freewriting is an exercise in which you write freely about any topic for a set amount of time (usually five to seven minutes). During the time limit, you may jot down **any** thoughts that come to your mind. Try not to worry about grammar, spelling, or punctuation. Instead, write as quickly as you can without stopping. If you get stuck, just copy the same word or phrase over and over again until you come up with a new thought.

Writing often comes easier when you have a personal connection with the topic you have chosen. Remember, to generate ideas in your freewriting, you may also think about readings that you have enjoyed or that have challenged your thinking. Doing this may lead your thoughts in interesting directions.

Quickly recording your thoughts on paper will help you discover what you have to say about a topic. When writing quickly, try not to doubt or question your ideas. Allow yourself to write freely and unselfconsciously. Once you start writing with few limitations, you may find you have more to say than you first realized. Your flow of thoughts can lead you to discover even more ideas about the topic. **Freewriting** may even lead you to discover another topic that excites you even more.

Look at Mariah's example below. The instructor allowed the members of the class to choose their own topics, and Mariah thought about her experiences as a communications major. She used this freewriting exercise to help her generate more concrete ideas from her own experience.

Example 3.1.1.1: freewriting

Last semester my favorite class was about mass media. We got to study radio and television. People say we watch too much television, and even though I try not to, I end up watching a few reality shows just to relax. Everyone has to relax! It's too hard to relax when something like the news (my husband watches all the time) is on because it's too scary now. Too much bad news, not enough good news. News. Newspapers I don't read as much anymore. I can get the headlines on my homepage when I check my email. Email could be considered mass media too these days. I used to go to the video store a few times a week before I started school, but now the only way I know what movies are current is to listen for the Oscar nominations. We have cable but we can't afford movie channels, so I sometimes look at older movies late at night. UGH. A few of them get played again and again until you're sick of them. My husband thinks I'm crazy, but sometimes there are old black-and-whites on from the 1930s and '40s. I could never live my life in black-and-white. I like the home decorating shows and love how

people use color on their walls. Makes rooms look so bright. When we buy a home, if we ever can, I'll use lots of color. Some of those shows even show you how to do major renovations by yourself. Knock down walls and everything. Not for me--or my husband. I'm handier than he is. I wonder if they could make a reality show about us?

Exercise 1

Freewrite about one event you have recently experienced. With this event in mind, write without stopping for five minutes. After you finish, read over what you wrote. Does anything stand out to you as a good general topic to write about? One of the following prompts may help you get started:

- A celebration
- The first day of a job or the first day of school
- An illness
- The loss of a friend or relative
- Finding a place to live

Asking Questions

Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

In everyday situations, you pose these kinds of questions to get more information. **Who** will be my partner for the project? **When** is the next meeting? **Why** is my car making that odd noise? When faced with a writing assignment, you might ask yourself, "How do I begin?"

You seek the answers to these questions to gain knowledge, to better understand your daily experiences, and to plan for the future. Asking these types of questions will also help you with the writing process. As you choose your topic, answering these questions can help you revisit the ideas you already have and generate new ways to think about your topic. You may also discover aspects of the topic that are unfamiliar to you and that you would like to learn more about. All these idea-gathering techniques will help you plan for future work on your assignment.

When Mariah reread her freewriting notes, she found she had rambled and her thoughts were disjointed. She realized that the topic that interested her most was the one she started with, the media. She then decided to explore that topic by asking herself questions about it. Her purpose was to refine media into a topic she felt comfortable writing about. To see how asking questions can help you choose a topic, take a look at the following chart that Mariah completed to record her questions and answers. She asked herself the questions that reporters and journalists use to gather information for their stories. The questions are often called the **5WH** questions, after their initial letters.

Example 3.1.1.2: "Asking Questions"

Who? I use media. Students teachers, parents, employers and employees-- almost everyone uses media.

What? The media can be a lot of things-- television, radio, email (I think), newspapers, magazines, books.

Where? The media is almost everywhere now. It's at home, at work, in cars, and even on cell phones.

When? The media has been around for a long time, but it seems a lot more important now.

Why? Hmm. This is a good question. I don't know why there is mass media. Maybe we have it because we have the technology now. Or people live far away from their families and have to stay in touch.

How? Well, media is possible because of the technology inventions, but I don't know how they all work.

Exercise 2

Using the prompt you chose to practice freewriting in Exercise 1, continue to explore the topic by answering the 5WH questions, as Mariah does in the above example.

Narrowing the focus

After rereading her essay assignment, Mariah realized her general topic, mass media, is too broad for her class's short paper requirement. Three pages are not enough to cover all the concerns in mass media today. Mariah also realized that although her readers are other communications majors who are interested in the topic, they might want to read a paper about a particular issue in mass media.

The prewriting techniques of brainstorming by freewriting and asking questions helped Mariah think more about her topic, but the following prewriting strategies can help her (and you) narrow the focus of the topic:

- Listing
- Clustering/Idea Mapping

Narrowing the focus means breaking up the topic into subtopics, or more specific points. Generating lots of subtopics will help you eventually select the ones that fit the assignment and appeal to you and your audience.

Listing

Listing is a term often applied to describe any prewriting technique writers use to generate ideas on a topic, including freewriting and asking questions. You can make a list on your own or in a group with your classmates. Start with a blank sheet of paper (or a blank computer screen) and write your general topic across the top. Underneath your topic, make a list of more specific ideas. Think of your general topic as a broad category and the list items as things that fit in that category. Often you will find that one item can lead to the next, creating a flow of ideas that can help you narrow your focus to a more specific paper topic. The following is Mariah's brainstorming list:

Mass Media

Magazines	DVD	Smart Phones
Newspapers	Gaming/Video	Text Messages
Broadcasting	Games	Tiny Cameras
Radio	Internet	GPS
Television	Cell Phones	

From this list, Mariah could narrow her focus to a particular technology under the broad category of "mass media."

Idea Mapping

Idea mapping, sometimes called clustering or webbing, allows you to visualize your ideas on paper using circles, lines, and arrows. This technique is also known as clustering because ideas are broken down and clustered, or grouped together. Many writers like

this method because the shapes show how the ideas relate or connect, and writers can find a focused topic from the connections mapped. Using idea mapping, you might discover interesting connections between topics that you had not thought of before.

To create an idea map:

1. Start by writing your general topic in a circle in the center of a blank sheet of paper. Moving out from the main circle, write down as many concepts and terms ideas you can think of related to your general topic in blank areas of the page. Jot down your ideas quickly--do not overthink your responses. Try to fill the page.
2. Once you've filled the page, circle the concepts and terms that are relevant to your topic. Use lines or arrows to categorize and connect closely related ideas. Add and cluster as many ideas as you can think of.

To continue brainstorming, Mariah tried idea mapping. Review the following idea map that Mariah created:



Figure 3.1.1.1

Notice Mariah's largest circle contains her general topic, mass media. Then, the general topic branches into two subtopics written in two smaller circles: television and radio. The subtopic television branches into even more specific topics: cable and DVDs. From there, Mariah drew more circles and wrote more specific ideas: high definition and digital recording from cable and Blu-ray from DVDs. The radio topic led Mariah to draw connections between music, downloads versus CDs, and, finally, piracy. From this idea map, Mariah saw she could consider narrowing the focus of her mass media topic to the more specific topic of music piracy.

Topic Checklist: Developing a Good Topic

- Am I interested in this topic?
- Would my audience be interested?
- Do I have prior knowledge or experience with this topic? If so, would I be comfortable exploring this topic and sharing my experience?
- Do I want to learn more about this topic?
- Is this topic specific?
- Does it fit the length of the assignment?

Prewriting strategies are a vital first step in the writing process. First, they help you choose a broad topic, and then they

help you narrow the focus of the topic to a more specific idea. An effective topic ensures that you are ready for the next step: Developing a working thesis and planning the organization of your essay by creating an outline.

Exercise 3

Return to the topic explored in Exercise 2 through the prewriting technique of answering questions (5WH). Explore and narrow the topic further by practicing the prewriting techniques of Brainstorming (listing) and Idea Mapping. Allow yourself no more than five to seven minutes for each technique.

Collaboration: Share your results with a classmate or in small groups, and compare answers. Offer feedback to your classmate(s) on what you find interesting about his or her topic.

key takeaways

- All writers rely on steps and strategies to begin the writing process.
- The steps in the writing process are prewriting, outlining, writing a rough draft, revising, and editing.
- Writers often choose a general topic first and then narrow the focus to a more specific topic.
- Prewriting includes any brainstorming technique used to generate ideas, narrow the focus of abstract thoughts and ideas, and transfer them into written form.
- A good topic interests the writer, appeals to the audience, and fits the purpose of the writing project.

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3.1.2: Outlining

Purpose of an Outline

Once your topic has been chosen, your ideas have been generated through brainstorming techniques, and you've developed a working thesis, the next step in the prewriting stage is to create an outline. Sometimes called a "blueprint," or "plan" for your paper, an outline helps writers organize their thoughts and categorize the main points they wish to make in an order that makes sense.

Creating an outline is an important step in the writing process!

The purpose of an outline is to help you organize your paper by checking to see if and how your ideas connect to each other, or whether you need to flesh out a point or two.

No matter the length of the paper, from a three-page weekly assignment to a 50-page senior thesis, outlines can help you see the overall picture.

Having an outline also helps prevent writers from "getting stuck" when writing the first draft of an essay.

A well-developed outline will show the essential elements of an essay:

- thesis of essay
- main idea of each body paragraph
- evidence/support offered in each paragraph to substantiate the main points

A well-developed outline breaks down the parts of your thesis in a clear, hierarchical manner. Writing an outline **before** beginning an essay helps the writer organize ideas generated through brainstorming and/or research. In short, a well-developed outline makes your paper easier to write.

The formatting of any outline is not arbitrary; the system of formatting and number/letter designations creates a visual hierarchy of the ideas, or points, being made in the essay.

Major points, in other words, should not be buried in subtopic levels.

Types of Outlines

Alphanumeric Outlines

This is the most common type of outline used and is usually instantly recognizable to most people. The formatting follows these characters, in this order:

Level 1: Roman Numerals (I, II, III, IV, V, etc.)

Level 2: Capitalized Letters (A, B, C, D, E, etc.)

Level 3: Arabic Numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc.)

Level 4: Lowercase Letters (a, b, c, d, e, etc.)

Example 3.1.2.1:

I. *(Main point)* Lowering the speed limit to 55 mph on Interstate highways is a cost effective way to reduce pollution and greenhouse gases
   A. *(Supporting detail)* Gas mileage significantly decreases at speeds over 55 mph
      1. *(Supporting detail for sub-point)* Slowing down from 65 mph to 55 mph can increase MPG by as much as 15 percent
         a. *(Additional explanation/support for supporting detail)* Each 5 mph driven over 60 mph is like paying an additional $0.21 per gallon for gas (at $3.00 per gallon).

If the outline needs to subdivide beyond these divisions, use Arabic numerals inside parentheses and then lowercase letters inside parentheses.

Decimal Outlines

The decimal outline follows the same levels of indentation when formatting to indicate the hierarchy of ideas/points as the alphanumeric outline. The added benefit of decimal notation, however, is that it clearly shows, through the decimal breakdown, how each progressive level relates to the larger whole.

Example 3.1.2.2:

1. *(Main point)* Lowering the speed limit on all Interstate highways to 55 mph would create a significant, cost free reduction in air pollution.
   1. *(Supporting detail)* Gas consumption significantly increases at speeds over 55 mph.
      1. (Supporting detail for sub-point) Slowing down from 65 mph to 55 mph can increase your MPG by as much as 15 percent, and thereby eliminate 15 percent of carbon emissions.
         1. *(Additional explanation/support for supporting detail)* According to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), "as a rule of thumb, each 5 mph driven over 60 mph is like paying an additional $0.21 per gallon for gas (at $3.00 per gallon)."

Micro and Macro Outlines

The indentation/formatting of a micro (full sentence) or macro (topic) outline is essentially the same as alphanumeric/decimal outlines. The difference between micro and macro outlines lies in the specificity and depth of the content.

Micro outlines focus on the "micro," the drilled-down specific details of the essay's content. They are particularly useful when the topic you are discussing is complex in nature. When creating a micro outline, it can also be useful to insert the quotations you plan to include in the essay (with citations) and subsequent analyses of quotes. Taking this extra step helps ensure that you have enough support for your ideas, as well as reminding writers to actually analyze and discuss quotations, rather than simply inserting quotes and moving on. While time-consuming to create, micro outlines can be seen as basically creating the first rough draft of an essay.

Macro outlines, in contrast, focus on the "big picture" of an essay's main points and support by using short phrases or keywords to indicate the focus and content at each level of the essay's development. A macro outline is useful when writing about a variety of ideas and issues where the ordering of points is more flexible. Macro outlines are also especially helpful when writing timed essays, or essay exam questions--or any rhetorical situation where writers need to quickly get their ideas down in an organized essay format.

Example 3.1.2.3: Micro/Full-Sentence Outline

I. *(Main point)* Lowering the speed limit on all Interstate highways to 55 mph would create a significant, cost free reduction in air pollution.
   A. *(Supporting detail)* Gas consumption significantly increases at speeds over 55 mph.
      1. *(Supporting detail for sub-point)* Slowing down from 65 mph to 55 mph can increase your car's MPG by as much as 15 percent, and thereby eliminate15 percent of carbon emissions.
         a. *(Additional explanation/support for supporting detail)* According to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), "as a rule of thumb, each 5 mph driven over 60 mph is like paying an additional $0.21 per gallon for gas (at $3.00 per gallon)".

Example 3.1.2.4: Macro/Topic Outline

I. *(Main point)* Lowering the speed limit on all Interstate highways to 55 mph would create a significant, cost free reduction in air pollution.
   A. *(Supporting detail)* Increase of Consumption over 55 mph
      1. *(Supporting detail for sub-point)* Consumption and carbon emissions
         a. *(Additional explanation/support for supporting detail)* Amount of money saved

Creating an Outline

Identify your topic: Put the topic in your own words in with a single sentence or phrase to help you stay on topic.

Determine your main points. What are the main points you want to make to convince your audience? Refer back to the prewriting/brainstorming exercise of answering 5WH questions: "why or how is the main topic important?" Using your brainstorming notes, you should be able to create a working thesis.

List your main points/ideas in a logical order. You can always change the order later as you evaluate your outline.

Create sub-points for each major idea. Typically, each time you have a new number or letter, there need to be at least two points (i.e. if you have an A, you need a B; if you have a 1, you need a 2; etc.). Though perhaps frustrating at first, it is indeed useful because it forces you to think hard about each point; if you can't create two points, then reconsider including the first in your paper, as it may be extraneous information that may detract from your argument.

Evaluate: Review your organizational plan, your blueprint for your paper. Does each paragraph have a controlling idea/topic sentence? Is each point adequately supported? Look over what you have written. Does it make logical sense? Is each point suitably fleshed out? Is there anything included that is unnecessary?

Overview: View the YouTube video on "Outlining" from the University of North Carolina's Online Writing Lab:

Exercise 4

1. Create a sentence outline from the following introductory paragraph in alphanumeric format:

The popularity of knitting is cyclical, rising and falling according to the prevailing opinion of women's places in society. Though internationally a unisex hobby, knitting is pervasively thought of as a woman's hobby in the United States. Knitting is currently enjoying a boost in popularity as traditionally minded women pick up the craft while women who enjoy subverting traditional gender roles have also picked up the needles to reclaim "the lost domestic arts" and give traditionally feminine crafts the proper respect. American men are also picking up the needles in greater numbers, with men's knitting guilds and retreats nationwide. This rise in popularity has made the receiving of hand-knit items special, and many people enjoy

receiving these long-lasting, painstakingly crafted items. For any knitters, the perfect gift starts by choosing the perfect yarn. Choosing the perfect yarn for a knitting project relies on the preferences of the person for whom the project is being made, the availability of the yarn, and the type of yarn recommended by the pattern.

What is the thesis? How is the topic introduced? Is there a hierarchy of supporting points?

2. Now create your own outline based on the topic you developed in Exercise 3.

Example 3.1.2.5: 3-Level Alphanumeric Outline

Outline

Thesis: Making the perfect egg omelet requires proper preparation and skillful cooking technique.

I. Making the perfect egg omelet requires proper preparation.
   A. The cook must have adequate utensils.
      1. A heavy, Teflon-coated frying pan gives even heat and prevents burning.
      2. A plastic spatula prevents the cook from scratching the frying pan.
   B. The cook must select fresh ingredients.
      1. Fresh eggs make a fluffier omelet than eggs that have aged.
      2. Sweet milk blends into the egg batter more evenly than sour milk.
      3. Fresh vegetable oil is necessary to avoid giving the omelet a greasy flavor and texture.
      4. Newly cracked pepper and sea salt add extra zest to the egg batter.

II. Making the perfect egg omelet requires skillful cooking techniques.
   A. The cook must prepare the egg batter quickly.
      1. The eggs must be beaten with a whisk until they are fluffy.
      2. The milk and seasonings must be whisked into the egg batter before the eggs go flat.
   B. The cook must fry the egg batter with care.
      1. The egg batter must be poured into the frying pan as soon as the oil is hot.
      2. The omelet must be turned in the pan only once as soon as the batter sets on top.

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3.1.3: Drafting (Part 1)

Drafting is the stage of the writing process in which you develop a complete first version of a piece of writing. Even professional writers admit that an empty page scares them because they feel they need to come up with something fresh and original every time they open a blank document on their computers. Because you have completed the first two steps in the writing process, you have already recovered from empty page syndrome. You have prewriting and planning already done, so you know what will go on that blank page: what you wrote in your outline.

Goals and Strategies for Drafting

Your objective at this stage of the writing process is to draft an essay with at least three body paragraphs, which means that the essay will contain a minimum of five paragraphs, including an introduction and a conclusion. A draft is a complete version of a piece of writing, but it is not the final version. The step in the writing process after drafting, as you may remember, is revising. During revising, you will have the opportunity to make changes to your first draft before you put the finishing touches on it during the editing and proofreading stage. A first draft gives you a working version that you can later improve.

If you are more comfortable starting on paper than on the computer, you can start on paper and then type it before you revise. You can also use a voice recorder to get yourself started, dictating a paragraph or two to get you thinking. In this lesson, Mariah does all her work on the computer, but you may use pen and paper or the computer to write a rough draft.

Making the Writing Process Work for You

The following approaches, done alone or in combination with others, may improve your writing and help you move forward in the writing process:

- **Begin writing with the part you know the most about**: You can start with the third paragraph in your outline if ideas come easily to mind. You can start with the second paragraph or the first paragraph, too. Although paragraphs may vary in length, keep in mind that short paragraphs may contain insufficient support. Readers may also think the writing is abrupt. Long paragraphs may be wordy and may lose your reader's interest. As a guideline, try to write paragraphs longer than one sentence but shorter than the length of an entire double-spaced page.
- **Write one paragraph at a time and then stop**: As long as you complete the assignment on time, you may choose how many paragraphs you complete in one sitting. Pace yourself. On the other hand, try not to procrastinate. Writers should always meet their deadlines.
- **Take short breaks to refresh your mind**: This tip might be most useful if you are writing a multipage report or essay. Still, if you are antsy or cannot concentrate, take a break to let your mind rest. But do not let breaks extend too long. If you spend too much time away from your essay, you may have trouble starting again. You may forget key points or lose momentum. Try setting an alarm to limit your break, and when the time is up, return to your desk to write.
- **Be reasonable with your goals**: If you decide to take ten-minute breaks, try to stick to that goal. If you told yourself that you need more facts, then commit to finding them. Holding yourself to your own goals will create successful writing assignments.
- **Keep your audience and purpose in mind as you write**: These aspects of writing are just as important when you are writing a single paragraph for your essay as when you are considering the direction of the entire essay.

Of all of these considerations, keeping your purpose and your audience at the front of your mind is the most important key to writing success. If your purpose is to persuade, for example, you will present your facts and details in the most logical and convincing way you can. Your purpose will guide your mind as you compose your sentences. Your audience will guide word choice. Are you writing for experts, for a general audience, for other college students, or for people who know very little about your topic? Keep asking yourself what your readers, with their background and experience, need to be told in order to understand your ideas.

How can you best express your ideas so they are totally clear and your communication is effective?

You may want to identify your purpose and audience on an index card that you clip to your paper (or keep next to your computer). On that card, you may want to write notes to yourself—perhaps about what that audience might not know or what it needs to know—so that you will be sure to address those issues when you write. It may be a good idea to also state exactly what you want to explain to that audience, or to inform them of, or to persuade them about.

Exercise 5

Using the topic for the essay that you outlined in the second step of Exercise 4, describe your purpose and your audience as specifically as you can. Use your own sheet of paper to record your responses. Then keep these responses near you during future stages of the writing process.

Purpose: _____

Audience: _____

Discovering the Basic Elements of a First Draft

If you have been using the information in the previous chapters step by step to help you develop an assignment, you already have both a formal topic outline and a formal sentence outline to direct your writing. Knowing what a first draft looks like will help you make the creative leap from the outline to the first draft.

A first draft should include the following elements:

- An **introduction** that piques the audience's interest, tells what the essay is about, and motivates readers to keep reading.
- A **thesis statement** that presents the main point, or controlling idea, of the entire piece of writing.
- A **topic sentence** in each paragraph that states the main idea of the paragraph and implies how that main idea connects to the thesis statement.
- **Supporting sentences** in each paragraph that develop or explain the topic sentence. These can be specific facts, examples, anecdotes, or other details that elaborate on the topic sentence.
- A **conclusion** that reinforces the thesis statement and leaves the audience with a feeling of completion.

The Bowtie Method

There are many ways to think about the writing process as a whole. One way to imagine your essay is to see it like a bowtie. In the figure below, you will find a visual representation of this metaphor. The left side of the bow is the introduction, which begins with a hook and ends with the thesis statement. In the center, you will find the body paragraphs, which grow with strength as the paper progresses, and each paragraph contains a supported topic sentence. On the right side, you will find the conclusion. Your conclusion should reword your thesis and then wrap up the paper with a summation, clinch, or challenge. In the end, your paper should present itself as a neat package, like a bowtie.

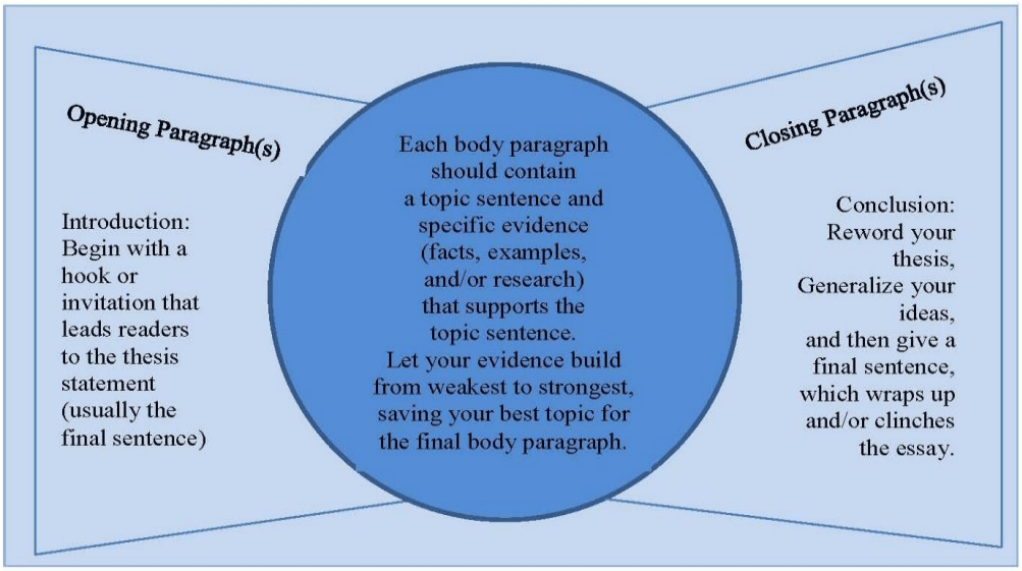


Figure 3.1.3.1 - *Figure of the "Bowtie Method"*

Starting Your First Draft

Now we are finally ready to look over Mariah's shoulder as she begins to write her essay about digital technology and the confusing choices that consumers face. As she does, you should have in front of you your outline, with its thesis statement and topic sentences, and the notes you wrote earlier in this lesson on your purpose and audience. Reviewing these will put both you and Mariah in the proper mind-set to start.

The following is Mariah's thesis statement:

E-book readers are changing the way people read.

Here are the notes that Mariah wrote to herself to characterize her purpose and audience:

> Everyone wants the newest and the best digital technology, but the choices are many, and the specifications are often confusing.
>
> Purpose: My purpose is to inform readers about the wide variety of consumer digital technology available in stores and to explain why the specifications for these products, expressed in numbers that average consumer don't understand, often cause bad or misinformed buying decisions.
>
> Audience: My audience is my instructor and members of this class. Most of them are not heavy into technology except for the usual laptops, cell phones, and MP3 players, which are not topics I'm writing about. I'll have to be as exact and precise as I can be when I explain possibly unfamiliar product specifications. At the same time, they're more with it electronically than my grandparents' VCR-flummoxed generation, so I won't have to explain every last detail.

Mariah chose to begin by writing a quick introduction based on her thesis statement. She knew that she would want to improve her introduction significantly when she revised. Right now, she just wanted to give herself a starting point. Remember that she could have started directly with any of the body paragraphs. You will learn more about writing attention-getting introductions and effective conclusions later in this chapter.

With her thesis statement and her purpose and audience notes in front of her, Mariah then looked at her sentence outline. She chose to use that outline because it includes the topic sentences. The following is the portion of her outline for the first body paragraph. The Roman numeral I identifies the topic sentence for the paragraph, capital letters indicate supporting details, and

Arabic numerals label sub-points.

I. Ebook readers are changing the way people read.
   A. Ebook readers make books easy to access and to carry.
      1. Books can be downloaded electronically.
      2. Devices can store hundreds of books in memory.
   B. The market expands as a variety of companies enter it.
      1. Booksellers sell their own ebook readers.
      2. Electronics and computer companies also sell ebook readers.
   C. Current ebook readers have significant limitations.
      1. The devices are owned by different brands and may not be compatible.
      2. Few programs have been made to duplicate the way Americans borrow and read printed books.

Mariah then began to expand the ideas in her outline into a paragraph. Notice how the outline helped her guarantee that all her sentences in the body of the paragraph develop the topic sentence.

> Ebook readers are changing the way people read, or so ebook developers hope. The main selling point for these handheld devices, which are sort of the size of a paperback book, is that they make books easy to access and carry. Electronic versions of printed books can be downloaded online for a few bucks or directly from your cell phone. These devices can store hundreds of books in memory and, with text-to-speech features, can even read the texts. The market for ebooks and ebook readers keeps expanding as a lot of companies enter it. Online and traditional booksellers have been the first to market ebook readers to the public, but computer companies, especially the ones already involved in cell phone, online music, and notepad computer technology, will also enter the market. The problem for consumers, however, is which device to choose. Incompatibility is the norm. Ebooks can be read only on the devices they were intended for. Furthermore, use is restricted by the same kind of DRM systems that restrict the copying of music and videos. So, book buyers are often unable to lend books to other readers, as they can with a read book. Few accommodations have been made to fit the other way Americans read: by borrowing books from libraries. What is a buyer to do?

If you write your first draft on the computer, consider creating a new file folder for each course with a set of subfolders inside the course folders for each assignment you are given. Label the folders clearly with the course names, and label each assignment folder and word processing document with a title that you will easily recognize. The assignment name is a good choice for the document. Then use that subfolder to store all the drafts you create. When you start each new draft, do not just write over the last one. Instead, save the draft with a new tag after the title—draft 1, draft 2, and so on—so that you will have a complete history of drafts in case your instructor wishes you to submit them. In your documents, observe any formatting requirements—for margins, headers, placement of page numbers, and other layout matters—that your instructor requires.

Exercise 6

Study how Mariah made the transition from her sentence outline to her first draft. First, copy her outline onto your own sheet of paper. Leave a few spaces between each part of the outline. Then copy sentences from Mariah's paragraph to align each sentence with its corresponding entry in her outline.

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3.1.4: Drafting (Part 2)

Continuing the First Draft

Mariah continued writing her essay, moving to the second and third body paragraphs. She had supporting details but no numbered sub-points in her outline, so she had to consult her prewriting notes for specific information to include

. If you decide to take a break between finishing your first body paragraph and starting the next one, do not start writing immediately when you return to your work. Put yourself back in context and in the mood by rereading what you have already written. This is what Mariah did. If she had stopped writing in the middle of writing the paragraph, she could have jotted down some quick notes to herself about what she would write next.

Preceding each body paragraph that Mariah wrote is the appropriate section of her sentence outline. Notice how she expanded Roman numeral II from her outline into a first draft of the second body paragraph. As you read, ask yourself how closely she stayed on purpose and how well she paid attention to the needs of her audience.

Outline

I. ...
II. Digital cameras have almost totally replaced film cameras.
    A. The first major choice is the type of digital camera.
        1. Compact digital cameras are light but lack the megapixels.
        2. Single lens reflex cameras, or SLRs, may be large but can be used for many functions.
        3. Some cameras combine the best features of compacts and SLRs.
    B. Choosing the camera type involves the confusing “megapixel wars.”
    C. The zoom lens battle also determines the camera you will buy. ...

Digital cameras have almost totally replaced film cameras in amateur photographers’ gadget bags. My father took hundreds of slides when his children were growing up, but he had more and more trouble getting them developed. So, he decided to go modern. But, what kind of camera should he buy? The small compact digital cameras could slip right in his pocket, but if he tried to print a photograph larger than an 8 x 10, the quality would be poor. When he investigated buying a single lens reflex camera, or SLR, he discovered that they were as versatile as his old film camera, also an SLR, but they were big and bulky. Then he discovered yet a third type, which combined the smaller size of the compact digital cameras with the zoom lenses available for SLRs. His first thought was to buy one of those, but then he realized he had a lot of decisions to make. How many megapixels should the camera be? Five? Ten? What is the advantage of each? Then came the size of the zoom lens. He knew that 3x was too small, but what about 25x? Could he hold a lens that long without causing camera shake? He read many photography magazines and buying guides, and he still wasn’t sure he was right.

Mariah then began her third and final body paragraph using Roman numeral III from her outline.

Outline

I.
II. ...
III. Nothing is more confusing to me than choosing among televisions.
    A. In the resolution wars, what are the benefits of 1080p and 768p?
    B. In the screen-size wars, what do plasma screens and LCD screens offer?
    C. Does every home really need a media center? ...

Nothing is more confusing to me than choosing among televisions. It confuses lots of people who want a new high-definition digital television (HDTV) with a large screen to watch sports and DVDs on. You could listen to the guys in the electronics stores, but word has it they know little more than you do. They want to sell you what they have in stock, not what best fits your needs. You face decisions you never had to make with the old, bulky picture-tube televisions. Screen resolution means the

number of horizontal scan lines the screen can show. This resolution is often 1080p, or full HD, or 768p. The trouble is that if you have a smaller screen, 32 inches or 37 inches, you won't be able to tell the difference with the naked eye. The 1080p televisions cost more, though, so those are what the salespeople want you to buy. They get bigger commissions. The other important decision you face as you walk around the sales floor is whether to get a plasma screen or an LCD screen. Now here the salespeople may finally give you decent info. Plasma flat-panel television screens can be much larger in diameter than their LCD rivals. Plasma screens show decent lacks and can be viewed at a wider angle than current LCD screens. But be careful and tell the salesperson you have budget constraints. Large flatpanel plasma screens are much more expensive than flat-screen LCD models. Don't buy more television than you need.

Exercise 7

Reread body paragraphs two and three of the essay that Mariah is writing. Then answer the questions on your own sheet of paper.

1. In body paragraph two, Mariah decided to develop her paragraph as a nonfiction narrative. Do you agree with her decision? Explain. How else could she have chosen to develop the paragraph? Why is that better?
2. Compare the writing styles of paragraphs two and three. What evidence do you have that Mariah was getting tired or running out of steam? What advice would you give her? Why?
3. Choose one of these two body paragraphs. Write a version of your own that you think better fits Mariah's audience and purpose.

Writing a Title

A writer's best choice for a title is one that alludes to the main point of the entire essay. Like the headline in a newspaper or the big, bold title in a magazine, an essay's title gives the audience a first peek at the content. If readers like the title, they are likely to keep reading.

Following her outline carefully, Mariah crafted each paragraph of her essay. Moving step by step in the writing process, Mariah finished the draft and even included a brief concluding paragraph which you will read later. She then decided, as the final touch for her writing session, to add an engaging title.

Thesis Statement: Everyone wants the newest and the best digital technology, but the choices are many, and the specifications are often confusing.

Working Title: Digital Technology: The Newest and the Best at What Price?

key takeaways

- Make the writing process work for you. Use any and all of the strategies that help you move forward in the writing process.
- Always be aware of your purpose for writing and the needs of your audience. Cater to those needs in every sensible way.
- Remember to include all the key structural parts of an essay: a thesis statement that is part of your introductory paragraph, three or more body paragraphs as described in your outline, and a concluding paragraph. Then add an engaging title to draw in readers.
- Write paragraphs of an appropriate length for your writing assignment. Paragraphs in college-level writing can be a page long, as long as they cover the main topics in your outline.
- Use your topic outline or your sentence outline to guide the development of your paragraphs and the elaboration of your ideas. Each main idea, indicated by a Roman numeral in your outline, becomes the topic of a new paragraph. Develop it with the supporting details and the sub-points of those details that you included in your outline.
- Generally speaking, write your introduction and conclusion last, after you have fleshed out the body paragraphs.

Drafting Body Paragraphs

If your thesis gives the reader a roadmap to your essay, then body paragraphs should closely follow that map. The reader should be able to predict what follows your introductory paragraph by simply reading the thesis statement. The body paragraphs present the evidence you have gathered to confirm your thesis. Before you begin to support your thesis in the body, you must find information from a variety of sources that support and give credit to what you are trying to prove.

Select Primary Support for Your Thesis

Without primary support, your argument is not likely to be convincing. Primary support can be described as the major points you choose to expand on your thesis. It is the most important information you select to argue for your point of view. Each point you choose will be incorporated into the topic sentence for each body paragraph you write. Your primary supporting points are further supported by supporting details within the paragraphs.

Remember that a worthy argument is backed by examples. In order to construct a valid argument, good writers conduct lots of background research and take careful notes. They also talk to people knowledgeable about a topic in order to understand its implications before writing about it. For guidance on incorporating research into your paragraphs, see the section “Using Sources.”

Identify the Characteristics of Good Primary Support

In order to fulfill the requirements of good primary support, the information you choose must meet the following standards:

- **Be relevant to the thesis**: Primary support is considered strong when it relates directly to the thesis. Primary support should show, explain, or prove your main argument without delving into irrelevant details. When faced with lots of information that could be used to prove your thesis, you may think you need to include it all in your body paragraphs. But effective writers resist the temptation to lose focus. Choose your supporting points wisely by making sure they directly connect to your thesis.
- **Be specific**: The main points you make about your thesis and the examples you use to expand on those points need to be more specific than the thesis. Use specific examples to provide the evidence and to build upon your general ideas. These types of examples give your reader something narrow to focus on, and if used properly, they leave little doubt about your claim. General examples, while they convey the necessary information, are not nearly as compelling or useful in writing because they are too obvious and typical.
- **Be detailed**: Remember that your thesis, while specific, should not be very detailed. The body paragraphs are where you develop the discussion that a thorough essay requires. Using detailed support shows readers that you have considered all the facts and chosen only the most precise details to enhance your point of view.

Pre-write to Identify Primary Supporting Points for a Thesis Statement

Recall that when you pre-write you essentially make a list of examples or reasons why you support your stance. Stemming from each point, you further provide details to support those reasons. After prewriting, you are then able to look back at the information and choose the most compelling pieces you will use in your body paragraphs.

Select the Most Effective Primary Supporting Points for a Thesis Statement

As you developed a working thesis through prewriting techniques, you may have generated a lot of information, which may be edited out later. Remember that your primary support must be relevant to your thesis. Remind yourself of your main argument, and delete any ideas that do not directly relate to it. Omitting unrelated ideas ensures that you will use only the most convincing information in your body paragraphs. Choose at least three of only the most compelling points. These will serve as the topic sentences for your body paragraphs.

When you support your thesis, you are revealing evidence. Evidence includes anything that can help support your stance. The following are the kinds of evidence you will encounter as you conduct your research:

1. **Facts**: Facts are the best kind of evidence to use because they often cannot be disputed. They can support your stance by providing background information on or a solid foundation for your point of view. However, some facts may still need explanation. For example, the sentence "The most populated state in the United States is California" is a pure fact, but it may require some explanation to make it relevant to your specific argument.
2. **Judgments**: Judgments are conclusions drawn from the given facts. Judgments are more credible than opinions because they are founded upon careful reasoning and examination of a topic.
3. **Testimony**: Testimony consists of direct quotations from either an eyewitness or an expert witness. An eyewitness is someone who has direct experience with a subject; he adds authenticity to an argument based on facts. An expert witness is a person who has extensive experience with a topic. This person studies the facts and provides commentary based on either facts or judgments, or both. An expert witness adds authority and credibility to an argument.
4. **Personal observation**: Personal observation is similar to testimony, but personal observation consists of your testimony. It reflects what you know to be true because you have experiences and have formed either opinions or judgments about them. For instance, if you are one of five children and your thesis states that being part of a large family is beneficial to a child's social development, you could use your own experience to support your thesis.

You can consult a vast pool of resources to gather support for your stance. Citing relevant information from reliable sources ensures that your reader will take you seriously and consider your assertions. Use any of the following sources for your essay: newspapers or news organization websites, magazines, encyclopedias, and scholarly journals, which are periodicals that address topics in a specialized field. When using sources, you are responsible for properly documenting the borrowed information properly. Refer to the section "Using Sources" for more information.

Choose Supporting Topic Sentences

Each body paragraph contains a topic sentence that states one aspect of your thesis and then expands upon it. Like the thesis statement, each topic sentence should be specific and supported by concrete details, facts, or explanations.

Each body paragraph should comprise the following elements: topic sentence + supporting details (examples, reasons, or arguments)

As you read in Writing Paragraphs, topic sentences indicate the location and main points of the basic arguments of your essay. These sentences are vital to writing your body paragraphs because they always refer back to and support your thesis statement. Topic sentences are linked to the ideas you have introduced in your thesis, thus reminding readers what your essay is about. A paragraph without a clearly identified topic sentence may be unclear and scattered, just like an essay without a thesis statement.

Unless your professor instructs otherwise, you should include at least three body paragraphs in your essay. A five-paragraph essay, including the introduction and conclusion, is commonly the standard for exams and essay assignments because it is meant to help students create fully developed essays; however, writers should maintain flexibility and not expect all essays to conform to that model. The emphasis is on creating an essay that provides enough support to tell a story, create an image or idea, or inform or persuade the audience.

Example 3.1.4.1:

Author J.D. Salinger relied primarily on his personal life and belief system as the foundation for the themes in the majority of his works.

Example 3.1.4.2:

The following paragraph contains supporting detail sentences for the primary support sentence (the topic sentence), which is underlined.

Salinger, a World War II veteran, suffered from posttraumatic stress disorder, a disorder that influenced the themes in many of his works. He did not hide his mental anguish over the horrors of war and once told his daughter, "You never really get the smell of burning flesh out of your nose, no matter how long you live." His short story "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" details a day in the life of a WWII veteran who was recently released form an army hospital for psychiatric problems. The man acts questionably with a little girl he meets on the beach before he returns to his hotel room and commits suicide. Another short Story, "For Esme – with Love and Squalor," is narrated by a traumatized soldier who sparks an unusual relationship with a young girl he meets before he departs to partake in D-Day. Finally, in Salinger's only novel, the Catcher in The Rye, he continues with the theme of posttraumatic stress, though not directly related to war. From a rest home for the mentally ill, sixteen-year-old Holden Caulfield narrates the story of his nervous breakdown following the death of his younger brother.

Draft Supporting Detail Sentences for Each Primary Support Sentence

After deciding which primary support points you will use as your topic sentences, you must add details to clarify and demonstrate each of those points. These supporting details provide examples, facts, or evidence that support the topic sentence. The writer drafts possible supporting detail sentences for each primary support sentence based on the thesis statement:

Thesis: Unleashed dogs on city streets are a dangerous nuisance.

I. Dogs can scare cyclists.
   A. Cyclists are forced to zigzag on the roads.
   B. School children panic and turn wildly on their bikes.
   C. People walking at night freeze in fear.

II. Loose dogs are traffic hazards.
   A. Dogs in the street make people swerve their cars.
   B. To avoid dogs, drivers run into other cars or pedestrians.
   C. Children coaxing dogs across city streets create danger.

III. Unleashed dogs damage gardens.
   A. They step on flowers and vegetables.
   B. They destroy hedges by urinating on them.
   C. They mess up lawns by digging holes.

You have the option of writing your topic sentences in one of three ways. You can state it at the beginning of the body paragraph, or at the end of the paragraph, or you do not have to write it at all. This is called an implied topic sentence. An implied topic sentence lets readers form the main idea for themselves. For beginning writers, it is best to not use implied topic sentences because it makes it harder to focus your writing. Your instructor may also want to clearly identify the sentences that support your thesis.

key takeaways

- Your body paragraphs should closely follow the path set forth by your thesis statement.
- Strong body paragraphs contain evidence that supports your thesis.

- Primary support comprises the most important points you use to support your thesis.
- Strong primary support is specific, detailed, and relevant to the thesis.
- Prewriting helps you determine your most compelling primary support.
- Evidence includes facts, judgments, testimony, and personal observation.
- Reliable sources may include newspapers, magazines, academic journals, books, encyclopedias, and firsthand testimony.
- A topic sentence presents one point of your thesis statement while the information in the rest of the paragraph supports that point.
- A body paragraph comprises a topic sentence plus supporting details.

Exercise 8

Print out the first draft of your essay and use a highlighter to mark your topic sentences in the body paragraphs. Make sure they are clearly stated and accurately present your paragraphs, as well as accurately reflect your thesis. If your topic sentence contains information that does not exist in the rest of the paragraph, rewrite it to more accurately match the rest of the paragraph.

Exercise 9

Choose one of the following working thesis statements. On a separate sheet of paper, write for at least five minutes using one of the prewriting techniques you learned in Chapter 2, "PreWriting Techniques."

1. Unleashed dogs on city streets are a dangerous nuisance.
2. Students cheat for many different reasons.
3. Drug use among teens and young adults is a problem.
4. The most important change that should occur at my college or university is _____.

Exercise 10

Refer to the previous Exercise and select three of your most compelling reasons to support the thesis statement. Remember that the points you choose must be specific and relevant to the thesis. The statements you choose will be your primary support points, and you will later incorporate them into the topic sentences for the body paragraphs.

Collaboration: Please share with a classmate and compare your answers.

Exercise 11

In the previous Exercise, you chose three of your most convincing points to support the thesis statement you selected from the list. Take each point and incorporate it into a topic sentence for each body paragraph.

Supporting point 1: _____

Topic sentence: _____

Supporting point 2: _____

Topic sentence: _____

Supporting point 3: _____

Topic sentence: _____

Collaboration: Please share with a classmate and compare your answers.

Exercise 12

Using the three topic sentences you composed for the thesis statement in Exercise 11, draft at least three supporting details for each point.

Thesis statement: _____

Primary supporting point 1: _____

Supporting details: _____

Primary supporting point 2: _____

Supporting details: _____

Primary supporting point 3: _____

Supporting details: _____

Drafting Introductory and Concluding Paragraphs

Picture your introduction as a storefront window: You have a certain amount of space to attract your customers (readers) to your goods (subject) and bring them inside your store (discussion). Once you have enticed them with something intriguing, you then point them in a specific direction and try to make the sale (convince them to accept your thesis). Your introduction is an invitation to your readers to consider what you have to say and then to follow your train of thought as you expand upon your thesis statement.

Writing an Introduction

An introduction serves the following purposes:

- Establishes your voice and tone, or your attitude, toward the subject
- Introduces the general topic of the essay
- States the thesis that will be supported in the body paragraphs

First impressions are crucial and can leave lasting effects in your reader's mind, which is why the introduction is so important to your essay. If your introductory paragraph is dull or disjointed, your reader probably will not have much interest in continuing with the essay.

Attracting Interest in Your Introductory Paragraph

Your introduction should begin with an engaging statement devised to provoke your readers' interest. In the next few sentences, introduce them to your topic by stating general facts or ideas about the subject. As you move deeper into your introduction, you gradually narrow the focus, moving closer to your thesis. Moving smoothly and logically from your introductory remarks to your thesis statement can be achieved using a funnel technique, as illustrated in the diagram "Funnel Technique."

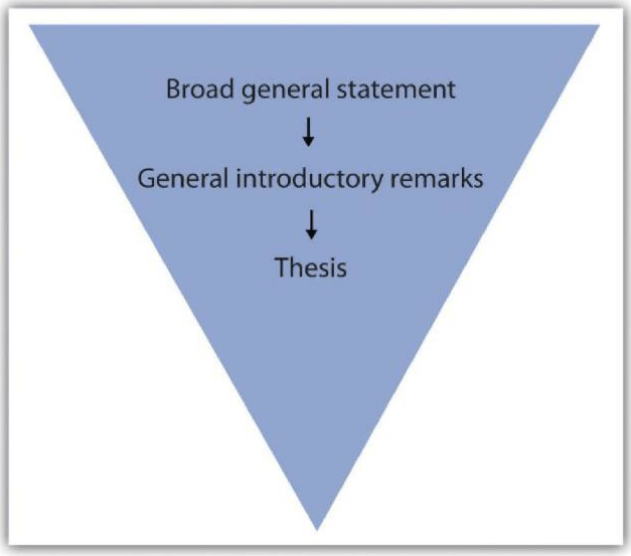


Figure 3.1.4.1 **-** *Funnel Technique*

Immediately capturing your readers' interest increases the chances of having them read what you are about to discuss. You can garner curiosity for your essay in a number of ways. Try to get your readers personally involved by doing any of the following:

- Appealing to their emotions
- Using logic
- Beginning with a provocative question or opinion
- Opening with a startling statistic or surprising fact
- Raising a question or series of questions
- Presenting an explanation or rationalization for your essay
- Opening with a relevant quotation or incident
- Opening with a striking image
- Including a personal anecdote

Remember that your diction, or word choice, while always important, is most crucial in your introductory paragraph. Boring diction could extinguish any desire a person might have to read through your discussion. Choose words that create images or express action.

Earlier in this chapter we followed Mariah as she moved through the writing process. In this section, Mariah writes her introduction and conclusion for the same essay. Mariah incorporates some of the introductory elements into her introductory paragraph, which she previously outlined. Her thesis statement is underlined.

> Play Atari on a General Electric brand television set? Maybe watch Dynasty? Or read old newspaper articles on microfiche at the library? Twenty-five years ago, the average college student did not have many options when it came to entertainment in the form of technology. Fast forward to the twenty-first century, and the digital age has revolutionized the way people entertain themselves. In today's rapidly evolving world of digital technology, consumers are bombarded with endless options for how they do most everything, from buying and reading books to taking and developing photographs. In a society that is obsessed with digital means of entertainment, it is easy for the average person to become baffled. Everyone wants the newest and best digital technology, but the choices are many and the specifications are often confusing.

Writing a Conclusion

It is not unusual to want to rush when you approach your conclusion, and even experienced writers may fade. But what good writers remember is that it is vital to put just as much attention into the conclusion as in the rest of the essay. After all, a hasty

ending can undermine an otherwise strong essay.

A conclusion that does not correspond to the rest of your essay, has loose ends, or is unorganized can unsettle your readers and raise doubts about the entire essay. However, if you have worked hard to write the introduction and body, your conclusion can often be the most logical part to compose.

The Anatomy of a Strong Conclusion

Keep in mind that the ideas in your conclusion must conform to the rest of your essay. In order to tie these components together, restate your thesis at the beginning of your conclusion. This helps you assemble, in an orderly fashion, all the information you have explained in the body. Repeating your thesis reminds your readers of the major arguments you have been trying to prove and also indicates that your essay is drawing to a close. A strong conclusion also reviews your main points and emphasizes the importance of the topic.

The construction of the conclusion is similar to the introduction, in which you make general introductory statements and then present your thesis. The difference is that in the conclusion you first paraphrase, or state in different words, your thesis and then follow up with general concluding remarks. These sentences should progressively broaden the focus of your thesis and maneuver your readers out of the essay.

Many writers like to end their essays with a final emphatic statement. This strong closing statement will cause your readers to continue thinking about the implications of your essay; it will make your conclusion, and thus your essay, more memorable. Another powerful technique is to challenge your readers to make a change in either their thoughts or their actions. Challenging your readers to see the subject through new eyes is a powerful way to ease yourself and your readers out of the essay.

When closing your essay, do not expressly state that you are drawing to a close. Relying on statements such as *in conclusion, it is clear that, as you can see*, or *in summation* is unnecessary and can be considered trite.

It is wise to avoid doing any of the following in your conclusion:

- **Introducing new material**: Introducing new material in your conclusion has an unsettling effect on your reader. When you raise new points, you make your reader want more information, which you could not possibly provide in the limited space of your final paragraph.
- **Contradicting your thesis**: Contradicting or changing your thesis statement causes your readers to think that you do not actually have a conviction about your topic. After all, you have spent several paragraphs adhering to a specific point of view.
- **Changing your thesis**: When you change sides or open up your point of view in the conclusion, your reader becomes less inclined to believe your original argument.
- **Using apologies or disclaimers**: By apologizing for your opinion or stating that you know it is tough to digest, you are in fact admitting that even you know what you have discussed is irrelevant or unconvincing. You do not want your readers to feel this way. Effective writers stand by their thesis statement and do not stray from it.

Mariah incorporates some of these pointers into her conclusion. She has paraphrased her thesis statement in the first sentence, which is underlined.

> In a society fixated on the latest and smartest digital technology, a consumer can easily become confused by the countless options and specifications. The ever-changing state of digital technology challenges consumer with its updates and add-ons and expanding markets and incompatible formats and restrictions – a fact that is complicated by salesmen who want to sell them anything. In a world that is increasingly driven by instant gratification, it's easy for people to buy the first thing they see. The solution for many people should be to avoid buying on impulse. Consumers should think about what they really need, not what is advertised.

Make sure your essay is balanced by not having an excessively long or short introduction or conclusion. Check that they match

each other in length as closely as possible, and try to mirror the formula you used in each. Parallelism strengthens the message of your essay.

Exercise 13

Reread each sentence in Mariah's introductory paragraph. Indicate which techniques she used and comment on how each sentence is designed to attract her readers' interest.

Exercise 14

On a separate sheet of a paper, restate your thesis from an earlier exercise in this section and then make some general concluding remarks. Next, compose a final emphatic statement. Finally, incorporate what you have written into a strong conclusion paragraph for your essay.

Collaboration: Please share with a classmate and compare your answers.

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3.1.5: Revising and Editing (Part 1)

Revising and editing are the two tasks you undertake to significantly improve your essay. Both are very important elements of the writing process. You may think that a completed first draft means little improvement is needed. However, even experienced writers need to improve their drafts and rely on peers during revising and editing. You may know that athletes miss catches, fumble balls, or overshoot goals. Dancers forget steps, turn too slowly, or miss beats. For both athletes and dancers, the more they practice, the stronger their performance will become. Web designers seek better images, a more clever design, or a more appealing background for their web pages. Writing has the same capacity to profit from improvement and revision.

Understanding the Purpose of Revising and Editing

Revising and editing allow you to examine two important aspects of your writing separately, so that you can give each task your undivided attention.

- When you **revise**, you take a second look at your ideas. You might add, cut, move, or change information in order to make your ideas clearer, more accurate, more interesting, or more convincing.
- When you **edit**, you take a second look at how you expressed your ideas. You add or change words. You fix any problems in grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure. You improve your writing style. You make your essay into a polished, mature piece of writing, the end product of your best efforts.

Here are some strategies that writers have developed to look at their first drafts from a fresh perspective. Try them over the course of this semester; then keep using the ones that bring results.

- Take a break. You are proud of what you wrote, but you might be too close to it to make changes. Set aside your writing for a few hours or even a day until you can look at it objectively.
- Ask someone you trust for feedback and constructive criticism.
- Use the resources that your college provides. Find out where your school's writing lab is located and ask about the assistance they provide online and in person.
- Pretend you are one of your readers. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied? Why?

Many people hear the words critic, critical, and criticism and pick up only negative vibes that provoke feelings that make them blush, grumble, or shout. However, as a writer and a thinker, you need to learn to be critical of yourself in a positive way and have high expectations for your work. You also need to train your eye and trust your ability to fix what needs fixing. For this, you need to teach yourself where to look.

When you reread your writing to find revisions to make, look for each type of problem in a separate sweep. Read it straight through once to locate any problems with unity. Read it straight through a second time to find problems with coherence. You may follow this same practice during many stages of the writing process.

Completing a Peer Review

After working so closely with a piece of writing, writers often need to step back and ask for a more objective reader. What writers most need is feedback from readers who can respond only to the words on the page. When they are ready, writers show their drafts to someone they respect and who can give an honest response about its strengths and weaknesses.

You, too, can ask a peer to read your draft when it is ready. After evaluating the feedback and assessing what is most helpful, the reader's feedback will help you when you revise your draft. This process is called **peer review**. You can work with a partner in your class and identify specific ways to strengthen each other's essays. Although you may be uncomfortable sharing your writing at first, remember that each writer is working toward the same goal: a final draft that fits the audience and the purpose. Maintaining

a positive attitude when providing feedback will put you and your partner at ease. The box that follows provides a useful framework for the peer review session.

Questions for Peer Review

Title of essay: _____

Date: _____

Writer's name: _____

Peer reviewer's name: _____

1. This essay is about_____.
2. Your main points in this essay are_____.
3. What I most liked about this essay is_____.
4. These three points struck me as your strongest:
   a. Point: _____
      Why: _____
   b. Point: _____
      Why: _____
   c. Point: _____
      Why: _____

These places in your essay are not clear to me:

a. Where: _____
   Needs improvement because _____
b. Where: _____
   Needs improvement because _____
c. Where: _____
   Needs improvement because _____

The one additional change you could make that would improve this essay significantly is_____.

Exercise 15

Exchange essays with a classmate and complete a peer review of each other's draft in progress. Remember to give positive feedback and to be courteous and polite in your responses. Focus on providing one positive comment and one question for more information to the author

Using Feedback

Using Feedback Objectively

The purpose of peer feedback is to receive constructive criticism of your essay. Your peer reviewer is your first real audience, and you have the opportunity to learn what confuses and delights a reader so that you can improve your work before sharing the final draft with a wider audience (or your intended audience). It may not be necessary to incorporate every recommendation your

peer reviewer makes. However, if you start to observe a pattern in the responses you receive from peer reviewers, you might want to take that feedback into consideration in future assignments. For example, if you read consistent comments about a need for more research, then you may want to consider including more research in future assignments.

Using Feedback from Multiple Sources

You might get feedback from more than one reader as you share different stages of your revised draft. In this situation, you may receive feedback from readers who do not understand the assignment or who lack your involvement with and enthusiasm for it. You need to evaluate the responses you receive according to two important criteria:

- Determine if the feedback supports the purpose of the assignment.
- Determine if the suggested revisions are appropriate to the audience.

Then, using these standards, accept or reject revision feedback.

Exercise 16

Work with two partners. Go back Exercise 14 in this lesson and compare your responses to Mariah's paragraph, with your partners' response. Recall Mariah's purpose for writing and her audience. Then, working individually, list where you agree and where you disagree about revision needs.

Writing at Work

One of the reasons why word-processing programs build in a reviewing feature is that workgroups have become a common feature in many businesses. Writing is often collaborative, and the members of a workgroup and their supervisors often critique group members' work and offer feedback that will lead to a better final product.

Creating Unity and Coherence

Following your outline closely offers you a reasonable guarantee that your writing will stay on purpose and not drift away from the controlling idea. However, when writers are rushed, are tired, or cannot find the right words, their writing may become less than they want it to be. Their writing may no longer be clear and concise, and they may be adding information that is not needed to develop the main idea.

When a piece of writing has unity, all the ideas in each paragraph and in the entire essay clearly belong and are arranged in an order that makes logical sense. When the writing has coherence, the ideas flow smoothly. The wording clearly indicates how one idea leads to another within a paragraph and from paragraph to paragraph.

Reading your writing aloud will often help you find problems with unity and coherence. Listen for the clarity and flow of your ideas. Identify places where you find yourself confused, and write a note to yourself about possible fixes.

Creating Unity

Sometimes writers get caught up in the moment and cannot resist a good digression. Even though you might enjoy such detours when you chat with friends, unplanned digressions usually harm a piece of writing.

Mariah stayed close to her outline when she drafted the three body paragraphs of her essay she tentatively titled "Digital Technology: The Newest and the Best at What Price?" But a recent shopping trip for an HDTV upset her enough that she digressed from the main topic of her third paragraph and included comments about the sales staff at the electronics store she visited. When she revised her essay, she deleted the offtopic sentences that affected the unity of the paragraph. Read the following paragraph twice, the first time without Mariah's changes, and the second time with them.

> Nothing is more confusing to me than choosing among televisions. It confuses lots of people who want a new high-definition digital television (HDTV) with a large screen to watch sports and DVDs on. ~~You could listen to the guys in the electronics store, but word has it they know little more than you do. They want to sell you what they have in stock, not what best fits your needs.~~ You face decisions you never had to make with the old, bulky picture-tube televisions. Screen resolution means the number of horizontal scan lines the screen can show. This resolution is often 1080p, or full HD, or 768p. The trouble is that if you have a smaller screen, 32 inches or 37 inches, you won't be able to tell the difference with the naked eye. ~~The 1080p televisions cost more, though, so those are what the salespeople want you to buy. They get bigger commissions.~~ The other important decision you face as you walk around the sales floor is whether to get a plasma screen or an LCD screen. ~~Now here the salespeople may finally give you decent info.~~ Plasma flat-panel television screens can be much larger in diameter than their LCD rivals. Plasma screens show decent lacks and can be viewed at a wider angle than current LCD screens. ~~But be careful and tell the salesperson you have budget constraints.~~ Large flat-panel plasma screens are much more expensive than flat-screen LCD models. Don't ~~let someone make you~~ buy more television than you need!

Exercise 17

1. Answer the following two questions about Mariah's paragraph:
    1. Do you agree with Mariah's decision to make the deletions she made? Did she cut too much, too little, or just enough? Explain.
    2. Is the explanation of what screen resolution means a digression? Or is it audience friendly and essential to understanding the paragraph? Explain.

Collaboration: Please share with a classmate and compare your answers.

2. Now start to revise the first draft of the essay you wrote at the end of Writing Your Own First Draft. Reread it to find any statements that affect the unity of your writing. Decide how best to revise.

Creating Coherence

Careful writers use transitions to clarify how the ideas in their sentences and paragraphs are related. These words and phrases help the writing flow smoothly. Adding transitions is not the only way to improve coherence, but they are often useful and give a mature feel to your essays. The Table of Common Transitional Words and Phrases groups many common transitions according to their purpose.

After Mariah revised for unity, she next examined her paragraph about televisions to check for coherence. She looked for places where she needed to add a transition or perhaps reword the text to make the flow of ideas clear. In the version that follows, she has already deleted the sentences that were off topic.

Many writers make their revisions on a printed copy and then transfer them to the version on-screen. They conventionally use a small arrow called a caret (^) to show where to insert an addition or correction.

^ Finally, Nothing is more confusing to me than choosing among televisions. It confuses lots of people who want a new high-definition digital television (HD television) with a large screen to watch sports and DVDs on. ^ There's good reason for this confusion: You face a decision you never had to make with the old, bulky picture-tube televisions. ^ The first big decision is the screen resolution you want. Screen resolution means the number of horizontal scan lines the screen can show. This resolution is often 1080p, or full HD, or 768p. The trouble is that if you have a smaller screen, 32 inches or 37 inches diagonal, you won't be able to tell the difference with the naked eye. The ^ second other important decision you face as you walk around the sales floor is whether to get a plasma screen or an LCD screen. ^ Along with the choice of display type, a further decision buyers face is screen size and features. Plasma flat-panel television screens can be much larger in diameter than their LCD rivals. Plasma screens show truer blacks and can be viewed at a wider angle than current LCD screens. ^ However, Large flat-panel plasma screens are much more expensive than flat-screen LCD models. Don't buy more television than you need!

Exercise 18

1. Answer the following questions about Mariah's revised paragraph.
    1. Do you agree with the transitions and other changes that Mariah made to her paragraph? Which would you keep and which were unnecessary? Explain.
    2. What transition words or phrases did Mariah add to her paragraph? Why did she choose each one?
    3. What effect does adding additional sentences have on the coherence of the paragraph? Explain. When you read both versions aloud, which version has a more logical flow of ideas? Explain.
2. Now return to the first draft of the essay you wrote in Starting Your First Draft and revise it for coherence. Add transition words and phrases where they are needed, and make any other changes that are needed to improve the flow and connection between ideas.

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3.1.6: REVISING AND EDITING (PART 2)

Being Clear and Concise

Some writers are very methodical and painstaking when they write a first draft. Other writers unleash a lot of words in order to get out all that they feel they need to say. Do either of these composing styles match your style? Or is your composing style somewhere in between? No matter which description best fits you, the first draft of almost every piece of writing, no matter its author, can be made clearer and more concise. If you have a tendency to write too much, you will need to look for unnecessary words. If you have a tendency to be vague or imprecise in your wording, you will need to find specific words to replace any overly general language.

Identifying Wordiness

Sometimes writers use too many words when fewer words will appeal more to their audience and better fit their purpose. Here are some common examples of wordiness to look for in your draft. Eliminating wordiness helps all readers, because it makes your ideas clear, direct, and straightforward.

- **Sentences that begin with** *There is* or *There are*.
  Wordy: There are two major experiments that the Biology Department sponsors.
  Revised: The Biology Department sponsors two major experiments.
- **Sentences with unnecessary modifiers.**
  Wordy: Two extremely famous and well-known consumer advocates spoke eloquently in favor of the proposed important legislation.
  Revised: Two well-known consumer advocates spoke in favor of the proposed legislation.
- **Sentences with deadwood phrases that add little to the meaning**. Be judicious when you use phrases such as *in terms of, with a mind to, on the subject of, as to whether or not, more or less, as far as…is concerned,* and similar expressions. You can usually find a more straightforward way to state your point.
  Wordy: As a world leader in the field of green technology, the company plans to focus its efforts in the area of geothermal energy. A report as to whether or not to use geysers as an energy source is in the process of preparation.
  Revised: As a world leader in green technology, the company plans to focus on geothermal energy. A report about using geysers as an energy source is in preparation.
- **Sentences in the passive voice or with forms of the verb** *to be*. Sentences with passive-voice verbs often create confusion, because the subject of the sentence does not perform an action. Sentences are clearer when the subject of the sentence performs the action and is followed by a strong verb. Use strong active-voice verbs in place of forms of *to be*, which can lead to wordiness. Avoid passive voice when you can.
  Wordy: It might perhaps be said that using a GPS device is something that is a benefit to drivers who have a poor sense of direction.
  Revised: Using a GPS device benefits drivers who have a poor sense of direction.
- **Sentences with constructions that can be shortened**.
  Wordy: The ebook reader, which is a recent invention, may become as commonplace as the cell phone. My over-sixty uncle bought an ebook reader, and his wife bought an ebook reader, too.
  Revised: The ebook reader, a recent invention, may become as commonplace as the cell phone. My over-sixty uncle and his wife both bought ebook readers.

Exercise 19

Now return once more to the first draft of the essay you have been revising. Check it for unnecessary words. Try making your sentences as concise as they can be.

Choosing Specific, Appropriate Words

Most college essays should be written in formal English, suitable for an academic situation. Follow these principles to be sure that your word choice is appropriate.

- **Avoid slang**: Find alternatives to *bummer, kewl*, and *rad*.
- **Avoid language that is overly casual**: Write about "men and women" rather than "girls and guys" unless you are trying to create a specific effect. A formal tone calls for formal language.
- **Avoid contractions**: Use *do not* in place of *don't*, *I am* in place of *I'm*, *have not* in place of *haven't*, and so on. Contractions are considered casual speech.
- **Avoid clichés**: Overused expressions such as *green with envy, face the music, better late than never,* and similar expressions are empty of meaning and may not appeal to your audience.
- **Be careful when you use words that sound alike but have different meanings**: Some examples are *allusion/illusion, complement/compliment, council/counsel, concurrent/consecutive, founder/flounder,* and *historic/historical*. When in doubt, check a dictionary.
- **Choose words with the connotations you want:** Choosing a word for its connotations is as important in formal essay writing as it is in all kinds of writing. Compare the positive connotations of the word *proud* and the negative connotations of *arrogant* and *conceited*.
- **Use specific words rather than overly general words:** Find synonyms for *thing, people, nice, good, bad, interesting*, and other vague words. Or use specific details to make your exact meaning clear.

Now read the revisions Mariah made to make her third paragraph clearer and more concise. She has already incorporated the changes she made to improve unity and coherence.

> Finally, nothing ^ confuses buyers more than purchasing ~~is more confusing to me than choosing among televisions. It confuses lots of people who want~~ a new high-definition digital television (HDTV), ~~with a large screen to watch sports and DVDs on.~~ ^ and with ~~There's a~~ good reason. ~~for this confusion. You face decisions you never had to make with the old, bulky picture-tube televisions.~~ The first big decision ~~is~~ ^ involves screen resolution, ~~you want.~~ ^ which ~~Screen resolution~~ means the number of horizontal scan lines the screen can show. This resolution is often 1080p, or full HD, or ^ as 768p. The trouble is that ^ on ~~if you have~~ a ~~smaller screen~~, 32-inch or 37-inch diagonal, ^ screen, viewers will not ~~you won't~~ be able to tell the difference ^ between them with the naked eye. The other important decision ~~you face as you walk around the sales floor~~ is whether to get a plasma screen or an LCD screen. ~~Along with the choice of display type, a further decision buyers face is screen size and features~~. Plasma flat-panel television screens can be much larger in diameter than their LCD rivals. Plasma screens show ~~truer~~ ^ deeper blacks and can be viewed at a wider angle than current LCD screens. However, large flat-panel plasma screens are much more expensive than flat-screen LCD models. ^ Only after buyers are totally certain they know what they want should they open their wallets. ~~Don't buy more television than you need!~~

Exercise 20

1. Answer the following questions about Mariah's revised paragraph:
   a. Read the unrevised and the revised paragraphs aloud. Explain in your own words how changes in word choice have affected Mariah's writing.
   b. Do you agree with the changes that Mariah made to her paragraph? Which changes would you keep and which were unnecessary? Explain. What other changes would you have made?
   c. What effect does removing contractions and the pronoun you have on the tone of the paragraph? How would you characterize the tone now? Why?
2. Now return once more to your essay in progress. Read carefully for problems with word choice. Be sure that your draft is written in formal language and that your word choice is specific and appropriate.

Writing at Work

Many companies hire copy editors and proofreaders to help them produce the cleanest possible final drafts of large writing projects. Copy editors are responsible for suggesting revisions and style changes; proofreaders check documents for any errors in capitalization, spelling, and punctuation that have crept in. Many times, these tasks are done on a freelance basis, with one freelancer working for a variety of clients.

Editing Your Draft

If you have been incorporating each set of revisions as Mariah has, you have produced multiple drafts of your writing. So far, all your changes have been content changes. Perhaps with the help of peer feedback, you have made sure that you sufficiently supported your ideas. You have checked for problems with unity and coherence. You have examined your essay for word choice, revising to cut unnecessary words and to replace weak wording with specific and appropriate wording.

The next step after revising the content is **editing**. When you edit, you examine the surface features of your text. You examine your spelling, grammar, usage, and punctuation. You also make sure you use the proper format when creating your finished assignment. Editing often takes time. Budgeting time into the writing process allows you to complete additional edits after revising.

Editing and proofreading your writing helps you create a finished work that represents your best efforts. Here are a few more tips to remember about your readers:

- Readers do not notice correct spelling, but they do notice misspellings.
- Readers look past your sentences to get to your ideas—unless the sentences are awkward, poorly constructed, and frustrating to read.
- Readers notice when every sentence has the same rhythm as every other sentence, with no variety.
- Readers do not cheer when you use there, their, and they're correctly; but they notice when you do not.
- Readers will notice the care with which you handled your assignment and your attention to detail in the delivery of an error-free document.

Chapter 5 offers a useful review of grammar, mechanics, and usage. Use it to help you eliminate major errors in your writing and refine your understanding of the conventions of language. Do not hesitate to ask for help, too, from peer tutors in your academic department or in the college's writing lab. In the meantime, use the following checklists to help you edit your writing.

Checklists for Editing Your Writing

Grammar

- Are some sentences actually sentence fragments?
- Are some sentences run-on sentences? How can I correct them?
- Do some sentences need conjunctions between independent clauses?
- Does every verb agree with its subject?
- Is every verb in the correct tense?
- Are tense forms, especially for irregular verbs, written correctly?
- Have I used subject, object, and possessive personal pronouns correctly?
- Have I used who and whom correctly?
- Is the antecedent of every pronoun clear?
- Do all personal pronouns agree with their antecedents?

- Have I used the correct comparative and superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs?
- Is it clear which word a participial phrase modifies, or is it a dangling modifier?

Sentence Structure

- Are all my sentences simple sentences, or do I vary my sentence structure?
- Have I chosen the best coordinating or subordinating conjunctions to join clauses?
- Have I created long, overpacked sentences that should be shortened for clarity?
- Do I see any mistakes in parallel structure?

Punctuation

- Does every sentence end with the correct end punctuation?
- Can I justify the use of every exclamation point?
- Have I used apostrophes correctly to write all singular and plural possessive forms?
- Have I used quotation marks correctly?

Mechanics and Usage

- Can I find any spelling errors? How can I correct them?
- Have I used capital letters where they are needed?
- Have I written abbreviations, when allowed, correctly?
- Can I find any errors in the use of commonly confused words, such as to/too/two?

Be careful about relying too much on spelling checkers and grammar checkers. A spelling checker cannot recognize that you meant to write *principle* but wrote principal instead. A grammar checker often queries constructions that are perfectly correct. The program does not understand your meaning; it makes its check against a general set of formulas that might not apply in each instance. If you use a grammar checker, accept the suggestions that make sense, but consider why the suggestions came up.

Proofreading requires patience; it is very easy to read past a mistake. Set your paper aside for at least a few hours, if not a day or more, so your mind will rest. Some professional proofreaders read a text backward so they can concentrate on spelling and punctuation. Another helpful technique is to slowly read a paper aloud, paying attention to every word, letter, and punctuation mark. If you need additional proofreading help, ask a reliable friend, a classmate, or a peer tutor to make a final pass on your paper to look for anything you missed.

Formatting

Remember to use proper format when creating your finished assignment. Sometimes an instructor, a department, or a college will require students to follow specific instructions on titles, margins, page numbers, or the location of the writer's name. These requirements may be more detailed and rigid for research projects and term papers, which often observe the American Psychological Association (APA) or Modern Language Association (MLA) style guides, especially when citations of sources are included. To ensure the format is correct and follows any specific instructions, make a final check before you submit an assignment.

Exercise 21

With the help of the checklist, edit and proofread your essay.

key takeaways

- Revising and editing are the stages of the writing process in which you improve your work before producing a final draft.
- During revising, you add, cut, move, or change information in order to improve content.
- During editing, you take a second look at the words and sentences you used to express your ideas and fix any problems in grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure.
- Unity in writing means that all the ideas in each paragraph and in the entire essay clearly belong together and are arranged in an order that makes logical sense.
- Coherence in writing means that the writer's wording clearly indicates how one idea leads to another within a paragraph and between paragraphs.
- Transitional words and phrases effectively make writing more coherent.
- Writing should be clear and concise, with no unnecessary words.
- Effective formal writing uses specific, appropriate words and avoids slang, contractions, clichés, and overly general words.
- Peer reviews, done properly, can give writers objective feedback about their writing. It is the writer's responsibility to evaluate the results of peer reviews and incorporate only useful feedback.
- Remember to budget time for careful editing and proofreading. Use all available resources, including editing checklists, peer editing, and your institution's writing lab, to improve your editing skills.

Exercise 22

Starting with the title "The Future of Information: How It Will Be Created, Transmitted, and Consumed," narrow the focus of the topic until it is suitable for a two- to three-page paper. Then narrow your topic with the help of brainstorming, idea mapping, and searching the Internet until you select a final topic to explore. Keep a journal or diary in which you record and comment on everything you did to choose a final topic. Then record what you will do next to explore the idea and create a thesis statement.

Exercise 23

Write a thesis statement and a formal sentence outline for an essay about the writing process. Include separate paragraphs for prewriting, drafting, and revising and editing. Your audience will be a general audience of educated adults who are unfamiliar with how writing is taught at the college level. Your purpose is to explain the stages of the writing process so that readers will understand its benefits.

Collaboration: Please share with a classmate and compare your answers.

Exercise 24

Pieces of writing in a variety of real-life and work-related situations would benefit from revising and editing. Consider the following list of real-life and work-related pieces of writing: emails, greeting card messages, junk mail, late-night television commercials, social networking pages, local newspapers, bulletin-board postings, and public notices. Find and submit at least two examples of writing that needs revision. Explain what changes you would make. Replace any recognizable names with pseudonyms.

Exercise 25

Group activity: At work, an employer might someday ask you to contribute to the research base for an essay such as the one Mariah wrote or the one you wrote while working through this chapter. Choosing either her topic or your own, compile a list of at least five sources. Then, working in a group of four students, bring in printouts or PDF files of Internet sources or paper copies of non-Internet sources for the other group members to examine. In a group report, rate the reliability of each other's sources.

Exercise 26

Group activity: Working in a peer-review group of four, go to the section on Drafting and reread the draft of the first two body paragraphs of Mariah's essay, "Digital Technology: The Newest and the Best at What Price?" Review those two paragraphs using the same level of inspection given to the essay's third paragraph in the section Revising and Editing. Suggest and agree on changes to improve unity and coherence, eliminate unneeded words, and refine word choice. Your purpose is to help Mariah produce two effective paragraphs for a formal college-level essay about her topic.

Sample Student Paper with Outline

The following paper and outline by Pere Ellis, entitled "Aquaponics: A Viable Solution to World Hunger," clearly breaks down the argument presented in his thesis, providing specific examples in the sub-points and further developing and expanding the subpoints.

Sample Student Outline

Pere J. Ellis II

English 1101 Honors

Dr. Cox

February 25, 2014

Outline

Thesis: Aquaponics is the best solution to the world hunger problem because it is simple to manage, environmentally friendly, and yields larger food quantities than typical farming techniques.

I. Aquaponics is a simple system that can be managed at the individual level, commercial level, and adapted to any location.
   A. An aquaponics system can be managed by one person.
      1. The system can be created at any level to meet the individual needs.
      2. The system can be easily managed with the use of technology.
   B. An aquaponics system can be managed at a commercial level.
      1. The system can be created for small scale and large scale production.
      2. The system is capable of providing produce to the commercial market.
   C. An aquaponics system can be managed at any location.
      1. A system can be built on land not suitable for crops.
      2. A system can be created with plants and animals from similar environments

II. Aquaponics is an environmentally friendly system.
    A. Chemical fertilizers are not used in aquaponics.
        1. Fish excrement is the only fertilizer used in the aquaponic system.
        2. Fish excrement is filtered from the water and cycled back into the system.
    B. Pesticides are not used in aquaponics.
        1. Pesticides contaminate fish tanks and potentially harm the fish.
        2. Pesticides kill insects, which are an additional food source for the fish.

II. Aquaponics yields larger quantities of food.
    A. Aquaponics produces two types of crops.
        1. Various species of plants can be grown in an aquaponics system.
        2. Various species of fish can be grown in an aquaponics system.
    B. Aquaponics produces greater quantities of food in a smaller area.
        1. Aquaponics farms are compounded and compact ecological systems.
        2. Aquaponics farms are capable of producing food year round.

Sample Student Paper

Pere J. Ellis II

English 1101 Honors

Dr. Cox

February 25, 2014

Aquaponics: A Viable Solution to World Hunger

Hunger and food shortages have plagued the world over and over again. The World agricultural community has historical problems with the demand and the need for more food. Technological advancements such as the bioengineering of plants have allowed them to thrive in harsher environments and produce high yields. But these advancements have not solved the world's food problems. One of the more recent developments is a technique known as aquaponics. Aquaponics is a farming method that utilizes a balanced ecological cycle between plants and aquatic animals, which creates surprising results. The cycle starts with transferring fresh water aquatic animal excrement to plants as a source of nutrients. The excrement is then filtered by the plants, and the water is recycled back to the freshwater aquatic animal environment. The cycle is constantly repeated until the plants and animals are harvested. An aquaponics system is the best system for farming because it is the most easily managed and environmentally friendly system available, and it is capable of producing impressive crop yields several times higher than more traditional farming systems practiced today.

Aquaponics is a versatile and simple system that can be easily managed by one person. One individual can easily set up a small scale operation to completely supplement or cheapen a food budget. By incorporating inexpensive sensors and other technological devices, an aquaponics system can be expanded beyond the management capabilities of one individual. Adapting technology to a smaller system will minimize the amount of time spent on managing an aquaponics system. Electronic devices, such as timed fish feeders and automated temperature control devices, reduce the amount of time spent managing a system, while simultaneously increasing production.

Like any individually managed aquaponics systems, a commercial system can be created on any scale. The scale of a commercial aquaponics system will be limited to the available space, workforce, and funding. Commercial systems typically provide produce to individual, local, and national markets. Most commercial aquaponics systems distribute to the local market since a typical aquaponics system is a small or medium scale operation. There are a few large-scale commercial aquaponics companies capable of meeting the demands of the national market.

No matter the scale of the operation, an aquaponics system can be created anywhere. An individual can build an aquaponics system in a backyard or on the rooftop of an apartment building. Several aquaponics farms have been created on land previously incapable of producing crops of any kind. Other commercial scale systems have been built in large unused industrial buildings reconstructed for use as green houses. In addition to being able to build an aquaponics system in any physical location, an

aquaponics farm can also be adapted to many environments. The ability to adapt an aquaponics system to multiple environments comes from the variety of different plants and animals which can be grown within a single system. Identifying plants and animals that thrive in atmospheres similar to the aquaponics farm's environment strengthens the production and survivability of the plants and animals in the system.

While aquaponics is a very adaptive ecological system, it is also an environmentally friendly system with no chemical additives. Unlike other farming techniques, aquaponics systems never use chemical fertilizers. This is partially because chemical fertilizers are extremely toxic to the aquatic animals in the system and there is no need for chemical fertilizers. The entire aquaponics system is a symbiotic ecosystem where the fish and plants rely on each other to survive. Fish excrement provides the nutrients needed for the plants to continue to grow. In turn, the plants filter and clean the water that is reintroduced back into the fish tanks. And the cycle is repeated over and over until harvest. As with chemical fertilizers, pesticides are not used in an aquaponics system because they are harmful to both plants and animals. Additionally, insects are a natural food source for aquatic animals such as fish, which are the most common type of aquatic animal used in an aquaponics system.

While the aquaponics system is an adaptable and environmentally friendly system, its most important quality is the amount of food that can be produced. Aquaponics farms are capable of growing two different types of crops. The adaptability of the aquaponics system is partially derived from the vast combinations of plants and animals which can be cultivated and raised. There are hundreds of various fruits and vegetables that can be grown in an aquaponics system. Broad leafy and juicy fruit bearing plants tend to do very well. Besides plants, various species of freshwater fish such as catfish, trout, and tilapia also do very well in aquaponics systems. In addition to growing fish, a few aquaponics farms have been very successful in raising different species of freshwater shrimp, further diversifying the aquaponics system.

Another advantage of the aquaponics system is that it requires a much smaller area than traditional farming systems. Aquaponics farms are compounded systems that can produce two different types of crops in the same amount of space that one traditional crop requires. This is accomplished in part by growing the plants much closer to each other. Typically, aquaponics systems are built in greenhouses, allowing for year round production, a smaller geographic footprint, and the production of larger crop yields.

The adaptable system of aquaponics is the best answer to solving world hunger because it produces organic and environmentally friendly high yield crops on less land than more traditional farming methods. Even though several aquaponics systems have been built in differing environments throughout world and have done quite well, aquaponics still has not been accepted as a viable alternative to traditional farming. Perhaps this is because it is a new idea and will take a while to catch on. Nevertheless, once aquaponics is accepted as a solution, the world may finally be rid of one of its longest living problems.

3.1.6.1: The Writing Process

3.1.6.1.1: Writing as a Process

3.1.6.1.2: Freewriting

3.1.6.1.3: Brainstorming

3.1.6.1.4: Journalist Questions

3.1.6.1.5: Listing

3.1.6.1.6: Clustering/Mapping

3.1.6.1.7: Outlining

3.1.6.1.8: Drafting

3.1.6.1.9: Revising

3.1.6.1.10: Creating Essay Titles

3.1.6.1.11: Editing/Proofreading

3.1.6.1.12: Final Revision Example

3.1.6.1.13: Essay Checklist

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3.1.6.1: THE WRITING PROCESS

3.1.6.1.1: Writing as a Process

3.1.6.1.2: Freewriting

3.1.6.1.3: Brainstorming

3.1.6.1.4: Journalist Questions

3.1.6.1.5: Listing

3.1.6.1.6: Clustering/Mapping

3.1.6.1.7: Outlining

3.1.6.1.8: Drafting

3.1.6.1.9: Revising

3.1.6.1.10: Creating Essay Titles

3.1.6.1.11: Editing/Proofreading

3.1.6.1.12: Final Revision Example

3.1.6.1.13: Essay Checklist

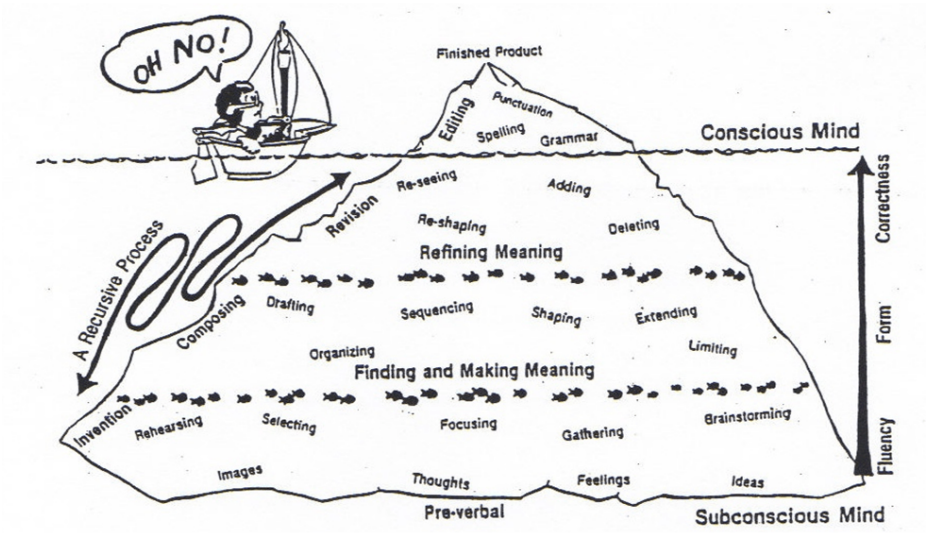
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3.1.6.1.1: Writing as a Process

WHAT IS THE WRITING PROCESS?

No writer can generate a perfect draft on the first attempt. Most employ a ***writing process***, in which they begin with **prewriting and invention, then outlining, composing, revising and editing**. Though the aforementioned might suggest a linear process, it is usually recursive. For instance, you might end up going back to the prewriting phase and do some brainstorming even while writing the actual draft. The general rule of thumb is to invest some time brainstorming and writing a rough outline before writing the essay. Also, save editing for last. Sometimes it may be too difficult to juggle developing your ideas along with attending to grammar so save editing for the very last step.



WRITING AS A PROCESS NOT A PRODUCT:

The iceberg diagram gives a visual image of the writing process. Above the water line is the final product your instructor sees, and below the water line are all the less visible yet important steps that went into building a good essay. Unfortunately, many writers "wreck" themselves by just focusing on the final product rather than the process. This can give you writer's block. Also, following a process, rather than last-minute writing, will help you to produce your strongest and best essays.

WHAT IS PREWRITING?

The prewriting stage is when you begin generating ideas on your topic without focusing too much on organization and correctness. Prewriting allows you to begin creatively and to truly explore the scope and potential of your topic. Also, breaking the writing process down into stages makes it less stressful and more manageable and gives you time to figure out exactly what you want to develop and explore in your paper.

Here are some **successful prewriting strategies:**

- Freewriting
- Brainstorming
- Journalist Questions
- Listing

- Clustering/Mapping

In this chapter, we will look at the WHAT, WHY and HOW of each of these prewriting strategies.

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3.1.6.1.2: Freewriting

WHAT IS FREEWRITING?

Freewriting is a technique that helps you generate content for an essay. Freewriting is writing continuously, letting thoughts unselfconsciously flow (often for about 5 to 10 minutes) without regard to spelling, grammar, style etc., and no corrections are made. Because there are no restrictions on structure/format or length, freewriting allows you the freedom to discover what you want to write about without worrying about rules or expectations.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- It provides you with the raw material to help you start writing an essay.
- It helps you to bypass your "internal critic" who can make it difficult for you to explore your thoughts and ideas.
- It gives you confidence in your ability to explore a topic.
- It helps you develop your own unique writing voice and promote a solid flow, or rhythm, to your sentences.
- It gives you an easy way to begin any piece of writing and helps you surpass writer's block.

HOW DO I DO IT?

Start with a blank piece of paper or blank computer screen. Give yourself a minimum of five minutes of uninterrupted time to freewrite. Write a few words at the top of the page to get you started and keep you focused, such as the general topic of your essay assignment or a quote from the text that is significant to you. Now begin writing whatever comes into your head when you think about this quote, the topic and/or the assignment that you have been given.

Try to keep writing without stopping, crossing-out, or erasing. Even if what you are writing seems like it isn't "correct" or "perfect," keep going. This is the key to freewriting – to write freely! Go for five minutes without stopping. If you have more to say, keep going for as long as you can. Don't evaluate what you are writing, or you will stop the free flow of thoughts and ideas.

Once you have a page or more of freewriting, read back over it and look for ideas or points that you might include in your essay. Underline or circle sentences or groups of sentences that you especially like and think you may be able to use in your essay. Use your freewriting as a springboard for your thinking about this assignment, directing you toward further reading, research and the writing of the first draft of the essay.

Example: Freewriting sample

In response to Chapter VII in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, do the following:

Write a quote, or part of a quote, from the text by Frederick Douglass at the top of a blank piece of paper or a blank computer screen (or your most recently assigned text). For approximately five minutes, write anything and everything that is triggered by the quote.

***Selected quote:* "I have often wished myself a beast. I preferred the condition of the meanest reptile to my own. Anything, no matter what, to get rid of thinking!"**

Frederick Douglass has learned to read and after he reads a speech by Sheridan, he sees that his human rights have been taken away by slavery. He began to hate his enslavers. He says they are robbers who took Africans from their homes and brought them to America to enslave them and take away their human rights. Once Douglass can read, his thinking skills are stronger because he is exposed to ideas beyond his own experiences, and his understanding of the oppressive nature of slavery is even stronger. He says that his Master Hugh was right – he feels a powerful feeling of discontentment that is so painful that he almost wishes he were illiterate and didn't know how to read and think. He is overwhelmed by what he realizes and says he wishes at times he was ignorant because he is tormented by the horror of slavery. It is ironic because slavery is dehumanizing and Douglass says he almost wishes he didn't know what he knows and could stay ignorant. This makes me think about how reading and thinking help to liberate and enlarge our minds, and that is why in many countries run by dictators there is a high rate of illiteracy. If people are kept illiterate, they can be oppressed more easily. Being exposed to ideas can promote consciousness, which can lead to action. Frederick Douglass was changed forever by his ability to read, write and think about his situation as a slave. This makes me think how all of us are enslaved in one way or another, and that by reading and thinking about it, we can free ourselves.

Ideas for an essay topic drawn from this example of freewriting:

- How learning to read, write and think about ideas is a liberating experience
- How anger and discontentment can fuel awareness and action
- The power of ideas to build consciousness
- The irony of Frederick Douglass wishing to be a "beast" because of the painful truths he realizes about the dehumanization of slavery

Practice: Freewriting

Analyze the following quote from Chapter VII in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (or analyze a quote or aspect of your most recently assigned text). For approximately five minutes, write anything and everything that is triggered by the selected text.

Douglass Quote: "My mistress was, as I have said, a kind and tender-hearted woman; and in the simplicity of her soul she commenced, when I first went to live with her, to treat me as she supposed one human being ought to treat another. In entering upon the duties of a slaveholder, she did not seem to perceive that I sustained to her the relation of a mere chattel, and that for her to treat me as a human being was not only wrong, but dangerously so. Slavery proved as injurious to her as it did
to me" (31).

Freewrite:

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3.1.6.1.3: Brainstorming

WHAT IS BRAINSTORMING?

Brainstorming is like freewriting in that you write down whatever comes to mind without stopping, but it is different because it looks more like a list of words and phrases than a string of sentences.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- It is easier to see the main ideas when “boiled down” in a brainstorm
- It helps you summarize the main concepts in the reading
- It helps you see the main ideas that captured your interest in the reading
- It can make complex reading more accessible
- You can see many choices of paper topics emerging
- It is fast and easy

HOW DO I DO IT?

Look back at your freewrite and capture the important concepts into words and phrases. Also, look back at the text and pull out the main ideas and concepts.

Example: Brainstorming sample

Here’s an example of brainstorming in response to Chapter VII in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass:*

Brainstorming Example

forbidden to read and write impressive determination
humans treated as beasts bread for knowledge—both feeding
depravity of slave owners Christian country?
abuse of power rights to freedom
slavery turning good people bad emancipation—liberation
reading and writing as dangerous slavery as indefensible
education and slavery incompatible reading a curse or blessing?
fear of rebellion wretched condition—no remedy
dehumanization ignorance is bliss?
used white boys as teachers building consciousness

Practice: Brainstorming

In response to the quote from Chapter VII in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (or your most recently assigned text), look at your freewrite and brainstorm the important concepts into words and phrases and then add to it.

Brainstorming Practice Space

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3.1.6.1.4: Journalist Questions

WHAT ARE JOURNALIST QUESTIONS?

"Journalist questions" are the "5Ws and the 1H"—who, what, when, where, and especially why and how. The who, what, when, and where are relevant to summaries while the how and why prompt you to examine the "so what?!" Use ideas from the text, your freewrite and your brainstorm and form them into questions. Through answering these questions, you can discover interesting information that you can use for writing.

WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

You may be asked to write about a topic or book, in which case you will need a means to generate the questions that most intrigue you. While who, what, when, and where questions are an effective means of gauging your comprehension, the why and how questions lend themselves to analysis, which is integral to any essay. After generating a list of questions, answer them. You may discover that a question generates multiple answers, some of them contradictory. Such controversy is often ripe for exploration and can lead to thought-provoking interpretations of texts. Answering complex questions is a way to form thesis statements.

HOW DO I CREATE THEM?

Look back at the text and then at your prewriting and think of the questions that were raised for you, or circle concepts or ideas you would like to know more about, and then form questions around them.

Example: Journalist Questions sample

Here are some examples of the journalist questions using Douglass:

Who were the main advocates of slavery?
What were the writings that most affected Douglass?
When was the period in which Douglass lived?
Where was slavery the most prevalent?
Why was reading considered such a threat to slave-owners?
How did the slave-owners maintain control over human beings for so long?

Practice: Creating Journalist Questions

In response to Chapter VII in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (or your most recently assigned text), create questions:

Who

What

When

Where

Why

How

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3.1.6.1.5: Listing

WHAT IS LISTING?

Generating ideas on a topic through freewriting, brainstorming, and creating questions has a purposeful messiness to it. It is the time to let your creativity run riot and to push your thinking in new and sometimes unexpected directions. Once you have generated a lot of material on your topic, however, it is time to take stock and begin to narrow down and organize your ideas as you move towards writing a focused essay. Listing helps you to **select certain ideas** and **organize** them by grouping related concepts together. This is the most informal kind of outline in which you jot down your main supporting points and possible evidence and analysis. This kind of outline is for you only, and you don't need to worry about making it more comprehensive if it does the job for you. Many students find this kind of outline helpful in taking timed essay exams because it is brief, and it doesn't take much time to produce.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

When you are just beginning to write an essay, rather than making a formal outline, you can make a list. A list is a very user-friendly technique because you don't yet need to craft full sentences but instead select your most promising ideas and start to look for connections between them. Listing is important because it takes all the free-form ideas you generated and helps you to see how you could narrow and focus the material to present a convincing, logical argument.

HOW DO I DO IT?

Start with a blank piece of paper or computer screen. Stay focused by keeping your essay assignment and/or the annotated text you are analyzing next to you. Begin making a list of everything you think you would like to write about to fulfill the assignment or to respond to in the text. Use keywords or phrases; it's not necessary to write in complete sentences when listing. Using a bullet-list format is helpful.

Once you have made your list, go back and organize it into logical units; for example, you can use a numbering system to indicate what you want to include in your introductory paragraph, your body paragraphs and your conclusion. Arrange the ideas in the body paragraphs into a logical order. To illustrate your body paragraph points, you can add quotes, examples, or information to further research. You may find it useful to make a second, more detailed list or you may decide to turn your list, once it is full enough, into an outline.

Example: Listing Sample

Here are some examples of listing using Douglass and the ideas that came from the stages of freewriting, journalist questions, and brainstorming:

IDEA: Slavery harmed the mistress as much as it did the slaves

- the mistress changed – "tender-hearted" to mean-spirited
- she took the newspaper away from him so he couldn't read

IDEA: Learning to read changed Douglass forever — became intolerant of slavery

- read Sheridan and saw good arguments against slavery

- saw slave owners as robbers stealing his people from Africa
- he came to hate (“abhor and detest”) his enslavers

IDEA: Reading as dangerous

- slave masters feared rebellion
- reading caused Douglass awareness but also despair
- “silver trump of freedom had roused my soul to eternal wakefulness”

IDEA: Denial of literacy is still used to control people

- poor urban neighborhoods with subpar schools and lack of supplies
- women in certain places in the middle east not allowed to learn to read and write

Practice: Listing

In response to Chapter VII in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (or your most recently assigned text), do the following:

Make a list of main points in the reading. Leave space under each main point for 2-3 examples that support the idea. You can put the examples in after you’ve come up with at least 3-5 main points. Afterwards, look at how the ideas connect to one another to form a possible unifying thesis or argument:

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3.1.6.1.6: Clustering/Mapping

WHAT IS CLUSTERING/MAPPING?

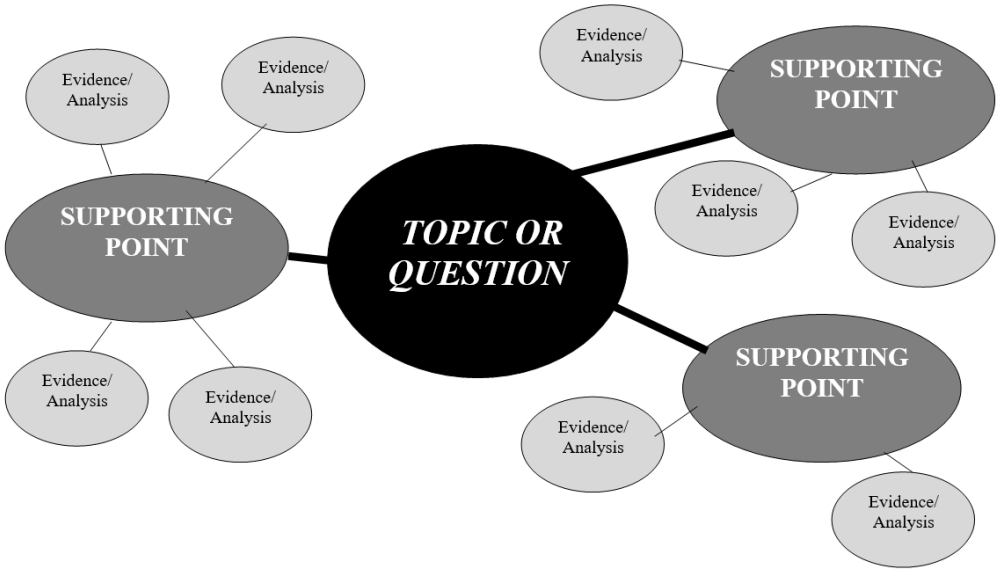
Clustering, also known as mapping, is like listing in that you narrow down and begin to organize your ideas. Cluster/mapping provides a mental picture of the ideas you generate and how they connect to each other. Where you place ideas on the page shows their relationship to each other. Ideas placed closer to the middle are the overarching key concepts that unify seemingly disparate ideas and details.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

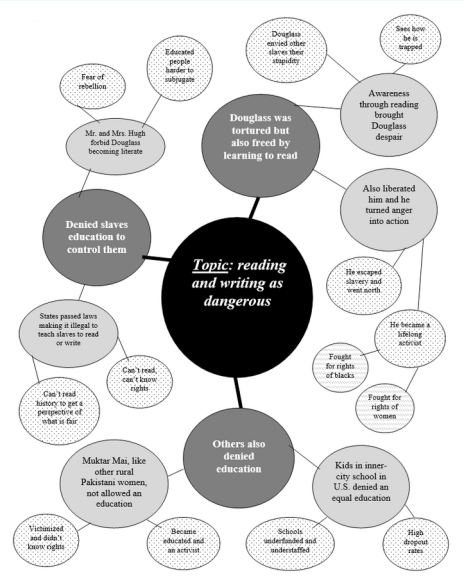
- It works particularly well for visual learners.
- It helps you to see the most important ideas.
- It helps you to see how ideas are related.
- It helps you organize your ideas.
- It helps you start to see potential paragraphs forming.

HOW DO I DO IT?

To create a cluster, first write your topic or question in the middle of the page and draw a large circle around it. Then in medium circles, write the supporting points that respond to the writing task, drawing lines linking each to the main center circle. Then, in small circles, write the evidence and analysis that illustrate each supporting point, drawing lines that link each to the appropriate supporting point. You can add additional levels of smaller circles as you provide more specific clarifying details.

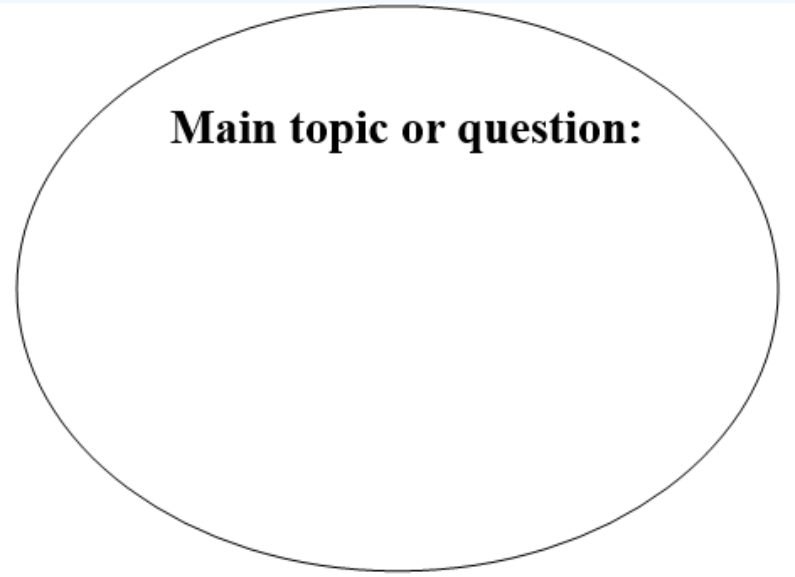


Example:Cluster



Practice: Clustering

In response to Chapter VII in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (or your most recently assigned text), create a cluster/map:



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3.1.6.1.7: Outlining

WHAT IS OUTLINING?

Outlining is the road map for the essay. American writer Tom Wolfe said, “By writing an outline you really are writing in a way, because you’re creating the structure of what you’re going to do. Once I really know what I’m going to write, I don’t find the actual writing takes all that long.”

Critical thinkers use outlines to organize their ideas and check the organization of their drafts throughout the writing process. Outlines represent an important element of the writing process not only for English essays, but also for essays in history, philosophy, economics, political science, etc.

As the “road map” of the essay, outlines should do the following:

- Provide the thesis and most important details of the essay.
- Demonstrate a clear, logical organization of main ideas and supporting details.
- Include topic sentences but not *every* sentence in the essay/paragraphs.

WHY OUTLINE?

Just like we need a road map when traveling to an unfamiliar destination, good writers create preliminary or rough outlines after they have generated enough ideas through prewriting to organize and develop their essays. Strong, thorough prewriting should develop more ideas than you can actually use in your essay so that you are able to select the most relevant and convincing ideas for your essay.

Once you have settled on a thesis statement and your main supporting ideas, you can write a formal outline, creating the “skeleton” of your essay. Looking at your ideas this way can help ensure that:

- Your main points are on-topic and directly support your thesis.
- Your main points are logically organized.
- Your most important ideas are emphasized and your less important ideas are subordinated.
- Your main points have sufficient and relevant supporting evidence.

Outlines also help writers:

- Make the writing process easier since you have a road map for your essay to follow.
- Break through writer’s block—for people who struggle with writer’s block, it helps to first set up a structure with lower stakes and less pressure.
- Save time writing your essay since you have a clear, focused plan to follow for your essay.
- Ensure each part of your essay relates to the essay prompt.

HOW DO I DO IT?

- Put the thesis statement at the top: it should be polished and be a complete sentence.
- Use Roman numerals (I, II, III, IV, V, etc.) to indicate the main points/topic sentences which should be written in specific phrases or complete sentences (this is the "P" or Point of PIE).
- Use capital letters (A, B, C, D, E, etc.) for the major supporting details; typically, writers should have at least two main supporting details for each point/topic sentence (the "I" or information of PIE providing evidence and the "E" or explanation of PIE providing analysis).
- Use numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc.) for sub-details clarifying and specifying your main supporting details.

Thesis:

I. (Main Idea 1)
   A. (Supporting Detail 1)
      1. Sub-detail 1
      2. Sub-detail 2
   B. (Supporting Detail 2)
      1. Sub-detail 1

II. (Main Idea 2)
   A. (Supporting Detail 1)
      1. Sub-detail 1
      2. Sub-detail 2
   B. (Supporting Detail 2)
      1. Sub-detail 1
      2. Sub-detail 2

III. (Main Idea 3)
   A. (Supporting Detail 1)
      1. Sub-detail 1
      2. Sub-detail 2
   B. (Supporting Detail 2)
      1. Sub-detail 1
      2. Sub-detail 2

IV. (Main Idea 4)
   A. (Supporting Detail 1)
      1. Sub-detail 1
      2. Sub-detail 2
   B. (Supporting Detail 2)
      1. Sub-detail 1
      2. Sub-detail 2

Outline Organization

When deciding how to order your points, your first consideration should be logic. How does one point lead up to or build upon another? Here are some different ways to logically organize your points:

- ***Climax:*** Present your ideas so they build to a climax, ending with your most dramatic examples.
- ***Complexity:*** Start with simpler ideas and build to more complex ones.
- ***Familiarity:*** Start with more familiar ideas and move towards newer ones.
- ***Audience appeal:*** Start with "safe" ideas and move to more challenging ones.

- ***Chronological:*** Present ideas in the time order in which they occurred.
- ***Compare/Contrast:*** When looking at similarities or differences, it may be ordered in one of two ways:

Block style vs. Point-by-point

Block style: look first at one item and then the next, using the same criteria each time. For example:	**Point-by-point: Look at the two items simultaneously, comparing them using the same criteria. For example:**
I. Frederick Douglass **A. Philosophies** **B. Activism** **C. Accomplishments** **II. Martin Luther King, Jr.** **A. Philosophies** **B. Activism** **C. Accomplishments**	**I. Philosophies** **A. Frederick Douglass** **B. Martin Luther King, Jr.** **II. Activism** **A. Frederick Douglass** **B. Martin Luther King, Jr.** **III. Accomplishments** **A. Frederick Douglass** **B. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Example: Outlining

It can be difficult to create a formal outline without some help. Here is a first step towards creating a more formal outline. Use this template and answer the guiding questions. After, revise what you produce into a formal outline.

Example: Outlining

THESIS: ***What do you want to convince your reader of? Is this an arguable assertion? Is this based on the reading? Can one disagree?*** **Slaves like Douglass were controlled by not being able to read and write and this denial of education is still happening in the United States as well as other parts of the world.**
PARAGRAPH 1:
TOPIC SENTENCE (Point/Topic): *What is an arguable point I can make to prove my thesis?* Slave-owners would not allow slaves to learn to read and write because they were afraid they would rebel.
SUPPORT (Information/Evidence): *What examples and quotes in the reading can I use to prove the claim in my topic sentence? Do I want to also include real life examples or research to strengthen my claim?* From text: Mr. and Mrs. Hugh forbid Douglass to learn to read and write. Mrs. Hugh became furious if she would ever see him holding the paper (page 84). Outside research: See if there were actual laws passed making it illegal to teach slaves to read and write.
RELEVANCE (Explanation/Analysis): *Why do I think this is important? What can be learned from this? What are the implications? Outcomes? Possible interpretations or deeper meaning?* If you can't read, you won't know the laws that govern you so you won't know your rights. Also, you can't get a clear historical perspective so can't know what is just and reasonable and what is not.
PARAGRAPH 2:

THESIS: ***What do you want to convince your reader of? Is this an arguable assertion? Is this based on the reading? Can one disagree?***

Slaves like Douglass were controlled by not being able to read and write and this denial of education is still happening in the United States as well as other parts of the world.

TOPIC SENTENCE (Point/Topic): *What is another arguable point I can make to prove my thesis? How can I smoothly transition from the point I made before?*

Learning to read caused Douglass unexpected pain as he better understood his own enslavement but it also set in motion his desire to create change and bring awareness to end slavery.

SUPPORT (Information/Evidence): *What examples and quotes in the reading can I use to prove the claim in my topic sentence? Do I want to also include real life examples or research to strengthen my claim?*

From text: Douglass speaks of his "unutterable anguish" (84) and how reading became a curse and that he wished he could return to the "stupidity" (84) of his fellow slaves.

Outside research: Research what Douglass later did after he escaped to the North and became an activist.

RELEVANCE (Explanation/Analysis): *Why do I think this is important? What can be learned from this? What are the implications? Outcomes? Possible interpretations or deeper meaning?*

Being able to read and write gives you the tools to call out oppression, gather other people to support making needed changes, and to liberate yourself and others from unfair institutions.

PARAGRAPH 3:

TOPIC SENTENCE (Point/Topic): *What is another arguable point I can make to prove my thesis? How can I smoothly transition from the point I made before?*

Denying people equal access to education is happening today in places like rural Pakistan in the case of women.

SUPPORT (Information/Evidence): *What examples and quotes in the reading can I use to prove the claim in my topic sentence? Do I want to also include real life examples or research to strengthen my claim?*

Outside research: Muktar Mai in her memoir *In the Name of Honor* tells how women in her region were not allowed to be educated so when she was gang-raped, she could not write down her account at the police station so her story was changed and she lost her case in court. Later she learned to read and write and became a strong advocate for women's rights and started a school for girls in her village. Quote on poor treatment of women, page 46.

RELEVANCE (Explanation/Analysis): *Why do I think this is important? What can be learned from this? What are the implications? Outcomes? Possible interpretations or deeper meaning?*

Becoming literate helped Mai navigate the complex legal systems, bring international awareness of the plight of women in her region, and enabled her to help others.

CONCLUSION:

How can I end the essay on a strong note? What would be a good "so what?" that explains: So what can we learn from this? So what is the larger significance or impact?

So what? The denying of certain groups an education didn't just happen long ago or far away. It is happening now in the United States with our inner-city schools which are underfunded and understaffed. With the high dropout rates, large numbers of blacks and Latinos are being denied equal access to education and literacy.

Practice: Outline Template

This is a template to help you on the first step towards making a formal outline. Adjust for how many body paragraphs you decide to include.

Please note: If your instructor has asked you to create a formal outline, *you are not going to turn in this template*. This template is designed to help you generate and organize the ideas you can then put into a formal outline.

Outline Template

THESIS: ***What do you want to convince your reader of? Is this an arguable assertion? Is this based on the reading? Can one disagree?***
PARAGRAPH 1:
TOPIC SENTENCE (Point/Topic): *What is an arguable point I can make to prove my thesis*
SUPPORT (Information/Evidence): *What examples and quotes in the reading can I use to prove the claim in my topic sentence? Do I want to also include real life examples or research to strengthen my claim?*
RELEVANCE (Explanation/Analysis): *Why do I think this is important? What can be learned from this? What are the implications? Outcomes? Possible interpretations or deeper meaning?*
PARAGRAPH 2:
TOPIC SENTENCE (Point/Topic): *What is another arguable point I can make to prove my thesis? How can I smoothly transition from the point I made before?*
SUPPORT (Information/Evidence): *What examples and quotes in the reading can I use to prove the claim in my topic sentence? Do I want to also include real life examples or research to strengthen my claim?*
RELEVANCE (Explanation/Analysis): *Why do I think this is important? What can be learned from this? What are the implications? Outcomes? Possible interpretations or deeper meaning?*
PARAGRAPH 3:
TOPIC SENTENCE (Point/Topic): *What is another arguable point I can make to prove my thesis? How can I smoothly transition from the point I made before?*
SUPPORT (Information/Evidence): *What examples and quotes in the reading can I use to prove the claim in my topic sentence? Do I want to also include real life examples or research to strengthen my claim?*

THESIS: ***What do you want to convince your reader of? Is this an arguable assertion? Is this based on the reading? Can one disagree?***
RELEVANCE (Explanation/Analysis): *Why do I think this is important? What can be learned from this? What are the implications? Outcomes? Possible interpretations or deeper meaning?*
PARAGRAPH 4:
TOPIC SENTENCE (Point/Topic): *What is another arguable point I can make to prove my thesis? How can I smoothly transition from the point I made before?*
SUPPORT (Information/Evidence): *What examples and quotes in the reading can I use to prove the claim in my topic sentence? Do I want to also include real life examples or research to strengthen my claim?*
RELEVANCE (Explanation/Analysis): *Why do I think this is important? What can be learned from this? What are the implications? Outcomes? Possible interpretations or deeper meaning?*
CONCLUSION:
How can I end the essay on a strong note? What would be a good "so what?" that explains: So what can we learn from this? So what is the larger significance or impact?

Example: Sample formal outline on *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Thesis: The control and limitations over reading and writing during slavery sought to make slaves like Douglass ignorant, powerless, and therefore more easily controlled, and this control over literacy and education is still happening in the world today.

Introduction

A. Lead in with George Orwell quote: "Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past."
B. Compare to the band Rage Against the Machine and how they used Orwell's warning.
C. Connect discussion of control to Fredrick Douglass and controlling slaves through denying them an education.
D. State thesis.

I. In his narrative, Douglass exposes how being denied education was one of the main tactics used to keep so many blacks trapped within generations of enslavement.
   A. Mr. and Mrs. Hugh forbid Douglass from learning to read and write.
      1. Mrs. Hugh became furious anytime she would catch Douglass reading.
      2. This shows their realization that educated people are harder to control.
   B. Many slave states passed laws making it illegal to teach slaves to read and write.
      1. Use quote North Carolina law and list the punishments for breaking the law.
      2. This shows how to control people you have to do so not just physically but mentally.

II. Douglass discovered that freeing his mind led to anguished torment as he was unable to free himself from the entrenched institutions of slavery but change was set in motion.
   A. Being awakened to the stark realities of his condition served to plunge Douglass into despair.
      1. Use quote showing how Master Hugh knew discontent would follow (page 84).

2. Use quote showing Douglass's anguish and despair as his eyes are opened (page 84).

B. Insert discussion of how ignorance is not bliss.
   1. Those who are ignorant get taken advantage of, they are powerless, are controlled by others.
   2. Douglass eventually gains power over his life from learning to read and becomes an activist fighting for the equality of blacks and women.

III. Unfortunately, when slavery was abolished in 1865, that did not end the practice of denying certain groups of people an education in order to control them, but it also did not end people's ability to go against societal norms, educate themselves, and fight for change.
   A. Muktar Mai, a poor rural woman in Pakistan, tells in her memoir *In the Name of Honor* how she was denied an education so when she was brutalized, she was helpless in the legal system.
   B. Mai learned to read and write, pursued her attackers legally, brought national awareness to the plight of women in her country, started a school for girls, and also an organization that advocates for the rights of women.

Conclusion: Denial of education is happening now and closer to home in the U.S as inner-city schools are underfunded and understaffed so many of our youth are dropping out and are not given access to an equal education and this puts them in a powerless and invisible state.

HOW CAN I CHECK AN OUTLINE?

Outline Peer response

Answer questions like the following to evaluate your peer's outline as well as your own outline.

How Can I Check an Outline?

1. Thesis:

Does the thesis make a statement that can be argued? Ask yourself, can I disagree? If you cannot disagree (if the thesis just states a fact or what is already obvious and known), advise the author about how to add an opinion. Is the thesis specific (focused?) and clear enough? Is the thesis based on the reading? Also, is there a clear "so what?" So what is important about this? So what is the significance?

2. Supporting Points:

Does the outline list the supporting points in a **clear and logical order**? How can the order be clearer or improved? Does each supporting point **directly prove the thesis**? Are there any **additional supporting points** that should be included?

3. Evidence:

Is there a clear example illustrating each of the supporting points? Is the author using examples **from the reading**? If not, suggest ideas the author could use to better prove his/her points. Could the author **improve or replace** any of the supporting points or textual examples? Has the author developed a clear **explanation** of why each supporting point is relevant?

Practice: Outline Constructive Feedback

Using the guiding questions on Outline Peer Response, provide constructive feedback on the following outline on **Chapter VII in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass***:

Thesis: Slavery in the United States damaged many lives.

Introduction

A. Lead in with statistics on how many people in the U.S. were enslaved.
B. Connect to how Mrs. Hugh changed for the worse and how Fredrick Douglass felt despair.
C. State thesis.

I. Douglass taught himself to read and write even though he was forbidden to do so.
   A. At first Mrs. Hugh was teaching him to read but she changed her mind.
      1. Her husband told her not to teach him.
      2. She became harsher than her husband is stopping Douglass from learning.
   B. Douglass got the young poor white boys in his neighborhood to teach him.
      1. He took a book with him on errands to use.
      2. He bribed the boys with bread.
II. Slavery changed people.
   A. Mrs. Hugh was once a kind woman and then she became cruel and inhumane because of slavery.
      1. She used to be charitable.
      2. She became mean.
   B. Douglass became anguished and trapped in slavery and even considered suicide.
      1. The more he read, the more miserable he became.
      2. Douglass fought for the rights of others.

Conclusion: Slavery hurt a lot of people and ruined many lives.

Example: A sample of outline peer response on the Douglass outline

Example of outline peer response

1. Thesis:

Does the thesis make a statement that can be argued? Ask yourself, can I disagree? If you cannot disagree (if the thesis just states a fact or what is already obvious and known), advise the author about how to add an opinion. Is the thesis specific (focused?) and clear enough? Is the thesis based on the reading? Also, is there a clear "so what?" So what is important about this? So what is the significance?

Thesis: Slavery in the United States damaged many lives.
I like where you are going with this but this statement is very general. Whose lives exactly were damaged? The story talks about how it hurt Douglass and also his slave masters so perhaps be more specific and say who you mean. Also, how were they damaged? So what can we learn from this? It seems like this is telling us something about abuse of power. Is this a lesson that we should apply to any situations today? Lastly, in the outline, you say you are going to lead up to the thesis by including statistics on how many people were enslaved but you might want to connect this to your argument about being damaged.

2. Supporting Points:

Does the outline list the supporting points in a **clear and logical order**? How can the order be clearer or improved? Does each supporting point **directly prove the thesis**? Are there any **additional supporting points** that should be included?

This entire second point summarizes how Douglass learned to read but it's not clear how this connects to the argument about people being damaged by slavery. I'd remove this. Section three is good as it directly connects to your thesis about being damaged by slavery. The topic sentence is a bit general though. You say: "Slavery changed people." How did it change people? For better or worse? Also, you discuss how it changed Mrs. Hugh, the slave master, first and then you discuss how it changed Douglass after that. I think it would make more sense to discuss Douglass first because he is the one obviously damaged by slavery. Then after that you can present Mrs. Hugh, the less obvious one who is also harmed by slavery. Finally, the conclusion just repeats your thesis.

1. Thesis:

Does the thesis make a statement that can be argued? Ask yourself, can I disagree? If you cannot disagree (if the thesis just states a fact or what is already obvious and known), advise the author about how to add an opinion. Is the thesis specific (focused?) and clear enough? Is the thesis based on the reading? Also, is there a clear "so what?" So what is important about this? So what is the significance?

Thesis: Slavery in the United States damaged many lives.
I like where you are going with this but this statement is very general. Whose lives exactly were damaged? The story talks about how it hurt Douglass and also his slave masters so perhaps be more specific and say who you mean. Also, how were they damaged? So what can we learn from this? It seems like this is telling us something about abuse of power. Is this a lesson that we should apply to any situations today? Lastly, in the outline, you say you are going to lead up to the thesis by including statistics on how many people were enslaved but you might want to connect this to your argument about being damaged.

3. Evidence:

Is there a clear example illustrating each of the supporting points? Is the author using examples **from the reading**? If not, suggest ideas the author could use to better prove his/her points. Could the author **improve or replace** any of the supporting points or textual examples? Has the author developed a clear **explanation** of why each supporting point is relevant?

You show how Douglass and Mrs. Hugh were damaged by slavery, but I think you could include a separate more developed section for each and include quotes from the text too. Douglass makes some strong statements about how he wishes he could lose his humanity and become an unthinking beast instead. You can also use the descriptions of how Mrs. Hugh's kindness turned to "tiger-like fierceness." Then include your own analysis of why it's important to see how these two were changed? So what does this reveal about people and having this much power over others?

Example: Providing feedback directly to the outline

Thesis: Slavery in the United States damaged many lives. *(Thesis feedback: This statement is very general. Whose lives exactly were damaged? How? So what?)*

Introduction

A. Lead in with statistics on how many people in the U.S. were enslaved. *(I like the idea of including statistics but how does this connect to the argument about being damaged?)*
B. Connect to how Mrs. Hugh changed for the worse and how Fredrick Douglass felt despair.
C. State thesis.

I. Douglass taught himself to read and write even though he was forbidden to do so.
   A. At first Mrs. Hugh was teaching him to read but she changed her mind.
      1. Her husband told her not to teach him.
      2. She became harsher than her husband is stopping Douglass from learning.
   B. Douglass got the young poor white boys in his neighborhood to teach him. *(This entire second point summarizes how Douglass learned to read but it's not clear how this connects to the argument about people being damaged by slavery. I'd remove this.)*
      1. He took a book with him on errands to use.
      2. He bribed the boys with bread.

II. Slavery changed people.
   A. Mrs. Hugh was once a kind woman and then she became cruel and inhumane because of slavery.
      1. She used to be charitable.
      2. She became mean.

B. Douglass became anguished and trapped in slavery and even considered suicide. *(Good, section three directly connects to your thesis about being damaged by slavery. The topic sentence is a bit general though. How did it "change" people? For better or worse? Then you show how Douglass and Mrs. Hugh were damaged, but I think you could include a separate more developed section for each and include quotes from the text too. You could also include your own analysis of why it's important to see how these two were changed? So what does this reveal?)*
   1. The more he read, the more miserable he became.
   2. Douglass fought for the rights of others.

Conclusion: Slavery hurt a lot of people and ruined many lives. *(It's good you stay on topic but this just repeats your thesis. In your conclusion, you want a larger "so what?" So what can we learn by realizing that both the enslaved and the enslavers were hurt by slavery? Can we apply this lesson elsewhere? Is this a danger now in a less obvious form that we should be concerned about? Are those who have unchecked power over others always harmed by it?)*

Example: Potential Revision of Outline based on feedback

Thesis: Douglass's narrative reveals how slavery in the U.S. not only damaged the psyche of the slaves but destroyed the humanity of the slave owners showing how no human being should ever have unchecked power over another as it inevitably leads to corruption. *(Originally the thesis said slavery damaged "many" lives. Now it states who (slaves and slave-owners), how (damaged psyches and destroyed humanity), and so what (unchecked power corrupts))*

Introduction

A. Lead in with statistics on how many people in the U.S. were enslaved and connect to how many families this means were separated and destroyed and how many people were maimed, raped and murdered. (The reasoning behind the statistics is now clearly connects to the damage caused. Then adding the corrupting influence of power now introduces the second part of the thesis about slave-owners being corrupted too. And now the order has been changed to talk about Douglass first (the obvious one damaged) and then the less obvious, the slave-owners.)
B. Introduce the idea of how absolute power corrupts absolutely.
C. Connect to how Fredrick Douglass felt despair and Mrs. Hugh changed for the worse.
D. State thesis.

I. Slavery slowly destroyed Douglass's psychological well-being.
   A. Douglass who is highly intelligent and motivated is held back by slavery.
      1. He is eager to learn but is unjustly forbidden by his slave-masters.
      2. He has to settle for an inferior, secretive education learning from young white kids between his errands.
      3. Speculate on the incredible loss of potential of someone this motivated and intelligent denied during his formative years. Connect to all the lost potential of poor kids in bad schools today.
   B. Douglass became anguished as he sees how he is trapped in slavery and even considered suicide.
      1. Douglass comes to see something as potentially liberating as education as something destructive "I would at times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing" (84).
      2. As time goes on, Douglass feels only more anguish and despair and even wishes his own humanity were taken away, "I have often wished myself a beast" (84)*(More detail, quotes and "so what?" analysis has been added to the discussions of Douglass and Mrs. Hugh.)*
II. Slavery also destroyed the humanity of Mrs. Hugh who was once kind became cruel.
   A. Mrs. Hugh was once a kind woman: "she was a pious, warm, and tender-hearted woman. There was no sorrow or suffering for which she had not a tear" (82). *(More detail, quotes and "so what?" analysis has been added to the discussions of Douglass and Mrs. Hugh.)*
   B. Slavery made her a despicable person: "Slavery soon proved its ability to divest her of these heavenly qualities. Under its influence, the tender heart became stone, and the lamblike disposition gave way to one of tiger-like fierceness" (82).
   C. Examine how absolute power corrupts and cite other examples in history (Hitler, Stalin) when this has been true.

Conclusion: We must be aware of any case when a person or group is allowed too much power over another group as this will lead to a corrupt and an unhealthy society. Examine how this is happening with corporations globally today who act in their own interest for profit and we all suffer as a result. *(A larger "so what?" has been added looking at how this lesson can be applied)*

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3.1.6.1.8: Drafting

WHAT IS DRAFTING?

After you do some good prewriting and write up an outline, it's time to start writing the paper; the first writing stage is called drafting. In this stage, get your ideas down as quickly as possible and don't focus too much on grammar, punctuation or spelling. This is the ideas stage. Focusing too much on "correctness" can bog your ideas down and give you writer's block. At this stage, you start getting ideas down on paper, extending some ideas, limiting others that aren't panning out. Many writers say that they didn't know what they thought until they saw what they thought. You might discover what you think as you write on a topic and your argument might change and evolve as you write.

WHY DRAFT?

It takes the pressure off to think of your initial writing as "drafting" which is more low stakes. It doesn't have to be perfect because no one is reading it at this stage but you, so drafting allows you to explore your topic using your creativity and analysis. Writing the first draft also gives you the opportunity to see how well your arguments support your tentative thesis and how the differing perspectives or opposing viewpoints will affect your position.

HOW DO I DO IT?

- Post your tentative thesis and paper assignment prominently above your work space, so you can refer to them as you write.
- Review your outline and the notes you have made on the text/topic you are writing on.
- In a draft, you want a clear beginning, middle and end even if they aren't set in stone.
- In drafting, some use a linear approach starting with the introduction and writing sequentially to the conclusion. Others prefer a more recursive approach where they work on one section for a time, move on to another part of the essay, and then return to the earlier section. Use the approach that works best for you.
- Once you feel you have covered what you want to cover, read through again to make sure that the organization and development are logical. One strategy for doing this is to note in the margin in a few words the point of each paragraph. Take those brief phrases and look at them to see whether they follow logically or require reorganizing. Is anything necessary omitted? Make any appropriate changes to your organization and development.
- As you look over your draft, try reading it out loud. It will help you "hear" what flows and what does not.

When you complete your draft, here are some questions to ask yourself:

- Is your argument (thesis) clear?
- Do your main arguments give the reasons for "why your thesis is so"?
- Have you supported these with credible and relevant evidence and your own analysis?
- Have you adequately addressed alternative perspectives?
- Is there additional reading or research you need in order to strengthen your thesis and arguments?

Example: Sample Draft for Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

By Rachel Bell

Essay #4

"Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past." This applies well to the past when blacks were enslaved. In "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave," Douglass reveals how this long and brutal control of human beings was partly accomplished through control over literacy. The control and limitations over reading and writing during slavery sought to make slaves like Douglass ignorant, powerless, and therefore more easily controlled.

Douglass lived in Baltimore for 7 years as a house slave and initially was taught by Mrs. Hugh but later was forbidden by his masters Mr. and Mrs. Hugh to read or write. Mrs. Hugh became furious if she caught Douglass reading because she wanted to control him. Many slave states passed laws making it illegal to teach slaves to read and write as seen in this typical law in North Carolina:

> AN ACT TO PREVENT ALL PERSONS FROM TEACHING SLAVES TO READ OR WRITE, THE USE OF FIGURES EXCEPTED. Whereas the teaching of slaves to read and write, has a tendency to excite dis-satisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion, to the manifest injury of the citizens of this State: Therefore, be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, that any free person, who shall hereafter teach, or attempt to teach, any slave within the State to read or write, the use of figures excepted, or shall give or sell to such slave or slaves any books or pamphlets, shall be liable to indictment in any court of record in this State having jurisdiction thereof. ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law")

The law then goes on to list the punishments and for a white person it was a fine and possible imprisonment and for a free person of color they could be fined, imprisoned or whipped ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law"). They couldn't just control people through force but had to control their minds too.

Douglass discovered that freeing his mind led to anguished torment. "As I read and contemplated the subject, behold! that very discontentment which Master Hugh had predicted would follow my learning to read had already come, to torment and sting my soul to unutterable anguish. I would at times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing. It had given me a view of my wretched condition, without the remedy. It opened my eyes to the horrible pit, but to no ladder upon which to get out. In moments of agony, I envied my fellow-slaves for their stupidity" (84). So is ignorance bliss? No, never. To be ignorant allows others to control us. Douglass realized this and after becoming educated, he joined the abolitionist movement and spent the remainder of his life fighting for the equality and rights of blacks as well as women.

Muktar Mai in her memoir *In the Name of Honor* published in 2006, tells her story of growing up in a small village in Pakistan where girls were not allowed to be educated. Mai was sentenced to be pubically gang raped by six men in a stable with 100 of her fellow villagers outside. Mai was then expected to follow custom and commit suicide, but instead she went to the police and testified against her attackers. Because she could not read or write, the officers wrote down her account but altered what she said to absolve her attackers of guilt, so when her case went to court, she lost. In spite of this, Mai still fights. She remains an outspoken advocate for women's rights, she is still pressing a retrial of her attackers, she continues to run the organization she started Mukhtar Mai Women's Welfare Organization (MMWWO), and even with many attempts to close it, she still runs a school she established in her village to educate girls.

We shouldn't let others control us. We should fight for our rights and everyone should be allowed an equal education. No one should be denied learning to read and write. If people can't read and write then they cannot compete equally in society and they will be taken advantage of by others.

Works Cited (Draft)

Douglass, Frederick. Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave.
Mai, Muktar. In the Name of Honor
.http://www.historyisaweapon.com/defc...eprohibit.html

Note:
3 sources are listed—some sources in the paper are missing from the Works Cited and none of the citations is properly formatted yet.

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3.1.6.1.9: Revising

WHAT IS REVISING?

Revising means what is says: it is a re-vision of your paper. To revise is to see again, to re-conceive your original essay. When you ***revise*** a paper, the larger elements of writing generally receive attention first—**the focus, organization, paragraphing, content, and overall strategy**. Improvements in sentence structure, word choice, grammar, punctuation, and mechanics come later when you **edit** the paper.

In revising, you make global revisions that address the larger elements of writing. Usually they affect chunks of text longer than a sentence, and frequently they can be quite dramatic. Whole paragraphs might be dropped, others added. Material once stretched over two or three paragraphs might be condensed into one. Entire sections might be rearranged. Even the content might change dramatically, for the process of revising stimulates thought.

WHY REVISE?

Past Supreme Court Justice, Louis Brandels said: “There is no such thing as good writing, only good rewriting.” American writer E.B. White echoed these sentiments when he said simply, “The best writing is rewriting.” When you revise or rewrite your draft, you are able to bring a higher level of clarity and development.

HOW DO I DO IT?

Here are some guiding questions you can use to revise your draft:

Title

- Does your title give readers a good idea of what's to come? ("Assignment #3" is not a title)

Introduction

- Is your thesis statement clearly stated?
- Does the introduction lead in smoothly and establish the importance of and context for the topic? Is there too much? Too little? By the end of the introduction, is it clear to the audience what kind of material will follow? If so, are these expectations fulfilled?

Body Paragraphs

- Is it clear where your introduction ends and body begins and where the body ends and the conclusion begins? In other words, are your paragraph indents meaningful?
- Are there transitions between all sections and paragraphs to create flow and unity?
- Does each body paragraph have a topic sentence? If you took your thesis and all your topic sentences, would that correspond to what you want to say in your paper? If not, do you need to revise your thesis or re-examine your supporting points?
- Do the topic sentences (1) make a connection back to the thesis, (2) establish a link with the previous paragraph's content, and (3) give enough information that the audience could guess where a particular paragraph's development would lead?
- Does the order of paragraphs make sense?
- Are your paragraphs too short or too long? Can you combine or separate any content?
- Are your examples reliable, representative, and convincing? Are there enough of them or too many?
- Are your sources convincing? Is there enough balance between your own insights and expert opinions?
- Are all sources and direct quotations explained or have you left them standing on their own?
- Has anything that goes off topic or is not essential been cut?

Conclusion

- Does the conclusion say something different from your introduction?
- Does the conclusion leave a good lasting impression?
- Does the conclusion end the paper on a strong and interesting note?

Example: Sample Revision of same paper

Rachel Bell
Professor Lucia Lachmayr
English 100
21 May 2013

Controlling Human Beings

INTRODUCTION FROM THE DRAFT:

"Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past." This applies well to the past when blacks were enslaved. In "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave," Douglass reveals how this long and brutal control of human beings was partly accomplished through control over literacy. The control and limitations over reading and writing during slavery sought to make slaves like Douglass ignorant, powerless, and therefore more easily controlled.

REVISIONS: The dropped quote has now been connected to a lead in phrase telling who said it and when. A contemporary reference to a band using the quote was added to give the quote modern-day relevancy. A transition was then added showing how this quote applies to Douglass's story. A "so what?" was added to the thesis applying the control over people in the past through literacy to today.

In the 1940s, George Orwell warned “Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past.” In the 1990s there was a band called Rage Against the Machine, the name itself referring to a people’s movement to fight against control (corporation, government or otherwise) used this mantra in their song “Testify,” a warning to not silently endure. This is a warning that is not only relevant to the 20th century, but has been applicable since human beings started forming structures of power to control and oppress one another. This can be seen during the times of slavery in the United States when blacks were enslaved. In Frederick Douglass’s novel *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave,* Douglass reveals how this control of human beings was partly accomplished through control over literacy. The control and limitations over reading and writing during slavery sought to make slaves like Douglass ignorant, powerless, and therefore more easily controlled, and this control over literacy and education is still happening in the world today.

BODY PARAGRAPH ONE FROM THE DRAFT:

Douglass lived in Baltimore for 7 years as a house slave and was forbidden by his masters Mr. and Mrs. Hugh to read or write. Mrs. Hugh became furious if she caught Douglass reading because she wanted to control him. Many slave states passed laws making it illegal to teach slaves to read and write as seen in this typical law in North Carolina:

> AN ACT TO PREVENT ALL PERSONS FROM TEACHING SLAVES TO READ OR WRITE, THE USE OF FIGURES EXCEPTED. Whereas the teaching of slaves to read and write, has a tendency to excite dis-satisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion, to the manifest injury of the citizens of this State: Therefore, be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, that any free person, who shall hereafter teach, or attempt to teach, any slave within the State to read or write, the use of figures excepted, or shall give or sell to such slave or slaves any books or pamphlets, shall be liable to indictment in any court of record in this State having jurisdiction thereof. ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law")

The law then lists the punishments and for a white person it was a hefty fine and possible imprisonment and for a free person of color they could be fined, imprisoned or whipped “not exceeding thirty nine lashes, nor less than twenty lashes” ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law"). They couldn’t just control people through force but had to control their minds too.

REVISIONS: Before the paragraph began with plot summary and facts. Now the paragraph begins with an arguable topic sentence that links directly to the thesis about control. More explanation was added connecting Mrs. Hugh’s fury with her desire to control Douglass. A quote was added from the text supporting the claim that education and slavery could not co-exist. The largest addition to the paragraph was developing the “so what?” explanation and analysis at the end of the paragraph telling what this connection between denial of literacy and control reveals.

In his narrative, Douglass exposes how being denied education was one of the main tactics used to keep so many blacks trapped within generations of enslavement. Douglass lived in Baltimore for 7 years as a house slave and initially his once kind mistress began to teach him to read and write until her husband forbid it. Afterwards, Mrs. Hugh became furious if she caught Douglass reading as she understood that keeping him illiterate and ignorant was her only way to maintain control over him, “She was an apt woman; and a little experience soon demonstrated, to her satisfaction, that education and slavery were incompatible with each other” (82). Mr. and Mrs. Hugh were not the only slave-owners to realize that educated people are harder to control, and that they could not indefinitely sustain control over other human beings solely through physical control. Many slave states passed laws making it illegal to teach slaves to read and write as seen in this typical law in North Carolina:

> AN ACT TO PREVENT ALL PERSONS FROM TEACHING SLAVES TO READ OR WRITE, THE USE OF FIGURES EXCEPTED. Whereas the teaching of slaves to read and write, has a tendency to excite dis-satisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion, to the manifest injury of the citizens of this State: Therefore, be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, that any free person, who shall hereafter teach, or attempt to teach, any slave within the State to read or write, the use of figures excepted, or shall give or sell to such slave or slaves any books or pamphlets, shall be liable to indictment in any court of record in this State having jurisdiction thereof. ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law")

The law then lists the punishments and for a white person it was a fine and possible imprisonment and for a free person of color they could be fined, imprisoned or whipped ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law"). The fear behind passing laws such as these reveals the certain knowledge that reading and writing can indeed lead to “insurrection and rebellion.” Revolution comes when one can read and understand laws that apply to and protect one group and yet arbitrarily exclude another. Rebellion comes when people, through reading, can gain a larger historical perspective and know what is fair and what is not. Insurrection comes when people can use the written word to communicate with and assemble the masses. This shows how physical force alone cannot control human beings for long but that something else must accompany it. The frightening truth that slave-owners and others throughout history have understood is that to fully control another person, you must limit their perceptions, their understanding of the world, and the influence of others—in essence you must also control their mind.

BODY PARAGRAPH TWO FROM THE DRAFT:

Douglass discovered that freeing his mind led to anguished torment. “As I read and contemplated the subject, behold! that very discontentment which Master Hugh had predicted would follow my learning to read had already come, to torment and sting my soul to unutterable anguish. I would at times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing. It had given me a view of my wretched condition, without the remedy. It opened my eyes to the horrible pit, but to no ladder upon which to get out. In moments of agony, I envied my fellow-slaves for their stupidity” (84). So is ignorance bliss? No, never. To be ignorant allows others to control us. Douglass realized this and after becoming educated he joined the abolitionist movement and spent the remainder of his life fighting for the equality and rights of blacks as well as women.

REVISIONS: The paragraph was revised so it didn’t begin with a fact. In the topic sentence, first a transition of time was added and then a “so what?’ was added that “change was set in motion.” The dropped quote was integrated in more smoothly with a phrase that introduces it and links it to the topic sentence about Douglass’s despair. The quote which was very long was separated with some commentary in between. Again the largest revision came with the added analysis at the end of the paragraph delving further into why ignorance is not bliss and the harms of this type of thinking.

After secretly learning to read and write on his own, Douglass discovered that freeing his mind led to anguished torment as he was unable to free himself from the entrenched institutions of slavery, but change at least was set in motion. Initially, being awakened to the stark realities of his condition served to plunge Douglass into despair: “As I read and contemplated the subject, behold! that very discontentment which Master Hugh had predicted would follow my learning to read had already come, to torment and sting my soul to unutterable anguish” (84). Once Douglass’s eyes were opened, he suffered: “... I would at times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing. It had given me a view of my wretched condition, without the remedy. It opened my eyes to the horrible pit, but to no ladder upon which to get out. In moments of agony, I envied my fellow-slaves for their stupidity” (84). So is ignorance bliss? The answer for us to live in a decent world has to be no, never. To be ignorant allows others not only to make choices for you but to limit your choices. Not knowing the factors and people who shape your life, enables those in power to act in their own self-interest. It also makes people unable to recognize when they are victimized by unjust situations, and if you cannot see the problem, then you can never demand or bring about change. After Douglass understood the evils of slavery, he suffered initially and even entertained thoughts of suicide, but later he escaped to the north and became an influential leader in the abolitionist movement and spent the remainder of his life fighting for the equality and rights of blacks as well as women.

BODY PARAGRAPH THREE FROM THE DRAFT:

Muktar Mai in her memoir *In the Name of Honor* published in 2006, tells her story of growing up in a small village in Pakistan where girls were not educated. Mai, was sentenced to be publically gang raped by six men in a stable with 100 of her fellow villagers outside. Mai was then expected to follow custom and commit suicide, but instead she went to the police and testified against her attackers. Because she could not read or write, the officers wrote down her account but altered what she said to absolve her attackers of guilt, so when her case went to court, she lost. In spite of this,Mai

still fights. She remains an outspoken advocate for women's rights, she is still pressing a retrial of her attackers, she continues to run the organization she started Mukhtar Mai Women's Welfare Organization (MMWWO), and even with many attempts to close it, she still runs a school she established in her village to educate girls.

REVISIONS: The paragraph began with plot summary of a book that had not yet been introduced. A topic sentence was added that transitioned more smoothly from the discussion of Douglass to Mai and connected back to thesis about literacy and control of people. Before Mai's horrific punishment was stated very abruptly. Now more context has been added leading up to what happened to her. Then more description of Mai's years of struggle as well as a quote from a fellow activist was added to emphasize what Mai bravely fights against. Analysis of what Mai gained was added at the end.

Unfortunately, when slavery was abolished, that did not end the practice of denying certain groups of people an education in order to control them, but it also did not end people's ability to go against societal norms, educate themselves, and fight for change. Muktar Mai in her memoir *In the Name of Honor* published in 2006, tells her story of growing up in a small village in Pakistan where girls were not allowed to be educated. In 2002, a more powerful clan wanted to assert its power so without evidence, they accused her brother of having sexual relations with an older woman in another clan. Mai was sentenced to be publically gang raped by six men in a stable with 100 of her fellow villagers outside. Mai was then expected to follow custom and commit suicide, but instead she went to the police and testified against her attackers. Because she could not read or write, the officers wrote down her account but altered what she said to absolve her attackers of guilt, so when her case went to court, she lost. After that, she dedicated herself to learn to read and write so she could document her own story and navigate the complexities of the legal system. As Mai suffered death threats and battled a daunting and biased legal system, a fellow activist told her:

> It doesn't matter what women think, because they are not allowed to think at all! They're not allowed to learn to read and write, to find out how the world around them works. That's why illiterate women cannot defend themselves: they know nothing about their rights, and words are put into their mouths to sabotage their revolt. But we support you! Just have courage. (46)

After nearly 10 years of her case being tried in various courts and reaching all the way to the Supreme Court, all but one of the men were acquitted. The president of Pakistan has since admitted to restricting Mai's movements as the publicity her case receives puts a bad light on Pakistan, and with her attackers free, her life remains in danger to this day. In spite of all this, Mai still fights. She remains an outspoken advocate for women's rights, she is still pressing a retrial of her attackers, she continues to run the organization she started Mukhtar Mai Women's Welfare Organization (MMWWO), and she still runs a school she established in her village to educate girls. With literacy came a more confident and determined Mai and through literacy she has been able to rescue many abused women, educate scores of young girls, and reach out beyond her community and gain international recognition and support.

CONCLUSION FROM THE DRAFT:

> We shouldn't let others control us. We should fight for our rights and everyone should be allowed an equal education. No one should be denied learning to read and write. If people can't read and write then they cannot compete equally in society and they will be taken advantage of by others.

REVISIONS: The previous conclusion ran out of steam and was the weakest, least developed paragraph in the essay. It stayed very general with very sweeping "should" statements but no specific explanation of why this issue is important today and what we can do with this knowledge. The conclusion was the area of largest revision in the paper because the essay needed to end on a stronger more convincing note. A modern-day application was added using Jonathan Kozol's research about the poor quality of inner-city schools in the U.S to show how large groups of people are denied an education today. Then how we can all fight this through using our own skills of literacy was added at the end so there is a clearer call to action.

Slavery might feel very distant time wise and Pakistan might feel very far off geographically, but the issue of people being denied literacy and education is not so far removed. People are being denied education right here and right now in the United States as well, so we must all continue to be vigilant about Orwell's warning: "Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past." Those who write our history, who write our textbooks, who write our news, who write our laws, write us. In the United States, unfortunately the quality of education one receives is based on income

so those living in wealthy neighborhoods get a good education but those who do not, are destined to be controlled by a wealthy elite: “Children in one set of schools are educated to be governors; children in the other set of schools are trained for being governed” (Kozol 176). Jonathan Kozol in his book *Savage Inequalities: Children in America’s School* documented the inequalities in education across the U.S. in inner-city schools. He repeatedly documented the high dropout rates as so many never het high school diplomas in schools that are underfunded, underequipped, and understaffed. We cannot call ourselves a democracy if the many are ruled by the few. We need to take a lesson from Frederick Douglass and Muktar Mai and use our own literacy skills to call out injustice and mobilize people to address it, be it large scale or small: blogging, writing letters to our political representatives, emailing our friends, reposting articles on Facebook. Ignorance leads to passivity and loss of choice. Even small efforts are empowering and can effect big change.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE MAIN REVISIONS TO THE DRAFT:

- **The PIE paragraph approach was used in each paragraph:**
  - First, the “P” (point) was missing in nearly every paragraph as most paragraphs began with facts or plot summary. Therefore topic sentences were added at the beginning of each paragraph that transitioned from the paragraph that came before, linked back to the thesis about literacy and control and forward to the main point in the paragraph.
  - Second, the “I” (information) in each paragraph was decent but dropped quotes needed to be connected to phrases that introduced and explained them and additional quotes were added to fully prove and illustrate certain points.
  - Third, the “E” (explanation) was underdeveloped in each paragraph so this was further developed throughout the essay to show why the issues raised were important and why the reader should care.
- **Additional context, transitions and explanation were added:**
  - When information seemed “out of the blue” or the connections to the overall discussion were unclear, more description was added or logical transitions explaining the connection directly were added.
- **The conclusion was scrapped and completely revised:**
  - The conclusion in the draft was underdeveloped, too general, and didn’t explain to the reader why control over literacy is a concern today. Outside research was added showing how the urban poor in the U.S. are denied an equal education and then what we can do individually about injustice such as this was added. The essay was about how control is taken away from us so the essay now ends on how we can regain some of that control.

Works Cited

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http://www.historyisaweapon.com/defc...eprohibit.html

REVISIONS: The original Works Cited did not list all the references that were used in the essay. All the outside research was added and listed in alphabetical order with the second lines of each citation indented. All the book titles were also italicized. Next, the formatting for all the sources was incorrect as you cannot just list the author’s name and title of the book or just list a web link. The website http://citationmachine.net was used where you can chose to format by MLA (or other types like APA) and then plug in the information asked for based on the type of source you want to cite. Then it formats the citation for the Works Cited and for the in-text citation for you. Skyline College’s library webpage also has citation information: www.skylinecollege.edu/library/citingsources.php

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3.1.6.1.10: Creating Essay Titles

WHAT SHOULD ESSAY TITLES LOOK LIKE?

After you revise your essay and are moving onto the editing and proofreading stage in the writing process, it's time to pay closer attention to the title of your essay. Essay titles should let your reader know what your essay will be about and immediately draw in your reader's interest. Titles should also be specific enough to prepare the reader for your particular argument, so avoid vague titles like "Racism" or "Hope." Also, never turn in a formal essay with a generic title like "Paper #2" and don't use the title of the work you are writing on as your own title like *The Great Gatsby*. It is often easier to write or revise your title *after* you have written your essay and have settled on the central themes and thesis.

WHY ARE TITLES IMPORTANT?

Creating a strong, clear, appealing title is an important part of any writing task. The title is the reader's *first* introduction to your piece of writing, and first impressions matter. Therefore, you want to create a title which pulls in your reader's interest and makes him or her want to keep reading. In a college class, you want your title to make your essay stand out from the stack and make your peers and your professor drawn to read your essay.

HOW CAN I CREATE A GOOD TITLE?

You normally want to include the following features in your title:

1. It should convey the **topic** of the paper. In other words, your reader should know what the paper is going to be *about* from the title.
2. Many titles, but not all, reflect in some way, what **point** you are going to make about your topic. What *argument* are you presenting about your topic? Oftentimes, titles briefly reflect the argument or *thesis* of a writing piece.
3. A good title should also be **creative**, thought-provoking, and make the reader keep reading.

Practice: Creating Innovative Titles

For their first writing assignment, a college writing class was posed with the following paper topic:

Take a look at the gender images that surround us in the media and analyze their various meanings. What roles and stereotypes are most commonly depicted? Do you find them accurate? Harmful? Limited? Helpful? Describe the affect you feel these gender images have on us as a society using specific examples, ads, etc. as evidence.

Here are the titles of the papers students created in response to this writing assignment:

Harmful Stereotypes Genders in Society
Male and Female Roles and Stereotypes Stereotypes Between Genders
Advertising and Stereotypes Seeing Stereotypes
Harmful Stereotypical Views of Women Stereotypes
Stereotypes and Roles Gender Images
Stereotypes: Silly and Harmless Are you a Man or a Woman?
The Roles of Males and Females Societies' Stereotypes
Today's Stereotypes on Opposite Genders Stereotyping

Differences in Gender Stereotypes
The Power of Society Gender Stereotypes
How Society Categorizes Men and Women Surrounded By Stereotypes

Most of these titles clearly conveyed the topic of the assignment but they are repetitive and unoriginal. Now let's try to refine a few of these titles so they are more individually tailored to the writer's argument. Below are several of the thesis statements for these papers. Create an effective title for each paper containing such a thesis statement:

(1) Thesis statement: In film, men are always portrayed as tough, macho figures, and this image ultimately harms men as they are forced to live up to this aggressive, emotionless "ideal."

Possible Title(s):

(2) Thesis statement: Because the media depicts men and women in such narrow and stereotypical roles, people get a distorted image of what careers they can and cannot pursue.

Possible Title(s):

(3) Thesis statement: Television, which seems to continuously show women as sexual objects, limits their potential and damages their sense of self worth.

Possible Title(s):

Answer available at the end of this section.

Answers

Practice: Creating Innovative Titles

POSSIBLE TITLES:

(1) Thesis statement: In films, men are always portrayed as tough, macho figures, and this image ultimately harms men as they are forced to live up to this aggressive, emotionless "ideal."

Possible Title(s): Men in Film: Macho on the Outside, Crying on the Inside

How Movies are Making Men Tough but Emotionally Dead

(2) Thesis statement: Because the media depicts men and women in such narrow and stereotypical roles, people get a distorted image of what careers they can and cannot pursue.

Possible Title(s): Be Anything You Want to Be! Not if the Media Has Any Say

Mechanics, Surgeons and Pilots versus Nannies, Nurses and Secretaries:
How the Media Keeps Our Jobs Divided by Gender

(3) Thesis statement: Television, which seems to continuously show women as sexual objects, limits their potential and damages their sense of self worth.

Possible Title(s): Women's Heightened Sexy Factor and Lowered Self-Esteem

Woman or Thing? How TV is Changing Women into Objects

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3.1.6.1.11: Editing/Proofreading

WHAT IS EDITING/PROOFREADING?

When you get to this stage, the hardest part is over. At the editing/proofreading stage, you are looking at sentence clarity, grammar, punctuation, spelling and any other sentence level issues or careless mistakes that distract your readers from your main ideas. Wait to edit and proofread until you are at the finishing stage, so you don't waste time carefully fixing each sentence in a paragraph you might end up removing entirely in the revision stage.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

You don't spend a long time picking out a nice gift for someone and then wrap it in newspaper. You spent a long time on your essay, so you want the final presentation of it to be inviting and impressive. An essay that contains careless or excessive errors will tell your reader that you did not invest much time or effort and will make your reader uninterested in reading your paper.

HOW DO I DO IT?

- Check out your verb tenses. Don't feel you have to completely avoid the "passive" tense (e.g., "the ball was caught") but definitely try to have MORE **subject-verb "active" sentences**; they add power and agency to your writing (e.g., "Billy caught the ball").
- Also make sure your **verbs are in the right tense**. If you're talking about literature, keep the tense in what is called "the literary present." So a sentence in your essay to set up an example would read "When Hana *tells* Caravaggio about the English patient..." If you're writing a historical paper though, past tense is more suitable.
- **Read your essay out loud** to listen for either awkward or long sentences that could be clarified or broken up to read better.
- Check your **punctuation**. Fix any errors with quotation marks, commas, semicolons, colons, dashes, etc.
- Look for **grammatical flaws**. Be especially on the alert for mistakes you make often.
- Check your **diction (word choice)**. If you're looking for a better word, look up some possibilities in a thesaurus or if you're having usage problems (affect vs. effect for example), then check out a writer's handbook (there are many accessible online).
- Now you can check your **spelling** both with a computer spell-checker and with your own eyes to catch those words that are spelled right but used in the wrong context (like there vs. their vs. they're). Someone else's eyes are great at this point because you're probably too close to your own writing.
- Work on the **presentation** of your paper: double space your lines, maintain 1 inch margins, and prepare a title page with an original title and your vital student info. Also make sure your font is very readable (Times New Roman is the most common) and in 12 point.

Example: Sample of EDITING/PROOFREADING

(Crossed out words show where wordiness has been removed. Bold sections mean descriptive words, phrases, or transitions have been added or dull, repetitive words have been replaced.)
Bell 1

Rachel Bell
Professor Lucia Lachmayr
English 100
21 May 2013

(**Proper MLA page numbering in the top right was added to each page with the author's last name and page number. Also the generic title "**Controlling Human Beings" **was replaced with something more original.)**

Education Denied: a Recipe to Control Human Beings

In the 1940s, George Orwell warned "Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past" **(Orwell 30) (The proper in-text citations were added after the opening quotes**). In the 1990s ~~**there was**~~ a band called Rage Against the Machine, the name itself referring to a people's movement to fight against control (corporation, government or otherwise) used this mantra in their song "Testify," a warning to not silently endure **injustice (*Rage Against the Machine*)**. This ~~**is a**~~ warning ~~**that**~~ is not only relevant to the 20th century, but has been applicable since human beings started forming structures of power to control and oppress one another. This can **vividly** be seen during the times of slavery in the United States when blacks were enslaved **for two and a half centuries**. In Frederick Douglass's novel *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave,* Douglass reveals how this **long and brutal** control of human beings was partly accomplished through control over literacy. The control and limitations over reading and writing during slavery sought to make slaves like Douglass ignorant, powerless, and therefore more easily controlled, and this control over literacy and education is still happening in the world today.

In his narrative, Douglass exposes how being denied education was one of the main tactics used to keep so many blacks trapped within generations of enslavement. Douglass lived in Baltimore for 7 years as a house slave ~~**and initially his once kindly mistress, Mrs. Hugh, began to teach him to read and write until her husband forbid it.**~~ and was forbidden by his masters Mr. and Mrs. Hugh to (**Originally the three words in bold immediately below were "control" but a thesaurus was helpful to find words to get rid of that repetition.)**

read or write Mrs. Hugh became furious if she caught Douglass reading as she understood that keeping him illiterate and ignorant was her only way to maintain **power** over him, "She was an apt woman; and a little experience soon demonstrated, to her satisfaction, that education and slavery were incompatible with each other" (82). Mr. and Mrs. Hugh were not the only slave-owners to realize that educated people are harder to **subjugate**, and that they could not indefinitely sustain control over other human beings solely through physical **coercion**. Many slave states passed laws making it illegal to teach slaves to read and write as seen in this typical law in North Carolina:

> AN ACT TO PREVENT ALL PERSONS FROM TEACHING SLAVES TO READ OR WRITE, THE USE OF FIGURES EXCEPTED. Whereas the teaching of slaves to read and write, has a tendency to excite dis-satisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion, to the manifest injury of the citizens of this State: Therefore, be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, that any free person, who shall hereafter teach, or attempt to teach, any slave within the State to read or write, the use of figures excepted, or shall give or sell to such slave or slaves any books or pamphlets, shall be liable to indictment in any court of record in this State having jurisdiction thereof. ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law")

The law then ~~**goes on to list**~~ lists the punishments and for a white person it was a **hefty** fine and possible imprisonment and for a free person of color they could be fined, imprisoned or whipped **"not exceeding thirty nine lashes, nor less than twenty lashes"** ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law"). The fear behind passing laws such as these reveals the certain knowledge that reading and writing can indeed lead to "insurrection and rebellion." Revolution comes when one can read and understand laws that apply to and protect one group and yet arbitrarily exclude another. Rebellion comes when people, through reading, can gain a larger historical perspective and know what is fair**, just and reasonable and** what is not. Insurrection comes when people can use the written word to communicate with and

thereby assemble the masses. This shows how physical force alone cannot control human beings for long ~~**but that something else must accompany it.**~~ The frightening truth that slave-owners and others throughout history have understood is that to fully control another person, you must limit their perceptions, their understanding of the world, and the influence of others—in essence you must also control their mind.

After secretly learning to read and write on his own, Douglass discovered that freeing his mind led to anguished torment as he was unable to free himself from the entrenched institutions of slavery, but change at least was set in motion. ~~**Douglass starting reading various books that made convincing arguments against slavery which finally helped him form his own thoughts on the subject that had previously "died away for want of utterance" (84).**~~ Initially, being awakened to the stark realities of his condition served to plunge Douglass into despair: "As I read and contemplated the subject, behold! that very discontentment which Master Hugh had predicted would follow my learning to read had already come, to torment and sting my soul to unutterable anguish" (84). Once Douglass's eyes were opened, he **invariably** suffered: "... I would at times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing. It had given me a view of my wretched condition, without the remedy. It opened my eyes to the horrible pit, but to no ladder upon which to get out. In moments of agony, I envied my fellow-slaves for their stupidity" (84). So is ignorance bliss? The answer for us to live in a **fair and** decent world has to be no, never. To be ignorant allows others not only to make choices for you but to limit your choices **without you even realizing it**. Not knowing the factors and people who shape your life, enables those in power to act in their own self-interest **and have no accountability when doing so**. It also makes people unable to recognize when they are victimized by unjust situations, and if you cannot see the problem, then you can never demand ~~**or bring about**~~ change.

After Douglass understood the evils of slavery, he suffered initially and even entertained thoughts of suicide, but later he escaped to the north and became an influential leader in the abolitionist movement and spent the remainder of his life fighting for the equality and rights of blacks as well as

Bell 4

women. Unfortunately, when slavery was abolished **in 1865**, that did not end the practice of denying certain groups of people an education in order to control them, but it also did not end people's ability to go against societal norms, educate themselves, and fight for change. Muktar Mai in her memoir *In the Name of Honor* published in 2006, tells her story of growing up in a small village in Pakistan where girls were not ~~**allowed to be**~~ educated. In 2002, a more powerful clan wanted to assert its power so without evidence, they accused her brother of having sexual relations with an older woman in another clan. **As a result,** Mai**, as his oldest sister,** was sentenced to be publically gang raped by six men in a stable with 100 of her fellow villagers outside. Mai was then expected to follow custom and commit suicide, but instead she went to the police and testified against her attackers. Because she could not read or write, the officers wrote down her account but altered what she said to absolve her attackers of guilt, so when her case went to court, she lost. ~~**Mai states: "The law requires that the police draw up a preliminary investigative report. And it's always the same thing: they tell the woman, 'Sign with your thumb, we'll write it down for you,' and when the report reaches the judge, the culprits are always innocent, and the woman has lied!" (Mai 164-165).**~~ After that, she dedicated herself to learn to read and write so she could document her own story and navigate the complexities of the legal system. As Mai suffered death threats and battled a daunting and biased legal system, a fellow activist told her:

> It doesn't matter what women think, because they are not allowed to think at all! They're not allowed to learn to read and write, to find out how the world around them works. That's why illiterate women cannot defend themselves: they know nothing about their rights, and words are put into their mouths to sabotage theirrevolt. But we support you! Just have courage. (46)

After nearly 10 years of her case being tried in various courts and reaching all the way to the Supreme Court, **sadly** all but one of the men were acquitted. The president of Pakistan has since admitted to restricting Mai's movements as the publicity her case receives puts a bad light on Pakistan, and with

Bell 5

her attackers free **and part of a very powerful clan**, her life remains in danger to this day. In spite of all this, Mai still fights. She remains an outspoken advocate for women's rights, she is still pressing a retrial of her attackers, she continues to run the organization she started Mukhtar Mai Women's Welfare Organization (MMWWO), **and even with many attempts to close it**, she still runs a school she established in her village to educate girls. With literacy came a more confident and determined Mai and through literacy she has been able to rescue many abused women, educate scores of young girls, and reach out beyond her community and gain international recognition and support.

Slavery might feel very distant time wise and Pakistan might feel very far off geographically, but the issue of people being denied literacy and education is not so far removed. People are being denied education right here and right now in the United States as well, so we must all continue to be vigilant about Orwell's warning: "Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past" **(Orwell 30)**. Those who write our history, who write our textbooks, who write our news, who write our laws, write us. In the United States, unfortunately the quality of education one receives is based on income **and property taxes** so those living in **affluent** neighborhoods get a good education but those who do not, are destined to be controlled by a wealthy elite: "Children in one set of schools are educated to be governors; children in the other set of schools are trained for being governed" (Kozol 176). Jonathan Kozol in his book *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's School* documented the inequalities in education across the U.S. in inner-city schools. He repeatedly documented the high dropout rates in these schools ~~**as so many never get high school diplomas in schools**~~ that are **grossly** underfunded, underequipped, and understaffed. We cannot call ourselves a **true** democracy if the many are ruled by the few. We need to take a lesson from Frederick Douglass and Muktar Mai and use our own literacy skills to call out injustice and mobilize people to address it, be it large scale or small: blogging, writing letters to our political representatives, **reading investigative books and articles**, emailing our friends, reposting articles on Facebook. Ignorance leads to **blind** passivity and loss of choice. Even small efforts are empowering and can effect ~~**big**~~ **great** change.

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3.1.6.1.12: Final Revision Example

Example: Final Version Sample

Rachel Bell Bell 1
Professor Lucia Lachmayr
English 100
21 May 2013

Education Denied: a Recipe to Control Human Beings

In the 1940s, George Orwell warned “Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past” (Orwell 30). In the 1990s a band called Rage Against the Machine, the name itself referring to a people’s movement to fight against control (corporation, government or otherwise) used this mantra in their song “Testify,” a warning to not silently endure injustice (Rage Against the Machine). This warning is not only relevant to the 20th century, but has been applicable since human beings started forming structures of power to control and oppress one another. This can vividly be seen during the times of slavery in the United States when blacks were enslaved for two and a half centuries. In Frederick Douglass’s novel *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave,* Douglass reveals how this long and brutal control of human beings was partly accomplished through control over literacy. The control and limitations over reading and writing during slavery sought to make slaves like Douglass ignorant, powerless, and therefore more easily controlled, and this control over literacy and education is still happening in the world today.

In his narrative, Douglass exposes how being denied education was one of the main tactics used to keep so many blacks trapped within generations of enslavement. Douglass lived in Baltimore for 7 years as a house slave and was forbidden by his masters Mr. and Mrs. Hugh to read or write. Mrs. Hugh became furious if she caught Douglass reading as she understood that keeping him illiterate and ignorant was her only way to maintain power over him, “She was an apt woman; and a little experience soon demonstrated, to her satisfaction, that education and slavery were incompatible

Bell 2

with each other” (82). Mr. and Mrs. Hugh were not the only slave-owners to realize that educated people are harder to subjugate, and that they could not indefinitely sustain control over other human beings solely through physical coercion. Many slave states passed laws making it illegal to teach slaves to read and write as seen in this typical law in North Carolina:

> AN ACT TO PREVENT ALL PERSONS FROM TEACHING SLAVES TO READ OR WRITE, THE USE OF FIGURES EXCEPTED. Whereas the teaching of slaves to read and write, has a tendency to excite dis-satisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion, to the manifest injury of the citizens of this State: Therefore, be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, that any free person, who shall hereafter teach, or attempt to teach, any slave within the State to read or write, the use of figures excepted, or shall give or sell to such slave or slaves any books or pamphlets, shall be liable to indictment in any court of record in this State having jurisdiction thereof. ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law")

The law then lists the punishments and for a white person it was a hefty fine and possible imprisonment and for a free person of color they could be fined, imprisoned or whipped “not exceeding thirty nine lashes, nor less than twenty lashes” ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law"). The fear behind passing laws such as these reveals the certain knowledge that reading and writing can indeed lead to “insurrection and rebellion.” Revolution comes when one can read and understand laws that apply to and protect one group and yet arbitrarily exclude another. Rebellion comes when people, through reading, can gain a larger historical perspective and know what is fair, just and reasonable and what is not. Insurrection comes when people can use the written word to communicate with and thereby assemble the masses. This shows how physical force alone cannot control human beings for long. The frightening truth that slave-owners and others throughout history have understood is that to fully control

Bell 3

another person, you must limit their perceptions, their understanding of the world, and the influence of others—in essence you must also control their mind.

After secretly learning to read and write on his own, Douglass discovered that freeing his mind led to anguished torment as he was unable to free himself from the entrenched institutions of slavery, but change at least was set in motion. Initially, being awakened to the stark realities of his condition served to plunge Douglass into despair: "As I read and contemplated the subject, behold! that very discontentment which Master Hugh had predicted would follow my learning to read had already come, to torment and sting my soul to unutterable anguish" (84). Once Douglass's eyes were opened, he invariably suffered: "... I would at times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing. It had given me a view of my wretched condition, without the remedy. It opened my eyes to the horrible pit, but to no ladder upon which to get out. In moments of agony, I envied my fellow-slaves for their stupidity" (84). So is ignorance bliss? The answer for us to live in a fair and decent world has to be no, never. To be ignorant allows others not only to make choices for you but to limit your choices without you even realizing it. Not knowing the factors and people who shape your life, enables those in power to act in their own self-interest and have no accountability when doing so. It also makes people unable to recognize when they are victimized by unjust situations, and if you cannot see the problem, then you can never demand change. After Douglass understood the evils of slavery, he suffered initially and even entertained thoughts of suicide, but later he escaped to the north and became an influential leader in the abolitionist movement and spent the remainder of his life fighting for the equality and rights of blacks as well as women.

Unfortunately, when slavery was abolished in 1865, that did not end the practice of denying certain groups of people an education in order to control them, but it also did not end people's ability to go against societal norms, educate themselves, and fight for change. Muktar Mai in her memoir *In the Name of Honor* published in 2006, tells her story of growing up in a small village in Pakistan where girls were not educated. In 2002, a more powerful clan wanted to assert its power so without evidence, they accused her brother of having sexual relations with an older woman in

Bell 4

another clan. As a result, Mai, as his oldest sister, was sentenced to be pubically gang raped by six men in a stable with 100 of her fellow villagers outside. Mai was then expected to follow custom and commit suicide, but instead she went to the police and testified against her attackers. Because she could not read or write, the officers wrote down her account but altered what she said to absolve her attackers of guilt, so when her case went to court, she lost. After that, she dedicated herself to learn to read and write so she could document her own story and navigate the complexities of the legal system. As Mai suffered death threats and battled a daunting and biased legal system, a fellow activist told her:

> It doesn't matter what women think, because they are not allowed to think at all! They're not allowed to learn to read and write, to find out how the world around them works. That's why illiterate women cannot defend themselves: they know nothing about their rights, and words are put into their mouths to sabotage their revolt. But we support you! Just have courage. (46)

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Bell 5

to be vigilant about Orwell's warning: "Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past" (Orwell 30). Those who write our history, who write our textbooks, who write our news, who write our laws, write us. In the United States, unfortunately the quality of education one receives is based on income and property taxes so those living in

affluent neighborhoods get a good education but those who do not, are destined to be controlled by a wealthy elite: “Children in one set of schools are educated to be governors; children in the other set of schools are trained for being governed” (Kozol 176). Jonathan Kozol in his book *Savage Inequalities: Children in America’s School* documented the inequalities in education across the U.S. in inner-city schools. He repeatedly documented the high dropout rates in these schools that are grossly underfunded, under equipped, and understaffed. We cannot call ourselves a true democracy if the many are ruled by the few. We need to take a lesson from Frederick Douglass and Muktar Mai and use our own literacy skills to call out injustice and mobilize people to address it, be it large scale or small: blogging, writing letters to our political representatives, reading investigative books and articles, emailing our friends, re-posting articles on Facebook. Ignorance leads to blind passivity and loss of choice. Even small efforts are empowering and can effect great change.

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3.1.6.1.13: Essay Checklist

Essay Checklist

Essay Checklist:* To ensure you have a complete essay, *you will want to check off all of the following*: *Student Name:

PAPER TOPIC:

___ The essay responds to all parts of the assignment and effectively fulfills all the requirements.
___ The essay is an analysis of/argument about the text(s).

PAPER FORMATTING:
___ The essay is double spaced with 1-inch margins at the top, sides and bottom of each page.
___ There is no extra spacing between paragraphs, just half inch indents at the start of each paragraph.
___ The essay meets the minimum page requirements.
___ The paper title is appropriate, creative and draws in reader interest.
___ The title page and numbering are properly formatted according to standard conventions (i.e. MLA).
___ The names of the texts are properly formatted (names of longer works likes books and plays are italicized or underlined, and titles of shorter works like chapter titles and short stories are in quotes)
___ I included a Work Cited page citing the primary text I wrote about as well as any outside research.

INTRODUCTION:
___ My introduction names the text(s) I am analyzing (title & author).
___ My introduction contains a thesis that is clear and arguable and has a clear “so what?”
___ My introduction is quick to capture reader interest and strongly orients the reader.

BODY PARAGRAPHS:
___ Each paragraph has a clear topic sentence stating a claim that directly supports the thesis.
___ Each paragraph contains supporting information (evidence) and analysis (so what?”).
___ The paragraphs are focused, fair, reasonable, logical and contain clear transitions.

CONCLUSION:
___ The conclusion leads to a larger significance and does not simply summarize the points made.

PLAGIARISM:
___ I have not plagiarized in this paper and know the repercussions if I have plagiarized.
___ I have cited all borrowed ideas and put all borrowed language in quotes.

INTEGRATING SOURCES:
___ I have included quotes and paraphrases from the reading.
___ All quotes are connected to phrases that introduce them—there are no “dropped” quotes.
___ I have followed all quotes with page numbers in parenthesis (and/or author depending on citation).
___ All quotes fit in logically and are accompanied with analysis that expresses the quote’s significance.
___ If I used outside research, it was credible, it met the required number of sources, and it was used to directly support my argument.

STYLE:
___ I have crafted sentences with attention to word choice, sentence combining, sentence variety, parallelism and have eliminated wordiness to create concise, purposeful and coherent sentences.

GRAMMAR-PUNCTUATION-SPELLING:
___ The paper is carefully proofread and the sentence-level errors have been corrected.

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4: CHAPTER FOUR-CRITICAL READING

4.1: Introduction to Critical Reading

4.2: Types of Reading Material

4.3: Reading Strategies

4.4: Specialized Reading Strategies

4.5: Identifying Thesis Statements

4.6: Vocabulary

4.7: Logic and Structure

4.8: Supporting Claims

4.9: Summary Skills

4.10: Conclusion to Critical Reading

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4.1: Introduction to Critical Reading

Identify critical reading strategies

- Identify and differentiate between different types of texts
- Identify reading strategies for academic texts
- Identify specialized reading strategies for specific types of texts, including content in disciplines and visual information
- Identify techniques for strengthening vocabulary
- Identify thesis statements in texts
- Identify supporting claims in texts
- Identify logic and structure in texts
- Identify summary strategies for reading comprehension

Why should we identify critical reading strategies?

"**Reading is fundamental**"—you may recall hearing this phrase as a child. A series of somewhat cheesy television ads emphasizes this point, such as this one featuring basketball superstar Shaquille O'Neal:

YouTube Video

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View this YouTube Video online

However, as college students, reading can often seem less like fun and more like work. The **purpose** of it changes. Instead of reading for enjoyment, we read for information, for deeper understanding, and for challenging what we thought we knew.

"Reading" in this course doesn't only mean the act of putting letters together to make words, and words together to make sentences. "Reading," now, means a set of skills we can practice and deepen, to make our college experience both easier and more meaningful.

This module will help you become familiar with steps you can take to better understand any assigned college reading.

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4.2: Types of Reading Material

Learning Objectives

- Identify various forms of writing, from various sources
- Identify distinguishing characteristics of journalism, literature, nonfiction, and academic texts

We love categorizing things, and defining items by their differences as much as their similarities. Consider movie genres: when a friend asks you to go see the new horror movie, you know to expect something different than when you snuggle up for a romance with your significant other.



Figure 4.2.1

We use **genre** to define types of writing, as well. Knowing some of the basic differences between types of readings you'll complete in college, will help you know what to expect from the reading before you begin.

The Academic Style

In everyday life, what you read is usually written to grab your attention and get a message across quickly before you "switch channels," so to speak. By contrast, academic texts often raise broad, abstract questions and are unconcerned about arriving at quick answers. For example, where a newspaper headline might say:

"Voters Ready for Tax & Spend, Claims Guru"

the text, written by Richard Layard in the article "The Secrets of Happiness," and published in *The New Statesman*, actually says:

> ...taxation is one of the most important institutions we have for preserving a sensible balance between work and leisure

> [...] I suspect that, in some almost unconscious way, the electorate now understands that the scramble to spend more money is partially self-defeating and that this explains why people are more favourable to public expenditure. But the time is ripe to make argument explicit.

The headline makes its point quickly, but it says far less. It presents little basis for analysis and debate. You can agree or disagree, but you can't easily discuss the proposition. Layard carefully teases out a variety of issues, but the headline simplifies everything down to a well-established formula: free markets or public spending – which side are you on?

Unlike general public debate, academic debate advances through finely-tuned language and disciplined methods of argument. The Layard paragraph may be a lot longer than the headline, but it is not "wordy" for the sake of it. It is very precisely argued; it would be quite difficult to cut out words without altering the meaning.

Academic writing



Figure 4.2.2

Academic writers use cautious, considered language in an effort to be as *exact* as they can in their analysis. They try to say *only* what they mean and what they think can be *justified*. In daily life we cheerfully use language as a blunt instrument, to cudgel our way through the discussions that spring up around us. By contrast, academic writing uses language as a scalpel, to cut precisely between closely related arguments, so that they can be spread apart and analyzed in detail. Learning how to read, think and write in this way is a central part of learning in college.

What Academic Sources Look Like

Academic and specialist sources, such as the ones you have just considered, may have different purposes and contain different kinds of information but they all aim to present content in a clear way. This is why they all follow a clear and predictable structure.

The structure of each type of source depends on its purpose. For example, to help readers to find a specific term easily and quickly, dictionaries arrange words and their definitions in alphabetical order. Once readers understand the way the words are listed, looking up a word is not difficult.

Academic articles or book chapters also follow a clear and predictable structure. They normally contain an introduction, several

paragraphs and a conclusion. Paragraphs may also be grouped into sections. This is their typical structure:

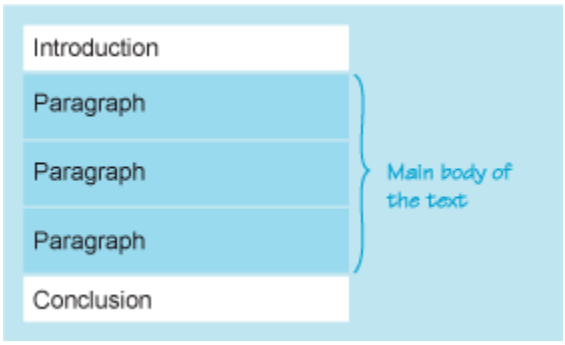


Figure 4.2.3 - The typical structure of a journal article or a book chapter

Other texts such as newspaper articles, web pages, and fact sheets are organized differently.

Distinguishing Features of Reading Types

The types of reading you do in college will depend on your major and your elective options. It helps to be able to identify the type of source you're being asked to read in each class. That way, you have some expectations about why you're reading it, what you should expect to learn from it, and how to read it effectively.

Literature

Literature includes poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, and drama.

Primary goal: to entertain.

Distinguishing Features

- Artistic use of language
- Plot = action
- Characters

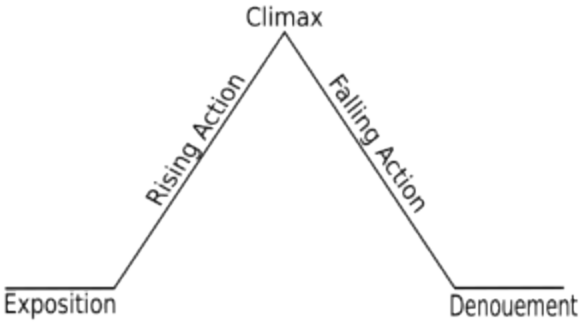


Figure 4.2.4 - *The dramatic arc that many fictional stories follow.*

Example 4.2.1:

- the *Harry Potter* series of books, by J. K. Rowling
- the plays and sonnets by William Shakespeare

Journalism

Journalism is news, usually focused on current events.

Primary goal: to inform.

Because of this purpose, the writing is **neutral**: it shows no opinion, just facts.

Distinguishing Features



Figure 4.2.5 - *The Inverted Pyramid structure of news articles*

The **inverted pyramid** is a metaphor used by journalists to illustrate how many news articles are organized. Many blogs and editorials follow this structure, in addition to most newspaper pieces.

This upside-down pyramid consists of three parts. The widest part at the top represents the most substantial, interesting, and important information the writer means to convey, while the lower parts illustrate that other material should follow in order of diminishing importance.

This format is useful for two reasons. First, readers can leave the story at any point and understand it, even if they do not have all the details. Second, readers get a sense of how important different content is, depending on where it appears in the article.

Journalism relies on research. They refer to sources by name, but don't have separate citations at the end of the piece.

Example 4.2.2:

- Articles from *The New York Times*
- Stories from the evening news

Actor Dennis Franz gives a demonstration of pulling out the key features from a newspaper story in this video clip.

Download a transcript for this video here (.docx file).

Textbooks

You're likely quite familiar with these already. Whether in ebook or print form, textbooks are commonly associated with formal education.

Primary goal: to educate.

Distinguishing Features

A textbook is an organized body of material useful for the formal study of a subject area. A good textbook is distinguished by:



Figure 4.2.6

- **A discrete, well-bounded scope**: all the material should relate to a solid understanding of the subject, usually mixing theory and practice for each topic as it covers the subject domain.
- **Use of examples and problems**: the student should be able to better grasp each presented concept by following examples, and then applying the concept in structured exercises or problems.
- **An internally consistent style**: after the first few sections, there should be little or no surprises for the student in terms of layout and presentation of material. The text's user can get comfortable with the layout, the tempo of presentation, and the pattern of figures, illustrations, examples and exercises.
- **Utility for future reference**: once reviewed, the textbook should isolate material that is useful to the future application of subject knowledge in well organized appendices and tables.
- **A structure that makes sense**: the textbook is not just a collection of useful material, it is a guide to the student for an order of review which will aid in mastering the subject area.

Academic Journals

An **academic** or **scholarly journal** is a peer-reviewed periodical that focuses on a narrow field of study. Academic journals serve as forums for the introduction and presentation for scrutiny of new research, and the critique of existing research.

Primary goal: to distribute new ideas.

Distinguishing features

Academic journal articles are generally written by experts in a particular field. They assume that readers have a depth of knowledge about the subject matter, as well.

This video defines scholarly articles, and shows their differences from other types of writing.

YouTube Video

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Self-Check

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4.3: Reading Strategies

Learning Objectives

- Identify rhetorical context of a text (purpose, author, audience)
- Identify previewing as a reading strategy
- Identify active reading as a reading strategy
- Identify summarizing as a reading strategy
- Identify reviewing as a reading strategy

Months after he was born, in 1948, Ron McCallum became blind. In this charming, moving talk, he shows how he is able to read — and celebrates the progression of clever tools and adaptive computer technologies that make it possible.

YouTube Video

This interactive element is not available in this format. Visit the link or scan the QR code to access it online.

View this YouTube Video online

While most of us don't have the same issues with accessing reading material that McCallum does, many of us can benefit from some of the same strategies he uses.

This section focuses on strategies to make reading a more meaningful process. Some of these strategies incorporate technology, while others just rely on a set of practices that become stronger over time.

Scanning

The technique of scanning is a useful one to use if you want to get an overview of the text you are reading as a whole – its shape, the focus of each section, the topics or key issues that are dealt with, and so on. In order to scan a piece of text you might look for sub-headings or identify key words and phrases which give you clues about its focus. Another useful method is to read the first sentence or two of each paragraph in order to get the general gist of the discussion and the way that it progresses.

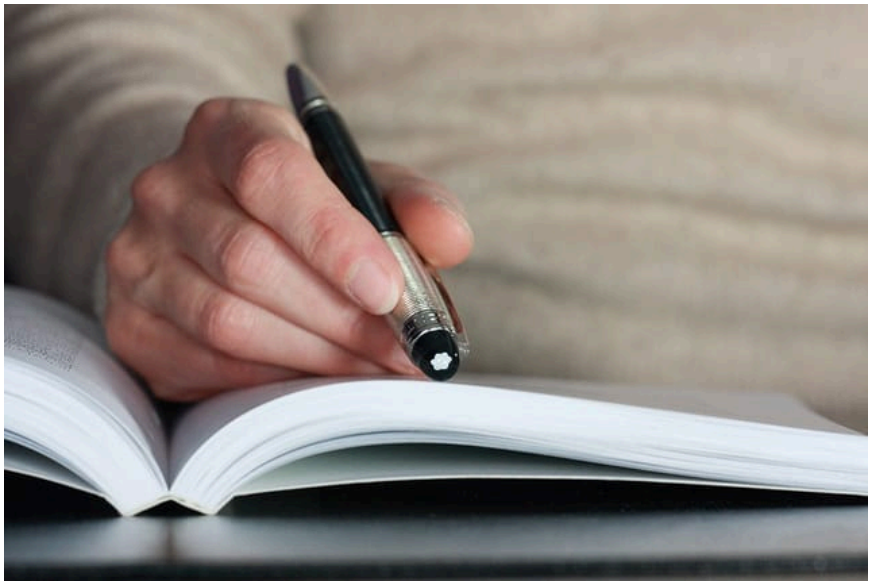


Figure 4.3.1

Scanning is used to find a particular piece of information. Run your eyes over the text looking for the specific piece of information you need. If you see words or phrases that you don't understand, don't worry when scanning.

Scanning is what you do to find an answer to a specific question. You may run your eyes quickly down the page in a zigzag or winding S pattern. If you are looking for a name, you note capital letters. For a date, you look for numbers. Vocabulary words may be boldfaced or italicized. When you scan for information, you read only what is needed.

Rhetorical Context

We're used to the idea of learning things from what we read. It's important to realize that we can learn a bit by looking at factors that are **outside** of a text, as well.

(Author, audience, purpose) Rhetorical Context from **Lumen Learning**

Skimming



Figure 4.3.2

Skimming is used to quickly gather the most important information, or “gist.” Run your eyes over the text, noting important information. Use skimming to quickly get up to speed on a current business situation. It’s not essential to understand each word when skimming.

Skimming is covering the chapter to get some of the main ideas and a general overview of the material. It is what you do first when reading a chapter assignment. You don’t read for details at this point.

Here is how you skim a chapter:

1. Read the first paragraph of the chapter line by line.
2. Next, read all the bold print headings starting at the beginning.
3. Read the first sentence of every paragraph.
4. Study any pictures, graphs, charts, and maps.
5. Finally, read the last paragraph of the chapter.

As you skim, you could write down the main ideas and develop a chapter outline.

SQ3R

SQ3R is a useful technique for understanding written information. It helps you to create a good mental framework of a subject, into which you can fit the right facts. It helps you to set study goals and prompts you to use review techniques that will help you to remember.

The acronym SQ3R stands for the five sequential techniques you should use to read a book: **S**urvey, **Q**uestion, **R**ead, **R**ecite and **R**eview.

Phase	Description

Survey (S)	Scan the entire assignment to get an overview of the material. Read the headings to see the major points. Read the introductory paragraphs and the summary at the end of the chapter. Do not forget to look at the tables, pictures, etc. Remember, you are scanning the material and not actually reading every sentence.
Question (Q)	Make questions that can be answered during the reading of the material. This will give a purpose to your reading. Take a heading and turn it into a question. For example, if a heading in a chapter about Cell Division is in your biology text, make a question by turning the title around: “How does cell division occur?” or “How many steps are involved in cell division?”
Read (R)	Now you read the material trying to find answers to your questions. This is a careful reading, line by line. You may want to take notes or make flashcards.
Recite (R)	As you read, look away from your book and notes and try to answer your questions. This checks your learning and helps put that information in your memory.
Review (R)	To check your memory, scan portions of the material or your notes to verify your answers. Review the material and note the main points under each heading. This review step helps you retain the material.

What SQ3R Looks Like

This video demonstrates the SQ3R process in action.

YouTube Video

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View this YouTube Video online

High-5 Reading Strategies

Click through following presentation to learn about a 5-step process for deeper reading comprehension and retention.

High 5! reading comprehension strategies from **Pilgrim Library**

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4.4: Specialized Reading Strategies

Learning Objectives

- Identify strategies for reading on digital devices
- Identify strategies for reading math, social science, and science texts
- Identify strategies for reading graphics (charts, etc.)

New technology offers us many more exciting ways to interact with reading content, whether it's for work, school, or pleasure. It also changes the way that we understand what we read, when we move from printed pages to computer screens, as the following excerpt explains.

"HYPERLINKS"

Embedded **hyperlinks** in documents or Internet pages have been found to make different demands on the reader than traditional text. Authors, such as **Nicholas Carr**, and psychologists, such as **Maryanne Wolf**, contend that the internet may have a negative impact on attention and reading comprehension. Some studies report increased demands of reading hyperlinked text in terms of cognitive load, or the amount of information actively maintained in one's mind (also see **working memory**). One study showed that going from about 5 hyperlinks per page to about 11 per page reduced college students' understanding (assessed by multiple choice tests) of articles about alternative energy. This can be attributed to the decision-making process (deciding whether to click on it) required by each hyperlink, which may reduce comprehension of surrounding text.

On the other hand, other studies have shown that if a short summary of the link's content is provided when the mouse pointer hovers over it, then comprehension of the text is improved. "Navigation hints" about which links are most relevant improved comprehension. Finally, the background knowledge of the reader can partially determine the effect hyperlinks have on comprehension. In a study of reading comprehension with subjects who were familiar or unfamiliar with art history, texts which were hyperlinked to one another hierarchically (in order of importance) were easier for novices to understand than texts which were hyperlinked semantically (in order of relationships between content). In contrast, those already familiar with the topic understood the content equally well with both types of organization.

This section will address best practices to adopt when reading particular kinds of sources, like math textbooks and online content.



Figure 4.4.1

Online Reading Strategies

It's more and more likely that you'll have to do at least some of your reading for college online. Class readings, library resources, and even textbooks are going digital. Reading online is convenient, and often cheaper than accessing print versions. It can be quite a different experience to closely read and retain information from a screen, rather than a printed page, however.

You should practice some strategies that will improve your online reading comprehension and speed. And some of the tactics you learn about here will help you with any kind of reading you might do, not just the stuff that's online.

Print vs. Online

So what do we mean when we say that reading print is different from reading online?

- First, when you read something—let's say, a book—that's been printed by a reputable publishing house, you can assume that the work is authoritative. The author had to be vetted by a publishing house and multiple editors, right? But when you read something online, it might have been written or posted by anybody. This means that you have to seriously evaluate the authority of the information you're reading. Pay attention to who was writing what you're reading—can you identify the author? What are his or her credentials?
- Second, in the print world, texts may include pictures, graphics, or other visual elements to supplement the author's writing. But in the digital realm, this supplementary material might also include hyperlinks, audio, and video, as well. This will fundamentally change the reading experience for you because online reading can be interactive in a way that a print book can't. An online environment allows you to work and play with content rather than passively absorbing it.
- Finally, when you read in print, you generally read sequentially, from the first word to the last. Maybe you'll flip to an index or refer to a footnote, but otherwise the way you read is fairly consistent and straightforward. Online, however, you can be led quickly into an entirely new area of reading by clicking on links or related content. Have you ever been studying for class and fall down a Wikipedia rabbit hole while looking for unfamiliar terms? You might have started by investigating the French Revolution, but half an hour later you find yourself reading about the experimental jazz scene in 1970s New York. You can't really do that with a book.

Why, What, How?

Now that you've heard about how reading online differs from reading print, you should know that this has some really practical consequences for reading comprehension—how to understand and apply what you're reading. Improving your online reading comprehension will save you time and frustration when you work on your assignments. You'll be able to understand your course subject matter better, and your performance on your quizzes and exams will improve.

Why?	"Why am I being asked to read this passage?"	In other words, what are the instructions my professor has given me?
What?	"What am I supposed to get out of this passage?"	That is, what are the main concerns, questions, and points of the text? What do you need to remember for class?
How?	"How will I remember what I just read?"	In most cases, this means taking notes and defining key terms.

When you keep the "why, what and how" of reading comprehension in the forefront of your mind while reading, your understanding of the material will improve drastically. It will only take a few minutes, but it will not only help you remember what you've read, but also structure any notes that you might want to take.

Student Q & A

Let's consider some questions about online reading, courtesy of students just like you.

Exercise 4.4.1

Question: I'm so used to reading printed texts, and I actually prefer it because I don't get distracted as easily as I do when I'm online. So how can I keep myself from getting distracted when reading online?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Exercise 4.4.2

Question: I once had a teacher who didn't want us use our phones to read our assigned texts. Why did she care?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Exercise 4.4.3

Question: You've talked a lot about comprehension, but I'd really like to know how I can improve my online reading speed. Got any tips?

Answer available at the end of this section.

How to Read Graphs

Line graphs and bar graphs are both visual ways of representing two or more data sets and their interrelation. In other words, graphs are pictures that show you how one thing changes in relation to another. Learning to read graphs properly is a matter of interpreting which pieces of information go together.

Steps for Reading Graphs

1. Identify what the graph represents. Most graphs will have a clearly labeled x-element, spaced along the graph's horizontal axis, and a clearly labeled y-element, spaced along the graph's vertical axis.

- The graph's title should also tell you exactly what it's about.

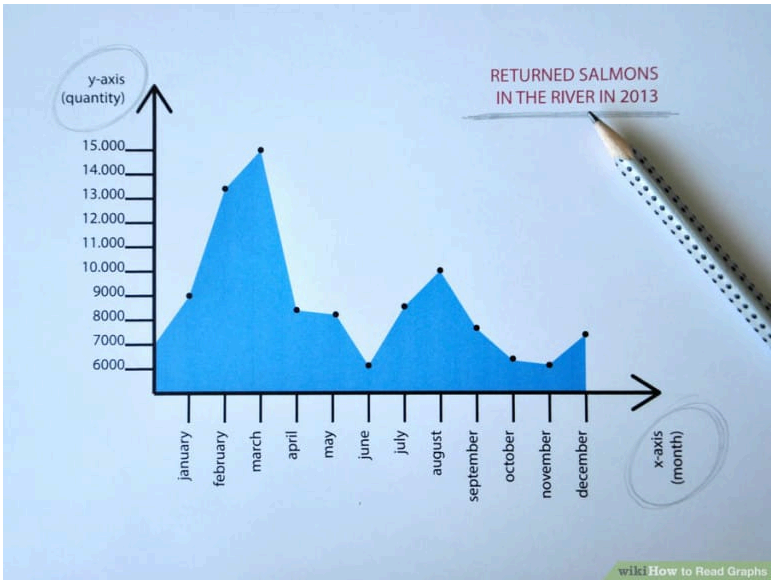


Figure 4.4.2

2. Check the scale for each graph element. This applies to both line graphs and bar graphs.

- For example, if you're looking at a graph that shows how many salmon returned to a given stream over the period of a few months last year, each increment along the graph's y-axis might represent hundreds, thousands or tens of thousands of salmon returning; you won't know which scale numbers apply until you check the graph.



Figure 4.4.3

3. Locate the graph element you want information on.

- For example, you might want to know how many salmon returned to the stream in question in August of last year. So you'd read across the graph's horizontal axis until you find "August."
- Time elements, such as days, weeks, months or years, are almost always listed along the horizontal ("x") axis. Quantity measurements are almost always listed along the vertical ("y") axis.



Figure 4.4.4

4. Read directly up from "August" until you find a dot or a slanting line, on a line graph, or the top of a bar for a bar graph. Then read straight across to the left until you hit the graph's labeled y-axis. Whatever quantity that line intersects with is the measurement for salmon return in August.

- So if you read up to the dot, line or top of the bar for salmon in August then read across to the left and hit "10,000," you know 10,000 salmon returned in August. If you hit a point between any two labeled graph increments, you have to estimate based on where you land between the 2 increments. For example, if you hit a point halfway between 10,000 and 15,000, you can safely estimate that the correct number is about 12,500.

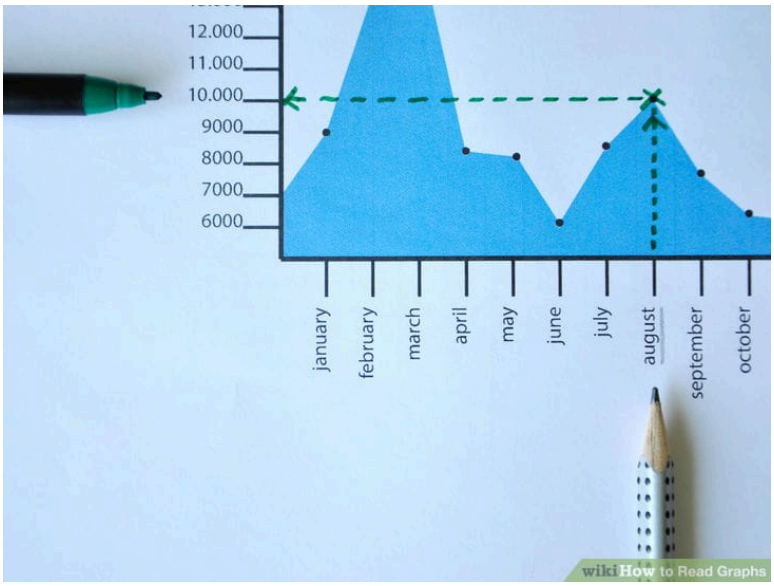


Figure 4.4.5

FINAL TIPS FOR READING GRAPHS

- Line graphs give you 1 piece of explicit information that bar graphs don't. The steepness of the line connecting each data point on the graph (that is, each dot) indicates the rate of change. A steeply descending line, for example, would show that salmon returns dropped abruptly from 1 month to the next. But a slowly ascending line represents a gradual increase.
- If the graph correlates more than 2 elements, the extra data sets are usually assigned to the x-, or horizontal axis. Often, the additional data sets are graphed in another color to avoid confusion. So if you want to compare the salmon returns over the same months for more than 1 year at a time, you could graph each year's return on the same graph, but in a different color.

How to Read Textbooks

Similar academic reading strategies apply to all kinds of readings you'll do in college. Practicing the habits of **previewing**, **active reading**, **reviewing**, and **summarizing** will continue to help you learn, no matter the type of class you're reading for.

In addition to these general strategies, this visual offers advice specific to reading textbooks to get the most out of what you're reading.



Figure 4.4.6

To take this advice even further, the following videos consider the specific needs for particular types of classes you're likely to take.

Math Texts

This overview video introduces some general concepts of how to read and study from math textbooks.

YouTube Video

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The second part of the series shows examples of concepts from the first video, as well as a summary of approaches useful when reading math.

YouTube Video

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Science Texts

This video debunks myths students might believe about reading science textbooks. It also introduces a specific type of note-taking, called the Cornell Method, which is useful for other types of academic reading as well.

YouTube Video

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Social Science Texts

This video models reading a Psychology textbook. The same techniques will be useful with other social science books, including Sociology, History, and Anthropology. It includes nice tips regarding tables and graphs.

YouTube Video

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Self-Check

Answers

Exercise 4.4.1

When you read online, the hyperlinks, images, audio, and video interactivity embedded in the text can be a really tempting distraction. Try reading a passage straight through at least once without clicking on any of the hyperlinks or participating in any of the interactive opportunities. First, get a basic "feel" for the passage, then read it with the interactive components to augment your reading.

Exercise 4.4.2

She's probably right—it's best not to read your assignments from the small screen of a smart phone. It's too easy to miss words and meanings when the reading process itself is challenging.

Exercise 4.4.3

So glad you asked! Reading quickly and efficiently will leave you more time to study, and improve your performance in your course.

To read more quickly and efficiently online, try most of all to avoid distractions like ads, pop-ups, or hyperlinks that will lead you away from your assignment. Another tactic you can try is to scan the page before actually reading, focusing on key words and phrases rather than every single word. It will not only help you to read faster, it'll also give you a sense of the text's main ideas.

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4.5: Identifying Thesis Statements

Learning Objectives

- Identify explicit thesis statements in texts
- Identify implicit thesis statements in texts
- Identify strategies for using thesis statements to predict content of texts

Being able to identify the purpose and thesis of a text, as you're reading it, takes practice. This section will offer you that practice.

One fun strategy for developing a deeper understanding the material you're reading is to make a visual "map" of the ideas. Mind maps, whether hand-drawn or done through computer programs, can be fun to make, and help put all the ideas of an essay you're reading in one easy-to-read format.

Your understanding of what the "central" element of the mind map is might change as you read and re-read. Developing the central idea of your mind map is a great way to help you determine the reading's thesis.

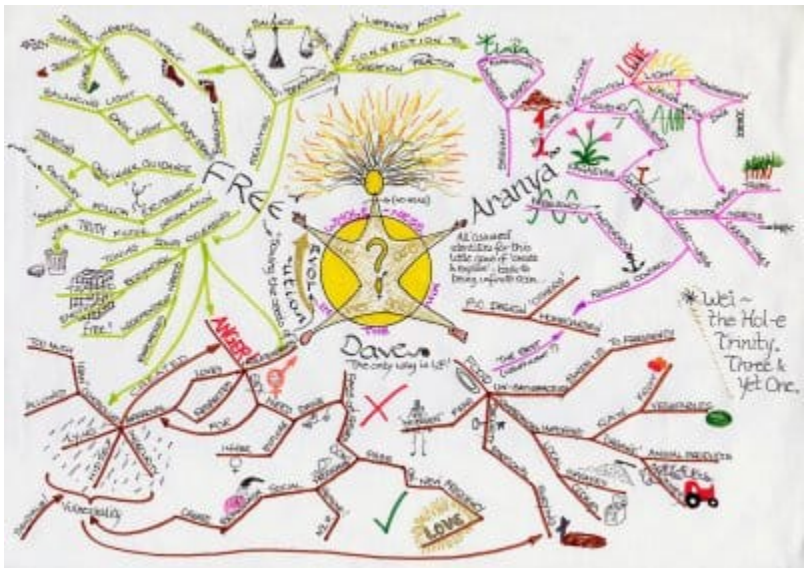


Figure 4.5.1 **-** *Hand-drawn Mind Map*

Locating Explicit and Implicit Thesis Statements

In academic writing, the thesis is often **explicit**: it is included as a sentence as part of the text. It might be near the beginning of the work, but not always–some types of academic writing leave the thesis until the conclusion.

Journalism and reporting also rely on explicit thesis statements that appear very early in the piece–the first paragraph or even the first sentence.

Works of literature, on the other hand, usually do not contain a specific sentence that sums up the core concept of the writing. However, readers should finish the piece with a good understanding of what the work was trying to convey. This is what's called an **implicit** thesis statement: the primary point of the reading is conveyed indirectly, in multiple locations throughout the work. (In literature, this is also referred to as the *theme* of the work.)

Academic writing sometimes relies on implicit thesis statements, as well.

This video offers excellent guidance in identifying the thesis statement of a work, no matter if it's explicit or implicit.

YouTube Video

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View this YouTube Video online

Topic Sentences

We've learned that a thesis statement conveys the primary message of an entire piece of text. Now, let's look at the next level of important sentences in a piece of text: **topic sentences** in each paragraph.

A useful metaphor would be to think of the thesis statement of a text as a general: it controls all the major decisions of the writing. There is only one thesis statement in a text. Topic sentences, in this relationship, serve as captains: they organize and sub-divide the overall goals of a writing into individual components. Each paragraph will have a topic sentence.

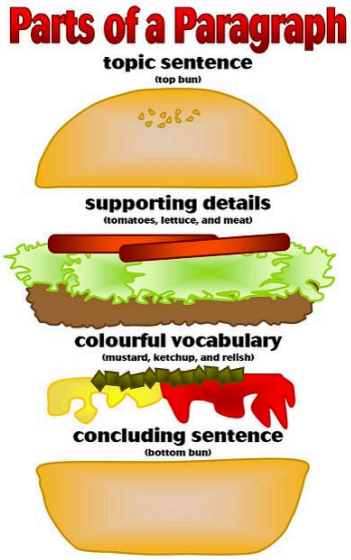


Figure 4.5.2

It might be helpful to think of a topic sentence as working in two directions simultaneously. It relates the paragraph to the essay's thesis, and thereby acts as a signpost for the argument of the paper as a whole, but it also defines the scope of the paragraph itself. For example, consider the following topic sentence:

> Many characters in Lorraine Hansberry's play *A Raisin in the Sun* have one particular dream in which they are following, though the character Walter pursues his most aggressively.

If this sentence controls the paragraph that follows, then all sentences in the paragraph must relate in some way to Walter and the pursuit of his dream.

Topic sentences often act like tiny thesis statements. Like a thesis statement, a topic sentence makes a claim of some sort. As the thesis statement is the unifying force in the essay, so the topic sentence must be the unifying force in the paragraph. Further, as is the case with the thesis statement, when the topic sentence makes a claim, the paragraph which follows must expand, describe, or prove it in some way. Topic sentences make a point and give reasons or examples to support it.

The topic sentence is often, though not always, the first sentence of a paragraph.

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4.6: Vocabulary

Learning Objectives

- Identify strategies for defining words from context
- Identify additional tools for defining words (i.e. dictionaries)
- Identify strategies for retaining new words in a working vocabulary

The English language includes over **1,025,000** words. The average English-speaking adult has a working vocabulary of about 20,000 words. That means most of us have about a million words that we could potentially add to our vocabulary!

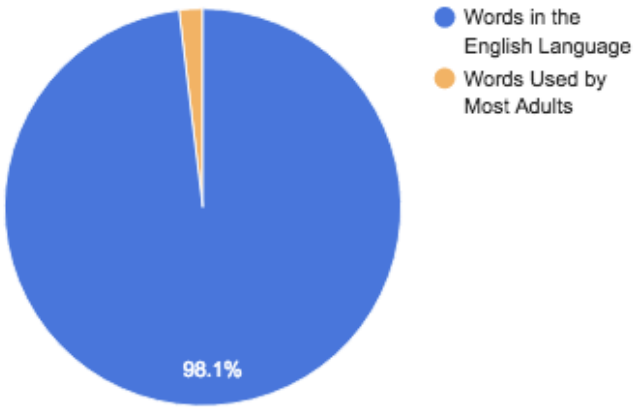


Figure 4.6.1

Having a strong vocabulary makes reading more meaningful and enjoyable, and reading helps build a strong vocabulary. There are lots of other ways to pick up words, though. This module includes several tactics for expanding your word power.

Stuck on a Word? Get Clues ... Context Clues!

Sometimes we misunderstand a sentence because it contains a key word that we don't know. When that happens, we can try using the context clues, or words around the unfamiliar word, to help us figure out the meaning. How do we do that? Read the boxes below slowly.

> For busy adults, learning new words may seem daunting, or discouraging. However, many people find that learning the meaning of new words and expanding what they know are enlightening experiences that make them more aware of the world's ideas.

Do you know what the words **daunting** and **enlightening** mean? If not, how could you figure them out? Try looking at the **context clues**— the surrounding words or phrases that give hints about the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Check the explanation below.

> For busy adults, learning new words may seem *daunting*, or discouraging. However, many people find that learning the meaning of new words and expanding what they know are *enlightening* experiences that make them more aware of the

world's ideas.

In the first sentence, the phrase "or discouraging" comes right after *daunting* to explain its meaning. Another word for *daunting* is *discouraging*.

How do you figure out what *enlightening* means? The context clues "expanding what they know" and "more aware of the world's ideas" can help you. Based on those surrounding phrases, *enlightening* must mean adding new knowledge to your life.



Figure 4.6.2

Dictionaries

Should you stop reading to look words up?

It depends. Looking up words slows you down, and you may be able to make reasonable sense of their context without having to.

You have to decide how important a word seems to be. Do you feel you are missing something by not knowing it? Does it keep appearing? If you just carry on reading, the word may become clearer as you experience it being used (after all, that's how we get to know the meaning of most words).

Sometimes it's not one particular word that's difficult, but a string of them. For example, when I read "clinical depression, assessed professionally through population surveys," I had to slow down. Having taken in the meaning, it seemed to me that "depression" was the main word I needed to pay attention to, so I underlined it.



Figure 4.6.3

One way to tackle the challenge of unfamiliar words is to use a dictionary. You could use a traditional printed dictionary, or an online dictionary, or both. A printed dictionary is easy to keep beside you wherever you happen to be reading. But an online dictionary holds the advantage when it comes to looking up words quickly as you can look up a word in three or four online dictionaries simultaneously, to compare the definitions they offer.

You also have a choice between using a *general* dictionary, or a *specialist* dictionary for the subject that you are studying. How helpful you find either will depend on your subject, so it is worth doing a little exploring to find out. Note down a few "difficult" words from one of your main textbooks. Then visit a bookshop, or go online and find a few dictionaries. Look your words up to see if they are included and whether the definitions make sense to you.

Dictionaries are an invaluable resource but don't expect them to be perfect. A general dictionary will often not include key words from your subject area, or will give a definition which is misleading because the nuances of meaning are not right for your subject. On the other hand, specialist dictionary definitions can be difficult to understand.

Enriching Your Vocabulary

This quick video suggests a practical guide to absorbing new words into your vocabulary.

Download a transcript for this video here (.docx file).

And this video suggests another way to do the same.

Download a transcript for this video here (.docx file).

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4.7: Logic and Structure

Learning Objectives

- Identify patterns of logical organization in texts
- Identify basic features of rhetorical patterns (narrative, comparison, definition, etc.)
- Identify logical structures in argument
- Identify logical fallacies



Figure 4.7.1

Human beings love order, and we will try to impose order in almost every situation. That includes reading. Clearly, most reading relies on understanding words in the order they appear in a sentence. Even beyond that, we anticipate patterns and shapes that particular types of writing will take, and we build expectations based on the first few sentences that we read.

This section will help you understand what you can learn from a piece of reading based on the shape it takes, in addition to what the words themselves convey.

Rhetorical Modes

We've been focusing on broad categories of reading materials so far: literature, journalism, textbooks, and academic writing. Since most of the reading (and writing!) you'll do throughout your college career falls into the "academic writing" category, this is a good point to slow down and examine the building blocks of academic writing more closely.

Rhetoric is the study of writing, so the basic types of academic writing are referred to as **rhetorical modes**. Let's look at 10 of the most common types.

1. Narration

The purpose of **narration** is to tell a story or relate an event. Narration is an especially useful tool for sequencing or putting details and information into some kind of logical order, usually chronological.

Literature uses narration heavily, but it also can be useful in academic writing for strong impact.

> An academic essay about the impact of lead in the drinking water in Flint, Michigan, for instance, might include a narrative section that tells the story of one particular family that's been impacted. This will help illustrate the broader impacts on the community.

2. Description

The purpose of description is to re-create, invent, or visually present a person, place, event, or action so that the reader can picture that which is being described. It is heavily based on **sensory details**: what we experience through our five senses.

Description is very useful in writing of all types.

> In our essay about lead in drinking water, sensory details such as the color of the lead-contaminated water coming out of the tap, or the taste of it when used for cooking, will be informative and help clarify the dangers to the community of Flint.

3. Example

We've been looking at examples so far, with the lead in the water of Flint, Michigan. An **exemplification essay** extends this idea even further: it carries one or more examples into great detail, in order to show the details of a complex problem in a way that's easy for readers to understand.

> Writing in detail about the drinking water crisis in Flint might be used to exemplify the political situation where a state governor appoints an emergency manager over a city, taking authority away from a mayor or a town council. On the surface, it seems like these two ideas aren't connected, so the extended example of the drinking water situation will help readers to understand the potential consequences of removing local leadership.

4. Definition

In the vocabulary section we talked about word definitions in great detail. A **definition essay** takes the concept of "definition" more broadly, moving beyond a dictionary definition to examine a word or concept as we actually use and understand it.

> If we use the term "drinking water crisis" to apply to the situation in Flint, Michigan, what does that actually mean? At what point does the term "crisis" apply? A definition essay would examine the various factors that shape a public crisis, such as the level of lead contamination in water determined to be dangerous, the costs of drinking water to citizens, the difficulty in accessing water in other ways, and the damage lead exposure can have to children.

5. Process Analysis

Analyzing a process can also be thought of as a "how-to" essay. Technical writing includes a lot of process analysis, for instance. Academic writing can incorporate process analysis to show how an existing problem came to be, or how it might be solved, by following a clear series of steps.

> Tracing the steps that led to the current drinking water problems in Flint would prove a useful exercise in a process analysis essay. Showing exactly what steps were taken, and in what order, would help illustrate for readers how similar situations could be avoided in other communities in the future.

6. Division/Classification

A **classification essay** takes one large concept, and divides it into individual pieces. A nice result from this type of writing is that it helps the reader to understand a complex topic by focusing on its smaller parts. This is particularly useful when an author has a unique way of dividing up the concepts, to provide new insight into the ways it might be viewed.

> Part of the reason that the Flint drinking water issue has gotten so much attention, is that it's such a thorny issue with so many potential long-term effects. A classification approach to this topic could divide the overall concept of

"crisis" into individual threads: the political implications, the public health implications, the financial implications, and the educational implications.

7. Comparison/Contrast

Comparison focuses on **similarities** between things, and contrast focuses on their **differences**. We innately make comparisons all the time, and they appear in many kinds of writings. The goal of comparison and contrast in academic essays is generally to show that one item is superior to another, based on a set of evaluations included as part of the writing.

A path to deeper understanding of the Flint drinking water crisis would be to look at another community that has experienced something similar. Comparisons and contrasts might be made in how the situation arose in each location, how it was handled by public officials and private citizens, and how it was ultimately resolved.

8. Cause/Effect

If narration offers a sequence of events, cause/effect essays offer an explanation about why that sequence matters. Cause/effect writing is particularly powerful when the author can provide a cause/effect relationship that the reader wasn't expecting, and as a result see the situation in a new light.

We recognize that lead contamination in drinking water is a problem, but many readers may not know exactly why that is. Drawing a cause/effect relationship between lead exposure in childhood, and later learning disabilities and physical problems once these children grow up, would be helpful for understanding the long-term impacts possible from the current situation in Flint.

9. Problem/Solution

This type of academic writing has two equally important tasks: clearly identifying a problem, and then providing a logical, practical solution for that problem. Establishing that a particular situation IS a problem can sometimes be a challenge–many readers might assume that a given situation is "just the way it is," for instance.

If the fact that the drinking water supply in Flint contains lead is the problem, then an academic problem/solution essay will establish WHY it's a problem. This might include noting the EPA guidelines for lead in the water supply, and what Flint's water testing results reveal. Then, this essay would need to establish a solution for the situation that would be both practical and feasible. The temporary solution many residents are using currently is to buy bottled water to drink, cook, and bathe with. A problem/solution essay on this subject will need to offer a more manageable long-term solution for these residents.

10. Argument & Persuasion

The purpose of argumentation (also called **persuasive writing**) is to prove the validity of a point of view, by presenting sound reasoning to thoroughly convince the reader. These assume that the reader is initially uninformed about the topic, or holds a viewpoint that differs from the author's. The author's goal is to bring the reader around to his or her way of thinking on the matter.

Many different people, organizations, and political groups have been blamed along the way for the water crisis in Flint. A persuasive paper looking at who's ultimately responsible would offer a definitive answer for which group or person deserves the bulk of the blame. It would also effectively address why this matters to the reader–why a reader should care about making sure that the guilty party is ultimately held responsible for their actions.

As the examples of the Flint, Michigan drinking water situation show, there is a lot of overlap between the different rhetorical modes. Many academic essays combine two or more different rhetorical modes in one finished product. This leads to a rich reading experience.

Logical Arguments

Anything you read that includes an attempt to persuade you to think a certain way is likely to include logical argument as part of that persuasion.

The text below introduces the idea of **premises** and **conclusions**. As you view this, think about the relationship of premises and conclusions as they align with main ideas and supporting evidence in paragraphs that we explored earlier in this module.

Elements of an Argument

ARGUMENTATION VOCABULARY

Claim: a statement or opinion that is either true or false

Argument: a claim supported by premises

Conclusion: the main claim in an argument

Premises: claims that support and argument's conclusion

A **claim** is an assertion about the truth, existence, or value of something that is either true or false. Claims are also called statements or propositions.

When supported by premises, a claim becomes a conclusion. For example:

- This class is easy.
- The Detroit Lions have the potential to make the NFL playoffs.
- This chemical structure is unstable.
- Democratic socialism is superior to a pure democracy.

An **argument** is an assertion that contains both a conclusion and premises. It is a statement of fact or opinion that is based on evidence. Keep in mind that not all statements are arguments, and some statements may contain multiple arguments.

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Exercise 4.7.1

Which of the following statements is an argument?

1. Vending machines stocked with soda or candy should be removed from all public schools.
2. *Star Wars* is the best movie ever.
3. We'd better leave now. If we don't, we might miss the last train and we'll be stuck here all night.

Answer available at the end of this section.

A **conclusion** is the main claim of an argument that is supported by a premise. It is the logical result of the relationship between the premises. Identifying the conclusion is the first step in understanding the argument.

But how do you identify the conclusion? Follow these steps:

1. Ask, "Is the statement the main point, or is it a claim given to support another statement in the argument?
2. Identify the indicator word that often precedes the conclusion, such as

Therefore	Thus	As a result	That's why	Consequently	So
This Means	This shows	It follows that	This suggests	Hence	Accordingly

Exercise 4.7.2

What is the conclusion in each of the following arguments?

1. Abortion is wrong because all human life is sacred.
2. It's flu season and you work with kids, so you should get a flu shot.
3. We should believe that rocks exist because we are able to see them.
4. John will probably receive the next promotion since he's been here the longest.
5. We must reduce the amount of money we spend on space exploration. Right now, the enemy is launching massive military buildup, and we need additional money to purchase military equipment to help match the anticipated increase in the enemy's strength.
6. It's a beautiful day. We should go to the park. Besides, I need some exercise.
7. That movie has had horrible reviews. My sister saw it and said it was boring and her friend spotted three mistakes. Pick a different movie. I am sure we can find something better.

Answer available at the end of this section.

A **premise** is a reason offered as support, or evidence, for another claim. It is often indicated by these words:

Because	For	As
Since	Inasmuch as	As shown by
Given that	As indicated by	The reason is that

Consider the following statement: Today's freshmen cannot write very well. Joe is a freshman, so he must be a poor writer. The premises and conclusion are identified as follows:

Premise	Today's freshmen cannot write very well
Premise	Joe is a freshman,
Conclusion	so he must be a poor writer.

Practice identifying the premises and conclusions

In order to identify the premises and conclusion, you should first rewrite the argument in standard form. You do this by identifying which claim is the conclusion, then working backwards to identify which claims are premises that support the conclusion. It should look like this:

Standard Form	
Premise 1:	
Premise 2:	
Conclusion:	

Practice in the following presentation:

Deductive and Inductive Arguments

Deduction

In the process of deduction, you begin with some statements, called “premises,” that are assumed to be true, you then determine what else would have to be true if the premises are true.

For example, you can begin by assuming that God exists, and is good, and then determine what would logically follow from such an assumption. You can begin by assuming that if you think, then you must exist, and work from there.

With deduction you can provide absolute proof of your conclusions, given that your premises are correct. The premises themselves, however, remain unproven and unprovable.[1]

Example 4.7.1:

- All men are mortal. Joe is a man. Therefore Joe is mortal. If the first two statements are true, then the conclusion must be true.[2]
- Bachelors are unmarried men. Bill is unmarried. Therefore, Bill is a bachelor.[3]
- To get a Bachelor’s degree at Utah Sate University, a student must have 120 credits. Sally has more than 130 credits. Therefore, Sally has a bachelor’s degree.

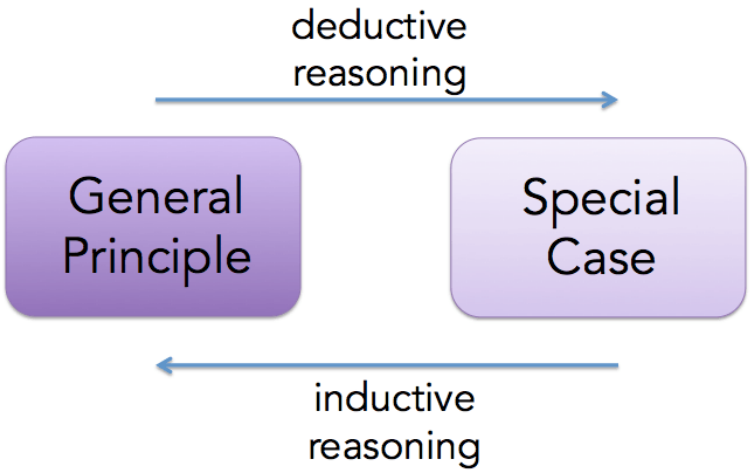


Figure 4.7.2

Induction

In the process of induction, you begin with some data, and then determine what general conclusion(s) can logically be derived from those data. In other words, you determine what theory or theories could explain the data.

For example, you note that the probability of becoming schizophrenic is greatly increased if at least one parent is schizophrenic, and from that you conclude that schizophrenia may be inherited. That is certainly a reasonable hypothesis given the data.

However, induction does not prove that the theory is correct. There are often alternative theories that are also supported by the

data. For example, the behavior of the schizophrenic parent may cause the child to be schizophrenic, not the genes.

What is important in induction is that the theory does indeed offer a logical explanation of the data. To conclude that the parents have no effect on the schizophrenia of the children is not supportable given the data, and would not be a logical conclusion.[4]

Example 4.7.2:

- This cat is black. That cat is black. A third cat is black. Therefore all cats are are black.[5]
- This marble from the bag is black. That marble from the bag is black. A third marble from the bag is black. Therefore all the marbles in the bag black.[6]
- Two-thirds of my Latino neighbors are illegal immigrants. Therefore, two-thirds of Latino immigrants come illegally.
- Most universities and colleges in Utah ban alcohol from campus. That most universities and colleges in the U.S. ban alcohol from campus.

Deduction and induction by themselves are inadequate to make a compelling argument. While deduction gives absolute proof, it never makes contact with the real world, there is no place for observation or experimentation, and no way to test the validity of the premises. And, while induction is driven by observation, it never approaches actual proof of a theory. Therefore an effective paper will include both types of logic.[7]

Critical Thinking and Logical Fallacies

Many of the texts you'll read in college will rely heavily on logical arguments. Logic is highly valued as a way of persuading readers, since it can be confirmed to be true.

However, logic can be used badly. When you're reading, you'll want to be able to pick out bad logic as well as good logic. This video series helps us identify different types of "bad logic" in reading we might encounter.

Broken Logic

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The Man Who Was Made of Straw

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Getting Personal

YouTube Video

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View this YouTube Video online

The Gambler's Fallacy

YouTube Video

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Have you encountered these types of bad logic, also called **fallacies**, in reading you've done so far? Once you're aware of them, they start to appear before your eyes, in text and in advertising of all types.

Self-Check

References

1. **More on Logic** ↵
2. **Deduction and Induction** ↵
3. **Good and Bad Arguments** ↵
4. **More on Logic** ↵
5. **Deduction and Induction** ↵
6. **Deduction and Induction** ↵
7. **More on Logic** ↵

Answers

Exercise 4.7.1

If you answered #3, then you are correct! The first and second statements are not arguments because they offer no support. The third statement is an argument because it offers support (premises) to support the claim.

Exercise 4.7.2

1. Conclusion: Abortion is wrong.
2. Conclusion: You should get a flu shot.
3. Conclusion: Rocks exist.
4. Conclusion: John will receive the next promotion.
5. Conclusion: We must reduce amount of money we spend on space exploration.
6. Conclusion: We should go to the park.
7. Conclusion: We should pick a different movie.

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4.8: Supporting Claims

Learning Objectives

- Identify various forms of support that can be used in a text to validate a thesis
- Identify use of personal forms of support (narrative, anecdote)
- Identify use of research-based forms of support (facts, statistics, outside authority)
- Identify relationship between the rhetorical context of a text, and the effectiveness of the types of support used

It's very easy to make a bold claim and walk away. But how many people will be convinced by such a claim, all on its own?

The heavy lifting of most writing comes in the form of supporting details. Support allows a claim to be verified, proven, and convincing to an audience.

Consider a recent example of an unsupported claim from early in the 2016 US Presidential campaign:



Figure 4.8.1 - *Carly Fiorina*

Carly Fiorina on several occasions has said 307,000 veterans have died while waiting for care from the Veterans Health Administration. In one instance, she said all of those veterans "died in the last year," citing a recent inspector general's report. But that's not what the report says.

The VA Office of the Inspector General report said 307,173 of nearly 867,000 pending VA applications belonged to individuals who died. But poor record-keeping made it impossible to say how many of them died while waiting for care or how many of them even applied for care.

The report also said 84 percent of those who died, or 258,367 individuals, died more than four years ago — not last year.[1]

It may be coincidence that Fiorina was one of the first candidates to withdraw from the race...but then again, maybe not!

Main Ideas and Supporting Details

Main Ideas

This video draws a helpful distinction between **main ideas** and **supporting details**, to show the connection between the topic sentence of a paragraph and other contents in the same paragraph.

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Supporting Details

To dive in more deeply to the concept of supporting details, view the following video. It describes the techniques of outlining and mapping a paragraph for greater understanding.

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Support and Elaboration

Support and elaboration consist of the specific details and information writers use to develop their topics. The key to developing support and elaboration is getting *specific*. Good writers use concrete, specific details, and relevant information to construct mental images for their readers. Without this attention to detail, readers struggle to picture what the writer is talking about, and will often give up altogether.

Two important concepts in support and elaboration are *sufficiency* and *relatedness*.

Sufficiency refers to the amount of detail — is there enough detail to support the topic? Good writers supply their readers with sufficient details to comprehend what they have written. In narrative writing, this means providing enough descriptive details for the readers to construct a picture of the story in their minds. In essay writing, this means the author finds enough information to support a thesis, and also finding information that is credible and accurate.

Sufficiency, however, is not enough. The power of information is determined less by the quantity of details than by their *quality*.

Relatedness refers to the quality of the details and their relevance to the topic. Good writers select only the details that will support their focus, deleting irrelevant information. In narrative writing, details should be concrete: they contribute to, rather than detract from, the picture provided by the narrative. In essay writing, information should be relevant to the writer's goal and strengthen the writer's ability to meet that goal.

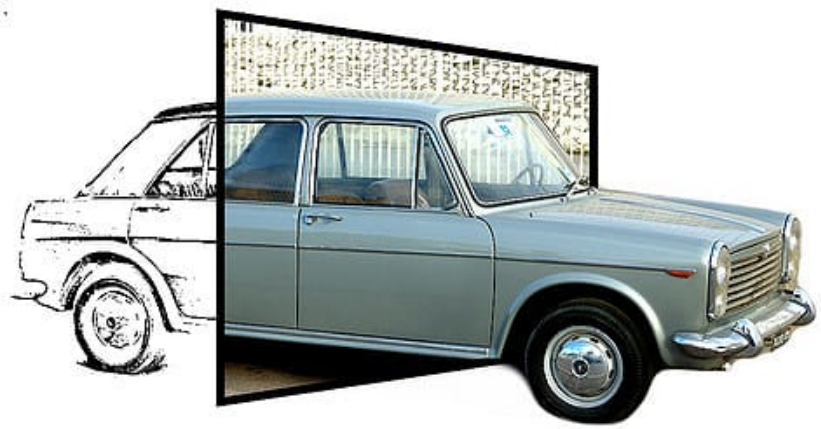


Figure 4.8.2

Show, don't tell: support and elaboration in narrative writing

Many writers work under the advice to "Show, don't tell." Good writers help their readers imagine the story by describing the action, providing sensory descriptions, and explaining characters' thoughts and feelings. Poets are especially adept at using precise details to focus on specific, concrete, observable things or experiences.

Some ways that writers "show, don't tell" include the following:

- **Description of action.** Just as slow-motion replay helps television viewers understand the action in a sporting event, good writers can slow down a moment, breaking down an event into a moment-by-moment replay of the action.
- **Description of physical states.** Good writers use sensory details to show readers what things in their story look like, sound like, smell like, taste like, and feel like. Similes and metaphors can also help readers construct a picture by comparing the object being described to something they know well.
- **Descriptions of internal states.** Books have an advantage over movies because they let the reader inside the characters' thoughts and feelings. Good writers also use dialogue to reveal a character's personality, internal thoughts, and feelings and to provide background information about the story.

Finding the right information: support and elaboration in expository writing

Information is the key to developing support and elaboration in the **expository (essay) genres** — informational, critical, and argumentative writing. While writers of narratives can often rely solely on their own observations and inner resources to develop their writing, writers of expository genres have to look outside themselves for the information they need to develop their writing. As a result, in expository writing, authors need the ability to find and use relevant information: facts, statistics, examples, and

anecdotes. Research, evaluation, and notetaking skills are vital for expository writers.

Relationship Between Purpose and Supporting Details

As you might imagine, some types of supporting details work more appropriately than others, given the purpose of the writing overall.

These two videos show the connections between the purpose of a piece of writing and the supporting evidence that appears inside the paragraphs. They also address the ways in which supporting ideas are “stacked” together inside a paragraph, with transitions to help a reader make sense of their internal relationships.

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Self-Check

References

1. Gore, D'Angelo. Fiorina's Unsupported Claim about VA Deaths. *FactCheck.org*. 23 Sept. 2015. Web. 3 May 2016. ↵

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4.9: Summary Skills

Learning Objectives

- Identify annotation strategies
- Identify strategies to paraphrase a text's thesis statement
- Identify strategies to identify and quote significant passages from a text
- Identify strategies to distinguish a text's major claims from minor ones
- Identify strategies to convey the essential features of a text to someone who hasn't read it

Being able to accurately summarize a reading to someone else is the ultimate demonstration that you understand the reading's contents.

Consider this fun example of a summary from the "30-Second Bunny Theater" series: **Star Wars in 30 Seconds and Re-enacted by Bunnies**.

This recap of the well-known movie *Star Wars* is a blend of major plot points and fan-favorite scenes. In other words, it conveys all the major points of the film. It also adds a couple of supporting details to capture the flavor of the entire movie. Plus bunny ears.

Annotation

As we've learned in earlier sections, active reading involves multiple steps. Even experts in a field expect to read a new piece of writing several times before they feel they understand it fully. Following the same steps that advanced readers do will help you become an advanced reader yourself.

The Secret is In the Pen

One of the ways experienced readers read is with a pen in hand. They know their purpose is to keep their attention on the material by:

- *predicting* what the material will be about
- *questioning* the material to further understanding
- *determining* what's important
- *identifying* key vocabulary
- *summarizing* the material in their own words, and
- *monitoring* their comprehension (understanding) during and after engaging with the material

Strategies for Annotation

You remember from the **SQ3R approach to reading**, that there are five general steps to reading: Surveying, Questioning, Reading, Reciting, and Reviewing.

The process of **annotation** will be especially useful for the Questioning and Reading steps of the SQ3R process.

As you annotate, focus on some or all of the following:

- **Definitions.** Look up and write down definitions of unfamiliar words.
- **Concepts.** Underline what you think are the most important, interesting, or difficult concepts.
- **Tone.** Note the writer's tone–sarcastic, sincere, witty, shrill.
- **Biases.** Look out for the writer's biases and unstated assumptions (and your own).
- **Responses.** Ask questions and note your own reactions and insights.
- **Connections.** Make connections with other texts you have read or your own experiences.

Paraphrasing a Text's Thesis Statement

We've discussed the fact that every piece of writing has a **thesis statement**, a sentence that captures the main idea of the text. Some are **explicit**–stated directly in the text itself. Others are **implicit**–implied by the content but not written in one distinct sentence.

You'll remember that the "How to Identify a Thesis Statement" video offered advice for locating a text's thesis statement. Remember when it asks you to write 1 or 2 sentences that summarize the text? When you write that summary, without looking at the text itself, you've actually paraphrased the thesis statement.

Review this process by re-watching the video here.

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Paraphrasing is a skill that asks you to capture the **idea** of a text, without using any of the same words. This is harder to do than it might first appear. Like advanced reading skills, it takes practice to do well.

As you paraphrase, keep the following tips in mind:

- **Paraphrases are roughly the same length as the original text**. If the thesis sentence is a medium-length sentence, your paraphrase will also be a medium-length sentence (though it doesn't have to have exactly the same number of words).
- **Paraphrases use entirely distinct wording from the original text**. Common small words like "the" and "and" are perfectly acceptable, of course, but try to use completely different nouns and verbs. If needed, you can quote short snippets, 1-2 words, if you feel the precise words are necessary.
- **Paraphrases keep the same meaning and tone as the original text**. Make sure that anyone reading your paraphrase would understand the same thing, as if they had read the original text you paraphrased.

Major vs. Minor Ideas

The following presentation offers advice about distinguishing major ideas in a text from minor ones. When you're asked to write a summary of something you read, you'll want to focus only on the major ideas, since minor ideas aren't generally included in summaries.

Major and minor details from **Nichole Keith**

On slide 6, can you identify which are the major ideas of the paragraph, and which are the minor ones?

Choosing Appropriate Quotes

Pretty much every piece of writing you do for college, whether it's an informal post or a formal essay, will be in response to something you've read—and that means you have to quote. Sometimes you'll rely on outside sources to introduce an idea, define a technical term, or provide supporting evidence for your own argument. Sometimes you'll use a quote to illustrate different positions on an issue, or as an example of an argument you'll go on to disagree with in your paper. But no matter why you're using a quote, remember: **what YOU have to say is more important than what the quote has to say**.



Figure 4.9.1

How to Pick Appropriate Quotes

1. Return to the annotations you made during the reading process. These should point to quotes & passages that you found compelling as you read.

2. For each quote, ask yourself:

- Does the quotation say something in an original or unusually vivid and powerful way that is hard to paraphrase?
- Does the quotation come from someone with first-hand experience with the issues?
- Does the quotation come from an expert whose authority is particularly important?

3. If the answer to any of these questions is *yes*, make a note of it next to the quote and hold onto it. If the answer to all of these questions is *no*, you don't need the quote—set it aside.

Summarizing

Once you've identified a text's thesis statement, major ideas, and quotations that are valuable, you'll be prepared to draft a summary of that text.

Remember, the goal of a summary is to convey the overall meaning of the text to someone who has not read it. You are the expert about this text, and you're sharing your expertise with others through your summary.

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4.10: Conclusion to Critical Reading

As discussed at the opening of this module, reading for pleasure is significantly different than reading for school. The *purpose* of why we read changes: we move from being entertained, to being educated.

That said, the two kinds of reading have more in common than not. And practicing one kind of reading helps improve the other at the same time. Consider this excerpt from the scholarly article “Reading Revolutions: Online Digital Text and Implications for Reading in Academe” by Barry W. Cull:

The Benefits of Leisure Reading

Part of the high value placed on reading may have something to do with the intellectual benefits of reading, including leisure reading, which has been long established by research. Predictably, the practice of reading helps to strengthen literacy proficiency — the more you read, the better reader you become. A significant correlation exits between the frequency of reading books and literacy levels (Grenier, *et al.*, 2008). Similarly, youth who read or write letters in their leisure time at home score significantly better on literacy scores (Willms, 2003). When it comes to college students, students who read for fun as well as for study do better academically than students who do not read beyond what is required for their coursework (Burgess and Jones, 2010).



Figure 4.10.1

So, find things you enjoy reading, and use them as rewards or breaks from academic reading. Many benefits come from keeping your reading skills active, even for “guilty pleasure” books and magazines!

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5: CHAPTER FIVE-THE WRITING PROCESS

Communication skills, including writing, are some of the most important soft skills (employable skills that have more to do with emotional IQ such as common sense, communication, problem-solving, and collaboration) that students learn when they are in college because most professions require high competency in written communication, which can be a chance for one to shine or to falter. With emails, memos, letters, texts, and even Tweets, most people spend a fair amount of time at work communicating via the written word. Whether you are messaging a colleague, writing to your manager, creating the company newsletter, or writing a press release to the media, your writing skills can boost or hinder your career easily, even if you do not have a "writing" profession. Basically, writing skills make a difference in how you are perceived in college and in the workplace. That is the reason it is important to be sure you are following expected guidelines, always using the steps of the writing process, and making sure that all of your writing is coherent, concise, credible, and correct.

5.1: What is the Writing Process?

5.2: What is Prewriting?

5.3: How to Organize and Arrange?

5.4: How to Write a Rough Draft?

5.5: What is Revising?

5.6: What is Done During Editing, Proofreading, and Formatting?

5.7: What are Other Types of Academic Writing?

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5.1: What is the Writing Process?

No matter what type of writing you are doing, academic writing, professional writing, or personal writing, it can be made easier by using the writing process. The writing process consists of the different stages that a writer follows to produce a good piece of writing. Although different sources may label and group the stages in various ways, the stages of the writing process are essentially as follows:

Prewriting – Deciding what to write about (the topic) and gathering information to support or explain what you want to say about your subject, and planning how to organize your ideas in a way that effectively develops the topic.

Drafting -Writing the first copy of the piece (essay, article, etc.). This is often called the rough draft. Ultimately, you should have multiple copies or drafts of your work.

Revising -Reconsidering the ideas and content of the essay as well as refining the style and structure of the paper.

Editing/Proofreading – Correcting grammar, punctuation, spelling, and mechanics.

Publishing – Sharing the final draft with others.



Figure 5.1.1The Writing Process

However, the writing process is not a series of neatly developed steps and may differ somewhat for everyone. Sometimes ideas do not flow easily, and the essay that you originally start out to write is not the essay that you end up writing. Often the stages proceed erratically and overlap; the important thing is to keep writing and improving until a final product is achieved. The more that you write, the better you will become as a writer.

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5.2: What is Prewriting?

Prewriting describes all of the thinking and planning that precedes the actual writing of a paper.

Much careful thought needs to be given to the assignment in general at the beginning of prewriting before focusing on your topic.

Thinking

- First, understand the writing assignment and its limits. Consider the assignment's length. Always know the expected length of a writing assignment. A two-page paper has a much narrower topic thana ten-page paper would have. If there is no page limit, consider the nature of the assignment to suggest its **length**. A summary of a chapter will be much shorter than the original chapter. An analysis of a poem may likely be longer than the poem itself.
- Second, establish the assignment's **purpose**. It is important to know the reasons you are writing or the purposes you are trying to accomplish with the writing.
    1. **Expressive writing** conveys personal feelings or impressions to the audience.
    2. **Informative writing** enlightens the audience about something.
    3. **Persuasive writing** attempts to convince the audience to think or act in a certain way.

Other more specific purposes can include entertaining, analyzing, hypothesizing, assessing, summarizing, questioning, reporting, recommending, suggesting, evaluating, describing, recounting, requesting, and instructing.

- Next, determine the assignment's **audience**. You must determine to whom you are writing. An audience can be an individual or a group. An audience can be general or specialized. Once you define your audience, you must determine how much the audience already knows about the subject to know how much or little background information should be included. You should also determine how best to approach your audience in terms of language, rhetorical strategies, purposes for reading, and background knowledge.
- Then devise the assignment's **occasion**. The occasion for which you are writing will determine the formality and scope of a writing project. An in-class writing assignment will differ from an out-of-class formal assignment. A memo for fellow office workers will differ from a report written for the company's president. A letter to an aunt will differ from a letter written to a bank to request a personal loan.
- Finally, assess your **own previous knowledge of the subject**. Before writing, you need to determine what you already know about a subject, what you need to find out about the subject, and what you think about the subject. Personal essays draw upon your own experiences and observations; research essays require you to gain new knowledge through research.

Topic Choice

The next step in prewriting, and often the hardest, is **choosing a topic** for an essay if one has not been assigned. Choosing a viable general topic for an assignment is an essential step. Sometimes your instructor will give you an idea to begin an assignment, and other times your instructor will ask you to come up with a topic on your own. A captivating topic covers what an assignment will be about and fits the assignment's purpose and its audience. There are various methods you may use to discover an appropriate topic for your writing.

Using Experience and Observations

When selecting a topic, you may also want to consider something that interests you or something based on your own life and personal experiences. Even everyday observations can lead to interesting topics. After writers think about their experiences and observations, they often take notes on paper to better develop their thoughts. These notes help writers discover what they have to say about their topic.

Tip

(http://infoguides.virginiawestern.edu/az.php) *Issues and Controversies* is a first-rate source.

Reading

Reading plays a vital role in all the stages of the writing process, but it first figures in the development of ideas and topics. Different kinds of documents can help you choose a topic and develop that topic. For example, a magazine advertising the latest research on the threat of global warming may catch your eye in the supermarket. This cover may interest you, and you may consider global warming as a topic, or maybe a novel's courtroom drama sparks your curiosity of a particular lawsuit or legal controversy. After you choose a topic, critical reading is essential to the development of a topic. While reading almost any document, you evaluate the author's point of view by thinking about his main idea and his support. When you judge the author's argument, you discover more about the author's opinion as well as your own. If these steps already seem daunting, remember that even the best writers need to use prewriting strategies to generate ideas.

Tip

The steps in the writing process may seem time consuming at first, but following these steps will save you time in the future. The more you plan in the beginning by reading and using prewriting strategies, the less time you may spend writing and editing later because your ideas will develop more swiftly. Prewriting strategies depend on your critical reading skills. Reading prewriting exercises (and outlines and drafts later in the writing process) will further develop your topic and ideas. As you continue to follow the writing process, you will see how to use critical reading skills to assess your own prewriting exercises.

Freewriting

Freewriting (also called brainstorming) is an exercise in which you write freely (jot, list, write paragraphs, dialog, take off on tangents: whatever "free" means to you) about a topic for a set amount of time (usually three to five minutes or until you run out of ideas or energy). Jot down any thoughts that come to your mind. Try not to worry about what you are saying, how it sounds, whether it is good or true, grammar, spelling, or punctuation. Instead, write as quickly as you can without stopping. If you are stuck, just copy the same word or phrase repeatedly until you come up with a new thought or write about why you cannot continue. Just keep writing; that is the power of this technique!

Writing often comes easier when you have a personal connection with the topic. Remember, to generate ideas in your freewriting,

think about readings that you have enjoyed or that have challenged your thinking. Then write about it. Doing this may lead your thoughts in interesting directions. Quickly recording your thoughts on paper will help you discover what you have to say about a topic. When writing quickly, try not to doubt or question your ideas, but if you do, write those, too. Allow yourself to write freely and unselfconsciously. Once you start writing with few limitations, you may find you have more to say than you first realized. Your flow of thoughts can lead you to discover more ideas about the topic as well as different perspectives on it. Freewriting may even lead you to discover another topic that excites you even more than your original idea. Freewriting can also be used to narrow a topic and/or to develop supporting ideas once a broad topic has been chosen.

Journaling is another useful strategy for generating topic and content ideas. Journaling can be useful in exploring different topic ideas and serve as possible topic ideas for future papers.

Tip

Some prewriting strategies can be used together. For example, you could use experience and observations to come up with a topic related to your course studies. Then you could use freewriting to describe your topic in more detail and figure out what you have to say about it.

Focusing Topic

Once a general topic has been assigned to or chosen by you, then you must decide on the **scope** of the topic. Broad topics always need to be narrowed down to topics that are more specific. Then you need to determine what you are going to say about a subject. Two ways to help narrow a general subject down to a narrower topic are **probing** and **focused freewriting**.

- **Probing** is asking a series of questions about the topic. **Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?** As you choose your topic, answering these questions can help you revisit the ideas you already have and generate new ways to think about your topic. You may also discover aspects of the topic that are unfamiliar to you and that you would like to learn more about. All these idea-gathering techniques will help you plan for future work on your assignment.

For example, if you were writing about tattoos, then you might ask yourself the following questions: **Who** do you know that has tattoos or who are some celebrities with memorable tattoos? **What** kinds of tattoos do people usually get–what symbols and what words? **Where** do people place tattoos on their bodies or where do people go to get tattoos–tattoo parlors? **When** do people get tattoos–is it after some memorable event or life stage? **Why** do people get tattoos? Finally, **how** do people get tattoos–what is the actual process?

- **Focused Freewriting** is freewriting again and again with each freewriting cycle becoming more focused (also called **looping**), and it can yield a great deal of useful material. Try this by taking the most compelling idea from one freewriting and starting the next with it.

Developing a Topic

The following checklist can help you decide if your narrowed topic is a possible topic for your assignment:

- Why am I interested in this topic?
- Would my audience be interested and why?
- Do I have prior knowledge or experience with this topic? If so, would I be comfortable exploring this topic and sharing my experiences?
- Why do I want to learn more about this topic?

- Is this topic specific? What specifics or details about this topic stand out to me?
- Does it fit the purpose of the assignment, and will it meet the required length of the assignment?

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5.3: How to Organize and Arrange?

Once you have generated supporting ideas for the main idea of your paper, you need to arrange those ideas in some type of order. **Clustering** and **outlining** can help organize the ideas.

Clustering (also called idea mapping) is a way of visually arranging ideas. Begin clustering by writing the topic in the center of a sheet of paper. Circle the topic, and then surround it with words and phrases that identify the major points to be discussed in the paper. Continue the process until all supporting details and secondary details have been listed. Many writers like this method because the shapes show how the ideas relate or connect, and writers can find a focused topic from the connections mapped. Using clustering, you might discover connections between topics that you had not thought of before.

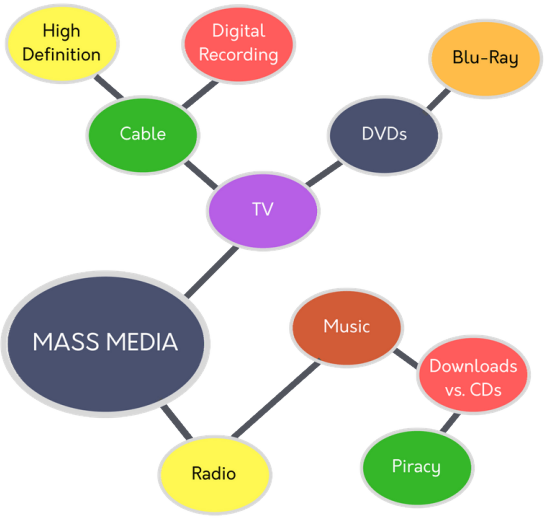


Figure 5.3.1Clustering

Outlining lists the major supporting details in a tentative order and includes secondary supporting details.

Traditional Formal Outline

1. Introduction
   Thesis statement
2. Main Point #1 → *becomes the topic sentence of body paragraph 1*
   1. Supporting detail → *becomes a support sentence of body paragraph 1*
      1. Subpoint
      2. Subpoint
   2. Supporting detail
      1. Subpoint
      2. Subpoint
   3. Supporting detail
      1. Subpoint
      2. Subpoint
3. Main Point #2 → *becomes the topic sentence of body paragraph 2*
   1. Supporting detail
   2. Supporting detail
   3. Supporting detail
4. Main Point #3 → *becomes the topic sentence of body paragraph 3*
   1. Supporting detail
   2. Supporting detail
   3. Supporting detail
5. Conclusion

Figure 5.3.2Traditional Formal Outline

Before you write, you need to decide how to organize your ideas. You need to determine the **rhetorical mode(s)** that will be used

and the order of the supporting ideas. Simplistically speaking, there are nine basicrhetorical modes.They are as follows: **narration, description, exemplification, process, cause and effect, comparison and contrast, classification and division, definition, and argument.** However, most complex writing begins with an argument of some sort and then uses a combination of modes to relay one's message.

Structure of a Paragraph and Essay

All formal paragraphs and essays have a **title**, a beginning oran **introduction**, a **middle-a body of supporting paragraphs**, and an end or **conclusion**.

A **title** is at the top of your paragraph or essay, but it is often the last thing that you create because until the paper is complete, you do not really know what your final product will be. A good title makes people want to read your paper; it does not merely repeat the topic sentence or thesis statement; it hints at your main idea. It is not a complete sentence, but it is a phrase or phrases that indicate your topic.

An effective **introduction** captures your readers' attention and arouses their curiosity. In a paragraph, it is often your topic sentence, and in an essay, it usually includes your thesis statement, which narrows your subject, claims something specific and significant, and conveys your purpose and often your form of organization. You can include a question, tell a story, use a quotation, give interesting facts or statistics, give background information, or outline a problem and/or a solution. **Do not tell the reader what your topic is–show them. Do not be vague and mysterious. Do not refer back to your title. Do not apologize for what you are about to say, and be original.** The important thing is that you hook your readers' attention and motivate them to continue reading.

throughout your paper and use repetition sparingly and only when it is effective and necessary. Be consistent in tense, number, and person throughout your paper as well. The entire body of supporting evidence should be focused on supporting your main idea without straying off topic or including unrelated ideas.

Your **conclusion** should let the readers know that you are finished and not leave them with any unanswered questions. It may recommend a call to action, or it may just summarize a long and complex paper. The conclusion may repeat some of the ideas from the introduction, but it should not be a replica of that paragraph. It may restate your main idea. The conclusion can be either hopeful or hopeless depending on the mood of your paper. You may leave your reader with some final important facts, or a compelling example, or a final visual image. **It is important that you do not go off in a new direction in your conclusion. Do not make sweeping generalizations, and again do not apologize for any of your ideas.** Once these arrangements and ideas have been decided, then an outline should be constructed.

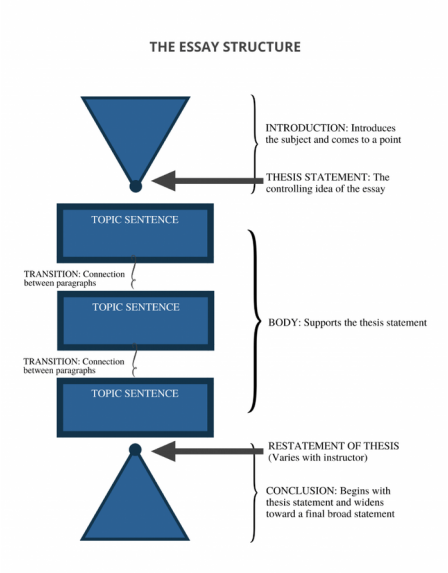


Figure 5.3.3 The Essay Structure

Using a Clear Organizational Pattern

Depending on your topic, you might find it beneficial to use one of these common organizational patterns, either within individual paragraphs or within the entire essay:

Pattern	Explanation	Example
Process analysis	A process analysis paragraph is used to describe how something is made or to explain the steps for how something is done.	The first key to growing good tomatoes is to give the seedlings plenty of room. Make sure to transplant them to small pots once they get their first leaves. Even when they are just starting out in pots, they need plenty of light, air, and heat. Make sure to warm the ground in advance by covering it in plastic sheeting for a couple of weeks. When you are ready to plant them in soil, plant them deeply enough, so they can put down some strong roots. Mulch next, and once the stems of the tomato plants have reached a few inches in height, cut off the lower leaves to avoid fungi. Carefully prune the suckers that develop in the joints of the developing stems.
Chronological	Chronological arrangement presents information in time order.	As soon as I arrived at the farmers' market, I bought a large bag of lettuce. I walked around the corner and saw the biggest, most gorgeous sunflower I had ever seen. I bought it and added it to my lettuce bag. The flower was so big that I had to hold the bag right in front of me to keep it from being bumped. At the Wilson Pork Farm booth, I tasted a little pulled pork. You guessed it—I had to buy a quart of it. I went on with a plastic quart container in my left hand and my lettuce and flower in my right hand. I was handling it all just fine until I saw a huge hanging spider plant I had to have. Ever so gently, I placed my pulled pork container inside the spider fern plant pot. Now I was holding everything right in front of me as I tried to safely make my way through the crowd. That is when I met up with little Willie. Willie was about seven years old, and he was playing tag with his brother. I am not sure where their mother was, but Willie came running around the corner and smacked right into me. You are probably thinking that poor Willie had pulled pork all over his clothes and an upside-down plant on his head, but no, not at all. I was the one. Willie didn't even notice. He was too busy chasing his brother.
General-to-specific	A common paragraph format is to present a general idea and then give examples.	The displays at the farmers' market do not lack for variety. You will see every almost every kind of fresh, locally grown food you can imagine. The featured fruits on a given day might be as varied as pomegranates, persimmons, guava, jackfruit, and citron. Vegetables might include shiitake mushrooms, artichokes, avocados, and garlic. Some vendors also sell crafts, preserves, seeds, and other supplies suitable for starting your own garden.
Specific-to-general	The reverse of the above format is to give some examples and then summarize them with a general idea.	Your sense of smell is awakened by eighteen varieties of fresh roma tomatoes. Your mouth waters at the prospect of sampling the fresh breads. Your eye catches a glimpse of the colors of handmade, embroidered bags. You linger to touch a perfectly ripe peach. Your ears catch the strain of an impromptu jug band. A walk up and down the aisles of your local farmers' market will engage all of your senses.

Spatial	A paragraph using spatial organization presents details as you would naturally encounter them, such as from top to bottom or from the inside to the outside. In other words, details are presented based on their physical location.	From top to bottom, the spice booth at our farmers' market is amazing. Up high vendors display artwork painstakingly made with spices. At eye level, you see at least ten different fresh spices in small baggies. On the tabletop is located an assortment of tasting bowls with choices ranging from desserts to drinks to salads. Below the table, but out of the way of customers, are large bags of the different spices. Besides being a great use of space, the spice booth looks both professional and charming.

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5.4: How to Write a Rough Draft?

Make the Writing Process Work for You! What makes the writing process beneficial to writers is that it encourages alternatives to standard practices and motivates you to develop your best ideas. For instance, the following approaches, done alone or in combination with others, may improve your writing and help you move forward in the writing process:

- Begin writing with the part you know the most about. The purpose of a first draft is to get ideas down on paper that can then be revised. Consider beginning with the body paragraphs and drafting the introduction and conclusion later. You can start with the third point in your outline if ideas come easily to mind, or you can start with the first or second point Although paragraphs may vary in length, keep in mind that short paragraphs may contain insufficient support. Readers may also think the writing is abrupt. Long paragraphs may be wordy and may lose your reader's interest. As a guideline, try to write paragraphs longer than one sentence but shorter than the length of an entire double-spaced page.
- Write one supporting point at a time and then stop. As long as you complete the assignment on time, you may choose how many paragraphs you complete in one sitting. Pace yourself. On the other hand, try not to procrastinate. Writers should always meet their deadlines.
- Take short breaks to refresh your mind. This tip might be most useful if you are writing a multipage report or essay. Still, if you are antsy or cannot concentrate, take a break to let your mind rest, but do not let breaks extend too long. If you spend too much time away from your essay, you may have trouble starting again. You may forget key points or lose momentum. Try setting an alarm to limit your break, and when the time is up, return to your desk to write.
- Be reasonable with your goals. If you decide to take ten-minute breaks, try to stick to that goal. If you told yourself that you need more facts, then commit to finding them. Holding yourself to your own goals will create successful writing assignments.
- Keep your audience and purpose in mind as you write. These aspects of writing are just as important when you are writing a single paragraph for your essay as when you are considering the direction of the entire essay.
- Of all of these considerations, keeping your purpose and your audience at the front of your mind is key to writing success. If your purpose is to persuade, for example, you will present your facts and details in the most logical and convincing way you can for the particular audience you have in mind. If your audience dwells on logic, for example, points that use reason, facts, documented information, and the like, will provide the persuasion to which those readers best respond. Some writers find it useful to keep the purpose and audience at the top of every page, highlighted in some way, as a reminder of the targets of each point.
- Your purpose will guide your mind as you compose your sentences. Your audience will guide word choice. Are you writing for experts, for a general audience, for other college students, or for people who know very little about your topic? Keep asking yourself what your readers, with their background and experience, need to know to understand your ideas. How can you best express your ideas, so they are meaningful and memorable and your communication is effective?
- Write knowing that the revision and editing processes lie ahead, so leave plenty of time for those stages.

Tip

You may want to identify your purpose and audience on an index card that you clip to your paper (or keep next to your computer). On that card, you may want to write notes to yourself—perhaps about what that audience might not know or what it needs to know—so that you will be sure to address those issues when you write. It may be a good idea to state exactly what you want to explain to that audience, or the subject about which you want to inform them or persuade them.

Writing at Work

Many of the documents you produce at work target a particular audience for a particular purpose. You may find that it is highly advantageous to know as much as you can about your target audience and to prepare your message to reach that audience,

even if the audience is a coworker or your boss. Menu language is a common example. Descriptions like “organic romaine” and “free-range chicken” are intended to appeal to a certain type of customer though perhaps not to the same customer who craves a thick steak. Similarly, mail-order companies research the demographics of the people who buy their merchandise. Successful vendors customize product descriptions in catalogs to appeal to their buyers’ tastes. For example, the product descriptions in a skateboarder catalog will differ from the descriptions in a clothing catalog for mature adults.

Tips to Avoid Writer's Block

Set up scheduled times to write and set deadlines to accomplish different parts of your essay, and avoid perfectionism–that comes later in the writing process.

Maintaining Internal Integrity of Paragraphs

Pattern	Explanation	Example
Linkages	Paragraphs with unity flow wellso that readers can follow along easily. You need to present an idea and then link the rest of the ideas in the paragraph together. Do not leave any unifying for your readers to do mentally. Do it all for them.	Not all the booths at a farmers’ market feature food. One couple has a booth that sells only fresh flowers. They display some flowers in antique containers and sell the flowers, the containers, or both. A clothesline above our heads displays a variety of dried flowers. A table holds about fifty vases of varying sizes, and they are all full of flowers. Some vases hold only one kind of long-stem flowers. Others hold mixtures of uncut flowers. Still, others display gorgeous arrangements. Both the man and the woman wear a wreath of flowers on their heads. The whole display is so attractive and smells so fabulous that it really draws people.
Parallelism	Parallelism means that you maintain the same general wording and format for similar situations throughout the paragraph so that once readers figure out what is going on, they can easily understand the whole paragraph.	The history of this farmers’ market followed a typical pattern. It started out in the 1970s as a co-op of local farmers, featuring a small city block of modest tables and temporary displays every Saturday morning from April to October from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. In the early 1990s, with the help of a grant from the city, the market expanded its footprint to a larger, more centrally located city block with ample parking. It benefited greatly from the installation of permanent booths, electrical outlets, and a ready water supply. These amenities drew far more customers and merchants. Its popularity reached unprecedented levels by 2000, when the city offered to help with the staffing needed to keep it open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and from noon to 5 p.m. on Sundays. Recently, discussions began about how to open the market on weeknights in the summer from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Consistency	A paragraph with consistency uses the same point of view and the same verb tense throughout. In other words, if you are using third person in the beginning of the paragraph, you use it throughout the paragraph. If you are using present tense to start the paragraph, you stick with it.	There comes a time each year when you must begin the all-important step of actually harvesting your vegetable garden. You will want to pick some of your vegetables before they are fully ripe. Eggplants, cucumbers, and squash fall into this category because they can further ripen once you have picked them. On the other hand, you will find that tomatoes, pumpkins, and most melons really need to ripen fully before you harvest them. You should also keep in mind that you would need plenty of storage space for your bounty. If you have a good harvest, you might want to have a few friends in mind, especially as recipients for your squash and cucumbers.

Using Transitions

Transitions within paragraphs are words that connect one sentence to another so that readers can follow the intended meanings of sentences and relationships between sentences. Transitions may also smooth the flow between body paragraphs. The following table shows some commonly used transition words:

Commonly Used Transition Words

To compare/ contrast	after that, again, also, although, and then, but, despite, even though, finally, first/second/third/etc., however, in contrast, in the same way, likewise, nevertheless, next, on the other hand, similarly, then
To signal cause and effect	as a result, because, consequently, due to, hence, since, therefore, thus
To show sequence or time	after, as soon as, at that time, before, during, earlier, finally, immediately, in the meantime, later, meanwhile, now, presently, simultaneously, so far, soon, until, then, thereafter, when, while
To indicate place or direction	above, adjacent to, below, beside, beyond, close, nearby, next to, north/south/east/west, opposite, to the left/ right
To present examples	for example, for instance, in fact, to illustrate, specifically
To suggest relationships	and, also, besides, further, furthermore, in addition, moreover, too

What Point of View Should Be Used in Academic Writing?

The dominant perspective in argument writing should be third person (he, she, it, and they). What do you gain by using third person?

- Third person puts the topic and argument at the center, where they should be.
- Third person implies a critical distance between the writer and the argument, which can reassure readers who might disagree with your perspective that you are not being overly swayed by emotional attachment, i.e., that you can be objective.



The third-person point of view lends more weight to argument writing by putting the topic and argument at the center of the paper and shows that the author can be objective.

Figure 5.4.1Point of View

What this means is that writers should minimize the first person (I, me, we, us).The use of *I* in writing is often a topic of debate, and the acceptance of its usage varies from instructor to instructor. Some instructors demand all removal of first person from argument writing, but other instructors do not mind it. (This is changing fast, though. Many academic journals now encourage first-person writing because it is more active, immediate, and interesting to read. The deciding factor is to follow the instructions of your instructor.) While you may feel more comfortable using first person because you still think of an argument as the same as an opinion, be aware that using first person in argument writing comes with damaging effects:

- Using *I* shifts the focus from the topic and argument to the one making the argument. *You* are not the focus of the essay; your argument and its support are. The insertion of *I* into a sentence alters not only the way a sentence might sound but also the composition of the sentence itself. *I* is often the subject of a sentence. If the subject of the essay is supposed to be, for example, smoking, then by inserting yourself into the sentence, you are effectively displacing the subject of the essay into a secondary position. Note the difference in these two sentences:

Smoking is bad.

I think smoking is bad.

In the first sentence, the rightful subject, *smoking*, is in the subject position in the sentence. In the second sentence, the insertion of *I* and think replaces smoking as the subject, which draws attention to *I* and away from the topic that is supposed to be discussed. Remember to keep the message (the subject) and the messenger (the writer) separate.

- Too many I-statements make your argument sound weak. Excessive repetition of “I think” or “I feel” or “I believe” will eventually make it look like you are overemphasizing your beliefs because you don’t have enough confidence in them. Perception is important. You may actually be incredibly confident in your argument, logic, and evidence, but your overuse of I-statements will undermine that.
- Too many I-statements make your argument sound biased. Too much use of *I* will make your readers think you cannot be objective, and they may doubt your support because they think you are too personally attached to the argument to reasonably and objectively weigh data and logic—even if you are doing that throughout the essay.
- I-statements make your sentences wordier. Good academic writing is shark-like, and when declaring arguments and supporting points, you especially want to cut through the noise and confusion with strong, straightforward, economic writing. Refer again to the two sentences above. The first is boldly declarative (Smoking is bad. Boom!). The second is wordier, which drains energy and punch from the claim.

Writers may use the first person POV in personal, reflective or narrative writing. However, the second person POV (using you) is usually avoided in any form of academic writing.

Tip

Consider adopting this rule of thumb: check with your professors for their preference, but even if they allow first person, use it sparingly.

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5.5: What is Revising?

Once a rough draft is created, take some time to step away from the essay to get a newer and better perspective. Then begin revising. Revising means reexamining and rethinking the first draft, adding and deleting ideas extensively; rearranging any of the ideas, sentences, or paragraphs in the first draft; rewriting sentences and paragraphs for more variety, better flow, and more precise word choices. Often times, you may have three or four drafts before you are finally satisfied with a final draft. For easier revision, follow the following tips:

- Take time between the first draft and the later revisions to approach it more objectively.
- Revise on hard copy rather than on the computer screen. Do not delete any drafts! Do label each successive one. Allow yourself and others to annotate (comment on and give suggestions to improve) your draft.
- Read the draft aloud. Better yet, have someone else read it aloud.
- Take advantage of opportunities to get feedback; however, do not become overwhelmed by feedback.
- Do not allow ego to get in the way of a successful paper.
- Revise in stages:
    - Revise for overall meaning and structure. Does the essay develop a central point clearly and logically and are the purpose, tone, and point-of-view suited for the audience of the essay?
    - Revise for paragraph development. Check that your paragraphs are logically ordered, unified, and specific.
    - Revise sentence structure. Make your sentences consistent with your overall tone, varied in type and length, emphatic, and economical.
- Finally, revise for word choices. Aim for an appropriate level of diction, word choices that do not overstate or understate, specific rather than general terms, strong verbs, only necessary modifiers, and original and nonsexist language.
- When you get your essays back, read the essay and heed your instructor's comments. They can help improve your future essays. If you do not understand your grade or the instructor's comments, schedule a conference to discuss them with her. As you revise your future essays, revisit the mistakes made before and be sure you avoid repeating them.

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5.6: What is Done During Editing, Proofreading, and Formatting?

- To **edit**, search for grammatical errors, check punctuation, check spelling, and look over sentence style and word choices one last time. See chapters eight, nine, and ten for additional help.
- To **proofread**, look for surface errors, such as typos, incorrect spacing, or formatting problems.
- To **format**, be sure that you are following the formatting style your instructor requires whether it is Modern Language Association (MLA), American Psychological Association (APA), etc. For more information, see the Brown Library **Citation Styles Guide** (http://infoguides.virginiawestern.edu/citations).
- Overall, look carefully for any error, large or small, that may weaken the essay's message or undermine its credibility.

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5.7: What are Other Types of Academic Writing?

There are many different types of writing that you will be asked to create during your academic and professional careers. Always be clear what your boss or professor expects in an assignment before you begin writing. Below is just a sample of the various assignments you may be given:

Personal/reflective writing assig nment–personal expression about an experience, event, situation, or information.

Expository writing assignment –writing that explains, describes, or informs.

Case study –a written report about a situation, group, or person that one has studied.

Review –summarizing as well as analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of a piece of writing, a show, or an event.

Technical report –clear, detailed report of the procedures undertaken and the results obtained during a scientific or technical procedure.

Lab report –writing that details the steps taken and the results of a scientific experiment.

Book report –writing that summarizes the contents of a book as well as some commentary concerning the writer's opinion of the book.

Critical analysis/critique –writing an informed review and an analysis of the significance of a piece of writing or an event.

Bibliography –writing a full list of all resources consulted during a research project.

Annotated bibliography –writing not only a list of all resources consulted for a research project, but also including a summary and analysis of each resource.

Literature review –writing that focuses on a specific research topic and the critical aspects of the literature consulted during the research process.

Research paper –the final product following an extended period of research, critical thinking, and composition that encompasses the writer's own ideas supported by a combination of primary and secondary sources.

E-mail –writing in electronic mail

Web writing –writing web content, which needs to be direct, concise, and credible.

Oral presentation of written report –developing an effective summary of a project to be delivered in front of an audience; may include visual aids.

Midterm/final exam essay –exams often include short essay questions that need to be written in a short amount of time.

Resume & other 'business' writing –writing that must communicate pertinent information in a concise, easy-to-read format.

Key Takeaways

- All writers rely on steps and strategies to begin the writing process.
- The steps in the writing process are prewriting, drafting, revising, editing/proofreading, and publishing.
- Prewriting is the transfer of ideas from abstract thoughts into words, phrases, and sentences on paper.
- A good topic interests the writer, appeals to the audience, and fits the purpose of the assignment. Writers often choose

a general topic first and then narrow the focus to a more specific topic.
- A strong thesis statement is key to having a focused and unified essay.
- Rough drafts are opportunities to get ideas down onto paper to get a first look at how your ideas will work together.
- Revising improves your writing as far as supporting ideas, organization, sentence flow, and word choices.
- Editing spots and corrects any errors in grammar, mechanics, spelling, and formatting.
- Regardless of the type of assignment you may be given in college or in work, it benefits you to follow a writing process, to put in the work necessary to understand your subject and audience, and to communicate your ideas confidently and coherently.

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6: CHAPTER SIX- WORKING TOWARD THE END PRODUCT

6.1: Working toward the End Product- Composing a Draft

6.1.1: Writing Body Paragraphs

6.1.2: Writing Introductory and Concluding Paragraphs

6.1.3: Drafting

6.1.4: End-of-Chapter Exercises

6.2: Writing a Research Paper

6.2.1: The Purpose of Research Writing

6.2.2: Choosing Your Topic

6.2.3: Managing Your Research

6.2.4: Gathering Your Sources (Part 1)

6.2.5: Gathering Your Sources (Part 2)

6.2.6: Evaluating and Processing Your Sources

6.2.7: Applying Your Research

6.2.8: Writing Your Draft

6.2.9: Revising Your Draft (Part 1)

6.2.10: Revising Your Draft (Part 2)

6.2.11: The Writing Process

6.2.11.1: Writing as a Process

6.2.11.2: Freewriting

6.2.11.3: Brainstorming

6.2.11.4: Journalist Questions

6.2.11.5: Listing

6.2.11.6: Clustering/Mapping

6.2.11.7: Outlining

6.2.11.8: Drafting

6.2.11.9: Revising

6.2.11.10: Creating Essay Titles

6.2.11.11: Editing/Proofreading

6.2.11.12: Final Revision Example

6.2.11.13: Essay Checklist

6.2.11.14: Thinking Critically About Research

6.2.11.14.1: What is “Research” and Why Should I Use It?

6.2.11.14.2: What’s Different about Academic Research?

6.2.11.14.3: Primary Research Versus Secondary Research

6.2.11.14.4: Scholarly versus Non-Scholarly Sources

6.2.11.14.5: Sources that are Both Scholarly and Non-Scholarly?

6.2.11.14.6: The Internet- The Researcher’s Challenge

6.2.11.14.7: Evaluating the Quality and Credibility of Your Research

6.2.11.15: The Research Essay

6.2.11.15.1: A “Research Essay” or a “Research Project” instead of a “Research Paper”

6.2.11.15.2: Getting Ready- Questions to Ask Yourself About Your Research Essay

6.2.11.15.3: Creating and Revising a Formal Outline

6.2.11.15.4: The Introduction

6.2.11.15.5: Background Information (or Helping Your Reader Find a Context)

6.2.11.15.6: Weaving in Evidence to Support Your Point

6.2.11.15.7: Antithetical Arguments and Answers

6.2.11.15.8: The Conclusion

6.2.11.15.9: “Works Cited” or “Reference” Information

6.2.11.15.10: A Student Example- “The Corruption Surrounding University Athletics” by Casey K. Copeman

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6.1: WORKING TOWARD THE END PRODUCT- COMPOSING A DRAFT

6.1.1: Writing Body Paragraphs

6.1.2: Writing Introductory and Concluding Paragraphs

6.1.3: Drafting

6.1.4: End-of-Chapter Exercises

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6.1.1: Writing Body Paragraphs

Learning Objectives

- Select primary support related to your thesis
- Support your topic sentences

Once you have completed your formal sentence outline, you will need to expand on that framework to create your expository essay. As much as you may be wanting to just get your ideas down and submit your paper, in order to make sure you are submitting a well-developed and strong essay, you need to make sure you are providing strong supporting ideas, developing paragraphs so they will fit together logically to best convince your reader, creating a strong introduction and conclusion, and revising your paper to catch issues you may have missed or not been aware of when writing.In this chapter, we will look at putting the pieces together to form a complete, revised, and supported expository essay, which you will need to submit next week.

If your thesis gives the reader a road map to your essay, then body paragraphs should closely follow that map. The reader should be able to predict what follows your introductory paragraph by simply reading the thesis statement.

The body paragraphs present the evidence you have gathered to confirm your thesis. Before you begin to support your thesis in the body, you must find information from a variety of sources that support and give credit to what you are trying to prove.

Select Primary Support for Your Thesis

Without primary support, your argument is not likely to be convincing. **Primary support** can be described as the major points you choose to expand on your thesis. It is the most important information you select to argue for your point of view. Each point you choose will be incorporated into the topic sentence for each body paragraph you write. Your primary supporting points are further supported by supporting details within the paragraphs.

Tip

Remember that a worthy argument is backed by examples. In order to construct a valid argument, good writers conduct a lot of background research and take careful notes. They also talk to people knowledgeable about a topic in order to understand its implications before writing about it.

Identify the Characteristics of Good Primary Support

In order to fulfill the requirements of good primary support, the information you choose must meet the following standards:

Be specific. The main points you make about your thesis and the examples you use to expand on those points need to be specific. Use specific examples to provide the evidence and to build upon your general ideas. These types of examples give your reader something narrow to focus on, and if used properly, they leave little doubt about your claim. General examples, while they convey the necessary information, are not nearly as compelling or useful in writing because they are too obvious and typical.

Be relevant to the thesis. Primary support is considered strong when it relates directly to the thesis. Primary support should show, explain, or prove your main argument without delving into irrelevant details. When faced with a lot of information that could

be used to prove your thesis, you may think you need to include it all in your body paragraphs. But effective writers resist the temptation to lose focus. Choose your examples wisely by making sure they directly connect to your thesis.

Be detailed. Remember that your thesis, while specific, should not be very detailed. The body paragraphs are where you develop the discussion that a thorough essay requires. Using detailed support shows readers that you have considered all the facts and chosen only the most precise details to enhance your point of view.

Prewrite to Identify Primary Supporting Points for a Thesis Statement

Recall that when you prewrite you essentially make a list of examples or reasons why you support your stance. Stemming from each point, you further provide details to support those reasons. After prewriting, you are then able to look back at the information and choose the most compelling pieces you will use in your body paragraphs.

Select the Most Effective Primary Supporting Points for a Thesis Statement

After you have prewritten about your working thesis statement, you may have generated a lot of information, which may be edited out later. Remember that your primary support must be relevant to your thesis. Remind yourself of your main argument, and delete any ideas that do not directly relate to it. Omitting unrelated ideas ensures that you will use only the most convincing information in your body paragraphs. Choose at least three of the most compelling points. These will serve as the topic sentences for your body paragraphs.

When you support your thesis, you are revealing evidence. Evidence includes anything that can help support your stance. The following are the kinds of evidence you will encounter as you conduct your research:

Facts: Facts are the best kind of evidence to use because they often cannot be disputed. They can support your stance by providing background information on or a solid foundation for your point of view. However, some facts may still need explanation. For example, the sentence “The most populated province in Canada is Ontario” is a pure fact, but it may require some explanation to make it relevant to your specific argument.

Judgments: Judgments are conclusions drawn from the given facts. Judgments are more credible than opinions because they are founded upon careful reasoning and examination of a topic.

Testimony: Testimony consists of direct quotations from either an eyewitness or an expert witness. An eyewitness is someone who has direct experience with a subject; the witness adds authenticity to an argument based on facts. An expert witness is a person who has extensive experience with a topic. This person studies the facts and provides commentary based on either facts or judgments, or both. An expert witness adds authority and credibility to an argument.

Personal observation: Personal observation is similar to testimony, but personal observation consists of *your* testimony. It reflects what you know to be true because you have experiences and have formed either opinions or judgments about them. For instance, if you are one of five children and your thesis states that being part of a large family is beneficial to a child’s social development, you could use your own experience to support your thesis.

Writing at Work

In any job where you devise a plan, you will need to support the steps that you lay out. This is an area in which you would incorporate primary support into your writing. Choosing only the most specific and relevant information to expand upon the steps

will ensure that your plan appears well thought out and precise.

Tip

You can consult a vast pool of resources to gather support for your stance. Citing relevant information from reliable sources ensures that your reader will take you seriously and consider your assertions. Use any of the following sources for your essay: newspapers or news organization websites, magazines, encyclopedias, and scholarly journals, which are periodicals that address topics in a specialized field.

Choose Supporting Topic Sentences

Each body paragraph contains a topic sentence that states one aspect of your thesis and then expands upon it. Like the thesis statement, each topic sentence should be specific and supported by concrete details, facts, or explanations.

Each body paragraph should comprise the following elements.

topic sentence + supporting details (examples, reasons, or arguments)

As you read in Chapter 5, topic sentences indicate the location and main points of the basic arguments of your essay. These sentences are vital to writing your body paragraphs because they always refer back to and support your thesis statement. Topic sentences are linked to the ideas you have introduced in your thesis, thus reminding readers what your essay is about. A paragraph without a clearly identified topic sentence may be unclear and scattered, just like an essay without a thesis statement.

Tip

Unless your teacher instructs otherwise, you should include at least three body paragraphs in your essay. A five-paragraph/section essay, including the introduction and conclusion, is commonly the standard for exams and essay assignments.

Consider the following the thesis statement:

> Author J. D. Salinger relied primarily on his personal life and belief system as the foundation for the themes in the majority of his works.

The following topic sentence is a primary support point for the thesis. The topic sentence states exactly what the controlling idea of the paragraph is. Later, you will see the writer immediately provide support for the sentence.

> Salinger, a World War II veteran, suffered from posttraumatic stress disorder, a disorder that influenced themes in many of his works.

Exercise 6.1

In Exercise 5.9, you chose three of your most convincing points to support the thesis statement you wrote. Now we are going to build onto the formal sentence outline you constructed in Exercise 5.14. Take each point and incorporate it into a topic sentence for each body paragraph.

Supporting point 1: _____

Topic sentence: _____

Supporting point 2: _____

Topic sentence: _____

Supporting point 3: _____

Topic sentence: _____

Collaboration: Please share with a classmate and compare your answers.

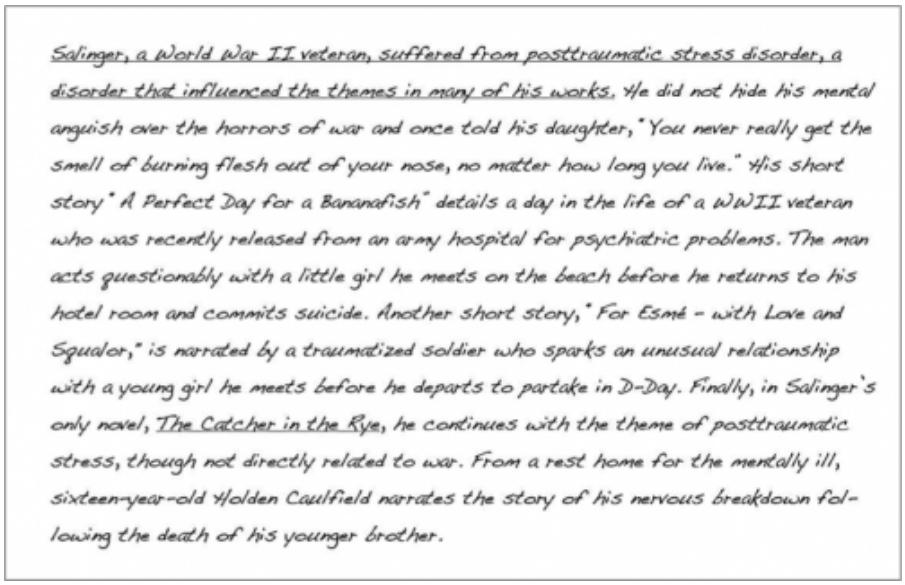
Draft Supporting Detail Sentences for Each Primary Support Sentence

After deciding which primary support points you will use as your topic sentences, you must add details to clarify and demonstrate each of those points. These supporting details provide examples, facts, or evidence that support the topic sentence.

The writer drafts possible supporting detail sentences for each primary support sentence based on the thesis statement:


Thesis statement: Unleashed dogs on city streets are a dangerous nuisance.
Supporting point 1: Dogs can scare cyclists and pedestrians.
Supporting details:
1. Cyclists are forced to zigzag on the road.
2. School children panic and turn wildly on their bikes.
3. People who are walking at night freeze in fear.
Supporting point 2: Loose dogs are traffic hazards.
Supporting details:
1. Dogs in the street make people swerve their cars.
2. To avoid dogs, drivers run into other cars or pedestrians.
3. Children coaxing dogs across busy streets create danger.
Supporting point 3: Unleashed dogs damage gardens.
Supporting details:
1. They step on flowers and vegetables.
2. They destroy hedges by urinating on them.
3. They mess up lawns by digging holes.

The following paragraph contains supporting detail sentences for the primary support sentence (the topic sentence), which is underlined.



Exercise 6.2

Using the three topic sentences you composed for the thesis statement in Exercise 6.1,draft at least three supporting details for each point.

Thesis statement: _____

Primary supporting point 1: _____

Supporting details: _____

Primary supporting point 2: _____

Supporting details: _____

Primary supporting point 3: _____

Supporting details: _____

Tip

You have the option of writing your topic sentences in one of three ways. You can state it at the beginning of the body paragraph, or at the end of the paragraph, or you do not have to write it at all. One that is not written at all is called an implied topic sentence. An implied topic sentence lets readers form the main idea for themselves. For beginning writers, it is best to not use implied topic sentences because it makes it harder to focus your writing. Your instructor may also want to clearly identify the sentences that support your thesis.

Tip

Print out the first draft of your essay and use a highlighter to mark your topic sentences in the body paragraphs. Make sure they are clearly stated and accurately present your paragraphs, as well as accurately reflect your thesis. If your topic sentence contains information that does not exist in the rest of the paragraph, rewrite it to more accurately match the rest of the paragraph.

key takeaways

- Your body paragraphs should closely follow the path set forth by your thesis statement.
- Strong body paragraphs contain evidence that supports your thesis.
- Primary support comprises the most important points you use to support your thesis.
- Strong primary support is specific, detailed, and relevant to the thesis.
- Prewriting helps you determine your most compelling primary support.
- Evidence includes facts, judgments, testimony, and personal observation.
- Reliable sources may include newspapers, magazines, academic journals, books, encyclopedias, and firsthand testimony.
- A topic sentence presents one point of your thesis statement while the information in the rest of the paragraph supports that point.
- A body paragraph comprises a topic sentence plus supporting details.

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6.1.2: Writing Introductory and Concluding Paragraphs

Learning Objectives

- Recognize the importance of strong introductory and concluding paragraphs
- Learn to engage the reader immediately with the introductory paragraph
- Practise concluding your essays in a more memorable way

Picture your introduction as a storefront window: you have a certain amount of space to attract your customers (readers) to your goods (subject) and bring them inside your store (discussion). Once you have enticed them with something intriguing, you then point them in a specific direction and try to make the sale (convince them to accept your thesis).

Your introduction is an invitation to your readers to consider what you have to say and then to follow your train of thought as you expand upon your thesis statement.

An introduction serves the following purposes:

- Establishes your voice and tone, or your attitude, toward the subject
- Introduces the general topic of the essay
- States the thesis that will be supported in the body paragraphs
- Provides signposts of what you will discuss in your essay

First impressions are crucial and can leave lasting effects in your reader's mind, which is why the introduction is so important to your essay. If your introductory paragraph is dull or disjointed, your reader probably will not have much interest in continuing with the essay.

Attracting Interest in Your Introductory Paragraph

Your introduction should begin with an engaging statement devised to provoke your readers' interest. In the next few sentences, introduce them to your topic by stating general facts or ideas about the subject. As you move deeper into your introduction, you gradually narrow the focus, moving closer to your thesis. Moving smoothly and logically from your introductory remarks to your thesis statement can be achieved using a **funnel technique**, as illustrated in **Figure 6.1**

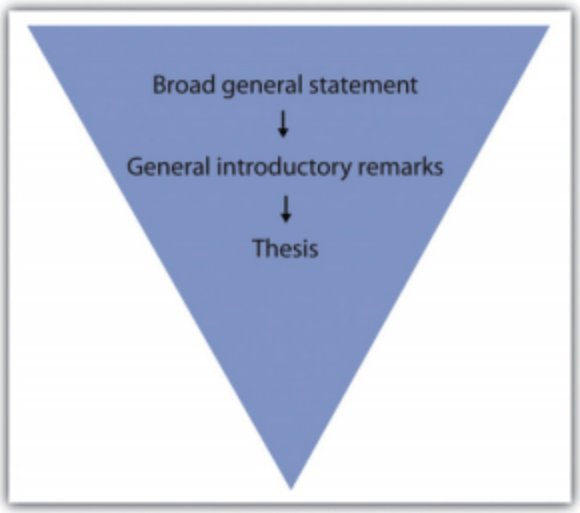


Figure 6.1 - Funnel Technique

Exercise 6.3

On a sheet of paper, jot down a few general remarks that you can make about the topic for which you formed a thesis in Exercise 5.7.

Immediately capturing your readers' interest increases the chances of having them read what you are about to discuss. You can garner curiosity for your essay in a number of ways. Try to get your readers personally involved by doing any of the following:

Appealing to their emotions

Using logic

Beginning with a provocative question or opinion

Opening with a startling statistic or surprising fact

Raising a question or series of questions

Presenting an explanation or rationalization for your essay

Opening with a relevant quotation or incident

Opening with a striking image

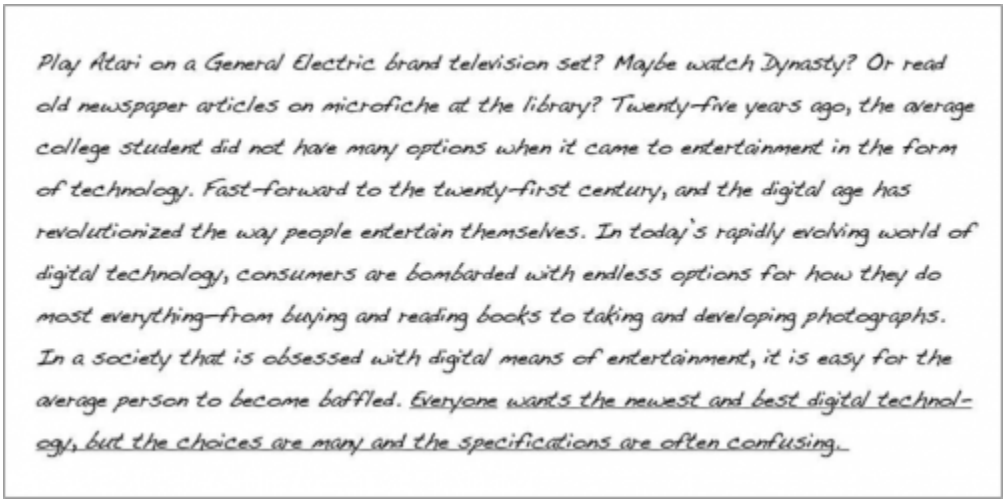
Including a personal anecdote

Tip

Remember that your diction, or word choice, while always important, is most crucial in your introductory paragraph. Boring diction could extinguish any desire a person might have to read through your discussion. Choose words that create images or express action.

In Chapter 5, you followed Mariah as she moved through the writing process. In this chapter, Mariah writes her introduction and

conclusion for the same essay. Mariah incorporates some of the introductory elements into her introductory paragraph, which she previously outlined. Her thesis statement is underlined.



Play Atari on a General Electric brand television set? Maybe watch Dynasty? Or read old newspaper articles on microfiche at the library? Twenty-five years ago, the average college student did not have many options when it came to entertainment in the form of technology. Fast-forward to the twenty-first century, and the digital age has revolutionized the way people entertain themselves. In today's rapidly evolving world of digital technology, consumers are bombarded with endless options for how they do most everything—from buying and reading books to taking and developing photographs. In a society that is obsessed with digital means of entertainment, it is easy for the average person to become baffled. Everyone wants the newest and best digital technology, but the choices are many and the specifications are often confusing.

Tip

If you have trouble coming up with a provocative statement for your opening, it is a good idea to use a relevant, attention-grabbing quote about your topic. Use a search engine to find statements made by historical or significant figures about your subject.

Writing at Work

In your job field, you may be required to write a speech for an event, such as an awards banquet or a dedication ceremony. The introduction of a speech is similar to an essay because you have a limited amount of space to attract your audience's attention. Using the same techniques, such as a provocative quote or an interesting statistic, is an effective way to engage your listeners. Using the funnel approach also introduces your audience to your topic and then presents your main idea in a logical manner.

Exercise 6.4

Reread each sentence in Mariah's introductory paragraph. Indicate which techniques she used and comment on how each sentence is designed to attract her readers' interest.

Writing a Conclusion

It is not unusual to want to rush when you approach your conclusion, and even experienced writers may fade by the time they get to the end. But what good writers remember is that it is vital to put just as much attention into the conclusion as the rest of the essay. After all, a hasty ending can undermine an otherwise strong essay.

A conclusion that does not correspond to the rest of your essay, has loose ends, or is unorganized can unsettle your readers and raise doubts about the entire essay. However, if you have worked hard to write the introduction and body, your conclusion can often be the most logical part to compose.

The Anatomy of a Strong Conclusion

Keep in mind that the ideas in your conclusion must conform to the rest of your essay. In order to tie these components together, restate your thesis at the beginning of your conclusion. This helps you assemble, in an orderly fashion, all the information you have explained in the body. Repeating your thesis reminds your readers of the major arguments you have been trying to prove and also indicates that your essay is drawing to a close. A strong conclusion also reviews your main points and emphasizes the importance of the topic.

The construction of the conclusion is similar to the introduction, in which you make general introductory statements and then present your thesis. The difference is that in the conclusion you first **paraphrase**, or state in different words, your thesis and then follow up with general concluding remarks. These sentences should progressively broaden the focus of your thesis and manoeuvre your readers out of the essay.

Many writers like to end their essays with a final emphatic statement. This strong closing statement will cause your readers to continue thinking about the implications of your essay; it will make your conclusion, and thus your essay, more memorable. Another powerful technique is to challenge your readers to make a change in either their thoughts or their actions. Challenging your readers to see the subject through new eyes is a powerful way to ease yourself and your readers out of the essay.

Tip

When closing your essay, do not expressly state that you are drawing to a close. Relying on statements such as in conclusion, it is clear that, as you can see, or in summation is unnecessary and can be considered trite.

Tip

Avoid doing any of the following in your conclusion:

Introducing new material

Contradicting your thesis

Changing your thesis

Using apologies or disclaimers

Introducing new material in your conclusion has an unsettling effect on your reader. When you raise new points, you make your reader want more information, which you could not possibly provide in the limited space of your final paragraph.

Contradicting or changing your thesis statement causes your readers to think that you do not actually have a conviction about your topic. After all, you have spent several paragraphs adhering to a singular point of view. When you change sides or open up your point of view in the conclusion, your reader becomes less inclined to believe your original argument.

By apologizing for your opinion or stating that you know it is tough to digest, you are in fact admitting that even you know what you have discussed is irrelevant or unconvincing. You do not want your readers to feel this way. Effective writers stand by their thesis statement and do not stray from it.

Exercise 6.5

On a sheet of a paper, restate your thesis from Exercise 5.7 and then make some general concluding remarks. Next, compose a final emphatic statement. Finally, incorporate what you have written into a strong conclusion paragraph for your essay.

Collaboration: Please share with a classmate and compare your answers

Mariah incorporates some of these pointers into her conclusion. She has paraphrased her thesis statement in the first sentence.


In a society fixated on the latest and smartest digital technology, a consumer can easily become confused by the countless options and specifications. The ever-changing state of digital technology challenges consumers with its updates and add-ons and expanding markets and incompatible formats and restrictions—a fact that is complicated by salesmen who want to sell them anything. In a world that is increasingly driven by instant gratification, it's easy for people to buy the first thing they see. The solution for many people should be to avoid buying on impulse. Consumers should think about what they really need, not what is advertised.

Tip

Make sure your essay is balanced by not having an excessively long or short introduction or conclusion. Check that they match each other in length as closely as possible, and try to mirror the formula you used in each. Parallelism strengthens the message of your essay.

Writing at Work

On the job you will sometimes give oral presentations based on research you have conducted. A concluding statement to an oral report contains the same elements as a written conclusion. You should wrap up your presentation by restating the purpose, reviewing the main points, and emphasizing the importance of the material you presented. A strong conclusion will leave a lasting impression on your audience.

key takeaways

- A strong opening captures your readers' interest and introduces them to your topic before you present your thesis statement.
- An introduction should restate your thesis, review your main points, and emphasize the importance of the topic.
- The funnel technique to writing the introduction begins with generalities and gradually narrows your focus until you present your thesis.
- A good introduction engages people's emotions or logic, questions or explains the subject, or provides a striking image or quotation.
- Carefully chosen diction in both the introduction and conclusion prevents any confusing or boring ideas.
- A conclusion that does not connect to the rest of the essay can diminish the effect of your paper.
- The conclusion should remain true to your thesis statement. It is best to avoid changing your tone or your main idea and avoid introducing any new material.

- Closing with a final emphatic statement provides closure for your readers and makes your essay more memorable.

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6.1.3: Drafting

Learning Objectives

- Identify drafting strategies that improve writing
- Use drafting strategies to prepare the first draft of an essay

Drafting is the stage of the writing process in which you develop a complete first version of a piece of writing.

Even professional writers admit that an empty page scares them because they feel they need to come up with something fresh and original every time they open a blank document on their computers. Because you have completed the first two steps in the writing process, you have already recovered from empty-page syndrome. You have hours of prewriting and planning already done. You know what will go on that blank page: what you wrote in your outline.

Getting Started: Strategies for Drafting

Your objective for this portion is to draft the body paragraphs of a standard five-paragraph essay. A five-paragraph essay contains an introduction, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion. If you are more comfortable starting on paper than on the computer, you can begin that way and then later type it before you revise. You can also use a voice recorder to get yourself started, dictating a paragraph or two to get you thinking. In this lesson, Mariah does all her work on the computer, but you may use pen and paper or the computer to write a rough draft.

Making the Writing Process Work for You

What makes the writing process so beneficial to writers is that it encourages alternatives to standard practices while motivating you to develop your best ideas. For instance, the following approaches, done alone or in combination with others, may improve your writing and help you move forward in the writing process:

Begin writing with the part you know the most about. You can start with the third paragraph in your outline if ideas come easily to mind. You can start with the second paragraph or the first paragraph, too. Although paragraphs may vary in length, keep in mind that short paragraphs may contain insufficient support. Readers may also think the writing is abrupt. Long paragraphs may be wordy and may lose your reader's interest. As a guideline, try to write paragraphs longer than one sentence but shorter than the length of an entire double-spaced page.

Write one paragraph at a time and then stop. As long as you complete the assignment on time, you may choose how many paragraphs you complete in one sitting. Pace yourself. On the other hand, try not to procrastinate. Writers should always meet their deadlines.

Take short breaks to refresh your mind. This tip might be most useful if you are writing a multi-page report or essay. Still, if you are impatient or cannot concentrate, take a break to let your mind rest. But do not let breaks extend too long. If you spend too much time away from your essay, you may have trouble starting again. You may forget key points or lose momentum. Try setting an alarm to limit your break, and when the time is up, return to your desk to write.

Be reasonable with your goals. If you decide to limit your breaks to 10 minutes, try to stick to that goal. If you told yourself that you need more facts, then commit to finding them. Holding yourself to your own goals will create successful writing assignments.

Keep your audience and purpose in mind as you write. These aspects of writing are just as important when you are writing a single

paragraph for your essay as when you are considering the direction of the entire essay.

Of all of these considerations, keeping your purpose and your audience at the front of your mind is the most important to writing success. If your purpose is to persuade, for example, you will present your facts and details in the most logical and convincing way you can.

Your purpose will guide your mind as you compose your sentences. Your audience will guide word choice. Are you writing for experts, for a general audience, for other students, or for people who know very little about your topic? Keep asking yourself what your readers, with their background and experience, need to be told in order to understand your ideas. How can you best express your ideas so they are totally clear and your communication is effective?

Tip

You may want to identify your purpose and audience on an index card that you clip to your paper (or keep next to your computer). On that card, you may want to write notes to yourself—perhaps about what that audience might not know or what it needs to know—so that you will be sure to address those issues when you write. It may be a good idea to also state exactly what you want to explain to that audience, or to inform them of, or to persuade them about.

Writing at Work

Many of the documents you produce at work target a particular audience for a particular purpose. You may find that it is highly advantageous to know as much as you can about your target audience and to prepare your message to reach that audience, even if the audience is a co-worker or your boss. Menu language is a common example. Descriptions like “organic romaine” and “free-range chicken” are intended to appeal to a certain type of customer though perhaps not to the same customer who craves a thick steak. Similarly, mail-order companies research the demographics of the people who buy their merchandise. Successful vendors customize product descriptions in catalogues to appeal to their buyers’ tastes. For example, the product descriptions in a skateboarder catalogue will differ from the descriptions in a clothing catalogue for mature adults.

Setting Goals for Your First Draft

A draft is a complete version of a piece of writing, but it is not the final version. The step in the writing process after drafting, as you may remember, is revising. During revising, you will have the opportunity to make changes to your first draft before you put the finishing touches on it during the editing and proofreading stages. A first draft gives you a working version that you can later improve.

Exercise 6.6

Using the topic for the essay that you outlined in Section 5.3: Outlining, describe your purpose and your audience as specifically as you can. Use your own sheet of paper to record your responses. Then keep these responses near you during future stages of the writing process.

My purpose: _____

_____

_____

My audience: _____

_____

_____

Writing at Work

Workplace writing in certain environments is done by teams of writers who collaborate on the planning, writing, and revising of documents, such as long reports, technical manuals, and the results of scientific research. Collaborators do not need to be in the same room, the same building, or even the same city. Many collaborations are conducted over the Internet.

In a perfect collaboration, each contributor has the right to add, edit, and delete text. Strong communication skills, in addition to strong writing skills, are important in this kind of writing situation because disagreements over style, content, process, emphasis, and other issues may arise.

The collaborative software, or document management systems, that groups use to work on common projects is sometimes called *groupware* or *workgroup support systems*.

The reviewing tool on some word processing programs also gives you access to a collaborative tool that many smaller work groups use when they exchange documents. You can also use it to leave comments to yourself.

Tip

If you invest some time now to investigate how the reviewing tool in your word processor works, you will be able to use it with confidence during the revision stage of the writing process. Then, when you start to revise, set your reviewing tool to track any changes you make, so you will be able to tinker with text and commit to only those final changes you want to keep.

Discovering the Basic Elements of a First Draft

If you have been using the information in this chapter step by step to help you develop an assignment, you already have both a formal topic outline and a formal sentence outline to direct your writing. Knowing what a first draft looks like will help you make the creative leap from the outline to the first draft. A first draft should include the following elements:

An **introduction** that piques the audience's interest, tells what the essay is about, and motivates readers to keep reading

A **thesis statement** that presents the main point, or controlling idea, of the entire piece of writing

A **topic sentence** in each paragraph that states the main idea of the paragraph and implies how that main idea connects to the thesis statement

Supporting sentences in each paragraph that develop or explain the topic sentence. These can be specific facts, examples, anecdotes, or other details that elaborate on the topic sentence

A **conclusion** that reinforces the thesis statement and leaves the audience with a feeling of completion.

These elements follow the standard five-paragraph essay format, which you probably first encountered in high school. In Section 4.1, you read that you should consider these as sections instead of just paragraphs because you will, at times, have to write a

paper that needs to have more than five paragraphs because some ideas need more development or support. For now, however, Mariah focuses on writing the three body paragraphs from her outline.

The Role of Topic Sentences

Topic sentences make the structure of a text and the writer's basic arguments easy to locate and comprehend. In post-secondary writing, using a topic sentence in each paragraph of the essay is the standard rule. However, the topic sentence does not always have to be the first sentence in your paragraph even if it the first item in your formal outline.

Tip

When you begin to draft your paragraphs, you should follow your outline fairly closely. After all, you spent valuable time developing those ideas. However, as you begin to express your ideas in complete sentences, it might strike you that the topic sentence might work better at the end of the paragraph or in the middle. Try it. Writing a draft, by its nature, is a good time for experimentation.

The topic sentence can be the first, middle, or final sentence in a paragraph. The assignment's audience and purpose will often determine where a topic sentence belongs. When the purpose of the assignment is to persuade, for example, the topic sentence should be the first sentence in a paragraph. In a persuasive essay, the writer's point of view should be clearly expressed at the beginning of each paragraph.

Choosing where to position the topic sentence depends not only on your audience and purpose but also on the essay's arrangement, or order. When you organize information according to order of importance, the topic sentence may be the final sentence in a paragraph. All the supporting sentences build up to the topic sentence. Chronological order may also position the topic sentence as the final sentence because the controlling idea of the paragraph may make the most sense at the end of a sequence.

When you organize information according to spatial order, a topic sentence may appear as the middle sentence in a paragraph. An essay arranged by spatial order often contains paragraphs that begin with descriptions. A reader may first need a visual in mind before understanding the development of the paragraph. When the topic sentence is in the middle, it unites the details that come before it with the ones that come after it.

Tip

As you read critically throughout the writing process, keep topic sentences in mind. You may discover topic sentences that are not always located at the beginning of a paragraph. For example, fiction writers customarily use topic ideas, either expressed or implied, to move readers through their text. In nonfiction writing, such as the kind you read in popular magazines, topic sentences are often used when the author thinks it is appropriate (based on the audience and the purpose, of course). A single topic sentence might even control the development of a number of paragraphs.

Developing topic sentences and thinking about their placement in a paragraph will prepare you to write the rest of the paragraph.

Paragraphs

The paragraph is the main structural component of an essay as well as other forms of writing. Each paragraph of an essay adds another related main idea to support the writer's thesis, or controlling idea. Each related main idea is supported and developed

with facts, examples, and other details that explain it. By exploring and refining one main idea at a time, writers build a strong case for their thesis.

Starting Your First Draft

Now we are finally ready to look over Mariah's shoulder as she begins to write her essay about digital technology and the confusing choices that consumers face. As she does, you should have in front of you your outline, with its thesis statement and topic sentences, and the notes you wrote earlier in this lesson on your purpose and audience. Reviewing these will put both you, like Mariah, in the proper mindset to start.

The following is Mariah's thesis statement.

> Everyone wants the newest and the best digital technology, but the choices are many, and the specifications are often confusing.

Here are the notes that Mariah wrote to herself to characterize her purpose and audience.

> **Purpose:** My purpose is to inform readers about the wide variety of consumer digital technology available in stores and to explain why the specifications for these products, expressed in numbers that average consumers don't understand, often cause bad or misinformed buying decisions.
> **Audience:** My audience is my instructor and members of this class. Most of them are not heavy into technology except for the usual laptops, cell phones, and MP3 players, which are not topics I'm writing about. I'll have to be as exact and precise as I can be when I explain possibly unfamiliar product specifications. At the same time, they're more with it electronically than my grandparents' VCR-flummoxed generation, so I won't have to explain every last detail.

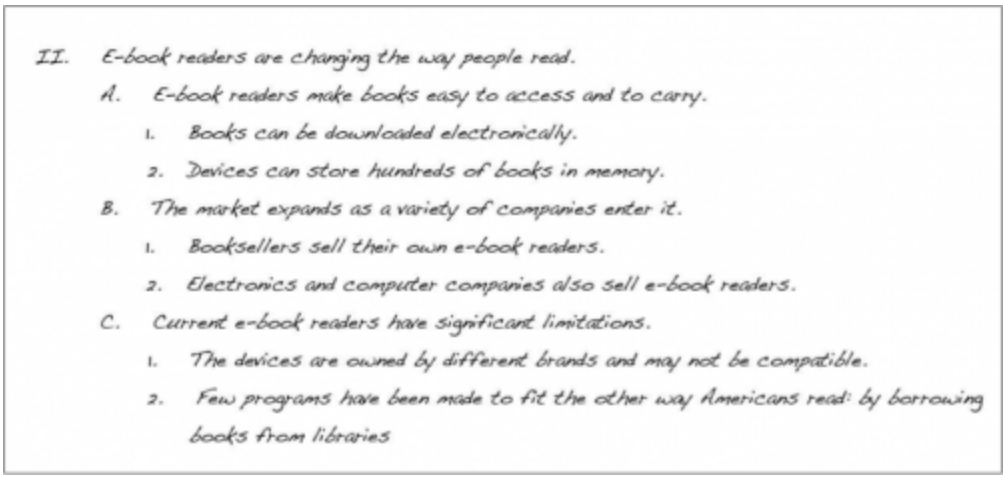
Mariah chose to begin by writing a quick introduction based on her thesis statement. She knew that she would want to improve her introduction significantly when she revised. Right now, she just wanted to give herself a starting point.

Tip

Remember Mariah's other options. She could have started directly with any of the body paragraphs.

You learned more about writing attention-getting introductions and effective conclusions in Section 6.2.

With her thesis statement and her purpose and audience notes in front of her, Mariah then looked at her sentence outline. She chose to use that outline because it includes the topic sentences. The following is the portion of her outline for the first body paragraph. The Roman numeral II identifies the topic sentence for the paragraph, capital letters indicate supporting details, and Arabic numerals label subpoints.



II. E-book readers are changing the way people read.
A. E-book readers make books easy to access and to carry.
1. Books can be downloaded electronically.
2. Devices can store hundreds of books in memory.
B. The market expands as a variety of companies enter it.
1. Booksellers sell their own e-book readers.
2. Electronics and computer companies also sell e-book readers.
C. Current e-book readers have significant limitations.
1. The devices are owned by different brands and may not be compatible.
2. Few programs have been made to fit the other way Americans read: by borrowing books from libraries

Mariah then began to expand the ideas in her outline into a paragraph. Notice how the outline helped her guarantee that all her sentences in the body of the paragraph develop the topic sentence.

E-book readers are changing the way people read, or so e-book developers hope. The main selling point for these handheld devices, which are sort of the size of a paperback book, is that they make books easy to access and carry. Electronic versions of printed books can be downloaded online for a few bucks or directly from your cell phone. These devices can store hundreds of books in memory and, with text-to-speech features, can even read the texts. The market for e-books and e-book readers keeps expanding as a lot of companies enter it. Online and traditional booksellers have been the first to market e-book readers to the public, but computer companies, especially the ones already involved in cell phone, online music, and notepad computer technology, will also enter the market. The problem for consumers, however, is which device to choose. Incompatibility is the norm. E-books can be read only on the devices they were intended for. Furthermore, use is restricted by the same kind of DRM systems that restrict the copying of music and videos. So, book buyers are often unable to lend books to other readers, as they can with a real book. Few accommodations have been made to fit the other way Americans read: by borrowing books from libraries. What is a buyer to do?

Tip

If you write your first draft on the computer, consider creating a new file folder for each course with a set of subfolders inside the course folders for each assignment you are given. Label the folders clearly with the course names, and label each assignment folder and word processing document with a title that you will easily recognize. The assignment name is a good choice for the document. Then use that subfolder to store all the drafts you create. When you start each new draft, do not just write over the last one. Instead, save the draft with a new tag after the title—draft 1, draft 2, and so on—so that you will have a complete history of drafts in case your instructor wishes you to submit them.

In your documents, observe any formatting requirements—for margins, headers, placement of page numbers, and other layout matters—that your instructor requires.

Exercise 6..7

Study how Mariah made the transition from her sentence outline to her first draft. First, copy her outline onto your own sheet of paper. Leave a few spaces between each part of the outline. Then copy sentences from Mariah's paragraph to align each sentence with its corresponding entry in her outline.

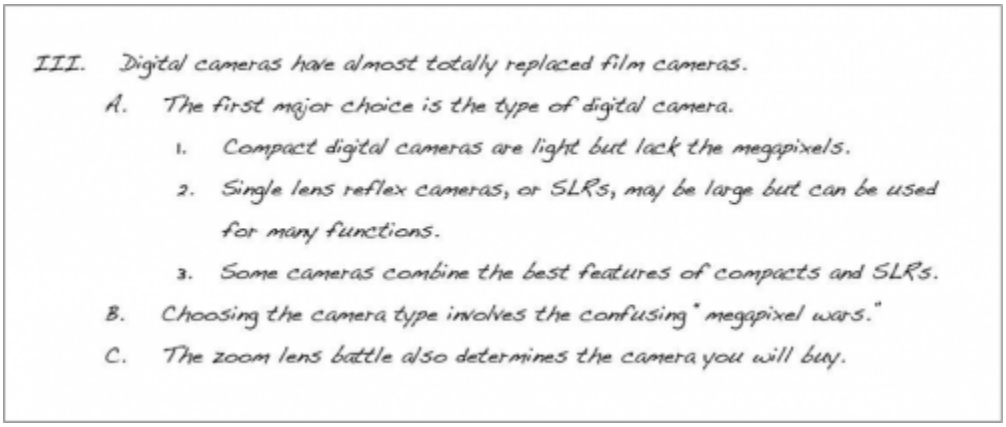
Continuing the First Draft

Mariah continued writing her essay, moving to the second and third body paragraphs. She had supporting details but no numbered subpoints in her outline, so she had to consult her prewriting notes for specific information to include.

Tip

If you decide to take a break between finishing your first body paragraph and starting the next one, do not start writing immediately when you return to your work. Put yourself back in context and in the mood by rereading what you have already written. This is what Mariah did. If she had stopped writing in the middle of writing the paragraph, she could have jotted down some quick notes to herself about what she would write next.

Preceding each body paragraph that Mariah wrote is the appropriate section of her sentence outline. Notice how she expanded Roman numeral III from her outline into a first draft of the second body paragraph. As you read, ask yourself how closely she stayed on purpose and how well she paid attention to the needs of her audience.



III. Digital cameras have almost totally replaced film cameras.
  A. The first major choice is the type of digital camera.
    1. Compact digital cameras are light but lack the megapixels.
    2. Single lens reflex cameras, or SLRs, may be large but can be used for many functions.
    3. Some cameras combine the best features of compacts and SLRs.
  B. Choosing the camera type involves the confusing "megapixel wars."
  C. The zoom lens battle also determines the camera you will buy.

Digital cameras have almost totally replaced film cameras in amateur photographers' gadget bags. My father took hundreds of slides when his children were growing up, but he had more and more trouble getting them developed. So, he decided to go modern. But, what kind of camera should he buy? The small compact digital cameras could slip right in his pocket, but if he tried to print a photograph larger than an 8 x 10, the quality would be poor. When he investigated buying a single lens reflex camera, or SLR, he discovered that they were as versatile as his old film camera, also an SLR, but they were big and bulky. Then he discovered yet a third type, which combined the smaller size of the compact digital cameras with the zoom lenses available for SLRs. His first thought was to buy one of those, but then he realized he had a lot of decisions to make. How many megapixels should the camera be? Five? Ten? What is the advantage of each? Then came the size of the zoom lens. He knew that 3x was too small, but what about 25x? Could he hold a lens that long without causing camera shake? He read hundreds of photography magazines and buying guides, and he still wasn't sure he was right.

Mariah then began her third and final body paragraph using Roman numeral IV from her outline.

IV. Nothing is more confusing to me than choosing among televisions.
- A. In the resolution wars, what are the benefits of 1080p and 768p?
- B. In the screen-size wars, what do plasma screens and LCD screens offer?
- C. Does every home really need a media center?

Nothing is more confusing to me than choosing among televisions. It confuses lots of people who want a new high-definition digital television (HDTV) with a large screen to watch sports and DVDs on. You could listen to the guys in the electronics store, but word has it they know little more than you do. They want to sell you what they have in stock, not what best fits your needs. You face decisions you never had to make with the old, bulky picture-tube televisions. Screen resolution means the number of horizontal scan lines the screen can show. This resolution is often 1080p, or full HD, or 768p. The trouble is that if you have a smaller screen, 32 inches or 37 inches diagonal, you won't be able to tell the difference with the naked eye. The 1080p televisions cost more, though, so those are what the salespeople want you to buy. They get bigger commissions. The other important decision you face as you walk around the sales floor is whether to get a plasma screen or an LCD screen. Now here the salespeople may finally give you decent info. Plasma flat-panel television screens can be much larger in diameter than their LCD rivals. Plasma screens show decent blacks and can be viewed at a wider angle than current LCD screens. But be careful and tell the salesperson you have budget constraints. Large flat-panel plasma screens are much more expensive than flat-screen LCD models. Don't buy more television than you need

Exercise 6.8

Reread body paragraphs two and three of the essay that Mariah is writing. Then answer the questions on below your own sheet of paper.

In body paragraph two, Mariah decided to develop her paragraph as a nonfiction narrative. Do you agree with her decision? Explain. How else could she have chosen to develop the paragraph? Why is that better?

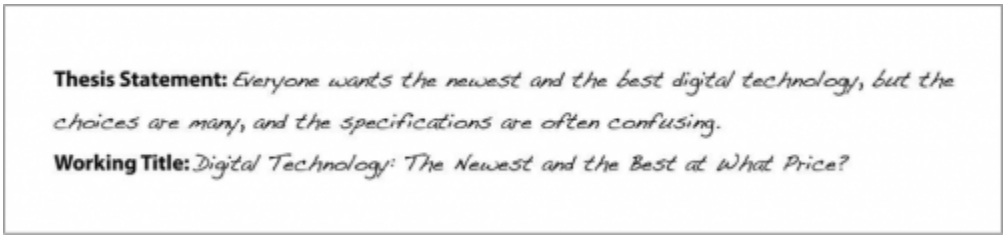
Compare the writing styles of paragraphs two and three. What evidence do you have that Mariah was getting tired or running out of steam? What advice would you give her? Why?

Choose one of these two body paragraphs. Write a version of your own that you think better fits Mariah's audience and purpose.

Writing a Title

A writer's best choice for a title is one that alludes to the main point of the entire essay. Like the headline in a newspaper or the big, bold title in a magazine, an essay's title gives the audience a first peek at the content. If readers like the title, they are likely to keep reading.

Following her outline carefully, Mariah crafted each paragraph of her essay. Moving step by step in the writing process, Mariah finished the draft and even included a brief concluding paragraph. She then decided, as the final touch for her writing session, to add an engaging title.



Writing Your Own First Draft

Now you may begin your own first draft. Follow the suggestions and the guidelines presented in this section. Follow the steps below and work through the process just as Mariah did to develop her essay.

Also, your expository essay will be due next week, so focus on the first draft by the end of this week then take the next week to look it over. In Chapter 12, you will learn more about final revisions and peer review, so for your later papers, you will be expected to complete a more thorough revision; for the expository essay, you will be expected to work through your first draft, and once you are finished that, you will need to do a basic revision and editing, looking for errors with spelling, homonyms, sentence construction—all of the grammar content we have covered so far. For now, work through the following steps:

Ensure your supporting ideas actually support your thesis.

Revise your thesis as required (make sure it still addresses the initial topic you have chosen).

Compose your paragraphs/sections following your formal sentence outline—one section at a time–then double check you have included all information from your outline in your paragraph/section.

Check that your topic sentences support your thesis.

Make sure the information in your paragraphs support your topic sentences.

Insert transitional words (if you have not done so already when composing your draft) into paragraphs AND to link paragraphs.

When writing, be conscious of your tone and how it relates to your audience.

Be careful when considering which words to use.

Create an introduction that engages the reader.

Create a conclusion that leaves your reader convinced and is memorable.

Make sure all of your sentences are complete.

Proofread for spelling mistakes (remember to not depend too much on spelling and grammar checkers).

Try to compile a references section using the JIBC APA Style Guide (**http://libguides.jibc.ca/apa**); you will practise this later in this course, but for now refer to the guide to see how to compose a complete reference page, and be sure to include *all* of the sources you used.

Include citations within your essay to show where and when you have taken information from an external source. Again, follow the JIBC APA Style Guide (**http://libguides.jibc.ca/apa**). You will learn more about this is a few weeks, but refer to the guide to see how to format your citations. You need to include a citation after each piece of information taken from a source, and you may use the same citation multiple times in a row. (Try and get into the practice of doing this now because you will be expected to have these in all future papers to avoid plagiarism.)

Create a title page with interesting title, your name, your course name and number, your instructor's name, the date the paper is due.

key takeaways

- Make the writing process work for you. Use any and all of the strategies that help you move forward in the writing process.
- Always be aware of your purpose for writing and the needs of your audience. Cater to those needs in every sensible way.
- Remember to include all the key structural parts of an essay: a thesis statement that is part of your introductory paragraph, three or more body paragraphs as described in your outline, and a concluding paragraph. Then add an engaging title to draw in readers.
- Write paragraphs of an appropriate length for your writing assignment. Paragraphs at this level of writing can be a page long, as long as they cover the main topics in your outline.
- Use your topic outline or your sentence outline to guide the development of your paragraphs and the elaboration of your ideas. Each main idea, indicated by a Roman numeral in your outline, becomes the topic of a new paragraph. Develop it with the supporting details and the subpoints of those details that you included in your outline.
- Generally speaking, write your introduction and conclusion last, after you have fleshed out the body paragraphs.

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6.1.4: End-of-Chapter Exercises

Learning Objectives

- Use the skills you have learned in the chapter
- Work collaboratively with other students
- Work with a variety of academic and on the job, real-world examples

In this chapter, you have thought and read about the topic of mass media. Starting with the title "The Future of Information: How It Will Be Created, Transmitted, and Consumed," narrow the focus of the topic until it is suitable for a two- to three-page paper. Then narrow your topic with the help of brainstorming, idea mapping, and searching the Internet until you select a final topic to explore. Keep a journal or diary in which you record and comment on everything you did to choose a final topic. Then record what you will do next to explore the idea and create a thesis statement.

Write a thesis statement and a formal sentence outline for an essay about the writing process. Include separate paragraphs for prewriting, drafting, and revising and editing. Your audience will be a general audience of educated adults who are unfamiliar with how writing is taught at the post-secondary level. Your purpose is to explain the stages of the writing process so that readers will understand its benefits.

Collaboration: Please share with a classmate and compare your answers.

Pieces of writing in a variety of real-life and work-related situations would benefit from revising and editing. Consider the following list of real-life and work-related pieces of writing: emails, greeting card messages, junk mail, late night television commercials, social networking pages, local newspapers, bulletin board postings, and public notices. Find and submit at least two examples of writing that needs revision. Explain what changes you would make. Replace any recognizable names with pseudonyms.

Group activity. At work, an employer might someday ask you to contribute to the research base for an essay such as the one Mariah wrote or the one you wrote while working through this chapter. Choosing either her topic or your own, compile a list of at least five sources. Then, working in a group of four students, bring in printouts or PDF files of Internet sources or paper copies of non-Internet sources for the other group members to examine. In a group report, rate the reliability of each other's sources.

Group activity. Working in a peer review group of four, go to **Section 6.3: Drafting** and reread the draft of the first two body paragraphs of Mariah's essay, "Digital Technology: The Newest and the Best at What Price?" Review those two paragraphs and suggest and agree on changes to improve unity and coherence, eliminate unneeded words, and refine word choice. Your purpose is to help Mariah produce two effective paragraphs for a formal post-secondary-level essay about her topic.

Journal entry #6

Write a paragraph or two responding to the following.

How do you feel about beginning your expository essay draft? Which, if any, of the steps do you find intimidating? OR Which steps do you find straightforward?

You were given a few tips about making the writing process for you? Which of these did you try?

How did breaking the writing process down into smaller stages work for you? What effect did this process have on the end result? What would have been different if you had just tackled your paper in one sitting?

Remember as mentioned in the Assessment Descriptions in your syllabus:

You will be expected to respond to the questions by reflecting on and discussing your experiences with the week's material.

When writing your journals, you should focus on free writing—writing without (overly) considering formal writing structures—but you want to remember that it will be read by the instructor, who needs to be able to understand your ideas.

Your instructor will begin reading your Journal Package 1 this week. (2.5%)

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6.2: WRITING A RESEARCH PAPER

6.2.1: The Purpose of Research Writing

6.2.2: Choosing Your Topic

6.2.3: Managing Your Research

6.2.4: Gathering Your Sources (Part 1)

6.2.5: Gathering Your Sources (Part 2)

6.2.6: Evaluating and Processing Your Sources

6.2.7: Applying Your Research

6.2.8: Writing Your Draft

6.2.9: Revising Your Draft (Part 1)

6.2.10: Revising Your Draft (Part 2)

6.2.11: The Writing Process

6.2.11.1: Writing as a Process

6.2.11.2: Freewriting

6.2.11.3: Brainstorming

6.2.11.4: Journalist Questions

6.2.11.5: Listing

6.2.11.6: Clustering/Mapping

6.2.11.7: Outlining

6.2.11.8: Drafting

6.2.11.9: Revising

6.2.11.10: Creating Essay Titles

6.2.11.11: Editing/Proofreading

6.2.11.12: Final Revision Example

6.2.11.13: Essay Checklist

6.2.11.14: Thinking Critically About Research

6.2.11.14.1: What is “Research” and Why Should I Use It?

6.2.11.14.2: What’s Different about Academic Research?

6.2.11.14.3: Primary Research Versus Secondary Research

6.2.11.14.4: Scholarly versus Non-Scholarly Sources

6.2.11.14.5: Sources that are Both Scholarly and Non-Scholarly?

6.2.11.14.6: The Internet- The Researcher’s Challenge

6.2.11.14.7: Evaluating the Quality and Credibility of Your Research

6.2.11.15: The Research Essay

6.2.11.15.1: A “Research Essay” or a “Research Project” instead of a “Research Paper”

6.2.11.15.2: Getting Ready- Questions to Ask Yourself About Your Research Essay

6.2.11.15.3: Creating and Revising a Formal Outline

6.2.11.15.4: The Introduction
6.2.11.15.5: Background Information (or Helping Your Reader Find a Context)
6.2.11.15.6: Weaving in Evidence to Support Your Point
6.2.11.15.7: Antithetical Arguments and Answers
6.2.11.15.8: The Conclusion
6.2.11.15.9: “Works Cited” or “Reference” Information
6.2.11.15.10: A Student Example- “The Corruption Surrounding University Athletics” by Casey K. Copeman

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6.2.1: The Purpose of Research Writing

Who has written poetry about exile? **What** roles did women play in the American Revolution? **Where** do cicadas go during their 'off' years? **When** did bookmakers start using movable type? **Why** was the Great Wall of China built? **How** does the human brain create, store, and retrieve memories?

You may know the answers to these questions off the top of your head. If you are like most people, however, you find answers to tough questions like these by searching the Internet, visiting a library, or asking others for information. To put it simply, you perform research.

Whether or not you realize it, you probably already perform research in your everyday life. When your boss, your instructor, or a family member asks you a question that you don't know the answer to, you locate relevant information, analyze your findings, and share your results. Locating, analyzing, and sharing information are key steps in the research process. In this chapter, you will learn more about each step. By developing your research writing skills, you will prepare yourself to answer challenging questions.

Sometimes you perform research simply to satisfy your own curiosity. Once you find the answer to your questions, your search may be over, or it may lead to more in-depth research about that topic or about another topic. Other times, you want to communicate what you have learned to your peers, your family, your teachers, or even the editors of magazines, newspapers, or journals. In your personal life, you might simply discuss the topic with your friends. In more formal situations, such as in business and school, you communicate your findings in writing or in a presentation. A report may simply relay the results of your research in an organized manner. In contrast, a research paper presents an original thesis about a topic and develops that thesis with ideas and information gathered from a variety of sources. In a research paper, you use facts, interpretations, and opinions you encounter in your research to create a narrative and support an argument about your topic.

A student in an art history course might write a research paper about an artist's work or an aesthetic movement. A student in a psychology course might write a research paper about current findings in childhood development. No matter what field of study you pursue, you will most likely be asked to write a research paper in your college degree program and to apply the skills of research and writing in your career. For similar reasons as professionals, students do research to answer specific questions, to share their findings with others, to increase their understanding of challenging topics, and to strengthen their analytical skills.

Having to write a research paper may feel intimidating at first. After all, researching and writing a long paper requires a lot of time, effort, and organization. However, its challenges have rewards. The research process allows you to gain expertise on a topic of your choice. The writing process helps you to remember what you learned and to understand it on a deeper level. Thus writing a research paper can be a great opportunity to explore a topic that particularly interests you and to grow as a person.

Writing at Work

Knowing how to write a good research paper is a valuable skill that will serve you well throughout your career. For example, laboratory technicians and information technology professionals do research to learn about the latest technological developments in their fields. A small business owner may conduct research to learn about the latest trends in his or her industry. A freelance writer will need to research his or her topics to write informed, up-to-date articles. Whether you are developing a new product, studying the best way to perform a procedure, discovering the challenges and opportunities in your field of employment, or learning about how to find a job, you will use research techniques to guide your exploration. Because effective communication is essential to any company, employers seek to hire people who can write clearly and professionally.

Exercise 1

Think about the job of your dreams. How might you use research writing skills to perform that job? Create a list of ways in which strong researching, organizing, writing, and critical thinking skills could help you succeed at your dream job. How might these skills help you obtain that job?

Process Overview

How does a research paper grow from a folder of notes to a polished final draft? No two projects are identical, but most writers of research papers follow six basic steps.

Step 1: Choosing a Topic

To narrow the focus of your topic, brainstorm using Prewriting Techniques. Starting with your topic, formulate a specific research question—a broad, open-ended question that will guide your research—as well as propose a possible answer, or a working thesis.

Step 2: Planning and Scheduling

Before you start researching your topic, take time to plan your researching and writing schedule. Research projects can take days, weeks, or even months to complete. Creating a schedule is a good way to ensure that you do not end up being overwhelmed by all the work you have to do as the deadline approaches. During this step of the process, it is also a good idea to plan the resources and organizational tools you will use to keep yourself on track throughout the project. Flowcharts, calendars, and checklists can all help you stick to your schedule.

Step 3: Conducting Research

When going about your research, you will likely use a variety of sources—anything from books and periodicals to video presentations and in-person interviews. However, you should pay close attention to instructions; instructors often specify what kinds of sources they require for research papers. Some may assign you to only use scholarly (peerreviewed) sources. For some assignments, your sources might include both primary sources and secondary sources. Primary sources provide firsthand information or raw data. For example, surveys, in-person interviews, historical documents, works of art, and works of literature are primary sources. Secondary sources, such as biographies, literary reviews, or news articles, include some analysis or interpretation of the information presented. As you conduct research, you should take detailed, careful notes about your discoveries. You should also evaluate the reliability of each source you find, especially sources that are not peer-reviewed.

Step 4: Organizing Your Research and Ideas

When your research is complete, you will organize your findings and decide which sources to cite in your paper. You will also have an opportunity to evaluate the evidence you have collected and determine whether it supports your thesis, or the focus of your paper. You may decide to adjust your thesis or conduct additional research to ensure that your thesis is well supported.

Step 5: Drafting Your Paper

Now you are ready to combine your research findings with your critical analysis of the results in a rough draft. You will incorporate source materials into your paper and discuss each source thoughtfully in relation to your thesis or purpose statement. It is important to pay close attention to standard conventions for citing sources in order to avoid plagiarism, which is the practice of using someone else's words without acknowledging the source. Later in this chapter, you will learn how to incorporate sources in your paper and avoid some of the most common pitfalls of attributing information.

Step 6: Revising and Editing Your Paper

In the final step of the research writing process, you will revise and polish your paper. You might reorganize your paper's structure or revise for unity and cohesion, ensuring that each element in your paper smoothly and logically flows into the next. You will also make sure that your paper uses an appropriate and consistent tone. Once you feel confident in the strength of your writing, you will edit your paper for proper spelling, grammar, punctuation, mechanics, and formatting. When you complete this final step, you will have transformed a simple idea or question into a thoroughly researched and well-written paper of which you can be proud.

Writing a good research paper takes time, thought, and effort. Although this assignment is challenging, it is manageable. Focusing on one step at a time will help you develop a thoughtful, informative, well-supported research paper.

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6.2.2: Choosing Your Topic

Your first step is to choose a topic and then to develop research questions and a working thesis. It's important to set aside adequate time for this part of the process. Fully exploring ideas will help you build a solid foundation for your paper.

Identifying Potential Topics

When you choose a topic for a research paper, you are making a major commitment. Your choice will help determine whether you enjoy the lengthy process of research and writing—and whether your final paper fulfills the assignment requirements. If you choose your topic hastily, you may later find it difficult to work with your topic. By taking your time and choosing carefully, you can ensure that this assignment is not only challenging but also rewarding.

Writers understand the importance of choosing a topic that fulfills the assignment requirements and fits the assignment's purpose and audience. Choosing a topic that genuinely interests you is also crucial. You instructor may provide a list of suggested topics or ask you to develop a topic on your own. You may find inspiration for topic ideas in your everyday life, by browsing magazines, or looking at lists of topics or themes in online databases such Opposing Viewpoints, CQ Researcher Online, Bloom's Literary Reference Online, and Literature Resource Center. In addition to Prewriting Techniques, use tools on the Web, such as Topic-o-rama and Wridea, to help you brainstorm your topic.

You may benefit from identifying several possibilities before committing to one idea. Building a list of potential topics will help you to identify additional, related topics. In this chapter, you will follow a writer named Jorge, who is studying healthcare administration, as he prepares a research paper. Jorge was assigned to write a research paper on current debates about healthy living for an introductory course in health care. Although a general topic was selected for the students, Jorge had to decide which specific issues interested him. He brainstormed the following list of possibilities:

Example 6.2.2.1:

- Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) in the news
- Sexual education programs
- Hollywood and eating disorders
- Americans' access to public health information
- Medial portrayals of health care reform
- Depictions of drugs on television
- The effect of the Internet on mental health
- Popularized diets (such as low-carbohydrate diets)
- Fear of pandemics (bird flu, H1N1, SARS)
- Electronic entertainment and obesity
- Advertisements for prescription drugs
- Public education and disease prevention

Focusing on a Topic

After identifying potential topics, you will need to evaluate your list and choose one topic to pursue as the focus of your research paper. Discussing your ideas with your instructor, peers, and tutors will help ensure that you choose a manageable topic that fits the requirements of the assignment. The following are some questions to consider:

- Will you be able to find enough information about the topic?

- Can you take an arguable position on the topic?
- Is the topic too broad or too narrow for the scope of the assignment? If so, can you modify the topic so it is more manageable?

You will also need to narrow your topic so you can formulate a concise, manageable thesis about it. Most writers find that the topics they listed during brainstorming or idea mapping are broad—too broad for the scope of the assignment. Working with an overly broad topic, such as sexual education programs or popularized diets, can be frustrating and overwhelming. Each topic has so many facets that it would be impossible to cover them all in a college research paper. However, more specific choices, such as the pros and cons of sexual education in kids' television programs or the physical effects of the South Beach diet, are specific enough to write about without being so narrow that they can't sustain an entire research paper. A good research paper provides focused, in-depth information and analysis. If your topic is too broad, you will find it difficult to do more than skim the surface when you research it and write about it. To narrow your focus, explore your topic in writing. Also, conduct preliminary research, including discussing the topic with others.

You may be asking yourself, "How am I supposed to narrow my topic when I haven't even begun researching yet?" In fact, you may already know more than you realize. Review your list and identify your top two or three topics. Set aside some time to explore each one through Prewriting Techniques. Taking the time to focus on your topic may yield fresh angles. For example, Jorge knew that he was especially interested in the topic of diet fads, but he also knew that it was much too broad for his assignment. He used freewriting to explore his thoughts so he could narrow his topic. Read Jorge's following ideas from freewriting.

> Our instructors are always saying that accurate, up-to-date information is crucial in encouraging people to make better choices about their health. I don't think the media does a very good job of providing that, though. Every time I go on the Internet, I see tons of ads for the latest 'miracle food'. One week it's acai berries, the next week it's green tea, and then six months later I see a news story saying all the fabulous claims about acai berries and green tea are overblown! Advice about weight loss is even worse. Think about all the diet books that are out there! Some say that a low-fat diet is best; some say you should cut down on carbs; and some make bizarre recommendations like eating half a grapefruit with every meal. I don't know how anybody is supposed to make an informed decision about what to eat when there's so much confusing, contradictory information. I bet even doctors, nurses, and dieticians have trouble figuring out what information is reliable and what is just the latest hype.

Another way that writers focus on a topic is by conducting preliminary research. Talk about your ideas with your classmates, friends, and family. Like freewriting, exploratory reading can help you identify interesting angles. Surfing the web is a good way to start. Find out what people are saying about your topic in online newspapers, magazines, blogs, and discussion boards. Keep in mind that the reliability of online sources varies greatly. In this exploratory phase of your research, you do not need to evaluate sources as closely as you will later; however, use common sense as you refine your paper topic. If you read a fascinating blog comment that gives you a new idea, search for some fully developed sources on that topic to see if it's worth pursuing. If you are writing a research paper for a specialized course, look back through your notes and course activities to identify potential topics. Remind yourself of reading assignments and class discussions that especially engaged you. Doing so can help you identify topics to pursue. If the readings or viewings assigned in your course deal with your topic, then review and take notes on those materials. Librarians and instructors can help you to determine if there are enough sources available on your topic, or if there are so many sources that it would be wise to narrow your topic further.

Jorge's freewriting exercise helped him realize that the assigned topic of current debates about healthy living intersected with a few of his own interests—diet, nutrition, and obesity. Preliminary online research and discussions with his classmates strengthened his impression that many people are confused or misled by media coverage of these subjects. Jorge decided to focus his paper on a topic that had garnered a great deal of media attention—low-carbohydrate diets. He wanted to find out whether low-carbohydrate diets were as effective as their proponents claimed.

Writing at Work

At work, you may need to research a topic quickly to find general information. This information can be useful in understanding trends in a given industry or generating competition. For example, a company may research a competitor's prices and use the information when pricing their own product. You may find it useful to skim a variety of sources and take notes on your findings.

Exercise 2

Set a timer for five minutes. Use prewriting techniques to create a list of topics you would be interested in researching for a paper about the influence of the Internet on social networking. Which social networking sites do you and your friends use? Do you closely follow a particular social media website, such as Twitter? Would you like to learn more about a certain industry, such as online dating? Would you like to learn more about people's use of the Internet to build support for social causes? List as many ideas related to this topic as you can.

Exercise 3

Choose two topics from the list you created above. Spend five minutes freewriting about each of these topics. Choose the topic about which you more enjoyed freewriting. Then, review your freewriting to identify possible areas of focus.

Exercise 4

Collaborative exercise: Swap lists of potential topics with a classmate. Select one or two topics on your classmate's list about which you would like to learn more. Explain to your classmate why you find those topics interesting. Ask your classmate which of the topics on your list s/he would like to learn more about and why.

Determining Paths of Inquiry

Your freewriting and preliminary research have helped you choose a focused, manageable topic for your research paper. To work with your topic successfully, you will need to determine what exactly you want to learn about it—and what you want to say about it. Before you begin conducting in-depth research, you will further define your focus by developing research questions and a working thesis.

By forming research questions about your topic, you are setting a goal for your research. Determine your main question—the primary focus of your paper—and several subquestions that you will need to research in more depth to answer your main question. Your main research question should be substantial enough to form the guiding principle of your paper—but focused enough to guide your research. A strong research question requires you not only to find information but also to put together different pieces of information, interpret and analyze them, and figure out what you think. As you consider potential research questions, ask yourself whether they would be too hard or too easy to answer. Review the results of your prewriting, and skim through your preliminary research. From these, write both simple, factual questions and more complex questions that would require analysis and interpretation to answer.

Below are the research questions Jorge will use to focus his research. Notice that his main research question has no obvious, straightforward answer. Jorge will need to research his subquestions, which address narrower topics, to answer his main question.

Topic: Low-carbohydrate diets

Main question: Are low-carbohydrate diets as effective as they have been portrayed to be by media sources?

Subquestions:

- Who can benefit from following a low-carbohydrate diet?
- What are the supposed advantages to following a low-carbohydrate diet?
- When did low-carbohydrate diets become a 'hot' topic in the media?
- Where do average consumers get information about diet and nutrition?
- Why has the low-carb approach received so much media attention?
- How do low-carb diets work?

A working thesis concisely states a writer's initial answer to the main research question. It does not merely state a fact or present a subjective opinion. Instead, it expresses a debatable idea or claim that you hope to prove through research. Your working thesis is called a working thesis for a reason: it is subject to modification. You may adapt your thinking in light of your research findings. Let your working thesis serve as a guide to your research, but do not hesitate to change your path as you learn about your topic.

One way to determine your working thesis is to consider how you would complete statements that begin, "I believe..." or "My opinion is...". These first-person phrases are useful starting points even though you may eventually omit them from sentences in your research paper. Generally, formal research papers use an assertive, objective voice and, therefore, do not include first-person pronouns. Some readers associate I with informal, subjective writing. Some readers think the first-person point of view diminishes the impact of a claim. For these reasons, some instructors will tell you not to use I in research papers.

Jorge began his research with a strong point of view based on his preliminary writing and research. Read his working thesis statement, below, which presents the point he will argue. Notice how it states Jorge's tentative answer to his research question.

Main research question: Are low-carb diets as effective as they have sometimes been portrayed to be by the mass media?

Working thesis statement: Low-carb diets do not live up to the media hype surrounding them.

Writing at Work

Before you begin a new project at work, you may have to develop a project summary document that states the purpose of the project, explains why it would be a wise use of company resources, and briefly outlines the steps involved in completing the project. This type of document is similar to a research proposal for an academic purpose. Both define and limit a project, explain its value, discuss how to proceed, and identify what resources you will use.

Exercise 5

Using the topic you have selected, write your main research question and at least four subquestions. Check that your main research question is appropriately complex for your assignment.

Exercise 6

Write a working thesis statement that presents your preliminary answer to the research question you wrote above. Think about whether your working thesis statement presents an idea or claim that could be supported or refuted by evidence from research.

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6.2.3: Managing Your Research

Step 1 “Choosing a Topic,” helped you begin to plan the content of your research paper—your topic, research questions, and preliminary thesis. It is equally important to plan out the process of researching and writing the paper. Although some types of writing assignments can be completed relatively quickly, developing a good research paper is a complex process that takes time and attention. Careful planning helps ensure that you will keep your project running smoothly and produce your best work. Think about how you will complete each step and what resources you will use. Resources may include anything from online databases and digital technologies to interview subjects and writing tutors.

Scheduling Research and Writing

Set up a project schedule that shows when you will complete each step. To develop your schedule, use a calendar and work backward from the date your final draft is due. Generally, it is wise to divide half of the available time on the research phase of the project and half on the writing phase. For example, if you have a month to work, plan for two weeks for each phase. If you have a full semester, plan to begin research early and to start writing by the middle of the term. You might think that no one really works that far ahead, but try it. You will probably be pleased with the quality of your work and with the reduction in your stress level.

Plan your schedule realistically, and consider other commitments that may sometimes take precedence. A business trip or family visit may mean that you are unable to work on the research project for a few days. Make the most of the time you have available. Plan for unexpected interruptions, but keep in mind that a short time away from the project may help you come back to it with renewed enthusiasm. Another strategy many writers find helpful is to finish each day’s work at a point when the next task is an easy one. That makes it easier to start again.

As you plan, break down major steps into smaller tasks if necessary. For example, Step 3, Conducting Research, involves locating potential sources, evaluating their usefulness and reliability, reading, and taking notes. Defining these smaller tasks makes the project more manageable by giving you concrete goals to achieve.

Jorge had six weeks to complete his research project. Working backward from a due date of May 2, he mapped out a schedule for completing his research by early April so that he would have ample time to write. Jorge chose to write his schedule in his weekly planner to help keep himself on track. Review Jorge’s schedule. Key target dates are shaded. Note that Jorge planned times to use available resources by visiting the library and writing center and by meeting with his instructor.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
March 20	21	22 Choose Topic	23 Preliminary research	24 Write research questions and working thesis	25 Write research proposal	26
27	28 Research proposal due	29 Look for sources online	30 Library	31 Evaluate sources; make source cards	April 1 Take notes →	2 →
3 →	4 →	5 Finish note cards	6 Organize notes →	7 →	8 Write outline	9 →
10	11 Outline due	12 Write draft →	13 →	14 →	15 Off – Trip to NYC	16 Off – Trip to NYC
17	18 Conference with Prof. Habib 2:00	19 Finish writing draft	20	21 Revise draft →	22 →	23 Library?
24	25	26 Finish revising draft	27 Edit draft	28 Writing Center 4:30	29 Finish editing draft	30 Create Works Cited page
May 1	2 Final draft due	3	4	5	6	7

Figure 6.2.3.1 - *Sample Schedule for Writing a Research Paper*

Staying Organized

Although setting up a schedule is relatively easy, sticking to one is challenging. Even if you are the rare person who never procrastinates, unforeseen events may interfere with your ability to complete tasks on time. A self-imposed deadline may slip your mind despite your best intentions. Organizational tools (e.g., calendars, checklists, note cards, software) and setting up a buddy system with a classmate can help you stay on track.

Throughout your project, organize both your time and resources systematically. Review your schedule frequently and check your progress. It helps to post your schedule in a place where you will see it every day. Email systems usually include a calendar feature where you can record tasks, arrange to receive daily reminders, and check off completed tasks. Electronic devices such as smartphones have similar features. There are online task-management tools you may use for free on the Web, such as Google Tasks, HiTask, Nirvana, and Remember the Milk. Some people enjoy using the most up-to-date technology to help them stay organized. Other people prefer simple methods, such as crossing off items on a checklist. The key to staying organized is finding a system you like enough to use daily. The particulars of the method are not important as long as you are consistent.

Organize project documents in a binder or digital folder. Label these clearly. Use note cards, an electronic document, an online database folder (this will require you to set up a free account on the database), or free downloadable software such as Colwiz and Zotero to record bibliographical information for sources you want to use in your paper. Tracking this information during the research process will save you time when Creating a List of References.

Writing at Work

When you create a project schedule at work, you set target dates for completing certain tasks and identify the resources you plan to use on the project. It is important to build in some flexibility. Materials may not be received on time because of a shipping delay. An employee on your team may be called away to work on a higher-priority project. Essential equipment may malfunction. You should always plan for the unexpected.

Exercise 7

Working backward from the date your final draft is due, create a project schedule. You may choose to write a sequential list of tasks, record tasks on a calendar, or set up your project's timeline using an online task-management tool, such as Google Tasks, HiTask, Nirvana, and Remember the Milk. Select a format you think will help you stay on track from day to day. Use a calendar accessible on your smartphone, record your schedule in a weekly planner, post it by your desk, or set your email or task-management tool to send you reminders. Review your schedule to be sure you have broken each step into smaller tasks and assigned a target completion date to each key task. Review your target dates to make sure they are realistic. Allow more time than you think you will need.

Anticipating Challenges

Do any of these scenarios sound familiar? You have identified a book that would be a great resource for your project, but it is currently checked out of the library. You planned to interview a subject-matter expert on your topic, but she calls to cancel. You have begun writing your draft, but now you realize that you will need to modify your thesis and conduct additional research. Or, you have finally completed your draft when your computer crashes, and days of hard work disappear in an instant. These troubling situations are all too common. No matter how carefully you plan your schedule, you may encounter a glitch or setback. Managing

your project effectively means anticipating potential problems, taking steps to minimize them where possible, and allowing time in your schedule to handle any setbacks.

Many times a situation becomes a problem due only to lack of planning. For example, if a book is checked out of your college's library, you can request it through interlibrary loan to have it delivered to your campus in a few days. Alternatively, you might locate another equally useful source. If you have allowed enough time for research, a brief delay will not become a major setback.

You can manage other potential problems by staying organized and maintaining a takecharge attitude. Take the time to save a backup copy of your work on a portable flash drive. Or, instead of using the hard drive of one computer to save your work, create your word-processing files using cloud storage such as Dropbox or Google Drive, which you can access with a username and password from any computer with an Internet connection. If you don't have a reliable Internet connection off campus, then visit a computer lab on campus or a public library with desktop computers, or you can go to a coffee shop with a laptop; it is important to find a space where you can concentrate and that is open during times that work with your schedule. As you conduct research, maintain detailed records and notes of sources—doing so will make citing sources in your draft infinitely easier. If you run into difficulties with your research or your writing, ask your instructor or a librarian for help, or meet with a peer or writing tutor.

Writing at Work

In the workplace, documents prepared at the beginning of a project often include a detailed plan for risk management. When you manage a project, it makes sense to anticipate and prepare for potential setbacks. For example, to roll out a new product line, a software development company must strive to complete tasks on a schedule in order to meet the new product release date. The project manager may need to adjust the project plan if one or more tasks fall behind schedule.

Exercise 8

Identify five potential problems you might encounter in the process of researching and writing your paper. Write them on a separate sheet of paper. For each problem, write at least one strategy for solving the problem or minimizing its effect on your project.

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6.2.4: Gathering Your Sources (Part 1)

Now that you have planned your research project, you are ready to begin the research. This phase can be both exciting and challenging. As you read this section, you will learn ways to locate sources efficiently, so you will have enough time to read the sources, take notes, and think about how to use them in your research paper. In addition to finding sources, research entails determining the relevance and reliability of sources, organizing findings, as well as deciding whether and how to use sources in your paper. The technological advances of the past few decades—particularly the rise of online media—mean that, as a twenty-first-century student, you have countless sources of information available at your fingertips. But how can you tell whether a source is reliable? This section will discuss strategies for finding and evaluating sources so that you can be a media-savvy researcher.

Depending on your assignment, you will likely search for sources by using

- **Internet search engines** to locate sources freely available on the web.
- **A library's online catalog** to identify print books, ebooks, periodicals, DVDs, and other items in the library's collection. The catalog will help you find journals by title, but it will not list the journal's articles by title or author.
- **Online databases** to locate articles, ebooks, streaming videos, images, and other electronic resources. These databases can also help you identify articles in print periodicals.

Your instructor, as well as writing tutors and librarians, at your college can help you determine which of these methods will best fit your project and learn to use the search tools available to you. You can also find research guides and tutorials on library websites and *YouTube* channels that can help you identify appropriate research tools and learn how to use them. As you gather sources, you will need to examine them with a critical eye. Smart researchers continually ask themselves two questions: "Is this source relevant to my purpose?" and "Is this source reliable?" The first question will help you avoid wasting valuable time reading sources that stray too far from your specific topic and research questions. The second question will help you find accurate, trustworthy sources.

Writing at Work

Businesses, government organizations, and nonprofit organizations produce published materials that range from brief advertisements and brochures to lengthy, detailed reports. In many cases, producing these publications requires research. A corporation's annual report may include research about economic or industry trends. A charitable organization may use information from research in materials sent to potential donors. Regardless of the industry you work in, you may be asked to assist in developing materials for publication. Often, incorporating research in these documents can make them more effective in informing or persuading readers.

Identifying Primary and Secondary Sources

When you chose a paper topic and determined your research questions, you conducted preliminary research to stimulate your thinking. Your research plan included some general ideas for how to go about your research—for instance, interviewing an expert in the field or analyzing the content of popular magazines. You may even have identified a few potential sources. Now it is time to conduct a more focused, systematic search for informative primary and secondary sources. Writers classify research resources in two categories: primary sources and secondary sources.

Primary sources are direct, firsthand sources of information or data. For example, if you were writing a paper about the First Amendment right to freedom of speech, the text of the First Amendment in the Bill of Rights would be a primary source. Other primary sources include the following:

- Data
- Works of visual art
- Literary texts

- Historical documents such as diaries or letters
- Autobiographies, interviews, or other personal accounts

Secondary sources discuss, interpret, analyze, consolidate, or otherwise rework information from primary sources. In researching a paper about the First Amendment, you might read articles about legal cases that involved First Amendment rights, or editorials expressing commentary on the First Amendment. These sources would be considered secondary sources because they are one step removed from the primary source of information. The following are examples of secondary sources:

- Literary criticism
- Biographies
- Reviews
- Documentaries
- News reports

Your topic and purpose determine whether you must cite both primary and secondary sources in your paper. Ask yourself which sources are most likely to provide the information that will answer your research questions. If you are writing a research paper about reality television shows, you will need to use some reality shows as a primary source, but secondary sources, such as a reviewer's critique, are also important. If you are writing about the health effects of nicotine, you will probably want to read the published results of scientific studies, but secondary sources, such as magazine articles discussing the outcome of a recent study, may also be helpful.

Some sources could be considered primary or secondary sources, depending on the writer's purpose for using them. For instance, if a writer's purpose is to inform readers about how the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation has affected elementary education in the United States, then a *Time* magazine article on the subject would be a secondary source. However, suppose the writer's purpose is to analyze how the news media has portrayed the effects of NCLB. In that case, articles about the legislation in news magazines like *Time, Newsweek*, and *US News & World Report* would be primary sources. They provide firsthand examples of the media coverage the writer is analyzing.

Once you have thought about what kinds of sources are most likely to help you answer your research questions, you may begin your search for sources. The challenge here is to conduct your search both efficiently and thoroughly. On the one hand, effective writers use strategies to help them find the sources that are most relevant and reliable while steering clear of sources that will not be useful; on the other hand, they are open to pursuing different lines of inquiry that come up along the way than those that seemed relevant at the start of research. As a process of discovery, good research requires critical thinking about, and often revising of, writers' plans and ideas.

Reading Popular and Scholarly Periodicals

When you search for periodicals, be sure to distinguish among different types. Mass-market publications, such as newspapers and popular magazines, differ from scholarly publications in their accessibility, audience, and purpose. Newspapers and magazines are written for a broader audience than scholarly journals. Their content is usually quite accessible and easy to read. Trade magazines that target readers within a particular industry may presume the reader has background knowledge, but these publications are still reader-friendly for a broader audience. Their purpose is to inform and, often, to entertain or persuade readers as well.

Scholarly or academic journals are written for a much smaller and more expert audience. The creators of these publications are experts in the subject and assume that most of their readers are already familiar with the main topic of the journal. The target audience is also highly educated. Informing is the primary purpose of a scholarly journal. While a journal article may advance an agenda or advocate a position, the content will still be presented in an objective style and formal tone. Entertaining readers with breezy comments and splashy graphics is not a priority.

Because of these differences, scholarly journals are more challenging to read. That doesn't mean you should avoid them. On the contrary, they can provide in-depth information unavailable elsewhere. Because knowledgeable professionals carefully review the content before publication in a process called "peer-review," scholarly journals are far more reliable than much of the information available in popular media. Seek out academic journals along with other resources. Just be prepared to spend a little more time processing the information.

Writing at Work

Periodicals databases are not just for students writing research papers. They also provide a valuable service to workers in various fields. The owner of a small business might use a database such as *Business Source Premiere* to find articles on management, finance, or trends within a particular industry. Health care professionals might consult databases such as MedLine to research a particular disease or medication. Regardless of what career path you plan to pursue, periodicals databases can be a useful tool for researching specific topics and identifying periodicals that will help you keep up with the latest news in your industry.

Using Sources from the Open Web

When faced with the challenge of writing a research paper, some students rely on popular search engines, such as Google, as their only source of information. Typing a keyword or phrase into a search engine instantly pulls up links to dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of related websites—what could be easier? While the Web is useful for retrieving information, you should be wary of limiting your research to sources from the open Web.

For example, **wikis**, including online encyclopedias, such as *Wikipedia*, and community-driven question-and-answer sites, such *Yahoo Answers*, are very easy to access on the Web. They are free, and they appear among the first few results when using a search engine. Because these sites are created and revised by a large community of users, they cover thousands of topics, and many are written in an informal and straightforward writing style. However, these sites may not have a reliable control system for researching, writing, and reviewing posts. While wikis may be a good starting point for finding other, more trustworthy, more fully developed sources, usually they should not be your final sources.

Despite its apparent convenience, researching on the open Web has the following drawbacks to consider:

- Results do not consider the reliability of the sources. The first few hits that appear in search results often include sites whose content is not always reliable. Search engines cannot tell you which sites have accurate information.
- Results may be influenced by popularity or advertisers. Search engines find websites that people visit often and list the results in order of popularity rather than relevance to your topic.
- Results may be too numerous for you to use. Search engines often return an overwhelming number of results. Because it is difficult to filter results for quality or relevance, the most useful sites may be buried deep within your search results. It is not realistic for you to examine every site.
- Results do not include many of the library's high quality electronic resources that are only available through password-protected databases or on campus.
- Because anyone can publish anything on the Web, the quality of the information varies greatly and you will need to evaluate web resources carefully.

Nevertheless, a search on the open Web can provide a helpful overview of a topic and may pull up genuinely useful sources. You may find specialized search engines recommended on your college library's website. For example, http://www.usa.gov will search for information on United States government websites. If you are working at your personal computer, use the Bookmarks or Favorites feature of your web browser to save and organize sites that look promising.

To get the most out of a search engine, use strategies to make your search more efficient. Depending on the specific search engine you use, the following options may be available:

- Limit results to websites that have been updated within a particular time frame.
- Limit results by language or region.
- Limit results to scholarly works available online. Google Scholar is an example.
- Limit results by file type.
- Limit results to a particular site or domain type, such as .edu (school and university sites) or .gov (government sites). This is a quick way to filter out commercial sites that often lead to less objective results.

Types and Formats of Library Sources

Information accessible through a college library comes in a variety of types and formats of sources. Books, DVDS, and various types of periodicals can be found in physical form at the library. Many of these same materials are available in electronic format in the form of ebooks, electronic journal articles, and streaming videos. Your college library may have some resources in both print and electronic formats while others may be available exclusively in one format. The following lists different types of resources available at college libraries. In addition to the resources noted, library holdings may include primary sources such as historical documents, letters, diaries, and images.

Types of sources

- **Reference works** provide a summary of information about a particular topic. Almanacs, encyclopedias, atlases, medical reference books, and scientific abstracts are examples of reference works. In most cases, reference books may not be checked out of a library. Note that reference works are many steps removed from original primary sources and are often brief, so these should be used only as a starting point when you gather information.
  - **Examples**: *The World Almanac and Book of Facts 2010*; *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual*, published by the American Psychiatric Association.
- **Nonfiction books** provide in-depth coverage of a topic. Trade books, biographies, and how-to guides are usually written for a general audience. Scholarly books and scientific studies are usually written for an audience that has specialized knowledge of a topic.
  - **Examples**: *The Low-Carb Solution: A Slimmer You in 30 Days; Carbohydrates, Fats and Proteins: Exploring the Relationship Between Macronutrient Ratios and Health Outcomes*.
- **Periodicals** are published at regular intervals—daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly. Newspapers, magazines, and academic journals are different kinds of periodicals. Some periodicals provide articles on subjects of general interest while others are more specialized.
  - **Examples**: *The New York Times; PC Magazine; JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association*.
- **Government publications** by federal, state, and local agencies publish information on a variety of topics. Government publications include reports, legislation, court documents, public records, statistics, studies, guides, programs, and forms.
  - **Examples**: *The Census 2000 Profile; The Business Relocation Package,* published by the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce.
- **Business publications** and publications by nonprofit organizations are designed to market a product, provide background about the organization, provide information on topics connected to the organization, or promote a cause. These publications include reports, newsletters, advertisements, manuals, brochures, and other print documents.
  - **Examples**: a company's instruction manual explaining how to use a specific software program; a news release published by the Sierra Club.
- **Documentaries** are the moving-image equivalent of nonfiction books. They cover a range of topics and can be introductory or scholarly. Newsreels can be primary sources about then-current events. Feature-length programs or episodes of a series can be secondary sources about historical phenomena or life stories. You may view a documentary in a movie theater, on television, on an open website, or in a subscription-accessed database such as Films on Demand.
  - **Examples**: *Freedom Riders*, directed by Stanley Nelson; *Finding Your Roots*, with Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

As you gather information, strive for a balance of accessible, easy-to-read sources and more specialized, challenging sources. Relying solely on lightweight books and articles written for a general audience will drastically limit the range of useful, substantial information. However, restricting oneself to dense, scholarly works could make the research process overwhelming. An effective strategy for unfamiliar topics is to begin your reading with works written for the general public, and then move to more scholarly works as you learn more about your topic.

Using Databases

While library catalogs can help you locate print and electronic book-length sources, as well as some types of non-print holdings, such as CDs, DVDs, and audiobooks, the best way to locate shorter sources, such as articles in magazines, newspapers, and journals, is to search online databases accessible through a portal to which your college's library subscribes. In many cases, the full texts of articles are available from these databases. In other instances, articles are indexed, meaning there is a summary and publication information about the article, but the full text is not immediately available in the database; instead, you may find the indexed article in a print periodical in your college's library holdings, or you can submit an online request for an interlibrary loan, and a librarian will email a digitized copy of the article to you.

When searching for sources using a password-protected portal, such as the University System of Georgia's GALILEO, it's important to understand where and how to look up your topic. On its homepage, GALILEO contains a general search bar called the "Discover" tool, which allows you to search many (but not all) databases at once. If you don't find useful sources using the portal's general search bar, then you may retrieve better results by going to specific databases within the portal. This video tutorial, titled "GALILEO at GPC Libraries, Including the Discover Tool," created by the Georgia Perimeter College (GPC) Libraries, explains how to search for sources using GALILEO. For specific guidance on using a password-protected portal to find sources for a literary research paper, watch videos in the GPC Libraries' "Literature Research Series" on *YouTube*. As these tutorials show, on a portal such as GALILEO, you can choose specific databases by going to "Databases A-Z" or "Databases by Subject." Databases may be general, including many types of resources on a broad range of subjects, or they may be specialized, focusing on a particular format of resource or a specific subject area. The following list describes some commonly used indexes and databases accessible through libraries' research portals.

- **Academic Search Complete** includes articles on a wide variety of topics published in various forums, both scholarly and popular.
- **Opposing Viewpoints** includes articles, statistics, and recommended websites related to a wide range of controversial issues.
- **CQ Researcher Online** has full-text articles about issues in the news.
- **Lexis Nexis** has articles from newspapers and other periodicals, news transcripts, and business and legal information.
- **Business Source Complete** comprises business-related content from magazines, journals, and trade publications.
- **Films on Demand** has streaming video of documentaries and historic newsreels.
- **Artstor** has high-quality images of works of visual art of various media, as well as information on the creators, subjects, materials, and holdings of artworks.
- **JSTOR** includes full-text scholarly secondary sources, including books and articles, as well as primary sources on a wide variety of topics, mostly in the humanities and social sciences.
- **History Reference Center** has full-text articles from reference books, encyclopedias, and scholarly journals, as well as images and streaming videos on most of the world's cultures and time periods.
- **Literature Resource Center** includes full-text print and electronic sources relevant to literature, such as biographies of authors, reviews of works, overviews of plots and characters, analyses of themes, and scholarly criticism.
- **Science and Technology Collection** has full-text articles from journals in various scientific and technical fields.
- **MEDLINE, Proquest Nursing**, and **Consumer Health Source** contain articles in medicine and health.

Sometimes you will know exactly which source you are looking for, for example, if your instructor or another writer references that source. Having the author (if available), title, and other information about the source included in an end-of-text citation will help you to find that source. The sequence of images below shows how to use the research portal GALILEO to find two sources with given citations, which indicate the sources are from the databases *Academic Search Complete* and *History Reference Center*.

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6.2.5: Gathering Your Sources (Part 2)

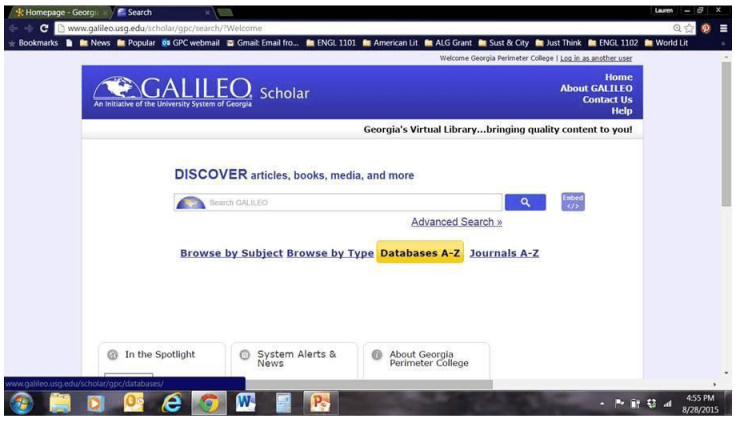
Finding Specific Sources in GALILEO

by Dr. Curtright

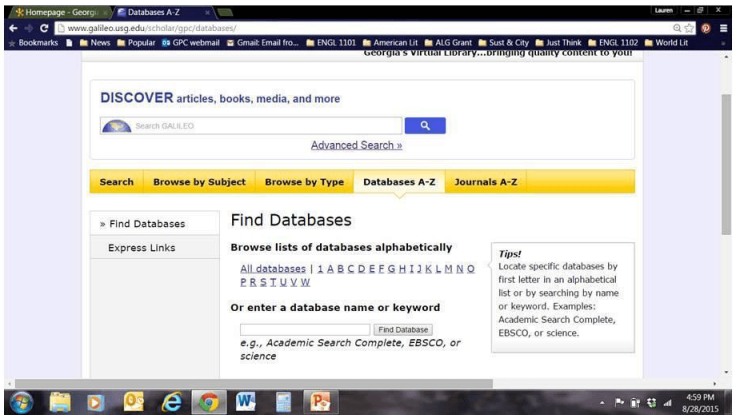
Using the following citations as examples, this presentation explains how to use GALILEO to find sources whose citations show they are from online library databases. Note: the item before "Web" in the citation is the title of the database.

"Alabama's Scandal." *Time* 67.8 (1956): 42. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 23 July 2015.

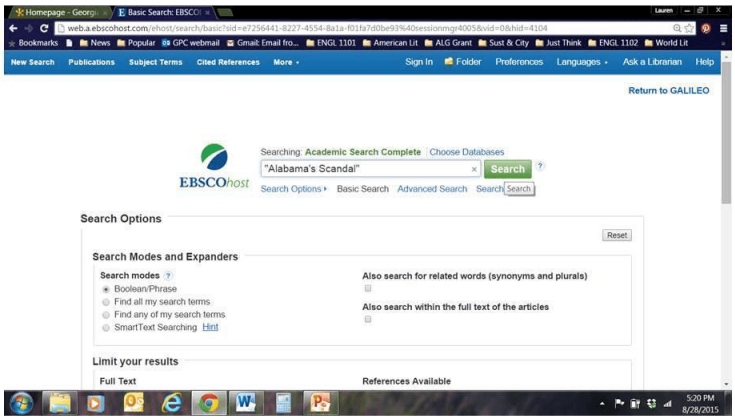
Wynn, Linda T. "Foster, Autherine Juanita Lucy (1929-)." *Freedom Facts & Firsts: 400 Years of the African American Civil Rights Experience* (2009): 103-104. *History Reference Center*. Web. 23 July 2015.



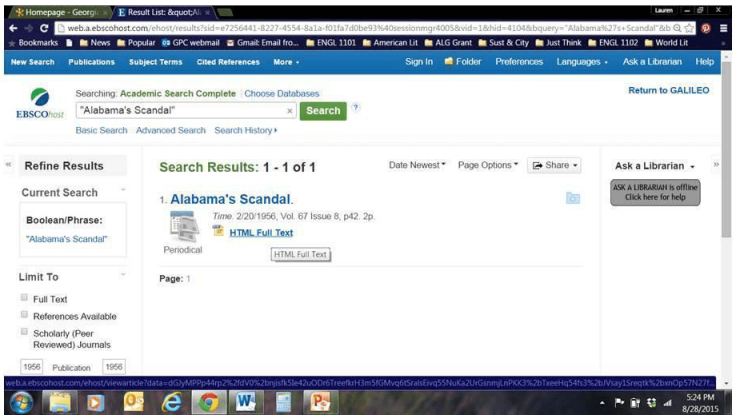
Once the GALILEO website loads in the browser, click on **Databases A-Z**.



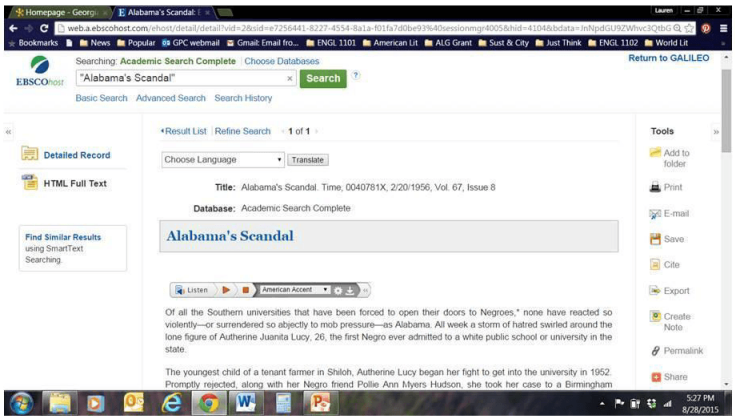
Search by first letter of the database or by words in its title at “Find Database”.



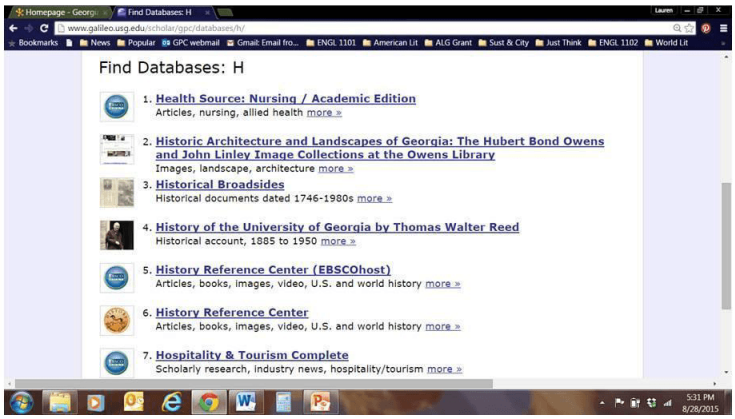
In the search bar, enter the first item of the citation, e.g. the source’s title, in quotation marks; then click Search.



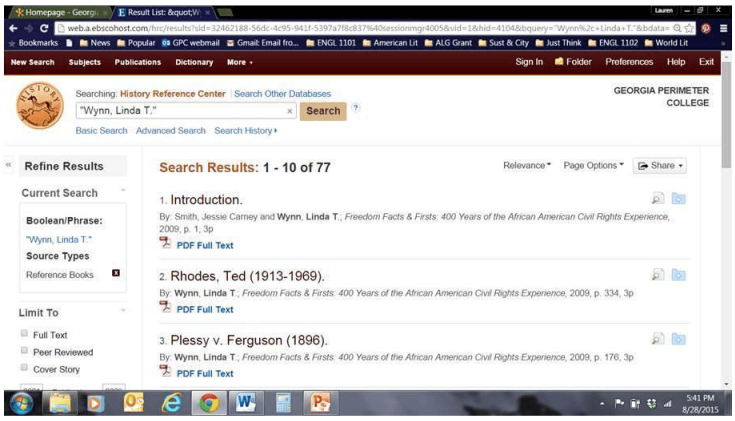
From the list of results, click on "HTML Full Text" to view the source.



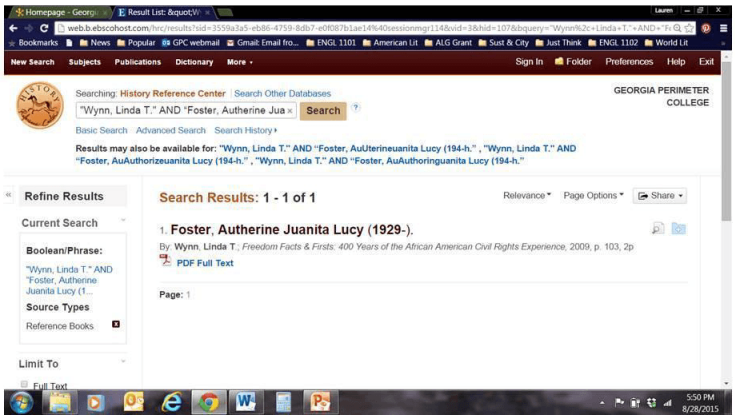
Read the source, or use tools in the column at right to read it elsewhere.



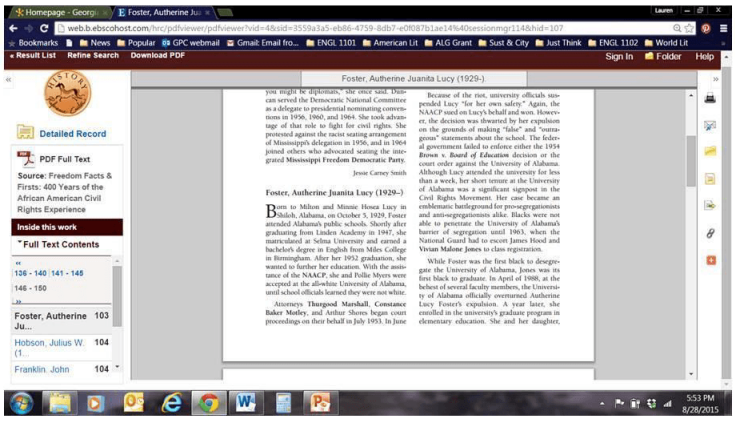
To find the next source, return to GALILEO; then look up the database **History Reference Center**.



Search the author's name (the first item in the citation) in quotations.



To narrow your search, add the source's title in quotations; type AND in-between the search phrases.



Click on "PDF Full Text" to open the source; then scroll down to read it. Note the tools at right to read it later.

As you go through the process of gathering sources, you will likely need to find specific sources referenced by others to build your list of useful sources; use the steps above to help you do this. However, keep in mind that, especially when you first start researching, you will also need to find sources about your topic having little or no idea what sources are out there. Therefore, rather than authors and titles, you will need to enter keywords, or subject search terms, related to your topic. The next section instructs you on how to do that.

Entering Search Terms

One of the most important steps in conducting research is to "learn how to speak database," as the sock puppet explains to the student in this video tutorial, titled "How to Use a Database," created by the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC) Library. As the video shows, to find reliable sources efficiently, you must identify single words or phrases that represent the major concepts of your research—that is, your keywords, or subject search terms. Your starting points for developing search terms are the topic and the research questions you identify, but you should also think of synonyms for those terms. Furthermore, as you begin searching for sources, you should notice additional terms in the subjects listed in the records of your results. These subjects will help you find additional sources.

As Jorge used his library's catalog and databases, he worked to refine his search by making note of subjects associated with sources about low-carb dieting. His search helped him to identify the following additional terms and related topics to research:

- Low-carbohydrate diet
- Insulin resistance reducing diets
- Glycemic index
- Dietary carbohydrates

Searching the library's online resources is similar in many ways to searching the Internet, except some library catalogs and databases require specific search techniques. For example, some databases require that you use **Boolean operators** to connect your search terms. In other databases, Boolean operators are optional, but can still help you get better search results. Here are some of the ways you can use Boolean operators:

- **Connect keywords with AND** to limit results to citations that include both keywords—for example, carbohydrates AND diet.
- **Connect keywords with OR** to search for results that contain either of two terms. For example, searching for diet OR nutrition locates articles that use "diet" as a keyword as well as articles that use "nutrition" as a keyword.
- **Connect keywords with NOT** to search for the first word without the second. This can help you eliminate irrelevant results based on words that are similar to your search term. For example, searching for obesity NOT childhood locates materials on obesity but excludes materials on childhood obesity.
- **Enclose a phrase in quotation marks** to search for an exact phrase, such as "morbid obesity."

Many databases offer tools for improving your search. Make your search in library catalogs and databases more effective by using the following tips:

- **Use limiters** (often located on the left side of the search results) to further refine your results after searching.
- **Change the sort of your results** so the order of the articles best fits your needs. Sorting by date allows you to put the most recent or the oldest articles at the top of the results list. Other types of sorts include relevance, alphabetical by author's name or alphabetical by article title.
- **Use the Advanced Search** functions of your database to further refine your results or to create more complex combinations of search terms.
- **Use the Help section of the database** to find more search strategies that apply to that particular database.

Here is an example of using Boolean operators in an Advanced Search:



Figure 6.2.5.1

Consulting a Reference Librarian

Sifting through library stacks and database search results to find the information you need can be like trying to find a needle in a haystack. Knowing the right keywords can sometimes make all the difference in conducting a successful search. If you are not sure how you should begin your search, or if your search is yielding too many, or too few, results, then you are not alone. Many students find this process challenging, although it does get easier with experience. One way to learn better search strategies is to consult a reference librarian and watch online tutorials that research experts have created to help you. If you have trouble finding sources on a topic, consult a librarian.

Reference librarians are intimately familiar with the systems that libraries use to organize and classify information. They can help you locate a particular book in the library stacks, steer you toward useful reference works, and provide tips on how to use databases and other electronic research tools. Take the time to see what resources you can find on your own, but if you encounter difficulties, ask for help. Many academic librarians are available for online chatting, texting, and emailing as well as face-to-face reference consultations. To make the most of your reference consultation, be prepared to explain, to the librarian, the assignment and your timeline as well as your research questions and ideas for keywords. Because they are familiar with the resources available, librarians may be able to recommend specific resources that fit your needs and tailor your keywords to the search tools you are using.

Exercise 9

At the Library of Congress's website, search for results on a few terms related to your topic. Review your search results to identify six to eight additional terms you might use when you search for sources using your college library's catalog and databases.

Exercise 10

Visit your library's website or consult with a reference librarian to determine which databases would be useful for your research. Depending on your topic, you may rely on a general database, a specialized database for a particular subject area, or both. Identify at least two relevant databases. Conduct a keyword search in these databases to find potentially relevant sources on your topic. Also, search your college's online library catalog. If the catalog or database you are using provides abstracts of sources, then read them to determine how useful the sources are likely to be. Print out, email to yourself, or save your search results.

Exercise 11

In your list of results, identify three to five sources to review more closely. If the full text is available online, set aside time to open, save, and read it. If not, use the "Find It" tool to see if the source is available through your college's library. Visit the library to locate any sources you need that are only available in print. If the source is not available directly through your school's library, then use the library's online tool to request an interlibrary loan of the source: librarians will send the source in digital form to your email address for you to open and save, or they will send it in print form to your campus library for you to check out.

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6.2.6: Evaluating and Processing Your Sources

Determining Whether a Source Is Relevant

At this point in your research process, you may have identified dozens of potential sources. It is easy for writers to get so caught up in checking out books and printing out articles that they forget to ask themselves how they will use these resources in their research. Now is a good time to get a little ruthless. Reading and taking notes takes time and energy, so you will want to focus on the most relevant sources.

You may benefit from seeking out sources that are current, or up to date. Depending on your topic, sources may become outdated relatively soon after publication, or they may remain useful for years. For instance, online social networking sites have evolved rapidly over the past few years. An article published in 2002 about this topic will not provide current information. On the other hand, a research paper on elementary education practices might refer to studies published decades ago by influential child psychologists. When using websites for research, look on the webpage to see when the site was last updated. Many non-functioning links are a sign that a website is not regularly updated. Do not be afraid to ask your instructor, tutors, and librarians for suggestions if you find that many of your most relevant sources are not especially reliable, or that your most reliable sources are not relevant.

To weed through your collection of books and articles, skim their contents. Read quickly with your research questions and subtopics in mind. The following tips explain how to skim to get a quick sense of what topics are covered. If a book or article is not especially relevant, put it aside. You can always come back to it later if you need to.

Tips for Skimming Books

1. Read the book cover and table of contents for a broad overview of the topics covered.
2. Use the index to locate more specific topics and see how thoroughly they are covered.
3. Flip through the book and look for subtitles or key terms that correspond to your research.

Tips for Skimming Articles

1. Journal articles often begin with an abstract or summary of the contents. Read it to determine the article's relevance to your research.
2. Skim the introduction and conclusion for summary material.
3. Skim through subheadings and text features such as sidebars.
4. Look for keywords related to your topic.

Determining Whether a Source Is Reliable

All information sources are not created equal. Sources can vary greatly in terms of how carefully they are researched, written, edited, and reviewed for accuracy. Common sense will help you identify obviously questionable sources, such as tabloids that feature tales of alien abductions, or personal websites with glaring typos. Sometimes, however, a source's reliability—or lack of it—is not so obvious. To evaluate your research sources, you will use critical thinking skills consciously and deliberately.

Sources you encounter will be written for distinct purposes and with particular audiences in mind, which may account for differences such as the following:

- How thoroughly writers cover a given topic
- How carefully writers research and document facts
- How editors review the work
- What biases or agendas affect the content

A journal article written for an academic audience for the purpose of expanding scholarship in a given field will take an approach quite different from a magazine feature written to inform a general audience. Textbooks, hard news articles, and websites approach a subject from different angles as well. To some extent, the type of source provides clues about its overall depth and reliability. Use the following descriptions of types of sources to help you determine the quality of your sources.

- **High Quality Sources** provide the most in-depth information. They are written and reviewed by subject-matter experts. Examples: books published by University presses and articles in scholarly journals, such as *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature*; trade books and magazines geared toward an educated general audience, such as *Smithsonian Magazine*; government documents; documents by reputable organizations, such as universities and research institutes.
- **Varied Quality Sources** are often useful; however, they do not cover subjects in as much depth as high-quality sources, and they are not always rigorously researched and reviewed. Some, such as popular magazine articles or company brochures, may be written to market a product or a cause. Textbooks and reference books are usually reliable, but they may not cover a topic in great depth. Use them with caution. Examples: news stories and feature articles (print or online) from reputable newspapers, magazines, or organizations, such as *The New York Times* or the *Public Broadcasting Service*; popular magazine articles, which may or may not be carefully researched and fact checked; documents by businesses and nonprofit organizations.
- **Questionable Sources** are often written primarily to attract a large readership or to present the author's opinions, and they are not subject to careful review. Generally, avoid using these as final sources. If you want to use a source that fits into this category, then carefully evaluate it using criteria below. Examples: loosely regulated or unregulated media content, such as Internet discussion boards, blogs, free online encyclopedias, talk shows, television news shows with obvious political biases, personal websites, and chat rooms.

Even when you are using a type of source that is generally reliable, you will still need to evaluate the author's credibility and the publication itself on an individual basis. To examine the author's credibility—that is, how much you can believe of what the author has to say—examine his or her credentials. What career experience or academic study shows that the author has the expertise to write about this topic? Keep in mind that expertise in one field is no guarantee of expertise in another, unrelated area. For instance, an author may have an advanced degree in physiology, but this credential is not a valid qualification for writing about psychology. Check credentials carefully.

Just as important as the author's credibility is the publication's overall reputability. Reputability refers to a source's standing and reputation as a respectable, reliable source of information. An established and well-known newspaper, such as *The New York Times* or *The Wall Street Journal*, is more reputable than a college newspaper put out by comparatively inexperienced students. A website that is maintained by a well-known, respected organization and regularly updated is more reputable than one created by an unknown author or group.

Whenever you consult a source, always think carefully about the author's or authors' purpose in presenting the information. Few sources present facts completely objectively. In some cases, the source's content and tone are significantly influenced by biases or hidden agendas. Bias refers to favoritism or prejudice toward a particular person or group. For instance, an author may be biased against a certain political party and present information in a way that subtly—or not so subtly—makes that organization look bad. Bias can lead an author to present facts selectively, edit quotations to misrepresent someone's words, and distort information. Hidden agendas are goals that are not immediately obvious but influence how an author presents the facts. For instance, an article about the role of beef in a healthy diet would be questionable if it were written by a representative of the beef industry—or by the president of an animalrights organization. In both cases, the author would likely have a hidden agenda.

As Jorge conducted his research, he read several research studies in which scientists found significant benefits to following a low-carbohydrate diet. He also noticed that many studies were sponsored by a foundation associated with the author of a popular series of low-carbohydrate diet books. Jorge read these studies with a critical eye, knowing that a hidden agenda might be shaping the researchers' conclusions.

In sum, to evaluate a source, you should consider not only how current the source is but also criteria such as the type of source, its intended purpose and audience, the author's (or authors') qualifications, the publication's reputation, any indications of bias or hidden agendas, and the overall professionalism of the source's language, ideas, and design. You should consider these criteria as well as your overall impressions of sources' quality. Read carefully, and notice how well authors present and support their

statements. Stay actively engaged—do not simply accept sources' words as truth.

Writing at Work

The critical thinking skills you use to evaluate research sources as a student are equally valuable when you conduct research on the job. If you follow certain periodicals or websites, you have probably identified publications that consistently provide reliable information. Reading blogs and online discussion groups is a great way to identify new trends and hot topics in a particular field, but these sources should not be your final sources if you're doing substantial research.

Exercise 12

Choose a source you found that you think is relevant but you're unsure if it's reliable. Answer the following questions about the source:

a. Can you establish that the author is credible and the publication is reputable?
b. Does the author support ideas with specific facts and details that are carefully documented? Is the source of the author's information clear? When you use secondary sources, look for sources that are not too removed from primary research.
c. Does the author leave out any information that you would expect to see in a discussion of this topic?
d. Does the source include any factual errors or instances of faulty logic?
e. Do the author's conclusions logically follow from the evidence that is presented? Can you see how the author gets to one point from another?
f. Is the writing clear and free from errors, clichés, and empty buzzwords?
g. Is the tone objective, balanced, and reasonable? Does the source convey any biases? Be on the lookout for extreme, emotionally-charged language.
h. Based on what you know about the author, is he or she likely to have any hidden agendas?
i. Is the source's design professional? Are graphics informative, useful, and easy to understand? If the source is a website, is it well-organized, easy to navigate, and free of clutter like flashing ads and unnecessary sound effects?
j. Is the source contradicted by information you found in other sources? If so, it is possible that your sources are presenting similar information but taking different perspectives, which requires you to think carefully about which sources you find more convincing and why. Be suspicious, however, of any source that presents facts you cannot confirm elsewhere.

Keeping Track of Sources

As you determine which sources you will rely on most, it is important to establish a system for keeping track of your sources and taking notes. There are several ways to go about it, and no one system is necessarily superior. Here's what matters: you keep materials in order; record bibliographical information you will need later; and take detailed, organized notes.

Think ahead to a moment a few weeks from now, when you've written your research paper and are almost ready to submit it for a grade. There is just one task left—writing your list of sources. As you begin typing your list, you realize you need to include the publication information for a book you cited frequently. Unfortunately, you already returned it to the library several days ago. You do not remember the URLs for some of the websites you used or the dates you accessed them—information that also must be included in your bibliography. With a sinking feeling, you realize that finding this information and preparing your bibliography will require hours of work.

This stressful scenario can be avoided. Taking time to organize source information now will ensure that you are not scrambling to find it at the last minute. Throughout your research, record bibliographical information for each source as soon as you begin using it. You may use pen-and-paper methods, such as a notebook or note cards, or maintain an electronic list. (If you prefer the latter option, many office software packages include separate programs for recording bibliographic information.) The following

table shows the specific details you should record for commonly used source types. Use these details to develop a working bibliography—a preliminary list of sources that you will later use to develop the references section of your paper. It will save you time later on to record, from the start, all information you will need about your sources to create a Works Cited page. The following lists what you should record for some common types of sources. Your research may involve other types of sources not listed below. **For more information on formatting citations**, consult the APA website at http://www.apa.org or the APA Guide or MLA Guide on the Purdue University Online Writing Lab website at http://owl.english.purdue.edu.

- **Book**: the author(s), title, subtitle, publisher, city of publication, and year of publication.
- **Work** (e.g., article) in an anthology (i.e., book): the work's author(s), title, and subtitle; the book's title, subtitle, editor(s); any edition and volume numbers of the book; the book's publisher, city of publication, and year of publication; the pages on which the work appears in the book.
- **Periodical**: the author(s), title of the article, title of the publication, date of publication, volume and issue number, and range of page numbers of the article.
- **Online source**: the author(s); the title of the work or web page; the title of the website; the organization that sponsors the website; the database name; the date of publication or date of last update; the date you accessed the source.
- **Interview**: the name of the person interviewed; the method of communication (e.g., in-person, video chat, email, or phone call); the date of the interview.

As you conduct research, you may wish to record additional details, such as a book's call number, the contact information for a person you interviewed, or the URL of an online source. That will make it easier for you to quickly locate the source again. You may also wish to assign each source a code (e.g., a number, letter, symbol, or color) to use when taking notes.

Taking Notes Efficiently

Writers sometimes get caught up in taking extensive notes, so much so that they lose sight of how their sources help them to answer their research questions. The challenge is to stay focused and organized as you gather information from sources. Before you begin taking notes, take a moment to step back and remind yourself of your goal as a researcher: to find information that will help you answer your research questions. That goal will determine what information you record and how you organize it. When you write your paper, you will present your conclusions about the topic supported by research. Therefore, you do not need to write down every detail of your sources; some of the information in relevant sources will be irrelevant to your research questions.

There are several formats you can use to take notes. No technique is necessarily better than the others—it is more important to choose a format you are comfortable using. Choose a note-taking method from among those listed below that works best for you, and use it as you gather sources. Using the techniques discussed in this section will prepare you for the next step in writing your research paper: organizing and synthesizing the information you find.

Use index cards. This traditional format involves writing each note on a separate index card. It takes more time than copying and pasting into an electronic document, which encourages you to be selective in choosing which ideas to record. Recording notes on separate cards makes it easy to later organize your notes according to major topics. Some writers color-code their cards to make them still more organized.

Maintain a research notebook. Instead of using index cards or electronic note cards, you may wish to keep a notebook or electronic folder, allotting a few pages (or one file) for each of your sources. This method makes it easy to create a separate column or section of the document where you add your responses to the information you encounter in your research.

Annotate your sources. This method involves making handwritten notes in the margins of sources that you have printed or photocopied. If using electronic sources, you can make comments within the source document. For example, you might add comment boxes to a PDF version of an article. This method works best for experienced researchers who have already thought a great deal about the topic because it can be difficult to organize your notes later when starting your draft.

Use note-taking software. There are many options for taking and organizing notes electronically. These include word-processing software that you can use offline on a computer. They also include tools like Diigo, Evernote, and Mindomo, available on the Web for free or reduced prices if you will use the tool for educational purposes. Although you may need to set aside time to learn how to use them, digital tools offer you possibilities that handwritten note cards do not, such as searching your notes, copying and pasting your notes into your paper, and saving and sharing your notes online.

Whether you use old-fashioned index cards or organize your notes digitally, you should keep all your notes in one place, and use topic headings to group related details. Doing so will help you identify connections among different sources. It will also help you make connections between your notes and the research questions and subtopics you identified earlier. Throughout the process of taking notes, be scrupulous about making sure you have correctly attributed each idea or piece of information to its source. Always include source information or use a code system (e.g., numbers, letters, symbols, or colors) so you know exactly which claims or evidence came from which sources.

Effective researchers make choices about which types of notes are most appropriate for their purpose. Your notes may fall into three categories:

Summary notes sum up the main ideas in a source in a few sentences or a short paragraph. A summary is considerably shorter than the original text and captures only the major ideas. Use summary notes when you do not need to record specific details but you intend to refer to broad concepts the author discusses.

Paraphrased notes restate a fact or idea from a source using your own words and sentence structure.

Direct quotations use the exact wording used by the original source and enclose the quoted material in quotation marks. It is a good strategy to copy direct quotations when an author expresses an idea in an especially lively or memorable way. However, do not rely exclusively on direct quotations in your note taking.

Summarizing and **paraphrasing** as you take notes is usually a better strategy than copying direct quotations because it forces you to think through the claims and evidence in your source and to understand it well enough to restate it. In short, these methods of note-taking help you to stay engaged with your topic instead of simply copying and pasting text from sources. Using them will help you when you draft your paper.

Paraphrase ideas carefully, and check your paraphrased notes against the original text to make sure you have restated the author's ideas accurately.

Use quotation marks to set off any words for phrases taken directly from the source. With direct quotations, again, make sure your notes accurately reflect the content of the original text: check that quoted material is copied verbatim. If you omit words from a quotation, use ellipses to show the omission, and make sure the omission does not change the author's meaning. If you add your own responses and ideas to your notes, mark them as such so that your own thinking about the topic stands out from ideas you summarized or paraphrased.

Exercise 13

Review your research, then set a timer for ten minutes and freewrite about your topic, using your questions and thesis to guide your writing. Complete this exercise without looking over your notes or sources. Base your writing on the overall impressions and concepts you have absorbed while conducting research. If additional, related questions come to mind, jot them down.

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6.2.7: Applying Your Research

At this point in your project, you are preparing to move from the research phase to the writing phase. You have gathered much of the information you will use, and soon you will be ready to begin writing your draft. This section helps you transition smoothly from one phase to the next.

Beginning writers sometimes attempt to transform a pile of note cards into a formal research paper without any intermediary step. This approach presents problems. The writer's original question and thesis may be buried in a flood of disconnected details taken from researched sources. The first draft may present redundant or contradictory information. Worst of all, the writer's ideas and voice may be lost.

An effective research paper focuses on the writer's ideas—from the question that sparked the research process to how the writer answers that question based on the research findings. Before beginning a draft, or even an outline, good writers pause and reflect. They ask themselves questions such as the following:

- How has my thinking changed based on my research? What have I learned?
- Was my working thesis on target? Do I need to rework my thesis based on what I have learned?
- How does the information in my sources mesh with my research questions and help me answer those questions?
- Have any additional important questions or subtopics come up that I will need to address in my paper?
- How do my sources complement each other? What ideas or facts recur in multiple sources?
- Where do my sources disagree with each other, and why?

In this section, you will reflect on your research and review the source material you have gathered. You will determine what you now think about your topic. You will synthesize, or put together, different pieces of information that help you answer your research questions. Finally, you will determine the organizational structure that works best for your paper and begin planning your outline.

Selecting Useful Details

At this point in the research process, you have gathered evidence, ideas, and information from a wide variety of sources. Now it is time to think about how you will use your source materials as a writer. When you conduct research, you keep an open mind and seek out many promising sources. You take notes on any information that looks like it might help you answer your research questions. Often, new ideas and terms come up in your reading, and these, too, find their way into your notes. You may record claims or examples that catch your attention and seem relevant to your research questions. By now, you have probably amassed an impressively detailed collection of notes. However, you will not use all of your notes in your paper.

Effective writers are selective. They determine which information is most relevant and appropriate for their purpose. They include details that develop or explain their ideas— and they leave out details that do not. The writer, not the notes, is the controlling force. The writer shapes the content of the research paper. While gathering sources, you used strategies to filter out irrelevant and unreliable sources and details. Now you will apply your critical-thinking skills to the details you recorded—analyzing how it is relevant, determining the ways in which it meshes with your ideas and forms patterns.

As Jorge reviewed his research, he realized that some of the information was not especially useful for his purpose. His notes included several statements about the relationship between soft drinks that are high in sugar and childhood obesity—a subtopic that was too far outside of the main focus of the paper. Jorge decided to cut this material.

Do not feel anxious if you still have trouble seeing the big picture. Systematically looking through your notes will help you. Begin by identifying the notes that clearly support your thesis. Mark or group these, either physically or using the cut-and-paste function in your word-processing program. As you identify the crucial details that support your thesis, make sure you analyze them critically. Ask the following questions to focus your thinking:

- **Is this detail from a reliable, high-quality source?** Is it appropriate for me to cite this source in an academic paper? The bulk of the support for your thesis should come from reliable, reputable sources. You've already thought about and made choices in the quality of sources you gathered earlier in the research process. If most of the details that support

your thesis are from less-reliable sources, you may need to do additional research or modify your thesis.
- **Is the link between this information and my thesis obvious—or will I need to explain it to my readers?** Remember, you have spent more time thinking and reading about this topic than your audience. Some connections might be obvious to both you and your readers. More often, however, you will need to provide the analysis or explanation that shows how the information supports your thesis. As you read through your notes, jot down ideas you have for making those connections clear.
- **What personal biases or experiences might affect the way I interpret this information?** No researcher is 100 percent objective. We all have personal opinions and experiences that influence our reactions to what we read and learn. Good researchers are aware of this human tendency. They keep an open mind when they read opinions or facts that contradict their beliefs.

It can be tempting to ignore information that does not support your thesis or that contradicts it outright. However, such information is important. At the very least, it gives you a sense of what has been written about the topic. More importantly, it can help you question and refine your own thinking so that writing your research paper is a true learning process. Remember, your working thesis is not set in stone. You can and should change your working thesis throughout the research writing process if the evidence you find does not support your tentative thesis. Never try to force evidence to fit your argument. For example, suppose your tentative thesis is "Mars cannot support life-forms." Yet, a week into researching your topic, you find an article in *The New York Times* detailing new findings of bacteria under the Martian surface. Instead of trying to argue that bacteria are not life forms, you would do better to alter your thesis to "Mars cannot support complex life-forms." In sum, you should carefully consider how information that challenges your thesis fits into the big picture of your research. You may decide that the source is unreliable or the information is irrelevant, or you may decide that it is an important point you need to bring up. What matters is that you give careful consideration to various perspectives and current research on the topic.

Writing at Work

When you create workplace documents based on research, selectivity remains important. A project team may spend months conducting market surveys to prepare for rolling out a new product, but few managers have time to read the research in its entirety. Most employees want the research distilled into a few well-supported points. Focused, concise writing is highly valued in the workplace.

Finding Connections between Sources

As you find connections between your ideas and information in your sources, also look for commonalities between your sources. Do most sources seem to agree on a particular idea? Are some facts mentioned repeatedly in many different sources? What key terms or major concepts come up in most of your sources regardless of whether the sources agree on the finer points? Identifying these connections will help you identify important ideas to discuss in your paper. Look for subtler ways your sources complement one another, too. Does one author refer to another's book or article? How do sources that are more recent build upon the ideas developed in earlier sources?

Be aware of any redundancies in your sources. If you have amassed solid support from a reputable source, such as a scholarly journal, there is no need to cite the same facts from an online encyclopedia article that is many steps removed from any primary research. If a given source adds nothing new to your discussion and you can cite a stronger source for the same information, use the stronger source.

Determine how you will address any contradictions found among different sources. For instance, if one source cites a startling fact that you cannot confirm anywhere else, it is safe to dismiss the information as unreliable. However, if you find significant disagreements among reliable sources, you will need to review them and evaluate each source. Which source presents a sounder argument or more solid evidence? It is up to you to determine which source is the most credible and why.

Reevaluating Your Working Thesis

A careful analysis of your notes will help you reevaluate your working thesis and determine whether you need to revise it. Remember that your working thesis was the starting point—not necessarily the end point—of your research. You should revise your working thesis if your ideas have changed. Even if your sources generally confirmed your preliminary thinking on the topic, it is still a good idea to tweak the wording of your thesis to incorporate the specific details you learned from research.

Jorge realized that his working thesis oversimplified the issues. He still believed that the media was exaggerating the benefits of low-carb diets. However, his research led him to conclude that these diets did have some advantages. Read Jorge's revised thesis:

> Although following a low-carbohydrate diet can benefit some people, these diets are not necessarily the best option for everyone who wants to lose weight or improve their health.

Exercise 14

Review your research questions and working thesis again. This time, keep them nearby as you review your research notes. Identify information that supports your working thesis. Identify details that call your thesis into question. Determine whether you need to modify your thesis. Use your research questions to identify key ideas in your paper. Begin categorizing your notes according to which topics are addressed. You may find yourself adding important topics or deleting unimportant ones as you proceed. Write out your revised thesis and at least two or three big ideas.

Synthesizing Source Material

By now, your ideas about your topic are taking shape. You have a sense of what major ideas to address in your paper, what points you can easily support, and what questions or subtopics might need a little more thought. In short, you have begun the process of synthesizing source material—that is, of putting the pieces together into a coherent whole.

It is normal to find this part of the process a little difficult. Some questions or concepts may still be unclear to you. You may not yet know how you will tie all of your research together. Synthesizing is a complex, demanding mental task, and even experienced researchers struggle with it at times. A little uncertainty is often a good sign. It means you are challenging yourself to work thoughtfully with your topic instead of simply restating the same information.

You have already considered how your notes fit with your working thesis. Now, take your synthesis a step further. Analyze how your notes relate to your major research question and the subquestions you identified at the start of the research process. Organize your notes with headings that correspond to those questions. As you proceed, you might identify some important subtopics that were not part of your original plan, or you might decide that some questions are not relevant to your paper.

Categorize information carefully, and continue to think critically about the material. Ask yourself whether the connections between ideas are clear. Remember, your ideas and conclusions will shape the paper. They are the glue that holds the rest of the content together. As you work, begin jotting down the big ideas you will use to connect the dots for your reader. (If you are not sure where to begin, try answering your major research question and subquestions. Add and answer new questions as appropriate.) You might record these big ideas on paper sticky notes or type them into a word-processing document or other digital format.

Jorge looked back on the list of research questions that he had written down earlier. He changed a few to match his new thesis, and he began the following rough outline for his paper:

Topic: Low-carbohydrate diets

Main question: Are low-carbohydrate diets as effective as they have been portrayed to be by media sources?

Thesis: Although following a low-carbohydrate diet can benefit some people, these diets are not necessarily the best option for everyone who wants to lose weight or improve their health.

Main points:

How do low-carb diets work? Low-carb diets cause weight loss by lowering insulin levels, causing the body to burn stored fat.

When did low-carbohydrate diets become a 'hot' topic in the media? The Atlkins diet was created by Richard Atkins in 1972, but it didn't gain wide-scale attention until 2003. The South Beach diet and other low-carb diets became popular around the same time, and led to a lowcarb craze in America from 2003 to 2004.

What are the supposed advantages to following a low-carbohydrate diet? They are said to help you lose weight faster than other diets and allow people to continue eat protein and fats while dieting.

What are some of the negative effects of a low-carb diet? Eating foods higher in saturated fats can increase your cholesterol levels and lead to heart disease. Incomplete fat breakdown can lead to a condition called ketosis, which puts a strain on the liver and can be fatal.

Planning How to Organize Your Paper

You may be wondering how your ideas are supposed to shape the paper, especially since you are writing a research paper based on your research. Integrating your ideas and your information from research is a complex process, and sometimes it can be difficult to separate the two. Some paragraphs in your paper will consist mostly of details from your research. That is fine, as long as you explain what those details mean or how they are linked. You should also include sentences and transitions that show the relationship between different claims and evidence from your research by grouping related ideas or pointing out connections or contrasts. The result is that you are not simply presenting information; you are synthesizing, analyzing, and interpreting it.

The final step to complete before beginning your draft is to choose an organizational structure. For some assignments, this may be determined by the instructor's requirements. For instance, if you are asked to explore the impact of a new communications device, a cause-and-effect structure is obviously appropriate. In other cases, you will need to determine the structure based on what suits your topic and purpose. For more information about the structures used in writing, see the chapter on Rhetorical Modes of Writing.

The purpose of Jorge's paper was primarily to persuade. With that in mind, he planned the following outline.

I. Introduction
   A. Background
   B. Thesis
II. Purported Benefits of Low-Carbohydrate Diets
   A. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) nutrition guidelines
   B. Potential flaws in USDA nutrition guidelines
      1. Effects of carbohydrates on blood sugar, insulin
      2. Relationship to metabolism and obesity
III. Research on Low-Carbohydrate Diets and Weight Loss
   A. Short-term effectiveness for weight-loss
   B. Long-term effectiveness not established
IV. Other Long-Term Health Outcomes
   A. Cholesterol and heart disease
   B. Blood pressure
   C. Diabetes
V. Conclusion

Writing at Work

The structures described in this section and in the chapter on Rhetorical Modes can also help you organize information in different types of workplace documents. For instance, medical incident reports and police reports follow a chronological structure. If the company must choose between two vendors to provide a service, you might write an email to your supervisor comparing and contrasting the choices. Understanding when and how to use each organizational structure can help you write workplace documents efficiently and effectively.

Exercise 15

Review the organizational structures discussed in Rhetorical Modes. Working with the notes you organized earlier, follow these steps to begin planning how to organize your paper. Create an outline that includes your thesis, major subtopics, and supporting points. The major headings in your outline will become sections or paragraphs in your paper. Remember that your ideas should form the backbone of the paper. For each major section of your outline, write out a topic sentence stating the main point you will make in that section. You may find that some points are too complex to explain in a sentence. Consider whether any major sections of your outline need to be broken up, and jot down additional topic sentences as needed. Review your notes and determine how the different pieces of information fit into your outline as supporting points.

Exercise 16

Collaborative exercise: Exchange outlines of your research papers with a classmate. Examine your classmate's outline to see if any questions come to mind and if you see any levels that would benefit from additional support, elaboration, or clarification. Return outlines to each other and compare observations.

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6.2.8: Writing Your Draft

At last, you are ready to begin writing the rough draft of your research paper. Putting your thinking and research into words is exciting. It can also be challenging. In this section, you will learn strategies for drafting your research paper, such as integrating material from your sources, citing information correctly, and avoiding misuse of your sources.

The Structure of a Research Paper

Research papers generally follow the same basic structure: an introduction that presents the writer's thesis; a body section that develops the thesis with supporting points and evidence; and a conclusion that revisits the thesis and provides additional insights or suggestions for further research.

Your writing voice will come across most strongly in your **introduction** and **conclusion** as you work to attract your readers' interest and establish your thesis. These sections usually do not cite sources at length. They focus on the big picture, not specific details. In contrast, the body of your paper will cite sources extensively. As you present your ideas, you will support your points with details from your research.

Writing Your Introduction

There are several approaches to writing an introduction, each of which fulfills the same goals. The introduction should get readers' attention, provide background information, and present the writer's thesis. Many writers like to begin with one of the following catchy openers:

- A surprising fact
- A thought-provoking question
- An attention-getting quote
- A brief anecdote that illustrates a larger concept
- A connection between your topic and your readers' experiences

The next few sentences place the opening in context by presenting background information. From there, the writer builds toward a thesis, which is traditionally placed at the end of the introduction. Think of your thesis as a signpost that lets readers know in what direction the paper is headed.

Jorge decided to begin his research paper by connecting his topic to readers' daily experiences. Read the **first draft of his introduction**. The thesis is in bold. Note how Jorge progresses from the opening sentences, to background information, to his thesis.

Introduction Draft

Beyond the Hype: Evaluating Low-Carb Diets

> Over the past decade, increasing numbers of Americans have jumped on the low-carb bandwagon. Some studies, such as those conducted by Lisa Sanders and David L. Katz and by Julie Hirsch, estimate that approximately forty million Americans, or about twenty percent of the population, are attempting to restrict their intake of food high in carbohydrates. Proponents of low-carb diets say they are not only the most effective way to lose weight, but they also yield health benefits such as lower blood pressure and improved cholesterol levels. Meanwhile, some doctors claim

that low-carb diets are overrated and caution that their long-term effects are unknown. **Although following a low-carbohydrate diet can benefit some people, these diets are not necessarily the best option for everyone who wants to lose weight or improve their health.**

Writers often work out of sequence when writing a research paper. If you find yourself struggling to write an engaging introduction, you may wish to write the body of your paper first. Writing the body sections first will help you clarify your main points. Writing the introduction should then be easier. You may have a better sense of how to introduce the paper after you have drafted some or all of the body.

Exercise 17

Draft the introductory paragraph of your research paper. Use one of the common techniques for writing an engaging introduction. Be sure to include background information about the topic that leads to your thesis.

Writing Your Conclusion

In your introduction, you tell readers where they are headed. In your conclusion, you recap where they have been. For this reason, some writers prefer to write their conclusions soon after they have written their introduction. However, this method may not work for all writers. Other writers prefer to write their conclusion at the end of the paper, after writing the body paragraphs. No process is absolutely right or absolutely wrong; find the one that best suits you.

No matter when you compose the conclusion, it should revisit your thesis and sum up your main ideas. The conclusion should not simply echo the introduction or rely on bland summary statements, such as “In this paper, I have demonstrated that….” In fact, avoid repeating your thesis verbatim from the introduction. Restate it in different words that reflect the new perspective gained through your research. That helps keep your ideas fresh for your readers. An effective writer might conclude a paper by asking a new question the research inspired, revisiting an anecdote presented earlier, or reminding readers of how the topic relates to their lives.

Using Primary and Secondary Research

As you write your draft, be mindful of how you are using primary and secondary source material to support your points. Recall that primary sources present firsthand information. Secondary sources are one step removed from primary sources. They present analyses or interpretations of primary sources. How you balance primary and secondary source material in your paper will depend on the topic and assignment.

Some types of research papers must use primary sources extensively to achieve their purpose. Any paper that analyzes a primary text or presents the writer’s own experimental research falls in this category. Here are a few examples:

- A paper for a **literature** course analyzing several poems by Emily Dickinson
- A paper for a **political science** course comparing televised speeches delivered by two presidential candidates
- A paper for a **communications** course discussing gender biases in television commercials
- A paper for a **business administration** course that discusses the results of a survey the writer conducted with local businesses to gather information about their work-from-home and flextime policies
- A paper for an **elementary education** course that discusses the results of an experiment the writer conducted to compare the effectiveness of two different methods of mathematics instruction

For these types of papers, primary research is the main focus. If you are writing about a work (including non-print works, such as a movie or a painting), it is crucial to gather information and ideas from the original work, rather than relying solely on others’ interpretations. And, of course, if you take the time to design and conduct your own field research, such as a survey, a series of interviews, or an experiment, you will want to discuss it in detail. Interviews may provide interesting responses that you want to share with your readers.

Even if your paper is largely based on primary sources, you may use secondary sources to develop your ideas. For instance, an

analysis of Alfred Hitchcock's films would focus on the films themselves as primary sources, but it might also cite commentary and interpretations by critics. A paper that presents an original experiment would include some discussion of similar prior research in the field.

For some assignments, it makes sense to rely more on secondary sources than primary sources. If you are not analyzing a text or conducting your own field research, then you will need to use secondary sources extensively. As much as possible, use secondary sources that are closely linked to primary research, such as a journal article that presents the results of the authors' scientific study or a book that cites interviews and case studies. These sources are more reliable and add more value to your paper than sources that are further removed from primary research. For instance, a popular magazine article on junk-food addiction might be several steps removed from the original scientific study on which it is loosely based. As a result, the article may distort, sensationalize, or misinterpret the scientists' findings.

Jorge knew he did not have the time, resources, or experience needed to conduct original experimental research for his paper. Because he was relying on secondary sources to support his ideas, he made a point of citing sources that were not far removed from primary research.

Incorporating Source Material into Your Body Paragraphs

One of the challenges of writing a research paper is successfully integrating your ideas with material from your sources. Your paper must explain what you think, or it will read like a disconnected string of facts and quotations. However, you also need to support your ideas with research, or they will seem insubstantial. How do you strike the right balance?

You have already taken a step in the right direction if you have drafted your introduction and conclusion. The introduction and conclusion function like the frame around a picture. They define and limit your topic and place your research in context. However, you may choose to wait to write your introduction and conclusion until after writing your body paragraphs. Either way, as you draft your body paragraphs, you must express your critical thinking about the ideas and information that you incorporate from your sources. You must offer claims of your own that either challenge or extend points from your sources.

In the body paragraphs of your paper, you will need to integrate ideas carefully at the paragraph level and at the sentence level. Use topic sentences and concluding sentences of body paragraphs to make sure readers understand the significance of any facts, details, or points you cite. In particular, you must continually explain how source material relates to your thesis. Indicate your interpretation of, and attitude toward, source material within and between sentences in which you summarize, paraphrase, or quote material from your sources. You will also include sentences that transition between ideas from your research, either within a paragraph or from one paragraph to the next. At the sentence level, you will need to think carefully about how you introduce your summarized, paraphrased, and quoted material.

You have already learned about summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting sources when taking notes. Here, you will learn how to use these techniques in the body of your paper to weave in source material to develop your ideas.

Introducing Cited Material Effectively

Including a signal phrase in your text, such as "Jackson wrote" or "Copeland found," often helps you integrate source material smoothly. This citation technique also helps convey that you are actively engaged with your source material. Unfortunately, during the process of writing your research paper, it is easy to fall into a rut and use the same few dull verbs repeatedly, such as "Jones said," "Smith stated," and so on. Punch up your writing by using strong verbs that help your reader understand how the source material presents ideas. There is a world of difference between an author who "suggests" and one who "claims," one who "questions" and one who "criticizes." You do not need to consult your thesaurus every time you cite a source, but do think about which verbs will accurately represent the ideas and make your writing more engaging.

The following list includes some possibilities:

- argue

- ask
- assert
- assess
- believe
- claim
- compare
- conclude
- contrast
- determine
- evaluate
- explain
- find
- hypothesize
- insist
- measure
- point out
- propose
- question
- recommend
- study
- suggest
- sum up
- warn

Summarizing Sources

When you summarize material from a source, you zero in on the main points and restate them concisely in your own words. This technique is appropriate when only the major ideas are relevant to your paper or when you need to simplify complex information into a few key points for your readers. Be sure to review the source material as you summarize it. Identify the main idea and restate it as concisely as you can— preferably in one sentence. Depending on your purpose, you may also add another sentence or two condensing any important details or examples. Check your summary to make sure it is accurate and complete.

In his draft, Jorge summarized research materials that presented scientists' findings about low-carbohydrate diets. Read the following passage from a trade magazine article and Jorge's summary of the article.

Assessing the Efficacy of Low-Carbohydrate Diets (from Adrienne Howell, Ph.D.)

Over the past few years, a number of clinical studies have explored whether high-protein, low-carbohydrate diets are more effective for weight loss than other frequently recommended diet plans, such as diets that drastically curtail fat intake (Pritikin) or that emphasize consuming lean meats, grains, vegetables, and a moderate amount of unsaturated fats (the Mediterranean diet). A 2009 study found that obese teenagers who followed a low-carbohydrate diet lost an average of 15.6 kilograms over a six-month period, whereas teenagers following a low-fat diet or a Mediterranean diet lost an average of 11.1 kilograms and 9.3 kilograms respectively. Two 2010 studies that measured weight loss for obese adults following these same three diet plans found similar results. Over three months, subjects on the low-carbohydrate diet plan lost anywhere from four to six kilograms more than subjects who followed other diet plans.

Sample Summary

> Adrienne Howell points out that in three recent studies, researchers compared outcomes for obese subjects who followed either a low-carbohydrate diet, a low-fat diet, or a Mediterranean diet and found that subjects following a low-carbohydrate diet lost more weight in the same time.

A summary restates ideas in your own words—but for specialized or clinical terms, you may need to use terms that appear in the

original source. For instance, Jorge used the term obese in his summary because related words such as heavy or overweight have a different clinical meaning.

Paraphrasing Sources

When you paraphrase material from a source, restate the information from an entire sentence or passage in your own words, using your own original sentence structure. A paraphrased source differs from a summarized source in that you focus on restating the ideas, not condensing them. Again, it is important to check your paraphrase against the source material to make sure it is both accurate and original. Inexperienced writers sometimes use the thesaurus method of paraphrasing—that is, they simply rewrite the source material, replacing most of the words with synonyms. This constitutes a misuse of sources. A true paraphrase restates ideas using the writer's own language and style.

In his draft, Jorge frequently paraphrased details from sources. At times, he needed to rewrite a sentence more than once to ensure he was paraphrasing ideas correctly. Read the following passage from a website. Then read Jorge's initial attempt at paraphrasing it, followed by the final version of his paraphrase.

Original Source (from Tracy Niethercott) Some insulin users in particular find that their blood glucose is far easier to control when they limit the carbs in their diet.

Initial Paraphrase

> According to one source, some people find they can control their blood glucose when they limit the carbs they eat (Neithercott).

After reviewing the paraphrased sentence, Jorge realized he was following the original source too closely. He did not want to quote the full passage verbatim, so he again attempted to restate the idea in his own style.

Revised Paraphrase

> Some people with diabetes are better able to control their blood sugar when they reduce their carb intake (Neithercott).

Quoting Sources Directly

Most of the time, you will summarize or paraphrase source material instead of quoting directly. Doing so shows that you understand your research well enough to write about it confidently in your own words. However, direct quotes can be powerful when used sparingly and with purpose.

Quoting directly can sometimes help you make a point in a colorful way. If an author's words are especially vivid, memorable, or well phrased, quoting them may help hold your reader's interest. Direct quotations from an interviewee or an eyewitness may help you personalize an issue for readers. And when you analyze primary sources, such as a historical speech or a work of literature, quoting extensively is often necessary to illustrate your points. These are valid reasons to use quotations.

Less experienced writers, however, sometimes overuse direct quotations in a research paper because it seems easier than paraphrasing. At best, this reduces the effectiveness of the quotations. At worst, it results in a paper that seems haphazardly pasted together from outside sources. Use quotations sparingly for greater impact. When you do choose to quote directly from a source, follow these guidelines:

- Make sure you have transcribed the original statement accurately.
- Represent the author's ideas honestly. Quote enough of the original text to reflect the author's point accurately.
- Never use a stand-alone, or "dropped in," quotation. Always integrate the quoted material into your own sentence.
- Use ellipses (...) if you need to omit a word or phrase. Use brackets [ ] if you need to replace a word or phrase or add any explanation or clarification of the original.
- Make sure any omissions or changed words do not alter the meaning of the original text. Omit or replace words only

when absolutely necessary to shorten the text or to make it grammatically correct within your sentence.
- Remember to include correctly formatted citations that follow the assigned style guide.

Jorge wanted to use the following information from an article on the American Heart Association's website.

Original Source (from the American Heart Association)

> A high carbohydrate diet that includes fruits, vegetables, nonfat dairy products and whole grains also has been shown to reduce blood pressure.

Because this particular sentence would be difficult to paraphrase properly, Jorge decided to quote it instead.

Quotation from the Source

> According to the American Heart Association, "A high carbohydrate diet that includes fruits, vegetables, nonfat dairy products and whole grains also has been shown to reduce blood pressure."

Notice how Jorge smoothly integrated the quoted material by starting the sentence with an introductory, or "**signal**," phrase.

Writing at Work

It is important to accurately represent a colleague's ideas or communications in the workplace. When writing professional or academic papers, be mindful of how the words you use to describe someone's tone or ideas carry certain connotations. Do not say a source argues a particular point unless an argument is, in fact, presented. Use lively language, but avoid language that is emotionally charged. Doing so will ensure you have represented your colleague's words in an authentic and accurate way.

Exercise 18

Write a one-sentence summary of a useful passage in one of your sources.

Exercise 19

To practice paraphrasing, choose an important idea or detail from your notes. Without looking at the original source, restate the idea in your own words. Check your paraphrase against the original text in the source. Make sure both your language and your sentence structure are original. Revise your paraphrase if necessary.

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6.2.9: Revising Your Draft (Part 1)

Given all the time and effort you have put into your research paper, you will want to make sure that your final draft represents your best work. This requires taking the time to revise and edit your paper carefully. You may feel that you need a break from your paper before you revise and edit it. That is understandable—but leave yourself with enough time to complete this important stage of the writing process. In this section, you will learn the following specific strategies that are useful for revising and editing a research paper:

- How to evaluate and improve the overall organization and cohesion
- How to maintain an appropriate style and tone
- How to use checklists to identify and correct any errors in language, citations, and formatting

Revising Your Paper's Organization and Cohesion

When writing a research paper, it is easy to become overly focused on editorial details, such as the proper format for bibliographic entries. These details do matter. However, before you begin to address them, it is important to spend time reviewing and revising the content of the paper. A good research paper is both organized and cohesive. Organization means that your argument flows logically from one point to the next. Cohesion means that the elements of your paper work together smoothly and naturally. In a cohesive research paper, information from research is seamlessly integrated with the writer's ideas.

When you revise to improve organization, you look at the flow of ideas throughout the essay as a whole and within individual paragraphs. You check to see that your essay moves logically from the introduction to the body paragraphs to the conclusion, and that each section reinforces your thesis. Writers choose transitions carefully to show the relationships between ideas—for instance, to make a comparison or elaborate on a point with examples. Make sure your transitions suit your purpose, and avoid overusing the same ones. You can reference the Table of Common Transitional Words and Phrases to help find a variety of transition words.

Jorge reread his draft paragraph by paragraph. As he read, he highlighted the main idea of each paragraph so he could see whether his ideas proceeded in a logical order. For the most part, the flow of ideas was clear. However, he did notice that one paragraph did not have a clear main idea. It interrupted the flow of the writing. During revision, Jorge added a topic sentence that clearly connected the paragraph to the one that had preceded it. He also added transitions to improve the flow of ideas from sentence to sentence. Read the following paragraphs: the first example is Jorge's first draft without any changes, and the second paragraph shows his revisions underlined.

First Draft:

> Picture this: you're standing in the aisle of your local grocery store when you see a chubby guy nearby staring at several brands of ketchup on display. After deliberating for a moment, he reaches for the bottle with the words "Low Carb!" displayed prominently on the label. (You can't help but notice that the low carb ketchup is higher priced.) Is he making a smart choice that will help him lose weight and enjoy better health—or is he just buying into the latest diet fad? Some researchers estimate that approximately forty million Americans, or about one fifth of the population, have attempted to restrict their intake of foods high in carbohydrates (Sanders and Katz; Hirsch). Proponents of low carb diets say they are the most effective way to lose weight. They yield health benefits such as lower blood pressure and improved cholesterol levels. Some doctors claim that low carbohydrate diets are overrated and caution that their long term effects are unknown. Although following a low carbohydrate diet can have many benefits—especially for people who are obese or diabetic—these diets are not necessarily the best option for everyone who wants to lose weight or improve their health.

Revised Paragraph:

> Picture this: you're standing in the aisle of your local grocery store when you see a chubby guy nearby staring at several brands of ketchup on display. After deliberating for a moment, he reaches for the bottle with the words "Low Carb!" displayed prominently on the label. (You can't help but notice that the low carb ketchup is higher priced.) Is he making a smart choice that will help him lose weight and enjoy better health—or is he just buying into the latest diet fad? Proponents of low carb diets say they are not only the most effective way to lose weight but also yield health benefits such as lower blood pressure and improved cholesterol levels. Meanwhile, some doctors claim that low carbohydrate diets are overrated and caution that their long term effects are unknown. Although following a low carbohydrate diet can have many benefits—especially for people who are obese or diabetic—these diets are not necessarily the best option for everyone who wants to lose weight or improve their health.

When you revise to improve cohesion, you analyze how the parts of your paper work together. You look for anything that seems awkward or out of place. Revision may involve deleting unnecessary material or rewriting parts of the paper so that the out-of-place material fits in smoothly. In a research paper, problems with cohesion usually occur when a writer has trouble integrating source material. If facts or quotations have been awkwardly dropped into a paragraph, they distract or confuse the reader instead of working to support the writer's point. Overusing paraphrased and quoted material has the same effect.

As Jorge reread his draft, he looked to see how the different pieces fit together to prove his thesis. He realized that he had too much information on the popularity of low-carb diets and the debate over their effect on weight loss, when his focus only emphasized the various health risks of low-carb diets, so he had to eliminate some material. He also realized that some of his supporting information needed to be integrated more carefully. Read the following paragraph, first without Jorge's revisions and then with them.

Initial Paragraph:

> One likely reason for these lackluster long-term results is that a low carbohydrate diet— like any restrictive diet—is difficult to adhere to for any extended period. Most people enjoy foods that are high in carbohydrates, and no one wants to be the person who always turns down that slice of pizza or birthday cake. In commenting on the Gardner study, experts at the Harvard School of Public Health noted that women in all four diet groups had difficulty following the plan. They further comment that because it is hard for dieters to stick to a low-carbohydrate eating plan, the initial success of these diets is short lived. Medical professionals caution that low carbohydrate diets are difficult for many people to follow consistently and that, to maintain a healthy weight, dieters should try to develop nutrition and exercise habits they can incorporate in their lives in the long term (Mayo Foundation). "For some people, [low carbohydrate diets] are great, but for most, any sensible eating and exercise plan would work just as well" (Kwon 78).

Revised Paragraph:

> One likely reason for these lackluster long-term results is that a low carbohydrate diet— like any restrictive diet—is difficult to adhere to for any extended period. In commenting on the Gardner study, experts at the Harvard School of Public Health noted that women in all four diet groups had difficulty following the plan. They further comment that because it is hard for dieters to stick to a low-carbohydrate eating plan, the initial success of these diets is short lived. Medical professionals caution that low carbohydrate diets are difficult for many people to follow consistently and that, to maintain a healthy weight, dieters should try to develop nutrition and exercise habits they can incorporate in their lives in the long term (Mayo Foundation).

Jorge decided that his comment about pizza and birthday cake came across as subjective and was not necessary to make his point, so he deleted it. He also realized that not only was the quotation at the end of the paragraph "dropped in," but also it was awkward and ineffective. How would his readers know who Kwon was or why her opinion should be taken seriously? Adding a signal phrase helped Jorge integrate this quotation smoothly and establish the credibility of his source.

Writing at Work

Understanding cohesion can also benefit you in the workplace, especially when you have to write and deliver a presentation. Speakers sometimes rely on cute graphics or funny quotations to hold their audience's attention. If you choose to use these elements, make sure they work well with the substantive content of your presentation. For example, if you are asked to give a financial presentation and the financial report shows that the company lost money, then funny illustrations would not be relevant or appropriate for the presentation.

Exercise 21

Read your paper paragraph by paragraph. Highlight your thesis and the topic sentence of each paragraph. Using the thesis and topic sentences as starting points, outline the ideas you presented—just as you would do if you were outlining a chapter in a textbook. Do not look at the outline you created during prewriting. You may write in the margins of your draft or create a formal outline on a separate sheet of paper. Next, reread your paper more slowly, looking for how ideas flow from sentence to sentence. Identify places where adding a transition or recasting a sentence would make the ideas flow more logically. Review the topics on your outline. Is there a logical flow of ideas? Identify any places where you may need to reorganize ideas.

Exercise 22: Collaborative Exercise

Exchange papers with a classmate. Apply the steps in Exercise 21 to your peer's draft. Share and discuss your observations about the draft's organization and clarity with your peer.

Exercise 23

Read the body paragraphs of your paper first. Each time you come to a place that cites information from sources, ask yourself what purpose this information serves. Check that it helps support a point and that it is clearly related to the other sentences in the paragraph. Identify unnecessary information from sources that you can delete. Identify places where you need to revise your writing so that readers understand the significance of the details cited from sources. Skim the body paragraphs once more, looking for any paragraphs that seem packed with citations. Review these paragraphs carefully for cohesion. Review your introduction and conclusion. Make sure the information presented works with ideas in the body of the paper.

Exercise 24: Collaborative Exercise

Exchange papers with a classmate. Identify places your peer needs to revise so that readers understand the significance of the details cited from sources. Share and discuss your observations about the draft's incorporation of source material with your peer.

Revising to Improve Style and Tone

Once you are certain that the content of your paper fulfills your purpose, you can begin revising to improve style and tone. Together, your style and tone create the voice of your paper, or how you come across to readers. Style refers to the way you use language as a writer—the sentence structures you use and the word choices you make. Tone is the attitude toward your subject and audience that you convey through your word choice.

Although accepted writing styles will vary within different disciplines, the underlying goal is the same—to come across to your readers as a knowledgeable, authoritative guide. Writing about research is like being a tour guide who walks readers through a topic. A stuffy, overly formal tour guide can make readers feel put off or intimidated. Too much informality or humor can make readers wonder whether the tour guide really knows what he or she is talking about. Extreme or emotionally charged language comes across as unbalanced.

To help prevent being overly formal or informal, determine an appropriate style and tone at the beginning of the research process. Consider your topic and audience because these can help dictate style and tone. For example, a paper on new breakthroughs in cancer research should be more formal than a paper on ways to get a good night's sleep. A strong research paper comes across as straightforward, appropriately academic, and serious.

Using plural nouns and pronouns or recasting a sentence can help you keep your language gender neutral while avoiding awkwardness. For example, the following sentence is gender-biased: "When a writer cites a source in the body of his paper, he must list it on his references page." The following is less gender biased but awkward: "When a writer cites a source in the body of his or her paper, he or she must list it on his or her references page." Making the subject third-person plural avoids bias and awkwardness: "Writers must list any sources cited in the body of a paper on the references page."

As you revise your paper, make sure your style is consistent throughout. Look for instances where a word, phrase, or sentence just does not seem to fit with the rest of the writing. It is best to reread for style after you have completed the other revisions so you are not distracted by any larger content issues. Revising strategies to use include the following:

- **Read your paper aloud**. Sometimes your ears catch inconsistencies that your eyes miss.
- **Share your paper** with another reader whom you trust to give you honest feedback. It is often difficult to evaluate one's own style objectively—especially in the final phase of a challenging writing project. Another reader may be more likely to notice instances of wordiness, confusing language, or other issues that affect style and tone.
- **Line edit** your paper slowly, sentence by sentence. You may even wish to use a sheet of paper to cover everything on the page except the paragraph you are editing—that forces you to read slowly and carefully. Mark any areas where you notice problems in style or tone, and then take time to rework those sections.

On reviewing his paper, Jorge found that he had generally used an appropriate academic style and tone. However, he noticed one glaring exception—his first paragraph. He realized there were places where his overly informal writing could come across as unserious or, worse, disparaging. Revising his word choice and omitting a humorous aside helped Jorge maintain a consistent tone. Read his revision below.

Initial Opening Paragraph:

> Picture this: you're standing in the aisle of your local grocery store when you see a chubby guy nearby staring at several brands of ketchup on display. After deliberating for a moment, he reaches for the bottle with the words "Low-Carb!" displayed prominently on the label. (You can't help but notice that the low-carb ketchup is higher priced.) Is he making a smart choice that will help him lose weight and enjoy better health—or is he just buying into the latest diet fad?

Revised Opening Paragraph:

> Picture this: standing in the aisle of your local grocery store, you see an overweight man nearby staring at several brands of ketchup on display. After deliberating for a moment, he reaches for the bottle with the words "Low-Carb!" displayed prominently on the label. Is he making a smart choice that will help him lose weight and enjoy better health—or is he just buying into the latest diet fad?

Editing Your Paper

After revising your paper to address problems in content or style, you will complete one final editorial review. Perhaps you have already caught and corrected minor mistakes during previous revisions. Nevertheless, give your draft a final edit to make sure it is error-free. Given how much work you have put into your research paper, you will want to check for any errors that could distract or confuse your readers. Using the spell-checking feature in your word-processing program can be helpful, but this should not replace a full, careful review of your document. Be sure to check for any errors that may have come up frequently for you in the past. Your final edit should focus on two broad areas:

- Errors in citing and formatting sources
- Errors in grammar, mechanics, usage, and spelling

For in-depth information on these topics, see the chapter on Grammar, the Purdue University's Online Writing Lab, or a print writing manual, such as *The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*.

During the process of revising and editing, Jorge made changes in the content and style of his paper. He also gave the paper a final review to check for overall correctness and, particularly, correct style for his citations and formatting. Read the final draft of his paper.

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6.2.10: Revising Your Draft (Part 2)

Sample Research Paper

Jorge Ramirez

Professor Thompson

English 1101

1 May 2014

Beyond the Hype: Evaluating Low-Carb Diets

Picture this: standing in the aisle of your local grocery store, you see an overweight man nearby staring at several brands of ketchup on display. After deliberating for a moment, he reaches for the bottle with the words “Low-Carb!” displayed prominently on the label. Is he making a smart choice that will help him lose weight and enjoy better health—or is he just buying into the latest diet fad? Over the past decade, increasing numbers of Americans have jumped on the low-carb bandwagon. Regardless of whether or not low-carb diets are most effective for weight loss, their potential benefits for weight loss must be weighed against other long-term health outcomes such as hypertension, the risk of heart disease, and cholesterol levels. Research findings in these areas are mixed. For this reason, people considering following a low-carbohydrate diet to lose weight should be advised of the potential risks in doing so.

Research on how low-carbohydrate diets affect cholesterol levels is inconclusive. Some researchers have found that low-carbohydrate diets raise levels of HDL, or “good” cholesterol (Ebbeling et al. 2093). Unfortunately, they may also raise levels of LDL, or “bad” cholesterol, which is associated with heart disease (Ebbeling et al. 2094). A particular concern is that as dieters on a low-carbohydrate plan increase their intake of meats and dairy products—foods that are high in protein and fat—they are also likely to consume increased amounts of saturated fats, resulting in clogged arteries and again increasing the risk of heart disease. Studies have identified possible risks to cardiovascular health associated with low-carb diets, so the American Heart Association cautions that doctors cannot yet assess how following a low-carbohydrate diet affects patients’ health over a long-term period.

Some studies have found that following a low-carb diet helped lower patients’ blood pressure (Bell 32). Again, however, excessive consumption of foods high in saturated fats may, over time, lead to the development of clogged arteries and increase risk of hypertension. According to the American Heart Association, “a high carbohydrate diet that includes fruits, vegetables, nonfat dairy products and whole grains also has been shown to reduce blood pressure.” Eliminating those foods in a low-carb diet may raise blood pressure because intake of sodium may increase and intake of minerals like calcium, potassium, and magnesium, all of which are important for maintaining healthy blood pressure, may be decreased. Choosing lean meats over those high in fat and supplementing the diet with high-fiber, lowglycemic index carbohydrates, such as leafy green vegetables, is a healthier plan for dieters to follow

Perhaps most surprisingly, low-carbohydrate diets are not necessarily advantageous for patients with Type II diabetes. According to Tracey Neithercott, some people with diabetes are better able to control their blood sugar when they reduce their carb intake, but others are not, and there are no studies that prove one single approach is best for everyone. One problem is that there are no long-term studies of a large scale that have examined this issue in detail. Neithercott advises diabetics to monitor blood sugar levels carefully and to consult with their health care provider or a registered dietitian to develop a plan for healthy eating.

Low-carb diets have garnered a great deal of positive attention, and it is not entirely undeserved. These diets do lead to rapid weight loss, and they often result in greater weight loss over a period of months than other diet plans. Significantly overweight or obese people may find low-carb eating plans the most effective for losing weight and reducing the risks associated with carrying excess body fat. However, because these diets are difficult for some people to adhere to and because their potential long-term health effects are still being debated, they are not necessarily the ideal choice for anyone who wants to lose weight. A moderately overweight person who wants to lose only a few pounds is best advised to choose whatever plan will help him stay active and consume fewer calories consistently—whether or not it involves eating low-carb ketchup.

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Writing at Work

Following MLA style guidelines may require time and effort. However, it is good practice to learn how to follow accepted conventions in any professional field. Many large corporations create a style manual with guidelines for editing and formatting documents produced by that corporation. Employees should follow the style manual when creating internal documents and documents for publication.

Checklist for Revision

Ask yourself the following about your draft to help you revise for:

Organization

Overall:

- Does my introduction proceed clearly from the opening to the thesis?
- Does each body paragraph have a clear main idea that relates to the thesis?
- Do the main ideas in the body paragraphs flow in a logical order? Is each paragraph connected to the one before it?
- Do I need to add or revise topic sentences or transitions to make the overall flow of ideas clearer?
- Does my conclusion summarize my main ideas and revisit my thesis?

At the paragraph level:

- Does the topic sentence clearly state the main idea?
- Do the details in the paragraph relate to the main idea?
- Do I need to recast any sentences or add transitions to improve the flow of sentences?

Cohesion

- Does the opening of the paper clearly connect to the broader topic and thesis?

- Do entertaining quotations or anecdotes serve a purpose?
- Have I included support from research for each main point in the body of my paper?
- Have I included introductory material before any quotations so quotations do not stand alone in paragraphs?
- Does paraphrased and quoted material clearly serve to develop my own points?
- Do I need to add to or revise parts of the paper to help the reader understand how certain information from a source is relevant?
- Are there any places where I have overused material from sources?
- Does my conclusion make sense based on the rest of the paper?
- Are any new questions or suggestions in the conclusion clearly linked to earlier material?

Style and Tone

- Does my paper avoid excessive wordiness?
- Are my sentences varied in length and structure?
- Have I used points of view (pronouns) effectively and appropriately for the assignment?
- Have I used active voice whenever possible?
- Have I defined specialized terms that might be unfamiliar to readers?
- Have I used clear, straightforward language whenever possible and avoided unnecessary jargon?
- Does my paper support my argument using a balanced tone—neither too indecisive nor too forceful?
- Does my paper avoid vague or imprecise terms? Slang? Repetition of the same phrases ("Smith states..., Jones states...") to introduce quoted and paraphrased material? Exclusive use of masculine pronouns or awkward use of he or she? Use of language with negative connotations? Use of outdated or offensive terms?

Apply the following checklists to your paper before submitting your final draft:

Grammar, Mechanics, Punctuation, Usage, and Spelling

- My paper is free of grammatical errors, such as errors in subject-verb agreement and sentence fragments. For additional guidance, see: sentence writing, pronouns, verbs.
- My paper is free of errors in punctuation and mechanics, such as misplaced commas or incorrectly formatted source titles. For additional, see: commas, semicolons.
- My paper is free of common usage errors, such as alot and alright. For additional guidance, see: word choice, commonly confused words.
- My paper is free of spelling errors. I have proofread my paper for spelling in addition to using the spell-checking feature in my word-processing program. For additional guidance, see spelling.
- I have checked my paper for any editing errors that I know I tend to make frequently

Citations

- Within the body of my paper, each fact or idea taken from a source is credited to the correct source.
- Each in-text citation includes the source author's name (or, if no author is given, the organization name or source title).
- I have used the correct format for in-text and parenthetical citations. If my source gives page numbers, I have included page numbers in parentheses directly after the quote or paraphrase taken from that page or pages.
- Each source cited in the body of my paper has a corresponding entry in the Works Cited at the end of my paper.

Formatting

- All entries in my Works Cited are in alphabetical order by author's last name (or by title or organization if no author is listed).
- My Works Cited is consistently double spaced (both within and between entries), and each entry uses proper indentation ("hanging indent": indented on the second and all subsequent lines).
- Each entry in my Works Cited includes all the necessary information for that source type, in the correct sequence and format.
- My paper includes a heading (with your name, course information, and date) in the upper left-hand corner of the first page; if no heading is used or your instructor requests it, substitute a title page for the heading.
- My paper includes a title that reflects the topic of my paper.
- My paper includes a running head (page numbers, or a header in the upper right-hand corner of each page of the paper).
- The margins of my paper are set at one inch. The text is double spaced and set in a standard 12-point font.

Exercise 25

Re-read your paper line by line. Check for the issues noted in the questions about style and tone and the checklists about conventions, above, as well as any other sentence-level aspects of your writing that you have previously identified as areas for improvement. Mark any places in your paper where you notice problems in style, tone, or clarity and then take time to rework those sections.

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6.2.11: THE WRITING PROCESS

6.2.11.1: Writing as a Process

6.2.11.2: Freewriting

6.2.11.3: Brainstorming

6.2.11.4: Journalist Questions

6.2.11.5: Listing

6.2.11.6: Clustering/Mapping

6.2.11.7: Outlining

6.2.11.8: Drafting

6.2.11.9: Revising

6.2.11.10: Creating Essay Titles

6.2.11.11: Editing/Proofreading

6.2.11.12: Final Revision Example

6.2.11.13: Essay Checklist

6.2.11.14: Thinking Critically About Research

6.2.11.14.1: What is “Research” and Why Should I Use It?

6.2.11.14.2: What’s Different about Academic Research?

6.2.11.14.3: Primary Research Versus Secondary Research

6.2.11.14.4: Scholarly versus Non-Scholarly Sources

6.2.11.14.5: Sources that are Both Scholarly and Non-Scholarly?

6.2.11.14.6: The Internet- The Researcher’s Challenge

6.2.11.14.7: Evaluating the Quality and Credibility of Your Research

6.2.11.15: The Research Essay

6.2.11.15.1: A “Research Essay” or a “Research Project” instead of a “Research Paper”

6.2.11.15.2: Getting Ready- Questions to Ask Yourself About Your Research Essay

6.2.11.15.3: Creating and Revising a Formal Outline

6.2.11.15.4: The Introduction

6.2.11.15.5: Background Information (or Helping Your Reader Find a Context)

6.2.11.15.6: Weaving in Evidence to Support Your Point

6.2.11.15.7: Antithetical Arguments and Answers

6.2.11.15.8: The Conclusion

6.2.11.15.9: “Works Cited” or “Reference” Information

6.2.11.15.10: A Student Example- “The Corruption Surrounding University Athletics” by Casey K. Copeman

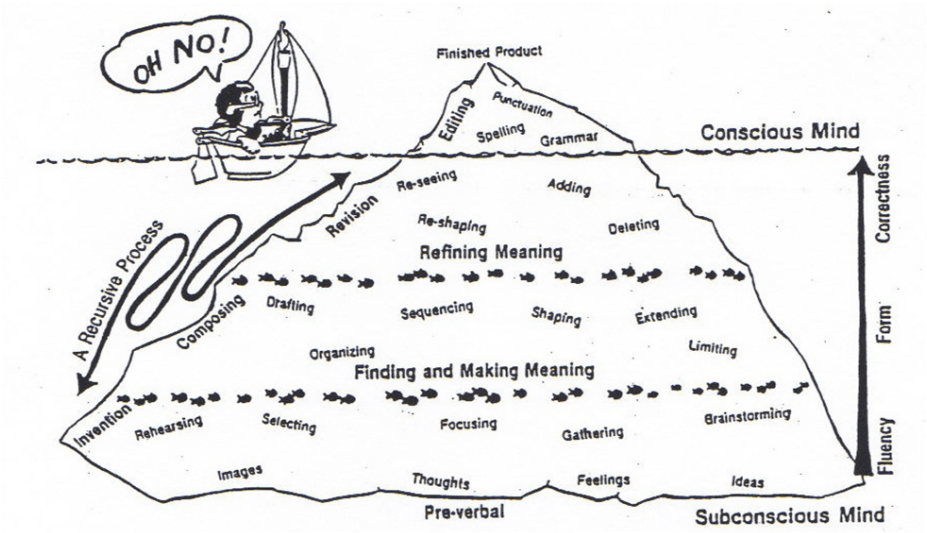
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6.2.11.1: Writing as a Process

WHAT IS THE WRITING PROCESS?

No writer can generate a perfect draft on the first attempt. Most employ a ***writing process***, in which they begin with **prewriting and invention, then outlining, composing, revising and editing**. Though the aforementioned might suggest a linear process, it is usually recursive. For instance, you might end up going back to the prewriting phase and do some brainstorming even while writing the actual draft. The general rule of thumb is to invest some time brainstorming and writing a rough outline before writing the essay. Also, save editing for last. Sometimes it may be too difficult to juggle developing your ideas along with attending to grammar so save editing for the very last step.



WRITING AS A PROCESS NOT A PRODUCT:

The iceberg diagram gives a visual image of the writing process. Above the water line is the final product your instructor sees, and below the water line are all the less visible yet important steps that went into building a good essay. Unfortunately, many writers "wreck" themselves by just focusing on the final product rather than the process. This can give you writer's block. Also, following a process, rather than last-minute writing, will help you to produce your strongest and best essays.

WHAT IS PREWRITING?

The prewriting stage is when you begin generating ideas on your topic without focusing too much on organization and correctness. Prewriting allows you to begin creatively and to truly explore the scope and potential of your topic. Also, breaking the writing process down into stages makes it less stressful and more manageable and gives you time to figure out exactly what you want to develop and explore in your paper.

Here are some **successful prewriting strategies:**

- Freewriting
- Brainstorming
- Journalist Questions
- Listing

- Clustering/Mapping

In this chapter, we will look at the WHAT, WHY and HOW of each of these prewriting strategies.

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6.2.11.2: Freewriting

WHAT IS FREEWRITING?

Freewriting is a technique that helps you generate content for an essay. Freewriting is writing continuously, letting thoughts unselfconsciously flow (often for about 5 to 10 minutes) without regard to spelling, grammar, style etc., and no corrections are made. Because there are no restrictions on structure/format or length, freewriting allows you the freedom to discover what you want to write about without worrying about rules or expectations.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- It provides you with the raw material to help you start writing an essay.
- It helps you to bypass your "internal critic" who can make it difficult for you to explore your thoughts and ideas.
- It gives you confidence in your ability to explore a topic.
- It helps you develop your own unique writing voice and promote a solid flow, or rhythm, to your sentences.
- It gives you an easy way to begin any piece of writing and helps you surpass writer's block.

HOW DO I DO IT?

Start with a blank piece of paper or blank computer screen. Give yourself a minimum of five minutes of uninterrupted time to freewrite. Write a few words at the top of the page to get you started and keep you focused, such as the general topic of your essay assignment or a quote from the text that is significant to you. Now begin writing whatever comes into your head when you think about this quote, the topic and/or the assignment that you have been given.

Try to keep writing without stopping, crossing-out, or erasing. Even if what you are writing seems like it isn't "correct" or "perfect," keep going. This is the key to freewriting – to write freely! Go for five minutes without stopping. If you have more to say, keep going for as long as you can. Don't evaluate what you are writing, or you will stop the free flow of thoughts and ideas.

Once you have a page or more of freewriting, read back over it and look for ideas or points that you might include in your essay. Underline or circle sentences or groups of sentences that you especially like and think you may be able to use in your essay. Use your freewriting as a springboard for your thinking about this assignment, directing you toward further reading, research and the writing of the first draft of the essay.

Example: Freewriting sample

In response to Chapter VII in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, do the following:

Write a quote, or part of a quote, from the text by Frederick Douglass at the top of a blank piece of paper or a blank computer screen (or your most recently assigned text). For approximately five minutes, write anything and everything that is triggered by the quote.

> ***Selected quote:* "I have often wished myself a beast. I preferred the condition of the meanest reptile to my own. Anything, no matter what, to get rid of thinking!"**

Frederick Douglass has learned to read and after he reads a speech by Sheridan, he sees that his human rights have been taken away by slavery. He began to hate his enslavers. He says they are robbers who took Africans from their homes and brought them to America to enslave them and take away their human rights. Once Douglass can read, his thinking skills are stronger because he is exposed to ideas beyond his own experiences, and his understanding of the oppressive nature of slavery is even stronger. He says that his Master Hugh was right – he feels a powerful feeling of discontentment that is so painful that he almost wishes he were illiterate and didn't know how to read and think. He is overwhelmed by what he realizes and says he wishes at times he was ignorant because he is tormented by the horror of slavery. It is ironic because slavery is dehumanizing and Douglass says he almost wishes he didn't know what he knows and could stay ignorant. This makes me think about how reading and thinking help to liberate and enlarge our minds, and that is why in many countries run by dictators there is a high rate of illiteracy. If people are kept illiterate, they can be oppressed more easily. Being exposed to ideas can promote consciousness, which can lead to action. Frederick Douglass was changed forever by his ability to read, write and think about his situation as a slave. This makes me think how all of us are enslaved in one way or another, and that by reading and thinking about it, we can free ourselves.

Ideas for an essay topic drawn from this example of freewriting:

- How learning to read, write and think about ideas is a liberating experience
- How anger and discontentment can fuel awareness and action
- The power of ideas to build consciousness
- The irony of Frederick Douglass wishing to be a "beast" because of the painful truths he realizes about the dehumanization of slavery

Practice: Freewriting

Analyze the following quote from Chapter VII in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (or analyze a quote or aspect of your most recently assigned text). For approximately five minutes, write anything and everything that is triggered by the selected text.

Douglass Quote: "My mistress was, as I have said, a kind and tender-hearted woman; and in the simplicity of her soul she commenced, when I first went to live with her, to treat me as she supposed one human being ought to treat another. In entering upon the duties of a slaveholder, she did not seem to perceive that I sustained to her the relation of a mere chattel, and that for her to treat me as a human being was not only wrong, but dangerously so. Slavery proved as injurious to her as it did
to me" (31).

Freewrite:

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6.2.11.3: Brainstorming

WHAT IS BRAINSTORMING?

Brainstorming is like freewriting in that you write down whatever comes to mind without stopping, but it is different because it looks more like a list of words and phrases than a string of sentences.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- It is easier to see the main ideas when “boiled down” in a brainstorm
- It helps you summarize the main concepts in the reading
- It helps you see the main ideas that captured your interest in the reading
- It can make complex reading more accessible
- You can see many choices of paper topics emerging
- It is fast and easy

HOW DO I DO IT?

Look back at your freewrite and capture the important concepts into words and phrases. Also, look back at the text and pull out the main ideas and concepts.

Example: Brainstorming sample

Here’s an example of brainstorming in response to Chapter VII in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass:*

Brainstorming Example

forbidden to read and write impressive determination
humans treated as beasts bread for knowledge—both feeding
depravity of slave owners Christian country?
abuse of power rights to freedom
slavery turning good people bad emancipation—liberation
reading and writing as dangerous slavery as indefensible
education and slavery incompatible reading a curse or blessing?
fear of rebellion wretched condition—no remedy
dehumanization ignorance is bliss?
used white boys as teachers building consciousness

Practice: Brainstorming

In response to the quote from Chapter VII in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (or your most recently assigned text), look at your freewrite and brainstorm the important concepts into words and phrases and then add to it.

Brainstorming Practice Space

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6.2.11.4: Journalist Questions

WHAT ARE JOURNALIST QUESTIONS?

"Journalist questions" are the "5Ws and the 1H"—who, what, when, where, and especially why and how. The who, what, when, and where are relevant to summaries while the how and why prompt you to examine the "so what?!" Use ideas from the text, your freewrite and your brainstorm and form them into questions. Through answering these questions, you can discover interesting information that you can use for writing.

WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

You may be asked to write about a topic or book, in which case you will need a means to generate the questions that most intrigue you. While who, what, when, and where questions are an effective means of gauging your comprehension, the why and how questions lend themselves to analysis, which is integral to any essay. After generating a list of questions, answer them. You may discover that a question generates multiple answers, some of them contradictory. Such controversy is often ripe for exploration and can lead to thought-provoking interpretations of texts. Answering complex questions is a way to form thesis statements.

HOW DO I CREATE THEM?

Look back at the text and then at your prewriting and think of the questions that were raised for you, or circle concepts or ideas you would like to know more about, and then form questions around them.

Example: Journalist Questions sample

Here are some examples of the journalist questions using Douglass:

Who were the main advocates of slavery?
What were the writings that most affected Douglass?
When was the period in which Douglass lived?
Where was slavery the most prevalent?
Why was reading considered such a threat to slave-owners?
How did the slave-owners maintain control over human beings for so long?

Practice: Creating Journalist Questions

In response to Chapter VII in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (or your most recently assigned text), create questions:

Who

What

When

Where

Why

How

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6.2.11.5: Listing

WHAT IS LISTING?

Generating ideas on a topic through freewriting, brainstorming, and creating questions has a purposeful messiness to it. It is the time to let your creativity run riot and to push your thinking in new and sometimes unexpected directions. Once you have generated a lot of material on your topic, however, it is time to take stock and begin to narrow down and organize your ideas as you move towards writing a focused essay. Listing helps you to **select certain ideas** and **organize** them by grouping related concepts together. This is the most informal kind of outline in which you jot down your main supporting points and possible evidence and analysis. This kind of outline is for you only, and you don't need to worry about making it more comprehensive if it does the job for you. Many students find this kind of outline helpful in taking timed essay exams because it is brief, and it doesn't take much time to produce.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

When you are just beginning to write an essay, rather than making a formal outline, you can make a list. A list is a very user-friendly technique because you don't yet need to craft full sentences but instead select your most promising ideas and start to look for connections between them. Listing is important because it takes all the free-form ideas you generated and helps you to see how you could narrow and focus the material to present a convincing, logical argument.

HOW DO I DO IT?

Start with a blank piece of paper or computer screen. Stay focused by keeping your essay assignment and/or the annotated text you are analyzing next to you. Begin making a list of everything you think you would like to write about to fulfill the assignment or to respond to in the text. Use keywords or phrases; it's not necessary to write in complete sentences when listing. Using a bullet-list format is helpful.

Once you have made your list, go back and organize it into logical units; for example, you can use a numbering system to indicate what you want to include in your introductory paragraph, your body paragraphs and your conclusion. Arrange the ideas in the body paragraphs into a logical order. To illustrate your body paragraph points, you can add quotes, examples, or information to further research. You may find it useful to make a second, more detailed list or you may decide to turn your list, once it is full enough, into an outline.

Example: Listing Sample

Here are some examples of listing using Douglass and the ideas that came from the stages of freewriting, journalist questions, and brainstorming:

IDEA: Slavery harmed the mistress as much as it did the slaves

- the mistress changed – "tender-hearted" to mean-spirited
- she took the newspaper away from him so he couldn't read

IDEA: Learning to read changed Douglass forever — became intolerant of slavery

- read Sheridan and saw good arguments against slavery

- saw slave owners as robbers stealing his people from Africa
- he came to hate (“abhor and detest”) his enslavers

IDEA: Reading as dangerous

- slave masters feared rebellion
- reading caused Douglass awareness but also despair
- “silver trump of freedom had roused my soul to eternal wakefulness”

IDEA: Denial of literacy is still used to control people

- poor urban neighborhoods with subpar schools and lack of supplies
- women in certain places in the middle east not allowed to learn to read and write

Practice: Listing

In response to Chapter VII in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (or your most recently assigned text), do the following:

Make a list of main points in the reading. Leave space under each main point for 2-3 examples that support the idea. You can put the examples in after you’ve come up with at least 3-5 main points. Afterwards, look at how the ideas connect to one another to form a possible unifying thesis or argument:

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6.2.11.6: Clustering/Mapping

WHAT IS CLUSTERING/MAPPING?

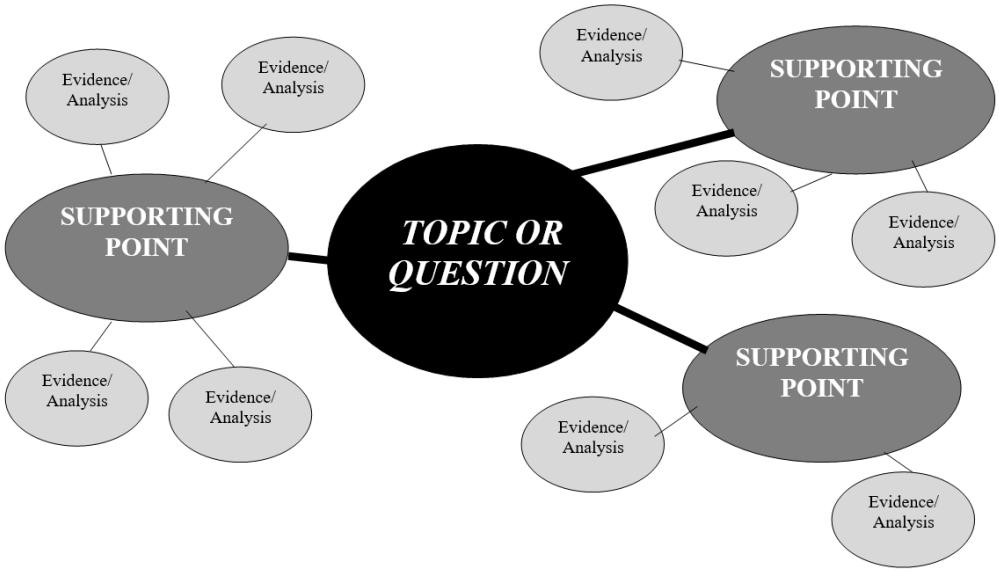
Clustering, also known as mapping, is like listing in that you narrow down and begin to organize your ideas. Cluster/mapping provides a mental picture of the ideas you generate and how they connect to each other. Where you place ideas on the page shows their relationship to each other. Ideas placed closer to the middle are the overarching key concepts that unify seemingly disparate ideas and details.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

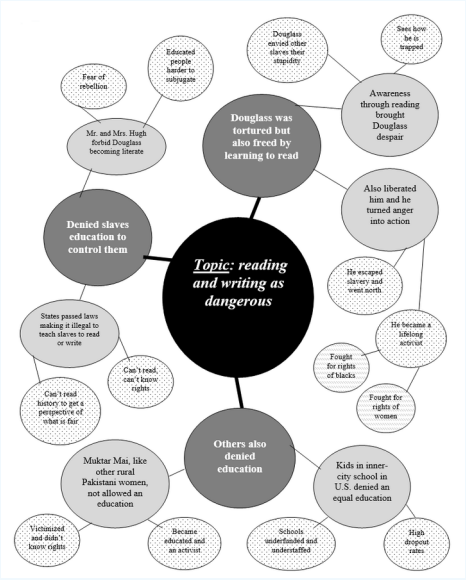
- It works particularly well for visual learners.
- It helps you to see the most important ideas.
- It helps you to see how ideas are related.
- It helps you organize your ideas.
- It helps you start to see potential paragraphs forming.

HOW DO I DO IT?

To create a cluster, first write your topic or question in the middle of the page and draw a large circle around it. Then in medium circles, write the supporting points that respond to the writing task, drawing lines linking each to the main center circle. Then, in small circles, write the evidence and analysis that illustrate each supporting point, drawing lines that link each to the appropriate supporting point. You can add additional levels of smaller circles as you provide more specific clarifying details.

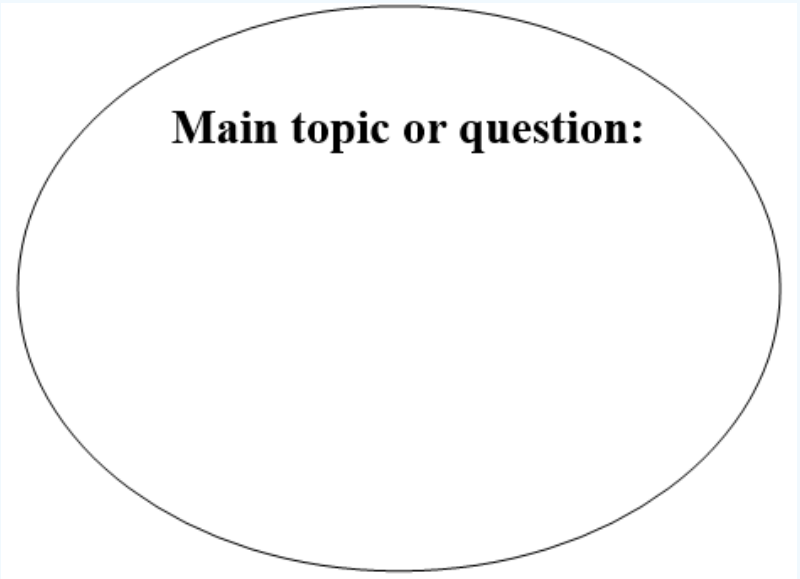


Example:Cluster



Practice: Clustering

In response to Chapter VII in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (or your most recently assigned text), create a cluster/map:



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6.2.11.7: Outlining

WHAT IS OUTLINING?

Outlining is the road map for the essay. American writer Tom Wolfe said, “By writing an outline you really are writing in a way, because you’re creating the structure of what you’re going to do. Once I really know what I’m going to write, I don’t find the actual writing takes all that long.”

Critical thinkers use outlines to organize their ideas and check the organization of their drafts throughout the writing process. Outlines represent an important element of the writing process not only for English essays, but also for essays in history, philosophy, economics, political science, etc.

As the “road map” of the essay, outlines should do the following:

- Provide the thesis and most important details of the essay.
- Demonstrate a clear, logical organization of main ideas and supporting details.
- Include topic sentences but not *every* sentence in the essay/paragraphs.

WHY OUTLINE?

Just like we need a road map when traveling to an unfamiliar destination, good writers create preliminary or rough outlines after they have generated enough ideas through prewriting to organize and develop their essays. Strong, thorough prewriting should develop more ideas than you can actually use in your essay so that you are able to select the most relevant and convincing ideas for your essay.

Once you have settled on a thesis statement and your main supporting ideas, you can write a formal outline, creating the “skeleton” of your essay. Looking at your ideas this way can help ensure that:

- Your main points are on-topic and directly support your thesis.
- Your main points are logically organized.
- Your most important ideas are emphasized and your less important ideas are subordinated.
- Your main points have sufficient and relevant supporting evidence.

Outlines also help writers:

- Make the writing process easier since you have a road map for your essay to follow.
- Break through writer’s block—for people who struggle with writer’s block, it helps to first set up a structure with lower stakes and less pressure.
- Save time writing your essay since you have a clear, focused plan to follow for your essay.
- Ensure each part of your essay relates to the essay prompt.

HOW DO I DO IT?

- Put the thesis statement at the top: it should be polished and be a complete sentence.
- Use Roman numerals (I, II, III, IV, V, etc.) to indicate the main points/topic sentences which should be written in specific phrases or complete sentences (this is the “P” or Point of PIE).
- Use capital letters (A, B, C, D, E, etc.) for the major supporting details; typically, writers should have at least two main supporting details for each point/topic sentence (the “I” or information of PIE providing evidence and the “E” or

explanation of PIE providing analysis).
- Use numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc.) for sub-details clarifying and specifying your main supporting details.

Thesis:

I. (Main Idea 1)
   A. (Supporting Detail 1)
      1. Sub-detail 1
      2. Sub-detail 2
   B. (Supporting Detail 2)
      1. Sub-detail 1
II. (Main Idea 2)
   A. (Supporting Detail 1)
      1. Sub-detail 1
      2. Sub-detail 2
   B. (Supporting Detail 2)
      1. Sub-detail 1
      2. Sub-detail 2
III. (Main Idea 3)
   A. (Supporting Detail 1)
      1. Sub-detail 1
      2. Sub-detail 2
   B. (Supporting Detail 2)
      1. Sub-detail 1
      2. Sub-detail 2
IV. (Main Idea 4)
   A. (Supporting Detail 1)
      1. Sub-detail 1
      2. Sub-detail 2
   B. (Supporting Detail 2)
      1. Sub-detail 1
      2. Sub-detail 2

Outline Organization

When deciding how to order your points, your first consideration should be logic. How does one point lead up to or build upon another? Here are some different ways to logically organize your points:

- ***Climax:*** Present your ideas so they build to a climax, ending with your most dramatic examples.
- ***Complexity:*** Start with simpler ideas and build to more complex ones.
- ***Familiarity:*** Start with more familiar ideas and move towards newer ones.
- ***Audience appeal:*** Start with “safe” ideas and move to more challenging ones.
- ***Chronological:*** Present ideas in the time order in which they occurred.
- ***Compare/Contrast:*** When looking at similarities or differences, it may be ordered in one of two ways:

Block style vs. Point-by-point

Block style: look first at one item and then the next, using the same criteria each time. For example:	**Point-by-point: Look at the two items simultaneously, comparing them using the same criteria. For example:**
I. Frederick Douglass **A. Philosophies** **B. Activism** **C. Accomplishments** **II. Martin Luther King, Jr.** **A. Philosophies** **B. Activism** **C. Accomplishments**	**I. Philosophies** **A. Frederick Douglass** **B. Martin Luther King, Jr.** **II. Activism** **A. Frederick Douglass** **B. Martin Luther King, Jr.** **III. Accomplishments** **A. Frederick Douglass** **B. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Example: Outlining

It can be difficult to create a formal outline without some help. Here is a first step towards creating a more formal outline. Use this template and answer the guiding questions. After, revise what you produce into a formal outline.

Example: Outlining

THESIS: ***What do you want to convince your reader of? Is this an arguable assertion? Is this based on the reading? Can one disagree?***   **Slaves like Douglass were controlled by not being able to read and write and this denial of education is still happening in the United States as well as other parts of the world.**
PARAGRAPH 1:
TOPIC SENTENCE (Point/Topic): *What is an arguable point I can make to prove my thesis?*   Slave-owners would not allow slaves to learn to read and write because they were afraid they would rebel.
SUPPORT (Information/Evidence): *What examples and quotes in the reading can I use to prove the claim in my topic sentence? Do I want to also include real life examples or research to strengthen my claim?*   From text: Mr. and Mrs. Hugh forbid Douglass to learn to read and write. Mrs. Hugh became furious if she would ever see him holding the paper (page 84).   Outside research: See if there were actual laws passed making it illegal to teach slaves to read and write.
RELEVANCE (Explanation/Analysis): *Why do I think this is important? What can be learned from this? What are the implications? Outcomes? Possible interpretations or deeper meaning?*   If you can't read, you won't know the laws that govern you so you won't know your rights. Also, you can't get a clear historical perspective so can't know what is just and reasonable and what is not.
PARAGRAPH 2:

THESIS: ***What do you want to convince your reader of? Is this an arguable assertion? Is this based on the reading? Can one disagree?***

Slaves like Douglass were controlled by not being able to read and write and this denial of education is still happening in the United States as well as other parts of the world.

TOPIC SENTENCE (Point/Topic): *What is another arguable point I can make to prove my thesis? How can I smoothly transition from the point I made before?*

Learning to read caused Douglass unexpected pain as he better understood his own enslavement but it also set in motion his desire to create change and bring awareness to end slavery.

SUPPORT (Information/Evidence): *What examples and quotes in the reading can I use to prove the claim in my topic sentence? Do I want to also include real life examples or research to strengthen my claim?*

From text: Douglass speaks of his "unutterable anguish" (84) and how reading became a curse and that he wished he could return to the "stupidity" (84) of his fellow slaves.

Outside research: Research what Douglass later did after he escaped to the North and became an activist.

RELEVANCE (Explanation/Analysis): *Why do I think this is important? What can be learned from this? What are the implications? Outcomes? Possible interpretations or deeper meaning?*

Being able to read and write gives you the tools to call out oppression, gather other people to support making needed changes, and to liberate yourself and others from unfair institutions.

PARAGRAPH 3:

TOPIC SENTENCE (Point/Topic): *What is another arguable point I can make to prove my thesis? How can I smoothly transition from the point I made before?*

Denying people equal access to education is happening today in places like rural Pakistan in the case of women.

SUPPORT (Information/Evidence): *What examples and quotes in the reading can I use to prove the claim in my topic sentence? Do I want to also include real life examples or research to strengthen my claim?*

Outside research: Muktar Mai in her memoir *In the Name of Honor* tells how women in her region were not allowed to be educated so when she was gang-raped, she could not write down her account at the police station so her story was changed and she lost her case in court. Later she learned to read and write and became a strong advocate for women's rights and started a school for girls in her village. Quote on poor treatment of women, page 46.

RELEVANCE (Explanation/Analysis): *Why do I think this is important? What can be learned from this? What are the implications? Outcomes? Possible interpretations or deeper meaning?*

Becoming literate helped Mai navigate the complex legal systems, bring international awareness of the plight of women in her region, and enabled her to help others.

CONCLUSION:

How can I end the essay on a strong note? What would be a good "so what?" that explains: So what can we learn from this? So what is the larger significance or impact?

So what? The denying of certain groups an education didn't just happen long ago or far away. It is happening now in the United States with our inner-city schools which are underfunded and understaffed. With the high dropout rates, large numbers of blacks and Latinos are being denied equal access to education and literacy.

Practice: Outline Template

This is a template to help you on the first step towards making a formal outline. Adjust for how many body paragraphs you decide to include.

Please note: If your instructor has asked you to create a formal outline, *you are not going to turn in this template*. This template is designed to help you generate and organize the ideas you can then put into a formal outline.

Outline Template

THESIS: ***What do you want to convince your reader of? Is this an arguable assertion? Is this based on the reading? Can one disagree?***
PARAGRAPH 1:
TOPIC SENTENCE (Point/Topic): *What is an arguable point I can make to prove my thesis*
SUPPORT (Information/Evidence): *What examples and quotes in the reading can I use to prove the claim in my topic sentence? Do I want to also include real life examples or research to strengthen my claim?*
RELEVANCE (Explanation/Analysis): *Why do I think this is important? What can be learned from this? What are the implications? Outcomes? Possible interpretations or deeper meaning?*
PARAGRAPH 2:
TOPIC SENTENCE (Point/Topic): *What is another arguable point I can make to prove my thesis? How can I smoothly transition from the point I made before?*
SUPPORT (Information/Evidence): *What examples and quotes in the reading can I use to prove the claim in my topic sentence? Do I want to also include real life examples or research to strengthen my claim?*
RELEVANCE (Explanation/Analysis): *Why do I think this is important? What can be learned from this? What are the implications? Outcomes? Possible interpretations or deeper meaning?*
PARAGRAPH 3:
TOPIC SENTENCE (Point/Topic): *What is another arguable point I can make to prove my thesis? How can I smoothly transition from the point I made before?*

THESIS: ***What do you want to convince your reader of? Is this an arguable assertion? Is this based on the reading? Can one disagree?***
SUPPORT (Information/Evidence): *What examples and quotes in the reading can I use to prove the claim in my topic sentence? Do I want to also include real life examples or research to strengthen my claim?*
RELEVANCE (Explanation/Analysis): *Why do I think this is important? What can be learned from this? What are the implications? Outcomes? Possible interpretations or deeper meaning?*
PARAGRAPH 4:
TOPIC SENTENCE (Point/Topic): *What is another arguable point I can make to prove my thesis? How can I smoothly transition from the point I made before?*
SUPPORT (Information/Evidence): *What examples and quotes in the reading can I use to prove the claim in my topic sentence? Do I want to also include real life examples or research to strengthen my claim?*
RELEVANCE (Explanation/Analysis): *Why do I think this is important? What can be learned from this? What are the implications? Outcomes? Possible interpretations or deeper meaning?*
CONCLUSION:
How can I end the essay on a strong note? What would be a good "so what?" that explains: So what can we learn from this? So what is the larger significance or impact?

Example: Sample formal outline on *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Thesis: The control and limitations over reading and writing during slavery sought to make slaves like Douglass ignorant, powerless, and therefore more easily controlled, and this control over literacy and education is still happening in the world today.

Introduction

A. Lead in with George Orwell quote: "Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past."
B. Compare to the band Rage Against the Machine and how they used Orwell's warning.
C. Connect discussion of control to Fredrick Douglass and controlling slaves through denying them an education.
D. State thesis.

I. In his narrative, Douglass exposes how being denied education was one of the main tactics used to keep so many blacks trapped within generations of enslavement.
   A. Mr. and Mrs. Hugh forbid Douglass from learning to read and write.
      1. Mrs. Hugh became furious anytime she would catch Douglass reading.

2. This shows their realization that educated people are harder to control.

B. Many slave states passed laws making it illegal to teach slaves to read and write.
   1. Use quote North Carolina law and list the punishments for breaking the law.
   2. This shows how to control people you have to do so not just physically but mentally.

II. Douglass discovered that freeing his mind led to anguished torment as he was unable to free himself from the entrenched institutions of slavery but change was set in motion.
   A. Being awakened to the stark realities of his condition served to plunge Douglass into despair.
      1. Use quote showing how Master Hugh knew discontent would follow (page 84).
      2. Use quote showing Douglass's anguish and despair as his eyes are opened (page 84).
   B. Insert discussion of how ignorance is not bliss.
      1. Those who are ignorant get taken advantage of, they are powerless, are controlled by others.
      2. Douglass eventually gains power over his life from learning to read and becomes an activist fighting for the equality of blacks and women.

III. Unfortunately, when slavery was abolished in 1865, that did not end the practice of denying certain groups of people an education in order to control them, but it also did not end people's ability to go against societal norms, educate themselves, and fight for change.
   A. Muktar Mai, a poor rural woman in Pakistan, tells in her memoir *In the Name of Honor* how she was denied an education so when she was brutalized, she was helpless in the legal system.
   B. Mai learned to read and write, pursued her attackers legally, brought national awareness to the plight of women in her country, started a school for girls, and also an organization that advocates for the rights of women.

Conclusion: Denial of education is happening now and closer to home in the U.S as inner-city schools are underfunded and understaffed so many of our youth are dropping out and are not given access to an equal education and this puts them in a powerless and invisible state.

HOW CAN I CHECK AN OUTLINE?

Outline Peer response

Answer questions like the following to evaluate your peer's outline as well as your own outline.

How Can I Check an Outline?

1. Thesis: **Does the thesis make a statement that can be argued? Ask yourself, can I disagree? If you cannot disagree (if the thesis just states a fact or what is already obvious and known), advise the author about how to add an opinion. Is the thesis specific (focused?) and clear enough? Is the thesis based on the reading? Also, is there a clear "so what?" So what is important about this? So what is the significance?**
2. Supporting Points: Does the outline list the supporting points in a **clear and logical order**? How can the order be clearer or improved? Does each supporting point **directly prove the thesis**? Are there any **additional supporting points** that should be included?
3. Evidence: Is there a clear example illustrating each of the supporting points? Is the author using examples **from the reading**? If not, suggest ideas the author could use to better prove his/her points. Could the author **improve or replace** any of the supporting points or textual examples? Has the author developed a clear **explanation** of why each supporting point is relevant?

Practice: Outline Constructive Feedback

Using the guiding questions on Outline Peer Response, provide constructive feedback on the following outline on **Chapter VII in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass***:

Thesis: Slavery in the United States damaged many lives.

Introduction

A. Lead in with statistics on how many people in the U.S. were enslaved.
B. Connect to how Mrs. Hugh changed for the worse and how Fredrick Douglass felt despair.
C. State thesis.

I. Douglass taught himself to read and write even though he was forbidden to do so.
   A. At first Mrs. Hugh was teaching him to read but she changed her mind.
      1. Her husband told her not to teach him.
      2. She became harsher than her husband is stopping Douglass from learning.
   B. Douglass got the young poor white boys in his neighborhood to teach him.
      1. He took a book with him on errands to use.
      2. He bribed the boys with bread.

II. Slavery changed people.
   A. Mrs. Hugh was once a kind woman and then she became cruel and inhumane because of slavery.
      1. She used to be charitable.
      2. She became mean.
   B. Douglass became anguished and trapped in slavery and even considered suicide.
      1. The more he read, the more miserable he became.
      2. Douglass fought for the rights of others.

Conclusion: Slavery hurt a lot of people and ruined many lives.

Example: A sample of outline peer response on the Douglass outline

Example of outline peer response

1. Thesis:

Does the thesis make a statement that can be argued? Ask yourself, can I disagree? If you cannot disagree (if the thesis just states a fact or what is already obvious and known), advise the author about how to add an opinion. Is the thesis specific (focused?) and clear enough? Is the thesis based on the reading? Also, is there a clear "so what?" So what is important about this? So what is the significance?

Thesis: Slavery in the United States damaged many lives.
I like where you are going with this but this statement is very general. Whose lives exactly were damaged? The story talks about how it hurt Douglass and also his slave masters so perhaps be more specific and say who you mean. Also, how were they damaged? So what can we learn from this? It seems like this is telling us something about abuse of power. Is this a lesson that we should apply to any situations today? Lastly, in the outline, you say you are going to lead up to the thesis by including statistics on how many people were enslaved but you might want to connect this to your argument about being damaged.

2. Supporting Points:

Does the outline list the supporting points in a **clear and logical order**? How can the order be clearer or improved? Does each supporting point **directly prove the thesis**? Are there any **additional supporting points** that should be included?

This entire second point summarizes how Douglass learned to read but it's not clear how this connects to the argument about people being damaged by slavery. I'd remove this. Section three is good as it directly connects to your thesis about being damaged by slavery. The topic sentence is a bit general though. You say: "Slavery changed people." How did it change people? For better or worse? Also, you discuss how it changed Mrs. Hugh, the slave master, first and then you discuss how it changed Douglass after that. I think it would make more sense to discuss Douglass first because he is the one obviously damaged by slavery. Then after that you can present Mrs. Hugh, the less obvious one who is also harmed by slavery. Finally, the conclusion just repeats your thesis.

3. Evidence:

Is there a clear example illustrating each of the supporting points? Is the author using examples **from the reading**? If not, suggest ideas the author could use to better prove his/her points. Could the author **improve or replace** any of the supporting points or textual examples? Has the author developed a clear **explanation** of why each supporting point is relevant?

You show how Douglass and Mrs. Hugh were damaged by slavery, but I think you could include a separate more developed section for each and include quotes from the text too. Douglass makes some strong statements about how he wishes he could lose his humanity and become an unthinking beast instead. You can also use the descriptions of how Mrs. Hugh's kindness turned to "tiger-like fierceness." Then include your own analysis of why it's important to see how these two were changed? So what does this reveal about people and having this much power over others?

Example: Providing feedback directly to the outline

Thesis: Slavery in the United States damaged many lives. *(Thesis feedback: This statement is very general. Whose lives exactly were damaged? How? So what?)*

Introduction

A. Lead in with statistics on how many people in the U.S. were enslaved. *(I like the idea of including statistics but how does this connect to the argument about being damaged?)*

B. Connect to how Mrs. Hugh changed for the worse and how Fredrick Douglass felt despair.
C. State thesis.

I. Douglass taught himself to read and write even though he was forbidden to do so.
   A. At first Mrs. Hugh was teaching him to read but she changed her mind.
      1. Her husband told her not to teach him.
      2. She became harsher than her husband is stopping Douglass from learning.
   B. Douglass got the young poor white boys in his neighborhood to teach him. *(This entire second point summarizes how Douglass learned to read but it's not clear how this connects to the argument about people being damaged by slavery. I'd remove this.)*
      1. He took a book with him on errands to use.
      2. He bribed the boys with bread.

II. Slavery changed people.
   A. Mrs. Hugh was once a kind woman and then she became cruel and inhumane because of slavery.
      1. She used to be charitable.
      2. She became mean.
   B. Douglass became anguished and trapped in slavery and even considered suicide. *(Good, section three directly connects to your thesis about being damaged by slavery. The topic sentence is a bit general though. How did it "change" people? For better or worse? Then you show how Douglass and Mrs. Hugh were damaged, but I think you could include a separate more developed section for each and include quotes from the text too. You could also include your own analysis of why it's important to see how these two were changed? So what does this reveal?)*
      1. The more he read, the more miserable he became.
      2. Douglass fought for the rights of others.

Conclusion: Slavery hurt a lot of people and ruined many lives. *(It's good you stay on topic but this just repeats your thesis. In your conclusion, you want a larger "so what?" So what can we learn by realizing that both the enslaved and the enslavers were hurt by slavery? Can we apply this lesson elsewhere? Is this a danger now in a less obvious form that we should be concerned about? Are those who have unchecked power over others always harmed by it?)*

Example: Potential Revision of Outline based on feedback

Thesis: Douglass's narrative reveals how slavery in the U.S. not only damaged the psyche of the slaves but destroyed the humanity of the slave owners showing how no human being should ever have unchecked power over another as it inevitably leads to corruption. *(Originally the thesis said slavery damaged "many" lives. Now it states who (slaves and slave-owners), how (damaged psyches and destroyed humanity), and so what (unchecked power corrupts))*

Introduction

A. Lead in with statistics on how many people in the U.S. were enslaved and connect to how many families this means were separated and destroyed and how many people were maimed, raped and murdered. (The reasoning behind the statistics is now clearly connects to the damage caused. Then adding the corrupting influence of power now introduces the second part of the thesis about slave-owners being corrupted too. And now the order has been changed to talk about Douglass first (the obvious one damaged) and then the less obvious, the slave-owners.)
B. Introduce the idea of how absolute power corrupts absolutely.
C. Connect to how Fredrick Douglass felt despair and Mrs. Hugh changed for the worse.
D. State thesis.

I. Slavery slowly destroyed Douglass's psychological well-being.
   A. Douglass who is highly intelligent and motivated is held back by slavery.
      1. He is eager to learn but is unjustly forbidden by his slave-masters.
      2. He has to settle for an inferior, secretive education learning from young white kids between his errands.
      3. Speculate on the incredible loss of potential of someone this motivated and intelligent denied during his formative years. Connect to all the lost potential of poor kids in bad schools today.
   B. Douglass became anguished as he sees how he is trapped in slavery and even considered suicide.
      1. Douglass comes to see something as potentially liberating as education as something destructive "I would at times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing" (84).

2. As time goes on, Douglass feels only more anguish and despair and even wishes his own humanity were taken away, “I have often wished myself a beast” (84)*(More detail, quotes and “so what?” analysis has been added to the discussions of Douglass and Mrs. Hugh.)*

II. Slavery also destroyed the humanity of Mrs. Hugh who was once kind became cruel.
   A. Mrs. Hugh was once a kind woman: “she was a pious, warm, and tender-hearted woman. There was no sorrow or suffering for which she had not a tear” (82). *(More detail, quotes and “so what?” analysis has been added to the discussions of Douglass and Mrs. Hugh.)*
   B. Slavery made her a despicable person: “Slavery soon proved its ability to divest her of these heavenly qualities. Under its influence, the tender heart became stone, and the lamblike disposition gave way to one of tiger-like fierceness” (82).
   C. Examine how absolute power corrupts and cite other examples in history (Hitler, Stalin) when this has been true.

Conclusion: We must be aware of any case when a person or group is allowed too much power over another group as this will lead to a corrupt and an unhealthy society. Examine how this is happening with corporations globally today who act in their own interest for profit and we all suffer as a result. *(A larger “so what?” has been added looking at how this lesson can be applied)*

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6.2.11.8: Drafting

WHAT IS DRAFTING?

After you do some good prewriting and write up an outline, it's time to start writing the paper; the first writing stage is called drafting. In this stage, get your ideas down as quickly as possible and don't focus too much on grammar, punctuation or spelling. This is the ideas stage. Focusing too much on "correctness" can bog your ideas down and give you writer's block. At this stage, you start getting ideas down on paper, extending some ideas, limiting others that aren't panning out. Many writers say that they didn't know what they thought until they saw what they thought. You might discover what you think as you write on a topic and your argument might change and evolve as you write.

WHY DRAFT?

It takes the pressure off to think of your initial writing as "drafting" which is more low stakes. It doesn't have to be perfect because no one is reading it at this stage but you, so drafting allows you to explore your topic using your creativity and analysis. Writing the first draft also gives you the opportunity to see how well your arguments support your tentative thesis and how the differing perspectives or opposing viewpoints will affect your position.

HOW DO I DO IT?

- Post your tentative thesis and paper assignment prominently above your work space, so you can refer to them as you write.
- Review your outline and the notes you have made on the text/topic you are writing on.
- In a draft, you want a clear beginning, middle and end even if they aren't set in stone.
- In drafting, some use a linear approach starting with the introduction and writing sequentially to the conclusion. Others prefer a more recursive approach where they work on one section for a time, move on to another part of the essay, and then return to the earlier section. Use the approach that works best for you.
- Once you feel you have covered what you want to cover, read through again to make sure that the organization and development are logical. One strategy for doing this is to note in the margin in a few words the point of each paragraph. Take those brief phrases and look at them to see whether they follow logically or require reorganizing. Is anything necessary omitted? Make any appropriate changes to your organization and development.
- As you look over your draft, try reading it out loud. It will help you "hear" what flows and what does not.

When you complete your draft, here are some questions to ask yourself:

- Is your argument (thesis) clear?
- Do your main arguments give the reasons for "why your thesis is so"?
- Have you supported these with credible and relevant evidence and your own analysis?
- Have you adequately addressed alternative perspectives?
- Is there additional reading or research you need in order to strengthen your thesis and arguments?

Example: Sample Draft for Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

By Rachel Bell

Essay #4

"Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past." This applies well to the past when blacks were enslaved. In "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave," Douglass reveals how this long and brutal control of human beings was partly accomplished through control over literacy. The control and limitations over reading and writing during slavery sought to make slaves like Douglass ignorant, powerless, and therefore more easily controlled.

Douglass lived in Baltimore for 7 years as a house slave and initially was taught by Mrs. Hugh but later was forbidden by his masters Mr. and Mrs. Hugh to read or write. Mrs. Hugh became furious if she caught Douglass reading because she wanted to control him. Many slave states passed laws making it illegal to teach slaves to read and write as seen in this typical law in North Carolina:

> AN ACT TO PREVENT ALL PERSONS FROM TEACHING SLAVES TO READ OR WRITE, THE USE OF FIGURES EXCEPTED. Whereas the teaching of slaves to read and write, has a tendency to excite dis-satisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion, to the manifest injury of the citizens of this State: Therefore, be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, that any free person, who shall hereafter teach, or attempt to teach, any slave within the State to read or write, the use of figures excepted, or shall give or sell to such slave or slaves any books or pamphlets, shall be liable to indictment in any court of record in this State having jurisdiction thereof. ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law")

The law then goes on to list the punishments and for a white person it was a fine and possible imprisonment and for a free person of color they could be fined, imprisoned or whipped ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law"). They couldn't just control people through force but had to control their minds too.

Douglass discovered that freeing his mind led to anguished torment. "As I read and contemplated the subject, behold! that very discontentment which Master Hugh had predicted would follow my learning to read had already come, to torment and sting my soul to unutterable anguish. I would at times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing. It had given me a view of my wretched condition, without the remedy. It opened my eyes to the horrible pit, but to no ladder upon which to get out. In moments of agony, I envied my fellow-slaves for their stupidity" (84). So is ignorance bliss? No, never. To be ignorant allows others to control us. Douglass realized this and after becoming educated, he joined the abolitionist movement and spent the remainder of his life fighting for the equality and rights of blacks as well as women.

Muktar Mai in her memoir *In the Name of Honor* published in 2006, tells her story of growing up in a small village in Pakistan where girls were not allowed to be educated. Mai was sentenced to be pubically gang raped by six men in a stable with 100 of her fellow villagers outside. Mai was then expected to follow custom and commit suicide, but instead she went to the police and testified against her attackers. Because she could not read or write, the officers wrote down her account but altered what she said to absolve her attackers of guilt, so when her case went to court, she lost. In spite of this, Mai still fights. She remains an outspoken advocate for women's rights, she is still pressing a retrial of her attackers, she continues to run the organization she started Mukhtar Mai Women's Welfare Organization (MMWWO), and even with many attempts to close it, she still runs a school she established in her village to educate girls.

We shouldn't let others control us. We should fight for our rights and everyone should be allowed an equal education. No one should be denied learning to read and write. If people can't read and write then they cannot compete equally in society and they will be taken advantage of by others.

Works Cited (Draft)

Douglass, Frederick. Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave.
Mai, Muktar. In the Name of Honor
.http://www.historyisaweapon.com/defc...eprohibit.html

Note:
3 sources are listed—some sources in the paper are missing from the Works Cited and none of the citations is properly formatted yet.

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6.2.11.9: Revising

WHAT IS REVISING?

Revising means what is says: it is a re-vision of your paper. To revise is to see again, to re-conceive your original essay. When you ***revise*** a paper, the larger elements of writing generally receive attention first—**the focus, organization, paragraphing, content, and overall strategy**. Improvements in sentence structure, word choice, grammar, punctuation, and mechanics come later when you **edit** the paper.

In revising, you make global revisions that address the larger elements of writing. Usually they affect chunks of text longer than a sentence, and frequently they can be quite dramatic. Whole paragraphs might be dropped, others added. Material once stretched over two or three paragraphs might be condensed into one. Entire sections might be rearranged. Even the content might change dramatically, for the process of revising stimulates thought.

WHY REVISE?

Past Supreme Court Justice, Louis Brandels said: “There is no such thing as good writing, only good rewriting.” American writer E.B. White echoed these sentiments when he said simply, “The best writing is rewriting.” When you revise or rewrite your draft, you are able to bring a higher level of clarity and development.

HOW DO I DO IT?

Here are some guiding questions you can use to revise your draft:

Title

- Does your title give readers a good idea of what's to come? ("Assignment #3" is not a title)

Introduction

- Is your thesis statement clearly stated?
- Does the introduction lead in smoothly and establish the importance of and context for the topic? Is there too much? Too little? By the end of the introduction, is it clear to the audience what kind of material will follow? If so, are these expectations fulfilled?

Body Paragraphs

- Is it clear where your introduction ends and body begins and where the body ends and the conclusion begins? In other words, are your paragraph indents meaningful?
- Are there transitions between all sections and paragraphs to create flow and unity?
- Does each body paragraph have a topic sentence? If you took your thesis and all your topic sentences, would that correspond to what you want to say in your paper? If not, do you need to revise your thesis or re-examine your supporting points?
- Do the topic sentences (1) make a connection back to the thesis, (2) establish a link with the previous paragraph's content, and (3) give enough information that the audience could guess where a particular paragraph's development would lead?
- Does the order of paragraphs make sense?
- Are your paragraphs too short or too long? Can you combine or separate any content?

- Are your examples reliable, representative, and convincing? Are there enough of them or too many?
- Are your sources convincing? Is there enough balance between your own insights and expert opinions?
- Are all sources and direct quotations explained or have you left them standing on their own?
- Has anything that goes off topic or is not essential been cut?

Conclusion

- Does the conclusion say something different from your introduction?
- Does the conclusion leave a good lasting impression?
- Does the conclusion end the paper on a strong and interesting note?

Example: Sample Revision of same paper

Rachel Bell
Professor Lucia Lachmayr
English 100
21 May 2013

Controlling Human Beings

> **INTRODUCTION FROM THE DRAFT:**
>
> "Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past." This applies well to the past when blacks were enslaved. In "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave," Douglass reveals how this long and brutal control of human beings was partly accomplished through control over literacy. The control and limitations over reading and writing during slavery sought to make slaves like Douglass ignorant, powerless, and therefore more easily controlled.
>
> REVISIONS: The dropped quote has now been connected to a lead in phrase telling who said it and when. A contemporary reference to a band using the quote was added to give the quote modern-day relevancy. A transition was then added showing how this quote applies to Douglass's story. A "so what?" was added to the thesis applying the control over people in the past through literacy to today.

In the 1940s, George Orwell warned "Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past." In the 1990s there was a band called Rage Against the Machine, the name itself referring to a people's movement to fight against control (corporation, government or otherwise) used this mantra in their song "Testify," a warning to not silently endure. This is a warning that is not only relevant to the 20th century, but has been applicable since human beings started forming structures of power to control and oppress one another. This can be seen during the times of slavery in the United States when blacks were enslaved. In Frederick Douglass's novel *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave,* Douglass reveals how this control of human beings was partly accomplished through control over literacy. The control and limitations over reading and writing during slavery sought to make slaves like Douglass ignorant, powerless, and therefore more easily controlled, and this control over literacy and education is still happening in the world today.

> **BODY PARAGRAPH ONE FROM THE DRAFT:**
>
> Douglass lived in Baltimore for 7 years as a house slave and was forbidden by his masters Mr. and Mrs. Hugh to read or write. Mrs. Hugh became furious if she caught Douglass reading because she wanted to control him. Many slave states passed laws making it illegal to teach slaves to read and write as seen in this typical law in North Carolina:
>
> > AN ACT TO PREVENT ALL PERSONS FROM TEACHING SLAVES TO READ OR WRITE, THE USE OF FIGURES EXCEPTED. Whereas the teaching of slaves to read and write, has a tendency to excite dis-satisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion, to the manifest injury of the citizens of this State: Therefore, be

> it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, that any free person, who shall hereafter teach, or attempt to teach, any slave within the State to read or write, the use of figures excepted, or shall give or sell to such slave or slaves any books or pamphlets, shall be liable to indictment in any court of record in this State having jurisdiction thereof. ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law")

The law then lists the punishments and for a white person it was a hefty fine and possible imprisonment and for a free person of color they could be fined, imprisoned or whipped “not exceeding thirty nine lashes, nor less than twenty lashes” ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law"). They couldn’t just control people through force but had to control their minds too.

REVISIONS: Before the paragraph began with plot summary and facts. Now the paragraph begins with an arguable topic sentence that links directly to the thesis about control. More explanation was added connecting Mrs. Hugh’s fury with her desire to control Douglass. A quote was added from the text supporting the claim that education and slavery could not co-exist. The largest addition to the paragraph was developing the “so what?” explanation and analysis at the end of the paragraph telling what this connection between denial of literacy and control reveals.

In his narrative, Douglass exposes how being denied education was one of the main tactics used to keep so many blacks trapped within generations of enslavement. Douglass lived in Baltimore for 7 years as a house slave and initially his once kind mistress began to teach him to read and write until her husband forbid it. Afterwards, Mrs. Hugh became furious if she caught Douglass reading as she understood that keeping him illiterate and ignorant was her only way to maintain control over him, “She was an apt woman; and a little experience soon demonstrated, to her satisfaction, that education and slavery were incompatible with each other” (82). Mr. and Mrs. Hugh were not the only slave-owners to realize that educated people are harder to control, and that they could not indefinitely sustain control over other human beings solely through physical control. Many slave states passed laws making it illegal to teach slaves to read and write as seen in this typical law in North Carolina:

> AN ACT TO PREVENT ALL PERSONS FROM TEACHING SLAVES TO READ OR WRITE, THE USE OF FIGURES EXCEPTED. Whereas the teaching of slaves to read and write, has a tendency to excite dis-satisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion, to the manifest injury of the citizens of this State: Therefore, be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, that any free person, who shall hereafter teach, or attempt to teach, any slave within the State to read or write, the use of figures excepted, or shall give or sell to such slave or slaves any books or pamphlets, shall be liable to indictment in any court of record in this State having jurisdiction thereof. ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law")

The law then lists the punishments and for a white person it was a fine and possible imprisonment and for a free person of color they could be fined, imprisoned or whipped ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law"). The fear behind passing laws such as these reveals the certain knowledge that reading and writing can indeed lead to “insurrection and rebellion.” Revolution comes when one can read and understand laws that apply to and protect one group and yet arbitrarily exclude another. Rebellion comes when people, through reading, can gain a larger historical perspective and know what is fair and what is not. Insurrection comes when people can use the written word to communicate with and assemble the masses. This shows how physical force alone cannot control human beings for long but that something else must accompany it. The frightening truth that slave-owners and others throughout history have understood is that to fully control another person, you must limit their perceptions, their understanding of the world, and the influence of others—in essence you must also control their mind.

BODY PARAGRAPH TWO FROM THE DRAFT:

Douglass discovered that freeing his mind led to anguished torment. “As I read and contemplated the subject, behold! that very discontentment which Master Hugh had predicted would follow my learning to read had already come, to torment and sting my soul to unutterable anguish. I would at times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing. It had given me a view of my wretched condition, without the remedy. It opened my eyes to the horrible pit, but to no ladder upon which to get out. In moments of agony, I envied my fellow-slaves for their stupidity” (84). So is ignorance bliss? No, never. To be ignorant allows others to control us. Douglass realized this and after becoming

educated he joined the abolitionist movement and spent the remainder of his life fighting for the equality and rights of blacks as well as women.

REVISIONS: The paragraph was revised so it didn't begin with a fact. In the topic sentence, first a transition of time was added and then a "so what?' was added that "change was set in motion." The dropped quote was integrated in more smoothly with a phrase that introduces it and links it to the topic sentence about Douglass's despair. The quote which was very long was separated with some commentary in between. Again the largest revision came with the added analysis at the end of the paragraph delving further into why ignorance is not bliss and the harms of this type of thinking.

After secretly learning to read and write on his own, Douglass discovered that freeing his mind led to anguished torment as he was unable to free himself from the entrenched institutions of slavery, but change at least was set in motion. Initially, being awakened to the stark realities of his condition served to plunge Douglass into despair: "As I read and contemplated the subject, behold! that very discontentment which Master Hugh had predicted would follow my learning to read had already come, to torment and sting my soul to unutterable anguish" (84). Once Douglass's eyes were opened, he suffered: "... I would at times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing. It had given me a view of my wretched condition, without the remedy. It opened my eyes to the horrible pit, but to no ladder upon which to get out. In moments of agony, I envied my fellow-slaves for their stupidity" (84). So is ignorance bliss? The answer for us to live in a decent world has to be no, never. To be ignorant allows others not only to make choices for you but to limit your choices. Not knowing the factors and people who shape your life, enables those in power to act in their own self-interest. It also makes people unable to recognize when they are victimized by unjust situations, and if you cannot see the problem, then you can never demand or bring about change. After Douglass understood the evils of slavery, he suffered initially and even entertained thoughts of suicide, but later he escaped to the north and became an influential leader in the abolitionist movement and spent the remainder of his life fighting for the equality and rights of blacks as well as women.

BODY PARAGRAPH THREE FROM THE DRAFT:

Muktar Mai in her memoir *In the Name of Honor* published in 2006, tells her story of growing up in a small village in Pakistan where girls were not educated. Mai, was sentenced to be publically gang raped by six men in a stable with 100 of her fellow villagers outside. Mai was then expected to follow custom and commit suicide, but instead she went to the police and testified against her attackers. Because she could not read or write, the officers wrote down her account but altered what she said to absolve her attackers of guilt, so when her case went to court, she lost. In spite of this,Mai still fights. She remains an outspoken advocate for women's rights, she is still pressing a retrial of her attackers, she continues to run the organization she started Mukhtar Mai Women's Welfare Organization (MMWWO), and even with many attempts to close it, she still runs a school she established in her village to educate girls.

REVISIONS: The paragraph began with plot summary of a book that had not yet been introduced. A topic sentence was added that transitioned more smoothly from the discussion of Douglass to Mai and connected back to thesis about literacy and control of people. Before Mai's horrific punishment was stated very abruptly. Now more context has been added leading up to what happened to her. Then more description of Mai's years of struggle as well as a quote from a fellow activist was added to emphasize what Mai bravely fights against. Analysis of what Mai gained was added at the end.

Unfortunately, when slavery was abolished, that did not end the practice of denying certain groups of people an education in order to control them, but it also did not end people's ability to go against societal norms, educate themselves, and fight for change. Muktar Mai in her memoir *In the Name of Honor* published in 2006, tells her story of growing up in a small village in Pakistan where girls were not allowed to be educated. In 2002, a more powerful clan wanted to assert its power so without evidence, they accused her brother of having sexual relations with an older woman in another clan. Mai was sentenced to be publically gang raped by six men in a stable with 100 of her fellow villagers outside. Mai was then expected to follow custom and commit suicide, but instead she went to the police and testified against her attackers. Because she could not read or write, the officers wrote down her account but altered what she said to absolve her attackers of guilt, so when her case went to court, she lost. After that, she dedicated herself to learn to read and write so she could document her own story and navigate the complexities of the legal system. As Mai suffered death threats and battled a daunting and biased legal system, a fellow activist told her:

> It doesn't matter what women think, because they are not allowed to think at all! They're not allowed to learn to read and write, to find out how the world around them works. That's why illiterate women cannot defend themselves: they know nothing about their rights, and words are put into their mouths to sabotage their revolt. But we support you! Just have courage. (46)

After nearly 10 years of her case being tried in various courts and reaching all the way to the Supreme Court, all but one of the men were acquitted. The president of Pakistan has since admitted to restricting Mai's movements as the publicity her case receives puts a bad light on Pakistan, and with her attackers free, her life remains in danger to this day. In spite of all this, Mai still fights. She remains an outspoken advocate for women's rights, she is still pressing a retrial of her attackers, she continues to run the organization she started Mukhtar Mai Women's Welfare Organization (MMWWO), and she still runs a school she established in her village to educate girls. With literacy came a more confident and determined Mai and through literacy she has been able to rescue many abused women, educate scores of young girls, and reach out beyond her community and gain international recognition and support.

CONCLUSION FROM THE DRAFT:

> We shouldn't let others control us. We should fight for our rights and everyone should be allowed an equal education. No one should be denied learning to read and write. If people can't read and write then they cannot compete equally in society and they will be taken advantage of by others.

REVISIONS: The previous conclusion ran out of steam and was the weakest, least developed paragraph in the essay. It stayed very general with very sweeping "should" statements but no specific explanation of why this issue is important today and what we can do with this knowledge. The conclusion was the area of largest revision in the paper because the essay needed to end on a stronger more convincing note. A modern-day application was added using Jonathan Kozol's research about the poor quality of inner-city schools in the U.S to show how large groups of people are denied an education today. Then how we can all fight this through using our own skills of literacy was added at the end so there is a clearer call to action.

Slavery might feel very distant time wise and Pakistan might feel very far off geographically, but the issue of people being denied literacy and education is not so far removed. People are being denied education right here and right now in the United States as well, so we must all continue to be vigilant about Orwell's warning: "Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past." Those who write our history, who write our textbooks, who write our news, who write our laws, write us. In the United States, unfortunately the quality of education one receives is based on income so those living in wealthy neighborhoods get a good education but those who do not, are destined to be controlled by a wealthy elite: "Children in one set of schools are educated to be governors; children in the other set of schools are trained for being governed" (Kozol 176). Jonathan Kozol in his book *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's School* documented the inequalities in education across the U.S. in inner-city schools. He repeatedly documented the high dropout rates as so many never het high school diplomas in schools that are underfunded, underequipped, and understaffed. We cannot call ourselves a democracy if the many are ruled by the few. We need to take a lesson from Frederick Douglass and Muktar Mai and use our own literacy skills to call out injustice and mobilize people to address it, be it large scale or small: blogging, writing letters to our political representatives, emailing our friends, reposting articles on Facebook. Ignorance leads to passivity and loss of choice. Even small efforts are empowering and can effect big change.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE MAIN REVISIONS TO THE DRAFT:

- **The PIE paragraph approach was used in each paragraph:**
  - First, the "P" (point) was missing in nearly every paragraph as most paragraphs began with facts or plot summary. Therefore topic sentences were added at the beginning of each paragraph that transitioned from the paragraph that came before, linked back to the thesis about literacy and control and forward to the main point in the paragraph.
  - Second, the "I" (information) in each paragraph was decent but dropped quotes needed to be connected to phrases that introduced and explained them and additional quotes were added to fully prove and illustrate certain points.

- Third, the “E” (explanation) was underdeveloped in each paragraph so this was further developed throughout the essay to show why the issues raised were important and why the reader should care.

- **Additional context, transitions and explanation were added:**
  - When information seemed “out of the blue” or the connections to the overall discussion were unclear, more description was added or logical transitions explaining the connection directly were added.
- **The conclusion was scrapped and completely revised:**
  - The conclusion in the draft was underdeveloped, too general, and didn’t explain to the reader why control over literacy is a concern today. Outside research was added showing how the urban poor in the U.S. are denied an equal education and then what we can do individually about injustice such as this was added. The essay was about how control is taken away from us so the essay now ends on how we can regain some of that control.

Works Cited

Douglass, Frederick. Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave.
Mai, Muktar. In the Name of Honor.
http://www.historyisaweapon.com/defc...eprohibit.html

REVISIONS: The original Works Cited did not list all the references that were used in the essay. All the outside research was added and listed in alphabetical order with the second lines of each citation indented. All the book titles were also italicized. Next, the formatting for all the sources was incorrect as you cannot just list the author’s name and title of the book or just list a web link. The website http://citationmachine.net was used where you can chose to format by MLA (or other types like APA) and then plug in the information asked for based on the type of source you want to cite. Then it formats the citation for the Works Cited and for the in-text citation for you. Skyline College’s library webpage also has citation information: www.skylinecollege.edu/library/citingsources.php

Works Cited

Douglass, Frederick. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1982. 81-85. Print.

Kozol, Jonathan. *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's School*. New York, NY: Harper Perennial, 1991. 176. Print.

Mai, Muktar. *In the Name of Honor*. New York, NY: Washington Square Press, 2006. 46-165. Print

Orwell, George. *1984*. New York, NY: Plume-Harcourt Brace, 1983. 30. Print.

Rage Against the Machine, "Testify Lyrics." *Metrolyrics*. CBS Interactive Music Group, 2 Nov 1999. Web. 19 Jul 2013. <www.metrolyrics.com/testify-l...e-machine.html>.

"Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law." *History is a Weapon*. N.p., n.d. Web. 18 Jul 2013 <http://www.historyisaweapon.com/defc...eprohibit.html>.

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6.2.11.10: Creating Essay Titles

WHAT SHOULD ESSAY TITLES LOOK LIKE?

After you revise your essay and are moving onto the editing and proofreading stage in the writing process, it's time to pay closer attention to the title of your essay. Essay titles should let your reader know what your essay will be about and immediately draw in your reader's interest. Titles should also be specific enough to prepare the reader for your particular argument, so avoid vague titles like "Racism" or "Hope." Also, never turn in a formal essay with a generic title like "Paper #2" and don't use the title of the work you are writing on as your own title like *The Great Gatsby*. It is often easier to write or revise your title *after* you have written your essay and have settled on the central themes and thesis.

WHY ARE TITLES IMPORTANT?

Creating a strong, clear, appealing title is an important part of any writing task. The title is the reader's *first* introduction to your piece of writing, and first impressions matter. Therefore, you want to create a title which pulls in your reader's interest and makes him or her want to keep reading. In a college class, you want your title to make your essay stand out from the stack and make your peers and your professor drawn to read your essay.

HOW CAN I CREATE A GOOD TITLE?

You normally want to include the following features in your title:

1. It should convey the **topic** of the paper. In other words, your reader should know what the paper is going to be *about* from the title.
2. Many titles, but not all, reflect in some way, what **point** you are going to make about your topic. What *argument* are you presenting about your topic? Oftentimes, titles briefly reflect the argument or *thesis* of a writing piece.
3. A good title should also be **creative**, thought-provoking, and make the reader keep reading.

Practice: Creating Innovative Titles

For their first writing assignment, a college writing class was posed with the following paper topic:

Take a look at the gender images that surround us in the media and analyze their various meanings. What roles and stereotypes are most commonly depicted? Do you find them accurate? Harmful? Limited? Helpful? Describe the affect you feel these gender images have on us as a society using specific examples, ads, etc. as evidence.

Here are the titles of the papers students created in response to this writing assignment:

Harmful Stereotypes Genders in Society
Male and Female Roles and Stereotypes Stereotypes Between Genders
Advertising and Stereotypes Seeing Stereotypes
Harmful Stereotypical Views of Women Stereotypes
Stereotypes and Roles Gender Images
Stereotypes: Silly and Harmless Are you a Man or a Woman?
The Roles of Males and Females Societies' Stereotypes
Today's Stereotypes on Opposite Genders Stereotyping

Differences in Gender Stereotypes
The Power of Society Gender Stereotypes
How Society Categorizes Men and Women Surrounded By Stereotypes

Most of these titles clearly conveyed the topic of the assignment but they are repetitive and unoriginal. Now let's try to refine a few of these titles so they are more individually tailored to the writer's argument. Below are several of the thesis statements for these papers. Create an effective title for each paper containing such a thesis statement:

(1) Thesis statement: In film, men are always portrayed as tough, macho figures, and this image ultimately harms men as they are forced to live up to this aggressive, emotionless "ideal."

Possible Title(s):

(2) Thesis statement: Because the media depicts men and women in such narrow and stereotypical roles, people get a distorted image of what careers they can and cannot pursue.

Possible Title(s):

(3) Thesis statement: Television, which seems to continuously show women as sexual objects, limits their potential and damages their sense of self worth.

Possible Title(s):

Answer available at the end of this section.

Answers

Practice: Creating Innovative Titles

POSSIBLE TITLES:

(1) Thesis statement: In films, men are always portrayed as tough, macho figures, and this image ultimately harms men as they are forced to live up to this aggressive, emotionless "ideal."

Possible Title(s): Men in Film: Macho on the Outside, Crying on the Inside

How Movies are Making Men Tough but Emotionally Dead

(2) Thesis statement: Because the media depicts men and women in such narrow and stereotypical roles, people get a distorted image of what careers they can and cannot pursue.

Possible Title(s): Be Anything You Want to Be! Not if the Media Has Any Say

Mechanics, Surgeons and Pilots versus Nannies, Nurses and Secretaries:
How the Media Keeps Our Jobs Divided by Gender

(3) Thesis statement: Television, which seems to continuously show women as sexual objects, limits their potential and damages their sense of self worth.

Possible Title(s): Women's Heightened Sexy Factor and Lowered Self-Esteem

Woman or Thing? How TV is Changing Women into Objects

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6.2.11.11: Editing/Proofreading

WHAT IS EDITING/PROOFREADING?

When you get to this stage, the hardest part is over. At the editing/proofreading stage, you are looking at sentence clarity, grammar, punctuation, spelling and any other sentence level issues or careless mistakes that distract your readers from your main ideas. Wait to edit and proofread until you are at the finishing stage, so you don't waste time carefully fixing each sentence in a paragraph you might end up removing entirely in the revision stage.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

You don't spend a long time picking out a nice gift for someone and then wrap it in newspaper. You spent a long time on your essay, so you want the final presentation of it to be inviting and impressive. An essay that contains careless or excessive errors will tell your reader that you did not invest much time or effort and will make your reader uninterested in reading your paper.

HOW DO I DO IT?

- Check out your verb tenses. Don't feel you have to completely avoid the "passive" tense (e.g., "the ball was caught") but definitely try to have MORE **subject-verb "active" sentences**; they add power and agency to your writing (e.g., "Billy caught the ball").
- Also make sure your **verbs are in the right tense**. If you're talking about literature, keep the tense in what is called "the literary present." So a sentence in your essay to set up an example would read "When Hana *tells* Caravaggio about the English patient..." If you're writing a historical paper though, past tense is more suitable.
- **Read your essay out loud** to listen for either awkward or long sentences that could be clarified or broken up to read better.
- Check your **punctuation**. Fix any errors with quotation marks, commas, semicolons, colons, dashes, etc.
- Look for **grammatical flaws**. Be especially on the alert for mistakes you make often.
- Check your **diction (word choice)**. If you're looking for a better word, look up some possibilities in a thesaurus or if you're having usage problems (affect vs. effect for example), then check out a writer's handbook (there are many accessible online).
- Now you can check your **spelling** both with a computer spell-checker and with your own eyes to catch those words that are spelled right but used in the wrong context (like there vs. their vs. they're). Someone else's eyes are great at this point because you're probably too close to your own writing.
- Work on the **presentation** of your paper: double space your lines, maintain 1 inch margins, and prepare a title page with an original title and your vital student info. Also make sure your font is very readable (Times New Roman is the most common) and in 12 point.

Example: Sample of EDITING/PROOFREADING

(Crossed out words show where wordiness has been removed. Bold sections mean descriptive words, phrases, or transitions have been added or dull, repetitive words have been replaced.)
Bell 1

Rachel Bell
Professor Lucia Lachmayr
English 100
21 May 2013

(**Proper MLA page numbering in the top right was added to each page with the author's last name and page number. Also the generic title "**Controlling Human Beings" **was replaced with something more original.)**

Education Denied: a Recipe to Control Human Beings

In the 1940s, George Orwell warned "Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past" **(Orwell 30) (The proper in-text citations were added after the opening quotes**). In the 1990s ~~**there was**~~ a band called Rage Against the Machine, the name itself referring to a people's movement to fight against control (corporation, government or otherwise) used this mantra in their song "Testify," a warning to not silently endure **injustice (*Rage Against the Machine*)**. This ~~**is a**~~ warning ~~**that**~~ is not only relevant to the 20th century, but has been applicable since human beings started forming structures of power to control and oppress one another. This can **vividly** be seen during the times of slavery in the United States when blacks were enslaved **for two and a half centuries**. In Frederick Douglass's novel *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave,* Douglass reveals how this **long and brutal** control of human beings was partly accomplished through control over literacy. The control and limitations over reading and writing during slavery sought to make slaves like Douglass ignorant, powerless, and therefore more easily controlled, and this control over literacy and education is still happening in the world today.

In his narrative, Douglass exposes how being denied education was one of the main tactics used to keep so many blacks trapped within generations of enslavement. Douglass lived in Baltimore for 7 years as a house slave ~~**and initially his once kindly mistress, Mrs. Hugh, began to teach him to read and write until her husband forbid it.**~~ and was forbidden by his masters Mr. and Mrs. Hugh to (**Originally the three words in bold immediately below were "control" but a thesaurus was helpful to find words to get rid of that repetition.)**

read or write Mrs. Hugh became furious if she caught Douglass reading as she understood that keeping him illiterate and ignorant was her only way to maintain **power** over him, "She was an apt woman; and a little experience soon demonstrated, to her satisfaction, that education and slavery were incompatible with each other" (82). Mr. and Mrs. Hugh were not the only slave-owners to realize that educated people are harder to **subjugate**, and that they could not indefinitely sustain control over other human beings solely through physical **coercion**. Many slave states passed laws making it illegal to teach slaves to read and write as seen in this typical law in North Carolina:

> AN ACT TO PREVENT ALL PERSONS FROM TEACHING SLAVES TO READ OR WRITE, THE USE OF FIGURES EXCEPTED. Whereas the teaching of slaves to read and write, has a tendency to excite dis-satisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion, to the manifest injury of the citizens of this State: Therefore, be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, that any free person, who shall hereafter teach, or attempt to teach, any slave within the State to read or write, the use of figures excepted, or shall give or sell to such slave or slaves any books or pamphlets, shall be liable to indictment in any court of record in this State having jurisdiction thereof. ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law")

The law then ~~**goes on to list**~~ lists the punishments and for a white person it was a **hefty** fine and possible imprisonment and for a free person of color they could be fined, imprisoned or whipped **"not exceeding thirty nine lashes, nor less than twenty lashes"** ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law"). The fear behind passing laws such as these reveals the certain knowledge that reading and writing can indeed lead to "insurrection and rebellion." Revolution comes when one can read and understand laws that apply to and protect one group and yet arbitrarily exclude another. Rebellion comes when people, through reading, can gain a larger historical perspective and know what is fair**, just and reasonable and** what is not. Insurrection comes when people can use the written word to communicate with and

thereby assemble the masses. This shows how physical force alone cannot control human beings for long ~~**but that something else must accompany it.**~~ The frightening truth that slave-owners and others throughout history have understood is that to fully control another person, you must limit their perceptions, their understanding of the world, and the influence of others—in essence you must also control their mind.

After secretly learning to read and write on his own, Douglass discovered that freeing his mind led to anguished torment as he was unable to free himself from the entrenched institutions of slavery, but change at least was set in motion. ~~**Douglass starting reading various books that made convincing arguments against slavery which finally helped him form his own thoughts on the subject that had previously "died away for want of utterance" (84).**~~ Initially, being awakened to the stark realities of his condition served to plunge Douglass into despair: "As I read and contemplated the subject, behold! that very discontentment which Master Hugh had predicted would follow my learning to read had already come, to torment and sting my soul to unutterable anguish" (84). Once Douglass's eyes were opened, he **invariably** suffered: "... I would at times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing. It had given me a view of my wretched condition, without the remedy. It opened my eyes to the horrible pit, but to no ladder upon which to get out. In moments of agony, I envied my fellow-slaves for their stupidity" (84). So is ignorance bliss? The answer for us to live in a **fair and** decent world has to be no, never. To be ignorant allows others not only to make choices for you but to limit your choices **without you even realizing it**. Not knowing the factors and people who shape your life, enables those in power to act in their own self-interest **and have no accountability when doing so**. It also makes people unable to recognize when they are victimized by unjust situations, and if you cannot see the problem, then you can never demand ~~**or bring about**~~ change.

After Douglass understood the evils of slavery, he suffered initially and even entertained thoughts of suicide, but later he escaped to the north and became an influential leader in the abolitionist movement and spent the remainder of his life fighting for the equality and rights of blacks as well as

Bell 4

women. Unfortunately, when slavery was abolished **in 1865**, that did not end the practice of denying certain groups of people an education in order to control them, but it also did not end people's ability to go against societal norms, educate themselves, and fight for change. Muktar Mai in her memoir *In the Name of Honor* published in 2006, tells her story of growing up in a small village in Pakistan where girls were not ~~**allowed to be**~~ educated. In 2002, a more powerful clan wanted to assert its power so without evidence, they accused her brother of having sexual relations with an older woman in another clan. **As a result,** Mai**, as his oldest sister,** was sentenced to be publically gang raped by six men in a stable with 100 of her fellow villagers outside. Mai was then expected to follow custom and commit suicide, but instead she went to the police and testified against her attackers. Because she could not read or write, the officers wrote down her account but altered what she said to absolve her attackers of guilt, so when her case went to court, she lost. ~~**Mai states: "The law requires that the police draw up a preliminary investigative report. And it's always the same thing: they tell the woman, 'Sign with your thumb, we'll write it down for you,' and when the report reaches the judge, the culprits are always innocent, and the woman has lied!" (Mai 164-165).**~~ After that, she dedicated herself to learn to read and write so she could document her own story and navigate the complexities of the legal system. As Mai suffered death threats and battled a daunting and biased legal system, a fellow activist told her:

> It doesn't matter what women think, because they are not allowed to think at all! They're not allowed to learn to read and write, to find out how the world around them works. That's why illiterate women cannot defend themselves: they know nothing about their rights, and words are put into their mouths to sabotage theirrevolt. But we support you! Just have courage. (46)

After nearly 10 years of her case being tried in various courts and reaching all the way to the Supreme Court, **sadly** all but one of the men were acquitted. The president of Pakistan has since admitted to restricting Mai's movements as the publicity her case receives puts a bad light on Pakistan, and with

Bell 5

her attackers free **and part of a very powerful clan**, her life remains in danger to this day. In spite of all this, Mai still fights. She remains an outspoken advocate for women's rights, she is still pressing a retrial of her attackers, she continues to run the organization she started Mukhtar Mai Women's Welfare Organization (MMWWO), **and even with many attempts to close it**, she still runs a school she established in her village to educate girls. With literacy came a more confident and determined Mai and through literacy she has been able to rescue many abused women, educate scores of young girls, and reach out beyond her community and gain international recognition and support.

Slavery might feel very distant time wise and Pakistan might feel very far off geographically, but the issue of people being denied literacy and education is not so far removed. People are being denied education right here and right now in the United States as well, so we must all continue to be vigilant about Orwell's warning: "Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past" **(Orwell 30)**. Those who write our history, who write our textbooks, who write our news, who write our laws, write us. In the United States, unfortunately the quality of education one receives is based on income **and property taxes** so those living in **affluent** neighborhoods get a good education but those who do not, are destined to be controlled by a wealthy elite: "Children in one set of schools are educated to be governors; children in the other set of schools are trained for being governed" (Kozol 176). Jonathan Kozol in his book *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's School* documented the inequalities in education across the U.S. in inner-city schools. He repeatedly documented the high dropout rates in these schools ~~**as so many never get high school diplomas in schools**~~ that are **grossly** underfunded, underequipped, and understaffed. We cannot call ourselves a **true** democracy if the many are ruled by the few. We need to take a lesson from Frederick Douglass and Muktar Mai and use our own literacy skills to call out injustice and mobilize people to address it, be it large scale or small: blogging, writing letters to our political representatives, **reading investigative books and articles**, emailing our friends, reposting articles on Facebook. Ignorance leads to **blind** passivity and loss of choice. Even small efforts are empowering and can effect ~~**big**~~ **great** change.

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6.2.11.12: Final Revision Example

Example: Final Version Sample

Rachel Bell Bell 1
Professor Lucia Lachmayr
English 100
21 May 2013

Education Denied: a Recipe to Control Human Beings

In the 1940s, George Orwell warned “Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past” (Orwell 30). In the 1990s a band called Rage Against the Machine, the name itself referring to a people’s movement to fight against control (corporation, government or otherwise) used this mantra in their song “Testify,” a warning to not silently endure injustice (Rage Against the Machine). This warning is not only relevant to the 20th century, but has been applicable since human beings started forming structures of power to control and oppress one another. This can vividly be seen during the times of slavery in the United States when blacks were enslaved for two and a half centuries. In Frederick Douglass’s novel *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave,* Douglass reveals how this long and brutal control of human beings was partly accomplished through control over literacy. The control and limitations over reading and writing during slavery sought to make slaves like Douglass ignorant, powerless, and therefore more easily controlled, and this control over literacy and education is still happening in the world today.

In his narrative, Douglass exposes how being denied education was one of the main tactics used to keep so many blacks trapped within generations of enslavement. Douglass lived in Baltimore for 7 years as a house slave and was forbidden by his masters Mr. and Mrs. Hugh to read or write. Mrs. Hugh became furious if she caught Douglass reading as she understood that keeping him illiterate and ignorant was her only way to maintain power over him, “She was an apt woman; and a little experience soon demonstrated, to her satisfaction, that education and slavery were incompatible

Bell 2

with each other” (82). Mr. and Mrs. Hugh were not the only slave-owners to realize that educated people are harder to subjugate, and that they could not indefinitely sustain control over other human beings solely through physical coercion. Many slave states passed laws making it illegal to teach slaves to read and write as seen in this typical law in North Carolina:

> AN ACT TO PREVENT ALL PERSONS FROM TEACHING SLAVES TO READ OR WRITE, THE USE OF FIGURES EXCEPTED. Whereas the teaching of slaves to read and write, has a tendency to excite dis-satisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion, to the manifest injury of the citizens of this State: Therefore, be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, that any free person, who shall hereafter teach, or attempt to teach, any slave within the State to read or write, the use of figures excepted, or shall give or sell to such slave or slaves any books or pamphlets, shall be liable to indictment in any court of record in this State having jurisdiction thereof. ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law")

The law then lists the punishments and for a white person it was a hefty fine and possible imprisonment and for a free person of color they could be fined, imprisoned or whipped “not exceeding thirty nine lashes, nor less than twenty lashes” ("Slaves Are Prohibited to Read and Write by Law"). The fear behind passing laws such as these reveals the certain knowledge that reading and writing can indeed lead to “insurrection and rebellion.” Revolution comes when one can read and understand laws that apply to and protect one group and yet arbitrarily exclude another. Rebellion comes when people, through reading, can gain a larger historical perspective and know what is fair, just and reasonable and what is not. Insurrection comes when people can use the written word to communicate with and thereby assemble the masses. This shows how physical force alone cannot control human beings for long. The frightening truth that slave-owners and others throughout history have understood is that to fully control

Bell 3

another person, you must limit their perceptions, their understanding of the world, and the influence of others—in essence you must also control their mind.

After secretly learning to read and write on his own, Douglass discovered that freeing his mind led to anguished torment as he was unable to free himself from the entrenched institutions of slavery, but change at least was set in motion. Initially, being awakened to the stark realities of his condition served to plunge Douglass into despair: "As I read and contemplated the subject, behold! that very discontentment which Master Hugh had predicted would follow my learning to read had already come, to torment and sting my soul to unutterable anguish" (84). Once Douglass's eyes were opened, he invariably suffered: "... I would at times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing. It had given me a view of my wretched condition, without the remedy. It opened my eyes to the horrible pit, but to no ladder upon which to get out. In moments of agony, I envied my fellow-slaves for their stupidity" (84). So is ignorance bliss? The answer for us to live in a fair and decent world has to be no, never. To be ignorant allows others not only to make choices for you but to limit your choices without you even realizing it. Not knowing the factors and people who shape your life, enables those in power to act in their own self-interest and have no accountability when doing so. It also makes people unable to recognize when they are victimized by unjust situations, and if you cannot see the problem, then you can never demand change. After Douglass understood the evils of slavery, he suffered initially and even entertained thoughts of suicide, but later he escaped to the north and became an influential leader in the abolitionist movement and spent the remainder of his life fighting for the equality and rights of blacks as well as women.

Unfortunately, when slavery was abolished in 1865, that did not end the practice of denying certain groups of people an education in order to control them, but it also did not end people's ability to go against societal norms, educate themselves, and fight for change. Muktar Mai in her memoir *In the Name of Honor* published in 2006, tells her story of growing up in a small village in Pakistan where girls were not educated. In 2002, a more powerful clan wanted to assert its power so without evidence, they accused her brother of having sexual relations with an older woman in

Bell 4

another clan. As a result, Mai, as his oldest sister, was sentenced to be pubically gang raped by six men in a stable with 100 of her fellow villagers outside. Mai was then expected to follow custom and commit suicide, but instead she went to the police and testified against her attackers. Because she could not read or write, the officers wrote down her account but altered what she said to absolve her attackers of guilt, so when her case went to court, she lost. After that, she dedicated herself to learn to read and write so she could document her own story and navigate the complexities of the legal system. As Mai suffered death threats and battled a daunting and biased legal system, a fellow activist told her:

> It doesn't matter what women think, because they are not allowed to think at all! They're not allowed to learn to read and write, to find out how the world around them works. That's why illiterate women cannot defend themselves: they know nothing about their rights, and words are put into their mouths to sabotage their revolt. But we support you! Just have courage. (46)

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Bell 5

to be vigilant about Orwell's warning: "Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past" (Orwell 30). Those who write our history, who write our textbooks, who write our news, who write our laws, write us. In the United States, unfortunately the quality of education one receives is based on income and property taxes so those living in

affluent neighborhoods get a good education but those who do not, are destined to be controlled by a wealthy elite: “Children in one set of schools are educated to be governors; children in the other set of schools are trained for being governed” (Kozol 176). Jonathan Kozol in his book *Savage Inequalities: Children in America’s School* documented the inequalities in education across the U.S. in inner-city schools. He repeatedly documented the high dropout rates in these schools that are grossly underfunded, under equipped, and understaffed. We cannot call ourselves a true democracy if the many are ruled by the few. We need to take a lesson from Frederick Douglass and Muktar Mai and use our own literacy skills to call out injustice and mobilize people to address it, be it large scale or small: blogging, writing letters to our political representatives, reading investigative books and articles, emailing our friends, re-posting articles on Facebook. Ignorance leads to blind passivity and loss of choice. Even small efforts are empowering and can effect great change.

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6.2.11.13: Essay Checklist

Essay Checklist

Essay Checklist:* To ensure you have a complete essay, *you will want to check off all of the following*: *Student Name:

PAPER TOPIC:

___ The essay responds to all parts of the assignment and effectively fulfills all the requirements.
___ The essay is an analysis of/argument about the text(s).

PAPER FORMATTING:
___ The essay is double spaced with 1-inch margins at the top, sides and bottom of each page.
___ There is no extra spacing between paragraphs, just half inch indents at the start of each paragraph.
___ The essay meets the minimum page requirements.
___ The paper title is appropriate, creative and draws in reader interest.
___ The title page and numbering are properly formatted according to standard conventions (i.e. MLA).
___ The names of the texts are properly formatted (names of longer works likes books and plays are italicized or underlined, and titles of shorter works like chapter titles and short stories are in quotes)
___ I included a Work Cited page citing the primary text I wrote about as well as any outside research.

INTRODUCTION:
___ My introduction names the text(s) I am analyzing (title & author).
___ My introduction contains a thesis that is clear and arguable and has a clear “so what?”
___ My introduction is quick to capture reader interest and strongly orients the reader.

BODY PARAGRAPHS:
___ Each paragraph has a clear topic sentence stating a claim that directly supports the thesis.
___ Each paragraph contains supporting information (evidence) and analysis (so what?”).
___ The paragraphs are focused, fair, reasonable, logical and contain clear transitions.

CONCLUSION:
___ The conclusion leads to a larger significance and does not simply summarize the points made.

PLAGIARISM:
___ I have not plagiarized in this paper and know the repercussions if I have plagiarized.
___ I have cited all borrowed ideas and put all borrowed language in quotes.

INTEGRATING SOURCES:
___ I have included quotes and paraphrases from the reading.
___ All quotes are connected to phrases that introduce them—there are no “dropped” quotes.
___ I have followed all quotes with page numbers in parenthesis (and/or author depending on citation).
___ All quotes fit in logically and are accompanied with analysis that expresses the quote’s significance.
___ If I used outside research, it was credible, it met the required number of sources, and it was used to directly support my argument.

STYLE:
___ I have crafted sentences with attention to word choice, sentence combining, sentence variety, parallelism and have eliminated wordiness to create concise, purposeful and coherent sentences.

GRAMMAR-PUNCTUATION-SPELLING:
___ The paper is carefully proofread and the sentence-level errors have been corrected.

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6.2.11.14: THINKING CRITICALLY ABOUT RESEARCH

6.2.11.14.1: What is “Research” and Why Should I Use It?

6.2.11.14.2: What’s Different about Academic Research?

6.2.11.14.3: Primary Research Versus Secondary Research

6.2.11.14.4: Scholarly versus Non-Scholarly Sources

6.2.11.14.5: Sources that are Both Scholarly and Non-Scholarly?

6.2.11.14.6: The Internet- The Researcher’s Challenge

6.2.11.14.7: Evaluating the Quality and Credibility of Your Research

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6.2.11.14.1: What is “Research” and Why Should I Use It?

Research always begins with the goal of answering a question. In your quest to answer basic research questions, you turn to a variety of different sources for evidence: reference resources, people, evaluative and opinionated articles, and other sources. All along the way, you continually evaluate and re-evaluate the credibility of your sources.

For example, if you wanted to find out where you could buy the best computer within your budget, your question might be “what kind of computer should I buy and where should I buy it?” To answer your questions about computers, the first research tool you might use is the phone book, where you would look up “Computer retailers” in the yellow pages. You might also ask friends where they got their computers and what they thought were the best (and worst) stores to go to. You would probably also talk to your friends about the kind of computer they bought: a Windows-based PC versus a Macintosh computer, or a desktop versus a laptop computer, for example. You could go to a computer store and ask the salespeople for their advice, though you would perhaps be more critical of what they tell you since they are biased. After all, salespeople are trying to sell you a computer that they sell in their stores, not necessarily the “best” computer for the amount of money you want to spend. To get the opinions of computer experts, you might do research in computer magazines or web sites, looking for reviews and ratings of different models of computers in your price range.

Of course, you could skip this research process entirely. You could simply go to a store and buy the first computer in your budget based on nothing more than a “gut feeling” or based on some criteria that has little to do with the quality of the computer—the color, for example.

Who knows? By just guessing like this, you might actually end up with a computer as good as you would have ended up with after your research. After all, researchers can never be *certain* that the evidence they find to answer their research questions is entirely correct, and the fact that there are different kinds of computers available suggests it is possible for people to look at the research and reach different conclusions about what is the “best computer.” Talk to loyal Macintosh computer owners and you will get a very different answer about “the best” kind of computer than you will from loyal Windows PC owners!

Nonetheless, the likelihood is quite high that the computer you bought after careful research is a better choice than the computer you would have bought after conducting no research at all. Most of us would agree that you have a better chance of being “right” about your choice of computer (and just about anything else) if that choice is informed by research.

Exercise 1.1

Working alone or collaboratively in small groups, answer the following questions:

- What are some examples of some of the decisions you have made that were based on a research method similar to the one described here? What do you think would have been the result of your decision had you not done any research?
- Can you think of any decisions that you have made that were not based on research? Would these decisions have turned out more favorably had you conducted some basic research?
- What kinds of decisions do think are potentially best made without research?

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6.2.11.14.2: What's Different about Academic Research?

The reasons academics and scholars conduct research are essentially the same as the reasons someone does research on the right computer to buy: to find information and answers to questions with a method that has a greater chance of being accurate than a guess or a "gut feeling." College professors in a history department, physicians at a medical school, graduate students studying physics, college juniors in a literature class, students in an introductory research writing class—all of these people are members of the academic community, and they all use research to find answers to their questions that have a greater chance of being "right" than making guesses or betting on feelings.

Students in an introductory research writing course are "academics," the same as college professors? **Generally speaking, yes.** You might not think of yourself as being a part of the same group as college professors or graduate students, but when you enter a college classroom, you are joining the academic community in the sense that you are expected to use your research to support your ideas and you are agreeing to the conventions of research within your discipline. Another way of looking at it: first-year college students and college professors more or less follow the same "rules" when it comes to making points supported by research and evidence.

A Student Profile: Daniel Marvins, New to Academic Research

Daniel Marvins is a first year college student at a large public university in the Midwest. While he certainly wrote plenty of essays when he was in high school, Marvins thought that the kind of research writing his teacher was asking him to do for his writing class was different.

"In high school, we wrote more about stories and poems and newspaper articles we read," Marvins said. "We didn't do a lot of research, other than looking things up on the web."

Marvins was ready for the challenge of tackling the thinking and research that would be expected of him in college. But he still wasn't sure about being "an academic." "I never thought of it that way, because I didn't really see how the stuff I had to write for school made me anything like my teachers. But I guess I'm starting to see the connection."

Read Marvins' "Working Thesis Essay" in Chapter 5.

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6.2.11.14.3: Primary Research Versus Secondary Research

Before you begin to answer your questions, you'll need to know about two types of research: primary research and secondary research. And, you'll need to learn about the differences between them.

Primary research is usually the "raw stuff" of research—the materials that researchers gather on their own and then analyze in their writing. For example, primary research would include the following:

- The experiments done by chemists, physicists, biologists, and other scientists.
- Researcher-conducted interviews, surveys, polls, or observations.
- The particular documents or texts (novels, speeches, government documents, and so forth) studied by scholars in fields like English, history, or political science.

Secondary research is usually considered research from texts where one researcher is quoting someone else to make a point. For example, secondary research would include the following:

- An article in a scientific journal that reported on the results of someone else's experiment.
- A magazine or newspaper account of an interview, survey, or poll done by another researcher.
- An article in a scholarly journal or a book about a particular novel or speech.

When you quote from another article in your research project, your writing becomes an example of secondary research. When other researchers quote information from your research project in *their* research project, *your* research project is considered a secondary source for them. And if a researcher decides to write about you (a biography, for example) and if that researcher examines and quotes from some of the writings you did in college-- like the research project you are working on right now-- then your project would probably be considered a primary source.

Obviously, the divisions between primary and secondary research are not crystal-clear. But even though these differences between primary and secondary research are somewhat abstract, the differences are good ones to keep in mind as you consider what to research and as you conduct your research. For example, if you were writing a research project on the connection between pharmaceutical advertising and the high cost of prescription drugs, it would be useful and informative to consider the differences between primary research on the subject (an article where the researcher documents statistical connections) and the secondary research (an essay where another researcher summarizes a variety of studies done by others).

Of course, the term "secondary" research has nothing to do with the quality or value of the research; it just means that to answer the questions of your research project and to support your point, you are relying in great part on the observations and opinions of others.

Most research projects completed by students in writing classes are based almost exclusively in secondary research because most students in introductory writing classes don't have the time, resources, or expertise to conduct credible primary research. However, sometimes some modest primary research is a realistic option. For example, if you were writing about the dangers of Internet-based computer crime and someone on your campus was an expert in the subject and was available for an interview, your interview of her would be primary research. If you were writing about the problems of parking on your campus, you might conduct some primary research in the form of observations, surveys of the students that drive and try to park on campus, interviews of the campus officials in charge of parking, and so forth.

Exercise 1.2

Working alone or collaboratively in small groups, answer the following questions:

- What other sorts of evidence do you think you would find that would count as "primary" research? What other sorts of evidence do you think would count as "secondary" research?
- Think about the kind of topics you are interested in researching and writing about. What sorts of "primary" research can you imagine examining that might be useful in your writing? What sorts of "secondary" research can you imagine examining that might be useful in your writing?

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6.2.11.14.4: Scholarly versus Non-Scholarly Sources

Before you begin to research you should be aware of the difference between “scholarly” and “non-scholarly” or popular sources.

Scholarly or academic publications are those where academics publish their research and opinions about topics of concern in their discipline. By and large, scholarly publications are highly specialized periodicals, as many of their titles suggest: *College Composition and Communication, Foodservice Research International,* or the *Journal of Analytic Social Work*. Scholarly periodicals tend to be published less frequently than popular sources, perhaps monthly, quarterly, or even less often. For the most part, the readers of scholarly journals are scholars themselves interested in the specific field of the publication—in other words, the articles in these publications are written for academics (both students and teachers) interested in the field, not a “general audience.” Because of the audience, the language of academic journals is often specialized and potentially difficult to understand for a reader not familiar with the field.

Scholarly or academic sources tend to be kind of bland in appearance: other than charts, graphs, and illustrations that appear predominantly in scientific publications, most academic journals include few color photos or flashy graphics. Most academic journals are not published in order to make a profit: while they frequently include some advertising, they usually only include a few ads to offset publication costs. Also, most academic journals are associated with academic organizations or institutions that subsidize and support their publication. Unless you are a subscriber, chances are the only place you will find most of these journals in your college or university library.

Usually, the articles that appear in academic journals indicate where the writer’s evidence comes from with footnotes, end notes, or information in parentheses. Most academic articles end with a “bibliography” or a “works cited” page, which is a list of the research the writer used in his essay. This practice—generally called “citation”—is particularly important in scholarly writing because the main audience of these articles (other scholars) is keenly interested in knowing where the writers got their information. As a member of the academic community, you too will have to follow some system of citation in the research project you do for this and other classes.

Hyperlink: See “Chapter 12: Citing Your Researching Using MLA or APA Style.”

Non-scholarly or popular sources tend to be written by journalists and writers who are not necessarily experts about the subject they are writing about. While there certainly are specialized popular sources, they tend to have names most of us have seen on the magazine racks of grocery and drug stores—*GQ, Cosmopolitan, Better Homes and Gardens, Sports Illustrated,* and so on—and even specialized popular sources tend to be written with a more general audience in mind. Writers of popular sources reach a general and broad audience by keeping the style of the writing in their articles approachable to people from a variety of different educational backgrounds—not necessarily members of the academic community.

Many popular periodicals are published weekly and almost all of them are published at least monthly. They tend to be visually appealing with lots of color photographs, graphics, and advertisements. Almost all popular sources are intended to make a profit, and some of the better known periodicals (*Time* or *Newsweek,* for example) sell millions of copies every week. Finally, popular sources rarely provide citation information about where the writer got her information.

Generally speaking, academic and non-academic books have characteristics that are similar to academic and non-academic periodicals. Academic books tend to be written by and for academics, are usually somewhat bland in appearance, tend to be published by companies that are supported by academic institutions, and tend to be only available at academic libraries or specialized bookstores. Non-academic books tend to be written by journalists or other writers trying to reach a more general audience, they are more eye-catching in appearance, they are published by large and for profit publishing companies, and they are more readily available at public libraries and bookstores.

Scholarly versus Non-Scholarly or Popular Sources

Scholarly Sources	Non-Scholarly or Popular Sources
Usually titled according to their specialization (*College English, Journal of Analytic Social Work,* etc.)	Often titled in ways that have little to do with their focus (*Newsweek, Time, People,* etc.)
Contain articles written by and for academics with language that is highly specialized for academic readers	Contain articles written by journalists and in a language that is for a non-academic reader

Scholarly Sources	Non-Scholarly or Popular Sources
Often published less frequently than monthly	Almost always published at least monthly, and often weekly
Usually fairly bland in appearance	Visually appealing and attractive in appearance
Generally not published “for profit” and usually supported by an academic organization or institution	Generally published “for profit,” and many well-known popular publications are very profitable; often supported by very large corporations
Almost always available only through subscription or at an academic library	Almost always readily available at bookstores, grocery and convenience stores
Most publish fewer than 5,000 copies of an issue	Many publish tens of thousands of copies each issue
Its articles follow some sort of citation system (MLA or APA, for example) that allow its readers to know where the writer’s research comes from	Very rarely contain any sort of citation information that allows readers to know where writers found their information

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6.2.11.14.5: Sources that are Both Scholarly and Non-Scholarly?

While these differences between scholarly and non-scholarly sources might seem straight-forward, many publications are somewhere in between scholarly and non-scholarly. A journal like *College English* is clearly an academic source and a magazine like *People* is clearly a popular source. But categorizing magazines like *Ms., Harper's,*or *The Atlantic* is more difficult since these publications tend to publish articles that are in many ways similar to the articles published in more academic sources.

Another difficult to categorize source is corporate or "trade" journals. Most professions and industries have highly specialized publications about that particular business. For example, *Human Resource Executive* is targeted to professionals who work in Human Resources departments, *Accounting Today* is for and about the accounting business, and *Advertising Age* focuses on the advertising industry. While most of the writers and editors of trade journals do not have scholarly backgrounds, they tend to be highly focused and knowledgeable about their business. An article about hiring trends in *Human Resource Executive* will probably have more in common with an academic source than it will with a popular source.

A third "in between" type of research resource is newspapers. On the one hand, most newspapers would seem to share the characteristics of non-scholarly or popular sources: they are written for a general audience by writers who are not necessarily experts, they include many photographs and graphics, and so on. However, a number of publications like *The Chronicle of Higher Education* are quite different from most newspapers because they are written for a specialized audience, like college and community college teachers and administrators. Further, newspapers tend to be used by a wide variety of readers and writers--including scholars-- as a source of basic and reliable information about day-to-day events.

In research writing courses, teachers will often insist students use only or mostly scholarly sources in their research projects because, as is discussed in some detail in the next section in this chapter, **scholarly sources tend to be more credible and reliable than non-scholarly sources.** This is not to say that popular sources aren't credible or reliable; clearly, most of them are, and in many cases, specialized popular sources can be very useful in academic research. A research project about computer crime may very well include relevant information from a popular source like *WIRED* or a trade publication written for people who work in the computer industry.

However, scholarly sources are generally considered *more* credible and reliable than popular sources. They tend to publish articles that go into more detail about their subjects, they are written for a more knowledgeable audience, and they are written by experts.

Exercise 1.3

Working alone or collaboratively in small groups, consider the following questions:

- What sorts of scholarly sources are you and your classmates already familiar with? What sorts of non-scholarly sources of evidence are you already familiar with that might be useful for your research process?
- Think about the kind of topics you are interested in researching and writing about. Are you aware of any scholarly sources where you are likely to find research on your topic? What about popular or non-scholarly publications?
- If you are not yet familiar with specific titles of scholarly or popular sources that might be relevant for your topic, what kind of research would you conduct to find these sources?

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6.2.11.14.6: The Internet- The Researcher's Challenge

Along with the distinction between primary and secondary sources and the distinction between scholarly and non-scholarly publications, you now need to consider a relatively new type of research source as you gather your evidence: the Internet, particularly the World Wide Web. The Internet started up almost 30 years ago, and elements like electronic mail ("email") and bulletin board newsgroup discussions have been around for quite some time.

Widespread use of the Internet really took off in the early 1990s with the development of the World Wide Web and browser software like Mosaic, Netscape, and Internet Explorer. In fact, the Web has become such a powerful research resource that many beginning research writing students wonder why they should go to the library at all.

Hyperlink: See the section "What's 'a library?' & 'What's The Internet?'" in Chapter 2, "Understanding and Using the Library and the Internet for Research."

The Web has become such a powerful medium in part because it has such a far reach—literally, anyone anywhere in the world who is connected to the World Wide Web with the right computer and the right software can access almost any of the hundreds of millions of "pages" and other documents on the Web. But it also has grown so quickly because it is relatively easy to put documents on to the Web. In fact, you too might consider exploring some of the options through your school or through a commercial service for joining the World Wide Web community by publishing your research project on the Web.

Hyperlink: See the section "The Web-based Research Project" in Chapter 11, "Alternative Ways to Present Your Research."

Nowadays, the Web has become dominated by corporate and "mainstream" sites that are advertised on television and in traditional magazines and newspapers, which means that it is difficult for an individual's Web site to compete with the Web sites of *The New York Times* or amazon.com. But individuals can still publish their own Web sites, and individually published Web sites can still attract a large and international audience.

Indeed, one of the great strengths of the World Wide Web is that just about anyone can put up "professional looking" Web pages that can reach a potential audience of millions. However, this strength of the Web is also its weakness, at least as far as being a good place to look for research because ***anyone*** can publish what appears to be a "professional" Web site, regardless of his or qualifications.

This fact means the Web is significantly different from more traditional sources of research. Most scholarly publications are closely scrutinized by editors and other scholars within a particular field. Further, the articles that appear in even the most non-scholarly of popular sources pass through a variety of different writers and editors before they make it to press.

The problem with many Web pages is that the review process and editors that we assume to be in place with traditional print sources are simply not there. For example, it would be easy for me to fabricate a Web site (complete with charts, graphs, and fake statistics) that argued that students and teachers who used this textbook became more fit, richer, and better-looking. Such inaccurate claims would never pass the review process of a scholarly journal or a popular magazine--with the possible exception of the sort of tabloid we all see at the grocery store check-out that reports on Elvis sightings. But on the Web, it is just another page which, if someone finds it "believable," could be included in someone's research writing.



Figure 6.2.11.14.6.1 - *The Dihydrogen Monoxide Research Division web site, <http://www.dhmo.org>, certainly looks like an official and reliable web site. What seems to make it a bit suspect? What exactly is Dihydrogen Monoxide, anyway?*

More seriously, many deceptive and "professional" looking Web pages present *very* inaccurate and misleading information and they are not intended to be jokes. Some of these pages are the work of various hate groups—racists or Holocaust deniers, for example—and some of these sites seem to be the work of con artists. But when these sites are read uncritically, they can cause serious problems for academic researchers.

Of course, not *everything* you find on the Web is untrustworthy. Far from it. For one thing, the lines between what counts as an Internet source and a more traditional "print" source are beginning to blur. There are numerous online databases available in many libraries that have complete text versions of articles from academic and popular periodicals, and the articles from these databases are every bit as reliable as the traditional print sources.

Hyperlink: See the discussion about electronically available periodicals in the section "Journals, Magazines, and Newspapers" in Chapter 2, "Understanding and Using the Library and the Internet for Research."

Additionally, more and more traditional print sources are creating and maintaining Web sites. Almost all of the most popular news magazines, newspapers, and television networks have Web pages that either reproduce information available in more traditional formats or that publish articles specifically for the Web. More and more scholarly publications are becoming available on the Web as well, and considering the international reach and low cost of publishing on the Web, it seems inevitable that more (maybe most) academic journals will eventually move from being traditional print journals to ones available only online.

Conversely, not everything you find in traditional print publications—either scholarly or non-scholarly—is always accurate and truthful. Despite the safeguards that most academic and popular publications follow to ensure they publish truthful and accurate articles, there are all sorts of examples of inaccuracies in print.

More common and therefore perhaps more problematic, small errors and misrepresentations appear in both academic and popular sources, evidence that the process of editorial review is not perfect. And what "counts" as true or accurate in many fields is a question of some debate and uncertainty, and this is frequently reflected in published articles of all sorts.

Here's my point: as I will discuss in the next section of this chapter, the best way to ensure that your evidence is reliable, regardless of where you found that evidence, is to seek out a variety of different types of evidence and to think critically about the quality and credibility of your sources. This is particularly true with Web-based research.

Exercise 1.4

Working alone or collaboratively in small groups, consider the following questions:

- Think of a web site that you visit on a regular basis. What makes this site a useful and credible resource for you?
- Are there any Web sites that you have come across that you thought were not believable or credible? Why did you find this site not believable?

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6.2.11.14.7: Evaluating the Quality and Credibility of Your Research

Finding evidence that answers a question is only the first part of the research process. You also have to evaluate the quality and credibility of your research. Inevitably, as we've already seen in this chapter, you do this as you consider the origins of your research—primary versus secondary research, scholarly versus popular sources, the Internet, and so forth. But evaluating the quality and credibility of your research is more subtle and complicated than just determining the source of the evidence. Consider again the example from the beginning of this chapter about deciding which computer to buy. One of the things you would have to weigh is the credibility of the information you received from your friends compared to the information you received from a salesperson at the computer store. You can probably count on your friends to be trustworthy and honest, but they might not know much about computers. Conversely, while a salesperson might know a lot about computers, you may be uncertain to what extent you can trust him to give you the best advice. The salesperson wants to sell you a computer, which means that his motivations might be consciously or unconsciously influencing the information he is providing you.

Who should you trust? We have all been in situations like this, and there is no easy way to answer that question. Chances are, you'll make your computer decision based on your interpretation of the evidence and based on what you perceive to be the reliability and credibility of your different sources. If someone else were faced with the same computer decision and the same evidence, they might make a different choice. That is why there are different kinds of computers on the market and that is why different people can do the same sort of research about "the best" computer and why they can arrive at different conclusions.

Academic research is not much different in the sense that different researchers, considering the same or similar evidence, often arrive at different conclusions. Academic research rarely provides clear answers in the sense of definitively knowing the "rights" and "wrongs" about some issue. Not all academics think that computer hacking is wrong (or right), that the solution to commercial over-fishing is strict international control, or that F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby* depicts the connection between material goods and the American dream. Rather, there are debates about these issues, differences of interpretation and opinion that result from different researchers looking at the same evidence.

Furthermore, the debates about differences of opinion on how to interpret evidence are good and healthy because these discussions further our understanding of complex issues. If we all agreed that something was true, then there would be no point in conducting research and writing about it. Indeed, if we all agreed about everything and had all of our questions answered as well as we thought possible, there would be no point to education at all!

Ultimately, there is no easy formula for evaluating the credibility and reliability of research. But there are some basic questions you should ask about your all of your evidence to ensure it is reliable and credible:

- Who wrote it?
- What do you think motivated the writer?
- Where was it published?
- When was it written?

Who wrote or said it?

Is there an author named with the evidence?

If your evidence does not name the author, it might still be reliable, especially if you have confidence about where the evidence was published. However, most credible and reliable publications tell readers who wrote the articles they contain.

On Web pages and other Internet-based sources, it can sometimes be tricky to find the name of the Web page's author. Many web sites don't name an author, which, given the nature of the Web, should send up red flags for you as a researcher regarding the credibility of the evidence. But like print publications, more credible Web pages will include the name of the page's writer. Be sure to look for the writer's name throughout the particular page (including the bottom) and related pages within the Web site.

What are the qualifications of the author?

Does he or she seem to be an expert in the field?

Have he or she written about this topic before?

Are there other experiences that seem to uniquely qualify him or her as a reliable and credible source on this topic?

Many academic publications will give a lot of detail about their authors, including their degrees and academic training, the institution where they work (if they are a college professor or instructor), and other publications they have had in the past. Popular sources tend to include less information about their writers, though they too will often indicate in a byline (where the writer's name is listed in a magazine or newspaper article) if the writer is a reporter, contributing editor, or editor for a particular subject.

Credible web sources will also describe the qualifications of the source's author or authors. If you can find an author's name on a Web site but you can't find anything about their qualifications on their research subject, you should be suspicious about what that research has to say.

Have you come across the writer based on some of the other research you have done?

After you have conducted a bit of research on your topic, you might find yourself coming across the same authors writing similar articles in different publications. You might also find different publications referring to the author or her work, which would suggest that the author is indeed reliable and credible in her field. After all, if other articles and writers refer positively to a particular writer or her articles again and again, then it seems likely that the often-referred-to writer is credible.

Understanding and trusting the expertise of the author of your evidence is probably the most crucial test of credibility and reliability of that evidence.

> Simply put, academics find evidence that comes from an author who is a credible expert to be much more persuasive than evidence that does not come from an expert.

For example, while my mom is a reliable source of information regarding many different topics, it would do you little good for me to interview her for an academic research project about the problems of over-fishing. Mind you, I value my mom's thoughts and wisdom, and she might have some things to say about the effects of decreased catches of fish that I find insightful. However, because my mom doesn't have any expertise about commercial fishing and because she doesn't know anything more (or less) about it than most people, most of the readers of my research project won't be persuaded by what she has to say.

On the other hand, my mother was a hospice work for many years, working with terminally ill patients and their families. If I were conducting research about the advantages and disadvantages of hospice care for terminally ill patients, my mom might be a very interesting and credible source.

What do you think motivated the writer?

Is the writer identified with a particular organization or group that might have a specific interest in the subject of the writing?

This can often be the source of conscious or unconscious bias. An obvious example: a writer who is identified as a member of the National Riflemen's Association, which represents a variety of Americans particularly interested in protecting the right to own guns, will certainly have a different view on gun ownership than a member of The Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, an organization working to enact gun control legislation.

You need to be particularly careful with Web-based sources of research when considering the writer's affiliation with different groups or organizations. There have been numerous incidents where Web page writers falsely claimed their Web pages were affiliated with particular groups or causes.

Does the writer identify himself or herself with an explicit political group or party?

Considering a writer's politics is particularly important when thinking about the credibility of a Web site. Besides the ease with

which a writer can misrepresent themselves or others, the low cost and wide reach of the Web has also made it an attractive forum for hate groups, terrorists, and other "fringe" political movements. This doesn't automatically mean the information you find on reactionary or radical Web sites is wrong; however, writers with particularly strong and extreme politics frequently present information that is biased to the point of inaccuracy.

Of course, while it is important to consider why a writer wrote about her subject and to think about how her motivations impact how she wrote about his or her subject, having a particular bias or motivation doesn't automatically lead to a lack of credibility or reliability.

Where was it published?

Was the piece of writing published in an academic or non-academic source? A book, a journal, a magazine, etc.? I've already discussed this a great deal in this chapter; generally speaking, academic sources are considered more credible than non-academic sources, and print-based sources are generally considered more credible than web-based sources.

But there are some more subtle tests of credibility and reliability concerning where a piece of research was published. For example, single-authored or co-authored scholarly books on a particular subject might be more regarded as more credible than a scholarly journal article because books go into much greater detail on topics than journal articles.

Are you familiar with the publication? If you are a new researcher to a particular field of study this can be a difficult question to answer since you might not have heard of some of the more well-known and credible publications known in that field. But once you get to know the field better (which will inevitably be the case as you conduct more research on your topic), chances are you will begin to realize certain publications are seen by experts in the field as more credible than others.

When was it written?

Last, but far from least, the date of publication can dramatically effect the credibility of your research. Obviously, this is especially important for date-sensitive research topics. If you were writing a research project about the Internet and the World Wide Web, chances are any research older than about 1990 or so would be of limited use since the Web literally did not exist before 1990.

But other potentially less obvious topics of research have date sensitive components to them. For example, if you were doing research on cigarette smoking or drunk driving, you would have to be careful about evaluating the credibility of research from the 1970s or 1960s or earlier since cultural "norms" in the United States for both smoking and drinking have changed a great deal.

Knowing (or rather, *not* knowing) the date of publication of a piece of research is yet another thing to be worried about when evaluating the credibility of Web-based sources. Many Web sites do not include any information about the date of publication or the date when the page was last updated. This means that you have no way of knowing when the information on that dateless page was published.

The date of publication is a key piece of information, the sort of thing that is always included in more print sources. Again, just because the date of publication or update is missing from a Web site does not automatically discount it as a credible source; however, it should make you suspicious.

Exercise 1.5

Working alone or collaboratively in small groups, consider a variety of different types of research—articles from scholarly and non-scholarly sources, newspaper articles, books, web sites, and other types of evidence. Using the criteria discussed here, how would you rate the quality and credibility of your research? Which of your sources seems the most reliable? Are there any pieces of evidence that, upon closer examination, do not seem credible or reliable?

Evidence Quality and Credibility Checklist

Who wrote or said it?

- The writer's name
- Qualifications
- Expertise in the field
- Previous publications on the topic
- Unique experiences of the writer

Why did the source write or say it?

- Association with an organization or group
- The writer's stated or implied politics

Where (what source) was it published?

- Academic/scholarly source versus non-academic/popular source
- Prior knowledge of publication

When was it published or said?

And when it comes to evidence from the 'net and World Wide Web...

- It's still important to know **who** wrote it, **why** you think they wrote it, **where** you found it online, and **when** was it published.
- If you **don't know** the answers to the who/why/where/when questions, you should be skeptical of the evidence.
- Don't be fooled by Web sites that "look" real, because...
- **Anybody can publish information on the Web, no matter what that information is.** Unlike most scholarly and many non-scholarly publications, Web writers don't have to have the work reviewed by editors and publishers to reach an audience.
- **The Internet and the World Wide Web are still good places to find research.** You just have to be a bit more careful with them.

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6.2.11.15: THE RESEARCH ESSAY

6.2.11.15.1: A “Research Essay” or a “Research Project” instead of a “Research Paper”

6.2.11.15.2: Getting Ready- Questions to Ask Yourself About Your Research Essay

6.2.11.15.3: Creating and Revising a Formal Outline

6.2.11.15.4: The Introduction

6.2.11.15.5: Background Information (or Helping Your Reader Find a Context)

6.2.11.15.6: Weaving in Evidence to Support Your Point

6.2.11.15.7: Antithetical Arguments and Answers

6.2.11.15.8: The Conclusion

6.2.11.15.9: “Works Cited” or “Reference” Information

6.2.11.15.10: A Student Example- “The Corruption Surrounding University Athletics” by Casey K. Copeman

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6.2.11.15.1: A “Research Essay” or a “Research Project” instead of a “Research Paper”

Throughout this book, I’ve purposefully avoided the term “research paper” for three reasons. First, while teachers assign and students write essays in college classes that are commonly called “research papers,” there is no clear consensus on the definition of a research paper. This is because the definition of “research” differs from field to field, and even between instructors within the same discipline teaching the same course.

Second, while the papers we tend to call “research papers” do indeed include research, most other kinds of college writing require at least some research as well. All of the exercises outlined in Part Two of the book, ” Exercises in the Process of Research” are examples of this: while none of these assignments are “research papers,” all of them involve research in order to make a point.

A third reason has to do with the connotations of the word “paper” versus the word “essay.” For me, “paper” suggests something static, concrete, routine, and uninteresting—think of the negative connotations of the term bureaucratic “paperwork,” or the policing mechanism of “showing your papers” to the authorities. On the other hand, the word “essay” has more positive connotations: dynamic, flexible, unique, and creative. The definitions of essay in dictionaries I have examined include terms like “attempt,” “endeavor,” and “a try.” As a writer, I would much rather work on something that was a dynamic and creative endeavor rather than a static and routine document. My hope is that you, as a student and a writer, feel the same way.

This chapter is about writing a research essay. While I cannot offer you *exact* guidelines of how to do this for each and every situation where you will be asked to write such a paper or essay, I can provide you with the general guidelines and advice you’ll need to successfully complete these sorts of writing assignments. In the next chapter, I’ll describe a few alternatives to presenting your research in a conventional essay.

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6.2.11.15.2: Getting Ready- Questions to Ask Yourself About Your Research Essay

If you are coming to this chapter after working through some of the writing exercises in Part Two, “Exercises in the Process of Research,” then you are ready to dive into your research essay. By this point, you probably have done some combination of the following things:

- Thought about different kinds of evidence to support your research;
- Been to the library and the internet to gather evidence;
- Developed an annotated bibliography for your evidence;
- Written and revised a working thesis for your research;
- Critically analyzed and written about key pieces of your evidence;
- Considered the reasons for disagreeing and questioning the premise of your working thesis; and
- Categorized and evaluated your evidence.

In other words, you already have been working on your research essay through the process of research writing.

But before diving into writing a research essay, you need to take a moment to ask yourself, your colleagues, and your teacher some important questions about the nature of your project.

- **What is the specific assignment?**

It is crucial to consider the teacher’s directions and assignment for your research essay. The teacher’s specific directions will in large part determine what you are required to do to successfully complete your essay, just as they did with the exercises you completed in part two of this book.

If you have been given the option to choose your own research topic, the assignment for the research essay itself might be open-ended. For example:

Example 6.2.11.15.2.1:

Write a research essay about the working thesis that you have been working on with the previous writing assignments. Your essay should be about ten pages long, it should include ample evidence to support your point, and it should follow MLA style.

Some research writing assignments are more specific than this, of course. For example, here is a research writing assignment for a poetry class:

Example 6.2.11.15.2.2:

Write a seven to ten page research essay about one of the poets discussed in the last five chapters of our textbook and his or her poems. Besides your analysis and interpretation of the poems, be sure to cite scholarly research that supports your points. You should also include research on the cultural and historic contexts the poet was working within. Be sure to use MLA documentation style throughout your essay.

Obviously, you probably wouldn’t be able to write a research project about the problems of advertising prescription drugs on television in a History class that focused on the American Revolution.

- **What is the main purpose of your research essay?**

Has the goal of your essay been to answer specific questions based on assigned reading material and your research? Or has the purpose of your research been more open-ended and abstract, perhaps to learn more about issues and topics to share with a wider audience? In other words, is your research essay supposed to answer questions that indicate that you have learned about

a set and defined subject matter (usually a subject matter which your teacher already more or less understands), or is your essay supposed to discover and discuss an issue that is potentially unknown to your audience, including your teacher.

The "demonstrating knowledge about a defined subject matter" purpose for research is quite common in academic writing. For example, a political science professor might ask students to write a research project about the Bill of Rights in order to help her students learn about the Bill of Rights and to demonstrate an understanding of these important amendments to the U.S. Constitution. But presumably, the professor already knows a fair amount the Bill of Rights, which means she is probably more concerned with finding out if you can demonstrate that you have learned and have formed an opinion about the Bill of Rights based on your research and study.

"Discovering and discussing an issue that is potentially unknown to your audience" is also a very common assignment, particularly in composition courses. As the examples included throughout *The Process of Research Writing* suggest, the subject matter for research essays that are designed to inform your audience about something new is almost unlimited.

Hyperlink: See Chapter 5: The Working Thesis Exercise" and the guidelines for "Working With Assigned Topics" and "Coming Up With a Topic of Your Own Idea."

Even if all of your classmates have been researching a similar research idea, chances are your particular take on that idea has gone in a different direction. For example, you and some of your classmates might have begun your research by studying the effect on children of violence on television, either because that was a topic assigned by the teacher or because you simply shared an interest in the general topic. But as you have focused and refined this initially broad topic, you and your classmates will inevitably go into different directions, perhaps focusing on different genres (violence in cartoons versus live-action shows), on different age groups (the effect of violent television on pre-schoolers versus the effect on teen-agers), or on different conclusions about the effect of television violence in the first place (it is harmful versus there is no real effect).

- **Who is the main audience for your research writing project?**

Besides your teacher and your classmates, who are you trying to reach with your research? Who are you trying to convince as a result of the research you have done? What do you think is fair to assume that this audience knows or doesn't know about the topic of your research project? Purpose and audience are obviously closely related because the reason for writing something has a lot to do with who you are writing it for, and who you are writing something for certainly has a lot to do with your purposes in writing in the first place.

In composition classes, it is usually presumed that your audience includes your teacher and your classmates. After all, one of the most important reasons you are working on this research project in the first place is to meet the requirements of this class, and your teacher and your classmates have been with you as an audience every step of the way.

Contemplating an audience beyond your peers and teachers can sometimes be difficult, but if you have worked through the exercises in Part Two of *The Process of Research Writing,* you probably have at least some sense of an audience beyond the confines of your class. For example, one of the purposes "Critique Exercise" in Chapter 7 is to explain to your readers why they might be interested in reading the text that you are critiquing. The goal of the "Antithesis Exercise" in Chapter 8 is to consider the position of those who would disagree with the position you are taking. So directly and indirectly, you've probably been thinking about your readers for a while now.

Still, it might be useful for you to try to be even more specific about your audience as you begin your research essay. Do you know any "real people" (friends, neighbors, relatives, etc.) who might be an ideal reader for your research essay? Can you at least imagine what an ideal reader might want to get out of reading your research essay?

I'm not trying to suggest that you ought to ignore your teacher and your classmates as your primary audience. But research essays, like most forms of writing, are strongest when they are intended for a more specific audience, either someone the writer knows or someone the writer can imagine. Teachers and classmates are certainly part of this audience, but trying to reach an audience of potential readers beyond the classroom and the assignment will make for a stronger essay.

- **What sort of "voice" or "authority" do you think is appropriate for your research project?**

Do you want to take on a personal and more casual tone in your writing, or do you want to present a less personal and less casual tone? Do you want to use first person, the "I" pronoun, or do you want to avoid it?

My students are often surprised to learn that it is perfectly acceptable in many types of research and academic writing for writers

to use the first person pronoun, "I." It is the tone I've taken with this textbook, and it is an approach that is very common in many fields, particularly those that tend to be grouped under the term "the humanities.

For example, consider this paragraph from Kelly Ritter's essay "The Economics of Authorship: Online Paper Mills, Student Writers, and First-Year Composition," which appeared in June 2005 issue of one of the leading journals in the field of composition and rhetoric, *College Composition and Communication*:

Example 6.2.11.15.2.3:

When considering whether, when, and how often to purchase an academic paper from an online paper-mill site, first-year composition students therefore work with two factors that **I** wish to investigate here in pursuit of answering the questions posed above: the negligible desire to do one's own writing, or to be an author, with all that entails in this era of faceless authorship vis-á-vis the Internet; and the ever-shifting concept of "integrity," or responsibility when purchasing work, particularly in the anonymous arena of online consumerism. (603, emphasis added)

Throughout her thoughtful and well-researched essay, Ritter uses first person pronouns ("I" and "my," for example) when it is appropriate: "I think," "I believe," "my experiences," etc.

This sort of use of the personal pronoun is not limited to publications in English studies. This example comes from the journal *Law and Society Review* (Volume 39, Issue 2, 2005), which is an interdisciplinary journal concerned with the connections between society and the law. The article is titled "Preparing to Be Colonized: Land Tenure and Legal Strategy in Nineteenth-Century Hawaii" and it was written by law professor Stuart Banner:

Example 6.2.11.15.2.4:

The story of Hawaii complicates the conventional account of colonial land tenure reform. Why did the land tenure reform movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries receive its earliest implementation in, of all places, Hawaii? Why did the Hawaiians do this to themselves? What did they hope to gain from it? This article attempts to answer these questions. At the end, **I** briefly suggest why the answers may shed some light on the process of colonization in other times and places, and thus why the answers may be of interest to people who are not historians of Hawaii. (275, emphasis added)

Banner uses both "I" and "my" throughout the article, again when it's appropriate.

Even this cursory examination of the sort of writing academic writers publish in scholarly journals will demonstrate my point: academic journals *routinely* publish articles that make use of the first person pronoun. Writers in academic fields that tend to be called "the sciences" (chemistry, biology, physics, and so forth, but also more "soft" sciences like sociology or psychology) are more likely to avoid the personal pronoun or to refer to themselves as "the researcher," "the author," or something similar. But even in these fields, "I" does frequently appear.

The point is this: using "I" is not inherently *wrong* for your research essay or for any other type of academic essay. However, you need to be aware of your choice of first person versus third person and your role as a writer in your research project.

Generally speaking, the use of the first person "I" pronoun creates a greater closeness and informality in your text, which can create a greater sense of intimacy between the writer and the reader. This is the main reason I've used "I" in *The Process of Research Writing:* using the first person pronoun in a textbook like this lessens the distance between us (you as student/reader and me as writer), and I think it makes for easier reading of this material.

If you do decide to use a first person voice in your essay, make sure that the focus stays on your research and does not shift to you the writer. When teachers say "don't use I," what they are really cautioning against is the *overuse* of the word "I" such that the focus of the essay shifts from the research to "you" the writer. While mixing autobiography and research writing can be interesting (as I will touch on in the next chapter on alternatives to the research essay), it is not the approach you want to take in a traditional academic research essay.

The third person pronoun (and avoidance of the use of "I") tends to have the opposite effect of the first person pronoun: it creates a sense of distance between writer and reader, and it lends a greater formality to the text. This can be useful in research writing because it tends to emphasize research and evidence in order to persuade an audience.

(I should note that much of this textbook is presented in what is called second person voice, using the "you" pronoun. Second person is very effective for writing instructions, but generally speaking, I would discourage you from taking this approach in your research project.)

In other words, "first person" and "third person" are both potentially acceptable choices, depending on the assignment, the main purpose of your assignment, and the audience you are trying to reach. Just be sure to consistent—don't switch between third person and first person in the same essay.

- **What is your working thesis and how has it changed and evolved up to this point?**

If you've worked through some of the exercises in part two of *The Process of Research Writing,*you already know how important it is to have an evolving working thesis. If you haven't read this part of the textbook, you might want to do so before getting too far along with your research project. Chapter Five, "The Working Thesis Exercise," is an especially important chapter to read and review.

Remember: a ***working*** thesis is one that changes and evolves as you write and research. It is perfectly acceptable to change your thesis in the writing process based on your research.

Exercise 10.1

Working alone or in small groups, answer these questions about your research essay before you begin writing it:

- What is the specific research writing assignment? Do you have written instructions from the teacher for this assignment? Are there any details regarding page length, arrangement, or the amount of support evidence that you need to address? In your own words, restate the assignment for the research essay.
- What is the purpose of the research writing assignment? Is the main purpose of your research essay to address specific questions, to provide new information to your audience, or some combination of the two?
- Who is the audience for your research writing assignment? Besides your teacher and classmates, who else might be interested in reading your research essay?
- What sort of voice are you going to use in your research essay? What do you think would be more appropriate for your project, first person or third person?
- What is your working thesis? Think back to the ways you began developing your working thesis in the exercises in part two of *The Process of Research Writing*. In what ways has your working thesis changed?

If you are working with a small group of classmates, do each of you agree with the basic answers to these questions? Do the answers to these questions spark other questions that you have and need to have answered by your classmates and your teacher before you begin your research writing project?

Once you have some working answers to these basic questions, it's time to start thinking about actually writing the research essay itself. For most research essay projects, you will have to consider at least most of these components in the process:

- The Formal Outline
- The Introduction
- Background Information
- Evidence to Support Your Points
- Antithetical Arguments and Answers
- The Conclusion
- Works Cited or Reference Information

The rest of this chapter explains these parts of the research essay and it concludes with an example that brings these elements together.

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6.2.11.15.3: Creating and Revising a Formal Outline

Frequently, research essay assignments will also require you to include a formal outline, usually before the essay begins following the cover page. Formal outlines are sort of table of contents for your essay: they give the reader a summary of the main points and sub-points of what they are about to read.

The standard format for an outline looks something like this:

I. First Major Point
   A. First sub-point of the first major point
      1. First sub-point of the first sub-point
      2. Second sub-point of the first sub-point
   B. Second sub-point of the first major point
II. Second Major point

And so on. Alternatively, you may also be able to use a decimal outline to note the different points. For example:

1. First Major point
   1. First sub-point of the first major point
      1. First sub-point of the first sub-point
      2. Second sub-point of the first sub-point
   2. Second sub-point of the first major point
2. Second Major point

Sometimes, teachers ask student writers to include a "thesis statement" for their essay at the beginning of the outline.

Generally speaking, if you have one "point," be it a major point or a sub-point, or sub-point of a sub-point (perhaps a sub-sub-point!), you need to have at least a second similar point. In other words, if you have a sub-point you are labeling "A.," you should have one labeled "B." The best rule of thumb I can offer in terms of the grammar and syntax of your various points is to keep them short and consistent.

Now, while the formal outline is generally the first thing in your research essay after the title page, writing one is usually the **last** step in the writing process. Don't start writing your research essay by writing a formal outline first because it might limit the changes you can make to your essay during the writing process.

Of course, a ***formal*** outline is quite different from a ***working*** outline, one where you are more informally writing down ideas and "sketching" out plans for your research essay before or as you write. There are no specific rules or methods for making a working outline-- it could be a simple list of points, it could include details and reminders for the writer, or anything in-between.

Making a working outline is a good idea, particularly if your research essay will be a relatively long and complex one. Just be sure to not confuse these two very different outlining tools.

If you're having trouble starting to write your research essay, revisit some of the tips I suggest in the "Brainstorming for Ideas" section of Chapter Five, "The Working Thesis Exercise."

Exercise 10.2

- Working alone or in small groups, make a formal outline of an already completed essay. You can work with any of the sample essays in previous chapters in *The Process of Research Writing* or any other brief sample. **Don't** work with the sample research essay at the end of this chapter, though-- there is a sample formal outline included with it.
- If you and your classmates made a formal outline of the same essay, compare your outlines. Were there any significant differences in your approaches to making an outline? What were they?

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6.2.11.15.4: The Introduction

Research essays have to begin somewhere, and this somewhere is called the "introduction." By "beginning," I don't necessarily mean *only* the first paragraph—introductions in traditional research essays are frequently several paragraphs long. Generally speaking though, the introduction is about 25 percent or less of the total essay; in other words, in a ten-page, traditional research essay, the introduction would rarely be longer than two and a half pages.

Introductions have two basic jobs to perform:

- To get the reader's attention; and
- To briefly explain what the rest of the essay will be about.

What is appropriate or what works to get the reader's attention depends on the audience you have in mind for your research essay and the sort of voice or authority you want to have with your essay. Frequently, it is a good idea to include some background material on the issue being discussed or a brief summary of the different sides of an argument. If you have an anecdote from either your own experience or your research that you think is relevant to the rest of your project or will be interesting to your readers, you might want to consider beginning with that story. Generally speaking, you should avoid mundane or clichéd beginnings like "This research essay is about..." or "In society today..."

The second job of an introduction in a traditional research essay is to explain to the reader what the rest of the essay is going to be about. This is frequently done by stating your "thesis statement," which is more or less where your working thesis has ended up after its inevitable changes and revisions.

A thesis statement can work in a lot of different places in the introduction, not only as the last sentence at the end of the first paragraph. It is also possible to let your readers know what your thesis is without ever directly stating it in a single sentence. This approach is common in a variety of different types of writing that use research, though traditionally, most academic research essays have a specific and identifiable thesis statement.

Let's take a look at this example of a **WEAK** introductory paragraph:

Example 6.2.11.15.4.1:

In our world today, there are many health problems, such as heart disease and cancer. Another serious problem that affects many people in this country is diabetes, particularly Type II diabetes. Diabetes is a disease where the body does not produce enough insulin, and the body needs insulin to process sugars and starches. It is a serious disease that effects millions of people, many of whom don't even know they have the disease. In this essay, I will discuss how eating sensibly and getting plenty of exercise are the most important factors in preventing Type 2 Diabetes.

The first two sentences of this introduction don't have much to do with the topic of diabetes, and the following sentences are rather vague. Also, this introduction doesn't offer much information about what the rest of the essay will be about, and it certainly doesn't capture the reader's attention.

Now, consider this revised and **BETTER** introductory paragraph:

Example 6.2.11.15.4.2:

Diabetes is a disease where the body does not produce enough of insulin to process starches and sugars effectively. According to the American Diabetes Association web site, over 18 million Americans have diabetes, and as many as 5.2 million of these people are unaware that they have it. Perhaps even more striking is that the most common form of diabetes, Type 2 Diabetes, is largely preventable with a sensible diet and exercise.

This introduction is much more specific and to the point, and because of that, it does a better job of getting the reader's attention. Also, because it is very specific, this introduction gives a better sense to the reader where the rest of the essay will be leading.

While the introduction is of course the first thing your readers will see, **make sure it is one of the last things you decide to revise in the process of writing your research essay.** You will probably start writing your essay by writing an introduction—after all, you've got to start somewhere. But it is nearly impossible to write a very effective introduction if the rest of the essay hasn't been written yet, which is why you will certainly want to return to the introduction to do some revision work after you've written your essay.

Exercise 10.3

Working alone or in small groups, revise one of the following "bad" introductions, being sure to get the reader's attention, to make clear what the essay being introduced would be about, and to eliminate unneeded words and clichés. Of course, since you don't have the entire essay, so you may have to take certain liberties with these passages. But the goal is to improve these "bad beginnings" without changing their meaning.

Example #1:

In society today, there are many problems with television shows. A lot of them are not very entertaining at all. Others are completely inappropriate for children. It's hard to believe that these things are on TV at all. In fact, because of a lot of the bad things that have been on television in recent years, broadcasters have had to censor more and more shows. They have done some of this voluntarily, but they have also been required to do this by irate advertisers and viewers as well. For example, consider Janet Jackson's famous "wardrobe malfunction" at the 2004 Super Bowl. I contend that Jackson's performance in the 2004 Super Bowl, accident or not, has lead to more censorship on television.

Example #2:

There are a lot of challenges to being a college student. We all know that studying and working hard will pay off in the end. A lot of college students also enjoy to cheer for their college teams. A lot of colleges and universities will do whatever it takes to have winning teams. In fact, some colleges and universities are even willing to allow in students with bad test scores and very low high school grades as long as they are great athletes and can make the team better. All of this leads to a difficult to deny observation: college sports, especially Division I football, is full of corruption and it is damaging the academic integrity of some of our best universities.

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6.2.11.15.5: Background Information (or Helping Your Reader Find a Context)

It is always important to explain, contextualize, and orientate your readers within any piece of writing. Your research essay is no different in that you need to include background information on your topic in order to create the right context for the project.

In one sense, you're giving your reader important background information every time you fully introduce and explain a piece of evidence or an argument you are making. But often times, research essays include some background information about the overall topic near the beginning of the essay. Sometimes, this is done briefly as part of the introduction section of the essay; at other times, this is best accomplished with a more detailed section after the introduction and near the beginning of the essay.

How much background information you need to provide and how much context you need to establish depends a great deal on how you answer the "Getting Ready" questions at the beginning of this chapter, particularly the questions in which you are asked to consider you ***purpose*** and your ***audience.*** If one of the purposes of your essay is to convince a primary audience of readers who know little about your topic or your argument, you will have to provide more background information than you would if the main purpose of your essay was to convince a primary audience that knows a lot about your topic. **But even if you can assume your audience is as familiar with the topic of your essay as you, it's still important to provide at least some background on your specific approach to the issue in your essay.**

It's almost always better to give your readers "too much" background information than "too little." In my experience, students too often assume too much about what their readers (the teacher included!) knows about their research essay. There are several reasons why this is the case; perhaps it is because students so involved in their research forget that their readers haven't been doing the same kind of research. The result is that sometimes students "cut corners" in terms of helping their audience through their essay. I think that the best way to avoid these kinds of misunderstandings is for you to always remember that your readers don't know as much about your specific essay as you do, and part of your job as a writer is to guide your reader through the text.

In Casey Copeman's research essay at the end of this chapter, the context and background information for the subject matter after the introduction; for example:

Example 6.2.11.15.5.1:

The problems surrounding corruption in university athletics have been around ever since sports have been considered important in American culture. People have emphasized the importance of sports and the significance of winning for a long time. According to Jerome Cramer in a special report published in Phi Delta Kappan, "Sports are a powerful experience, and America somehow took this belief of the ennobling nature of sports and transformed it into a quasi-religion" (Cramer K1).

Casey's subject matter, college athletics, was one that she assumed most of her primary audience of fellow college students and classmates were familiar with. Nonetheless, she does provide some basic information about the importance of sports team in society and in universities in particular.

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6.2.11.15.6: Weaving in Evidence to Support Your Point

Throughout your research essay, you need to include evidence that supports your points. There is no firm rule as to "how much" research you will want or need to include in your research essay. Like so many other things with research writing, it depends on your purpose, the audience, the assignment, and so forth. **But generally speaking, you need to have a piece of evidence in the form of a direct quote or paraphrase every time you make a claim that you cannot assume your audience "just knows."**

Hyperlink: See Chapter 3: "Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Avoiding Plagiarism" for more details on how to effectively introduce quotes and paraphrases into your research writing.

Stringing together a series of quotes and paraphrases from different sources might show that you have done a lot of research on a particular topic, but your audience wants to know your ***interpretation*** of these quotes and paraphrases, and your reader wants and needs to be guided through your research. To do this, you need to work at explaining the significance of your evidence throughout your essay.

For example, this passage does a **BAD** job of introducing and weaving in evidence to support a point.

Example 6.2.11.15.6.1:

In America today, the desire to have a winning team drives universities to admit academically unqualified students. "At many universities, the tradition of athletic success requires coaches to produce not only competitive by championship-winning teams" (Duderstadt 191).

The connection between the sentence and the evidence is not as clear as it could be. Further, the quotation is simply "dropped in" with no explanation. Now, compare it with this revised and **BETTER** example:

Example 6.2.11.15.6.2:

The desire to always have a winning team has driven many universities to admit academically unqualified student athletes to their school just to improve their sports teams. According to James Duderstadt, former president of the University of Michigan, the corruption of university athletics usually begins with the process of recruiting and admitting student athletes. He states that, "At many universities, the tradition of athletic success requires coaches to produce not only competitive but championship-winning teams" (Duderstadt 191).

Remember: the point of using research in writing (be it a traditional research essay or any other form of research writing) is not merely to offer your audience a bunch of evidence on a topic. Rather, the point of research writing is to interpret your research in order to persuade an audience.

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6.2.11.15.7: Antithetical Arguments and Answers

Most research essays anticipate and answer antithetical arguments, the ways in which a reader might disagree with your point. Besides demonstrating your knowledge of the different sides of the issue, acknowledging and answering the antithetical arguments in your research essay will go a long way toward convincing some of your readers that the point you are making is correct.

Hyperlink: See Chapter 8: “The Antithesis Exercise,” which offers strategies for researching, developing, and answering antithetical arguments in your research writing.

Antithetical arguments can be placed almost anywhere within a research essay, including the introduction or the conclusion. However, you want to be sure that the antithetical arguments are accompanied by “answering” evidence and arguments. After all, the point of presenting antithetical arguments is to explain why the point you are supporting with research is the correct one.

In the essay at the end of this chapter, Casey brings up antithetical points at several points in her essay. For example:

Example 6.2.11.15.7.1:

To be fair, being a student-athlete isn’t easy. They are faced with difficult situations when having to juggle their athletic life and their academic life at school. As Duderstadt said, "Excelling in academics is challenging enough without the additional pressures of participating in highly competitive athletic programs" (Duderstadt 190). So I can see why some athletes might experience trouble fitting all of the studying and coursework into their busy schedules.

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6.2.11.15.8: The Conclusion

As research essays have a beginning, so do they have an ending, generally called a conclusion. While the main purpose of an introduction is to get the reader's attention and to explain what the essay will be about, the goal of a conclusion is to bring the reader to a satisfying point of closure. In other words, a good conclusion does not merely "end" an essay; it wraps things up.

It is usually a good idea to make a connection in the conclusion of your essay with the introduction, particularly if you began your essay with something like a relevant anecdote or a rhetorical question. You may want to restate your thesis, though you don't necessarily have to restate your thesis in exactly the same words you used in your introduction. It is also usually not a good idea to end your essay with obvious concluding cues or clichéd phrases like "in conclusion."

Conclusions are similar to introductions on a number of different levels. First, like introductions, they are important since they leave definite "impressions" on the reader—in this case, the important "last" impression. Second, conclusions are almost as difficult to write and revise as introductions. Because of this, be sure to take extra time and care to revise your conclusion.

Here's the conclusion of Casey Copeman's essay, which is included at the end of this chapter:

Example 6.2.11.15.8.1

As James Moore and Sherry Watt say in their essay "Who Are Student Athletes?", the "marriage between higher education and intercollegiate athletics has been turbulent, and always will be" (7). The NCAA has tried to make scholarly success at least as important as athletic success with requirements like Proposition 48 and Proposition 16. But there are still too many cases where under-prepared students are admitted to college because they can play a sport, and there are too still too many instances where universities let their athletes get away with being poor students because they are a sport superstar. I like cheering for my college team as much as anyone else, but I would rather cheer for college players who were students who worried about learning and success in the classroom, too.

Exercise 6.2.11.15.8.1

If you worked with the examples in Exercise 10.3, take another look at the revised introductions your wrote. Based on the work you did in that exercise, write a fitting conclusion. Once again, since you don't have the entire essay, you'll have to take some liberties with what you decide to include in your conclusion.

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6.2.11.15.9: “Works Cited” or “Reference” Information

If I were to give you one and only one “firm and definite” rule about research essay writing, it would be that you **must** have a section following the conclusion of your essay that explains to the reader where the evidence you cite comes from. This information is especially important in academic essays since academic readers are keenly interested in the evidence that supports your point.

If you’re following the Modern Language Association rules for citing evidence, this last section is called “Works Cited.” If you’re following the American Psychological Association rules, it’s called “References.” In either case, this is the place where you list the full citation of all the evidence you quote or paraphrase in your research essay. **Note that for both MLA and APA style, research you read but didn’t actually use in your research essay is not included.** Your teacher might want you to provide a “bibliography” with your research essay that does include this information, but this is not the same thing.

Hyperlink: For guidelines for properly citing your evidence and compiling “Works Cited” or “Reference” pages, see Chapter 12: Citing Your Research Using MLA or APA Style.”

Frankly, one of the most difficult aspects of this part of the research essay is the formatting—alphabetizing, getting the spacing right, underlining titles or putting them in quotes, periods here, commas there, and so forth. Again, see the appendix for information on how to do this. But if you have been keeping and adding to an annotated bibliography as you have progressed through the process of research (as discussed in chapter six), this part of the essay can actually be merely a matter of checking your sources and “copying” the citation information from the word processing file where you have saved your annotated bibliography and “pasting” it into the word processing file where you are saving your research essay.

Hyperlink: See the assignment for constructing an annotated bibliography in Chapter 6: The Annotated Bibliography Exercise.”

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6.2.11.15.10: A Student Example- “The Corruption Surrounding University Athletics” by Casey K. Copeman

The assignment that Casey Copeman followed to write this research essay is similar to the assignment described earlier in this chapter:

Write a research essay about the working thesis that you have been working on with the previous writing assignments. Your essay should be about ten pages long, it should include ample evidence to support your point, and it should follow MLA style.

Of course, it’s also important to remember that Casey’s work on this project began long before she wrote this essay with the exercises she worked through to develop her working thesis, to gather evidence, and to evaluate and categorize it.

The Corruption Surrounding University Athletics

By Casey Copeman

Outline

I. Introduction
II. Origins and description of the problem
    A. The significance of sports in our society
    B. The drive and pressure for universities to win leads to admitting academically unqualified student athletes
II. The Eligibility Rules Proposition 48 and Proposition 16
    A. Proposition 48 explained
    B. Proposition 16 explained
    C. Proposition 16 challenged but upheld in the courts
    D. Academic eligibility rules still broken
IV. Rules Broken At School
    A. The pressures faced by athletes and universities
        1. The pressures of being a student athlete
        2. The pressures put on universities to recruit “good players”
    B. “Athletics” emphasized over studies indirectly and directly
        1. The indirect message is about sports above academics
        2. Occasionally, the message to emphasize sports is direct
        3. Student-athletes often steered into “easy” classes
    C. Good student athletes, mostly in sports other than football and men’s basketball, get a bad name
V. Conclusion

Most young people who are trying to get into college have to spend a lot of time studying and worrying. They study to get good grades in high school and to get good test scores, and they worry about whether or not all of the studying will be enough to get them into the college of their choice. But there is one group of college students who don’t have to study and worry as much, as long as they are outstanding football or basketball players: student athletes.

Issues involving student athletes with unsatisfactory test scores, extremely low grade point averages, special privileges given to them by the schools, and issues concerning their coaches' influence on them academically, have all been causes of concern with university athletics. The result is a pattern where athletics at the university level are full of corruption surrounding the academic standards and admittance policy that are placed upon some university athletes. In this essay, I will explain what I see as the source of this corruption and the ways in which academic standards are compromised in the name of winning.

The problems surrounding corruption in university athletics have been around ever since sports have been considered important in American culture. People have emphasized the importance of sports and the significance of winning for a long time. According to Jerome Cramer in a special report published in Phi Delta Kappan, "Sports are a powerful experience, and America somehow took this belief of the ennobling nature of sports and transformed it into a quasi-religion" (Cramer K1). Cramer also says,

> "The original sin of sports in United States society seems to have been committed when we allowed our games to assume too much of our lives. It was as if we could measure our moral fiber by the won/lost record of our local team. Once schools began to organize sports, winning became a serious institutional consideration. Our innocence vanished when we refused to accept losing" (Cramer K1).

This importance of sports and winning in the United States today is what has led to this corruption that we now see in our top universities when it comes to athletes and how they are treated by their schools.

The desire to always have a winning team has driven many universities to admit academically unqualified student athletes to their school just to improve their sports teams. According to James Duderstadt, former president of the University of Michigan, the corruption of university athletics usually begins with the process of recruiting and admitting student athletes. He states that, "At many universities, the tradition of athletic success requires coaches to produce not only competitive but championship-winning teams" (Duderstadt 191). This, in turn, "puts enormous pressure to recruit the most outstanding high school athletes each year, since this has become the key determinant of competitive success in major college sports"(Duderstadt 192).

According to Duderstadt, "Coaches and admissions officers have long known that the pool of students who excel at academics and athletics is simply too small to fill their rosters with players who meet the usual admissions criteria" (Duderstadt 193). This pressure put on coaches to recruit the best athletes "leads them to recruit athletes who are clearly unprepared for college work or who have little interest in a college education" (Duderstadt 193). This obviously leads to a problem because although most universities have standards that must be met for students to be admitted, "in all too many cases, recruited athletes fail to meet even these minimum standards" (Duderstadt 193).

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) set some minimum standards for admission in January of 1986. They had decided that "the time had come to make sure that college athletes were not only athletically qualified, but that they also were academically competent to represent schools of higher learning" (Cramer K4). Proposition 48 required that "all entering athletes score a minimum of 700 on their Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and achieve a minimum high school grade point average in core academic courses of 2.0, or sit out their first year" (Duderstadt 194). This seemed like a fairly reasonable rule to most universities around the country, and some even thought, "a kid who can not score a combined 700 and keep a C average in high school should not be in college in the first place" (Cramer K4).

In 1992, the NCAA changed these requirements slightly with the introduction of proposition 16. According to the document “Who Can Play? An Examination of NCAA’s Proposition 16,” which was published on the National Center for Educational Statistics in August 1995, Proposition 16 requirements are “more strict than the current Proposition 48 requirements. The new criteria are based on a combination of high school grade point average (GPA) in 13 core courses and specified SAT (or ACT) scores.”

Some coaches and college athletes have argued against proposition 48 and proposition 16 because they claim that they unfairly discriminate against African-American students. According to Robert Fullinwider’s web-based article “Academic Standards and the NCAA,” some “black coaches were so incensed that they toyed with the idea of boycotting NCAA events.” Fullinwider goes on:

> John Thompson, then-coach of Georgetown University’s basketball team, complained that poor minority kids were at a disadvantage taking the "mainstream-oriented" SAT. "Certain kids," he noted just after the federal court’s decision, "require individual assessment. Some urban schools cater to poor kids, low-income kids, black and white. To put everybody on the same playing field [i.e., to treat them the same in testing] is just crazy."

Fullinwider writes that the legality of Proposition 16 was challenged in March 1999 on the basis that it was discriminatory to African-American student athletes. However, in its summary of the case Cureton v. NCAA, the Marquette University Law School You Make the Call web site explains that the federal courts ultimately decided that Proposition 16 was not a violation of students’ civil rights and could be enforced by the NCAA.

With rules like Proposition 48 and Proposition 16, "the old practice of recruiting athletes who are clearly unqualified for admission with the hope that their contributions on the field will be sufficient before their inadequacy in the classroom, slowed somewhat" (Duderstadt 195). However, as facts show today, it seems as if these rules are harder to enforce in some universities than the NCAA originally thought.

There have been many documented instances of athletes being admitted to a university without even coming close to meeting the minimum requirements for academic eligibility set by the NCAA. One such instance happened just one year after Proposition 48 was enacted. North Carolina State University signed Chris Washburn, "one of the most highly recruited high school seniors in the nation" (Cramer K4). Although Washburn proved to be valuable to the team, it was later found out that "his combined score on the SAT was a whopping 470," and that he had "an abysmal academic record in high school" (Cramer K4). Both his SAT score and

his poor grades in high school all fell much lower than the standards set by the NCAA.

According to Art Padilla, former vice president for academic affairs at the University of North Carolina System, student athletes like Chris Washburn are not uncommon at most universities (Cramer K5). He states, "Every major college sports institution has kids with that kind of academic record, and if they deny it, they are lying" (Cramer K5).

The admitting of unqualified students is not the only place where colleges seem to step out of bounds though. Once the athlete has been admitted and signed with the university, for some, a long list of corruption from the university is still to follow when it comes to dealing with their academics.

Furthermore, many universities face a lot of pressure to recruit good players to their schools regardless of their academic skills. Debra Blum reported in 1996 about the case of a star basketball player who wanted to attend Vanderbilt University. As Blum writes, “Vanderbilt denied him (basketball player Ron Mercer) admission, describing his academic record as not up to snuff. So he enrolled at Kentucky, where he helped his team to a national championship last season” (A51). The case of Vanderbilt losing Mercer caused a lot of “soul searching” at Vanderbilt, in part because there was a lot of pressure from “other university constituents, particularly many alumni … to do what it takes to field more-competitive teams, especially in football and men’s basketball” (A51).

But these pressures are also the point where school officials are tempted to break the rules. As John Gerdy wrote in his article "A Suggestion For College Coaches: Teach By Example,” in universities where the purpose of recruiting a great athlete is to improve the team, they often claim, "intercollegiate athletics are about education, but it is obvious that they are increasingly about entertainment, money, and winning" (28).

Mixed messages are sent when some student-athletes "are referred to as "players" and "athletes" rather than "students" and "student-athletes" (Gerdy 28). It is clear that these student-athletes are sometimes only wanted for their athletic ability, and it is also clear that there are sometimes many pressures to recruit such students. As Austin C. Wherwein said, many student athletes "are given little incentive to be scholars and few persons care how the student athlete performs academically, including some of the athletes themselves" (Quoted in Thelin 183).

In some cases, coaches directly encourage students to emphasize their athletic career instead of their studies. One such instance, reported in Sports Illustrated by Austin Murphy, involves an Ohio State tailback, Robert Smith, who quit the football team "saying that coaches had told him he was spending too much time on academics" (Murphy 9). Smith claims that offensive coordinator Elliot Uzelac "encouraged him to skip a summer-school chemistry class because it was causing Smith, who was a pre-med student, to miss football practice" (Murphy 9). Smith did not think this was right so he walked off the team (Murphy 9). Supposedly, "the university expressed support for Uzelac, who denied Smith's allegations" (Murphy 9).

Another way some universities sometimes manage the academic success of their student-athletes is to enroll them in easier classes, particularly those set up specifically for student-athletes. The curriculum for some of these courses is said to be "less than intellectually demanding"(Cramer K2). Jan Kemp, a remedial English professor at the University of Georgia who taught a class with just football players for students, was "troubled by the fact that many of her students seemed incapable of graduating from college" (Cramer K2). This seems surprising, but in fact some athletes from the University of Georgia "were described as being given more than four chances to pass developmental studies classes" without ever being successful (Cramer K2). Also, "school records show that in an effort to keep athletes playing, several were placed in the regular academic curriculum without having passed even the watered-down classes" (Cramer K2). Although this particular story comes from the University of Georgia, it is not just unique to that school. Many universities have been guilty of doing such things for their athletes just so they could continue to play on the team.

Of course, not all student-athletes are bad students. Many student-athletes actually do well in school and excel both athletically and academically. But although these true "student-athletes" do exist, they are often overshadowed by those negative images of athletes who do not do as well in school. And while all sorts of different sports have had academic problems with their athletes, the majority of corruption at the university level exists in football and basketball teams (Cramer K3). According to Duderstadt, "football and basketball are not holding their own when it comes to student academic honors" (Duderstadt 190). He says "Football and basketball have developed cultures with low expectations for academic performance. For many student-athletes in these sports, athletics are clearly regarded as a higher priority than their academic goals" (Duderstadt 191). So although this label of the bad student-athlete does not even come close to applying to all athletes, some universities are still considered, as John Thelin wrote in his book Games Colleges Play, "academically corrupt and athletically sound" (199).

As James Moore and Sherry Watt say in their essay “Who Are Student Athletes?”, the “marriage between higher education and intercollegiate athletics has been turbulent, and always will be" (7). The NCAA has tried to make scholarly success at least as

important as athletic success with requirements like Proposition 48 and Proposition 16. But there are still too many cases where under-prepared students are admitted to college because they can play a sport, and there are too still too many instances where universities let their athletes get away with being poor students because they are a sport superstar. I like cheering for my college team as much as anyone else, but I would rather cheer for college players who were students who worried about learning and success in the classroom, too.

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7: CHAPTER SEVEN-CONDUCTING RESEARCH

7.1: Documenting Your Source Material

7.2: MLA Citations

7.2.1: What is MLA,?

7.2.2: MLA Citation Examples

7.2.3: CMS Signal Phrases

7.2.4: MLA Signal Phrases

7.2.5: APA Citation Examples

7.2.6: APA Signal Phrases

7.3: Argument

7.3.1: What is Argument?

7.3.2: What are the Components and Vocabulary of Argument?

7.3.3: What is Logic?

7.3.4: What are the Different Types of Argument in Writing?

7.3.5: A Repository of Logical Fallacies

7.3.5.1: Writing to Persuade

7.3.5.1.1: Introduction to Argumentative Writing

7.3.5.1.2: Aristotelian (Classical) Argument Model

7.3.5.1.3: Rogerian Argument Model

7.3.5.1.4: Toulmin Argument Model

7.3.5.1.5: Proposal Argument Model

7.3.5.1.6: Putting It All Together- Basic Elements of an Argument Essay

7.3.5.1.7: Tips for Writing Academic Persuasive Essays

7.3.5.1.8: Sample Writing Assignments

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7.1: Documenting Your Source Material

A reader interested in your subject wants not only to read what you wrote but also to be aware of the works that you used to create it. Readers may want to enter the discussion on your topic, using some of the same sources that you have. They also may want to examine your sources to see if you know your subject, if you missed anything, or if you offer anything new and interesting. Your sources may offer the reader additional insight on the subject being considered. It also demonstrates that you, as the author, are up-todate on what is happening in the field or on the subject. In sum, giving credit where it is due contributes to research on your topic and enhances your credibility.

Throughout the writing process, be scrupulous about documenting information taken from sources.

Again, there are multiple reasons for doing so:

- To give credit to others for their ideas
- To allow your reader to follow up and learn more about the topic if desired
- To build your own reputation as a writer

It is important to indicate the source both in your essay and in a bibliography, list of references, or Works Cited, to prevent the possibility of plagiarism. If you follow the appropriate style guide (e.g., APA, Chicago Manual, and MLA), pay attention to detail, and clearly indicate your sources, then this approach to formatting and citation offers a proven way to demonstrate your respect for others and earn their respect in return.

Citing Sources in Your Paper

You need to cite all your information: if someone else wrote it, said it, drew it, demonstrated it, or otherwise expressed it, you need to cite it. The exception to this statement is common, widespread knowledge, but if you are ever in doubt, go ahead and document the material.

If you are using MLA style, then your citation of the source in the body of the essay will point to the Works Cited page at the end. You must cite your sources as you use them, mentioning the author or title of the source by name if you summarize its ideas and giving the author or title of the source as well as the page number (if available) in parentheses if you paraphrase or directly quote the source. The reference to the author or title is like a signal to readers that information has been incorporated from a separate source. It also provides readers with the information they need to locate the source in the Works Cited at the end of your essay where they can find the complete reference.

Rules for In-Text Citations:

The following examples illustrate basic rules for documenting sources within the text of your paper in MLA style:

Author named in the introduction to the paraphrase or quote: Jacob Leibowitz found that low-carbohydrate diets often helped subjects with Type II diabetes maintain a healthy weight and control blood-sugar (56). Leibowitz states, “People with Type II diabetes should follow a low-carbohydrate diet in order to prevent weight gain and unbalanced blood-sugar levels” (56).

Author named in parentheses: One source indicates that low-carbohydrate diets often helped subjects with Type II diabetes maintain a healthy weight and control blood-sugar (Leibowitz 56). A noted nutritionist advises diabetics: “People with Type II diabetes should follow a low-carbohydrate diet in order to prevent weight gain and unbalanced blood-sugar levels” (Leibowitz 56).

Unknown author: One website points out that a low-carbohydrate diet may aggravate a heart condition by raising a person’s bad cholesterol (“Cholesterol and the Low-carb Diet”).

Unknown or No Page Reference: The risks of following a low-carbohydrate diet outweigh any benefits according to one researcher (Jones). Gerald Jones believes that "a balanced diet is still the safest and most effective approach to good health."

A source quoted in another source (an indirect quotation): "For the chronically overweight," states Martin Rogers, "a low-carbohydrate diet may provide a viable option for weight loss" (qtd. in Evans 46).

Exercise 20

Review in-text citations in your draft. Look for places where you introduce source material using a signal phrase in your sentence. Highlight the verbs used in your signal phrases, and make note of any that seem to be overused throughout the paper. Identify places where a stronger verb could be used. Revise your draft accordingly.

Creating a List of References

Each of the sources you cite in the body of your paper should appear in a list of references at the end of your paper. If you're using MLA style, then your Works Cited should list the sources alphabetically by last name, or by title if the author is not identified. While in-text citations provide the most basic information about the source, your Works Cited will include more complete publication details. There are a number of ways to learn how to properly cite your sources on your Works Cited:

- The MLA Guide at Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (OWL)
- A current edition of The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.
- Online videos found by searching for "MLA style" on YouTube.
- For an overview of citing sources in MLA style and APA style, watch this module created in 2008 by Aline Soules of California State University, East Bay, and licensed under a Creative Commons AttributionNonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 United States.

One of the many advantages of using sources from databases is that the databases themselves, or the platforms which host them, usually include a citation of the source at the bottom of the HTML full text of the source or a "Cite" tool accessible from the record of the source in the list of search results. When using these automatically-generated citations, be sure to select and copy the citation in the style that you have been assigned to use. Also, be sure to review the citation that the database or platform has generated, as it may include some errors in it. An error that consistently occurs using a "Cite" tool is the capitalization of titles; in the United States, the first letters of the first and last words of titles are always capitalized, and so are the first letters of all words inbetween except for articles (a, an, the), conjunctions (and, but, or), and prepositions (at, by, for, in, of, on, etc.). The "Cite" tool does not distinguish between parts of speech when capitalizing words in titles, so you will need to change some letters in titles to lowercase in order to properly format your citations.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Your research paper presents your thinking about a topic, supported and developed by other people's ideas and information. It is crucial to always distinguish between the two—as you conduct research, as you plan your paper, and as you write. Failure to do so can lead to plagiarism.

If you incorporate the words or ideas of a source into your own writing without giving full credit, then you are plagiarizing that source. In both professional and academic settings, the penalties for plagiarism are severe. In the professional world, plagiarism may result in loss of credibility, diminishment in compensation, and even loss of employment, including future opportunities. That is, employees may be fired for plagiarism and do irreparable damage to their professional reputation. In a class, a student's plagiarism may result in a range of sanctions, from the loss of points on an assignment to a failing grade in the course to expulsion from college.

The concepts and strategies discussed in this section connect to a larger issue— academic integrity. You maintain your integrity as a member of an academic community by representing your work and others' work honestly and by using other people's work only in legitimately accepted ways. It is a point of honor taken seriously in every academic discipline and career field. Even when cheating and plagiarism go undetected, they still result in a student's failure to learn necessary research and writing skills.

In short, it is never worth the risk to plagiarize. For more information about Academic Integrity, consult your college's Student Handbook.

Working with Sources Carefully

Disorganization and carelessness sometimes lead to plagiarism. For instance, writers may be unable to provide complete, accurate citations if they did not record bibliographical information. Writers may cut and paste passages from websites into their papers and later forget where the material came from. Writers who procrastinate may rush through drafts; this easily leads to sloppy paraphrasing and inaccurate quotations. Any of these actions can create the appearance of plagiarism and lead to negative consequences. Carefully organizing your time and notes is the best guard against these forms of plagiarism. As discussed above, you should maintain a detailed working bibliography and thorough notes throughout the research process. As you incorporate source material into your draft, check original sources again to clear up any uncertainties. Schedule plenty of time for writing your draft so there is no temptation to cut corners.

Intentional and Accidental Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of misrepresenting someone else's work as your own. Sometimes a writer plagiarizes work on purpose—for instance, by purchasing an essay from a website and submitting it as original course work. In other cases, a writer may commit accidental plagiarism due to carelessness, haste, or misunderstanding. To avoid unintentional plagiarism, follow these guidelines:

- Understand what types of information must be cited.
- Understand what constitutes fair use of a source.
- Keep source materials and notes carefully organized.
- Follow guidelines for summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting sources.

When to Cite

Whether it is quoted or paraphrased, any idea or fact taken from an outside source must be cited, in both the body of your paper and your list of references. The only exceptions are facts or general statements that are common knowledge. Common-knowledge facts or general statements are commonly supported by and found in multiple sources. For example, a writer would not need to cite the statement that most breads, pastas, and cereals are high in carbohydrates; this is well known and well documented. However, if a writer explained in detail the differences among the chemical structures of carbohydrates, proteins, and fats, a citation would be necessary. When in doubt, cite.

Fair Use

In recent years, issues related to the fair use of sources have been prevalent in popular culture. Recording artists, for example, may disagree about the extent to which one has the right to sample another's music. For academic purposes, however, the guidelines for fair use are reasonably straightforward. Writers may quote from or paraphrase material from previously published works without formally obtaining the copyright holder's permission. Fair use means that the writer legitimately uses brief excerpts from source material to support and develop his or her own ideas. For instance, a columnist may excerpt a few sentences from a novel when writing a book review. However, quoting or paraphrasing another's work at excessive length, to the extent that large sections of the writing are unoriginal, is not fair use.

As he worked on his draft, Jorge was careful to cite his sources correctly and not to rely excessively on any one source.

Occasionally, however, he caught himself quoting a source at great length. In those instances, he highlighted the paragraph in question so that he could go back to it later and revise. Read the example, along with Jorge's revision.

Initial Use of Source Material

> Heinz found that "subjects in the low-carbohydrate group (30% carbohydrates; 40% protein, 30% fat) had a mean weight loss of 10 kg (22 lbs) over a 4-month period." These results were "noticeably better than results for subjects on a low-fat diet (45% carbohydrates, 35% protein, 20% fat)" whose average weight loss was only "7 kg (15.4 lbs) in the same period." From this, it can be concluded that "low-carbohydrate diets obtain more rapid results." Other researchers agree that "at least in the short term, patients following low-carbohydrate diets enjoy greater success" than those who follow alternative plans (Johnson and Crowe).

After reviewing the paragraph, Jorge realized that he had drifted into unoriginal writing. Most of the paragraph was taken verbatim from a single article. Although Jorge had enclosed the material in quotation marks, he knew it was not an appropriate way to use the research in his paper.

Revised Use of Source Material

> Low-carbohydrate diets may indeed be superior to other diet plans for short-term weight loss. In a study comparing low-carbohydrate diets and low-fat diets, Heinz found that subjects who followed a low-carbohydrate plan (30% of total calories) for four months lost, on average, about three kilograms more than subjects who followed a low-fat diet for the same time. Heinz concluded that these plans yield quick results, an idea supported by a similar study conducted by Johnson and Crowe. What remains to be seen, however, is whether this initial success can be sustained for longer periods.

As Jorge revised the paragraph, he realized he did not need to quote these sources directly. Instead, he paraphrased their most important findings. He also made sure to include a topic sentence stating the main idea of the paragraph and a concluding sentence that transitioned to the next major topic in his essay.

Writing at Work

Citing other people's work appropriately is just as important in the workplace as it is in school. If you need to consult outside sources to research a document you are creating, follow the general guidelines already discussed, as well as any industry-specific citation guidelines. For more extensive use of others' work—for instance, requesting permission to link to another company or organization's website on your own employer's website—always follow your employer's established procedures.

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7.2: MLA CITATIONS

7.2.1: What is MLA,?

7.2.2: MLA Citation Examples

7.2.3: CMS Signal Phrases

7.2.4: MLA Signal Phrases

7.2.5: APA Citation Examples

7.2.6: APA Signal Phrases

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7.2.1: What is MLA,?

MLA stands for Modern Language Association. It is a style of formatting academic papers that is used mostly in the arts and humanities.

APA stands for American Psychological Association, the professional guild who first developed the guidelines of the style. APA is a style of formatting academic papers that is used mostly in the social sciences.

CMS stands for the Chicago Manual of Style. It is a style of formatting written works that is most widely used in publishing.

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7.2.2: MLA Citation Examples

IN-TEXT CITATIONS

In-text citations in MLA style are sometimes called parenthetical citations. An in-text citation is used to let the reader of your work know that an outside source contributed to your writing of a particular phrase, idea, or argument. In-text citations need to be used following every direct quotation and paraphrase/summary that you write.

IN-TEXT CITATION FOR SOURCE WITH KNOWN AUTHOR

These citations need to include the author's last name and the page/paragraph number on which the information was found. If a signal phrase is used earlier in the sentence which includes the author's name, the name does not need to be included in the citation.

Example 7.2.2.1

Stephen Hawking describes the climate at Oxford while he was studying there as "very anti-work" (33).

The climate at Oxford during his studies is described as "very anti-work" (Hawking 33).

IN-TEXT CITATION FOR SOURCE WITH UNKNOWN AUTHOR

These citations need to include the title or shortened title of the work and the page/paragraph number on which the information was found.

Example 7.2.2.2

While some suggest that transgender individuals should rely on law enforcement for protection it's reported that "police often participate in the intimidation themselves rather than providing protection" ("Fighting Anti-Trans Violence" 2).

IN-TEXT CITATION FOR SOURCE WITH MULTIPLE AUTHORS

These citations need to include the authors' last names and the page/paragraph number on which the information was found. If a signal phrase is used earlier in the sentence which includes the authors' last names, the names do not need to be included in the citation. If the source has three or fewer authors, all the authors' last names need to be listed in the citation.

Example 7.2.2.3

Ishiguro, Garcia, and Schmidt suggest that more scientific research is needed before a conclusion between cause and effect can be drawn (198).

> "More scientific research needs to be completed before any conclusions about causation can be drawn" (Ishiguro, Garcia, and Schmidt 198).

If the source has more than three authors, only the first author's last name needs to be listed in the citation, followed by the phrase 'et al'.

Example 7.2.2.4:

De Walle et al. suggest that mainstream scientists and media organizations have ulterior motives when it comes to conducting such research (231).

The scientists involved in these studies have suggested that mainstream scientists and media organizations may have ulterior motives when it comes to conducting such research (De Walle et al. 231).

WORKS CITED ENTRIES

WORKS CITED ENTRY FOR BOOK/PRINT SOURCE WITH KNOWN AUTHOR

Last name, First name. *Title of Book*. City of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. Medium of Publication.

Example 7.2.2.5

Ip, Greg. *The Little Book of Economics*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2010. Book.

WORKS CITED ENTRY FOR AN ARTICLE IN A SCHOLARLY JOURNAL

Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Journal* Volume.Issue (Year): pages. Medium of publication.

Example 7.2.2.6

Belzer, Alisa. "From Heroic Victims To Competent Comrades: Views Of Adult Literacy Learners In The Research Literature." *Adult Education Quarterly*. 65.3 (2015): 250-266. Web.

WORKS CITED ENTRY FOR A WEBPAGE

Editor, author, or compiler name (if available). "Page Title." *Name of Website*. Name of publisher, date of resource creation (if available). Medium of publication. Date of access.

Example 7.2.2.7

Ravenscraft, Eric. “How to Change Your Car’s Oil.” *Lifehacker*. Lifehacker, 1 August 2014. Web. 24 June 2016.

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7.2.3: CMS Signal Phrases

Keep things interesting for your readers by switching up the language and placement of your signal phrases.

MODEL PHRASES

In the words of geneticist Gregor Mendel, "..."1

As Derek Terrence Crab has argued, "..."2

In a letter to his brother, a Freedom Rider who witnessed the riots wrote that "..."3

"...," claims Benjamin Disraeli.4

"...," writes Albert Camus, "..."5

Mary Shelly offers an intriguing interpretation: "..."6

VERBS

Admits	Contends	Reasons
Agrees	Declares	Refutes
Argues	Denies	Rejects
Asserts	Emphasizes	Reports
Believes	Insists	Responds
Claims	Notes	Suggests
Compares	Observes	Thinks
Confirms	Points out	Writes

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7.2.4: MLA Signal Phrases

Keep things interesting for your readers by switching up the language and placement of your signal phrases.

MODEL PHRASES

In the words of professors Greer and Dewey, "..."

As sociology scholar Janice Kinsey has noted, "..."

Creative Commons, an organization that helps internet users understand and create copyright for materials, reports that "..."

"...," writes Deidre Tyrell, "..."

"...," attorney Sanderson claims.

Kyles and Sanderson offer up a compelling point: "..."

VERBS

Acknowledges	Contends	Observes
Admits	Declares	Points out
Adds	Denies	Reasons
Agrees	Disputes	Refutes
Argues	Emphasizes	Rejects
Asserts	Endorses	Reports
Believes	Grants	Responds
Claims	Illustrates	Suggests
Comments	Implies	Thinks
Compares	Insists	Writes
Confirms	Notes	

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7.2.5: APA Citation Examples

IN-TEXT CITATIONS

An in-text citation is used to let the reader of your work know that an outside source contributed to your writing of a particular phrase, idea, or argument. In-text citations need to be used following every direct quotation and paraphrase/summary that you write.

IN-TEXT CITATION FOR SOURCE WITH KNOWN AUTHOR

These citations need to include the author's last name, date that the information was published, and the page (p.) /paragraph (para.) number on which you found the information. If a signal phrase is used earlier in the sentence which includes the author's name, the name does not need to be included in the citation.

Example 7.2.5.1:

Stephen Hawking (2013) describes the climate at Oxford while he was studying there as "very anti-work" (p. 33).

The climate at Oxford during his studies is described as "very anti-work" (Hawking, 2013, p. 33).

IN-TEXT CITATION FOR SOURCE WITH UNKNOWN AUTHOR

These citations need to include the title or shortened title of the work in either the signal phrase or in the citation itself, the date when the information was published, and the page/paragraph number on which the information was found. Titles of books and reports are italicized or underlined; titles of articles, chapters, and web pages are in quotation marks.

Example 7.2.5.2:

In "Fighting Anti-Trans Violence" (2015), readers are told that while some suggest that transgender individuals should rely on law enforcement for protection, "police often participate in the intimidation themselves rather than providing protection" (para. 2).

While some suggest that transgender individuals should rely on law enforcement for protection it's reported that "police often participate in the intimidation themselves rather than providing protection" ("Fighting Anti-Trans Violence", 2015, para. 2).

IN-TEXT CITATION FOR SOURCE WITH MULTIPLE AUTHORS

These citations need to include the authors' last names, the date when the information was published, and the page/paragraph number on which the information was found. If a signal phrase is used earlier in the sentence which includes the authors' last names, the names do not need to be included in the citation. If the source has two authors, both authors' last names need to be listed in the citation.

Example 7.2.5.3:

Research by Ishiguro and Garcia (2009), suggest that more scientific study is needed before a conclusion between cause and effect can be drawn (p. 198).

"More scientific research needs to be completed before any conclusions about causation can be drawn" (Ishiguro & Garcia, 2009, p. 198).

If the source has three – five authors, all the authors' last names need to be used in either a signal phrase or in the citation the first time the source is cited. After the first citation, only the first author's last name followed by "et al." should be used.

Example 7.2.5.4:

De Walle, Schmidt, and Lisowski (2010) assert that mainstream scientists and media organizations have ulterior motives when it comes to conducting such research (p. 231).

The scientists involved in these studies have suggested that mainstream scientists and media organizations may have ulterior motives when it comes to conducting such research (De Walle, Schmidt, & Lisowski, 2010, p. 231).

However, De Walle et al. (2010) could not provide adequate evidence for this assertion (p. 233).

However, adequate evidence for this assertion could not be provided (De Walle et al., 2010 p. 233).

If the source has six or more authors, you only need to use the first author's last name in either a signal phrase or in the citation.

Example 7.2.5.5:

Willig et al. (1998) were the first group of researchers to take the issue seriously and perform in-depth research to identify potential negative effects of such events (p. 52).

The first group of researchers to take the issue seriously and perform in-depth research to identify potential negative effects of such events found some disturbing trends (Willig et al., 1998, p. 52).

WORKS CITED ENTRIES

WORKS CITED ENTRY FOR BOOK/PRINT SOURCE WITH KNOWN AUTHOR

Author, A. A. (Year of publication). *Title of work: Capital letter also for subtitle*. Location: Publisher.

Example 7.2.5.6:

Ip, G. (2010). *The little book of economics*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

WORKS CITED ENTRY FOR AN ARTICLE IN A SCHOLARLY JOURNAL

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Date of publication). Title of article.*Title of Journal, volume number,* page range. doi: 0000000/0000000000000 or dx.doi.org/10.0000/0000

Example 7.2.5.7:

Belzer, A., & Shapka J. (2015). From heroic victims to competent comrades: Views of adult literacy learners in the research literature. *Adult Education Quarterly*, *65.3*, 250-266. Doi: 10.1177/0741713615580015

WORKS CITED ENTRY FOR A WEBPAGE

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Date of publication). *Title of document*. Retrieved from Web address

Example 7.2.5.8:

Ravenscraft, E. (2014, August 1). *How to change your car's oil*. Retrieved fromhttp://lifehacker.com/how-to-change-your-cars-oil-1598482301

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7.2.6: APA Signal Phrases

Keep things interesting for your readers by switching up the language and placement of your signal phrases.

MODEL PHRASES

In the words of Peterson (2012), "..."

As Johnson and Allen (2006) have noted, "..."

Einstein and Yvanovich (1956), researchers in physics, pointed out that, "..."

"...," claimed Carter (1998).

"...," wrote Dietrich (2002), "..."

Linguists McAllen et al. (2015) have compiled an impressive amount of data for this argument: "..."

Harrison (2007) answered these criticisms with the following rebuttal: "..."

VERBS

Admitted	Contended	Reasoned
Agreed	Declared	Refuted
Argued	Denied	Rejected
Asserted	Emphasized	Reported
Believed	Insisted	Responded
Claimed	Noted	Suggested
Compared	Observed	Thought
Confirmed	Pointed out	Wrote

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7.3: ARGUMENT

At school, at work, and in everyday life, argument is one of main ways we exchange ideas with one another. Academics, business people, scientists, and other professionals all make arguments to determine what to do or think, or to solve a problem by enlisting others to do or believe something they otherwise would not. Not surprisingly, then, argument dominates writing, and training in argument writing is essential for all college students.

This chapter will explore how to define argument, how to talk about argument, how logic works in argument, the main argument types, and a list of logical fallacies.

7.3.1: What is Argument?

7.3.2: What are the Components and Vocabulary of Argument?

7.3.3: What is Logic?

7.3.4: What are the Different Types of Argument in Writing?

7.3.5: A Repository of Logical Fallacies

7.3.5.1: Writing to Persuade

7.3.5.1.1: Introduction to Argumentative Writing

7.3.5.1.2: Aristotelian (Classical) Argument Model

7.3.5.1.3: Rogerian Argument Model

7.3.5.1.4: Toulmin Argument Model

7.3.5.1.5: Proposal Argument Model

7.3.5.1.6: Putting It All Together- Basic Elements of an Argument Essay

7.3.5.1.7: Tips for Writing Academic Persuasive Essays

7.3.5.1.8: Sample Writing Assignments

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7.3.1: What is Argument?

All people, including you, make arguments on a regular basis. When you make a claim and then support the claim with reasons, you are making an argument. Consider the following:

The two main models of argument desired in college courses as part of the training for academic or professional life are **rhetorical argument** and **academic argument**. If rhetoric is the study of the craft of writing and speaking, particularly writing or speaking designed to convince and persuade, the student studying **rhetorical argument** focuses on how to create an argument that convinces and persuades effectively. To that end, the student must understand how to think broadly about argument, the particular vocabulary of argument, and the logic of argument. The close sibling of rhetorical argument is academic argument, argument used to discuss and evaluate ideas, usually within a professional field of study, and to convince others of those ideas. In **academic argument**, interpretation and research play the central roles.

However, it would be incorrect to say that academic argument and rhetorical argument do not overlap. Indeed, they do, and often. A psychologist not only wishes to prove an important idea with research, but she will also wish to do so in the most effective way possible. A politician will want to make the most persuasive case for his side, but he should also be mindful of data that may support his points. *Thus, throughout this chapter, when you see the term **argument** , it refers to a broad category including both **rhetorical** and **academic argument** .*

Before moving to the specific parts and vocabulary of argument, it will be helpful to consider some further ideas about what argument is and what it is not.

Argument vs. Controversy or Fight

Consumers of written texts are often tempted to divide writing into two categories: argumentative and non-argumentative. According to this view, to be argumentative, writing must have the following qualities: It has to defend a position in a debate between two or more opposing sides, it must be on a controversial topic, and the goal of such writing must be to prove the correctness of one point of view over another.

A related definition of argument implies a confrontation, a clash of opinions and personalities, or just a plain verbal fight. It implies a winner and a loser, a right side and a wrong one. Because of this understanding of the word “argument,” many students think the only type of argument writing is the debate-like position paper, in which the author defends his or her point of view against other, usually opposing, points of view.

For a fun illustration of the reductive nature of a mere fight, see “ **The Argument Clinic** ” (youtu.be/XNkjDuSVXiE, transcript **here**) skit from Monty Python.

These two characteristics of argument—as controversial and as a fight—limit the definition because arguments come in different disguises, from hidden to subtle to commanding. It is useful to look at the term “argument” in a new way. What if we think of argument as an opportunity for conversation, for sharing with others our point of view on an issue, for showing others our perspective of the world? What if we think of argument as an opportunity to connect with the points of view of others rather than defeating those points of view?

One community that values argument as a type of communication and exchange is the community of scholars. They advance their arguments to share research and new ways of thinking about topics. Biologists, for example, do not gather data and write up analyses of the results because they wish to fight with other biologists, even if they disagree with the ideas of other biologists. They wish to share their discoveries and get feedback on their ideas. When historians put forth an argument, they do so often while building on the arguments of other historians who came before them. Literature scholars publish their interpretations of different works of literature to enhance understanding and share new views, not necessarily to have one interpretation replace all others. There may be debates within any field of study, but those debates can be healthy and constructive if they mean even more scholars come together to explore the ideas involved in those debates. Thus, be prepared for your college professors to have a much broader view of argument than a mere fight over a controversial topic or two.

Argument vs. Opinion

Argument is often confused with opinion. Indeed, arguments and opinions sound alike. Someone with an opinion asserts a claim that he thinks is true. Someone with an argument asserts a claim that she thinks is true. Although arguments and opinions do sound the same, there are two important differences:

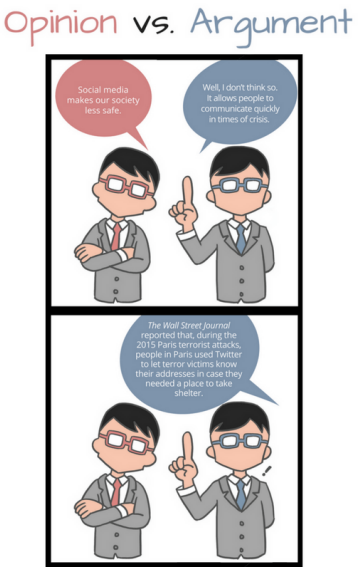


Figure 7.3.1.1

Argument vs. Thesis

Another point of confusion is the difference between an argument and an essay's **thesis**. For college essays, there is no essential difference between an argument and a thesis; most professors use these terms interchangeably. An argument is a claim that you must then support. The main claim of an essay is the point of the essay and provides the purpose for the essay. Thus, the main claim of an essay is also the thesis. For more on the thesis, see Chapter 4.

Consider this as well: Most formal essays center upon one main claim (the thesis) but then support that main claim with supporting evidence and arguments. The **topic sentence** of a body paragraph can be another type of argument, though a supporting one, and, hence, a narrower one. Try not to be confused when professors call both the thesis and topic sentences arguments. They are not wrong because arguments come in different forms; some claims are broad enough to be broken down into a number of supporting arguments. Many longer essays are structured by the smaller arguments that are a part of and support the main argument. Sometimes professors, when they say supporting points or supporting arguments, mean the reasons (**premises**) for the main claim (**conclusion**) you make in an essay. If a claim has a number of reasons, those reasons will form the support structure for the essay, and each reason will be the basis for the topic sentence of its body paragraph.

Argument vs. Fact

Arguments are also commonly mistaken for statements of fact. This comes about because often people privilege facts over opinions, even as they defend the right to have opinions. In other words, facts are "good," and opinions are "bad," or if not exactly bad, then fuzzy and thus easy to reject. However, remember the important distinction between an argument and an opinion stated

above: While argument may sound like an opinion, the two are not the same. An opinion is an assertion, but it is left to stand alone with little to no reasoning or support. An argument is much stronger because it includes and demonstrates reasons and support for its claim.

As for mistaking a fact for an argument, keep this important distinction in mind: An argument must be **arguable**. In everyday life, arguable is often a synonym for doubtful. For an argument, though, arguable means that it is worth arguing, that it has a range of possible answers, angles, or perspectives: It is an answer, angle, or perspective with which a reasonable person might disagree. Facts, by virtue of being facts, are not arguable. **Facts** are statements that can be definitely proven using objective data. The statement that is a fact is absolutely valid. In other words, the statement can be pronounced as definitively true or definitively false. For example, 2 + 2 = 4. This expression identifies a verifiably true statement, or a fact, because it can be proved with objective data. When a fact is established, there is no other side, and there should be no disagreement.

The misunderstanding about facts (being inherently good) and argument (being inherently problematic because it is not a fact) leads to the mistaken belief that facts have no place in an argument. This could not be farther from the truth. First of all, most arguments are formed by analyzing facts. Second, facts provide one type of support for an argument. Thus, do not think of facts and arguments as enemies; rather, they work closely together.

Explicit vs. Implicit Arguments

Arguments can be both explicit and implicit. **Explicit arguments** contain prominent and definable thesis statements and multiple specific proofs to support them. This is common in academic writing from scholars of all fields. **Implicit arguments**, on the other hand, work by weaving together facts and narratives, logic and emotion, personal experiences and statistics. Unlike explicit arguments, implicit ones do not have a one-sentence thesis statement. Implicit arguments involve evidence of many different kinds to build and convey their point of view to their audience. Both types use rhetoric, logic, and support to create effective arguments.

Exercise 7.3.1.1

Go on a hunt for an implicit argument in the essay, " **37 Who Saw Murder Didn't Call the Police** " (https://tinyurl.com/yc35o25x) by Martin Gansberg.

1. Read the article, and take notes on it–either using a notebook or by annotating a printed copy of the text itself (for help with note-taking on reading material, see **Chapter 1, "Critical Reading."** Mark or write down all the important details you find.
2. After you are finished reading, look over your notes or annotations. What do all the details add up to? Use the details you have read about to figure out what Gansberg's implicit argument is in his essay. Write it in your own words.
3. Discuss your results with a partner or a group. Did you come up with the same argument? Have everyone explain the reasoning for his or her results.

Argument and Rhetoric

An argument in written form involves making choices, and knowing the principles of rhetoric allows a writer to make *informed* choices about various aspects of the writing process. Every act of writing takes place in a specific rhetorical situation. The most basic and important components of a rhetorical situation are

These components give readers a way to analyze a text on first encounter. These factors also help writers select their topics, arrange their material, and make other important decisions about the argument they will make and the support they will need. For more on rhetoric, see **Chapter 2, "Rhetorical Analysis."**

Key Takeaways: What is an Argument?

With this brief introduction, you can see what rhetorical or academic argument *is not*:

Furthermore, you can see what rhetorical argument *is*:

1. **Arguments have rules; opinions do not**. In other words, to form an argument, you must consider whether the argument is reasonable. Is it worth making? Is it valid? Is it sound? Do all of its parts fit together logically? Opinions, on the other hand, have no rules, and anyone asserting an opinion need not think it through for it to count as one; however, it will not count as an argument.
2. **Arguments have support; opinions do not**. If you make a claim and then stop, as if the claim itself were enough to demonstrate its truthfulness, you have asserted an opinion only. An argument must be supported, and the support of an argument has its own rules. The support must also be reasonable, relevant, and sufficient.

- **Author** of the text.
- **Purpose** of the text.
- **Intended audience** (i.e., those the author imagines will be reading the text).
- **Form or type** of text.
- An argument need not be controversial or about a controversy.
- An argument is not a mere fight.
- An argument does not have a single winner or loser.
- An argument is not a mere opinion.
- An argument is not a statement of fact.
- An argument is a claim asserted as true.
- An argument is arguable.
- An argument must be reasonable.
- An argument must be supported.
- An argument in a formal essay is called a thesis. Supporting arguments can be called topic sentences.
- An argument can be explicit or implicit.
- An argument must be adapted to its rhetorical situation.

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7.3.2: What are the Components and Vocabulary of Argument?

Questions are at the core of arguments. What matters is not just that you believe that what you have to say is true, but that you give others viable reasons to believe it as well—and also show them that you have considered the issue from multiple angles. To do that, build your argument out of the answers to the five questions a rational reader will expect answers to. In academic and professional writing, we tend to build arguments from the answers to these main questions:

1. What do you want me to do or think?
2. Why should I do or think that?
3. How do I know that what you say is true?
4. Why should I accept the reasons that support your claim?
5. What about this other idea, fact, or consideration?
6. How should you present your argument?

When you ask people to do or think something they otherwise would not, they quite naturally want to know why they should do so. In fact, people tend to ask the same questions. As you make a reasonable argument, you anticipate and respond to readers' questions with a particular part of argument:

1. The answer to *What do you want me to do or think?* is your **conclusion**: "I conclude that you should do or think X."
2. The answer to *Why should I do or think that?* states your **premise**: "You should do or think X because..."
3. The answer to *How do I know that what you say is true?* presents your **support**: "You can believe my reasons because they are supported by these facts..."
4. The answer to *Why should I accept that your reasons support your claim?* states your general principle of reasoning, called a **warrant**: "My specific reason supports my specific claim because whenever this general condition is true, we can generally draw a conclusion like mine."
5. The answer to *What about this other idea, fact, or conclusion?* **acknowledges** that your readers might see things differently and then **responds** to their **counterarguments**.
6. The answer to *How should you present your argument?* leads to the **point of view**, **organization**, and **tone** that you should use when making your arguments.

As you have noticed, the answers to these questions involve knowing the particular vocabulary about argument because these terms refer to specific parts of an argument. The remainder of this section will cover the terms referred to in the questions listed above as well as others that will help you better understand the building blocks of argument.

What Is a Conclusion, and What Is a Premise?

The root notion of an argument is that it convinces us that something is true. What we are being convinced of is the **conclusion**. An example would be this claim:

Littering is harmful.

A reason for this conclusion is called the **premise**. Typically, a conclusion will be supported by two or more **premises**. Both premises and conclusions are **statements**. Some premises for our littering conclusion might be these:

Littering is dangerous to animals.

Littering is dangerous to humans.

Thus, to be clear, understand that an argument asserts that the writer's claim is true in *two* main parts: the **premises** of the argument exist to show that the **conclusion** is true.

Tip

Be aware of the other words to indicate a conclusion– *claim*, *assertion*, *point* –and other ways to talk about the premise– *reason*, *factor*, the *why*. Also, do not confuse this use of the word conclusion with a conclusion paragraph for an essay.

What Is a Statement?

A **statement** is a type of sentence that can be true or false and corresponds to the grammatical category of a **declarative sentence**. For example, the sentence,

The Nile is a river in northeastern Africa,

is a statement because it makes sense to inquire whether it is true or false. (In this case, it happens to be true.) However, a sentence is still a statement, even if it is false. For example, the sentence,

The Yangtze is a river in Japan,

is still a statement; it is just a false statement (the Yangtze River is in China). In contrast, none of the following sentences are statements:

Please help yourself to more casserole.

Don't tell your mother about the surprise.

Do you like Vietnamese pho?

None of these sentences are statements because it does not make sense to ask whether those sentences are true or false; rather, they are a request, a command, and a question, respectively. Make sure to remember the difference between sentences that are declarative statements and sentences that are not *because arguments depend on declarative statements*.

Tip

A question cannot be an argument, yet students will often pose a question at the end of an introduction to an essay, thinking they have declared their thesis. They have not. If, however, they answer that question (**conclusion**) and give some reasons for that answer (**premises**), they then have the components necessary for both an argument and a declarative statement of that argument (**thesis**).

To reiterate: All arguments are composed of premises and conclusions, both of which are types of statements. The premises of the argument provide reasons for thinking that the conclusion is true. Arguments typically involve more than one premise.

What Is Standard Argument Form?

A standard way of capturing the structure of an argument, or diagramming it, is by numbering the premises and conclusion. For example, the following represents another way to arrange the littering argument:

1. Littering is harmful
2. Litter is dangerous to animals
3. Litter is dangerous to humans

This numbered list represents an argument that has been put into **standard argument form**. A more precise definition of an argument now emerges, employing the vocabulary that is specific to academic and rhetorical arguments. An argument is a set of **statements**, some of which (the **premises**: statements 2 and 3 above) attempt to provide a reason for thinking that some other

statement (the **conclusion**: statement 1) is true.

Tip

Diagramming an argument can be helpful when trying to figure out your essay's thesis. Because a thesis is an argument, putting the parts of an argument into standard form can help sort ideas. You can transform the numbered ideas into a cohesive sentence or two for your thesis once you are more certain what your argument parts are.

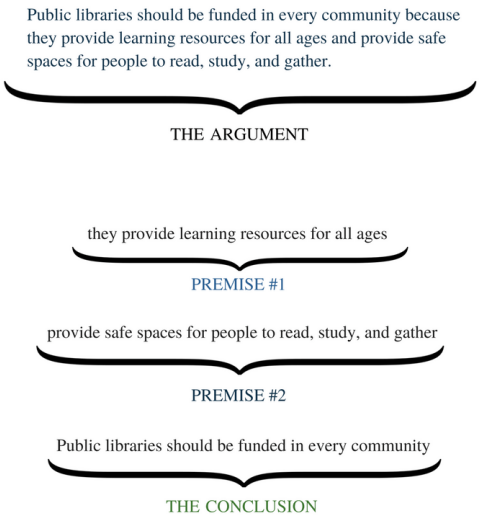


Figure 7.3.2.1 "Argument Diagram"

Recognizing arguments is essential to analysis and critical thinking; if you cannot distinguish between the details (the support) of a piece of writing and what those details are there to support (the argument), you will likely misunderstand what you are reading. Additionally, studying how others make arguments can help you learn how to effectively create your own.

What Are Argument Indicators?

While mapping an argument in standard argument form can be a good way to figure out and formulate a thesis, identifying arguments by other writers is also important. The best way to identify an argument is to ask whether a claim exists (in statement form) that a writer justifies by reasons (also in statement form). Other identifying markers of arguments are key words or phrases that are premise indicators or conclusion indicators. For example, recall the littering argument, reworded here into a single sentence (much like a thesis statement):

Littering is harmful *because* it is dangerous to both animals and humans.

The word "because" here is a **premise indicator**. That is, "because" indicates that what follows is a reason for thinking that littering is bad. Here is another example:

The student plagiarized *since* I found the exact same sentences on a website, and the website was published more than a year before the student wrote the paper.

In this example, the word "since" is a premise indicator because what follows is a statement that is clearly intended to be a reason for thinking that the student plagiarized (i.e., a premise). Notice that in these two cases, the premise indicators "because" and "since" are interchangeable: "because" could be used in place of "since" or "since" in the place of "because," and the meaning of the sentences would have been the same.

COMMON PREMISE INDICATORS	
since	because
for	as
given that	seeing that
for the reason that	is shown by the fact that

Figure 7.3.2.2"Common Premise Indicators"

In addition to premise indicators, there are also **conclusion indicators**. Conclusion indicators mark that what follows is the conclusion of an argument. For example,

Bob-the-arsonist has been dead for a year, *so* Bob-the-arsonist didn't set the fire at the East Lansing Starbucks last week.

In this example, the word "so" is a conclusion indicator because what follows it is a statement that someone is trying to establish as true (i.e., a conclusion). Here is another example of a conclusion indicator:

A poll administered by Gallup (a respected polling company) showed candidate X to be substantially behind candidate Y with only a week left before the vote; *therefore*, candidate Y will probably not win the election.

In this example, the word "therefore" is a conclusion indicator because what follows it is a statement that someone is trying to establish as true (i.e., a conclusion). As before, in both of these cases, the conclusion indicators "so" and "therefore" are interchangeable: "So" could be used in place of "therefore" or "therefore" in the place of "so," and the meaning of the sentences would have been the same.

COMMON CONCLUSION INDICATORS	
therefore	so
hence	thus
implies that	consequently
it follows that	we may conclude that

Figure 7.3.2.3"Common Conclusion Indicators"

Exercise 2

Which of the following are arguments? If it is an argument, identify the conclusion (claim) of the argument. If it is not an argument, explain why not. Remember to look for the qualifying features of an argument: (1) It is a statement or series of statements, (2) it states a claim (a conclusion), and (3) it has at least one premise (reason for the claim).

1. The woman with the hat is not a witch since witches have long noses, and she doesn't have a long nose.
2. I have been wrangling cattle since before you were old enough to tie your own shoes.
3. Albert is angry with me, so he probably won't be willing to help me wash the dishes.
4. First, I washed the dishes, and then I dried them.
5. If the road weren't icy, the car wouldn't have slid off the turn.
6. Marvin isn't a fireman and isn't a fisherman, either.
7. Are you seeing the rhinoceros over there? It's huge!
8. Obesity has become a problem in the US because obesity rates have risen over the past four decades.
9. Bob showed me a graph with rising obesity rates, and I was very surprised to see how much they had risen.
10. Marvin isn't a fireman because Marvin is a Greyhound, which is a type of dog, and dogs can't be firemen.
11. What Susie told you is not the actual reason she missed her flight to Denver.
12. Carol likely forgot to lock her door this morning because she was distracted by a clown riding a unicycle while singing Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Simple Man."
13. No one who has ever gotten frostbite while climbing K2 has survived to tell about it; therefore, no one ever will.

What Constitutes Support?

To ensure that your argument is sound—that the premises for your conclusion are true—you must establish **support**. The burden of proof, to borrow language from law, is on the one making an argument, not on the recipient of an argument. If you wish to assert a claim, you must then also support it, and this support must be relevant, logical, and sufficient.

It is important to use the right kind of evidence, to use it effectively, and to have an appropriate amount of it.

You will find more information about the different types of evidence, how to find them, and what makes them credible in Chapter 6. Logic will be covered later on in this chapter.

What Is the Warrant?

Above all, connect the evidence to the argument. This connection is the **warrant**. Evidence is not self-evident. In other words, after introducing evidence into your writing, you must demonstrate why and how this evidence supports your argument. You must explain the significance of the evidence and its function in your paper. What turns a fact or piece of information into evidence is the connection it has with a larger claim or argument: Evidence is always evidence *for* or *against* something, and you have to make that link clear.

Tip

Student writers sometimes assume that readers already know the information being written about; students may be wary of elaborating too much because they think their points are obvious. But remember, readers are not mind readers: Although they may be familiar with many of the ideas discussed, they don't know what writers want to do with those ideas unless they indicate that through explanations, organization, and transitions. Thus, when you write, be sure to explain the connections you made in your mind when you chose your evidence, decided where to place it in your paper, and drew conclusions based on it.

What Is a Counterargument?

Remember that arguments are multi-sided. As you brainstorm and prepare to present your idea and your support for it, consider other sides of the issue. These other sides are **counterarguments**. Make a list of counterarguments as you work through the writing process, and use them to build your case – to widen your idea to include a valid counterargument, to explain how a counterargument might be defeated, to illustrate how a counterargument may not withstand the scrutiny your research has uncovered, and/or to show that you are aware of and have taken into account other possibilities.

For example, you might choose the issue of declawing cats and set up your search with the question should I have my indoor cat declawed? Your research, interviews, surveys, personal experiences might yield several angles on this question: Yes, it will save your furniture and your arms and ankles. No, it causes psychological issues for the cat. No, if the cat should get outside, he will be without defense. As a writer, be prepared to address alternate arguments and to include them to the extent that it will illustrate your reasoning.

Almost anything claimed in a paper can be refuted or challenged. Opposing points of view and arguments exist in every debate. It is smart to anticipate possible objections to your arguments – and to do so will make your arguments stronger. Another term for a counterargument is **antithesis** (i.e., the opposition to a thesis). To find possible counterarguments (and keep in mind there can be many counterpoints to one claim), ask the following questions:

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, the next set of questions can help you respond to these potential objections:

Is it possible to concede the point of the opposition, but then challenge that point's importance/usefulness?

It may not seem likely at first, but clearly recognizing and addressing different sides of the argument, the ones that are not your own, can make your argument and paper stronger. By addressing the antithesis of your argument essay, you are showing your readers that you have carefully considered the issue and accept that there are often other ways to view the same thing.

You can use signal phrases in your paper to alert readers that you are about to present an objection. Consider using one of these phrases–or ones like them–at the beginning of a paragraph:

What Are More Complex Argument Structures?

So far you have seen that an argument consists of a conclusion and a premise (typically more than one). However, often arguments and explanations have a more complex structure than just a few premises that directly support the conclusion. For example, consider the following argument:

No one living in Pompeii could have survived the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius. The reason is simple: The lava was flowing too fast, and there was nowhere to go to escape it in time. Therefore, this account of the eruption, which claims to have been written by an eyewitness living in Pompeii, was not actually written by an eyewitness.

The **main conclusion** of this argument—the statement that depends on other statements as evidence but doesn't itself provide any evidence for other statements—is

A. This account of the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius was not actually written by an eyewitness.

However, the argument's structure is more complex than simply having a couple of premises that provide evidence directly for the conclusion. Rather, some statements provide evidence directly for the main conclusion, but some premise statements support other premise statements which then support the conclusion.

To determine the structure of an argument, you must determine which statements support which, using premise and conclusion indicators to help. For example, the passage above contains the phrase, "the reason is..." which is a premise indicator, and it also contains the conclusion indicator, "therefore." That conclusion indicator helps identify the main conclusion, but the more

important element to see is that statement A does not itself provide evidence or support for any of the other statements in the argument, which is the clearest reason statement A is the main conclusion of the argument. The next questions to answer are these: Which statement most directly supports A? What most directly supports A is

B. No one living in Pompeii could have survived the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius.

However, there is also a reason offered in support of B. That reason is the following:

C. The lava from Mt. Vesuvius was flowing too fast, and there was nowhere for someone living in Pompeii to go to escape it in time.

So the main conclusion (A) is directly supported by B, and B is supported by C. Since B acts as a premise for the main conclusion but is also itself the conclusion of further premises, B is classified as an **intermediate conclusion**. What you should recognize here is that *one and the same statement can act as both a premise and a conclusion*. Statement B is a premise that supports the main conclusion (A), but it is also itself a conclusion that follows from C. Here is how to put this complex argument into standard form (using numbers this time, as is typical for diagramming arguments):

Notice that at the end of statement 2 is a written indicator in parentheses (from 1), and, likewise, at the end of statement 3 is another indicator (from 2). From 1 is a shorthand way of saying, "this statement follows logically from statement 1." Use this convention as a way to keep track of an argument's structure. It may also help to think about the structure of an argument spatially, as the figure below shows:

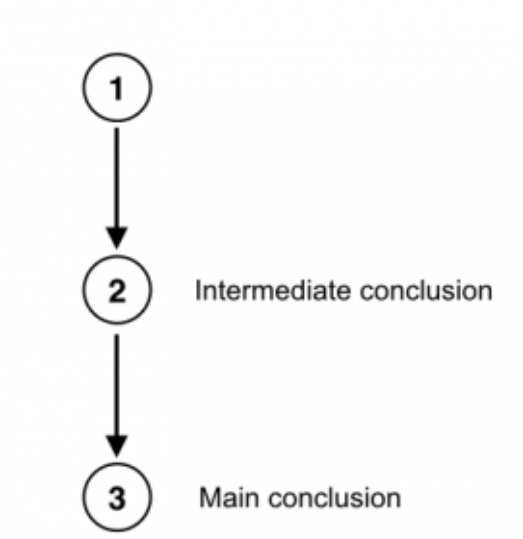


Figure 7.3.2.4: From Introduction to Logic and Critical Thinking by Matthew Van Cleave

The main argument here (from 2 to 3) contains a **subargument**, in this case, the argument from 1 (a premise) to 2 (the intermediate conclusion). A subargument, as the term suggests, is a part of an argument that provides indirect support for the main argument. The main argument is simply the argument whose conclusion is the main conclusion.

Another type of structure that arguments can have is when two or more premises provide direct but independent support for the conclusion. Here is an example of an argument with that structure:

Wanda rode her bike to work today because when she arrived at work she had her right pant leg rolled up, which cyclists do to keep their pants legs from getting caught in the chain. Moreover, our co-worker, Bob, who works in accounting, saw her riding towards work at 7:45 a.m.

The conclusion of this argument is "Wanda rode her bike to work today"; two premises provide independent support for it: the fact that Wanda had her pant leg cuffed and the fact that Bob saw her riding her bike. Here is the argument in standard form:

Again, notice that next to statement 4 of the argument is an indicator of how each part of the argument relates to the main conclusion. In this case, to avoid any ambiguity, you can see that the support for the conclusion comes independently from

statements 1 and 2, on the one hand, and from statement 3, on the other hand. It is important to point out that an argument *or subargumen* t can be supported by one or more premises, the case in this argument because the main conclusion (4) is supported jointly by 1 and 2, and singly by 3. As before, we can represent the structure of this argument spatially, as the figure below shows:

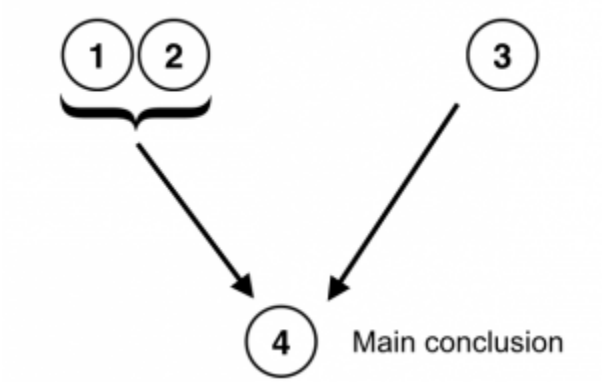


Figure 7.3.2.5from Introduction to Logic and Critical Thinking by Matthew Van Cleave

There are endless argument structures that can be generated from a few simple patterns. At this point, it is important to understand that arguments can have different structures and that some arguments will be more complex than others. Determining the structure of complex arguments is a skill that takes some time to master, rather like simplifying equations in math. Even so, it may help to remember that any argument structure ultimately traces back to some combination of premises, intermediate arguments, and a main conclusion.

Exercise 3

Write the following arguments in standard form. If any arguments are complex, show how each complex argument is structured using a diagram like those shown just above.

1. There is nothing wrong with prostitution because there is nothing wrong with consensual sexual and economic interactions between adults. Moreover, there is no difference between a man who goes on a blind date with a woman, buys her dinner and then has sex with her and a man who simply pays a woman for sex, which is another reason there is nothing wrong with prostitution.

2. Prostitution is wrong because it involves women who have typically been sexually abused as children. Proof that these women have been abused comes from multiple surveys done with female prostitutes that show a high percentage of self-reported sexual abuse as children.

3. Someone was in this cabin recently because warm water was in the tea kettle and wood was still smoldering in the fireplace. However, the person couldn't have been Tim because Tim has been with me the whole time. Therefore, someone else must be in these woods.

4. Someone can be blind and yet run in the Olympic Games since Marla Runyan did it at the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

5. The train was late because it had to take a longer, alternate route seeing as the bridge was out.

6. Israel is not safe if Iran gets nuclear missiles because Iran has threatened multiple times to destroy Israel, and if Iran had nuclear missiles, it would be able to carry out this threat. Furthermore, since Iran has been developing enriched uranium, it has the key component needed for nuclear weapons; every other part of the process of building a nuclear weapon is simple compared to that. Therefore, Israel is not safe.

7. Since all professional hockey players are missing front teeth, and Martin is a professional hockey player, it follows that Martin is missing front teeth. Because almost all professional athletes who are missing their front teeth have false teeth, it follows that Martin probably has false teeth.

8. Anyone who eats the crab rangoon at China Food restaurant will probably have stomach troubles afterward. It has happened to

me every time; thus, it will probably happen to other people as well. Since Bob ate the crab rangoon at China Food restaurant, he will probably have stomach troubles afterward.

9. Lucky and Caroline like to go for runs in the afternoon in Hyde Park. Because Lucky never runs alone, any time Albert is running, Caroline must also be running. Albert looks like he has just run (since he is panting hard), so it follows that Caroline must have run, too.

10. Just because Linda's prints were on the gun that killed Terry and the gun was registered to Linda, it doesn't mean that Linda killed Terry since Linda's prints would certainly be on her own gun, and someone else could have stolen her gun and used it to kill Terry.

Key Takeaways: Components of Vocabulary and Argument

- Could someone draw a different conclusion from the facts or examples you present?
- Could a reader question any of your assumptions or claims?
- Could a reader offer a different explanation of an issue?
- Is there any evidence out there that could weaken your position?
- Can you offer an explanation of why a reader should question a piece of evidence or consider a different point of view?
- Can you explain how your position responds to any contradicting evidence?
- Can you put forward a different interpretation of evidence?
- Researchers have challenged these claims with...
- Critics argue that this view...
- Some readers may point to...

1. The lava from Mt. Vesuvius was flowing too fast, and there was nowhere for someone living in Pompeii to go to escape it in time.
2. Therefore, no one living in Pompeii could have survived the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius. (from 1)
3. Therefore, this account of the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius was not actually written by an eyewitness. (from 2)
4. Wanda arrived at work with her right pant leg rolled up.
5. Cyclists often roll up their right pant leg.
6. Bob saw Wanda riding her bike towards work at 7:45.
7. Therefore, Wanda rode her bike to work today. (from 1-2, 3 independently)

- **Conclusion** —a claim that is asserted as true. One part of an argument.
- **Premise** —a reason behind a conclusion. The other part of an argument. Most conclusions have more than one premise.
- **Statement** —a declarative sentence that can be evaluated as true or false. The parts of an argument, premises and the conclusion, should be statements.
- **Standard Argument Form** —a numbered breakdown of the parts of an argument (conclusion and all premises).
- **Premise Indicators** —terms that signal that a premise, or reason, is coming.
- **Conclusion Indicator** —terms that signal that a conclusion, or claim, is coming.
- **Support** —anything used as proof or reasoning for an argument. This includes evidence, experience, and logic.
- **Warrant** —the connection made between the support and the reasons of an argument.
- **Counterargument** —an opposing argument to the one you make. An argument can have multiple counterarguments.
- **Complex Arguments** –these are formed by more than individual premises that point to a conclusion. Complex arguments may have layers to them, including an intermediate argument that may act as both a conclusion (with its own premises) and a premise (for the main conclusion).

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7.3.3: What is Logic?

Logic, in its most basic sense, is the study of how ideas reasonably fit together. In other words, when you apply logic, you must be concerned with analyzing ideas and arguments by using reason and rational thinking, not emotions or mysticism or belief. As a dedicated field of study, logic belongs primarily to math, philosophy, and computer science; in these fields, one can get professional training in logic. However, *all* academic disciplines employ logic: to evaluate evidence, to analyze arguments, to explain ideas, and to connect evidence to arguments. One of the most important uses of logic is in composing and evaluating arguments.

The study of logic divides into two main categories: formal and informal. **Formal logic** is the formal study of logic. In other words, in math or philosophy or computer science, if you were to take a class on logic, you would likely be learning formal logic. The purpose of formal logic is to eliminate any imprecision or lack of objectivity in evaluating arguments. Logicians, scholars who study and apply logic, have devised a number of formal techniques that accomplish this goal for certain classes of arguments. These techniques can include truth tables, Venn diagrams, proofs, syllogisms, and formulae. The different branches of formal logic include, but are not limited to, propositional logic, categorical logic, and first order logic.

Informal logic is logic applied outside of formal study and is most often used in college, business, and life. According to *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* ,

For centuries, the study of logic has inspired the idea that its methods might be harnessed in efforts to understand and improve thinking, reasoning, and argument as they occur in real life contexts: in public discussion and debate; in education and intellectual exchange; in interpersonal relations; and in law, medicine, and other professions. Informal logic is the attempt to build a logic suited to this purpose. It combines the study of argument, evidence, proof and justification with an instrumental outlook which emphasizes its usefulness in the analysis of real life arguing.

When people apply the principles of logic to employ and evaluate arguments in real life situations and studies, they are using informal logic.

Why Is Logic Important?

Logic is one of the most respected elements of scholarly and professional thinking and writing. Consider that logic teaches us how to recognize good and bad arguments—not just arguments about logic, *any* argument. Nearly every undertaking in life will ultimately require that you evaluate an argument, perhaps several. You are confronted with a question: “Should I buy this car or that car?” “Should I go to this college or that college?” “Did that scientific experiment show what the scientist claims it did?” “Should I vote for the candidate who promises to lower taxes, or for the one who says she might raise them?” Your life is a long parade of choices.

When answering such questions, to make the best choices, you often have only one tool: an argument. You listen to the reasons for and against various options and must choose among them. Thus, the ability to evaluate arguments is an ability useful in everything that you will do—in your work, your personal life, and your deepest reflections. This is the job of logic.

If you are a student, note that nearly every discipline–be it a science, one of the humanities, or a study like business–relies upon arguments. Evaluating arguments is the most fundamental skill common to math, physics, psychology, history, literary studies, and any other intellectual endeavor. Logic alone tells you how to evaluate the arguments of *any* discipline.

The alternative to developing logic skills is to be always at the mercy of bad reasoning and, as a result, bad choices. Worse, you can be manipulated by deceivers. Speaking in Canandaigua, New York, on August 3, 1857, the escaped slave and abolitionist leader Frederick Douglass observed,

Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them, and these will continue till they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress.

Add this to Frederick Douglass's words: If you find out just how much a person can be deceived, that is just how far she will be deceived. The limits of tyrants are also prescribed by the reasoning abilities of those they aim to oppress. What logic teaches you is how to demand and recognize good reasoning, and, hence, avoid deceit. You are only as free as your powers of reasoning enable.

The remaining part of this logic section will concern two types of logical arguments— **inductive** and **deductive** —and the tests of those arguments, including **validity**, **soundness**, **reliability**, and **strength**, so that you can check your own arguments and evaluate the arguments of others, no matter if those arguments come from the various academic disciplines, politics, the business world, or just discussions with friends and family.

What Is Deductive Argument?

A **deductive argument** is an argument whose conclusion is supposed to follow from its premises with absolute certainty, thus leaving no possibility that the conclusion doesn't follow from the premises. If a deductive argument fails to guarantee the truth of the conclusion, then the deductive argument can no longer be called a deductive argument.

The Tests of Deductive Arguments: Validity and Soundness

So far in this chapter, you have learned what arguments are and how to determine their structure, including how to reconstruct arguments in standard form. But what makes an argument good or bad? There are four main ways to test arguments, two of which are for deductive arguments. The first test for deductive arguments is **validity**, a concept that is central to logical thinking. Validity relates to how well the premises support the conclusion and is the golden standard that every deductive argument should aim for. A **valid argument** is an argument whose conclusion cannot possibly be false, assuming that the premises are true. Another way to put this is as a conditional statement: A valid argument is an argument in which *if* the premises are true, the conclusion *must* be true. Here is an example of a valid argument:

1. Violet is a dog.
2. Therefore, Violet is a mammal. (from 1)

You might wonder whether it *is* true that Violet is a dog (maybe she's a lizard or a buffalo—you have no way of knowing from the information given). But, for the purposes of validity, it doesn't matter whether premise 1 is *actually* true or false. All that matters for validity is whether the conclusion follows from the premise. You can see that the conclusion—that Violet is a mammal—does seem to follow from the premise—that Violet is a dog. That is, given the truth of the premise, the conclusion has to be true. This argument is clearly valid because *if* you assume that "Violet is a dog" is true, then, since all dogs are mammals, *it follows* that "Violet is a mammal" must also be true. Thus, whether an argument is valid has nothing to do with whether the premises of the argument are actually true. Here is an example where the premises are clearly false, yet the argument is valid:

1. Everyone born in France can speak French.
2. Barack Obama was born in France.
3. Therefore, Barack Obama can speak French. (from 1-2)

This is a valid argument. Why? Because when you *assume* the truth of the premises (everyone born in France can speak French, and Barack Obama was born in France) the conclusion (Barack Obama can speak French) *must* be true. Notice that this is so even though none of these statements is *actually* true. Not everyone born in France can speak French (think about people who were born there but then moved somewhere else where they didn't speak French and never learned it), and Barack Obama was not born in France, but it is also false that Obama can speak French. However, the argument is still valid even though neither the premises nor the conclusion is actually true. That may sound strange, but if you understand the concept of validity, it is not strange at all. Remember: *validity describes the relationship between the premises and conclusion, and it means that the premises imply the conclusion, whether or not that conclusion is true.*

To better understand the concept of validity, examine this example of an *invalid* argument:

1. George was President of the United States.
2. Therefore, George was elected President of the United States. (from 1)

This argument is **invalid** because it is possible for the premise to be true and yet the conclusion false. Here is a counterexample to the argument. Gerald Ford was President of the United States, but he was never elected president because Ford replaced Richard Nixon when Nixon resigned in the wake of the Watergate scandal. Therefore, it does not follow that just because someone is President of the United States that he was *elected* President of the United States. In other words, it is possible for the premise of the argument to be true and yet the conclusion false. This means that the argument is invalid. If an argument is invalid, it will always be possible to construct a counterexample to show that it is invalid (as demonstrated in the Gerald Ford scenario). A **counterexample** is simply a description of a scenario in which the premises of the argument are all true while the conclusion of the argument is false.

Exercise 4

Determine whether the following arguments are valid by using an informal test of validity. In other words, ask whether you can imagine a scenario in which the premises are both true and yet the conclusion is false. For each argument do the following: (1) If the argument is valid, explain your reasoning, and (2) if the argument is invalid, provide a counterexample. Remember, this is a test of validity, so you may assume all premises are true (even if you know or suspect they are not in real life) for the purposes of this assignment.

1. Katie is a human being. Therefore, Katie is smarter than a chimpanzee.

2. Bob is a fireman. Therefore, Bob has put out fires.

3. Gerald is a mathematics professor. Therefore, Gerald knows how to teach mathematics.

4. Monica is a French teacher. Therefore, Monica knows how to teach French.

5. Bob is taller than Susan. Susan is taller than Frankie. Therefore, Bob is taller than Frankie.

6. Craig loves Linda. Linda loves Monique. Therefore, Craig loves Monique.

7. Orel Hershizer is a Christian. Therefore, Orel Hershizer communicates with God.

8. All Muslims pray to Allah. Muhammad is a Muslim. Therefore, Muhammad prays to Allah.

9. Some protozoa are predators. No protozoa are animals. Therefore, some predators are not animals.

10. Charlie only barks when he hears a burglar outside. Charlie is barking. Therefore, there must be a burglar outside.

A good deductive argument is not only valid but also **sound**. A **sound argument** is a valid argument that has all true premises. That means that the conclusion, or claim, of a sound argument will always be true because if an argument is valid, the premises transmit truth to the conclusion on the assumption of the truth of the premises. If the premises are actually true, as they are in a sound argument, and since all sound arguments are valid, we know that the conclusion of a sound argument is true. The relationship between soundness and validity is easy to specify: *all sound arguments are valid arguments, but not all valid arguments are sound arguments* .

Professors will expect sound arguments in college writing. Philosophy professors, for the sake of pursuing arguments based on logic alone, may allow students to pursue unsound arguments, but nearly all other professors will want sound arguments. How do you make sure that all the premises of your argument are true? How can we know that Violet is a dog or that littering is harmful to animals and people? Answers to these questions come from **evidence**, often in the form of research.

Tip

One way to counter another's argument is to question his premises and test them for soundness. If you find that one or more premise is unsound, you can add that information–and your explanations–to the support of your own argument.

One way to test the accuracy of a premise is to apply the following questions:

- Is there a sufficient amount of data?
- What is the quality of the data?
- Has additional data been missed?
- Is the data relevant?
- Are there additional possible explanations?

Determine whether the starting claim is based upon a sample that is both representative and sufficiently large, and ask yourself whether all relevant factors have been taken into account in the analysis of data that leads to a generalization.

Another way to evaluate a premise is to determine whether its source is credible. Ask yourself,

- Are the authors identified?
- What are their backgrounds?
- Was the claim something you found on an undocumented website?
- Did you find it in a popular publication or a scholarly one?
- How complete, how recent, and how relevant are the studies or statistics discussed in the source?

What Is Inductive Argument?

In contrast to a deductive argument, an **inductive argument** is an argument whose conclusion is supposed to follow from its premises with a high level of probability, which means that although it is possible that the conclusion doesn't follow from its premises, it is unlikely that this is the case. Here is an example of an inductive argument:

Tweets is a healthy, normally functioning bird and since most healthy, normally functioning birds fly, Tweets most likely flies.

Notice that the conclusion, "Tweets probably flies," contains the words "most likely." This is a clear indicator that the argument is supposed to be inductive, not deductive. Here is the argument in standard form:

1. Tweets is a healthy, normally functioning bird. (**premise**)
2. Most healthy, normally functioning birds fly. (**premise**)
3. Therefore, Tweets probably flies. (**conclusion**)

Given the information provided by the premises, the conclusion does seem to be well supported. That is, the premises provide strong reasons for accepting the conclusion. The inductive argument's conclusion is a strong one, even though we can imagine a scenario in which the premises are true and yet the conclusion is false.

Remember, inductive arguments cannot guarantee the truth of the conclusion, which means they will look like invalid deductive arguments. Indeed, they are. There *will* be counterexamples for inductive arguments because an inductive argument never promises absolute truth. We measure inductive arguments by degrees of **probability** and **plausibility**, not absolute categories like validity and soundness. Validity and soundness do not allow for a sliding scale of degrees. They are absolute conditions: There is no such thing as being partially valid or somewhat sound.

Do not let this difference between deductive and inductive arguments cause you to privilege deductive and revile inductive because inductive arguments cannot guarantee truth. That is an unfair measure, and it is not practical. The truth is that most arguments we create and evaluate in life are inductive arguments. It might be helpful to think of deductive arguments as those created in perfect lab conditions, where all the ideal parameters can be met. Life is much messier than that, and we rarely get ideal conditions. One main reason is that we rarely ever have all the information we need to form an absolutely true conclusion. When new information is discovered, a scientist or historian or psychologist or business executive or a college student should investigate how it affects previous ideas and arguments, knowing that those previous ideas may need to be adjusted based on new information. For example, suppose that we added the following premise to our earlier argument:

Tweets is 6 feet tall and can run 30 mph. (**premise**)

When we add this premise, the conclusion that Tweets can fly would no longer be likely because any bird that is 6 feet tall and

can run 30 mph, is not a kind of bird that can fly. That information leads us to believe that Tweets is an ostrich or emu, which are not kinds of birds that can fly.

The Tests of Inductive Arguments: Reliability and Strength

Inductive arguments can never lead to absolute certainty, which is one reason scholars keep studying and trying to add to knowledge. This does not mean, however, that any inductive argument will be a good one. Inductive arguments must still be evaluated and tested, and the two main tests are **reliability** and **strength**.

Test of **reliability**, much like that of validity for deductive arguments, tests an inductive argument's reason, its internal logic. In other words, just because an inductive argument cannot guarantee a true conclusion doesn't mean that it should not be logically constructed. One cannot make just any sort of claim, particularly one that does not have a reliable basis. Reliability, unlike validity, can be measured by degree. More reliable arguments are ones that have a more solid basis in reason. Consider this example:

Ninety-seven percent of Banana^{TM}computers work without any glitches. (**premise**)

Max has a Banana^{TM}computer. (**premise**)

Therefore, Max's computer works without any glitches. (**conclusion**)

This argument has a high degree of reliability. While it may well be true that Max has one of the three percent of computers that have glitches, it is much more likely, given the initial premise that he does not. If the initial premise changes, however, so does the reliability of the argument:

Thirty-three percent of Banana^{TM}computers work without any glitches.

Max has a Banana^{TM}computer.

Therefore, Max's computer works without any glitches.

Note how the degree of reliability has gone done dramatically. The argument can now be considered unreliable since the conclusion that Max's computer will work without glitches is improbable given the premises provided. The conclusion still could be true, but it has tipped toward unlikely.

The second test of inductive arguments is **strength**. Strength, like reliability, can be measured by degree. Strong arguments must have the following conditions: (1) They must be reliable arguments; (2) they draw upon multiple lines of reasoning as support and/or a collection of data. Indeed, the more the data and the more the reasons for a conclusion, the stronger the argument. Consider the following argument:

Susie has walked by Mack the dog every day for ten days. (**premise**)

Mack the dog has never bitten Susie. (**premise**)

Thus, when Susie walks by Mack the dog today, he will not bite her. (**conclusion**)

This argument is reasonable; we can see that the premises may logically lead to the conclusion. However, the argument is not very strong as Susie has only walked by the dog for ten days. Is that enough data to make the conclusion a likely one? What if we had more data, like so—

Susie has walked by Mack the dog every day for five years.

Mack the dog has never bitten Susie.

Thus, when Susie walks by Mack the dog today, he will not bite her.

This argument, with more data to consider (five years of information instead of just ten days), is much stronger. An argument also gets stronger when reasons are added:

Susie has walked by Mack the dog every day for five years.

Mack the dog has never bitten Susie.

Mack's owners trained him to be friendly to people. (**additional premise**)

Mack the dog's breed is not known for aggression. (**additional premise**)

Thus, when Susie walks by Mack the dog today, he will not bite her.

This argument is even stronger. Not only does it have more data, but it also has additional reasons for Mack's gentle nature.

Remember these tests when writing your own essays. You are most likely going to be using inductive arguments, and you should make them as reliable and strong as you can because you can bet your professors will be evaluating your arguments by those criteria as well.

What Are Logical Fallacies, and Why Should You Avoid Them?

Fallacies are errors or tricks of reasoning. A fallacy is an *error* of reasoning if it occurs accidentally; it is a *trick* of reasoning if a speaker or writer uses it to deceive or manipulate his audience. Fallacies can be either **formal** or **informal**.

Whether a fallacy is an error or a trick, whether it is formal or informal, its use undercuts the validity and soundness of any argument. At the same time, fallacious reasoning can damage the credibility of the speaker or writer and improperly manipulate the emotions of the audience or reader. This is a consideration you must keep in mind as a writer who is trying to maintain credibility (*ethos*) with the reader. Moreover, being able to recognize logical fallacies in the speech and writing of others can greatly benefit you as both a college student and a participant in civic life. Not only does this awareness increase your ability to think and read critically—and thus not be manipulated or fooled—but it also provides you with a strong basis for counter arguments.

Even more important, using faulty reasoning is unethical and irresponsible. Using logical fallacies can be incredibly tempting. The unfortunate fact is they work. Every day—particularly in politics and advertising—we can see how using faults and tricks of logic effectively persuade people to support certain individuals, groups, and ideas and, conversely, turn them away from others. Furthermore, logical fallacies are easy to use. Instead of doing the often difficult work of carefully supporting an argument with facts, logic, and researched evidence, the lazy debater turns routinely to the easy path of tricky reasoning. Human beings too often favor what is easy and effective, even if morally questionable, over what is ethical, particularly if difficult. However, your college professors' task is not to teach you how to join the Dark Side. Their job is to teach you how to write, speak, and argue effectively and *ethically* . To do so, you must recognize and avoid the logical fallacies.

What Are Formal Fallacies?

Most **formal fallacies** are errors of logic: The conclusion does not really "follow from" (is not supported by) the premises. Either the premises are untrue, or the argument is invalid. Below is an example of an invalid deductive argument:

Premise: All black bears are omnivores.

Premise: All raccoons are omnivores.

Conclusion: All raccoons are black bears.

Bears are a subset of omnivores. Raccoons also are a subset of omnivores. But these two subsets do not overlap, and that fact makes the conclusion illogical. The argument is invalid—that is, the relationship between the two premises does not support the conclusion.

"Raccoons are black bears" is instantaneously recognizable as fallacious and may seem too silly to be worth bothering about. However, that and other forms of poor logic play out on a daily basis, and they have real world consequences. Below is an example of a common fallacious argument:

Premise: All Arabs are Muslims.

Premise: All Iranians are Muslims.

Conclusion: All Iranians are Arabs.

This argument fails on two levels. First, the premises are untrue because, although many Arabs and Iranians are Muslim, not all are. Second, the two ethnic groups (Iranians and Arabs) are sets that do not overlap; nevertheless, the two groups are confounded because they (largely) share one quality in common (being Muslim). One only has to look at comments on the web to realize that the confusion is widespread and that it influences attitudes and opinions about US foreign policy. The logical problems make this both an invalid and an unsound argument.

What Are Informal Fallacies?

Informal fallacies take many forms and are widespread in everyday discourse. Very often they involve bringing irrelevant information into an argument, or they are based on assumptions that, when examined, prove to be incorrect. Formal fallacies are created when the relationship between premises and conclusion does not hold up or when premises are unsound; informal fallacies are more dependent on misuse of language and of evidence.

It is easy to find lists of informal fallacies, but that does not mean that it is always easy to spot them.

How Can You Check for Logical Fallacies?

One way to go about evaluating an argument for fallacies is to return to the concept of the three fundamental appeals: **ethos**, **logos**, and **pathos**. As a quick reminder,

- **Ethos** is an appeal to ethics, authority, and/or credibility.
- **Logos** is an appeal to logic.
- **Pathos** is an appeal to emotion.

Once you have refreshed your memory of the basics, you may begin to understand how ethos, logos, and pathos can be used appropriately to strengthen your argument or inappropriately to manipulate an audience through the use of fallacies. Classifying fallacies as fallacies of ethos, logos, or pathos will help you to understand their nature and to recognize them. Please keep in mind, however, that some fallacies may fit into multiple categories. For more details and examples on errors in the rhetorical appeals, see **Chapter 2, "Rhetorical Analysis."**

Fallacies of ethos relate to credibility. These fallacies may unfairly build up the credibility of the author (or his allies) or unfairly attack the credibility of the author's opponent (or her allies). Some fallacies give an unfair advantage to the claims of the speaker or writer or an unfair disadvantage to his opponent's claims. These are **fallacies of logos**. **Fallacies of pathos** rely excessively upon emotional appeals, attaching positive associations to the author's argument and negative ones to his opponent's position.

Key Takeaways: Logic

- **Logic** —shows how ideas fit together by using reason.
- **Formal Logic** —a formal and rigorous study of logic, such as in math and philosophy.
- **Informal Logic** —the application of logic to arguments of all types: in scholarship, in business, and in life. Informal logic is what this part of the chapter covers.
- **Deductive Argument** —guarantees a true conclusion based on the premises. The tests for deductive arguments are validity and soundness.
- **Validity** —a way to evaluate a deductive argument; a valid argument is one which, *if* the premises are true, the conclusion must be true.
- **Soundness** —the second way to evaluate a deductive argument; a sound argument is one where the argument is valid AND the premises have been shown to be true (via support).
- **Inductive Argument** —cannot guarantee a true conclusion but can only assert what is most likely to be true based on the premises and the support. The tests for inductive arguments are reliability and strength.
- **Reliability** —a test of reason for inductive arguments. Inductive arguments must still be reasonable, must still have a reliable basis in logic.
- **Strength** —another test for inductive arguments. Inductive arguments are stronger when they have more reasons and more data to support them.
- **Logical Fallacy** —a flaw or trick of logic to be avoided at all costs. Fallacies can be formal or informal. See the Repository of Logical Fallacies below for individual examples.

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7.3.4: What are the Different Types of Argument in Writing?

Throughout this chapter, you have studied the definition of argument, parts of argument, and how to use logic in argument. This section brings all of the previous material together and tackles arguments in writing. Foremost on most students' minds when taking college composition courses is this question: "How do I write an argument paper?" The answer is not a simple one because, as mentioned previously, arguments come in a variety of packages. This means that written arguments–whether in essay or some other form–also come in many different types.

Arguments of the Rhetorical Modes

Most arguments involve one or more of the **rhetorical modes**. Once again, rhetoric is the study and application of effective writing techniques. There are a number of standard rhetorical modes of writing—structural and analytical models that can be used effectively to suit different writing situations. The rhetorical modes include, but are not limited to, narrative, description, process analysis, illustration and exemplification, cause and effect, comparison, definition, persuasion, and classification. These modes will be covered in detail in **Chapter 5, "Rhetorical Modes."** They are mentioned here, however, to make clear that any and all rhetorical modes can be used to pursue an argument. In fact, most professors will insist upon it.

Tip

Remember that when writing arguments, always be mindful of the point of view you should use. Most academic arguments should be pursued using third person. For more on this issue, see **Chapter 4, "The Writing Process."**

Arguments of Persuasion

One of the most common forms of argument is that of **persuasion**, and often standardized tests, like the SOL, will provide writing prompts for persuasive arguments. On some level, all arguments have a persuasive element because the goal of the argument is to persuade the reader to take the writer's claim seriously. Many arguments, however, exist primarily to introduce new research and interpretation whereas persuasive arguments expressly operate to change someone's mind about an issue or a person.

A common type of persuasive essay is an **Op-Ed article**. Included in the opinion section of a newspaper, these articles are more appropriately called argument essays because most authors strive not only to make explicit claims but also to support their claims, sometimes even with researched evidence. These articles are often well-designed persuasive essays, written to convince readers of the writer's way of thinking.

In addition to essays, other forms of persuasive writing exist. One common and important example is the **job letter**, where you must persuade others to believe in your merits as a worker and performer so that you might be hired.

In a persuasive essay, you should be sure to do the following:

- Clearly articulate your claim and the main reasons for it. Avoid forming a thesis based on a negative claim. For example, "The hourly minimum wage is not high enough for the average worker to live on." This is probably a true statement, but persuasive arguments should make a positive case because a negative is hard to prove. That is, the thesis statement should focus on how the hourly minimum wage is too low or insufficient.
- Anticipate and address counterarguments. Think about your audience and the counterarguments they would mostly likely have. Acknowledging points of view different from your own also has the effect of fostering more credibility between you and the audience. They know from the outset that you are aware of opposing ideas and that you are not afraid to give them space.
- Make sure your support comes in many different forms. Use logical reasoning and the rhetorical appeals, but also strive for concrete examples from your own experience and from society.

- Keep your tone courteous, but avoid being obsequious. In other words, shamelessly appealing to your readers' vanity will likely ring false. Aim for respectful honesty.

- Avoid the urge to win the argument. On some level, we all want to be right, and we want others to see the error of their ways. More times than not, however, arguments in which both sides try to win end up producing losers all around. The more productive approach is to persuade your audience to consider your claim as a sound one, not simply the right one.

Tip

Because argument writing is designed to convince readers of an idea they may not have known before or a side of an issue they may not agree with, you must think carefully about the attitude you wish to convey as you advance your argument. The overall attitude of a piece of writing is its **tone**, and it comes from the words you choose (for more on the importance of word choice, see **Chapter 10, "Working with Words")** In argument writing, strive for the following:

- **Confidence** —The reader needs to know that you believe in what you say, so be confident. Avoid hedgy and apologetic language. However, be careful not to cross the line from confidence to overconfidence. Arrogance can rebuff your readers, even if they agree with you.
- **Neutrality** —While you may advocate for one side or way of thinking, you still must demonstrate that you are being as objective as you can in your analysis and assessment. Avoid loaded terms, buzzwords, and overly emotional language.
- **Courtesy and fairn** ess—Particularly when dealing with any counterarguments, you want your tone to reveal that you have given other points of view due consideration. Avoid being smug, snide, or harshly dismissive of other ideas.

Sample Writing Assignment 1

Find an Op-Ed article from one of the major US newspapers: *The New York Time*s, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The Boston Globe*, or the *LA Time*s. Then, do the following:

1. Prewriting Work: Read the article carefully, taking notes or annotating it. Be sure to find the main argument and map the support used by the author, i.e., how the author is trying to persuade you. Note any use of rhetorical appeals, expert testimony, and research. (For tips about note-taking and annotating reading material, see Chapter 1for a review of the rhetorical appeals, seeChapter 2.
2. Write a paragraph summary of the article. Include the main argument and its support. Explain the different types of support used by the author (rhetorical appeals, expert testimony, and research).
3. In a paragraph, devise and explain your own counterargument(s) to the author's thesis.
4. In a paragraph, explain what kind of support you would use for your counterargument. What rhetorical appeals would you use? What experts might you call on? Do you think you would need to do research and if so, on what?

Sample Writing Assignment 2

Write a job letter. As you design it, be sure to do the following:

1. Use formal letter format. Be sure to include these elements: your address, the address of the job you're applying to (or the department you are applying to), the date you send the letter, a greeting, the letter content in coherent paragraphs (single-spaced paragraphs with a double space in between paragraphs), a sign off, any additional information (your phone and/or email address). For some visual examples of what this would look like, do a Google image search for "job letter format."
2. Prewriting Work 1: Imagine a job you would like to apply for. Ask yourself the following questions and brainstorm answers to them: "What skills would I need to have for this job, and which of those skills do I have?" "What educational background would be required, and can I show that I fulfill the requirements?" "What experience might the hiring committee want to me to have, and do I have any experience that would be relevant?"
3. Prewriting Work 2: Take the notes you have come up with and add as many specific details as you can. If you believe

you do have relevant skills, what are they, specifically? Where did you get those skills, specifically? How long have you had those skills, specifically? Do you have examples where you have shown excellence with those skills, specifically?

4. Drafting: Shape your details into three paragraphs organized by issue: skills, education, and experience. Be specific, include a couple examples per paragraph, and be succinct in your delivery.
5. Proofread carefully. First of all, excellent sentence composition, punctuation, and spelling communicate your seriousness to those who might hire you. Mistakes make you look sloppy and make it easy for them to toss your letter on the rejection pile. Second, watch word choice. Choose specific over general words as much as possible (you say you are a hard worker, but what does that mean, practically speaking?). Make sure you avoid clichés and overly gushy sentiment ("I'm passionate about people!"). Finally, proofread for tone. Strive for courteousness and objectivity. Make it seem like you are being objective about your own abilities.

Arguments of Evaluation

If you have ever answered a question about your personal take on a book or movie or television show or piece of music, you have given a **review**. Most times, these reviews are somewhat hasty and based on initial or shallow impressions. However, if you give thought to your review, if you explain more carefully what you liked or didn't like and why, if you bring in specific examples to back up your points, then you have moved on to an argument of evaluation. Reviews of film, books, music, food, and other aspects of taste and culture represent the most familiar type of argument of evaluation. The main objective of an **argument of evaluation** is to render a critical judgment on the merits of something.

Another common argument of evaluation is the **performance review**. If you have ever held a job, you know what it feels like to be on the receiving end of such a review; your timeliness and productivity and attitude are scrutinized to determine if you have been a good worker or need to worry about looking for another job. If you are in any sort of supervisory position, you will be the one writing and delivering those reviews, and your own supervisor will want to know that you have logical justification and evidence for your judgements.

For all types of reviews or evaluation arguments, make sure to plan for the following:

- Declare your overall judgment of the subject under review—good, bad, or somewhere in between. This is your conclusion or thesis.
- Lay out the criteria for your judgment. In other words, your review must be based on logical criteria—i.e., the standards by which you evaluate something. For example, if you are reviewing a film, reasonable criteria would include acting, writing, storytelling, directing, cinematography, music, and special effects. If you are evaluating an employee, that criteria will change and more likely involve punctuality, aspects of job performance, and overall attitude on the job.
- Make sure to evaluate each criteria and provide evidence. Draw your evidence from what you are reviewing, and use as many specific examples as you can. In a movie review in which you think the acting quality was top notch, give examples of a particular style that worked well or lines delivered effectively or emotions realistically conveyed.
- Use concrete language. A review is only an argument if we can reasonably see—from examples and your explanations—how you arrived at your judgment. Vague or circular language ("I liked it because it was just really good!") will keep your evaluation at the opinion level only, preventing it from being taken seriously as an argument.

- Keep the tone respectful—even if you ultimately did not like the subject of your review. Be as objective as you can when giving your reasons. Insulting language detracts from the seriousness of your analysis and makes your points look like personal attacks.



Figure 7.3.4.1: Roger Ebert

Roger Ebert (1942-2013), a movie reviewer for the *Chicago Sun-Times*, was once one of the most famous movie critics in America. His reviews provide excellent examples of the argument of evaluation.

Consider his review(https://tinyurl.com/y82ylaav) of the 2009 film *Avatar* and note how clearly he declares his judgments, how he makes his reader aware of just what standards he uses for judgement (his criteria), and how he uses a wealth of examples and reasons to back his critiques (although he is careful to avoid spoilers, the review went to print as the movie was coming out).

Sample Writing Assignment 3

Write a brief review of your first job. How would you rate that experience, and what would your rating be based on?

1. Declare your overall judgment of your job experience. This is your main claim.
2. Come up with at least four criteria for evaluation. Give your judgment for each criteria. Include at least two specific examples to support each evaluation, and explain the logic of your support.
3. Proofread for tone, making sure to look for any words that would cause a reader to think your critique was unfair or hostile. For example, even if you loathed your first job, treat it dispassionately, like you are a social scientist putting that work experience under a microscope. (This might allow you to say, for example, that although the job was dull and repetitive, it gave you some useful experience.)

Sample Writing Assignment 4

Evaluate a source that you plan to use for a research project. Explain what type of source you have (website? journal article? book? newspaper article?), and declare your source to be credible or not, using the following criteria:

1. Author's credentials. First of all, are the authors named? Can you find out anything about them, like degrees and professional information? If you cannot find anything, how does that affect credibility? If you can find information, how does that information show credibility or lack of it?
2. Publication information and process. Was the article or book peer reviewed? Was it online or in print? Did you find it through a database or a Google search? Who funded publication? Explain what the results of these questions tell you about the source's credibility.
3. The use of support. Does the source have footnotes or endnotes? A bibliography? Links to different articles? In other words, how carefully is the author trying to back up his or her claims?

Arguments of Fact and Explanation

In the beginning of this chapter, arguments were shown to be distinct from facts. Facts are not arguable, they do not have "two sides," and they are not up for debate. However, as we well know, people disagree with facts all the time. We wouldn't have a nonsense term like "alternative facts" otherwise. We do, however, have arguments that deal with this scenario: **arguments of fact and explanation**. Arguments of fact seek to establish, often in the face of doubters, *that* a fact is indeed true. Arguments of explanation establish *why* that fact is true. Not surprisingly, these arguments often go hand in hand, and they lie primarily in the domain of the research paper. For more detail on the research process, refer to **Chapter 6, "Research"** ; this section will clarify these two types of argument.

Arguments of Fact: Many times, the goal of giving an argument is simply to establish that the conclusion is true. For example, to convince someone that obesity rates are rising in the US, the writer should cite evidence such as studies from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The studies cited would function as premises for the conclusion that obesity rates are rising:

Obesity is on the rise in the US because multiple studies carried out by the CDC and NIH have consistently shown a rise in obesity over the last four decades.

Putting this simple argument into standard form would look like this:

1. Multiple studies by the CDC and NIH have consistently shown a rise in obesity over the last four decades. (**premises**)
2. Therefore, obesity is on the rise in the US. (**conclusion**)

The standard form argument clearly distinguishes the premise from the conclusion and shows how the conclusion is supposed to be supported by the evidence offered in the premise. Again, the goal of this simple argument would be to convince someone that the conclusion is *true*. However, sometimes we already know that a statement or claim is true, and we are trying to establish *why* it is true rather than *that* it is true.

Arguments of Explanation: An argument that attempts to show *why* its conclusion is true is an explanation. Contrast the previous example with the following:

The reason that the rate of obesity is on the rise in the US is that the foods we most often consume over the past four decades have increasingly contained high levels of sugar and low levels of dietary fiber. Because eating foods high in sugar and low in fiber triggers the insulin system to start storing those calories as fat, it follows that people who consume foods high in sugar and low in fiber will tend to store more of the calories consumed as fat.

This passage gives an explanation for *why* obesity is on the rise in the US. Unlike the earlier example, here it is taken for granted that obesity *is* on the rise in the US. That is the claim whose truth the author must explain. The obesity explanation can also be put into standard form just like any other argument:

1. Over the past four decades, Americans have increasingly consumed foods high in sugar and low in fiber. (**premise**)
2. Consuming foods high in sugar and low in fat triggers the insulin system to start storing those calories as fat. (**premise**)
3. When people store more calories as fat, they tend to become obese. (**premise**)
4. Therefore, the rate of obesity is on the rise in the US. (**conclusion**)

Notice that in this explanation, the premises (1-3) attempt to explain *why* the conclusion is true, rather than a reason for thinking *that* the conclusion is true. That is, in an argument of explanation, we assume that what we are trying to explain (i.e., the conclusion) is true. In this case, the premises are supposed to show why we should *expect* or *predict* that the conclusion is true. Explanations often give us an *understanding* of why the conclusion is true.

Arguments of Interpretation

Arguments of interpretation come mainly in the form of **critical analysis** writing. Scholars and students use critical analysis to understand a text more deeply; therefore, it is common in disciplines in which texts are the main objects of study—literature, philosophy, and history. However, we can also think of critical analysis as any analysis where someone takes raw data—from texts, from objects and images, from laboratory experiments, from surveys of people—and analyzes that data to come up with what they

mean. The “what it all means” is an **interpretation**. The argument in critical analysis writing is the interpretation of the data. This must be a logical interpretation with the data also used to support the interpretation through reasoning and examples.

The guidelines for analyzing data are determined by the experts in those areas. Scholars of the life, earth, and physical sciences; the social sciences; and the humanities gather all sorts of different data. When writing up an interpretation of that data, writers and researchers should follow the models and standards provided by experts in those fields of study. In college, professors are important sources of these models and standards.

In the humanities, particularly in literature, there are generally four ways (or perspectives) for analyzing a text: writing from the perspective of a **reader**, writing as if the text were an **object of study**, writing about or from the perspective of an **author**, and writing about where a text fits into a particular **context**.

The process of critical analysis is dependent on **close reading** of the data or text and is an analytical process in which the writer moves from analyzing the details of the text to a broader conclusion that is logically based on those details. What can confuse a lot of students is that formal essay structure is must be framed by the conclusion, not the details: They must establish the main claim immediately, and then use the reasons for the claim to organize the details in each body paragraph. For more on close reading, see Chapter 1.

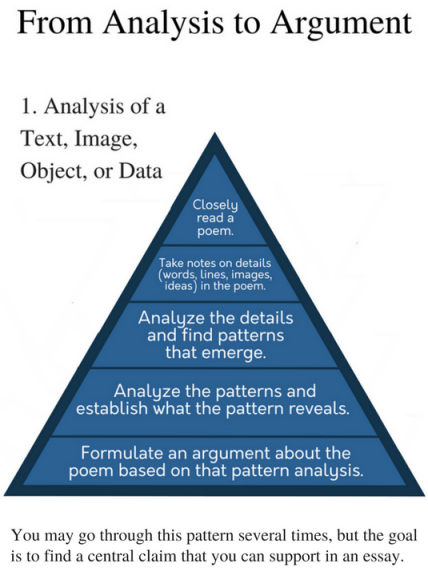


Figure 7.3.4.2From Analysis to Argument

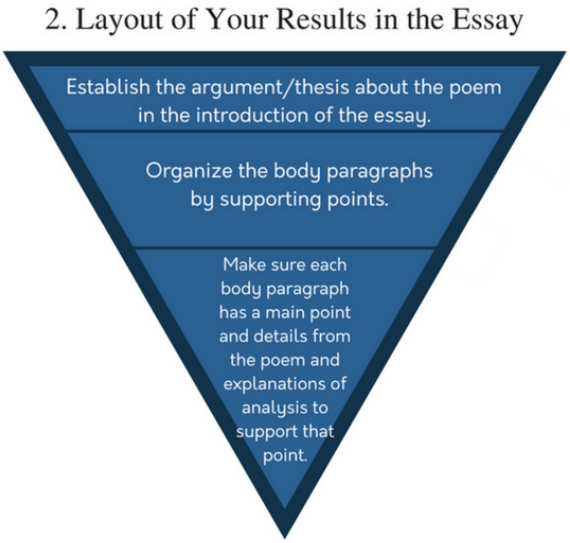


Figure 7.3.4.3From Argument to Essay

Rogerian Argument

The Rogerian argument, inspired by the influential psychologist Carl Rogers, aims to find compromise or common ground about an issue. If, as stated in the beginning of the chapter, academic or rhetorical argument is not merely a two-sided debate that seeks a winner and a loser, the Rogerian argument model provides a structured way to move beyond the win-lose mindset. Indeed, the Rogerian model can be employed to deal effectively with controversial arguments that have been reduced to two opposing points of view by forcing the writer to confront opposing ideas and then work towards a common understanding with those who might disagree.

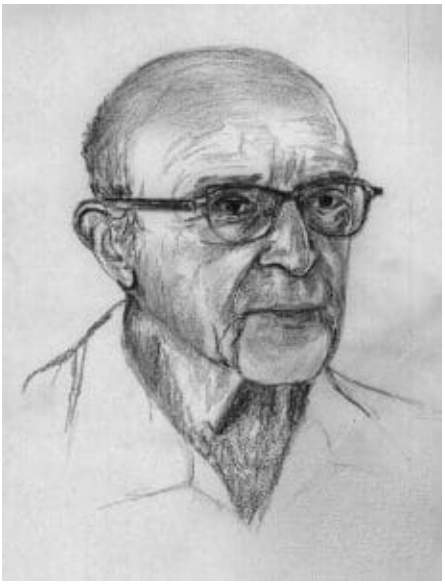


Figure 7.3.4.4 Carl Ransom Rogers

The following are the basic parts of a Rogerian Argument:

1. **Introduction**: Introduce the issue under scrutiny in a non-confrontational way. Be sure to outline the main sides in the debate. Though there are always more than two sides to a debate, Rogerian arguments put two in stark opposition to one another. Crucially, be sure to indicate the overall purpose of the essay: to come to a **compromise** about the issue at hand. If this intent is not stated up front, the reader may be confused or even suspect manipulation on the part of the writer, i.e., that the writer is massaging the audience just to win a fight. Be advised that the Rogerian essay uses an inductive reasoning structure, so *do not* include your thesis in your introduction. You will build toward the thesis and then include it in your conclusion. Once again, state the *intent* to compromise, but do not yet state what the compromise is.

2. **Side A**: Carefully map out the main claim and reasoning for the **opposing side** of the argument first. The writer's view should never really come first because that would defeat the purpose of what Rogers called **empathetic listening**, which guides the overall approach to this type of argument. By allowing the opposing argument to come first, you communicate to the reader that you are willing to respectfully consider another's view on the issue. Furthermore, you invite the reader to then give you the same respect and consideration when presenting your own view. Finally, presenting the opposition first can help those readers who would side against you to ease into the essay, keeping them invested in the project. If you present your own ideas first, you risk polarizing those readers from the start, which would then make them less amenable to considering a compromise by the end of the essay. You can listen to Carl Rogers himself discuss the importance of empathy onYouTube(https://youtu.be/2dLsgpHw5x0, transcript **here**).

3. **Side B**: Carefully go over **your side** of the argument. When mapping out this side's claim and support, be sure that it parallels that of Side A. In other words, make sure not to raise entirely new categories of support, or there can be no way to come to a compromise. Make sure to maintain a non-confrontational tone; for example, avoid appearing arrogant, sarcastic, or smug.

4. **The Bridge**: A solid Rogerian argument acknowledges the desires of each side and tries to accommodate both. In this part,

point out the ways in which you agree or can find **common ground** between the two sides. There should be at least one point of agreement. This can be an acknowledgement of the one part of the opposition's agreement that you also support or an admittance to a shared set of values even if the two sides come to different ideas when employing those values. This phase of the essay is crucial for two reasons: finding common ground (1) shows the audience the two views are not necessarily at complete odds, that they share more than they seem, and (2) sets up the compromise to come, making it easier to digest for all parties. Thus, this section **builds a bridge** from the two initial isolated and opposite views to a compromise that both sides can reasonably support.

5. **The Compromise**: Now is the time to finally announce your compromise, which is your thesis. The compromise is what the essay has been building towards all along, so explain it carefully and demonstrate the logic of it. For example, if debating about whether to use racial profiling, a compromise might be based on both sides' desire for a safer society. That shared value can then lead to a new claim, one that disarms the original dispute or set of disputes. For the racial profiling example, perhaps a better solution would focus on more objective measures than race that would then promote safety in a less problematic way.

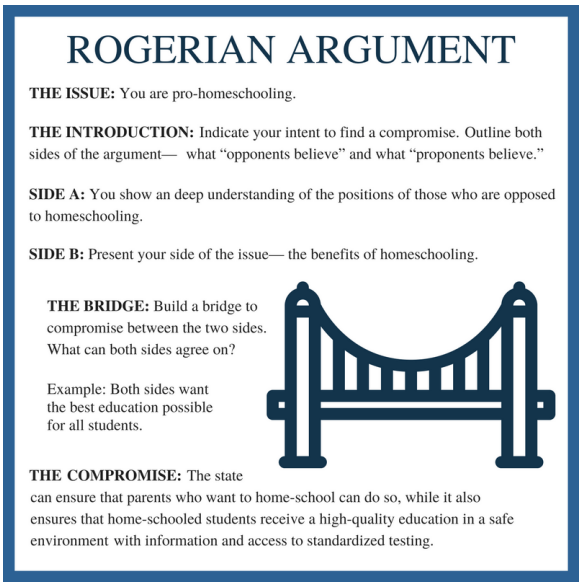


Figure 7.3.4.5Rogerian Argument

Sample Writing Assignment 5

Find a controversial topic, and begin building a Rogerian argument. Write up your responses to the following:

The Toulmin Argument Model

Stephen Edelston Toulmin (born March 25, 1922) was a British philosopher, author, and educator. Toulmin devoted his works to analyzing moral reasoning. He sought to develop practical ways to evaluate ethical arguments effectively. The Toulmin Model of Argumentation, a diagram containing six interrelated components, was considered Toulmin's most influential work, particularly in the fields of rhetoric, communication, and computer science. His components continue to provide useful means for analyzing arguments, and the terms involved can be added to those defined in earlier sections of this chapter.

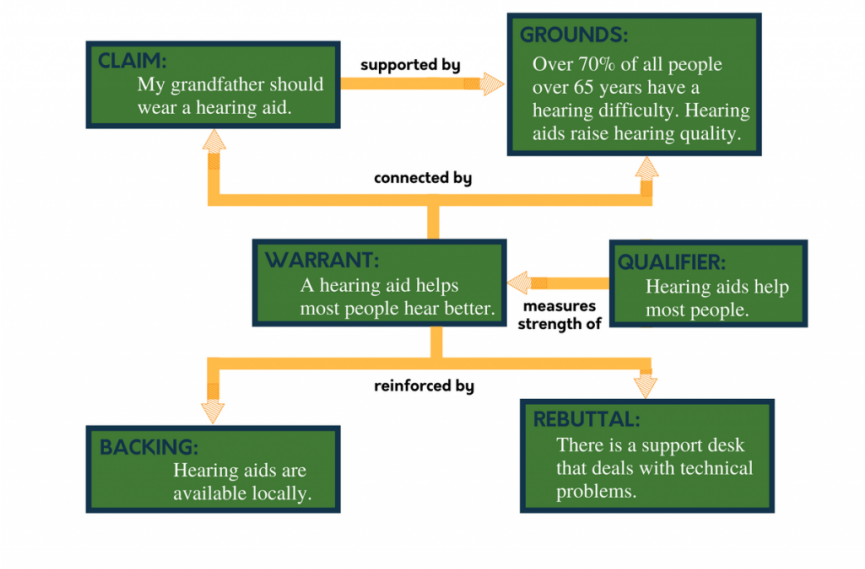


Figure 7.3.4.6Toulmin Argument

The following are the parts of a Toulmin argument:

1. **Claim**: The claim is a statement that you are asking the other person to accept as true (i.e., a conclusion) and forms the nexus of the Toulmin argument because all the other parts relate back to the claim. The claim can include information and ideas you are asking readers to accept as true or actions you want them to accept and enact. One example of a claim:

My grandfather should wear a hearing aid.

This claim both asks the reader to believe an idea and suggests an action to enact. However, like all claims, it can be challenged. Thus, a Toulmin argument does not end with a claim but also includes grounds and warrant to give support and reasoning to the claim.

2. **Grounds**: The grounds form the basis of real persuasion and includes the reasoning behind the claim, data, and proof of expertise. Think of grounds as a combination of **premises** and **support**. The truth of the claim rests upon the grounds, so those grounds should be tested for strength, credibility, relevance, and reliability. The following are examples of grounds:

Over 70% of all people over 65 years have a hearing difficulty.

Hearing aids raise hearing quality.

Information is usually a powerful element of persuasion, although it does affect people differently. Those who are dogmatic, logical, or rational will more likely be persuaded by factual data. Those who argue emotionally and who are highly invested in their own position will challenge it or otherwise try to ignore it. Thus, grounds can also include appeals to emotion, provided they aren't misused. The best arguments, however, use a variety of support and rhetorical appeals.

3. **Warrant**: A warrant links data and other grounds to a claim, legitimizing the claim by showing the grounds to be **relevant**. The warrant may be carefully explained and explicit or unspoken and implicit. The warrant answers the question, "Why does that data mean your claim is true?" For example,

A hearing aid helps most people hear better.

The warrant may be simple, and it may also be a longer argument with additional sub-elements including those described below. Warrants may be based on ***logos*** , ***ethos*** or ***pathos*** , or values that are assumed to be shared with the listener. In many arguments, warrants are often implicit and, hence, unstated. This gives space for the other person to question and expose the warrant, perhaps to show it is weak or unfounded.

4. **Backing**: The backing for an argument gives additional support to the warrant. Backing can be confused with grounds, but the main difference is this: Grounds should directly support the premises of the main argument itself, while backing exists to help

the warrants make more sense. For example,

Hearing aids are available locally.

This statement works as backing because it gives credence to the warrant stated above, that a hearing aid will help most people hear better. The fact that hearing aids are readily available makes the warrant even more reasonable.

5. **Qualifier**: The qualifier indicates how the data justifies the warrant and may limit how universally the claim applies. The necessity of qualifying words comes from the plain fact that most absolute claims are ultimately false (all women want to be mothers, e.g.) because one counterexample sinks them immediately. Thus, most arguments need some sort of qualifier, words that temper an absolute claim and make it more reasonable. Common qualifiers include “most,” “usually,” “always,” or “sometimes.” For example,

Hearing aids help most people.

The qualifier “most” here allows for the reasonable understanding that rarely does one thing (a hearing aid) universally benefit all people. Another variant is the reservation, which may give the possibility of the claim being incorrect:

Unless there is evidence to the contrary, hearing aids do no harm to ears.

Qualifiers and reservations can be used to bolster weak arguments, so it is important to recognize them. They are often used by advertisers who are constrained not to lie. Thus, they slip “usually,” “virtually,” “unless,” and so on into their claims to protect against liability. While this may seem like sneaky practice, and it can be for some advertisers, it is important to note that the use of qualifiers and reservations can be a useful and legitimate part of an argument.

6. **Rebuttal**: Despite the careful construction of the argument, there may still be counterarguments that can be used. These may be rebutted either through a continued dialogue, or by pre-empting the counter-argument by giving the rebuttal during the initial presentation of the argument. For example, if you anticipated a counterargument that hearing aids, as a technology, may be fraught with technical difficulties, you would include a rebuttal to deal with that counterargument:

There is a support desk that deals with technical problems.

Any rebuttal is an argument in itself, and thus may include a claim, warrant, backing, and the other parts of the Toulmin structure.

Even if you do not wish to write an essay using strict Toulmin structure, using the Toulmin checklist can make an argument stronger. When first proposed, Toulmin based his layout on legal arguments, intending it to be used analyzing arguments typically found in the courtroom; in fact, Toulmin did not realize that this layout would be applicable to other fields until later. The first three elements–“claim,” “grounds,” and “warrant”–are considered the essential components of practical arguments, while the last three—“qualifier,” “backing,” and “rebuttal”—may not be necessary for all arguments.

Exercise 5

Find an argument in essay form and diagram it using the Toulmin model. The argument can come from an Op-Ed article in a newspaper or a magazine think piece or a scholarly journal. See if you can find all six elements of the Toulmin argument. Use the structure above to diagram your article’s argument.

Key Takeaways: Types of Argument

1. The topic or dilemma I will write about is...
2. My opposing audience is...
3. My audience’s view on the topic is...
4. My view on the topic is...
5. Our common ground–shared values or something that we both already agree on about the topic–is...

6. My compromise (the main claim or potential thesis) is...

- **Arguments in the Rhetorical Modes** —models of writing that can be used for an argument, including the rhetorical modes: narration, comparison, causal analysis, process, description, definition, classification, and exemplification.
- **Arguments of Persuasion** —used to change someone's thinking on a topic or person.
- **Arguments of Evaluation** —critical reviews based on logical evaluation of criteria and evidence for that evaluation.
- **Arguments of Fact and Explanation** —establishes *that* a fact is true (the former) or *why* it is true (the latter).
- **Arguments of Interpretation** —critical analysis writing in which one makes an argument about what data mean. Data can come from texts, objects, surveys, and scientific experiments.
- **The Rogerian Argument Model** —an argument model designed to bring about consensus and mutual understanding rather than conflict.
- **Toulmin's Argument Model** —six interrelated components used to diagram an argument, drawn from both rhetorical and academic argument.

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7.3.5: A REPOSITORY OF LOGICAL FALLACIES

Below is a list of informal fallacies, divided into four main categories: fallacies of irrelevance, presumption, ambiguity, and inconsistency. While this list is by no means exhaustive, it will include some of the most common fallacies used by writers and speakers, both in the world and in the classroom.

Fallacies of Irrelevance

One of the most common ways to go off track in an argument is to bring up irrelevant information or ideas. They are grouped here into two main categories: the **red herring fallacies** and the **irrelevant appeals**.

- **Red Herring Fallacies** —These aim to distract the reader by introducing irrelevant ideas or information. They divert attention away from the validity, soundness, and support of an argument. Think of red herrings as squirrels to a dog—almost impossible to resist chasing once spotted.

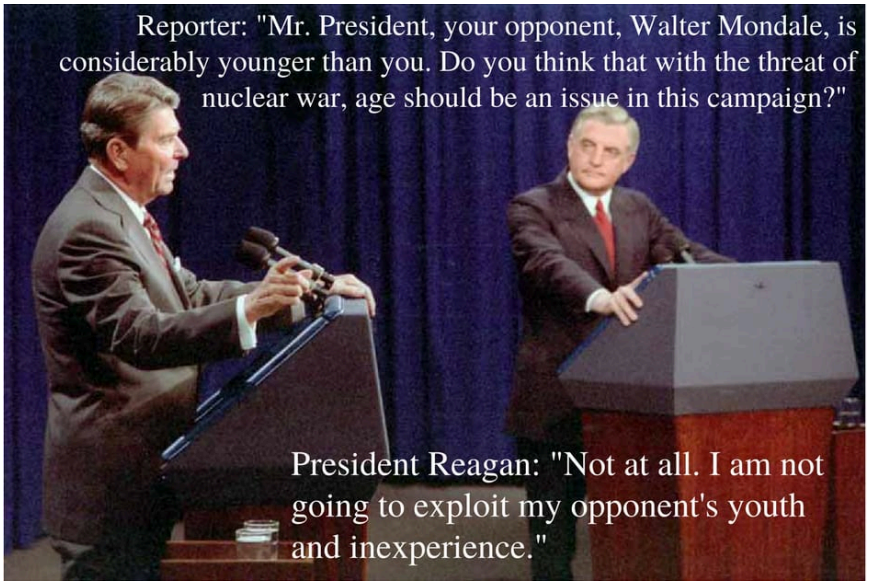


Figure 7.3.5.1 Reagan's Red Herring

- **Weak/False Analogy** —An analogy is a brief comparison, usually to make writing more interesting and to connect with the reader. While writers often use analogies effectively to illustrate ideas, a bad analogy can be misleading and even inflammatory.

Example: “Taxes are like theft.” This statement makes a false analogy because taxes are legal and thus cannot logically be defined as, or even compared to, something illegal.

- **Tu Quoque** —Also known as an appeal to hypocrisy, this fallacy translates from the Latin as “you, too.” Known on grade school playgrounds around the world, this false argument distracts by turning around any critique on the one making the critique with the implication that the accuser should not have made the accusation in the first place because it reveals him as a hypocrite—even if the accusation or critique has validity.

Example 1: “Mom, Joey pushed me!” “Yeah, but Sally pushed me first!” Any sister who has ratted out a brother before knows she will have to deal with an immediate counter attack, claiming that she has perpetrated the same crime she has accused the brother of doing (and more than likely, she has done so). The brother hopes that the sister’s blatant hypocrisy will absolve him of his crime. Any veteran parent of siblings will know not to fall for this trick.

Example 2: Joe the Politician has been legitimately caught in a lie. Joe and his supporters try to deflect the damage by pointing out the times his opponents have been caught lying, too; this counter accusation implies that Joe's lie should be excused because of the hypocrisy of those who found it and who dare to even talk about it. However, this counter accusation does not actually do anything logically to disprove or challenge the fact of Joe's lie.

- **Ad Hominem Attacks** —The *argumentum ad hominem* is one of the most recognizable and irresistible of the red herring fallacies. Ad hominem attacks distract from an argument by focusing on the one making the argument, trying to damage his or her credibility. There are two main types of ad hominem attack: **abuse** and **circumstance**:

Ad hominem attacks of **abuse** are personal (often ruthlessly so), meant to insult and demean. Attacks of abuse distract the audience as well as the speaker or writer because he will believe it necessary to defend himself from the abuse rather than strengthen his argument.

Examples: These can include attacks on the body, intelligence, voice, dress, family, and personal choices and tastes.



Figure 7.3.5.2Student vs Freud Ad Hominem

In ad hominem attacks of circumstance, the debater implies that his opponent only makes an argument because of a personal connection to it instead of the quality and support of the argument itself, which should be considered independent of any personal connection.

Example: "You only support the Latino for this job because you're a Latino."

This statement fails the logic test because it only takes a personal characteristic into account–race–when making this claim. This claim does not consider two important issues: (1) People do not base every decision they make on their race, and (2) there may have been other perfectly logical reasons to support the Latino job applicant that had nothing to do with race.

- **Poisoning the Well** —This is a type of ad hominem attack that attempts to damage the character of an opponent before that person even introduces an argument. Thus, by the time the argument is made, it often sounds weak and defensive, and the person making the argument may already be suspect in the minds of the audience.

Example: If a speaker calls out a woman for being overly emotional or hysterical, any heightened feeling—even a raised voice—may be attributed to her inability to control emotion. Furthermore, if that woman makes an argument, she can be ignored and her argument weakened because of the perception that it is rooted in emotion, not reason.



Figure 7.3.5.3Poisoning the well

- **Guilt by Association** —This red herring fallacy works by associating the author of an argument with a group or belief so abhorrent and inflammatory in the minds of the audience that everyone, author and audience alike, is chasing squirrels up trees—that is, they are occupied by the tainted association to the reviled group—instead of dealing with the merits of the original argument.

Example: the *argumentum ad Nazium*, or playing the Hitler card. To counter an argument, either the arguer or a part of the argument itself is associated with Hitler or the Nazis. ("Vegetarianism is a healthy option for dieters." "Never! You know, Hitler was a vegetarian!") Because almost no one wants to be associated with fascists (or other similarly hated groups, like cannibals or terrorists), the author now faces the task of defending himself against the negative association instead of pursuing the argument. If, however, there are actual Nazis–or the equivalent of Nazis, such as white supremacists or other neofascists–making an argument based on fascist ideology, it is perfectly reasonable to criticize, oppose, and object to their extreme and hateful views.



Figure 7.3.5.4Guilt by Association

Irrelevant Appeals —Unlike the rhetorical appeals, the irrelevant appeals are attempts to persuade the reader with ideas and information that are irrelevant to the issues or arguments at hand, or the appeals rest on faulty assumptions in the first place. The irrelevant appeals can look and feel like logical support, but they are either a mirage or a manipulation.

- **Appeal to Emotion** —manipulates the audience by playing too much on emotion instead of rational support. Using scare tactics is one type of appeal to emotion. Using pity to pressure someone into agreement is another example.

Example: Imagine a prosecuting attorney in a murder case performing closing arguments, trying to convict the defendant by playing on the emotions of the jury: "Look at that bloody knife! Look at that poor, battered victim and the cruelty of all those terrible stab wounds!" The jury may well be swayed by such a blatant appeal to emotion–pity, horror, disgust—but this appeal doesn't actually provide any concrete proof for the defendant's guilt. If the lawyer has built a logical case that rests on an abundance of factual data, then this appeal to emotion may be justified as a way to personalize that data for the jury. If, however, the lawyer *only* uses this appeal to emotion, the argument for guilt is flawed because the lawyer has tried to make up for a weak case by turning the jury members' emotions into the main evidence for guilt.

- **Appeal to Popularity** —Also known as the bandwagon fallacy, the appeal to popularity implies that because many people believe or support something, it constitutes evidence for its validity. However, once we stop to think this idea through, we can easily remember popular ideas that were not at all good or justifiable: The majority does not always make the best choice.

Example: A good example here would be fashion trends. What is popular from one day to the next does not necessarily have anything to do with whether something logically is a good idea or has practical use.



Figure 7.3.5.5Appeal to popularity

- **Appeal to Incredulity** —suggests that a lack of understanding is a valid excuse for rejecting an idea. Just because someone does not personally understand how something works does not mean that thing is false. A person does not need to understand how a car's engine works to know that it *does* work, for instance. Often, in addition to rejecting the difficult idea, the arguer goes on to suggest that anyone who believes in the idea is foolish to do so.

Example: "It's just common sense that the earth is flat because when I look at it, I can't see any curve, not even when I'm in an airplane. I don't need any scientist to tell me what I can clearly figure out with my own eyes." This person has casually dismissed any scientific evidence against a flat earth as if it did not matter. Often those making an illogical appeal to incredulity will substitute what they think of as "common sense" for actual scientific evidence with the implication that they do not need any other basis for understanding. The problem is that many of the truths of our universe cannot be understood by common sense alone. Science provides the answers, often through complex mathematical and theoretical frameworks, but ignorance of the science is not a justifiable reason for dismissing it.

- **Appeal to Nature** —the assumption that what is natural is (1) inherently good and therefore (2) constitutes sufficient reason for its use or support. This is flawed because (1) how we determine what is natural can and does change, and (2) not everything that is natural is beneficial.

Example: "Vaccines are unnatural; thus, being vaccinated is more harmful than not being vaccinated." A person making this statement has made an illogical appeal to nature. The fact that vaccines are a product of human engineering does not automatically mean they are harmful. If this person applied that logic to other cases, she would then have to reject, for instance,

all medicines created in the lab rather than plucked from the earth.

- **Appeal to Tradition/Antiquity** —assumes that what is old or what "has always been done" is automatically good and beneficial. The objection, "But, we've always done it this way!" is fairly common, used when someone tries to justify or legitimize whatever "it" is by calling on tradition. The problems are these: (1) Most rudimentary history investigations usually prove that, in fact, "it" has *not* always been done that way; (2) tradition is not by itself a justification for the goodness or benefit of anything. Foot binding was a tradition at one point, but a logical argument for its benefit would strain credulity.

Example: "We should bar women from our club because that is how it has always been done." The person making this argument needs to provide logical reasons women should not be included, not just rely on tradition.

- **Appeal to Novelty** —the mirror of the appeal to antiquity, suggesting that what is new is necessarily better.

Example: "Buy our new and improved product, and your life will forever be changed for the better!" Advertisers love employing the appeal to novelty to sell the public on the idea that because their product is new, it is better. Newness is no guarantee that something is good or of high quality.

- **Appeal to Authority** —Appealing to the ideas of someone who is a credentialed expert—or authority—on a subject can be a completely reasonable type of evidence. When one writes a research paper about chemistry, it is reasonable to use the works of credentialed chemists. However, the appeal to authority becomes a fallacy when misapplied. That same credentialed chemist would not be a logical authority to consult for information about medieval knights because authority in one area does not necessarily transfer to other areas. Another mistaken appeal to authority is to assume that because someone is powerful in some way that that power accords that person special knowledge or wisdom.

Example: Many societies throughout history have had hierarchical social and political structures, and those who happened to be in the top tier, like aristocrats and rulers, had authority over those below them. In fact, the term "nobility" in the west had embedded within it the notion that the aristocracy really were better—more ethical, more intelligent, more deserving of reward—than those lower on the social ladder. Careful study of the nobility shows, however, that some members were just as capable of immorality and stupidity as lower social groups.

- **Appeal to Consequences/Force** —the attempt to manipulate someone into agreement by either implicit or explicit threats of consequences or force (violence!).

Example: "Agree with me or you'll be fired!" Holding something over another person's head is not a reasonable way to support an argument. The arguer avoids giving any sort of logic or evidence in favor of a threat.

- **Appeal to Wealth** —the assumption that wealthy people have special knowledge or wisdom that derives from their economic position and that can then be applied to any area of knowledge.

Example: "Hi, I'm a famous actress, and while I'm not a qualified psychologist, read my new self-help book for how you, too, can avoid depression!" Fame and fortune alone do not turn someone into a qualified expert. Appealing to a person's expertise solely based on wealth and position is thus logically flawed.

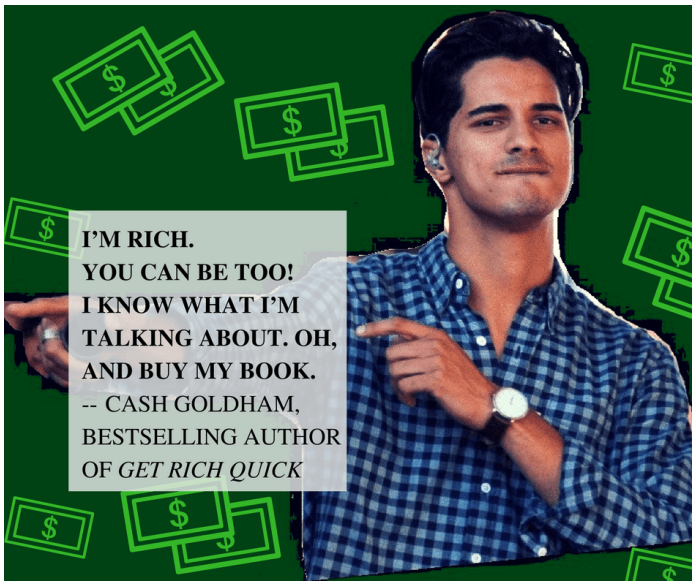


Figure 7.3.5.6Appeal to Wealth

- **Appeal to Poverty** —the mirror of the above irrelevant appeal, that poor people have special knowledge or wisdom because of their adverse economic circumstances. This can work in another way: that poor people are particularly deficient in knowledge or wisdom because they are poor. However, neither assumption constitutes sound reasoning. The conditions of poverty are far too complex.

Example: "That man lives on unemployment benefits, so why would I care about his opinion on anything?" The arguer in this scenario unreasonably uses another's poverty against him, by implying that a poor person would have worthless ideas. This implication has embedded within it the idea that someone is only poor because of some sort of personal lack–intelligence, morality, good sense, and so on. However, it is quite reasonable for a poor person to be intelligent, ethical, and wise. To assume otherwise is to risk making logical mistakes.

Fallacies of Presumption

To call someone presumptuous is to accuse that person of overreaching—making bold assertions without adequate reason or failing to follow the rules of behavior (but presuming it is okay to do so). The logical fallacy version of this involves making a case with inadequate or tainted evidence, or even no evidence whatsoever, or by having unjustified reasons for making the case in the first place.

Working with Flawed Evidence —These fallacies occur when an author uses evidence that has been compromised.

- **Hasty Generalization** —A hasty generalization derives its conclusion from too little information, evidence, or reason.

One type of hasty generalization is jumping to a conclusion from a small amount of evidence.

Example: Having one bad meal at a restaurant and then immediately concluding that all meals from that restaurant will be just as bad.



Figure 7.3.5.7Hasty Generalization

Another type of hasty generalization involves relying on **anecdotal evidence** for support. As human beings, we overestimate the power of personal experience and connections, so they can drown out scientific data that contradict an individual—or anecdotal—experience. Additionally, anecdotal evidence is persuasive because of the human desire for perfection. Perfection is a lofty—and mostly unreachable—goal, and when a product or a person or a program fails to live up to perfection, it becomes easier to dismiss—particularly when a personal story or two of imperfection is involved. Accurate information, however, comes from a much larger amount of data—analysis of hundreds or thousands or even millions of examples. Unfortunately, data can feel impersonal and, therefore, less convincing.

Example: "I love my new Banana^{tm}laptop. The product ratings for it are very high." "Oh, no one should ever buy one of their computers! My brother had one, and it was full of glitches." Basing a judgement or an argument on a personal story or two, as in this case, is not logical but can be incredibly persuasive. However, if 98% of Banana^{tm}computers run perfectly well, and only 2% have glitches, it is illogical to use that 2% to write this product off as universally terrible.

In scholarship, hasty generalizations can happen when conclusions derive from an **unrepresentative sample**. Data coming from a group that fail to represent the group's full complexity is unrepresentative, and any results drawn from that data will be flawed.

Example: If advances in cancer research were only, or mostly, tested on men, that would be unrepresentative of humanity because half of the human population—women—would not be represented. What if the cancer treatments affect women differently?

Another type of hasty generalization derived from poor research is the **biased sample**. This comes from a group that has a predisposed bias to the concepts being studied.

Example: If a psychologist were to study how high school students handled challenges to their religious views, it would be flawed to only study students at schools with a religious affiliation since most of those students may be predisposed toward a single type of religious view.

- **S weeping Generalization** —the inverse of the hasty generalization. Instead of making a conclusion from little evidence, the sweeping generalization applies a general rule to a specific situation without providing proper evidence, without demonstrating that the rule even applies, or without providing for exceptions. Stereotyping is one prominent type of sweeping generalization; a stereotype derives from general ideas about a group of people without accounting for exceptions or accuracy or that there is any sound reasoning behind the stereotype.
- **Confirmation Bias** —a pernicious fallacy that can trip even careful scholars. It occurs when the writer or researcher is so convinced by her point of view that she only seeks to confirm it and, thus, ignores any evidence that would challenge it. Choosing only data that support a preformed conclusion is called cherry picking and is a one-way ticket to skewed results. Related to this fallacy is another—disconfirmation bias—when the writer or researcher puts so much stock in her side of the argument that she does not apply equal critical evaluation to the arguments and evidence that support the other side. In other words, while too easily and uncritically accepting what supports her side, she is unreasonably critical of opposing

arguments and evidence.

Example: In the later nineteenth century, when archaeology was a new and thrilling field of study, Heinrich Schliemann excavated the ancient city of Troy, made famous in Homer's epic poem, *The Iliad*. In fact, Schliemann used *The Iliad* as a guide, so when he excavated, he looked to find structures (like walls) and situations (proof of battles) in the archaeological remains. While Schliemann's work is still considered groundbreaking in many ways, his method was flawed. It allowed him to cherry pick his results and fit them to his expectations–i.e., that his results would fit the myth. When Schliemann sought to confirm story elements from *The Iliad* in the archaeological record, he risked misinterpreting his data. What if the data was telling a different story than that in *The Iliad* ? How could he know for sure until he put the book down and analyzed the archaeological evidence on its own merits? For more on Schliemann and his famous early excavations, see his Encyclopedia Britannicaentry(https://tinyurl.com/y9tk4vou), or look up "Heinrich Schliemann" in the *Gale Virtual Reference Library* database.

- **No True Scotsman** —a false claim to purity for something that is too complex for purity, like a group, an identity, or an organization. Those making claims to purity usually attempt to declare that anyone who does not fit their "pure" definition does not belong. For example, national identity is complicated and can mean something different to each person who claims that identity; therefore, it is too complex for a one-size-fits-all definition and for any one litmus test to prove that identity.

Examples: "No real Scot would put ice in his scotch!" "No real man would drink lite beer!" "No real feminist would vote Republican!" Each of these statements assumes that everyone has the same definition for the identities or groups discussed: Scots, men, and feminists. However, the members of each group are themselves diverse, so it is illogical to make such blanket declarations about them. It is actually quite reasonable for a Scottish person to like ice in her scotch and still claim a Scottish identity or for a man to drink lite beer without relinquishing his manhood or for a feminist to vote Republican while still working toward women's rights.



Figure 7.3.5.8"No true Scotsman, No true Southerner"

Working with No Evidence —These fallacies occur when the evidence asserted turns out to be no evidence whatsoever.

- **Burden of Proof** —This logical fallacy, quite similar to the appeal to ignorance, occurs when the author forgets that she is the one responsible for supporting her arguments and, instead, shifts the burden of proof to the audience.

Example: "Larry stole my painting," Edith cried. "Prove to me he didn't!" No: The one making the claim must give reasons and evidence for that claim *before* anyone else is obligated to refute it. If Edith cannot give sound proof of Larry's guilt, the argument should be rejected.

- **Arguing from Silence or Ignorance** —Like the burden of proof fallacy, this one occurs when the author, either implicitly or explicitly, uses a lack of evidence as a type of proof. This is the basis for most conspiracy theory nonsense, as if the lack of evidence is so hard to believe, the only reason to explain why it is missing is a cover up. Remember, it is the writer's job to present positive proof (evidence that actually exists and can be literally seen) to support any argument made. If a writer cannot find evidence, he must admit that he may be wrong and then, find a new argument!

Example: “There is no proof that Joe the Politician conspired with the Canadians to rig the elections.” “A-ha! That there is nothing to find is proof that he did! He must have paid off everyone involved to bury the evidence.” Lack of proof cannot be–in and of itself–a type of proof because it has no substance; it is a nothing. Is it possible that proof may arise in the future? Yes, but until it does, the argument that Joe and the Canadians rigged an election is illegitimate. Is it possible that Joe both rigged the election and paid people off to hide it? Again, yes, but there are two problems with this reasoning: (1) Possibility, like absence of evidence, is not in itself a type of evidence, and (2) possibility does not equal probability. Just because something is possible does not mean it is probable, let alone likely or a sure thing. Those supporting conspiracy theories try to convince others that lack of proof is a type of proof and that a remote possibility is actually a surety. Both fail the logic test.

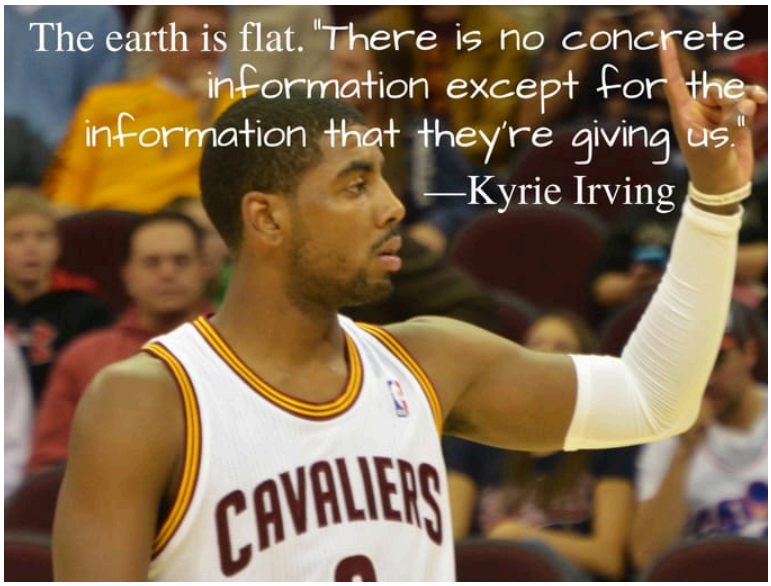


Figure 7.3.5.9Arguing from Ignorance

- **Circular Reasoning** —also known as begging the question, occurs when, instead of providing reasons for a claim, the arguer just restates the claim but in a different way. An author cannot sidestep reasons and proof for an argument by just repeating the claim over and over again.

Example: “The death penalty is sinful because it is wrong and immoral.” The conclusion (the death penalty is sinful) looks like it is supported by two premises (that it is wrong, that it is immoral). The problem is that the words “wrong” and “immoral” are too close in meaning to “sinful,” so they are not actual reasons; rather, they are just other ways to state the claim.

- **Special Pleading** —Anyone who makes a case based on special circumstances without actually providing any reasonable evidence for those circumstances is guilty of special pleading.

Example: “Is there any extra credit I can do to make up for my missing work?” Many students have asked this of their college professors. Embedded within the question is a logical fallacy, the insistence that the student asking it should get special treatment and be rewarded with extra credit even though he missed prior assignments. If the student has logical (and preferably documented) reasons for missing course work, then the fallacy of special pleading does not apply. Those expecting to be given special treatment without reasonable justification have committed the special pleading fallacy.

- **Moving the Goalposts** —happens when one keeps changing the rules of the game in mid-play without any reasonable justification.

Example: This fallacy occurs in Congress quite a lot, where the rules for a compromise are established in good faith, but one side or the other decides to change those rules at the last minute without good reason or evidence for doing so.

- **Wishful Thinking** —involves replacing actual evidence and reason with desire, i.e., desire for something to be true. Wanting an idea to be real or true, no matter how intensely, does not constitute rational support. This fallacy often occurs when closely-held ideas and beliefs are challenged, particularly if they are connected to family and identity or if they serve self interest.

Example: People do not like to see their personal heroes tarnished in any way. If a popular sports hero, e.g., is accused of a crime,

many fans will refuse to believe it because they just don't want to. This plays right into the wishful thinking fallacy.



Figure 7.3.5.10Wishful Thinking

Working with False Ideas about Evidence or Reasoning —These fallacies either (1) presume something is a reason for or evidence of something else when that connection has not been adequately or fairly established or (2) unfairly limit one's choices of possible reasons.

- **False Dilemma/Dichotomy** —occurs when one presents only two options in an argument when there are, in fact, many more options. Arguments have multiple sides, not just two, so when only two are presented, readers are forced to choose between them when they should be able to draw from a more complex range of options. Another way to talk about the false dichotomy is to call it reductionist because the arguer has *reduced* the options from many to only two.

Example: "So, are you a dog person or a cat person? Are you a Beatles person or a Rolling Stones person? You can be only one!" Both of these examples provide a false choice between two options when there are clearly others to choose from. One might also reasonably choose both or neither. When an arguer only provides two options, she tries to rig the response and to get the responder to only work within the severely limited framework provided. Life is more complicated than that, so it is unreasonable to limit choices to only two.



Figure 7.3.5.11False Dilemma

- **Loaded Question** —embeds a hidden premise in the question, so anyone who responds is forced to accept that premise. This puts the responder at an unfair disadvantage because he has to either answer the question and, by doing so, accept the premise, or challenge the question, which can look like he is ducking the issue.

Example: “So, when did you start practicing witchcraft?” The hidden premise here is that the responder is a witch, and any reply is an admittance to that as a fact. An open question, one that does not trick the responder into admitting the presumption of witchcraft, would be this: “Are you a witch?”

False Cause —asserts causes that are more assumptions than actual causes. There are three types of false cause fallacies:

- **Post hoc ergo propter hoc** —In Latin, this phrase means “after this, therefore, because of this,” which asserts that when one thing happens before another thing, the first must have caused the second. This is a false assumption because, even if the two things are related to each other, they do not necessarily have a causal relationship.

Example: Superstitions draw power from this logical fallacy. If a black cat crosses Joe the Politician’s path, and the next day Joe loses the election, is he justified, logically, in blaming the cat? No. Just because the cat’s stroll happened before the election results does not mean the one caused the other.

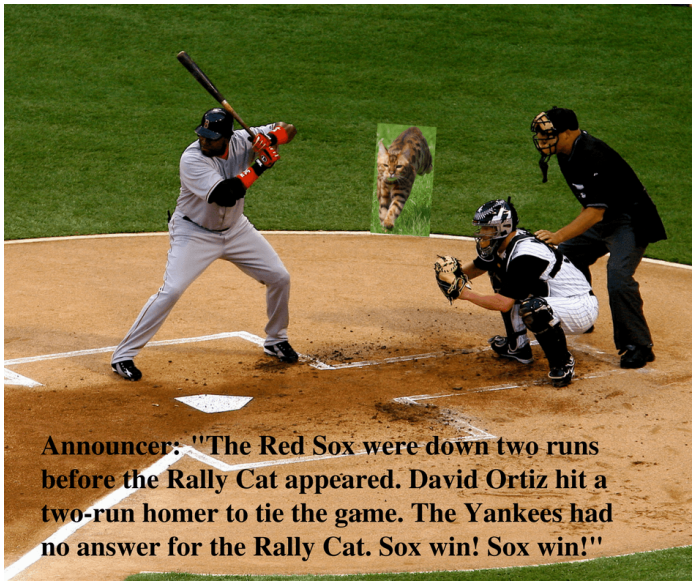


Figure 7.3.5.12Post Hoc ergo Propter Hoc

- **Slippery Slope** —the cause/effect version of jumping to a conclusion. A slippery slope argument claims that the first link in a causal chain will inevitably end in the most disastrous result possible, thus working to scare the audience away from the initial idea altogether. Keep in mind, legitimate and logical causal chains can be argued: where one cause leads to a logical effect, which then leads to the next logical effect, which then leads to the next logical effect, and so on. Those using the slippery slope fallacy, however, do not bother to carefully establish a logical chain but rather skip right ahead to the worst possible conclusion.

Example: “Oh no, if I fail this test, my whole life is ruined!” This is a common fear among panicked students but is a prime example of the slippery slope. The student likely imagines this sort of logical chain: a failed test → failed class → getting behind in college → flunking out of college → all future job prospects falling through → total unemployment → abject poverty → becoming a pariah to family and friends → a thoroughly ruined life. The worry is that failing a test, should it even happen at all, will automatically result in the worst possible case: a totally failed life. However, when thought through more calmly and logically, hopefully, the student will realize that many mitigating factors lie between one failed test and total ruination and that the total ruination result is actually quite unlikely.

- **Cum hoc ergo propter hoc** —In Latin, this phrase translates to “with this, therefore, because of this,” which suggests that because two or more things happen at the same time they must be related. This, however, doesn’t account for other logical possibilities, including coincidence.

Example: “Gah! Why does the phone always ring as we sit down to dinner?” This question implies that those two events have

something to do with each other when there are likely far more logical reasons that they do not.

Fallacies of Ambiguity

To be ambiguous is to be unclear; thus, fallacies of ambiguity are those that, intentionally or not, confuse the reader through lack of clarity. They create a fog that makes it difficult to see what the conclusion or the reasonable parts of an argument are, or the fog prevents a reasonable conclusion in the first place.

- **Quoting out of Context** —occurs when quoting someone without providing all the necessary information to understand the author's meaning. Lack of context means that the original quote's meaning can be obscured or manipulated to mean something the original author never intended. Usually that context comes from the original text the quote came from that the borrower has failed to include or deliberately excluded.

Example: Original statement: "You may hand write your assignments but only when instructed to in the assignment schedule."

Quote used: "You may hand write your assignments."

Clearly, the quoted part leaves out some crucial information, qualifying information that puts limits on the initial instruction. The scenario may be this: The original statement came from a professor's syllabus, and the student quoted just the first part to an advisor, for instance, while trying to register a complaint over a bad grade for an assignment he hand wrote but wasn't supposed to. When the student exclaims, "But my professor told me I could hand write my assignments!" he is guilty of muddying the truth by quoting out of context. He left out the part that told him to verify the assignment instructions to see if handwriting were allowable or not.

- **Straw Man** —Creating a straw man argument involves taking a potentially reasonable argument and misrepresenting it, usually through scare tactics or oversimplification, i.e., by creating an argument that sounds similar to the original but in reality is not. The straw man argument is designed to be outrageous and upsetting, and thus easier to defeat or get others to reject. Why try to dismantle and rebut a reasonable argument when one can just knock the head off the straw man substitute instead?

Example: "I think we need to get rid of standardized testing in junior high and high school, at least in its current form." "That's terrible! I can't believe you don't want any standards for students. You just want education to get even worse!" In this scenario, the second person has committed the straw man fallacy. She has distorted the first person's argument–that standardized *testing* in its current form should be eliminated–and replaced it with a much more objectionable one–that *all* educational standards should be eliminated. Because there are more ways than just testing to monitor educational standards, the second person's argument is a blatant misrepresentation and an over simplification.



Figure 7.3.5.13Straw Man

- **Equivocation** —happens when an author uses terms that are abstract or complex—and, therefore, have multiple meanings or

many layers to them—in an overly simple or misleading fashion or without bothering to define the particular use of that term.

Example: "I believe in freedom." The problem with this statement is it assumes that everyone understands just exactly what the speaker means by freedom. Freedom from what? Freedom to do what? Freedom in a legal sense? In an intellectual sense? In a spiritual sense? Using a vague sense of a complex concept like freedom leads to the equivocation fallacy.

Fallacies of Inconsistency

This category of fallacies involves a lack of logical consistency within the parts of the argument itself or on the part of the speaker.

- **Inconsistency Fallacy** —is one of the more blatant fallacies because the speaker is usually quite up-front about his inconsistency. This fallacy involves making contradictory claims but attempting to offset the contradiction by framing one part as a disclaimer and, thus, implying that the disclaimer inoculates the one making it from any challenge.

Example 1: "I'm not a racist but...." If what follows is a racist statement, the one saying this is guilty of the inconsistency fallacy and of making a racist statement. Making a bold claim against racism is not a shield.

Example 2: "I can't be sexist because I'm a woman." The speaker, when making this kind of statement and others like it, assumes that she cannot logically be called out for making a sexist statement because she happens to be a member of a group (women) who are frequent victims of sexism. If the statements she makes can objectively be called sexist, then she is guilty of both sexism and the inconsistency fallacy.



Figure 7.3.5.14Inconsistency Fallacy

- **False Equivalence** —asserts that two ideas or groups or items or experiences are of equal type, standing, and quality when they are not.

Example: The belief in intelligent design and the theory of evolution are often falsely equated. The logical problem lies not with desire to support one or the other idea but with the idea that these two concepts are the same *type* of concept. They are not. Intelligent design comes out of belief, mainly religious belief, while evolution is a scientific theory underpinned by factual data. Thus, these two concepts should not be blithely equated. Furthermore, because these two concepts are not the same type, they do not need to be in opposition. In fact, there are those who may well believe in intelligent design while also subscribing to the theory of evolution. In other words, their religious beliefs do not restrict an adherence to evolutionary theory. A religious belief is faith based and, thus, is not evaluated using the same principles as a scientific theory would be.

- **False Balance** —applies mainly to journalists who, because they wish to present an appearance of fairness, falsely claim that two opposing arguments are roughly equal to each other when one actually has much more weight to it—of both reasoning and evidence.

Example: The majority of scientists accept climate change as established by empirical evidence, while a scant few do not; putting

one representative of each on a news program, however, implies that they represent an equal number of people, which is clearly false.

Key Takeaways: Logical Fallacies

- Both formal and informal fallacies are errors of reasoning, and if writers rely on such fallacies, even unintentionally, they undercut their arguments, particularly their crucial appeals to *logos*. For example, if someone defines a key term in an argument in an ambiguous way or if someone fails to provide credible evidence, or if someone tries to distract with irrelevant or inflammatory ideas, her arguments will appear logically weak to a critical audience.
- More than just *logos* is at stake, however. When listeners or readers spot questionable reasoning or unfair attempts at audience manipulation, they may conclude that an author's ethics have become compromised. The credibility of the author (*ethos*) and perhaps the readers' ability to connect with that writer on the level of shared values (*pathos*) may well be damaged.

7.3.5.1: Writing to Persuade

7.3.5.1.1: Introduction to Argumentative Writing

7.3.5.1.2: Aristotelian (Classical) Argument Model

7.3.5.1.3: Rogerian Argument Model

7.3.5.1.4: Toulmin Argument Model

7.3.5.1.5: Proposal Argument Model

7.3.5.1.6: Putting It All Together- Basic Elements of an Argument Essay

7.3.5.1.7: Tips for Writing Academic Persuasive Essays

7.3.5.1.8: Sample Writing Assignments

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7.3.5.1: WRITING TO PERSUADE

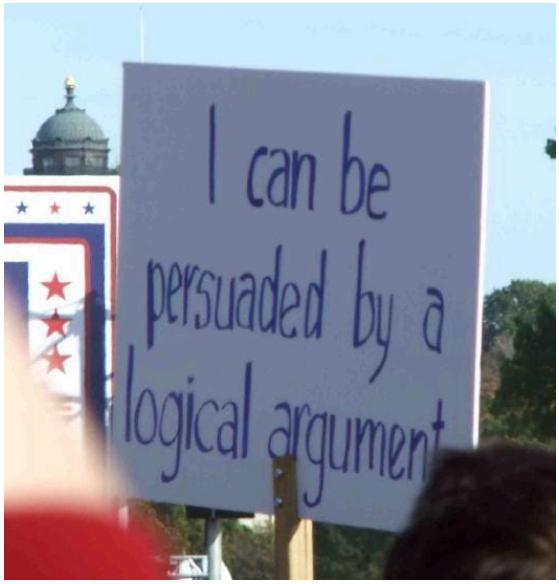


Figure 7.3.5.1.1: "I Can Be Persuaded" by soukup is licensed under CC BY 2.0

7.3.5.1.1: Introduction to Argumentative Writing

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7.3.5.1.1: Introduction to Argumentative Writing

Overview

by Joel Gladd and Amy Minervini

Argumentative writing, also referred to as persuasive writing, is a cornerstone of any first-year writing course. We encounter arguments on daily basis, in both formal and informal contexts. Most of the time, however, we don't realize how the arguments are actually working. This example developed by Ohio State's University Library shows how a relatively informal argument may unfold. The dialogue has been annotated to show what kinds of rhetorical elements tend to appear in casual arguments.

> **Jerald:** Where should we have my parents take us for dinner when they're here on Sunday? *[He asks the question about something that's unsettled.]*
> **Cathy:** We should go to The Cascades! *[She makes her main claim to answer the question.]* It's the nicest place around. *[Another claim, which functions as a reason for the main claim.]*
> **Jerald:** How so? *[He asks for a reason to believe her claims.]*
> **Cathy:** White table cloths. *[She gives a reason.]*
> **Jerald:** What's that have to do with how good the food is? *[He doesn't see how her reason is relevant to the claim.]*
> **Cathy:** Table cloths make restaurants seem upscale. *[She relates her reason for the claims.]* And I've read a survey in Columbus Metro that says the Cascades is one of the most popular restaurants in town. *[She offers evidence.]*
> **Jerald:** I never read the Metro. And Dino's has table cloths. *[He offers a point that contradicts her reason.]*
> **Cathy:** I know, but those are checkered! I'm talking about heavy white ones. *[She acknowledges his point and responds to it.]*
> **Jerald:** My dad loves Italian food. I guess he's kind of a checkered-table-cloth kind of guy? *[He raises another reservation or objection.]*
> **Cathy:** Yeah, but? Well, I know The Cascades has some Italian things on the menu. I mean, it's not known for its Italian food but you can order it there. Given how nice the place is, it will probably be gourmet Italian food. *[She acknowledges his point and responds to it. There's another claim in there.]*
> **Jerald:** Ha! My dad, the gourmet? Hey, maybe this place is too expensive. *[He raises another reservation.]*
> **Cathy:** More than someplace like Dino's. *[She concedes his point.]*
> **Jerald:** Yeah. *[He agrees.]*
> **Cathy:** But everybody eats at The Cascades with their parents while they're students here, so it can't be outlandishly expensive. *[She now puts limits on how much she's conceding.]*

As the example above shows, a number of elements typically play a role in most well-developed arguments:

- a **question** that doesn't have a straightforward answer
- a **claim** that responds to the question
- one or more **reasons** for accepting the claim
- **evidence** that backs each reason
- **objections** & **response to objections**

We often employ many or all of these elements in everyday life, when debating current issues with friends and family. It just unfolds in a messier way than your academic essay will need to structure the conversation. However, even though academic persuasive essays rely on some techniques you're already familiar with, certain strategies are less well-known, and even certain obvious elements, such as using "evidence" to back a claim, has a certain flavor in more formal environments that some students may not find obvious.

Different models have been proposed for how to best package the elements above. The three models most commonly employed in academic writing are the **Aristotelian (classical)**, **Toulmin**, and **Rogerian**, covered in this chapter. The proposal method is also included though this strategy focuses on solutions rather than problems.

Key Characteristics:

Argumentative writing generally exhibits the following:

- Presents a particular position/side of an issue
- Attempts to persuade the reader to the writer's side
- Uses elements of rhetoric and strategies that include the integration of logos, pathos, ethos, and kairos in intentional and meaningful ways
- Presents information, data, and research as part of the evidence/support (logos)
- Relies on real-world stories and examples to nurture empathy (pathos)
- Leans on experts in their fields to cultivate credibility (ethos)
- Enlists or elicits a call to action (kairos)
- Presents and acknowledges opposing views

Contents within this Chapter:

- Elements of an Argument Essay
- Aristotelian (Classical) Argument Model
- Rogerian Argument Model
- Toulmin Argument Model
- Proposal Argument Model
- Counterargument and Response
- Generating Antithetical Points in Five Easy Steps
- Tips for Writing Argument Essays

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7.3.5.1.2: Aristotelian (Classical) Argument Model

Aristotelian Argument

Aristotle

The Aristotelian or classical argument is a style of argument developed by the famous Greek philosopher and rhetorician, **Aristotle**. In this style of argument, your goal as a writer is to convince your audience of something. The goal is to use a series of strategies to persuade your audience to adopt your side of the issue. Although **ethos**, **pathos**, and **logos** play a role in any argument, this style of argument utilizes them in the most persuasive ways possible.

Of course, your professor may require some variations, but here is the basic format for an Aristotelian, or classical, argumentative essay:

1. **Introduce your issue.** At the end of your introduction, most professors will ask you to present your thesis. The idea is to present your readers with your main point and then dig into it.
2. **Present your case** by explaining the issue in detail and why something must be done or a way of thinking is not working. This will take place over several paragraphs.
3. **Address the opposition.** Use a few paragraphs to explain the other side. Refute the opposition one point at a time.
4. **Provide your proof.** After you address the other side, you'll want to provide clear evidence that your side is the best side.
5. **Present your conclusion.** In your conclusion, you should remind your readers of your main point or thesis and summarize the key points of your argument. If you are arguing for some kind of change, this is a good place to give your audience a call to action. Tell them what they could do to make a change.

For a visual representation of this type of argument, check out the Aristotelian infographic below:

Aritstotelian
Infographic

Introduction to Aristotelian Argument

The Aristotelian or classical argument is a style of argument developed by the famous Greek philosopher and rhetorician, Aristotle. In this style of argument, the writer's goal is to be convincing and to persuade your audience to your side of the issue through a series of strategies.

Start here!

Before you begin, review your assignment and ask yourself questions about what you might want to write about.

Use prewriting activities, such as brainstorming or listing, to help develop ideas for topics and angles.

Do your research! Find credible sources to help you build your argument.

But there's more! There are some important concepts you need to learn about.

Modes of Persuasion

Ethos=credibility

Pathos=emotions

Logos=logic

Know Your Audience!

When writing a classical or Aristotelian argument, think about how you are going to be convincing to your audience!

Things to remember along the way...

Clear thesis

Support thesis

Opposing views

Cite sources

Sample Essay

For a sample essay written in the Aristotelian model, click here.

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7.3.5.1.3: Rogerian Argument Model

Rogerian Argument

The Rogerian argument, inspired by the influential psychologist Carl Rogers, aims to find compromise or common ground about an issue. If, as stated in the beginning of the chapter, academic or rhetorical argument is not merely a two-sided debate that seeks a winner and a loser, the Rogerian argument model provides a structured way to move beyond the win-lose mindset. Indeed, the Rogerian model can be employed to deal effectively with controversial arguments that have been reduced to two opposing points of view by forcing the writer to confront opposing ideas and then work towards a common understanding with those who might disagree.

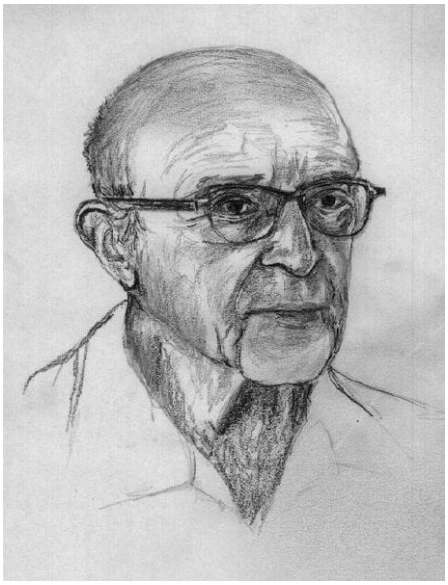


Figure 7.3.5.1.3.1: "Carl Ransom Rogers," by Didius, Wikimedia, . CC-BY 2.5.

The following are the basic parts of a Rogerian Argument:

1. **Introduction**: Introduce the issue under scrutiny in a non-confrontational way. Be sure to outline the main sides in the debate. Though there are always more than two sides to a debate, Rogerian arguments put two in stark opposition to one another. Crucially, be sure to indicate the overall purpose of the essay: to come to a **compromise** about the issue at hand. If this intent is not stated up front, the reader may be confused or even suspect manipulation on the part of the writer, i.e., that the writer is massaging the audience just to win a fight. Be advised that the Rogerian essay uses an inductive reasoning structure, so *do not* include your thesis in your introduction. You will build toward the thesis and then include it in your conclusion. Once again, state the *intent* to compromise, but do not yet state what the compromise is.

2. **Side A**: Carefully map out the main claim and reasoning for the **opposing side** of the argument first. The writer's view should never really come first because that would defeat the purpose of what Rogers called **empathetic listening**, which guides the overall approach to this type of argument. By allowing the opposing argument to come first, you communicate to the reader that you are willing to respectfully consider another's view on the issue. Furthermore, you invite the reader to then give you the same respect and consideration when presenting your own view. Finally, presenting the opposition first can help those readers who would side against you to ease into the essay, keeping them invested in the project. If you present your own ideas first, you risk polarizing those readers from the start, which would then make them less amenable to considering a compromise by the end of the essay. **You can listen to Carl Rogers himself discuss the importance of empathy on *YouTube*** (https://youtu.be/2dLsgpHw5x0, transcript **here**).

3. **Side B**: Carefully go over **your side** of the argument. When mapping out this side's claim and support, be sure that it parallels that of Side A. In other words, make sure not to raise entirely new categories of support, or there can be no way to come to a compromise. Make sure to maintain a non-confrontational tone; for example, avoid appearing arrogant, sarcastic, or smug.

4. **The Bridge**: A solid Rogerian argument acknowledges the desires of each side and tries to accommodate both. In this part, point out the ways in which you agree or can find **common ground** between the two sides. There should be at least one point of agreement. This can be an acknowledgement of the one part of the opposition's agreement that you also support or an admittance to a shared set of values even if the two sides come to different ideas when employing those values. This phase of the essay is crucial for two reasons: finding common ground (1) shows the audience the two views are not necessarily at complete odds, that they share more than they seem, and (2) sets up the compromise to come, making it easier to digest for all parties. Thus, this section **builds a bridge** from the two initial isolated and opposite views to a compromise that both sides can reasonably support.

5. **The Compromise**: Now is the time to finally announce your compromise, which is your thesis. The compromise is what the essay has been building towards all along, so explain it carefully and demonstrate the logic of it. For example, if debating about whether to use racial profiling, a compromise might be based on both sides' desire for a safer society. That shared value can then lead to a new claim, one that disarms the original dispute or set of disputes. For the racial profiling example, perhaps a better solution would focus on more objective measures than race that would then promote safety in a less problematic way.

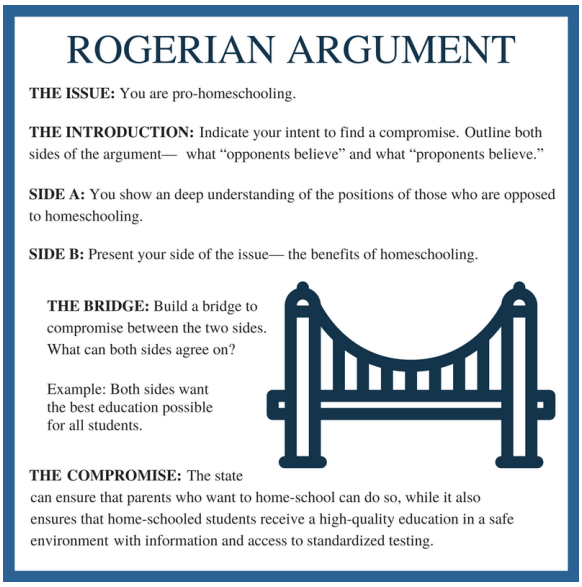


Figure 7.3.5.1.3.2: "Rogerian Argument," by Kalyca Schultz, Virginia Western Community College, CC-BY-NC-SA.

Rogerian Exercise

Find a controversial topic, and begin building a Rogerian argument. Write up your responses to the following:

1. The topic or dilemma I will write about is...
2. My opposing audience is...
3. My audience's view on the topic is...
4. My view on the topic is...
5. Our common ground–shared values or something that we both already agree on about the topic–is...
6. My compromise (the main claim or potential thesis) is...

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7.3.5.1.4: Toulmin Argument Model

Toulmin Argument Model

Stephen Edelston Toulmin (born March 25, 1922) was a British philosopher, author, and educator. Toulmin devoted his works to analyzing moral reasoning. He sought to develop practical ways to evaluate ethical arguments effectively. The Toulmin Model of Argumentation, a diagram containing six interrelated components, was considered Toulmin's most influential work, particularly in the fields of rhetoric, communication, and computer science. His components continue to provide useful means for analyzing arguments, and the terms involved can be added to those defined in earlier sections of this chapter.

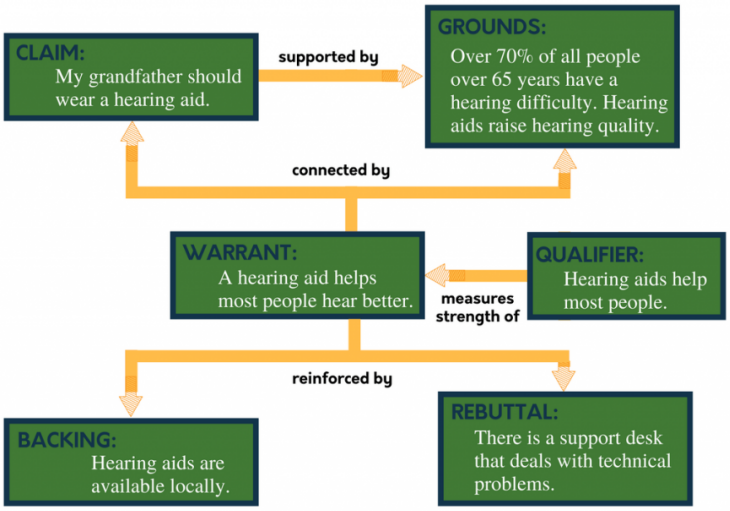


Figure 7.3.5.1.4.1: "Toulmin Argument," Kalyca Schultz, Virginia Western Community College, CC-BY-SA.

The following are the parts of a Toulmin argument:

1. **Claim**: The claim is a statement that you are asking the other person to accept as true (i.e., a conclusion) and forms the nexus of the Toulmin argument because all the other parts relate back to the claim. The claim can include information and ideas you are asking readers to accept as true or actions you want them to accept and enact. One example of a claim:

> My grandfather should wear a hearing aid.

This claim both asks the reader to believe an idea and suggests an action to enact. However, like all claims, it can be challenged. Thus, a Toulmin argument does not end with a claim but also includes grounds and warrant to give support and reasoning to the claim.

2. **Grounds**: The grounds form the basis of real persuasion and includes the reasoning behind the claim, data, and proof of expertise. Think of grounds as a combination of **premises** and **support**. The truth of the claim rests upon the grounds, so those grounds should be tested for strength, credibility, relevance, and reliability. The following are examples of grounds:

> Over 70% of all people over 65 years have a hearing difficulty.
>
> Hearing aids raise hearing quality.

Information is usually a powerful element of persuasion, although it does affect people differently. Those who are dogmatic, logical, or rational will more likely be persuaded by factual data. Those who argue emotionally and who are highly invested in their own position will challenge it or otherwise try to ignore it. Thus, grounds can also include appeals to emotion, provided they aren't misused. The best arguments, however, use a variety of support and rhetorical appeals.

3. **Warrant**: A warrant links data and other grounds to a claim, legitimizing the claim by showing the grounds to be **relevant**. The warrant may be carefully explained and explicit or unspoken and implicit. The warrant answers the question, "Why does that data mean your claim is true?" For example,

> A hearing aid helps most people hear better.

The warrant may be simple, and it may also be a longer argument with additional sub-elements including those described below. Warrants may be based on ***logos***, ***ethos*** or ***pathos***, or values that are assumed to be shared with the listener. In many arguments, warrants are often implicit and, hence, unstated. This gives space for the other person to question and expose the warrant, perhaps to show it is weak or unfounded.

4. **Backing**: The backing for an argument gives additional support to the warrant. Backing can be confused with grounds, but the main difference is this: Grounds should directly support the premises of the main argument itself, while backing exists to help the warrants make more sense. For example,

> Hearing aids are available locally.

This statement works as backing because it gives credence to the warrant stated above, that a hearing aid will help most people hear better. The fact that hearing aids are readily available makes the warrant even more reasonable.

5. **Qualifier**: The qualifier indicates how the data justifies the warrant and may limit how universally the claim applies. The necessity of qualifying words comes from the plain fact that most absolute claims are ultimately false (all women want to be mothers, e.g.) because one counterexample sinks them immediately. Thus, most arguments need some sort of qualifier, words that temper an absolute claim and make it more reasonable. Common qualifiers include "most," "usually," "always," or "sometimes." For example,

> Hearing aids help most people.

The qualifier "most" here allows for the reasonable understanding that rarely does one thing (a hearing aid) universally benefit all people. Another variant is the reservation, which may give the possibility of the claim being incorrect:

> Unless there is evidence to the contrary, hearing aids do no harm to ears.

Qualifiers and reservations can be used to bolster weak arguments, so it is important to recognize them. They are often used by advertisers who are constrained not to lie. Thus, they slip "usually," "virtually," "unless," and so on into their claims to protect against liability. While this may seem like sneaky practice, and it can be for some advertisers, it is important to note that the use of qualifiers and reservations can be a useful and legitimate part of an argument.

6. **Rebuttal**: Despite the careful construction of the argument, there may still be counterarguments that can be used. These may be rebutted either through a continued dialogue, or by pre-empting the counter-argument by giving the rebuttal during the initial presentation of the argument. For example, if you anticipated a counterargument that hearing aids, as a technology, may be fraught with technical difficulties, you would include a rebuttal to deal with that counterargument:

> There is a support desk that deals with technical problems.

Any rebuttal is an argument in itself, and thus may include a claim, warrant, backing, and the other parts of the Toulmin structure.

Even if you do not wish to write an essay using strict Toulmin structure, using the Toulmin checklist can make an argument stronger. When first proposed, Toulmin based his layout on legal arguments, intending it to be used analyzing arguments typically found in the courtroom; in fact, Toulmin did not realize that this layout would be applicable to other fields until later. The first three elements–"claim," "grounds," and "warrant"–are considered the essential components of practical arguments, while the last three—"qualifier," "backing," and "rebuttal"—may not be necessary for all arguments.

Toulmin Exercise

Find an argument in essay form and diagram it using the Toulmin model. The argument can come from an Op-Ed article in a newspaper or a magazine think piece or a scholarly journal. See if you can find all six elements of the Toulmin argument. Use the structure above to diagram your article's argument.

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7.3.5.1.5: Proposal Argument Model

Proposal Method

from *Introduction to College Writing at CNM*

The proposal method of argument is used when there is a problematic situation, and you would like to offer a solution to the situation. The structure of the proposal method is similar to the other persuasive methods, but there are slight differences.

Introduce and define the nature of the problematic situation. Make sure to focus on the problem and its causes. This may seem simple, but many people focus solely on the effects of a problematic situation. By focusing on the actual problem, your readers will see your proposal as a solution to the problem. If you don't, your readers might see your solution as a mere complaint.

Propose a solution, or a number of solutions, to the problem. Be specific about these solutions. If you have one solution, you may choose to break it into parts and spend a paragraph or so describing each part. If you have several solutions, you may instead choose to spend a paragraph on each scenario. Each additional solution will add both depth and length to your argument. But remember to stay focused. Added length does not always equal a better argument.

Describe the workability of the various solutions. There are a variety of ways that this could be done. With a single-solution paper you could break the feasibility down into short and long term goals and plans. With a multiple-solution essay, you may instead highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the individual solutions, and establish which would be the most successful, based on your original statement of the problem and its causes. Check out this source from Owlcation, where they give a chart of 12 Ways to Solve Problems in the middle of the page.

Summarize and conclude your proposal. Summarize your solutions, re-state how the solution or solutions would work to remedy the problematic situation, and you're done.

More information on proposal arguments follows.

Proposal Arguments

from *College Comp II*

Key Concept

Proposal Argument: argues that something should, ought to, or must happen.

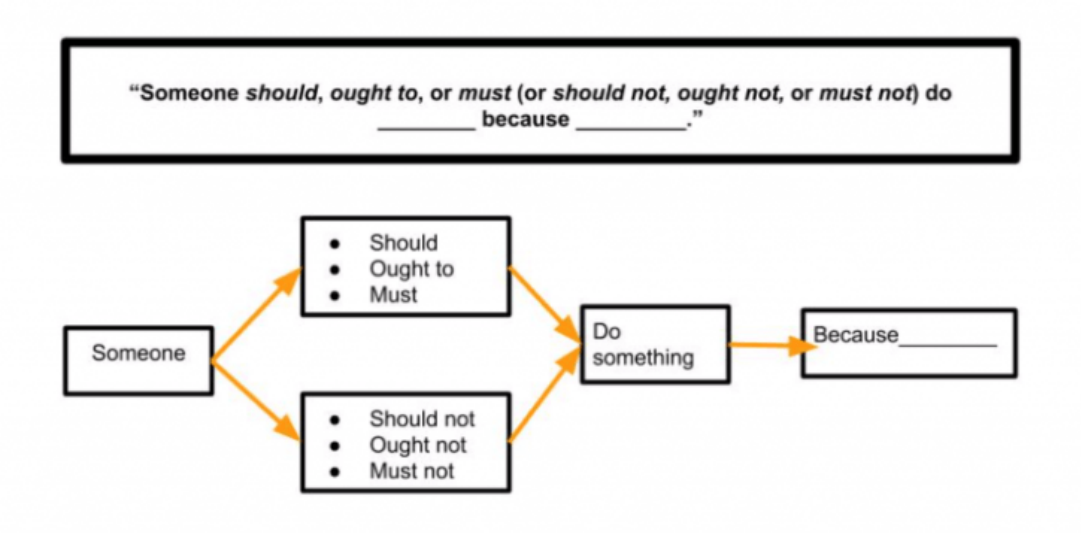


Figure 7.3.5.1.5.1

Proposal arguments–which propose that something should, ought to, or must happen–may be one of the most common kinds of arguments we encounter in our day-to-day lives; however, despite how often we find them, they can actually be rhetorically quite complex, perhaps because they appear deceptively simple to make. And this is exactly why we're covering them last, since there are some very important subtleties to them.

The basic idea behind a proposal argument seems pretty straightforward: we state what we think should happen and then marshal evidence to support that proposal. Seems easy, right?

Let's look at a hypothetical example:

> *Friend #1: "We should go see Movie X!"* **(Proposal claim)**
>
> *Friend #2: "Okay, sounds good. I'm in!"*

Friend #1 is making a proposal claim, arguing that both friends should go see a particular movie. In an abstract setting, this claim makes sense. However, Friend #2's response seems pretty unlikely. If you were Friend #2, you'd probably have a few questions about why Friend #1 thinks you should go see this movie, right? Equally, you'd probably expect Friend #1 to provide at least some evidence (however scant) about why you should go see this movie. Perhaps, for example, you might want to know about the actors or the director. Maybe you're curious about what critics are saying. Perhaps you'd like to know how long it is. Indeed, these are pretty typical things that your average person would want to know before they pay for their movie ticket. Maybe a more genuine conversation would look like this:

> *Friend #1: "Hey, did you know that Movie X in the theaters right now?"* **(Definition claim, establishing the existence of a condition.)**
>
> *Friend #2: "Yeah, I did!"*
>
> *Friend #1: "I've been reading that critics across the board are praising it. One critic whose opinion I really trust even said that it's the best movie to come out all year."* **(Evaluative claim, arguing that something is good.)**
>
> *Friend #2: "Oh wow!"*
>
> *Friend #1: "I think we should go see it!"* **(Proposal claim)**

Note that in this second example, in order for Friend #1 to build a sound proposal argument, they have to first make several other claims–notably a definition claim, establishing the existence of a condition, following by an evaluative claim, arguing that the movie is good.

However, in less mundane examples, proposal arguments often begin by identifying a problem before proposing a solution

to it. For instance, in recent years, there has been increased public awareness of the dangers of disposable plastic drinking straws, particularly focused on the dangers they cause to wildlife. Many stakeholders have proposed (and even implemented) a variety of different solutions. Starbucks, for example, redesigned their cold-drink cups so that they could stop giving customers obligatory straws with their beverages. Other establishments have switched to using straws that are made of paper, which is more biodegradable and therefore breaks down more easily. Other companies have started marketing washable, reusable plastic straws that can be reused over and over again. While a wide variety of solutions have been proposed (and while many of those proposals have even been enacted), what's important to note is that these proposals were in response to what was identified as a problem–i.e. The wastefulness of disposable drinking straws.

For our purposes, however, here is how we can think about making proposal arguments:

1) Part of showing that a problem exists entails getting your reader to care enough to accept your proposed solution. To get the reader to care, you will need to work on their hearts as well as their minds by showing how the problem affects people (and, potentially, the reader specifically) and has important stakes.

2) You will need to show how your solution solves the problem (wholly or partially).

3) You will need to offer reasons for adopting your proposal. What values can you appeal to? Of the person or organization that needs to be convinced, how can you show that their interests are served? Always remember your audience. You don't have to pretend that your solution is perfect or has neither costs nor any negative consequences; you should address these and convince your reader that despite them, your solution is about doing the right thing.

Recapping the main ideas behind Proposal Arguments:

- **They argue that something should, ought to or must happen**
- **They don't necessarily need to completely "solve" the problem; perhaps they only improve certain parts of it.**
- **Proposal claims are often the culmination of a string of other claims (definition, causal, etc.)**

SAMPLE ESSAY

Here is an annotated Sample Proposal Essay.

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7.3.5.1.6: Putting It All Together- Basic Elements of an Argument Essay

The previous chapters on argumentation offered different models for thinking about what it means to make an argument. Toulmin's method is deeply analytical, and it requires that a student become familiar with many technical terms. The Rogerian model, on the other hand, feels very conversational, almost intuitive.

In higher education, it's rare (but not impossible) that a student will be asked to use a single model of argumentation. Depending on the assignment, the course, and your instructor, you might be expected to deploy certain conversational techniques that feel more at home in the Rogerian model, while also defending claims and articulating warrants that rely on Toulmin's framework. It helps to become familiar with all of them.

The purpose of this chapter is to offer a comprehensive method for developing an argument, based largely on the classical Aristotelian model, but also pulling in strategies from Toulmin, Roger, and other influences, as well as many different articles and writing textbooks. Most academic persuasive/argumentative essay assignments will expect students to include these elements, to some degree.

I. Begin with issue-based questions

Arguments begin with identifying a problem or issue that needs to be addressed, often phrased as a question. In rhetoric, we might consider the question the **exigence**, an issue that demands a timely response. Sometimes your instructor will give you the question; in other cases you will be expected to develop your own research question. Though vitally important, explicit research questions are sometimes not stated in essays or term papers, but they are usually stated in reports of original studies, such as theses, dissertations, and journal articles.

As *Writing Arguments* and other composition textbooks suggest, it's important to distinguish between "information questions" (or fact-based questions) and "issue questions." An information question is a fact-finding mission that's more suitable for essay reports and other forms of expository writing. An issue question, by contrast, ultimately requires the writer to take a stance on something that can be debated.

> **Information question**: "What's a soda tax?"
>
> **Issue question:** "In order to curb the rise in type 2 diabetes, should soda be taxed?"

The information question above can be quickly answered by a few google searches. The second, which includes the word *should*, is open-ended and can be endlessly debated.

The distinction between open-ended and fact-based questions isn't always so clear-cut. Sometimes a researcher will begin with an information-based question and soon discover that answering it requires so much analysis that it can be easily debated. For example, a little bit of research shows that the question "Is there a rise in type 2 diabetes in the U.S.?" has a straightforward answer (the consensus is yes), but when asking the follow-up question, "What is *causing* the rise in type 2 diabetes?", you'll find a wide variety of responses. Figuring out the cause is presumably factual, but asking questions about causation with population-level trends is going to touch on so much data and information that any cogent response will require significant prioritizing and analysis on the part of the researcher, and the results will disagree with other interpretations that chose different kinds of prioritizing and analysis. Since a response to this particular question leads to a debate, it's suitable for argumentation.

II. Formulate strong claims

A claim is your response to the issue. Depending on the rigor of the assignment and expectations of the course, a claim can be brainstormed rather quickly, or, in research-intensive writing courses, it might require weeks or months of labor. It's the conclusion you come to after you've brainstormed the issue, done the research, analyzed the data, and arrived at a conclusion. It's a statement expressed in an assertive way.

> **bad example of a claim:** "In this paper, I will focus on attempts to tax soda."
>
> **example claim:** "Soda should not be taxed."

Word like "should" often appear in claims and they indicate that the statement is open to debate. It's not a factual claim, although it should be based on factual evidence.

III. Prove a claim with Reasoning and Evidence

Academic arguments are organized around strictly logical frameworks, which means any opinion or belief must be supported; or, in other words, it must be proved. The difference between informal debates with family, friends, and acquaintances and the more formal debates in academia is largely due to the more rigorous expectations surrounding what it means to actually *prove* a claim. The proof is the logical core of the argument, what most readers within your audience will likely accept as convincing.

Here, the what it means to *support* an argument will be broken down into two main elements: reasoning and evidence.

Reasoning

When staking a claim, a writer must respond to the question, "but why?" Reasons are answers to hypothetical challenges:

> **Debate**: "Should soda be taxed?"
>
> **Claim**: "Yes, soda should be taxed."
>
> **Hypothetical challenge**: "But why?"
>
> **Response to the hypothetical challenge (Reasoning)**: "Well, for starters, taxing soda would reduce the amount of sugar the average citizen consumes.$_{\text{reason 1}}$ Secondly, revenue from a soda tax could be used to curb the rise in type 2 diabetes."$_{\text{reason 2}}$

The last part above, the Reasoning, is often the bulk of an academic persuasive essay. It's the writer's attempt to prove to the reader their claim is valid. As Booth, et al explain in *The Craft ofResearch*, the main points of a persuasive academic essay can often be joined to the overarching claim with the word *because*:

> TV violence can have harmful psychological effects on children$_{\text{claim}}$ **because** those exposed to lots of it tend to adopt the values of what the see.$_{\text{reason}}$

In their chapter, "Making Good Arguments," Booth, et al suggest it's helpful to keep in mind that the term **claim** can both refer to the broader thesis statement the writer is attempting to support and any sub-claim within the essay that needs proved with additional reasoning. What makes something a **reason** is that it attempts to support a claim, regardless of whether that claim

is the one found in the introduction or in the body of the essay. A heavily researched persuasive essay will have a single thesis statement, but many sub-claims that are in turn proved by separate reasons. This ongoing connection between claim, sub-claim, and reason is important to keep in mind when structuring your essay. A very basic assignment might expect a fairly simple proof, backed by only one reason. A more complex assignment might ask the student to generate a variety of reasons from a given set of courses. An even more complex assignment might ask a student to do original research that requires them to explore several layers of claims and sub-claims.

Simple proof

- Claim
  - Reason

More complex proof

- Claim
  - Reason 1
  - Reason 2

Complex proof, with sub-claims

- Claim
  - Sub-Claim 1
    - Reason 1
    - Reason 1
  - Sub-Claim 2
    - Reason 1
    - Reason 2

The example above, concerning the soda tax debate, would be considered a fairly simple proof:

> **Claim**: Soda should be taxed.
>
> **Reason 1**: Taxing soda would reduce the amount of sugar the average citizen consumes.
>
> **Reason 2**: Revenue from a soda tax could be used to fight the obesity epidemic.

The first reason above, "Taxing soda would reduce the amount of sugar," is compelling only if the audience also accepts the unstated belief that it's *fair* to achieve lower levels in a somewhat brute force manner (in contrast to, for example, relying entirely on educating people about health). Focusing on unstated beliefs or implied premises is what Toulmin terms a **warrant**. Articulating warrants help the writer practice analysis, which is a separate section touched on below.

Evidence

If reasoning proves a claim, then evidence proves the reasoning. The evidence provides the foundation upon which the entire argument rests. This is why it's sometimes called the **ground** in classical rhetoric (in Toulmin's scheme, it's termed **backing**). Since the role of evidence is to put all questions to rest, it's often something concrete, such as facts or data that most readers

would find convincing. In a criminal case, for example, a prosecutor might point to fingerprints as proof (as evidence) that the defendant can be placed at the crime scene (support/reason), and this presence at the crime scene supports the broader conclusion that the defendant is guilty of the crime (claim). For the case to be successfully prosecuted, the prosecutor needs enough forensics.

When constructing arguments from research in an academic situation, it's unlikely a writer will rely on literal forensic evidence to support the reasoning and claim. Instead, academic writers tend to use a variety of research methods to persuade their audience. Let's look at an example:

> **Issue/debate**: How should local governments respond to the rising obesity epidemic? Some advocate taxing sugary drinks, especially sodas; but consumer advocates argue a tax would infringe on the rights of consumers and corporations.
>
> **Claim**: In response to the obesity epidemic, municipal governments should tax sodas.
>
> **Support (Reasoning with Evidence)**: Taxing soda would reduce the amount of sugar consumed by the average citizen.$_{reason}$ A prime example of this can be seen in a case study from 2016 that showed a city in California successfully reduced the average sugar consumption of each citizen after implementing a soda tax.$_{evidence}$

The evidence for the reason above gives something to satisfy the reader's skepticism. This particular evidence is a case study, an experiment conducted by researches to test a hypothesis, then published in an peer-reviewed journal. Research like this is often treated as a persuasive form of evidence in academic communities.

What counts as **evidence** will vary depending on the discipline and situation. In a literature course, passages from a novel are usually key evidence. In a psychology class, on the other hand, case studies are typically evidence. As you develop your research-supported essay, consider not only what types of evidence might support your ideas but also what types of evidence will be considered valid or credible according to the academic discipline or academic audience for which you are writing.

Evidence in the Humanities: Literature, Art, Film, Music, Philosophy

- Scholarly essays that analyze original works
- Details from an image, a film, or other work of art
- Passages from a musical composition
- Passages of text, including poetry

Evidence in the Humanities: History

- Primary Sources (photos, letters, maps, official documents, etc.)
- Other books or articles that interpret primary sources or other evidence.

Evidence in the Social Sciences: Psychology, Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology

- Books or articles that interpret data and results from other people's original experiments or studies.
- Results from one's own field research (including interviews, surveys, observations, etc.)
- Data from one's own experiments
- Statistics derived from large studies

Evidence in the Sciences: Biology, Chemistry, Physics

- Data from the author of the paper's own experiments
- Books or articles that interpret data and results from other people's original experiments or studies.

What remains consistent no matter the discipline in which you are writing, however, is that "evidence" never speaks for itself—you must integrate it into your own argument or claim and demonstrate that the evidence supports your thesis. In addition, be alert to evidence that seems to contradict your claims or offers a counterargument to it: rebutting that counterargument can be powerful evidence for your claim. You can also make evidence that isn't there an integral part of your argument, too. If you can't find the evidence you think you need, ask yourself why it seems to be lacking, or if its absence adds a new dimension to your thinking about the topic. Remember, evidence is not the piling up of facts or quotes: evidence is only one component of a strong, well supported, well argued, and well written composition. For more tips with integration information in a research-based persuasive essay, see the section, "Writing With Sources."

Failures in evidence occur when a reader says, "I do not accept your evidence." Here is why that might happen:

- The evidence that you have provided is *inaccurate*: You've misread information or misquoted; you are not interpreting the quoted material in an accurate manner
- The evidence that you have provided is *insufficient*: You are using just a small piece of evidence to support your reasoning. You need more. You probably have a "generalization" fallacy.
- The evidence that you have provided is *unrelated to the reason*: Your evidence does not clearly or directly relate to the point that you are trying to make.
- The evidence that you have provided is *incomplete or too narrowly chosen*: You have "cherry picked" certain examples or pieces of information to the exclusion of others, so while you do have evidence to support your point, you are also neglecting a lot of other information
- The evidence that you have provided is *old*: The information that you are citing is not relevant anymore. It is outdated!
- The evidence that you have provided does not come from an *authoritative source*: The source of your evidence is not credible; the person being cited is not an authority on the topic.

IV. Analyze and discuss the evidence

Composition students often get feedback that includes phrases like, "more analysis!", or "discuss the evidence!". These comments are sometimes confusing for students who initially assume that simply presenting enough reasoning and evidence is enough to prove a claim. It's often unclear what the term **analysis** actually refers to.

Let's look again at one of the examples above, concerning the soda tax debate:

> **Claim**: Soda should be taxed.
>
> **Reason**: Taxing soda would reduce the amount of sugar the average citizen consumes.
>
> **Evidence (Grounds)**: A prime example of this can be seen in a case study from 2016 that showed a city in California successfully reduced the average sugar consumption of each citizen after implementing a soda tax.

This structure has the core elements of an argument: a strong and assertive **claim**, followed by **reasoning**, which in turn is grounded in specific **evidence**. Each element seems fairly straightforward. What more is there to discuss?

Discuss the warrant

One area that's ripe for the discussion is the extent to which the reasoning takes for granted certain values. Rather than simply educating the citizenry in the risks associated with consuming a lot of sugar, a sugar tax moves beyond that step and expects consumers to either reduce their consumption or pay the price. It adds a penalty to a certain behavior, and this kind of policy-enforcement might be interpreted as paternalistic by someone who's concerned about the encroachment of "big government." With this skeptical reader in mind, the writer might slow down when proving their point in order to articulate the implied premise, or **warrant**, that using tax policy to encourage healthier habits is ethically and political sound.

Here's another version of the proof above, now with the warrant expressed:

> **Claim**: Soda should be taxed.
>
> **Reason**: Taxing soda would reduce the amount of sugar the average citizen consumes.
>
> **Evidence (Grounds)**: A prime example of this can be seen in a case study from 2016 that showed a city in California successfully reduced the average sugar consumption of each citizen after implementing a soda tax.
>
> **Warrant**: It's justifiable to use tax policy to encourage healthy eating habits.

Bringing the warrant to the surface is considered one form of analysis because it closely interrogates a piece of the argument, uncovering another potential layer of discussion. If the writer thinks the audience will readily accept the belief (that it's ok to use tax policies in this way), they can move forward. However, anticipating objections from the audience is a sign of self-awareness and critical thinking, a type of **ethos**, so articulating and discussing warrants can have a two-fold effect: making your case more solid (logos) *and* convincing the reader you're a careful thinker (ethos).

Add backing to the warrant

Depending on how controversial or complex the warrant is, it might be helpful to spend some time making your case that the warrant is actually valid. When proving a warrant, use the same strategies as you would for any other point in the essay—offer reasoning and evidence.

In the soda tax example, one way to back the warrant is by pointing out that local and federal governments in the U.S. have long used tax policy to encourage healthy behaviors. Formerly known as "sin taxes," these tax policies leverage the power of governments to make certain items more expensive (through taxes) to encourage the behavior most of its citizens want for themselves. An alcohol tax was first introduced in the 1790s; then, more recently, tobacco has been heavily taxed in order to bring down cancer rates.

> **Claim**: Soda should be taxed.
>
> **Reason**: Taxing soda would reduce the amount of sugar the average citizen consumes.
>
> **Evidence (Grounds)**: A prime example of this can be seen in a case study from 2016 that showed a city in California successfully reduced the average sugar consumption of each citizen after implementing a soda tax.
>
> **Warrant**: It's justifiable to use tax policy to encourage healthy eating habits.
>
> **Backing for the warrant**: "Sin taxes" have been used throughout U.S. history to encourage healthy behavior.

This process of tracking down implied beliefs and then backing them can go on endlessly. That's part of the reason why some topics deserve 20-30 page articles, or even book-length critical engagement. When do you know when to stop? Warrants and backing for them should be supplied for the audience. As the writer anticipates objections to their reasoning, warrants will come to the surface; but, as you interrogate them closely, it's important to also think and write with the audience in mind, and also to look for feedback from peers. Many (in fact most) beliefs don't need to be stated or backed, depending on how knowledgeable, specialized, and formal the intended audience is.

Make connections

Another way to analyze and discuss evidence is by connecting it with other pieces of evidence. If evidence never speaks for itself, it is also rarely isolated. The most convincing grounds or backing have layers of example.

Connecting evidence with concrete examples, especially personal ones, is an especially powerful way to bring home a point. When an evidence-based point (logos) is clearly illustrated with something personal and relatable, the writer/speaker can tap into the emotional reservoirs of their audience (pathos).

Justify your evidence

Yet another way to discuss evidence is to use "meta" language that explains to a skeptical reader why your evidence is actually valid. Case studies have different methodologies, for example, and a skeptical reader might wonder about the sample size. A keen

writer could anticipate these attempts to undermine evidence by discussing whether a source is convincing or authoritative. This kind of discussion surrounding the authority and trustworthiness of the writer's sources also helps establish **ethos**.

Paraphrase!

Sometimes, simply paraphrasing key ideas and points from a source can serve as a form of discussion. Rephrasing important ideas *in your own words* is also an important integration technique, and it contributes to the cohesive feel of your essay. After including key quotes from an expert, for example, you can follow up with: "In other words...," or "What this means is..."

V. Offer counterarguments and rebuttals

The section on **warrants**, mentioned above, suggests that anticipating the reader's objections shapes how certain parts of the essay are written. Part of what separates academic essays from more informal persuasive situations is how intensely writers are expected to consider other arguments and probable objections. As the Rogerian model from the previous chapter shows, academic argumentation is fundamentally conversational.

The conversation can begin with the introduction. Do any of your sources not agree with your thesis? Does any of the research disagree with any of the supporting claims (the reasoning)? Opening with an ongoing conversation can also help provide **context** for the claim, which is covered below.

When supporting your thesis, put yourself in your readers' shoes. What might they not find logical in your argument? Toulmin's terminology (claim, grounds, warrant, backing) can be helpful for critically analyzing your own ideas, as the section on warrants above shows.

How solid is the evidence? Would some readers poke holes in it?

One of the following chapters in this Part will offer more suggestions for how to craft counterarguments and rebuttals. In addition, it will be helpful to review the section, Writing With Sources.

VI. Provide context and define key terms

When defending your claim, you will need to place your topic (and argument) in context by including relevant background material. Remember, your audience is relying on you for vital information, such as definitions, historical placement, and controversial positions. This background material might appear in either your introductory paragraph/s or your body paragraphs. How and where to incorporate background material depends a lot upon your topic, assignment, evidence, and audience.

Kairotic appeals

One reason context is so important is that it helps persuade the reader your claim is timely and appropriate to a present matter

of concern. The timelines of an argument is its **kairos**. Providing sufficient background information that pinpoints an urgent issue and conversation adds **kairotic appeal**. This kind of context should appear before introducing your claim—whenever possible, the claim should sound like it's deeply enmeshed in the moment, pitched at just the right time.

Definitions

One of the most important contextual pieces of information a writer can provide is to carefully define certain terms of ideas that play a key role in the argument. Part of what makes an argument so experimental is that many of the key terms (words) a writer uses are slippery. Words like "freedom," "progress," and "happiness" often appear in many casual arguments, but all of those words are heatedly disputed. These linguistic disputes are why good speakers and writers take their time clarifying key terms that play an important role in their argument.

Consider the debate over free speech in higher education. Most Universities state their commitment to free speech. It's often in the student handbook. However, many student handbooks also state their commitment to learning and providing a safe and secure environment for that to happen. This second commitment sometimes operates in tension with free speech, which doesn't care about truth, learning, or the interests of the institution. Google "free speech in higher education" and you'll see a ton of news articles debating this issue.

In " Free Speech Is Not an Academic Value ," Stanley Fish takes the controversial stance that public universities should not value free speech above all other concerns. How does he support his opinion? He points to court decisions that distinguish between "speech on a matter of public concern and speech that is personal or internal to the operations of the unit." Fish continues, "If the speech at issue falls under the first category, it is constitutionally protected; if it falls under the second, it can be regulated in the same way any employer can regulate speech that disrupts the core business of the workplace."

From this distinction, he suggests that free speech is protected only when it's nonacademic. When it's academic speech, the interests of the institution (the learning outcomes for that class, the objectives of the campus as a whole, etc.) are paramount, and the foundational principle of higher education is "free inquiry" towards the truth. In the classroom and in other academic-related activities, campuses care most about "getting a matter of fact right," and expressing oneself is secondary to that concern. Controversial indeed!

Notice how Fish deftly uses authoritative definitions to help move forward his argument. He mentions previous court decisions (historical evidence) in order to justify his definition of free speech vs. academic speech. This careful parsing of certain terms is crucial for Fish's position. It allows him to make the point that arguments related to free speech in higher education must pay close attention to what "speech" actually refers to: speech related to the public interest vs. speech internal to the institution. Only after identifying the different kinds of speech can he then support his broader claim.

In academic situations, persuasive writers are upfront and transparent about their definitions. If an important term is employed throughout your essay, it's often good practiced to define it near the beginning, or whenever that term first appears.

The original version of this chapter contained H5P content. You may want to remove or replace this element. Most of this chapter is original content, but some of the parts above are taken from Ohio State University's *Choosing & Using Sources*, Chapter 9, CC-BY 4.0.

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7.3.5.1.7: Tips for Writing Academic Persuasive Essays

The previous chapters in this section offer an overview of what it means to formulate an argument in an academic situation. The purpose of this chapter is to offer more concrete, actionable tips for drafting an academic persuasive essay. Keep in mind that preparing to draft a persuasive essay relies on the strategies for any other thesis-driven essay, covered by the section in this textbook, The Writing Process. The following chapters can be read in concert with this one:

- Critical Reading and other research strategies helps writers identify the exigence (issue) that demands a response, as well as what kinds of research to use.
- Generate Ideas covers prewriting models (such as brainstorming techniques) that allow students to make interesting connections and develop comprehensive thesis statements. These connections and main points will allow a writer to outline their core argument.
- Organizing is important for understanding why an argument essay needs a detailed plan, before the drafting stage. For an argument essay, start with a basic outline that identifies the claim, reasoning, and evidence, but be prepared to develop more detailed outlines that include counterarguments and rebuttals, warrants, additional backing, etc., as needed.
- Drafting introduces students to basic compositional strategies that they must be familiar with before beginning an argument essay. This current chapter offers more details about what kinds of paragraphs to practice in an argument essay, but it assumes the writer is familiar with basic strategies such as coherence and cohesion.

Classical structure of an argument essay

Academic persuasive essays tend to follow what's known as the "classical" structure, based on techniques that derive from ancient Roman and Medieval rhetoricians. John D. Ramage, et. al outline this structure in *Writing Arguments*:

• Exordium • Narratio • Propositio • Partitio	Introduction (one to several paragraphs)	• Attention grabber • Explanation of issue and needed background • Writer's thesis (claim) • Forecasting passage
• Confirmatio	Presentation of writer's position	• Main body of essay • Presents and supports each reason in turn • Each reason is tied to a value or belief held by the audience
• Confutatio	Summary of opposing views (Counterarguments) Response to opposing views (Rebuttals)	• Summary of views differing from writer's • Shows weaknesses in opposing views • May concede some strengths
• Peroratio	Conclusion	• Brings essay to closure • Often sums up argument • Leaves strong last impression • Often calls for action or relates topic to a larger context of issues

This very detailed table can be simplified. Most academic persuasive essays include the following basic elements:

- **Introduction** that explains why the situation is important and presents your argument (aka the claim or thesis).
- **Support/Body**
  - Reasons the thesis is correct or at least reasonable.
  - Evidence that supports each reason, often occurring right after the reason the evidence supports.
  - Acknowledgement of objections.
  - Response to objections.
- **Conclusion**

Keep in mind that the structure above is just a conventional starting point. The previous chapters of this section suggest how different kinds of arguments (Classical/Aristotelian, Toulmin, Rogerian) involve slightly different approaches, and your course, instructor, and specific assignment prompt may include its own specific instructions on how to complete the assignment. There are many different variations. At the same time, however, most academic argumentative/persuasive essays expect you to practice the techniques mentioned below. These tips overlap with the elements of argumentation, covered in that chapter, but they offer more explicit examples for how they might look in paragraph form, beginning with the introduction to your essay.

Persuasive introductions should move from context to thesis

Since one of the main goals of a persuasive essay introduction is to forecast the broader argument, it's important to keep in mind that the legibility of the argument depends on the ability of the writer to provide sufficient information to the reader. If a basic high school essay moves from general topic to specific argument (the funnel technique), a more sophisticated academic persuasive essay is more likely to move from context to thesis.

The great stylist of clear writing, Joseph W. Williams, suggests that one of the key rhetorical moves a writer can make in a persuasive introduction is to not only provide enough background information (the context), but to frame that information in terms of a problem or issue, what the section on Reading and Writing Rhetorically terms the exigence. The ability to present a clearly defined problem and then the thesis as a solution creates a motivating introduction. The reader is more likely to be gripped by it, because we naturally want to see problems solved.

Consider these two persuasive introductions, both of which end with an argumentative thesis statement:

> **A.** In America we often hold to the belief that our country is steadily progressing.$_{topic}$ This is a place where dreams come true. With enough hard work, we tell ourselves (and our children), we can do anything. I argue that, when progress is more carefully defined, our current period is actually one of decline.$_{claim}$
>
> **B**. Two years ago my dad developed Type 2 diabetes, and the doctors explained to him that it was due in large part to his heavy consumption of sugar. For him, the primary form of sugar consumption was soda.$_{hook}$ His experience is echoed by millions of Americans today. According to the most recent research, "Sugary drink portion sizes have risen dramatically over the past forty years, and children and adults are drinking more soft drinks than ever," while two out of three adults in the United States are now considered either overweight or obese. This statistic correlates with reduced life expectancy by many years. Studies have shown that those who are overweight in this generation will live a lot fewer years than those who are already elderly. And those consumers who don't become overweight remain at risk for developing Type 2 diabetes (like my dad), known as one of the most serious global health concerns ("Sugary Drinks and Obesity Fact Sheet").$_{problem}$ In response to this problem, some political journalists, such as Alexandra Le Tellier, argue that sodas should be banned. On the opposite end of the political spectrum, politically conservative journalists such as Ernest Istook argue that absolutely nothing should be done because that would interfere with consumer freedom.$_{debate}$ I suggest something in between: a "soda tax," which would balance concerns over the public welfare with concerns over consumer freedom.$_{claim}$

Example B feels richer, more dramatic, and much more targeted not only because it's longer, but because it's structured in a "motivating" way. Here's an outline of that structure:

- Hook: It opens with a brief hook that illustrates an emerging issue. This concrete, personal anecdote grips the reader's attention.
- Context (background information)

    - Problem: The anecdote is connected with the emerging issue, phrased as a problem that needs to be addressed.
    - Debate: The writer briefly alludes to a debate over how to respond to the problem.
- Claim: The introduction ends by hinting at how the writer intends to address the problem, and it's phrased conversationally, as part of an ongoing dialogue.

Not every persuasive introduction needs all of these elements. Not all introductions will have an obvious problem. Sometimes a "problem," or the exigence, will be as subtle as an ambiguity in a text that needs to be cleared up (as in literary analysis essays). Other times it will indeed be an obvious problem, such as in a problem-solution argument essay.

In most cases, however, a clear introduction will proceed from **context to thesis**. The most attention-grabbing and motivating introductions will also include things like hooks and problem-oriented issues.

Here's a very simple and streamlined template that can serve as rudimentary scaffolding for a persuasive introduction, inspired by the excellent book, *They Say / I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*:Definition: Term

> In discussions of _____, an emerging issue is _____.issue When addressing this issue, some experts suggest _____.debate In my view, however, _____.claim

Each aspect of the template will need to be developed, but it can serve as training wheels for how to craft a nicely structured context-to-thesis introduction, including things like an issue, debate, and claim. You can try filling in the blanks below, and then export your attempt as a document.

Define key terms, as needed

Much of an academic persuasive essay is dedicated to supporting the claim. A traditional thesis-driven essay has an introduction, body, and conclusion, and the support constitutes much of the body. In a persuasive essay, most of the support is dedicated to reasoning and evidence (more on that below). However, depending on what your claim does, a careful writer may dedicate the beginning (or other parts of the essay body) to defining key terms.

Suppose I wish to construct an argument that enters the debate over euthanasia. When researching the issue, I notice that much of the debate circles around the notion of rights, specifically what a "legal right" actually means. Clearly defining that term will help reduce some of the confusion and clarify my own argument. In Vancouver Island University's resource "Defining key terms," Ian Johnston offers this example for how to define "legal right" for an academic reader:

Before discussing the notion of a right to die, we need to clarify precisely what the term legal right means. In common language, the term "right" tends often to mean something good, something people ought to have (e.g., a right to a good home, a right to a meaningful job, and so on). In law, however, the term has a much more specific meaning. It refers to something to which people are legally entitled. Thus, a "legal" right also confers a legal obligation on someone or some institution to make sure the right is conferred. For instance, in Canada, children of a certain age have a right to a free public education. This right confers on society the obligation to provide that education, and society cannot refuse without breaking the law. Hence, when we use the term right to die in a legal sense, we are describing something to which a citizen is legally entitled, and we are insisting that someone in society has an obligation to provide the services which will confer that right on anyone who wants it.

As the example above shows, academics often dedicate space to providing nuanced and technical definitions that correct common misconceptions. Johnston's definition relies on research, but it's not always necessary to use research to define your terms. Here are some tips for crafting definitions in persuasive essays, from "Defining key terms":

1. Fit the descriptive detail in the definition to the knowledge of the intended audience. The definition of, say, AIDS for a general readership will be different from the definition for a group of doctors (the latter will be much more technical). It often helps to distinguish between common sense or popular definitions and more technical ones.
2. Make sure definitions are full and complete; do not rush them unduly. And do not assume that just because the term is quite common that everyone knows just what it means (e.g., *alcoholism*). If you are using the term in a very specific sense, then let the reader know what that is. The amount of detail you include in a definition should cover what is essential for the reader to know, in order to follow the argument. By the same token, do not overload the definition, providing too much detail or using

far too technical a language for those who will be reading the essay.
3. It's unhelpful to simply quote the google or dictionary.com definition of a word. Dictionaries contain a few or several definitions for important terms, and the correct definition is informed by the context in which it's being employed. It's up to the writer to explain that context and how the word is usually understood within it.
4. You do not always need to research a definition. Depending on the writing situation and audience, you may be able to develop your own understanding of certain terms.

Use P-E-A-S or M-E-A-L to support your claim

The heart of a persuasive essay is a claim supported by reasoning and evidence. Thus, much of the essay body is often devoted to the supporting reasons, which in turn are proved by evidence. One of the formulas commonly taught in K-12 and even college writing programs is known as PEAS, which overlaps strongly with the MEAL formula introduced by the chapter, "Basic Integration":

> **Point**: State the reasoning as a single point: "One reason why a soda tax would be effective is that..." or "One way an individual can control their happiness is by..."
>
> **Evidence**: After stating the supporting reason, *prove* that reason with related evidence. There can be more than one piece of evidence. "According to ..." or "In the article, '...,' the author shows that ..."
>
> **Analysis**: There a different levels of analysis. At the most basic level, a writer should clearly explain how the evidence proves the point, in their own words: "In other words...," "What this data shows is that..." Sometimes the "A" part of PEAS becomes simple paraphrasing. Higher-level analysis will use more sophisticated techniques such as Toulmin's **warrants** to explore deeper terrain. For more tips on how to discuss and analyze, refer to the previous chapter's section, "Analyze and discuss the evidence."
>
> **Summary/So what?**: Tie together all of the components (PEA) succinctly, before transitioning to the next idea. If necessary, remind the reader how the evidence and reasoning relates to the broader claim (the thesis argument).

PEAS and MEAL are very similar; in fact they are identical except for how they refer to the first and last part. In theory, it shouldn't matter which acronym you choose. Both versions are effective because they translate the basic structure of a supporting reason (reasoning and evidence) into paragraph form.

Here's an example of a PEAS paragraph in an academic persuasive essay that argues for a soda tax:

> A soda tax would also provide more revenue for the federal government, thereby reducing its debt.$_{point}$ Despite Ernest Istook's concerns about eroding American freedom, the United States has long supported the ability of government to leverage taxes in order to both curb unhealthy lifestyles *and* add revenue. According to Peter Ubel's "Would the Founding Fathers Approve of a Sugar Tax?", in 1791 the US government was heavily in debt and needed stable revenue. In response, the federal government taxed what most people viewed as a "sin" at that time: alcohol. This single tax increased government revenue by at least 20% on average, and in some years more than 40% . The effect was that only the people who really wanted alcohol purchased it, and those who could no longer afford it were getting rid of what they already viewed as a bad habit (Ubel).$_{evidence}$ Just as alcohol (and later, cigarettes) was viewed as a superfluous "sin" in the Early Republic, so today do many health experts and an increasing amount of Americans view sugar as extremely unhealthy, even addictive. If our society accepts taxes on other consumer sins as a way to improve government revenue, a tax on sugar is entirely consistent.$_{analysis}$ We could apply this to the soda tax and try to do something like this to help knock out two problems at once: help people lose their addiction towards soda and help reduce our government's debt.$_{summary/so\ what?}$

The paragraph above was written by a student who was taught the PEAS formula. However, we can see versions of this formula in professional writing. Here's a more sophisticated example of PEAS, this time from a non-academic article. In Nicholas Carr's extremely popular article, "**Is Google Making Us Stupid?**", he argues that Google is altering how we think. To prove that broader claim, Carr offers a variety of reasons and evidence. Here's part of his reasoning:

> Thanks to the ubiquity of text on the Internet, not to mention the popularity of text-messaging on cell phones, we may well be reading more today than we did in the 1970s or 1980s, when television was our medium of choice. But it's a different kind of reading, and behind it lies a different kind of thinking—perhaps even a new sense of the self.$_{point}$ "We are not only *what*

> we read," says Maryanne Wolf, a developmental psychologist at Tufts University and the author of *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain*. "We are *how* we read." Wolf worries that the style of reading promoted by the Net, a style that puts "efficiency" and "immediacy" above all else, may be weakening our capacity for the kind of deep reading that emerged when an earlier technology, the printing press, made long and complex works of prose commonplace. When we read online, she says, we tend to become "mere decoders of information."evidence Our ability to interpret text, to make the rich mental connections that form when we read deeply and without distraction, remains largely disengaged.analysis

This excerpt only contains the first three elements, PEA, and the analysis part is very brief (it's more like paraphrase), but it shows how professional writers often employ some version of the formula. It tends to appear in persuasive texts written by experienced writers because it reinforces writing techniques mentioned elsewhere in this textbook. A block of text structured according to PEA will practice coherence, because opening with a point (P) forecasts the main idea of that section. Embedding the evidence (E) within a topic sentence and follow-up commentary or analysis (A) is part of the "quote sandwich" strategy we cover in the section on "Writing With Sources."

Use "they say / i say" strategies for Counterarguments and rebuttals

Another element that's unique to persuasive essays is embedding a counterargument. Sometimes called naysayers or opposing positions, counterarguments are points of view that challenge our own.

Why embed a naysayer?

Recall above how a helpful strategy for beginning a persuasive essay (the introduction) is to briefly mention a debate—what some writing textbooks call "joining the conversation." Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein's *They Say / I Say* explains why engaging other points of view is so crucial:

> Not long ago we attended a talk at an academic conference where the speaker's central claim seemed to be that a certain sociologist—call him Dr. X—had done very good work in a number of areas of the discipline. The speaker proceeded to illustrate his thesis by referring extensively and in great detail to various books and articles by Dr. X and by quoting long pas-sages from them. The speaker was obviously both learned and impassioned, but as we listened to his talk we found ourselves somewhat puzzled: the argument—that Dr. X's work was very important—was clear enough, but why did the speaker need to make it in the first place? Did anyone dispute it? Were there commentators in the field who had argued against X's work or challenged its value? Was the speaker's interpretation of what X had done somehow novel or revolutionary? Since the speaker gave no hint of an answer to any of these questions, we could only wonder why he was going on and on about X. It was only after the speaker finished and took questions from the audience that we got a clue: in response to one questioner, he referred to several critics who had vigorously questioned Dr. X's ideas and convinced many sociologists that Dr. X's work was unsound.

When writing for an academic audience, one of the most important moves a writer can make is to demonstrate how their ideas compare to others. It serves as part of the context. Your essay might be offering a highly original solution to a certain problem you've researched the entire semester, but the reader will only understand that if existing arguments are presented in your draft. Or, on the other hand, you might be *synthesizing* or connecting a variety of opinions in order to arrive at a more comprehensive solution. That's also fine, but the creativity of your synthesis and its unique contribution to existing research will only be known if those other voices are included.

Aristotelian argumentation embeds counterarguments in order to refute them. Rogerian arguments present oppositional stances in order to synthesize and integrate them. No matter what your strategy is, the essay should be conversational.

Notice how Ana Mari Cauce opens her essay on free speech in higher education, "Messy but Essential":

> Over the past year or two, issues surrounding the exercise of free speech and expression have come to the forefront at colleges around the country. The common narrative about free speech issues that we so often read goes something like this: today's college students — overprotected and coddled by parents, poorly educated in high school and exposed to primarily left-leaning faculty — have become soft "snowflakes" who are easily offended by mere words and the slightest of insults, unable or unwilling to tolerate opinions that veer away from some politically correct orthodoxy and unable to engage in hard-hitting debate.counterargument

This is false in so many ways, and even insulting when you consider the reality of students' experiences today.claim

The introduction to her article is essentially a counteragument (which serves as her introductory context) followed by a response. Embedding naysayers like this can appear anywhere in an essay, not just the introduction. Notice, furthermore, how Cauce's naysayer isn't gleaned from any research she did. It's just a general, trendy naysayer, something one might hear nowadays, in the ether. It shows she's attuned to an ongoing conversation, but it doesn't require her to cite anything specific. As the previous chapter on using rhetorical appeals in arguments explained, this kind of attunement with an emerging problem (or exigence) is known as the **appeal to kairos**. A compelling, engaging introduction will demonstrate that the argument "kairotically" addresses a pressing concern.

Below is a brief overview of what counterarguments are and how you might respond to them in your arguments. This section was developed by Robin Jeffrey, in "Counterargument and Response":

Common Types of counterarguments

- Could someone disagree with your claim? *If so, why? Explain this opposing perspective in your own argument, and then respond to it.*
- Could someone draw a different conclusion from any of the facts or examples you present? *If so, what is that different conclusion? Explain this different conclusion and then respond to it.*
- Could a reader question any of your assumptions or claims? *If so, which ones would they question? Explain and then respond.*
- Could a reader offer a different explanation of an issue? *If so, what might their explanation be? Describe this different explanation, and then respond to it.*
- Is there any evidence out there that could weaken your position? *If so, what is it? Cite and discuss this evidence and then respond to it.*

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, that does not necessarily mean that you have a weak argument. It means, ideally and as long as your argument is logical and valid, that you have a counterargument. Good arguments can and do have counterarguments; it is important to discuss them. But you must also discuss and then respond to those counterarguments.

Responding to counterarguments

You do not need to attempt to do all of these things as a way to respond; instead, choose the response strategy that makes the most sense to you, for the counterargument that you have.

- If you agree with some of the counterargument perspectives, you can concede some of their points. ("I do agree that ….", "Some of the points made by ___ are valid…..") You could then challenge the importance/usefulness of those points. "However, this information does not apply to our topic because…"
- If the counterargument perspective is one that contains different evidence than you have in your own argument, you can explain why a reader should not accept the evidence that the counterarguer presents.
- If the counterargument perspective is one that contains a different *interpretation* of evidence than you have in your own argument, you can explain why a reader should not accept the interpretation of the evidence that that your opponent (counterarguer) presents.
- If the counterargument is an acknowledgement of evidence that threatens to weaken your argument, you must explain why and how that evidence does not, in fact invalidate your claim.

It is important to use **transitional phrases** in your paper to alert readers when you're about to present an counterargument. It's usually best to put this phrase at the beginning of a paragraph such as:

- Researchers have challenged these claims with…
- Critics argue that this view…
- Some readers may point to…

- A perspective that challenges the idea that . . .

Transitional phrases will again be useful to highlight your shift from counterargument to response:

- Indeed, some of those points are valid. However, . . .
- While I agree that . . . , it is more important to consider . . .
- These are all compelling points. Still, other information suggests that . .
- While I understand . . . , I cannot accept the evidence because . . .

Further reading

To read more about the importance of counterarguments in academic writing, read Steven D. Krause's "On the Other Hand: The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses."

When concluding, address the "so what?" challenge

As Joseph W. Williams mentions in his chapter on concluding persuasive essays in *Style*,

> a *good introduction* motivates your readers to keep reading, introduces your key themes, and states your main point … [but] a *good conclusion* serves a different end: as the last thing your reader reads, it should bring together your point, its significance, and its implications for thinking further about the ideas your explored.

At the very least, a good persuasive conclusion will

1. Summarize the main points
2. Address the *So what?* or *Now what?* challenge.

When summarizing the main points of longer essays, Williams suggests it's fine to use "metadiscourse," such as, "I have argued that." If the essay is short enough, however, such metadiscourses may not be necessary, since the reader will already have those ideas fresh in their mind.

After summarizing your essay's main points, imagine a friendly reader thinking,

> *"OK, I'm persuaded and entertained by everything you've laid out in your essay. But remind me what's so important about these ideas? What are the implications? What kind of impact do you expect your ideas to have? Do you expect something to change?"*

It's sometimes appropriate to offer brief action points, based on the implications of your essay. When addressing the "So what?" challenge, however, it's important to first consider whether your essay is primarily targeted towards changing the way people *think* or *act*. Do you expect the audience to *do* something, based on what you've argued in your essay? Or, do you expect the audience to *think* differently? Traditional academic essays tend to propose changes in how the reader thinks more than acts, but your essay may do both.

Finally, Williams suggests that it's sometimes appropriate to end a persuasive essay with an anecdote, illustrative fact, or key quote that emphasizes the significance of the argument. We can see a good example of this in Carr's article, "Is Google Making Us Stupid?" Here are the introduction and conclusion, side-by-side:Definition: Term

[Introduction] "Dave, stop. Stop, will you? Stop, Dave. Will you stop, Dave?" So the supercomputer HAL pleads with the implacable astronaut Dave Bowman in a famous and weirdly poignant scene toward the end of Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Bowman, having nearly been sent to a deep-space death by the malfunctioning machine, is calmly, coldly disconnecting the memory circuits that control its artificial " brain. "Dave, my mind is going," HAL says, forlornly. "I can feel it. I can feel it."

I can feel it, too. Over the past few years I've had an uncomfortable sense that someone, or something, has been tinkering with my brain, remapping the neural circuitry, reprogramming the memory. ...

[Conclusion] I'm haunted by that scene in *2001*. What makes it so poignant, and so weird, is the computer's emotional response to the disassembly of its mind: its despair as one circuit after another goes dark, its childlike pleading with the astronaut—"I can feel it. I can feel it. I'm afraid"—and its final reversion to what can only be called a state of innocence. HAL's outpouring of feeling contrasts with the emotionlessness that characterizes the human figures in the film, who go about their business with an almost robotic efficiency. Their thoughts and actions feel scripted, as if they're following the steps of an algorithm. In the world of *2001*, people have become so machinelike that the most human character turns out to be a machine. That's the essence of Kubrick's dark prophecy: as we come to rely on computers to mediate our understanding of the world, it is our own intelligence that flattens into artificial intelligence.

Instead of merely rehashing all of the article's main points, Carr returns to the same movie scene from *2001* that he opened with. The final lines interpret the scene according to the argument he just dedicated the entire essay to presenting.

The entire essay should use rhetorical appeals strategically

The chapter "Persuasive Appeals" introduces students to logos, pathos, ethos, and kairos. Becoming familiar with each of those persuasive appeals can add much to an essay. It also reinforces the idea that writing argumentative essays is not a straightforward process of jotting down proofs. It's not a computer algorithm.

- **Logos** (appeals to evidence and reasoning) is the foundational appeal of an argument essay. Clearly identifying the claim, then supporting that claim with reasoning and evidence will appeal to the reader's logos demands. As the previous chapter on argumentation mentions, however, what constitutes solid evidence will vary depending on the audience. Make sure your evidence is indeed convincing to your intended reader.
- **Pathos** (appeals to emotion) are a crucial component and should permeate should every section of the essay. Personal anecdotes are an effective way to illustrate important ideas, and they connect with the reader at an emotional level. Personal examples also cultivate **voice**.
- **Ethos** (appeals to character, image, and values) is essential to gaining the reader's trust and assent. The tone of your essay (snarky, sincere, ironic, sarcastic, empathetic) is immensely important for its overall effect, and it helps build the reader's image of you. A careful attention to high-quality research reinforces a sincere and empathetic tone. When supporting certain claims and sub-claims, it's also important to identify implied beliefs (warrants) that your reader is most likely to agree with, and to undermine beliefs that might seem repugnant.
- **Kairos** (appeals to timeliness) impresses the reader with your attunement to the situation. This should be practiced especially in the introduction, but it can appear throughout the essay as you engage with research and other voices that have recently weighed in on the topic.

All of these appeals are already happening, whether or not they're recognized. If they are missed, the audience will often use them against you, judging your essay as not being personable enough (pathos), or not in touch with commonly accepted values (ethos), or out of touch with what's going on (kairos). These non-logical appeals aren't irrational. They are crucial components to writing that matters.

Argument Outline Exercise

To get started on your argument essay, practice adopting from of the outlines from this Persuasive Essay Outline worksheet.

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7.3.5.1.8: Sample Writing Assignments

Problem/Solution Persuasive Argument Essay

Writing Task

Role: You are a member of an advocacy group (real or imagined).

Situation: You want to educate the public about an issue you discovered by writing your exploratory essay, OR another issue that matters to you and impacts you directly. Your problem must be approved by your instructor.

Task: Weave the knowledge you gained in Essay One into a 6-8 page researched problem/solution argument essay to be published on your organization's website or in a publication like the Boise Weekly or a national magazine.

Purpose: Win hearts and minds. Show your audience:

1) There is a problem.

2) They should care about it.

3) What can and should be done about it (solution).

Important notes:

- Your goal for this paper is to inform the public or a specific audience that has the power to change this issue, and make them care about your problem. It must, at a minimum, affect you and others you don't know. It must somehow impact quality of life, affect the local economy, or violate human rights. In other words, this needs to be a significant problem—not just an annoyance or inconvenience to you.
- In choosing the problem you'll aim to solve, consider what you learned (or didn't learn) from your exploratory paper. What problems did you discover?
- If you don't feel like your exploratory essay brought up any significant problems, or you'd rather work outside of your exploratory essay topic, that's fine. Choose something you care about but are distanced from enough to be objective.
- However, finding a problem outside of your first paper topic means you'll have more work to do. The benefit of choosing something even loosely related to your essay is that you've already done some of the work; you already have some connections, and possibly some sources to re-use.

Writing Process

- Step 1: Brainstorm—So what? Stake your claim.
- Step 2: Draft the essay. Rough draft due for peer review Thursday Week Five
- Step 3: Revise the essay based on peer review feedback. Final draft due Sunday Week Five

Final Paper Requirements

- APA style, 1500-2000 words, Times New Roman, size 12, double spaced, 1-inch margins
- 5 or more quality sources; You may only have one source that is not a person, a primary source, or a peer-reviewed journal article or book. If you are struggling with this requirement, please e-mail me.

Basic Rubric

This is used to help determine whether a paper earns full credit (110), partial credit (90/60) or no credit.

Format & length check:

- Final paper is complete and correctly formatted. Yes / No

Topic—The essay is on topic and contains a clear "so what"

- The role and situation are clear; the essay makes a clear claim about a problem that impacts the writer and others. Yes / No

Quality

Argument—The essay makes a good argument for a solution.

- The premises are relevant to the main claim. Yes / No
- The premises are true. Yes / No
- There is plenty of good quality evidence to support the claim. Yes / No
- The essay provides an effective rebuttal to the strongest opposing arguments. Yes / No

Research

- The author uses at least five high-quality, reliable sources. Yes / No
- Sources are integrated correctly; any quotes are explained (use quote sandwiches) Yes / No
- Source are cited for all "how do I know this?" information Yes / No

Organization

- The essay is thesis-drivenYes / No
- The essay has an effective introduction and conclusionYes / No
- Paragraphs are organized around topic sentencesYes / No
- The paper uses transitions to connect ideas logicallyYes / No

Citation and Mechanics

- All sources are properly cited in the text.Yes / No
- Errors in References entries are few and minor. Yes / No
- There are few errors in grammar, punctuation, and spellingYes / No

Tips

- Starting the paper with a brief story about how the problem affects you would be a wise choice for your hook. Concluding it with an echo back to that story would help bring the argument full circle.
- Remember the qualities of a good argument from the readings, and do your best not to be guilty of logical fallacies.
- Consider the examples we read for approach and structure.
- Try to start your research with a person or agency, not Google.

- Use our library. Its physical presence may be small, but most of what you need is available online. It's a wonderful place to get some extra help.
- Use the Writing Center. The tutors are there to help you. If you go, be sure to bring a copy of the assignment with you. Note that the Writing Center is also available via e-mail. Send a draft and the assignment to the writing centerand allow two business days for feedback.

Some Do's and Don'ts:

- No big vague concepts, such as "no traffic control." Be precise: There are no stop signs, traffic circles, or traffic lights for a 10-mile stretch between Hereville and Thereville.
- No absent solutions such as, "we have a lack of money and thus children don't go to school." Instead, the problem is, "school fees are not affordable."
- No formulation of interpretations or snap judgments, such as "the government is lazy." Instead, "Fish and Wildlife does not issue hunting licenses in time for bow season."

Unit 2: Visual Argument: "Call to Action" PSA poster mock-ups and rationale (50 points)

Inspired by John Holland and colleagues at San Francisco State University

Overview: This assignment is designed to help you identify your audience and values for your problem/solution persuasive argument using a different genre: the visual argument, in the form of a PSA (Public Service Advertising) poster, infographic, or billboard design. Public Service Advertising (PSAs) are messages in the public interest, which are on television, radio, print or

other media. The purpose of commercial advertising is to market a product or service. In contrast, PSAs are messages that benefit the public by raising awareness of an issue, influencing attitudes or actions for the good. Many PSAs are designed using the "Value, Problem, Solution, Action" structure. Examples of values are mobility, freedom, health, safety, equality.

- First, you will need to figure out what kind of claim you want to make with your visual argument,

- Then, you will need to figure out two possible audiences, their values, and the action you want them to take.
- Next, you will create two mock ups (rough versions) of an approach to making that claim using images and words together. These mock ups should target two different audiences but use the same problem. You will post the two drafts to a course blog on Blackboard.
- Finally, you will choose one of your two mock-ups for the audience you intend to use for your essay and write a rationale/reflection short essay (500-750 words, 2-3 paragraphs) explaining the value, problem, solution, and action you used for your final PSA/infographic/billboard and why you chose this approach.

Making a Claim Visual

Arguments consist of two things: claims (or assertions) and support (evidence: reasons for believing the assertion). In a visual argument, the claim is usually a "call to action," or a statement about what you want your audience to do, believe, or think differently about. Many public service announcements make claims like this: don't text and drive, stop smoking, or help prevent forest fires. The first step of this assignment is to figure out what you want your audience to do or believe about your issue or topic. What action or attitude do you want your audience to take?

Using Words and Images
Once you have identified your basic claim, spend some time considering what images come to mind when you think about that claim. Images, like words, can be used both literally and metaphorically. A visual argument about animal cruelty might show an abused animal (literal), or it might show a picture of a prison, likening it to a zoo or circus (more metaphorical).

Use software of your choice to construct your visual argument, and try out different combinations of images and words together to express your desired claim. You will want to balance words and images, so try to limit the number of words that you use. You don't need much computer skill to do this. I recommend using www.canva.com, an online program that has poster templates, images, and text options (make sure that you limit your choices to free content). Word, PowerPoint or Google Slides can also be used, and feel free to use more advanced software if you know how to use it. Your early mock-ups can be hand-drawn and then transferred to a digital medium. What matters most is articulating the thinking and rationale behind your choices in creating the mock-ups, NOT the perfection of the visuals.

Writing the Reflection

After you have created your two mock-ups and chosen your final one, you will write a short essay (500-750 words, 2-3 paragraphs), which will accomplish two goals:

1. Reflect on the PSA creation process itself.
2. Explain why you feel that your visual argument is effective for the audience you chose. Basically, in addition to reflecting on the process, you're also making an argument for why your mock-up works for that audience. Consider how your mock-up reflects your audience's values and needs.

To reflect, address the following questions in essay form:

- How did you decide what claim to make?
- What values are you appealing to in your two PSAs?
- How did you determine your target audiences?
- How did you choose the images for your visual argument?

- What did you try to accomplish in terms of visual impact, emphasis, and organization?
- How was your visual argument different for your two audiences? How was it similar?
- What could you accomplish with your visual argument that would be harder than with words alone?
- How does your final PSA make and support a clear claim or “call to action” related to your topic?
- How does the mock-up create visual impact, coherence, emphasis, and organization?

Specifics:

- Two draft visual mock-ups of your claim for two different audiences, saved as .pdf, .png or .jpg files, due before class Week 7.
- One final revised mockup designed for the audience you will use for Essay Two due Sunday Week 7. Images must be cited, using a link to the source.
- 500-750-word short essay reflecting on the process and articulating a rationale for your choices due Sunday Week 7.
- Submit your images and rationale to our class Visual Argument blog in Blackboard.

Suggested Resources:

- Consider “Opportunity Agenda’s” approach of values-based messaging for planning your visual argument: https://opportunityagenda.org/approach/why-values-based-messaging
- This list of core American values might help you identify your approach (note: These may not be the values of your intended audience). https://www.andrews.edu/~tidwell/bsad560/USValues.html
- This list of general, personal values might also help in identifying your approach and the values of your intended audience. http://www.motivationalinterviewing.org/sites/default/files/valuescardsort_0.pdf

- The Ad Council, one of the major creators of PSAs, has a gallery of campaigns. You will want to look most closely at the “print” PSAs, as these will be posters rather than videos, but various genres might still give you ideas. https://www.adcouncil.org/Our-Campaigns

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8: CHAPTER EIGHT-ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING

8.1: Persuasion

8.1.1: Types of Argumentation

8.1.1.1: Introduction

8.1.1.2: Features of an Argument

8.1.1.3: Failures in Evidence- When “Lots of Quotes” Can’t Save a Paper

8.1.1.4: Basic Structure and Content of Argument

8.1.1.5: Toulmin- Dissecting the Everyday Argument

8.1.1.6: Rogerian Argument

8.1.1.7: On the Other Hand- The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses

8.1.2: Types of Argumentation

8.1.2.1: Introduction

8.1.2.2: Features of an Argument

8.1.2.3: Failures in Evidence- When “Lots of Quotes” Can’t Save a Paper

8.1.2.4: Basic Structure and Content of Argument

8.1.2.5: Toulmin- Dissecting the Everyday Argument

8.1.2.6: Rogerian Argument

8.1.2.7: On the Other Hand- The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses

8.1.2.8: Unit III- Research and Argumentation

8.1.2.8.1: Situation and Analysis

8.1.2.8.1.1: What Does the Professor Want? Understanding the Assignment

8.1.2.8.1.2: Backpacks v. Briefcases- Steps Toward Rhetorical Analysis

8.1.2.8.1.3: Murder! Rhetorically Speaking

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8.1: PERSUASION

This chapter is short in comparison to the other chapters you have read. That is because you will be expected to complete your critique this week. In the next chapter, **Developing a Convincing Argument**, you will need to apply this information and structures in developing your persuasive paper, the last essay form you will learn in this course.

8.1.1: Types of Argumentation

8.1.1.1: Introduction

8.1.1.2: Features of an Argument

8.1.1.3: Failures in Evidence- When “Lots of Quotes” Can’t Save a Paper

8.1.1.4: Basic Structure and Content of Argument

8.1.1.5: Toulmin- Dissecting the Everyday Argument

8.1.1.6: Rogerian Argument

8.1.1.7: On the Other Hand- The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses

8.1.2: Types of Argumentation

8.1.2.1: Introduction

8.1.2.2: Features of an Argument

8.1.2.3: Failures in Evidence- When “Lots of Quotes” Can’t Save a Paper

8.1.2.4: Basic Structure and Content of Argument

8.1.2.5: Toulmin- Dissecting the Everyday Argument

8.1.2.6: Rogerian Argument

8.1.2.7: On the Other Hand- The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses

8.1.2.8: Unit III- Research and Argumentation

8.1.2.8.1: Situation and Analysis

8.1.2.8.1.1: What Does the Professor Want? Understanding the Assignment

8.1.2.8.1.2: Backpacks v. Briefcases- Steps Toward Rhetorical Analysis

8.1.2.8.1.3: Murder! Rhetorically Speaking

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8.1.1: TYPES OF ARGUMENTATION

8.1.1.1: Introduction
8.1.1.2: Features of an Argument
8.1.1.3: Failures in Evidence- When “Lots of Quotes” Can’t Save a Paper
8.1.1.4: Basic Structure and Content of Argument
8.1.1.5: Toulmin- Dissecting the Everyday Argument
8.1.1.6: Rogerian Argument
8.1.1.7: On the Other Hand- The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses

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8.1.1.1: Introduction

Where can you find the best tacos in Texas? Who wrote the best version of the song *Wagon Wheel*? Which cause is most deserving of a federal grant? While all of these topics seem like fodder for a happy hour conversation, each one can be proven with specifically defined criteria and evidence. And while the word *argument* conjures up negative memories for some, in rhetoric we use the term to refer to a persuasive essay. In this section, we introduce you to the concepts surrounding argumentation and discuss two of the more prominent methodologies used today.

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8.1.1.2: Features of an Argument

Argument is not the loud, assertive, unwavering statement of your opinion in the hopes of conquering the opposition. Argument is the careful consideration of numerous positions and the careful development of logically sound, carefully constructed assertions that, when combined, offer a worthwhile perspective in an ongoing debate. Certainly you want to imagine yourself arguing *with* others—and certainly you want to believe your ideas have superior qualities to theirs—but the purpose of argument in the college setting is not to solve a practical problem or shut down a conversation. Rather, it's to illuminate, expand, and further inform a debate happening on a worthwhile subject between reasonable, intelligent people. In other words, calling the opposition s*tupid* is not good argument, it's an ad hominem attack. For a review of this and other logical fallacies, refer to section 3.7 of this text.

Some of the key tools of argument are the strategies that students are asked to consider when doing a rhetorical analysis. Before beginning an argument of your own, review the basic concepts of rhetorical appeals below. As you plan and draft your own argument, carefully use the following elements of rhetoric to your own advantage.

Rhetorical Appeals

Logos

The use of data, statistical evidence, and sufficient support to establish the practicality and rationality of your claims should be the strongest element of your argument. To have a logically sound argument, you should include:

- A debatable and supportable claim
- Logical reasoning to support your claim
- Sound evidence and examples to justify the reasoning
- Reasonable projections
- Concessions & rebuttals
- Avoid logical fallacies

Ethos

The ethical and well-balanced use of all of the strategies above will help you to present yourself as trustworthy and intelligent in your consideration of the topic and in the development of your argument. This balance should include the use of credible, relevant sources which can be accomplished through research methods utilizing the strategies governing your discipline. Following those strategies will build your credibility as a writer of argument, particularly in the college setting, as you pay attention to the needs of the audience with regard to presentation and style. In college, this means that you have used the style manual (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.) required for the assignment and appropriate to the audience. In so doing, make certain to cite the sources you have used according to the style manual you are using.

Pathos

The use of examples and language that evoke an appropriate emotional response in your reader—that gets them to care about your topic—can be helpful in argument. For academic essays, pathos may be useful in introductory sections, concluding sections, or as ways to link various parts of the paper together. However, if your argument is based solely or primarily upon emotional appeals, it will be viewed as weak in an academic setting, especially when data or ethical sources can disprove your claims. Therefore, college writing often puts more emphasis on logos and ethos.

Approaches to Argument

A well-structured argument is one that is carefully and optimally planned. It is organized so that the argument has a continuous building of ideas, one upon the other or in concert with the other, in order to produce the most persuasive impact or effect on the reader. For clarity, avoid repeating ideas, reasons, or evidence. Instead, consider how each idea in your argument connects to the others. Should some ideas come before others? Should you build your reasons from simple to complex or from complex to simple? Should you present the counterargument before your reasons? Or, would it make more sense for you to present your reasons and then the concessions and rebuttals? How can you use clear transitional phrases to facilitate reader comprehension of your argument? Consider these questions while constructing and revising your argument.

Simple to Complex/Complex to Simple

Whether structuring a paragraph or a research paper, the simple to complex (or reverse) method can be an effective way to build cohesion throughout your writing. Just as the phrase implies, simple to complex is when a writer introduces a simple concept then builds upon it to heighten interest. Sometimes, the opposite structure works to move the reader through your position. For example, if you choose to write on the topic of pollution as it impacts the world, you might begin with the concept of straws and sea turtles. Your simple topic of sea turtles swallowing straws thrown away might then move to the complex issues of consumption, consumerism and disposal. Conversely, if you begin with the broad, complex topic of consumerism, you could then move to the story of the sea turtles as a way of building pathos in the reader. Whichever method you choose, make sure that the relationship between the topics is logical and clear so that readers find validity in your position.

Cause/Effect

The cause/effect method is a way of establishing a reason, or reasons, why something has occurred. For example, if you live in south Texas, then you understand the problem that mosquitoes cause in the hot, humid summer months. While there is no way to eliminate all mosquitoes, there are ways to minimize their growth in your backyard. If you research the ways in which mosquitoes are born, you would understand the importance of things such as emptying containers of all stagnant water so that they cannot incubate or keeping your grass mowed to eliminate areas for them to populate. The process by which you go through to determine the cause of mosquito infestations is the cause and effect method. In argumentation, you might use this method to support a claim for community efforts to prevent mosquitoes from growing in your neighborhood. Demonstrating that process is effective for a logos based argument.

Chronological

Sometimes an argument is presented best when a sequential pattern is used. Oftentimes, that pattern will be based on the pattern of time in which the sequence occurs. For example, if you are writing an argumentative essay in which you are calling for a new stop light to be installed at a busy intersection, you might utilize a chronological structure to demonstrate the rate of increased accidents over a given period of time at that intersection. If your pattern demonstrates a marked increase in accidents, then your data would show a logical reason for supporting your position. Oftentimes, a chronological pattern involves steps indicated by signal words such as first, next, and finally. Utilizing this pattern will walk readers through your line of reasoning and guide them towards reaching your proposed conclusion.

Emphatic

Another method for organizing your writing is by order of importance. This method is often referred to as emphatic because organization is done based upon emphasis. The direction you choose to go is yours whether you begin with the strongest, most important point of your argument, or the weakest. In either case, the hierarchy of ideas should be clear to readers. The emphatic method is often subjectively based upon the writer's beliefs. If, for example, you want to build an argument for a new rail system to be used in your city, you will have to decide which reason is most important and which is simply support material. For one writer, the decrease in the number of cars on the road might be the most important aspect as it would result in a reduction of toxic emissions. For another writer, the time saved for commuters might be the most important aspect. The decision to start with your strongest or weakest point is one of style.

Style/ Eloquence

When we discuss style in academic writing, we generally mean the use of formal language appropriate for the given academic audience and occasion. Academics generally favor Standard American English and the use of precise language that avoids idioms, clichés, or dull, simple word choices. This is not to imply that these tropes are not useful; however, strong academic writing is typically objective and frequently avoids the use of first-person pronouns unless the disciplinary style and conventions suggest otherwise.

Some writing assignments allow you to choose your audience. In that case, the style in which you write may not be the formal, precise Standard American English that the academy prefers. For some writing assignments, you may even be asked to use, where appropriate, poetic or figurative language or language that evokes the senses. Additionally, instructors should be cognizant of second language learners and the variations in style when writing in a non-native language.

In all cases, it is important to understand what style of writing your audience expects, as delivering your argument in that style could make it more persuasive.

Practice Activity

The original version of this chapter contained H5P content. You may want to remove or replace this element.

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8.1.1.3: Failures in Evidence- When “Lots of Quotes” Can’t Save a Paper

In a strong essay, the author or writer’s own thesis and reasoning drive the argument, and then credible, valid evidence is used to support that reasoning. Arguments, in particular, are interactions between writer and audience. The author wants to persuade the audience to accept his or her claim, so he or she tries to provide sufficient compelling evidence that will sway the audience to his or her perspective.

Research questions might be easy to come up with. Claims or thesis statements can be easy to come up with. Even reasons or ideas to support the thesis or claim may be fairly easy to come up with. But for your ideas in a paper to be valid, for them to be accepted by a reader, they must be supported and developed with solid, credible, sufficient, accurate, relevant and compelling evidence.

Evidence is not simply “a bunch of quotes.” Nor is evidence a bunch of facts or statistics from an article, no matter how credible that article may be. For evidence to truly work in the sense of supporting a thesis/claim, it has to be accurate, sufficient to prove your point, directly related to the reason, ethically chosen, current, and credible. That is a lot to think about. It is certainly more than “a quote that looks good”.

Here are some things to think about avoiding when attempting to develop a strong source-based essay. Just as understanding what logical fallacies are so you can avoid them in your own writing, understanding what weak evidence is can help you to avoid falling into the trap of using it in your own work.

Failures in evidence occur when a reader says, “I do not accept your evidence”. Here is why that might happen:

- *The evidence that you have provided is* ***inaccurate.***
  You’ve misread information or misquoted; you are not interpreting the quoted material in an accurate manner
- *The evidence that you have provided is* ***insufficient.***
  You are using just a small piece of evidence to support your reasoning. You need more. You probably have a “generalization” fallacy.
- *The evidence that you have provided is* ***unrelated to the reason.***
  Your evidence does not clearly or directly relate to the point that you are trying to make.
- *The evidence that you have provided is* ***incomplete or too narrowly chosen.***
  You have “cherry picked” certain examples or pieces of information to the exclusion of others, so while you do have evidence to support your point, you are also neglecting a lot of other information
- *The evidence that you have provided is* ***old.***
  The information that you are citing is not relevant anymore. It is outdated!
- *The evidence that you have provided does not come from an* ***authoritative source.***
  The source of your evidence is not credible; the person being cited is not an authority on the topic

One of the bigger issues with evidence is not so much with the evidence itself, but with the way that you integrate it into the paper. A reader needs to understand clearly how and why the evidence you chose relates to the point that you are making. Evidence must always be explained. Whenever you integrate evidence into your papers, it is important to answer the question “How does this evidence support the point that I am making?” Never assume that the reader sees what you see in evidence. Always make it as clear as possible how the evidence supports the reason.

Practice Activity

The original version of this chapter contained H5P content. You may want to remove or replace this element.

This section contains material from:

Zickel, Emilie. “Failures in Evidence: When Even ‘Lots of Quotes’ Can’t Save an [*sic*] Paper.” In *A Guide to Rhetoric, Genre, and Success in First-Year Writing*, by Melanie Gagich and Emilie Zickel. Cleveland: MSL Academic Endeavors. Accessed July 2019. https://pressbooks.ulib.csuohio.edu/csu-fyw-rhetoric/chapter/failures-in-evidence-when-even-lots-of-quotes-cant-save-an-

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8.1.1.4: Basic Structure and Content of Argument

When you are tasked with crafting an argumentative essay, it is likely that you will be expected to craft your argument based upon a given number of sources–all of which should support your topic in some way. Your instructor might provide these sources for you, ask you to locate these sources, or provide you with some sources and ask you to find others. Whether or not you are asked to do additional research, an argumentative essay should contain the following basic components.

Claim: What Do You Want the Reader to Believe?

In an argument paper, the thesis is often called a claim. This claim is a statement in which you take a stand on a debatable issue. A strong, debatable claim has at least one valid counterargument, an opposite or alternative point of view that is as sensible as the position that you take in your claim. In your thesis statement, you should clearly and specifically state the position you will convince your audience to adopt. One way to accomplish this is via either a closed or open thesis statement.

A **closed** thesis statement includes sub-claims or reasons why you choose to support your claim.

Example of Closed Thesis Statement

The city of Houston has displayed a commitment to attracting new residents by making improvements to its walkability, city centers, and green spaces.

In this instance, walkability, city centers, and green spaces are the sub-claims, or reasons, why you would make the claim that Houston is attracting new residents.

An **open** thesis statement does not include sub-claims and might be more appropriate when your argument is less easy to prove with two or three easily-defined sub-claims.

Example of Open Thesis Statement

The city of Houston is a vibrant metropolis due to its walkability, city centers, and green spaces.

The choice between an open or a closed thesis statement often depends upon the complexity of your argument. Another possible construction would be to start with a research question and see where your sources take you.

A research question approach might ask a large question that will be narrowed down with further investigation.

Example of Research Question Approach

What has the city of Houston done to attract new residents and/or make the city more accessible?

As you research the question, you may find that your original premise is invalid or incomplete. The advantage to starting with a research question is that it allows for your writing to develop more organically according to the latest research. When in doubt about how to structure your thesis statement, seek the advice of your instructor or a writing center consultant.

A Note on Context: What Background Information About the Topic Does Your Audience Need?

Before you get into defending your claim, you will need to place your topic (and argument) into context by including relevant background material. Remember, your audience is relying on you for vital information such as definitions, historical placement, and controversial positions. This background material might appear in either your introductory paragraph(s) or your body paragraphs. How and where to incorporate background material depends a lot upon your topic, assignment, evidence, and audience. In most cases, kairos, or an opportune moment, factors heavily in the ways in which your argument may be received.

Evidence or Grounds: What Makes Your Reasoning Valid?

To validate the thinking that you put forward in your claim and sub-claims, you need to demonstrate that your reasoning is based on more than just your personal opinion. Evidence, sometimes referred to as grounds, can take the form of research studies or scholarship, expert opinions, personal examples, observations made by yourself or others, or specific instances that make your reasoning seem sound and believable. Evidence only works if it directly supports your reasoning — and sometimes you must explain how the evidence supports your reasoning (do not assume that a reader can see the connection between evidence and reason that you see).

Warrants: Why Should a Reader Accept Your Claim?

A warrant is the rationale the writer provides to show that the evidence properly supports the claim with each element working towards a similar goal. Think of warrants as the glue that holds an argument together and ensures that all pieces work together coherently.

An important way to ensure you are properly supplying warrants within your argument is to use topic sentences for each paragraph and linking sentences within that connect the particular claim directly back to the thesis. Ensuring that there are linking sentences in each paragraph will help to create consistency within your essay. Remember, the thesis statement is the driving force of organization in your essay, so each paragraph needs to have a specific purpose (topic sentence) in proving or explaining your thesis. Linking sentences complete this task within the body of each paragraph and create cohesion. These linking sentences will often appear after your textual evidence in a paragraph.

Counterargument: But What About Other Perspectives?

Later in this section, we have included an essay by Steven Krause who offers a thorough explanation of what counterargument is (and how to respond to it). In summary, a strong arguer should not be afraid to consider perspectives that either challenge or completely oppose his or her own claim. When you respectfully and thoroughly discuss perspectives or research that counters your own claim or even weaknesses in your own argument, you are showing yourself to be an ethical arguer. The following are some things of which counter arguments may consist:

- summarizing opposing views;
- explaining how and where you actually agree with some opposing views;
- acknowledging weaknesses or holes in your own argument.

You have to be careful and clear that you are not conveying to a reader that you are rejecting your own claim. It is important

to indicate that you are merely open to considering alternative viewpoints. Being open in this way shows that you are an ethical arguer – you are considering many viewpoints.

Types of Counterarguments

Counterarguments can take various forms and serve a range of purposes such as:

- *Could someone disagree with your claim?* If so, why? Explain this opposing perspective in your own argument, and then respond to it.
- *Could someone draw a different conclusion from any of the facts or examples you present?* If so, what is that different conclusion? Explain this different conclusion and then respond to it.
- *Could a reader question any of your assumptions or claims?* If so, which ones would they question? Explain and then respond.
- *Could a reader offer a different explanation of an issue?* If so, what might their explanation be? Describe this different explanation, and then respond to it.
- *Is there any evidence out there that could weaken your position?* If so, what is it? Cite and discuss this evidence and then respond to it.

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, that does not necessarily mean that you have a weak argument. It means ideally, and as long as your argument is logical and valid, that you have a counterargument. Good arguments can and do have counterarguments; it is important to discuss them. But you must also discuss and then respond to those counterarguments.

Response to Counterargument: I See That, But...

Just as it is important to include counterargument to show that you are fair-minded and balanced, you must respond to the counterargument so that a reader clearly sees that you are not agreeing with the counterargument and thus abandoning or somehow undermining your own claim. Failure to include the response to counterargument can confuse the reader. There are several ways to respond to a counterargument such as:

- Concede to a specific point or idea from the counterargument by explaining why that point or idea has validity. However, you must then be sure to return to your own claim, and explain why even that concession does not lead you to completely accept or support the counterargument;
- Reject the counterargument if you find it to be incorrect, fallacious, or otherwise invalid;
- Explain why the counterargument perspective does not invalidate your own claim.

A Note About Where to Put the Counterargument

It is certainly possible to begin the argument section (after the background section) with your counterargument + response instead of placing it at the end of your essay. Some people prefer to have their counterargument first where they can address it and then spend the rest of their essay building their own case and supporting their own claim. However, it is just as valid to have the counterargument + response appear at the end of the paper after you have discussed all of your reasons.

What is important to remember is that wherever you place your counterargument, you should:

- Address the counterargument(s) fully:
  - Explain what the counter perspectives are;
  - Describe them thoroughly;
  - Cite authors who have these counter perspectives;
  - Quote them and summarize their thinking.

- Then, respond to these counterarguments:
  - Make it clear to the reader of your argument why you concede to certain points of the counterargument or why you reject them;
  - Make it clear that you do not accept the counterargument, even though you understand it;
  - Be sure to use transitional phrases that make this clear to your reader.

Responding to Counterarguments

You do not need to attempt to do all of these things as a way to respond. Instead, choose the response strategy that makes the most sense to you for the counterargument that you find:

- If you agree with some of the counterargument perspectives, you can concede some of their points. ("I do agree that ....", "Some of the points made by X are valid.....") You could then challenge the importance/usefulness of those points;
  - "However, this information does not apply to our topic because..."
- If the counterargument perspective is one that contains different evidence than you have in your own argument, you can explain why a reader should not accept the evidence that the counterarguer presents;
- If the counterargument perspective is one that contains a different *interpretation* of evidence than you have in your own argument, you can explain why a reader should not accept the interpretation of the evidence that your opponent (counterarguer) presents.

If the counterargument is an acknowledgement of evidence that threatens to weaken your argument, you must explain why and how that evidence does not, in fact, invalidate your claim.

It is important to use **transitional phrases** in your paper to alert readers when you're about to present a counterargument. It's usually best to put this phrase at the beginning of a paragraph such as:

- Researchers have challenged these claims with...
- Critics argue that this view...
- Some readers may point to...
- A perspective that challenges the idea that...

Transitional phrases will again be useful to highlight your shift from counterargument to response:

- Indeed, some of those points are valid. However, . . .
- While I agree that . . . , it is more important to consider . . .
- These are all compelling points. Still, other information suggests that . .
- While I understand . . . , I cannot accept the evidence because . . .[1]

In the section that follows, the Toulmin method of argumentation is described and further clarifies the terms discussed in this section.

Practice Activity

The original version of this chapter contained H5P content. You may want to remove or replace this element.

This section contains material from:

Amanda Lloyd and Emilie Zickel. "Basic Structure of Arguments." In *A Guide to Rhetoric, Genre, and Success in First-Year Writing*, by Melanie Gagich and Emilie Zickel. Cleveland: MSL Academic Endeavors. Accessed July 2019. https://pressbooks.ulib.csuohio.edu/csu-fyw-rhetoric/chapter/basic-argument-components/. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Jeffrey, Robin. "Counterargument and Response." In *A Guide to Rhetoric, Genre, and Success in First-Year Writing*, by Melanie Gagich and Emilie Zickel. Cleveland: MSL Academic Endeavors. Accessed July 2019. https://pressbooks.ulib.csuohio.edu/csu-

fyw-rhetoric/chapter/questions-for-thinking-about-counterarguments/. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

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8.1.1.5: Toulmin- Dissecting the Everyday Argument

Philosopher Stephen Toulmin studies the arguments we make in our everyday lives. He developed his method out of frustration with logicians (philosophers of argumentation) that studied argument in a vacuum or through mathematical formulations:

> All A are B. All B are C.
>
> Therefore, all A are C.[1]

Instead, Toulmin views argument as it appears in a conversation, in a letter, or some other context because real arguments are much more complex than the syllogisms that make up the bulk of Aristotle's logical program (for a review of syllogisms see section 3.4 of this text). Toulmin offers the contemporary writer/reader a way to map an argument. The result is a visualization of the argument process. This map comes complete with vocabulary for describing the parts of an argument. The vocabulary allows us to see the contours of the landscape—the winding rivers and gaping caverns. One way to think about a "good" argument is that it is a discussion that hangs together, a landscape that is cohesive (we can't have glaciers in our desert valley). Sometimes we miss the faults of an argument because it sounds good or appears to have clear connections between the statement and the evidence, when in truth the only thing holding the argument together is a lovely sentence or an artistic flourish.

For Toulmin, argumentation is an attempt to justify a statement or a set of statements. The better the demand is met, the higher the audience's appreciation. Toulmin's vocabulary for the study of argument offers labels for the parts of the argument to help us create our map.[2]

> **Claim:** The basic standpoint presented by a writer/ speaker.
>
> **Data:** The evidence which supports the claim.
>
> **Warrant:** The justification for connecting particular data to a particular claim. The warrant also makes clear the assumptions underlying the argument.
>
> **Backing:** Additional information required if the warrant is not clearly supported.
>
> **Rebuttal:** Conditions or standpoints that point out flaws in the claim or alternative positions.
>
> **Qualifiers:** Terminology that limits a standpoint. Examples include applying the following terms to any part of an argument: sometimes, seems, occasionally, none, always, never, etc.

The following paragraphs come from an article reprinted in *UTNE* magazine by Pamela Paxton and Jeremy Adam Smith titled: "Not Everyone Is Out to Get You."[3] Charting this excerpt helps us to understand some of the underlying assumptions found in the article.

Example: "Trust No One"

That was the slogan of The X-Files, the TV drama that followed two FBI agents on a quest to uncover a vast government conspiracy. A defining cultural phenomenon during its run from 1993–2002, the show captured a mood of growing distrust in America.

Since then, our trust in one another has declined even further. In fact, it seems that "Trust no one" could easily have been America's motto for the past 40 years—thanks to, among other things, Vietnam, Watergate, junk bonds, Monica Lewinsky, Enron, sex scandals in the Catholic Church, and the Iraq war.

The General Social Survey, a periodic assessment of Americans' moods and values, shows an 11-point decline from 1976–2008 in the number of Americans who believe other people can generally be trusted. Institutions haven't fared any better. Over the same period, trust has declined in the press (from 29 to 9 percent), education (38–29 percent), banks (41 percent to 20 percent), corporations (23–16 percent), and organized religion (33–20 percent). Gallup's 2008 governance survey showed that trust in the government was as low as it was during the Watergate era.

The news isn't all doom and gloom, however. A growing body of research hints that humans are hardwired to trust, which is why institutions, through reform and high performance, can still stoke feelings of loyalty, just as disasters and mismanagement can inhibit it. The catch is that while humans want, even need, to trust, they won't trust blindly and foolishly.

Figure 4.5.1[4] below demonstrates one way to chart the argument that Paxton and Smith make in "Trust No One." The remainder of the article offers additional claims and data, including the final claim that there is hope for overcoming our collective trust issues. The chart helps us to see that some of the warrants, in a longer research project, might require additional support. For example, the warrant that TV mirrors real life is an argument and not a fact that would require evidence.

Example of Visualizing an Argument

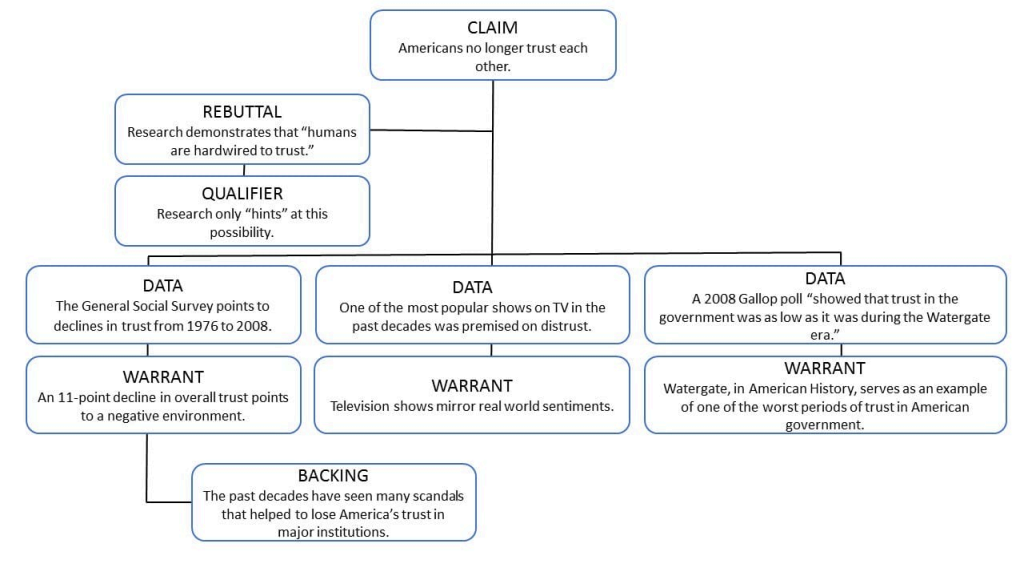


Figure 4.5.1: Visualizing an Argument

Charting your own arguments and the arguments of others helps you to visualize the meat of your discussion. All the flourishes are gone and the bones revealed. Even if you cannot fit an argument neatly into the boxes, the attempt forces you to ask important questions about your claim, your warrant, and possible rebuttals. By charting your argument you are forced to write your claim in a succinct manner and admit, for example, what you are using for evidence. Charted, you can see if your evidence is scanty, if it relies too much on one kind of evidence over another, and if it needs additional support. This charting might also reveal a disconnect between your claim and your warrant or cause you to reevaluate your claim altogether.

The Toulmin method is a useful way of determining the validity of an argument and is oftentimes the model used in legal proceedings. But the Toulmin method can leave you feeling as if you're stuck in an either/or situation as it focuses on justifying the arguer's reasons only. For a method that incorporates a humanistic approach, consider using the Rogerian method.

Practice Activity

The original version of this chapter contained H5P content. You may want to remove or replace this element.

This section contains material from:

Jones, Rebecca. "Finding the Good Argument OR Why Bother With Logic?" In *Writing Spaces: Readings on Writing, Volume*

1, edited by Charles Lowe and Pavel Zemliansky, 156-179. West Lafayette, IN: Parlor Press, 2010. https://writingspaces.org/?page_id=243. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 License.

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1. Frans H. van Eemeren, Rob Grootendorst, and Francesca Snoeck Henkemans, *Argumentation: Analysis, Evaluation, Presentation* (Mahwah: Erlbaum, NJ, 2002), 131. ↩
2. Stephen Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument, (*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958). ↩
3. Pamela Paxton and Jeremy Adam Smith, "Reimagining a Politics of Trust: Not Everyone Is Out to Get You," *UNTE Reader,* September-October 2009, https://www.utne.com/politics/reimagining-a-political-community-of-trust. ↩
4. This image was derived from "Figure 5: This Chart Demonstrates the Utility of Visualizing an Argument" by Rebecca Jones in: Rebecca Jones, "Finding the Good Argument OR Why Bother With Logic?," in *Writing Spaces: Readings on Writing, Volume 1*, eds. Charles Lowe and Pavel Zemliansky (West Lafayette, IN: Parlor Press, 2010), 156-179, https://writingspaces.org/?page_id=243. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 License. ↩

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8.1.1.6: Rogerian Argument

As discussed in the previous section, for Toulmin, argumentation is an attempt to justify a statement or a set of statements and focuses solely upon proving those statements. But what happens when you can concede that your opponent has a valid point? Because we are complex creatures, humans oftentimes find themselves strongly opposed to something that later changes for them once they are presented with different evidence. While many arguments can seemingly be based upon emotions alone, when presented with logical evidence to refute our position we may experience a crisis of conscience. Is it possible to hold firmly to one belief yet concede that the opposing side has merit? There is a way if you utilize the Rogerian method for argumentation.

Carl Rogers (1902-1987) was an American psychologist and clinical therapist who utilized a humanistic (client-centered) approach to psychology. When applied to argumentation, the Rogerian method makes use of examining counterarguments as enhancements, or concessions, rather than viewing them as completely oppositional. According to Lunsford et al., "Rogers argued that people involved in disputes should not respond to each other until they [can] fully, fairly, and even sympathetically state the other person's position."[1] Rogers' non confrontational methods, when applied to argumentation in rhetoric, suggests that the most personal feelings are also the most common and, therefore, are the most likely to be understood.

One benefit to utilizing a Rogerian approach in composition studies is that it encourages the writer/arguer to build a bridge towards oppositional positions. This does not mean that you abandon your own position, and it does not mean that your position is weak. Rather, a Rogerian approach provides alternative perspectives for considering a given position as well as methods for responding to counterarguments that might seem to refute your major premise.

Much like the Toulmin method, the Rogerian method relies upon claims that can be supported with evidence (data). How the Rogerian method differs is in the concession where, if there is a strong, valid argument that refutes your claim, you concede that argument might be a valid point in a different context. Or, perhaps you concede that a portion of your opponent's argument is valid for your position, yet point out how the circumstances differ, therefore making your position the most logical, strongest one for your given topic. While the goal remains to persuade your reader/audience to view your position as valid, when utilizing the Rogerian method you build common ground to other possibilities and demonstrate that counterviews are not entirely wrong.

When used in argumentation, the Rogerian method allows for a dialogue to occur surrounding an issue. By examining counterarguments to your claims, you are able to view your position/ thesis from a different point of view. Understanding all (or most) of the points surrounding your given topic will strengthen your own position as you will create a more fully informed essay.

Practice Activity

The original version of this chapter contained H5P content. You may want to remove or replace this element.

Pantuso, Terri, Sarah LeMire, and Kathy Anders, eds. *Informed Arguments: A Guide to Writing and Research*. 3rd ed. College Station: Texas A&M University, 2022. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License, except where otherwise noted.

1. Andrea Lunsford, John J. Ruszkiewicz, and Keith Walters, *Everything's an Argument,* 8th ed. (Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2018), 139. ↩

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8.1.1.7: On the Other Hand- The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses

Besides my own experiences as a student many years ago in courses similar to the ones you and your classmates are in now, I think the most important influence on how I have approached research and argumentative writing came from academic debate. Debate taught me at least two ways to approach an argument that were not part of my formal schooling. First, academic policy debate[1] taught me that argumentation is a contest—a sport, not at all different from tennis or basketball or figure skating or gymnastics, an activity where you have to work with a team, you have to practice, and the goal is to "win." And winning in academic debate happens: while it is a sport that is judged, it is an activity, like gymnastics or figure skating, where the rules for judging are surprisingly well codified. I will admit that seeing a debate or argument as something "to be won" has not always served me well in life, for there are any number of situations in which the framework for an argument is perhaps better perceived as an opportunity to listen and to compromise than to score points.

Second, because of the way that academic debate is structured, I learned quickly the importance of being able to perceive and argue multiple and opposing views on the same issue. Not unlike other sports where players play both offense and defense—baseball and basketball immediately come to mind—debaters have to argue both for and against the year's resolution, which was the broad proposition that framed all of the particular cases debate teams put forward for the entire season. In fact, it was not at all uncommon for a team to strenuously advocate for a controversial position one round—"the U.S. should engage in one-on-one talks with North Korea"—only to strenuously argue the opposite position—"the U.S. should not engage in one-on-one talks with North Korea"—the very next round. Seeing "multiple positions" was not simply a good idea; it was one of the rules of the game.

I've brought these past experiences into my current teaching in a number of ways, including one of the exercises I am discussing here, what my students and I call antithesis writing. These exercises will help you gain a better understanding of how to shape an argument, how to more fully explore a topic, and how to think more carefully about your different audiences.[2]

Thesis Is Not Doesn't Have to Be a Bad Thing (Or Why Write Antithesis Essays in the First Place)

Somewhere along the way, "thesis" became a dirty word in a lot of writing courses, inherently bound up and attached to all that is wrong with what composition historians and the writing scholars call the "Current-Traditional" paradigm of writing instruction. Essentially, this approach emphasizes the product and forms of writing (in most nineteenth century American rhetoric textbooks, these forms were Exposition, Description, Narration, and Argument), issues of syntax and grammar, correctness, and so forth. It didn't matter so much what position a writer took; what mattered most was that the writer got the form correct.

"Thesis" is often caught in/lumped into this current-traditional paradigm, I think mainly because of the rigid role and placement of a thesis in the classic form of the five-paragraph essay. Most of you and your classmates already know about this: in the five-paragraph formula, the thesis is the last sentence of the introduction, is divided into three parts, and it rigidly controls the structure of the following four paragraphs. Certainly this overly prescriptive and narrow definition of thesis is not useful. Jasper Neel describes this sort of formula in his book *Plato, Derrida, and Writing* as "anti-writing,"[3] and I think that Sharon Crowley is correct in arguing that the kind of teaching exemplified by the five-paragraph essay is more akin to filling out a form than it is to actual "writing."[4]

But when I discuss "thesis" here, I mean something much more broad and organic. I mean an initial direction that every research writing project must take. A thesis advocates a specific and debatable position, is not a statement of fact nor a summary of events, and it answers the questions "what's your point?" and "why should I care?" You should begin with a working thesis that attempts to answer these questions simply as a way of getting your research process started. True, these initial working theses are usually broad and unwieldy, but the emphasis here is on working, because as you research and think more carefully, you will inevitably change your thesis. And this is good—change is the by-product of learning, and seeing a working thesis differently is both the purpose and the opportunity of the antithesis exercise.

So, I think the first and probably most important reason to consider antithesis writing is to test and strengthen the validity of the working thesis. After all, there isn't much "debatable" about a working thesis like "crime is bad" or "cleaning up the environment is good," which suggests that there probably isn't a viable answer to the questions "what's your point?" and "why should I care?" Considering opposing and differing views can help you find the path to make a vague generalization like "crime is bad" into a more pointed, researchable, and interesting observation.

The second general value for antithesis exercises is to raise more awareness of your audience—the potential readers who would disagree with your working thesis, along with readers who are more favorable to your point. Sometimes, readers won't be convinced no matter what evidence or logic a writer presents; but it seems to me that writers have an obligation to at least try.

Generating Antithetical Points in Five Easy Steps

Step 1: Have a Working Thesis and Make Sure You Have Begun the Research Process.

Developing a good antithetical argument is not something you can do as a "first step" in the research process. Generally, you need to have already developed a basic point and need some evidence and research to develop that point. In other words, the process of developing an antithetical position has to come after you develop an initial position in the first place.

Step 2: Consider the Direct Opposite of Your Working Thesis.

This is an especially easy step if your working thesis is about a controversial topic.

Examples

Working thesis:

To prevent violence on campus, students, staff, and faculty should not be allowed to carry concealed weapons.

Antithesis:

To prevent violence on campus, students, staff, and faculty should be allowed to carry concealed weapons.

Examples

Working thesis:

Drug companies should be allowed to advertise prescription drugs on television.

Antithesis:

Drug companies should not be allowed to advertise prescription drugs on television.

This sort of simple change of qualifiers also exposes weak theses, because, generally speaking, the opposite position of a proposition that everyone accepts as true is one that everyone easily accepts as false. For example, if you begin with a working thesis like "Drunk driving is bad" or "Teen violence is bad" to their logical opposites, you end up with an opposite that is ridiculous—"Drunk driving is good" or "Teen violence is good." What that signals is that it is probably time to revisit your original working thesis.

Usually though, considering the opposite of a working thesis is a little more complicated. For example:

Examples

Working Thesis:

Many computer hackers commit serious crimes and represent a major expense for internet-based businesses.

Antitheses:

Computer hackers do not commit serious crimes.

Computer hacking is not a major expense for internet-based businesses.

Both of the antithetical examples are the opposite of the original working theses, but each focuses on different aspects of the working thesis.

Step 3: Ask "Why" about Possible Antithetical Arguments.

Creating antitheses by simply changing the working thesis to its opposite typically demands more explanation. The best place to develop more details with your antithesis is to ask "why." For example:

Examples

Why should drug companies not be allowed to advertise prescription drugs? Because . . .

- The high cost of television advertising needlessly drives up the costs of prescriptions.
- Advertisements too often confuse patients and offer advice that contradicts the advice of doctors.

Examples

Why are the crimes committed by computer hackers not serious? Because . . .

- They are usually pranks or acts of mischief.
- Computer hackers often expose problems for Internet businesses before serious crimes result.

The point here is to dig a little further into your antithetical argument. Asking "why" is a good place to begin that process.

Step 4: Examine Alternatives to Your Working Thesis.

Often, the best antithetical arguments aren't about "the opposite" so much as they are about alternatives. For example, the working thesis "To prevent violence on campus, students, staff, and faculty should not be allowed to carry concealed weapons" presumes that a serious potential cause for violence on campuses is the presence of guns. However, someone could logically argue that the more important cause of violence on college campuses is alcohol and drug abuse. Certainly the number of incidents involving underage drinking and substance abuse outnumber those involving firearms on college campuses, and it is also probably true that many incidents of violence on college campuses involve drinking or drugs.

Now, unlike the direct opposite of your working thesis, the alternatives do not necessarily negate your working thesis. There is

no reason why a reader couldn't believe that both concealed weapons and alcohol and substance abuse contribute to violence on campuses. But in considering alternatives to your working thesis, the goal is to "weigh" the positions against each other. I'll return to this matter of "weighing your position" later.

Step 5: Imagine Hostile Audiences.

Whenever you are trying to develop a clearer understanding of the antithesis of your working thesis, you need to think about the kinds of audiences who would disagree with you. By thinking about the opposites and alternatives to your working thesis, you are already starting to do this because the opposites and the alternatives are what a hostile audience might think.

Sometimes, potential readers are hostile to a particular working thesis because of ideals, values, or affiliations they hold that are at odds with the point being advocated by the working thesis. For example, people who identify themselves as being "pro-choice" on the issue of abortion would certainly be hostile to an argument for laws that restrict access to abortion; people who identify themselves as being "prolife" on the issue of abortion would certainly be hostile to an argument for laws that provide access to abortion.

At other times, audiences are hostile to the arguments of a working thesis because of more crass and transparent reasons. For example, the pharmaceutical industry disagrees with the premise of the working thesis "Drug companies should not be allowed to advertise prescription drugs on TV" because they stand to lose billions of dollars in lost sales. Advertising companies and television broadcasters would also be against this working thesis because they too would lose money. You can probably easily imagine some potential hostile audience members who have similarly selfish reasons to oppose your point of view.

Of course, some audiences will oppose your working thesis based on a different interpretation of the evidence and research. This sort of difference of opinion is probably most common with research projects that are focused on more abstract and less definitive subjects. But there are also different opinions about evidence for topics that you might think would have potentially more concrete "right" and "wrong" interpretations. Different researchers and scholars can look at the same evidence about a subject like gun control and arrive at very different conclusions.

Regardless of the reasons why your audience might be hostile to the argument you are making with your working thesis, it is helpful to try to imagine your audience as clearly as you can. What sort of people are they? What other interests or biases might they have? Are there other political or social factors that you think are influencing their point of view? If you want to persuade at least some members of this hostile audience that your point of view and your interpretation of the research is correct, you need to know as much about your hostile audience as you possibly can.

Strategies for Answering Antithetical/Oppositional Arguments

It might not seem logical, but directly acknowledging and addressing positions that are different from the one you are holding in your research can actually make your position stronger. When you take on the antithesis in your research project, it shows you have thought carefully about the issue at hand and you acknowledge that there is no clear and easy "right" answer. There are many different ways you might incorporate the antithesis into your research to make your own thesis stronger and to address the concerns of those readers who might oppose your point of view. For now, focus on three basic strategies: directly refuting your opposition, weighing your position against the opposition, and making concessions.

Directly Refuting Your Opposition

Perhaps the most obvious approach, one way to address those potential readers who might raise objections to your arguments, is to simply refute their objections with better evidence and reasoning. Of course, this is an example of yet another reason why it is so important to have good research that supports your position: when the body of evidence and research is on your side, it is

usually a lot easier to make a strong point.

Answering antithetical arguments with research that supports your point of view is also an example of where you as a researcher might need to provide a more detailed evaluation of your evidence. The sort of questions you should answer about your own research—who wrote it, where was it published, when was it published, etc.—are important to raise in countering antithetical arguments that you think come from suspicious sources.

Weighing Your Position Against the Opposition

Readers who oppose the argument you are trying to support with your research might do so because they value or "weigh" the implications of your working thesis differently than you do. For example, those opposed to a working thesis like "Drug companies should not be allowed to advertise prescription drugs on TV" might think this because they think the advantages of advertising drugs on television—increased sales for pharmaceutical companies, revenue for advertising agencies and television stations, and so forth—are more significant than the disadvantages of advertising drugs on television.

Besides recognizing and acknowledging the different ways of comparing the advantages and disadvantages suggested by your working thesis, the best way of answering these antithetical arguments in your own writing is to clearly explain how you weigh and compare the evidence. This can be a challenging writing experience because it requires a subtle hand and a broad understanding of multiple sides of your topic. But if in acknowledging to your readers that you have carefully considered the reasons against your working thesis and you can demonstrate your position to be more persuasive, then this process of weighing positions can be very effective.

Making Concessions

In the course of researching and thinking about the antithesis to your working thesis and its potentially hostile audiences, it may become clear to you that these opposing views have a point. When this is the case, you may want to consider revising your working thesis or your approach to your research to make some concessions to these antithetical arguments.

Sometimes, my students working on this exercise "make concessions" to the point of changing sides on their working thesis—that is, in the process of researching, writing, and thinking about their topic, a researcher moves from arguing for their working thesis to arguing for their antithesis. This might seem surprising, but it makes perfect sense when you remember the purpose of research in the first place. When we study the evidence on a particular issue, we often realize that our initial and uninformed impression or feelings on an issue were simply wrong. That's why we research: we put more trust in ideas based on research than in things based on gut instinct or feelings.

But usually, most concessions to antithetical perspectives are less dramatic and can be accomplished in a variety of ways. You might want to employ some qualifying terms to hedge a bit. For example, the working thesis "Drug companies should not be allowed to advertise prescription drugs on TV" might be qualified to "Drug companies should be closely regulated about what they are allowed to advertise in TV." I think this is still a strong working thesis, but the revised working thesis acknowledges the objections some might have to the original working thesis.

Of course, you should use these sorts of concessions carefully. An over-qualified working thesis can be just as bad as a working thesis about something that everyone accepts as true: it can become so watered-down as to not have any real significance anymore. A working thesis like "Drug company television advertising is sometimes bad and sometimes good for patients" is over-qualified to the point of taking no real position at all.

But You Still Can't Convince Everyone . . .

I'd like to close by turning away a bit from where I started this essay, the influence of competitive debate on my early education

about argument. In debate, an argument is part of the game, the catalyst for the beginning of a competition. The same is often true within college classrooms. Academic arguments are defined in terms of their hypothetical nature; they aren't actually real but rather merely an intellectual exercise.

But people in the real world do hold more than hypothetical positions, and you can't always convince everyone that you're right, no matter what evidence or logic you might have on your side. You probably already know this. We have all been in conversations with friends or family members where, as certain as we were that we were right about something and as hard as we tried to prove we were right, our friends or family were simply unwilling to budge from their positions. When we find ourselves in these sorts of deadlocks, we often try to smooth over the dispute with phrases like "You're entitled to your opinion" or "We will have to agree to disagree," and then we change the subject. In polite conversation, this is a good strategy to avoid a fight. But in academic contexts, these deadlocks can be frustrating and difficult to negotiate.

A couple of thousand years ago, the Greek philosopher and rhetorician Aristotle said that all of us respond to arguments based on three basic characteristics or appeals: logos or logic, pathos or emotional character, and ethos, the writer's or speaker's perceived character. Academic writing tends to rely most heavily on logos and ethos because academics tend to highly value arguments based on logical research and arguments that come from writers with strong character-building qualifications—things like education, experience, previous publications, and the like. But it's important to remember that pathos is always there, and particularly strong emotions or feelings on a subject can obscure the best research.

Most academic readers have respect for writers when they successfully argue for positions that they might not necessarily agree with. Along these lines, most college writing instructors can certainly respect and give a positive evaluation to a piece of writing they don't completely agree with as long as it uses sound logic and evidence to support its points. However, all readers—students, instructors, and everyone else—come to your research project with various preconceptions about the point you are trying to make. Some of them will already agree with you and won't need much convincing. Some of them will never completely agree with you, but will be open to your argument to a point. And some of your readers, because of the nature of the point you are trying to make and their own feelings and thoughts on the matter, will never agree with you, no matter what research evidence you present or what arguments you make. So, while you need to consider the antithetical arguments to your thesis in your research project to convince as many members of your audience as possible that the point you are trying to make is correct, you should remember that you will likely not convince all of your readers all of the time.

Practice Activity

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1. Explaining "academic policy debate" is not my goal in this essay. But I will say that academic debate bears almost no resemblance to "debates" between political candidates or to the stereotypical way debate tends to be depicted on television shows or in movies. Certainly debate involves a certain intellectual prowess; but I think it's fair to say that debate is a lot closer to a competitive sport than a classroom exercise. Two excellent introductions to the world of academic debate are the Wikipedia entry for "Policy Debate" (https://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Policy_debate) ↩
2. The original text contained this statement: "In this essay, I borrow heavily from my own online textbook, The Process of Research Writing, which is available for free at http://stevendkrause.com/tprw/. You might want to visit that site for additional information about this exercise and other exercises I've put together for teaching the research writing process." ↩
3. Jasper Neel, *Plato, Derrida, and Writing* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1988). ↩
4. Sharon Crowley, *The Methodical Memory: Invention in Current-Traditional Rhetoric,* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1990).

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8.1.2: TYPES OF ARGUMENTATION

8.1.2.1: Introduction

8.1.2.2: Features of an Argument

8.1.2.3: Failures in Evidence- When “Lots of Quotes” Can’t Save a Paper

8.1.2.4: Basic Structure and Content of Argument

8.1.2.5: Toulmin- Dissecting the Everyday Argument

8.1.2.6: Rogerian Argument

8.1.2.7: On the Other Hand- The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses

8.1.2.8: Unit III- Research and Argumentation

8.1.2.8.1: Situation and Analysis

8.1.2.8.1.1: What Does the Professor Want? Understanding the Assignment

8.1.2.8.1.2: Backpacks v. Briefcases- Steps Toward Rhetorical Analysis

8.1.2.8.1.3: Murder! Rhetorically Speaking

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8.1.2.1: Introduction

Where can you find the best tacos in Texas? Who wrote the best version of the song *Wagon Wheel*? Which cause is most deserving of a federal grant? While all of these topics seem like fodder for a happy hour conversation, each one can be proven with specifically defined criteria and evidence. And while the word *argument* conjures up negative memories for some, in rhetoric we use the term to refer to a persuasive essay. In this section, we introduce you to the concepts surrounding argumentation and discuss two of the more prominent methodologies used today.

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8.1.2.2: Features of an Argument

Argument is not the loud, assertive, unwavering statement of your opinion in the hopes of conquering the opposition. Argument is the careful consideration of numerous positions and the careful development of logically sound, carefully constructed assertions that, when combined, offer a worthwhile perspective in an ongoing debate. Certainly you want to imagine yourself arguing *with* others—and certainly you want to believe your ideas have superior qualities to theirs—but the purpose of argument in the college setting is not to solve a practical problem or shut down a conversation. Rather, it's to illuminate, expand, and further inform a debate happening on a worthwhile subject between reasonable, intelligent people. In other words, calling the opposition s*tupid* is not good argument, it's an ad hominem attack. For a review of this and other logical fallacies, refer to section 3.7 of this text.

Some of the key tools of argument are the strategies that students are asked to consider when doing a rhetorical analysis. Before beginning an argument of your own, review the basic concepts of rhetorical appeals below. As you plan and draft your own argument, carefully use the following elements of rhetoric to your own advantage.

Rhetorical Appeals

Logos

The use of data, statistical evidence, and sufficient support to establish the practicality and rationality of your claims should be the strongest element of your argument. To have a logically sound argument, you should include:

- A debatable and supportable claim
- Logical reasoning to support your claim
- Sound evidence and examples to justify the reasoning
- Reasonable projections
- Concessions & rebuttals
- Avoid logical fallacies

Ethos

The ethical and well-balanced use of all of the strategies above will help you to present yourself as trustworthy and intelligent in your consideration of the topic and in the development of your argument. This balance should include the use of credible, relevant sources which can be accomplished through research methods utilizing the strategies governing your discipline. Following those strategies will build your credibility as a writer of argument, particularly in the college setting, as you pay attention to the needs of the audience with regard to presentation and style. In college, this means that you have used the style manual (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.) required for the assignment and appropriate to the audience. In so doing, make certain to cite the sources you have used according to the style manual you are using.

Pathos

The use of examples and language that evoke an appropriate emotional response in your reader—that gets them to care about your topic—can be helpful in argument. For academic essays, pathos may be useful in introductory sections, concluding sections, or as ways to link various parts of the paper together. However, if your argument is based solely or primarily upon emotional appeals, it will be viewed as weak in an academic setting, especially when data or ethical sources can disprove your claims. Therefore, college writing often puts more emphasis on logos and ethos.

Approaches to Argument

A well-structured argument is one that is carefully and optimally planned. It is organized so that the argument has a continuous building of ideas, one upon the other or in concert with the other, in order to produce the most persuasive impact or effect on the reader. For clarity, avoid repeating ideas, reasons, or evidence. Instead, consider how each idea in your argument connects to the others. Should some ideas come before others? Should you build your reasons from simple to complex or from complex to simple? Should you present the counterargument before your reasons? Or, would it make more sense for you to present your reasons and then the concessions and rebuttals? How can you use clear transitional phrases to facilitate reader comprehension of your argument? Consider these questions while constructing and revising your argument.

Simple to Complex/Complex to Simple

Whether structuring a paragraph or a research paper, the simple to complex (or reverse) method can be an effective way to build cohesion throughout your writing. Just as the phrase implies, simple to complex is when a writer introduces a simple concept then builds upon it to heighten interest. Sometimes, the opposite structure works to move the reader through your position. For example, if you choose to write on the topic of pollution as it impacts the world, you might begin with the concept of straws and sea turtles. Your simple topic of sea turtles swallowing straws thrown away might then move to the complex issues of consumption, consumerism and disposal. Conversely, if you begin with the broad, complex topic of consumerism, you could then move to the story of the sea turtles as a way of building pathos in the reader. Whichever method you choose, make sure that the relationship between the topics is logical and clear so that readers find validity in your position.

Cause/Effect

The cause/effect method is a way of establishing a reason, or reasons, why something has occurred. For example, if you live in south Texas, then you understand the problem that mosquitoes cause in the hot, humid summer months. While there is no way to eliminate all mosquitoes, there are ways to minimize their growth in your backyard. If you research the ways in which mosquitoes are born, you would understand the importance of things such as emptying containers of all stagnant water so that they cannot incubate or keeping your grass mowed to eliminate areas for them to populate. The process by which you go through to determine the cause of mosquito infestations is the cause and effect method. In argumentation, you might use this method to support a claim for community efforts to prevent mosquitoes from growing in your neighborhood. Demonstrating that process is effective for a logos based argument.

Chronological

Sometimes an argument is presented best when a sequential pattern is used. Oftentimes, that pattern will be based on the pattern of time in which the sequence occurs. For example, if you are writing an argumentative essay in which you are calling for a new stop light to be installed at a busy intersection, you might utilize a chronological structure to demonstrate the rate of increased accidents over a given period of time at that intersection. If your pattern demonstrates a marked increase in accidents, then your data would show a logical reason for supporting your position. Oftentimes, a chronological pattern involves steps indicated by signal words such as first, next, and finally. Utilizing this pattern will walk readers through your line of reasoning and guide them towards reaching your proposed conclusion.

Emphatic

Another method for organizing your writing is by order of importance. This method is often referred to as emphatic because organization is done based upon emphasis. The direction you choose to go is yours whether you begin with the strongest, most important point of your argument, or the weakest. In either case, the hierarchy of ideas should be clear to readers. The emphatic method is often subjectively based upon the writer's beliefs. If, for example, you want to build an argument for a new rail system to be used in your city, you will have to decide which reason is most important and which is simply support material. For one writer, the decrease in the number of cars on the road might be the most important aspect as it would result in a reduction of toxic emissions. For another writer, the time saved for commuters might be the most important aspect. The decision to start with your strongest or weakest point is one of style.

Style/ Eloquence

When we discuss style in academic writing, we generally mean the use of formal language appropriate for the given academic audience and occasion. Academics generally favor Standard American English and the use of precise language that avoids idioms, clichés, or dull, simple word choices. This is not to imply that these tropes are not useful; however, strong academic writing is typically objective and frequently avoids the use of first-person pronouns unless the disciplinary style and conventions suggest otherwise.

Some writing assignments allow you to choose your audience. In that case, the style in which you write may not be the formal, precise Standard American English that the academy prefers. For some writing assignments, you may even be asked to use, where appropriate, poetic or figurative language or language that evokes the senses. Additionally, instructors should be cognizant of second language learners and the variations in style when writing in a non-native language.

In all cases, it is important to understand what style of writing your audience expects, as delivering your argument in that style could make it more persuasive.

Practice Activity

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8.1.2.3: Failures in Evidence- When “Lots of Quotes” Can’t Save a Paper

In a strong essay, the author or writer’s own thesis and reasoning drive the argument, and then credible, valid evidence is used to support that reasoning. Arguments, in particular, are interactions between writer and audience. The author wants to persuade the audience to accept his or her claim, so he or she tries to provide sufficient compelling evidence that will sway the audience to his or her perspective.

Research questions might be easy to come up with. Claims or thesis statements can be easy to come up with. Even reasons or ideas to support the thesis or claim may be fairly easy to come up with. But for your ideas in a paper to be valid, for them to be accepted by a reader, they must be supported and developed with solid, credible, sufficient, accurate, relevant and compelling evidence.

Evidence is not simply “a bunch of quotes.” Nor is evidence a bunch of facts or statistics from an article, no matter how credible that article may be. For evidence to truly work in the sense of supporting a thesis/claim, it has to be accurate, sufficient to prove your point, directly related to the reason, ethically chosen, current, and credible. That is a lot to think about. It is certainly more than “a quote that looks good”.

Here are some things to think about avoiding when attempting to develop a strong source-based essay. Just as understanding what logical fallacies are so you can avoid them in your own writing, understanding what weak evidence is can help you to avoid falling into the trap of using it in your own work.

Failures in evidence occur when a reader says, “I do not accept your evidence”. Here is why that might happen:

- *The evidence that you have provided is* ***inaccurate.***
  You’ve misread information or misquoted; you are not interpreting the quoted material in an accurate manner
- *The evidence that you have provided is* ***insufficient.***
  You are using just a small piece of evidence to support your reasoning. You need more. You probably have a “generalization” fallacy.
- *The evidence that you have provided is* ***unrelated to the reason.***
  Your evidence does not clearly or directly relate to the point that you are trying to make.
- *The evidence that you have provided is* ***incomplete or too narrowly chosen.***
  You have “cherry picked” certain examples or pieces of information to the exclusion of others, so while you do have evidence to support your point, you are also neglecting a lot of other information
- *The evidence that you have provided is* ***old.***
  The information that you are citing is not relevant anymore. It is outdated!
- *The evidence that you have provided does not come from an* ***authoritative source.***
  The source of your evidence is not credible; the person being cited is not an authority on the topic

One of the bigger issues with evidence is not so much with the evidence itself, but with the way that you integrate it into the paper. A reader needs to understand clearly how and why the evidence you chose relates to the point that you are making. Evidence must always be explained. Whenever you integrate evidence into your papers, it is important to answer the question “How does this evidence support the point that I am making?” Never assume that the reader sees what you see in evidence. Always make it as clear as possible how the evidence supports the reason.

Practice Activity

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8.1.2.4: Basic Structure and Content of Argument

When you are tasked with crafting an argumentative essay, it is likely that you will be expected to craft your argument based upon a given number of sources–all of which should support your topic in some way. Your instructor might provide these sources for you, ask you to locate these sources, or provide you with some sources and ask you to find others. Whether or not you are asked to do additional research, an argumentative essay should contain the following basic components.

Claim: What Do You Want the Reader to Believe?

In an argument paper, the thesis is often called a claim. This claim is a statement in which you take a stand on a debatable issue. A strong, debatable claim has at least one valid counterargument, an opposite or alternative point of view that is as sensible as the position that you take in your claim. In your thesis statement, you should clearly and specifically state the position you will convince your audience to adopt. One way to accomplish this is via either a closed or open thesis statement.

A **closed** thesis statement includes sub-claims or reasons why you choose to support your claim.

Example of Closed Thesis Statement

The city of Houston has displayed a commitment to attracting new residents by making improvements to its walkability, city centers, and green spaces.

In this instance, walkability, city centers, and green spaces are the sub-claims, or reasons, why you would make the claim that Houston is attracting new residents.

An **open** thesis statement does not include sub-claims and might be more appropriate when your argument is less easy to prove with two or three easily-defined sub-claims.

Example of Open Thesis Statement

The city of Houston is a vibrant metropolis due to its walkability, city centers, and green spaces.

The choice between an open or a closed thesis statement often depends upon the complexity of your argument. Another possible construction would be to start with a research question and see where your sources take you.

A research question approach might ask a large question that will be narrowed down with further investigation.

Example of Research Question Approach

What has the city of Houston done to attract new residents and/or make the city more accessible?

As you research the question, you may find that your original premise is invalid or incomplete. The advantage to starting with a research question is that it allows for your writing to develop more organically according to the latest research. When in doubt about how to structure your thesis statement, seek the advice of your instructor or a writing center consultant.

A Note on Context: What Background Information About the Topic Does Your Audience Need?

Before you get into defending your claim, you will need to place your topic (and argument) into context by including relevant background material. Remember, your audience is relying on you for vital information such as definitions, historical placement, and controversial positions. This background material might appear in either your introductory paragraph(s) or your body paragraphs. How and where to incorporate background material depends a lot upon your topic, assignment, evidence, and audience. In most cases, kairos, or an opportune moment, factors heavily in the ways in which your argument may be received.

Evidence or Grounds: What Makes Your Reasoning Valid?

To validate the thinking that you put forward in your claim and sub-claims, you need to demonstrate that your reasoning is based on more than just your personal opinion. Evidence, sometimes referred to as grounds, can take the form of research studies or scholarship, expert opinions, personal examples, observations made by yourself or others, or specific instances that make your reasoning seem sound and believable. Evidence only works if it directly supports your reasoning — and sometimes you must explain how the evidence supports your reasoning (do not assume that a reader can see the connection between evidence and reason that you see).

Warrants: Why Should a Reader Accept Your Claim?

A warrant is the rationale the writer provides to show that the evidence properly supports the claim with each element working towards a similar goal. Think of warrants as the glue that holds an argument together and ensures that all pieces work together coherently.

An important way to ensure you are properly supplying warrants within your argument is to use topic sentences for each paragraph and linking sentences within that connect the particular claim directly back to the thesis. Ensuring that there are linking sentences in each paragraph will help to create consistency within your essay. Remember, the thesis statement is the driving force of organization in your essay, so each paragraph needs to have a specific purpose (topic sentence) in proving or explaining your thesis. Linking sentences complete this task within the body of each paragraph and create cohesion. These linking sentences will often appear after your textual evidence in a paragraph.

Counterargument: But What About Other Perspectives?

Later in this section, we have included an essay by Steven Krause who offers a thorough explanation of what counterargument is (and how to respond to it). In summary, a strong arguer should not be afraid to consider perspectives that either challenge or completely oppose his or her own claim. When you respectfully and thoroughly discuss perspectives or research that counters your own claim or even weaknesses in your own argument, you are showing yourself to be an ethical arguer. The following are some things of which counter arguments may consist:

- summarizing opposing views;
- explaining how and where you actually agree with some opposing views;
- acknowledging weaknesses or holes in your own argument.

You have to be careful and clear that you are not conveying to a reader that you are rejecting your own claim. It is important

to indicate that you are merely open to considering alternative viewpoints. Being open in this way shows that you are an ethical arguer – you are considering many viewpoints.

Types of Counterarguments

Counterarguments can take various forms and serve a range of purposes such as:

- *Could someone disagree with your claim?* If so, why? Explain this opposing perspective in your own argument, and then respond to it.
- *Could someone draw a different conclusion from any of the facts or examples you present?* If so, what is that different conclusion? Explain this different conclusion and then respond to it.
- *Could a reader question any of your assumptions or claims?* If so, which ones would they question? Explain and then respond.
- *Could a reader offer a different explanation of an issue?* If so, what might their explanation be? Describe this different explanation, and then respond to it.
- *Is there any evidence out there that could weaken your position?* If so, what is it? Cite and discuss this evidence and then respond to it.

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, that does not necessarily mean that you have a weak argument. It means ideally, and as long as your argument is logical and valid, that you have a counterargument. Good arguments can and do have counterarguments; it is important to discuss them. But you must also discuss and then respond to those counterarguments.

Response to Counterargument: I See That, But...

Just as it is important to include counterargument to show that you are fair-minded and balanced, you must respond to the counterargument so that a reader clearly sees that you are not agreeing with the counterargument and thus abandoning or somehow undermining your own claim. Failure to include the response to counterargument can confuse the reader. There are several ways to respond to a counterargument such as:

- Concede to a specific point or idea from the counterargument by explaining why that point or idea has validity. However, you must then be sure to return to your own claim, and explain why even that concession does not lead you to completely accept or support the counterargument;
- Reject the counterargument if you find it to be incorrect, fallacious, or otherwise invalid;
- Explain why the counterargument perspective does not invalidate your own claim.

A Note About Where to Put the Counterargument

It is certainly possible to begin the argument section (after the background section) with your counterargument + response instead of placing it at the end of your essay. Some people prefer to have their counterargument first where they can address it and then spend the rest of their essay building their own case and supporting their own claim. However, it is just as valid to have the counterargument + response appear at the end of the paper after you have discussed all of your reasons.

What is important to remember is that wherever you place your counterargument, you should:

- Address the counterargument(s) fully:
  - Explain what the counter perspectives are;
  - Describe them thoroughly;
  - Cite authors who have these counter perspectives;
  - Quote them and summarize their thinking.

- Then, respond to these counterarguments:
  - Make it clear to the reader of your argument why you concede to certain points of the counterargument or why you reject them;
  - Make it clear that you do not accept the counterargument, even though you understand it;
  - Be sure to use transitional phrases that make this clear to your reader.

Responding to Counterarguments

You do not need to attempt to do all of these things as a way to respond. Instead, choose the response strategy that makes the most sense to you for the counterargument that you find:

- If you agree with some of the counterargument perspectives, you can concede some of their points. ("I do agree that ....", "Some of the points made by X are valid.....") You could then challenge the importance/usefulness of those points;
  - "However, this information does not apply to our topic because..."
- If the counterargument perspective is one that contains different evidence than you have in your own argument, you can explain why a reader should not accept the evidence that the counterarguer presents;
- If the counterargument perspective is one that contains a different *interpretation* of evidence than you have in your own argument, you can explain why a reader should not accept the interpretation of the evidence that your opponent (counterarguer) presents.

If the counterargument is an acknowledgement of evidence that threatens to weaken your argument, you must explain why and how that evidence does not, in fact, invalidate your claim.

It is important to use **transitional phrases** in your paper to alert readers when you're about to present a counterargument. It's usually best to put this phrase at the beginning of a paragraph such as:

- Researchers have challenged these claims with...
- Critics argue that this view...
- Some readers may point to...
- A perspective that challenges the idea that...

Transitional phrases will again be useful to highlight your shift from counterargument to response:

- Indeed, some of those points are valid. However, . . .
- While I agree that . . . , it is more important to consider . . .
- These are all compelling points. Still, other information suggests that . .
- While I understand . . . , I cannot accept the evidence because . . .[1]

In the section that follows, the Toulmin method of argumentation is described and further clarifies the terms discussed in this section.

Practice Activity

The original version of this chapter contained H5P content. You may want to remove or replace this element.

This section contains material from:

Amanda Lloyd and Emilie Zickel. "Basic Structure of Arguments." In *A Guide to Rhetoric, Genre, and Success in First-Year Writing*, by Melanie Gagich and Emilie Zickel. Cleveland: MSL Academic Endeavors. Accessed July 2019. https://pressbooks.ulib.csuohio.edu/csu-fyw-rhetoric/chapter/basic-argument-components/. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Jeffrey, Robin. "Counterargument and Response." In *A Guide to Rhetoric, Genre, and Success in First-Year Writing*, by Melanie Gagich and Emilie Zickel. Cleveland: MSL Academic Endeavors. Accessed July 2019. https://pressbooks.ulib.csuohio.edu/csu-

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8.1.2.5: Toulmin- Dissecting the Everyday Argument

Philosopher Stephen Toulmin studies the arguments we make in our everyday lives. He developed his method out of frustration with logicians (philosophers of argumentation) that studied argument in a vacuum or through mathematical formulations:

> All A are B. All B are C.
>
> Therefore, all A are C.[1]

Instead, Toulmin views argument as it appears in a conversation, in a letter, or some other context because real arguments are much more complex than the syllogisms that make up the bulk of Aristotle's logical program (for a review of syllogisms see section 3.4 of this text). Toulmin offers the contemporary writer/reader a way to map an argument. The result is a visualization of the argument process. This map comes complete with vocabulary for describing the parts of an argument. The vocabulary allows us to see the contours of the landscape—the winding rivers and gaping caverns. One way to think about a "good" argument is that it is a discussion that hangs together, a landscape that is cohesive (we can't have glaciers in our desert valley). Sometimes we miss the faults of an argument because it sounds good or appears to have clear connections between the statement and the evidence, when in truth the only thing holding the argument together is a lovely sentence or an artistic flourish.

For Toulmin, argumentation is an attempt to justify a statement or a set of statements. The better the demand is met, the higher the audience's appreciation. Toulmin's vocabulary for the study of argument offers labels for the parts of the argument to help us create our map.[2]

> **Claim:** The basic standpoint presented by a writer/ speaker.
>
> **Data:** The evidence which supports the claim.
>
> **Warrant:** The justification for connecting particular data to a particular claim. The warrant also makes clear the assumptions underlying the argument.
>
> **Backing:** Additional information required if the warrant is not clearly supported.
>
> **Rebuttal:** Conditions or standpoints that point out flaws in the claim or alternative positions.
>
> **Qualifiers:** Terminology that limits a standpoint. Examples include applying the following terms to any part of an argument: sometimes, seems, occasionally, none, always, never, etc.

The following paragraphs come from an article reprinted in *UTNE* magazine by Pamela Paxton and Jeremy Adam Smith titled: "Not Everyone Is Out to Get You."[3] Charting this excerpt helps us to understand some of the underlying assumptions found in the article.

Example: "Trust No One"

That was the slogan of The X-Files, the TV drama that followed two FBI agents on a quest to uncover a vast government conspiracy. A defining cultural phenomenon during its run from 1993–2002, the show captured a mood of growing distrust in America.

Since then, our trust in one another has declined even further. In fact, it seems that "Trust no one" could easily have been America's motto for the past 40 years—thanks to, among other things, Vietnam, Watergate, junk bonds, Monica Lewinsky, Enron, sex scandals in the Catholic Church, and the Iraq war.

The General Social Survey, a periodic assessment of Americans' moods and values, shows an 11-point decline from 1976–2008 in the number of Americans who believe other people can generally be trusted. Institutions haven't fared any better. Over the same period, trust has declined in the press (from 29 to 9 percent), education (38–29 percent), banks (41 percent to 20 percent), corporations (23–16 percent), and organized religion (33–20 percent). Gallup's 2008 governance survey showed that trust in the government was as low as it was during the Watergate era.

The news isn't all doom and gloom, however. A growing body of research hints that humans are hardwired to trust, which is why institutions, through reform and high performance, can still stoke feelings of loyalty, just as disasters and mismanagement can inhibit it. The catch is that while humans want, even need, to trust, they won't trust blindly and foolishly.

Figure 4.5.1[4] below demonstrates one way to chart the argument that Paxton and Smith make in "Trust No One." The remainder of the article offers additional claims and data, including the final claim that there is hope for overcoming our collective trust issues. The chart helps us to see that some of the warrants, in a longer research project, might require additional support. For example, the warrant that TV mirrors real life is an argument and not a fact that would require evidence.

Example of Visualizing an Argument

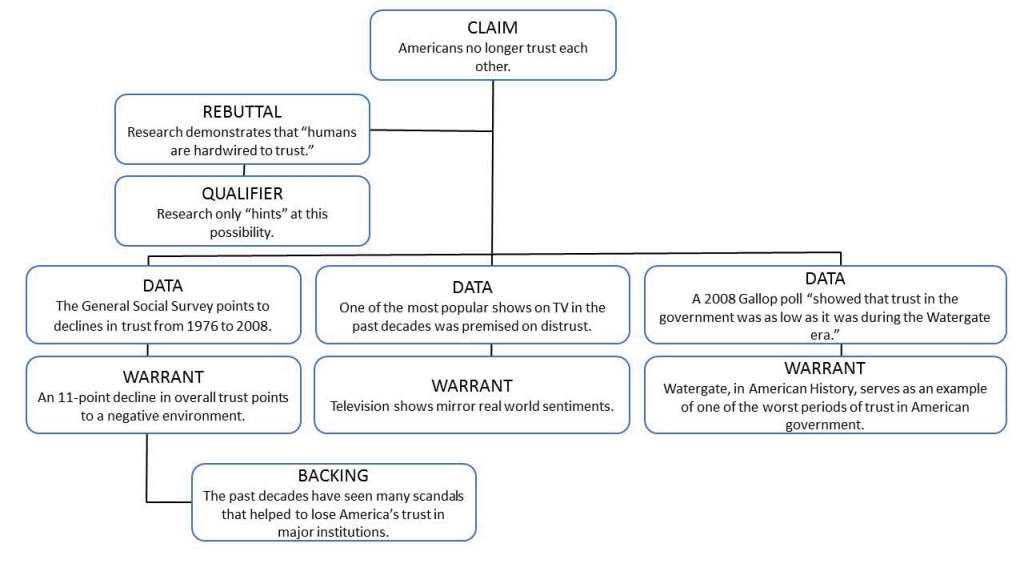


Figure 4.5.1: Visualizing an Argument

Charting your own arguments and the arguments of others helps you to visualize the meat of your discussion. All the flourishes are gone and the bones revealed. Even if you cannot fit an argument neatly into the boxes, the attempt forces you to ask important questions about your claim, your warrant, and possible rebuttals. By charting your argument you are forced to write your claim in a succinct manner and admit, for example, what you are using for evidence. Charted, you can see if your evidence is scanty, if it relies too much on one kind of evidence over another, and if it needs additional support. This charting might also reveal a disconnect between your claim and your warrant or cause you to reevaluate your claim altogether.

The Toulmin method is a useful way of determining the validity of an argument and is oftentimes the model used in legal proceedings. But the Toulmin method can leave you feeling as if you're stuck in an either/or situation as it focuses on justifying the arguer's reasons only. For a method that incorporates a humanistic approach, consider using the Rogerian method.

Practice Activity

The original version of this chapter contained H5P content. You may want to remove or replace this element.

This section contains material from:

Jones, Rebecca. "Finding the Good Argument OR Why Bother With Logic?" In *Writing Spaces: Readings on Writing, Volume*

1, edited by Charles Lowe and Pavel Zemliansky, 156-179. West Lafayette, IN: Parlor Press, 2010. https://writingspaces.org/?page_id=243. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 License.

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1. Frans H. van Eemeren, Rob Grootendorst, and Francesca Snoeck Henkemans, *Argumentation: Analysis, Evaluation, Presentation* (Mahwah: Erlbaum, NJ, 2002), 131. ↩
2. Stephen Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument, (*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958). ↩
3. Pamela Paxton and Jeremy Adam Smith, "Reimagining a Politics of Trust: Not Everyone Is Out to Get You," *UNTE Reader,* September-October 2009, https://www.utne.com/politics/reimagining-a-political-community-of-trust. ↩
4. This image was derived from "Figure 5: This Chart Demonstrates the Utility of Visualizing an Argument" by Rebecca Jones in: Rebecca Jones, "Finding the Good Argument OR Why Bother With Logic?," in *Writing Spaces: Readings on Writing, Volume 1*, eds. Charles Lowe and Pavel Zemliansky (West Lafayette, IN: Parlor Press, 2010), 156-179, https://writingspaces.org/?page_id=243. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 License. ↩

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8.1.2.6: Rogerian Argument

As discussed in the previous section, for Toulmin, argumentation is an attempt to justify a statement or a set of statements and focuses solely upon proving those statements. But what happens when you can concede that your opponent has a valid point? Because we are complex creatures, humans oftentimes find themselves strongly opposed to something that later changes for them once they are presented with different evidence. While many arguments can seemingly be based upon emotions alone, when presented with logical evidence to refute our position we may experience a crisis of conscience. Is it possible to hold firmly to one belief yet concede that the opposing side has merit? There is a way if you utilize the Rogerian method for argumentation.

Carl Rogers (1902-1987) was an American psychologist and clinical therapist who utilized a humanistic (client-centered) approach to psychology. When applied to argumentation, the Rogerian method makes use of examining counterarguments as enhancements, or concessions, rather than viewing them as completely oppositional. According to Lunsford et al., "Rogers argued that people involved in disputes should not respond to each other until they [can] fully, fairly, and even sympathetically state the other person's position."[1] Rogers' non confrontational methods, when applied to argumentation in rhetoric, suggests that the most personal feelings are also the most common and, therefore, are the most likely to be understood.

One benefit to utilizing a Rogerian approach in composition studies is that it encourages the writer/arguer to build a bridge towards oppositional positions. This does not mean that you abandon your own position, and it does not mean that your position is weak. Rather, a Rogerian approach provides alternative perspectives for considering a given position as well as methods for responding to counterarguments that might seem to refute your major premise.

Much like the Toulmin method, the Rogerian method relies upon claims that can be supported with evidence (data). How the Rogerian method differs is in the concession where, if there is a strong, valid argument that refutes your claim, you concede that argument might be a valid point in a different context. Or, perhaps you concede that a portion of your opponent's argument is valid for your position, yet point out how the circumstances differ, therefore making your position the most logical, strongest one for your given topic. While the goal remains to persuade your reader/audience to view your position as valid, when utilizing the Rogerian method you build common ground to other possibilities and demonstrate that counterviews are not entirely wrong.

When used in argumentation, the Rogerian method allows for a dialogue to occur surrounding an issue. By examining counterarguments to your claims, you are able to view your position/ thesis from a different point of view. Understanding all (or most) of the points surrounding your given topic will strengthen your own position as you will create a more fully informed essay.

Practice Activity

The original version of this chapter contained H5P content. You may want to remove or replace this element.

Pantuso, Terri, Sarah LeMire, and Kathy Anders, eds. *Informed Arguments: A Guide to Writing and Research*. 3rd ed. College Station: Texas A&M University, 2022. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License, except where otherwise noted.

1. Andrea Lunsford, John J. Ruszkiewicz, and Keith Walters, *Everything's an Argument,* 8th ed. (Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2018), 139. ↩

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8.1.2.7: On the Other Hand- The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses

Besides my own experiences as a student many years ago in courses similar to the ones you and your classmates are in now, I think the most important influence on how I have approached research and argumentative writing came from academic debate. Debate taught me at least two ways to approach an argument that were not part of my formal schooling. First, academic policy debate[1] taught me that argumentation is a contest—a sport, not at all different from tennis or basketball or figure skating or gymnastics, an activity where you have to work with a team, you have to practice, and the goal is to "win." And winning in academic debate happens: while it is a sport that is judged, it is an activity, like gymnastics or figure skating, where the rules for judging are surprisingly well codified. I will admit that seeing a debate or argument as something "to be won" has not always served me well in life, for there are any number of situations in which the framework for an argument is perhaps better perceived as an opportunity to listen and to compromise than to score points.

Second, because of the way that academic debate is structured, I learned quickly the importance of being able to perceive and argue multiple and opposing views on the same issue. Not unlike other sports where players play both offense and defense—baseball and basketball immediately come to mind—debaters have to argue both for and against the year's resolution, which was the broad proposition that framed all of the particular cases debate teams put forward for the entire season. In fact, it was not at all uncommon for a team to strenuously advocate for a controversial position one round—"the U.S. should engage in one-on-one talks with North Korea"—only to strenuously argue the opposite position—"the U.S. should not engage in one-on-one talks with North Korea"—the very next round. Seeing "multiple positions" was not simply a good idea; it was one of the rules of the game.

I've brought these past experiences into my current teaching in a number of ways, including one of the exercises I am discussing here, what my students and I call antithesis writing. These exercises will help you gain a better understanding of how to shape an argument, how to more fully explore a topic, and how to think more carefully about your different audiences.[2]

Thesis Is Not Doesn't Have to Be a Bad Thing (Or Why Write Antithesis Essays in the First Place)

Somewhere along the way, "thesis" became a dirty word in a lot of writing courses, inherently bound up and attached to all that is wrong with what composition historians and the writing scholars call the "Current-Traditional" paradigm of writing instruction. Essentially, this approach emphasizes the product and forms of writing (in most nineteenth century American rhetoric textbooks, these forms were Exposition, Description, Narration, and Argument), issues of syntax and grammar, correctness, and so forth. It didn't matter so much what position a writer took; what mattered most was that the writer got the form correct.

"Thesis" is often caught in/lumped into this current-traditional paradigm, I think mainly because of the rigid role and placement of a thesis in the classic form of the five-paragraph essay. Most of you and your classmates already know about this: in the five-paragraph formula, the thesis is the last sentence of the introduction, is divided into three parts, and it rigidly controls the structure of the following four paragraphs. Certainly this overly prescriptive and narrow definition of thesis is not useful. Jasper Neel describes this sort of formula in his book *Plato, Derrida, and Writing* as "anti-writing,"[3] and I think that Sharon Crowley is correct in arguing that the kind of teaching exemplified by the five-paragraph essay is more akin to filling out a form than it is to actual "writing."[4]

But when I discuss "thesis" here, I mean something much more broad and organic. I mean an initial direction that every research writing project must take. A thesis advocates a specific and debatable position, is not a statement of fact nor a summary of events, and it answers the questions "what's your point?" and "why should I care?" You should begin with a working thesis that attempts to answer these questions simply as a way of getting your research process started. True, these initial working theses are usually broad and unwieldy, but the emphasis here is on working, because as you research and think more carefully, you will inevitably change your thesis. And this is good—change is the by-product of learning, and seeing a working thesis differently is both the purpose and the opportunity of the antithesis exercise.

So, I think the first and probably most important reason to consider antithesis writing is to test and strengthen the validity of the working thesis. After all, there isn't much "debatable" about a working thesis like "crime is bad" or "cleaning up the environment

is good," which suggests that there probably isn't a viable answer to the questions "what's your point?" and "why should I care?" Considering opposing and differing views can help you find the path to make a vague generalization like "crime is bad" into a more pointed, researchable, and interesting observation.

The second general value for antithesis exercises is to raise more awareness of your audience—the potential readers who would disagree with your working thesis, along with readers who are more favorable to your point. Sometimes, readers won't be convinced no matter what evidence or logic a writer presents; but it seems to me that writers have an obligation to at least try.

Generating Antithetical Points in Five Easy Steps

Step 1: Have a Working Thesis and Make Sure You Have Begun the Research Process.

Developing a good antithetical argument is not something you can do as a "first step" in the research process. Generally, you need to have already developed a basic point and need some evidence and research to develop that point. In other words, the process of developing an antithetical position has to come after you develop an initial position in the first place.

Step 2: Consider the Direct Opposite of Your Working Thesis.

This is an especially easy step if your working thesis is about a controversial topic.

Examples

Working thesis:

To prevent violence on campus, students, staff, and faculty should not be allowed to carry concealed weapons.

Antithesis:

To prevent violence on campus, students, staff, and faculty should be allowed to carry concealed weapons.

Examples

Working thesis:

Drug companies should be allowed to advertise prescription drugs on television.

Antithesis:

Drug companies should not be allowed to advertise prescription drugs on television.

This sort of simple change of qualifiers also exposes weak theses, because, generally speaking, the opposite position of a proposition that everyone accepts as true is one that everyone easily accepts as false. For example, if you begin with a working thesis like "Drunk driving is bad" or "Teen violence is bad" to their logical opposites, you end up with an opposite that is ridiculous—"Drunk driving is good" or "Teen violence is good." What that signals is that it is probably time to revisit your original working thesis.

Usually though, considering the opposite of a working thesis is a little more complicated. For example:

Examples

Working Thesis:

Many computer hackers commit serious crimes and represent a major expense for internet-based businesses.

Antitheses:

Computer hackers do not commit serious crimes.

Computer hacking is not a major expense for internet-based businesses.

Both of the antithetical examples are the opposite of the original working theses, but each focuses on different aspects of the working thesis.

Step 3: Ask "Why" about Possible Antithetical Arguments.

Creating antitheses by simply changing the working thesis to its opposite typically demands more explanation. The best place to develop more details with your antithesis is to ask "why." For example:

Examples

Why should drug companies not be allowed to advertise prescription drugs? Because . . .

- The high cost of television advertising needlessly drives up the costs of prescriptions.
- Advertisements too often confuse patients and offer advice that contradicts the advice of doctors.

Examples

Why are the crimes committed by computer hackers not serious? Because . . .

- They are usually pranks or acts of mischief.
- Computer hackers often expose problems for Internet businesses before serious crimes result.

The point here is to dig a little further into your antithetical argument. Asking "why" is a good place to begin that process.

Step 4: Examine Alternatives to Your Working Thesis.

Often, the best antithetical arguments aren't about "the opposite" so much as they are about alternatives. For example, the working thesis "To prevent violence on campus, students, staff, and faculty should not be allowed to carry concealed weapons" presumes that a serious potential cause for violence on campuses is the presence of guns. However, someone could logically argue that the more important cause of violence on college campuses is alcohol and drug abuse. Certainly the number of incidents involving underage drinking and substance abuse outnumber those involving firearms on college campuses, and it is also probably true that many incidents of violence on college campuses involve drinking or drugs.

Now, unlike the direct opposite of your working thesis, the alternatives do not necessarily negate your working thesis. There is no reason why a reader couldn't believe that both concealed weapons and alcohol and substance abuse contribute to violence on campuses. But in considering alternatives to your working thesis, the goal is to "weigh" the positions against each other. I'll return to this matter of "weighing your position" later.

Step 5: Imagine Hostile Audiences.

Whenever you are trying to develop a clearer understanding of the antithesis of your working thesis, you need to think about the kinds of audiences who would disagree with you. By thinking about the opposites and alternatives to your working thesis, you are already starting to do this because the opposites and the alternatives are what a hostile audience might think.

Sometimes, potential readers are hostile to a particular working thesis because of ideals, values, or affiliations they hold that are at odds with the point being advocated by the working thesis. For example, people who identify themselves as being “pro-choice” on the issue of abortion would certainly be hostile to an argument for laws that restrict access to abortion; people who identify themselves as being “prolife” on the issue of abortion would certainly be hostile to an argument for laws that provide access to abortion.

At other times, audiences are hostile to the arguments of a working thesis because of more crass and transparent reasons. For example, the pharmaceutical industry disagrees with the premise of the working thesis “Drug companies should not be allowed to advertise prescription drugs on TV” because they stand to lose billions of dollars in lost sales. Advertising companies and television broadcasters would also be against this working thesis because they too would lose money. You can probably easily imagine some potential hostile audience members who have similarly selfish reasons to oppose your point of view.

Of course, some audiences will oppose your working thesis based on a different interpretation of the evidence and research. This sort of difference of opinion is probably most common with research projects that are focused on more abstract and less definitive subjects. But there are also different opinions about evidence for topics that you might think would have potentially more concrete “right” and “wrong” interpretations. Different researchers and scholars can look at the same evidence about a subject like gun control and arrive at very different conclusions.

Regardless of the reasons why your audience might be hostile to the argument you are making with your working thesis, it is helpful to try to imagine your audience as clearly as you can. What sort of people are they? What other interests or biases might they have? Are there other political or social factors that you think are influencing their point of view? If you want to persuade at least some members of this hostile audience that your point of view and your interpretation of the research is correct, you need to know as much about your hostile audience as you possibly can.

Strategies for Answering Antithetical/Oppositional Arguments

It might not seem logical, but directly acknowledging and addressing positions that are different from the one you are holding in your research can actually make your position stronger. When you take on the antithesis in your research project, it shows you have thought carefully about the issue at hand and you acknowledge that there is no clear and easy “right” answer. There are many different ways you might incorporate the antithesis into your research to make your own thesis stronger and to address the concerns of those readers who might oppose your point of view. For now, focus on three basic strategies: directly refuting your opposition, weighing your position against the opposition, and making concessions.

Directly Refuting Your Opposition

Perhaps the most obvious approach, one way to address those potential readers who might raise objections to your arguments, is to simply refute their objections with better evidence and reasoning. Of course, this is an example of yet another reason why it is so important to have good research that supports your position: when the body of evidence and research is on your side, it is usually a lot easier to make a strong point.

Answering antithetical arguments with research that supports your point of view is also an example of where you as a researcher might need to provide a more detailed evaluation of your evidence. The sort of questions you should answer about your own research—who wrote it, where was it published, when was it published, etc.—are important to raise in countering antithetical

arguments that you think come from suspicious sources.

Weighing Your Position Against the Opposition

Readers who oppose the argument you are trying to support with your research might do so because they value or "weigh" the implications of your working thesis differently than you do. For example, those opposed to a working thesis like "Drug companies should not be allowed to advertise prescription drugs on TV" might think this because they think the advantages of advertising drugs on television—increased sales for pharmaceutical companies, revenue for advertising agencies and television stations, and so forth—are more significant than the disadvantages of advertising drugs on television.

Besides recognizing and acknowledging the different ways of comparing the advantages and disadvantages suggested by your working thesis, the best way of answering these antithetical arguments in your own writing is to clearly explain how you weigh and compare the evidence. This can be a challenging writing experience because it requires a subtle hand and a broad understanding of multiple sides of your topic. But if in acknowledging to your readers that you have carefully considered the reasons against your working thesis and you can demonstrate your position to be more persuasive, then this process of weighing positions can be very effective.

Making Concessions

In the course of researching and thinking about the antithesis to your working thesis and its potentially hostile audiences, it may become clear to you that these opposing views have a point. When this is the case, you may want to consider revising your working thesis or your approach to your research to make some concessions to these antithetical arguments.

Sometimes, my students working on this exercise "make concessions" to the point of changing sides on their working thesis—that is, in the process of researching, writing, and thinking about their topic, a researcher moves from arguing for their working thesis to arguing for their antithesis. This might seem surprising, but it makes perfect sense when you remember the purpose of research in the first place. When we study the evidence on a particular issue, we often realize that our initial and uninformed impression or feelings on an issue were simply wrong. That's why we research: we put more trust in ideas based on research than in things based on gut instinct or feelings.

But usually, most concessions to antithetical perspectives are less dramatic and can be accomplished in a variety of ways. You might want to employ some qualifying terms to hedge a bit. For example, the working thesis "Drug companies should not be allowed to advertise prescription drugs on TV" might be qualified to "Drug companies should be closely regulated about what they are allowed to advertise in TV." I think this is still a strong working thesis, but the revised working thesis acknowledges the objections some might have to the original working thesis.

Of course, you should use these sorts of concessions carefully. An over-qualified working thesis can be just as bad as a working thesis about something that everyone accepts as true: it can become so watered-down as to not have any real significance anymore. A working thesis like "Drug company television advertising is sometimes bad and sometimes good for patients" is over-qualified to the point of taking no real position at all.

But You Still Can't Convince Everyone . . .

I'd like to close by turning away a bit from where I started this essay, the influence of competitive debate on my early education about argument. In debate, an argument is part of the game, the catalyst for the beginning of a competition. The same is often true within college classrooms. Academic arguments are defined in terms of their hypothetical nature; they aren't actually real but rather merely an intellectual exercise.

But people in the real world do hold more than hypothetical positions, and you can't always convince everyone that you're right,

no matter what evidence or logic you might have on your side. You probably already know this. We have all been in conversations with friends or family members where, as certain as we were that we were right about something and as hard as we tried to prove we were right, our friends or family were simply unwilling to budge from their positions. When we find ourselves in these sorts of deadlocks, we often try to smooth over the dispute with phrases like "You're entitled to your opinion" or "We will have to agree to disagree," and then we change the subject. In polite conversation, this is a good strategy to avoid a fight. But in academic contexts, these deadlocks can be frustrating and difficult to negotiate.

A couple of thousand years ago, the Greek philosopher and rhetorician Aristotle said that all of us respond to arguments based on three basic characteristics or appeals: logos or logic, pathos or emotional character, and ethos, the writer's or speaker's perceived character. Academic writing tends to rely most heavily on logos and ethos because academics tend to highly value arguments based on logical research and arguments that come from writers with strong character-building qualifications—things like education, experience, previous publications, and the like. But it's important to remember that pathos is always there, and particularly strong emotions or feelings on a subject can obscure the best research.

Most academic readers have respect for writers when they successfully argue for positions that they might not necessarily agree with. Along these lines, most college writing instructors can certainly respect and give a positive evaluation to a piece of writing they don't completely agree with as long as it uses sound logic and evidence to support its points. However, all readers—students, instructors, and everyone else—come to your research project with various preconceptions about the point you are trying to make. Some of them will already agree with you and won't need much convincing. Some of them will never completely agree with you, but will be open to your argument to a point. And some of your readers, because of the nature of the point you are trying to make and their own feelings and thoughts on the matter, will never agree with you, no matter what research evidence you present or what arguments you make. So, while you need to consider the antithetical arguments to your thesis in your research project to convince as many members of your audience as possible that the point you are trying to make is correct, you should remember that you will likely not convince all of your readers all of the time.

Practice Activity

The original version of this chapter contained H5P content. You may want to remove or replace this element.

This section contains material from:

Krause, Steven D. "On the Other Hand: The Role of Antithetical Writing the First Year Composition Courses." In *Writing Spaces: Readings on Writing, Volume 2*, edited by Charles Lowe and Pavel Zemliansky, 141-153. Anderson, SC: Parlor Press, 2011. https://writingspaces.org/?page_id=160. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 United States License.

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Krause, Steven D. *The Process of Research Writing, Version 1.0*. Spring 2007. http://stevendkrause.com/tprw/. Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License.

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1. Explaining "academic policy debate" is not my goal in this essay. But I will say that academic debate bears almost no resemblance to "debates" between political candidates or to the stereotypical way debate tends to be depicted on television shows or in movies. Certainly debate involves a certain intellectual prowess; but I think it's fair to say that debate is a lot closer to a competitive sport than a classroom exercise. Two excellent introductions to the world of academic debate are the Wikipedia entry for "Policy Debate" (https://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Policy_debate) ↵
2. The original text contained this statement: "In this essay, I borrow heavily from my own online textbook, The Process of Research Writing, which is available for free at http://stevendkrause.com/tprw/. You might want to visit that site for additional information about this exercise and other exercises I've put together for teaching the research writing process." ↵
3. Jasper Neel, *Plato, Derrida, and Writing* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1988). ↵
4. Sharon Crowley, *The Methodical Memory: Invention in Current-Traditional Rhetoric,* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1990). ↵

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8.1.2.8: UNIT III- RESEARCH AND ARGUMENTATION

8.1.2.8.1: Situation and Analysis

8.1.2.8.1.1: What Does the Professor Want? Understanding the Assignment

8.1.2.8.1.2: Backpacks v. Briefcases- Steps Toward Rhetorical Analysis

8.1.2.8.1.3: Murder! Rhetorically Speaking

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8.1.2.8.1: SITUATION AND ANALYSIS

The process of preparing to write is as important as the drafting process itself; in many cases, it's more important. Yet this is the process that most of us will skip when in a rush, preferring to dive directly into the writing part of any given writing assignment. Here, through a few excellent readings, we'll look at the value of starting early; of considering a college writing assignment thoroughly to avoid the misunderstandings that lead to costly rewrites and failing grades; and of considering your audience and final purpose before pen (or keyboard) connects to paper.

Our first section on pre-writing also serves as a review of active reading, the most critical skill for college (and daily life) survival that we teach.

8.1.2.8.1.1: What Does the Professor Want? Understanding the Assignment

8.1.2.8.1.2: Backpacks v. Briefcases- Steps Toward Rhetorical Analysis

8.1.2.8.1.3: Murder! Rhetorically Speaking

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8.1.2.8.1.1: What Does the Professor Want? Understanding the Assignment

Learning Objectives

- Understand assignment parameters
- Understand the rhetorical situation

Writing for whom? Writing for what?

The first principle of good communication is knowing your audience. This is where writing papers for class gets kind of weird. As Peter Elbow explains:

> When you write for a teacher you are usually swimming against the stream of natural communication. The natural direction of communication is to explain what you understand to someone who doesn't understand it. But in writing an essay for a teacher your task is usually to explain what you are still engaged in trying to understand to someone who understands it better.

Often when you write for an audience of one, you write a letter or email. But college papers aren't written like letters; they're written like articles for a hypothetical group of readers that you don't actually know much about. There's a fundamental mismatch between the real-life audience and the form your writing takes. It's kind of bizarre, really.

It helps to remember the key tenet of the university model: you're a junior scholar joining the academic community. Academic papers, in which scholars report the results of their research and thinking to one another, are the lifeblood of the scholarly world, carrying useful ideas and information to all parts of the academic corpus. Unless there is a particular audience specified in the assignment, you would do well to imagine yourself writing for a group of peers who have some introductory knowledge of the field but are unfamiliar with the specific topic you're discussing. Imagine them being interested in your topic but also busy; try to write something that is well worth your readers' time. Keeping an audience like this in mind will help you distinguish common knowledge in the field from that which must be defined and explained in your paper. Understanding your audience like this also resolve the audience mismatch that Elbow describes. As he notes, "You don't write to teachers, you write for them."

Student Advice

> Don't be scared whenever you are given an assignment. Professors know what it was like to be in college and write all kinds of papers. They aren't trying to make your lives difficult, but it is their jobs to make us think and ponder about many things. Take your time and enjoy the paper. Make sure you answer the question being asked rather than rant on about something that is irrelevant to the prompt. — Timothée Pizarro

Another basic tenet of good communication is clarifying the purpose of the communication and letting that purpose shape your decisions. Your professor wants to see you work through complex ideas and deepen your knowledge through the process of producing the paper. Each assignment—be it an argumentative paper, reaction paper, reflective paper, lab report, discussion question, blog post, essay exam, project proposal, or what have you—is ultimately about your learning. To succeed with writing assignments (and benefit from them) you first have to understand their learning-related purposes. As you write for the hypothetical audience of peer junior scholars, you're demonstrating to your professor how far you've gotten in analyzing your topic.

Professors don't assign writing lightly. Grading student writing is generally the hardest, most intensive work instructors do. With every assignment they give you, professors assign themselves many, many hours of demanding and tedious work that has to be

completed while they are also preparing for each class meeting, advancing their scholarly and creative work, advising students, and serving on committees. Often, they're grading your papers on evenings and weekends because the conventional work day is already saturated with other obligations. You would do well to approach every assignment by putting yourself in the shoes of your instructor and asking yourself, "Why did she give me this assignment? How does it fit into the learning goals of the course? Why is this question/topic/problem so important to my professor that he is willing to spend evenings and weekends reading and commenting on several dozen novice papers on it?"

Most instructors do a lot to make their pedagogical (teaching) goals and expectations transparent to students: they explain the course learning goals associated with assignments, provide grading rubrics in advance, and describe several strategies for succeeding. Other professors … not so much. Some students perceive more open-ended assignments as evidence of a lazy, uncaring, or even incompetent instructor. Not so fast! Professors certainly vary in the quantity and specificity of the guidelines and suggestions they distribute with each writing assignment. Some professors make a point to give very few parameters about an assignment—perhaps just a topic and a length requirement—and they likely have some good reasons for doing so. Here are some possible reasons:

They figured it out themselves when they were students. Unsurprisingly, your instructors were generally successful students who relished the culture and traditions of higher education so much that they strove to build an academic career. The current emphasis on student-centered instruction is relatively recent; your instructors much more often had professors who adhered to the classic model of college instruction: they gave lectures together with, perhaps, one or two exams or papers. Students were on their own to learn the lingo and conventions of each field, to identify the key concepts and ideas within readings and lectures, and to sleuth out instructors' expectations for written work. Learning goals, rubrics, quizzes, and preparatory assignments were generally rare.

They think figuring it out yourself is good for you. Because your professors by and large succeeded in a much less supportive environment, they appreciate how learning to thrive in those conditions gave them life-long problem-solving skills. Many think you should be able to figure it out yourself and that it would be good practice for you to do so. Even those who do include a lot of guidance with writing assignments sometimes worry that they're depriving you of an important personal and intellectual challenge. Figuring out unspoken expectations is a valuable skill in itself.

They're egg-heads. Many of your instructors have been so immersed in their fields that they may struggle to remember what it was like to encounter a wholly new discipline for the first time. The assumptions, practices, and culture of their disciplines are like the air they breathe; so much so that it is hard to describe to novices. They may assume that a verb like "analyze" is self-evident, forgetting that it can mean very different things in different fields. As a student, you voluntarily came to study with the scholars, artists, and writers at your institution. Rightly or wrongly, the burden is ultimately on you to meet them where they are.

Professors value academic freedom; that is, they firmly believe that their high-level expertise in their fields grants them the privilege of deciding what is important to focus on and how to approach it. College professors differ in this way from high school teachers who are usually obligated to address a defined curriculum. Professors are often extremely wary of anything that seems to threaten academic freedom. Some see specified learning goals and standardized rubrics as the first step in a process that would strip higher education of its independence, scholarly innovation, and sense of discovery. While a standardized set of expectations and practices might make it easier to earn a degree, it's also good to consider the benefits of the more flexible and diversified model.

It is understandably frustrating when you feel you don't know how to direct your efforts to succeed with an assignment. However, except for rare egregious situations, you would do well to assume the best of your instructor and to appreciate the diversity of learning opportunities you have access to in college. Like one first-year student told Keith Hjortshoj, "I think that every course, every assignment, is a different little puzzle I have to solve. What do I need to do here? When do I need to do it, and how long will it take? What does this teacher expect of me?" The transparency that you get from some professors—along with guides like this one—will be a big help to you in situations where you have to be scrappier and more pro-active, piecing together the clues you get from your professors, the readings, and other course documents.

The prompt: what does "analyze" mean anyway?

Often, the handout or other written text explaining the assignment—what professors call the assignment prompt—will explain the purpose of the assignment, the required parameters (length, number and type of sources, referencing style, etc.), and the criteria for evaluation. Sometimes, though—especially when you are new to a field—you will encounter the baffling situation in which you comprehend every single sentence in the prompt but still have absolutely no idea how to approach the assignment. No one is doing anything wrong in a situation like that. It just means that further discussion of the assignment is in order. Here are some

tips:

Focus on the verbs. Look for verbs like “compare,” “explain,” “justify,” “reflect” or the all-purpose “analyze.” You’re not just producing a paper as an artifact; you’re conveying, in written communication, some intellectual work you have done. So the question is, what kind of thinking are you supposed to do to deepen your learning?

Put the assignment in context. Many professors think in terms of assignment sequences. For example, a social science professor may ask you to write about a controversial issue three times: first, arguing for one side of the debate; second, arguing for another; and finally, from a more comprehensive and nuanced perspective, incorporating text produced in the first two assignments. A sequence like that is designed to help you think through a complex issue. Another common one is a scaffolded research paper sequence: you first propose a topic, then prepare an annotated bibliography, then a first draft, then a final draft, and, perhaps, a reflective paper. The preparatory assignments help ensure that you’re on the right track, beginning the research process long before the final due date, and taking the time to consider recasting your thesis, finding additional sources, or reorganizing your discussion.5If the assignment isn’t part of a sequence, think about where it falls in the semester, and how it relates to readings and other assignments. Are there headings on the syllabus that indicate larger units of material? For example, if you see that a paper comes at the end of a three-week unit on the role of the Internet in organizational behavior, then your professor likely wants you to synthesize that material in your own way. You should also check your notes and online course resources for any other guidelines about the workflow. Maybe you got a rubric a couple weeks ago and forgot about it. Maybe your instructor posted a link about “how to make an annotated bibliography” but then forgot to mention it in class.

Try a free-write. When I hand out an assignment, I often ask students to do a five-minute or ten-minute free-write. A free-write is when you just write, without stopping, for a set period of time. That doesn’t sound very “free;” it actually sounds kind of coerced. The “free” part is what you write—it can be whatever comes to mind. Professional writers use free-writing to get started on a challenging (or distasteful) writing task or to overcome writers block or a powerful urge to procrastinate. The idea is that if you just make yourself write, you can’t help but produce some kind of useful nugget. Thus, even if the first eight sentences of your free write are all variations on “I don’t understand this” or “I’d really rather be doing something else,” eventually you’ll write something like “I guess the main point of this is …” and—booyah!—you’re off and running. As an instructor, I’ve found that asking students to do a brief free-write right after I hand out an assignment generates useful clarification questions. If your instructor doesn’t make time for that in class, a quick free-write on your own will quickly reveal whether you need clarification about the assignment and, often, what questions to ask.

Ask for clarification the right way. Even the most skillfully crafted assignments may need some verbal clarification, especially because students’ familiarity with the field can vary enormously. Asking for clarification is a good thing. Be aware, though, that instructors get frustrated when they perceive that students want to skip doing their own thinking and instead receive an exact recipe for an A paper. Go ahead and ask for clarification, but try to convey that you want to learn and you’re ready to work.In general, avoid starting a question with “Do we have to …” because I can guarantee that your instructor is thinking, “You don’t have to do crap. You’re an adult. You chose college. You chose this class. You’re free to exercise your right to fail.” Similarly, avoid asking the professor about what he or she “wants.” You’re not performing some service for the professor when you write a paper. What they “want” is for you to really think about the material.

Potentially Annoying Questions	Preferable Alternatives
I don’t get it. Can you explain this more? or What do you want us to do?	I see that we are comparing and contrasting these two cases. What should be our focus? Their causes? Their impacts? Their implications? All of those things? or I’m unfamiliar with how art historians analyze a painting. Could you say more about what questions I should have in mind to do this kind of analysis?
How many sources do we have to cite?	Is there a typical range for the number of sources a well written paper would cite for this assignment? or Could you say more about what the sources are for? Is it more that we’re analyzing these texts in this paper, or are we using these texts to analyze some other case?

Potentially Annoying Questions	Preferable Alternatives
What do I have to do to get an A on this paper?	Could I meet with you to get feedback on my (pre-prepared) plans/outline/thesis/draft? or I'm not sure how to approach this assignment. Are there any good examples or resources you could point me to?

Rubrics as road maps

If a professor provides a grading rubric with an assignment prompt, thank your lucky stars (and your professor). If the professor took the trouble to prepare and distribute it, you can be sure that he or she will use it to grade your paper. He or she may not go over it in class, but it's the clearest possible statement of what the professor is looking for in the paper. If it's wordy, it may seem like those online "terms and conditions" that we routinely accept without reading. But you really should read it over carefully before you begin and again as your work progresses. A lot of rubrics do have some useful specifics. Mine, for example, often contain phrases like "makes at least six error-free connections to concepts or ideas from the course," or "gives thorough consideration to at least one plausible counter-argument." Even less specific criteria (such as "incorporates course concepts" and "considers counter-arguments") will tell you how you should be spending your writing time.

Even the best rubrics aren't completely transparent. They simply can't be. Even well-written, nationally admired rubrics may still seem kind of vague. Take, for example, the Association of American Universities and Colleges critical thinking rubric as an example, what is the real difference between "demonstrating a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose" and "demonstrating adequate consideration" of the same? It depends on the specific context. So how can you know whether you've done that? A big part of what you're learning, through feedback from your professors, is to judge the quality of your writing for yourself. Your future bosses are counting on that. At this point, it is better to think of rubrics as roadmaps, displaying your destination, rather than a GPS system directing every move you make.

Behind any rubric is the essential goal of higher education: helping you take charge of your own learning, which means writing like an independently motivated scholar. Are you tasked with proposing a research paper topic? Don't just tell the professor what you want to do, convince him or her of the salience of your topic, as if you were a scholar seeking grant money. Is it a reflection paper? Then outline both the insights you've gained and the intriguing questions that remain, as a scholar would. Are you writing a thesis-driven analytical paper? Then apply the concepts you've learned to a new problem or situation. Write as if your scholarly peers around the country are eagerly awaiting your unique insights. Descriptors like "thoroughness" or "mastery" or "detailed attention" convey the vision of student writers making the time and rigorous mental effort to offer something new to the ongoing, multi-stranded academic conversation. What your professor wants, in short, is critical thinking.

What's critical about critical thinking?

Critical thinking is one of those terms that has been used so often and in so many different ways that if often seems meaningless. It also makes one wonder, is there such a thing as uncritical thinking? If you aren't thinking critically, then are you even thinking?

Despite the prevalent ambiguities, critical thinking actually does mean something. The Association of American Colleges and Universities usefully defines it as "a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion."

That definition aligns with the best description of critical thinking I ever heard; it came from my junior high art teacher, Joe Bolger. He once asked us, "What color is the ceiling?" In that withering tween tone, we reluctantly replied, "Whiiiite." He then asked, "What color is it really?" We deigned to aim our pre-adolescent eyes upwards, and eventually began to offer more accurate answers: "Ivory?" "Yellow-ish tan." "It's grey in that corner."

After finally getting a few thoughtful responses, Mr. Bolger said something like, "Making good art is about drawing what you see, not what you think you're supposed to see." The AAC&U definition, above, essentially amounts to the same thing: taking a good

look and deciding what you really think rather than relying on the first idea or assumption that comes to mind.

The critical thinking rubric produced by the AAC&U describes the relevant activities of critical thinking in more detail. To think critically, one must ...

a. "clearly state and comprehensively describe the issue or problem"
b. "independently interpret and evaluate sources"
c. "thoroughly analyze assumptions behind and context of your own or others' ideas"
d. "argue a complex position and one that takes counter-arguments into account"
e. "arrive at logical and well informed conclusions"

While you are probably used to providing some evidence for your claims, you can see that college-level expectations go quite a bit further. When professors assign an analytical paper, they don't just want you to formulate a plausible-sounding argument. They want you to dig into the evidence, think hard about unspoken assumptions and the influence of context, and then explain what you really think and why.

Interestingly, the AAC&U defines critical thinking as a "habit of mind" rather than a discrete achievement. And there are at least two reasons to see critical thinking as a craft or art to pursue rather than a task to check off. First, the more you think critically, the better you get at it. As you get more and more practice in closely examining claims, their underlying logic, and alternative perspectives on the issue, it'll begin to feel automatic. You'll no longer make or accept claims that begin with "Everyone knows that ..." or end with "That's just human nature." Second, just as artists and craftspersons hone their skills over a lifetime, learners continually expand their critical thinking capacities, both through the feedback they get from others and their own reflections. Artists of all kinds find satisfaction in continually seeking greater challenges. Continual reflection and improvement is part of the craft.

Critical thinking is hard work. Even those who actively choose to do it experience it as tedious, difficult, and sometimes surprisingly emotional. Nobel-prize winning psychologist Daniel Kahneman explains that our brains aren't designed to think; rather, they're designed to save us from having to think. Our brains are great at developing routines and repertoires that enable us to accomplish fairly complex tasks like driving cars, choosing groceries, and having a conversation without thinking consciously and thoroughly about every move we make. Kahneman calls this "fast thinking." "Slow thinking," which is deliberate and painstaking, is something our brains seek to avoid. That built-in tendency can lead us astray. Kahneman and his colleagues often used problems like this one in experiments to gauge how people used fast and slow thinking in different contexts:

- A bat and ball cost $1.10.
- The bat costs one dollar more than the ball.
- How much does the ball cost?

Most people automatically say the ball costs $0.10. However, if the bat costs $1 more, than the bat would cost $1.10 leading to the incorrect total of $1.20. The ball costs $0.05. Kahneman notes, "Many thousands of university students have answered the bat-and-ball puzzle, and the results are shocking. More than 50% of students at Harvard, MIT, and Princeton gave the intuitive—incorrect—answer." These and other results confirm that "many people are overconfident, prone to place too much faith in their intuitions." Thinking critically—thoroughly questioning your immediate intuitive responses—is difficult work, but every organization and business in the world needs people who can do that effectively. Some students assume that an unpleasant critical thinking experience means that they're either doing something wrong or that it's an inherently uninteresting (and oppressive) activity. While we all relish those times when we're pleasantly absorbed in a complex activity (what psychologist Mihaly Czikszentmihalyi calls "flow"), the more tedious experiences can also bring satisfaction, sort of like a good work-out.

Critical thinking can also be emotionally challenging, researchers have found. Facing a new realm of uncertainty and contradiction without relying on familiar assumptions is inherently anxiety-provoking because when you're doing it, you are, by definition, incompetent. Recent research has highlighted that both children and adults need to be able to regulate their own emotions in order to cope with the challenges of building competence in a new area. The kind of critical thinking your professors are looking for—that is, pursuing a comprehensive, multi-faceted exploration in order to arrive at an arguable, nuanced argument—is inevitably a struggle and it may be an emotional one. Your best bet is to find ways to make those processes as efficient, pleasant, and effective as you can.

The demands students face are not just from school. Professional working roles demand critical thinking, as 81% of major employers reported in an AAC&U-commissioned survey, and it's pretty easy to imagine how critical thinking helps one make much better decisions in all aspects of life. Embrace it. And just as athletes, artists, and writers sustain their energy and inspiration for hard work by interacting with others who share these passions, look to others in the scholarly community— your professors and

fellow students—to keep yourself engaged in these ongoing intellectual challenges. While writing time is often solitary, it's meant to plug you into a vibrant academic community. What your professors want, overall, is for you to join them in asking and pursuing important questions about the natural, social, and creative worlds.

Reference

- Amy Guptill
- This essay originally appeared in the Open SUNY textbook Writing in College: From Competence to Excellence. It has been edited from its original form. Original citations from the text are available at its web site.

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8.1.2.8.1.2: Backpacks v. Briefcases- Steps Toward Rhetorical Analysis

Learning Objectives

- Define Rhetorical Analysis and the rhetorical triangle
- Identify how rhetoric is used in writing and media
- Implement rhetorical analysis in your own reading and writing

First Impressions

Imagine the first day of class in first year composition at your university. The moment your professor walked in the room, you likely began analyzing her and making assumptions about what kind of teacher she will be. You might have noticed what kind of bag she is carrying—a tattered leather satchel? a hot pink polka-dotted backpack? a burgundy brief case? You probably also noticed what she is wearing—trendy slacks and an untucked striped shirt? a skirted suit? jeans and a tee shirt?

It is likely that the above observations were only a few of the observations you made as your professor walked in the room. You might have also noticed her shoes, her jewelry, whether she wears a wedding ring, how her hair is styled, whether she stands tall or slumps, how quickly she walks, or maybe even if her nails are done. If you don't tend to notice any of these things about your professors, you certainly do about the people around you—your roommate, others in your residence hall, students you are assigned to work with in groups, or a prospective date. For most of us, many of the people we encounter in a given day are subject to this kind of quick analysis.

Now as you performed this kind of analysis, you likely didn't walk through each of these questions one by one, write out the answer, and add up the responses to see what kind of person you are interacting with. Instead, you quickly took in the information and made an informed, and likely somewhat accurate, decision about that person. Over the years, as you have interacted with others, you have built a mental database that you can draw on to make conclusions about what a person's looks tell you about their personality. You have become able to analyze quickly what people are saying about themselves through the way they choose to dress, accessorize, or wear their hair.

We have, of course, heard that you "can't judge a book by its cover," but, in fact, we do it all the time. Daily we find ourselves in situations where we are forced to make snap judgments. Each day we meet different people, encounter unfamiliar situations, and see media that asks us to do, think, buy, and act in all sorts of ways. In fact, our saturation in media and its images is one of the reasons why learning to do rhetorical analysis is so important. The more we know about how to analyze situations and draw informed conclusions, the better we can become about making savvy judgments about the people, situations and media we encounter.

Implications of Rhetorical Analysis

Media is one of the most important places where this kind of analysis needs to happen. Rhetoric—the way we use language and images to persuade—is what makes media work. Think of all the media you see and hear every day: Twitter, television shows, web pages, billboards, text messages, podcasts. Even as you read this chapter, more ways to get those messages to you quickly and in a persuasive manner are being developed. Media is constantly asking you to buy something, act in some way, believe something to be true, or interact with others in a specific manner. Understanding rhetorical messages is essential to help us to become informed consumers, but it also helps evaluate the ethics of messages, how they affect us personally, and how they affect society.

Take, for example, a commercial for men's deodorant that tells you that you'll be irresistible to women if you use their product.

This campaign doesn't just ask you to buy the product, though. It also asks you to trust the company's credibility, or ethos, and to believe the messages they send about how men and women interact, about sexuality, and about what constitutes a healthy body. You have to decide whether or not you will choose to buy the product and how you will choose to respond to the messages that the commercial sends.

Or, in another situation, a Facebook group asks you to support health care reform. The rhetoric in this group uses people's stories of their struggles to obtain affordable health care. These stories, which are often heart-wrenching, use emotion to persuade you—also called pathos. You are asked to believe that health care reform is necessary and urgent, and you are asked to act on these beliefs by calling your congresspersons and asking them to support the reforms as well.

Because media rhetoric surrounds us, it is important to understand how rhetoric works. If we refuse to stop and think about how and why it persuades us, we can become mindless consumers who buy into arguments about what makes us value ourselves and what makes us happy. For example, research has shown that only 2% of women consider themselves beautiful ("Campaign"), which has been linked to the way that the fashion industry defines beauty. We are also told by the media that buying more stuff can make us happy, but historical surveys show that US happiness peaked in the 1950s, when people saw as many advertisements in their lifetime as the average American sees in one year (Leonard).

Our worlds are full of these kinds of social influences. As we interact with other people and with media, we are continually creating and interpreting rhetoric. In the same way that you decide how to process, analyze or ignore these messages, you create them. You probably think about what your clothing will communicate as you go to a job interview or get ready for a date. You are also using rhetoric when you try to persuade your parents to send you money or your friends to see the movie that interests you. When you post to your blog or tweet you are using rhetoric. In fact, according to rhetorician Kenneth Burke, rhetoric is everywhere: "wherever there is persuasion, there is rhetoric. And wherever there is 'meaning,' there is 'persuasion.' Food eaten and digested is not rhetoric. But in the meaning of food there is much rhetoric, the meaning being persuasive enough for the idea of food to be used, like the ideas of religion, as a rhetorical device of statesmen" (71–72). In other words, most of our actions are persuasive in nature. What we choose to wear (tennis shoes vs. flip flops), where we shop (Whole Foods Market vs. Wal-Mart), what we eat (organic vs. fast food), or even the way we send information (snail mail vs. text message) can work to persuade others.

Chances are you have grown up learning to interpret and analyze these types of rhetoric. They become so commonplace that we don't realize how often and how quickly we are able to perform this kind of rhetorical analysis. When your teacher walked in on the first day of class, you probably didn't think to yourself, "I think I'll do some rhetorical analysis on her clothing and draw some conclusions about what kind of personality she might have and whether I think I'll like her." And, yet, you probably were able to come up with some conclusions based on the evidence you had.

However, when this same teacher hands you an advertisement, photograph or article and asks you to write a rhetorical analysis of it, you might have been baffled or felt a little overwhelmed. The good news is that many of the analytical processes that you already use to interpret the rhetoric around you are the same ones that you'll use for these assignments.

The Rhetorical Situation, Or Discerning Context

One of the first places to start is context. Rhetorical messages always occur in a specific situation or context. The president's speech might respond to a specific global event, like an economic summit; that's part of the context. You choose your clothing depending on where you are going or what you are doing; that's context. A television commercial comes on during specific programs and at specific points of the day; that's context. A billboard is placed in a specific part of the community; that's context, too.

In an article called "The Rhetorical Situation," Lloyd Bitzer argues that there are three parts to understanding the context of a rhetorical moment: exigence, audience and constraints. Exigence is the circumstance or condition that invites a response; "imperfection marked by urgency; it is a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be" (Bitzer 304). In other words, rhetorical discourse is usually responding to some kind of problem. You can begin to understand a piece's exigence by asking, "What is this rhetoric responding to?" "What might have happened to make the rhetor (the person who creates the rhetoric) respond in this way?"

The exigence can be extremely complex, like the need for a new Supreme Court justice, or it can be much simpler, like receiving an email that asks you where you and your friends should go for your road trip this weekend. Understanding the exigence is important because it helps you begin to discover the purpose of the rhetoric. It helps you understand what the discourse is trying

to accomplish.

Another part of the rhetorical context is audience, those who are the (intended or unintended) recipients of the rhetorical message. The audience should be able to respond to the exigence. In other words, the audience should be able to help address the problem. You might be very frustrated with your campus's requirement that all first-year students purchase a meal plan for on-campus dining. You might even send an email to a good friend back home voicing that frustration. However, if you want to address the exigence of the meal plans, the most appropriate audience would be the person/office on campus that oversees meal plans. Your friend back home cannot solve the problem (though she may be able to offer sympathy or give you some good suggestions), but the person who can change the meal plan requirements is probably on campus. Rhetors make all sorts of choices based on their audience. Audience can determine the type of language used, the formality of the discourse, the medium or delivery of the rhetoric, and even the types of reasons used the make the rhetor's argument. Understanding the audience helps you begin to see and understand the rhetorical moves that the rhetor makes.

The last piece of the rhetorical situation is the constraints. The constraints of the rhetorical situation are those things that have the power to "constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence" (Bitzer 306). Constraints have a lot to do with how the rhetoric is presented. Constraints can be "beliefs, attitudes, documents, facts, traditions, images, interests, motives" (Bitzer 306). Constraints limit the way the discourse is delivered or communicated. Constraints may be something as simple as your instructor limiting your proposal to one thousand words, or they may be far more complex like the kinds of language you need to use to persuade a certain community.

So how do you apply this to a piece of rhetoric? Let's say you are flipping through a magazine, and you come across an advertisement that has a large headline that reads "Why Some People Say 'D'OH' When You Say 'Homer'" ("Why"). This ad is an Ad Council public service announcement (PSA) to promote arts education and is sponsored by Americans for the Arts and NAMM, the trade association of the international music products industry.

Since you want to understand more about what this ad means and what it wants you to believe or do, you begin to think about the rhetorical situation. You first might ask, "what is the ad responding to? What problem does it hope to address?" That's the exigence. In this case, the exigence is the cutting of arts funding and children's lack of exposure to the arts. According to the Ad Council's website, "the average kid is provided insufficient time to learn and experience the arts. This PSA campaign was created to increase involvement in championing arts education both in and out of school" ("Arts"). The PSA is responding directly to the fact that kids are not getting enough arts education.

Then you might begin to think about to whom the Ad Council targeted the ad. Unless you're a parent, you are probably not the primary audience. If you continued reading the text of the ad, you'd notice that there is information to persuade parents that the arts are helpful to their children and to let them know how to help their children become more involved with the arts. The ad tells parents that "the experience will for sure do more than entertain them. It'll build their capacity to learn more. In fact, the more art kids get, the smarter they become in subjects like math and science. And that's reason enough to make a parent say, 'D'oh!,' For Ten Simple Ways to instill art in your kids' lives visit AmericansForTheArts.org" ("Why"). Throughout the text of the ad, parents are told both what to believe about arts education and how to act in response to the belief.

There also might be a secondary audience for this ad—people who are not the main audience of the ad but might also be able to respond to the exigence. For example, philanthropists who could raise money for arts education or legislators who might pass laws for arts funding or to require arts education in public schools could also be intended audiences for this ad.

Finally, you might want to think about the constraints or the limitations on the ad. Sometimes these are harder to get at, but we can guess a few things. One constraint might be the cost of the ad. Different magazines charge differently for ad space as well as placement within the magazine, so the Ad Council could have been constrained by how much money they wanted to spend to circulate the ad. The ad is also only one page long, so there might have been a limitation on the amount of space for the ad. Finally, on the Ad Council's webpage, they list the requirements for organizations seeking the funding and support of the Ad Council. There are twelve criteria, but here are a few:

1. The sponsor organization must be a private non-profit 501(c)3 organization, private foundation, government agency or coalition of such groups.
2. The issue must address the Ad Council's focus on Health & Safety, Education, or Community. Applications which benefit children are viewed with favor—as part of the Ad Council's Commitment to Children.
3. The issue must offer a solution through an individual action.
4. The effort must be national in scope, so that the message has relevance to media audiences in communities throughout the nation. ("Become")

Each of these criteria helps to understand the limitations on both who can participate as rhetor and what can be said.

The exigence, audience and constraints are only one way to understand the context of a piece of rhetoric, and, of course, there are other ways to get at context. Some rhetoricians look at subject, purpose, audience and occasion. Others might look at the "rhetorical triangle" of writer, reader, and purpose.

An analysis using the rhetorical triangle would ask similar questions about audience as one using the rhetorical situation, but it would also ask questions about the writer and the purpose of the document. Asking questions about the writer helps the reader determine whether she or he is credible and knowledgeable. For example, the Ad Council has been creating public service announcements since 1942 ("Loose Lips Sink Ships," anyone?) and is a non-profit agency. They also document their credibility by showing the impact of their campaigns in several ways: "Destruction of our forests by wildfires has been reduced from 22 million acres to less than 8.4 million acres per year, since our Forest Fire Prevention campaign began" and "6,000 Children were paired with a mentor in just the first 18 months of our mentoring campaign" ("About"). Based on this information, we can assume that the Ad Council is a credible rhetor, and whether or not we agree with the rhetoric they produce, we can probably assume it contains reliable information. Asking questions about the next part of the rhetorical triangle, the purpose of a piece of rhetoric, helps you understand what the rhetor is trying to achieve through the discourse. We can discern the purpose by asking questions like "what does the rhetor want me to believe after seeing this message?" or "what does the rhetor want me to do?" In some ways, the purpose takes the exigence to the next step. If the exigence frames the problem, the purpose frames the response to that problem.

The rhetorical situation and rhetorical triangle are two ways to begin to understand how the rhetoric functions within the context you find it. The key idea is to understand that no rhetorical performance takes place in a vacuum. One of the first steps to understanding a piece of rhetoric is to look at the context in which it takes place. Whatever terminology you (or your instructor) choose, it is a good idea to start by locating your analysis within a rhetorical situation.

The Heart of the Matter—The Argument

The rhetorical situation is just the beginning of your analysis, though. What you really want to understand is the argument—what the rhetor wants you to believe or do and how he or she goes about that persuasion. Effective argumentation has been talked about for centuries. In the fourth century BCE, Aristotle was teaching the men of Athens how to persuade different kinds of audiences in different kinds of rhetorical situations. Aristotle articulated three "artistic appeals" that a rhetor could draw on to make a case—logos, pathos, and ethos.

Logos is commonly defined as argument from reason, and it usually appeals to an audience's intellectual side. As audiences we want to know the "facts of the matter," and logos helps present these—statistics, data, and logical statements. For example, on our Homer ad for the arts, the text tells parents that the arts will "build their capacity to learn more. In fact, the more art kids get, the smarter they become in subjects like math and science" ("Why"). You might notice that there aren't numbers or charts here, but giving this information appeals to the audience's intellectual side.

That audience can see a continuation of the argument on the Ad Council's webpage, and again much of the argument appeals to logos and draws on extensive research that shows that the arts do these things:

- Allow kids to express themselves creatively and bolster their self-confidence.
- Teach kids to be more tolerant and open.
- Improve kids' overall academic performance.
- Show that kids actively engaged in arts education are likely to have higher SAT scores than those with little to no arts involvement.
- Develop skills needed by the 21st century workforce: critical thinking, creative problem solving, effective communication, teamwork and more.
- Keep students engaged in school and less likely to drop out. ("Arts")

Each bullet above is meant to intellectually persuade parents that they need to be more intentional in providing arts education for their children.

Few of us are persuaded only with our mind, though. Even if we intellectually agree with something, it is difficult to get us to act unless we are also persuaded in our heart. This kind of appeal to emotion is called pathos. Pathetic appeals (as rhetoric that

draws on pathos is called) used alone without logos and ethos can come across as emotionally manipulative or overly sentimental, but are very powerful when used in conjunction with the other two appeals.

Emotional appeals can come in many forms—an anecdote or narrative, an image such as a photograph, or even humor. For example, on their web campaign, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) uses an image of a baby chick and of Ronald McDonald wielding a knife to draw attention to their Chicken McCruely UnHappy Meal. These images are meant to evoke an emotional response in the viewer and, along with a logos appeal with the statistics about how cruelly chickens are treated, persuade the viewer to boycott McDonalds.

Pathos can also be a very effective appeal if the rhetor has to persuade the audience in a very short amount of time, which is why it is used heavily in print advertisements, billboards, or television commercials. An investment company will fill a 30-second commercial with images of families and couples enjoying each other, seeming happy, and surrounded by wealth to persuade you to do business with them.

The 30-second time spot does not allow them to give the 15-year growth of each of their funds, and pathetic appeals will often hold our interest much longer than intellectual appeals.

The ad promoting the importance of art uses humor to appeal to the audience's emotional side. By comparing the epic poet Homer to Homer Simpson and his classic "d'oh!" the ad uses humor to draw people into their argument about the arts. The humor continues as they ask parents if their kids know the difference between the Homers, "The only Homer some kids know is the one who can't write his own last name" ("Why"). The ad also appeals to emotion through its language use (diction), describing Homer as "one very ancient dude," and describing The Odyssey as "the sequel" to The Iliad. In this case, the humor of the ad, which occurs in the first few lines, is meant to draw the reader in and help them become interested in the argument before the ad gets to the logos, which is in the last few lines of the ad.

The humor also makes the organization seem real and approachable, contributing to the ethos. The humor might lead you to think that Americans for the Arts is not a stuffy bunch of suits, but an organization you can relate to or one that has a realistic understanding of the world. Ethos refers to the credibility of the rhetor—which can be a person or an organization. A rhetor can develop credibility in many ways. The tone of the writing and whether that tone is appropriate for the context helps build a writer's ethos, as does the accuracy of the information or the visual presentation of the rhetoric.

In the Homer ad, the ethos is built in several ways. The simple, humorous and engaging language, such as "Greek Gods. Achilles Heel. Trojan Horse. All of these icons are brought to us by one very ancient dude—Homer. In The Iliad and its sequel, The Odyssey, he presented Greek mythology in everyday language" ("Why") draws the audience in and helps the tone of the ad seem very approachable. Also, the knowledge of Greek mythology and the information about how the arts help children—which also contribute to the logos appeal—make the ad seem credible and authoritative. However, the fact that the ad does not use too many statistics or overly technical language also contributes to the ethos of the ad because often sounding too intellectual can come across as pompous or stuffy.

Aristotle's artistic appeals are not the only way to understand the argument of rhetoric. You might choose to look at the claim or the unstated assumptions of a piece; someone else might consider the visual appeal of the rhetoric, like the font, page layout, types of paper, or images; another person might focus on the language use and the specific word choice and sentence structure of a piece. Logos, pathos, and ethos can provide a nice framework for analysis, but there are numerous ways to understand how a piece of rhetoric persuades (or fails to persuade).

Looking at the context and components of a piece of rhetoric often isn't enough, though, because it is important to draw conclusions about the rhetoric—does it successfully respond to the exigence? Is it an ethical approach? Is it persuasive? These kinds of questions let you begin to create your own claims, your own rhetoric, as you take a stand on what other people say, do, or write.

Beginning to Analyze

Once you have established the context for the rhetoric you are analyzing, you can begin to think about how well it fits into that context. You've probably been in a situation where you arrived way underdressed for an occasion. You thought that the dinner was just a casual get together with friends; it turned out to be a far more formal affair, and you felt very out of place. There are also times when discourse fails to respond to the situation well—it doesn't fit. On the other hand, successful discourses often

respond very well to the context. They address the problem, consider the audience's needs, provide accurate information, and have a compelling claim. One of the reasons you work to determine the rhetorical situation for a piece of discourse is to consider whether it works within that context. You can begin this process by asking questions like:

- Does the rhetoric address the problem it claims to address?
- Is the rhetoric targeted at an audience who has the power to make change?
- Are the appeals appropriate to the audience?
- Does the rhetor give enough information to make an informed decision?
- Does the rhetoric attempt to manipulate in any way (by giving incomplete/inaccurate information or abusing the audience's emotions)?
- What other sub-claims do you have to accept to understand the rhetor's main claim? (For example, in order to accept the Ad Council's claim that the arts boost math and science scores, you first have to value the boosting of those scores.)
- What possible negative effects might come from this rhetoric?

Rhetorical analysis asks how discourse functions in the setting in which it is found. In the same way that a commercial for denture cream seems very out of place when aired during a reality television show aimed at teenagers, rhetoric that does not respond well to its context often fails to persuade. In order to perform analysis, you must understand the context and then you must carefully study the ways that the discourse does and does not respond appropriately to that context.

The bottom line is that the same basic principles apply when you look at any piece of rhetoric (your instructor's clothing, an advertisement, the president's speech): you need to consider the context and the argument. As you begin to analyze rhetoric, there are lots of different types of rhetoric you might encounter in a college classroom, such as a:

- Political cartoon
- Wikipedia entry
- Scholarly article
- Bar Graph
- Op-Ed piece in the newspaper
- Speech
- YouTube video
- Book chapter
- Photograph
- PowerPoint Presentation

All of the above types of discourse try to persuade you. They may ask you to accept a certain kind of knowledge as valid, they may ask you to believe a certain way, or they may ask you to act. It is important to understand what a piece of rhetoric is asking of you, how it tries to persuade you, and whether that persuasion fits within the context you encounter it in. Rhetorical analysis helps you answer those questions.

Implications of Rhetorical Analysis, Or Why Do This Stuff Anyway?

So you might be wondering if you know how to do this analysis already—you can tell what kind of person someone is by their clothing, or what a commercial wants you to buy without carefully listening to it—why do you need to know how to do more formal analysis? How does this matter outside a college classroom?

Well, first of all, much of the reading and learning in college requires some level of rhetorical analysis: as you read a textbook chapter to prepare for a quiz, it is helpful to be able to distill the main points quickly; when you read a journal article for a research paper, it is necessary to understand the scholar's thesis; when you watch a video in class, it is useful to be able to understand how the creator is trying to persuade you. But college is not the only place where an understanding of how rhetoric works is important. You will find yourself in many situations—from boardrooms to your children's classrooms or churches to city council meetings where you need to understand the heart of the arguments being presented.

One final example: in November 2000, Campbell's Soup Company launched a campaign to show that many of their soups were low in calories and showed pre-pubescent girls refusing to eat because they were "watching their weight." A very small organization called Dads and Daughters, a group that fights advertising that targets girls with negative body images, contacted Campbell's explaining the problems they saw in an ad that encouraged young girls to be self-conscious about their weight, and

asked Campbell's to pull the ad. A few days later, Campbell's Vice President for Marketing and Corporate Communications called. One of the dads says, "the Vice President acknowledged he had received their letter, reviewed the ad again, saw their point, and was pulling the ad," responding to a "couple of guys writing a letter" ("Media"). Individuals who understand rhetorical analysis and act to make change can have a tremendous influence on their world.

Exercise 8.1.2.8.1.2.1

1. What are examples of rhetoric that you see or hear on a daily basis?
2. What are some ways that you create rhetoric? What kinds of messages are you trying to communicate?

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8.1.2.8.1.3: Murder! Rhetorically Speaking

Learning Objectives

- Find the rhetorical situation by/after reading a piece
- Identify and use tone, voice, and style in your own work
- Recognize the consequence of tone, voice, and style in the works of others

The college where I first started teaching writing called its freshman composition course “Logic and Rhetoric” after two of the three arts of discourse in the classical tradition (the third being grammar).* While the students could easily explain what logic is, they struggled with the definition of rhetoric; most of their responses were more or less a politer version of this succinct definition offered by one brave student: “bullshit.” While I was surprised that he dared say such a word in class, and I am equally surprised that our publishers have so kindly agreed to print it, this offensive word so directly and memorably brings us to the crux of the matter: that choosing how to express your meaning is every bit as important as the message itself, which is really what rhetoric is. Every time you go to write anything (and every time you open your mouth), whether actively conscious of the purpose or not, you are making decisions about which words to use and what tone to establish as you order your thoughts based upon what is appropriate for your intended audience in that context.

Determined as I was to enlighten the class about the more positive and powerful aspects of rhetoric, we used no textbook in the program that could edify us. This turned out to be a good thing, for, out of necessity, I invented a simple, little exercise for them that you will participate in here, now, and dazzle yourself with the rhetorical skills you already possess, skills that are crucial for your development as an academic writer. For purposes of comparison, I have also included responses from other student writers for you to consider—all of whom surprised themselves with their own rhetorical range and ability. First, I will give you five simple facts, nothing but the facts, as I did my students:

Who: Mark Smith

What: Murdered

Where: Parking garage

When: June 6, 2010; 10:37 p.m.

How: Multiple stab wounds

You might read such straightforward facts in a short newspaper article or hear them in a brief news report on the radio; if the person was not famous, the narrative might sound like this: Mark Smith was found stabbed to death at 10:37 p.m. on June 6th, in the local parking garage. Next, imagine that you are the detective called out to investigate the crime scene, which will, of course, demand that you also write and file a report of your findings. (In fact, many people who go into law enforcement are shocked to discover how much writing such a job regularly entails.)

Take a moment to visualize the five facts, and then pick up a pen or turn to your keyboard and write for five or so minutes as if you were that detective. In writing up the case (whoops, I have given you a clue), you may add or invent as many details as you see fit, but you may not alter the given facts. Go ahead. Get started on writing your report of the murder scene. Then come back and read the next section.

Getting in Touch with Your Inner Detective

Welcome back. While it is usually the detective who asks all the questions, we will proceed first with me grilling you not about the murder but about your report:

- How does it begin? Where does it end?

- What types of details did you find yourself adding? Why? What details did you omit? Why?
- What kind of words did you choose?
- What tone did you take? (I will admit, tone can be a tricky thing to describe; it is best done by searching for a specific adjective that describes a feeling or an attitude such as “pretentious,” “somber,” “buoyant,” “melancholic,” “didactic,” “humorous,” etc.).
- How did you order your information?
- And, since I am working under the assumption that no undergraduates have yet had careers in law enforcement, how did you know how to write like a detective would in the first place?

The answer I get to my last question invariably is “from television, of course,” nowadays particularly from shows such as the fictitious *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* and reality-based *The First 48*. From such shows, and from detective movies or fiction, we get a glimpse not only into the work detectives are likely to do but also the language they choose. Gradually, and ever so subtly, we internalize this detectivespeak, which is more than just the jargon they use. **Jargon** is the terminology used by those in a particular profession or group to facilitate clear and precise communication, but this rhetorical tool is not limited just to the professional world. For example, anyone who participates in a sport uses the lingo specific to that sport, which is learned by doing. Doctors use medical jargon and lawyers use legal jargon, and they go to school specifically to learn the terms and abbreviations of their professions; so do detectives.

If you use any kind of **slang** words, you, too, use jargon, but if you studied these words in a book, they are probably not very hip or at least not very *au courant*. For slang is different in that it maintains a currency in a dual sense: it strives to be current, and it circulates among a select network of users. Jargon does not fall victim to fashion so easily as slang does, but it does have a similar effect in that they both exclude those outside of the community who do not understand the meanings of the words. And so purposefully in the case of slang and not necessarily purposefully in the case of jargon, the initiated constitute an “insiders club” for whom they themselves are their intended and best audience. When *you* write an academic paper, you are practicing how to use the jargon you have internalized through studying that discipline as you write for professors and students within that field.

Getting back to the detective writing . . . although you probably didn’t think much about whom your audience would be, who would read such a report, when you got started you probably had no problem deciding how to begin your narrative: Am I right that it starts with you arriving at the crime scene, and that you wrote in first person? Every piece of writing needs a starting point and a perspective, it is true, and the demands of the genre—in this instance the reports of detectives—shaped the very first words of your response. This is why I say with confidence that you worked your magic with more than just detective jargon. As much as I am aware of my audience here—so much so that I am trying to engage in dialog with you through my casual tone, my informal language, and my addressing you directly by asking you questions and anticipating your responses—ultimately the format dictates that our “conversation” remain one-sided.

As much as I wish I could chat with you about the report you wrote, I cannot. Instead, I offer you here the “detective reports” of students much like you, students taking freshman composition classes who were given just the five facts about the murder, to present some rhetoric in action.

“I arrived at the crime scene at roughly 22:45 (10:45) p.m.,” writes Jeannette Olsavsky; “headquarters had received a phone call at 10:37 p.m. about a dead body lying stabbed in the parking garage on Franklin Ave.” Ilya Imyanitov starts his report with: “My partner and I received a phone call at 11:02 p.m. from dispatch that a body was found in the parking garage on 34th and 5th. We were the first to arrive on the scene.” Here’s one more example: “On Saturday, June 6th, at 10:37 p.m., the Montclair Police Department received an anonymous call regarding a body found in the Hawk Parking Garage. Detectives Dan Barry, Randy Johnson, and I, Tamara Morales, were called to the scene. Upon arrival, we noted the cadaver was facing down and had multiple stab wounds.”

Did you notice all of the things that these reports do similarly? Mere coincidence? I think not. They obey the conventions of the genre (which is a word we will gradually define). All of these opening sentences note some kind of phone call that gets them to the scene of the crime, all of them establish more specifically the location, all of them note precise times (which could be of significance), all of them are in first person, and two of our detectives work with partners. While the similarities continue to multiply as the three reports unfold, we can discern from these few sentences alone that writers attend to how they order their information and that writers can aspire towards objectivity even when writing in the first person.

Since detectives are trained observers who search for clues to aid in the investigation of a crime, they provide written, first-hand accounts of the tangible evidence they find. They also speculate as to what might have motivated the criminal to perpetrate the crime. In short, detectives have an agenda: in their reports, our three student-detectives try to identify the victim, establish injuries and cause of death, and look for signs of foul play. They also hope to interview witnesses to corroborate their findings, and one lucky detective does. Detective Imyanitov “took down a statement from the [garage] attendant, Michael Portnick.” Portnick “states

that he was making his rounds as usual," and "he remembers checking his phone" when "he discovered a body that appeared to be stabbed to death." Why such hesitation, Detective Imyanitov? You can tell from the verbs he uses (such as Portnick "states" and "remembers," and the body "appeared") that he is recording a version of the events he has not yet verified, and so he infuses his narrative with words that establish room for doubt. Through his diction, or choice of words, Imyanitov establishes a *tone* for his report that is formal, objective, inquisitive, and tentative all at the same time. Not surprisingly, Olsavsky's and Morales's reports adopt much the same tone, and all three also end the same way: with the call for a "full investigation" to ensue based on the preliminary findings.

These three detective reports, in fact all the detective reports I've ever collected from students, discuss to some degree the nature of the fatal wounds Mark Smith received. Now shift gears slightly to imagine that you are the coroner who is on duty in the city morgue when Mark's body arrives. The coroner must do a full examination of the corpse and, what else, write up a report (trust me, there are few jobs out there that do not require writing). Visualize yourself in your new occupation, recall the "five facts," and then take five minutes to write up your findings as a coroner might (remember, you may add or invent as many details as you like, but you may not alter the given facts). Really—go, write, and come back.

Cultivating Your Inner Coroner

Your first thoughts probably weren't so much about audience this time, either; you were probably thinking hard about jargon, though. You know (from CSI or elsewhere) that coroners use very specific terminology that allows for precise and concise description, so to write a plausible report you had to muster up as many factual and pseudo-medical words as possible. In other words, your freedom to select words—to choose your diction—was limited greatly by the jargon of this profession, which means that the tone was also mostly dictated. Because a detective and a coroner have similar agendas in that they report causes, effects, and facts, and because they often present to similar audiences, their reports often assume a similar tone that is informative, authoritative, and forensic. But the tone of the coroner's report is ultimately much more technical and is prescribed by the medical community. Every discipline has its own range of acceptable jargon, diction, and tone to be learned and applied.

So how does your report read? If it is like that of my students, you began it much like you did your detective report with the five, simple facts relating to the crime. After that, however, it diverges. It becomes focused on the body alone and for good reason—that's all you've got to look at! Here I'd like to answer some relevant questions I asked but never addressed with regard to your detective report: what details did you include or omit and why? Of course the coroner cannot and does not include details about the parking garage, but what would stop him/her from recording whether Mark Smith was handsome or not, or whether the tattoo on Smith's calf was cool or comical, or whether he reminded the coroner of his/her brother-in-law? You think this a dumb question, I know, because such subjectivity and personal observations do not belong in an official, objective report. Perhaps the question is dumb, but thinking about why it is dumb is not: even though you are not a real coroner (you just play one here) you have an awareness not only of what the genre demands but also what it rejects. You have a sense of what is appropriate in this context, and in many, many other rhetorical contexts, including when you assume the role of a student writing an essay (we are getting closer to a definition of genre).

What surprises me most about all the times I've asked students to write like coroners do is not that they can, even though this is the most difficult exercise in the group, but that they do not include the simplest information—a basic, physical description of Mark Smith. They tend to jump right into gory descriptions of what got him to the morgue but not anything like "The subject is a Caucasian male, is in his early thirties, about five feet, ten inches tall and 175 pounds; he has brown eyes and shoulder-length, dark brown hair. He has a birthmark on his left forearm and a two-inch scar in the vicinity of where his appendix would be." Maybe students are just too eager to cover the "five facts" I have presented them; or maybe it is that they are not so eager to ponder Mark Smith as a real but dead person with personal features; or both.

After reporting the five facts in the first sentence of his coroner's report, and adding that Mark Smith was found by an off-duty police officer, Brett Magura writes:

> After post-mortem evaluation, it can be seen that only one of the six stab wounds was fatal. This stab came from behind, through the back and in between the ribs, puncturing the heart and causing internal bleeding. The fatal blow appeared to follow an effort to run away after the first five wounds occurred to the hands and arms. The wounds on the hands and arms are determined to be defensive wounds.

Magura concludes his report with the contents of Smith's stomach and a blood-alcohol level assessment. Like many students, Magura identifies the locations of the wounds and the exact cause of death, and like many students he admirably gropes for the

words that coroners use. Instead of “back” or “behind,” he might have substituted “posterior” and thrown in some words like “anterior” or “lateral” or “laceration,” I would venture, but his report is on target even if his and my jargon would benefit from some medical schooling.

Lecille Desampardo is the only student I’ve known to give the report a case number, “Murder Case #123,” which immediately suggests that her report is official and conforms to standards we would also find in Cases 1 through 122. Even better, one could easily keep track of and even reference such a report, which would be important if it should be needed as forensic evidence. Desampardo finds “remnants of some kind of black grease” in the stab wounds, and upon the miracles of further lab testing links it to the “Nissan Pathfinder owned by the victim.” Coupled with the “irregular shape” of the stab wounds, the murder weapon was a “monkey wrench” she concludes. What kind of weapon did you deduce killed Mark Smith? Was it a hunting knife or a butcher’s knife or scissors or something else? Does your report work to support that assumption? Chances are you found yourself knowing exactly what content to include but were frustrated at not having the 94 Janet Boyd exact words you desired at your disposal. In this rhetorical instance, you even know what it is you don’t know (which, unfortunately, can also be the case when you are first learning academic writing).

On the other hand, perhaps these words came easy for Kristin Flynn who writes,

> Mark Smith was an amazing father, husband and good friend. His unfortunate murder and untimely demise come as a shock to all who knew him. Mark and I go way back [. . .]. His memory will be forever treasured, and it is truly a shame to have to say goodbye to him today.

Wait a minute? What happened to the knife, the parking garage, and the stab wounds? One would hope that such graphic details wouldn’t make their way into a eulogy.

Yes, the next exercise I want you to write is a short eulogy for Mark Smith, which is a speech of remembrance delivered at a funeral. This exercise is perhaps one of the easier ones to write, but that is only if you liked Mark Smith and can write in honesty; imagine how difficult it would be if you didn’t like him? So return now to the “five facts,” invent the details that you need, and work for five minutes or so to fulfill the rhetorical demands of the genre of the eulogy (which I hope you’ll never get much practice in).

Learning How to Say Goodbye

Many students get flustered with this exercise because they feel compelled to include all “five facts” while they intuitively know that an actual eulogy would not; the instructions I give require no such thing. I write “intuitively” here because, again, I cannot imagine that many of you are trained to write eulogies, and so you proceeded based on the knowledge you have internalized from your religion or culture. The example of the eulogy highlights very well the decisions all writers must make about what to include and what to omit based upon the expectations of the audience for whom they write (including an academic audience). You were probably rather surprised to read just on the heels of the coroners’ reports an excerpt of the eulogy Flynn penned because you were expecting more blood and guts. It is a good time to admit that I did this on purpose, and that in my classes I aim for this element of surprise as well; my students don’t know that they have been assigned different writing tasks relating to the facts of Mark Smith’s murder, and when they read them aloud without identifying the piece the contrasts stand sharp. After only a few sentences, though, the students recognize what genre it is they hear because of the various rhetorical cues they so quickly discern.

So what did you include in your eulogy? Of the five facts, you probably mentioned Mark Smith by his whole name at first, and thereafter by his first name to foster a sense of familiarity, and then did your best to avoid the other four facts entirely, facts the detectives must write about so extensively. Flynn mentions the “unfortunate murder” in her eulogy, which could be considered daring, but she does so to commiserate with others in their sense of “shock.” Notice, though, that she doesn’t say that Mark Smith “died” or “croaked” or was “offed”; okay, clearly “croaked” and “offed” are too indelicate, but why not “died,” which seems innocuous enough? She writes of Mark’s “untimely demise,” which is a euphemism.

When people replace a word that can be considered offensive, discomforting, or controversial with another term to make it seem less so, they have chosen a euphemism. Death provides an excellent example of something that makes us uncomfortable, and so we have many euphemistic synonyms for dying such as “to pass on,” “to leave this world,” “to be with God,” “to breathe one’s last,” and “to go to a better place.” Interestingly enough, we have many irreverent synonyms for dying in addition to “croak,” such as “to kick the bucket,” “to bite the big one,” “to push up the daisies,” or “to buy the farm,” which are colloquial and try to bring humor to this bothersome subject. **Colloquial** refers to language that is informal and usually spoken but not written (such as “ain’t”

and “gonna”). These particular death *colloquialisms* can also be considered dysphemisms in that they exaggerate rather than soften what could be offensive. While colloquialisms and **dysphemisms** usually do not belong in academic writing, euphemism can serve its purpose depending on your tone.

But enough talk about talk. Let’s get back to the writing. Adi Baruch wrote her eulogy in the form of letter (also known as an **epistle**) to Mark Smith, which is a bit of a departure from the genre in its strictest sense, but she nevertheless avoids mentioning anything about the murder while still conveying that he has, well, left us:

> Whoever knew quite how cruel life could be? Surely, neither you nor I. We’ve known each other for the past ten years, always growing closer. Unfortunately enough, for me and many others, your life has come to an end. We can no longer continue to make great memories together. . . . Your memory will live on with every life you’ve ever touched.

Does your eulogy sound like this? Is it written in first-person, is it evasive of specifics but generally positive, is the diction a bit stilted and the tone sentimental, wistful, and poignant? Does yours, like hers, eventually end with saying good-bye to the deceased (aka the dead person)?

Or does your eulogy sound more like this one from Micheal Lynch:

> For those of you who knew Mark Smith as I did, I am sure you are not the least bit surprised to hear that he was murdered and quite violently with multiple stab wounds. Mark was our friend and our benefactor, but of course we all know he was a low-life criminal. With the number of enemies Mark made, I’m sure that the only surprise is that it took them until 10:37 p.m. on Saturday, June 6th to catch up with his sorry butt. It is ironic, you must agree, that he “bought it” in a parking garage since the only thing he ever did in a parking garage is rip off the things that everybody who parked there had brought! Yes, we’ll miss you Mark and those little surprises he used to bring to each of us. Rest in peace, buddy!

When we read this one aloud in class, much laughter broke out. Why is it funny? Because it runs contrary to our established expectations, and incongruity is often a source of humor. The students recognized that while Lynch conforms to the rhetorical conventions of eulogy— he writes in first-person, remembers the deceased fondly, and says goodbye—he also works against the conventions of the genre in terms of content, diction, and tone. In short, this incongruity makes the piece ironic, which Lynch might be trying to flag when he points to the situational irony of the location of the murder.

I imagine that Lynch, like many students, assumed he had to work in all “five-facts” and saw his way to a very creative solution; knowing that such facts don’t belong in a eulogy and wanting to respond to the assignment as he interpreted it, Lynch turned the genre on its head. He showed savvy in writing it and his classmates in laughing at it, for they all recognized how much one can push or play with a given genre and still maintain its identifiable qualities. The content is graphic, the diction is crass, and the tone is irreverent. Nonetheless, it remains a eulogy, one that would likely get recited among friends (but not family) with shots of whiskey in hand.

Herein we might find our definition of **genre**, which by necessity remains perpetually loose: when the traits or attributes considered normal to or typical of a particular kind of creative piece, such as in literature, film, or music, make it that kind and not another. For example, we know horror films when we see them and we recognize classical music when we hear it because we can classify these things according to the conventions of their genres. And we can identify the genre of the piece I am writing for you as an expository essay with its thesis, its body paragraphs of support and detail, and, as you will see, its conclusion, even if my tone is playful.

Whether or not Mark Smith was a low-life, petty thief as Lynch makes him out to be, the person who murdered him is most definitely a criminal, which brings us to our last rhetorical scenario. Your final task is to write a closing argument as if you were the prosecutor addressing the jury who will find the accused murderer guilty or not. Go ahead. Put on a suit and become a lawyer (in this profession, if you are not off researching you are usually writing), and then come back to see how your closing argument compares with the others.

Learning to Love Your Inner Lawyer

Notice how I kindly provided a big clue to get you started, since you’ve had so much to think about already. When you wrote the eulogy I did not call attention to the fact that your audience was friends and family, for whom you wrote nonetheless, but here I do

remind you that you were to address the jury. This is your signal not to soften the blow of the loss of Mark Smith for your audience, as you did in the eulogy, but to write it big, to write it bold . . . perhaps to the point where you could be accused of exaggeration (in writing aka hyperbole). You must play upon your audience's heartstrings here, too, of course, but you must balance it with cold, hard, irrefutable facts as per the genre's demands. How did you begin?

Despite my clue, only some of your peers start their closing arguments as Christopher Traina and Ricardo Ataide did with the requisite and respectful "ladies and gentlemen of the jury" (Traina did admit that both of his parents are attorneys, but it is unlikely he attends any of the closing arguments they might make!). What effect does this address have? It alerts the members of the jury that what follows is directed specifically to them, reminds them of their important role, and helps to establish a rapport between them and the attorney. The closing argument is a good example of how the different rhetorical tools available carry different weight given the rhetorical situation.

Although awareness of audience is always hugely important when one goes to write anything, a direct address is not, which we see with the lack thereof in the detective's and coroner's reports. They write for an **implied audience** (as you do in your academic writing), which is more often than not comprised of attorneys and, funnily enough, eventually of judges and juries (which is why their work is ultimately forensic). Furthermore, when it comes time to communicate to the jury how Mark Smith was murdered, the attorney would do best to translate the medical jargon of the coroner's report into **layperson's terms**, or language for people who are not experts; plain, simple diction would prevail over sophisticated jargon in this context. And while the detective's and the coroner's reports should be devoid of emotion, just as the eulogy should be saturated with it, the attorney aims to persuade the jury with both objective facts, what Aristotle calls **logos**, and simmering emotion, what he calls **pathos**; and lastly, depending on the lawyer, the jury will also likely be persuaded by his/her **ethos**, or credible character.

Appealing to his jury in first person, Traina states for "what reasons" the "accused" committed the "heinous murder . . . you and I will never know. But I do ask you to do what is right. That is when you go to deliberate, you remember the grieving family. Remember the horrendous photos. Remember the lack of emotion on the accused's face. You must remember all of these facts, find the defendant guilty, and put him in jail where he will not be a danger to society. I thank you for your time and hope for your diligence in [reaching] your verdict." Traina charges the jury with the moral duty to do what is right based on the evidence provided while he also beseeches them—in short sentences of parallel form that one can imagine him articulating very slowly and deliberately—to dwell not only on the family's agony but on the defendant's lack of remorse. This *appeal to emotion* (aka pathos) doesn't alter the facts per se, but it provides a less than neutral lens, a bias, through which the attorney hopes the jury will view them (although in academic writing one is often encouraged to avoid such bias). The tone Traina establishes is one full of urgency and gravity for the case and also of reverence for the jury, whom he thanks at the end and so maintains the rapport he initially established.

You might find that your closing argument reads so much like Traina's that they can be considered "generic" closing arguments. Or maybe you went the route that Ataide did, which is to highlight the significant points of the investigation as you constructed a summary— a conclusion. Ataide looked a bit at the criminal mind of the defendant who "harbored feelings of despair and hatred for quite some time" before murdering his former professor, all of which are documented "in his emails and Twitter updates." Ataide concludes his argument by directly reminding the jury that while the professor "will never again teach a class, you have the opportunity to teach the accused, Lucas Brown, a lesson here today. A conviction should be your only choice." This clever twist on teaching a lesson provides eloquent closure to his argument.

Or perhaps you, like Chelsea Vick, felt mounting drama to be the most persuasive approach. She tells the jury that "the defendant has not only physically stabbed my client Mark Smith; he has stabbed the judicial system. Every entrance wound on my victim's body is another blow to the system our government runs on." She, like Traina, conjures up fear with the prospect of returning such a person to the streets, and she, too, "leaves you [the jury] to deliberate whether to send a murderer to jail or to another parking garage."

By making reference to the "system our government runs on," Vick plays with the sometimes subtle line between the **connotation** and **denotation** of words. What a word denotes is its literal definition or what you would find should you look it up in the dictionary, but words have connotations, too, which are the emotional associations, positive or negative, we bring to them. While an apple pie denotes a dessert made of sliced apples and sugar baked in a single or double flour crust, in the United States it can also conjure up positive emotions about home and/or patriotism about country. We imagine apple pies to be lovingly-baked by apron-clad moms who raise citizens who are, well, as the saying goes, "as American as apple pie." Vick's comment that the defendant has metaphorically "stabbed the judicial system" in addition to Mark Smith is meant to produce negative connotations beyond the actual murder; she conjures up the looming threat that our entire way of life would be at stake should the jury do anything other than convict the defendant.

If we envision in our minds the passionate delivery of these closing arguments, we might imagine that we have finally come

close to the first definition of “rhetoric” that the *American Heritage Dictionary* online offers us, which is “the art or study of using language effectively and persuasively,” rather than that one-word definition my brave student once proffered. Yes, our attorneys all did perform admirably in their endeavors to persuade the jury with their words, but we find examples of effective rhetoric in all of the writing scenarios we have considered.

Here I offer my definition: **rhetoric** is what allows you to write (and speak) appropriately for a given situation, one that is determined by the expectations of your audience, implied or acknowledged, whether you are texting, writing a love letter, or bleeding a term paper. When you go to write, you might not always be actively aware of your audience as an audience. You may not even consciously realize that you are enacting certain rhetorical strategies while rejecting others. But each time you write you will find yourself in a rhetorical situation, in other words within a context or genre, that nudges you to choose the right diction or even jargon and to strike the right tone.

In this essay, I put you in three rhetorical situations for which you have no formal training—writing hypothetically as if you were a detective, a coroner, and a lawyer—and you knew what to do, as you did with the eulogy. This shows the extent to which we absorb and internalize our rhetorical tools by watching media, reading books, and participating in our culture. More importantly, you can now see that when I told you at the beginning that you are already in possession of the rhetorical skills necessary for mastering the genre of academic writing and that you need only apply them, I wasn’t just feeding you a bunch of bull.

Exercise 8.1.2.8.1.3.1

1. Which of the exercises did you find easiest to write? Why?
2. Which of the exercises did you find hardest to write? Why?
3. What does the rhetorical situation of academic writing demand? Who is the audience? What tone is appropriate? What jargon might be needed? What information might be included and/or rejected in an academic paper?

Note

1. Oddly enough, my moment of inspiration came when I got on a bus to commute to New York City and found myself sitting next to the famous author and columnist Anna Quindlen. Thanks, Anna!
2. While coroners are forensic scientists, the terms are not exactly synonymous, for forensic actually means “legal,” and a forensic scientist can be anyone in the discipline who gathers evidence of interest in legal matters.
3. And I would add, unfortunately for Mark, too!

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- This essay originally appeared in Writing Spaces: Readings on Writing, Vol. 2.

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9: CHAPTER NINE-RHETORICAL ANALYSIS

9.1: Basic Questions for Rhetorical Analysis
9.2: Rogerian Argument
9.3: Toulmin's Argument Model
9.4: Toulmin's Schema
9.5: Persuasion

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9.1: Basic Questions for Rhetorical Analysis

What is the rhetorical situation?

- What occasion gives rise to the need or opportunity for persuasion?
- What is the historical occasion that would give rise to the composition of this text?

Who is the author/speaker?

- How does he or she establish ethos (personal credibility)?
- Does he/she come across as knowledgeable? fair?
- Does the speaker's reputation convey a certain authority?

What is his/her intention in speaking?

- To attack or defend?
- To exhort or dissuade from certain action?
- To praise or blame?
- To teach, to delight, or to persuade?

Who make up the audience?

- Who is the intended audience?
- What values does the audience hold that the author or speaker appeals to?
- Who have been or might be secondary audiences?
- If this is a work of fiction, what is the nature of the audience within the fiction?

What is the content of the message?

- Can you summarize the main idea?
- What are the principal lines of reasoning or kinds of arguments used?
- What topics of invention are employed?
- How does the author or speaker appeal to reason? to emotion?

What is the form in which it is conveyed?

- What is the structure of the communication; how is it arranged?
- What oral or literary genre is it following?
- What figures of speech (schemes and tropes) are used?
- What kind of style and tone is used and for what purpose?

How do form and content correspond?

- Does the form complement the content?
- What effect could the form have, and does this aid or hinder the author's intention?

Does the message/speech/text succeed in fulfilling the author's or speaker's intentions?

- For whom?
- Does the author/speaker effectively fit his/her message to the circumstances, times, and audience?
- Can you identify the responses of historical or contemporary audiences?

What does the nature of the communication reveal about the culture that produced it?

- What kinds of values or customs would the people have that would produce this?
- How do the allusions, historical references, or kinds of words used place this in a certain time and location?

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9.2: Rogerian Argument

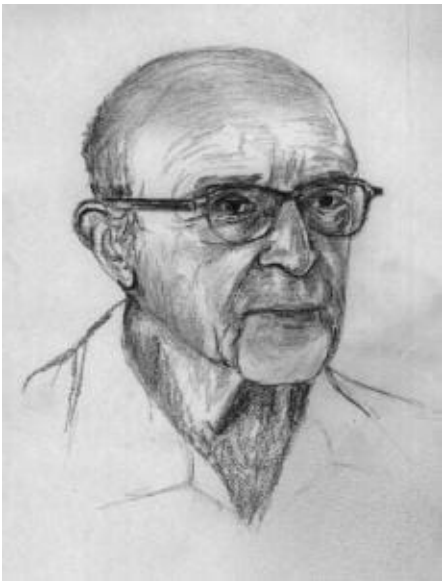


Figure 9.2.1 - *Carl Rogers*

The Rogerian argument, inspired by the influential psychologist Carl Rogers, aims to find compromise on a controversial issue.

If you are using the Rogerian approach your introduction to the argument should accomplish three objectives:

1. **Introduce the author and work**
    1. Usually, you will introduce the author and work in the first sentence, as in this example:*In Dwight Okita's "In Response to Executive Order 9066," the narrator addresses an inevitable by-product of war – racism.*The first time you refer to the author, refer to him or her by his or her full name. After that, refer to the author by last name only. Never refer to an author by his or her first name only.
    2. **Provide the audience a short but concise summary of the work to which you are responding** Remember, your audience has already read the work you are responding to. Therefore, you do not need to provide a lengthy summary. Focus on the main points of the work to which you are responding and use direct quotations sparingly. Direct quotations work best when they are powerful and compelling.
    3. **State the main issue addressed in the work** Your thesis, or claim, will come after you summarize the two sides of the issue.

The Introduction

The following is an example of how the introduction of a Rogerian argument can be written. The topic is racial profiling.

> In Dwight Okita's "In Response to Executive Order 9066," the narrator — a young Japanese-American — writes a letter to the government, who has ordered her family into a relocation camp after Pearl Harbor. In the letter, the narrator details the people in her life, from her father to her best friend at school. Since the narrator is of Japanese descent, her best friend accuses her of "trying to start a war" (18). The narrator is seemingly too naïve to realize the ignorance of this statement, and tells the government that she asked this friend to plant tomato seeds in her honor. Though Okita's poem deals specifically with World War II, the issue of race relations during wartime is still relevant. Recently, with the outbreaks of terrorism in the United States, Spain, and England, many are calling for racial profiling to stifle terrorism. The issue has sparked debate, with one side calling it racism and the other calling it common sense.

Once you have written your introduction, you must now show the two sides to the debate you are addressing. Though there are always more than two sides to a debate, Rogerian arguments put two in stark opposition to one another. Summarize each side,

then provide a middle path. Your summary of the two sides will be your first two body paragraphs. Use quotations from outside sources to effectively illustrate the position of each side.

An outline for a Rogerian argument might look like this:

- Introduction
- Side A
- Side B
- Claim
- Conclusion

The Claim

Since the goal of Rogerian argument is to find a common ground between two opposing positions, you must identify the shared beliefs or assumptions of each side. In the example above, both sides of the racial profiling issue want the U.S. A solid Rogerian argument acknowledges the desires of each side, and tries to accommodate both. Again, using the racial profiling example above, both sides desire a safer society, perhaps a better solution would focus on more objective measures than race; an effective start would be to use more screening technology on public transportation. Once you have a claim that disarms the central dispute, you should support the claim with evidence, and quotations when appropriate.

Quoting Effectively

Remember, you should quote to illustrate a point you are making. You should not, however, quote to simply take up space. Make sure all quotations are compelling and intriguing: Consider the following example. In “The Danger of Political Correctness,” author Richard Stein asserts that, “the desire to not offend has now become more important than protecting national security” (52). This statement sums up the beliefs of those in favor of profiling in public places.

The Conclusion

Your conclusion should:

- Bring the essay back to what is discussed in the introduction
- Tie up loose ends
- End on a thought-provoking note

Example 9.2.1:

Though the debate over racial profiling is sure to continue, each side desires to make the United States a safer place. With that goal in mind, our society deserves better security measures than merely searching a person who appears a bit dark. We cannot waste time with such subjective matters, especially when we have technology that could more effectively locate potential terrorists. Sure, installing metal detectors and cameras on public transportation is costly, but feeling safe in public is priceless.

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9.3: Toulmin's Argument Model

Stephen Toulmin, an English philosopher and logician, identified elements of a persuasive argument. These give useful categories by which an argument may be analyzed.

Claim

A claim is a statement that you are asking the other person to accept. This includes information you are asking them to accept as true or actions you want them to accept and enact.

Example 9.3.1:

You should use a hearing aid.

Many people start with a claim, but then find that it is challenged. If you just ask me to do something, I will not simply agree with what you want. I will ask why I should agree with you. I will ask you to prove your claim. This is where grounds become important.

Grounds

The grounds (or data) is the basis of real persuasion and is made up of data and hard facts, plus the reasoning behind the claim. It is the 'truth' on which the claim is based. Grounds may also include proof of expertise and the basic premises on which the rest of the argument is built.

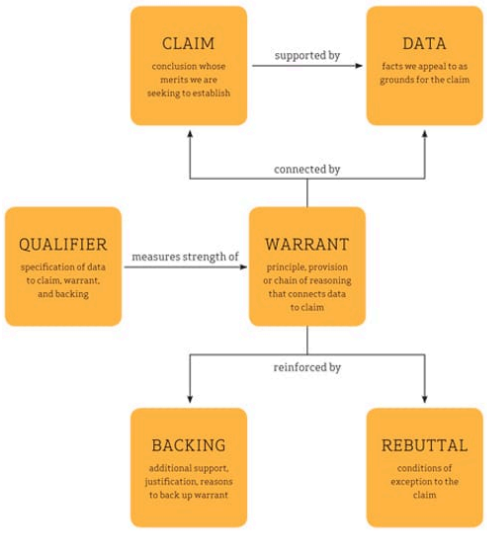


Figure 9.3.1

The actual truth of the data may be less that 100%, as much data are ultimately based on perception. We assume what we measure is true, but there may be problems in this measurement, ranging from a faulty measurement instrument to biased

sampling.

It is critical to the argument that the grounds are not challenged because, if they are, they may become a claim, which you will need to prove with even deeper information and further argument.

Example 9.3.2:

Over 70% of all people over 65 years have a hearing difficulty.

Information is usually a very powerful element of persuasion, although it does affect people differently. Those who are dogmatic, logical or rational will more likely to be persuaded by factual data. Those who argue emotionally and who are highly invested in their own position will challenge it or otherwise try to ignore it. It is often a useful test to give something factual to the other person that disproves their argument, and watch how they handle it. Some will accept it without question. Some will dismiss it out of hand. Others will dig deeper, requiring more explanation. This is where the warrant comes into its own.

Warrant

A warrant links data and other grounds to a claim, legitimizing the claim by showing the grounds to be relevant. The warrant may be explicit or unspoken and implicit. It answers the question 'Why does that data mean your claim is true?'

Example 9.3.3:

A hearing aid helps most people to hear better.

The warrant may be simple and it may also be a longer argument, with additional sub-elements including those described below.

Warrants may be based on *logos*, *ethos* or *pathos*, or values that are assumed to be shared with the listener.

In many arguments, warrants are often implicit and hence unstated. This gives space for the other person to question and expose the warrant, perhaps to show it is weak or unfounded.

Backing

The backing (or support) for an argument gives additional support to the warrant by answering different questions.

Example 9.3.4:

Hearing aids are available locally.

Qualifier

The qualifier (or modal qualifier) indicates the strength of the leap from the data to the warrant and may limit how universally the claim applies. They include words such as 'most', 'usually', 'always' or 'sometimes'. Arguments may hence range from strong

assertions to generally quite floppy with vague and often rather uncertain kinds of statement.

Example 9.3.5:

Hearing aids help most people.

Another variant is the reservation, which may give the possibility of the claim being incorrect. Unless there is evidence to the contrary, hearing aids do no harm to ears.

Qualifiers and reservations are much used by advertisers who are constrained not to lie. Thus they slip 'usually', 'virtually', 'unless' and so on into their claims.

Rebuttal

Despite the careful construction of the argument, there may still be counter-arguments that can be used. These may be rebutted either through a continued dialogue, or by pre-empting the counter-argument by giving the rebuttal during the initial presentation of the argument.

Example 9.3.6:

There is a support desk that deals with technical problems.

Any rebuttal is an argument in itself, and thus may include a claim, warrant, backing and so on. It also, of course can have a rebuttal. Thus if you are presenting an argument, you can seek to understand both possible rebuttals and also rebuttals to the rebuttals.

See also:

Arrangement, Use of Language

Toulmin, S. (1969). The Uses of Argument, Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press

<http://changingminds.org/disciplines/argument/making_argument/toulmin.htm > [accessed April 2011]

See more at: **www.designmethodsandprocesses....dwkAUTvh.dpuf**

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9.4: Toulmin's Schema

Stephen Edelston Toulmin (born March 25, 1922) is a British philosopher, author, and educator. Influenced by the Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, Toulmin devoted his works to the analysis of moral reasoning. Throughout his writings, he seeks to develop practical arguments which can be used effectively in evaluating the ethics behind moral issues. The Toulmin Model of Argumentation, a diagram containing six interrelated components used for analyzing arguments, was considered his most influential work, particularly in the field of rhetoric and communication, and in computer science.

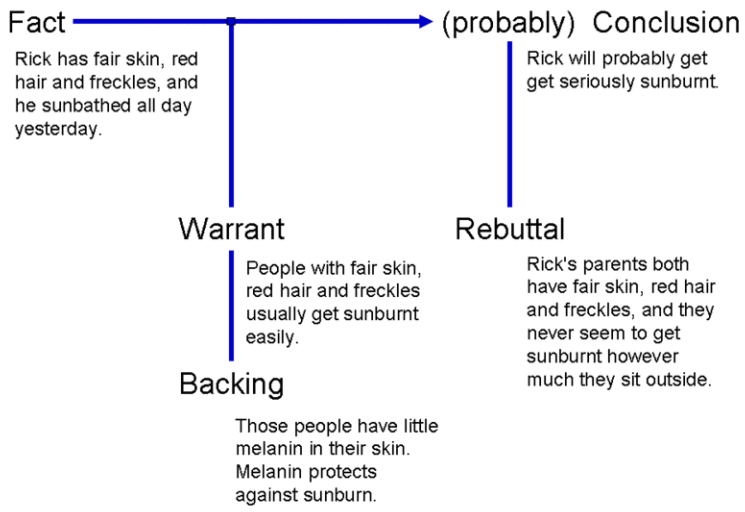


Figure 9.4.1

Stephen Toulmin is a British philosopher and educator who devoted to analyzing moral reasoning. Throughout his writings, he seeks to develop practical arguments which can be used effectively in evaluating the ethics behind moral issues. His most famous work was his Model of Argumentation(sometimes called "Toulmin's Schema," which is a method of analyzing an argument by breaking it down into six parts. Once an argument is broken down and examined, weaknesses in the argument can be found and addressed.

Toulmin's Schema:

1. Claim: conclusions whose merit must be established. For example, if a person tries to convince a listener that he is a British citizen, the claim would be "I am a British citizen."
2. Data: the facts appealed to as a foundation for the claim. For example, the person introduced in 1 can support his claim with the supporting data "I was born in Bermuda."
3. Warrant: the statement authorizing the movement from the data to the claim. In order to move from the data established in 2, "I was born in Bermuda," to the claim in 1, "I am a British citizen," the person must supply a warrant to bridge the gap between 1 & 2 with the statement "A man born in Bermuda will legally be a British Citizen." Toulmin stated that an argument is only as strong as its weakest warrant and if a warrant isn't valid, then the whole argument collapses. Therefore, it is important to have strong, valid warrants.
4. Backing: facts that give credibility to the statement expressed in the warrant; backing must be introduced when the warrant itself is not convincing enough to the readers or the listeners. For example, if the listener does not deem the warrant as credible, the speaker would supply legal documents as backing statement to show that it is true that "A man born in Bermuda will legally be a British Citizen."
5. Rebuttal: statements recognizing the restrictions to which the claim may legitimately be applied. The rebuttal is exemplified as follows, "A man born in Bermuda will legally be a British citizen, unless he has betrayed Britain and become a spy of another country."
6. Qualifier: words or phrases expressing how certain the author/speaker is concerning the claim. Such words or phrases include "possible," "probably," "impossible," "certainly," "presumably," "as far as the evidence goes," or "necessarily."

The claim “I am definitely a British citizen” has a greater degree of force than the claim “I am a British citizen, presumably.”

7. The first three elements “claim,” “data,” and “warrant” are considered as the essential components of practical arguments, while the 4-6 “Qualifier,” “Backing,” and “Rebuttal” may not be needed in some arguments. When first proposed, this layout of argumentation is based on legal arguments and intended to be used to analyze arguments typically found in the courtroom; in fact, Toulmin did not realize that this layout would be applicable to the field of rhetoric and communication until later. 1

Here are a few more examples of Toulmin’s Schema:

Suppose you see a one of those commercials for a product that promises to give you whiter teeth. Here are the basic parts of the argument behind the commercial:



Figure 9.4.2

1. Claim: You should buy our tooth-whitening product.
2. Data: Studies show that teeth are 50% whiter after using the product for a specified time.
3. Warrant: People want whiter teeth.
4. Backing: Celebrities want whiter teeth.
5. Rebuttal: Commercial says “unless you don’t want to attract guys.”
6. Qualifier: Fine print says “product must be used six weeks for results.”

Notice that those commercials don’t usually bother trying to convince you that you want whiter teeth; instead, they assume that you have bought into the value our culture places on whiter teeth. When an assumption–a warrant in Toulmin’s terms–is unstated, it’s called an implicit warrant. Sometimes, however, the warrant may need to be stated because it is a powerful part of the argument. When the warrant is stated, it’s called an explicit warrant. 2

Example 9.4.1:

1. Claim: People should probably own a gun.
2. Data: Studies show that people who own a gun are less likely to be mugged.
3. Warrant: People want to be safe.
4. Backing: May not be necessary. In this case, it is common sense that peoplewant to be safe.
5. Rebuttal: Not everyone should own a gun. Children and those will mentaldisorders/problems should not own a gun.
6. Qualifier: The word “probably” in the claim.

Example 9.4.2:

1. Claim: Flag burning should be unconstitutional in most cases.
2. Data: A national poll says that 60% of Americans want flag burningunconstitutional
3. Warrant: People want to respect the flag.
4. Backing: Official government procedures for the disposal of flags.

5. Rebuttal: Not everyone in the U.S. respects the flag.
6. Qualifier: The phrase “in most cases”

Toulmin says that the weakest part of any argument is its weakest warrant. Remember that the warrant is the link between the data and the claim. If the warrant isn’t valid, the argument collapses. 2

Sources

1. **Stephen Toulmin**

2. **Toulmin’s Analysis**

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9.5: Persuasion

Learning Objectives

- Determine the purpose and structure of persuasion in writing.
- Identify bias in writing.
- Assess various rhetorical devices.
- Distinguish between fact and opinion.
- Understand the importance of visuals to strengthen arguments.
- Write a persuasive essay.

The Purpose of Persuasive Writing

The purpose of persuasion in writing is to convince, motivate, or move readers toward a certain point of view, or opinion. The act of trying to persuade automatically implies more than one opinion on the subject can be argued.

The idea of an argument often conjures up images of two people yelling and screaming in anger. In writing, however, an argument is very different. An argument is a reasoned opinion supported and explained by evidence. To argue in writing is to advance knowledge and ideas in a positive way. Written arguments often fail when they employ ranting rather than reasoning.

tip

Most of us feel inclined to try to win the arguments we engage in. On some level, we all want to be right, and we want others to see the error of their ways. More times than not, however, arguments in which both sides try to win end up producing losers all around. The more productive approach is to persuade your audience to consider your opinion as a valid one, not simply the right one.

The Structure of a Persuasive Essay

The following five features make up the structure of a persuasive essay:

1. Introduction and thesis
2. Opposing and qualifying ideas
3. Strong evidence in support of claim
4. Style and tone of language
5. A compelling conclusion

Creating an Introduction and Thesis

The persuasive essay begins with an engaging introduction that presents the general topic. The thesis typically appears somewhere in the introduction and states the writer's point of view.

tip

Avoid forming a thesis based on a negative claim. For example, “The hourly minimum wage is not high enough for the average worker to live on.” This is probably a true statement, but persuasive arguments should make a positive case. That is, the thesis statement should focus on how the hourly minimum wage is low or insufficient.

Acknowledging Opposing Ideas and Limits to Your Argument

Because an argument implies differing points of view on the subject, you must be sure to acknowledge those opposing ideas. Avoiding ideas that conflict with your own gives the reader the impression that you may be uncertain, fearful, or unaware of opposing ideas. Thus it is essential that you not only address counterarguments but also do so respectfully.

Try to address opposing arguments earlier rather than later in your essay. Rhetorically speaking, ordering your positive arguments last allows you to better address ideas that conflict with your own, so you can spend the rest of the essay countering those arguments. This way, you leave your reader thinking about your argument rather than someone else’s. You have the last word.

Acknowledging points of view different from your own also has the effect of fostering more credibility between you and the audience. They know from the outset that you are aware of opposing ideas and that you are not afraid to give them space.

It is also helpful to establish the limits of your argument and what you are trying to accomplish. In effect, you are conceding early on that your argument is not the ultimate authority on a given topic. Such humility can go a long way toward earning credibility and trust with an audience. Audience members will know from the beginning that you are a reasonable writer, and audience members will trust your argument as a result. For example, in the following concessionary statement, the writer advocates for stricter gun control laws, but she admits it will not solve all of our problems with crime:

Although tougher gun control laws are a powerful first step in decreasing violence in our streets, such legislation alone cannot end these problems since guns are not the only problem we face.

Such a concession will be welcome by those who might disagree with this writer’s argument in the first place. To effectively persuade their readers, writers need to be modest in their goals and humble in their approach to get readers to listen to the ideas. See Table 10.5 “Phrases of Concession” for some useful phrases of concession.

Table 10.5 - Phrases of Concession

although	granted that
of course	still
though	yet

Exercise 9.5.1

Try to form a thesis for each of the following topics. Remember the more specific your thesis, the better.

1. Foreign policy
2. Television and advertising
3. Stereotypes and prejudice
4. Gender roles and the workplace
5. Driving and cell phones

Collaboration

Please share with a classmate and compare your answers. Choose the thesis statement that most interests you and discuss why.

Bias in Writing

Everyone has various biases on any number of topics. For example, you might have a bias toward wearing black instead of brightly colored clothes or wearing jeans rather than formal wear. You might have a bias toward working at night rather than in the morning, or working by deadlines rather than getting tasks done in advance. These examples identify minor biases, of course, but they still indicate preferences and opinions.

Handling bias in writing and in daily life can be a useful skill. It will allow you to articulate your own points of view while also defending yourself against unreasonable points of view. The ideal in persuasive writing is to let your reader know your bias, but do not let that bias blind you to the primary components of good argumentation: sound, thoughtful evidence and a respectful and reasonable address of opposing sides.

The strength of a personal bias is that it can motivate you to construct a strong argument. If you are invested in the topic, you are more likely to care about the piece of writing. Similarly, the more you care, the more time and effort you are apt to put forth and the better the final product will be.

The weakness of bias is when the bias begins to take over the essay—when, for example, you neglect opposing ideas, exaggerate your points, or repeatedly insert yourself ahead of the subject by using *I* too often. Being aware of all three of these pitfalls will help you avoid them.

The Use of *I* in Writing

The use of *I* in writing is often a topic of debate, and the acceptance of its usage varies from instructor to instructor. It is difficult to predict the preferences for all your present and future instructors, but consider the effects it can potentially have on your writing.

Be mindful of the use of *I* in your writing because it can make your argument sound overly biased. There are two primary reasons:

1. Excessive repetition of any word will eventually catch the reader's attention—and usually not in a good way. The use of *I* is no different.
2. The insertion of *I* into a sentence alters not only the way a sentence might sound but also the composition of the sentence itself. *I*is often the subject of a sentence. If the subject of the essay is supposed to be, say, smoking, then by inserting yourself into the sentence, you are effectively displacing the subject of the essay into a secondary position. In the following example, the subject of the sentence is underlined:

Smoking is bad.

I think smoking is bad.

In the first sentence, the rightful subject, *smoking*, is in the subject position in the sentence. In the second sentence, the insertion of *I*and *think* replaces *smoking* as the subject, which draws attention to *I* and away from the topic that is supposed to be discussed. Remember to keep the message (the subject) and the messenger (the writer) separate.

Checklist

Developing Sound Arguments

Does my essay contain the following elements?

- An engaging introduction
- A reasonable, specific thesis that is able to be supported by evidence
- A varied range of evidence from credible sources
- Respectful acknowledgement and explanation of opposing ideas
- A style and tone of language that is appropriate for the subject and audience
- Acknowledgement of the argument's limits
- A conclusion that will adequately summarize the essay and reinforce the thesis

Fact and Opinion

Facts are statements that can be definitely proven using objective data. The statement that is a fact is absolutely valid. In other words, the statement can be pronounced as true or false. For example, 2 + 2 = 4. This expression identifies a true statement, or a fact, because it can be proved with objective data.

Opinions are personal views, or judgments. An opinion is what an individual believes about a particular subject. However, an opinion in argumentation must have legitimate backing; adequate evidence and credibility should support the opinion. Consider the credibility of expert opinions. Experts in a given field have the knowledge and credentials to make their opinion meaningful to a larger audience.

For example, you seek the opinion of your dentist when it comes to the health of your gums, and you seek the opinion of your mechanic when it comes to the maintenance of your car. Both have knowledge and credentials in those respective fields, which is why their opinions matter to you. But the authority of your dentist may be greatly diminished should he or she offer an opinion about your car, and vice versa.

In writing, you want to strike a balance between credible facts and authoritative opinions. Relying on one or the other will likely lose more of your audience than it gains.

tip

The word *prove* is frequently used in the discussion of persuasive writing. Writers may claim that one piece of evidence or another proves the argument, but proving an argument is often not possible. No evidence proves a debatable topic one way or the other; that is why the topic is debatable. Facts can be proved, but opinions can only be supported, explained, and persuaded.

Exercise 9.5.2

On a separate sheet of paper, take three of the theses you formed in Exercise 1, and list the types of evidence you might use in support of that thesis.

Exercise 9.5.3

Using the evidence you provided in support of the three theses in Exercise 2, come up with at least one counterargument to each. Then write a concession statement, expressing the limits to each of your three arguments.

Using Visual Elements to Strengthen Arguments

Adding visual elements to a persuasive argument can often strengthen its persuasive effect. There are two main types of visual elements: quantitative visuals and qualitative visuals.

Quantitative visuals present data graphically. They allow the audience to see statistics spatially. The purpose of using quantitative visuals is to make logical appeals to the audience. For example, sometimes it is easier to understand the disparity in certain statistics if you can see how the disparity looks graphically. Bar graphs, pie charts, Venn diagrams, histograms, and line graphs are all ways of presenting quantitative data in spatial dimensions.

Qualitative visuals present images that appeal to the audience's emotions. Photographs and pictorial images are examples of qualitative visuals. Such images often try to convey a story, and seeing an actual example can carry more power than hearing or reading about the example. For example, one image of a child suffering from malnutrition will likely have more of an emotional impact than pages dedicated to describing that same condition in writing.

Example 9.5.1:

When making a business presentation, you typically have limited time to get across your idea. Providing visual elements for your audience can be an effective timesaving tool. Quantitative visuals in business presentations serve the same purpose as they do in persuasive writing. They should make logical appeals by showing numerical data in a spatial design. Quantitative visuals should be pictures that might appeal to your audience's emotions. You will find that many of the rhetorical devices used in writing are the same ones used in the workplace. For more information about visuals in presentations, see Chapter 14 "Creating Presentations: Sharing Your Ideas."

Writing a Persuasive Essay

Choose a topic that you feel passionate about. If your instructor requires you to write about a specific topic, approach the subject from an angle that interests you. Begin your essay with an engaging introduction. Your thesis should typically appear somewhere in your introduction.

Start by acknowledging and explaining points of view that may conflict with your own to build credibility and trust with your audience. Also state the limits of your argument. This too helps you sound more reasonable and honest to those who may naturally be inclined to disagree with your view. By respectfully acknowledging opposing arguments and conceding limitations to your own view, you set a measured and responsible tone for the essay.

Make your appeals in support of your thesis by using sound, credible evidence. Use a balance of facts and opinions from a wide range of sources, such as scientific studies, expert testimony, statistics, and personal anecdotes. Each piece of evidence should be fully explained and clearly stated.

Make sure that your style and tone are appropriate for your subject and audience. Tailor your language and word choice to these two factors, while still being true to your own voice.

Finally, write a conclusion that effectively summarizes the main argument and reinforces your thesis. See Chapter 15 "Readings: Examples of Essays" to read a sample persuasive essay.

Exercise 9.5.4

Choose one of the topics you have been working on throughout this section. Use the thesis, evidence, opposing argument, and concessionary statement as the basis for writing a full persuasive essay. Be sure to include an engaging introduction, clear explanations of all the evidence you present, and a strong conclusion.

key takeaways

- The purpose of persuasion in writing is to convince or move readers toward a certain point of view, or opinion.
- An argument is a reasoned opinion supported and explained by evidence. To argue, in writing, is to advance knowledge and ideas in a positive way.
- A thesis that expresses the opinion of the writer in more specific terms is better than one that is vague.
- It is essential that you not only address counterarguments but also do so respectfully.
- It is also helpful to establish the limits of your argument and what you are trying to accomplish through a concession statement.
- To persuade a skeptical audience, you will need to use a wide range of evidence. Scientific studies, opinions from experts, historical precedent, statistics, personal anecdotes, and current events are all types of evidence that you might use in explaining your point.
- Make sure that your word choice and writing style is appropriate for both your subject and your audience.
- You should let your reader know your bias, but do not let that bias blind you to the primary components of good argumentation: sound, thoughtful evidence and respectfully and reasonably addressing opposing ideas.
- You should be mindful of the use of I in your writing because it can make your argument sound more biased than it needs to.
- Facts are statements that can be proven using objective data.
- Opinions are personal views, or judgments, that cannot be proven.
- In writing, you want to strike a balance between credible facts and authoritative opinions.
- Quantitative visuals present data graphically. The purpose of using quantitative visuals is to make logical appeals to the audience.
- Qualitative visuals present images that appeal to the audience's emotions.

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10: CHAPTER TEN-WRITING TO THINK AND WRITING TO LEARN

Which Comes First? A Chicken-or-the-Egg Question

You've probably had moments as a writing student when you've said to yourself, "I know what I think about this topic; I just can't get it down on paper." This frustration comes from the notion that writing comes after thinking, that it merely represents or translates thoughts that are already fully formed in your head. But what if the act of writing helps sharpen your thinking? What if the act of putting thoughts into words changes those thoughts for the better? Are there ways to make that transformation happen consistently enough so that writing becomes not an end but a beginning, not a chore but a revelation? That's what this first chapter is about.

10.1: Examining the Status Quo

10.2: Posing Productive Questions

10.3: Slowing Down Your Thinking

10.4: Withholding Judgment

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10.1: Examining the Status Quo

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
1. Understand your roles and responsibilities as a person engaged in higher education. 2. Explore the relationship between higher education and the status quo. 3. Learn ways to examine the status quo in your surroundings consistently and productively.

Why are you here?

The question sounds simple enough, and you may well have developed some stock answers by now.

I'm here because...

- I want to be a _____ when I grow up.
- college graduates make more money.
- my parents wanted me to go here.
- my boyfriend or girlfriend got accepted here.
- I couldn't get in anywhere else.
- I just got laid off.

Maybe the truth is, deep down, that you don't really know yet why you're here, and that's OK. By the end of your college experience, you'll have developed several good answers for why you were here, and they won't necessarily look anything like your first stock response.

But what does this personal question about your motivations for being in college have to do with examining the status quo? Well, the first way to learn how to examine the status quo (literally, "the state in which") is to examine your place in it. By enrolling in higher education, you're making a choice to develop your skills and intellect beyond a baseline level of proficiency. Choosing to become a college-educated person obligates you to leave your mark on the world.

You're investing time and money into your college education, presumably for the real benefits it will provide you, but it's important to remember that others are investing in you as well. Perhaps family members are providing financial support, or the federal government is providing a Pell Grant or a low-interest loan, or an organization or alumni group is awarding you a scholarship. If you're attending a state school, the state government is investing in you because your tuition (believe it or not) covers only a small portion of the total cost to educate you.

So what is the return a free, independent, evolving society expects on its investment in you, and what should you be asking of yourself? Surely something more than mere maintenance of the status quo should be in order. Rather, society expects you to be a member of a college-educated citizenry and workforce capable of improving the lives and lot of future generations.

Getting into the habit of "examining" (or even "challenging") the status quo doesn't necessarily mean putting yourself into a constant state of revolution or rebellion. Rather, the process suggests a kind of **mindfulness**[1], a certain disposition to ask a set of questions about your surroundings:

- What is the status quo of _____? (descriptive)
- Why is _____ the way it is? (**diagnostic**[2])
- What (or who) made _____ this way? (**forensic**[3])
- Was _____ ever different in the past? (historical)
- Who benefits from keeping _____ the way it is? (investigative)

Only after these relatively objective questions have been asked, researched, and answered might you hazard a couple of additional, potentially more contentious questions:

- How could or should _____ be different in the future? (speculative)
- What steps would be required to make _____ different? (policy based)

These last two types of questions are more overtly controversial, especially if they are applied to status-quo practices that have been in place for many years or even generations. But asking even the seemingly benign questions in the first category will directly threaten those forces and interests that benefit most from the preservation of the status quo. You will encounter resistance not only from this already powerful group but also from reformers with competing interests who have different opinions about where the status quo came from or how it should be changed.

1. A habit of sharpening your consciousness of your surroundings, attained by posing productive questions, slowing down your thinking, and withholding judgment.

2. A kind of inquiry meant to figure out why something is the way it is.

3. A kind of inquiry about the circumstances that led something to be the way it currently is.

These concerns about “going public” with your ideas about the status quo are covered in more detail in Chapter 4 "Joining the Conversation". For now, before you risk losing heart or nerve for fear of making too many enemies by roiling the waters, think about the benefits the habit of privately examining the status quo might have for your thinking, writing, and learning.

Since we began this section with a discussion about education and your place in it, let’s close by having you exercise this habit on that same subject. For starters, let’s just apply the questioning habit to some of what you may have been taught about academic writing over the years. Here is one description of the status quo thinking on the subject that might be worth some examination.

What Is the Status Quo of Academic Writing?

• Writing can and should be taught and learned in a certain, systematic way.
• Writing has been taught and learned in much the same way over time.
• Becoming a good writer is a matter of learning the forms (genres, modes, etc.) of academic writing.
• Students are blank slates who know next to nothing about how to write.
• Writing done outside of academic settings (e-mail, texting, graffiti, comics, video game design, music lyrics, etc.) is not really writing.
• Knowing what you think is a must before you turn to writing.
• Writing is largely a solitary pursuit.
• Good writing can happen in the absence of good reading.
• Using agreed-on norms and rubrics for evaluation is how experts can measure writing quality based on students’ responses to standardized prompts.

Your list might look a little different, depending on your experience as a student writer. But once you have amassed your description of the status quo, you’re ready to run each element of it through the rest of the mindfulness questions that appear earlier in the section. Or more broadly, you can fill in the blanks of those mindfulness questions with “academic writing” (as you have just described it):

- Why is academic writing the way it is?
- What (or who) made academic writing this way?
- Was academic writing ever different in the past?
- Who benefits from keeping academic writing the way it is?
- How could or should academic writing be different in the future?
- What steps would be required to make academic writing different?

Asking these kinds of questions about a practice like academic writing, or about any of the other subjects you will encounter in college, might seem like a recipe for disaster, especially if you were educated in a K–12 environment that did not value critical questioning of authority. After all, most elementary, middle, and high schools are not in the business of encouraging dissent from their students daily. Yes, there are exceptions, but they are rare, and all the more rare in recent years thanks to the stranglehold of standardized testing and concerns about school discipline. In college, on the other hand, even at the introductory level, the curriculum rewards questioning and perspective about the development and future of the given discipline under examination.

Certainly, to be successful at the graduate, postgraduate, and professional level, you must be able to assess, refine, and reform the practices and assumptions of the discipline or profession of which you will be a fully vested member.

KEY TAKEAWAYS
• You don't have to know exactly why you're here in college, but you do have to get into the habit of asking, reasking, and answering that question daily. • Society's expected return on its investment in you as a college student (and your expectation of yourself) is that you will be in a position to examine the status quo and when necessary, help change it for the better. • Learning to ask certain kinds of questions about the status quo will establish a habit of mindfulness and will lead to more productive thinking and writing about your surroundings.

EXERCISES
1. So why *are* you here? (Be honest, keep it private if you want, but repeat the exercise for the next twenty-eight days and see if your answer changes.) 2. Near the end of this section, you were invited to apply the mindfulness questions to traditional practices in the teaching and learning of academic writing. Now it's time to try those questions on a topic of your choice or on one of the following topics. Fill in the blank in each case with the chosen topic and answer the resulting question. Keep in mind that this exercise, in some cases, could require a fair amount of research but might also net a pretty substantial essay. The Mindfulness Questions ◦ What is the status quo of _____? (descriptive) ◦ Why is _____ the way it is? (diagnostic) ◦ What (or who) made _____ this way? (forensic) ◦ Was _____ ever different in the past? (historical) ◦ Who benefits from keeping _____ the way it is? (investigative) ◦ How could or should _____ be different in the future? (speculative) ◦ What steps would be required to make _____ different? (policy based) Some Possible Topics ◦ Fashion (or, if you like, a certain fashion trend or fad) ◦ Sports (or, if you like, a certain sport) ◦ Filmmaking ◦ Video games ◦ Music (or a particular genre of music) ◦ Electoral politics ◦ Internet or computer technology ◦ US foreign policy ◦ Health care ◦ Energy consumption ◦ Parenting ◦ Advertising ◦ A specific academic discipline you are currently studying in another course 3. Do some research on an aspect of K–12 or college-level education that you suspect has maintained the status quo for too long. Apply the mindfulness questions to the topic, performing some research and making policy recommendations as necessary.

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10.2: Posing Productive Questions

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
1. Broaden your understanding of what constitutes a “text” worthy of analysis or interpretation. 2. Learn how self, text, and context interact in the process of critical inquiry. 3. Explore whether and when seemingly unproductive questions can still produce meaning or significance.

In Section 1.1 "Examining the Status Quo", we examined the status quo by asking a set of mindfulness questions about a variety of topics. In this section, we'll explore other ways to open up thinking and writing through the systematic process of **critical inquiry**[4]. Essentially three elements are involved in any act of questioning:

1. The **self**[5] doing the questioning
2. The **text**[6] about which the questions are being asked
3. The **context**[7] of the text being questioned

For our purposes, **text** should be defined here very broadly as **anything** that can besubjected to analysis or interpretation, including but certainly not limited to written texts. Texts can be found everywhere, including but not limited to these areas:

- Music
- Film
- Television
- Video games
- Art and sculpture
- The Internet
- Modern technology
- Advertisement
- Public spaces and architecture
- Politics and government

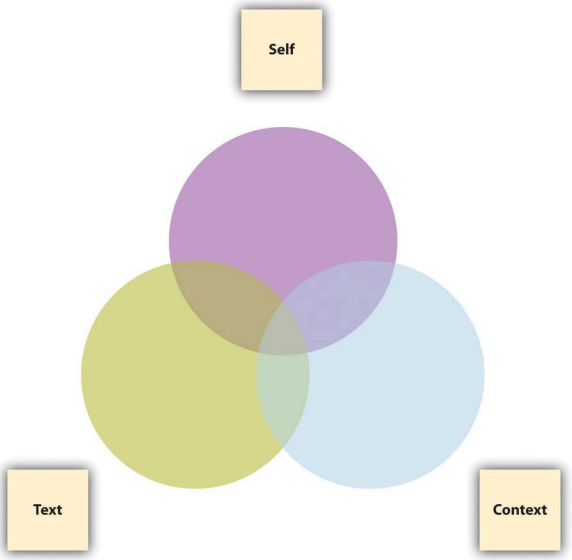
The following Venn diagram is meant to suggest that relatively simple questions arise when any two out of three of these elements are implicated with each other, while the most complicated, productive questions arise when all three elements are taken into consideration.

4. A systematic way of asking probing questions about texts.

5. The person doing the questioning.

6. The object of examination and analysis (defined very broadly to include nonverbal, nonwritten artifacts).

7. The surroundings that produce both the text and the self that is examining and analyzing it.



Asking the following questions about practically any kind of text will lead to a wealth of ideas, insights, and possible essay topics. As a short assignment in a journal or blog, or perhaps as a group or whole-class exercise, try out these questions by filling in the blanks with a specific text under your examination, perhaps something as common and widely known as “Wikipedia” or “Facebook” or “Google” (for ideas about where to find other texts, see the first exercise at the end of this section).

Twenty Questions about Self, Text, and Context

Self-Text Questions

- What do I think about _____?
- What do I feel about _____?
- What do I understand or what puzzles me in or about _____?
- What turns me off or amuses me in or about _____?
- What is predictable or surprises me in or about _____?

Text-Context Questions

- How is _____ a product of its culture and historical moment?
- What might be important to know about the creator of _____?
- How is _____ affected by the genre and medium to which it belongs?
- What other texts in its genre and medium does _____ resemble?
- How does _____ distinguish itself from other texts in its genre and medium?

Self-Context Questions

- How have I developed my aesthetic sensibility (my tastes, my likes, and my dislikes)?
- How do I typically respond to absolutes or ambiguities in life or in art? Do I respond favorably to gray areas or do I like things more clear-cut?
- With what groups (ethnic, racial, religious, social, gendered, economic, nationalist, regional, etc.) do I identify?
- How have my social, political, and ethical opinions been formed?
- How do my attitudes toward the “great questions” (choice vs. necessity, nature vs. nurture, tradition vs. change, etc.) affect the way I look at the world?

Self-Text-Context Questions

- How does my personal, cultural, and social background affect my understanding of _____?
- What else might I need to learn about the culture, the historical moment, or the creator that produced _____ in order to more fully understand it?
- What else about the genre or medium of _____ might I need to learn in order to understand it better?
- How might _____ look or sound different if it were produced in a different time or place?
- How might _____ look or sound different if I were viewing it from a different perspective or identification?

We've been told there's no such thing as a stupid question, but to call certain questions "productive" is to suggest that there's such a thing as an unproductive question. When you ask **rhetorical questions**[8] to which you already know the answer or that you expect your audience to answer in a certain way, are you questioning productively? Perhaps not, in the sense of knowledge creation, but you may still be accomplishing a rhetorical purpose. And sometimes even rhetorical questions can produce knowledge. Let's say you ask your sister, "How can someone as intelligent as you are do such self-destructive things?" Maybe you're merely trying to direct your sister's attention to her self-destructive behavior, but upon reflection, the question could actually trigger some productive self-examination on her part.

Hypothetical questions[9], at first glance, might also seem unproductive since they are usually founded on something that hasn't happened yet and may never happen. Politicians and debaters try to steer clear of answering them but often ask them of their opponents for rhetorical effect. If we think of hypothetical questions merely as speculative ploys, we may discount their productive possibilities. But hypothetical questions asked in good faith are crucial building blocks of knowledge creation. Asking "What if we tried something else?" leads to the formation of a **hypothesis**[10], which is a theory or proposition that can be subjected to testing and experimentation.

This section has focused more on the types of genuinely interrogative questions that can lead to productive ideas for further exploration, research, and knowledge creation once you decide how you want to go public with your thinking. For more on using rhetorical and hypothetical questions as devices in your public writing, see Chapter 4 "Joining the Conversation".

8. A kind of persuasive strategy in which the poser of the question already knows the answer or expects a listener or reader to answer in a certain way.

9. A kind of inquiry about something that hasn't yet happened or may never happen; it is meant either to establish a hypothesis or to bait a rhetorical opponent.

10. A theory of a case or situation that lends itself to experimental testing.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- At least two out of the following three elements are involved in critical inquiry: self, text, and context. When all three are involved, the richest questions arise.
- Expanding your notion of what constitutes a "text" will greatly enrich your possibilities for analysis and interpretation.
- Rhetorical or hypothetical questions, while often used in the public realm, can also perform a useful function in private, low-stakes writing, especially when they are genuinely interrogative and lead to further productive thinking.

EXERCISES

1. Use the **Twenty Questions about Self, Text, and Context** to develop a researched essay topic on one of the following types of **texts**. Note that you are developing a topic at this point. Sketch out a plan for how you would go about finding answers to some of the questions requiring research.

a. An editorial in the newspaper
b. A website
c. A blog
d. A television show
e. A music CD or video
f. A film
g. A video game
h. A political candidate
i. A building
j. A painting or sculpture
k. A feature of your college campus
l. A short story or poem

2. Perform a scavenger hunt in the world of advertising, politics, and/or education for the next week or so to compile a list of questions. (You could draw from the **Note 2.5 "Gallery of Web-Based Texts"** in Chapter 2 "Becoming a Critical Reader" to find examples.) Label each question you find as rhetorical, hypothetical, or interrogative. If the questions are rhetorical or hypothetical, indicate whether they are still being asked in a genuinely interrogative way. Bring your examples to class for discussion or post them to your group's or class's discussion board.

3. Apply the **Twenty Questions about Self, Text, and Context** to a key concept in an introductory course in which you are currently enrolled.

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10.3: Slowing Down Your Thinking

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
1. Learn the benefits of thinking more slowly. 2. Learn the benefits of thinking of the world in smaller chunks. 3. Apply slower, more “small-bore” thinking to a piece of student writing.

Given the fast pace of today’s multitasking world, you might wonder why anyone would want to slow down their thinking. Who has that kind of time? The truth is that college will probably present you with more of an opportunity to slow down your thinking than any other time of your adult life. Slowing down your thinking doesn’t mean taking it easy or doing less thinking in the same amount of time. On the contrary, learning to think more slowly is a precondition to making a successful, meaningful contribution to any discipline. The key is to adjust your perspective toward the world around you by seeing it in much smaller chunks.

When you get a writing assignment in a broad topic area asking for a certain number of words or pages (let’s say 1,000 to 1,250 words, or 4 to 5 double-spaced pages, with 12-point font and 1-inch margins), what’s your first reaction? If you’re like most students, you might panic at first, wondering how you’re going to produce that much writing. The irony is that if you try to approach the topic from a perspective that is too general, what you write will likely be as painful to read as it is to write, especially if it’s part of a stack of similarly bland essays. It will inevitably be shallow because a thousand words on ten ideas works out to about a hundred words per idea. But if you slow down your thinking to find a single aspect of the larger topic and devote your thousand words to that single aspect, you’ll be able to approach it from ten different angles, and your essay will distinguish itself from the pack.

Let’s try this with an excerpt of student writing on high school dropouts that was conducted at warp speed. Either the writer was eager to complete the assignment or she hurried to a conclusion without examining the elements of her topic that she was taking for granted. Every sentence or phrase that could benefit from slower thinking in smaller chunks is set in **bold blue font**.

> In **today’s world** it is extremely difficult to get a decent well-paying job without a high school degree. Although there are **many things that may serve as obstacles** it is vital that everyone receives this degree. What exactly can we do to help teens stay in school and achieve that diploma they have spent so much time working toward? First and foremost, parents need to be informed of just how difficult it will soon be to go anywhere in life without an education. Ultimately, **the parents must make the decision whether the student is going to be allowed to drop out or not**. Having parental support can also make a huge difference in how successful the student is. Secondly, **guidance counselors should do all they can** to help the student stay in school. **Some students may be looked upon as a challenge**, but they need to be helped just as much as any other student. If **students are forced for other reasons to have to drop out** they should have a plan, whether it be to **get a job** or carry on with **some kind of alternative education** that leads to a GED. In conclusion, **schools should do everything they can** to help their students succeed, whether it is creating extra help classes or interims to help keep students in check with how they are doing in classes.

This example is not given to find fault with the student’s approach, however rushed it might have been. Each of the **bold blue passages** is not technically a mistake, but rather a missed opportunity to take a deeper, more methodical approach to a complicated problem. From this one paragraph, one could imagine as many as **eight** completely researched, full-length essays emerging on the following topics.

Missed Opportunity	Possible Essay Topic
“Today’s world”	A historical comparison with other job markets for high school dropouts

“Many things that may serve as an obstacle” or “students are forced for other reasons to have to drop out”	A study of the leading causes of the high school dropout rate
“The parents must make the decision whether the student is going to be allowed to drop out or not”	A study of the dynamics of parent-teen relationships in households where the teen is at risk academically
“Guidance counselors should do all they can”	An analysis of current practices of allocating guidance counseling to a wide range of high school students
“Some students may be looked upon as a challenge”	A profile of the most prominent characteristics of high school students who are at risk academically

Missed Opportunity	Possible Essay Topic
“Get a job”	A survey of employment opportunities for high school dropouts
“Some kind of alternative education”	An evaluation of the current GED (General Educational Development) system
“Schools should do everything they can”	A survey of best practices at high schools across the country that have substantially reduced the dropout rate

The questions you’ve encountered so far in this chapter have been designed to encourage mindfulness, the habit of taking nothing for granted about the text under examination. Even (or especially) when “the text under examination” happens to be your own, you can apply that same habit. The question “**What is it I am taking for granted about _____?**” has several variants:

- What am I not asking about _____ that I should be asking?
- What is it in _____ that is not being said?
- Is there something in _____ that “goes without saying” that nonetheless should be said?
- Do I feel like asking a question when I look at _____ even though it’s telling me not to?

Slowing down your thinking isn’t an invitation to sit on the sidelines. If anything, you should be in a better position to make a real contribution once you’ve learned to focus your communication skills on a precise area of most importance to you.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Even in a world of high-speed multitasking, thinking deliberately about small, specific things can pay great academic and professional dividends.
- Disciplines and professions rely on many participants thinking and writing about many small-bore topics over an extended period of time.
- Practically any text, especially an early piece of your writing or that of a classmate, can benefit from at least one variation on the question, “What is it I am taking for granted?”

EXERCISES

1. Take a piece of your writing from a previous class or another class you are currently taking, or even from this class, and subject it to a thorough scouring for phrases and sentences that exhibit rushed thinking. Set up a chart similar to the one that appears in this section, listing every missed opportunity and every possible essay topic that emerges from the text once your thinking is slowed down.

2. Now try this same exercise on a classmate's piece of writing, and offer up one of your own for them to work on.

3. Sometimes texts demonstrate thinking that is sped up or oversimplified on purpose, as a method of misleading readers. Find an example of a text that's inviting readers or listeners to take something for granted or to think too quickly. (You might look in the **Note 2.5 "Gallery of Web-Based Texts**" in Chapter 2 "Becoming a Critical Reader" to find examples.) Subject the example you find to the questions in this section. Bring the example and your analysis of it to class for discussion or include both the example and your analysis in your group's or class's discussion board. Choose from among one of the following categories or come up with a category of your own:

a. An editorial column
b. A bumper sticker
c. A billboard
d. A banner on a website
e. A political slogan or speech
f. A financial, educational, or occupational document
g. A song lyric
h. A movie or television show plotline
i. A commercial advertisement
j. A message from a friend or family member

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10.4: Withholding Judgment

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
1. Appreciate the value, power, and authority derived from paying attention to detail before moving on to evaluative judgment. 2. Consider the danger of a judgment reached prematurely. 3. Investigate the cultural and educational forces that may have encouraged you to rush to judgment.

We live in a culture that values taking a stance, having an opinion, making a judgment, and backing it up with evidence. Being undecided or even open-minded about an issue can be seen as a sign of weakness or sloppiness or even as a moral or ethical failing. Our culture also privileges action over the kind of reflection and contemplation this chapter is advocating.

If you've encountered mostly traditional writing instruction, you've probably been encouraged to make judgments fairly early in the writing process. Well before you have fully examined an issue, you've been told to "take a position and defend it." You might make an effort to understand an issue from multiple sides (a process discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 "Thinking through the Disciplines", Section 3.2 "Seeing and Making Connections across Disciplines" and Chapter 3 "Thinking through the Disciplines", Section 3.3 "Articulating Multiple Sides of an Issue") only **after** you have staked your claim in a half-hearted effort to be "fair to both sides."

If you've been subjected to standardized tests of writing ability (often key factors in decisions about college acceptance and placement and earlier, in assessments of competence at various levels of K–12 education), you've probably noticed they rely on essay prompts that put heavy emphasis on argumentation. Some evaluative **rubrics**[11] for such essays require the presence of a thesis statement by the end of the introductory paragraph in order to earn a high score for organization.

Here's an introductory paragraph of a student writer who has been trained by the "point–counterpoint" culture of sound bites and perhaps encouraged by writing teachers over the years to believe that he has very little time to get to his thesis

11. A chart with specific domains (or criteria) and scoring norms used to evaluate the quality of something (e.g., a piece of writing).

Today the **media and paparazzi** are out there more than ever before. They both try to capture everyone's mistakes. **Pictures and quotes** of not being **politically correct** can make you lose your job and be frowned upon by the rest of the nation. Political correctness is the most outrageous thing that I have ever heard of. It takes away **our right to freedom of speech**. If the **Founding Fathers** were still alive today they would be furious with this political correctness. I believe that America is taking two giant steps backward to what our Founding Fathers were trying to accomplish. Political correctness has gone way too far in America and not only is it taking our **God-given freedoms** away, it is also **silencing a nation** and letting the **government take control**.

The rush to judgment has caused this student to fall into the same quick-thinking trap of the student in Section 1.3 "Slowing Down Your Thinking". The remedy (isolating the phrases worthy of further examination, indicated here, as in Section 1.3 "Slowing Down Your Thinking", with **bold blue font**) is similar. This student may let make something useful out of his concerns about political correctness, but he will do so only by making a meaningful effort to withhold his judgment on what is actually a much more complicated issue.

Premature Judgment	Complicating Question
“Media and paparazzi”	What is the press’s motivation for insisting on political correctness?
“Pictures and quotes”	What examples can I find as test cases for analysis?
“Politically correct”	What is the definition and the history of this phrase?
“Our right to freedom of speech”	How does political correctness run counter to the First Amendment’s protection of speech?
“Founding fathers”	Did the founders debate matters of press freedom and appropriate speech?
“God-given freedoms”	What are the intersections between religion and the right to free speech?
“Silencing a nation”	Are there sensitive subjects we don’t address as a nation because of political correctness?
“Government takes control”	How might a government create an atmosphere of political correctness in order to control its people?

Much of the pressure to reach judgments prematurely comes from elements of society that do not necessarily have our best interests in mind. The last exercise of Section 1.3 "Slowing Down Your Thinking" hinted at the strategic reasons why corporations, politicians, **ideologues**[12], popular entertainers, authority figures, or even friends and family might try to speed up your thinking at precisely the moment when you should be slowing it down. While inaction and dithering can be cited as the cause of some of history’s worst moments, the “rush to judgment” that comes from rash thinking can be cited as the cause of many more. A good rule of thumb when you are asked to make an irrevocable judgment or decision is to ask yourself or your questioner, “What’s your hurry?”

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Our sound-bite, point–counterpoint culture and even our reductive definitions of effective writing place a heavy emphasis on taking a position early and sticking to it.
- One must eventually take action after a period of contemplation, but history is full of examples of judgments made in haste.
- Withholding judgment, like slowing down your thinking, can be an effective strategy for revision and peer review.

12. A person with an inflexible, often extreme position or ideology through which the entire world is viewed.

EXERCISES

1. Take a piece of your writing from a previous class or another class you are currently taking, or even from this class, and look for phrases and sentences that suggest a “rush to judgment.” Set up a chart similar to the one that appears in this section, listing every possible essay topic that emerges from the complicating questions you write in response to each premature judgment.

2. Now try this same exercise on a classmate’s piece of writing and offer up one of your own for him or her to work on.

3. Compare the pace with which a writer makes a judgment in the each of the following rhetorical settings. Discuss whether you think there are certain conventions about making, presenting, and defending judgments in each of these genres. Draw from the **Note 2.5 "Gallery of Web-Based Texts"** in Chapter 2 "Becoming a Critical Reader" to find examples.

a. A television commercial for a political candidate, a pharmaceutical company, or an investment firm
b. A Supreme Court majority opinion
c. A presidential address on a topic of national security
d. A journal article in a field you are studying

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11: CHAPTER ELEVEN- MLA STYLE

Overview

The Modern Language Association (MLA) is a professional association for scholars of literature and language. Among other things, the MLA publishes a style manual (sometimes called a “style guide”) for writing and citing sources, used primarily in the humanities, including most English classes. MLA is one of several types of citation styles. As an undergraduate student, some professors or courses may require you to use APA (details below), Chicago, or Turabian style.

It’s not necessary (or advisable) to memorize formatting rules for any citation style. Getting used to checking formatting examples and published guidance (for example, in books or on websites) will help you proofread citations and move more easily between citation styles. There are helpful reference books you can keep on hand (such as the MLA Handbook, which is the style manual mentioned above), and many great online tools through your college library or tutoring websites, or found with a quick online search. Every so often, MLA style (or any citation style), will undergo some changes, and a new edition of the style manual will be released. All citation styles have different formats for citing various information types (e.g., websites, books, podcasts, emails), and as technology advances and information becomes available in new formats, citation styles need to be added and updated.

Works Cited

In MLA style, the list of detailed bibliographic information at the end of the paper or assignment is called “Works Cited.” The core elements of an MLA citation are as follows (be sure to pay attention to the punctuation that follows each element):

MLA Core Elements

1. Author.
2. Title of source.
3. Title of container,
4. Other contributors,
5. Version,
6. Number,
7. Publisher,
8. Publication date,
9. Location.

Author

- A single author should be written: Last name, First name Middle name
- For two authors, only invert the first author’s name. List the names in the order in which they appear on the source.
- For three or more authors, use et al. (which means, ‘and others’).
- When citing an edited book, add a descriptive label (“editor”) after the name.
  Example: Smith, John M.
  Example: Smith, John M., and Terence Duvall.

Title of Source

- Include both the title and subtitle separated by a colon [:].
- Capitalize the first word of the title and subtitle, plus all other important words.
- Enclose in “quotation marks:”
  - If the title is part of a larger work, such as a story in an anthology, an article in a journal, or a Web page from a Web site
- Place in italics:
  - If the title is a for an entire book, journal, or Web site

Title of Container

- When a source is part of a larger work, the larger work is called the “container.”
- The container is italicized and followed by a comma.
- Containers can be:
  - Periodicals (magazines, journals, newspapers)
  - Anthologies (books which contain short stories, essays, poetry, etc.)
  - Entire Web sites (which contain individual web pages)
  - Library or other online databases (which contain articles, books, etc.)

Other Contributors

- Contributors other than the author are named in the entry if they are important to your research or the identification of the source (i.e. editors and translators).
- When citing a source with both an author and editor, list the author first and the editor after the title of the source.

Version

If a source carries a notation that it is a work in more than one form (i.e. book edition), identify the version.

- 7th ed.
- Expanded ed.

Number

- Journals are typically numbered with volume (vol.) and issue numbers (no.).
- If you are using a multi-volume set, include the volume (vol.) number.

Publisher

- Only include the first publisher listed, unless the source was published by multiple independent organizations. Separate independent publishers with a forward slash [/].
- Abbreviate publisher names in the following cases:
  - Omit business words like Company, Corporation, Incorporated, and Limited
  - Replace University Press with UP (i.e. Oxford UP, U of California P, MIT P).
- A publisher's name may be completely omitted for the following types of sources:
  - Web page whose publisher is the same as the name of the overall website
  - Periodical (journal, magazine, newspaper)
  - Work published by the author

Publication Date

- Dates should be given as fully as they appear in your sources.
- If multiple dates are listed, cite the date most meaningful to your use of the source.
- Format as: Day Month Year. Abbreviate the names of months longer than 4 letters

Location

- In print sources, a page number (preceded by p.) or a range of page numbers (preceded by pp.) specifies the location.
- In online sources, location is indicated by the URL, DOI, or Permalink.
  - URL: Copy in full from your Web browser, but omit http:// or https://
  - DOI: Journal articles are often assigned "Digital Object Identifiers". When possible, cite a DOI (preceded by doi:) instead of the URL.
  - Permalink: Web sources (especially Library databases) often provide stable URLs, called "permalinks". When possible, use these instead of the URL.

Compiling & Formatting

Once you have constructed your citations according to MLA rules, there are a few more steps to complete the Works Cited list.

- Center the words "Works Cited" at the top of the page.
- Alphabetize the citations by author's last name, or by the first main word of the title if there is no author. (When alphabetizing, ignore A, An, and The at the beginning of citations.)
- Make sure all lines are double-spaced.
- Apply "hanging" indents to all citations: The first line of the citation is not indented. All subsequent lines are indented 0.5 inch.

Examples

Print Book:

Mancini, Candice. *Racism in Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird*. Greenhaven Press, 2008.

Electronic Book:

Schreiber, Brad. *Music Is Power: Popular Songs, Social Justice, and the Will to Change*. Rutgers UP, 2019. *EBSCOhost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=2293722&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

Web page:

Hollmichel, Stephanie. "The Reading Brain: Differences between Digital and Print." *So Many Books*, 25 Apr. 2013, somanybooksblog.com/2013/04/25/the-reading-brain-differences-between-digital-and-print/.

Academic Journal Article:

Grauer, Jens, et al. "Strategic Spatiotemporal Vaccine Distribution Increases the Survival Rate in an Infectious Disease like Covid-19." *Scientific Reports*, vol. 10, no. 1, Dec. 2020, pp. 1–10. *EBSCOhost*, doi:10.1038/s41598-020-78447-3.

For more MLA style citation examples, visit Excelsior OWL.

Sources

MLA Handbook. 8th ed., Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

Works Cited section adapted from "Library 10" by Cabrillo College Library, licensed under CC BY 4.0

11.1: Citation Generators

11.2: Chapter Nine- MLA Formatting

11.2.1: Citations and Referencing

11.2.1.1: Supporting Your Ideas

11.2.1.2: Documenting Source Material

11.2.1.3: Making Your Quotes Fit

11.2.1.4: Citation Guidelines

11.2.1.5: Creating a References Page (Part 1)

11.2.1.6: Creating a References Page (Part 2)

11.2.1.6.1: Citing Sources

11.2.1.6.1.1: Read- Acknowledging Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism

11.2.1.6.1.2: When and How To Use MLA In-Text Citation

11.2.1.6.1.3: How to Cite YouTube

11.3: Citation Steps for Any Style

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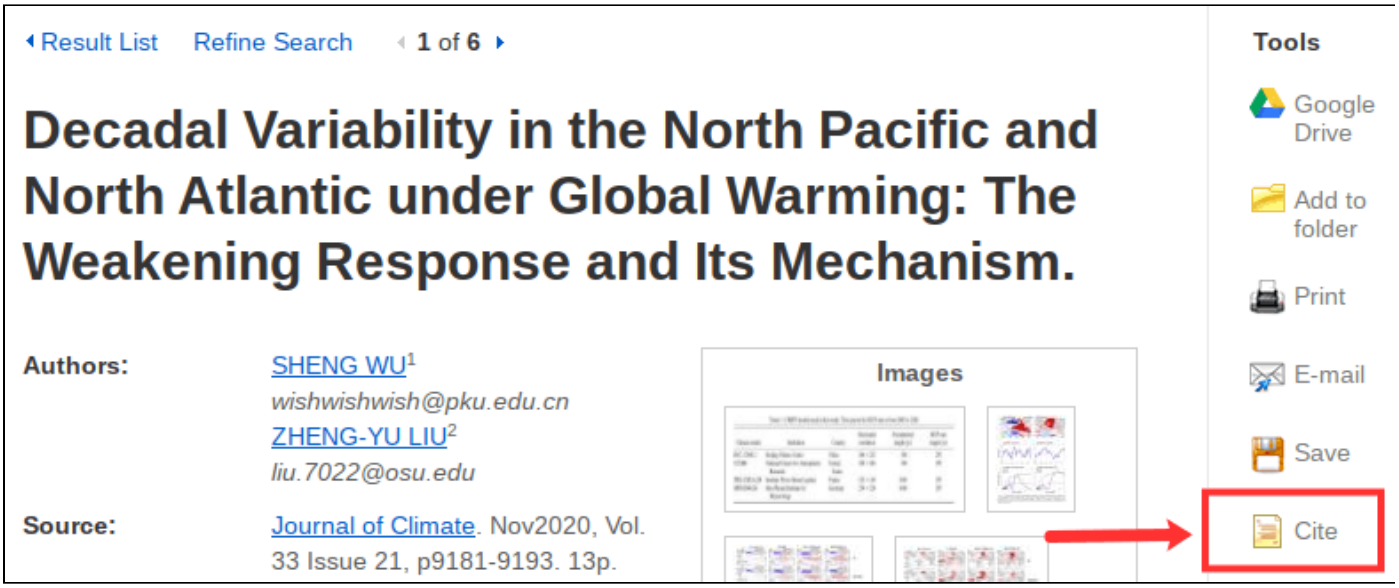
11.1: Citation Generators

Unlike 10-15 years ago when college students had to try to memorize citation formats and create each citation by hand, there are now many online tools available that will automatically create citations for many different types of information sources. Citation generators are tools that allow users to type, paste, or import certain information (like a source's type, title, author, and date), and then create a citation in whatever format is needed (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago).

Library Databases

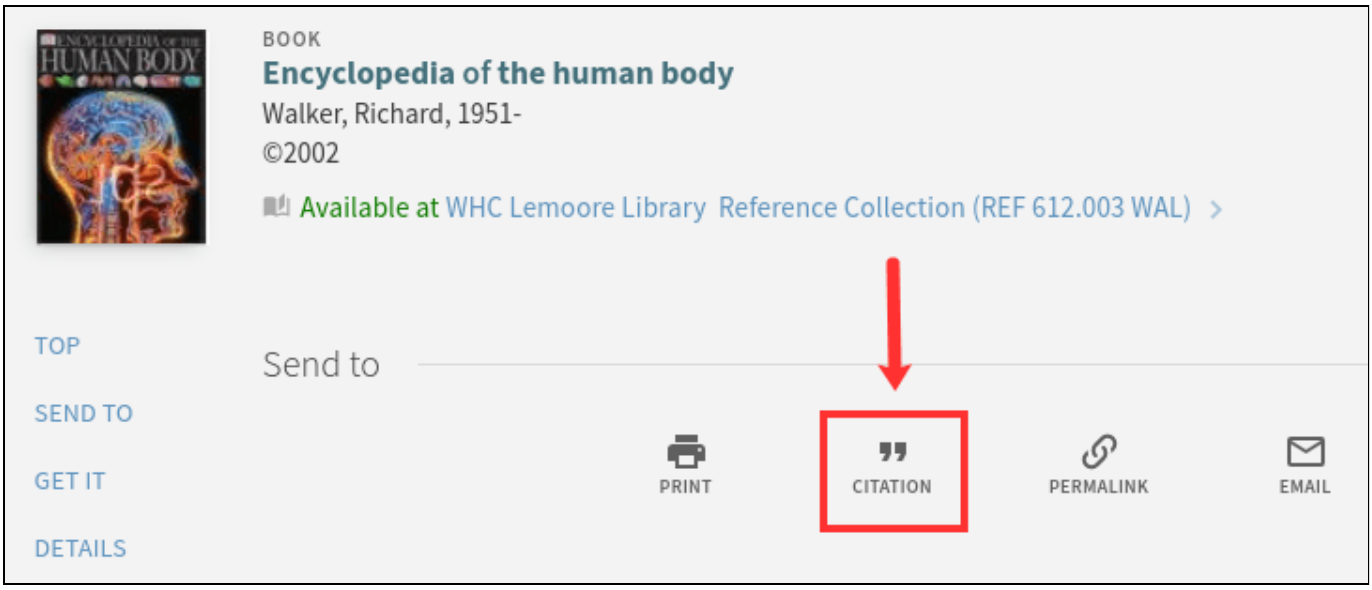
Almost all of your college library's databases will have a convenient citation generator built right into them. In most cases, when you are reading an ebook, academic journal article, or another resource coming from a library database, there will be an icon somewhere on the page for a citation generator. These often offer a list of citation styles to choose from; they provide a citation for that particular source in whatever format is needed, so you can easily copy and paste the full citation into your assignment. The citation generator is not always located in the same spot, and does not always appear the same way in all library databases, but will often say "cite" or have quotation mark icons to indicate that it is a citation tool.

While these citation generators are incredibly helpful and convenient, they do sometimes make mistakes! Always be sure to double-check the citation generated for you—do not assume that all citations generated by a citation tool will be 100% correct.



OneSearch

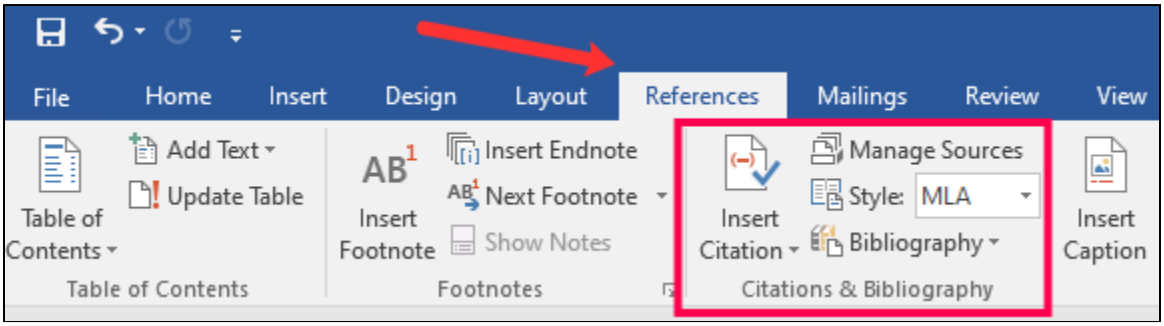
OneSearch also has its own convenient tool located within the record of every item record. The tool is located in the "Send to" section of the record and looks like one set of quotation marks with the word "CITATION" underneath. The citation style can be selected on the left-hand side (but please note, some colleges may list these formats differently from what is shown in the image below). Clicking on "COPY CITATION TO CLIPBOARD" will copy the citation so you can easily paste it into your bibliography (in Microsoft Word, Google Docs, or elsewhere). Besides checking the citation for accuracy, it is also important to check the formatting of your pasted text. Some formatting, like italics, may be lost when copying and pasting. Citation generators are fantastic tools that save a lot of time, but are not always 100% accurate!



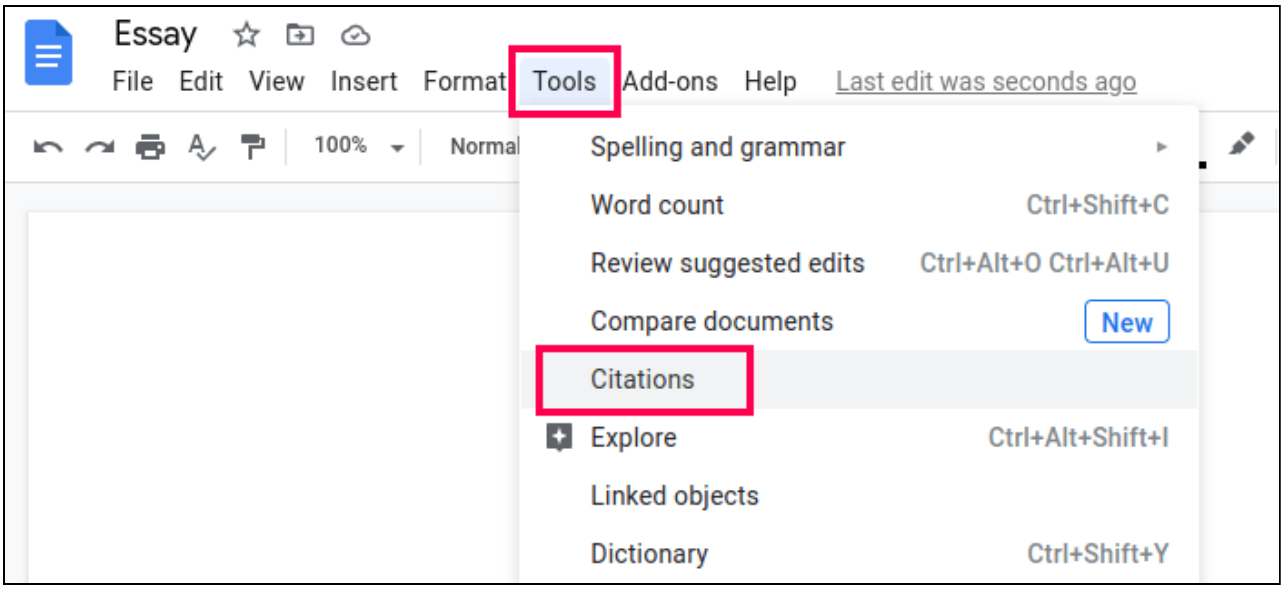
Word Processors

Two commonly used word processors—Microsoft Word and Google Docs—both have citation tools built into the software that make inserting in-text citations and compiling full citations quick and simple.

Microsoft Word's citation generator is found under the toolbar section called "References," and the "Insert Citation" tool allows users to plug in bibliographic information about each source used in their paper. The software will keep a running list of the sources, and allows for easy insertion of an in-text citation and a quick combination of citations into a bibliography in the appropriate citation style. An important thing to note is that Microsoft Word may not have the latest citation style format edition; for instance, it may only have the option to create citations in MLA 7th edition, but (as of the time this book was published) MLA 8th edition is the most up-to-date style.



The citation generator in Google Docs is located under the "Tools" menu item on the toolbar. Though this citation tool is much less robust than Microsoft Word's, only having three citation styles to choose from, it still allows for quick insertion of both in-text citations and a bibliography at the end of the paper. As mentioned previously, the citation styles may not be the latest edition and it is important to always review any citation generated for you.



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11.2: CHAPTER NINE- MLA FORMATTING

11.2.1: Citations and Referencing

11.2.1.1: Supporting Your Ideas

11.2.1.2: Documenting Source Material

11.2.1.3: Making Your Quotes Fit

11.2.1.4: Citation Guidelines

11.2.1.5: Creating a References Page (Part 1)

11.2.1.6: Creating a References Page (Part 2)

11.2.1.6.1: Citing Sources

11.2.1.6.1.1: Read- Acknowledging Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism

11.2.1.6.1.2: When and How To Use MLA In-Text Citation

11.2.1.6.1.3: How to Cite YouTube

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11.2.1: CITATIONS AND REFERENCING

11.2.1.1: Supporting Your Ideas

11.2.1.2: Documenting Source Material

11.2.1.3: Making Your Quotes Fit

11.2.1.4: Citation Guidelines

11.2.1.5: Creating a References Page (Part 1)

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11.2.1.1: Supporting Your Ideas

Learning Objectives

- Evaluate when to use primary or secondary sources for support
- Explain the two forms of plagiarism and how to avoid them
- Explain the importance of academic integrity and the potential consequences of not abiding by this

In this chapter you are going to learn more about compiling references and citations. You will also learn strategies for handling some of the more challenging aspects of writing a research paper, such as integrating material from your sources, citing information correctly, and avoiding any misuse of your sources. The first section of this chapter will introduce you to broad concepts associated with adding support to your ideas and providing documentation—citations and references—when you use sources in your papers.

Using Primary and Secondary Research

As you write your draft, be mindful of how you are using primary and secondary source material to support your points. Recall that primary sources present firsthand information. Secondary sources are one step removed from primary sources. They present a writer's analysis or interpretation of primary source materials. How you balance primary and secondary source material in your paper will depend on the topic and assignment.

Using Primary Sources Effectively

Some types of research papers must use primary sources extensively to achieve their purpose. Any paper that analyzes a primary text or presents the writer's own experimental research falls in this category. Here are a few examples:

A paper for a literature course analyzing several poems by Emily Dickinson

A paper for a political science course comparing televised speeches delivered by two candidates for prime minister

A paper for a communications course discussing gender bias in television commercials

A paper for a business administration course that discusses the results of a survey the writer conducted with local businesses to gather information about their work from home and flextime policies

A paper for an elementary education course that discusses the results of an experiment the writer conducted to compare the effectiveness of two different methods of mathematics instruction

For these types of papers, primary research is the main focus. If you are writing about a work (including non-print works, such as a movie or a painting), it is crucial to gather information and ideas from the original work, rather than rely solely on others' interpretations. And, of course, if you take the time to design and conduct your own field research, such as a survey, a series of interviews, or an experiment, you will want to discuss it in detail. For example, the interviews may provide interesting responses that you want to share with your reader.

Using Secondary Sources Effectively

For some assignments, it makes sense to rely more on secondary sources than primary sources. If you are *not* analyzing a text or conducting your own field research, you will need to use secondary sources extensively.

As much as possible, use secondary sources that are closely linked to primary research, such as a journal article presenting the results of the authors' scientific study or a book that cites interviews and case studies. These sources are more reliable and add more value to your paper than sources that are further removed from primary research. For instance, a popular magazine article on junk food addiction might be several steps removed from the original scientific study on which it is loosely based. As a result, the article may distort, sensationalize, or misinterpret the scientists' findings.

Even if your paper is largely based on primary sources, you may use secondary sources to develop your ideas. For instance, an analysis of Alfred Hitchcock's films would focus on the films themselves as a primary source, but might also cite commentary from critics. A paper that presents an original experiment would include some discussion of similar prior research in the field.

Jorge, who is preparing his essay on low-carbohydrate diets, knew he did not have the time, resources, or experience needed to conduct original experimental research for his paper. Because he was relying on secondary sources to support his ideas, he made a point of citing sources that were not far removed from primary research.

Tip

Some sources could be considered primary or secondary sources, depending on the writer's purpose for using them. For instance, if a writer's purpose is to inform readers about how the American No Child Left Behind legislation has affected elementary education in the United States, a *Time* magazine article on the subject would be a secondary source. However, suppose the writer's purpose is to analyze how the news media has portrayed the effects of the No Child Left Behind legislation. In that case, articles about the legislation in news magazines like *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *US News & World Report* would be primary sources. They provide firsthand examples of the media coverage the writer is analyzing.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Your research paper presents your thinking about a topic, supported and developed by other people's ideas and information. It is crucial to always distinguish between the two—as you conduct research, as you plan your paper, and as you write. Failure to do so can lead to plagiarism.

Intentional and Accidental Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of misrepresenting someone else's work as your own. Sometimes a writer plagiarizes work on purpose—for instance, by copying and pasting or purchasing an essay from a website and submitting it as original course work. This often happens because the person has not managed his or her time and has left the paper to the last minute or has struggled with the writing process or the topic. Any of these can lead to desperation and cause the writer to just take someone else's ideas and take credit for them.

In other cases, a writer may commit accidental plagiarism due to carelessness, haste, or misunderstanding. For instance, a writer may be unable to provide a complete, accurate citation because of neglecting to record bibliographical information. A writer may cut and paste a passage from a website into her paper and later forget where the material came from. A writer who procrastinates may rush through a draft, which easily leads to sloppy paraphrasing and inaccurate quotations. Any of these actions can create the appearance of plagiarism and lead to negative consequences.

Carefully organizing your time and notes is the best guard against these forms of plagiarism. Maintain a detailed working

reference list and thorough notes throughout the research process. Check original sources again to clear up any uncertainties. Allow plenty of time for writing your draft so there is no temptation to cut corners.

To avoid unintentional/accidental plagiarism, follow these guidelines:

- Understand what types of information must be cited.
- Understand what constitutes fair dealing of a source.
- Keep source materials and notes carefully organized.
- Follow guidelines for summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting sources.

Academic Integrity

The concepts and strategies discussed in this section connect to a larger issue—academic integrity. You maintain your integrity as a member of an academic community by representing your work and others' work honestly and by using other people's work only in legitimately accepted ways. It is a point of honour taken seriously in every academic discipline and career field.

Academic integrity violations have serious educational and professional consequences. Even when cheating and plagiarism go undetected, they still result in a student's failure to learn necessary research and writing skills. Students who are found guilty of academic integrity violations face consequences ranging from a failing grade to expulsion. Employees may be fired for plagiarism and do irreparable damage to their professional reputation. In short, it is never worth the risk.

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11.2.1.2: Documenting Source Material

Learning Objectives

- Identify when to summarize, paraphrase, and directly quote information from research sources
- Identify when citations are needed
- Introduce sources
- Throughout the writing process, be scrupulous about documenting information taken from sources. The purpose of doing so is twofold:
- To give credit to other writers or researchers for their ideas
- To allow your reader to follow up and learn more about the topic if desired

You will cite sources within the body of your paper and at the end of the paper in your references section. For this assignment, you will use the citation format used by the American Psychological Association (also known as APA style). Within this course and for all of your courses at JIBC, you will need to follow the JIBC APA Reference Guide when formatting citations and references within your papers.

This section covers the nitty-gritty details of in-text citations. You will learn how to format citations for different types of source materials, whether you are citing brief quotations, paraphrasing ideas, or quoting longer passages. You will also learn techniques you can use to introduce quoted and paraphrased material effectively. Keep this section handy as a reference to consult while writing the body of your paper.

Formatting Cited Material: The Basics

In-text citations usually provide the name of the author(s) and the year the source was published. For direct quotations, the page number must also be included. Use past tense verbs when introducing a quote: for example, “Smith found...,” not “Smith finds....”

Citing Sources in the Body of Your Paper

In-text citations document your sources within the body of your paper. These include two vital pieces of information: the author’s name and the year the source material was published. When quoting a print source, also include in the citation the page number where the quoted material originally appears. The page number follows the year in the in-text citation. *Page numbers are necessary only when content has been directly quoted, not when it has been summarized or paraphrased.*

Using Source Material in Your Paper

One of the challenges of writing a research paper is successfully integrating your ideas with material from your sources. Your paper must explain what you think, or it will read like a disconnected string of facts and quotations. However, you also need to support your ideas with research, or they will seem insubstantial. How do you strike the right balance?

In your essay, the introduction and conclusion function like the frame around a picture. They define and limit your topic and place your research in context. In the body paragraphs of your paper, you need to integrate ideas carefully at the paragraph level and at the sentence level. You will use topic sentences in your paragraphs to make sure readers understand the significance of any facts, details, or quotations you cite. You will also include sentences that transition between ideas from your research, either within a

paragraph or between paragraphs. At the sentence level, you will need to think carefully about how you introduce paraphrased and quoted material.

Earlier you learned about summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting when taking notes. In the next few sections, you will learn how to use these techniques in the body of your paper to weave in source material to support your ideas.

Summarizing Sources

Look back at Section 3.2 to refresh your memory of how Jorge summarized the article. As was mentioned there, when you are summarizing, you are focusing on identifying and sharing the main elements of a source. This is when you paraphrase the concepts and put them in your own words, demonstrating you have a firm understanding of the concepts presented and are able to incorporate them into your own paper.

Within a paragraph, this information may appear as part of your introduction to the material or as a parenthetical citation at the end of a sentence. Read the examples that follow.

Summary

Leibowitz (2008) found that low-carbohydrate diets often helped subjects with Type II diabetes maintain a healthy weight and control blood sugar levels.

The introduction to the source material (the **attributive tag**) includes the author's name followed by the year of publication in parentheses.

Summary

Low-carbohydrate diets often help subjects with Type II diabetes maintain a healthy weight and control blood sugar levels (Leibowitz, 2008).

The parenthetical citation at the end of the sentence includes the author's name, a comma, and the year the source was published. The period at the end of the sentence comes after the parentheses.

Formatting Paraphrased and Summarized Material

When you paraphrase or summarize ideas from a source, you follow the same guidelines previously provided, except that you are not required to provide the page number where the ideas are located. If you are summing up the main findings of a research article, simply providing the author's name and publication year may suffice, but if you are paraphrasing a more specific idea, consider including the page number.

Read the following examples.

Chang (2008) pointed out that weight-bearing exercise has many potential benefits for women.

Here, the writer is summarizing a major idea that recurs throughout the source material. No page reference is needed.

Chang (2008) found that weight-bearing exercise could help women maintain or even increase bone density through middle age and beyond, reducing the likelihood that they will develop osteoporosis in later life (p. 86).

Although the writer is not directly quoting the source, this passage paraphrases a specific detail, so the writer chose to include the page number where the information is located.

Introducing Cited Material Effectively

Including an introductory phrase in your text, such as “Jackson wrote” or “Copeland found,” often helps you integrate source material smoothly. This citation technique also helps convey that you are actively engaged with your source material. Unfortunately, during the process of writing your research paper, it is easy to fall into a rut and use the same few dull verbs repeatedly, such as “Jones said,” “Smith stated,” and so on.

Punch up your writing by using strong verbs that help your reader understand how the source material presents ideas. There is a world of difference between an author who “suggests” and one who “claims,” one who “questions” and one who “criticizes.” You do not need to consult your thesaurus every time you cite a source, but do think about which verbs will accurately represent the ideas and make your writing more engaging. **Table 9.1 Strong Verbs for Introducing Cited Material** shows some possibilities.

Table 9.1 - Strong Verbs for Introducing Cited Material

ask	suggest	question	recommend	determine	insist
explain	assert	claim	hypothesize	measure	argue
propose	compare	contrast	evaluate	conclude	find
study	sum up	believe	warn	point out	assess

When to Cite

Any idea or fact taken from an outside source must be cited, in both the body of your paper and the references. The only exceptions are facts or general statements that are common knowledge. Common knowledge facts or general statements are commonly supported by and found in multiple sources. For example, a writer would not need to cite the statement that most breads, pastas, and cereals are high in carbohydrates; this is well known and well documented. However, if a writer explained in detail the differences among the chemical structures of carbohydrates, proteins, and fats, a citation would be necessary. When in doubt, cite!

Fair Dealing

In recent years, issues related to the fair use of sources have been prevalent in popular culture. Recording artists, for example, may disagree about the extent to which one has the right to sample another’s music. For academic purposes, however, the guidelines for fair dealing are reasonably straightforward.

Writers may quote from or paraphrase material from previously published works without formally obtaining the copyright holder’s permission. **Fair dealing** in copyright law allows a writer to legitimately use brief excerpts from source material to support and develop his or her own ideas. For instance, a columnist may excerpt a few sentences from a novel when writing a book review. However, quoting or paraphrasing another’s work excessively, to the extent that large sections of the writing are unoriginal, is not fair dealing.

As he worked on his draft, Jorge was careful to cite his sources correctly and not to rely excessively on any one source. Occasionally, however, he caught himself quoting a source at great length. In those instances, he highlighted the paragraph in question so that he could go back to it later and revise. Read the example, along with Jorge’s revision.

Summary

Heinz (2009) found that “subjects in the low-carbohydrate group (30% carbohydrates; 40% protein, 30% fat) had a mean weight

loss of 10 kg (22 lbs) over a four-month period." These results were "noticeably better than results for subjects on a low-fat diet (45% carbohydrates, 35% protein, 20% fat)" whose average weight loss was only "7 kg (15.4 lbs) in the same period." From this, it can be concluded that "low-carbohydrate diets obtain more rapid results." Other researchers agree that "at least in the short term, patients following low-carbohydrate diets enjoy greater success" than those who follow alternative plans (Johnson & Crowe, 2010).

Exercise 9.1

Paraphrasing practice is always a good thing! Take a look at Jorge's "summary" above. Notice he is not really summarizing but rather quoting. While this is technically not plagiarism, it does not show any processing of the information from the original source. It is just copying and pasting; the end result seems very choppy, and a lot of the information can be generalized.

For this exercise, try to rewrite Jorge's summary in your own words.

After reviewing the paragraph, Jorge realized that he had drifted into unoriginal writing. Most of the paragraph was taken verbatim from a single article. Although Jorge had enclosed the material in quotation marks, he knew it was not an appropriate way to use the research in his paper.

Summary

Low-carbohydrate diets may indeed be superior to other diet plans for short-term weight loss. In a study comparing low-carbohydrate diets and low-fat diets, Heinz (2009) found that subjects who followed a low-carbohydrate plan (30% of total calories) for four months lost, on average, about 3 kilograms more than subjects who followed a low-fat diet for the same time. Heinz concluded that these plans yield quick results, an idea supported by a similar study conducted by Johnson and Crowe (2010). What remains to be seen, however, is whether this initial success can be sustained for longer periods.

As Jorge revised the paragraph, he realized he did not need to quote these sources directly. Instead, he paraphrased their most important findings. He also made sure to include a topic sentence stating the main idea of the paragraph and a concluding sentence that transitioned to the next major topic in his essay.

Tip

It is extremely important to remember that even though you are summarizing and paraphrasing from another source—not quoting—you must still include a citation, including the last name(s) of the author(s) and the year of publication.

Example 11.2.1.2.1:

Additionally, marijuana burning creates toxins; this strategy is counterproductive, and there are numerous individual hazards associated with using the plant as medicine (Ogborne, Smart, & Adlaf, 2000).

Example taken from:

Writing Commons. (2014, September). Open Text. Retrieved from writingcommons.org/format/apa...quotations-apa

Writing at Work

It is important to accurately represent a colleague's ideas or communications in the workplace. When writing professional or academic papers, be mindful of how the words you use to describe someone's tone or ideas carry certain connotations. Do not say a source "argues" a particular point unless an argument is, in fact, presented. Use lively language, but avoid language that is emotionally charged. Doing so will ensure you have represented your colleague's words in an authentic and accurate way.

key takeaways

- An effective research paper focuses on the writer's ideas. The introduction and conclusion present and revisit the writer's thesis. The body of the paper develops the thesis and related points with information from research.
- Ideas and information taken from outside sources must be cited in the body of the paper and in the references section.
- Material taken from sources should be used to develop the writer's ideas. Summarizing and paraphrasing are usually most effective for this purpose.
- A summary concisely restates the main ideas of a source in the writer's own words.
- A paraphrase restates ideas from a source using the writer's own words and sentence structures.
- Direct quotations should be used sparingly. Ellipses and brackets must be used to indicate words that are omitted or changed for conciseness or grammatical correctness.
- Always represent material from outside sources accurately.
- Plagiarism has serious academic and professional consequences. To avoid accidental plagiarism, keep research materials organized, understand guidelines for fair dealing and appropriate citation of sources, and review the paper to make sure these guidelines are followed.

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11.2.1.3: Making Your Quotes Fit

Learning Objectives

- Apply guidelines for citing sources within the body of the paper
- Evaluating when to use a short or long quote
- Incorporate short quotes with correct APA formatting
- Incorporate long quotations with correct APA formatting

So, now you may have decided after much critical thought, that you definitely have found the most amazing, well-suited quote that cannot be paraphrased, and you want to incorporate that quote into your paper. There are different ways to do this depending on how long the quote is; there are also a number of formatting requirements you need to apply.

Quoting Sources Directly

Most of the time, you will summarize or paraphrase source material instead of quoting directly. Doing so shows that you understand your research well enough to write about it confidently in your own words. However, direct quotes can be powerful when used sparingly and with purpose.

Quoting directly can sometimes help you make a point in a colourful way. If an author's words are especially vivid, memorable, or well phrased, quoting them may help hold your reader's interest. Direct quotations from an interviewee or an eyewitness may help you personalize an issue for readers. Also, when you analyze primary sources, such as a historical speech or a work of literature, quoting extensively is often necessary to illustrate your points. These are valid reasons to use quotations.

Less-experienced writers, however, sometimes overuse direct quotations in a research paper because it seems easier than paraphrasing. At best, this reduces the effectiveness of the quotations. At worst, it results in a paper that seems haphazardly pasted together from outside sources. *Use quotations sparingly for greater impact.*

When you do choose to quote directly from a source, follow these guidelines:

Only use a quote when the original writer has phrased a statement so perfectly that you do not believe you could rephrase it any better without getting away from the writer's point.

Make sure you have transcribed the original statement accurately.

Represent the author's ideas honestly. Quote enough of the original text to reflect the author's point accurately.

Use an attributive tag (e.g., "According to Marshall (2013)....") to lead into the quote and provide a citation at the same time.

Never use a standalone quotation. Always integrate the quoted material into your own sentence.

Make sure any omissions or changed words do not alter the meaning of the original text. Omit or replace words only when absolutely necessary to shorten the text or to make it grammatically correct within your sentence.

Use ellipses (3) [...] if you need to omit a word or phrase; use (4) [....] when you are removing a section—maybe a complete sentence—that would end in a period. This shows your reader that you have critically and thoroughly examined the contents of this quote and have chosen only the most important and relevant information.

Use brackets [ ] if you need to replace a word or phrase or if you need to change the verb tense.

Use [*sic*] after something in the quote that is grammatically incorrect or spelled incorrectly. This shows your reader that the mistake is in the original, not your writing.

Use double quotation marks [“ ”] when quoting and use single quotation marks [‘ ’] when you include a quote within a quote (i.e., if you quote a passage that already includes a quote, you need to change the double quotation marks in the original to single marks, and add double quotations marks around your entire quote).

Remember to include correctly formatted citations that follow the JIBC APA Reference Guide.

Jorge interviewed a dietitian as part of his research, and he decided to quote her words in his paper. Read an excerpt from the interview and Jorge’s use of it, which follows.

Source

Personally, I don’t really buy into all of the hype about low-carbohydrate miracle diets like Atkins and so on. Sure, for some people, they are great, but for most, any sensible eating and exercise plan would work just as well.

Summary

Registered dietitian Dana Kwon (2010) admits, “Personally, I don’t really buy into all of the hype.... Sure, for some people, [low carbohydrate diets] are great, but for most, any sensible eating and exercise plan would work just as well.”

Notice how Jorge smoothly integrated the quoted material by starting the sentence with an introductory phrase. His use of an ellipsis and brackets did not change the source’s meaning.

Short versus Long Quotations

Remember, what you write in essays should be primarily your own words; your instructors want to know what your ideas are and for you to demonstrate your own critical thinking. This means you should only use the ideas of experts in the form of quotes to support your ideas. A paper that consists of mostly quotes pieced together does not demonstrate original thought but rather that you are good at cutting and pasting. Therefore, you should strive to state your ideas, develop them thoroughly, and then insert a supporting quote, and only if necessary. Focus on paraphrasing and integrating and blending those external sources into your own ideas (giving the original author credit by using a citation, of course). When deciding to use any quotation as opposed to paraphrasing, you need to make sure the quote is a statement that the original author has worded so beautifully it would be less effective if you changed it into your own words. When you find something you would like to include **verbatim** (word for word) from a source, you need to decide if you should include the whole paragraph or section, or a smaller part. Sometimes, you may choose to use a longer quote but remove any unnecessary words. You would then use ellipses to show what content you have removed. The following examples show how this is done.

Original

According to Marshall (2010), “Before the creation of organized governmental policing agencies, it was citizens possessing firearms who monitored and maintained the peace” (p. 712).

With Ellipses

According to Marshall (2010), “Before the creation of organized governmental policing agencies, ... citizens possessing firearms ... monitored and maintained the peace” (p. 712).

Short Quotations

A short quote can be as one word or a phrase or a complete sentence as long as three lines of text (again, removing any unnecessary words). Generally, a short quotation is one that is fewer than 40 words. Whether you use a complete sentence or only part of one, you need to make sure it blends in perfectly with your own sentence or paragraph. For example, if your paragraph is written in the present tense but the quote is in the past, you will need to change the verb, so it will fit into your writing. (You will read about on this shortly.) Using an **attributive tag** is another way to help incorporate your quote more fluidly. An attributive tag is a phrase that shows your reader you got the information from a source, and you are giving the author attribution or credit for his or her ideas or words. Using an attributive tag allows you to provide a citation at the same time as helping integrate the quote more smoothly into your work.

Example 11.2.1.3.1:

According to Marshall (2010), “Before the creation of organized governmental policing agencies, it was citizens possessing firearms who monitored and maintained the peace” (p. 712).

In the example above, the attributive tag (with citation) is underlined; this statement is giving Marshall credit for his own words and ideas. You should note that this short quotation is a complete sentence taken from Marshall’s bigger document, which is why the first word, *Before,* is capitalized. If you were to include only a portion of that sentence, perhaps excerpting from the middle of it, you would not start the quote with a capital.

Example 11.2.1.3.2:

Marshall (2010) argues that vigilantism in the Wild West was committed by “citizens possessing firearms who monitored and maintained the peace” (p. 712).

In this example, notice how the student has only used a portion of the sentence, so did not need to include the capital.

Tip

If you do not use an attributive tag because the quote already fits smoothly into your sentence, you need to include the author’s name after the sentence in parentheses with the date and page number.

Example 11.2.1.3.3:

Vigilantism in the Wild West was committed by “citizens possessing firearms who monitored and maintained the peace” (Marshall, 2010, p. 712).

Formatting Short Quotations

For short quotations, use quotation marks to indicate where the quoted material begins and ends, and cite the name of the author(s), the year of publication, and the page number where the quotation appears in your source. Remember to include commas to separate elements within the parenthetical citation. Also, avoid redundancy. If you name the author(s) in your sentence, do not repeat the name(s) in your parenthetical citation. Review following the examples of different ways to cite direct quotations.

Chang (2008) emphasized that “engaging in weight-bearing exercise consistently is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health” (p. 49).

The author’s name can be included in the body of the sentence or in the parenthetical citation. Note that when a parenthetical citation appears at the end of the sentence, it comes *after* the closing quotation marks and *before* the period. The elements within parentheses are separated by commas.

Weight Training for Women (Chang, 2008) claimed that “engaging in weight-bearing exercise consistently is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health” (p. 49).

Weight Training for Women claimed that “engaging in weight-bearing exercise consistently is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health” (Chang, 2008, p. 49).

Including the title of a source is optional.

In Chang’s 2008 text *Weight Training for Women*, she asserts, “Engaging in weight-bearing exercise is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health” (p. 49).

The author’s name, the date, and the title may appear in the body of the text. Include the page number in the parenthetical citation. Also, notice the use of the verb *asserts* to introduce the direct quotation.

“Engaging in weight-bearing exercise,” Chang asserts, “is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health” (2008, p. 49).

You may begin a sentence with the direct quotation and add the author’s name and a strong verb before continuing the quotation.

Tip

Although APA style guidelines do not require writers to provide page numbers for material that is not directly quoted, your instructor may wish you to do so when possible. Check with your instructor about his or her preferences.

Long (Block) Quotations

Long quotations should be used even more sparingly than shorter ones. Long quotations can range in length from four to seven or eight lines (40 words or more, and should *never* be as long as a page. There are two reasons for this: First, by using a long quote, you are essentially letting the original author do all the thinking for you; remember that your audience wants to see *your* ideas, not someone else’s. Second, unless all the information and every word in the long quote is essential and could not be paraphrased (which is highly doubtful with a long passage), you are not showing your audience you have processed or evaluated the importance of the source’s critical information and weeded out the unnecessary information. If you believe you have found the perfect paragraph to support your ideas, and you decide you really want or need to use the long quote, see if you can shorten it by removing unnecessary words or complete sentences and put ellipses in their place. This will again show your reader that you have put a lot of thought into the use of the quote and that you have included it just because you did not want to do any thinking.

Tip

Be wary of quoting from sources at length. Remember, your ideas should drive the paper, and quotations should be used to support and enhance your points. Make sure any lengthy quotations that you include serve a clear purpose. Generally, no more than 10 to 15 percent of a paper should consist of quoted material.

Long Quotations: How to Make Them Fit

As with short quotations, you need to make sure long quotations fit into your writing. To introduce a long quote, you need to include a **stem** (this can include an attributive tag) followed by a colon (:). The stem is underlined in the example below.

Example:

Marshall uses the example of towns in the Wild West to explain that:

Much of the population—especially younger males—frequently engaged in violence by participating in saloon fights and shootouts and gun fights. [However,] crimes committed by females, the elderly, or the infirm were rare occasions were much rarer because of those individuals being less likely to frequent such drinking establishments. (2010, p. 725)

In example, you can see the stem clearly introduces the quote in a grammatically correct way, leading into the quote fluidly.

Formatting Longer Quotations

When you quote a longer passage from a source—40 words or more—you need to use a different format to set off the quoted material. Instead of using quotation marks, create a **block quotation** by starting the quotation on a new line and indented five spaces from the margin. Note that in this case, the parenthetical citation comes *after* the period that ends the sentence. If the passage continues into a second paragraph, indent a full tab (five spaces) again in the first line of the second paragraph. Here is

an example:

In recent years, many writers within the fitness industry have emphasized the ways in which women can benefit from weight-bearing exercise, such as weightlifting, karate, dancing, stair climbing, hiking, and jogging. Chang (2008) found that engaging in weight-bearing exercise regularly significantly reduces women's risk of developing osteoporosis. Additionally, these exercises help women maintain muscle mass and overall strength, and many common forms of weight bearing exercise, such as brisk walking or stair climbing, also provide noticeable cardiovascular benefits.

It is important to note that swimming cannot be considered a weight-bearing exercise, since the water supports and cushions the swimmer. That doesn't mean swimming isn't great exercise, but it should be considered one part of an integrated fitness program. (p. 93)

Exercise 9.2

Look at the longblock quotation example above. Identify four differences between how it is formatted and how you would format a short quotation.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Tip

To format a long quote, you need to remember the following:

You may want to single space the quote, but not the main part of your essay. This will allow the long block quotation to stand out even more.

Indent on both sides of the quote; you can use *left* or *full* justification.

Do not use quotation marks; they are unnecessary because the spacing and indenting (and citation) will tell your reader this is a quote.

Do not put the quote in italics.

Include the end period (.) before the citation. See the example above.

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11.2.1.4: Citation Guidelines

Learning Objectives

- Apply APA guidelines for citing sources within the body of the paper for various source types

In-Text Citations

Throughout the body of your paper, you must include a citation whenever you quote or paraphrase material from your research sources. The purpose of citations is twofold: to give credit to others for their ideas and to allow your reader to follow up and learn more about the topic if desired. Your in-text citations provide basic information about your source; you will provide more detailed information for each source you cite in text in the references section. (Refer to your JIBC APA Reference Guide for guidance on compose citation—for quotes or paraphrasing—under the referencing example for each type of source.)

In-text citations must provide the name of the author or authors and the year the source was published. (When a given source does not list an individual author, you may provide the source title or the name of the organization that published the material instead.) When directly quoting a source, you must include the page number where the quote appears in the work being cited. This information may be included within the sentence or in a parenthetical reference at the end of the sentence, as in these examples.

Epstein (2010) points out that "junk food cannot be considered addictive in the same way that we think of psychoactive drugs as addictive" (p. 137).

Here, the writer names the source author when introducing the quote and provides the publication date in parentheses after the author's name. The page number appears in parentheses *after* the closing quotation marks and *before* the period that ends the sentence.

Addiction researchers caution that "junk food cannot be considered addictive in the same way that we think of psychoactive drugs as addictive" (Epstein, 2010, p. 137).

Here, the writer provides a parenthetical citation at the end of the sentence that includes the author's name, the year of publication, and the page number separated by commas. Again, the parenthetical citation is placed *after* the closing quotation marks and *before* the period at the end of the sentence.

As noted in the book *Junk Food, Junk Science* (Epstein, 2010, p. 137), "junk food cannot be considered addictive in the same way that we think of psychoactive drugs as addictive."

Here, the writer chose to mention the source title in the sentence (an optional piece of information to include) and followed the title with a parenthetical citation. Note that in this example the parenthetical citation is placed *before* the comma that signals the end of the introductory phrase.

David Epstein's book *Junk Food, Junk Science* (2010) pointed out that "junk food cannot be considered addictive in the same way that we think of psychoactive drugs as addictive" (p. 137).

Another variation is to introduce the author and the source title in your sentence and include the publication date and page number in parentheses within the sentence or at the end of the sentence. As long as you have included the essential information, you can use the option that works best for that particular sentence and source.

Citing a book with a single author is usually straightforward. Of course, your research may require that you cite many other types of sources, such as books or articles with more than one author or sources with no individual author listed. You may also need to cite sources available in both print and online and nonprint sources, such as websites and personal interviews.

Exercise 9.3

In each of the sentences below, identify the mistakes with how the quote was incorporated. Look carefully; some of them are tricky and have more than one error.

One researcher outlines the viewpoints of both parties:

Freedom of research is undoubtedly a cherished ideal in our society. In that respect, research has an interest in being free, independent, and unrestricted. Such interests weigh against regulations. On the other hand, research should also be valid, verifiable, and unbiased, to attain the overarching goal of gaining obtaining generalisable knowledge (Simonsen, 2012, p. 46).

_____

_____

_____

2.

According to a recent research study, 'that women aged 41 and over were 5 times less likely to use condoms than were men aged 18 and younger' (2007, p. 707).

_____

_____

_____

3.

According to Emlet, the rate in which older adults have contracted HIV has grown exponentially. Currently, "approximately 20% of all HIV cases were among older adults". (Emlet, 2008).

_____

_____

_____

Examples taken from:

Writing Commons. (2014, September). *Open Text*. Retrieved from writingcommons.org/format/apa...quotations-apa

Answer available at the end of this section.

Formatting In-Text Citations

The following subsections discuss the correct format for various types of in-text citations. Read them through quickly to get a sense of what is covered, and then refer to them again as needed.

Print Sources

This section covers books, articles, and other print sources with one or more authors.

A Work by One Author

For a print work with one author, follow the guidelines provided in the JIBC APA Reference Guide. Always include the author's name and year of publication. Include a page reference whenever you quote a source directly. (See also the guidelines presented earlier in this chapter about when to include a page reference for paraphrased material.)

Chang (2008) emphasized that "engaging in weight-bearing exercise consistently is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health" (p. 49).

Chang (2008) pointed out that weight-bearing exercise has many potential benefits for women.

Two or More Works by the Same Author

At times, your research may include multiple works by the same author. If the works were published in different years, a standard in-text citation will serve to distinguish them. If you are citing multiple works by the same author published in the same year, include a lowercase letter immediately after the year. Rank the sources in the order they appear in your references section. The source listed first should include an *a* after the year, the source listed second should include a *b*, and so on.

Rodriguez (2009a) criticized the nutrition supplement industry for making unsubstantiated and sometimes misleading claims about the benefits of taking supplements. Additionally, he warned that consumers frequently do not realize the potential harmful effects of some popular supplements (Rodriguez, 2009b).

The author's last name is again mentioned in the final citation despite it being used in the attributive tag. In this case, this is acceptable because this is referring to a different source written by the same person.

Works by Authors with the Same Last Name

If you are citing works by different authors with the same last name, include each author's initials in your citation, whether you mention them in the text or in parentheses. Do so even if the publication years are different.

J. S. Williams (2007) believes nutritional supplements can be a useful part of some diet and fitness regimens. C. D. Williams (2008), however, believes these supplements are overrated.

According to two leading researchers, the rate of childhood obesity exceeds the rate of adult obesity (K. Connelley, 2010; O. Connelley, 2010).

Studies from both A. Wright (2007) and C. A. Wright (2008) confirm the benefits of diet and exercise on weight loss.

A Work by Two Authors

When two authors are listed for a given work, include both authors' names each time you cite the work. If you are citing their names in parentheses, use an ampersand (&) between them. (Use the word *and*, however, if the names appear in your sentence.)

As Garrison and Gould (2010) pointed out, "It is never too late to quit smoking. The health risks associated with this habit begin to decrease soon after a smoker quits" (p. 101).

As doctors continue to point out, "It is never too late to quit smoking. The health risks associated with this habit begin to decrease

soon after a smoker quits" (Garrison & Gould, 2010, p. 101).

A Work by Three to Five Authors

If the work you are citing has three to five authors, list all the authors' names the first time you cite the source. In subsequent citations, use the first author's name followed by the abbreviation *et al*. (*Et al*. is short for *et alia*, the Latin phrase for "and others.")

Henderson, Davidian, and Degler (2010) surveyed 350 smokers aged 18 to 30.

One survey, conducted among 350 smokers aged 18 to 30, included a detailed questionnaire about participants' motivations for smoking (Henderson, Davidian, & Degler, 2010).

Note that these examples follow the same ampersand conventions as sources with two authors. Again, use the ampersand only when listing authors' names in parentheses.

As Henderson et al. (2010) found, some young people, particularly young women, use smoking as a means of appetite suppression.

Disturbingly, some young women use smoking as a means of appetite suppression (Henderson et al., 2010).

Note how the phrase *et al*. is punctuated. There is no period comes after *et*, but there is one with *al*. because it is an abbreviation for a longer Latin word. In parenthetical references, include a comma after *et al*. but not before. Remember this rule by mentally translating the citation to English: "Henderson and others, 2010."

A Work by Six or More Authors

If the work you are citing has six or more authors, list only the first author's name, followed by *et al*., in your in-text citations. The other authors' names will be listed in your references section.

Researchers have found that outreach work with young people has helped reduce tobacco use in some communities (Costello et al., 2007).

A Work Authored by an Organization

When citing a work that has no individual author but is published by an organization, use the organization's name in place of the author's name. Lengthy organization names with well-known abbreviations can be abbreviated. In your first citation, use the full name, followed by the abbreviation in square brackets. Subsequent citations may use the abbreviation only.

It is possible for a patient to have a small stroke without even realizing it (American Heart Association [AHA], 2010).

Another cause for concern is that even if patients realize that they have had a stroke and need medical attention, they may not know which nearby facilities are best equipped to treat them (AHA, 2010).

A Work with No Listed Author

If no author is listed and the source cannot be attributed to an organization, use the title in place of the author's name. You may

use the full title in your sentence or use the first few words—enough to convey the key ideas—in a parenthetical reference. Follow standard conventions for using italics or quotations marks with titles:

Use italics for titles of books or reports.

Use quotation marks for titles of articles or chapters.

"Living With Diabetes: Managing Your Health" (2009) recommends regular exercise for patients with diabetes.

Regular exercise can benefit patients with diabetes ("Living with Diabetes," 2009).

A Work Cited within Another Work

To cite a source that is referred to within another secondary source, name the first source in your sentence. Then, in parentheses, use the phrase *as cited in* and the name of the second source author.

Rosenhan's study "On Being Sane in Insane Places" (as cited in Spitzer, 1975) found that psychiatrists diagnosed schizophrenia in people who claimed to be experiencing hallucinations and sought treatment—even though these patients were, in fact, imposters.

Two or More Works Cited in One Reference

At times, you may provide more than one citation in a parenthetical reference, such as when you are discussing related works or studies with similar results. List the citations in the same order they appear in your references section, and separate the citations with a semicolon.

Some researchers have found serious flaws in the way Rosenhan's study was conducted (Dawes, 2001; Spitzer, 1975).

Both of these researchers authored works that support the point being made in this sentence, so it makes sense to include both in the same citation.

A Famous Text Published in Multiple Editions

In some cases, you may need to cite an extremely well-known work that has been repeatedly republished or translated. Many works of literature and sacred texts, as well as some classic nonfiction texts, fall into this category. For these works, the original date of publication may be unavailable. If so, include the year of publication or translation for your edition. Refer to specific parts or chapters if you need to cite a specific section. Discuss with your instructor whether he or she would like you to cite page numbers in this particular instance.

In *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho Analysis*, Freud explains that the "manifest content" of a dream—what literally takes place—is separate from its "latent content," or hidden meaning (trans. 1965, lecture XXIX).

In this example, the student is citing a classic work of psychology, originally written in German and later translated to English. Since the book is a collection of Freud's lectures, the student cites the lecture number rather than a page number.

An Introduction, Foreword, Preface, or Afterword

To cite an introduction, foreword, preface, or afterword, cite the author of the material and the year, following the same format used for other print materials.

Electronic Sources

Whenever possible, cite electronic sources as you would print sources, using the author, the date, and where appropriate, a page number. For some types of electronic sources—for instance, many online articles—this information is easily available. Other times, however, you will need to vary the format to reflect the differences in online media.

Online Sources without Page Numbers

If an online source has no page numbers but you want to refer to a specific portion of the source, try to locate other information you can use to direct your reader to the information cited. Some websites number paragraphs within published articles; if so, include the paragraph number in your citation. Precede the paragraph number with the abbreviation for the word *paragraph* and the number of the paragraph (e.g., para. 4).

As researchers have explained, “Incorporating fresh fruits and vegetables into one’s diet can be a challenge for residents of areas where there are few or no easily accessible supermarkets” (Smith & Jones, 2006, para. 4).

Even if a source does not have numbered paragraphs, it is likely to have headings that organize the content. In your citation, name the section where your cited information appears, followed by a paragraph number.

The American Lung Association (2010) noted, “After smoking, radon exposure is the second most common cause of lung cancer” (What Causes Lung Cancer? section, para. 2).

This student cited the appropriate section heading within the website and then counted to find the specific paragraph where the cited information was located.

If an online source has no listed author and no date, use the source title and the abbreviation *n.d.* in your parenthetical reference.

It has been suggested that electromagnetic radiation from cellular telephones may pose a risk for developing certain cancers (“Cell Phones and Cancer,” n.d.).

Personal Communication

For personal communications, such as interviews, letters, and emails, cite the name of the person involved, clarify that the material is from a personal communication, and provide the specific date the communication took place. Note that while in-text citations correspond to entries in the references section, personal communications are an exception to this rule. They are cited only in the body text of your paper.

J. H. Yardley, M.D., believes that available information on the relationship between cell phone use and cancer is inconclusive (personal communication, May 1, 2009).

Writing at Work

At work, you may sometimes share information resources with your colleagues by photocopying an interesting article or forwarding the URL of a useful website. Your goal in these situations and in formal research citations is the same: to provide enough information to help your professional peers locate and follow up on potentially useful information. Provide as much specific information as possible to achieve that goal, and consult with your supervisor or professor as to what specific style he or she may prefer.

key takeaways

- In APA papers, in-text citations include the name of the author(s) and the year of publication whenever possible.
- Page numbers are always included when citing quotations. It is optional to include page numbers when citing paraphrased material; however, this should be done when citing a specific portion of a work.
- When citing online sources, provide the same information used for print sources if it is available.
- When a source does not provide information that usually appears in a citation, in-text citations should provide readers with alternative information that would help them locate the source material. This may include the title of the source, section headings and paragraph numbers for websites, and so forth.
- When writing a paper, discuss with your instructor what particular standards you should follow.

Answers

Exercise 9.3

1.

The quote is not indented on either side.

[sic] is required after “obtaining”because it is a mistake in the original.

The period is placed after the citation not before.

2.

“That” should have been removed to make the quote flow with the rest of the sentence.

There is no attributive tag and no mention of the authors in the citation: Sormanti & Shibusawa

Single quotation marks are used instead of double quotation marks.

3.

The writer used an attributive tag with the name of the source’s author, then gave the name again in the citation at the end. The second one is redundant.

The original quote used the past tense (“were”), but the transition word “currently” requires this verb to be changed to present tense (“are”) inside square brackets to make it fit.

There is an extra period before the citation. With a short quote, you put the end punctuation after the citation.

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11.2.1.5: Creating a References Page (Part 1)

Learning Objectives

- Navigate and find examples of references in the JIBC APA Reference Guide
- Compose an APA-formatted references page

The brief citations included in the body of your paper correspond to the more detailed citations provided at the end of the paper in the references section. In-text citations provide basic information—the author's name, the publication date, and the page number if necessary—while the references section provides more extensive information, which allows your reader to follow up on the sources you cited and do additional reading about the topic if desired.

In-text citations are necessary within your writing to show where you have borrowed ideas or quoted directly from another author. These are kept short because you do not want to disrupt the flow of your writing and distract the reader. While the in-text citation is very important, it is not enough to enable yourreaders to locate that source if they would like to use it for their own research.

The references section of your essay may consist of a single page for a brief research paper or may extend for many pages in professional journal articles. This section provides detailed information about how to create the references section of your paper. You will review basic formatting guidelines and learn how to format bibliographical entries for various types of sources. As you create this section of your paper, follow the guidelines provided here.

Formatting the References Page

To set up your references section, use the insert page break feature of your word processing program to begin a new page. Note that the header and margins will be the same as in the body of your paper, and pagination will continue from the body of your paper. (In other words, if you set up the body of your paper correctly, the correct header and page number should appear automatically in your references section.) The references page should be double spaced and list entries in alphabetical order by the author's last name. If an entry continues for more than one line, the second line and each subsequent line are indented five spaces, or one tab space; this is called a "hanging indent."

What to Include in the References Section

Generally, the information to include in your references section is:

The name(s) of the author(s) or institution that wrote the source

The year of publication and, where applicable, the exact date of publication

The full title of the source

For books, the city of publication

For articles or essays, the name of the periodical or book in which the article or essay appears

For magazine and journal articles, the volume number, issue number, and pages where the article appears

For sources on the web, the URL where the source is located

Before you start compiling your own references and translating referencing information from possibly other styles into APA style, you need to be able to identify each piece of information in the reference. This can sometimes be challenging because the different styles format the information differently and may put it in different places within the reference. However, the types of information each of the referencing styles requires is generally the same.

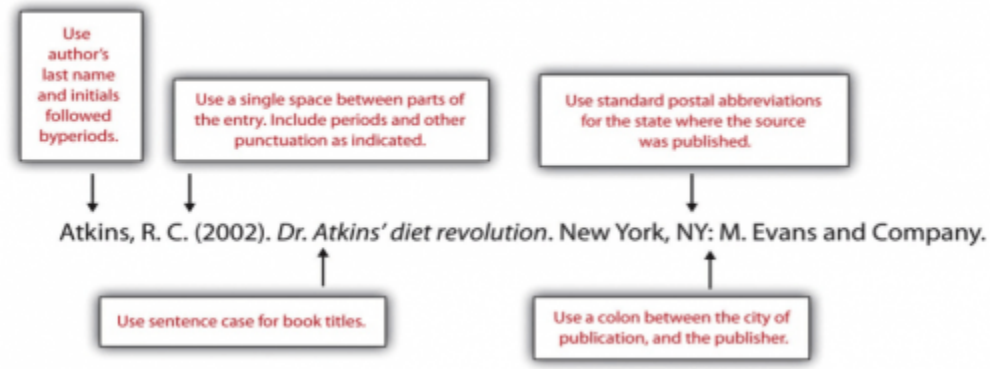
Navigating Your Reference Guide

The JIBC APA Reference Guide is organized into types of sources—print, online, mixed media—and by number of authors (or if there is no author). Once you find the referencing format you need in the guide, you can study the example and follow the structure to set up your own citations. (The style guide also provides examples for how to do the in-text citation for quotes and paraphrasing from that type of source.)

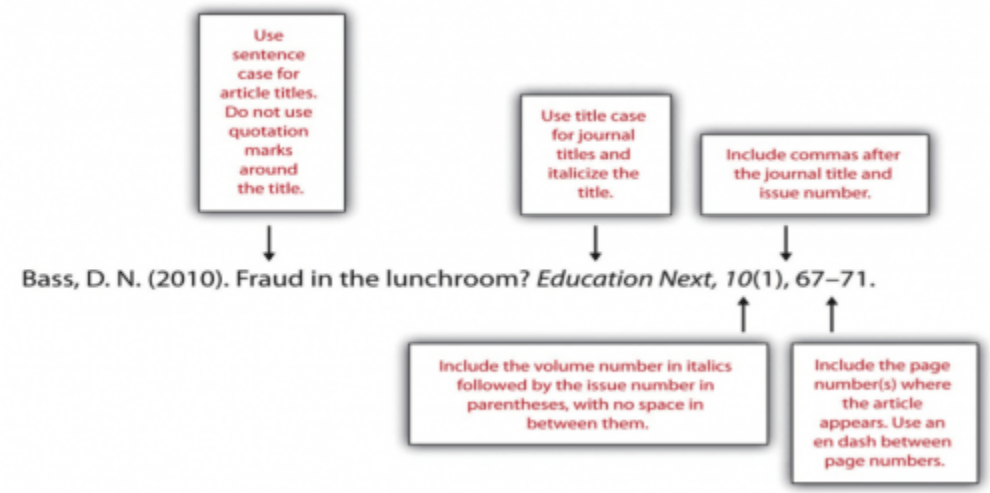
You may be asking yourself why you cannot just use the reference that is often provided on the first page of the source (like a journal article), but you need to remember that not all authors use APA style referencing, or even if they do, they may not use the exact formatting you need to follow.

Putting together a references page becomes a lot easier once you recognize the types of information you continually see in references. For example, anytime you see something *italicized* for APA or underlined (in MLA), you know it is the title of the major piece of writing, such as a book with chapters or an academic journal with multiple articles. Take a look at the examples below.

Sample Book Entry



Sample Journal Article Entry



Tip

If you are sourcing a chapter from a book, do not italicize the title of the chapter; instead, use double quotes. You also need to include the pages of the chapter within the book. (You *do* italicize the title of the book, similar to the journal article example above.)

The following box provides general guidelines for formatting the reference page. For the remainder of this chapter, you will learn about how to format reference entries for different source types, including multi-author and electronic sources.

Formatting the References Section: APA General Guidelines

Include the heading References, centred at the top of the page. The heading should not be boldfaced, italicized, or underlined.

Use double-spaced type throughout the references section, as in the body of your paper.

Use **hanging indentation** for each entry. The first line should be flush with the left margin, while any lines that follow should be indented five spaces. (Hanging indentation is the opposite of normal indenting rules for paragraphs.)

List entries in alphabetical order by the author's last name. For a work with multiple authors, use the last name of the first author listed.

List authors' names using this format: Smith, J. C.

For a work with no individual author(s), use the name of the organization that published the work or, if this is unavailable, the title of the work in place of the author's name.

For works with multiple authors, follow these guidelines:

- For works with up to and including seven authors, list the last name and initials for each author.
- For works with more than seven authors, list the first six names, followed by ellipses, and then the name of the last author

listed.
- Use an ampersand before the name of the last author listed.

Use title case for journal titles. Capitalize all important words in the title.

Use sentence case for all other titles—books, articles, web pages, and other source titles. Capitalize the first word of the title. Do not capitalize any other words in the title except for the following:

- Proper nouns
- First word of a subtitle
- First word after a colon or dash

Use italics for book and journal titles. Do not use italics, underlining, or quotation marks for titles of shorter works, such as articles.

Tip

There are many word processing programs and websites available that allow you to just plug in your referencing information and it will format it to the style required. If you decide to use such a program, you must still check all your references against your referencing guide because the way those programs and sites piece the information together may not be the *exact* way you are expected to do so at your school. Always double check!

Writing at Work

Citing other people's work appropriately is just as important in the workplace as it is in school. If you need to consult outside sources to research a document you are creating, follow the general guidelines already discussed, as well as any industry-specific citation guidelines. For more extensive use of others' work—for instance, requesting permission to link to another company's website on your own corporate website—always follow your employer's established procedures.

Formatting Reference Page Entries

As is the case for in-text citations, formatting reference entries becomes more complicated when you are citing a source with multiple authors, various types of online media, or sources for which you must provide additional information beyond the basics listed in the general guidelines. The following sections show how to format reference entries by type of source.

Print Sources: Books

For book-length sources and shorter works that appear in a book, follow the guidelines that best describe your source.

A Book by Two or More Authors

List the authors' names in the order they appear on the book's title page. Use an ampersand (&) before the last author's name.

Campbell, D. T., & Stanley, J. C. (1963). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research.* Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

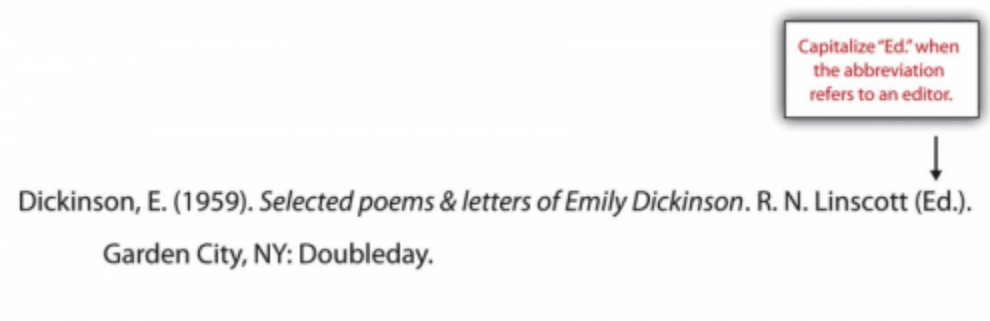
An Edited Book with No Author

List the editor or editors' names in place of the author's name, followed by *Ed.* or*Eds.* in parentheses.

Myers, C., & Reamer, D. (Eds.). (2009). *2009 nutrition index.* San Francisco, CA: HealthSource, Inc.

An Edited Book with an Author

List the author's name first, followed by the title and the editor or editors. Note that when the editor is listed after the title, you list the initials before the last name.



Tip

The previous example shows the format used for an edited book with one author—for instance, a collection of a famous person's letters that has been edited. This is different from an anthology, which is a collection of articles or essays by different authors. For citing works in anthologies, see the guidelines later in this section.

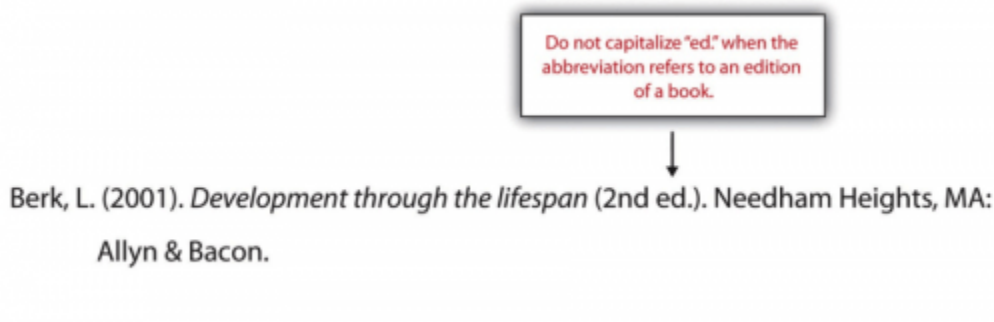
A Translated Book

Include the translator's name after the title, and at the end of the citation, list the date the original work was published. Note that for the translator's name, you list the initials before the last name.

Freud, S. (1965). *New introductory lectures on psycho-analysis* (J. Strachey, Trans.). New York, NY: W. W. Norton. (Original work published 1933).

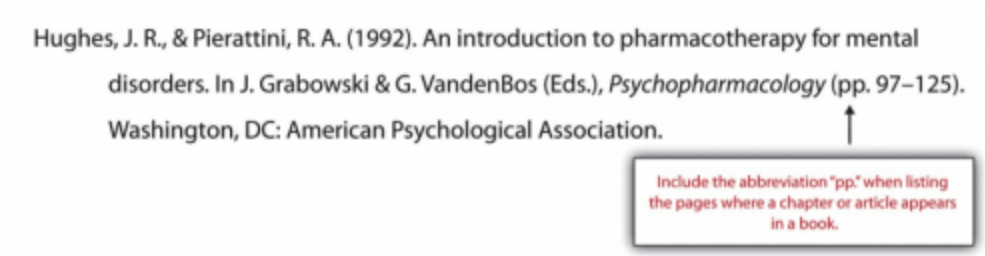
A Book Published in Multiple Editions

If you are using any edition other than the first, include the edition number in parentheses after the title.



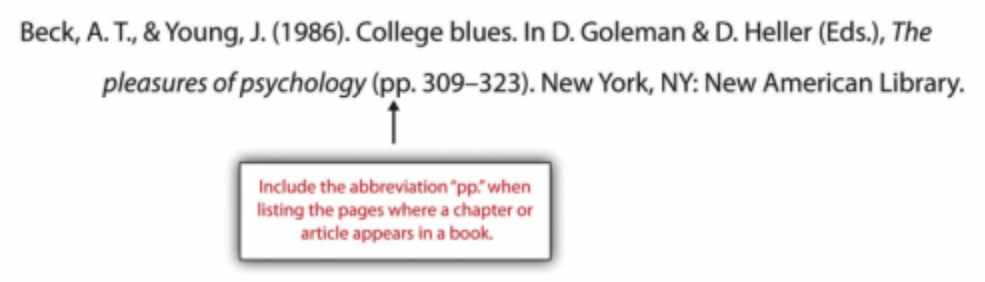
A Chapter in an Edited Book

List the name of the author(s) who wrote the chapter, followed by the chapter title. Then list the names of the book editor(s) and the title of the book, followed by the page numbers for the chapter and the usual information about the book's publisher.



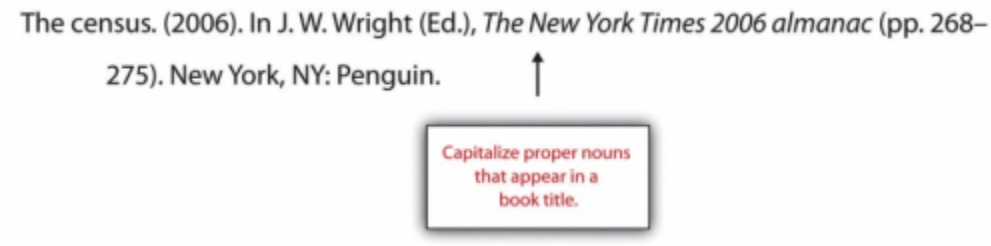
A Work That Appears in an Anthology

Follow the same process you would use to cite a book chapter, substituting the article or essay title for the chapter title.



An Article in a Reference Book

List the author's name if available; if no author is listed, provide the title of the entry where the author's name would normally be listed. If the book lists the name of the editor(s), include it in your citation. Indicate the volume number (if applicable) and page numbers in parentheses after the article title.



Two or More Books by the Same Author

List the entries in order of their publication year, beginning with the work published first.

Swedan, N. (2001). *Women's sports medicine and rehabilitation*. Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen Publishers.

Swedan, N. (2003). *The active woman's health and fitness handbook*. New York, NY: Perigee.

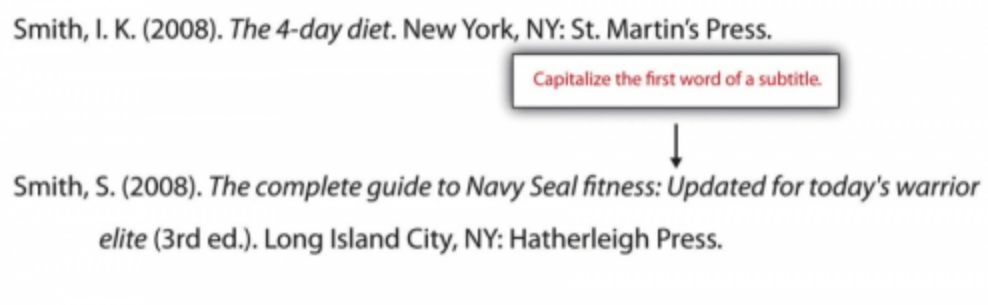
If two books have multiple authors, and the first author is the same but the others are different, alphabetize by the second author's last name (or the third or fourth, if necessary).

Carroll, D., & Aaronson, F. (2008). *Managing type II diabetes*. Chicago, IL: Southwick Press.

Carroll, D., & Zuckerman, N. (2008). *Gestational diabetes*. Chicago, IL: Southwick Press.

Books by Different Authors with the Same Last Name

Alphabetize entries by the authors' first initial.



A Book Authored by an Organization

Treat the organization name as you would an author's name. For the purposes of alphabetizing, ignore words like *the* in the organization's name (e.g., a book published by the American Heart Association would be listed with other entries whose authors' names begin with *A*.)

American Psychiatric Association. (1994). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders DSM-IV* (4th ed.). Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing.

A Book Authored by a Government Agency

Treat these as you would a book published by a non-governmental organization, but be aware that these works may have an identification number listed. If so, include the number in parentheses after the publication year.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2002). *The decennial censuses from 1790 to 2000*(Publication No. POL/02-MA). Washington, DC: US Government Printing Offices.

Print Sources: Periodicals

An Article in a Scholarly Journal

Include the following information:

Author or authors' names

Publication year

Article title (in sentence case, without quotation marks or italics)

Journal title (in title case and in italics)

Volume number (in italics)

Issue number (in parentheses)

Page number(s) where the article appears

DeMarco, R. F. (2010). Palliative care and African American women living with HIV. *Journal of Nursing Education, 49*(5), 1–4.

An Article in a Journal Paginated by Volume

In journals, page numbers are continuous across all the issues in a particular volume. For instance, the winter issue may begin with page 1, and in the spring issue that follows, the page numbers pick up where the previous issue left off. (If you have ever wondered why a print journal did not begin on page 1, or wondered why the page numbers of a journal extend into four digits, this is why.) Omit the issue number from your reference entry.

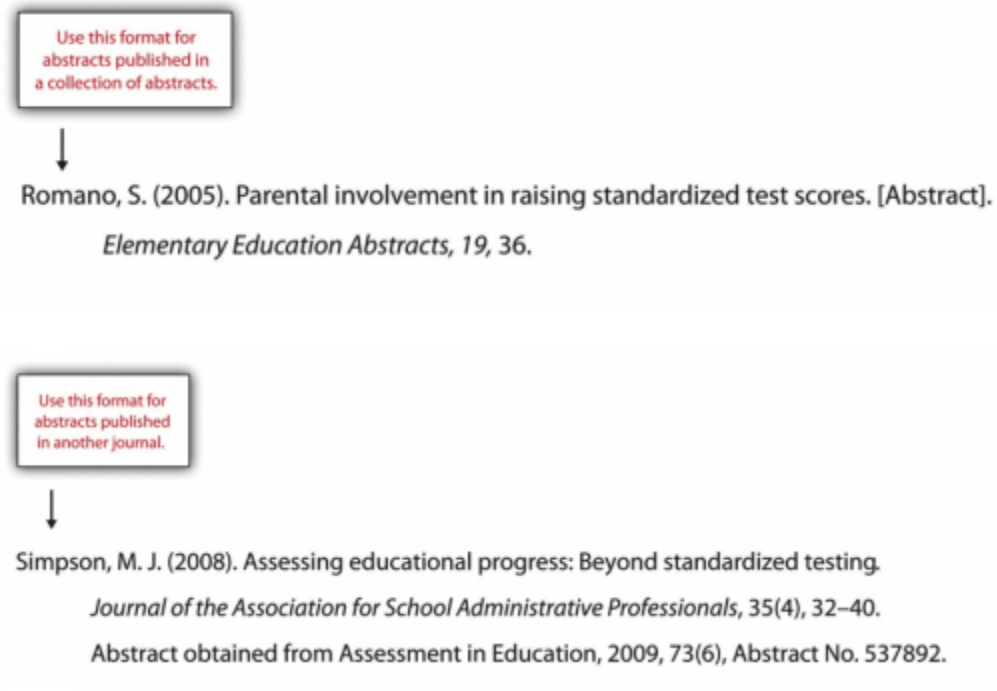
Wagner, J. (2009). Rethinking school lunches: A review of recent literature. *American School Nurses' Journal*, *47,* 1123–1127.

An Abstract of a Scholarly Article

At times you may need to cite an **abstract**—the summary that appears at the beginning of a published article. If you are citing the abstract only, and it was published separately from the article, provide the following information:

Publication information for the article

Information about where the abstract was published (for instance, another journal or a collection of abstracts)



A Journal Article with Two to Seven Authors

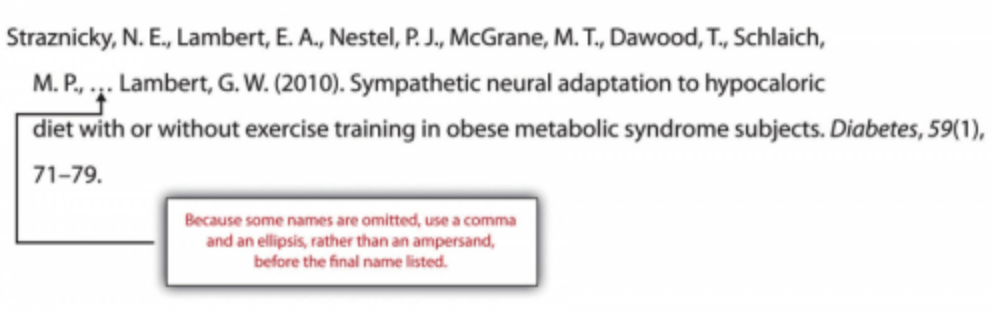
List all the authors' names in the order they appear in the article. Use an ampersand before the last name listed.

Barker, E. T., & Bornstein, M. H. (2010). Global self-esteem, appearance satisfaction, and self-reported dieting in early adolescence. *Journal of Early Adolescence, 30*(2), 205–224.

Tremblay, M. S., Shields, M., Laviolette, M., Craig, C. L., Janssen, I., & Gorber, S. C. (2010). Fitness of Canadian children and youth: Results from the 2007–2009 Canadian Health Measures Survey. *Health Reports, 21*(1), 7–20.

A Journal Article with More Than Eight Authors

List the first six authors' names, followed by a comma, an ellipsis, and the name of the last author listed. The article in the following example has 16 listed authors; the reference entry lists the first six authors and the 16th, omitting the seventh through the 15th.



Writing at Work

The idea of an eight-page article with 16 authors may seem strange to you—especially if you are in the midst of writing a 10-page research paper on your own. More often than not, articles in scholarly journals list multiple authors. Sometimes, the authors actually did collaborate on writing and editing the published article. In other instances, some of the authors listed may have contributed to the research in some way while being only minimally involved in the process of writing the article. Whenever you collaborate with colleagues to produce a written product, follow your profession's conventions for giving everyone proper credit for their contribution.

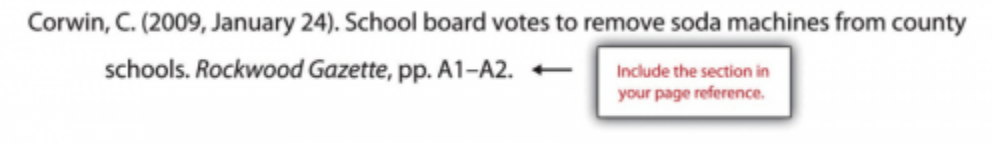
A Magazine Article

After the publication year, list the issue date. Otherwise, magazine articles as you would journal articles. List the volume and issue number if both are available.



A Newspaper Article

Treat newspaper articles as you would magazine and journal articles, with one important difference: precede the page number(s) with the abbreviation *p.* (for a single-page article) or *pp.* (for a multipage-page article). For articles that have non-continuous pagination, list all the pages included in the article. For example, an article that begins on page A1 and continues on pages A4 would have the page reference A1, A4. An article that begins on page A1 and continues on pages A4 and A5 would have the page reference A1, A4–A5.



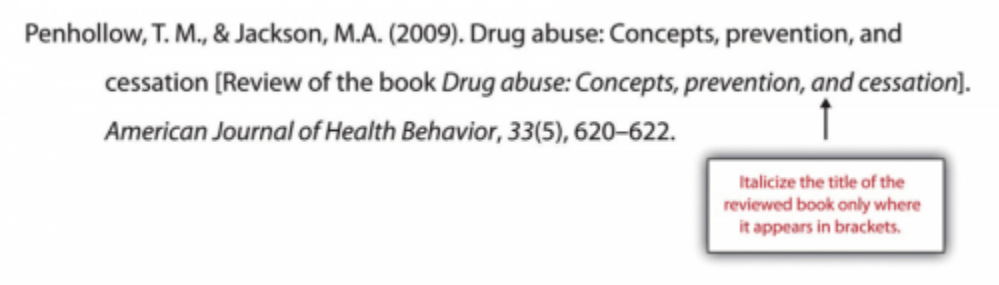
A Letter to the Editor

After the title, indicate in brackets that the work is a letter to the editor.

Jones, J. (2009, January 31). Food police in our schools [Letter to the editor]. *Rockwood Gazette,* p. A8.

A Review

After the title, indicate in brackets that the work is a review and state the name of the work being reviewed. (Note that even if the title of the review is the same as the title of the book being reviewed, as in the following example, you should treat it as an article title. Do not italicize it.)



This page titled 11.2.1.5: Creating a References Page (Part 1) is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

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11.2.1.6: CREATING A REFERENCES PAGE (PART 2)

Electronic Sources

Citing Articles from Online Periodicals: URLs and Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs)

Whenever you cite online sources, it is important to provide the most up-to-date information available to help readers locate the source. In some cases, this means providing an article's URL, or web address. (The letters *URL* stand for uniform resource locator.) Always provide the most complete URL possible. Provide a link to the specific article used, rather than a link to the publication's homepage.

As you likely know, web addresses are not always stable. If a website is updated or reorganized, the article you accessed in April may move to a different location in May. The URL you provided may become a dead link. For this reason, many online periodicals, especially scholarly publications, now rely on DOIs rather than URLs to keep track of articles.

A **DOI** is a digital object identifier—an identification code provided for some online documents, typically articles in scholarly journals. Like a URL, its purpose is to help readers locate an article. However, a DOI is more stable than a URL, so it makes sense to include it in your reference entry when possible. Follow these guidelines:

If you are citing an online article with a DOI, list the DOI at the end of the reference entry.

If the article appears in print as well as online, you do not need to provide the URL. However, include the words *electronic version* after the title in brackets.

In all other respects, treat the article as you would a print article. Include the volume number and issue number if available. (Note, however, that these may not be available for some online periodicals.)

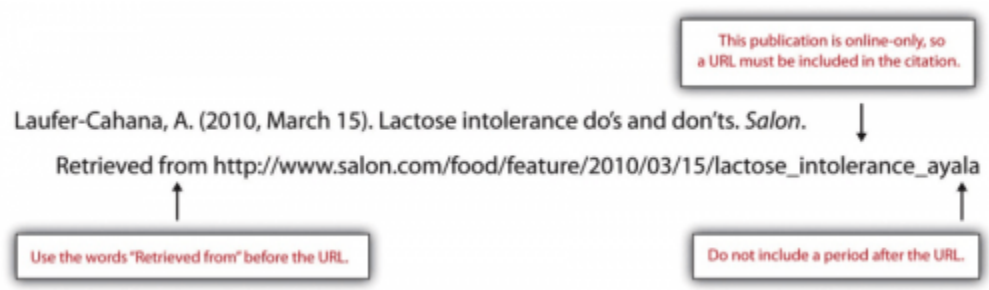
An Article from an Online Periodical with a DOI

List the DOI if one is provided. There is no need to include the URL if you have listed the DOI.

Bell, J. R. (2006). Low-carb beats low-fat diet for early losses but not long term. *OBGYN News, 41*(12), 32. doi:10.1016/S0029-7437(06)71905-X

An Article from an Online Periodical with No DOI

List the URL. Include the volume and issue number for the periodical if this information is available. (For some online periodicals, it may not be.)



Note that if the article appears in a print version of the publication, you do not need to list the URL, but do indicate that you accessed the electronic version.

Robbins, K. (2010, March/April). Nature's bounty: A heady feast [Electronic version]. *Psychology Today, 43*(2), 58.

A Newspaper Article

Provide the URL of the article.

McNeil, D. G. (2010, May 3). Maternal health: A new study challenges benefits of vitamin A for women and babies. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from www.nytimes.com/2010/05/04/he...tml?ref=health

An Article Accessed through a Database

Cite articles accessed through a database the same way you would normally cite a print article. Provide database information only if the article is difficult to locate.

Tip

APA style does not require the item number or accession number for articles retrieved from databases. You may choose to include it if the article is difficult to locate or the database is an obscure one. Check with your instructor for specific requirements for your course.

An Abstract of an Article

Format article abstracts as you would an article citation, but add the word *Abstract* in brackets after the title.

Bradley, U., Spence, M., Courtney, C. H., McKinley, M. C., Ennis, C. N., McCance, D. R....Hunter, S. J. (2009). Low-fat versus low-carbohydrate weight reduction diets: Effects on weight loss, insulin resistance, and cardiovascular risk: A randomized control trial [Abstract]. *Diabetes*,*58*(12), 2741–2748. diabetes.diabetesjournals.org...00098.abstract

A Nonperiodical Web Document

The ways you cite different nonperiodical web documents may vary slightly from source to source, depending on the information available. In your citation, include as much of the following information as you can:

Name of the author(s), whether an individual or organization

Date of publication (Use *n.d.* if no date is available.)

Title of the document

Address where you retrieved the document

If the document consists of more than one web page within the site, link to the homepage or the entry page for the document.

American Heart Association. (2010). *Heart attack, stroke, and cardiac arrest warning signs*.Retrieved from http://www.americanheart.org/present...dentifier=3053

An Entry from an Online Encyclopedia or Dictionary

Because these sources often do not include authors' names, you may list the title of the entry at the beginning of the citation. Provide the URL for the specific entry.

Addiction. (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster's online dictionary*. Retrieved from http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/addiction

Graphic Data

When citing graphic data—such as maps, pie charts, bar graphs, and so on—include the name of the organization that compiled the information, along with the publication date. Briefly describe the contents in brackets. Provide the URL where you retrieved the information. (If the graphic is associated with a specific project or document, list it after your bracketed description of the contents.)

US Food and Drug Administration. (2009). [Pie charts showing the percentage breakdown of the FDA's budget for fiscal year

2005]. *2005 FDA budget summary*. Retrieved from mhttp://www.fda.gov/AboutFDA/Reports.../ucm117231.htm

An Electronic Book

Electronic books may include books available as text files online or audiobooks. If an electronic book is easily available in print, cite it as you would a print source. If it is unavailable in print (or extremely difficult to find), use the format in the example. (Use the words *Available from* in your citation if the book must be purchased or is not available directly.)

Chisholm, L. (n.d.). *Celtic tales*. Retrieved from http://www.childrenslibrary.org/icdl...Reader?bookid=chicelt_00150014&twoPage=false&route=text&size=0&fullscreen=false&pnum1=1&lang= English&ilang=English

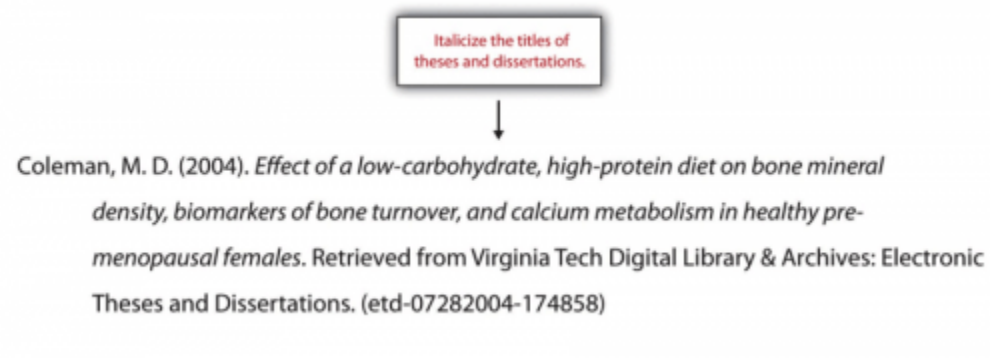
A Chapter from an Online Book or a Chapter or Section of a Web Document

Chapters and sections from online books or web documents are treated similarly to their print counterparts with the addition of retrieval information. Include the chapter or section number in parentheses after the book title.

Hart, A. M. (1895). Restoratives—Coffee, cocoa, chocolate. In *Diet in sickness and in health* (VI). Retrieved from www.archive.org/details/dieti...ssin00hartrich

A Dissertation or Thesis from a Database

Provide the author, date of publication, title, and retrieval information. If the work is numbered within the database, include the number in parentheses at the end of the citation.



Computer Software

For commonly used office software and programming languages, it is not necessary to provide a citation. Cite software only when you are using a specialized program, such as the nutrition tracking software in the following example. If you download software from a website, provide the version and the year if available.

Internet Brands, Inc. (2009). FitDay PC (Version 2) [Software]. Available from www.fitday.com/Pc/PcHome.html?gcid=14

A Post on a Blog or Video Blog

Citation guidelines for blogs are similar to those used for discussion forum postings. Briefly describe the type of source in brackets after the title.



Writing at Work

Because the content may not be carefully reviewed for accuracy, discussion forums and blogs should not be relied upon as a major source of information. However, it may be appropriate to cite these sources for some types of research. You may also participate in discussion forums or comment on blogs that address topics of personal or professional interest. Always keep in mind that when you post, you are making your thoughts public—and in many cases, available through search engines. Make sure any posts that can easily be associated with your name are appropriately professional, because a potential employer could view them.

A Television or Radio Broadcast

Include the name of the producer or executive producer; the date, title, and type of broadcast; and the associated company and location.

West, Ty. (Executive producer). (2009, September 24). *PBS special report: Health care reform* [Television broadcast]. New York, NY, and Washington, DC: Public Broadcasting Service.

A Television or Radio Series or Episode

Include the producer and the type of series if you are citing an entire television or radio series.

Couture, D., Nabors, S., Pinkard, S., Robertson, N., & Smith, J. (Producers). (1979). *The Diane Rehm show* [Radio series]. Washington, DC: National Public Radio.

To cite a specific episode of a radio or television series, list the name of the writer or writers (if available), the date the episode aired, its title, and the type of series, along with general information about the series.

Bernanke, J., & Wade, C. (2010, January 10). Hummingbirds: Magic in the air [Television series episode]. In F. Kaufman (Executive producer), *Nature*. New York, NY: WNET.

A Motion Picture

Name the director or producer (or both), year of release, title, country of origin, and studio.

Spurlock, M. (Director/producer), Morley, J. (Executive producer), & Winters. H. M. (Executive producer). (2004). *Super size me*. United States: Kathbur Pictures in association with Studio on Hudson.

A Recording

Name the primary contributors and list their role. Include the recording medium in brackets after the title. Then list the location and the label.

Smith, L. W. (Speaker). (1999). *Meditation and relaxation* [CD]. New York, NY: Earth, Wind, & Sky Productions.

Székely, I. (Pianist), Budapest Symphony Orchestra (Performers), & Németh, G. (Conductor). (1988). *Chopin piano concertos no. 1 and 2* [CD]. Hong Kong: Naxos.

A Podcast

Provide as much information as possible about the writer, director, and producer; the date the podcast aired; its title; any organization or series with which it is associated; and where you retrieved the podcast.

Kelsey, A. R. (Writer), Garcia, J. (Director), & Kim, S. C. (Producer). (2010, May 7). Lies food labels tell us. *Savvy consumer podcast* [Audio podcast]. Retrieved from www.savvyconsumer.org/podcasts/050710

Exercise 9.4

Using the guidelines above and your JIBC APA Reference Guide, identify what each of these types of sources are based on their identifying characteristics and under which categories you would find them in the reference guide. Choose the answer that best describes each example.

Baudrillard, Jean. *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign.* Trans. Charles Levin. Saint Louis: Telos, 1981.

1. A book with two authors
2. A multi-volume work
3. An article in a journal
4. A book with one author

United States Drug Enforcement Administration. (2014). The Dangers and consequences of marijuana abuse. Retrieved from www.justice.gov/dea/docs/dang...uana-abuse.pdf

1. Online government document
2. Online task force report, corporate author
3. Online codes and standards
4. A blog

Watson, S. (2003). Antigone. In R. Sullivan & M. Levene (Eds.), *Short Fiction: An Anthology* (pp. 323-329). Don Mills, Ont.: Oxford University Press. (Original work published 1979)

1. A short story reprinted in an anthology
2. A chapter in a book
3. A multi-volume book
4. A book with three authors

Gilbert, Elliot. “The Ceremony of Innocence: Charles Dickens’s *A Christmas Carol*.” *PMLA* 90 (1975): 22-31.

1. An online journal article
2. An academic article
3. A chapter in a book
4. A newspaper article

Ogborne, A.C., Smart, R.G., & Adlaf, E.M. (2000). Self-reported medical use of marijuana: A survey of the general population. *Canadian Medical Association Journal, 162*(12), 1685. Retrieved from ecmaj.ca.cgi

1. An online academic journal article
2. An online authored report, non-governmental organization
3. An online academic journal article by multiple authors
4. An e-version of a print book

David, L. (Producer) & Guggenheim, D. (Director). (2006). *An Inconvenient Truth* [Motion Picture]. United States: Lawrence Bender Productions.

1. A CD-ROM
2. A television series
3. A video/DVD
4. A blog

Jaynes, J. 1986 Consciousness of the voices of the mind. *Canadian Psychology* 27. 128-137.

1. An online journal article
2. An academic journal article
3. A book
4. A magazine article

Spiro, M.D. (1983). Introduction: Thirty years of kibbutz research. In E. Krause (Ed.), *The sociology of the kibbutz: Studies in Israeli society II*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.

1. A book
2. A chapter
3. An edited book
4. All of the above

Kamel, F., Tanner, C., Umbach, D., Hoppin, J., Alavanja, M., Blair, A.,... Sandler, D. (2007). Pesticide exposure and self-reported Parkinson's disease in the agricultural health study. *Am J Epidemiol*, 165: 364-374.

1. An online academic article with eight or more authors
2. A book with eight or more authors
3. A print journal article with eight or more authors
4. A chapter in an edited book

McPartland, J.M., & Pruitt, P.L. (1997). Medical marijuana and its use by the immunocompromised. *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine, 3*(3), 39-45. doi: 10.1080/102825

1. An online newspaper article
2. An online article with DOI
3. A chapter of a book from an online library
4. All of the above

Some examples taken from:

Writing Commons. (2014, September). *Open Text*. Retrieved from writingcommons.org/format/apa...quotations-apa

Answer available at the end of this section.

Sample Reference Page

Review the following example from Jorge's paper on evaluating low-carbohydrate diets. This is an example of how to piece all of your referencing information into one section.



BEYOND THE HYPE: EVALUATING LOW-CARBOHYDRATE DIETS 10

References

Agatson, A. (2003). The South Beach diet. New York, NY: St. Martin's Griffin.

The American Heart Association. (2010). *American Heart Association comments on weight loss study comparing low carbohydrate/high protein, Mediterranean style and low fat diets*. http://americanheart.mediaroom.com/index.php?s=43&item=473

Atkins, R. C. (2002). *Dr. Atkins' diet revolution*. New York, NY: M. Evans and Company.

Bell, J. R. (2006). Low-carb beats low-fat diet for early losses but not long term. *OBGYN News, 41*(12), 32. doi:10.1016/50029-7437(06)71905-X

Bradley, U., Spence, M., Courtney, C. H., McKinley, M. C., Ennis, C. N., McCance, D. R.…Hunter, S. J. (2009). Low-fat versus low-carbohydrate weight reduction diets: effects on weight loss, insulin resistance, and cardiovascular risk: A randomized control trial [Abstract]. Diabetes, 58(12), 2741–2748. Recieved from http://diabetes.diabetesjournals.org/content/early/2009/08/23/db09-0098.abstract

Ebbeling, C. B., Leidig, M. M., Feldman, H. A., Lovesky, M. M., & Ludwig, D. S. (2007). *Effects of a low-glycemic load vs low-fat diet in obese young adults: A randomized trial*. Journal of the American Medical Association, 297(19), 2092–2102.

Foo, S. Y., Heller, E. R., Wykrzykowska, J., Sullivan, C. J., Manning-Tobin, J. J., Moore, K. J.…Rosenzweigac, A. (2009). Vascular effects of a low-carbohydrate high-protein diet. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of America, 106*(36), 15418–15423. doi:10.1073/pnas.0907995106

Gardner, C. D., Kiazand, A., Alhassan, S., Kim, S., Stafford, R. S., Balise, R. R.…King, A. C. (2007). Comparison of the Atkins, Zone, Ornish, and LEARN Diets for change in weight and related risk factors among overweight premenopausal women. *Journal of the American Medical Association, 297*(9), 969–977. http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/297/9/969#AUTHINFO

Harvard School of Public Health. (2010). *The Nutrition Source*. Carbohydrates: Good carbs guide



BEYOND THE HYPE: EVALUATING LOW-CARBOHYDRATE DIETS 11

the way. In The Nutrition Source. Retrieved from http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/what-should-you-eat/carbohydrates-full-story/index.html#good-carbs-not-no-carbs

HealthDay. (2010). *Low-fat diets beat low-carb regimen long term*. http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_95861.html

Hirsch, J. (2004). The low-carb evolution: Be reactive with low-carb products but proactive with nutrition. *Nutraceuticals World*. Retrved from http://www.nutraceuticalsworld.com/contents/view/13321

Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MFMER). (2010). Weight-loss options: 6 common diet plans. http://www.mayoclinic.com/print/weight-loss/NU00616/METHOD=print

McMillan-Price, J., Petocz, P., Atkinson, F., O'Neill, K., Samman, S., Steinbeck, K.…Brand-Miller, J. (2006, July). Comparison of 4 diets of varying glycemic load on weight loss and cardiovascular risk reduction in overweight and obese young adults: A randomized controlled trial. *Archives of Internal Medicine, 166*(14), 1466–1475. Retrieved from http://archinte.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/166/14/1466

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. (2010). What I need to know about eating and diabetes. In *National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse*. Retrieved from http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/eating_ez/index.htm

Reuters Health. (2010). *Low-carb diet can increase bad cholesterol levels*. Retrieved from http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_95708.html

Seppa, N. (2008). Go against the grains, diet study suggests: Low-carb beats low-fat in weight loss, cholesterol. *Science News, 174*(4), 25. http://www.sciencenews.org/view/issue/id/34757

Assignment 3 (2.5%)

Using the JIBC APA Reference Guide, compile a reference page consisting of the six sources given below. You will need to apply the required formatting for each of the references as well as the page as a whole. You will have to look at each of the sources and the information that is given for each: there may be some extra information you will need to omit from the references.

1. Identify what type of source this is from the information given.

2. Find the example of that type of source in the reference guide.

3. Decide what information you need and do not need for each.

4. Compose each individual source's reference.

5. On a separate page, combine the references you created for the six sources into a correctly formatted reference page.

Submit this assignment to your instructor for grading. (2.5%)

Referencing information for Assignment 3

1. *American Music Teacher*, August-Sept 1999 v49 (1) p34(5) 1998 National Survey of High School Pianists. Harold Kafer; Richard Kennel

2. *The Economist* (US), June 1, 1996 v339 n7968 p79(1) The food of the gods.

3. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, Dec 2005 v14 i6 p317(4) Music and Cognitive Abilities. Glenn E. Schellenberg

4. *Nursing interventions: effective nursing treatments* / [edited by] Gloria M. Bulechek, Joanne C. McCloskey. Philadelphia: Saunders, c1999. 3rd ed Includes bibliographical references and index. ISBN: 072167724X Fenwick Stacks Call Number: RT48 .N8833 1999

5. Kok, S.C. (2005). Music and learning. In Hoffman, B. (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Educational Technology*.Retrieved: March 28, 2008, from coe.sdsu.edu/eet/articles/mus...ning/start.htm

6. Tuning up young minds: music lessons give kids a small IQ advantage.B. Bower. *Science News*165.25 (June 19, 2004): p389(1). (446 words)

Checklist 7.1 Reference Page Reminder

Just to review, your final reference page needs to:

Start on an fresh page after your last page of writing

Be titled “Reference Page” or “References”

Be in alphabetical order based on the author’s last name

Be double spaced

Have hanging indents

Tip

In APA style, book and article titles are formatted in sentence case, not title case. Sentence case means that only the first word is capitalized, along with any proper nouns.

key takeaways

- In APA papers, in-text citations usually include the name(s) of the author(s) and the year of publication.
- In-text citations correspond to entries in the references section, which provide detailed referencing information about a source.
- Entries in the references section include as much of the following information as possible:
- Print Resources: Author(s), date of publication, title, publisher, page numbers (for shorter works), editors (if applicable), and periodical title (if applicable).
- Online resources (text based). Author(s), date of publication, title, publisher or sponsoring organization, and DOI or URL (if applicable).
- Electronic resources (non text based).Details about the creator(s) of the work, title, associated company or series, and date the work was produced or broadcast. The specific details provided will vary depending on the medium and the information that is available.
- Electronic resources (text based). If widely available in print form, it is sometimes unnecessary to provide details about how to access the electronic version. Check the guidelines for the specific source type.

Journal entry #9

Write a paragraph or two responding to the following.

What did you find the most straightforward/easy about citations?

What did you find more difficult about citations?

What did you find the most straightforward/easy about composing references?

What did you find more difficult about composing references?

What concerns you most about referencing citations? What will you do to address this?

Remember as mentioned in the Assessment Descriptions in your syllabus:

You will be expected to respond to the questions by reflecting on and discussing your experiences with the week's material.

When writing your journals, you should focus on freewriting—writing without (overly) considering formal writing structures—but remember that it will be read by the instructor, who needs to be able to understand your ideas.

Your instructor will be able to see if you have completed this entry by the end of the week but will not read all of the journals until week 11.

Answers

Exercise 9.4

D. Although two names are given, only the first is the author; the second is a translator. It is a book because it has a city and publisher.

A. Starts with "United States" = good chance it is a government-produced document

A. The title of the book contains "anthology," which means collection of stories, and "fiction" refers to stories. We know it is a book because of the city and publisher.

B. There are actually three titles given here: the article, a book within the title of the article, the journal name *PMLA* (*Publications of the Modern Language Association*). There are also a volume number after *PMLA* and page numbers.

C. There are three authors, URL, and title of journal, identifying it as an online article with multiple authors.

C. The keywords identifying it as a video/DVD are *director, producer*, and *motion picture*

B. The title of journal and article, and the page numbers identify it as a journal article, but there is no URL so we know it is not online.

D. There are two titles, one italicized and one not, so it is part of a bigger source; the second name followed by "Ed." shows this was an edited book; we know it is a book because of the city and publisher.

C. The title of journal and article, with page numbers, identifies it as a journal article, but not online as there is no URL. More than eight authors are listed.

B. It is identified as a journal article because the journal title is given, and the name of the article. There is no URL but there is a DOI, identifying it as being online.

11.2.1.6.1: Citing Sources

11.2.1.6.1.1: Read- Acknowledging Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism

11.2.1.6.1.2: When and How To Use MLA In-Text Citation

11.2.1.6.1.3: How to Cite YouTube

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11.2.1.6.1: CITING SOURCES

11.2.1.6.1.1: Read- Acknowledging Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism

11.2.1.6.1.2: When and How To Use MLA In-Text Citation

11.2.1.6.1.3: How to Cite YouTube

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11.2.1.6.1.1: Read- Acknowledging Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism

Acknowledgment of Sources is a Rhetorical Act

To an inexperienced writer, citing and documenting sources may seem like busywork. Yet, when you cite your external sources in the text of your paper and when you document them at the end of your piece in a list of works cited or a bibliography, you are performing a rhetorical act. Complete and accurate citing and documenting of all external sources help writers achieve three very important goals:

1. It enhances your credibility as a writer. By carefully and accurately citing your external sources in the text and by documenting them at the end of your paper you show your readers that you are serious about your subject, your research, and the argument which you are making in your paper. You demonstrate that you have studied your subject in sufficient depth, and by reading credible and authoritative sources.
2. It helps you to avoid plagiarism. Plagiarism is trying to pass someone else's ideas or writing as your own. It is a serious offense that can damage the reputation of a writer forever and lead to very serious consequences if committed in an academic or professional setting. Later on in the chapter, we will discuss plagiarism and ways to avoid it in detail.
3. The presence of complete citations of sources in your paper will help you demonstrate to your readers that you are an active participant in the community of readers, writers, researchers, and learners. It shows that you are aware of the conversations that are going on among writers and researchers in your field and that you are willing to enter those conversations by researching and writing about the subjects that interest you. By providing enough information about the sources which you used in you own research and writing, you give other interested readers the opportunity to find out more about your subject and, thus, to enter in a conversation with you.

The Logic and Structure of a Source Citation

Every time writers cite and document their sources, they do it in two places in the paper—in the text itself and at the end of the paper, in a list of works cited or bibliography. A citation is incomplete and, by and large, useless to the readers, if either of the parts is missing. Consider the following example, in which I cite an academic journal article using the Modern Language Association citation system. Please note that I give this example at this point in the chapter only to demonstrate the two parts of a citation. Later on, we will discuss how to cite and document different kinds of sources using different documentation systems, in full detail.

In-text citations

In-text citations are also known as parenthetical citations or parenthetical references because, at the end of the citation, parentheses are used. In her essay "If Winston Weather Would Just Write to Me on E-mail," published in the journal College Composition and Communication, writer and teacher Wendy Bishop shares her thoughts on the nature of writing: "[I see...writing as a mixture of mess and self-discipline, of self-history [and] cultural history." (101).

The Citation in the List of Works Cited

Bishop, Wendy. "If Winston Weather Would Just Write to Me on E-mail." College Composition and Communication. 46.1 (1995): 97-103.

The reason why each citation, regardless of the type of source and the documentation system being used, has two parts is simple. Writers acknowledge and document external sources for several reasons. One of these reasons is to give their readers enough information and enable them, if necessary, to find the same source which the paper mentions. Therefore, if we look at the kinds of information provided in the citation (page numbers, titles, authors, publishers, and publication dates), it becomes clear that this information is sufficient to locate the source in the library, bookstore, or online.

When to Cite and Document Sources

The brief answer to this question is “always.” Every time you use someone else’s ideas, arguments, opinions, or data, you need to carefully acknowledge their author and source. Keep in mind that you are not just borrowing others’ words when you use sources in your writing. You are borrowing ideas. Therefore, even if you are not directly citing the source, but paraphrase or summarize it, you still need to cite it both in the text and at the end of the paper in a list of works cited or in a list of references.

The only exception is when you are dealing with what is known as “common knowledge.” Common knowledge consists of facts that are so widely known that they do not require a source reference. For instance, if you say in your writing that the Earth rotates around the Sun or that Ronald Reagan was a US President, you do not need to cite the sources of this common knowledge formally.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a problem that exists not only on college, university, and high school campuses. In recent years, several high profile cases, some involving famous writers and journalists have surfaced, in which the these writers were accused of either presenting someone else work as their own or fabricating works based on fictitious or unreliable research. With the advent of the Internet, it has become relatively easy to download complete papers. Various people and organizations, sometimes masquerading as “writing consultants” promise students that they would write a paper on any subject and of any level of complexity for a hefty fee. Clearly, the use of such services by student writers is dishonest and dishonorable. If your college or university is like mine, it probably has adopted strict policies for dealing with plagiarizing writers. Punishments for intentional plagiarism are severe and may include not only a failing grade for the class but even an expulsion from the university.

In addition to intentional plagiarism, there is also the unintentional kind. Experience shows that beginning writers’ work sometimes include passages which could be called plagiarized because such writers often do not know how to cite and document external sources properly or do not understand that importance of following proper citation practices.

Observing the following practices will help you avoid plagiarism:

As you research, keep careful notes of your sources. As you take notes for your research project, keep track of what materials in those notes comes from external sources and what material is yours. Keep track of all your sources, including interviews and surveys, photographs and drawings, personal e-mails and conversations. Be sure to record the following information:

- Author
- Title
- Date of publication
- Publisher

Remember that when you use external sources, you are borrowing not the words of another writer, but his or her ideas, theories, and opinions. Therefore, even if you summarize or paraphrase a source, be sure to give it full credit. Writers used to have to record this information on separate note cards. However, with the proliferation of online and other electronic tools which allow us to keep track of our research, the task of recording and reflecting on source-related information has become easier.

Anti-Plagiarism Activity

Read the following four paragraphs. They are from a research source, an article in *The New Yorker* magazine. The other three are from student papers which attempt to use the article as an external source. As you read consider the following questions:

- Would you call the student's passage or its parts plagiarized from the original? Why or why not?
- If any parts of the student's passages are plagiarized what needs to be changed in order to avoid plagiarism? Keep in mind that you may need to rewrite the whole Paragraph and not just make changes in separate sentences.
- Which of the student passages will require more significant rewriting than others and why?

Source Paragraph (from the article "Personality Plus," by Malcolm Gladwell. *New Yorker*, Sept 20, 2004). One of the most popular personality tests in the world is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), a psychologicalassessment system based on Carl Jung's notion that people make sense of the world through a series or psychological frames. Some people are extraverts, some are introverts. Some process information through logical thought. Some are directed by their feelings. Some make sense of the world through intuitive leaps. Others collect data through their senses.

Student Paragraph 1

The Myers-Briggs Test is a very popular way to assess someone's personality type. Philosopher Carl Jung believed that people make sense of the world in different ways. Some are extraverts and some and introverts. According to this idea, people process information either by logical reasoning or through intuition or feelings.

Student Paragraph 2

According to writer Malcolm Gladwell, One of the most popular personality tests in the world is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), a psychological-assessment system based on Carl Jung's notion that people make sense of the world through a series or psychological frames. Gladwell states that the test is based on the idea by Carl Jung that people make sense of the world through a series of psychological frames. According to Jung, some people are extroverts and some are introverts. Some process information through logical input, and some through feelings. Some make sense of the world through intuitive leaps. Others collect data through their senses.

Student Paragraph 3

One of the most popular personality tests in the world is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), a psychological assessment system based on Carl Jung's notion that people make sense of the world through a series or psychological frames (Gladwell 43). The test is based on Jung's theory that people understand the world differently. This is why we have extroverts and introverts and people who act either based on reasoning or feelings (Gladwell).

Major Citation Systems

In this part of the chapter, I will explain the major citation and documentation systems which you are likely to encounter in your writing for college classes and beyond. The information in this section is not meant to be memorized. Instead, I encourage you to use this material as a reference source, when you are writing a paper and need to cite and document sources correctly, using one of the systems described below, refer to this chapter.

Please note that the following sections include only the basic information about each of the citation styles. There are plenty of excellent sources explaining and illustrating the differences between citation systems. I recommend the cite of the **Online Writing Center at Purdue University**.

Conclusion

Avoiding plagiarism and acknowledging your external sources completely and accurately are vital parts of the writing process. Your credibility as a writer and the reception that you work will receive from readers may depend on how well you acknowledge your sources. By following the guidelines presented in this chapter and by seeking out more knowledge about the rules of citing and documenting from the publications listed in this chapter, you will become a more competent, more professional, and more credible writer. This chapter covers only the basics of source citing and documenting. For more resources this topic and the various styles of documentation, see the Appendix to this book.

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11.2.1.6.1.2: When and How To Use MLA In-Text Citation

Download this PDF file to see a Decision Tree for When & How to use MLA in-text citation.

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11.2.1.6.1.3: How to Cite YouTube

For information on how to cite YouTube using APA style, **view the "Quick Answers" article directly from the APA**.

How to Cite a YouTube Video in MLA

As more information is introduced via the Web, students and instructors must come to expect an increase in the number of online citations included in research papers. YouTube videos are among the content one should learn to handle. Continue reading for specific instructions and examples concerning how to cite a YouTube video in MLA format.

Method 1 of 4: In-Text Citation

1. **Type a portion of the title in parentheses.**[1] Follow quoted, paraphrased, or summarized information included in the text with the video's full title or a shortened version of the title. Enclose the title in parentheses, and place any punctuation marks on the outside of the parentheses.
    - Maru is a famous cat known for a variety of antics ("Maru Greatest Hits").
2. **Introduce the title in the sentence.** Instead of including the title inside parentheses, you can also introduce the video's full title or a shortened form directly in the sentence when you write out the borrowed information. Surround the title in quotation marks.
    - As seen in "Maru Greatest Hits," Maru is a famous cat known for a variety of antics.
3. **Include the creator's name when applicable.** If you know the name of the director or the person otherwise responsible for creating the content of the video, state the last name of that individual. A YouTube username can be used if no real name is provided. The name can either be included in the parentheses or introduced directly within the sentence containing the cited information.
    - The man responsible for holding the three Cleveland women captive has been arrested along with two other suspects (Associated Press, "3 Women").
    - As stated in "3 Women," the man responsible for holding the three Cleveland women captive has been arrested along with two other suspects (Associated Press).
    - According the the Associated Press, the man responsible for holding the three Cleveland women captive has been arrested along with two other suspects ("3 Women").
    - In "3 Women," the Associated Press explains that the man responsible for holding the three Cleveland women captive has been arrested along with two other suspects.

Method 2 of 4: Works Cited Page with Creator Name

Mention the name or username of the creator.[2] Use the real name of the director, editor, or compiler when available. Write it out in *LastName, FirstName*format. If citing a video from an organization or if the creator's real name is not available, cite the name of the organization or the username associated with that YouTube account. Regardless of the name you use, follow it with a period.

- Associated Press.
- Tofield, Simon.

State the full title of the video. Write the title exactly as it is typed online. Never abbreviate it; write the full title out since multiple videos may be abbreviated in similar ways. Type a period after the final word and enclose it all in double quotation marks.

- Associated Press. "3 Women, Missing for Years, Found Alive in Ohio."
- Tofield, Simon. "Screen Grab – Simon's Cat."

Name the website. In this case, the name of the website is simply "YouTube." Italicize the website name and follow it with a period.

- Associated Press. "3 Women, Missing for Years, Found Alive in Ohio."*YouTube*.
- Tofield, Simon. "Screen Grab – Simon's Cat." *Youtube*.

Name the sponsor/publisher.[3] The sponsor refers to the official legal name of the corporation or entity responsible for the website. In this case, it would be "YouTube." Do not enclose it in quotation marks or italicize it. Instead of following it with a period, use a comma.

- Associated Press. "3 Women, Missing for Years, Found Alive in Ohio."*YouTube*. YouTube,
- Tofield, Simon. "Screen Grab – Simon's Cat." *Youtube*. YouTube,

State when the video was created. The date that the video was posted should be written in *Day Month Year* format. Follow it with a period.

- Associated Press. "3 Women, Missing for Years, Found Alive in Ohio."*YouTube*. YouTube, 6 May 2013.
- Tofield, Simon. "Screen Grab – Simon's Cat." *Youtube*. YouTube, 12 April 2013.

Mention the publishing medium. For all YouTube videos, the medium should be listed as "Web." This, too, should be followed with a period.

- Associated Press. "3 Women, Missing for Years, Found Alive in Ohio."*YouTube*. YouTube, 6 May 2013. Web.
- Tofield, Simon. "Screen Grab – Simon's Cat." *Youtube*. YouTube, 12 April 2013. Web.

Include the date of access. The date of access refers to the first date that you went to that video for the sake of using it as a citation source. List the date in *Day Month Year* format. Conclude with a period.

- Associated Press. "3 Women, Missing for Years, Found Alive in Ohio."*YouTube*. YouTube, 6 May 2013. Web. 7 May 2013.
- Tofield, Simon. "Screen Grab – Simon's Cat." *Youtube*. YouTube, 12 April 2013. Web. 7 May 2013.

Type the URL, when requested. The URL is not a standard part of MLA citation style for online videos. Nonetheless, many instructors still request it. If your instructor does request the URL, enclose it in carrot brackets and follow the ending bracket with a period.

- Associated Press. "3 Women, Missing for Years, Found Alive in Ohio."*YouTube*. YouTube, 6 May 2013. Web. 7 May 2013. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9ZXoHnzbcA>.
    - Tofield, Simon. "Screen Grab – Simon's Cat." *Youtube*. YouTube, 12 April 2013. Web. 7 May 2013. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LpHpm_b0vRY>.

Method 3 of 4: Works Cited Page with No Creator Name

Write out the full title of the video. If video footage is reposted by a YouTube user who is not the original creator of the footage, and if the name of the original creator is not listed, the first piece of information is the title of the video. Do not list the name or username of the YouTube channel responsible for reposting the video. Enclose the full title in double quotation marks, and follow the final word of the title with a period.

- "Maru Greatest Hits V1."

Indicate the name of the website. For all YouTube videos, the name of the website should simply be "YouTube." Italicize the word and follow it with another period.

- "Maru Greatest Hits V1." *YouTube*.

State the name of the sponsor. The official, legal name of the corporation that owns YouTube should also be indicated. Type "YouTube," and follow the name with a comma.

- “Maru Greatest Hits V1.” *YouTube*. YouTube,

Include a posting date. Specify the original date that the video was posted on the YouTube channel you used to access it. Arrange the date in *Day Month Year*format and place another period after the year.

- “Maru Greatest Hits V1.” *YouTube*. YouTube, 29 April 2009.

State the publishing medium. For a YouTube video, the publishing medium will always be “Web.” Follow it with yet another period.

- “Maru Greatest Hits V1.” *YouTube*. YouTube, 29 April 2009. Web.

Type an access date. The access date is the day, month, and year on which you first accessed the video with the intention of citing it among your research. Write the date in *Day Month Year* format and conclude with a period.

- “Maru Greatest Hits V1.” *YouTube*. YouTube, 29 April 2009. Web. 7 May 2013.

Include the URL only when requested. The video URL is not a standard part of MLA format and may be marked as wrong if you include it. Oftentimes, however, an instructor will specifically ask for the URL of any online source to be included, in which case, you should enclose the URL in carrot brackets and conclude the entire thing with a final period.

- “Maru Greatest Hits V1.” *YouTube*. YouTube, 29 April 2009. Web. 7 May 2013. <**http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8uDuls5TyNE**>.

Method 4 of 4: Works Cited Page when Citing YouTube Directly

State the creator as “YouTube.” This applies to any video that was uploaded to the official YouTube channel. Write the name out and follow it with a period.

- YouTube.

Include the full title of the video. Make sure to include the full title to minimize the odds of citing a duplicate or similar title. Follow the title with a period and enclose it in parentheses.

- YouTube. “Rewind YouTube Style 2012.”

Specify the name of the website. Even though “YouTube” is already listed once as the creator of the video, you must also list it a second time as the publisher. Note, however, that you do not need to list it a third time as an official corporation. Only italicize the name of the website here, and follow it with another period.

- YouTube. “Rewind YouTube Style 2012.” *YouTube*.

Indicate the date of publication. Specify the date that the video was originally updated in *Day Month Year* format. Follow the year with a period.

- YouTube. “Rewind YouTube Style 2012.” *YouTube*. 17 Dec. 2012.

State the publishing medium. The publishing medium for any YouTube video will be “Web.” Type a period after this information.

- YouTube. “Rewind YouTube Style 2012.” *YouTube*. 17 Dec. 2012. Web.

Include a date of access. Write the day on which you first accessed or viewed the video with the intention of using it as a resource. Type it out in *Day Month Year* format.

- YouTube. “Rewind YouTube Style 2012.” *YouTube*. 17 Dec. 2012. Web. 7 May 2013.

Write the URL if directly requested. Official MLA guidelines do not list the URL as vital information, but if your instructor asks

for it, include the URL in carrot brackets and follow the end bracket with a concluding period.

- YouTube. “Rewind YouTube Style 2012.” *YouTube*. 17 Dec. 2012. Web. 7 May 2013. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCkYw3cRwLo>[4]

tips

- Ask your instructor if he or she has a preference regarding the way that YouTube videos are cited. Some instructors prefer students to include the URL of online sources, while many do not. Moreover, since there is no official set of guidelines governing the citation of YouTube videos in MLA format, these details can be considered somewhat subjective.
- Check the MLA citation guidelines to verify that the above information is accurate and complete. These guidelines change periodically.

Sources and Citations

1. **citesource.trincoll.edu/mla/m...deoweb_002.pdf**
2. **http://valenciacollege.edu/library/documents/youtube.pdf**
3. **http://www.bibme.org/citation-guide/MLA/website**
4. **http://elmo.academyart.edu/reference-help/mla_citation_guide.html**

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11.3: Citation Steps for Any Style

1. Determine the citation style required for your paper or project and refresh your memory on the formatting rules using that citation styles handbook (your college library should have a copy for you to use) or using an online guide, like Excelsior OWL or Citation and Writing Guides from Penn State University Libraries.
2. Remember to include your in-text citations as you are writing your paper or pulling your project together. If you don't include them as you go, it is easy to forget to go back and cite the source, which could lead to accidental plagiarism! See the section on When to Cite Sources at the end of this chapter to learn when you will and will not need to include an in-text citation.
3. Identify the information source type you are creating a full bibliographic citation for, since the citation format looks different for different types of information sources. Sometimes, especially online, it can be hard to tell! If you aren't sure what type of source something is or how to format your citation, ask a librarian or writing tutor.
4. Compile your cited sources at the end of your paper or project, being sure to follow the formatting rules of the citation style you are using throughout the assignment. See the section on Citation Generators, next, for information about helpful tools for this task.

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12: CHAPTER TWELVE- EDITS, REVISING, AND PUBLISHING

12.1: Readings

12.1.1: Revising

12.1.1.1: A strategy for analyzing and revising a first draft

12.1.1.2: Checklist- Revision

12.1.1.3: How to- Be a Constructive Peer Reviewer

12.2: Citations and Referencing

12.2.1: Supporting Your Ideas

12.2.2: Documenting Source Material

12.2.3: Making Your Quotes Fit

12.2.4: Citation Guidelines

12.2.5: Creating a References Page (Part 2)

12.2.6: Creating a References Page (Part 1)

12.3: Peer Review and Final Revisions

12.3.1: Revision (Part 1)

12.3.2: Revision (Part 2)

12.3.3: Editing and Developing a Final Draft of a Research Paper (Part 1)

12.3.4: Editing and Developing a Final Draft of a Research Paper (Part 2)

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12.1: READINGS

Readings in Each Mode of Essay

- Readings: Examples of Essays

Kirkman Reader

- Kirkman Reader - Free readings and videos for students enrolled in freshman composition. The essays and videos are organized by pattern, point of view, and theme.

12.1.1: Revising

12.1.1.1: A strategy for analyzing and revising a first draft

12.1.1.2: Checklist- Revision

12.1.1.3: How to- Be a Constructive Peer Reviewer

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12.1.1: REVISING

12.1.1.1: A strategy for analyzing and revising a first draft
12.1.1.2: Checklist- Revision
12.1.1.3: How to- Be a Constructive Peer Reviewer

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12.1.1.1: A strategy for analyzing and revising a first draft

Here are some steps for re-reading and revising your essays in a reasonably objective way. These steps may seem formulaic and mechanical, but you need a way to diagnose your own prose so that you have some sense of how others will read it.

FINDING YOUR BEST POINT — AND MAKING SURE YOUR READERS CAN FIND IT

This first step is intended to ensure that the beginning and end of your paper cohere with each other, that they "frame" your paper is an appropriate way.

1. Find the beginning and the end.

> Draw a line after the end of your introduction and just before the beginning of your conclusion.

2. Find candidates for your point.

> Underline one sentence in both your introduction and conclusion that comes closest to expressing your main point, your claim, the thesis of your paper. In your introduction, that sentence is most likely to be the last one; in your conclusion, it might be anywhere.

3. Find the best candidate.

> Read the introduction and conclusion together, particularly comparing those two most important sentences. They should at least not contradict one another.

From an introduction:

> During this unprecedented period, African-American artists shared in the process of creating a black urban identity through their depictions of a culture's experience.

From a conclusion:

> While many were eager to slash the culture's ties to its primitive history, Armstrong and Motley created art which included elements of the community's history and which made this history a central part of African-American urban identity.

It is likely that the sentence in your conclusion will be more specific, more substantive, more thoughtful than the one in your introduction. Your introduction may merely announce a general intention to write about some topic. If so, your conclusion is more likely to make a more important claim, generalization, or point about that topic. In the example above, the sentence from the introduction describes only the fairly general idea that artists contributed to a culture's identity by depicting its experience. An important idea, certainly, but one that your readers probably already hold. An essay that did no more than reiterate it would not be especially valuable. Contrast the sentence from the conclusion. Here, the writer is more specific in several important ways. First, she is specific about one element in African-American experience: its ties to its primitive history. She is specific about what the artists did: they included aspects of that history in their art. She also adds the suggestive information that some people opposed including primitive history in African-American culture ("While many eager to slash the cultures ties . . . "). This controversy is potentially enriching for the essay because it may prompt the reader (and the writer) to analyze the subject from a very different perspective.

4. Revise your introduction to match the best point.

If you find that the sentence from your conclusion is more insightful than the one from your introduction, then you have to revise

your introduction to make it seem that you had this sentence in mind all along (even though when you started drafting the paper you may have had no idea how you were going to end it). You can do this in one of two ways:

- Insert at the end of your introduction some version of that sentence in your conclusion that comes closest to expressing your main point. You may have to revise the rest of the introduction to make it fit.
- If you don't want to "give away" the point of your paper at the beginning, insert a sentence at the end of your introduction that at least anticipates your point by using some of its same language.

For example:

> As African-American artists such as Louis Armstrong and Archibald Motley, Jr. shared in the collective process of creating a black urban identity, they reflected their community's struggle to define the role of historical experience in modern culture.

Note that this sentence does not conclude that Armstrong and Motley did include primitive history in their art. But it does introduce some implicit questions that anticipate that conclusion: did these artists use their historical experience? If so, how? Those implicit question set up the explicit point.

How do you choose between stating your main point at the beginning of the essay or waiting to state it at the end? If you think you are a skilled writer, the second choice–the "point-last" strategy–is a possibility. You must be certain, though, that the rest of the paper plausibly takes your reader to your conclusion. (We'll talk more about that in a minute.) Point-last writing, however, is always more difficult that point-first, and if you feel uncertain about your writing or more important, if you aren't interested in spending the extra time it takes to write good point-last prose, then you should state your main point explicitly at the end of your introduction. If you've stated your main point at the beginning of your essay, your reader won't lose track of your argument, won't lose the sense of where you are headed. More important, it will focus your attention on where you are headed. Don't worry that if you state your point first your professors will lose interest in your paper. If your point is interesting (or even if it's not), they will read on to see how you support it. (That, after all, is what you're paying them to do.)

There are, to be sure, some instructors, mostly but not exclusively in the humanities, who prefer point-last papers: papers that pose a problem in their introductions, then work toward a conclusion, demonstrating how the writer thought about the topic, wrestled with alternative answers, and finally discovered a solution. That kind of organization creates a dramatic tension that some instructors like, because they want to see the processes of your thinking.

The risk is that you might do exactly that! For nearly all of us, the process of our thinking is messy, inefficient, and hard to follow. If you write a paper that in fact tracks what you thought about at 1 AM, then 3 AM, the 6 AM, you're likely to write a messy, inefficient and hard to follow paper. Few instructors want to see that. They want to see a coherent, ordered, analytical account of your thinking that may seem to be a narrative, but in fact is always an artful invention, something that requires writing skills of a high order.

So when you go through this first phase of your analysis, you have to make a thoughtful choice about where you want to locate your point–in your introduction and your conclusion, or just in your conclusion, with an "anticipatory" point in your introduction. The default choice for both writer and reader is the first: point-first.

CREATING COHERENT SECTIONS

Now you need to determine whether the parts of your paper hang together to form a coherent argument and whether the parts are in an order that will seem to make sense to your reader.

1. Find the paper's major sections.

> Draw a line between every major section in your paper. A four or five page paper should have at least two and probably not more than three or four.
>
> Now, analyze and revise each section as you did your whole paper:

2. Find each section's introduction and conclusion

Put a slash mark after the introduction to each section. The introduction to a section may be only one sentence or it may be a complete paragraph. Each section needs a sentence that tells your readers that they have finished one segment of your argument and are moving on to another.

Put a slash mark before the conclusion to each major section. If your sections are short–only a couple of paragraphs or less–that section might not need a separate conclusion.

3. Identify the major point in each section.

Just as your whole paper has to have a point, so should each section have a sentence that offers some generalization, some point, some claim that that section is intended to support.

If most of your points seem to be at the beginnings of your sections, fine. If most of them are at the ends of your sections as conclusions, you have to . . .

4. Think hard about whether you want any particular section to be point-last.

If you can think of no good reason, revise so that that section is point first. If you decide that you want the section to be point-last, then you'll have to repeat for the section the process we described for a point-last essay. You'll need to write an introductory sentence for the section that uses some of the key words that will appear in the point sentence that concludes the section. This principle simply reflects the needs of readers to know where they are and where they are going. Nothing confuses a reader more than moving from paragraph to paragraph with no sense of the logical progression of your argument. Such an essay feels like pudding with an occasional raisin to chew on, but not in any particular order.

5. Ordering the sections.

Try to explain to yourself why you put the parts of the paper in the order you did. If you arranged the parts of your paper in the order you did because that's the order in which they occurred to you, your readers are likely not to see any rationale for moving through your paper in the order they do.

- If you have three (or four, or whatever) reasons for something, why are the reasons in the order they are in? (By the way, beware of organization-by-number: ". . . for three reasons. First . . . Second . . . Third . . . "If the only relationship you can demonstrate among your arguments is "first-second-third," your essay will probably be perceived as unsophisticated. Most significant arguments have substantive relationships: they are related not merely by number but by content.)
- If you have ordered the parts of your paper from cause-to-effect, why did you do that? Why not effect-to-cause?
- If you organized your paper to echo the organization of the text you are writing about, why have you done that? If you did, you risk having written a mere summary.
- If you organized your paper to match the terms of the assignment, is that what your instructor wanted, or did your instructor want something more original from you?

- If you organized your paper around major topics in your assignment ("Compare and contrast Freud and Jung in terms of the role of society in the development of their theories") did you write about, say, Freud first and Jung second simply because that was the order in the assignment?

There are so many principles of order that we cannot list them all here. We can only urge you to identify the one you chose and then to justify it as the best one from among the many possible.

ENSURING YOUR EVIDENCE FITS YOUR CLAIMS

The most common evidence you will offer to support your claims will be quotations from the texts you read and references to passages in them. Without such evidence, your claims are merely statements of opinion. As we said, you are entitled to your opinions but you're not entitled to having your readers agree with them. In fact, your readers generally will not highly value your opinions unless you provide some evidence to support them. When you provide evidence, you turn your opinions into arguments.

But before readers can value your claim as supported with evidence, they must first understand how your evidence counts as evidence for that claim. No flaw more afflicts the papers of less experienced writers than to make some sort of claim, or to offer

a quotation from the text, and assume that the reader understands how the quotations speaks to the claim. Here is an example:

> Lincoln believed that the Founders would have supported the North, because as he said, this country was "dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

The writer may be correct that Lincoln believed that the Founders would have supported the North, but what in that quotation would cause a reader to agree? In other words, how does the quotation count as evidence of the claim? The evidence says something about the views of the founders in 1776. How does that support a claim about what the founders would think about 1863? When pressed, the writer explained: "Since the Founders dedicated the country to the proposition that all men are created equal and Lincoln freed the slaves because he thought they were created equal, then he must have thought that he and the Founders agreed, so they would have supported the North. It's obvious."

Well, it's not. After it has been explained, it may or may not be persuasive (after all, the author of "all men are created equal" was himself a slave owner). But it isn't obvious. Quotations rarely speak for themselves; most have to be "unpacked." If you offer only quotes without interpreting those quotes, your reader will likely have trouble understanding how the quote, as evidence, supports your claim. Your paper will seem to be a pastiche of strung-together quotations, suggesting that your data never passed through the critical analysis of a working mind.

Whenever you support a claim with numbers, charts, pictures, and especially quotations — whatever looks like primary data — do not assume that what you see is what your readers will get. Spell out for them how it is that the data counts as evidence for your claim. For a quotation, a good principle is to use a few of its key words just before or after it. Something like this:

> Lincoln believed that the Founders would have supported the North because they would have supported his attempt to move the slaves to a more equal position. He echoes the Founder's own language when he says that the country was "dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

MAKING YOUR CASE WITHOUT OVERSIMPLIFYING IT

Some inexperienced writers think that the strongest and most persuasive kind of writing projects a voice of utter confidence, complete certainty, and no room for doubt of the possibility of seeing things in a different way. That view could not be more mistaken. If communicating with your readers is like having a serious, mutually respectful conversation with them, then the last kind of person you want to talk with is someone who is **UTTERLY CERTAIN OF EVERYTHING WITH NO QUALIFICATIONS, RESERVATIONS, OR LIMITATIONS.**

Two minutes with such a person is at least one too many. Compare these two passages:

> For more than a century now, every liberal has vehemently argued against any kind of censorship of art and/or entertainment. And in the last 20 years, the courts and the legislatures of Western nations have found these arguments so persuasive that no one remembers any rebuttals to these arguments. Censorship has simply ceased to exist.

> For almost a century now, many liberals have argued against the censorship of art and/or entertainment, and in the last 20 years, courts and the legislatures in most Western nations have found these arguments fairly persuasive. Few people now clearly remember what the rebuttals to these arguments were. Today, in the United States and other democracies, censorship has just about ceased to exist.

Twenty pages of the first prose would quickly grow wearisome. It is too strident, too flat-footed, completely unnuanced. But some would say the second is mealy mouthed, too hedged about with qualifiers. Here is a third version, which neither proclaims nor hedges:

> For a century now, liberals have been arguing against the censorship of art and/or entertainment, and in the last 20 years, courts and the legislatures in Western nations have found these arguments so persuasive that few now remember what the rebuttals to these arguments were. Today, in the United States and other democracies, overt censorship by the central government has largely ceased to exist.

It is hard to give completely reliable advice about hedging and emphasizing because different writers have different opinions about it, different fields do it in different ways. But something most of us share is a sense of caution. (Notice that we said "most of us.")

Another kind of reservation you ought to make room for in your papers is plausibly contradictory evidence. No matter what

position you take on a text, there will almost always be some evidence in it that someone can use as a basis to disagree with you.

> Lincoln may have been willing to let his readers associate the Founders with the North, but it is not clear that he actually believed that they would have supported the Union. He does not specifically say so. Although he describes what the founders did in the past (“Four score and seven years ago”), he does not say what they would do in the present.

The shrewd writer considers these kinds of objections before readers do, and may include the objections in the essay. Once you think you have constructed an argument that fully supports your claim, skim your reading again specifically looking for evidence that might support a different conclusion. Then raise that evidence and counterclaim in order both to acknowledge and, if you can, rebut them. Even if you can’t fully rebut them, you can suggest that the weight of evidence is still on your side. Don’t worry that including counter evidence will make your argument less persuasive. On the contrary. While there are exceptions, most academic readers are much more persuaded by writers who admit reservations then by writers who insist that they are always absolutely correct.

The point here is to avoid the kind of flat-footed, unnuanced, unsophisticated certainty that characterizes the thinking of someone who does not recognize that things are usually more complex, less clear-cut, than most of us wish.

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12.1.1.2: Checklist- Revision

- The draft addresses a question or issue that readers will care about.
- The draft is written at the audience's level, accounting for their level of knowledge and attitudes.
- The thesis is clear and placed at or near the beginning of the paper.
- All ideas within the draft relate to the main thesis.
- There are plenty of organizational cues (topic sentences, headings, etc.) to help guide the readers through the paper.
- Ideas are presented in an order that makes sense.
- Paragraphs are long enough to cover the topic, but short enough to keep it interesting.
- The evidence used is relevant and persuasive.
- All ideas are fully developed.
- Any unnecessary material has been deleted.
- The point of view is appropriate both for the draft's purpose and the intended audience.

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12.1.1.3: How to- Be a Constructive Peer Reviewer

- You aren't casting judgment on a work, you're coaching the writer. Remember to include the writer in the process, helping them find the draft's strengths and weaknesses rather than telling them what they are or are not doing wrong.
- Check with the writer to make sure you're understanding the main ideas of the work.
- Give specific compliments as well as specific criticism; reviewing isn't just about one or the other.
- If you find a passage confusing, ask the writer for clarification.
- Always express an interest in reading the next draft.

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12.2: CITATIONS AND REFERENCING

12.2.1: Supporting Your Ideas
12.2.2: Documenting Source Material
12.2.3: Making Your Quotes Fit
12.2.4: Citation Guidelines
12.2.5: Creating a References Page (Part 2)
12.2.6: Creating a References Page (Part 1)

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12.2.1: Supporting Your Ideas

Learning Objectives

- Evaluate when to use primary or secondary sources for support
- Explain the two forms of plagiarism and how to avoid them
- Explain the importance of academic integrity and the potential consequences of not abiding by this

In this chapter you are going to learn more about compiling references and citations. You will also learn strategies for handling some of the more challenging aspects of writing a research paper, such as integrating material from your sources, citing information correctly, and avoiding any misuse of your sources. The first section of this chapter will introduce you to broad concepts associated with adding support to your ideas and providing documentation—citations and references—when you use sources in your papers.

Using Primary and Secondary Research

As you write your draft, be mindful of how you are using primary and secondary source material to support your points. Recall that primary sources present firsthand information. Secondary sources are one step removed from primary sources. They present a writer's analysis or interpretation of primary source materials. How you balance primary and secondary source material in your paper will depend on the topic and assignment.

Using Primary Sources Effectively

Some types of research papers must use primary sources extensively to achieve their purpose. Any paper that analyzes a primary text or presents the writer's own experimental research falls in this category. Here are a few examples:

A paper for a literature course analyzing several poems by Emily Dickinson

A paper for a political science course comparing televised speeches delivered by two candidates for prime minister

A paper for a communications course discussing gender bias in television commercials

A paper for a business administration course that discusses the results of a survey the writer conducted with local businesses to gather information about their work from home and flextime policies

A paper for an elementary education course that discusses the results of an experiment the writer conducted to compare the effectiveness of two different methods of mathematics instruction

For these types of papers, primary research is the main focus. If you are writing about a work (including non-print works, such as a movie or a painting), it is crucial to gather information and ideas from the original work, rather than rely solely on others' interpretations. And, of course, if you take the time to design and conduct your own field research, such as a survey, a series of interviews, or an experiment, you will want to discuss it in detail. For example, the interviews may provide interesting responses that you want to share with your reader.

Using Secondary Sources Effectively

For some assignments, it makes sense to rely more on secondary sources than primary sources. If you are *not* analyzing a text or conducting your own field research, you will need to use secondary sources extensively.

As much as possible, use secondary sources that are closely linked to primary research, such as a journal article presenting the results of the authors' scientific study or a book that cites interviews and case studies. These sources are more reliable and add more value to your paper than sources that are further removed from primary research. For instance, a popular magazine article on junk food addiction might be several steps removed from the original scientific study on which it is loosely based. As a result, the article may distort, sensationalize, or misinterpret the scientists' findings.

Even if your paper is largely based on primary sources, you may use secondary sources to develop your ideas. For instance, an analysis of Alfred Hitchcock's films would focus on the films themselves as a primary source, but might also cite commentary from critics. A paper that presents an original experiment would include some discussion of similar prior research in the field.

Jorge, who is preparing his essay on low-carbohydrate diets, knew he did not have the time, resources, or experience needed to conduct original experimental research for his paper. Because he was relying on secondary sources to support his ideas, he made a point of citing sources that were not far removed from primary research.

Tip

Some sources could be considered primary or secondary sources, depending on the writer's purpose for using them. For instance, if a writer's purpose is to inform readers about how the American No Child Left Behind legislation has affected elementary education in the United States, a *Time* magazine article on the subject would be a secondary source. However, suppose the writer's purpose is to analyze how the news media has portrayed the effects of the No Child Left Behind legislation. In that case, articles about the legislation in news magazines like *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *US News & World Report* would be primary sources. They provide firsthand examples of the media coverage the writer is analyzing.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Your research paper presents your thinking about a topic, supported and developed by other people's ideas and information. It is crucial to always distinguish between the two—as you conduct research, as you plan your paper, and as you write. Failure to do so can lead to plagiarism.

Intentional and Accidental Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of misrepresenting someone else's work as your own. Sometimes a writer plagiarizes work on purpose—for instance, by copying and pasting or purchasing an essay from a website and submitting it as original course work. This often happens because the person has not managed his or her time and has left the paper to the last minute or has struggled with the writing process or the topic. Any of these can lead to desperation and cause the writer to just take someone else's ideas and take credit for them.

In other cases, a writer may commit accidental plagiarism due to carelessness, haste, or misunderstanding. For instance, a writer may be unable to provide a complete, accurate citation because of neglecting to record bibliographical information. A writer may cut and paste a passage from a website into her paper and later forget where the material came from. A writer who procrastinates may rush through a draft, which easily leads to sloppy paraphrasing and inaccurate quotations. Any of these actions can create the appearance of plagiarism and lead to negative consequences.

Carefully organizing your time and notes is the best guard against these forms of plagiarism. Maintain a detailed working

reference list and thorough notes throughout the research process. Check original sources again to clear up any uncertainties. Allow plenty of time for writing your draft so there is no temptation to cut corners.

To avoid unintentional/accidental plagiarism, follow these guidelines:

- Understand what types of information must be cited.
- Understand what constitutes fair dealing of a source.
- Keep source materials and notes carefully organized.
- Follow guidelines for summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting sources.

Academic Integrity

The concepts and strategies discussed in this section connect to a larger issue—academic integrity. You maintain your integrity as a member of an academic community by representing your work and others' work honestly and by using other people's work only in legitimately accepted ways. It is a point of honour taken seriously in every academic discipline and career field.

Academic integrity violations have serious educational and professional consequences. Even when cheating and plagiarism go undetected, they still result in a student's failure to learn necessary research and writing skills. Students who are found guilty of academic integrity violations face consequences ranging from a failing grade to expulsion. Employees may be fired for plagiarism and do irreparable damage to their professional reputation. In short, it is never worth the risk.

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12.2.2: Documenting Source Material

Learning Objectives

- Identify when to summarize, paraphrase, and directly quote information from research sources
- Identify when citations are needed
- Introduce sources
- Throughout the writing process, be scrupulous about documenting information taken from sources. The purpose of doing so is twofold:
- To give credit to other writers or researchers for their ideas
- To allow your reader to follow up and learn more about the topic if desired

You will cite sources within the body of your paper and at the end of the paper in your references section. For this assignment, you will use the citation format used by the American Psychological Association (also known as APA style). Within this course and for all of your courses at JIBC, you will need to follow the JIBC APA Reference Guide when formatting citations and references within your papers.

This section covers the nitty-gritty details of in-text citations. You will learn how to format citations for different types of source materials, whether you are citing brief quotations, paraphrasing ideas, or quoting longer passages. You will also learn techniques you can use to introduce quoted and paraphrased material effectively. Keep this section handy as a reference to consult while writing the body of your paper.

Formatting Cited Material: The Basics

In-text citations usually provide the name of the author(s) and the year the source was published. For direct quotations, the page number must also be included. Use past tense verbs when introducing a quote: for example, “Smith found...,” not “Smith finds....”

Citing Sources in the Body of Your Paper

In-text citations document your sources within the body of your paper. These include two vital pieces of information: the author’s name and the year the source material was published. When quoting a print source, also include in the citation the page number where the quoted material originally appears. The page number follows the year in the in-text citation. *Page numbers are necessary only when content has been directly quoted, not when it has been summarized or paraphrased.*

Using Source Material in Your Paper

One of the challenges of writing a research paper is successfully integrating your ideas with material from your sources. Your paper must explain what you think, or it will read like a disconnected string of facts and quotations. However, you also need to support your ideas with research, or they will seem insubstantial. How do you strike the right balance?

In your essay, the introduction and conclusion function like the frame around a picture. They define and limit your topic and place your research in context. In the body paragraphs of your paper, you need to integrate ideas carefully at the paragraph level and at the sentence level. You will use topic sentences in your paragraphs to make sure readers understand the significance of any facts, details, or quotations you cite. You will also include sentences that transition between ideas from your research, either within a

paragraph or between paragraphs. At the sentence level, you will need to think carefully about how you introduce paraphrased and quoted material.

Earlier you learned about summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting when taking notes. In the next few sections, you will learn how to use these techniques in the body of your paper to weave in source material to support your ideas.

Summarizing Sources

Look back at Section 3.2 to refresh your memory of how Jorge summarized the article. As was mentioned there, when you are summarizing, you are focusing on identifying and sharing the main elements of a source. This is when you paraphrase the concepts and put them in your own words, demonstrating you have a firm understanding of the concepts presented and are able to incorporate them into your own paper.

Within a paragraph, this information may appear as part of your introduction to the material or as a parenthetical citation at the end of a sentence. Read the examples that follow.

Summary

Leibowitz (2008) found that low-carbohydrate diets often helped subjects with Type II diabetes maintain a healthy weight and control blood sugar levels.

The introduction to the source material (the **attributive tag**) includes the author's name followed by the year of publication in parentheses.

Summary

Low-carbohydrate diets often help subjects with Type II diabetes maintain a healthy weight and control blood sugar levels (Leibowitz, 2008).

The parenthetical citation at the end of the sentence includes the author's name, a comma, and the year the source was published. The period at the end of the sentence comes after the parentheses.

Formatting Paraphrased and Summarized Material

When you paraphrase or summarize ideas from a source, you follow the same guidelines previously provided, except that you are not required to provide the page number where the ideas are located. If you are summing up the main findings of a research article, simply providing the author's name and publication year may suffice, but if you are paraphrasing a more specific idea, consider including the page number.

Read the following examples.

Chang (2008) pointed out that weight-bearing exercise has many potential benefits for women.

Here, the writer is summarizing a major idea that recurs throughout the source material. No page reference is needed.

Chang (2008) found that weight-bearing exercise could help women maintain or even increase bone density through middle age and beyond, reducing the likelihood that they will develop osteoporosis in later life (p. 86).

Although the writer is not directly quoting the source, this passage paraphrases a specific detail, so the writer chose to include the page number where the information is located.

Introducing Cited Material Effectively

Including an introductory phrase in your text, such as “Jackson wrote” or “Copeland found,” often helps you integrate source material smoothly. This citation technique also helps convey that you are actively engaged with your source material. Unfortunately, during the process of writing your research paper, it is easy to fall into a rut and use the same few dull verbs repeatedly, such as “Jones said,” “Smith stated,” and so on.

Punch up your writing by using strong verbs that help your reader understand how the source material presents ideas. There is a world of difference between an author who “suggests” and one who “claims,” one who “questions” and one who “criticizes.” You do not need to consult your thesaurus every time you cite a source, but do think about which verbs will accurately represent the ideas and make your writing more engaging. **Table 9.1 Strong Verbs for Introducing Cited Material** shows some possibilities.

Table 9.1 - Strong Verbs for Introducing Cited Material

ask	suggest	question	recommend	determine	insist
explain	assert	claim	hypothesize	measure	argue
propose	compare	contrast	evaluate	conclude	find
study	sum up	believe	warn	point out	assess

When to Cite

Any idea or fact taken from an outside source must be cited, in both the body of your paper and the references. The only exceptions are facts or general statements that are common knowledge. Common knowledge facts or general statements are commonly supported by and found in multiple sources. For example, a writer would not need to cite the statement that most breads, pastas, and cereals are high in carbohydrates; this is well known and well documented. However, if a writer explained in detail the differences among the chemical structures of carbohydrates, proteins, and fats, a citation would be necessary. When in doubt, cite!

Fair Dealing

In recent years, issues related to the fair use of sources have been prevalent in popular culture. Recording artists, for example, may disagree about the extent to which one has the right to sample another’s music. For academic purposes, however, the guidelines for fair dealing are reasonably straightforward.

Writers may quote from or paraphrase material from previously published works without formally obtaining the copyright holder’s permission. **Fair dealing** in copyright law allows a writer to legitimately use brief excerpts from source material to support and develop his or her own ideas. For instance, a columnist may excerpt a few sentences from a novel when writing a book review. However, quoting or paraphrasing another’s work excessively, to the extent that large sections of the writing are unoriginal, is not fair dealing.

As he worked on his draft, Jorge was careful to cite his sources correctly and not to rely excessively on any one source. Occasionally, however, he caught himself quoting a source at great length. In those instances, he highlighted the paragraph in question so that he could go back to it later and revise. Read the example, along with Jorge’s revision.

Summary

Heinz (2009) found that “subjects in the low-carbohydrate group (30% carbohydrates; 40% protein, 30% fat) had a mean weight

loss of 10 kg (22 lbs) over a four-month period." These results were "noticeably better than results for subjects on a low-fat diet (45% carbohydrates, 35% protein, 20% fat)" whose average weight loss was only "7 kg (15.4 lbs) in the same period." From this, it can be concluded that "low-carbohydrate diets obtain more rapid results." Other researchers agree that "at least in the short term, patients following low-carbohydrate diets enjoy greater success" than those who follow alternative plans (Johnson & Crowe, 2010).

Exercise 9.1

Paraphrasing practice is always a good thing! Take a look at Jorge's "summary" above. Notice he is not really summarizing but rather quoting. While this is technically not plagiarism, it does not show any processing of the information from the original source. It is just copying and pasting; the end result seems very choppy, and a lot of the information can be generalized.

For this exercise, try to rewrite Jorge's summary in your own words.

_____

After reviewing the paragraph, Jorge realized that he had drifted into unoriginal writing. Most of the paragraph was taken verbatim from a single article. Although Jorge had enclosed the material in quotation marks, he knew it was not an appropriate way to use the research in his paper.

Summary

Low-carbohydrate diets may indeed be superior to other diet plans for short-term weight loss. In a study comparing low-carbohydrate diets and low-fat diets, Heinz (2009) found that subjects who followed a low-carbohydrate plan (30% of total calories) for four months lost, on average, about 3 kilograms more than subjects who followed a low-fat diet for the same time. Heinz concluded that these plans yield quick results, an idea supported by a similar study conducted by Johnson and Crowe (2010). What remains to be seen, however, is whether this initial success can be sustained for longer periods.

As Jorge revised the paragraph, he realized he did not need to quote these sources directly. Instead, he paraphrased their most important findings. He also made sure to include a topic sentence stating the main idea of the paragraph and a concluding sentence that transitioned to the next major topic in his essay.

Tip

It is extremely important to remember that even though you are summarizing and paraphrasing from another source—not quoting—you must still include a citation, including the last name(s) of the author(s) and the year of publication.

Example 12.2.2.1:

Additionally, marijuana burning creates toxins; this strategy is counterproductive, and there are numerous individual hazards associated with using the plant as medicine (Ogborne, Smart, & Adlaf, 2000).

Example taken from:

Writing Commons. (2014, September). Open Text. Retrieved from writingcommons.org/format/apa...quotations-apa

Writing at Work

It is important to accurately represent a colleague's ideas or communications in the workplace. When writing professional or academic papers, be mindful of how the words you use to describe someone's tone or ideas carry certain connotations. Do not say a source "argues" a particular point unless an argument is, in fact, presented. Use lively language, but avoid language that is emotionally charged. Doing so will ensure you have represented your colleague's words in an authentic and accurate way.

key takeaways

- An effective research paper focuses on the writer's ideas. The introduction and conclusion present and revisit the writer's thesis. The body of the paper develops the thesis and related points with information from research.
- Ideas and information taken from outside sources must be cited in the body of the paper and in the references section.
- Material taken from sources should be used to develop the writer's ideas. Summarizing and paraphrasing are usually most effective for this purpose.
- A summary concisely restates the main ideas of a source in the writer's own words.
- A paraphrase restates ideas from a source using the writer's own words and sentence structures.
- Direct quotations should be used sparingly. Ellipses and brackets must be used to indicate words that are omitted or changed for conciseness or grammatical correctness.
- Always represent material from outside sources accurately.
- Plagiarism has serious academic and professional consequences. To avoid accidental plagiarism, keep research materials organized, understand guidelines for fair dealing and appropriate citation of sources, and review the paper to make sure these guidelines are followed.

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12.2.3: Making Your Quotes Fit

Learning Objectives

- Apply guidelines for citing sources within the body of the paper
- Evaluating when to use a short or long quote
- Incorporate short quotes with correct APA formatting
- Incorporate long quotations with correct APA formatting

So, now you may have decided after much critical thought, that you definitely have found the most amazing, well-suited quote that cannot be paraphrased, and you want to incorporate that quote into your paper. There are different ways to do this depending on how long the quote is; there are also a number of formatting requirements you need to apply.

Quoting Sources Directly

Most of the time, you will summarize or paraphrase source material instead of quoting directly. Doing so shows that you understand your research well enough to write about it confidently in your own words. However, direct quotes can be powerful when used sparingly and with purpose.

Quoting directly can sometimes help you make a point in a colourful way. If an author's words are especially vivid, memorable, or well phrased, quoting them may help hold your reader's interest. Direct quotations from an interviewee or an eyewitness may help you personalize an issue for readers. Also, when you analyze primary sources, such as a historical speech or a work of literature, quoting extensively is often necessary to illustrate your points. These are valid reasons to use quotations.

Less-experienced writers, however, sometimes overuse direct quotations in a research paper because it seems easier than paraphrasing. At best, this reduces the effectiveness of the quotations. At worst, it results in a paper that seems haphazardly pasted together from outside sources. *Use quotations sparingly for greater impact.*

When you do choose to quote directly from a source, follow these guidelines:

Only use a quote when the original writer has phrased a statement so perfectly that you do not believe you could rephrase it any better without getting away from the writer's point.

Make sure you have transcribed the original statement accurately.

Represent the author's ideas honestly. Quote enough of the original text to reflect the author's point accurately.

Use an attributive tag (e.g., "According to Marshall (2013)....") to lead into the quote and provide a citation at the same time.

Never use a standalone quotation. Always integrate the quoted material into your own sentence.

Make sure any omissions or changed words do not alter the meaning of the original text. Omit or replace words only when absolutely necessary to shorten the text or to make it grammatically correct within your sentence.

Use ellipses (3) [...] if you need to omit a word or phrase; use (4) [....] when you are removing a section—maybe a complete sentence—that would end in a period. This shows your reader that you have critically and thoroughly examined the contents of this quote and have chosen only the most important and relevant information.

Use brackets [ ] if you need to replace a word or phrase or if you need to change the verb tense.

Use [*sic*] after something in the quote that is grammatically incorrect or spelled incorrectly. This shows your reader that the mistake is in the original, not your writing.

Use double quotation marks [“ ”] when quoting and use single quotation marks [‘ ’] when you include a quote within a quote (i.e., if you quote a passage that already includes a quote, you need to change the double quotation marks in the original to single marks, and add double quotations marks around your entire quote).

Remember to include correctly formatted citations that follow the JIBC APA Reference Guide.

Jorge interviewed a dietitian as part of his research, and he decided to quote her words in his paper. Read an excerpt from the interview and Jorge’s use of it, which follows.

Source

Personally, I don’t really buy into all of the hype about low-carbohydrate miracle diets like Atkins and so on. Sure, for some people, they are great, but for most, any sensible eating and exercise plan would work just as well.

Summary

Registered dietitian Dana Kwon (2010) admits, “Personally, I don’t really buy into all of the hype.... Sure, for some people, [low carbohydrate diets] are great, but for most, any sensible eating and exercise plan would work just as well.”

Notice how Jorge smoothly integrated the quoted material by starting the sentence with an introductory phrase. His use of an ellipsis and brackets did not change the source’s meaning.

Short versus Long Quotations

Remember, what you write in essays should be primarily your own words; your instructors want to know what your ideas are and for you to demonstrate your own critical thinking. This means you should only use the ideas of experts in the form of quotes to support your ideas. A paper that consists of mostly quotes pieced together does not demonstrate original thought but rather that you are good at cutting and pasting. Therefore, you should strive to state your ideas, develop them thoroughly, and then insert a supporting quote, and only if necessary. Focus on paraphrasing and integrating and blending those external sources into your own ideas (giving the original author credit by using a citation, of course). When deciding to use any quotation as opposed to paraphrasing, you need to make sure the quote is a statement that the original author has worded so beautifully it would be less effective if you changed it into your own words. When you find something you would like to include **verbatim** (word for word) from a source, you need to decide if you should include the whole paragraph or section, or a smaller part. Sometimes, you may choose to use a longer quote but remove any unnecessary words. You would then use ellipses to show what content you have removed. The following examples show how this is done.

Original

According to Marshall (2010), “Before the creation of organized governmental policing agencies, it was citizens possessing firearms who monitored and maintained the peace” (p. 712).

With Ellipses

According to Marshall (2010), “Before the creation of organized governmental policing agencies, ... citizens possessing firearms ... monitored and maintained the peace” (p. 712).

Short Quotations

A short quote can be as one word or a phrase or a complete sentence as long as three lines of text (again, removing any unnecessary words). Generally, a short quotation is one that is fewer than 40 words. Whether you use a complete sentence or only part of one, you need to make sure it blends in perfectly with your own sentence or paragraph. For example, if your paragraph is written in the present tense but the quote is in the past, you will need to change the verb, so it will fit into your writing. (You will read about on this shortly.) Using an **attributive tag** is another way to help incorporate your quote more fluidly. An attributive tag is a phrase that shows your reader you got the information from a source, and you are giving the author attribution or credit for his or her ideas or words. Using an attributive tag allows you to provide a citation at the same time as helping integrate the quote more smoothly into your work.

Example 12.2.3.1:

According to Marshall (2010), “Before the creation of organized governmental policing agencies, it was citizens possessing firearms who monitored and maintained the peace” (p. 712).

In the example above, the attributive tag (with citation) is underlined; this statement is giving Marshall credit for his own words and ideas. You should note that this short quotation is a complete sentence taken from Marshall’s bigger document, which is why the first word, *Before,* is capitalized. If you were to include only a portion of that sentence, perhaps excerpting from the middle of it, you would not start the quote with a capital.

Example 12.2.3.2:

Marshall (2010) argues that vigilantism in the Wild West was committed by “citizens possessing firearms who monitored and maintained the peace” (p. 712).

In this example, notice how the student has only used a portion of the sentence, so did not need to include the capital.

Tip

If you do not use an attributive tag because the quote already fits smoothly into your sentence, you need to include the author’s name after the sentence in parentheses with the date and page number.

Example 12.2.3.3:

Vigilantism in the Wild West was committed by “citizens possessing firearms who monitored and maintained the peace” (Marshall, 2010, p. 712).

Formatting Short Quotations

For short quotations, use quotation marks to indicate where the quoted material begins and ends, and cite the name of the author(s), the year of publication, and the page number where the quotation appears in your source. Remember to include commas to separate elements within the parenthetical citation. Also, avoid redundancy. If you name the author(s) in your sentence, do not repeat the name(s) in your parenthetical citation. Review following the examples of different ways to cite direct quotations.

Chang (2008) emphasized that “engaging in weight-bearing exercise consistently is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health” (p. 49).

The author’s name can be included in the body of the sentence or in the parenthetical citation. Note that when a parenthetical citation appears at the end of the sentence, it comes *after* the closing quotation marks and *before* the period. The elements within parentheses are separated by commas.

Weight Training for Women (Chang, 2008) claimed that “engaging in weight-bearing exercise consistently is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health” (p. 49).

Weight Training for Women claimed that “engaging in weight-bearing exercise consistently is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health” (Chang, 2008, p. 49).

Including the title of a source is optional.

In Chang’s 2008 text *Weight Training for Women*, she asserts, “Engaging in weight-bearing exercise is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health” (p. 49).

The author’s name, the date, and the title may appear in the body of the text. Include the page number in the parenthetical citation. Also, notice the use of the verb *asserts* to introduce the direct quotation.

"Engaging in weight-bearing exercise," Chang asserts, "is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health" (2008, p. 49).

You may begin a sentence with the direct quotation and add the author's name and a strong verb before continuing the quotation.

Tip

Although APA style guidelines do not require writers to provide page numbers for material that is not directly quoted, your instructor may wish you to do so when possible. Check with your instructor about his or her preferences.

Long (Block) Quotations

Long quotations should be used even more sparingly than shorter ones. Long quotations can range in length from four to seven or eight lines (40 words or more, and should *never* be as long as a page. There are two reasons for this: First, by using a long quote, you are essentially letting the original author do all the thinking for you; remember that your audience wants to see *your* ideas, not someone else's. Second, unless all the information and every word in the long quote is essential and could not be paraphrased (which is highly doubtful with a long passage), you are not showing your audience you have processed or evaluated the importance of the source's critical information and weeded out the unnecessary information. If you believe you have found the perfect paragraph to support your ideas, and you decide you really want or need to use the long quote, see if you can shorten it by removing unnecessary words or complete sentences and put ellipses in their place. This will again show your reader that you have put a lot of thought into the use of the quote and that you have included it just because you did not want to do any thinking.

Tip

Be wary of quoting from sources at length. Remember, your ideas should drive the paper, and quotations should be used to support and enhance your points. Make sure any lengthy quotations that you include serve a clear purpose. Generally, no more than 10 to 15 percent of a paper should consist of quoted material.

Long Quotations: How to Make Them Fit

As with short quotations, you need to make sure long quotations fit into your writing. To introduce a long quote, you need to include a **stem** (this can include an attributive tag) followed by a colon (:). The stem is underlined in the example below.

Example:

Marshall uses the example of towns in the Wild West to explain that:

Much of the population—especially younger males—frequently engaged in violence by participating in saloon fights and shootouts and gun fights. [However,] crimes committed by females, the elderly, or the infirm were rare occasions were much rarer because of those individuals being less likely to frequent such drinking establishments. (2010, p. 725)

In example, you can see the stem clearly introduces the quote in a grammatically correct way, leading into the quote fluidly.

Formatting Longer Quotations

When you quote a longer passage from a source—40 words or more—you need to use a different format to set off the quoted material. Instead of using quotation marks, create a **block quotation** by starting the quotation on a new line and indented five spaces from the margin. Note that in this case, the parenthetical citation comes *after* the period that ends the sentence. If the passage continues into a second paragraph, indent a full tab (five spaces) again in the first line of the second paragraph. Here is

an example:

In recent years, many writers within the fitness industry have emphasized the ways in which women can benefit from weight-bearing exercise, such as weightlifting, karate, dancing, stair climbing, hiking, and jogging. Chang (2008) found that engaging in weight-bearing exercise regularly significantly reduces women's risk of developing osteoporosis. Additionally, these exercises help women maintain muscle mass and overall strength, and many common forms of weight bearing exercise, such as brisk walking or stair climbing, also provide noticeable cardiovascular benefits.

It is important to note that swimming cannot be considered a weight-bearing exercise, since the water supports and cushions the swimmer. That doesn't mean swimming isn't great exercise, but it should be considered one part of an integrated fitness program. (p. 93)

Exercise 9.2

Look at the longblock quotation example above. Identify four differences between how it is formatted and how you would format a short quotation.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Tip

To format a long quote, you need to remember the following:

You may want to single space the quote, but not the main part of your essay. This will allow the long block quotation to stand out even more.

Indent on both sides of the quote; you can use *left* or *full* justification.

Do not use quotation marks; they are unnecessary because the spacing and indenting (and citation) will tell your reader this is a quote.

Do not put the quote in italics.

Include the end period (.) before the citation. See the example above.

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12.2.4: Citation Guidelines

Learning Objectives

- Apply APA guidelines for citing sources within the body of the paper for various source types

In-Text Citations

Throughout the body of your paper, you must include a citation whenever you quote or paraphrase material from your research sources. The purpose of citations is twofold: to give credit to others for their ideas and to allow your reader to follow up and learn more about the topic if desired. Your in-text citations provide basic information about your source; you will provide more detailed information for each source you cite in text in the references section. (Refer to your JIBC APA Reference Guide for guidance on compose citation—for quotes or paraphrasing—under the referencing example for each type of source.)

In-text citations must provide the name of the author or authors and the year the source was published. (When a given source does not list an individual author, you may provide the source title or the name of the organization that published the material instead.) When directly quoting a source, you must include the page number where the quote appears in the work being cited. This information may be included within the sentence or in a parenthetical reference at the end of the sentence, as in these examples.

Epstein (2010) points out that "junk food cannot be considered addictive in the same way that we think of psychoactive drugs as addictive" (p. 137).

Here, the writer names the source author when introducing the quote and provides the publication date in parentheses after the author's name. The page number appears in parentheses *after* the closing quotation marks and *before* the period that ends the sentence.

Addiction researchers caution that "junk food cannot be considered addictive in the same way that we think of psychoactive drugs as addictive" (Epstein, 2010, p. 137).

Here, the writer provides a parenthetical citation at the end of the sentence that includes the author's name, the year of publication, and the page number separated by commas. Again, the parenthetical citation is placed *after* the closing quotation marks and *before* the period at the end of the sentence.

As noted in the book *Junk Food, Junk Science* (Epstein, 2010, p. 137), "junk food cannot be considered addictive in the same way that we think of psychoactive drugs as addictive."

Here, the writer chose to mention the source title in the sentence (an optional piece of information to include) and followed the title with a parenthetical citation. Note that in this example the parenthetical citation is placed *before* the comma that signals the end of the introductory phrase.

David Epstein's book *Junk Food, Junk Science* (2010) pointed out that "junk food cannot be considered addictive in the same way that we think of psychoactive drugs as addictive" (p. 137).

Another variation is to introduce the author and the source title in your sentence and include the publication date and page number in parentheses within the sentence or at the end of the sentence. As long as you have included the essential information, you can use the option that works best for that particular sentence and source.

Citing a book with a single author is usually straightforward. Of course, your research may require that you cite many other types of sources, such as books or articles with more than one author or sources with no individual author listed. You may also need to cite sources available in both print and online and nonprint sources, such as websites and personal interviews.

Exercise 9.3

In each of the sentences below, identify the mistakes with how the quote was incorporated. Look carefully; some of them are tricky and have more than one error.

One researcher outlines the viewpoints of both parties:

Freedom of research is undoubtedly a cherished ideal in our society. In that respect, research has an interest in being free, independent, and unrestricted. Such interests weigh against regulations. On the other hand, research should also be valid, verifiable, and unbiased, to attain the overarching goal of gaining obtaining generalisable knowledge (Simonsen, 2012, p. 46).

_____

_____

_____

2.

According to a recent research study, 'that women aged 41 and over were 5 times less likely to use condoms than were men aged 18 and younger' (2007, p. 707).

_____

_____

_____

3.

According to Emlet, the rate in which older adults have contracted HIV has grown exponentially. Currently, "approximately 20% of all HIV cases were among older adults". (Emlet, 2008).

_____

_____

_____

Examples taken from:

Writing Commons. (2014, September). *Open Text*. Retrieved from writingcommons.org/format/apa...quotations-apa

Answer available at the end of this section.

Formatting In-Text Citations

The following subsections discuss the correct format for various types of in-text citations. Read them through quickly to get a sense of what is covered, and then refer to them again as needed.

Print Sources

This section covers books, articles, and other print sources with one or more authors.

A Work by One Author

For a print work with one author, follow the guidelines provided in the JIBC APA Reference Guide. Always include the author's name and year of publication. Include a page reference whenever you quote a source directly. (See also the guidelines presented earlier in this chapter about when to include a page reference for paraphrased material.)

Chang (2008) emphasized that "engaging in weight-bearing exercise consistently is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health" (p. 49).

Chang (2008) pointed out that weight-bearing exercise has many potential benefits for women.

Two or More Works by the Same Author

At times, your research may include multiple works by the same author. If the works were published in different years, a standard in-text citation will serve to distinguish them. If you are citing multiple works by the same author published in the same year, include a lowercase letter immediately after the year. Rank the sources in the order they appear in your references section. The source listed first should include an *a* after the year, the source listed second should include a *b*, and so on.

Rodriguez (2009a) criticized the nutrition supplement industry for making unsubstantiated and sometimes misleading claims about the benefits of taking supplements. Additionally, he warned that consumers frequently do not realize the potential harmful effects of some popular supplements (Rodriguez, 2009b).

The author's last name is again mentioned in the final citation despite it being used in the attributive tag. In this case, this is acceptable because this is referring to a different source written by the same person.

Works by Authors with the Same Last Name

If you are citing works by different authors with the same last name, include each author's initials in your citation, whether you mention them in the text or in parentheses. Do so even if the publication years are different.

J. S. Williams (2007) believes nutritional supplements can be a useful part of some diet and fitness regimens. C. D. Williams (2008), however, believes these supplements are overrated.

According to two leading researchers, the rate of childhood obesity exceeds the rate of adult obesity (K. Connelley, 2010; O. Connelley, 2010).

Studies from both A. Wright (2007) and C. A. Wright (2008) confirm the benefits of diet and exercise on weight loss.

A Work by Two Authors

When two authors are listed for a given work, include both authors' names each time you cite the work. If you are citing their names in parentheses, use an ampersand (&) between them. (Use the word *and*, however, if the names appear in your sentence.)

As Garrison and Gould (2010) pointed out, "It is never too late to quit smoking. The health risks associated with this habit begin to decrease soon after a smoker quits" (p. 101).

As doctors continue to point out, "It is never too late to quit smoking. The health risks associated with this habit begin to decrease

soon after a smoker quits" (Garrison & Gould, 2010, p. 101).

A Work by Three to Five Authors

If the work you are citing has three to five authors, list all the authors' names the first time you cite the source. In subsequent citations, use the first author's name followed by the abbreviation *et al*. (*Et al*. is short for *et alia*, the Latin phrase for "and others.")

Henderson, Davidian, and Degler (2010) surveyed 350 smokers aged 18 to 30.

One survey, conducted among 350 smokers aged 18 to 30, included a detailed questionnaire about participants' motivations for smoking (Henderson, Davidian, & Degler, 2010).

Note that these examples follow the same ampersand conventions as sources with two authors. Again, use the ampersand only when listing authors' names in parentheses.

As Henderson et al. (2010) found, some young people, particularly young women, use smoking as a means of appetite suppression.

Disturbingly, some young women use smoking as a means of appetite suppression (Henderson et al., 2010).

Note how the phrase *et al*. is punctuated. There is no period comes after *et*, but there is one with *al*. because it is an abbreviation for a longer Latin word. In parenthetical references, include a comma after *et al*. but not before. Remember this rule by mentally translating the citation to English: "Henderson and others, 2010."

A Work by Six or More Authors

If the work you are citing has six or more authors, list only the first author's name, followed by *et al*., in your in-text citations. The other authors' names will be listed in your references section.

Researchers have found that outreach work with young people has helped reduce tobacco use in some communities (Costello et al., 2007).

A Work Authored by an Organization

When citing a work that has no individual author but is published by an organization, use the organization's name in place of the author's name. Lengthy organization names with well-known abbreviations can be abbreviated. In your first citation, use the full name, followed by the abbreviation in square brackets. Subsequent citations may use the abbreviation only.

It is possible for a patient to have a small stroke without even realizing it (American Heart Association [AHA], 2010).

Another cause for concern is that even if patients realize that they have had a stroke and need medical attention, they may not know which nearby facilities are best equipped to treat them (AHA, 2010).

A Work with No Listed Author

If no author is listed and the source cannot be attributed to an organization, use the title in place of the author's name. You may

use the full title in your sentence or use the first few words—enough to convey the key ideas—in a parenthetical reference. Follow standard conventions for using italics or quotations marks with titles:

Use italics for titles of books or reports.

Use quotation marks for titles of articles or chapters.

"Living With Diabetes: Managing Your Health" (2009) recommends regular exercise for patients with diabetes.

Regular exercise can benefit patients with diabetes ("Living with Diabetes," 2009).

A Work Cited within Another Work

To cite a source that is referred to within another secondary source, name the first source in your sentence. Then, in parentheses, use the phrase *as cited in* and the name of the second source author.

Rosenhan's study "On Being Sane in Insane Places" (as cited in Spitzer, 1975) found that psychiatrists diagnosed schizophrenia in people who claimed to be experiencing hallucinations and sought treatment—even though these patients were, in fact, imposters.

Two or More Works Cited in One Reference

At times, you may provide more than one citation in a parenthetical reference, such as when you are discussing related works or studies with similar results. List the citations in the same order they appear in your references section, and separate the citations with a semicolon.

Some researchers have found serious flaws in the way Rosenhan's study was conducted (Dawes, 2001; Spitzer, 1975).

Both of these researchers authored works that support the point being made in this sentence, so it makes sense to include both in the same citation.

A Famous Text Published in Multiple Editions

In some cases, you may need to cite an extremely well-known work that has been repeatedly republished or translated. Many works of literature and sacred texts, as well as some classic nonfiction texts, fall into this category. For these works, the original date of publication may be unavailable. If so, include the year of publication or translation for your edition. Refer to specific parts or chapters if you need to cite a specific section. Discuss with your instructor whether he or she would like you to cite page numbers in this particular instance.

In *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho Analysis*, Freud explains that the "manifest content" of a dream—what literally takes place—is separate from its "latent content," or hidden meaning (trans. 1965, lecture XXIX).

In this example, the student is citing a classic work of psychology, originally written in German and later translated to English. Since the book is a collection of Freud's lectures, the student cites the lecture number rather than a page number.

An Introduction, Foreword, Preface, or Afterword

To cite an introduction, foreword, preface, or afterword, cite the author of the material and the year, following the same format used for other print materials.

Electronic Sources

Whenever possible, cite electronic sources as you would print sources, using the author, the date, and where appropriate, a page number. For some types of electronic sources—for instance, many online articles—this information is easily available. Other times, however, you will need to vary the format to reflect the differences in online media.

Online Sources without Page Numbers

If an online source has no page numbers but you want to refer to a specific portion of the source, try to locate other information you can use to direct your reader to the information cited. Some websites number paragraphs within published articles; if so, include the paragraph number in your citation. Precede the paragraph number with the abbreviation for the word *paragraph* and the number of the paragraph (e.g., para. 4).

As researchers have explained, “Incorporating fresh fruits and vegetables into one’s diet can be a challenge for residents of areas where there are few or no easily accessible supermarkets” (Smith & Jones, 2006, para. 4).

Even if a source does not have numbered paragraphs, it is likely to have headings that organize the content. In your citation, name the section where your cited information appears, followed by a paragraph number.

The American Lung Association (2010) noted, “After smoking, radon exposure is the second most common cause of lung cancer” (What Causes Lung Cancer? section, para. 2).

This student cited the appropriate section heading within the website and then counted to find the specific paragraph where the cited information was located.

If an online source has no listed author and no date, use the source title and the abbreviation *n.d.* in your parenthetical reference.

It has been suggested that electromagnetic radiation from cellular telephones may pose a risk for developing certain cancers (“Cell Phones and Cancer,” n.d.).

Personal Communication

For personal communications, such as interviews, letters, and emails, cite the name of the person involved, clarify that the material is from a personal communication, and provide the specific date the communication took place. Note that while in-text citations correspond to entries in the references section, personal communications are an exception to this rule. They are cited only in the body text of your paper.

J. H. Yardley, M.D., believes that available information on the relationship between cell phone use and cancer is inconclusive (personal communication, May 1, 2009).

Writing at Work

At work, you may sometimes share information resources with your colleagues by photocopying an interesting article or forwarding the URL of a useful website. Your goal in these situations and in formal research citations is the same: to provide enough information to help your professional peers locate and follow up on potentially useful information. Provide as much specific information as possible to achieve that goal, and consult with your supervisor or professor as to what specific style he or she may prefer.

key takeaways

- In APA papers, in-text citations include the name of the author(s) and the year of publication whenever possible.
- Page numbers are always included when citing quotations. It is optional to include page numbers when citing paraphrased material; however, this should be done when citing a specific portion of a work.
- When citing online sources, provide the same information used for print sources if it is available.
- When a source does not provide information that usually appears in a citation, in-text citations should provide readers with alternative information that would help them locate the source material. This may include the title of the source, section headings and paragraph numbers for websites, and so forth.
- When writing a paper, discuss with your instructor what particular standards you should follow.

Answers

Exercise 9.3

1.

The quote is not indented on either side.

[sic] is required after “obtaining”because it is a mistake in the original.

The period is placed after the citation not before.

2.

“That” should have been removed to make the quote flow with the rest of the sentence.

There is no attributive tag and no mention of the authors in the citation: Sormanti & Shibusawa

Single quotation marks are used instead of double quotation marks.

3.

The writer used an attributive tag with the name of the source’s author, then gave the name again in the citation at the end. The second one is redundant.

The original quote used the past tense (“were”), but the transition word “currently” requires this verb to be changed to present tense (“are”) inside square brackets to make it fit.

There is an extra period before the citation. With a short quote, you put the end punctuation after the citation.

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12.2.5: Creating a References Page (Part 2)

Electronic Sources

Citing Articles from Online Periodicals: URLs and Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs)

Whenever you cite online sources, it is important to provide the most up-to-date information available to help readers locate the source. In some cases, this means providing an article's URL, or web address. (The letters *URL* stand for uniform resource locator.) Always provide the most complete URL possible. Provide a link to the specific article used, rather than a link to the publication's homepage.

As you likely know, web addresses are not always stable. If a website is updated or reorganized, the article you accessed in April may move to a different location in May. The URL you provided may become a dead link. For this reason, many online periodicals, especially scholarly publications, now rely on DOIs rather than URLs to keep track of articles.

A **DOI** is a digital object identifier—an identification code provided for some online documents, typically articles in scholarly journals. Like a URL, its purpose is to help readers locate an article. However, a DOI is more stable than a URL, so it makes sense to include it in your reference entry when possible. Follow these guidelines:

If you are citing an online article with a DOI, list the DOI at the end of the reference entry.

If the article appears in print as well as online, you do not need to provide the URL. However, include the words *electronic version* after the title in brackets.

In all other respects, treat the article as you would a print article. Include the volume number and issue number if available. (Note, however, that these may not be available for some online periodicals.)

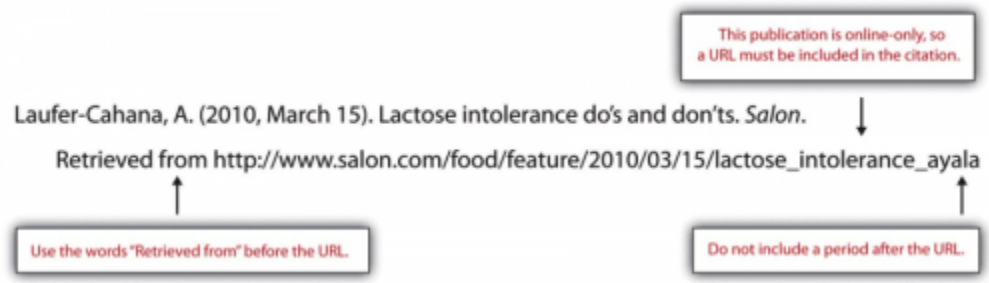
An Article from an Online Periodical with a DOI

List the DOI if one is provided. There is no need to include the URL if you have listed the DOI.

Bell, J. R. (2006). Low-carb beats low-fat diet for early losses but not long term. *OBGYN News, 41*(12), 32. doi:10.1016/S0029-7437(06)71905-X

An Article from an Online Periodical with No DOI

List the URL. Include the volume and issue number for the periodical if this information is available. (For some online periodicals, it may not be.)



Note that if the article appears in a print version of the publication, you do not need to list the URL, but do indicate that you accessed the electronic version.

Robbins, K. (2010, March/April). Nature's bounty: A heady feast [Electronic version]. *Psychology Today, 43*(2), 58.

A Newspaper Article

Provide the URL of the article.

McNeil, D. G. (2010, May 3). Maternal health: A new study challenges benefits of vitamin A for women and babies. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from www.nytimes.com/2010/05/04/he...tml?ref=health

An Article Accessed through a Database

Cite articles accessed through a database the same way you would normally cite a print article. Provide database information only if the article is difficult to locate.

Tip

APA style does not require the item number or accession number for articles retrieved from databases. You may choose to include it if the article is difficult to locate or the database is an obscure one. Check with your instructor for specific requirements for your course.

An Abstract of an Article

Format article abstracts as you would an article citation, but add the word *Abstract* in brackets after the title.

Bradley, U., Spence, M., Courtney, C. H., McKinley, M. C., Ennis, C. N., McCance, D. R....Hunter, S. J. (2009). Low-fat versus low-carbohydrate weight reduction diets: Effects on weight loss, insulin resistance, and cardiovascular risk: A randomized control trial [Abstract]. *Diabetes*,*58*(12), 2741–2748. diabetes.diabetesjournals.org...00098.abstract

A Nonperiodical Web Document

The ways you cite different nonperiodical web documents may vary slightly from source to source, depending on the information available. In your citation, include as much of the following information as you can:

Name of the author(s), whether an individual or organization

Date of publication (Use *n.d.* if no date is available.)

Title of the document

Address where you retrieved the document

If the document consists of more than one web page within the site, link to the homepage or the entry page for the document.

American Heart Association. (2010). *Heart attack, stroke, and cardiac arrest warning signs*.Retrieved from http://www.americanheart.org/present...dentifier=3053

An Entry from an Online Encyclopedia or Dictionary

Because these sources often do not include authors' names, you may list the title of the entry at the beginning of the citation. Provide the URL for the specific entry.

Addiction. (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster's online dictionary*. Retrieved from http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/addiction

Graphic Data

When citing graphic data—such as maps, pie charts, bar graphs, and so on—include the name of the organization that compiled the information, along with the publication date. Briefly describe the contents in brackets. Provide the URL where you retrieved the information. (If the graphic is associated with a specific project or document, list it after your bracketed description of the contents.)

US Food and Drug Administration. (2009). [Pie charts showing the percentage breakdown of the FDA's budget for fiscal year

2005]. *2005 FDA budget summary*. Retrieved from mhttp://www.fda.gov/AboutFDA/Reports.../ucm117231.htm

An Electronic Book

Electronic books may include books available as text files online or audiobooks. If an electronic book is easily available in print, cite it as you would a print source. If it is unavailable in print (or extremely difficult to find), use the format in the example. (Use the words *Available from* in your citation if the book must be purchased or is not available directly.)

Chisholm, L. (n.d.). *Celtic tales*. Retrieved from http://www.childrenslibrary.org/icdl...Reader?bookid=chicelt_00150014&twoPage=false&route=text&size=0&fullscreen=false&pnum1=1&lang= English&ilang=English

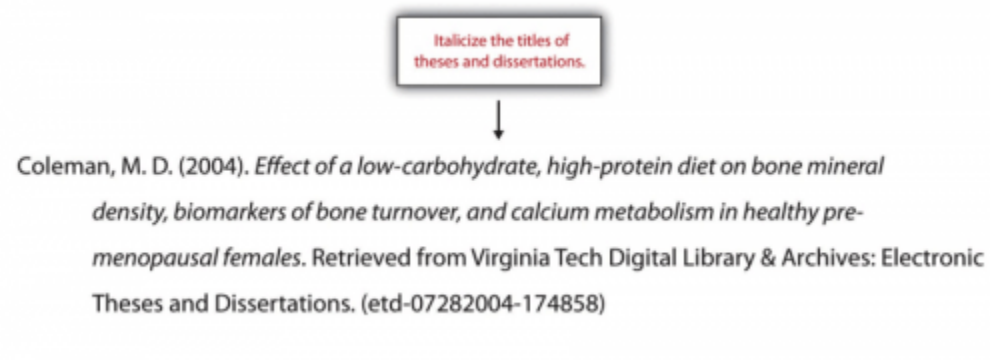
A Chapter from an Online Book or a Chapter or Section of a Web Document

Chapters and sections from online books or web documents are treated similarly to their print counterparts with the addition of retrieval information. Include the chapter or section number in parentheses after the book title.

Hart, A. M. (1895). Restoratives—Coffee, cocoa, chocolate. In *Diet in sickness and in health* (VI). Retrieved from www.archive.org/details/dieti...ssin00hartrich

A Dissertation or Thesis from a Database

Provide the author, date of publication, title, and retrieval information. If the work is numbered within the database, include the number in parentheses at the end of the citation.



Computer Software

For commonly used office software and programming languages, it is not necessary to provide a citation. Cite software only when you are using a specialized program, such as the nutrition tracking software in the following example. If you download software from a website, provide the version and the year if available.

Internet Brands, Inc. (2009). FitDay PC (Version 2) [Software]. Available from www.fitday.com/Pc/PcHome.html?gcid=14

A Post on a Blog or Video Blog

Citation guidelines for blogs are similar to those used for discussion forum postings. Briefly describe the type of source in brackets after the title.



Writing at Work

Because the content may not be carefully reviewed for accuracy, discussion forums and blogs should not be relied upon as a major source of information. However, it may be appropriate to cite these sources for some types of research. You may also participate in discussion forums or comment on blogs that address topics of personal or professional interest. Always keep in mind that when you post, you are making your thoughts public—and in many cases, available through search engines. Make sure any posts that can easily be associated with your name are appropriately professional, because a potential employer could view them.

A Television or Radio Broadcast

Include the name of the producer or executive producer; the date, title, and type of broadcast; and the associated company and location.

West, Ty. (Executive producer). (2009, September 24). *PBS special report: Health care reform* [Television broadcast]. New York, NY, and Washington, DC: Public Broadcasting Service.

A Television or Radio Series or Episode

Include the producer and the type of series if you are citing an entire television or radio series.

Couture, D., Nabors, S., Pinkard, S., Robertson, N., & Smith, J. (Producers). (1979). *The Diane Rehm show* [Radio series]. Washington, DC: National Public Radio.

To cite a specific episode of a radio or television series, list the name of the writer or writers (if available), the date the episode aired, its title, and the type of series, along with general information about the series.

Bernanke, J., & Wade, C. (2010, January 10). Hummingbirds: Magic in the air [Television series episode]. In F. Kaufman (Executive producer), *Nature*. New York, NY: WNET.

A Motion Picture

Name the director or producer (or both), year of release, title, country of origin, and studio.

Spurlock, M. (Director/producer), Morley, J. (Executive producer), & Winters. H. M. (Executive producer). (2004). *Super size me*. United States: Kathbur Pictures in association with Studio on Hudson.

A Recording

Name the primary contributors and list their role. Include the recording medium in brackets after the title. Then list the location and the label.

Smith, L. W. (Speaker). (1999). *Meditation and relaxation* [CD]. New York, NY: Earth, Wind, & Sky Productions.

Székely, I. (Pianist), Budapest Symphony Orchestra (Performers), & Németh, G. (Conductor). (1988). *Chopin piano concertos no. 1 and 2* [CD]. Hong Kong: Naxos.

A Podcast

Provide as much information as possible about the writer, director, and producer; the date the podcast aired; its title; any organization or series with which it is associated; and where you retrieved the podcast.

Kelsey, A. R. (Writer), Garcia, J. (Director), & Kim, S. C. (Producer). (2010, May 7). Lies food labels tell us. *Savvy consumer podcast* [Audio podcast]. Retrieved from www.savvyconsumer.org/podcasts/050710

Exercise 9.4

Using the guidelines above and your JIBC APA Reference Guide, identify what each of these types of sources are based on their identifying characteristics and under which categories you would find them in the reference guide. Choose the answer that best describes each example.

Baudrillard, Jean. *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign.* Trans. Charles Levin. Saint Louis: Telos, 1981.

1. A book with two authors
2. A multi-volume work
3. An article in a journal
4. A book with one author

United States Drug Enforcement Administration. (2014). The Dangers and consequences of marijuana abuse. Retrieved from www.justice.gov/dea/docs/dang...uana-abuse.pdf

1. Online government document
2. Online task force report, corporate author
3. Online codes and standards
4. A blog

Watson, S. (2003). Antigone. In R. Sullivan & M. Levene (Eds.), *Short Fiction: An Anthology* (pp. 323-329). Don Mills, Ont.: Oxford University Press. (Original work published 1979)

1. A short story reprinted in an anthology
2. A chapter in a book
3. A multi-volume book
4. A book with three authors

Gilbert, Elliot. “The Ceremony of Innocence: Charles Dickens’s *A Christmas Carol*.” *PMLA* 90 (1975): 22-31.

1. An online journal article
2. An academic article
3. A chapter in a book
4. A newspaper article

Ogborne, A.C., Smart, R.G., & Adlaf, E.M. (2000). Self-reported medical use of marijuana: A survey of the general population. *Canadian Medical Association Journal, 162*(12), 1685. Retrieved from ecmaj.ca.cgi

1. An online academic journal article
2. An online authored report, non-governmental organization
3. An online academic journal article by multiple authors
4. An e-version of a print book

David, L. (Producer) & Guggenheim, D. (Director). (2006). *An Inconvenient Truth* [Motion Picture]. United States: Lawrence Bender Productions.

1. A CD-ROM
2. A television series
3. A video/DVD
4. A blog

Jaynes, J. 1986 Consciousness of the voices of the mind. *Canadian Psychology* 27. 128-137.

1. An online journal article
2. An academic journal article
3. A book
4. A magazine article

Spiro, M.D. (1983). Introduction: Thirty years of kibbutz research. In E. Krause (Ed.), *The sociology of the kibbutz: Studies in Israeli society II*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.

1. A book
2. A chapter
3. An edited book
4. All of the above

Kamel, F., Tanner, C., Umbach, D., Hoppin, J., Alavanja, M., Blair, A.,... Sandler, D. (2007). Pesticide exposure and self-reported Parkinson's disease in the agricultural health study. *Am J Epidemiol*, 165: 364-374.

1. An online academic article with eight or more authors
2. A book with eight or more authors
3. A print journal article with eight or more authors
4. A chapter in an edited book

McPartland, J.M., & Pruitt, P.L. (1997). Medical marijuana and its use by the immunocompromised. *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine, 3*(3), 39-45. doi: 10.1080/102825

1. An online newspaper article
2. An online article with DOI
3. A chapter of a book from an online library
4. All of the above

Some examples taken from:

Writing Commons. (2014, September). *Open Text*. Retrieved from writingcommons.org/format/apa...quotations-apa

Answer available at the end of this section.

Sample Reference Page

Review the following example from Jorge's paper on evaluating low-carbohydrate diets. This is an example of how to piece all of your referencing information into one section.



BEYOND THE HYPE: EVALUATING LOW-CARBOHYDRATE DIETS 10

References

Agatson, A. (2003). The South Beach diet. New York, NY: St. Martin's Griffin.

The American Heart Association. (2010). *American Heart Association comments on weight loss study comparing low carbohydrate/high protein, Mediterranean style and low fat diets*. http://americanheart.mediaroom.com/index.php?s=43&item=473

Atkins, R. C. (2002). *Dr. Atkins' diet revolution*. New York, NY: M. Evans and Company.

Bell, J. R. (2006). Low-carb beats low-fat diet for early losses but not long term. *OBGYN News, 41*(12), 32. doi:10.1016/50029-7437(06)71905-X

Bradley, U., Spence, M., Courtney, C. H., McKinley, M. C., Ennis, C. N., McCance, D. R.…Hunter, S. J. (2009). Low-fat versus low-carbohydrate weight reduction diets: effects on weight loss, insulin resistance, and cardiovascular risk: A randomized control trial [Abstract]. Diabetes, 58(12), 2741–2748. Recieved from http://diabetes.diabetesjournals.org/content/early/2009/08/23/db09-0098.abstract

Ebbeling, C. B., Leidig, M. M., Feldman, H. A., Lovesky, M. M., & Ludwig, D. S. (2007). *Effects of a low-glycemic load vs low-fat diet in obese young adults: A randomized trial*. Journal of the American Medical Association, 297(19), 2092–2102.

Foo, S. Y., Heller, E. R., Wykrzykowska, J., Sullivan, C. J., Manning-Tobin, J. J., Moore, K. J.…Rosenzweigac, A. (2009). Vascular effects of a low-carbohydrate high-protein diet. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of America, 106*(36), 15418–15423. doi:10.1073/pnas.0907995106

Gardner, C. D., Kiazand, A., Alhassan, S., Kim, S., Stafford, R. S., Balise, R. R.…King, A. C. (2007). Comparison of the Atkins, Zone, Ornish, and LEARN Diets for change in weight and related risk factors among overweight premenopausal women. *Journal of the American Medical Association, 297*(9), 969–977. http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/297/9/969#AUTHINFO

Harvard School of Public Health. (2010). *The Nutrition Source*. Carbohydrates: Good carbs guide



BEYOND THE HYPE: EVALUATING LOW-CARBOHYDRATE DIETS 11

the way. In The Nutrition Source. Retrieved from http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/what-should-you-eat/carbohydrates-full-story/index.html#good-carbs-not-no-carbs

HealthDay. (2010). *Low-fat diets beat low-carb regimen long term*. http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_95861.html

Hirsch, J. (2004). The low-carb evolution: Be reactive with low-carb products but proactive with nutrition. *Nutraceuticals World*. Retrved from http://www.nutraceuticalsworld.com/contents/view/13321

Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MFMER). (2010). Weight-loss options: 6 common diet plans. http://www.mayoclinic.com/print/weight-loss/NU00616/METHOD=print

McMillan-Price, J., Petocz, P., Atkinson, F., O'Neill, K., Samman, S., Steinbeck, K.…Brand-Miller, J. (2006, July). Comparison of 4 diets of varying glycemic load on weight loss and cardiovascular risk reduction in overweight and obese young adults: A randomized controlled trial. *Archives of Internal Medicine, 166*(14), 1466–1475. Retrieved from http://archinte.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/166/14/1466

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. (2010). What I need to know about eating and diabetes. In *National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse*. Retrieved from http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/eating_ez/index.htm

Reuters Health. (2010). *Low-carb diet can increase bad cholesterol levels*. Retrieved from http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_95708.html

Seppa, N. (2008). Go against the grains, diet study suggests: Low-carb beats low-fat in weight loss, cholesterol. *Science News, 174*(4), 25. http://www.sciencenews.org/view/issue/id/34757

Assignment 3 (2.5%)

Using the JIBC APA Reference Guide, compile a reference page consisting of the six sources given below. You will need to apply the required formatting for each of the references as well as the page as a whole. You will have to look at each of the sources and the information that is given for each: there may be some extra information you will need to omit from the references.

1. Identify what type of source this is from the information given.

2. Find the example of that type of source in the reference guide.

3. Decide what information you need and do not need for each.

4. Compose each individual source's reference.

5. On a separate page, combine the references you created for the six sources into a correctly formatted reference page.

Submit this assignment to your instructor for grading. (2.5%)

Referencing information for Assignment 3

1. *American Music Teacher*, August-Sept 1999 v49 (1) p34(5) 1998 National Survey of High School Pianists. Harold Kafer; Richard Kennel

2. *The Economist* (US), June 1, 1996 v339 n7968 p79(1) The food of the gods.

3. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, Dec 2005 v14 i6 p317(4) Music and Cognitive Abilities. Glenn E. Schellenberg

4. *Nursing interventions: effective nursing treatments* / [edited by] Gloria M. Bulechek, Joanne C. McCloskey. Philadelphia: Saunders, c1999. 3rd ed Includes bibliographical references and index. ISBN: 072167724X Fenwick Stacks Call Number: RT48 .N8833 1999

5. Kok, S.C. (2005). Music and learning. In Hoffman, B. (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Educational Technology*.Retrieved: March 28, 2008, from coe.sdsu.edu/eet/articles/mus...ning/start.htm

6. Tuning up young minds: music lessons give kids a small IQ advantage.B. Bower. *Science News*165.25 (June 19, 2004): p389(1). (446 words)

Checklist 7.1 Reference Page Reminder

Just to review, your final reference page needs to:

Start on an fresh page after your last page of writing

Be titled “Reference Page” or “References”

Be in alphabetical order based on the author’s last name

Be double spaced

Have hanging indents

Tip

In APA style, book and article titles are formatted in sentence case, not title case. Sentence case means that only the first word is capitalized, along with any proper nouns.

key takeaways

- In APA papers, in-text citations usually include the name(s) of the author(s) and the year of publication.
- In-text citations correspond to entries in the references section, which provide detailed referencing information about a source.
- Entries in the references section include as much of the following information as possible:
- Print Resources: Author(s), date of publication, title, publisher, page numbers (for shorter works), editors (if applicable), and periodical title (if applicable).
- Online resources (text based). Author(s), date of publication, title, publisher or sponsoring organization, and DOI or URL (if applicable).
- Electronic resources (non text based).Details about the creator(s) of the work, title, associated company or series, and date the work was produced or broadcast. The specific details provided will vary depending on the medium and the information that is available.
- Electronic resources (text based). If widely available in print form, it is sometimes unnecessary to provide details about how to access the electronic version. Check the guidelines for the specific source type.

Journal entry #9

Write a paragraph or two responding to the following.

What did you find the most straightforward/easy about citations?

What did you find more difficult about citations?

What did you find the most straightforward/easy about composing references?

What did you find more difficult about composing references?

What concerns you most about referencing citations? What will you do to address this?

Remember as mentioned in the Assessment Descriptions in your syllabus:

You will be expected to respond to the questions by reflecting on and discussing your experiences with the week's material.

When writing your journals, you should focus on freewriting—writing without (overly) considering formal writing structures—but remember that it will be read by the instructor, who needs to be able to understand your ideas.

Your instructor will be able to see if you have completed this entry by the end of the week but will not read all of the journals until week 11.

Answers

Exercise 9.4

D. Although two names are given, only the first is the author; the second is a translator. It is a book because it has a city and publisher.

A. Starts with "United States" = good chance it is a government-produced document

A. The title of the book contains "anthology," which means collection of stories, and "fiction" refers to stories. We know it is a book because of the city and publisher.

B. There are actually three titles given here: the article, a book within the title of the article, the journal name *PMLA* (*Publications of the Modern Language Association*). There are also a volume number after *PMLA* and page numbers.

C. There are three authors, URL, and title of journal, identifying it as an online article with multiple authors.

C. The keywords identifying it as a video/DVD are *director, producer*, and *motion picture*

B. The title of journal and article, and the page numbers identify it as a journal article, but there is no URL so we know it is not online.

D. There are two titles, one italicized and one not, so it is part of a bigger source; the second name followed by "Ed." shows this was an edited book; we know it is a book because of the city and publisher.

C. The title of journal and article, with page numbers, identifies it as a journal article, but not online as there is no URL. More than eight authors are listed.

B. It is identified as a journal article because the journal title is given, and the name of the article. There is no URL but there is a DOI, identifying it as being online.

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12.2.6: Creating a References Page (Part 1)

Learning Objectives

- Navigate and find examples of references in the JIBC APA Reference Guide
- Compose an APA-formatted references page

The brief citations included in the body of your paper correspond to the more detailed citations provided at the end of the paper in the references section. In-text citations provide basic information—the author's name, the publication date, and the page number if necessary—while the references section provides more extensive information, which allows your reader to follow up on the sources you cited and do additional reading about the topic if desired.

In-text citations are necessary within your writing to show where you have borrowed ideas or quoted directly from another author. These are kept short because you do not want to disrupt the flow of your writing and distract the reader. While the in-text citation is very important, it is not enough to enable yourreaders to locate that source if they would like to use it for their own research.

The references section of your essay may consist of a single page for a brief research paper or may extend for many pages in professional journal articles. This section provides detailed information about how to create the references section of your paper. You will review basic formatting guidelines and learn how to format bibliographical entries for various types of sources. As you create this section of your paper, follow the guidelines provided here.

Formatting the References Page

To set up your references section, use the insert page break feature of your word processing program to begin a new page. Note that the header and margins will be the same as in the body of your paper, and pagination will continue from the body of your paper. (In other words, if you set up the body of your paper correctly, the correct header and page number should appear automatically in your references section.) The references page should be double spaced and list entries in alphabetical order by the author's last name. If an entry continues for more than one line, the second line and each subsequent line are indented five spaces, or one tab space; this is called a "hanging indent."

What to Include in the References Section

Generally, the information to include in your references section is:

The name(s) of the author(s) or institution that wrote the source

The year of publication and, where applicable, the exact date of publication

The full title of the source

For books, the city of publication

For articles or essays, the name of the periodical or book in which the article or essay appears

For magazine and journal articles, the volume number, issue number, and pages where the article appears

For sources on the web, the URL where the source is located

Before you start compiling your own references and translating referencing information from possibly other styles into APA style, you need to be able to identify each piece of information in the reference. This can sometimes be challenging because the different styles format the information differently and may put it in different places within the reference. However, the types of information each of the referencing styles requires is generally the same.

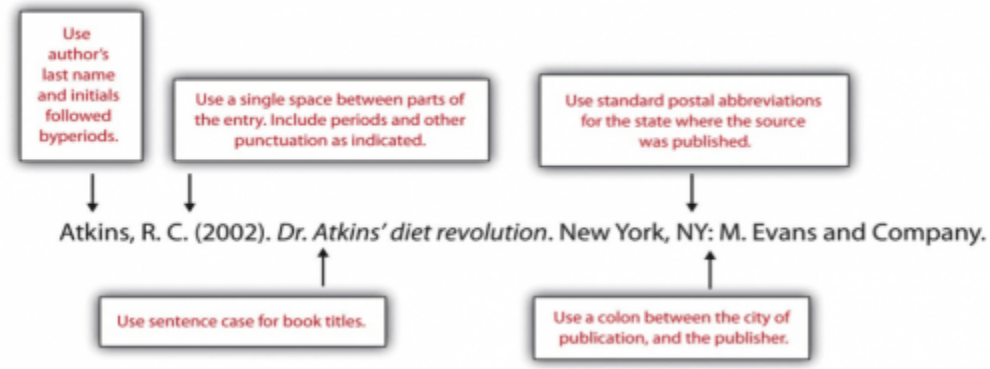
Navigating Your Reference Guide

The JIBC APA Reference Guide is organized into types of sources—print, online, mixed media—and by number of authors (or if there is no author). Once you find the referencing format you need in the guide, you can study the example and follow the structure to set up your own citations. (The style guide also provides examples for how to do the in-text citation for quotes and paraphrasing from that type of source.)

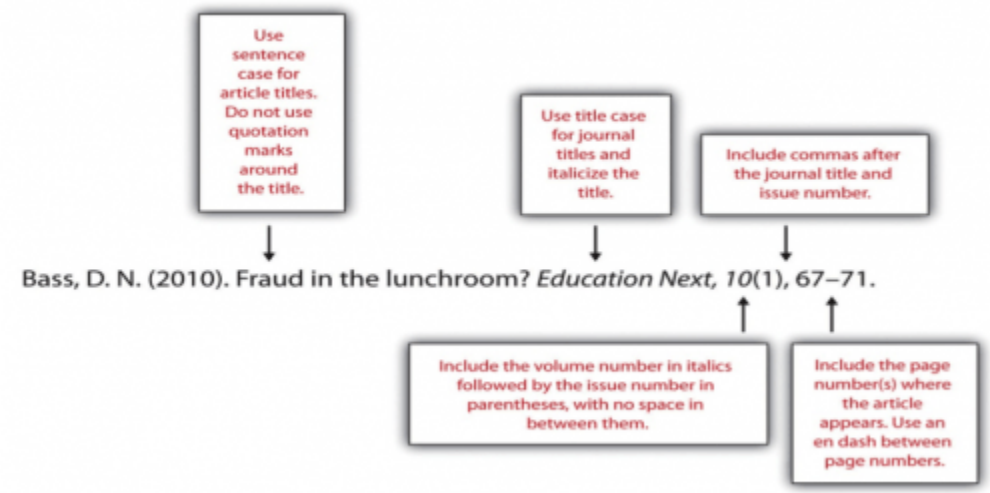
You may be asking yourself why you cannot just use the reference that is often provided on the first page of the source (like a journal article), but you need to remember that not all authors use APA style referencing, or even if they do, they may not use the exact formatting you need to follow.

Putting together a references page becomes a lot easier once you recognize the types of information you continually see in references. For example, anytime you see something *italicized* for APA or underlined (in MLA), you know it is the title of the major piece of writing, such as a book with chapters or an academic journal with multiple articles. Take a look at the examples below.

Sample Book Entry



Sample Journal Article Entry



Tip

If you are sourcing a chapter from a book, do not italicize the title of the chapter; instead, use double quotes. You also need to include the pages of the chapter within the book. (You *do* italicize the title of the book, similar to the journal article example above.)

The following box provides general guidelines for formatting the reference page. For the remainder of this chapter, you will learn about how to format reference entries for different source types, including multi-author and electronic sources.

Formatting the References Section: APA General Guidelines

Include the heading References, centred at the top of the page. The heading should not be boldfaced, italicized, or underlined.

Use double-spaced type throughout the references section, as in the body of your paper.

Use **hanging indentation** for each entry. The first line should be flush with the left margin, while any lines that follow should be indented five spaces. (Hanging indentation is the opposite of normal indenting rules for paragraphs.)

List entries in alphabetical order by the author's last name. For a work with multiple authors, use the last name of the first author listed.

List authors' names using this format: Smith, J. C.

For a work with no individual author(s), use the name of the organization that published the work or, if this is unavailable, the title of the work in place of the author's name.

For works with multiple authors, follow these guidelines:

- For works with up to and including seven authors, list the last name and initials for each author.
- For works with more than seven authors, list the first six names, followed by ellipses, and then the name of the last author listed.
- Use an ampersand before the name of the last author listed.

Use title case for journal titles. Capitalize all important words in the title.

Use sentence case for all other titles—books, articles, web pages, and other source titles. Capitalize the first word of the title. Do not capitalize any other words in the title except for the following:

- Proper nouns
- First word of a subtitle
- First word after a colon or dash

Use italics for book and journal titles. Do not use italics, underlining, or quotation marks for titles of shorter works, such as articles.

Tip

There are many word processing programs and websites available that allow you to just plug in your referencing information and it will format it to the style required. If you decide to use such a program, you must still check all your references against your referencing guide because the way those programs and sites piece the information together may not be the *exact* way you are expected to do so at your school. Always double check!

Writing at Work

Citing other people's work appropriately is just as important in the workplace as it is in school. If you need to consult outside sources to research a document you are creating, follow the general guidelines already discussed, as well as any industry-specific citation guidelines. For more extensive use of others' work—for instance, requesting permission to link to another company's website on your own corporate website—always follow your employer's established procedures.

Formatting Reference Page Entries

As is the case for in-text citations, formatting reference entries becomes more complicated when you are citing a source with multiple authors, various types of online media, or sources for which you must provide additional information beyond the basics listed in the general guidelines. The following sections show how to format reference entries by type of source.

Print Sources: Books

For book-length sources and shorter works that appear in a book, follow the guidelines that best describe your source.

A Book by Two or More Authors

List the authors' names in the order they appear on the book's title page. Use an ampersand (&) before the last author's name.

Campbell, D. T., & Stanley, J. C. (1963). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research.* Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

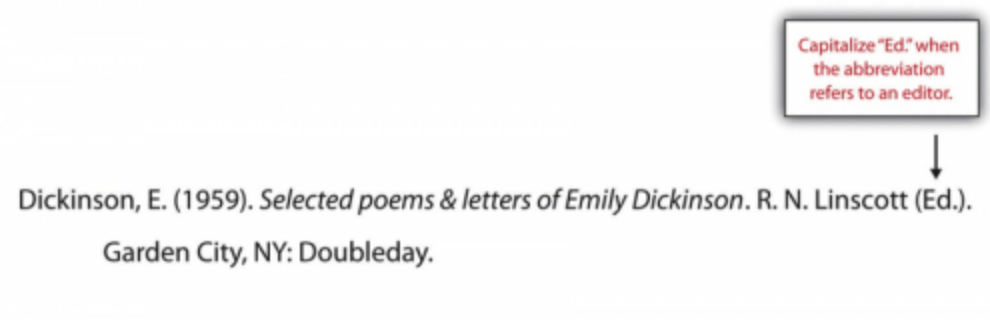
An Edited Book with No Author

List the editor or editors' names in place of the author's name, followed by *Ed.* or*Eds.* in parentheses.

Myers, C., & Reamer, D. (Eds.). (2009). *2009 nutrition index.* San Francisco, CA: HealthSource, Inc.

An Edited Book with an Author

List the author's name first, followed by the title and the editor or editors. Note that when the editor is listed after the title, you list the initials before the last name.



Tip

The previous example shows the format used for an edited book with one author—for instance, a collection of a famous person's letters that has been edited. This is different from an anthology, which is a collection of articles or essays by different authors. For citing works in anthologies, see the guidelines later in this section.

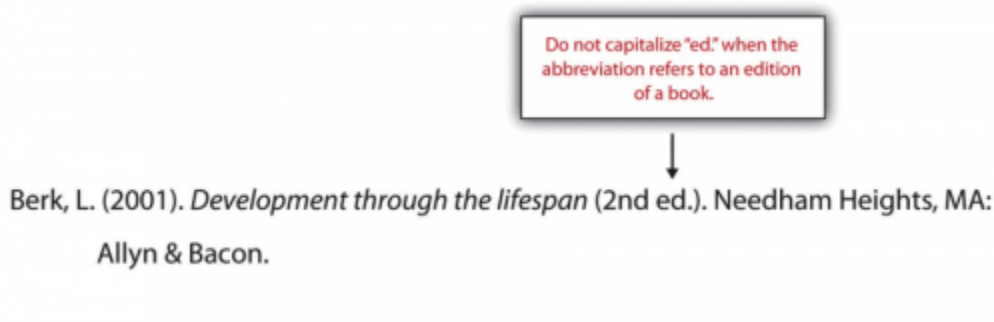
A Translated Book

Include the translator's name after the title, and at the end of the citation, list the date the original work was published. Note that for the translator's name, you list the initials before the last name.

Freud, S. (1965). *New introductory lectures on psycho-analysis* (J. Strachey, Trans.). New York, NY: W. W. Norton. (Original work published 1933).

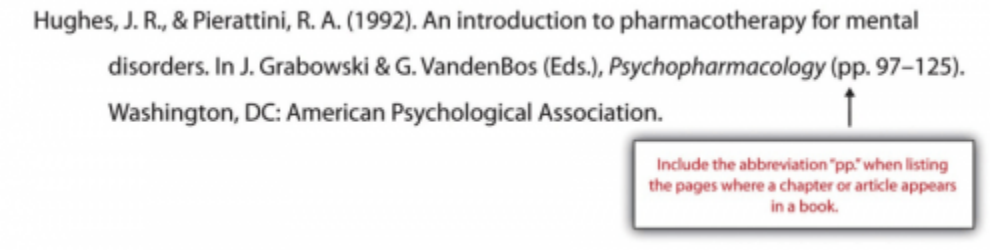
A Book Published in Multiple Editions

If you are using any edition other than the first, include the edition number in parentheses after the title.



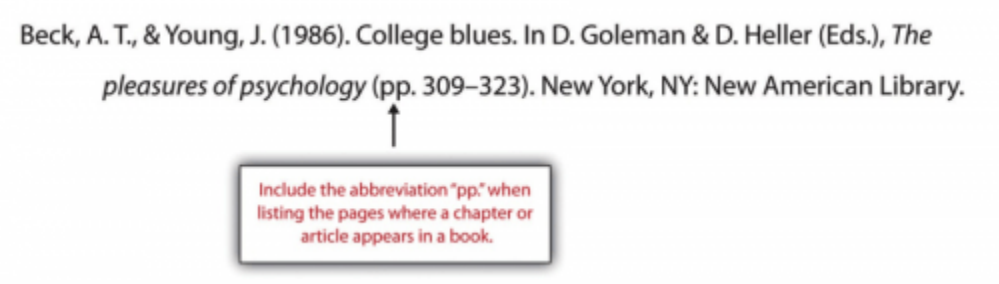
A Chapter in an Edited Book

List the name of the author(s) who wrote the chapter, followed by the chapter title. Then list the names of the book editor(s) and the title of the book, followed by the page numbers for the chapter and the usual information about the book's publisher.



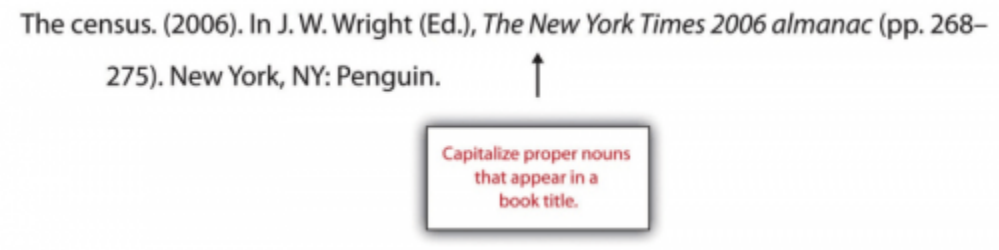
A Work That Appears in an Anthology

Follow the same process you would use to cite a book chapter, substituting the article or essay title for the chapter title.



An Article in a Reference Book

List the author's name if available; if no author is listed, provide the title of the entry where the author's name would normally be listed. If the book lists the name of the editor(s), include it in your citation. Indicate the volume number (if applicable) and page numbers in parentheses after the article title.



Two or More Books by the Same Author

List the entries in order of their publication year, beginning with the work published first.

Swedan, N. (2001). *Women's sports medicine and rehabilitation*. Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen Publishers.

Swedan, N. (2003). *The active woman's health and fitness handbook*. New York, NY: Perigee.

If two books have multiple authors, and the first author is the same but the others are different, alphabetize by the second author's last name (or the third or fourth, if necessary).

Carroll, D., & Aaronson, F. (2008). *Managing type II diabetes*. Chicago, IL: Southwick Press.

Carroll, D., & Zuckerman, N. (2008). *Gestational diabetes*. Chicago, IL: Southwick Press.

Books by Different Authors with the Same Last Name

Alphabetize entries by the authors' first initial.



A Book Authored by an Organization

Treat the organization name as you would an author's name. For the purposes of alphabetizing, ignore words like *the* in the organization's name (e.g., a book published by the American Heart Association would be listed with other entries whose authors' names begin with *A*.)

American Psychiatric Association. (1994). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders DSM-IV* (4th ed.). Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing.

A Book Authored by a Government Agency

Treat these as you would a book published by a non-governmental organization, but be aware that these works may have an identification number listed. If so, include the number in parentheses after the publication year.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2002). *The decennial censuses from 1790 to 2000*(Publication No. POL/02-MA). Washington, DC: US Government Printing Offices.

Print Sources: Periodicals

An Article in a Scholarly Journal

Include the following information:

Author or authors' names

Publication year

Article title (in sentence case, without quotation marks or italics)

Journal title (in title case and in italics)

Volume number (in italics)

Issue number (in parentheses)

Page number(s) where the article appears

DeMarco, R. F. (2010). Palliative care and African American women living with HIV. *Journal of Nursing Education, 49*(5), 1–4.

An Article in a Journal Paginated by Volume

In journals, page numbers are continuous across all the issues in a particular volume. For instance, the winter issue may begin with page 1, and in the spring issue that follows, the page numbers pick up where the previous issue left off. (If you have ever wondered why a print journal did not begin on page 1, or wondered why the page numbers of a journal extend into four digits, this is why.) Omit the issue number from your reference entry.

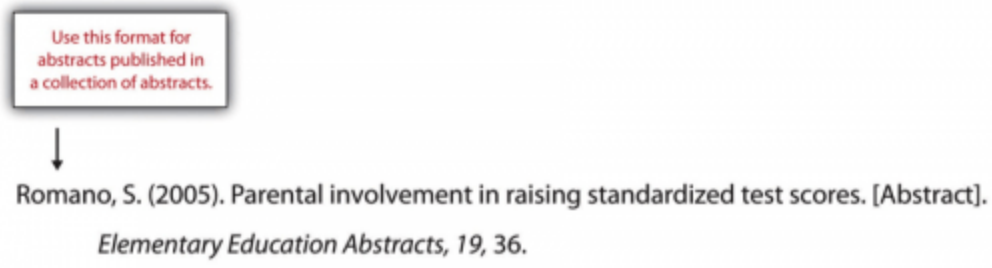
Wagner, J. (2009). Rethinking school lunches: A review of recent literature. *American School Nurses' Journal*, *47,* 1123–1127.

An Abstract of a Scholarly Article

At times you may need to cite an **abstract**—the summary that appears at the beginning of a published article. If you are citing the abstract only, and it was published separately from the article, provide the following information:

Publication information for the article

Information about where the abstract was published (for instance, another journal or a collection of abstracts)





A Journal Article with Two to Seven Authors

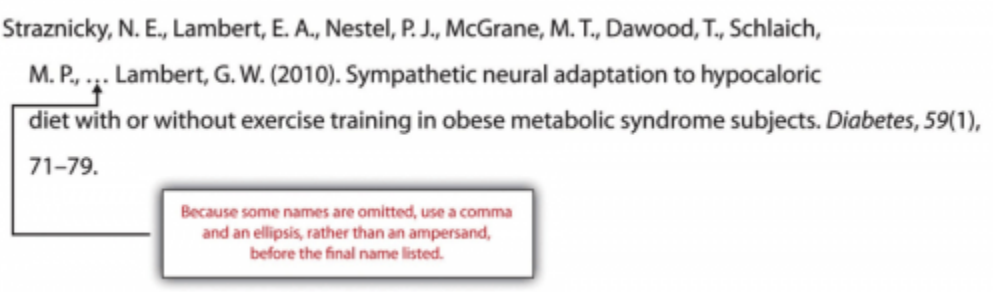
List all the authors' names in the order they appear in the article. Use an ampersand before the last name listed.

Barker, E. T., & Bornstein, M. H. (2010). Global self-esteem, appearance satisfaction, and self-reported dieting in early adolescence. *Journal of Early Adolescence, 30*(2), 205–224.

Tremblay, M. S., Shields, M., Laviolette, M., Craig, C. L., Janssen, I., & Gorber, S. C. (2010). Fitness of Canadian children and youth: Results from the 2007–2009 Canadian Health Measures Survey. *Health Reports, 21*(1), 7–20.

A Journal Article with More Than Eight Authors

List the first six authors' names, followed by a comma, an ellipsis, and the name of the last author listed. The article in the following example has 16 listed authors; the reference entry lists the first six authors and the 16th, omitting the seventh through the 15th.



Writing at Work

The idea of an eight-page article with 16 authors may seem strange to you—especially if you are in the midst of writing a 10-page research paper on your own. More often than not, articles in scholarly journals list multiple authors. Sometimes, the authors actually did collaborate on writing and editing the published article. In other instances, some of the authors listed may have

contributed to the research in some way while being only minimally involved in the process of writing the article. Whenever you collaborate with colleagues to produce a written product, follow your profession's conventions for giving everyone proper credit for their contribution.

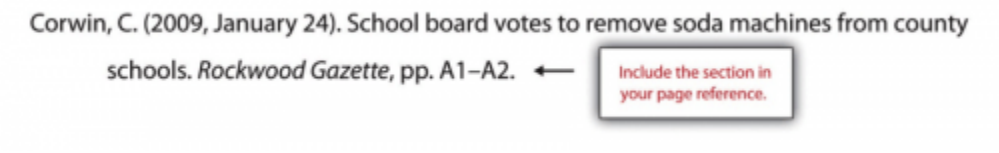
A Magazine Article

After the publication year, list the issue date. Otherwise, magazine articles as you would journal articles. List the volume and issue number if both are available.



A Newspaper Article

Treat newspaper articles as you would magazine and journal articles, with one important difference: precede the page number(s) with the abbreviation *p.* (for a single-page article) or *pp.* (for a multipage-page article). For articles that have non-continuous pagination, list all the pages included in the article. For example, an article that begins on page A1 and continues on pages A4 would have the page reference A1, A4. An article that begins on page A1 and continues on pages A4 and A5 would have the page reference A1, A4–A5.



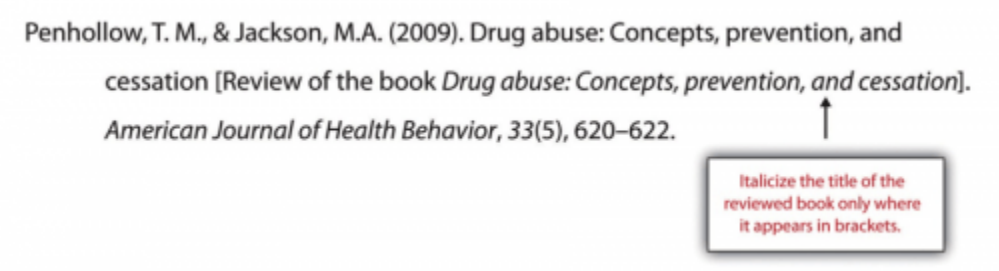
A Letter to the Editor

After the title, indicate in brackets that the work is a letter to the editor.

Jones, J. (2009, January 31). Food police in our schools [Letter to the editor]. *Rockwood Gazette,* p. A8.

A Review

After the title, indicate in brackets that the work is a review and state the name of the work being reviewed. (Note that even if the title of the review is the same as the title of the book being reviewed, as in the following example, you should treat it as an article title. Do not italicize it.)



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12.3: PEER REVIEW AND FINAL REVISIONS

12.3.1: Revision (Part 1)
12.3.2: Revision (Part 2)
12.3.3: Editing and Developing a Final Draft of a Research Paper (Part 1)
12.3.4: Editing and Developing a Final Draft of a Research Paper (Part 2)

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12.3.1: Revision (Part 1)

Skills to Develop

- Identify major areas of concern in the draft essay during revising
- Use peer reviews and checklists to assist revising
- Revise your paper to improve organization and cohesion
- Determine an appropriate style and tone for your paper
- Revise to ensure that your tone is consistent
- Revise the first draft of your essay and produce a final draft

Revising and editing are the two tasks you undertake to significantly improve your essay. Both are very important elements of the writing process. You may think that a completed first draft means that little improvement is needed. However, even experienced writers need to improve their drafts and rely on peers during revising and editing. You may know that athletes miss catches, fumble balls, or overshoot goals. Dancers forget steps, turn too slowly, or miss beats. For both athletes and dancers, the more they practise, the stronger their performance will become. Web designers seek better images, a more clever design, or a more appealing background for their web pages. Writing has the same capacity to profit from improvement and revision.

You should revise and edit in stages: do not expect to catch everything in one go. If each time you review your essay you focus on a different aspect of construction, you will be more likely to catch any mistakes or identify any issues. Throughout this chapter, you will see a number of checklists containing specific things to look for with each revision. For example, you will first look at how the overall paper and your ideas are organized.

In the second section of this chapter, you will focus more on editing: correcting the mechanical issues. Also at the end of the chapter, you will see a comprehensive but more general list of things you should be looking for.

Understanding the Purpose of Revising and Editing

Revising and editing allow you to examine two important aspects of your writing separately, so that you can give each task your undivided attention.

When you revise, you take a second look at your ideas. You might add, cut, move, or change information in order to make your ideas clearer, more accurate, more interesting, or more convincing.

When you edit, you take a second look at how you expressed your ideas. You add or change words. You fix any problems in grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure. You improve your writing style. You make your essay into a polished, mature piece of writing, the end product of your best efforts.

Tip

How do you get the best out of your revisions and editing? Here are some strategies that writers have developed to look at their first drafts from a fresh perspective. Try them throughout the writing process; then keep using the ones that bring results.

Take a break. You are proud of what you wrote, but you might be too close to it to make changes. Set aside your writing for a few hours or even a day until you can look at it objectively.

Ask someone you trust for feedback and constructive criticism.

Pretend you are one of your readers. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied? Why?

For many people, the words *critic*, *critical*, and *criticism* provoke only negative feelings that make them blush, grumble, or shout.

However, as a writer and a thinker, you need to learn to be critical of yourself in a positive way and have high expectations for your work. You also need to train your eye and trust your ability to fix what needs fixing. To do this, you need to teach yourself where to look.

Revising Your Paper: Organization, Cohesion, and Unity

When writing a research paper, it is easy to become overly focused on editorial details, such as the proper format for bibliographical entries. These details do matter. However, before you begin to address them, it is important to spend time reviewing and revising the content of the paper.

A good research paper is both organized and cohesive. **Organization** means that your argument flows logically from one point to the next. **Cohesion** means that the elements of your paper work together smoothly and naturally. In a cohesive research paper, information from research is seamlessly integrated with the writer's ideas.

Revise to Improve Organization

When you revise to improve organization, you look at the flow of ideas throughout the essay as a whole and within individual paragraphs. You check to see that your essay moves logically from the introduction to the body paragraphs to the conclusion, and that each section reinforces your thesis. Use **Checklist 12.1: Revise for Organization** to help you.

Checklist 12.1: Revise for Organization

At the essay level

Does my introduction proceed clearly from the opening to the thesis?

Does each body paragraph have a clear main idea that relates to the thesis?

Do the main ideas in the body paragraphs flow in a logical order? Is each paragraph connected to the one before it?

Do I need to add or revise topic sentences or transitions to make the overall flow of ideas clearer?

Does my conclusion summarize my main ideas and revisit my thesis?

At the paragraph level

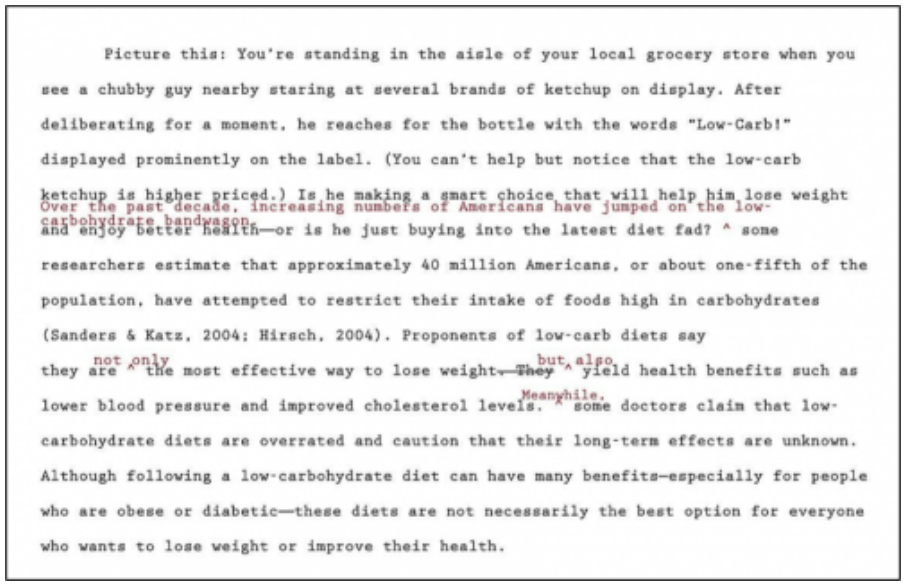
Does the topic sentence clearly state the main idea?

Do the details in the paragraph relate to the main idea?

Do I need to recast any sentences or add transitions to improve the flow of sentences?

Jorge reread his draft paragraph by paragraph. As he read, he highlighted the main idea of each paragraph so he could see whether his ideas proceeded in a logical order. For the most part, the flow of ideas was clear. However, he did notice that one paragraph did not have a clear main idea. It interrupted the flow of the writing. During revision, Jorge added a topic sentence that clearly connected the paragraph to the one that had preceded it. He also added transitions to improve the flow of ideas from sentence to sentence.

Read the following paragraphs twice, the first time without Jorge's changes, and the second time with them.



Picture this: You're standing in the aisle of your local grocery store when you see a chubby guy nearby staring at several brands of ketchup on display. After deliberating for a moment, he reaches for the bottle with the words "Low-Carb!" displayed prominently on the label. (You can't help but notice that the low-carb ketchup is higher priced.) Is he making a smart choice that will help him lose weight and enjoy better health—or is he just buying into the latest diet fad? ^ some researchers estimate that approximately 40 million Americans, or about one-fifth of the population, have attempted to restrict their intake of foods high in carbohydrates (Sanders & Katz, 2004; Hirsch, 2004). Proponents of low-carb diets say they are ^ the most effective way to lose weight. ~~They~~ ^ yield health benefits such as lower blood pressure and improved cholesterol levels. ^ some doctors claim that low-carbohydrate diets are overrated and caution that their long-term effects are unknown. Although following a low-carbohydrate diet can have many benefits—especially for people who are obese or diabetic—these diets are not necessarily the best option for everyone who wants to lose weight or improve their health.

Over the past decade, increasing numbers of Americans have jumped on the low-carbohydrate bandwagon.
not only
but also
Meanwhile,

Exercise 12.1

Follow these steps to begin revising your paper's overall organization.

Print out a hard copy of your paper. (You will use this for multiple self-practice exercises in this chapter.)

Read your paper paragraph by paragraph. Highlight your thesis and the topic sentence of each paragraph.

Using the thesis and topic sentences as starting points, outline the ideas you presented—just as you would do if you were outlining a chapter in a textbook. Do not look at the outline you created during prewriting. You may write in the margins of your draft or create a formal outline on a separate sheet of paper.

Next, reread your paper more slowly, looking for how ideas flow from sentence to sentence. Identify places where adding a transition or recasting a sentence would make the ideas flow more logically.

Review the topics on your outline. Is there a logical flow of ideas? Identify any places where you may need to reorganize ideas.

Begin to revise your paper to improve organization. Start with any major issues, such as needing to move an entire paragraph. Then proceed to minor revisions, such as adding a transitional phrase or tweaking a topic sentence so it connects ideas more clearly.

Optional collaboration: Please share your paper with a classmate. Repeat the six steps and take notes on a separate piece of paper. Share and compare notes.

Tip

Writers choose transitions carefully to show the relationships between ideas—for instance, to make a comparison or elaborate on a point with examples. Make sure your transitions suit your purpose and avoid overusing the same ones.

Creating Coherence

Careful writers use transitions to clarify how the ideas in their sentences and paragraphs are related. These words and phrases

help the writing flow smoothly. Adding transitions is not the only way to improve coherence, but they are often useful and give a mature feel to your essays. Earlier chapters have discussed using transitions for specific purposes in the planning of your writing. **Table 12.1: Common Transitional Words and Phrases** groups many common transitions according to their purpose.

Table 12.1 - Common Transitional Words and Phrases According to Purpose

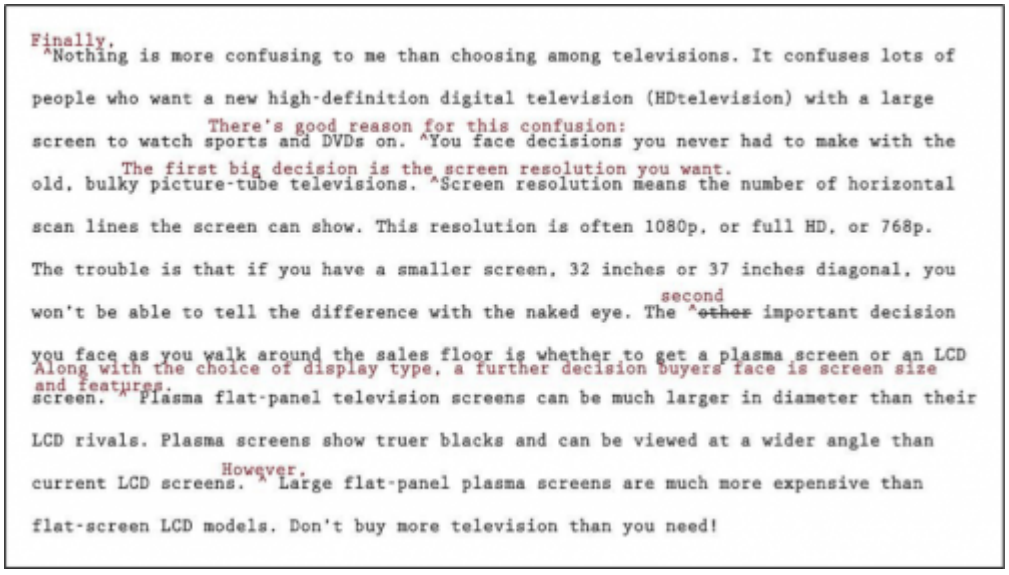
Transitions That Show Sequence or Time		
after	before	later
afterward	before long	meanwhile
as soon as	finally	next
at first	first, second, third	soon
at last	in the first place	then
Transitions That Show Position		
above	across	at the bottom
at the top	behind	below
beside	beyond	inside
near	next to	opposite
to the left, to the right, to the side	under	where
Transitions That Show a Conclusion		
indeed	hence	in conclusion
in the final analysis	therefore	thus
Transitions That Continue a Line of Thought		
consequently	furthermore	additionally
because	besides the fact	following this idea further
in addition	in the same way	moreover
looking further	considering..., it is clear that	
Transitions That Change a Line of Thought		
but	yet	however
nevertheless	on the contrary	on the other hand
Transitions That Show Importance		
above all	best	especially
in fact	more important	>most important
most	worst	
Transitions That Introduce the Final Thoughts in a Paragraph or Essay		
finally	last	in conclusion
most of all	least of all	last of all
All Purpose Transitions to Open Paragraphs or to Connect Ideas Inside Paragraphs		
admittedly	at this point	certainly
granted	it is true	generally speaking
in general	in this situation	no doubt

no one denies	obviously	of course
to be sure	undoubtedly	unquestionably
Transitions that Introduce Examples		
for instance	for example	such as
Transitions That Clarify the Order of Events or Steps		
first, second, third	generally, furthermore, finally	in the first place, also, last
in the first place, furthermore, finally	in the first place, likewise, lastly	

When Mariah (who you were introduced to in Chapters 5 and 6) revised her essay for unity, she examined her paragraph about televisions to check for coherence. She looked for places where she needed to add a transition or perhaps reword the text to make the flow of ideas clear. In the version that follows, she has already deleted the sentences that were off topic.

Tip

Many writers make their revisions on a printed copy and then transfer them to the version on screen. They conventionally use a small arrow called a caret (^) to show where to insert an addition or correction.



Exercise 12.2

Answer the following questions about Mariah's revised paragraph.

Do you agree with the transitions and other changes that Mariah made to her paragraph? Which would you keep and which were unnecessary? Explain.

What transition words or phrases did Mariah add to her paragraph? Why did she choose each one?

What effect does adding additional sentences have on the coherence of the paragraph? Explain. When you read both versions aloud, which version has a more logical flow of ideas? Explain.

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12.3.2: Revision (Part 2)

Revise to Improve Cohesion

When you revise to improve cohesion, you analyze how the parts of your paper work together. You look for anything that seems awkward or out of place. Revision may involve deleting unnecessary material or rewriting parts of the paper so that the out of place material fits in smoothly.

In a research paper, problems with cohesion usually occur when a writer has trouble integrating source material. If facts or quotations have been awkwardly dropped into a paragraph, they distract or confuse the reader instead of working to support the writer's point. Overusing paraphrased and quoted material has the same effect. Use **Checklist 12.2: Revise for Cohesion** to review your essay for cohesion.

Checklist 12.2: Revise for Cohesion

Does the opening of the paper clearly connect to the broader topic and thesis? Make sure entertaining quotes or anecdotes serve a purpose.

Have I included support from research for each main point in the body of my paper?

Have I included introductory material before any quotations? Quotations should never stand alone in a paragraph.

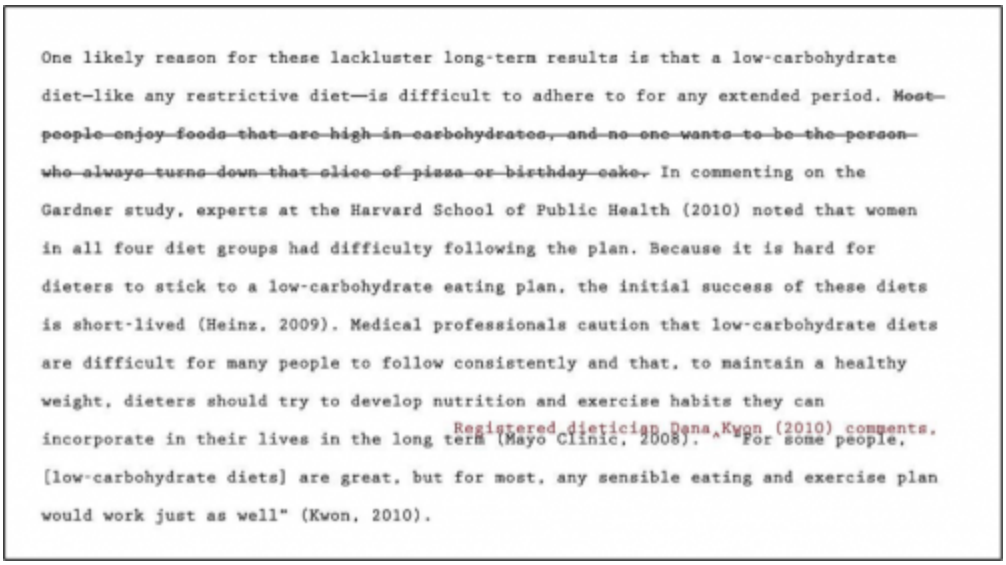
Does paraphrased and quoted material clearly serve to develop my own points?

Do I need to add to or revise parts of the paper to help the reader understand how certain information from a source is relevant?

Are there any places where I have overused material from sources?

Does my conclusion make sense based on the rest of the paper? Make sure any new questions or suggestions in the conclusion are clearly linked to earlier material.

As Jorge reread his draft, he looked to see how the different pieces fit together to prove his thesis. He realized that some of his supporting information needed to be integrated more carefully and decided to omit some details entirely. Read the following paragraph, first without Jorge's revisions and then with them.



One likely reason for these lackluster long-term results is that a low-carbohydrate diet—like any restrictive diet—is difficult to adhere to for any extended period. ~~Most people enjoy foods that are high in carbohydrates, and no one wants to be the person who always turns down that slice of pizza or birthday cake.~~ In commenting on the Gardner study, experts at the Harvard School of Public Health (2010) noted that women in all four diet groups had difficulty following the plan. Because it is hard for dieters to stick to a low-carbohydrate eating plan, the initial success of these diets is short-lived (Heinz, 2009). Medical professionals caution that low-carbohydrate diets are difficult for many people to follow consistently and that, to maintain a healthy weight, dieters should try to develop nutrition and exercise habits they can incorporate in their lives in the long term (Mayo Clinic, 2008). ^ Registered dietician Dana Kwon (2010) comments, "For some people, [low-carbohydrate diets] are great, but for most, any sensible eating and exercise plan would work just as well" (Kwon, 2010).

Jorge decided that his comment about pizza and birthday cake came across as subjective and was not necessary to make his point, so he deleted it. He also realized that the quotation at the end of the paragraph was awkward and ineffective. How would his readers know who Kwon was or why her opinion should be taken seriously? Adding an introductory phrase helped Jorge integrate this quotation smoothly and establish the credibility of his source.

Exercise 12.3

Follow these steps to begin revising your paper to improve cohesion.

Print out a hard copy of your paper, or work with your printout from **Exercise 12.1**.

Read the body paragraphs of your paper first. Each time you come to a place that cites information from sources, ask yourself what purpose this information serves. Check that it helps support a point and that it is clearly related to the other sentences in the paragraph.

Identify unnecessary information from sources that you can delete.

Identify places where you need to revise your writing so that readers understand the significance of the details cited from sources.

Skim the body paragraphs once more, looking for any paragraphs that seem packed with citations. Review these paragraphs carefully for cohesion.

Review your introduction and conclusion. Make sure the information presented works with ideas in the body of the paper.

Revise the places you identified in your paper to improve cohesion.

Optional collaboration: Please exchange papers with a classmate. Complete step 4. On a separate piece of paper, note any areas that would benefit from clarification. Return and compare notes.

Writing at Work

Understanding cohesion can also benefit you in the workplace, especially when you have to write and deliver a presentation. Speakers sometimes rely on cute graphics or funny quotations to hold their audience's attention. If you choose to use these elements, make sure they work well with the substantive content of your presentation. For example, if you are asked to give a financial presentation, and the financial report shows that the company lost money, funny illustrations would not be relevant or appropriate for the presentation.

Tip

Reading your writing aloud will often help you find problems with unity and coherence. Listen for the clarity and flow of your ideas. Identify places where you find yourself confused, and write a note to yourself about possible fixes.

Creating Unity

Sometimes writers get caught up in the moment and cannot resist a good digression. Even though you might enjoy such detours when you chat with friends, unplanned digressions usually harm a piece of writing.

Following your outline closely offers you a reasonable guarantee that your writing will stay on purpose and not drift away from the controlling idea. However, when writers are rushed, are tired, or cannot find the right words, their writing may become less than they want it to be. Their writing may no longer be clear and concise, and they may add information that is not needed to develop the main idea.

When a piece of writing has **unity**, all the ideas in each paragraph and in the entire essay clearly belong and are arranged in an order that makes logical sense. When the writing has **coherence**, the ideas flow smoothly. The wording clearly indicates how one idea leads to another within a paragraph and from paragraph to paragraph.

Mariah stayed close to her outline when she drafted the three body paragraphs of her essay she tentatively titled "Digital Technology: The Newest and the Best at What Price?" But a recent shopping trip for an HDTV upset her enough that she digressed from the main topic of her third paragraph and included comments about the sales staff at the electronics store she visited. When she revised her essay, she deleted the off-topic sentences that affected the unity of the paragraph.

Read the following paragraph twice, the first time without Mariah's changes and the second time with them.

Nothing is more confusing to me than choosing among televisions. It confuses lots of people who want a new high-definition digital television (HDTV) with a large screen to watch sports and DVDs on. ~~You could listen to the guys in the electronics store, but word has it they know little more than you do. They want to sell you what they have in stock, not what best fits your needs.~~ You face decisions you never had to make with the old, bulky picture-tube televisions. Screen resolution means the number of horizontal scan lines the screen can show. This resolution is often 1080p, or full HD, or 768p. The trouble is that if you have a smaller screen, 32 inches or 37 inches diagonal, you won't be able to tell the difference with the naked eye. ~~The 1080p televisions cost more, though, so those are what the salespeople want you to buy. They get bigger commissions.~~ The ~~other~~ important decision you face as you walk around the sales floor is whether to get a plasma screen or an LCD screen. ~~Now here the salespeople may finally give you decent info.~~ Plasma flat-panel television screens can be much larger in diameter than their LCD rivals. Plasma screens show truer blacks and can be viewed at a wider angle than current LCD screens. ~~But be careful and tell the salesperson you have budget constraints.~~ Large flat-panel plasma screens are much more expensive than flat-screen LCD models. Don't ~~let someone make you~~ buy more television than you need!

Exercise 12.4

Answer the following two questions about Mariah's paragraph:

Do you agree with Mariah's decision to make the deletions she made? Did she cut too much, too little, or just enough? Explain.

Is the explanation of what screen resolution means a digression? Or is it audience friendly and essential to understanding the paragraph? Explain.

Collaboration: Please share with a classmate and compare your answers.

Now, print out another copy of your essay or use the printed version(s) you used in Exercises 12.1 and 12.3. Reread it to find any statements that affect the unity of your writing. Decide how best to revise.

Tip

When you reread your writing to find revisions to make, look for each type of problem in a separate sweep. Read it straight through once to locate any problems with unity. Read it straight through a second time to find problems with coherence. You may follow this same practice during many stages of the writing process.

Writing at Work

Many companies hire copy editors and proofreaders to help them produce the cleanest possible final drafts of large writing projects. Copy editors are responsible for suggesting revisions and style changes; proofreaders check documents for any errors in capitalization, spelling, and punctuation that have crept in. Many times, these tasks are done on a freelance basis, with one freelancer working for a variety of clients.

Using a Consistent Style and Tone

Once you are certain that the content of your paper fulfills your purpose, you can begin revising to improve **style** and **tone**. Together, your style and tone create the voice of your paper, or how you come across to readers. Style refers to the way you use language as a writer—the sentence structures you use and the word choices you make. Tone is the attitude toward your subject and audience that you convey through your word choice.

Determining an Appropriate Style and Tone

Although accepted writing styles will vary within different disciplines, the underlying goal is the same—to come across to your readers as a knowledgeable, authoritative guide. Writing about research is like being a tour guide who walks readers through a topic. A stuffy, overly formal tour guide can make readers feel put off or intimidated. Too much informality or humour can make readers wonder whether the tour guide really knows what he or she is talking about. Extreme or emotionally charged language comes across as unbalanced.

To help prevent being overly formal or informal, determine an appropriate style and tone at the beginning of the research process. Consider your topic and audience because these can help dictate style and tone. For example, a paper on new breakthroughs in cancer research should be more formal than a paper on ways to get a good night's sleep.

A strong research paper comes across as straightforward, appropriately academic, and serious. It is generally best to avoid writing in the first person, as this can make your paper seem overly subjective and opinion based. Use **Checklist 12.3: Revise for Style** to review your paper for other issues that affect style and tone. You can check for consistency at the end of the writing process. Checking for consistency is discussed later in this section.

Checklist 12.3: Revise for Style

My paper avoids excessive wordiness.

My sentences are varied in length and structure.

I have avoided using first person pronouns such as *I* and *we*.

I have used the active voice whenever possible.

I have defined specialized terms that might be unfamiliar to readers.

I have used clear, straightforward language whenever possible and avoided unnecessary jargon.

My paper states my point of view using a balanced tone—neither too indecisive nor too forceful.

Word Choice

Note that word choice is an especially important aspect of style. In addition to checking the points noted on **Checklist 12.3**, review your paper to make sure your language is precise, conveys no unintended connotations, and is free of bias. Here are some of the points to check for:

Vague or imprecise terms

Slang

Repetition of the same phrases ("Smith states..., Jones states...") to introduce quoted and paraphrased material (For a full list of strong verbs to use with in text citations, see Chapter 9.)

Exclusive use of masculine pronouns or awkward use of *heorshe*

Use of language with negative connotations, such as *haughty* or *ridiculous*

Use of outdated or offensive terms to refer to specific ethnic, racial, or religious groups

Tip

Using plural nouns and pronouns or recasting a sentence can help you keep your language gender neutral while avoiding awkwardness. Consider the following examples.

- **Gender biased:** When a writer cites a source in the body of his paper, he must list it on his references page.
- **Awkward:** When a writer cites a source in the body of his or her paper, he or she must list it on his or her references page.
- **Improved:** Writers must list any sources cited in the body of a paper on the references page.

Keeping Your Style Consistent

As you revise your paper, make sure your style is consistent throughout. Look for instances where a word, phrase, or sentence does not seem to fit with the rest of the writing. It is best to reread for style after you have completed the other revisions so that you are not distracted by any larger content issues. Revising strategies you can use include the following:

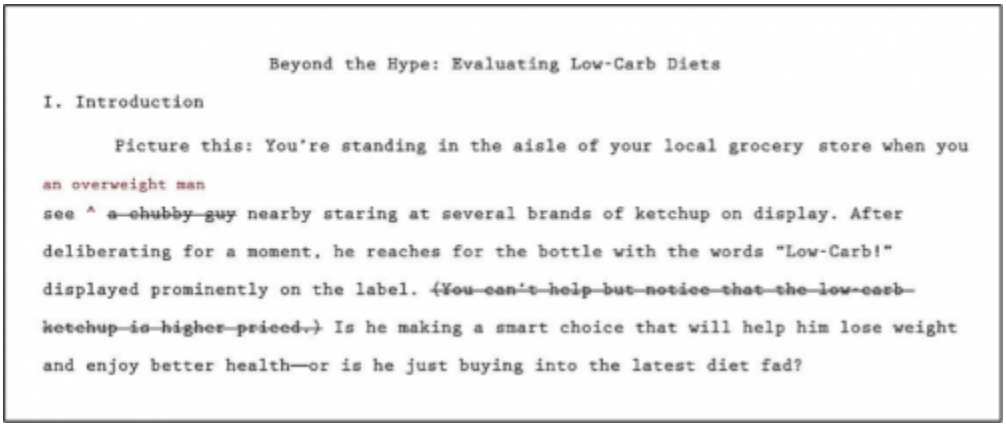
Read your paper aloud. Sometimes your ears catch inconsistencies that your eyes miss.

Share your paper with another reader whom you trust to give you honest feedback. It is often difficult to evaluate one's

own style objectively—especially in the final phase of a challenging writing project. Another reader may be more likely to notice instances of wordiness, confusing language, or other issues that affect style and tone.

Edit your paper slowly, sentence by sentence. You may even wish to use a sheet of paper to cover up everything on the page except the paragraph you are editing. This practice forces you to read slowly and carefully. Mark any areas where you notice problems in style or tone, and then take time to rework those sections.

On reviewing his paper, Jorge found that he had generally used an appropriately academic style and tone. However, he noticed one glaring exception—his first paragraph. He realized there were places where his overly informal writing could come across as unserious or, worse, disparaging. Revising his word choice and omitting a humorous aside helped Jorge maintain a consistent tone. Read his revisions.



Beyond the Hype: Evaluating Low-Carb Diets

I. Introduction

Picture this: You're standing in the aisle of your local grocery store when you an overweight man see ^ ~~a chubby guy~~ nearby staring at several brands of ketchup on display. After deliberating for a moment, he reaches for the bottle with the words "Low-Carb!" displayed prominently on the label. ~~(You can't help but notice that the low-carb ketchup is higher priced.)~~ Is he making a smart choice that will help him lose weight and enjoy better health—or is he just buying into the latest diet fad?

Exercise 12.5

Using Checklist 12.3: Revise for Style, revise your paper line by line. You may use either of these techniques:

Print out a hard copy of your paper or work with your printout from **Exercise 12.1**. Read it line by line. Check for the issues noted on **Checklist 12.3**, as well as any other aspects of your writing style you have previously identified as areas for improvement. Mark any areas where you notice problems in style or tone, and then take time to rework those sections.

If you prefer to work with an electronic document, use the menu options in your word processing program to enlarge the text to 150 or 200 percent of the original size. Make sure the type is large enough that you can focus on one paragraph at a time. Read the paper line by line as described in step 1. Highlight any areas where you notice problems in style or tone, and then take time to rework those sections.

Optional collaboration: Please exchange papers with a classmate. On a separate piece of paper, note places where the essay does not seem to flow or you have questions about what was written. Return the essay and compare notes.

Completing a Peer Review

After working so closely with a piece of writing, writers often need to step back and ask for a more objective reader. What writers need most is feedback from readers who can respond only to the words on the page. When they are ready, writers show their drafts to someone they respect and who can give an honest response about its strengths and weaknesses.

You, too, can ask a peer to read your draft when it is ready. After evaluating the feedback and assessing what is most helpful, the reader's feedback will help you when you revise your draft. This process is called **peer review**.

You can work with a partner in your class and identify specific ways to strengthen each other's essays. Although you may be

uncomfortable sharing your writing at first, remember that each writer is working toward the same goal: a final draft that fits the audience and the purpose. Maintaining a positive attitude when providing feedback will put you and your partner at ease. The box that follows provides a useful framework for the peer review session.

Questions for Peer Review: Organization, Unity, and Coherence

Title of essay: _____

Date: _____

Writer's name: _____

Peer reviewer's name: _____

This essay is about_____.

Your main points in this essay are_____.

What I most liked about this essay is_____.

These three points struck me as your strongest:

Point: _____
Why: _____

Point: _____
Why: _____

Point: _____
Why: _____

These places in your essay are not clear to me:

Where: _____
Needs improvement because_____

Where: _____
Needs improvement because _____

Where: _____

Needs improvement because _____

The one additional change you could make that would improve this essay significantly is _____.

Writing at Work

One of the reasons why word processing programs build in a reviewing feature is that work groups have become a common feature in many businesses. Writing is often collaborative, and the members of a work group and their supervisors often critique group members' work and offer feedback that will lead to a better final product.

Exercise 12.6

Exchange essays with a classmate and complete a peer review of each other's draft in progress. Remember to give positive feedback and to be courteous and polite in your responses. Focus on providing one positive comment and one question for more information to the author.

Using Feedback Objectively

The purpose of peer feedback is to receive constructive criticism of your essay. Your peer reviewer is your first real audience, and you have the opportunity to learn what confuses and delights a reader so that you can improve your work before sharing the final draft with a wider audience (or your intended audience).

It may not be necessary to incorporate every recommendation your peer reviewer makes. However, if you start to observe a pattern in the responses you receive from peer reviewers, you might want to consider that feedback in future assignments. For example, if you read consistent comments about a need for more research, then you may want to consider including more research in future assignments.

Using Feedback from Multiple Sources

You might get feedback from more than one reader as you share different stages of your revised draft. In this situation, you may receive feedback from readers who do not understand the assignment or who lack your involvement with and enthusiasm for it.

You need to evaluate the responses you receive according to two important criteria:

Determine if the feedback supports the purpose of the assignment.

Determine if the suggested revisions are appropriate to the audience.

Then, using these standards, accept or reject revision feedback.

Exercise 12.7

Consider the feedback you received from the peer review and all of the revision exercises throughout this section. Compile a final draft of your revisions that you can use in the next section to complete your final edits.

key takeaways

- Revising and editing are the stages of the writing process in which you improve your work before producing a final draft.
- Unity in writing means that all the ideas in each paragraph and in the entire essay clearly belong together and are arranged in an order that makes logical sense.
- Coherence in writing means that the writer's wording clearly indicates how one idea leads to another within a paragraph and between paragraphs.
- Transitional words and phrases effectively make writing more coherent.
- Writing should be clear and concise, with no unnecessary words.
- Effective formal writing uses specific, appropriate words and avoids slang, contractions, clichés, and overly general words.

- Peer reviews, done properly, can give writers objective feedback about their writing. It is the writer's responsibility to evaluate the results of peer reviews and incorporate only useful feedback.

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12.3.3: Editing and Developing a Final Draft of a Research Paper (Part 1)

Skills to Develop

- Edit your paper to ensure that language, citations, and formatting are correct

Given all the time and effort you have put into your research paper, you will want to make sure that your final draft represents your best work. This requires taking the time to revise and edit your paper carefully.

You may feel like you need a break from your paper before you edit it. That feeling is understandable, so you want to be sure to leave yourself enough time to complete this important stage of the writing process. This section presents a number of opportunities for you to focus on different aspects of the editing process; as with revising a draft, you should approach editing in different stages.

Some of the content in this section may seem repetitive, but again, it provides you with a chance to double-check any revisions you have made at a detailed level.

Editing Your Draft

If you have been incorporating each set of revisions as Mariah and Jorge have, you have produced multiple drafts of your writing. So far, all your changes have been content changes. Perhaps with the help of peer feedback, you have made sure that you sufficiently supported your ideas. You have checked for problems with unity and coherence. You have examined your essay for word choice, revising to cut unnecessary words and to replace weak wording with specific and appropriate wording.

The next step after revising the content is editing. When you edit, you examine the surface features of your text. You examine your spelling, grammar, usage, and punctuation. You also make sure you use the proper format when creating your finished assignment.

Tip

Editing takes time. Be sure to budget time into the writing process to complete additional edits after revising. Editing and proofreading your writing helps you create a finished work that represents your best efforts. Here are a few more tips to remember about your readers:

Readers do not notice correct spelling, but they *do* notice misspellings.

Readers look past your sentences to get to your ideas—unless the sentences are awkward, poorly constructed, and frustrating to read.

Readers notice when every sentence has the same rhythm as every other sentence, with no variety.

Readers do not cheer when you use *there*, *their*, and *they're* correctly, but they notice when you do not.

Readers will notice the care with which you handled your assignment and your attention to detail in the delivery of an error-free document.

Being Clear and Concise

Some writers are very methodical and painstaking when they write a first draft. Other writers unleash a lot of words in order to get out all that they feel they need to say. Do either of these methods match your style? Or is your composing style somewhere in between? No matter which description best fits you, the first draft of almost every piece of writing, no matter its author, can be made clearer and more concise.

If you have a tendency to write too much, you will need to look for unnecessary words. If you have a tendency to be vague or imprecise in your wording, you will need to find specific words to replace any overly general language.

Identifying Wordiness

Sometimes writers use too many words when fewer words will appeal more to their audience and better fit their purpose. Here are some common examples of wordiness to look for in your draft. Eliminating wordiness helps all readers, because it makes your ideas clear, direct, and straightforward.

- **Sentences that begin with** *There is* **or** *There are*
- **Wordy.** There are two major experiments that the Biology Department sponsors.
- **Revised.** The Biology Department sponsors two major experiments.
- **Sentences with unnecessary modifiers**
- **Wordy.** Two extremely famous and well-known consumer advocates spoke eloquently in favour of the proposed important legislation.
- **Revised.** Two well-known consumer advocates spoke in favour of the proposed legislation.

Sentences with deadwood phrases that add little to the meaning. Be judicious when you use phrases such as *in terms of*, *with a mind to*, *on the subject of*, *as to whether or not*, *more or less*, *as far as…is concerned*, and similar expressions. You can usually find a more straightforward way to state your point.

- **Wordy.** As a world leader in the field of green technology, the company plans to focus its efforts in the area of geothermal energy. A report as to whether or not to use geysers as an energy source is in the process of preparation.
- **Revised.** As a world leader in green technology, the company plans to focus on geothermal energy. Researchers are preparing a report about using geysers as an energy source.

Sentences in the passive voice or with forms of the verb *to be***: S**entences with passive voice verbs often create confusion because the subject of the sentence does not perform an action. Sentences are clearer when the subject performs the action and is followed by a strong verb. Use strong active voice verbs in place of forms of *to be*, which can lead to wordiness. Avoid passive voice when you can.

- **Wordy.** It might perhaps be said that using a GPS device is something that is a benefit to drivers who have a poor sense of direction.
- **Revised.** Using a GPS device benefits drivers who have a poor sense of direction.

Sentences with constructions that can be shortened

- **Wordy.** The e-book reader, which is a recent invention, may become as commonplace as the cell phone. My over-60 uncle bought an e-book reader, and his wife bought an e-book reader, too.
- **Revised.** The e-book reader, a recent invention, may become as commonplace as the cell phone. My over-60 uncle and his wife both bought e-book readers.

Choosing Specific, Appropriate Words

Most essays at the post-secondary level should be written in formal English suitable for an academic situation. Follow these principles to be sure that your word choice is appropriate. For more information about word choice, see Chapter 2.

Avoid slang. Find alternatives to *bummer*, *kewl*, and *rad*.

Avoid language that is overly casual. Write about "men and women" rather than "girls and guys" unless you are trying to create a specific effect. A formal tone calls for formal language.

Avoid contractions. Use *do not* in place of *don't*, *I am* in place of *I'm*,*have not* in place of *haven't*, and so on. Contractions are considered casual speech.

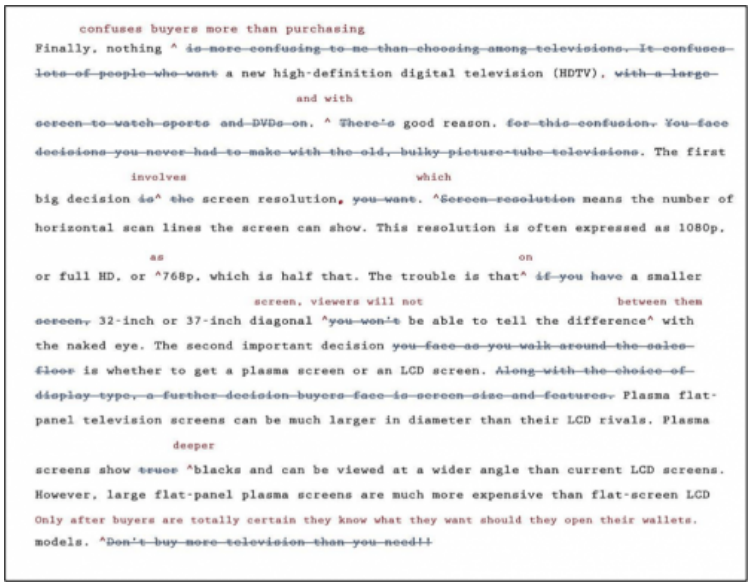
Avoid clichés. Overused expressions such as *green with envy*, *face the music*, *better late than never*, and similar expressions are empty of meaning and may not appeal to your audience.

Be careful when you use words that sound alike but have different meanings. Some examples are *allusion/illusion*; *complement/compliment; council/counsel; concurrent/consecutive; founder/flounder;* and *historic/historical*. When in doubt, check a dictionary.

Choose words with the connotations you want. Choosing a word for its connotations is as important in formal essay writing as it is in all kinds of writing. Compare the positive connotations of the word *proud* and the negative connotations of *arrogant* and *conceited*.

Use specific words rather than overly general words. Find synonyms for *thing*, *people*, *nice*, *good*, *bad*, *interesting*, and other vague words. Or use specific details to make your exact meaning clear.

Now read the revisions Mariah made to make her third paragraph clearer and more concise. She has already incorporated the changes she made to improve unity and coherence.


confuses buyers more than purchasing
Finally, nothing ^ ~~is more confusing to me than choosing among televisions. It confuses lots of people who want~~ a new high-definition digital television (HDTV), ~~with a large~~
and with
~~screen to watch sports and DVDs on.~~ ^ ~~There's~~ good reason. ~~for this confusion. You face decisions you never had to make with the old, bulky picture-tube televisions~~. The first
involves which
big decision ~~is~~^ ~~the~~ screen resolution, ~~you want~~. ^~~Screen resolution~~ means the number of horizontal scan lines the screen can show. This resolution is often expressed as 1080p,
as on
or full HD, or ^768p, which is half that. The trouble is that^ ~~if you~~ have a smaller
screen, viewers will not between them
~~screen,~~ 32-inch or 37-inch diagonal ^~~you won't~~ be able to tell the difference^ with the naked eye. The second important decision ~~you face as you walk around the sales floor~~ is whether to get a plasma screen or an LCD screen. ~~Along with the choice of display type, a further decision buyers face is screen size and features.~~ Plasma flat-panel television screens can be much larger in diameter than their LCD rivals. Plasma
deeper
screens show ~~truer~~ ^blacks and can be viewed at a wider angle than current LCD screens. However, large flat-panel plasma screens are much more expensive than flat-screen LCD
Only after buyers are totally certain they know what they want should they open their wallets.
models. ^~~Don't buy more television than you need!!~~

Exercise 12.8

Answer the following questions about Mariah's revised paragraph:

Read the unrevised and the revised paragraphs aloud. Explain in your own words how changes in word choice have affected Mariah's writing.

Do you agree with the changes that Mariah made to her paragraph? Which changes would you keep and which were unnecessary? Explain. What other changes would you have made?

What effect does removing contractions and the pronoun [you] have on the tone of the paragraph? How would you characterize the tone now? Why?

Now return once more to your essay in progress. Read carefully for problems with word choice. Be sure that your draft is written in formal language and that your word choice is specific and appropriate.

Exercise 12.9

Return once more to the first draft of the essay you have been revising. Check it for unnecessary words.

Try making your sentences as concise as they can be.

Brief Punctuation Review

Throughout this book, you have been presented with a number of tables containing transitional words. **Table 12.2: Punctuating Transitional Words and Phrases** shows many of the transition words you have seen organized into different categories to help you know how to punctuate with each one.

Table 12.2 - Punctuating Transitional Words and Phrases

Joining Independent Clauses (coordination)			
2 IND	Coordinating conjunctions: FANBOYS	Conjunctive adverbs and other transitional expressions	
IND;IND	**IND, ___ IND**	**IND. _____, IND** or **IND; _____,IND**	
	for	accordingly	after all
	and	after a while	also
	nor	anyhow	as a result
	but	at any rate	at the same time
	or	besides	consequently
	yet	for example	for instance
	so	furthermore	hence
		henceforth	however
		in addition	indeed
		in fact	in other words
		in particular	instead
		in the first place	likewise
		meanwhile	moreover
		nevertheless	nonetheless

		on the contrary		on the other hand
		otherwise		still
		then		therefore
		thus		
Forming Dependent Clauses (subordination)				
IND +DEP or **DEP,IND**				
after	although	as	as if	as though
because	before	if	in order that	since
so that	that	though	unless	until
when	whenever	where	wherever	
*which	while	who	whom	whose

* This row contains relative pronouns, which may be punctuated differently.

Joining Independent Clauses

There are three ways to join independent clauses. By using a mix of all three methods and varying your transition words, you will add complexity to your writing and improve the flow. You will also be emphasizing to your reader which ideas you want to connect or to show things like cause and effect or contrast. For a more detailed review of independent clauses, look back at **Chapter 3: Putting Ideas into Your Own Words and Paragraphs**. **Option 1** By simply using a semicolon (**;**), you can make the ideas connect more than if you were to use a period. If you are trying to reinforce that connection, use a semicolon because it is not as strong of a pause as a period and reinforces the link. **Option 2** When you want to link two independent sentences and increase the flow between ideas, you can add a comma and a coordinating conjunction between them. With coordinating conjunctions (FANBOYS: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so), you do not use a comma every time: you would only do so if what is on either side of the conjunction is a complete sentence not just a phrase. You would not put a comma if you are only giving a list of two items. For example:

Comma: It is cold outside**, so** I wore an extra warm coat.

No comma: It is cold outside. I wore an extra warm coat **and** gloves.

The first example contains a complete sentence (independent clause) on *either* side of the conjunction *so*. Just the conjunction by itself or just a comma by itself is not strong enough to join two independent clauses. However, if you put the two together with *so*, you can link the two. In the second example, *and* is simply connecting two noun phrases: *warm coat* and *gloves*. What comes after the conjunction is **not** a complete sentence, so you would not add a comma. To check if there is a complete, independent clause, ask yourself, “Can that part stand by itself as a complete sentence?” In the case of the no comma example, *gloves* is what comes after the comma. That is not a complete sentence, only a noun: that means it is part of a list and is not a complete sentence = no comma. The point of these examples was to show you that you have to be careful how you use commas and conjunctions. As easy as it would be to just always toss in a comma, doing so would confuse your reader as what is and is not part of a list and what ideas are joined. **Option 3** Your third choice is to join two independent clauses with a conjunctive adverb or another transition word. These words are very useful because they clearly show your reader how you would like your ideas to connect. If you wanted to emphasize contrasting ideas, you would use *on the other hand* or *however*. If you wanted to show cause and effect, you could use *as a result*. Refer to the tables you have seen in other chapters to make sure you are using the transitions you actually mean to be using; then, check Table 12.2 to confirm how you should punctuate it. After your first independent clause, you can choose to either use a period or a semicolon, again depending on how much of a link you want to show. You may also want to consider how many long sentences you have used prior to this. If you use a lot of complicated sentences, you should probably use a period to allow your reader to take a break. You must also remember to include a comma *after* the transition word.

Period: It is cold outside**.Therefore,** I wore an extra warm coat.

Semicolon: It is cold outside**; therefore,** I wore an extra warm coat.

Joining Dependent Clauses

If one of the clauses in a sentence is independent and can stand on its own, but the other is not, you have to construct the sentence a little differently. Whenever you add a subordinating conjunction or relative pronoun to an independent sentence, you create a dependent clause—one that can never stand alone. In the examples below, notice that when the independent clause comes first, it is strong enough to carry the dependent clause at the end without any helping punctuation. However, if you want the dependent clause first, you must add a comma between it and the independent clause: the dependent clause is not strong enough to support the independent clause after without a little help. In the examples below, the independent clauses are double underlined and the dependent clause has a single underline.

IND first:I wore an extra warm coat **as** it is cold outside.

DEP first: As it is cold outside**,** I wore an extra warm coat.

Tip

If you want to start a sentence with *Because*, you need to make sure there is a second half to that sentence that is independent. A *Because* (dependent) clause can never stand by itself.

At the bottom on **Table 12.2**, you can see a list of five dependent markers that can be used a little differently. These are relative pronouns, and when you use them, you need to ask yourself if the information is 100 percent necessary for the reader to understand what you are describing. If it is optional, you can include a comma before the relative clause even if it comes *after* the independent clause.

Non-essential: As it is cold outside, I wore an extra warm coat**, which** was blue.

Essential: My coat **which is blue** is the one I wear when it is really cold outside.

In the *non-essential* example, the fact that the coat was warm was probably more important than that the coat was blue. The information that the coat is blue probably would not make a difference in keeping the person warm, so the information in that relative clause is not terribly important. Adding the comma before the clause tells the reader it is extra information. In the *essential* example, the use of the same clause *without* a preceding comma shows that this information is important. The writer is implying he has other coats that are not as warm and are not blue, so he is emphasizing the importance of the blue coat. These are the only five subordinators, or relative pronouns, for which you can do this; every other one needs to follow the previous explanation of how to use these dependent transition words. If you do decide to add a comma with one of the relative pronouns, you need to think critically about whether or not that description is completely essential.

Using any of these sentence joining strategies is helpful in providing sentence variety to help your reader stay engaged and reading attentively. By following these punctuation rules, you will also avoid creating sentence fragments, run-on sentences, and comma splices, all of which improves your end product.

Given how much work you have put into your research paper, you will want to check for any errors that could distract or confuse your readers. Using the spell checking feature in your word processing program can be helpful, it should not replace a full, careful review of your document. Be sure to check for any errors that may have come up frequently for you in the past. Use **Checklist 12.4: Editing Your Writing** to help you as you edit.

Checklist 12.4: Editing Your Writing

Grammar

Are some sentences actually sentence fragments?

Are some sentences run-on? How can I correct them?

Do some sentences need conjunctions between independent clauses?

Does every verb agree with its subject?

Is every verb in the correct tense?

Are tense forms, especially for irregular verbs, written correctly?

Have I used subject, object, and possessive personal pronouns correctly?

Have I used *who* and *whom* correctly?

Is the antecedent of every pronoun clear?

Do all personal pronouns agree with their antecedents?

Have I used the correct comparative and superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs?

Is it clear which word a participial phrase modifies, or is it a dangling modifier?

Sentence Structure

Are all my sentences simple sentences, or do I vary my sentence structure?

Have I chosen the best coordinating or subordinating conjunctions to join clauses?

Have I created long, overpacked sentences that should be shortened for clarity?

Do I see any mistakes in parallel structure?

Punctuation

Does every sentence end with the correct end punctuation?

Can I justify the use of every exclamation point?

Have I used apostrophes correctly to write all singular and plural possessive forms?

Have I used quotation marks correctly?

Mechanics and Usage

Can I find any spelling errors? How can I correct them?

Have I used capital letters where they are needed?

Have I written abbreviations, where allowed, correctly?

Can I find any errors in the use of commonly confused words, such as *to*/*too*/*two*?

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12.3.4: Editing and Developing a Final Draft of a Research Paper (Part 2)

Tip

Be careful about relying too much on spelling checkers and grammar checkers. A spelling checker cannot recognize that you meant to write *principle* but wrote *principal* instead. A grammar checker often queries constructions that are perfectly correct. The program does not understand your meaning; it makes its check against a general set of formulas that might not apply in each instance. If you use a grammar checker, accept the suggestions that make sense, but consider why the suggestions came up.

Tip

Proofreading requires patience; it is very easy to read past a mistake. Set your paper aside for at least a few hours, if not a day or more, so your mind will rest. Some professional proofreaders read a text backward so they can concentrate on spelling and punctuation. Another helpful technique is to slowly read a paper aloud, paying attention to every word, letter, and punctuation mark.

If you need additional proofreading help, ask a reliable friend, classmate, or peer tutor to make a final pass on your paper to look for anything you missed.

Formatting

Your finished assignment should be properly formatted, following the style required of you. Formatting includes the style of the title, margin size, page number placement, location of the writer's name, and other factors. Your instructor or department may require a specific style to be used. The requirements may be more detailed and rigid for research projects and term papers, which often observe the American Psychological Association (APA) style guide, especially when citations of sources are included.

To ensure the format is correct and follows any specific instructions, make a final check before you submit an assignment.

Exercise 12.10

With the help of Checklist 12.4, edit and proofread your essay.

Checking Citations and Formatting

When editing a research paper, it is also important to check that you have cited sources properly and formatted your document according to the specified guidelines. There are two reasons for this. First, citing sources correctly ensures that you give proper credit to other people for ideas and information that helped you in your work. Second, using correct formatting establishes your paper as one student's contribution to the work developed by and for a larger academic community. Increasingly, American Psychological Association (APA) style guidelines are the standard for many academic fields. Use **Checklist 12.5: Citations and Formatting** to help.

Checklist 12.5: Citations and Formatting

Within the body of my paper, each fact or idea taken from a source is credited to the correct source.

Each in-text citation includes the source author's name (or, where applicable, the organization name or source title) and year of publication. I have used the correct format of in text and parenthetical citations.

Each source cited in the body of my paper has a corresponding entry in the references section of my paper.

My references section includes a heading and double-spaced alphabetized entries.

Each entry in my references section is indented on the second line and all subsequent lines.

Each entry in my references section includes all the necessary information for that source type, in the correct sequence and format.

My paper includes a title page.

My paper includes a running head.

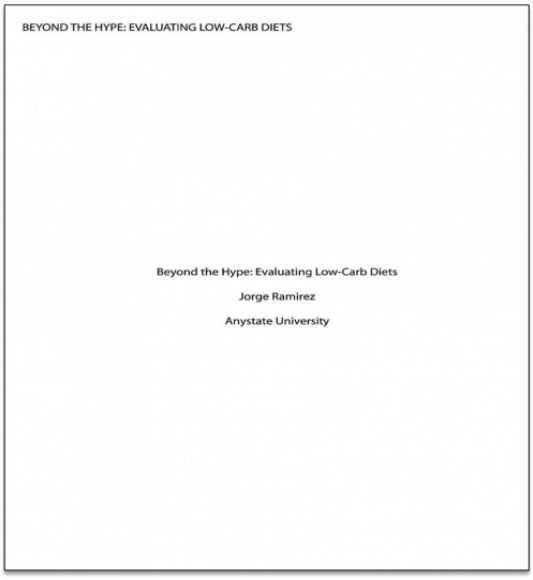
The margins of my paper are set at one inch. Text is double spaced and set in a standard 12-point font.

For detailed guidelines on APA citation and formatting, see Chapter 9.

Writing at Work

Following APA citation and formatting guidelines may require time and effort. However, it is good practice for learning how to follow accepted conventions in any professional field. Many large corporations create a style manual with guidelines for editing and formatting documents produced by that corporation. Employees follow the style manual when creating internal documents and documents for publication.

During the process of revising and editing, Jorge made changes in the content and style of his paper. He also gave the paper a final review to check for overall correctness and, particularly, correct APA citations and formatting. Read the final draft of his paper.


BEYOND THE HYPE: EVALUATING LOW-CARB DIETS

Beyond the Hype: Evaluating Low-Carb Diets

Jorge Ramirez

Anystate University

Beyond the Hype: Evaluating Low-Carb Diets

Picture this: You're standing in the aisle of your local grocery store when you see an overweight man nearby staring at several brands of ketchup on display. After deliberating for a moment, he reaches for the bottle with the words "Low-Carb!" displayed prominently on the label. Is he making a smart choice that will help him lose weight and enjoy better health—or is he just buying into the latest diet fad?

Over the past decade, increasing numbers of Americans have jumped on the low-carb bandwagon. As of 2004, researchers estimated that approximately 40 million Americans, or about one-fifth of the population, were attempting to restrict their intake of food high in carbohydrates (Sanders & Katz, 2004; Hirsch, 2004). Proponents of low-carb diets say they not only are the most effective way to lose weight but also yield health benefits such as lower blood pressure and improved cholesterol levels. Meanwhile, some doctors claim that low-carb diets are overrated and caution that their long-term effects are unknown. Although following a low-carbohydrate diet can benefit some people, these diets are not necessarily the best option for everyone who wants to lose weight or improve their health.

Purported Benefits of Low-Carbohydrate Diets

To make sense of the popular enthusiasm for low-carbohydrate diets, it is important to understand proponents' claims about how they work. Any eating plan includes a balance of the three macronutrients—proteins, fats, and carbohydrates—each of which is essential for human health. Different foods provide these macronutrients in different proportions; a steak is primarily a source of protein, and a plate of pasta is primarily a source of carbohydrates. No one recommends eliminating any of these three macronutrient groups entirely.

However, experts disagree on what protein : fats : carbohydrate ratio is best for optimum health and for maintaining a healthy weight. Since the 1970s, the USDA has recommended that the greatest proportion of one's daily calories should come from carbohydrates—breads, pastas, and cereals—with moderate consumption of proteins and minimal consumption of fats. High-carbohydrate foods form the base of the "food pyramid" familiar to nutrition students.

Those who subscribe to the low-carb philosophy, however, argue that this approach is flawed. They argue that excess weight stems from disordered metabolism, which in turn can be traced to overconsumption of foods high in carbohydrates—especially refined carbohydrates like white flour and sugar (Atkins, 2002; Sears, 1995; Agatson, 2003). The body quickly absorbs sugars from these foods, increasing the level of glucose in the blood. This triggers the release of insulin, delivering energy-providing glucose to cells and storing some of the excess as glycogen. Unfortunately, the liver turns the rest of this excess glucose into fat. Thus, adherents of the low-carb approach often classify foods according to their glycemic index (GI)—a measurement of how quickly a given food raises blood glucose levels when consumed. Foods high in refined carbohydrates—sugar, potatoes, white breads, and pasta, for instance—have a high glycemic index.[1]

Dieters who focus solely on reducing fat intake may fail to realize that consuming refined carbohydrates contributes to weight problems. Atkins (2002) notes that low-fat diets recommended to many who wish to lose weight are, by definition, usually high in carbohydrates, and thus unlikely to succeed.

Even worse, consuming high-carbohydrate foods regularly can, over time, wreak havoc with the body's systems for regulating blood sugar levels and insulin production. In some individuals, frequent spikes in blood sugar and insulin levels cause the body to become insulin-resistant—less able to use glucose for energy and more likely to convert it to fat (Atkins, 2002). This in turn

helps to explain the link between obesity and Type 2 diabetes. In contrast, reducing carbohydrate intake purportedly helps the body use food more efficiently for energy. Additional benefits associated with these diets include reduced risk of cardiovascular disease (Atkins, 2002), lowered blood pressure (Bell, 2006; Atkins, 2002), and reduced risk of developing certain cancers (Atkins, 2002).

Given the experts' conflicting recommendations, it is no wonder that patients are confused about how to eat for optimum health. Some may assume that even moderate carbohydrate consumption should be avoided (Harvard School of Public Health, 2010). Others may use the low-carb approach to justify consuming large amounts of foods high in saturated fats—eggs, steak, bacon, and so forth. Meanwhile, low-carb diet plans and products have become a multibillion-dollar industry (Hirsch, 2004). Does this approach live up to its adherents' promises?

Research on Low-Carbohydrate Diets and Weight Loss

A number of clinical studies have found that low-carbohydrate diet plans are indeed highly effective for weight loss. Gardner et al. (2007) compared outcomes among overweight and obese women who followed one of four popular diet plans: Atkins, The Zone, LEARN, or Ornish. After 12 months, the group that had followed the low-carb Atkins plan had lost significantly more weight than those in the other three groups. McMillan-Price et al. (2006) compared results among overweight and obese young adults who followed one of four plans, all of which were low in fat but had varying proportions of proteins and carbohydrates. They found that, over a 12-week period, the most significant body-fat loss occurred on plans that were high in protein and/or low in "high glycemic index" foods. More recently, the American Heart Association (2010) reported on an Israeli study that found that subjects who followed a low-carbohydrate, high-protein diet lost more weight than those who followed a low-fat plan

or a Mediterranean plan based on vegetables, grains, and minimal consumption of meats and healthy fats.[2] Other researchers have also found that low-carbohydrate diets resulted in increased weight loss (Ebbeling, Leidig, Feldman, Lovesky, & Ludwig, 2007; Bell, 2006; HealthDay, 2010).

Although these results are promising, they may be short-lived. Dieters who succeed in losing weight often struggle to keep the weight off—and unfortunately, low-carb diets are no exception to the rule. HealthDay News (2010) cites a study recently published in the Annals of Internal Medicine that compared obese subjects who followed a low-carbohydrate diet and a low-fat diet. The former group lost more weight in the first six months of the diet, but three years later, only the latter group continued to lose weight steadily—and both groups had difficulty keeping weight off. Similarly, Swiss researchers found that, although low-carb dieters initially lost more weight than those who followed other plans, the differences tended to even out over time (Bell, 2006). This suggests that low-carb diets may be no more effective than other diets for maintaining a healthy weight in the long term.

One likely reason is that a low-carbohydrate diet—like any restrictive diet—is difficult to adhere to for any extended period of time. In commenting on the Gardner study, experts at the Harvard School of Public Health (2010) noted that women in all four diet groups had difficulty following the plan. Because it is hard for dieters to stick to a low-carbohydrate eating plan, the initial success of these diets is short-lived (Heinz, 2009). Medical professionals caution that low-carb diets are difficult for many people to follow consistently and that, to maintain a healthy weight, dieters should try to develop nutrition and exercise habits they can incorporate in their lives in the long term (Mayo Clinic, 2008). Registered dietician Dana Kwon (2010) comments, "for some people, [low-carbohydrate diets] are great, but for most, any sensible eating and exercise plan would work just as well."

Other Long-Term Health Outcomes

Regardless of whether low-carb diets are most effective for weight loss, their potential benefits for weight loss must be weighed against other long-term health outcomes such as hypertension, the risk of heart disease, and cholesterol levels. Research findings in these areas are mixed. For this reason, people considering following a low-carbohydrate diet to lose weight should be advised of the potential risks in doing so.

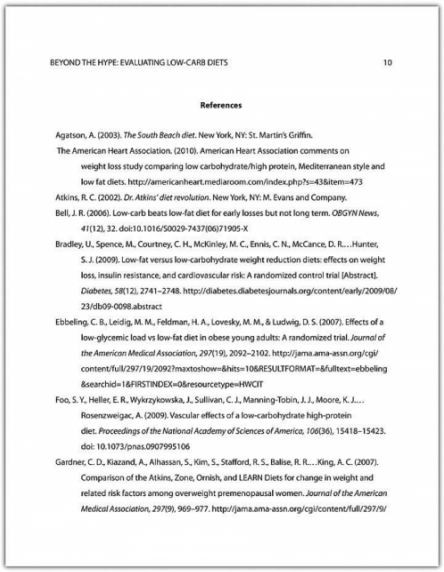
Research on how low-carbohydrate diets affect cholesterol levels is inconclusive. Some researchers have found that low-carbohydrate diets raise levels of HDL, or "good" cholesterol (Ebbeling et al., 2007; Seppa, 2008). Unfortunately, they may also raise levels of LDL, or "bad" cholesterol, which is associated with heart disease (Ebbeling et al., 2007; Reuters, 2010). A particular concern is that as dieters on a low-carbohydrate plan increase their intake of meats and dairy products—foods that are high in protein and fat—they are also likely to consume increased amounts of saturated fats, resulting in clogged arteries and again increasing the risk of heart disease. Studies of humans (Bradley et al., 2009) and mice (Foo et al., 2009) have identified possible risks to cardiovascular health associated with low-carb diets. The American Heart Association (2010) and the Harvard School of Public Health (2010) caution that doctors cannot yet assess how following a low-carbohydrate diet affects patients' health over a long-term period.

Some studies (Bell, 2006) have found that following a low-carb diet helped lower patients' blood pressure. Again, however, excessive consumption of foods high in saturated fats may, over time, lead to the development of clogged arteries and increase risk of hypertension. Choosing lean meats over those high in fat and supplementing the diet with high-fiber, low-glycemic-index carbohydrates, such as leafy green vegetables, is a healthier plan for dieters to follow.

Perhaps most surprisingly, low-carbohydrate diets are not necessarily advantageous for patients with Type 2 diabetes. Bradley et al. (2009) found that patients who followed a low-carb or a low-fat diet had comparable outcomes for both weight loss and insulin resistance. The National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse (2010) advises diabetics to monitor blood sugar levels carefully and to consult with their health care provider to develop a plan for healthy eating. Nevertheless, the nutritional guidelines it provides as a dietary starting point closely follow the USDA food pyramid.

Conclusion

Low-carb diets have garnered a great deal of positive attention, and it isn't entirely undeserved. These diets do lead to rapid weight loss, and they often result in greater weight loss over a period of months than other diet plans. Significantly overweight or obese people may find low-carb eating plans the most effective for losing weight and reducing the risks associated with carrying excess body fat. However, because these diets are difficult for some people to adhere to and because their potential long-term health effects are still being debated, they are not necessarily the ideal choice for anyone who wants to lose weight. A moderately overweight person who wants to lose a only few pounds is best advised to choose whatever plan will help him stay active and consume fewer calories consistently—whether or not it involves eating low-carb ketchup.



BEYOND THE HYPE: EVALUATING LOW-CARB DIETS 10

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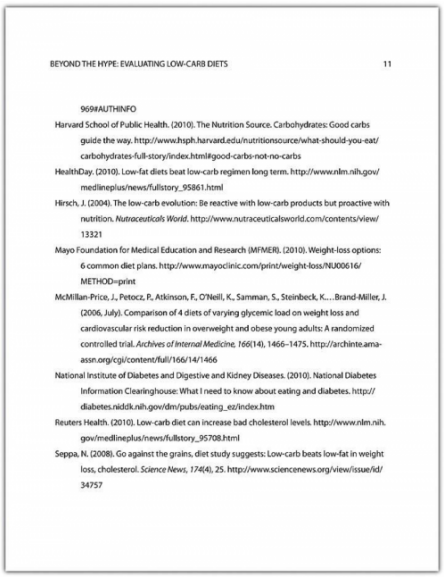
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BEYOND THE HYPE: EVALUATING LOW-CARB DIETS 11

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With the help of Checklist 12.5, edit and proofread your essay.

Although you probably do not want to look at your paper again before you submit it to your instructor, take the time to do a final check. Since you have already worked through all of the checklists above focusing on certain aspects at one time, working through one final checklist should confirm you have written a strong, persuasive essay and that everything is the way you want it to be. As extra insurance you have produced a strong paper, you may even want someone else to double-check your essay using **Checklist 12.6: Final Revision**. Then you can compare to see how your perceptions of your paper match those of someone else, essentially having that person act as the one who will be grading your paper.

Checklist 12.6: Final Revision

First Revision 1: Organization	
___	Do you show you understand the assignment: purpose, audience, and genre?
___	Focus: Have you clearly stated your thesis (your controlling idea) in the first paragraph?
___	Does your thesis statement catch the reader's attention?

___	Unity: Write your opening and closing paragraphs and place each topic sentence in between. You should have a “mini essay” with several different main points supporting your thesis.
___	Are your paragraphs organized in a logical manner?
___ ___	Does each topic sentence (per paragraph) logically follow the one preceding it?
	Do you have several points to support your thesis?
___ ___ ___	Check whether your paragraphs are organized according to a specific pattern.
	Would rearranging your paragraphs support your thesis better?
	Have you provided a comprehensive conclusion to your essay? Does it summarize your main points (using different words)?
First Revision 2: Paragraphs and Sentences	
___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___	Does each paragraph have main points and supporting details?
	Does each paragraph have only one main point?
	Is your approach or pattern used to develop your paragraph’s main point followed?
	Check that each sentence is relevant to the main point of the paragraph.
	Are there several sentences giving details, facts, quotes, reasons, and arguments in each paragraph?
	Is each supporting detail specific, concrete, and relevant to the topic sentence?
	Does each sentence logically follow the preceding one?
	Have you used transitional words to help the reader follow your thoughts? If not, add them.
	Paragraph length: If too short, develop further. If too long, break into smaller paragraphs or consolidate some sentences.
	Check your essay for tone and point of view.
Second Revision 1: Sentences and Usage	
___ ___ ___ ___	Confirm that each sentence has a subject and a verb.
	Revise fragments, splices, and run-on sentences.
	Check modifiers to see if they have been put in unclear places.
	Do you have a variety of sentence structures? (simple and complex)
___ ___ ___ ___ ___	Scan for subject-verb agreement in each sentence.
	Are you consistent with your verb tenses? Check to make sure there are not any confusing or irrelevant tense changes.
	Make sure that words in lists are in parallel forms.
	Think through your pronouns; what is each one referring to?
	Check for confusing “person” shifts within paragraphs. Keep the subjects consistent.
___ ___ ___ ___ ___	Identify all verbs and change any that are passive to active.
	Use strong verbs not weak adverbs. Say something “is” not that it “may be.”
	Check for wordiness.
	Scan to make sure you have not used the same word repeatedly in the same sentence and paragraph. Use a thesaurus.
	Look for and eliminate clichés.
Second Revision 2: Documentation	

___ ___ ___ ___	Have you documented all your references?
	Have you used in text citations every time they were needed? Have you formatted all your citations correctly?
	Is your references' section complete and correct according to the JIBC APA Style Guide.
Second Revision 3: Mechanics	
___ ___	Check that all words and sentences are punctuated according to standard usage.
	Check for spelling and typographical errors.
Third Revision: Content	
___ ___ ___ ___	Read your essay aloud. Do you believe what you have written?
	At this point do you develop your controlling idea in a way that makes sense?
	Have you provided enough background information? Is it relevant/necessary?
	Have you primarily used paraphrasing as opposed to direct quotations?

You should now be confident you have produced a strong argument that is wonderfully constructed and that you will be able to persuade your audience that your points and point of view are valid.

key takeaways

- During revising, you add, cut, move, or change information in order to improve content.
- During editing, you take a second look at the words and sentences you used to express your ideas and fix any problems in grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure.
- Remember to budget time for careful editing and proofreading. Use all available resources, including editing checklists, peer editing, and your institution's writing lab, to improve your editing skills.
- Organization in a research paper means that the argument proceeds logically from the introduction to the body to the conclusion. It flows logically from one point to the next. When revising a research paper, evaluate the organization of the paper as a whole and the organization of individual paragraphs.
- In a cohesive research paper, the elements of the paper work together smoothly and naturally. When revising a research paper, evaluate its cohesion. In particular, check that information from research is smoothly integrated with your ideas.
- An effective research paper uses a style and tone that are appropriately academic and serious. When revising a research paper, check that the style and tone are consistent throughout.
- Editing a research paper involves checking for errors in grammar, mechanics, punctuation, usage, spelling, citations, and formatting.

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13: CHAPTER THIRTEEN-ADDITIONAL READINGS

13.1: APA and MLA Documentation and Formatting

13.1.1: Formatting a Research Paper

13.1.2: Citing and Referencing Techniques

13.1.3: Creating a References Section (Part 1)

13.1.4: Creating a References Section (Part 2)

13.1.5: Using Modern Language Association (MLA) Style

13.1.E: APA and MLA Documentation and Formatting (Exercises)

13.2: Book- Writing Spaces- Readings on Writing, Vol. I (Lowe and Zemliansky)

13.2.1: Backpacks vs. Briefcases- Steps toward Rhetorical Analysis

13.2.2: Collaborating Online- Digital Strategies for Group Work

13.2.3: Composing the Anthology- An Exercise in Patchwriting

13.2.4: Finding the Good Argument OR Why Bother With Logic?

13.2.5: “Finding Your Way In”- Invention as Inquiry Based Learning in First Year Writing

13.2.6: From Topic to Presentation- Making Choices to Develop Your Writing

13.2.7: Introduction- Open Source Composition Texts Arrive for College Writers

13.2.8: “I need you to say ‘I’”- Why First Person Is Important in College Writing

13.2.9: Navigating Genres

13.2.10: Reflective Writing and the Revision Process- What Were You Thinking?

13.2.11: Reinventing Invention- Discovery and Investment in Writing

13.2.12: So You’ve Got a Writing Assignment. Now What?

13.2.13: Taking Flight- Connecting Inner and Outer Realities during Invention

13.2.14: The Inspired Writer vs. the Real Writer

13.2.15: What Is "Academic" Writing?

13.2.16: Why Visit Your Campus Writing Center?

13.2.17: Wikipedia Is Good for You!?

13.3: Nonfiction

13.3.1: Nonfiction

13.3.2: Nonfiction Exercises

13.4: 20 Most Common Grammar Errors

13.4.1: Wrong Word

13.4.2: Comma After Introductory Element

13.4.3: Documentation Common Error

13.4.4: Pronoun Reference

13.4.5: Spelling

13.4.6: Quotation Error

13.4.7: Unnecessary Comma

13.4.8: Capitalization
13.4.9: Missing Word
13.4.10: Faulty Sentence Structure
13.4.11: Missing Comma with Nonrestrictive Element
13.4.12: Verb Tense Shift
13.4.13: Missing Comma in Compound Sentence
13.4.14: Apostrophe Errors
13.4.15: Run-On Sentences
13.4.16: Comma Splice
13.4.17: Pronoun Agreement
13.4.18: Poorly Integrated Quote
13.4.19: Hyphens
13.4.20: Sentence Fragment
13.4.21: Try It Out
13.4.22: Putting It All Together
13.4.23: Time to Write
13.5: Grammar Essentials (Excelsior Online Writing Lab)

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13.1: APA AND MLA DOCUMENTATION AND FORMATTING

13.1.1: Formatting a Research Paper
13.1.2: Citing and Referencing Techniques
13.1.3: Creating a References Section (Part 1)
13.1.4: Creating a References Section (Part 2)
13.1.5: Using Modern Language Association (MLA) Style
13.1.E: APA and MLA Documentation and Formatting (Exercises)

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13.1.1: Formatting a Research Paper

Learning Objectives

- Identify the major components of a research paper written using American Psychological Association (APA) style.
- Apply general APA style and formatting conventions in a research paper.

In this chapter, you will learn how to use APA style, the documentation and formatting style followed by the American Psychological Association, as well as MLA style, from the Modern Language Association. There are a few major formatting styles used in academic texts, including AMA, Chicago, and Turabian:

- AMA (American Medical Association) for medicine, health, and biological sciences
- APA (American Psychological Association) for education, psychology, and the social sciences
- Chicago—a common style used in everyday publications like magazines, newspapers, and books
- MLA (Modern Language Association) for English, literature, arts, and humanities
- Turabian—another common style designed for its universal application across all subjects and disciplines

While all the formatting and citation styles have their own use and applications, in this chapter we focus our attention on the two styles you are most likely to use in your academic studies: APA and MLA.

If you find that the rules of proper source documentation are difficult to keep straight, you are not alone. Writing a good research paper is, in and of itself, a major intellectual challenge. Having to follow detailed citation and formatting guidelines as well may seem like just one more task to add to an already-too-long list of requirements.

Following these guidelines, however, serves several important purposes. First, it signals to your readers that your paper should be taken seriously as a student's contribution to a given academic or professional field; it is the literary equivalent of wearing a tailored suit to a job interview. Second, it shows that you respect other people's work enough to give them proper credit for it. Finally, it helps your reader find additional materials if he or she wishes to learn more about your topic.

Furthermore, producing a letter-perfect APA-style paper need not be burdensome. Yes, it requires careful attention to detail. However, you can simplify the process if you keep these broad guidelines in mind:

- **Work ahead whenever you can.** Chapter 11 includes tips for keeping track of your sources early in the research process, which will save time later on.
- **Get it right the first time.** Apply APA guidelines as you write, so you will not have much to correct during the editing stage. Again, putting in a little extra time early on can save time later.
- **Use the resources available to you.** In addition to the guidelines provided in this chapter, you may wish to consult the APA website at http://www.apa.org or the Purdue University Online Writing lab at http://owl.english.purdue.edu, which regularly updates its online style guidelines.

General Formatting Guidelines

This chapter provides detailed guidelines for using the citation and formatting conventions developed by the American Psychological Association, or APA. Writers in disciplines as diverse as astrophysics, biology, psychology, and education follow APA style. The major components of a paper written in APA style are listed in the following box.

These are the major components of an APA-style paper:

1. Title page
2. Abstract
3. Body, which includes the following:

- Headings and, if necessary, subheadings to organize the content
- In-text citations of research sources

4. References page

All these components must be saved in one document, not as separate documents.

Title Page

The title page of your paper includes the following information:

- Title of the paper
- Author's name
- Name of the institution with which the author is affiliated
- Header at the top of the page with the paper title (in capital letters) and the page number (If the title is lengthy, you may use a shortened form of it in the header.)

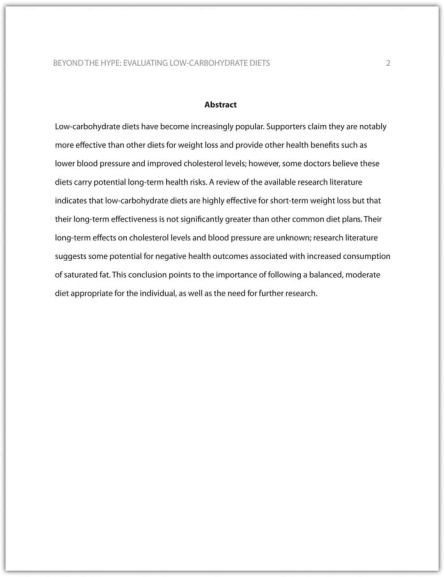
List the first three elements in the order given in the previous list, centered about one third of the way down from the top of the page. Use the headers and footers tool of your word-processing program to add the header, with the title text at the left and the page number in the upper-right corner. Your title page should look like the following example.



Abstract

The next page of your paper provides an abstract, or brief summary of your findings. An abstract does not need to be provided in every paper, but an abstract should be used in papers that include a hypothesis. A good abstract is concise—about one hundred to one hundred fifty words—and is written in an objective, impersonal style. Your writing voice will not be as apparent here as in the body of your paper. When writing the abstract, take a just-the-facts approach, and summarize your research question and your findings in a few sentences.

In Chapter 12, you read a paper written by a student named Jorge, who researched the effectiveness of low-carbohydrate diets. Read Jorge's abstract. Note how it sums up the major ideas in his paper without going into excessive detail.



BEYOND THE HYPE: EVALUATING LOW-CARBOHYDRATE DIETS 2

Abstract

Low-carbohydrate diets have become increasingly popular. Supporters claim they are notably more effective than other diets for weight loss and provide other health benefits such as lower blood pressure and improved cholesterol levels; however, some doctors believe these diets carry potential long-term health risks. A review of the available research literature indicates that low-carbohydrate diets are highly effective for short-term weight loss but that their long-term effectiveness is not significantly greater than other common diet plans. Their long-term effects on cholesterol levels and blood pressure are unknown; research literature suggests some potential for negative health outcomes associated with increased consumption of saturated fat. This conclusion points to the importance of following a balanced, moderate diet appropriate for the individual, as well as the need for further research.

Exercise 13.1.1.1

Write an abstract summarizing your paper. Briefly introduce the topic, state your findings, and sum up what conclusions you can draw from your research. Use the word count feature of your word-processing program to make sure your abstract does not exceed one hundred fifty words.

Tip

Depending on your field of study, you may sometimes write research papers that present extensive primary research, such as your own experiment or survey. In your abstract, summarize your research question and your findings, and briefly indicate how your study relates to prior research in the field.

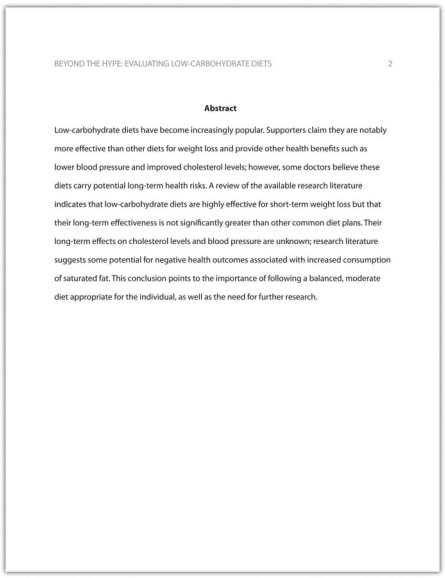
Margins, Pagination, and Headings

APA style requirements also address specific formatting concerns, such as margins, pagination, and heading styles, within the body of the paper. Review the following APA guidelines.

Use these general guidelines to format the paper:

1. Set the top, bottom, and side margins of your paper at 1 inch.
2. Use double-spaced text throughout your paper.
3. Use a standard font, such as Times New Roman or Arial, in a legible size (10- to 12-point).
4. Use continuous pagination throughout the paper, including the title page and the references section. Page numbers appear flush right within your header.
5. Section headings and subsection headings within the body of your paper use different types of formatting depending on the level of information you are presenting. Additional details from Jorge's paper are provided.





Exercise 13.1.1.2

Begin formatting the final draft of your paper according to APA guidelines. You may work with an existing document or set up a new document if you choose. Include the following:

- Your title page
- The abstract you created in Exercise 1
- Correct headers and page numbers for your title page and abstract

Headings

APA style uses section headings to organize information, making it easy for the reader to follow the writer's train of thought and to know immediately what major topics are covered. Depending on the length and complexity of the paper, its major sections

may also be divided into subsections, sub-subsections, and so on. These smaller sections, in turn, use different heading styles to indicate different levels of information. In essence, you are using headings to create a hierarchy of information.

The following heading styles used in APA formatting are listed in order of greatest to least importance:

1. Section headings use centered, boldface type. Headings use title case, with important words in the heading capitalized.
2. Subsection headings use left-aligned, boldface type. Headings use title case.
3. The third level uses left-aligned, indented, boldface type. Headings use a capital letter only for the first word, and they end in a period.
4. The fourth level follows the same style used for the previous level, but the headings are boldfaced and italicized.
5. The fifth level follows the same style used for the previous level, but the headings are italicized and **not** boldfaced.

Visually, the hierarchy of information is organized as indicated in Table 13.1 “Section Headings”.

Table 13.1 - Section Headings

Level of Information	Text Example
Level 1	**Heart Disease**
Level 2	**Lifestyle Factors That Reduce Heart Disease Risk**
Level 3	**Exercising regularly.**
Level 4	*Aerobic exercise.*
Level 5	*Country line dancing.*

A college research paper may not use all the heading levels shown in Table 13.1 “Section Headings”, but you are likely to encounter them in academic journal articles that use APA style. For a brief paper, you may find that level 1 headings suffice. Longer or more complex papers may need level 2 headings or other lower-level headings to organize information clearly. Use your outline to craft your major section headings and determine whether any subtopics are substantial enough to require additional levels of headings.

Exercise 13.1.1.3

Working with the document you developed in Note 13.11 “Exercise 2”, begin setting up the heading structure of the final draft of your research paper according to APA guidelines. Include your title and at least two to three major section headings, and follow the formatting guidelines provided above. If your major sections should be broken into subsections, add those headings as well. Use your outline to help you.

Because Jorge used only level 1 headings, his Exercise 3 would look like the following:

Level of Information	Text Example
Level 1	**Purported Benefits of Low-Carbohydrate Diets**
Level 1	**Research on Low-Carbohydrate Diets and Weight Loss**
Level 1	**Other Long-Term Health Outcomes**
Level 1	**Conclusion**

Citation Guidelines

In-Text Citations

Throughout the body of your paper, include a citation whenever you quote or paraphrase material from your research sources. As you learned in Chapter 11, the purpose of citations is twofold: to give credit to others for their ideas and to allow your reader to follow up and learn more about the topic if desired. Your in-text citations provide basic information about your source; each source you cite will have a longer entry in the references section that provides more detailed information.

In-text citations must provide the name of the author or authors and the year the source was published. (When a given source does not list an individual author, you may provide the source title or the name of the organization that published the material instead.) When directly quoting a source, it is also required that you include the page number where the quote appears in your citation.

This information may be included within the sentence or in a parenthetical reference at the end of the sentence, as in these examples.

Epstein (2010) points out that "junk food cannot be considered addictive in the same way that we think of psychoactive drugs as addictive" (p. 137).

Here, the writer names the source author when introducing the quote and provides the publication date in parentheses after the author's name. The page number appears in parentheses **after** the closing quotation marks and **before** the period that ends the sentence.

Addiction researchers caution that "junk food cannot be considered addictive in the same way that we think of psychoactive drugs as addictive" (Epstein, 2010, p. 137).

Here, the writer provides a parenthetical citation at the end of the sentence that includes the author's name, the year of publication, and the page number separated by commas. Again, the parenthetical citation is placed **after** the closing quotation marks and **before** the period at the end of the sentence.

As noted in the book *Junk Food, Junk Science* (Epstein, 2010, p. 137), "junk food cannot be considered addictive in the same way that we think of psychoactive drugs as addictive."

Here, the writer chose to mention the source title in the sentence (an optional piece of information to include) and followed the title with a parenthetical citation. Note that the parenthetical citation is placed **before** the comma that signals the end of the introductory phrase.

David Epstein's book *Junk Food, Junk Science* (2010) pointed out that "junk food cannot be considered addictive in the same way that we think of psychoactive drugs as addictive" (p. 137).

Another variation is to introduce the author and the source title in your sentence and include the publication date and page number in parentheses within the sentence or at the end of the sentence. As long as you have included the essential information, you can choose the option that works best for that particular sentence and source.

Citing a book with a single author is usually a straightforward task. Of course, your research may require that you cite many other types of sources, such as books or articles with more than one author or sources with no individual author listed. You may also need to cite sources available in both print and online and nonprint sources, such as websites and personal interviews. Section 13.2 and Section 13.3 provide extensive guidelines for citing a variety of source types.

writing at work

APA is just one of several different styles with its own guidelines for documentation, formatting, and language usage. Depending on your field of interest, you may be exposed to additional styles, such as the following:

- **MLA style.** Determined by the Modern Languages Association and used for papers in literature, languages, and other disciplines in the humanities.
- **Chicago style.** Outlined in the *Chicago Manual of Style* and sometimes used for papers in the humanities and the sciences; many professional organizations use this style for publications as well.
- **Associated Press (AP) style.** Used by professional journalists.

References List

The brief citations included in the body of your paper correspond to the more detailed citations provided at the end of the paper in the references section. In-text citations provide basic information—the author's name, the publication date, and the page number if necessary—while the references section provides more extensive bibliographical information. Again, this information allows your reader to follow up on the sources you cited and do additional reading about the topic if desired.

The specific format of entries in the list of references varies slightly for different source types, but the entries generally include the following information:

- The name(s) of the author(s) or institution that wrote the source
- The year of publication and, where applicable, the exact date of publication
- The full title of the source
- For books, the city of publication
- For articles or essays, the name of the periodical or book in which the article or essay appears
- For magazine and journal articles, the volume number, issue number, and pages where the article appears
- For sources on the web, the URL where the source is located

The references page is double spaced and lists entries in alphabetical order by the author's last name. If an entry continues for more than one line, the second line and each subsequent line are indented five spaces. Review the following example. (Section 13.3 provides extensive guidelines for formatting reference entries for different types of sources.)



BEYOND THE HYPE: EVALUATING LOW-CARBOHYDRATE DIETS 11

the way. In The Nutrition Source. Retrieved from http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/what-should-you-eat/carbohydrates-full-story/index.html#good-carbs-not-no-carbs

HealthDay. (2010). *Low-fat diets beat low-carb regimen long term*. http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_95861.html

Hirsch, J. (2004). The low-carb evolution: Be reactive with low-carb products but proactive with nutrition. *Nutraceuticals World*. Retrved from http://www.nutraceuticalsworld.com/contents/view/13321

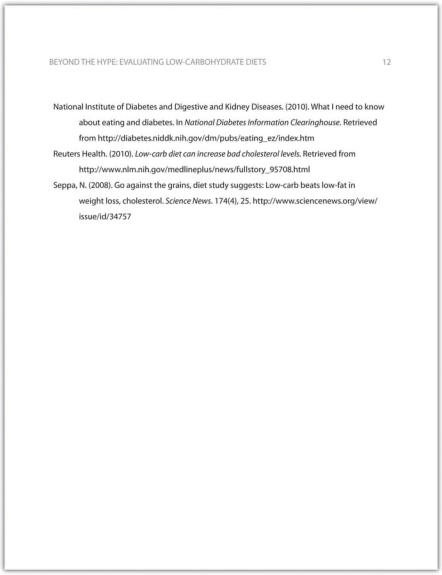
Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MFMER). (2010). Weight-loss options: 6 common diet plans. http://www.mayoclinic.com/print/weight-loss/NU00616/METHOD=print

McMillan-Price, J., Petocz, P., Atkinson, F., O'Neill, K., Samman, S., Steinbeck, K.…Brand-Miller, J. (2006, July). Comparison of 4 diets of varying glycemic load on weight loss and cardiovascular risk reduction in overweight and obese young adults: A randomized controlled trial. *Archives of Internal Medicine, 166*(14), 1466–1475. Retrieved from http://archinte.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/166/14/1466

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. (2010). What I need to know about eating and diabetes. In *National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse*. Retrieved from http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/eating_ez/index.htm

Reuters Health. (2010). *Low-carb diet can increase bad cholesterol levels*. Retrieved from http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_95708.html

Seppa, N. (2008). Go against the grains, diet study suggests: Low-carb beats low-fat in weight loss, cholesterol. *Science News, 174*(4), 25. http://www.sciencenews.org/view/issue/id/34757



BEYOND THE HYPE: EVALUATING LOW-CARBOHYDRATE DIETS 12

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. (2010). What I need to know about eating and diabetes. In *National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse*. Retrieved from http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/eating_ez/index.htm

Reuters Health. (2010). *Low-carb diet can increase bad cholesterol levels*. Retrieved from http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_95708.html

Seppa, N. (2008). Go against the grains, diet study suggests: Low-carb beats low-fat in weight loss, cholesterol. *Science News*. 174(4), 25. http://www.sciencenews.org/view/issue/id/34757

Tip

In APA style, book and article titles are formatted in sentence case, not title case. Sentence case means that only the first word is capitalized, along with any proper nouns.

Key Takeaways

- Following proper citation and formatting guidelines helps writers ensure that their work will be taken seriously, give proper credit to other authors for their work, and provide valuable information to readers.
- Working ahead and taking care to cite sources correctly the first time are ways writers can save time during the editing stage of writing a research paper.
- APA papers usually include an abstract that concisely summarizes the paper.
- APA papers use a specific headings structure to provide a clear hierarchy of information.
- In APA papers, in-text citations usually include the name(s) of the author(s) and the year of publication.
- In-text citations correspond to entries in the references section, which provide detailed bibliographical information about a source.

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13.1.2: Citing and Referencing Techniques

Learning Objectives

- Apply American Psychological Association (APA) style formatting guidelines for citations.

This section covers the nitty-gritty details of in-text citations. You will learn how to format citations for different types of source materials, whether you are citing brief quotations, paraphrasing ideas, or quoting longer passages. You will also learn techniques you can use to introduce quoted and paraphrased material effectively. Keep this section handy as a reference to consult while writing the body of your paper.

Formatting Cited Material: The Basics

As noted in previous sections of this book, in-text citations usually provide the name of the author(s) and the year the source was published. For direct quotations, the page number must also be included. Use past-tense verbs when introducing a quote—"Smith found..." and not "Smith finds...."

Formatting Brief Quotations

For brief quotations—fewer than forty words—use quotation marks to indicate where the quoted material begins and ends, and cite the name of the author(s), the year of publication, and the page number where the quotation appears in your source. Remember to include commas to separate elements within the parenthetical citation. Also, avoid redundancy. If you name the author(s) in your sentence, do not repeat the name(s) in your parenthetical citation. Review following the examples of different ways to cite direct quotations.

Chang (2008) emphasized that "engaging in weight-bearing exercise consistently is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health" (p. 49).

The author's name can be included in the body of the sentence or in the parenthetical citation. Note that when a parenthetical citation appears at the end of the sentence, it comes **after** the closing quotation marks and **before** the period. The elements within parentheses are separated by commas.

- *Weight Training for Women* (Chang, 2008) claimed that "engaging in weight-bearing exercise consistently is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health" (p. 49).
- *Weight Training for Women* claimed that "engaging in weight-bearing exercise consistently is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health" (Chang, 2008, p. 49).

Including the title of a source is optional.

In Chang's 2008 text *Weight Training for Women*, she asserts, "Engaging in weight-bearing exercise is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health" (p. 49).

The author's name, the date, and the title may appear in the body of the text. Include the page number in the parenthetical citation. Also, notice the use of the verb *asserts* to introduce the direct quotation.

"Engaging in weight-bearing exercise," Chang asserts, "is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health" (2008, p. 49).

You may begin a sentence with the direct quotation and add the author's name and a strong verb before continuing the quotation.

Formatting Paraphrased and Summarized Material

When you paraphrase or summarize ideas from a source, you follow the same guidelines previously provided, except that you are not required to provide the page number where the ideas are located. If you are summing up the main findings of a research article, simply providing the author's name and publication year may suffice, but if you are paraphrasing a more specific idea, consider including the page number.

Read the following examples.

> Chang (2008) pointed out that weight-bearing exercise has many potential benefits for women.

Here, the writer is summarizing a major idea that recurs throughout the source material. No page reference is needed.

> Chang (2008) found that weight-bearing exercise could help women maintain or even increase bone density through middle age and beyond, reducing the likelihood that they will develop osteoporosis in later life (p. 86).

Although the writer is not directly quoting the source, this passage paraphrases a specific detail, so the writer chose to include the page number where the information is located.

Tip

Although APA style guidelines do not require writers to provide page numbers for material that is not directly quoted, your instructor may wish you to do so when possible.

Check with your instructor about his or her preferences.

Formatting Longer Quotations

When you quote a longer passage from a source—forty words or more—use a different format to set off the quoted material. Instead of using quotation marks, create a block quotation by starting the quotation on a new line and indented five spaces from the margin. Note that in this case, the parenthetical citation comes **after** the period that ends the sentence. Here is an example:

> In recent years, many writers within the fitness industry have emphasized the ways in which women can benefit from weight-bearing exercise, such as weightlifting, karate, dancing, stair climbing, hiking, and jogging. Chang (2008) found that engaging in weight-bearing exercise regularly significantly reduces women's risk of developing osteoporosis. Additionally, these exercises help women maintain muscle mass and overall strength, and many common forms of weight-bearing exercise, such as brisk walking or stair climbing, also provide noticeable cardiovascular benefits. (p. 93)

Exercise 13.1.2.1

Review the places in your paper where you cited, quoted, and paraphrased material from a source with a single author. Edit your citations to ensure that

- each citation includes the author's name, the date of publication, and, where appropriate, a page reference;
- parenthetical citations are correctly formatted;
- longer quotations use the block-quotation format.

If you are quoting a passage that continues into a second paragraph, indent five spaces again in the first line of the second

paragraph. Here is an example:

> In recent years, many writers within the fitness industry have emphasized the ways in which women can benefit from weight-bearing exercise, such as weightlifting, karate, dancing, stair climbing, hiking, and jogging. Chang (2008) found that engaging in weight-bearing exercise regularly significantly reduces women's risk of developing osteoporosis. Additionally, these exercises help women maintain muscle mass and overall strength, and many common forms of weight-bearing exercise, such as brisk walking or stair climbing, also provide noticeable cardiovascular benefits.
>
> It is important to note that swimming cannot be considered a weight-bearing exercise, since the water supports and cushions the swimmer. That doesn't mean swimming isn't great exercise, but it should be considered one part of an integrated fitness program. (p. 93)

Tip

Be wary of quoting from sources at length. Remember, your ideas should drive the paper, and quotations should be used to support and enhance your points. Make sure any lengthy quotations that you include serve a clear purpose. Generally, no more than 10–15 percent of a paper should consist of quoted material.

Introducing Cited Material Effectively

Including an introductory phrase in your text, such as "Jackson wrote" or "Copeland found," often helps you integrate source material smoothly. This citation technique also helps convey that you are actively engaged with your source material. Unfortunately, during the process of writing your research paper, it is easy to fall into a rut and use the same few dull verbs repeatedly, such as "Jones said," "Smith stated," and so on.

Punch up your writing by using strong verbs that help your reader understand how the source material presents ideas. There is a world of difference between an author who "suggests" and one who "claims," one who "questions" and one who "criticizes." You do not need to consult your thesaurus every time you cite a source, but do think about which verbs will accurately represent the ideas and make your writing more engaging. The following chart shows some possibilities.

Strong Verbs for Introducing Cited Material		
ask	suggest	question
explain	assert	claim
recommend	compare	contrast
propose	hypothesize	believe
insist	argue	find
determine	measure	assess
evaluate	conclude	study
warn	point out	sum up

Exercise 13.1.2.2

Review the citations in your paper once again. This time, look for places where you introduced source material using a signal phrase in your sentence.

1. Highlight the verbs used in your signal phrases, and make note of any that seem to be overused throughout the paper.
2. Identify at least three places where a stronger verb could be used.
3. Make the edits to your draft.

writing at work

It is important to accurately represent a colleague's ideas or communications in the workplace. When writing professional or academic papers, be mindful of how the words you use to describe someone's tone or ideas carry certain connotations. Do not say a source *argues* a particular point unless an argument is, in fact, presented. Use lively language, but avoid language that is emotionally charged. Doing so will ensure you have represented your colleague's words in an authentic and accurate way.

Formatting In-Text Citations for Other Source Types

These sections discuss the correct format for various types of in-text citations. Read them through quickly to get a sense of what is covered, and then refer to them again as needed.

Print Sources

This section covers books, articles, and other print sources with one or more authors.

A Work by One Author

For a print work with one author, follow the guidelines provided in Section 13.1. Always include the author's name and year of publication. Include a page reference whenever you quote a source directly. (See also the guidelines presented earlier in this chapter about when to include a page reference for paraphrased material.)

- Chang (2008) emphasized that "engaging in weight-bearing exercise consistently is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health" (p. 49).
- Chang (2008) pointed out that weight-bearing exercise has many potential benefits for women.

Two or More Works by the Same Author

At times, your research may include multiple works by the same author. If the works were published in different years, a standard in-text citation will serve to distinguish them. If you are citing multiple works by the same author published in the same year, include a lowercase letter immediately after the year. Rank the sources in the order they appear in your references section. The source listed first includes an *a* after the year, the source listed second includes a *b*, and so on.

> Rodriguez (2009a) criticized the nutrition-supplement industry for making unsubstantiated and sometimes misleading claims about the benefits of taking supplements. Additionally, he warned that consumers frequently do not realize the potential harmful effects of some popular supplements (Rodriguez, 2009b).

Tip

If you have not yet created your references section, you may not be sure which source will appear first. See Section 13.3 for guidelines—or assign each source a temporary code and highlight the in-text citations so you remember to double-check them later on.

Works by Authors with the Same Last Name

If you are citing works by different authors with the same last name, include each author's initials in your citation, whether you mention them in the text or in parentheses. Do so even if the publication years are different.

- J. S. Williams (2007) believes nutritional supplements can be a useful part of some diet and fitness regimens. C. D. Williams (2008), however, believes these supplements are overrated.
- According to two leading researchers, the rate of childhood obesity exceeds the rate of adult obesity (K. Connelley, 2010; O. Connelley, 2010).
- Studies from both A. Wright (2007) and C. A. Wright (2008) confirm the benefits of diet and exercise on weight loss.

A Work by Two Authors

When two authors are listed for a given work, include both authors' names each time you cite the work. If you are citing their names in parentheses, use an ampersand (&) between them. (Use the word *and*, however, if the names appear in your sentence.)

- As Garrison and Gould (2010) pointed out, "It is never too late to quit smoking. The health risks associated with this habit begin to decrease soon after a smoker quits" (p. 101).
- As doctors continue to point out, "It is never too late to quit smoking. The health risks associated with this habit begin to decrease soon after a smoker quits" (Garrison & Gould, 2010, p. 101).

A Work by Three to Five Authors

If the work you are citing has three to five authors, list all the authors' names the first time you cite the source. In subsequent citations, use the first author's name followed by the abbreviation et al. (*Et al.* is short for *et alia*, the Latin phrase for "and others.")

- Henderson, Davidian, and Degler (2010) surveyed 350 smokers aged 18 to 30.
- One survey, conducted among 350 smokers aged 18 to 30, included a detailed questionnaire about participants' motivations for smoking (Henderson, Davidian, & Degler, 2010).

Note that these examples follow the same ampersand conventions as sources with two authors. Again, use the ampersand only when listing authors' names in parentheses.

- As Henderson et al. (2010) found, some young people, particularly young women, use smoking as a means of appetite suppression.
- Disturbingly, some young women use smoking as a means of appetite suppression (Henderson et al., 2010).

Note how the phrase *et al.* is punctuated. No period comes after *et*, but *al.* gets a period because it is an abbreviation for a longer Latin word. In parenthetical references, include a comma after *et al.* but not before. Remember this rule by mentally translating the citation to English: "Henderson and others, 2010."

A Work by Six or More Authors

If the work you are citing has six or more authors, list only the first author's name, followed by *et al.*, in your in-text citations. The other authors' names will be listed in your references section.

Researchers have found that outreach work with young people has helped reduce tobacco use in some communities (Costello et al., 2007).

A Work Authored by an Organization

When citing a work that has no individual author(s) but is published by an organization, use the organization's name in place of the author's name. Lengthy organization names with well-known abbreviations can be abbreviated. In your first citation, use the full name, followed by the abbreviation in square brackets. Subsequent citations may use the abbreviation only.

- It is possible for a patient to have a small stroke without even realizing it (American Heart Association [AHA], 2010).
- Another cause for concern is that even if patients realize that they have had a stroke and need medical attention, they may not know which nearby facilities are best equipped to treat them (AHA, 2010).

Exercise 13.1.2.3

1. Review the places in your paper where you cited material from a source with multiple authors or with an organization as the author. Edit your citations to ensure that each citation follows APA guidelines for the inclusion of the authors' names, the use of ampersands and *et al.*, the date of publication, and, where appropriate, a page reference.
2. Mark any additional citations within your paper that you are not sure how to format based on the guidelines provided so far. You will revisit these citations after reading the next few sections.

A Work with No Listed Author

If no author is listed and the source cannot be attributed to an organization, use the title in place of the author's name. You may use the full title in your sentence or use the first few words—enough to convey the key ideas—in a parenthetical reference. Follow standard conventions for using italics or quotations marks with titles:

- Use italics for titles of books or reports.
- Use quotation marks for titles of articles or chapters.
- "Living With Diabetes: Managing Your Health" (2009) recommends regular exercise for patients with diabetes.
- Regular exercise can benefit patients with diabetes ("Living with Diabetes," 2009).
- Rosenhan (1973) had mentally healthy study participants claim to be experiencing hallucinations so they would be admitted to psychiatric hospitals.

A Work Cited within Another Work

To cite a source that is referred to within another secondary source, name the first source in your sentence. Then, in parentheses,

use the phrase *as cited in* and the name of the second source author.

> Rosenhan's study "On Being Sane in Insane Places" (as cited in Spitzer, 1975) found that psychiatrists diagnosed schizophrenia in people who claimed to be experiencing hallucinations and sought treatment—even though these patients were, in fact, imposters.

Two or More Works Cited in One Reference

At times, you may provide more than one citation in a parenthetical reference, such as when you are discussing related works or studies with similar results. List the citations in the same order they appear in your references section, and separate the citations with a semicolon.

> Some researchers have found serious flaws in the way Rosenhan's study was conducted (Dawes, 2001; Spitzer, 1975).

Both of these researchers authored works that support the point being made in this sentence, so it makes sense to include both in the same citation.

A Famous Text Published in Multiple Editions

In some cases, you may need to cite an extremely well-known work that has been repeatedly republished or translated. Many works of literature and sacred texts, as well as some classic nonfiction texts, fall into this category. For these works, the original date of publication may be unavailable. If so, include the year of publication or translation for your edition. Refer to specific parts or chapters if you need to cite a specific section. Discuss with your instructor whether he or she would like you to cite page numbers in this particular instance.

> In *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, Freud explains that the "manifest content" of a dream—what literally takes place—is separate from its "latent content," or hidden meaning (trans. 1965, lecture XXIX).

Here, the student is citing a classic work of psychology, originally written in German and later translated to English. Since the book is a collection of Freud's lectures, the student cites the lecture number rather than a page number.

An Introduction, Foreword, Preface, or Afterword

To cite an introduction, foreword, preface, or afterword, cite the author of the material and the year, following the same format used for other print materials.

Electronic Sources

Whenever possible, cite electronic sources as you would print sources, using the author, the date, and where appropriate, a page number. For some types of electronic sources—for instance, many online articles—this information is easily available. Other times, however, you will need to vary the format to reflect the differences in online media.

Online Sources without Page Numbers

If an online source has no page numbers but you want to refer to a specific portion of the source, try to locate other information you can use to direct your reader to the information cited. Some websites number paragraphs within published articles; if so, include the paragraph number in your citation. Precede the paragraph number with the abbreviation for the word *paragraph* and the number of the paragraph (e.g., para. 4).

> As researchers have explained, "Incorporating fresh fruits and vegetables into one's diet can be a challenge for residents of areas where there are few or no easily accessible supermarkets" (Smith & Jones, 2006, para. 4).

Even if a source does not have numbered paragraphs, it is likely to have headings that organize the content. In your citation, name the section where your cited information appears, followed by a paragraph number.

> The American Lung Association (2010) noted, "After smoking, radon exposure is the second most common cause of lung cancer" (What Causes Lung Cancer? section, para. 2).

This student cited the appropriate section heading within the website and then counted to find the specific paragraph where the cited information was located.

If an online source has no listed author and no date, use the source title and the abbreviation *n.d.*in your parenthetical reference.

> It has been suggested that electromagnetic radiation from cellular telephones may pose a risk for developing certain cancers ("Cell Phones and Cancer," n.d.).

Personal Communication

For personal communications, such as interviews, letters, and e-mails, cite the name of the person involved, clarify that the material is from a personal communication, and provide the specific date the communication took place. Note that while in-text citations correspond to entries in the references section, personal communications are an exception to this rule. They are cited only in the body text of your paper.

> J. H. Yardley, M.D., believes that available information on the relationship between cell phone use and cancer is inconclusive (personal communication, May 1, 2009).

writing at work

At work, you may sometimes share information resources with your colleagues by photocopying an interesting article or forwarding the URL of a useful website. Your goal in these situations and in formal research citations is the same. The goal is to provide enough information to help your professional peers locate and follow up on potentially useful information. Provide as much specific information as possible to achieve that goal, and consult with your professor as to what specific style he or she may prefer.

Exercise 13.1.2.4

Revisit the problem citations you identified in Exercise 3—for instance, sources with no listed author or other oddities. Review the guidelines provided in this section and edit your citations for these kinds of sources according to APA guidelines.

Key Takeaways

- In APA papers, in-text citations include the name of the author(s) and the year of publication whenever possible.
- Page numbers are always included when citing quotations. It is optional to include page numbers when citing paraphrased material; however, this should be done when citing a specific portion of a work.
- When citing online sources, provide the same information used for print sources if it is available.
- When a source does not provide information that usually appears in a citation, in-text citations should provide readers with alternative information that would help them locate the source material. This may include the title of the source, section headings and paragraph numbers for websites, and so forth.
- When writing a paper, discuss with your professor what particular standards he or she would like you to follow.

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13.1.3: Creating a References Section (Part 1)

Learning Objectives

- Apply American Psychological Association (APA) style and formatting guidelines for a references section.

This section provides detailed information about how to create the references section of your paper. You will review basic formatting guidelines and learn how to format bibliographical entries for various types of sources. This section of Chapter 13, like the previous section, is meant to be used as a reference tool while you write.

Formatting the References Section: The Basics

At this stage in the writing process, you may already have begun setting up your references section. This section may consist of a single page for a brief research paper or may extend for many pages in professional journal articles. As you create this section of your paper, follow the guidelines provided here.

Formatting the References Section

To set up your references section, use the insert page break feature of your word-processing program to begin a new page. Note that the header and margins will be the same as in the body of your paper, and pagination continues from the body of your paper. (In other words, if you set up the body of your paper correctly, the correct header and page number should appear automatically in your references section.) See additional guidelines below.

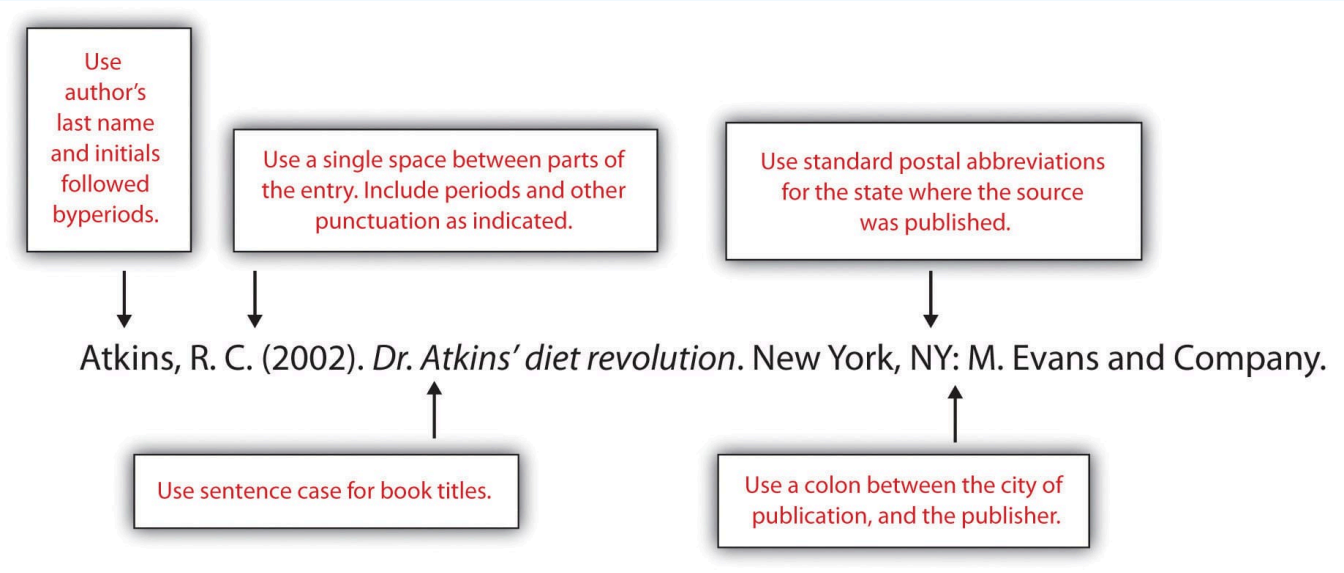
Formatting Reference Entries

Reference entries should include the following information:

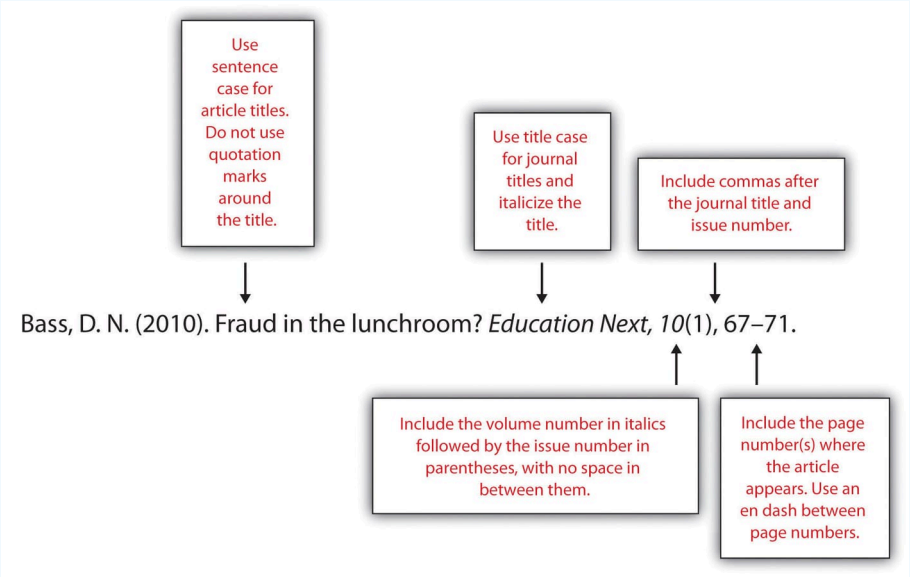
- The name of the author(s)
- The year of publication and, where applicable, the exact date of publication
- The full title of the source
- For books, the city of publication
- For articles or essays, the name of the periodical or book in which the article or essay appears
- For magazine and journal articles, the volume number, issue number, and pages where the article appears
- For sources on the web, the URL where the source is located

See the following examples for how to format a book or journal article with a single author.

Sample Book Entry



Sample Journal Article Entry



The following box provides general guidelines for formatting the reference page. For the remainder of this chapter, you will learn about how to format bibliographical entries for different source types, including multiauthor and electronic sources.

Formatting the References Section: APA General Guidelines

1. Include the heading *References*, centered at the top of the page. The heading should not be boldfaced, italicized, or underlined.
2. Use double-spaced type throughout the references section, as in the body of your paper.
3. Use hanging indentation for each entry. The first line should be flush with the left margin, while any lines that follow should be

indented five spaces. Note that hanging indentation is the opposite of normal indenting rules for paragraphs.
4. List entries in alphabetical order by the author's last name. For a work with multiple authors, use the last name of the first author listed.
5. List authors' names using this format: Smith, J. C.
6. For a work with no individual author(s), use the name of the organization that published the work or, if this is unavailable, the title of the work in place of the author's name.

7. For works with multiple authors, follow these guidelines:

- For works with up to seven authors, list the last name and initials for each author.
- For works with more than seven authors, list the first six names, followed by ellipses, and then the name of the last author listed.
- Use an ampersand before the name of the last author listed.

8. Use title case for journal titles. Capitalize all important words in the title.

9. Use sentence case for all other titles—books, articles, web pages, and other source titles. Capitalize the first word of the title. Do not capitalize any other words in the title except for the following:

- Proper nouns
- First word of a subtitle
- First word after a colon or dash

10. Use italics for book and journal titles. Do not use italics, underlining, or quotation marks for titles of shorter works, such as articles.

Exercise 13.1.3.1

Set up the first page of your references section and begin adding entries, following the APA formatting guidelines provided in this section.

1. If there are any simple entries that you can format completely using the general guidelines, do so at this time.
2. For entries you are unsure of how to format, type in as much information as you can, and highlight the entries so you can return to them later.

Formatting Reference Entries for Different Source Types

As is the case for in-text citations, formatting reference entries becomes more complicated when you are citing a source with multiple authors, citing various types of online media, or citing sources for which you must provide additional information beyond the basics listed in the general guidelines. The following guidelines show how to format reference entries for these different situations.

Print Sources: Books

For book-length sources and shorter works that appear in a book, follow the guidelines that best describes your source.

A Book by Two or More Authors

List the authors' names in the order they appear on the book's title page. Use an ampersand before the last author's name.

Campbell, D. T., & Stanley, J. C. (1963). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research.* Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

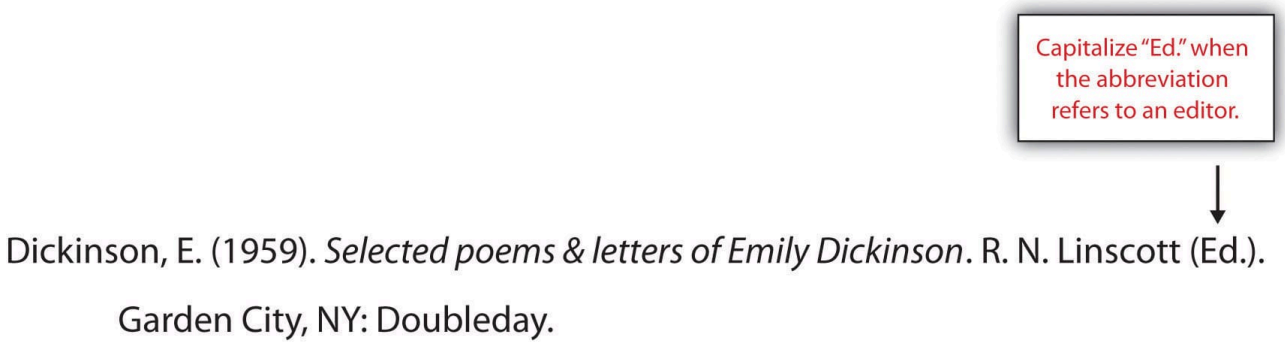
An Edited Book with No Author

List the editor or editors' names in place of the author's name, followed by *Ed.* or *Eds.* in parentheses.

Myers, C., & Reamer, D. (Eds.). (2009). *2009 nutrition index.* San Francisco, CA: HealthSource, Inc.

An Edited Book with an Author

List the author's name first, followed by the title and the editor or editors. Note that when the editor is listed after the title, you list the initials before the last name.



Tip

The previous example shows the format used for an edited book with one author—for instance, a collection of a famous person's letters that has been edited. This type of source is different from an anthology, which is a collection of articles or essays by different authors. For citing works in anthologies, see the guidelines later in this section.

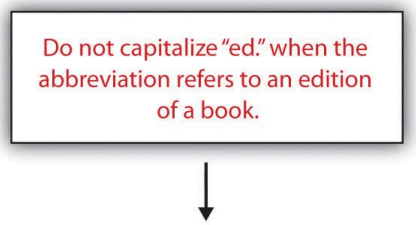
A Translated Book

Include the translator's name after the title, and at the end of the citation, list the date the original work was published. Note that for the translator's name, you list the initials before the last name.

Freud, S. (1965). *New introductory lectures on psycho-analysis* (J. Strachey, Trans.). New York, NY: W. W. Norton. (Original work published 1933).

A Book Published in Multiple Editions

If you are using any edition other than the first edition, include the edition number in parentheses after the title.

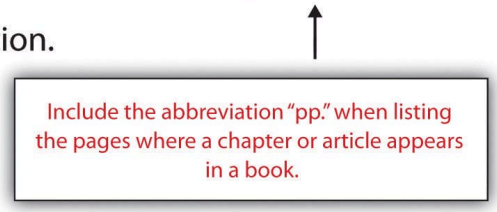


Berk, L. (2001). *Development through the lifespan* (2nd ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

A Chapter in an Edited Book

List the name of the author(s) who wrote the chapter, followed by the chapter title. Then list the names of the book editor(s) and the title of the book, followed by the page numbers for the chapter and the usual information about the book's publisher.

Hughes, J. R., & Pierattini, R. A. (1992). An introduction to pharmacotherapy for mental disorders. In J. Grabowski & G. VandenBos (Eds.), *Psychopharmacology* (pp. 97–125). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.



A Work That Appears in an Anthology

Follow the same process you would use to cite a book chapter, substituting the article or essay title for the chapter title.

Beck, A. T., & Young, J. (1986). College blues. In D. Goleman & D. Heller (Eds.), *The pleasures of psychology* (pp. 309–323). New York, NY: New American Library.

Include the abbreviation "pp." when listing the pages where a chapter or article appears in a book.

An Article in a Reference Book

List the author's name if available; if no author is listed, provide the title of the entry where the author's name would normally be listed. If the book lists the name of the editor(s), include it in your citation. Indicate the volume number (if applicable) and page numbers in parentheses after the article title.

The census. (2006). In J. W. Wright (Ed.), *The New York Times 2006 almanac* (pp. 268–275). New York, NY: Penguin.

Capitalize proper nouns that appear in a book title.

Two or More Books by the Same Author

List the entries in order of their publication year, beginning with the work published first.

- Swedan, N. (2001). *Women's sports medicine and rehabilitation.* Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen Publishers.
- Swedan, N. (2003). *The active woman's health and fitness handbook.* New York, NY: Perigee.

If two books have multiple authors, and the first author is the same but the others are different, alphabetize by the second author's last name (or the third or fourth, if necessary).

- Carroll, D., & Aaronson, F. (2008). *Managing type II diabetes.* Chicago, IL: Southwick Press.
- Carroll, D., & Zuckerman, N. (2008). *Gestational diabetes.* Chicago, IL: Southwick Press.

Books by Different Authors with the Same Last Name

Alphabetize entries by the authors' first initial.

Smith, I. K. (2008). *The 4-day diet*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

Capitalize the first word of a subtitle.

Smith, S. (2008). *The complete guide to Navy Seal fitness: Updated for today's warrior elite* (3rd ed.). Long Island City, NY: Hatherleigh Press.

A Book Authored by an Organization

Treat the organization name as you would an author's name. For the purposes of alphabetizing, ignore words like *The* in the organization's name. (That is, a book published by the American Heart Association would be listed with other entries whose authors' names begin with *A*.)

American Psychiatric Association. (1994). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders DSM-IV* (4th ed.). Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing.

A Book-Length Report

Format technical and research reports as you would format other book-length sources. If the organization that issued the report assigned it a number, include the number in parentheses after the title. (See also the guidelines provided for citing works produced by government agencies.)

Jameson, R., & Dewey, J. (2009). *Preliminary findings from an evaluation of the president's physical fitness program in Pleasantville school district.* Pleasantville, WA: Pleasantville Board of Education.

A Book Authored by a Government Agency

Treat these as you would a book published by a nongovernment organization, but be aware that these works may have an identification number listed. If so, include it in parentheses after the publication year.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2002). *The decennial censuses from 1790 to 2000* (Publication No. POL/02-MA). Washington, DC: US Government Printing Offices.

Exercise 13.1.3.2

Revisit the references section you began to compile in Exercise 1. Use the guidelines provided to format any entries for book-length print sources that you were unable to finish earlier.

Review how Jorge formatted these book-length print sources:

Atkins, R. C. (2002). *Dr. Atkins' diet revolution*. New York, NY: M. Evans and Company.

Agatson, A. (2003). *The South Beach diet*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Griffin.

Print Sources: Periodicals

An Article in a Scholarly Journal

Include the following information:

- Author or authors' names
- Publication year
- Article title (in sentence case, without quotation marks or italics)
- Journal title (in title case and in italics)
- Volume number (in italics)
- Issue number (in parentheses)
- Page number(s) where the article appears

DeMarco, R. F. (2010). Palliative care and African American women living with HIV. *Journal of Nursing Education, 49*(5), 1–4.

An Article in a Journal Paginated by Volume

In these types of journals, page numbers for one volume continue across all the issues in that volume. For instance, the winter issue may begin with page 1, and in the spring issue that follows, the page numbers pick up where the previous issue left off. (If you have ever wondered why a print journal did not begin on page 1, or wondered why the page numbers of a journal extend into four digits, this is why.) Omit the issue number from your reference entry.

Wagner, J. (2009). Rethinking school lunches: A review of recent literature. *American School Nurses' Journal*, *47,* 1123–1127.

An Abstract of a Scholarly Article

At times you may need to cite an abstract—the summary that appears at the beginning—of a published article. If you are citing the abstract only, and it was published separately from the article, provide the following information:

- Publication information for the article
- Information about where the abstract was published (for instance, another journal or a collection of abstracts)

Use this format for abstracts published in a collection of abstracts.

Romano, S. (2005). Parental involvement in raising standardized test scores. [Abstract]. *Elementary Education Abstracts, 19,* 36.

Use this format for abstracts published in another journal.

Simpson, M. J. (2008). Assessing educational progress: Beyond standardized testing. *Journal of the Association for School Administrative Professionals*, 35(4), 32–40. Abstract obtained from Assessment in Education, 2009, 73(6), Abstract No. 537892.

A Journal Article with Two to Seven Authors

List all the authors' names in the order they appear in the article. Use an ampersand before the last name listed.

- Barker, E. T., & Bornstein, M. H. (2010). Global self-esteem, appearance satisfaction, and self-reported dieting in early adolescence. *Journal of Early Adolescence, 30*(2), 205–224.
- Tremblay, M. S., Shields, M., Laviolette, M., Craig, C. L., Janssen, I., & Gorber, S. C. (2010). Fitness of Canadian children and youth: Results from the 2007–2009 Canadian Health Measures Survey. *Health Reports, 21*(1), 7–20.

A Journal Article with More Than Seven Authors

List the first six authors' names, followed by a comma, an ellipsis, and the name of the last author listed. The article in the following example has sixteen listed authors; the reference entry lists the first six authors and the sixteenth, omitting the seventh through the fifteenth.

Straznicky, N. E., Lambert, E. A., Nestel, P. J., McGrane, M. T., Dawood, T., Schlaich, M. P., … Lambert, G. W. (2010). Sympathetic neural adaptation to hypocaloric diet with or without exercise training in obese metabolic syndrome subjects. *Diabetes*, *59*(1), 71–79.

Because some names are omitted, use a comma and an ellipsis, rather than an ampersand, before the final name listed.

Writing at Work

The idea of an eight-page article with sixteen authors may seem strange to you—especially if you are in the midst of writing a ten-page research paper on your own. More often than not, articles in scholarly journals list multiple authors. Sometimes, the authors actually did collaborate on writing and editing the published article. In other instances, some of the authors listed may have contributed to the research in some way while being only minimally involved in the process of writing the article. Whenever you collaborate with colleagues to produce a written product, follow your profession's conventions for giving everyone proper credit for their contribution.

A Magazine Article

After the publication year, list the issue date. Otherwise, treat these as you would journal articles. List the volume and issue number if both are available.

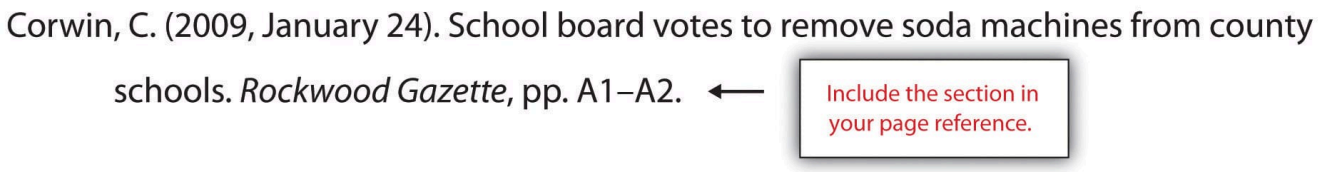
List the month after the year. For weekly magazines, list the full date, e.g. "March 8, 2010."

Marano, H. E. (2010, March/April). Keen cuisine: Dairy queen. *Psychology Today*, *43*(2), 58.

A Newspaper Article

Treat these as you would magazine and journal articles, with one important difference: precede the page number(s) with the abbreviation *p.* (for a single-page article) or *pp.* (for a multipage article). For articles whose pagination is not continuous, list all the pages included in the article. For example, an article that begins on page A1 and continues on pages A4 would have the page

reference A1, A4. An article that begins on page A1 and continues on pages A4 and A5 would have the page reference A1, A4–A5.



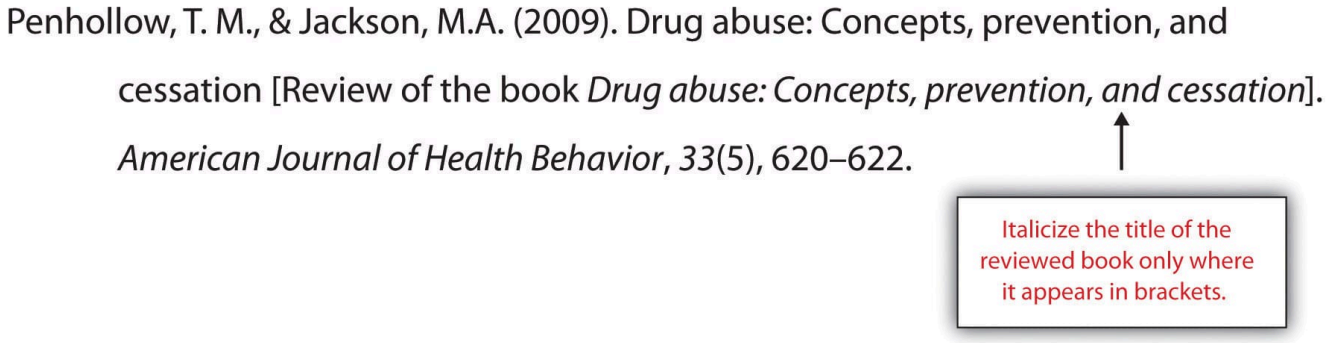
A Letter to the Editor

After the title, indicate in brackets that the work is a letter to the editor.

Jones, J. (2009, January 31). Food police in our schools [Letter to the editor]. *Rockwood Gazette,* p. A8.

A Review

After the title, indicate in brackets that the work is a review and state the name of the work being reviewed. (Note that even if the title of the review is the same as the title of the book being reviewed, as in the following example, you should treat it as an article title. Do not italicize it.)



Exercise 13.1.3.3

Revisit the references section you began to compile in Exercise 1. Use the guidelines provided above to format any entries for periodicals and other shorter print sources that you were unable to finish earlier.

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13.1.4: Creating a References Section (Part 2)

Electronic Sources

Citing Articles from Online Periodicals: URLs and Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs)

Whenever you cite online sources, it is important to provide the most up-to-date information available to help readers locate the source. In some cases, this means providing an article's URL, or web address. (The letters *URL* stand for uniform resource locator.) Always provide the most complete URL possible. Provide a link to the specific article used, rather than a link to the publication's homepage.

As you know, web addresses are not always stable. If a website is updated or reorganized, the article you accessed in April may move to a different location in May. The URL you provided may become a dead link. For this reason, many online periodicals, especially scholarly publications, now rely on DOIs rather than URLs to keep track of articles.

A DOI is a Digital Object Identifier—an identification code provided for some online documents, typically articles in scholarly journals. Like a URL, its purpose is to help readers locate an article. However, a DOI is more stable than a URL, so it makes sense to include it in your reference entry when possible. Follow these guidelines:

- If you are citing an online article with a DOI, list the DOI at the end of the reference entry.
- If the article appears in print as well as online, you do not need to provide the URL. However, include the words *Electronic version* after the title in brackets.
- In other respects, treat the article as you would a print article. Include the volume number and issue number if available. (Note, however, that these may not be available for some online periodicals).

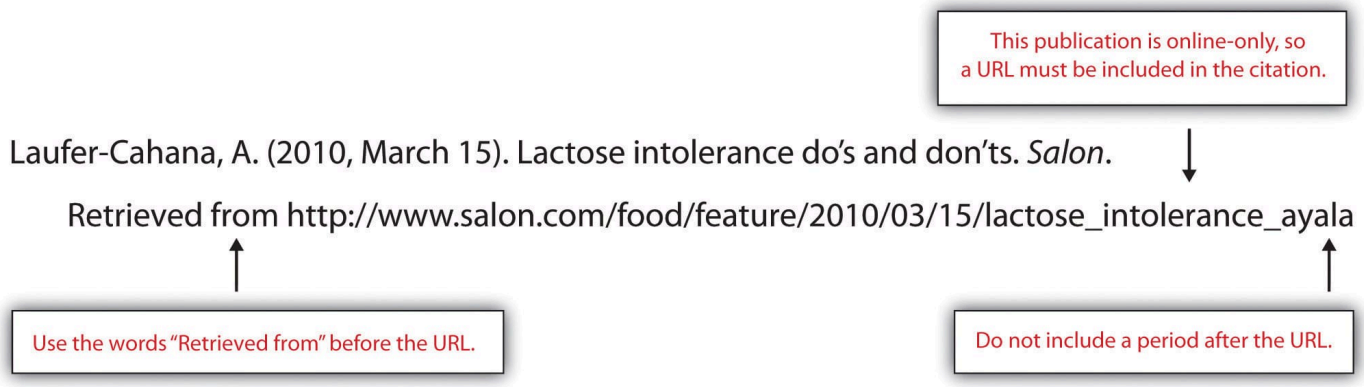
An Article from an Online Periodical with a DOI

List the DOI if one is provided. There is no need to include the URL if you have listed the DOI.

Bell, J. R. (2006). Low-carb beats low-fat diet for early losses but not long term. *OBGYN News, 41*(12), 32. doi:10.1016/S0029-7437(06)71905-X

An Article from an Online Periodical with No DOI

List the URL. Include the volume and issue number for the periodical if this information is available. (For some online periodicals, it may not be.)



Note that if the article appears in a print version of the publication, you do not need to list the URL, but do indicate that you accessed the electronic version.

Robbins, K. (2010, March/April). Nature's bounty: A heady feast [Electronic version]. *Psychology Today, 43*(2), 58.

A Newspaper Article

Provide the URL of the article.

McNeil, D. G. (2010, May 3). Maternal health: A new study challenges benefits of vitamin A for women and babies. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from www.nytimes.com/2010/05/04/he...tml?ref=health

An Article Accessed through a Database

Cite these articles as you would normally cite a print article. Provide database information only if the article is difficult to locate.

Tip

APA style does not require writers to provide the item number or accession number for articles retrieved from databases. You may choose to do so if the article is difficult to locate or the database is an obscure one. Check with your professor to see if this is something he or she would like you to include.

An Abstract of an Article

Format these as you would an article citation, but add the word *Abstract* in brackets after the title.

Bradley, U., Spence, M., Courtney, C. H., McKinley, M. C., Ennis, C. N., McCance, D. R....Hunter, S. J. (2009). Low-fat versus low-carbohydrate weight reduction diets: Effects on weight loss, insulin resistance, and cardiovascular risk: A randomized control trial [Abstract]. *Diabetes*, *58*(12), 2741–2748. diabetes.diabetesjournals.org...00098.abstract

A Nonperiodical Web Document

The ways you cite different nonperiodical web documents may vary slightly from source to source, depending on the information that is available. In your citation, include as much of the following information as you can:

- Name of the author(s), whether an individual or organization
- Date of publication (Use *n.d.* if no date is available.)
- Title of the document
- Address where you retrieved the document

If the document consists of more than one web page within the site, link to the homepage or the entry page for the document.

American Heart Association. (2010). *Heart attack, stroke, and cardiac arrest warning signs.* Retrieved from http://www.americanheart.org/present...dentifier=3053

An Entry from an Online Encyclopedia or Dictionary

Because these sources often do not include authors' names, you may list the title of the entry at the beginning of the citation. Provide the URL for the specific entry.

Addiction. (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster's online dictionary*. Retrieved from http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/addiction

Data Sets

If you cite raw data compiled by an organization, such as statistical data, provide the URL where you retrieved the information. Provide the name of the organization that sponsors the site.

> US Food and Drug Administration. (2009). *Nationwide evaluation of X-ray trends: NEXT surveys performed* [Data file]. Retrieved from www.fda.gov/Radiation-Emittin...EvaluationofX- RayTrendsNEXT/ucm116508.htm

Graphic Data

When citing graphic data—such as maps, pie charts, bar graphs, and so on—include the name of the organization that compiled the information, along with the publication date. Briefly describe the contents in brackets. Provide the URL where you retrieved the information. (If the graphic is associated with a specific project or document, list it after your bracketed description of the contents.)

> US Food and Drug Administration. (2009). [Pie charts showing the percentage breakdown of the FDA's budget for fiscal year 2005]. *2005 FDA budget summary*. Retrieved from mhttp://www.fda.gov/AboutFDA/Reports.../ucm117231.htm

An Online Interview (Audio File or Transcript)

List the interviewer, interviewee, and date. After the title, include bracketed text describing the interview as an "Interview transcript" or "Interview audio file," depending on the format of the interview you accessed. List the name of the website and the URL where you retrieved the information. Use the following format.

> Davies, D. (Interviewer), & Pollan, M. (Interviewee). (2008). *Michael Pollan offers president food for thought* [Interview transcript]. Retrieved from National Public Radio website: www.npr.org/templates/transcr...ryId=100755362

An Electronic Book

Electronic books may include books available as text files online or audiobooks. If an electronic book is easily available in print, cite it as you would a print source. If it is unavailable in print (or extremely difficult to find), use the format in the example. (Use the words *Available from* in your citation if the book must be purchased or is not available directly.)

> Chisholm, L. (n.d.). *Celtic tales*. Retrieved from http://www.childrenslibrary.org/icdl/BookReader?bookid=chicelt_00150014&twoPage=false&route=text&size=0&fullscreen=false&pnum1=1&lang= English&ilang=English

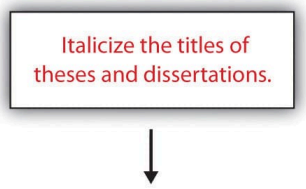
A Chapter from an Online Book or a Chapter or Section of a Web Document

These are treated similarly to their print counterparts with the addition of retrieval information. Include the chapter or section number in parentheses after the book title.

Hart, A. M. (1895). Restoratives—Coffee, cocoa, chocolate. In *Diet in sickness and in health* (VI). Retrieved from www.archive.org/details/dieti...ssin00hartrich

A Dissertation or Thesis from a Database

Provide the author, date of publication, title, and retrieval information. If the work is numbered within the database, include the number in parentheses at the end of the citation.



Coleman, M. D. (2004). *Effect of a low-carbohydrate, high-protein diet on bone mineral density, biomarkers of bone turnover, and calcium metabolism in healthy pre-menopausal females*. Retrieved from Virginia Tech Digital Library & Archives: Electronic Theses and Dissertations. (etd-07282004-174858)

Computer Software

For commonly used office software and programming languages, it is not necessary to provide a citation. Cite software only when you are using a specialized program, such as the nutrition tracking software in the following example. If you download software from a website, provide the version and the year if available.

Internet Brands, Inc. (2009). FitDay PC (Version 2) [Software]. Available from www.fitday.com/Pc/PcHome.html?gcid=14

A Post on a Blog or Video Blog

Citation guidelines for these sources are similar to those used for discussion forum postings. Briefly describe the type of source in brackets after the title.



Fazio, M. (2010, April 5). Exercising in my eighth month of pregnancy [Web log comment]. Retrieved from http://somanyblogs.com/~faziom/postID=67

Because the content may not be carefully reviewed for accuracy, discussion forums and blogs should not be relied upon as a major source of information. However, it may be appropriate to cite these sources for some types of research. You may also participate in discussion forums or comment on blogs that address topics of personal or professional interest. Always keep in mind that when you post, you are making your thoughts public—and in many cases, available through search engines. Make sure any posts that can easily be associated with your name are appropriately professional, because a potential employer could view them.

A Television or Radio Broadcast

Include the name of the producer or executive producer; the date, title, and type of broadcast; and the associated company and location.

West, Ty. (Executive producer). (2009, September 24). *PBS special report: Health care reform* [Television broadcast]. New York, NY, and Washington, DC: Public Broadcasting Service.

A Television or Radio Series or Episode

Include the producer and the type of series if you are citing an entire television or radio series.

Couture, D., Nabors, S., Pinkard, S., Robertson, N., & Smith, J. (Producers). (1979). *The Diane Rehm show* [Radio series]. Washington, DC: National Public Radio.

To cite a specific episode of a radio or television series, list the name of the writer or writers (if available), the date the episode aired, its title, and the type of series, along with general information about the series.

Bernanke, J., & Wade, C. (2010, January 10). Hummingbirds: Magic in the air [Television series episode]. In F. Kaufman (Executive producer), *Nature*. New York, NY: WNET.

A Motion Picture

Name the director or producer (or both), year of release, title, country of origin, and studio.

Spurlock, M. (Director/producer), Morley, J. (Executive producer), & Winters. H. M. (Executive producer). (2004). *Super size me*. United States: Kathbur Pictures in association with Studio on Hudson.

A Recording

Name the primary contributors and list their role. Include the recording medium in brackets after the title. Then list the location and the label.

- Smith, L. W. (Speaker). (1999). *Meditation and relaxation* [CD]. New York, NY: Earth, Wind, & Sky Productions.
- Székely, I. (Pianist), Budapest Symphony Orchestra (Performers), & Németh, G. (Conductor). (1988). *Chopin piano concertos no. 1 and 2* [CD]. Hong Kong: Naxos.

A Podcast

Provide as much information as possible about the writer, director, and producer; the date the podcast aired; its title; any organization or series with which it is associated; and where you retrieved the podcast.

Kelsey, A. R. (Writer), Garcia, J. (Director), & Kim, S. C. (Producer). (2010, May 7). Lies food labels tell us. *Savvy consumer podcasts* [Audio podcast]. Retrieved from www.savvyconsumer.org/podcasts/050710

Exercise 13.1.4.4

Revisit the references section you began to compile in Exercise 1.

1. Use the APA guidelines provided in this section to format any entries for electronic sources that you were unable to finish earlier.
2. If your sources include a form of media not covered in the APA guidelines here, consult with a writing tutor or review a print or online reference book. You may wish to visit the website of the American Psychological Association at http://www.apa.org or the Purdue University Online Writing lab at http://owl.english.purdue.edu, which regularly updates its online style guidelines.
3. Give your paper a final edit to check the references section.

Key Takeaways

In APA papers, entries in the references section include as much of the following information as possible:

- **Print sources.** Author(s), date of publication, title, publisher, page numbers (for shorter works), editors (if applicable), and periodical title (if applicable).
- **Online sources (text-based).** Author(s), date of publication, title, publisher or sponsoring organization, and DOI or URL (if applicable).
- **Electronic sources (non-text-based).** Provide details about the creator(s) of the work, title, associated company or series, and date the work was produced or broadcast. The specific details provided will vary depending on the medium and the information that is available.
- **Electronic sources (text-based).** If an electronic source is also widely available in print form, it is sometimes unnecessary to provide details about how to access the electronic version. Check the guidelines for the specific source type.

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13.1.5: Using Modern Language Association (MLA) Style

Learning Objectives

- Identify the major components of a research paper written using MLA style.
- Apply general Modern Language Association (MLA) style and formatting conventions in a research paper.

We have addressed American Psychological Association (APA) style, as well as the importance of giving credit where credit is due, so now let's turn our attention to the formatting and citation style of the Modern Language Association, known as MLA style.

MLA style is often used in the liberal arts and humanities. Like APA style, it provides a uniform framework for consistency across a document in several areas. MLA style provides a format for the manuscript text and parenthetical citations, or in-text citations. It also provides the framework for the works cited area for references at the end of the essay. MLA style emphasizes brevity and clarity. As a student writer, it is to your advantage to be familiar with both major styles, and this section will outline the main points of MLA as well as offer specific examples of commonly used references. Remember that your writing represents you in your absence. The correct use of a citation style demonstrates your attention to detail and ability to produce a scholarly work in an acceptable style, and it can help prevent the appearance or accusations of plagiarism.

If you are taking an English, art history, or music appreciation class, chances are that you will be asked to write an essay in MLA format. One common question goes something like "What's the difference?" referring to APA and MLA style, and it deserves our consideration. The liberal arts and humanities often reflect works of creativity that come from individual and group effort, but they may adapt, change, or build on previous creative works. The inspiration to create something new, from a song to a music video, may contain elements of previous works. Drawing on your fellow artists and authors is part of the creative process, and so is giving credit where credit is due.

A reader interested in your subject wants not only to read what you wrote but also to be aware of the works that you used to create it. Readers want to examine your sources to see if you know your subject, to see if you missed anything, or if you offer anything new and interesting. Your new or up-to-date sources may offer the reader additional insight on the subject being considered. It also demonstrates that you, as the author, are up-to-date on what is happening in the field or on the subject. Giving credit where it is due enhances your credibility, and the MLA style offers a clear format to use.

Uncredited work that is incorporated into your own writing is considered plagiarism. In the professional world, plagiarism results in loss of credibility and often compensation, including future opportunities. In a classroom setting, plagiarism results in a range of sanctions, from loss of a grade to expulsion from a school or university. In both professional and academic settings, the penalties are severe. MLA offers artists and authors a systematic style of reference, again giving credit where credit is due, to protect MLA users from accusations of plagiarism.

MLA style uses a citation in the body of the essay that links to the works cited page at the end. The in-text citation is offset with parentheses, clearly calling attention to itself for the reader. The reference to the author or title is like a signal to the reader that information was incorporated from a separate source. It also provides the reader with information to then turn to the works cited section of your essay (at the end) where they can find the complete reference. If you follow the MLA style, and indicate your source both in your essay and in the works cited section, you will prevent the possibility of plagiarism. If you follow the MLA guidelines, pay attention to detail, and clearly indicate your sources, then this approach to formatting and citation offers a proven way to demonstrate your respect for other authors and artists.

Five Reasons to Use MLA Style

1. To demonstrate your ability to present a professional, academic essay in the correct style
2. To gain credibility and authenticity for your work
3. To enhance the ability of the reader to locate information discussed in your essay
4. To give credit where credit is due and prevent plagiarism

5. To get a good grade or demonstrate excellence in your writing

Before we transition to specifics, please consider one word of caution: consistency. If you are instructed to use the MLA style and need to indicate a date, you have options. For example, you could use an international or a US style:

- **International style:** 18 May 1980 (day/month/year)
- **US style:** May 18, 1980 (month/day/year)

If you are going to the US style, be consistent in its use. You'll find you have the option on page 83 of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th edition. You have many options when writing in English as the language itself has several conventions, or acceptable ways of writing particular parts of speech or information. For example, on the next page our *MLA Handbook* addresses the question:

Which convention is preferred in MLA style:

twentieth century
Twentieth Century
20th century
20th Century

You are welcome to look in the *MLA Handbook* and see there is one preferred style or convention (you will also find the answer at end of this section marked by an asterisk [*]). Now you may say to yourself that you won't write that term and it may be true, but you will come to a term or word that has more than one way it can be written. In that case, what convention is acceptable in MLA style? This is where the *MLA Handbook* serves as an invaluable resource. Again, your attention to detail and the professional presentation of your work are aspects of learning to write in an academic setting.

Now let's transition from a general discussion on the advantages of MLA style to what we are required to do to write a standard academic essay. We will first examine a general "to do" list, then review a few "do not" suggestions, and finally take a tour through a sample of MLA features. Links to sample MLA papers are located at the end of this section.

General MLA List

1. Use standard white paper (8.5 × 11 inches).
2. Double space the essay and quotes.
3. Use Times New Roman 12-point font.
4. Use one-inch margins on all sides
5. Indent paragraphs (five spaces or 1.5 inches).
6. Include consecutive page numbers in the upper-right corner.
7. Use italics to indicate a title, as in *Writing for Success*.
8. On the first page, place your name, course, date, and instructor's name in the upper-left corner.
9. On the first page, place the title centered on the page, with no bold or italics and all words capitalized.
10. On all pages, place the header, student's name + one space + page number, 1.5 inches from the top, aligned on the right.

Tip

Depending on your field of study, you may sometimes write research papers in either APA or MLA style. Recognize that each has its advantages and preferred use in fields and disciplines. Learn to write and reference in both styles with proficiency.

Title Block Format

You never get a second chance to make a first impression, and your title block (not a separate title page; just a section at the top of the first page) makes an impression on the reader. If correctly formatted with each element of information in its proper place, form, and format, it says to the reader that you mean business, that you are a professional, and that you take your work seriously, so it should, in turn, be seriously considered. Your title block in MLA style contributes to your credibility. Remember that your writing represents you in your absence, and the title block is the tailored suit or outfit that represents you best. That said, sometimes a separate title page is necessary, but it is best both to know how to properly format a title block or page in MLA style and to ask your instructor if it is included as part of the assignment.

> Your name
>
> Instructor
>
> Course number
>
> Date
>
> Title of Paper

Paragraphs and Indentation

Make sure you indent five spaces (from the left margin). You'll see that the indent offsets the beginning of a new paragraph. We use paragraphs to express single ideas or topics that reinforce our central purpose or thesis statement. Paragraphs include topic sentences, supporting sentences, and conclusion or transitional sentences that link paragraphs together to support the main focus of the essay.

Tables and Illustrations

Place tables and illustrations as close as possible to the text they reinforce or complement. Here's an example of a table in MLA.

Table 13.2

Sales Figures by Year	Sales Amount ($)
2007	100,000
2008	125,000
2009	185,000
2010	215,000

As we can see in Table 13.2, we have experienced significant growth since 2008.

This example demonstrates that the words that you write and the tables, figures, illustrations, or images that you include should be next to each other in your paper.

Parenthetical Citations

You must cite your sources as you use them. In the same way that a table or figure should be located right next to the sentence that discusses it (see the previous example), parenthetical citations, or citations enclosed in parenthesis that appear in the text, are required. You need to cite all your information. If someone else wrote it, said it, drew it, demonstrated it, or otherwise expressed it, you need to cite it. The exception to this statement is common, widespread knowledge. For example, if you search online for MLA resources, and specifically MLA sample papers, you will find many similar discussions on MLA style. MLA is a style and cannot be copyrighted because it is a style, but the seventh edition of the *MLA Handbook* can be copyright protected. If you reference a specific page in that handbook, you need to indicate it. If you write about a general MLA style issue that is commonly covered or addressed in multiple sources, you do not. When in doubt, reference the specific resource you used to write your essay.

Your in-text, or parenthetical, citations should do the following:

- Clearly indicate the specific sources also referenced in the works cited
- Specifically identify the location of the information that you used
- Keep the citation clear and concise, always confirming its accuracy

Works Cited Page

After the body of your paper comes the works cited page. It features the reference sources used in your essay. List the sources alphabetically by last name, or list them by title if the author is not known as is often the case of web-based articles. You will find links to examples of the works cited page in several of the sample MLA essays at the end of this section.

As a point of reference and comparison to our APA examples, let's examine the following three citations and the order of the information needed.

Citation Type	MLA Style	APA Style
Website	Author's Last Name, First Name. Title of the website. Publication Date. Name of Organization (if applicable). Date you accessed the website. <URL>.	Author's Last Name, First Initial. (Date of publication). Title of document. Retrieved from URL
Online article	Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." Title of the website. Date of publication. Organization that provides the website. Date you accessed the website.	Author's Last name, First Initial. (Date of publication). Title of article. *Title of Journal, Volume*(Issue). Retrieved from URL
Book	Author's Last Name, First Name. *Title of the Book*. Place of Publication: Publishing Company, Date of publication.	Author's Last Name, First Initial. (Date of publication). *Title of the book*. Place of Publication: Publishing Company.
Note: The items listed include proper punctuation and capitalization according to the style's guidelines.		

Exercise 13.1.5.1

In Section 13.1, you created a sample essay in APA style. After reviewing this section and exploring the resources linked at the end of the section (including California State University–Sacramento's clear example of a paper in MLA format), please convert your paper to MLA style using the formatting and citation guidelines. You may find it helpful to use online applications that quickly, easily, and at no cost convert your citations to MLA format.

Exercise 13.1.5.2

Please convert the APA-style citations to MLA style. You may find that online applications can quickly, easily, and at no cost convert your citations to MLA format. There are several websites and applications available free (or as a free trial) that will allow you to input the information and will produce a correct citation in the style of your choice. Consider these two sites:

- http://www.noodletools.com
- http://citationmachine.net

Hint: You may need access to the Internet to find any missing information required to correctly cite in MLA style. This demonstrates an important difference between APA and MLA style—the information provided to the reader.

Sample Student Reference List in APA Style	
1	Brent, D. A., Poling, K. D., & Goldstein, T. R. (2010). *Treating depressed and suicidal adolescents: A clinician's guide*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
MLA	
2	Dewan, S. (2007, September 17). Using crayons to exorcise Katrina. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from www.nytimes.com/2007/09/17/ar...gn/17ther.html
MLA	
3	Freud, S. (1955). Beyond the pleasure principle. In *The Complete Works of Sigmund Freud*. (Vol. XVII, pp. 3–66). London, England: Hogarth.
MLA	
4	Henley, D. (2007). Naming the enemy: An art therapy intervention for children with bipolar and comorbid disorders. *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association, 24*(3), 104–110.
MLA	
5	Hutson, M. (2008). Art therapy: The healing arts. *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from www.psychologytoday.com/artic...e-healing-arts
MLA	
6	Isis, P. D., Bus, J., Siegel, C. A., & Ventura, Y. (2010). Empowering students through creativity: Art therapy in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association, 27*(2), 56–61.
MLA	
7	Johnson, D. (1987). The role of the creative arts therapies in the diagnosis and treatment of psychological trauma. *The Arts in Psychotherapy, 14,* 7–13.
MLA	
8	Malchiodi, C. (2006). *Art therapy sourcebook*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
MLA	
9	Markel, R. (Producer). (2010). *I'm an artist* [Motion picture]. United States: Red Pepper Films.
MLA	
10	Kelley, S. J. (1984). The use of art therapy with sexually abused children. *Journal of Psychosocial Nursing and Mental Health, 22*(12), 12–28.
MLA	
11	Pifalo, T. (2008). Why art therapy? *Darkness to light: Confronting child abuse with courage*.Retrieved from www.darkness2light.org/KnowAb...rt_therapy.asp
MLA	

Sample Student Reference List in APA Style	
12	Rubin, J. A. (2005). *Child art therapy* (25th ed.). New York, NY: Wiley.
MLA	
13	Schimek, J. (1975). A critical re-examination of Freud's concept of unconscious mental representation. *International Review of Psychoanalysis, 2,* 171–187.
MLA	
14	Strauss, M. B. (1999). *No talk therapy for children and adolescents*. New York, NY: Norton.
MLA	
15	Thompson, T. (2008). *Freedom from meltdowns: Dr. Thompson's solutions for children with autism.*Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.
MLA	

Useful Sources of Examples of MLA Style

- Arizona State University Libraries offers an excellent resource with clear examples.
  - http://libguides.asu.edu/content.php...97&sid=1132964
- Purdue Online Writing Lab includes sample pages and works cited.
  - http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01
- California State University–Sacramento's Online Writing Lab has an excellent visual description and example of an MLA paper.
  - www.csus.edu/owl/index/mla/mla_format.htm
- SUNY offers an excellent, brief, side-by-side comparison of MLA and APA citations.
  - www.sunywcc.edu/LIBRARY/resea...A_08.03.10.pdf
- Cornell University Library provides comprehensive MLA information on its Citation Management website.
  - http://www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/mla
- The University of Kansas Writing Center is an excellent resource.
  - www.writing.ku.edu/guides

* (a) is the correct answer to the question at the beginning of this section. The *MLA Handbook* prefers "twentieth century."

Key Takeaways

- MLA style is often used in the liberal arts and humanities.
- MLA style emphasizes brevity and clarity.
- A reader interested in your subject wants not only to read what you wrote but also to be informed of the works you used to create it.
- MLA style uses a citation in the body of the essay that refers to the works cited section at the end.
- If you follow MLA style, and indicate your source both in your essay and in the works cited section, you will prevent the possibility of plagiarism.

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13.1.E: APA and MLA Documentation and Formatting (Exercises)

1. In this chapter, you learned strategies for using APA and MLA style documentation and formatting in a research paper. Locate a source that uses APA or MLA style, such as an article in a professional journal in the sciences or social sciences. Identify these key components of an APA or MLA paper in your example: the abstract, section heads, in-text citations, and references list.

2. Check one of your assignments for correct APA or MLA formatting and citations. (You may wish to conduct this activity in two sessions—one to edit the body of the paper and one to edit the references section.) Check for the following:

- All components of an APA or MLA paper are included.
- The title page (or title block) and body of the paper are correctly formatted.
- In-text, or parenthetical, citations are complete and correctly formatted.
- Sources cited within the paper match the sources listed in the references or works cited section.
- The references or works cited section uses correct formatting and lists entries in alphabetical order.

3. As electronic media continually change, guidelines for citing electronic sources are continually updated. Identify three new or emerging forms of electronic media not listed in this text—for instance, virtual communities, such as Second Life, or social networking sites, such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and MySpace. Answer the following questions:

- Under what circumstances would this media be a useful source of information for a research paper? How might students use these sources to conduct research five or ten years from now?
- What information would a student need to provide if citing this source? Why?
- Develop brief guidelines for how to cite the emerging media source types you identified.

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13.2: BOOK- WRITING SPACES- READINGS ON WRITING, VOL. I (LOWE AND ZEMLIANSKY)

https://writingspaces.org/sites/defa...ting-vol-1.pdf

Volumes in *Writing Spaces: Readings on Writing* offer multiple perspectives on a wide-range of topics about writing, much like the model made famous by Wendy Bishop's "The Subject Is . . ." series. In each chapter, authors present their unique views, insights, and strategies for writing by addressing the undergraduate reader directly. Drawing on their own experiences, these teachers-as-writers invite students to join in the larger conversation about developing nearly every aspect of the craft of writing. Consequently, each essay functions as a standalone text that can easily complement other selected readings in writing or writing-intensive courses across the disciplines at any level.

13.2.1: Backpacks vs. Briefcases- Steps toward Rhetorical Analysis

13.2.2: Collaborating Online- Digital Strategies for Group Work

13.2.3: Composing the Anthology- An Exercise in Patchwriting

13.2.4: Finding the Good Argument OR Why Bother With Logic?

13.2.5: "Finding Your Way In"- Invention as Inquiry Based Learning in First Year Writing

13.2.6: From Topic to Presentation- Making Choices to Develop Your Writing

13.2.7: Introduction- Open Source Composition Texts Arrive for College Writers

13.2.8: "I need you to say 'I'"- Why First Person Is Important in College Writing

13.2.9: Navigating Genres

13.2.10: Reflective Writing and the Revision Process- What Were You Thinking?

13.2.11: Reinventing Invention- Discovery and Investment in Writing

13.2.12: So You've Got a Writing Assignment. Now What?

13.2.13: Taking Flight- Connecting Inner and Outer Realities during Invention

13.2.14: The Inspired Writer vs. the Real Writer

13.2.15: What Is "Academic" Writing?

13.2.16: Why Visit Your Campus Writing Center?

13.2.17: Wikipedia Is Good for You!?

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13.2.1: Backpacks vs. Briefcases- Steps toward Rhetorical Analysis

Laura Bolin Carroll

First Impressions

Imagine the first day of class in first year composition at your university.* The moment your professor walked in the room, you likely began analyzing her and making assumptions about what kind of teacher she will be. You might have noticed what kind of bag she is carrying—a tattered leather satchel? a hot pink polka-dotted backpack? a burgundy brief case? You probably also noticed what she is wearing—trendy slacks and an untucked striped shirt? a skirted suit? jeans and a tee shirt?

It is likely that the above observations were only a few of the observations you made as your professor walked in the room. You might have also noticed her shoes, her jewelry, whether she wears a wedding ring, how her hair is styled, whether she stands tall or slumps, how quickly she walks, or maybe even if her nails are done. If you don't tend to notice any of these things about your professors, you certainly do about the people around you—your roommate, others in your residence hall, students you are assigned to work with in groups, or a prospective date. For most of us, many of the people we encounter in a given day are subject to this kind of quick analysis.

Now as you performed this kind of analysis, you likely didn't walk through each of these questions one by one, write out the answer, and add up the responses to see what kind of person you are interacting with. Instead, you quickly took in the information and made an informed, and likely somewhat accurate, decision about that person. Over the years, as you have interacted with others, you have built a mental database that you can draw on to make conclusions about what a person's looks tell you about their personality. You have become able to analyze quickly what people are saying about themselves through the way they choose to dress, accessorize, or wear their hair.

We have, of course, heard that you "can't judge a book by its cover," but, in fact, we do it all the time. Daily we find ourselves in situations where we are forced to make snap judgments. Each day we meet different people, encounter unfamiliar situations, and see media that asks us to do, think, buy, and act in all sorts of ways. In fact, our saturation in media and its images is one of the reasons why learning to do rhetorical analysis is so important. The more we know about how to analyze situations and draw informed conclusions, the better we can become about making savvy judgments about the people, situations and media we encounter.

Implications of Rhetorical Analysis

Media is one of the most important places where this kind of analysis needs to happen. Rhetoric—the way we use language and images to persuade—is what makes media work. Think of all the media you see and hear every day: Twitter, television shows, web pages, billboards, text messages, podcasts. Even as you read this chapter, more ways to get those messages to you quickly and in a persuasive manner are being developed. Media is constantly asking you to buy something, act in some way, believe something to be true, or interact with others in a specific manner. Understanding rhetorical messages is essential to help us to become informed consumers, but it also helps evaluate the ethics of messages, how they affect us personally, and how they affect society.

Take, for example, a commercial for men's deodorant that tells you that you'll be irresistible to women if you use their product. This campaign doesn't just ask you to buy the product, though. It also asks you to trust the company's credibility, or ethos, and to believe the messages they send about how men and women interact, about sexuality, and about what constitutes a healthy body. You have to decide whether or not you will choose to buy the product and how you will choose to respond to the messages that the commercial sends.

Or, in another situation, a Facebook group asks you to support health care reform. The rhetoric in this group uses people's stories of their struggles to obtain affordable health care. These stories, which are often heart-wrenching, use emotion to persuade you—also called pathos. You are asked to believe that health care reform is necessary and urgent, and you are asked to act on these beliefs by calling your congresspersons and asking them to support the reforms as well.

Because media rhetoric surrounds us, it is important to understand how rhetoric works. If we refuse to stop and think about

how and why it persuades us, we can become mindless consumers who buy into arguments about what makes us value ourselves and what makes us happy. For example, research has shown that only 2% of women consider themselves beautiful ("Campaign"), which has been linked to the way that the fashion industry defines beauty. We are also told by the media that buying more stuff can make us happy, but historical surveys show that US happiness peaked in the 1950s, when people saw as many advertisements in their lifetime as the average American sees in one year (Leonard).

Our worlds are full of these kinds of social influences. As we interact with other people and with media, we are continually creating and interpreting rhetoric. In the same way that you decide how to process, analyze or ignore these messages, you create them. You probably think about what your clothing will communicate as you go to a job interview or get ready for a date. You are also using rhetoric when you try to persuade your parents to send you money or your friends to see the movie that interests you. When you post to your blog or tweet you are using rhetoric. In fact, according to rhetorician Kenneth Burke, rhetoric is everywhere: "wherever there is persuasion, there is rhetoric. And wherever there is 'meaning,' there is 'persuasion.' Food eaten and digested is not rhetoric. But in the meaning of food there is much rhetoric, the meaning being persuasive enough for the idea of food to be used, like the ideas of religion, as a rhetorical device of statesmen" (71–72). In other words, most of our actions are persuasive in nature. What we choose to wear (tennis shoes vs. flip flops), where we shop (Whole Foods Market vs. Wal-Mart), what we eat (organic vs. fast food), or even the way we send information (snail mail vs. text message) can work to persuade others.

Chances are you have grown up learning to interpret and analyze these types of rhetoric. They become so commonplace that we don't realize how often and how quickly we are able to perform this kind of rhetorical analysis. When your teacher walked in on the first day of class, you probably didn't think to yourself, "I think I'll do some rhetorical analysis on her clothing and draw some conclusions about what kind of personality she might have and whether I think I'll like her." And, yet, you probably were able to come up with some conclusions based on the evidence you had.

However, when this same teacher hands you an advertisement, photograph or article and asks you to write a rhetorical analysis of it, you might have been baffled or felt a little overwhelmed. The good news is that many of the analytical processes that you already use to interpret the rhetoric around you are the same ones that you'll use for these assignments.

The Rhetorical Situation, Or Discerning Context

One of the first places to start is context. Rhetorical messages always occur in a specific situation or context. The president's speech might respond to a specific global event, like an economic summit; that's part of the context. You choose your clothing depending on where you are going or what you are doing; that's context. A television commercial comes on during specific programs and at specific points of the day; that's context. A billboard is placed in a specific part of the community; that's context, too.

In an article called "The Rhetorical Situation," Lloyd Bitzer argues that there are three parts to understanding the context of a rhetorical moment: exigence, audience and constraints. Exigence is the circumstance or condition that invites a response; "imperfection marked by urgency; it is a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be" (Bitzer 304). In other words, rhetorical discourse is usually responding to some kind of problem. You can begin to understand a piece's exigence by asking, "What is this rhetoric responding to?" "What might have happened to make the rhetor (the person who creates the rhetoric) respond in this way?"

The exigence can be extremely complex, like the need for a new Supreme Court justice, or it can be much simpler, like receiving an email that asks you where you and your friends should go for your road trip this weekend. Understanding the exigence is important because it helps you begin to discover the purpose of the rhetoric. It helps you understand what the discourse is trying to accomplish.

Another part of the rhetorical context is audience, those who are the (intended or unintended) recipients of the rhetorical message. The audience should be able to respond to the exigence. In other words, the audience should be able to help address the problem. You might be very frustrated with your campus's requirement that all first-year students purchase a meal plan for on-campus dining. You might even send an email to a good friend back home voicing that frustration. However, if you want to address the exigence of the meal plans, the most appropriate audience would be the person/office on campus that oversees meal plans. Your friend back home cannot solve the problem (though she may be able to offer sympathy or give you some good suggestions), but the person who can change the meal plan requirements is probably on campus. Rhetors make all sorts of choices based on their audience. Audience can determine the type of language used, the formality of the discourse, the medium or delivery of the rhetoric, and even the types of reasons used the make the rhetor's argument. Understanding the audience helps you begin to see and understand the rhetorical moves that the rhetor makes.

The last piece of the rhetorical situation is the constraints. The constraints of the rhetorical situation are those things that have the power to "constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence" (Bitzer 306). Constraints have a lot to do with how the rhetoric is presented. Constraints can be "beliefs, attitudes, documents, facts, traditions, images, interests, motives" (Bitzer 306). Constraints limit the way the discourse is delivered or communicated. Constraints may be something as simple as your instructor limiting your proposal to one thousand words, or they may be far more complex like the kinds of language you need to use to persuade a certain community.

So how do you apply this to a piece of rhetoric? Let's say you are flipping through a magazine, and you come across an advertisement that has a large headline that reads "Why Some People Say 'D'OH' When You Say 'Homer'" ("Why"). This ad is an Ad Council public service announcement (PSA) to promote arts education and is sponsored by Americans for the Arts and NAMM, the trade association of the international music products industry.

Since you want to understand more about what this ad means and what it wants you to believe or do, you begin to think about the rhetorical situation. You first might ask, "what is the ad responding to? What problem does it hope to address?" That's the exigence. In this case, the exigence is the cutting of arts funding and children's lack of exposure to the arts. According to the Ad Council's website, "the average kid is provided insufficient time to learn and experience the arts. This PSA campaign was created to increase involvement in championing arts education both in and out of school" ("Arts"). The PSA is responding directly to the fact that kids are not getting enough arts education.

Then you might begin to think about to whom the Ad Council targeted the ad. Unless you're a parent, you are probably not the primary audience. If you continued reading the text of the ad, you'd notice that there is information to persuade parents that the arts are helpful to their children and to let them know how to help their children become more involved with the arts. The ad tells parents that "the experience will for sure do more than entertain them. It'll build their capacity to learn more. In fact, the more art kids get, the smarter they become in subjects like math and science. And that's reason enough to make a parent say, 'D'oh!,' For Ten Simple Ways to instill art in your kids' lives visit AmericansForTheArts.org" ("Why"). Throughout the text of the ad, parents are told both what to believe about arts education and how to act in response to the belief.

There also might be a secondary audience for this ad—people who are not the main audience of the ad but might also be able to respond to the exigence. For example, philanthropists who could raise money for arts education or legislators who might pass laws for arts funding or to require arts education in public schools could also be intended audiences for this ad.

Finally, you might want to think about the constraints or the limitations on the ad. Sometimes these are harder to get at, but we can guess a few things. One constraint might be the cost of the ad. Different magazines charge differently for ad space as well as placement within the magazine, so the Ad Council could have been constrained by how much money they wanted to spend to circulate the ad. The ad is also only one page long, so there might have been a limitation on the amount of space for the ad. Finally, on the Ad Council's webpage, they list the requirements for organizations seeking the funding and support of the Ad Council. There are twelve criteria, but here are a few:

1. The sponsor organization must be a private non-profit 501(c)3 organization, private foundation, government agency or coalition of such groups.
2. The issue must address the Ad Council's focus on Health & Safety, Education, or Community. Applications which benefit children are viewed with favor—as part of the Ad Council's Commitment to Children.
3. The issue must offer a solution through an individual action.
4. The effort must be national in scope, so that the message has relevance to media audiences in communities throughout the nation. ("Become")

Each of these criteria helps to understand the limitations on both who can participate as rhetor and what can be said.

The exigence, audience and constraints are only one way to understand the context of a piece of rhetoric, and, of course, there are other ways to get at context. Some rhetoricians look at subject, purpose, audience and occasion. Others might look at the "rhetorical triangle" of writer, reader, and purpose.

An analysis using the rhetorical triangle would ask similar questions about audience as one using the rhetorical situation, but it would also ask questions about the writer and the purpose of the document. Asking questions about the writer helps the reader determine whether she or he is credible and knowledgeable. For example, the Ad Council has been creating public service announcements since 1942 ("Loose Lips Sink Ships," anyone?) and is a non-profit agency. They also document their credibility by showing the impact of their campaigns in several ways: "Destruction of our forests by wildfires has been reduced from 22 million acres to less than 8.4 million acres per year, since our Forest Fire Prevention campaign

began" and "6,000 Children were paired with a mentor in just the first 18 months of our mentoring campaign" ("About"). Based on this information, we can assume that the Ad Council is a credible rhetor, and whether or not we agree with the rhetoric they produce, we can probably assume it contains reliable information. Asking questions about the next part of the rhetorical triangle, the purpose of a piece of rhetoric, helps you understand what the rhetor is trying to achieve through the discourse. We can discern the purpose by asking questions like "what does the rhetor want me to believe after seeing this message?" or "what does the rhetor want me to do?" In some ways, the purpose takes the exigence to the next step. If the exigence frames the problem, the purpose frames the response to that problem.

The rhetorical situation and rhetorical triangle are two ways to begin to understand how the rhetoric functions within the context you find it. The key idea is to understand that no rhetorical performance takes place in a vacuum. One of the first steps to understanding a piece of rhetoric is to look at the context in which it takes place. Whatever terminology you (or your instructor) choose, it is a good idea to start by locating your analysis within a rhetorical situation.

The Heart of the Matter—The Argument

The rhetorical situation is just the beginning of your analysis, though. What you really want to understand is the argument—what the rhetor wants you to believe or do and how he or she goes about that persuasion. Effective argumentation has been talked about for centuries. In the fourth century BCE, Aristotle was teaching the men of Athens how to persuade different kinds of audiences in different kinds of rhetorical situations. Aristotle articulated three "artistic appeals" that a rhetor could draw on to make a case—logos, pathos, and ethos.

Logos is commonly defined as argument from reason, and it usually appeals to an audience's intellectual side. As audiences we want to know the "facts of the matter," and logos helps present these—statistics, data, and logical statements. For example, on our Homer ad for the arts, the text tells parents that the arts will "build their capacity to learn more. In fact, the more art kids get, the smarter they become in subjects like math and science" ("Why"). You might notice that there aren't numbers or charts here, but giving this information appeals to the audience's intellectual side.

That audience can see a continuation of the argument on the Ad Council's webpage, and again much of the argument appeals to logos and draws on extensive research that shows that the arts do these things:

- Allow kids to express themselves creatively and bolster their self-confidence.
- Teach kids to be more tolerant and open.
- Improve kids' overall academic performance.
- Show that kids actively engaged in arts education are likely to have higher SAT scores than those with little to no arts involvement.
- Develop skills needed by the 21st century workforce: critical thinking, creative problem solving, effective communication, teamwork and more.
- Keep students engaged in school and less likely to drop out. ("Arts")

Each bullet above is meant to intellectually persuade parents that they need to be more intentional in providing arts education for their children.

Few of us are persuaded only with our mind, though. Even if we intellectually agree with something, it is difficult to get us to act unless we are also persuaded in our heart. This kind of appeal to emotion is called pathos. Pathetic appeals (as rhetoric that draws on pathos is called) used alone without logos and ethos can come across as emotionally manipulative or overly sentimental, but are very powerful when used in conjunction with the other two appeals.

Emotional appeals can come in many forms—an anecdote or narrative, an image such as a photograph, or even humor. For example, on their web campaign, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) uses an image of a baby chick and of Ronald McDonald wielding a knife to draw attention to their Chicken McCruely UnHappy Meal. These images are meant to evoke an emotional response in the viewer and, along with a logos appeal with the statistics about how cruelly chickens are treated, persuade the viewer to boycott McDonalds.

Pathos can also be a very effective appeal if the rhetor has to persuade the audience in a very short amount of time, which is why it is used heavily in print advertisements, billboards, or television commercials. An investment company will fill a 30-second commercial with images of families and couples enjoying each other, seeming happy, and surrounded by wealth to persuade you to do business with them. The 30-second time spot does not allow them to give the 15-year growth of each of their funds, and pathetic appeals will often hold our interest much longer than intellectual appeals.

The ad promoting the importance of art uses humor to appeal to the audience's emotional side. By comparing the epic poet Homer to Homer Simpson and his classic "d'oh!" the ad uses humor to draw people into their argument about the arts. The humor continues as they ask parents if their kids know the difference between the Homers, "The only Homer some kids know is the one who can't write his own last name" ("Why"). The ad also appeals to emotion through its language use (diction), describing Homer as "one very ancient dude," and describing The Odyssey as "the sequel" to The Iliad. In this case, the humor of the ad, which occurs in the first few lines, is meant to draw the reader in and help them become interested in the argument before the ad gets to the logos, which is in the last few lines of the ad.

The humor also makes the organization seem real and approachable, contributing to the ethos. The humor might lead you to think that Americans for the Arts is not a stuffy bunch of suits, but an organization you can relate to or one that has a realistic understanding of the world. Ethos refers to the credibility of the rhetor—which can be a person or an organization. A rhetor can develop credibility in many ways. The tone of the writing and whether that tone is appropriate for the context helps build a writer's ethos, as does the accuracy of the information or the visual presentation of the rhetoric.

In the Homer ad, the ethos is built in several ways. The simple, humorous and engaging language, such as "Greek Gods. Achilles Heel. Trojan Horse. All of these icons are brought to us by one very ancient dude—Homer. In The Iliad and its sequel, The Odyssey, he presented Greek mythology in everyday language" ("Why") draws the audience in and helps the tone of the ad seem very approachable. Also, the knowledge of Greek mythology and the information about how the arts help children—which also contribute to the logos appeal—make the ad seem credible and authoritative. However, the fact that the ad does not use too many statistics or overly technical language also contributes to the ethos of the ad because often sounding too intellectual can come across as pompous or stuffy.

Aristotle's artistic appeals are not the only way to understand the argument of rhetoric. You might choose to look at the claim or the unstated assumptions of a piece; someone else might consider the visual appeal of the rhetoric, like the font, page layout, types of paper, or images; another person might focus on the language use and the specific word choice and sentence structure of a piece. Logos, pathos, and ethos can provide a nice framework for analysis, but there are numerous ways to understand how a piece of rhetoric persuades (or fails to persuade).

Looking at the context and components of a piece of rhetoric often isn't enough, though, because it is important to draw conclusions about the rhetoric—does it successfully respond to the exigence? Is it an ethical approach? Is it persuasive? These kinds of questions let you begin to create your own claims, your own rhetoric, as you take a stand on what other people say, do, or write.

Beginning to Analyze

Once you have established the context for the rhetoric you are analyzing, you can begin to think about how well it fits into that context. You've probably been in a situation where you arrived way underdressed for an occasion. You thought that the dinner was just a casual get together with friends; it turned out to be a far more formal affair, and you felt very out of place. There are also times when discourse fails to respond to the situation well—it doesn't fit. On the other hand, successful discourses often respond very well to the context. They address the problem, consider the audience's needs, provide accurate information, and have a compelling claim. One of the reasons you work to determine the rhetorical situation for a piece of discourse is to consider whether it works within that context. You can begin this process by asking questions like:

- Does the rhetoric address the problem it claims to address?
- Is the rhetoric targeted at an audience who has the power to make change?
- Are the appeals appropriate to the audience?
- Does the rhetor give enough information to make an informed decision?
- Does the rhetoric attempt to manipulate in any way (by giving incomplete/inaccurate information or abusing the audience's emotions)?
- What other sub-claims do you have to accept to understand the rhetor's main claim? (For example, in order to accept the Ad Council's claim that the arts boost math and science scores, you first have to value the boosting of those scores.)
- What possible negative effects might come from this rhetoric?

Rhetorical analysis asks how discourse functions in the setting in which it is found. In the same way that a commercial for denture cream seems very out of place when aired during a reality television show aimed at teenagers, rhetoric that does not respond well to its context often fails to persuade. In order to perform analysis, you must understand the context and then you must carefully study the ways that the discourse does and does not respond appropriately to that context.

The bottom line is that the same basic principles apply when you look at any piece of rhetoric (your instructor's clothing, an advertisement, the president's speech): you need to consider the context and the argument. As you begin to analyze rhetoric, there are lots of different types of rhetoric you might encounter in a college classroom, such as

- Political cartoon
- Wikipedia entry
- Scholarly article
- Bar Graph
- Op-Ed piece in the newspaper
- Speech
- YouTube video
- Book chapter
- Photograph
- PowerPoint Presentation

All of the above types of discourse try to persuade you. They may ask you to accept a certain kind of knowledge as valid, they may ask you to believe a certain way, or they may ask you to act. It is important to understand what a piece of rhetoric is asking of you, how it tries to persuade you, and whether that persuasion fits within the context you encounter it in. Rhetorical analysis helps you answer those questions.

Implications of Rhetorical Analysis, Or Why Do This Stuff Anyway?

So you might be wondering if you know how to do this analysis already—you can tell what kind of person someone is by their clothing, or what a commercial wants you to buy without carefully listening to it—why do you need to know how to do more formal analysis? How does this matter outside a college classroom?

Well, first of all, much of the reading and learning in college requires some level of rhetorical analysis: as you read a textbook chapter to prepare for a quiz, it is helpful to be able to distill the main points quickly; when you read a journal article for a research paper, it is necessary to understand the scholar's thesis; when you watch a video in class, it is useful to be able to understand how the creator is trying to persuade you. But college is not the only place where an understanding of how rhetoric works is important. You will find yourself in many situations—from boardrooms to your children's classrooms or churches to city council meetings where you need to understand the heart of the arguments being presented.

One final example: in November 2000, Campbell's Soup Company launched a campaign to show that many of their soups were low in calories and showed pre-pubescent girls refusing to eat because they were "watching their weight." A very small organization called Dads and Daughters, a group that fights advertising that targets girls with negative body images, contacted Campbell's explaining the problems they saw in an ad that encouraged young girls to be self-conscious about their weight, and asked Campbell's to pull the ad. A few days later, Campbell's Vice President for Marketing and Corporate Communications called. One of the dads says, "the Vice President acknowledged he had received their letter, reviewed the ad again, saw their point, and was pulling the ad," responding to a "couple of guys writing a letter" ("Media"). Individuals who understand rhetorical analysis and act to make change can have a tremendous influence on their world.

Discussion

1. What are examples of rhetoric that you see or hear on a daily basis?
2. What are some ways that you create rhetoric? What kinds of messages are you trying to communicate?
3. What is an example of a rhetorical situation that you have found yourself in? Discuss exigence, audience, and constraints.

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13.2.2: Collaborating Online- Digital Strategies for Group Work

Anthony T. Atkins

Introduction

Much of what you do in school, on the job, and in your everyday life involves the ability to work well with others.* Here, in college, your teachers will ask you to collaborate or work together in a number of ways. For example, you may be paired with one person to complete an in-class assignment, or you may be required to work with a group of three or four of your classmates to complete a semester-long project. Collaborative activities and assignments may occur in a number of your classes (English, Business, History, and Political Science to name a few). You may work with non-profit organizations, for instance, where you and your classmates develop a newsletter or brochure, or you may compose a grant to help a local organization build a park near your neighborhood. Group assignments like these require you and your group members to work efficiently, and require everyone to contribute to the project equally. Your teachers are looking for how well you can manage tasks, orchestrate togetherness, and demonstrate that everyone can work together productively to complete a project as a team or a group. Even though working in groups can be challenging, the truth is that much of what you will do both here in college and on the job occurs as a group effort. Indeed, collaboration with others can be difficult. What follows are some productive technological alternatives to face-to-face collaboration. In this chapter of Writing Spaces you will learn more about:

- Assessing the project or task;
- Using technology to organize the project;
- Using technology to present the project.

Assessing the Project or Task

In this section we will consider the following questions:

- What does the project entail? What is its purpose?
- How long should the project take?
- How many group members are needed or required, and what should each one do?
- What will be each group member's role?

Teachers or employers request a number of tasks or projects that require collaborating with others. Sometimes group tasks can last for one hour, and sometimes group tasks can last for several months (and sometimes even years, depending on the nature of the project and its purpose). For example, in a classroom, you might be asked to complete a quick group project within the fifty minute class period, or you may be asked to complete a month-long group project. Projects in a classroom are usually completed for a grade, whereby projects completed for an employer or businesses are evaluated as part of your job performance. Once you and your group members have been assigned a specific project, it is important to have a meeting to assess the project and all of its facets or components, and so you can get to know your group members.

Consider, for example, a group project (we'll call this Project A) that requires four people to work together as a team to create a newsletter for a non-profit organization. You and your group members should begin by reviewing the components of the assignment and the project. Producing a newsletter can require designing a layout, conducting research, creating copy, gathering visuals, and collating, collecting, editing, and proofing the final product. In this type of scenario, the team will need to determine how best to delegate responsibilities to each member. For example, one person could design the layout and look of the newsletter, one or two people might be responsible for the research and content development, and another person on the team might manage the final production of the newsletter—including collating pieces and editing.

Once tasks are assigned and each group member knows her/his responsibilities, determine what technologies you and your group will need to facilitate the project collaboratively, and set deadlines for tasks. Deadlines and managing time is extremely important when working with groups. Make certain that everyone in the group is aware of deadlines and is confident that they can be met. It is not uncommon to fall behind schedule, but how you and your team members react to added challenges determines the success or failure of the project. Adjusting group duties and pitching in to help each other

can reassert the team's to complete the task.

In addition to working with a team of other students, sometimes students work with teachers or professors on individual projects—like an honor's thesis or professor-driven independent projects. This example (we'll call it Project B) references three separate honors projects directed/guided by the same teacher. Three students selected a range of general topics for their honors projects. Over the course of one semester, the honors projects required that each student write a traditional research paper on their topic, and provide a "poster" presentation as well as a formal presentation to an audience in a classroom setting.[1]

Part of the challenge of Project B is that the three students needed to read and respond to each other's projects, and the teacher needed to read and respond to each student's specific project as well. Because of the collaborative nature of Project B, the teacher and three students held an initial face-to-face meeting to determine tasks, roles, and collaboration spaces so that all members of the group could adjust their calendars and set deadlines. When individuals have a number of tasks or assignments that demand their attention, frequently meeting faceto-face is not conducive or productive. However, in the beginning of a collaborative task, such as Project B, it is extremely necessary to have a meeting so that a thorough assessment of the project and its requirements can be determined, which then provides useful information to the group for how to proceed.

Both Project A and B provide examples of ways that group work may be assigned in your classes. To be sure, there are a number of projects and ways that collaborative work is assigned and required by your teachers and your classes. Importantly, you should remember to assess the task, delegate responsibilities, and determine a timeframe (deadlines).

Using Technology to Organize the Project

In this section, we will consider the following questions:

- Which technology will work best for a specific project?
- Should you use or do you need multimedia files and documents?
- What kind of editing and revising is required or needed?

Many free technologies are available to help organize collaborative projects. Because Web 2.0 technologies like wikis and Google Docs are so common, they lend themselves to easy use when collaborating with others. Using technologies to organize group work and projects can make group work more productive, alleviate problems with group members who are absent (or who do not participate), and cost nothing to use. They are also easily accessible. A collaborative technology like a wiki can help group members organize their contributions, respond to others' ideas, communicate with members of the group (easily forwarding links or electronic documents, for example), and facilitate a way to present the final group project to an audience. While there are a number of these technologies out there, wikis (like Wetpaint, PBWorks, or Wikispaces) and project management tools (like Google Docs) will serve as examples here of how to orchestrate a productive group work experience for you and your group members.

The most well-known wiki is Wikipedia. What makes Wikipedia intriguing is that all Wikipedia readers can edit most entries on the Wikipedia website.[2] This same concept is a shared characteristic among wikis. In short, it is what makes a wiki a wiki. Wikis, like many online free tools, often require a username and password. Everyone registered on the site can create and share pages or add to already existing pages (just like editing an entry in Wikipedia) by writing text, uploading images, or linking to videos, images, text/articles, or to other websites. The beauty in this tool is that it is free and all you need is an Internet connection. Moreover, your group can use a wiki to make contributions to your group project without having to meet face-to-face.

Mashing in other collaborative technologies can further help you to create, organize, and present your group project. To enhance the productivity of your group work, you might also consider employing another digital tool: Google Docs. Google Docs, like wikis, allows users to create and share documents electronically removing the necessity for face-to-face meetings. Once you create an account via Google, you will have access to other features that Google has, like Google Docs, Google Talk, and Gmail to name a few[3]. The attractive feature of Google Docs, is that it allows you to create many of the same types of documents as Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, and PowerPoint). So, a team member could write the first draft of a proposal using Google Docs and share the document with the team for easy editing online. Or you could all revise and edit the document simultaneously. A link to the document can also be included on your group wiki page for easy access. In fact, because Google Docs is so valuable and easy to use, even teachers and researchers are using it to collaborate on their own research projects.

In Projects A and B, the wiki serves as a “house,” meaning this is where all information for the projects will be stored. The pages in the wiki are created as separate “rooms” in the house. Each room (or page) will represent a task in the project. Once the wiki is created and all members create an account and join, each group member can create their own page within the wiki so that information concerning that task can be available and edited by all group members. To keep with the house metaphor, each member can create their own “space” or room and put in their room only the things they need. For example, in Project A, the wiki might have a page for the contents of the newsletter whereby a group member can keep the other members up-to-date on currently drafted articles or information, and provide a timeframe for when other information will be available. For project A, you might set-up a wiki this way:

1. Create three pages that correspond to the individual tasks. The three pages might be named: Newsletter Design, Newsletter Content, and Newsletter Production.
2. Each member of the group is responsible for a section and should post information pertaining to his or her task. This might include drafts of articles for the newsletter—as mentioned previously—sample or mock-up drafts of the design of the newsletter, or ideas pertaining to how the newsletter should be created.
3. Significantly, each member should contribute to the wiki in their specified area, or in their own room, but should also be visiting the other members’ areas—or rooms—to provide helpful feedback and ideas as needed.



Figure 1: The wiki for Project A.

Similarly, Project B integrates wikis and Google Docs by following similar principles. For example, in Project B, each of the three students created their own page (room) within the wiki (house) that the teacher created for them. Each of their projects was located within the wiki, making it easy for the members of Project B to read and respond to each other’s work (visit each other’s rooms).

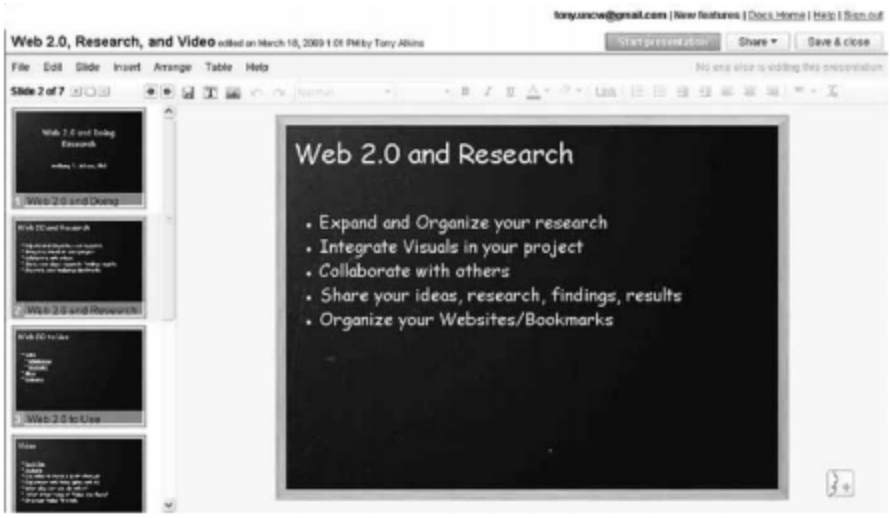


Figure 2: The wiki for Project B.

In Project B, all three students were expected to create their own projects, but were encouraged to collaborate with the other students working on individual projects for help with revising, brainstorming research questions, and finding articles or other multimedia files that could help another student. Working together was the best course of action because each group member had a detailed project that required a high quality product. The wiki allowed group members to post and share information with each other. Together, Project B group members felt that using a wiki would be the best technology to use for collaborating and sharing each others' work and progress.

How is using a wiki better or more helpful than simply meeting face-to-face? Aside from getting around schedule constraints trying to get all group members in the same room at the same time to work faceto-face, it also allows you and your group to always work in an electronic medium where all text, images, and links are saved at all times in one space, without having to trade files by email. All members have access to the same material from any location, and any group member can edit any of the documents at any time. Online collaboration also facilitates participation because group members who are often quiet in face-to-face meetings may feel less inhibited to participate or contribute to the project. You can also share the wiki with your teacher so she/ he can see your progress as your group completes the project.

There are a number of ways to share documents on a wiki, but an easy option is to create your documents using Google Docs. For example, while some drafting can be done in a wiki, it is even easier to create a Google Doc, draft an article for the project, then simply link to it from the wiki, allowing all group members to see the link and edit if they choose to do so. Regardless of whether you use wikis or Google Docs, both also provide the added benefit of revision tracking, which keeps a record of all changes made to the document and by whom.

With each group project, you will want to determine the best technological tool to complete the task. In Projects A and B, a wiki and Google Docs seem to be the best tools for the purpose, but it should be noted that there are a number of many Internet communication and productivity tools available (blogs, Facebook, drop.io file sharing, and instant messaging are some other tools that could assist you), and each group should determine what works best for that particular group and that particular project. Questions you might think about when determining which tool to use are:

- Will documents need to be edited, revised, or otherwise changed?
- Will group members need to be able to upload multimedia files and documents, and if so, what kinds and how large are they?
- Will documents need to be shared with more than assigned group members?

Answering these questions can help you determine the best technological tool for the task.

Assessing your project and determining the technological tools that will help complete it are not the only challenges when it comes to group work. Simply working with your group members can be difficult. Some group members do not participate, lack motivation or desire, or simply leave the bulk of the work to other group members, making excuses along the way. "Is this a group grade?" you might ask after learning about a group project assigned in one of your classes. Why is this a common question? By far, the biggest complaint of group work from students is that some members do not contribute fairly, and then the students who do the work must share the grade with the person who did very little. Certainly, teachers

have come up with numerous ways to track work among students within a collaborative project like progress reports, end-of-project reflections, and asking group members to “grade” each other. These attempts at making sure all members of a group participate equally come with mixed results. However, using wikis or Google Docs, and inviting the teacher to review your group’s progress, gives your group and your instructor a permanent and visible record of the contributions each group member made.

Beyond using Web 2.0 technologies to help police non-contributing group members, using Web 2.0 tools can increase participation in your group by changing attitudes about group work. One of the reasons group projects can be successful is because group members can get excited by using a Web 2.0 technology to organize the project, and this has the potential to eliminate virtually all face-to-face meetings. Group members should decide on an exciting way to conduct and complete group work. Using a technology like a wiki, Google Docs, or a blog (or even a social networking site), can do more than excite group members about the project; it can also alleviate the problems associated with face-to-face discussion-based meetings and facilitate participation by all group members.

Once the project is complete, often you are asked to present the project to the class or to the group of people for whom you were working. As you will see in the next section, online digital tools can also help your group develop the presentation.

Using Technology for Presentation

In this section we will consider the following questions:

- What type of presentation (or end product) is required?
- What tools will best help the group deliver a coherent presentation of the project?
- What technologies can help create the presentation?

Often, group work requires the presentation of the project to the class, teacher and/or people invested in the project. Presentations can take various forms. What kind of presentation you create is determined largely by the nature of the project itself. For example, if the group project you completed involved many numbers or statistics, you might consider creating graphs and charts to display the statistics in an honest and visually appealing format. Web 2.0 technologies can aid in this part of the project, too. Let’s look at the two projects described earlier.

Projects A and B required two types of presentations. Project A required the development of a newsletter. Certainly, the audience will want to see the completed newsletter, but your teacher, the non-profit organization, and/or your classmates will also want to see how you collected the information to write the content of the newsletter and the process your group went through to design the newsletter. For example, how did your group decide on the design and layout of the newsletter? To illustrate the work your group completed, consider the technologies you used to organize the project and your group. When you and your group members use Google Docs and a wiki to house and create a project, your information is readily available in electronic format. An easy way to illustrate what you have done is by showing the audience your group wiki pages (your house and the rooms) to help explain the decision-making process. Likewise, you and your group could also use Google Docs’ presentation tool, which resembles Microsoft PowerPoint, to show and share more concretely the major points and ideas of the newsletter. Once you create a Google Doc presentation, you could link to it from your wiki (house), and email a link to the presentation to all audience members for easy reference. Additionally, your presentation is available from almost any location that has an Internet connection. You do not even have to carry a USB flash drive containing the presentation.

Project B, on the other hand, required a slightly different dynamic for group members because each group member had to present the project orally, as well as put together a poster that summarized the project as a whole. Like Project A, students could use Google Docs’ presentation tool to develop the oral presentation because they had maintained their work in the wiki.

The posters were created by another software program that was also shared electronically among group members. While group members shared the posters via email, they also reviewed and edited each other’s presentations by using Google Docs. Eventually, links to the posters were added to the wiki.

As you will discover in your own projects, creating presentations in Google Docs functions like a review system that allows you and your classmates to access the presentations from home, encourages group members to participate, and increases the quality of work produced by the group. When presentations are meant to be interactive, having the project and presentation in an electronic format will allow others to participate in your project and further illustrate the time, work, and effort put into a specific project.

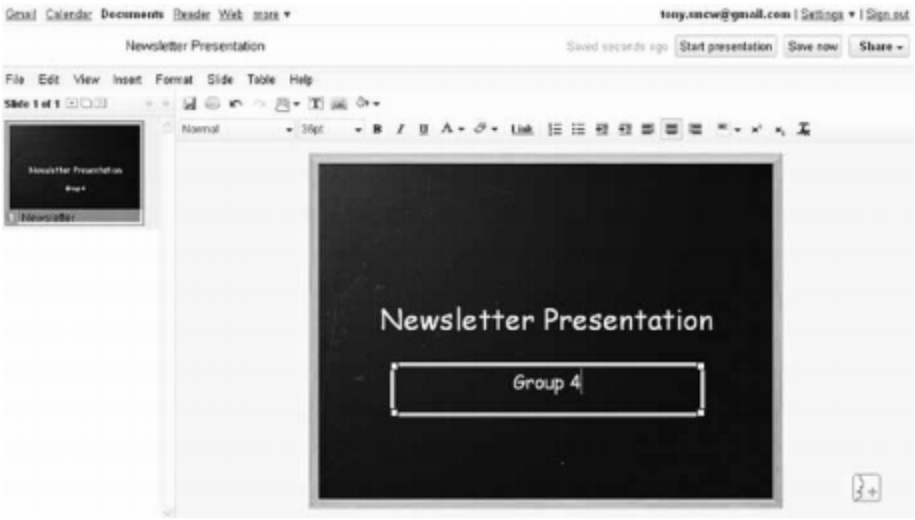


Figure 3: An example Google Doc presentation in edit mode.



Figure 4: Project B's Google Doc presentation in edit mode.

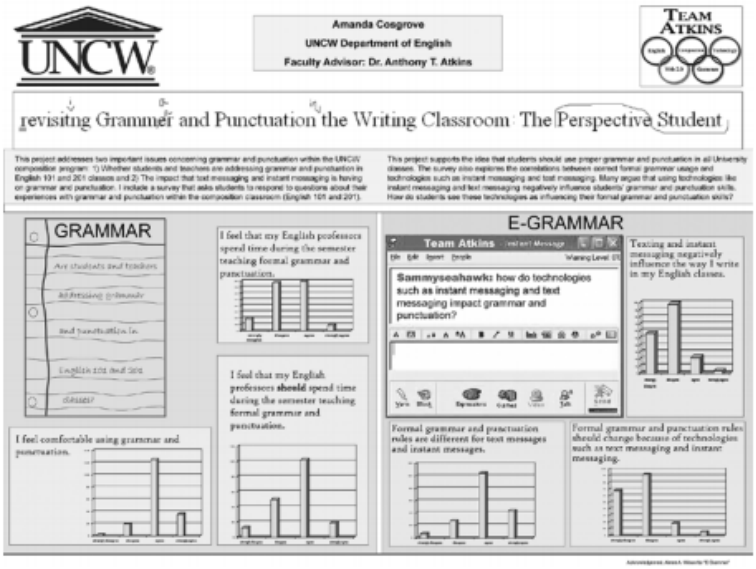


Figure 5: Final version of the poster. (© 2008 Amanda Cosgrove.)

Review

Working in a collaborative environment can be tricky and certainly if group members decide not to contribute, it can become more challenging than it should be. There are a number of ways to improve the quality of group work. Assessing your project or what you have been asked to do is the first step in determining how best to proceed. Once groups have been formulated, having an initial group meeting is imperative. If your teacher does not provide time during class, you could meet face-to-face in the library, a coffee shop, or if you are taking the course as a distance or online course, hold a phone conference using a free service such as FreeConferenceCall.com, Skype, or talk online in a chat room. During this meeting, it is important to determine group member roles. What should each group member do to help facilitate the completion of a project? Remember to consider the following when getting ready for group work:

- What does the project entail? What is its purpose?
- How long should the project take?
- How many group members are needed or required and what should each one do?
- What technologies can help the group complete the project collaboratively?
- What is the best way to present the project?

The newsletter project (Project A), ended successfully. Using a wiki called Wikispaces, the group was able to post all content concerning the newsletter to the wiki for everyone to view and evaluate. Because all group members could follow the progress of the newsletter on the wiki, all group members were able to communicate and share information, manage their deadlines, and complete their tasks in a timely manner. The group could also share the wiki and other project information with the non-profit organization's stakeholders. Keeping the client organization up-to-date with the progress of the project is an important positive attribute to using Web 2.0 tools to develop collaborative projects. The presentation of the project included a Google Doc with links to pertinent material associated with how group member contributed directly to the project, which included research gathered about the organization and the adaptation of a logo/image. The group maintained a large house filled with rooms of information that was easy to mange, access, and use. Indeed, the work and contributions of group members, the full development of the project, and the endproduct delivered are a direct result of employing Web 2.0 tools like wikis and Google Docs. When assigned a group task or group project, you should consider what free digital tools are available that can most help you and your group members organize the project.

Discussion

1. Consider some of your previous experiences doing collaborative work. What important concepts in this essay would have been useful for your group to know? Why?
2. Think about what online tools (websites) you have used to communicate or share content. Would any of them be useful for doing collaborative work with a group? Why?
3. Create a Google Docs account (if you don't have one already). Experiment with it. Think about the individual work you do as a college student. How might Google Docs be useful to you for your non-group work?

Notes

1. The students were required to create a poster for a presentation to faculty, and in this situation the students simply stood next to their poster and explained the project to those who chose to stop by and review them. The students were also required to provide a more formal presentation of their work in a classroom setting (where a computer and LCD projector could also be used).
2. Wikipedia controls the edits of some entries more than others; they also allow anonymous edits for some entries. Users should read the restrictions and limitations surrounding some Wikipedia entries.
3. For those who simply want access to Google Docs, they can create an account using a school email address. In other words, a full Google account is not necessary for access to Google Docs.

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13.2.3: Composing the Anthology- An Exercise in Patchwriting

Christopher Leary

Rebecca Moore Howard defines “patchwriting” as a method of composing in which writers take the words of other authors and patch them together with few or no changes (233).* Although associated with plagiarism, it is an extremely useful writing strategy with a very long and noble tradition, and I hope that, by the end of this essay, you will be convinced that the opportunities (great writing) far outweigh the risks (accusations of dishonesty). With that as my goal, I’ll start by telling you the story of how I worked through my own fears and uncertainties about plagiarism and patchwriting.

Nowadays, I consider myself to be a frequent practitioner of patchwriting, especially early in my writing process. I also happen to really *enjoy* it—for one thing, it gets me past the stage of staring at a blank white page. Likewise, my students report that (in addition to being frustrating and time-consuming) patchwriting is “fun,” “confidencebuilding,” and “extremely interesting.” I consider us to be the latest in a long-running line of writers [1] spanning centuries who view this type of work as crucial to their identities as writers.

Patchwriting was a mode I gravitated toward while studying for a degree in English at Long Island University in Brooklyn. Underemployed, single, without the kind of budget that would allow me to really partake in New York’s “nightlife,” without any cable TV or Internet access, I had, during much of this time, nothing to entertain myself in my bare apartment except for a bookshelf full of books.

During one notable phase of this period, I went one-by-one through each of my books, copying out short sentences until I had three or four pages worth of lines. Since the books were from different countries, times, genres, and personalities, I anticipated a sharp contrast in styles. “If I put tens of sentences from different times and eras and places all on the same page,” my thinking went, “I’ll be able to witness these eras bumping up against each other and rubbing elbows.” In much the same way I find it interesting to view, say, automobiles from different times and places all in the same room.

After copying them into one Microsoft Word document, I started moving the sentences around, hoping to find sentences that *play weirdly* against each other. I was looking for that jarring effect, not expecting the exercise to go any further than that.

But once these lines were in the same document, I found that some were attracted to each other and others repelled. I dragged some over here, and some over there, deleting a lot, pruning a lot. The lines grouped themselves into stanzas, puzzlingly falling into place. For the most part, intuition told me where to move them, how to group them together, and which ones to delete. Much to my surprise, the lines that I had copied from the books in my bookshelf started to take a shape resembling the shape of a poem. And out of the original mess of lines, a scenario or situation—if not a story—started to emerge. (If you are getting visions of Ouija boards, I don’t blame you.) I ended up spending a whole month on this project that was really meant to kill time one night.

Here is a small excerpt from the poem. I compiled it from work by Chinua Achebe, Milan Kundera, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, a lost source, and Henry James respectively.

> Then something had given way inside him.
>
> What about the hero who keeps his mouth shut?
>
> The intoxication of power began to break apart under the waves of discomfort.
>
> “I can’t help dreaming what I dream,” he thought.
>
> Yet even as he afresh made this out, he felt how strange it all was.

This odd project got stickier when I decided I wanted to submit a few of the “poems” to my school’s literary magazine, *Downtown Brooklyn*. I was held back by a concern and a strong feeling of guilt about authorship. I had to really wrestle with the question, “Am I the author of these texts?” When I got to the stage where I wanted to submit them as my own and put my name as the author, something felt very wrong and even dastardly. It didn’t strike me as at all appropriate to put my own name as the author

because I could not have written them “from scratch,” by any means. The phrasings and language outstrip my capabilities.

I felt like a cheater. I worried I’d be accused of plagiarism or academic dishonesty. Ungenerous readers could fairly accuse me of trying to pass myself off as a better writer than I really am by stealing the language of established greats. Worse, my classmates and teachers could dismiss me as a parasite who, being completely unable to write his own poems, leeches off the work of others instead. The Dane Cook of poetry, so to speak.

At the same time, I recognized that, even if I didn’t exactly write the things, I did sort of *make* them . . . and that ought to count for something.

My unshakeable moral dilemma propelled me to seek advice from a few knowledgeable poets whom I trust.

Conveniently, I shared a cubicle in the English Department during that time with someone I consider a “real” poet, a friend named Valerie. She’s always blunt and I knew she’d give it to me straight. As the submission deadline approached, I found her in our graduate assistant cubicle. She was deep in thought, responding to a pile of work submitted by her undergraduate students. I plunked my shady texts on the top of her pile and peppered her with my doubts.

“Are these poems?” I asked Valerie. “Can I call them mine? Does it seem at all ethical to submit them to *Downtown Brooklyn*?”

She started off by saying that she did not particularly like what I’d shown her. (“That’s not what I asked,” I replied.) Yet she affirmed, technically speaking, they are *poems* and there was no reason not to submit them. She explained that what I was doing has a name— “found poetry”—and that it is a pretty conventional poetic strategy. She even found an old quote from her notebook and read it aloud: “The spider’s web is no whit the better because it spins it from its own entrails; and my text no whit the worse because, as does the bee, I gather its components from other authors’ flowers.”

“Case closed,” she said, slapping the quotebook shut and returning to her work.

Still, I wanted a second opinion, so I visited a faculty member and resident poet at LIU, Professor Moss, to ask him whether the work could legitimately be called mine and submitted to *Downtown Brooklyn* under my name. He agreed with Valerie that, yes, the poem is not very strong, and that, yes, it is in the tradition of “found poetry.” He brought up another term, “the cento”: it is a method of constructing poems (or even prose) out of quotations that are displaced and relocated. It’s an ancient form that is still used today. One example my professor showed me was written by council members at the Academy of American Poets. They used lines from Charles Wright, Marie Ponsot, Emily Dickinson, Sylvia Plath, and Samuel Beckett, respectively, to compose the following:

> In the Kingdom of the Past, the Brown-Eyed Man is King
> Brute. Spy. I trusted you. Now you reel & brawl.
> After great pain, a formal feeling comes—
> A vulturous boredom pinned me in this tree
> Day after day, I become of less use to myself,
> The hours after you are gone are so leaden.

For a prose version, Professor Moss referred me to the essayist Walter Benjamin. Benjamin created a huge book, entitled *The Arcades Project*, consisting mostly of other people’s writing about malls in Paris. Paradoxically, the book is “by” Benjamin, but there is not that much of his own writing in it. It’s more like he just selects and arranges the writing of others. Below is a selection from *The Arcades Project*, with Benjamin’s writing in bold, and other people’s writing in italics:

> **In reference to Hausmann’s success with the water supply and the drainage of Paris:** *“The poets would say that Hausmann was more inspired by the divinities below than by the gods above.”* **Metro**. *“A great many of the stations have been given absurd names. The worst seems to belong to the one at the corner of the Rue Breguet and the Rue Saint-Sabin, which ultimately joined together, in the abbreviation ‘Breguet-Sabin,’ the name of a watchmaker and the name of a saint.”* **June Insurrection**. *“Most of the prisoners were transferred via the quarries and subterranean passages which are located under the forts of Paris and, which are so extensive that most of half the population of the city could be contained there. The cold in these underground corridors is so intense that many had to run continually or move their arms about to keep from freezing, and no one dared lie down on the cold stones . . . The prisoners gave all the passages names of Paris streets, and whenever they met one another, they exchanged addresses.” (89)*

Benjamin goes on like this—arranging the quotes of other writers— for around a thousand extraordinary pages.

In the end, after we look at these examples together, and as we wrap up our conversation, Professor Moss encouraged me in the exercises I was doing but pointedly stated: "you must also mine your *own* writing, not just other people's, for language that you like."

I point to my experience drafting and publishing those so-called poems in *Downtown Brooklyn* because it played a pretty big role in my own education in writing and language. One of the things you come to realize as a patchwriter is that the shifting boundaries between writing, editing, and cheating are not problems you need to resolve, but rather opportunities you can exploit.

Anthologizing in the Composition Classroom

One of the most obvious contemporary examples of patchwriting is the anthology. This essay, for example, is part of an anthology called Writing Spaces. The editors, Charles Lowe and Pavel Zemlianksy, didn't write the book, but they played a huge role in its construction. In fact, if you have ever made a portfolio of your work, then you already pretty much understand anthologizing. The only difference is that anthologies are collections mostly of *other* people's writing, instead of your own. And it turns out that many of the goals of portfolio work equally apply to anthologizing in the classroom:

- Anthologizing and portfolio creation require you to move large chunks of texts around in relation to each other, almost as if you were rearranging a bookshelf.
- These practices help you to realize that texts, no matter the size, derive their meaning from the relationships of the parts that make it up.
- Each is an exercise in coherence. As Alan Schrift mentions, "For an anthology to work, the pieces must hang together, they must build on each other and if not articulate a thesis, at least give voice to several related theses" (192).
- In both portfolios and anthologies, you can inflect the pieces by placing them in different contexts, and you will begin to understand "how ideas fluctuate in specific types of spaces and contexts" (Rice 131).
- The anthologist and the portfolio manager have to manage what Ann Moss calls a "peculiar property": their "inherent capacity to balance unity and multiplicity" (430).

As convincing as this list might be to me, students don't always immediately warm to patchwriting as a brand of composition. For example, on the first day of class last year, during a break, Lorraina caught up with me in the hallway. "I am probably going to switch to a different section," she said. Drops are normal, I thought to myself, but not necessarily after the first hour of the first class.

"Are you concerned about the amount of work?" I said.

"Not the amount so much . . . more the type of work. I don't see how this so-called anthologizing is going to help me. We're going to be editing other people's work and writing introductory prefaces but none of that is what I need to do in my job."

"What is your job?"

"I work 9 to 5 all week for an insurance company, writing letters to customers," she said. "I want to get better at that, and I don't see how this type of work is going to help me."

Another student, Lisa, was on the brink of quitting as well. She was listening in on the hallway conversation, but, unlike Lorraina, decided to stick around. Months later, as the semester was finishing up, Lisa told me, "I thought I was going to drop this class after day one. I wanted to run when I heard about the anthologizing." She added, "But I'm glad I didn't."

Not to say there wouldn't be a lot more drops by other students throughout this particular semester. I can't say whether it was students fleeing from the odd Sunday morning hours, the pockets of swine flu that kept flaring up in our region of Queens, or the challenging coursework. Many students, I realized more and more as the semester progresses, plainly didn't have time to do all of the work that I asked them to do. They had full-time jobs, families to take care of, and a heavy course load of other classes. And, quite frankly, successful patchwriting requires a ton of reading.

What is Reading Like for an Anthologist?

The same principle applies to patchwriters. In the midst of editing her anthology on family morality, Gail, a Queensborough Community College student, writes, "I am starting off working on the Internet reading different types of sources. This includes memoirs, court cases, newspaper articles, impact statements from those families affected. I am also working with poems and possibly works of art. After I gather a wide variety of work, I am going to narrow them down to the ones that have

the greatest to do with my topic and help to tell my story." You might notice from Gail's writing that anthologists consider a slightly different set of questions than other readers. In other circumstances, when she doesn't have her editing cap on, Gail might read for plot, to see what happens, or to be able to say that she's read it. Or she might read for theme, main ideas, musicality, or pleasure.

However, during the anthologizing process, Gail reads for these reasons and a few others. It doesn't always matter so much what she learns from a piece, nor whether she agrees or disagrees with the author, nor whether she can identify the main points in it. It's more about what she can do with the text, how she can utilize it . . . how she can put it to work. It's a different kind of reading, and anthologists ask different kinds of questions as they make their way through a text, sometimes skimming, sometimes reading more closely. A student named Iga writes, "As I read, I am thinking about how one piece might fit with the others in the section. I am also thinking about how it is 'different' from the others (to create variety). Also, I look at the style of writing to make sure it is not just some sloppy work but something worthwhile." Iga's reading is very opportunistic. How, she asks, can I exploit this text that I am reading so that it increases the power and overall richness of my anthology?

While anthologists read, they think very strategically, trying to figure out where in the anthology a piece might go, if it will make it into the anthology at all, and what section or subsection it will go into. Gail puts the matter succinctly, saying that anthologists "view the texts not only on a personal level but also from the point of view of the audience it is intended for."

Unlike Lorraina, the insurance agent who dropped the class, I view the considerable time spent working on patchwriting to be well spent. It is a great experience in an underappreciated kind of composition, a kind that requires "working with information on higher levels of organization, pulling together the efforts of others into a multilayered multireferential whole which is much more than the sum of its parts" (Von Seggern).

However, for all of my confidence (and as much as I would like to convince you to try patchwriting), I'll end by admitting that some questions remain. For example, I think Lorraina was right to question how our anthological work would improve the letters she writes to customers. How would all of this have helped her at her job? The question of scale plays a big role here. Does improvement at one scale of writing (portfolio management) translate into improvement at other scales (letter writing)? Will your spelling improve as you arrange the books in a library? Will your experiments in patchwriting help you to improve your "grammar"?

Discussion

1. What are some other situations where you organize the work of other people?
2. How might you reorganize the table of contents of the Writing Spaces collection that this article is a part of?

Note

1. For example, the German-Hebrew writer Micha Berdyczewski wrote that compiling religious texts is a "poetic" (Kagan 223) practice that shines "new light" (Kagan 219) on them. This was puzzling to his friends, who viewed compiling the work of others to be a mundane, non-intellectual task. Also, the twenty-first century writer Jerome Rothenburg talks fondly of his textual assembly as "a pulling together of poems & people & ideas about poetry & much else in the words of others and in our own" (Golding). And the sixteenth century essayist and patchwriter Michel Montaigne says of his own work, "I have here only made a nosegay of culled flowers, and have brought nothing of my own but the thread that ties them together."

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13.2.4: Finding the Good Argument OR Why Bother With Logic?

Rebecca Jones

The word argument often means something negative.* In Nina Paley's cartoon (see Figure 1), the argument is literally a cat fight. Rather than envisioning argument as something productive and useful, we imagine intractable sides and use descriptors such as "bad," "heated," and "violent." We rarely say, "Great, argument. Thanks!" Even when we write an academic "argument paper," we imagine our own ideas battling others.

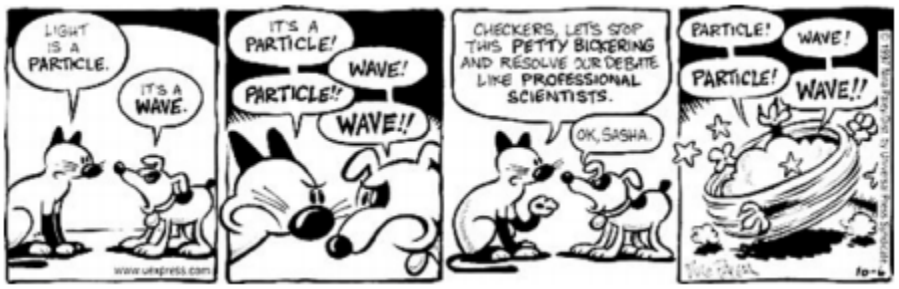


Figure 1: This cartoon demonstrates the absurdity of either/or arguments. (© 1997-1998 Nina Paley. Image available under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike license.[1]

Linguists George Lakoff and Mark Johnson explain that the controlling metaphor we use for argument in western culture is war:

> g metaphor we use for argument in western culture is war: It is important to see that we don't just *talk* about arguments in terms of war. We actually win or lose arguments. We see the person we are arguing with as an opponent. We attack his positions and we defend our own. We gain and lose ground. We plan and use strategies. If we find a position indefensible, we can abandon it and take a new line of attack. Many of the things we *do* in arguing are partially structured by the concept of war. (4)

If we follow the war metaphor along its path, we come across other notions such as, "all's fair in love and war." If all's fair, then the rules, principles, or ethics of an argument are up for grabs. While many warrior metaphors are about honor, the "all's fair" idea can lead us to arguments that result in propaganda, spin, and, dirty politics. The war metaphor offers many limiting assumptions: there are only two sides, someone must win decisively, and compromise means losing. The metaphor also creates a false opposition where argument (war) is action and its opposite is peace or inaction. Finding better arguments is not about finding peace—the opposite of antagonism. Quite frankly, getting mad can be productive. Ardent peace advocates, such as Jane Addams, Mahatma Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, Jr., offer some of the most compelling arguments of our time through concepts like civil disobedience that are hardly inactive. While "argument is war" may be the default mode for Americans, it is not the only way to argue. Lakoff and Johnson ask their readers to imagine something like "argument is dance" rather than "argument is war" (5). While we can imagine many alternatives to the war metaphor, concepts like argument as collaboration are more common even if they are not commonly used. Argument as collaboration would be more closely linked to words such as *dialogue* and *deliberation*, cornerstone concepts in the history of American democracy.

However, argument as collaboration is not the prevailing metaphor for public argumentation we see/hear in the mainstream media. One can hardly fault the average American for not being able to imagine argument beyond the war metaphor. Think back to the coverage of the last major election cycle in 2008. The opponents on either side (democrat/republican) dug in their heels and defended every position, even if it was unpopular or irrelevant to the conversation at hand. The political landscape divided into two sides with no alternatives. In addition to the entrenched positions, blogs and websites such as FactCheck.org flooded us with lists of inaccuracies, missteps, and plain old fallacies that riddled the debates. Unfortunately, the "debates" were more like speeches given to a camera than actual arguments deliberated before the public. These important moments that fail to offer good models lower the standards for public argumentation.

On an average news day, there are entire websites and blogs dedicated to noting ethical, factual, and legal problems with public arguments, especially on the news and radio talk shows. This is not to say that all public arguments set out to mislead their

audiences, rather that the discussions they offer masquerading as arguments are often merely opinions or a spin on a particular topic and not carefully considered, quality arguments. What is often missing from these discussions is research, consideration of multiple vantage points, and, quite often, basic logic.

On news shows, we encounter a version of argument that seems more like a circus than a public discussion. Here's the visual we get of an "argument" between multiple sides on the average news show. In this example (see Figure 2), we have a four ring circus.

While all of the major networks use this visual format, multiple speakers in multiple windows like *The Brady Bunch* for the news, it is rarely used to promote ethical deliberation. These talking heads offer a simulation of an argument. The different windows and figures pictured in them are meant to represent different views on a topic, often "liberal" and "conservative." This is a good start because it sets up the possibility for thinking through serious issues in need of solutions. Unfortunately, the people in the windows never actually engage in an argument (see Thinking Outside the Text). As we will discuss below, one of the rules of good argument is that participants in an argument agree on the primary standpoint and that individuals are willing to concede if a point of view is proven wrong. If you watch one of these "arguments," you will see a spectacle where prepared speeches are hurled across the long distances that separate the participants. Rarely do the talking heads respond to the actual ideas/arguments given by the person pictured in the box next to them on the screen unless it is to contradict one statement with another of their own. Even more troubling is the fact that participants do not even seem to agree about the point of disagreement. For example, one person might be arguing about the congressional vote on health care while another is discussing the problems with Medicaid. While these are related, they are different issues with different premises. This is not a good model for argumentation despite being the predominant model we encounter.



Figure 2: This mock up of a typical news show created by Colin Charlton offers a visual of the attempt to offer many "sides" of an argument

Activity: Thinking Outside the Text

Watch the famous video of Jon Stewart on the show Crossfire: (http:// www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmj6JADOZ-8).

- What is Stewart's argument?
- How do the hosts of Crossfire respond to the very particular argument that Stewart makes?
- Why exactly are they missing the point?

These shallow public models can influence argumentation in the classroom. One of the ways we learn about argument is to think in terms of pro and con arguments. This replicates the liberal/conservative dynamic we often see in the papers or on television (as if there are only two sides to health care, the economy, war, the deficit). This either/or fallacy of public argument is debilitating. You are either for or against gun control, for or against abortion, for or against the environment, for or against everything. Put this way, the absurdity is more obvious. For example, we assume that someone who claims to be an "environmentalist" is pro every part of the green movement. However, it is quite possible to develop an environmentally sensitive argument that argues against a particular recycling program. While many pro and con arguments are valid, they can erase nuance, negate the local and particular, and shut down the very purpose of having an argument: the possibility that you might change your mind, learn something new, or solve a problem. This limited view of argument makes argumentation

a shallow process. When all angles are not explored or fallacious or incorrect reasoning is used, we are left with ethically suspect public discussions that cannot possibly get at the roots of an issue or work toward solutions.

Activity: Finding Middle Ground

Outline the pro and con arguments for the following issues:

1. Gun Control
2. Cap and Trade
3. Free Universal Healthcare

In a group, develop an argument that finds a compromise or middle ground between two positions.

Rather than an either/or proposition, argument is multiple and complex. An argument can be logical, rational, emotional, fruitful, useful, and even enjoyable. As a matter of fact, the idea that argument is necessary (and therefore not always about war or even about winning) is an important notion in a culture that values democracy and equity. In America, where nearly everyone you encounter has a different background and/or political or social view, skill in arguing seems to be paramount, whether you are inventing an argument or recognizing a good one when you see it.

The remainder of this chapter takes up this challenge—inventing and recognizing good arguments (and bad ones). From classical rhetoric, to Toulmin's model, to contemporary pragma-dialectics, this chapter presents models of argumentation beyond pro and con. Paying more addition to the details of an argument can offer a strategy for developing sound, ethically aware arguments.

What Can We Learn from Models of Argumentation

So far, I have listed some obstacles to good argument. I would like to discuss one other. Let's call it the mystery factor. Many times I read an argument and it seems great on the surface, but I get a strange feeling that something is a bit off. Before studying argumentation, I did not have the vocabulary to name that strange feeling. Additionally, when an argument is solid, fair, and balanced, I could never quite put my finger on what distinguished it from other similar arguments. The models for argumentation below give us guidance in revealing the mystery factor and naming the qualities of a logical, ethical argument.

Classical Rhetoric

In James Murphy's translation of Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*, he explains that "Education for Quintilian begins in the cradle, and ends only when life itself ends" (xxi). The result of a life of learning, for Quintilian, is a perfect speech where "the student is given a statement of a problem and asked to prepare an appropriate speech giving his solution" (Murphy xxiii). In this version of the world, a good citizen is always a PUBLIC participant. This forces the good citizen to know the rigors of public argumentation: "Rhetoric, or the theory of effective communication, is for Quintilian merely the tool of the broadly educated citizen who is capable of analysis, reflection, and powerful action in public affairs" (Murphy xxvii). For Quintilian, learning to argue in public is a lifelong affair. He believed that the "perfect orator . . . cannot exist unless he is above all a good man" (6). Whether we agree with this or not, the hope for ethical behavior has been a part of public argumentation from the beginning.

The ancient model of rhetoric (or public argumentation) is complex. As a matter of fact, there is no single model of ancient argumentation. Plato claimed that the Sophists, such as Gorgias, were spin doctors weaving opinion and untruth for the delight of an audience and to the detriment of their moral fiber. For Plato, at least in the Phaedrus, public conversation was only useful if one applied it to the search for truth. In the last decade, the work of the Sophists has been redeemed. Rather than spin doctors, Sophists like Isocrates and even Gorgias, to some degree, are viewed as arbiters of democracy because they believed that many people, not just male, property holding, Athenian citizens, could learn to use rhetoric effectively in public.

Aristotle gives us a slightly more systematic approach. He is very concerned with logic. For this reason, much of what I discuss below comes from his work. Aristotle explains that most men participate in public argument in some fashion. It is important to note that by "men," Aristotle means citizens of Athens: adult males with the right to vote, not including women, foreigners, or slaves. Essentially this is a homogenous group by race, gender, and religious affiliation. We have to keep this in mind when adapting these strategies to our current heterogeneous culture. Aristotle explains,

> . . . for to a certain extent all men attempt to discuss statements and to maintain them, to defend themselves and to attack others. Ordinary people do this either at random or through practice and from acquired habit. Both ways being possible, the subject can plainly be handled systematically, for it is possible to inquire the reason why some speakers succeed through practice and others spontaneously; and every one will at once agree that such an inquiry is the function of an art. (Honeycutt, "Aristotle's *Rhetoric*" 1354a I i)

For Aristotle, inquiry into this field was artistic in nature. It required both skill and practice (some needed more of one than the other). Important here is the notion that public argument can be systematically learned.

Aristotle did not dwell on the ethics of an argument in *Rhetoric* (he leaves this to other texts). He argued that "things that are true and things that are just have a natural tendency to prevail over their opposites" and finally that " . . . things that are true and things that are better are, by their nature, practically always easier to prove and easier to believe in" (Honeycutt, "Aristotle's Rhetoric" 1355a I i). As a culture, we are skeptical of this kind of position, though I think that we do often believe it on a personal level. Aristotle admits in the next line that there are people who will use their skills at rhetoric for harm. As his job in this section is to defend the use of rhetoric itself, he claims that everything good can be used for harm, so rhetoric is no different from other fields. If this is true, there is even more need to educate the citizenry so that they will not be fooled by unethical and untruthful arguments.

For many, logic simply means reasoning. To understand a person's logic, we try to find the structure of their reasoning. Logic is not synonymous with fact or truth, though facts are part of evidence in logical argumentation. You can be logical without being truthful. This is why more logic is not the only answer to better public argument.

Our human brains are compelled to categorize the world as a survival mechanism. This survival mechanism allows for quicker thought. Two of the most basic logical strategies include inductive and deductive reasoning. **Deductive reasoning** (see Figure 3) starts from a premise that is a generalization about a large class of ideas, people, etc. and moves to a specific conclusion about a smaller category of ideas or things (All cats hate water; therefore, my neighbor's cat will not jump in our pool). While the first premise is the most general, the second premise is a more particular observation. So the argument is created through common beliefs/observations that are compared to create an argument. For example:

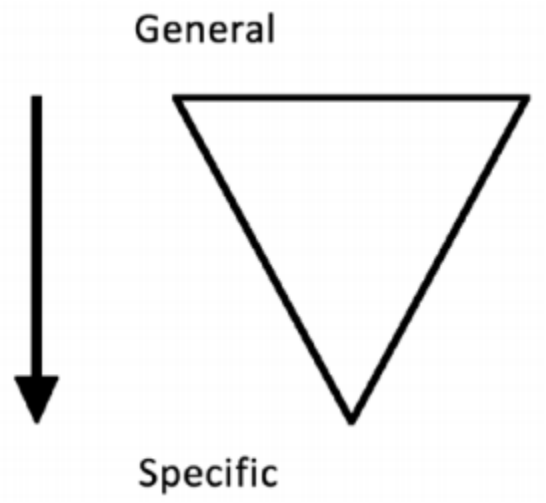


Figure 3: Deductive Reasoning

> People who burn flags are unpatriotic. **Major Premise**
> Sara burned a flag. **Minor Premise**
> Sara is unpatriotic. **Conclusion**

The above is called a syllogism. As we can see in the example, the major premise offers a general belief held by some groups and the minor premise is a particular observation. The conclusion is drawn by comparing the premises and developing a conclusion. If you work hard enough, you can often take a complex argument and boil it down to a syllogism. This can reveal a great deal about the argument that is not apparent in the longer more complex version.

Stanley Fish, professor and *New York Times* columnist, offers the following syllogism in his July 22, 2007, blog entry titled "Democracy and Education": "The syllogism underlying these comments is (1) America is a democracy (2) Schools and

universities are situated within that democracy (3) Therefore schools and universities should be ordered and administrated according to democratic principles."

Fish offered the syllogism as a way to summarize the responses to his argument that students do not, in fact, have the right to free speech in a university classroom. The responses to Fish's standpoint were vehemently opposed to his understanding of free speech rights and democracy. The responses are varied and complex. However, boiling them down to a single syllogism helps to summarize the primary rebuttal so that Fish could then offer his extended version of his standpoint (see link to argument in Question #1 at the end of the text).

Inductive reasoning moves in a different direction than deductive reasoning (see Figure 4). Inductive reasoning starts with a particular or local statement and moves to a more general conclusion. I think of inductive reasoning as a stacking of evidence. The more particular examples you give, the more it seems that your conclusion is correct.

Inductive reasoning is a common method for arguing, especially when the conclusion is an obvious probability. Inductive reasoning is the most common way that we move around in the world. If we experience something habitually, we reason that it will happen again. For example, if we walk down a city street and every person smiles, we might reason that this is a "nice town." This seems logical. We have taken many similar, particular experiences (smiles) and used them to make a general conclusion (the people in the town are nice). Most of the time, this reasoning works. However, we know that it can also lead us in the wrong direction. Perhaps the people were smiling because we were wearing inappropriate clothing (country togs in a metropolitan city), or perhaps only the people living on that particular street are "nice" and the rest of the town is unfriendly. Research papers sometimes rely too heavily on this logical method. Writers assume that finding ten versions of the same argument somehow prove that the point is true.

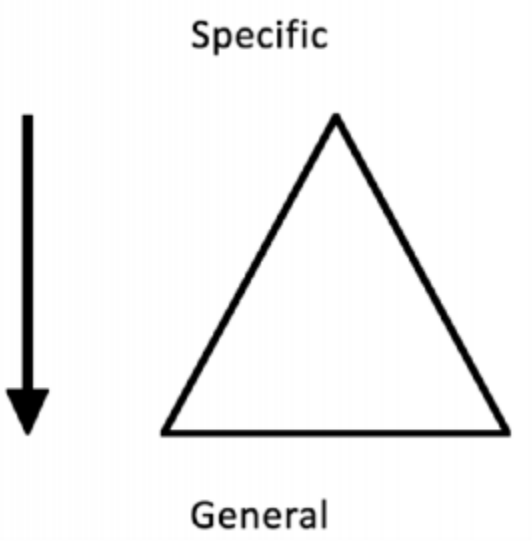


Figure 4: Inductive Reasoning

Here is another example. In Ann Coulter's most recent book, *Guilty: Liberal "Victims" and Their Assault on America*, she makes her (in)famous argument that single motherhood is the cause of many of America's ills. She creates this argument through a piling of evidence. She lists statistics by sociologists, she lists all the single moms who killed their children, she lists stories of single mothers who say outrageous things about their life, children, or marriage in general, and she ends with a list of celebrity single moms that most would agree are not good examples of motherhood. Through this list, she concludes, "Look at almost any societal problem and you will find it is really a problem of single mothers" (36). While she could argue, from this evidence, that being a single mother is difficult, the generalization that single motherhood is the root of social ills in America takes the inductive reasoning too far. Despite this example, we need inductive reasoning because it is the key to analytical thought (see Activity: Applying Inductive and Deductive Reasoning). To write an "analysis paper" is to use inductive reasoning.

Activity: Applying Deductive and Inductive Reasoning

For each standpoint, create a deductive argument AND an inductive argument. When you are finished, share with your group members and decide which logical strategy offers a more successful, believable, and/or ethical argument for the particular standpoint. Feel free to modify the standpoint to find many possible arguments.

1. a. Affirmative Action should continue to be legal in the United States.
   b. Affirmative Action is no longer useful in the United States.
2. The arts should remain an essential part of public education.
3. Chose a very specific argument on your campus (parking, tuition, curriculum) and create deductive and inductive arguments to support the standpoint.

Most academic arguments in the humanities are inductive to some degree. When you study humanity, nothing is certain. When observing or making inductive arguments, it is important to get your evidence from many different areas, to judge it carefully, and acknowledge the flaws. Inductive arguments must be judged by the quality of the evidence since the conclusions are drawn directly from a body of compiled work.

The Appeals

"The appeals" offer a lesson in rhetoric that sticks with you long after the class has ended. Perhaps it is the rhythmic quality of the words (ethos, logos, pathos) or, simply, the usefulness of the concept. Aristotle imagined logos, ethos, and pathos as three kinds of artistic proof. Essentially, they highlight three ways to appeal to or persuade an audience: "(1) to reason logically, (2) to understand human character and goodness in its various forms, (3) to understand emotions" (Honeycutt, *Rhetoric* 1356a).

While Aristotle and others did not explicitly dismiss emotional and character appeals, they found the most value in logic. Contemporary rhetoricians and argumentation scholars, however, recognize the power of emotions to sway us. Even the most stoic individuals have some emotional threshold over which no logic can pass. For example, we can seldom be reasonable when faced with a crime against a loved one, a betrayal, or the face of an adorable baby.

The easiest way to differentiate the appeals is to imagine selling a product based on them. Until recently, car commercials offered a prolific source of logical, ethical, and emotional appeals.

Logos: Using logic as proof for an argument. For many students this takes the form of numerical evidence. But as we have discussed above, logical reasoning is a kind of argumentation.

> *Car Commercial*: (Syllogism) Americans love adventure—Ford Escape allows for off road adventure— Americans should buy a Ford Escape.
>
> OR
>
> The Ford Escape offers the best financial deal.

Ethos: Calling on particular shared values (patriotism), respected figures of authority (MLK), or one's own character as a method for appealing to an audience.

> *Car Commercial*: Eco-conscious Americans drive a Ford Escape.
>
> OR
>
> [Insert favorite movie star] drives a Ford Escape.

Pathos: Using emotionally driven images or language to sway your audience.

> *Car Commercial*: Images of a pregnant women being safely rushed to a hospital. Flash to two car seats in the back seat. Flash to family hopping out of their Ford Escape and witnessing the majesty of the Grand Canyon.
>
> OR
>
> After an image of a worried mother watching her sixteen year old daughter drive away: "Ford Escape takes the fear out of driving."

The appeals are part of everyday conversation, even if we do not use the Greek terminology (see Activity: Developing Audience Awareness). Understanding the appeals helps us to make better rhetorical choices in designing our arguments. If you think about the appeals as a choice, their value is clear.

Activity: Developing Audience Awareness

Imagine you have been commissioned by your school food service provider to create a presentation encouraging the consumption of healthier foods on campus.

1. How would you present this to your friends: consider the media you would use, how you present yourself, and how you would begin.
2. How would you present this same material to parents of incoming students?
3. Which appeal is most useful for each audience? Why?

Toulmin: Dissecting the Everyday Argument

Philosopher Stephen Toulmin studies the arguments we make in our everyday lives. He developed his method out of frustration with logicians (philosophers of argumentation) that studied argument in a vacuum or through mathematical formulations:

> All A are B.
> All B are C.
>
> Therefore, all A are C. (Eemeren, et al. 131)

Instead, Toulmin views argument as it appears in a conversation, in a letter, or some other context because real arguments are much more complex than the syllogisms that make up the bulk of Aristotle's logical program. Toulmin offers the contemporary writer/reader a way to map an argument. The result is a visualization of the argument process. This map comes complete with vocabulary for describing the parts of an argument. The vocabulary allows us to see the contours of the landscape—the winding rivers and gaping caverns. One way to think about a "good" argument is that it is a discussion that hangs together, a landscape that is cohesive (we can't have glaciers in our desert valley). Sometimes we miss the faults of an argument because it sounds good or appears to have clear connections between the statement and the evidence, when in truth the only thing holding the argument together is a lovely sentence or an artistic flourish.

For Toulmin, argumentation is an attempt to justify a statement or a set of statements. The better the demand is met, the higher the audience's appreciation. Toulmin's vocabulary for the study of argument offers labels for the parts of the argument to help us create our map.

> **Claim**: The basic standpoint presented by a writer/ speaker.
>
> **Data**: The evidence which supports the claim.
>
> **Warrant**: The justification for connecting particular data to a particular claim. The warrant also makes clear the assumptions underlying the argument.
>
> **Backing**: Additional information required if the warrant is not clearly supported.
>
> **Rebuttal**: Conditions or standpoints that point out flaws in the claim or alternative positions.
>
> **Qualifiers**: Terminology that limits a standpoint. Examples include applying the following terms to any part of an argument: sometimes, seems, occasionally, none, always, never, etc.

The following paragraphs come from an article reprinted in UTNE magazine by Pamela Paxton and Jeremy Adam Smith titled: "Not Everyone Is Out to Get You." Charting this excerpt helps us to understand some of the underlying assumptions found in the article.

"Trust No One"

> That was the slogan of *The X-Files*, the TV drama that followed two FBI agents on a quest to uncover a vast government conspiracy. A defining cultural phenomenon during its run from 1993–2002, the show captured a mood of growing distrust in America.
>
> Since then, our trust in one another has declined even further. In fact, it seems that "Trust no one" could easily have been America's motto for the past 40 years—thanks to, among other things, Vietnam, Watergate, junk

bonds, Monica Lewinsky, Enron, sex scandals in the Catholic Church, and the Iraq war.

The General Social Survey, a periodic assessment of Americans' moods and values, shows an 11-point decline from 1976–2008 in the number of Americans who believe other people can generally be trusted. Institutions haven't fared any better. Over the same period, trust has declined in the press (from 29 to 9 percent), education (38–29 percent), banks (41 percent to 20 percent), corporations (23–16 percent), and organized religion (33–20 percent). Gallup's 2008 governance survey showed that trust in the government was as low as it was during the Watergate era.

The news isn't all doom and gloom, however. A growing body of research hints that humans are hardwired to trust, which is why institutions, through reform and high performance, can still stoke feelings of loyalty, just as disasters and mismanagement can inhibit it. The catch is that while humans want, even need, to trust, they won't trust blindly and foolishly.

Figure 5 demonstrates one way to chart the argument that Paxton and Smith make in "Trust No One." The remainder of the article offers additional claims and data, including the final claim that there is hope for overcoming our collective trust issues. The chart helps us to see that some of the warrants, in a longer research project, might require additional support. For example, the warrant that TV mirrors real life is an argument and not a fact that would require evidence.

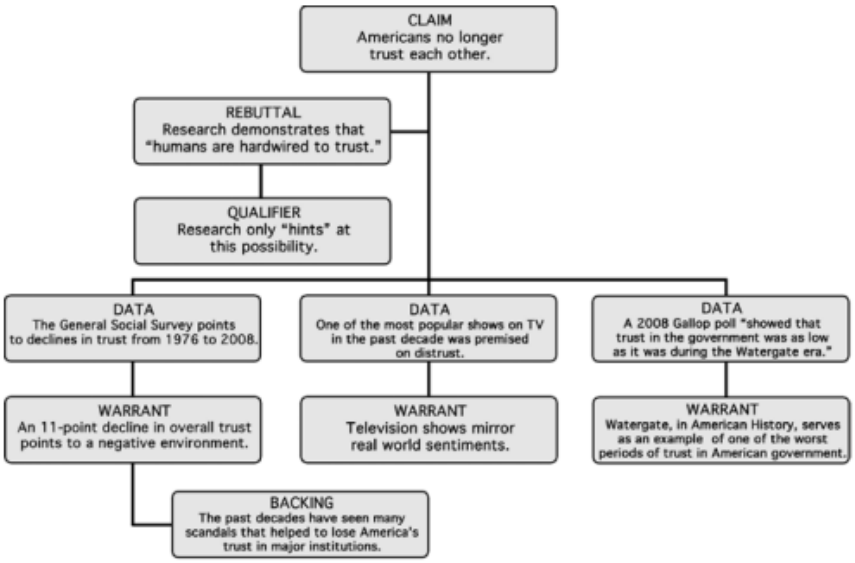


Figure 5: This chart demonstrates the utility of visualizing an argument.

Charting your own arguments and others helps you to visualize the meat of your discussion. All the flourishes are gone and the bones revealed. Even if you cannot fit an argument neatly into the boxes, the attempt forces you to ask important questions about your claim, your warrant, and possible rebuttals. By charting your argument you are forced to write your claim in a succinct manner and admit, for example, what you are using for evidence. Charted, you can see if your evidence is scanty, if it relies too much on one kind of evidence over another, and if it needs additional support. This charting might also reveal a disconnect between your claim and your warrant or cause you to reevaluate your claim altogether.

Pragma-Dialects: A Fancy Word for a Close Look at Argumentation

The field of rhetoric has always been interdisciplinary and so it has no problem including argumentation theory. Developed in the Speech Communication Department at the University of Amsterdam, pragma-dialectics is a study of argumentation that focuses on the ethics of one's logical choices in creating an argument. In *Fundamentals of Argumentation Theory: A Handbook of Historical Backgrounds and Contemporary Developments,* Frans H. van Eemeren and Rob Grootendorst describe argumentation, simply, as "characterized by the use of language for resolving a difference of opinion" (275). While much of this work quite literally looks at actual speech situations, the work can easily be applied to the classroom and to broader political situations.

While this version of argumentation deals with everything from ethics to arrangement, what this field adds to rhetorical studies is a new approach to argument fallacies. Fallacies are often the cause of the mystery feeling we get when we come

across faulty logic or missteps in an argument.

What follows is an adaptation of Frans van Eemeren, Rob Grootendorst, and Francesca Snoeck Henkemans' "violations of the rules for critical engagement" from their book What follows is an adaptation of Frans van Eemeren, Rob Grootendorst, and Francesca Snoeck Henkemans' "violations of the rules for critical engagement" from their book Argumentation: Analysis, Evaluation, Presentation (109). Rather than discuss rhetorical fallacies in a list (ad hominem, straw man, equivocation, etc.), they argue that there should be rules for proper argument to ensure fairness, logic, and a solution to the problem being addressed. Violating these rules causes a fallacious argument and can result in a standoff rather than a solution. (109). Rather than discuss rhetorical fallacies in a list (ad hominem, straw man, equivocation, etc.), they argue that there should be rules for proper argument to ensure fairness, logic, and a solution to the problem being addressed. Violating these rules causes a fallacious argument and can result in a standoff rather than a solution.

While fallacious arguments, if purposeful, pose real ethical problems, most people do not realize they are committing fallacies when they create an argument. To purposely attack someone's character rather than their argument (ad hominem) is not only unethical, but demonstrates lazy argumentation. However, confusing cause and effect might simply be a misstep that needs fixing. It is important to admit that many fallacies, though making an argument somewhat unsound, can be rhetorically savvy. While we know that appeals to pity (or going overboard on the emotional appeal) can often demonstrate a lack of knowledge or evidence, they often work. As such, these rules present argumentation as it would play out in a utopian world where everyone is calm and logical, where everyone cares about resolving the argument at hand, rather than winning the battle, and where everyone plays by the rules. Despite the utopian nature of the list, it offers valuable insight into argument flaws and offers hope for better methods of deliberation.

What follows is an adaptation of the approach to argumentation found in Chapters 7 and 8 of *Argumentation: Analysis, Evaluation, Presentation* (Eemeren, et al. 109-54). The rule is listed first, followed by an example of how the rule is often violated.

1. The Freedom Rule

> "Parties must not prevent each other from putting forward standpoints or casting doubt on standpoints" (110).
>
> There are many ways to stop an individual from giving her own argument. This can come in the form of a physical threat but most often takes the form of a misplaced critique. Instead of focusing on the argument, the focus is shifted to the character of the writer or speaker (ad hominem) or to making the argument (or author) seem absurd (straw man) rather than addressing its actual components. In the past decade, "Bush is stupid" became a common ad hominem attack that allowed policy to go unaddressed. To steer clear of the real issues of global warming, someone might claim "Only a fool would believe global warming is real" or "Trying to suck all of the CO_2 out of the atmosphere with giant greenhouse gas machines is mere science fiction, so we should look at abandoning all this green house gas nonsense."

2. The Burden-of-Proof Rule

> "A party who puts forward a standpoint is obliged to defend it if asked to do so" (113).
>
> This is one of my favorites. It is clear and simple. If you make an argument, you have to provide evidence to back it up. During the 2008 Presidential debates, Americans watched as all the candidates fumbled over the following question about healthcare: "How will this plan actually work?" If you are presenting a written argument, this requirement can be accommodated through quality, researched evidence applied to your standpoint.

3. The Standpoint Rule

> "A party's attack on a standpoint must relate to the standpoint that has indeed been advanced by the other party" (116).
>
> Your standpoint is simply your claim, your basic argument in a nutshell. If you disagree with another person's argument or they disagree with yours, the actual standpoint and not some related but more easily attacked issue must be addressed. For example, one person might argue that the rhetoric of global warming has created a multi-million dollar green industry benefiting from fears over climate change. This is an argument about the effects of global warming rhetoric, not global warming itself. It would break the standpoint rule to argue that the writer/speaker does not believe in global warming. This is not the issue at hand.

4. The Relevance Rule

> "A party may defend his or her standpoint only by advancing argumentation related to that standpoint" (119).
>
> Similar to #3, this rule assures that the evidence you use must actually relate to your standpoint. Let's stick with same argument: global warming has created a green industry benefiting from fears over climate change. Under this rule, your evidence would need to offer examples of the rhetoric and the resulting businesses that have developed since the introduction of green industries. It would break the rules to simply offer attacks on businesses who sell "eco-friendly" products.

5. The Unexpressed Premise Rule

> "A party may not falsely present something as a premise that has been left unexpressed by the other party or deny a premise that he or she has left implicit" (121).
>
> This one sounds a bit complex, though it happens nearly every day. If you have been talking to another person and feel the need to say, "That's NOT what I meant," then you have experienced a violation of the unexpressed premise rule. Overall, the rule attempts to keep the argument on track and not let it stray into irrelevant territory. The first violation of the rule, to falsely present what has been left unexpressed, is to rephrase someone's standpoint in a way that redirects the argument. One person might argue, "I love to go to the beach," and another might respond by saying "So you don't have any appreciation for mountain living." The other aspect of this rule is to camouflage an unpopular idea and deny that it is part of your argument. For example, you might argue that "I have nothing against my neighbors. I just think that there should be a noise ordinance in this part of town to help cut down on crime." This clearly shows that the writer does believe her neighbors to be criminals but won't admit it.

6. The Starting Point Rule

> "No party may falsely present a premise as an accepted starting point, or deny a premise representing an accepted starting point" (128).
>
> Part of quality argumentation is to agree on the opening standpoint. According to this theory, argument is pointless without this kind of agreement. It is well known that arguing about abortion is nearly pointless as long as one side is arguing about the rights of the unborn and the other about the rights of women. These are two different starting points.

7. The Argument Scheme Rule

> "A standpoint may not be regarded as conclusively defended if the defense does not take place by means of an appropriate argument scheme that is correctly applied" (130).
>
> This rule is about argument strategy. Argument schemes could take up another paper altogether. Suffice it to say that schemes are ways of approaching an argument, your primary strategy. For example, you might choose emotional rather than logical appeals to present your position. This rule highlights the fact that some argument strategies are simply better than others. For example, if you choose to create an argument based largely on attacking the character of your opponent rather than the issues at hand, the argument is moot.
>
> Argument by analogy is a popular and well worn argument strategy (or scheme). Essentially, you compare your position to a more commonly known one and make your argument through the comparison. For example, in the "Trust No One" argument above, the author equates the Watergate and Monica Lewinsky scandals. Since it is common knowledge that Watergate was a serious scandal, including Monica Lewinsky in the list offers a strong argument by analogy: the Lewinsky scandal did as much damage as Watergate. To break this rule, you might make an analogy that does not hold up, such as comparing a minor scandal involving a local school board to Watergate. This would be an exaggeration, in most cases.

8. The Validity Rule

> "The reasoning in the argumentation must be logically valid or must be capable of being made valid by making explicit one or more unexpressed premises" (132).
>
> This rule is about traditional logics. Violating this rule means that the parts of your argument do not match up. For

example, your cause and effect might be off: If you swim in the ocean today you will get stung by a jelly fish and need medical care. Joe went to the doctor today. He must have been stung by a jelly fish. While this example is obvious (we do not know that Joe went swimming), many argument problems are caused by violating this rule.

9. The Closure Rule

"A failed defense of a standpoint must result in the protagonist retracting the standpoint, and a successful defense of a standpoint must result in the antagonist retracting his or her doubts" (134).

This seems the most obvious rule, yet it is one that most public arguments ignore. If your argument does not cut it, admit the faults and move on. If another writer/speaker offers a rebuttal and you clearly counter it, admit that the original argument is sound. Seems simple, but it's not in our public culture. This would mean that George W. Bush would have to have a press conference and say, "My apologies, I was wrong about WMD," or for someone who argued fervently that Americans want a single payer option for healthcare to instead argue something like, "The polls show that American's want to change healthcare, but not through the single payer option. My argument was based on my opinion that single payer is the best way and not on public opinion." Academics are more accustomed to retraction because our arguments are explicitly part of particular conversations. Rebuttals and renegotiations are the norm. That does not make them any easier to stomach in an "argument is war" culture.

10. The Usage Rule

"Parties must not use any formulations that are insufficiently clear or confusingly ambiguous, and they must interpret the formulations of the other party as carefully and accurately as possible" (136).

While academics are perhaps the worst violators of this rule, it is an important one to discuss. Be clear. I notice in both student and professional academic writing that a confusing concept often means confusing prose, longer sentences, and more letters in a word. If you cannot say it/write it clearly, the concept might not yet be clear to you. Keep working. Ethical violations of this rule happen when someone is purposefully ambiguous so as to confuse the issue. We can see this on all the "law" shows on television or though deliberate propaganda.

Activity: Following the Rules

1. Choose a topic to discuss in class or as a group (ex. organic farming, campus parking, gun control).

a. Choose one of the rules above and write a short argument (a sentence) that clearly violates the rule. Be prepared to explain WHY it violates the rule.

b. Take the fallacious argument you just created in exercise a) and correct it. Write a solid argument that conforms to the rule.

Food for thought: The above rules offer one way to think about shaping an argument paper. Imagine that the argument for your next paper is a dialogue between those who disagree about your topic. After doing research, write out the primary standpoint for your paper. For example: organic farming is a sustainable practice that should be used more broadly. Next, write out a standpoint that might offer a refutation of the argument. For example: organic farming cannot supply all of the food needed by the world's population. Once you have a sense of your own argument and possible refutations, go through the rules and imagine how you might ethically and clearly provide arguments that support your point without ignoring the opposition.

Even though our current media and political climate do not call for good argumentation, the guidelines for finding and creating it abound. There are many organizations such as America Speaks (www. americaspeaks.org) that are attempting to revive quality, ethical deliberation. On the personal level, each writer can be more deliberate in their argumentation by choosing to follow some of these methodical approaches to ensure the soundness and general quality of their argument. The above models offer the possibility that we can imagine modes of argumentation other than war. The final model, pragma-dialectics, especially, seems to consider argument as a conversation that requires constant vigilance and interaction by participants. Argument as conversation, as new metaphor for public deliberation, has possibilities.

Additional Activities

1. Read Stanley Fish's blog entry titled "Democracy and Education" (fish.blogs.nytimes.com/2007/0...ation/#more-57). Choose at least two of the responses to Fish's argument that students are not entitled to free speech rights in the classroom and

compare them using the different argumentation models listed above.
2. Following the pragma-dialectic rules, create a fair and balanced rebuttal to Fish's argument in his "Democracy and Education" blog entry.
3. Use Toulmin's vocabulary to build an argument. Start with a claim and then fill in the chart with your own research, warrants, qualifiers, and rebuttals.

Note

1. I would like to extend a special thanks to Nina Paley for giving permission to use this cartoon under Creative Commons licensing, free of charge. Please see Paley's great work at www.ninapaley.com.

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13.2.5: “Finding Your Way In”- Invention as Inquiry Based Learning in First Year Writing

Steven Lessner and Collin Craig

Imagine the initial meeting of your first year writing course.* After welcoming you to the course and going over the basics, your writing instructor prompts you and the other students to reflect on how you typically begin to think about approaching a writing assignment. Several hands raise and you listen as students begin answering. One student hesitantly states that he normally waits until the last minute to think about it and stays up all night before it’s due, working away. Another student asserts that she often has trouble choosing and then narrowing down a topic. Disagreeing about this shared response, a student sitting near you asserts that he has trouble generating more supporting ideas once he has chosen a topic to explore. Still someone else states that she tries to get ideas from the readings she is supposed to write about in essays—often without success. After hearing from these students, your writing instructor tells the class that this is a good time to start talking about invention and helpful activities to use when approaching and starting a writing assignment.

Your first year college writing course often becomes a primary place where new writing techniques and tools are presented to help smoothen your transition into college-level writing. We hope this chapter will encourage you to see the diverse invention possibilities available when beginning a writing assignment. For instance, have you ever felt a blank sheet of paper or empty word processing screen intently staring at you while you decide what to say? Learning potential invention activities for writing can help you feel more comfortable as a writer in college by giving you many more places to begin. As college writing teachers, we know that first year writing students have plenty of generative ideas to share and many insightful connections to make in their writing. Knowing that a wide range of invention activities are available to try out may be all you need to begin approaching writing assignments with more effectiveness, clarity and creativity.

In his piece entitled “Inventing Invention” from *Writing Inventions: Identities, Technologies, Pedagogies*, college writing professor Scott Lloyd DeWitt makes a comparison between the inventing space his father used as an engineer and the multitude of invention activities open to writers (17–19). DeWitt describes his father’s garage as a generative place where “wires, tool handles, broken toys, thermometers, an ice bucket, lamp switches, an intercom system, the first microwave oven ever manufactured . . .” are drawn on as invention tools that his father selects depending on what project he is starting and what tool will ultimately help him the most (17). Similarly, as a writer in college with many different writing assignments, you will need to think about what invention activity best helps you not only to begin specific papers most effectively, but also to generate new ideas and arguments during the writing process.

In considering your previous experiences, you may have been taught that invention “is a single art form, or a single act of creativity” (DeWitt 23). When taught in this way, readers and writers may be misled to understand invention as something that takes place in one definite moment that can’t be revisited while in the middle of writing. Viewing invention as a one time, hit or miss event does not allow the construction and development of ideas to be seen as a continuing process a writer employs throughout the act of writing. In looking at invention as a “single act,” you might miss how helpful invention can really be as an ongoing developmental practice that allows new ideas and exciting connections to be made.

The invention activities we offer in this chapter will help you begin to see invention as more than formulaic correct or incorrect approaches for producing writing. We want these invention activities to be ones that you can try out and, ultimately, make your own as college readers and writers. Let us be clear in stating that no one invention activity may work for all writers. Some of these approaches for beginning your writing assignments will be more useful than others. However, each invention activity has been crafted with you in mind and as a generative way for you to begin thinking about your writing assignments. Through the invention strategies of reading rhetorically, freewriting, focused freewriting, critical freewriting, flexible outlining, bulleting, visual outlining and auditory/dialogic generative outlining, you will begin inventing in ways that stretch your writerly muscles. You will see how beginning papers can be a process that invites you as a participant to share and build on your experiences and knowledge in productive ways. And much like Professor DeWitt’s engineering father with his tools in a garage, you will learn to choose your invention tools with care when starting to write.

Reading Rhetorically

As a college reader, finding an author’s intent is a commonly learned critical thinking strategy that works for analyzing texts. But engaged reading can also be about discovering how the writing strategies of authors are working to build an essay and

convey a message. A good start towards transitioning into college-level writing is discovering what you can stand to gain as a writer from the reading process. Through directed reading, you can learn strategies for building structure and argument in your own texts. Moreover, as part of your successful development as a writer, you'll need ample opportunity and space for creativity in your writing process. Reading with a purpose teaches you how to use creativity to generate multiple approaches to building arguments and making connections between ideas.

Rhetorical reading is our approach for understanding the tools that writers use to persuade or effectively communicate ideas. This critical reading approach will have you analyze, interpret, and reflect on choices that writers make to convey a thought or argument. Reading rhetorically develops critical thinking skills that not only interrogate ideas but also situates them within a rhetorical situation (context) and works towards determining how the message, intended audience, and method of delivery work together for the purpose of persuasion and effective communication. For example, when reading a New York Times op-ed about the war in Iraq, you might consider the traditional political stance the newspaper has taken on the war in the Middle East and how this might determine how Iraqi citizens are spoken for, or how visual images are used to invoke an emotion about the Muslim faith in times of war. You will find that the ability to perform specific analytical moves in your reading can make you

- more aware of your own intentions as a writer;
- more specific in developing methods of delivery;
- and, more cognizant of how you want your intended audience to respond to your ideas.

This critical reading exercise encourages you to think about reading as a social interaction with the writer. Take a look at an assigned reading by an author for your course. What questions might you ask the author about the writing moves that he/she makes to draw readers in?

Here are some sample questions to get you started towards reading rhetorically

- How does the author organize events, evidence, or arguments throughout the text?
- What stylistic moves does the text do to draw readers in?
- Does the author rely on experts, personal experience, statistics, etc. to develop an argument or communicate an idea? Is this rhetorical approach effective?
- Who might we suggest is the intended audience? How does the author make appeals or cater her message to this audience specifically?

In a writing situation that asks you to effectively communicate a specific idea to a target audience, knowing how to respond will develop your critical reading skills and provide you with effective strategies for writing in multiple genres. Having a rhetorical knowledge of how genres of writing work will also prepare you with tools for generating inquiry-based writing for multiple audiences.

A Rhetorical Reading Activity

Below is an excerpt from Gloria Anzaldua's "How to Tame a Wild Tongue," an autobiographic text that demonstrates how the author finds her identity as Chicana, shaped by multiple language practices and responses.

> I remember being caught speaking Spanish at recess—that was good for three licks on the knuckles with a sharp ruler. I remember being sent to the corner of the classoom for "talking back" to the Anglo teacher when all I was trying to do was tell her how to pronounce my name. "If you want to be American, speak 'American.' If you don't like it, go back to Mexico where you belong."
>
> "I want you to speak English. Pa' hallar buen trabajo tienes que saber hablar el ingles bien. Que vale toda tu educacion si todavia hablas ingles con un 'accent,'" my mother would say, mortified that I spoke English like a Mexican. At Pan American University, I and all Chicano students were required to take two speech classes. Their purpose: to get rid of our accents.
>
> Attacks on one's form of expression with the intent to censor are a violation of the First Amendment. El Anglo con cara de inocente nos arranco la lengua. Wild tongues can't be tamed, they can only be cut out.

Asking Rhetorical Questions

Here are a few rhetorical questions you might consider asking:

- What is the rhetorical situation in which Anzaldua finds herself using different language forms? (Rhetorical situation refers to the context, intended audience, and purpose for writing.)
- Does Anzaldua's writing attempt to invoke an emotional response from its readers?
- What makes Anzaldua credible to speak about language practices as a condition of access into a community?
- Does the author make any logical appeals to persuade readers?
- What assumptions about culture can we make based on the content of Anzaldua's text?

Asking rhetorical questions provokes a process of inquiry-based thinking that is useful for learning how to participate in academic conversations in a way that investigates the decisions writers make when they compose and arrange compositions. As you read, get in the habit of asking rhetorical questions about the composition of texts. This will further guide your prewriting process of brainstorming and frame decisions for how you might compose your own texts. Freewriting can be an initial invention exercise that begins your composing process.

Entering Conversations as a Writer

Freewriting

Freewriting is a warmup exercise that is designed to jumpstart the writing process. Writing professor Peter Elbow, well-known for promoting the practice of freewriting, describes freewriting as private writing without stopping (4). Freewriting is an effective prewriting strategy that allows you to explore an idea without worrying about grammar errors or coherence. This form of writing is not about developing a finished product or performing "good writing." Many writers might use this exercise to get their brains into gear when developing ideas about a topic. If you are struggling with pinning down ideas that are at the back of your mind, freewriting enables you to explore the field of thoughts in your mind and get words down on paper that can trigger connections between meaningful ideas.

Here is an exercise to get you started:

Exercise 1

Take about ten minutes to write about anything that comes to mind. The goal is to keep writing without stopping. If you are coming up blank and nothing comes to mind, then write "nothing comes to mind" until something does. Do not worry about the quality of the writing, grammar, or what to write. Just write!

Focused Freewriting

Focused freewriting asks you to write about a specific topic. It is more concentrated and allows writers opportunities to develop continuity and connections between ideas while exploring all that you might know about a subject. Focused freewriting can be useful in sorting through what you know about a topic that might be useful for outlining a writing project.

Exercise 2

Take about ten minutes to focus freewrite on one of the topics below. As with initial freewriting, write without stopping. But this time, pay closer attention to maintaining a focus and developing continuity while building upon and connecting ideas.

- What writing moves can you learn from a close rhetorical reading of Anzaldua's text to compose your own text?
- Write about an important language practice that you participated in or experienced that is not school related.

Kelsey, a first year writer on the university basketball team, offers an example of a focused freewrite she performed in her college writing course about learning how to talk to her baby sister.

> I'm not really sure what he wants us to exactly write. Like speaking a different language? Talking in different tones? Language like Amy Tan described? Well since I'm not sure, I guess that I'll just guess and see how this works. When Mackenzie was first learning to speak, she obviously didn't produce full sentences. She used a lot of touching, showing, and pointing. When speaking to her, it was important to emphasize certain words (that she would pick up on or understand), to make them clear to her and not allow an entire sentence or phrase to confuse her. And, when she spoke to us, it was important to not only pay at tention to the word that she was

> saying (often not comprehendible), but watch her facial expression, and notice how she used her hand to point, gesture, etc. It was truly fascinating to watch how her language developed and grew over such a short period of time. She went from shouting out short, one syllable words, to formulating her own sentences (although often without correct tenses or order), to speaking in such a way that little observation from me or my family was needed. She continued to occasionally sometimes mix up her words, or even mispronounce them, but it is still astounding to me that she learned what so many things are, how to say them, and how to describe them, without ever attending any school. I know that this is pretty much how everyone learns to speak, but the power of simple acquisition still is fascinating. Ok so now im all out of what I wanted to say.

Kelsey begins her focused freewrite with questions that help her create a framework for making sense of non-school language practices. Using personal narrative, she is able to explore the concept of acquisition in how her baby sister learns how to communicate. She also takes moments throughout her freewrite to reflect on the literacy issues implied in her recounted story. During interpretive moments of her freewriting, Kelsey can formulate ideas she might further explore about literacy as a social practice, such as the influences of both formal education and the mundane experiences of family social life.

Critical Freewriting

Critical freewriting asks writers to think more analytically about a topic or subject for writing. When we say “critical,” we do not mean it simply as an analytical approach focused solely on creating an opposing viewpoint. We use the term critical to define a reflection process during freewriting that includes

- asking questions
- responding
- engaging with opposing points of view
- developing new perspectives and then asking more questions

Critical freewriting gives you permission to grapple with an idea and even explore the basis for your own beliefs about a topic. It involves going beyond writing freely about a subject, and placing it in relationship to larger existing conversations. For example, you might ask, “How does my stance on teenage pregnancy align with existing viewpoints on abortion?” or “What are the consequences for sex education in high schools?” Critical freewriting provides you the opportunity to use reflection and inquiry as inventive strategies towards exploring multiple angles into a writing topic.

Below is an example of critical freewriting on the benefits and possible consequences of other forms of writing, such as text messaging.

> Text messaging is a kind of writing that I do to keep in touch with friends and family back home and on campus. I use it everyday after class or when I get bored with studying homework. It’s a lot like instant messaging in my opinion because it allows you to communicate without having to worry about weird silences that can happen when you run out of things to say. On the other hand I wonder about how it will affect my ability to communicate in formal settings, such as a phone interview for a job when I graduate. Often times for example when I receive a phone call I will ignore it and send a text message instead of calling back. I would say that I text message more than I actually talk on the phone. I wonder how such indirect communication might create bad habits of passivity that might cause me to miss out on all the benefits of human interaction. I feel the same way about online instant messaging. Though it is a great way to maintain contact with friends that are going to college in another state, I wonder if it makes me less inclined to initiate face-to-face communication with others on campus. Some might say that digital communication is more efficient and that you can say whatever you feel without the pressure of being embarrassed by someone’s response. I would agree but meaning in words can be understood better when hearing emotions in someone’s audible voice, right? Meh, this probably won’t change my habits of typing up a quick text over calling someone. LOL.

Here the writer takes an inconclusive stance on the pros and cons of text messaging as a form of everyday communication. Her assignment might ask her to either make an argumentative stance or to take an open-ended approach in exploring instant messaging as a language practice. In either case, she engages in a recursive (ongoing) process of questioning and answering that invents scenarios and raises issues she might explore in order to develop a working knowledge on trendy forms of technological communication.

Exercise 3

Spend ten minutes critical freewriting on one of the following topics.

- What is a type of writing that you do that is not school related? How does your knowledge about the context (people, place, or occasion) of writing determine how you communicate in this writing situation?
- How has writing contributed to your experiences as a member of an online community (ex. Facebook, Twitter, writing emails)?

Critical freewriting encourages recursive thinking that enables you to create a body of ideas and to further decide which ones might be worth researching and which themes might work together in constructing a coherent, yet flexible pattern of ideas. We value flexibility because we believe it complements how ideas are never final and can always be revised or strengthened. Flexible outlining enables this process of ongoing revision, no matter what writing stage you are in.

Flexible Outlining

Once you have engaged in freewriting, you may find it useful to use a process called flexible outlining that can help you arrange your ideas into more complex, thought provoking material. First year writing students and their comments about outlining inspired the kind of flexible outlining we encourage in the exercises below. Summing up many students' needs to begin writing a paper in some kind of outline format, first year writer Valencia Cooper writes, "The way I start a paper usually is to organize or outline the topic whatever it may be." Valencia used a variety of bullets and indenting when beginning her work, which suggests that flexible outlining could be more effective in terms of organizing generative thoughts for papers. Similarly using a form of flexible outlining, first year writing student Tommy Brooks conveyed that he "makes an outline and fills in the blanks." These examples encourage you as a writer to remember that there is no right or wrong way to engage in outlining ideas as you start thinking about what directions to take your paper. We encourage you to visualize, hear, and talk through important information generated from your critical freewriting using the techniques of bulleting, drawing, and dialoguing that we detail below.

Bulleting

After generating a body of ideas from freewriting, bulleting your ideas can be the next step towards conceptualizing a map of your writing project. Organizing your thoughts in bullets can generate possibilities for how you might sequence coherent streams of ideas, such as main points, examples, or themes. For instance, if you chose to critically freewrite about writing that is not school related as prompted in Exercise 3 above, itemizing the ideas in your response through bulleting allows you to isolate prospective themes and decide if they are worth exploring. Below is an example bulleted list generated from the above critical freewriting demonstration about text messaging as an alternative writing practice.

- Text messaging allows me to keep in touch with those I am close to that live far away and nearby me as well.
- Text messaging is a kind of writing that I use everyday in situations, like when I'm bored with schoolwork.
- Text messaging is very similar to instant messaging in how it avoids weird silences that happen in face-to-face or phone conversations.
- Text messaging may create bad habits of passivity that might cause missing out on human interaction.
- Text messaging does not allow emotions to be fully understood like listening to someone's audible voice.

Visual Outlining

After locating common themes from your bullets, try to visually think about the best way to represent the arrangement of your ideas for what we call a visual outline. This exercise will require some drawing, but please understand that visual outlining does not require you to be an artist. The point of this exercise is for you to conceptualize your paper in a new way that helps generate new ideas. Peter Elbow points out in *Writing With Power* that drawings connected to your writing "have life, energy and experience in them" (324).

Take some time to consider how you visualize the arrangement of your paper. Is your central idea the trunk of a tree, with other ideas expanding outward as the branches, and with details hanging like leaves? Or is your beginning idea a tall skyscraper with many small windows on the outside and hallways and elevators on the inside underlying your ideas and claims?

For instance, if you wanted to visualize the above bullets concerning text messaging in the shape of a tree diagram, you might write text messaging in what you draw and label as the trunk. As you continue sketching in the branches on your tree,

each one should represent an idea or other evidence that supports a main claim being made about text messaging. Below, we have created a conceptual tree from the previous critical freewriting excerpt as a visual example for outlining that can be both generative and flexible. But you don't have to imitate ours. Be stylistically creative in developing your own tree outline (see figure 1).

Developing a tree diagram as a way of outlining ideas prompts you to see that linear approaches to orchestrating ideas are not the only way of arranging a composition at this stage. While "Text Messaging As Alternative Writing" works as the foundational theme in Figure 1, having a variety of visually horizontal alignments in this outline can eliminate premature decisions about how you might arrange your composition and which topics can be best aligned in relationship to others. Use this type of spatial alignment to make more effective decisions about how to communicate your intended message.

Exercise 4

Take some time to draw your own visual outline using the ideas developed from your critical freewriting. Think about reoccurring central theme(s) that surface. Decide which ones can be foundational in building supporting arguments or potential alternative perspectives.

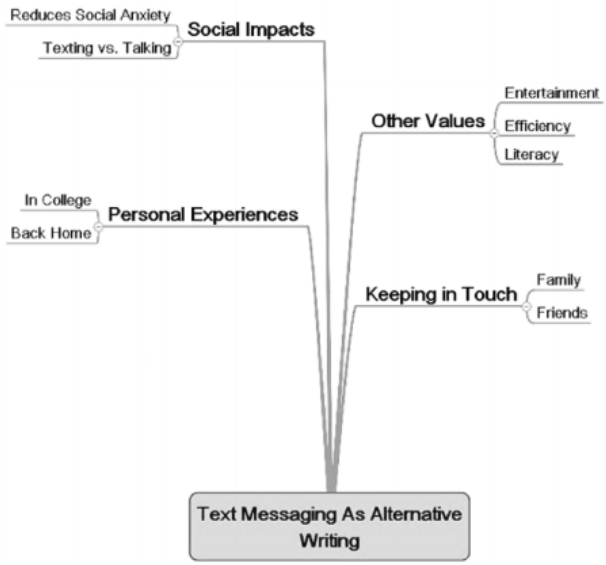


Figure 1: Tree Outline

Reflection

- From looking at your visual outline, what directions might you first consider pursuing in the process of developing and organizing an essay?
- In what ways did using an image as a medium for outlining allow you to think about how you might arrange your ideas?

Auditory/Dialogic Generative Outlining

We also want to suggest an interactive outlining process that allows you to get more immediate feedback from your peers about the directions you may want to take in your writing. In her work *Remembered Rapture: The Writer at Work*, author and cultural critic bell hooks writes about how her outlining process is improved through communication with others. When trying to write her autobiography, hooks recalls that memories "came in a rush, as though they were a sudden thunderstorm" (83). Often, she found that her remembering and categorizing process in recalling old memories of her younger life were best to "talk about" with others before she began writing (83).

For this exercise, you will want to return to the original bulleted list that you generated from your critical freewriting. If you find it helpful, you can use the example bullet list about text messaging we provided in the "Bulleting" section above.

Step #1

As you did with your visual outline, take some time to think about the central idea in your bulleted list that you created from critical freewriting. Highlight, underline or circle these main ideas in your bullets. You may want to use different color highlighters to differentiate between your starting, central idea and those that are supportive and expanding. Below, we have provided an example of coding in our created bulleted list by making starting, central ideas bold and expanding, supportive points italicized.

- **Text messaging allows me to keep in touch** with *those I am close to that live far away and nearby me as well*.
- **Text messaging is a kind of writing** *that I use everyday in situations like when I'm bored with schoolwork*.
- **Text messaging is very similar to instant messaging** in how *it avoids weird silences that happen in face-to-face or phone conversations*.
- **Text messaging may create bad habits of passivity** *that might cause missing out on human interaction*.
- **Text messaging does not allow emotions to be heard** *like in someone's audible voice*

Please note that the distinctions between your central and supporting ideas do not have to be finalized. Some initial thoughts may be part of your supporting points. Or you may still be in the process of solidifying an idea. This is perfectly fine. Just do your best to make as many distinctions as you can.

Take some time to code the bulleted list you generated from your starting, central ideas and supporting ideas.

In Step #1 of Auditory/Dialogic Generative Outlining, separating main and supportive ideas by marking them differently (highlighting, underlining, circling), helps you see generative connections you are making with your topic of text messaging. In looking over this list, there are many ideas you can explore about text messaging and its relationship to something else (ability to keep in touch with others, writing, instant messaging, bad habits of passivity, and emotions). Having these diverse connections about text messaging listed pushes you to see that there is no one, right answer that you need to explore in your writing. Instead, this invention step opens up many different possible connections for you to consider as you begin writing.

Step #2

For the next piece of this outlining strategy, work with a peer. In discussing the interactive nature of writing and communication, Elbow points out "there is a deep and essential relationship between writing and the speaking voice" (22). In speaking face to face with another student in your class that is writing the same assignment, you may find a higher level of comfort in conveying your ideas. However, you could also choose to share your bullets with another individual outside your class, such as a friend or family member.

Instruction #1 for the Writer: Look closely at your central, starting point(s) (coded in bold in the example above). Find a partner in class. Give them your coded list.

Instruction #1 for the Reader/Recorder: Read aloud each of the writer's central starting points (coded in bold in the example above). Then frame a question for the writer that relates to their central points. An example question can be, "You have a lot of starting points that talk about text messaging and its relationship to something else (writing, instant messaging, bad habits of passivity, emotions). Why do these relationships to text messaging keep coming up in your ideas?"

Below is a list of three other example questions a reader/recorder might ask in relationship to the writer's central starting points about text messaging. These example questions are offered here to help you think about what types of questions you could ask as a reader/recorder to a writer.

1. The majority of your central starting points seem to express a strong point about text messaging with definite wording such as in "Text messaging allows me . . . ," "Text messaging is a kind of writing . . . ," "Text messaging is very similar . . . ," and "Text messaging does not allow . . ." However, you have one central starting point that does not express certainty, and that one is "Text messaging may create bad habits of passivity . . ." Why is the opinion in this idea not as strong as your other starting central points? Why do you choose to use the word "may" here?
2. In two of your central starting points, you seem to make a kind of comparison between text messaging and other forms of communication such as "writing" and "instant messaging." Are there any other forms of communication that you can compare text messaging to? If so, what are they?
3. Three of your central starting points ("Text messaging allows me to keep in touch . . . ," "Text messaging

may create bad habits of passivity . . . ," "Text messaging does not allow emotions to be heard . . .") appear to deal with human emotions and their relationships to text messaging. Is this relationship between human emotions and text messaging something you find interesting and want to further explore? If so, how?

Instruction #2 for the Writer: After the reader asks you a question about your central, starting points, start talking. While you want to try to remember the supporting details (coded in the example above in italics), do not hesitate to speak on new thoughts that you are having.

Below, we have provided samples of what a writer might say in response to each of the above reader/recorder questions.

1. Well, I mean, text messaging may not definitely create bad habits that cause you to miss out on human interaction. At times, it could actually help you resolve something that might be tough to talk out with someone—like if you were in an argument with that person or something. Then, it might be easier for some people to text. But then again, text messaging is passive in some ways and does not allow you to talk with that person face to face. However, text messaging could be something that two friends use who live apart as a way to stay in touch because they can't have human interaction due to geographical distance. So yea, I guess I used "may" to make sure I was not taking a decided stance on it. I'm still thinking through it, you know?
2. Well, I mean text messaging can also be considered a type of reading that is a form of communication as well. You have to be able to know what certain things like "lol" mean in order to understand what you are reading in texts. Otherwise, you will not be able to respond to the person sending you the text. The reading you have to do in instant messaging and text messaging is really similar—you have to know the codes to use, right? And you can just keep on texting or instant messaging without all the awkward silences.
3. Yea, I find that pretty interesting. I mean, text messaging can have certain inside jokes in it, but you don't get to hear someone's voice when texting. Also, you don't get to give someone a high five, handshake, or hug. But yet, texting does allow you to keep in touch with some people far away from you. And texting is so much easier to use when trying to communicate with some friends rather than calling or visiting, know what I mean?

Instruction #2 for the Reader/Recorder: Write down what the writer is telling you about the question you asked, recording as much as you can on a sheet of paper. After you have finished taking notes, look back over what the writer has given you as supporting points (coded in the example above in italics) in his/her highlighted bulleted list. Check off ones that are mentioned by the writer. Then hand back the original paper with your check marks.

If you look at the samples above (under subheading Instruction #2 for the Writer), you would most likely place check marks next to the following ideas that were original supporting points of the writer. While you would not have written everything the writer said word by word, your notes should be able to provide you with his/her original, supporting points. These are listed below from the sample, and you could place check marks by them.

1. missing out on human interaction
2. avoiding weird silences
3. you can't hear someone's voice when texting, but you can keep in touch with those that live far away

Instruction #3 for Writer: Look through the recorded notes your reader/recorder took about what you referred to in regards to the question the reader/recorder asked. Reflect on what you may have talked about that was originally not on your list.

Here, if you refer back to the samples above of the writer talking aloud (under subheading Instruction #2 for the Writer), you can see that much new information has been generated. Once again, the sample is not as detailed as what the reader/recorder would have written down. However, you should still be able to look through what the reader/recorder hands back and see new information that you generated while talking aloud. In our examples, this new information is listed below:

1. text messaging might help you resolve something with someone else such as an argument
2. reading is another form of text messaging communication, and you have to know the code of texting in order to read it
3. text messaging can have certain inside jokes in it between people that are close

Now make sure to switch your roles as writers and readers/recorders once so each of you can have the benefit of this exercise.

You will uncover more specific supportive details in this invention exercise. You also may find that talking freely about your starting, central idea(s) can push you towards encountering new supportive details that come about from physical dialogue with a peer who is asking questions about your ideas. As bell hooks points out in recalling salient moments of her past, you can ignite productive reflection on ideas through talking them over with someone else.

In openly dialoguing with and also listening to a partner during this process, you will actively invent new supporting ideas as well as reinforce ones you find important about your topic. Talking through the ideas that come to mind as you dialogue with your partner is a way to experience more spontaneous invention. On the other hand, in asking questions and listening to a partner as he/she speaks, you are helping someone else invent—much like the diverse tools did for DeWitt's father as he invented. In participating in invention that is collaborative, you are giving your writing peer support as he/she generates new ideas. This activity situates invention as a social, interactive process that can help you see many different directions you can take with a subject in your writing.

Reflection

In looking back over your experiences as both a writer and reader/ recorder, it will be helpful to reflect on what you learned in your dialogue process. We have found it useful for students to spend time writing about their ideas after talking them over with someone. Here are some questions you might consider asking as a writer:

1. What did you learn from verbalizing your ideas?
2. How might dialogue enable you to conceptualize and organize the structure for an essay topic?

Conclusion

When student writers are given the space and tools to be critical thinkers and writers, we have learned that they have a greater stake in the knowledge that they produce, recognizing their value as contributing members of the university. Invention in the writing process is not just about exploring ways into your writing, it is about also developing new ideas within ongoing academic conversations in an intellectual community. The strategies we offer for writing invention are by no means to be seen as individual, exclusive exercises in and of themselves. We have arranged them in sequence so that you might understand invention as a process of taking practical steps that work collectively in developing your reading and writing skills. As a college writer, you will find that not all conversations are alike; some require you to use a repertoire of rhetorical moves that are less formulaic and more complex. We hope that this chapter has demonstrated writing as an ongoing process of discovery, where developing multiple approaches to analyzing texts in your reading process also provides you the opportunity to learn multiple invention strategies for writing effectively.

Discussion

1. How have you generally started your own writing assignments? What worked and didn't work for you? Are there any ideas you have for invention in writing that are not in this chapter that you would like to add? What are they, and do you think they could help other students?
2. Out of the new invention strategies you have learned in this chapter, which do you think would be most helpful as you transition into writing in higher education? Why do you think the invention strategy you choose would work well and in what way do you see yourself using it?

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13.2.6: From Topic to Presentation- Making Choices to Develop Your Writing

Beth L. Hewett

Introduction

Every semester, I ask my students for topic ideas, and then I write an essay for them.* When we're in a traditional classroom, they watch me write the initial draft using a computer and projector; they comment on the writing, and I present revisions to them later. When we work online, they receive copies of all my drafts with changes tracked for their review and comments. My students like this exercise—partially because they don't have to do the writing, but mostly because they like to see what I can make of an assignment they give me. They tell me that they struggle with beginning the writing and that the model I offer teaches new ways of understanding writing and revision. I like this exercise for the same reasons.

This chapter addresses how to make decisions about essay development and revision. It pays particular attention to using feedback from peers, instructors, or other readers. While you've probably had a lot of instructor feedback and many opportunities to review other students' writing and to have them review yours, you may not have learned much about how to make revision choices related to such feedback. To help you learn about making choices, I present my own argumentative essay that I developed from my students' feedback, and I analyze my decision-making processes as a model for you.

In this chapter, you'll see various stages of an in-progress essay:

1. Choosing among topics
2. Brainstorming
3. Writing an initial, or "zero," draft
4. Writing a preliminary draft that is intended to be revised
5. Using student feedback to revise
6. Completing a presentation draft
7. Considering how to make these processes work for you

The drafts, feedback, and commentary demonstrate how you can develop an essay from early thinking to preliminary writing to presentation-quality writing. Although there are many other ways to write an essay, this model may give you some ideas for your own writing. In addition, don't be surprised if you need more drafts for your essays than you see presented here. This essay was a short one (for me), and so I was able to revise fairly thoroughly in one step. However, a longer project usually takes me many drafts and many feedback rounds to develop fully.

My essay was developed much like your essays are even though I'm a more experienced writer. My assignment was to write an argument, so I was constrained by the genre's requirements. The argument needed to state a position (my assertion or thesis) and had to support that position with good reasons and sufficient evidence to substantiate those reasons. I had a choice of topics, but I didn't have complete freedom to write about just anything I wanted. The topic I ultimately chose was one that I was interested in but knew little about, so I needed to do a lot of research. Because my class was taught in a completely online setting and because I was working from home, I didn't have a physical library to go to, so I used my university's library search engines and the Internet for my research. Finally, I had only four work days to begin and complete a preliminary draft for student review; the process took twelve solid work hours.

My Students' Suggested Writing Topics

To figure out what I would write about, I asked my students to suggest an assignment for me. As the example topics show, some them were pretty mundane—easy to do, but insubstantial and, frankly, boring. Other topics were substantial, but difficult to research and write about thoughtfully in just four days for the class. Finally, one student suggested a topic that captured my interest and that of other students; peers added their questions, and I knew this was the topic I wanted to address even though I knew little about it.

Students' Suggested Topics

- Write about a cell phone charger. I had a teacher in high school that would pick random things every class and make us write about it for 10 minutes to "warm up" our brains. I hated those assignments.
- Why are liquid laundry detergents superior to powdered detergents?
- Does modern technology make life better and more convenient?
- How will the recent election of President Barack Obama affect race relations in the U.S.?
- What are your thoughts and opinions on adoptions by homosexual couples?
- Nadya Suleman gave birth to octuplets. Should the doctors have advised her against in vitro fertilization since she's not financially stable to take care of all of those children? If she does end up on welfare should taxpayers be outraged? At what point or if at any should the government step-in in situations such as this?
    - One angle to look at this sort of story is whether humans should impregnate themselves with "litters" of babies.
    - Personally, I would also like to know what doctor would inseminate this woman without [who didn't have] the funds to do so. It makes me wonder if he/she just wanted part of the publicity.

When you find a topic that is interesting and challenging, you've probably got a good subject that will sustain your attention during the harder parts of the writing. In this case, I was fascinated by the idea of a woman giving birth to eight children and the moral questions that the students asked about this case. I wondered what the woman's motivation was for having more children when she already had six of them, was unmarried and without a supportive partner, and unemployed.

Notice that the interest level of the topic doesn't guarantee an easy one to research. I chose to do quite a bit of digging into the issue because I had an "itch to know"; my curiosity was sufficient reason for me to do this work. Although school assignments may not seem this way, the motive behind research is—or should be—the genuine need or desire to answer a question for which you don't have the answer but about which you really want to know more.

My topic choice also took into consideration that my students would be writing an essay that supports a position during the semester. I wanted to write a similar type of essay that would provide a model for them at that time in their writing development. Thus, choosing my topic was connected to the rhetorical situation of my teaching these students to write arguments that are designed to convince audiences.

Brainstorming

One way that writers can find ideas is commonly called "brainstorming." While there are many ways to find ideas, brainstorming is popular because writers often learn how to do it by such strategies as journaling, listing thoughts, and circling and connecting ideas.

To brainstorm my essay topic, I developed a series of questions that interested me. I also did some preliminary research. Although I didn't list where that research came from in my notes here, I did list them on my original notes so I could be sure to credit my sources with their ideas and words.

Brainstorming

- Octuplets = irresponsibility?
- Selfishness?
- Freak of non-nature?
- Potential for abuse of children
- How the children will/may grow up
- Include stats
    - The increase in multiple births in the past 29 years clearly is due to supplemental fertilization methods like invitro fertilization (IVF). Increase of rates XYZ.
- Newborn octuplets have taken the world by surprise and gotten our attention: how were they conceived (IVF), who is the mother and why would she have asked to have so many embryos implanted (six other children, divorced and single, no job, on disability, lives with mother)—what about them?
    - Multiple birth children are exploited; humans not made to have litters; how do we care for all these children? Sensationalism: TV, movies, books, Quintland. Can we predict the ramifications for the children? Yes. Dionne quintuplets; Jon/Kate + 8
- Assertion? As the rate of multiple births increases due to various fertility treatments, we must be thoughtful about the possibility that children of such births will be exploited by their parents and a curious society. (curiosity, money, nurturing) (to insist on protecting these kids would be a persuasive paper)

- Assertion? As fertility treatments increase the rate of multiple births, the potential for both parents and society to exploit these children also increases.

Notice that while I just listed some ideas, my notes show that I also began my research. First, I needed to learn about the topic, which is to earn an "informed opinion," and then I could express that informed opinion through a thesis, or assertion. I wrote two possible assertions at this early stage. They helped me to narrow down what I believed I wanted to argue.

Initial, or Zero, Draft

After brainstorming, many people write an initial draft, which I am calling a zero draft. The zero draft gets the writing started and generally isn't going to be ready for others to see. This draft is a great way to begin because you don't have to be neat and tidy or super correct sentence-wise. Since this draft just begins to organize ideas, a zero draft should never be turned in as a completed draft for grading; trust me—these drafts just aren't ready for prime time. Zero drafts also tend to be fairly useless in a peer response session, so write a complete preliminary draft for that purpose. Unless your instructor asks you to provide it, this draft is yours alone. Return to it as you write your preliminary draft to keep track of how your earliest ideas are developing. You'll be interested in seeing whether your preliminary draft follows these early ideas or veers from them.

Zero Draft

The Exploitation of Multiple Birth Children

Two weeks ago, Nadya Suleman gave birth to octuplets in a California hospital. Although all eight babies lived, they were very small and some may die. Suleman now is the mother of fourteen children—six between the ages of 2 and 7. She is unemployed, without a husband or partner, and lives in her mother's home (she fights with her mother enough that her mom has said so publically). Suleman's babies and her own poverty are the talk of the tabloids and everyone seems to have an opinion. But people have always been excited when multiple children are born to women. But there will likely be more of these births because of in vitro fertilization. Both parents and society tend to exploit these children, but it is not acceptable because it is harmful to the children.

For demonstration purposes, I'm showing you only one paragraph of my zero draft. It provides the barest details of what the first paragraph of my preliminary draft would become. Don't worry if my zero draft looks stronger than one of yours might. I write professionally and I teach writing—it's natural that I would get a good start. When you look at the preliminary draft, however, you'll see that I can do much better! The assertion, which is the last sentence in both examples, is much more focused in the preliminary draft than it is in the zero draft

For people who really become stuck or "blocked" when beginning to write an essay, the combination of some brainstorming and a zero draft can get you started writing fairly painlessly. If you're really stuck, just take some of your brainstorming ideas and begin writing without looking at the paper or screen. Take time to begin developing your thinking before worrying about whether it makes much sense. As long as you take time for writing additional drafts, this zero draft process will be helpful.

Preliminary Draft

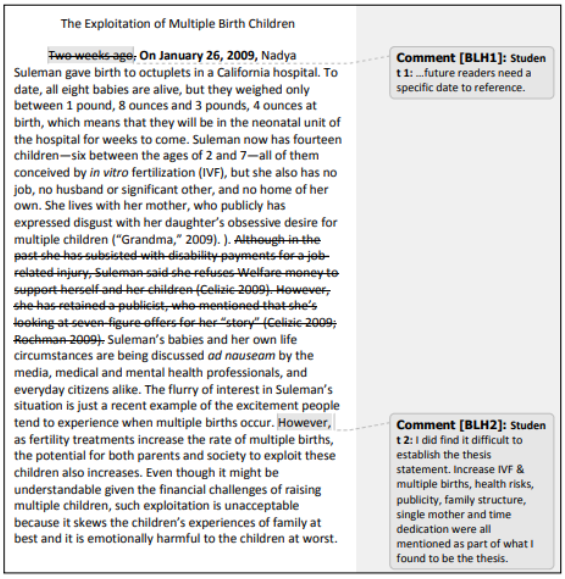
How does this first paragraph change in the preliminary draft? As we can see from the example preliminary draft that follows, the argument becomes more fully fleshed out. It contains more detail in general and it uses various source citations for authority. One of the reasons that I included these citations was to give my readers a sense that I had earned an informed opinion. My process before writing this next draft was to deepen my knowledge of the topic through more research and to try to express my informed opinion through a coherent assertion. Throughout the entire argumentative essay, I needed to support that opinion so that readers could be convinced that it is reasonable. Readers didn't have to agree with me or with each other for my argument to be successful. Because people argue only about those things for which there is no definite

or single position, it isn't possible to get everyone in my audience to agree with me—which is why my readers only needed to find the argument reasonable.

Let's look now at the complete preliminary draft. After I finished this draft, I posted it for my students to review. Their feedback is shown in the right hand column. At various places in this draft, I make a break and respond to the comments to show my thinking and decision making process. Since I'm writing this chapter for you months after teaching this particular class, I provide you with some hindsight thinking as well.

Bold text shows what I added to the preliminary draft in response to student feedback and my own developing thinking. A strikethrough shows what I deleted in revision. If you can imagine that these changes were all accepted, then you have a good sense of what the presentation draft looked like. Notice that the revision was fairly substantial in that I addressed what I considered to be most important: content, organization, and sentence-level issues in that order.

Preliminary Draft and Tracked Changes



The Exploitation of Multiple Birth Children

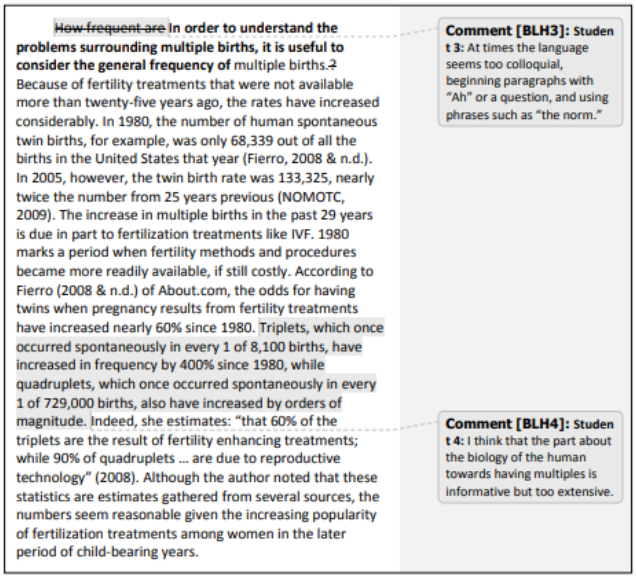
~~Two weeks ago,~~ **On January 26, 2009,** Nadya Suleman gave birth to octuplets in a California hospital. To date, all eight babies are alive, but they weighed only between 1 pound, 8 ounces and 3 pounds, 4 ounces at birth, which means that they will be in the neonatal unit of the hospital for weeks to come. Suleman now has fourteen children—six between the ages of 2 and 7—all of them conceived by *in vitro* fertilization (IVF), but she also has no job, no husband or significant other, and no home of her own. She lives with her mother, who publicly has expressed disgust with her daughter's obsessive desire for multiple children ("Grandma," 2009).). ~~Although in the past she has subsisted with disability payments for a job-related injury, Suleman said she refuses Welfare money to support herself and her children (Celizic 2009). However, she has retained a publicist, who mentioned that she's looking at seven-figure offers for her "story" (Celizic 2009; Rochman 2009).~~ Suleman's babies and her own life circumstances are being discussed *ad nauseam* by the media, medical and mental health professionals, and everyday citizens alike. The flurry of interest in Suleman's situation is just a recent example of the excitement people tend to experience when multiple births occur. However, as fertility treatments increase the rate of multiple births, the potential for both parents and society to exploit these children also increases. Even though it might be understandable given the financial challenges of raising multiple children, such exploitation is unacceptable because it skews the children's experiences of family at best and it is emotionally harmful to the children at worst.

Comment [BLH1]: Studen t 1: ...future readers need a specific date to reference.

Comment [BLH2]: Studen t 2: I did find it difficult to establish the thesis statement. Increase IVF & multiple births, health risks, publicity, family structure, single mother and time dedication were all mentioned as part of what I found to be the thesis.

The first revision change I made was in response to Student 1's comment, which was a good catch on his part. It's surprising that such a small change as adding a date to an event can contextualize an entire argument. In this case, I substituted the actual date of the octuplets' birth, which makes the piece understandable in the future.

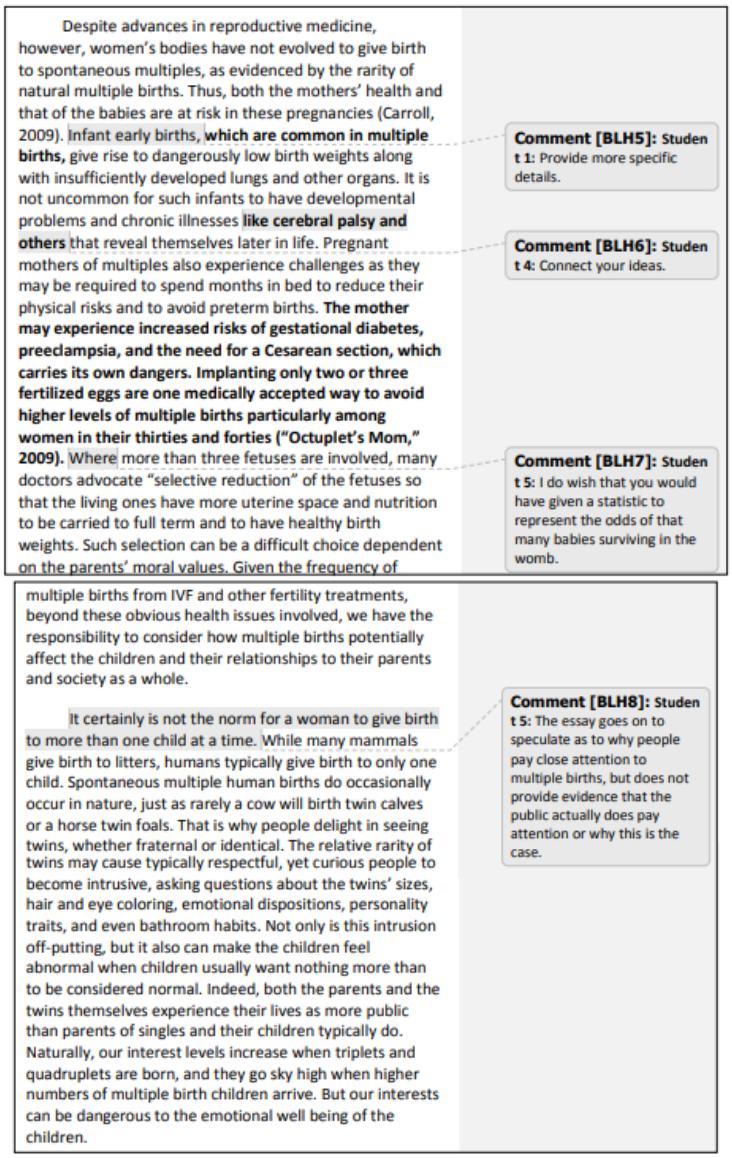
Student 2's feedback clearly indicated that there was a potential misunderstanding of the thesis, or argumentative assertion. This argument opens with an anecdote about a mother of octuplets, which doesn't mean that this mother is necessarily its subject. The assertion appears in the last sentence of the opening paragraph, a common place for a thesis in a short essay. This essay's goal is to support the position that exploiting multiple children harms them by skewing their experience of family and emotionally harming them. Notice that the goal is broader than just Suleman's case, as indicated by the word "example" in the third from the last sentence. In order to further help readers to understand that Suleman isn't the topic, I deleted detailed information about her that might have caused some readers to think the argument is all about her. I moved that information to later in the essay when I talk about Suleman as an example of an exploitative parent.



Student 3 found my uses of language to be somewhat informal on various occasions. I didn't always agree with this reader's advice; for example, there's nothing wrong with beginning a paragraph with a question, but she was right that I was being informal in a way that she wasn't being taught to be informal in most of her college writing. To that end, I eliminated the initial paragraph question and created a sentence that was somewhat more precise.

I had to agree with Student 1's remark that about.com wasn't a strong source. I knew that fact when I first used the source, and I searched the Internet and the library search engines for something more authoritative. I wasn't able to find a better source, but I think that if I had talked to a librarian about these statistics, I probably would have done better. My way of trying to mitigate possible problems from using this source was to make sure that I used the available statistics well from the preliminary draft onward; the rest of the paragraph demonstrates how I used this source.

On the whole, this paragraph seems out of place in the sense that it doesn't directly deal with the assertion. To some degree, I think that is what Student 4 was indicating. Yet, the information also seems necessary as context. In a longer essay, this paragraph (and even more contextual material) might come in a section called "Background." I thought a lot about the student's advice; I tried moving this material to another place in the argument, and I also tried deleting it altogether. Finally, I decided it was needed information and I left it where it was.



These two paragraphs are fairly intimately connected in terms of content, so let's look at them together. I added the information about the challenges of multiple births here and in paragraphs found below to satisfy readers like Students 1 and 4, who needed more information and wanted better transitions. Throughout the revised essay, I used their advice and added more detailed material wherever it seemed useful. Pointing me to the need for strong transitions was especially good advice. When I write early drafts, I don't worry much about transitions because I know that my organization of certain material will change and that I'll insert appropriate transitional later. I like it when students notice that the "glue" that holds an essay together is missing.

Student 5 really wanted some statistics and other evidence of my argument's main points. I agreed that I needed to find more statistical proof to support a point about the unnatural nature of multiple births. Doing so would have helped to show why people are so interested in them. This paragraph also has background material that I used to get to the heart of my thesis: that there's disruptiveness about multiple birth children's and parents' lives. It provides a reason for why people respond so intrusively to multiple births. But the feedback is well-taken. This material needed authoritative support—not statistics necessarily—but pertinent thoughts about human behavior around multiple birth children.

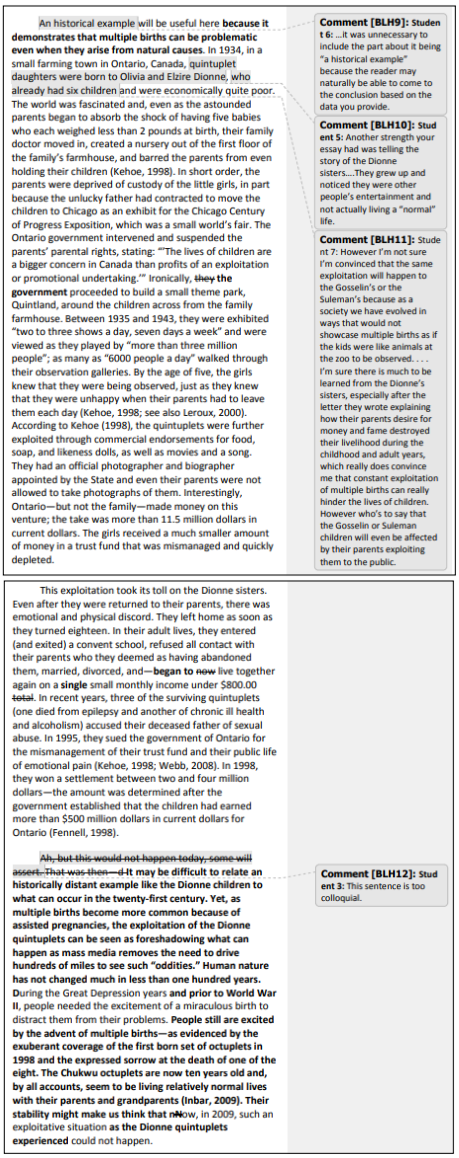
The final sentence of the second paragraph takes the background information and links it to the assertion. Unfortunately, this technique didn't work for some of my student readers who were already confused about the thesis—wrongly believing it was about Suleman alone. I left this sentence intact because I believed that the other changes to the essay would make this thesis link more obvious in the presentation draft.

For those who are curious about methods for arguing an assertion like this one, at the end of this second paragraph, I reasoned from the lesser to the greater: if something is true at a smaller number (twins, triplets), it also will be true at a higher number (sextuplets, octuplets). I'll say more about such reasoning later in this chapter.

Although Student 6 believed that opening the next paragraph with the words "an historical example" was unnecessary, I thought the idea of history was quite important because I also used two contemporary examples. Instead of deleting the sentence as advised, I added material to help make that connection: "because it demonstrates that multiple births can be problematic even when they arise from natural causes."

It's helpful to remember that "positive" criticism like that from Student 5 can be useful to writers by reinforcing what they are doing well. In this case, the example of the Dionne children is reasoning from past fact to future fact: what happened in the past will happen in the future. Some student readers, like Student 7, were unconvinced because the situation was a little different in the 1930s. Yet, the quintuplets from natural birth were just as much a curiosity in the 1930s as octuplets or sextuplets from IVF birth are in the twenty-first century. Additionally, the financial issues that the Dionne parents experienced are similar to the two main cases I cited. Finally, the "zoo" atmosphere of the Dionne quintuplets certainly can be compared to the television screen that gives the world a peek into the Gosselin sextuplets (discussed later in the essay) and the Suleman octuplets. For these reasons, I left the historical example intact and developed it even more.

In the second paragraph of this set, I restated the assertion. This paragraph and the following one directly support the thesis, which, as you recall, isn't about Suleman, but about the potential exploitation of all multiple birth children. These causes of death for the Dionne adults are suggestive evidence of the health problems I noted earlier in the essay about multiple birth children, for example.



An historical example will be useful here **because it demonstrates that multiple births can be problematic even when they arise from natural causes**. In 1934, in a small farming town in Ontario, Canada, quintuplet daughters were born to Olivia and Elzire Dionne, who already had six children and were economically quite poor. The world was fascinated and, even as the astounded parents began to absorb the shock of having five babies who each weighed less than 2 pounds at birth, their family doctor moved in, created a nursery out of the first floor of the family's farmhouse, and barred the parents from even holding their children (Kehoe, 1998). In short order, the parents were deprived of custody of the little girls, in part because the unlucky father had contracted to move the children to Chicago as an exhibit for the Chicago Century of Progress Exposition, which was a small world's fair. The Ontario government intervened and suspended the parents' parental rights, stating: "'The lives of children are a bigger concern in Canada than profits of an exploitation or promotional undertaking.'" Ironically, ~~they~~ **the government** proceeded to build a small theme park, Quintland, around the children across from the family farmhouse. Between 1935 and 1943, they were exhibited "two to three shows a day, seven days a week" and were viewed as they played by "more than three million people"; as many as "6000 people a day" walked through their observation galleries. By the age of five, the girls knew that they were being observed, just as they knew that they were unhappy when their parents had to leave them each day (Kehoe, 1998; see also Leroux, 2000). According to Kehoe (1998), the quintuplets were further exploited through commercial endorsements for food, soap, and likeness dolls, as well as movies and a song. They had an official photographer and biographer appointed by the State and even their parents were not allowed to take photographs of them. Interestingly, Ontario—but not the family—made money on this venture; the take was more than 11.5 million dollars in current dollars. The girls received a much smaller amount of money in a trust fund that was mismanaged and quickly depleted.

Comment [BLH9]: Student 6: ...it was unnecessary to include the part about it being "a historical example" because the reader may naturally be able to come to the conclusion based on the data you provide.

Comment [BLH10]: Student 5: Another strength your essay had was telling the story of the Dionne sisters....They grew up and noticed they were other people's entertainment and not actually living a "normal" life.

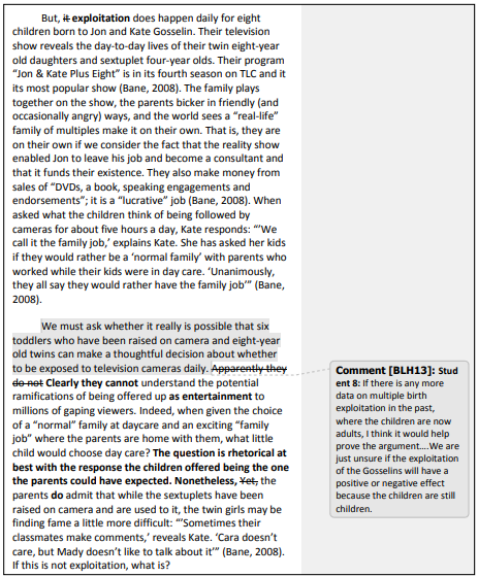
Comment [BLH11]: Student 7: However I'm not sure I'm convinced that the same exploitation will happen to the Gosselin's or the Suleman's because as a society we have evolved in ways that would not showcase multiple births as if the kids were like animals at the zoo to be observed. . . . I'm sure there is much to be learned from the Dionne's sisters, especially after the letter they wrote explaining how their parents desire for money and fame destroyed their livelihood during the childhood and adult years, which really does convince me that constant exploitation of multiple births can really hinder the lives of children. However who's to say that the Gosselin or Suleman children will even be affected by their parents exploiting them to the public.

This exploitation took its toll on the Dionne sisters. Even after they were returned to their parents, there was emotional and physical discord. They left home as soon as they turned eighteen. In their adult lives, they entered (and exited) a convent school, refused all contact with their parents who they deemed as having abandoned them, married, divorced, and—**began to** ~~now~~ live together again on a **single** small monthly income under $800.00 ~~total~~. In recent years, three of the surviving quintuplets (one died from epilepsy and another of chronic ill health and alcoholism) accused their deceased father of sexual abuse. In 1995, they sued the government of Ontario for the mismanagement of their trust fund and their public life of emotional pain (Kehoe, 1998; Webb, 2008). In 1998, they won a settlement between two and four million dollars—the amount was determined after the government established that the children had earned more than $500 million dollars in current dollars for Ontario (Fennell, 1998).

~~Ah, but this would not happen today, some will assert. That was then.—d~~**It may be difficult to relate an historically distant example like the Dionne children to what can occur in the twenty-first century. Yet, as multiple births become more common because of assisted pregnancies, the exploitation of the Dionne quintuplets can be seen as foreshadowing what can happen as mass media removes the need to drive hundreds of miles to see such "oddities." Human nature has not changed much in less than one hundred years.** During the Great Depression years **and prior to World War II**, people needed the excitement of a miraculous birth to distract them from their problems. **People still are excited by the advent of multiple births—as evidenced by the exuberant coverage of the first born set of octuplets in 1998 and the expressed sorrow at the death of one of the eight. The Chukwu octuplets are now ten years old and, by all accounts, seem to be living relatively normal lives with their parents and grandparents (Inbar, 2009). Their stability might make us think that n**~~N~~ow, in 2009, such an exploitative situation **as the Dionne quintuplets experienced** could not happen.

Comment [BLH12]: Student 3: This sentence is too colloquial.

This third paragraph particularly makes a transition from the past to the present. I made changes to address level of formality appropriate to what my students also were writing. But I also added material about another set of multiple birth children that may not be as famous because they are not always in the public eye. Despite the major excitement of their birth as the first set of octuplets ever recorded (one died shortly after birth), the Chukwu octuplets appear to be living fairly normal lives. It is here that I use an argumentative strategy of providing a counterargument. A counterargument is an acknowledgment that there are valid points of view other than the one I argue; acknowledging (and sometimes refuting) counterarguments can increase my ethos, or believability, as a writer. I needed to provide evidence that I've considered assertions other than my own and that my position still is the most reasonable. This brief material about the Chukwu family (and later the McCaughey septuplets) counterargues that multiple birth children don't have to be exploited. After admitting this fact, however, I return to my argument in the next paragraph and reveal yet another example of exploited famous multiples: the Gosselins.



But, ~~it~~ **exploitation** does happen daily for eight children born to Jon and Kate Gosselin. Their television show reveals the day-to-day lives of their twin eight-year old daughters and sextuplet four-year olds. Their program "Jon & Kate Plus Eight" is in its fourth season on TLC and it its most popular show (Bane, 2008). The family plays together on the show, the parents bicker in friendly (and occasionally angry) ways, and the world sees a "real-life" family of multiples make it on their own. That is, they are on their own if we consider the fact that the reality show enabled Jon to leave his job and become a consultant and that it funds their existence. They also make money from sales of "DVDs, a book, speaking engagements and endorsements"; it is a "lucrative" job (Bane, 2008). When asked what the children think of being followed by cameras for about five hours a day, Kate responds: "'We call it the family job,' explains Kate. She has asked her kids if they would rather be a 'normal family' with parents who worked while their kids were in day care. 'Unanimously, they all say they would rather have the family job'" (Bane, 2008).

We must ask whether it really is possible that six toddlers who have been raised on camera and eight-year old twins can make a thoughtful decision about whether to be exposed to television cameras daily. ~~Apparently they do not~~ **Clearly they cannot** understand the potential ramifications of being offered up **as entertainment** to millions of gaping viewers. Indeed, when given the choice of a "normal" family at daycare and an exciting "family job" where the parents are home with them, what little child would choose day care? **The question is rhetorical at best with the response the children offered being the one the parents could have expected. Nonetheless, ~~Yet,~~** the parents **do** admit that while the sextuplets have been raised on camera and are used to it, the twin girls may be finding fame a little more difficult: "'Sometimes their classmates make comments,' reveals Kate. 'Cara doesn't care, but Mady doesn't like to talk about it'" (Bane, 2008). If this is not exploitation, what is?

Comment [BLH13]: **Student 8:** If there is any more data on multiple birth exploitation in the past, where the children are now adults, I think it would help prove the argument....We are just unsure if the exploitation of the Gosselins will have a positive or negative effect because the children are still children.

The evidence provided in the next two paragraphs might be called arguing from anecdote (story), but really it's a continuation of argument from past (to present) to future fact. It can be a very convincing technique because people tend to believe that what was possible in the past is possible again in the present or future. Part of reasoning from past fact to future fact is bringing in recent and current examples. It's impossible to accurately predict the future, but it's possible to suggest how the future might develop based on current events.

When I was writing this essay in early 2009, for example, the parents of the Gosselin children (Jon and Kate) appeared to be happily married. In the short months between writing my essay and using it to write this chapter for you, the Gosselin adults have become common faces in print and TV media tabloids as Jon has admitted to adultery and has taken on a playboy persona, and Kate has aired their problems publically and filed for divorce. Their children are sometimes photographed looking confused and sad. For all of that, the network has continued the television show for some time, suggesting that this divorce is just a normal part of the children's lives. Anecdotally, I think readers who are children of divorce would not have wanted television cameras filming their experiences and emotions as they adjusted to the new family situation. Similarly, in early 2010, Suleman contracted to begin a reality show with her currently-one year-old octuplets. If I were revising this essay today, I'd certainly be adding this material as proof of exploitation of the Gosselin children's painful home life and the Suleman children's lack of privacy.

Student 8 still wasn't convinced that the argument was reasonable. Fair enough. We can't convince everyone to take our position in an argument although we can present reasonable evidence. One student suggested that I use the case of child celebrities to show how innocent children can be ruined by exploitation and publicity. In a longer revised essay, I would seriously consider that argument from analogy.

Students 6 expressed a need for more direct connections among the past, present, and future. That was the difficulty of my argument from the outset because I was writing it only weeks after the Suleman octuplets were born. All I could do at this point was to predict, but my prediction wasn't a far stretch given that the infants already were on camera as a way to exonerate the mother's choice and to make money for her. Multiple sources revealed that she had received money to buy a much larger house and that she had daily outside assistance with the children. Contemporary sources confirm those facts and certainly much more evidence could be provided now that the babies are more than one-year old.



(Celizic, 2009); while it is unclear whether by "each child" she meant the six at home or the eight premature infants, it seems ~~unlikely~~ **certain** that she will **not** have upwards of eight free hours a day to hold one child at a time. Her life will be as hectic as the Gosselins' but without the advantage of two parents. In fact, since Suleman, who has a degree in childhood and adolescent development ("Grandma," 2009), claimed that she will return to graduate school in the fall for a master's degree in counseling, one has to wonder how she will take care of the children and still complete her school work.

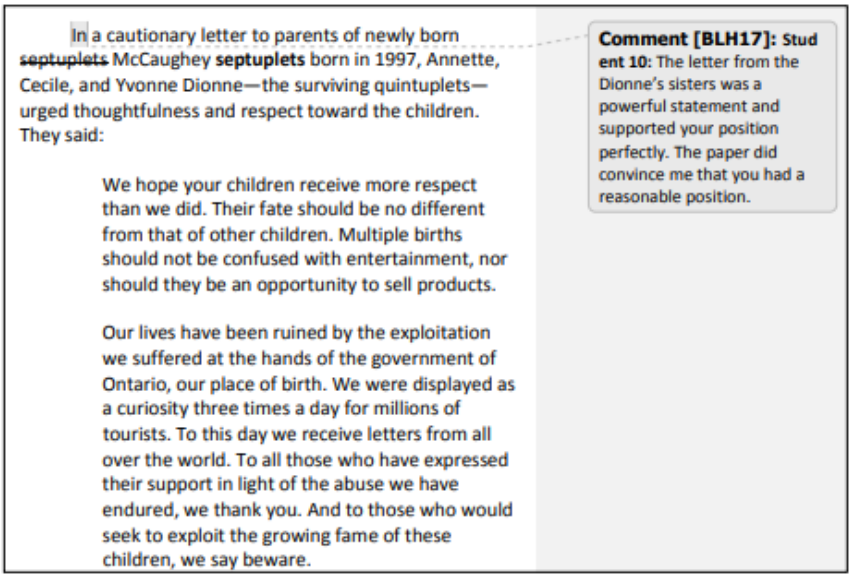
~~While it is true that~~ **The** first of Suleman's interviews has ~~not yet~~ aired **and information** about her is becoming more **available**. **It is true that she gives an appearance of sincerity, calm thoughtfulness, and tender love for her children. However, there remain signs** ~~about her is sketchy, there are signs~~ of trouble in the future for the octuplets and their siblings. First, their grandmother is not supportive of her daughter's actions and does not express confidence in her emotional balance ("Grandma," 2009). Hers is a case where a family member's help would be extraordinarily helpful and it is unclear whether the grandmother actually will be available to the family. Second, financial offers may yet pour in, and they would be enticing to a woman with fourteen children and no other income besides government subsidies. The odds of not exploiting the children are low. Sadly, one psychoanalyst interviewed about this situation found nothing wrong with such exploitation: "'And even if she was looking ahead to financial gain: What is so wrong with that? She's got a commodity that grabs the attention of the world and she's going to get rewarded. Why are we so morally outraged?'" (Carroll, 2009). With ~~that kind of~~ such public support **that would accept her children as an economic bargaining chip**, it seems unlikely that Suleman will seek enough reasons to avoid exploiting her children for the money that they will engender. Finally, Suleman herself may be far less prepared to raise her fourteen children than she realizes. In an interview with the TODAY Show's Ann Curry, she indicated that she believed her childhood as an only child was "dysfunctional" and that she lacked a "feeling of self and identity": "I just didn't feel

Comment [BLH16]: Stud ent 9: We are finally presented with some 'authorities' on the subject: A psychologist, who is external to the situation, has believable scholarly authority, and out and out refutes your point.

as though, when I was a child, I had much control of my environment. I felt powerless. And that gave me a sense of predictability" (Celizic, 2009). It seems odd—and a little frightening—that someone with ~~her~~ **an** undergraduate degree in childhood development would not understand that it is the nature of childhood to be somewhat powerless and not in control of one's environment; parents are supposed to support children in these areas. In fact, the predictability that she complained of can be very positive for children. Her lack of understanding of these basic childhood needs suggests that Suleman **selfishly** may try to correct her own childhood issues by giving her own children too much power, which can lead to an unhealthy *and* an unpredictable environment. Sadly, in all ways possible, the Suleman octuplets and their siblings are at risk of parental and public exploitation**, which can twist their sense of family life and harm them emotionally**.

Recall that my major thesis regards the emotional well-being of multiple birth children, of which the Suleman octuplets were an example. According to Student 1, this argument would have benefited from psychological predictions from experts or authorities. I didn't find any such psychological predictions in my initial research, but my readers have convinced me that I would need to do that research for any future revisions of this argument. They simply need more evidence that my reasoning is sound and probable.

In the third paragraph of this set, I used a psychologist's statement about Suleman's likely exploitation of the children for money as a way of showing irony. To me, it was clear that calling the octuplets a "commodity that grabs the attention of the world" and stating that "she's going to get rewarded" for it, was disturbing in that the psychologist herself wasn't showing appropriate concern for the babies' welfare. In the preliminary draft, I assumed that all readers would understand the import of this psychologist's statement. But as I thought about the feedback I was getting—Student 9, for example—I realized this point needed sharper language in the presentation draft to indicate the bargaining power of children viewed as a "commodity" to be bought and sold.



I used this cautionary letter from the Dionne adults to the McCaughey family as a way to prove that the quintuplets were sufficiently damaged by their exploitative upbringing that they felt a need to help other multiple birth children. Although my research did not reveal specifically how the letter affected the parents of the septuplets, it seemed possible to speculate in the essay's final paragraph that they took these words to heart. Student 10 commented that she found this letter to be convincing evidence of my assertion.

The second to last sentence of the argument restates the assertion. Why did I choose this kind of assertion instead of talking about Suleman alone? I did so because there was no way I could prove convincingly what has not yet happened in the babies' lives. But I could build on past and present fact and published anecdotes to strongly suggest that the futures of these infants' and others like them are in danger. Overall, I think I accomplished this goal. In the process, my students and I had a good opportunity to study one writer's processes in depth.

Conclusion

This is a useful time to say that even the best advice cannot always be put into effect in an essay revision. Sometimes it just doesn't fit the current plan for the essay. Thoughtful choice about using feedback for revision is always necessary. Try to be able to explain your choices, as I have in this chapter, if you are questioned about your revision choices by your instructor or peers.

As my comments throughout this essay suggest, there are various areas for continued research before deciding that this piece (or any essay) is finished. Additionally, it's important to remember that any revised draft needs a final set of actions before it's ready for "publication" to an instructor or other audience. Accepting revision changes, spellchecking, and proofreading are all necessary editing steps to create a presentation draft. At that point, in a school setting, this essay would be ready for grading. In a more public setting, such as a "letter to the editor" of a newspaper or magazine, it would be ready for mailing. In both cases, readers might suggest additional changes before it would be assessed.

To teach you how to make similar decisions with the same kinds of resources, this chapter shows how I made many of my writing and revision decisions in an argumentative essay. Although my comments indicate that additional revisions could make the argument stronger, all writers must stop writing at some point and call the writing "done," even if it feels only semi-finished. Hopefully, however, before calling the piece done, you've learned that putting focused hours into the writing can help to develop a strong essay that conveys thoughtfully developed meaning. As you begin your next essay, apply whatever version of this brainstorming, zero draft, research, preliminary draft, feedback, revision, and presentation draft approach that may fit your own writing process. I think you'll find yourself working hard while enjoying your writing more!

Discussion

1. How do you use brainstorming, other prewriting, and/or initial/zero drafts in your writing?
2. What are the main differences between a preliminary and a presentation draft? With these terms in mind, how would you describe your own drafting process?

3. What have you learned about making writing and revision choices based on your own thinking? What have you learned about acting on feedback from readers like your peers or your instructor?
4. What have you learned about giving feedback to other writers? How will you apply it the next time you give feedback to another writer?
5. This chapter uses the American Psychological Association (APA) style for formatting in-text citations and bibliographic entries. Compare it to the Modern Language Association (MLA) style that you have seen in other Writing Spaces' chapters. Discuss how APA in-text citations compare to MLA. How are the bibliographic references on an APA References page different from those on a MLA Works Cited page?

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13.2.7: Introduction- Open Source Composition Texts Arrive for College Writers

Robert E. Cummings

Let me ask you this: which of the following statements is most memorable?*

A) Hasta la vista, baby.

B) I need your clothes, your boots, and your motorcycle.

C) I'll be bahk.

D) From government to non-profit organizations, teachers to textbook publishers, we all have a role to play in leveraging twentyfirst century technology to expand learning and better serve California's students, parents, teachers and schools.

If you answered "D," you might need to get out more often. But you will probably be proven correct.

Of course all of these statements are the pronouncements of California's current governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger. While in the first three instances he serves as a robotic killing machine (*Terminator 2* and *The Terminator*), in the last statement he serves as a harbinger of a major change in the way textbooks are written, reviewed, published, and distributed in America ("Free Digital"). Long after the Terminator is terminated in our collective pop culture memories, the effects of open source textbooks will be felt.

The arrival of open source texts for the classroom is coming in fits and starts, but with the debut of the first volume of *Writing Spaces*, college writing students can now join the movement. *Writing Spaces* combines peer-reviewed texts, composed for student writers, by teachers in the field, and arranged by topics student writers will immediately understand.

What help are we offering for students learning to write in the college environment?

- Understanding the shift from high school to college writing
- Strategies for group writing
- Defining and employing stages of the writing process
- Finding real help in writing through an engagement with rhetorical concepts, such as the rhetorical triangle, or genre, or principles of the canon, such as invention
- Coming to terms with plagiarism, how the academy defines it, and how to avoid common traps
- Appreciating the role of argument in the classroom, and constructively addressing fatigue with argumentation
- Why you should use "I" in your writing
- Metacognition and the necessary role of reflection in a robust revision process
- Strategies for recognizing the natural role of procrastination, and how to defeat it
- Realistic conceptions of online writing environments such as Wikipedia, and information on how to use such sites to further the goals of composition
- Creative strategies for generating writing ideas, including journaling, conversation (face-to-face and electronic), role play, drumming, movement, and handwriting

If you are struggling with a writing project, we think you will also appreciate the organization of *Writing Spaces*. Through the use of the keyword index on the website, you can quickly scan the table of contents to find chapters which help with your specific problems. Once a writer clicks on a particular keyword, only the articles which address that specific problem appear; we will also have an expanded index in the print edition. This "just in time delivery" method for the help writers need not only provides clear help in the moment of composing confusion, but also places the concept in the context of several approaches from multiple articles so that when writers have the cognitive space to look at the writing concept in context, the keyword system gives them the ability to do just that.

But how else does this text differ from other composition texts geared for students? Let's start with free. Not only, as so many computer coders have said before, free like "beer" but free like "speech" (and maybe even free like a puppy, too) (cf. Wikipedia

and Williams). Our text arrives to you free of charge, and freely available on the web. Thus, you can refer to it without limitation, through laptops and phones. And your teachers can assign it in your classroom without giving a second thought to whether or not it can be accessed, how much the bookstore will charge for it, and whether or not their prices will prevent or deter you from acquiring the text in a fall semester class until just before Thanksgiving. Nor will your teachers need to worry about sending the bookstore their readings for the fall semester before the prior February, as is a common practice on most campuses. Perhaps best of all, free means there is no need to for you to either rent the book or sell it back at the end of the semester for twenty-five cents on the dollar. And if you would prefer reading from the printed page, versions of this content will be for sale through Parlor Press.

Also, the content in this electronic volume evokes the "free as in speech" concept as well. This text is written largely by teachers of writing and donated free of charge to *Writing Spaces*. But because ours is a peer-reviewed publication, contributors can earn credit within the traditional tenure and promotion system. As students, you are ensured a quality of content which ranks as high as any in our field, and authors' content is evaluated for its veracity and utility in teaching writing— not whether it will sell.

This distinction between "gratis" and "libre" comes from the open source process in the computer coding world to describe a collaborative authoring process where the coding/writing product could be altered by the software user. But now we see how the open source process has expanded to fundamentally alter the textbook publishing model. As students, parents, and legislators have lately pointed out, the textbook marketplace has long been broken: students must purchase texts required for courses, and the faculty who require those texts have no control over pricing. With the arrival of systems such as *Writing Spaces*, faculty can select peer-reviewed materials that students can either access for free on a website, or pay to print, and contributing authors are given academic credit for their original work.

Like many open source projects, *Writing Spaces* is just beginning. While even the most dedicated fan of *The Terminator* series would be hard pressed to think of "The Governator" as a progressive fomenter of equitable access to texts in higher education, there will no doubt be more and more government officials who see "free" and become acquainted with the open source publishing model. But you no longer need to wait to be told about the usefulness of open source textbooks in your writing classroom; you are reading it now. The fundamental shift toward a collaborative and responsive textbook publishing model has clearly begun in the world of composition. Thanks for being a part of it.

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13.2.8: “I need you to say ‘I’”- Why First Person Is Important in College Writing

Kate McKinney Maddalena

At this point in your development as a writer, you may have learned to write “I-less” prose, without first person.* I-less-ness is fine; writing habits, like all habits, are best simplified when first learned or re-learned. Jazz pianists learn strict scales before they are allowed to improvise. Someone might go on a strict diet and then return to a modified menu after the desired weight is lost, and the bad eating habits are broken. Constructing arguments without using “I” is good practice for formal “improvisation” at higher levels of thinking and writing. Avoiding personal pronouns forces you to be objective. It also “sounds” more formal; you’re more likely to maintain an appropriate tone if you stay away from the personal.

But writing in various academic and professional contexts needs to be more flexible, sophisticated, and subtle than writing for high school English classes. In college, you should start using first-person pronouns in your formal academic writing, where appropriate. First person has an important place—an irreplaceable place—in texts that report research and engage scholarship. Your choices about where you place yourself as subject are largely determined by context and the conventions of the field in which you’re writing. The key is making sure that your choices are appropriate for the context of your paper— whom you’re writing it for, and the kind of information it’s meant to communicate. Here I’ll list some ways in which first person improves written argument and show you some examples of the ways scholars use first person, and then I’ll propose places where it might be used appropriately in your own writing.

Why “I”?

First person can support the following characteristics of good written argument (and good writing in general).

1. Objectivity and Integrity

The main reason most teachers give for the discipline of I-less-ness is that it keeps your writing “objective.” They want to make sure that you don’t rely on personal experiences or perspectives where you should be providing concrete, researched support for your arguments. Your best friend at summer camp doesn’t “prove” a sociological theory. Your memory of a “fact”—the average rainfall in a town, the actions of a character in a film, the tendencies of groups of people to behave in certain ways, or the population of Kenya—is not a reliable source in academic contexts. You shouldn’t write, “because I think so,” or “I know that . . .” But if you consider some of the higher-level implications of perspective’s effects on argument, there are some well-chosen places where “I” can give your argument more objectivity and intellectual integrity

Take scientific writing, for example. Up until very recently, when writing observational and experimental reports, scientists, as a rule, avoided first person. Methodology was (and is still, in many cases) described in the passive voice. That is, instead of writing, “We took measurements of ice thickness on the first and 15th day of every month,” scientists wrote, “Measurements of ice thickness were taken on the first and 15th day of every month.” Taking out the “we” focuses the reader’s attention on the phenomenon (object) being observed, not the observer taking the readings (subject). Or at least that was the reasoning behind passive voice in science writing.

But during the last half of the last century, mostly because of developments in physics, scientists have talked a lot about a thing called the “observer effect”: while observing or experimenting with a social or even physical system, the scientist watching can affect the system’s behavior. When particle physicists try to measure the motion of something as tiny as an electron, their very observation almost certainly changes that motion. Because of the observer effect, the passive voice convention I’ve described above has been called into question. Is it really honest to act like “measurements are taken” by some invisible hand? Is the picture minus the researcher the whole picture? Not really. The fact is, someone took the measurements, and those measurements might reflect that observer’s involvement. It’s more truthful, complete, and objective, then, to put the researchers in the picture. These days, it’s much more common to “see” the researchers as subjects—“We measured ice thickness . . .”—in methodology sections.

2. Clarifying Who’s Saying What

A clear description of your perspective becomes even more important when your stance has to incorporate or respond

to someone else's. As you move into more advanced college writing, the claims you respond to will usually belong to scholars. Some papers may require you to spend almost as much time summarizing a scholarly conversation as they do presenting points of your own. By "signification," I mean little phrases that tell the reader, "This is my opinion," "This is my interpretation." You need them for two big reasons.

First of all, the more "voices" you add to the conversation, the more confusing it gets. You must separate your own interpretations of scholars' claims, the claims themselves, and your argument so as not to misrepresent any of them. If you've just paraphrased a scholar, making your own claim without quite literally claiming it might make the reader think that the scholar said it. Consider these two sentences: "Wagstaff et al. (2007) conclude that the demand for practical science writing that the layperson can understand is on the rise. But there is a need for laypeople people to increase their science literacy, as well." Is that second claim part of Wagstaff's conclusion, or is it your own reflection on the implications of Wagstaff's argument? By writing something like, "Wagstaff et al. (2007) conclude that the demand for practical science that the layperson can understand is on the rise. I maintain that there is a need for laypeople to increase their science literacy, as well," you avoid the ambiguity. First person can help you express, very simply, who "says" what.

Secondly, your perceptions, and therefore your interpretations, are not always perfect. Science writing can help me illustrate this idea, as well. In the imaginary observation report I refer to above, the researchers may or may not use first person in their methodology section out of respect for the observer effect, but they are very likely to use first person in the discussion/conclusion section. The discussion section involves interpretation of the data—that is, the researchers must say what they think the data means. The importance of perspective is compounded, here. They might not be right. And even if they are mostly right, the systems scientists study are usually incredibly complex; one observation report is not the whole picture. Scientists, therefore, often mark their own interpretations with first person pronouns. "We interpret these data to imply . . ." they might say, or, "We believe these findings indicate . . . ," and then they go on to list questions for further research. Even the experts know that their understanding is almost always incomplete.

3. Ownership, Intellectual Involvement, and Exigency

Citing scholarship contextualizes and strengthens your argument; you want to defer to "experts" for evidence of your claims when you can. As a student, you might feel like an outsider—unable to comment with authority on the concepts you're reading and writing about. But outsider status doesn't only mean a lack of expertise. Your own, welldefined viewpoint might shed new light on a topic that the experts haven't considered (or that your classmates haven't considered, or that your professor hasn't mentioned in class, or even, quite simply, that you hadn't thought of and so you're excited about). In that case, you want to say, "This is mine, it's a new way of looking at the issue, and I'm proud of it."

Those kinds of claims are usually synthetic ones—you've put information and/or interpretations from several sources together, and you've actually got something to say. Whether your new spin has to do with a cure for cancer or an interpretation of Batman comics, pride in your own intellectual work is important on many levels. As a student, you should care; such investment can help you learn. Your school community should also care; good teachers are always looking for what we call "critical thinking," and when students form new ideas from existing ones, we know it's happening. On the larger scale, the scholarly community should care. Having something new to say increases the exigency of your argument in the larger, intellectual exchange of ideas. A scholarly reader should want to pay attention, because what you say may be a key to some puzzle (a cure for cancer) or way of thinking about the topic (interpreting Batman). That's the way scholars work together to form large bodies of knowledge: we communicate about our research and ideas, and we try to combine them when we can.

An emphatic statement like "Much discussion has addressed the topic of carbon emissions' relationship to climate change, but I would like to ask a question from a new perspective," will make your reader sit up and take notice. In I-less form, that might look like: "Much discussion has addressed the topic of carbon emissions' relationship to climate change, but some questions remain unconsidered." In this case, second sentence still sounds like summary—the writer is telling us that research is incomplete, but isn't giving us a strong clue that his or her (new! fresh!) argument is coming up next. Be careful, of course, not to sound arrogant. If the writer of the sentences above was worried about his or her lack of expertise in an assignment involving scholarly sources, he or she could write: "What scholarly discussion I have read so far has addressed the topic of carbon emissions' relationship to climate change, but I would like to ask a question from a new perspective." He or she can use first person to employ both deference and ownership/involvement in the same sentence.

4. Rhetorical Sophistication

Some writing assignments focus on one simple task at a time: "Summarize the following . . ." "Compare the readings . . ." "analyze," or "argue." When you write a simple five-paragraph essay, your mode rarely changes—you can write an

introduction, thesis, body, and conclusion without explaining too many shifts in what the paper is "doing." Writing at the college level and beyond often has to "do" a few things in the same text. Most involved writing assignments expect you to do at least two things. You may need to summarize/ report and respond, or (more likely) you'll need to summarize/report, synthesize, and respond. A good introduction, as you've learned, needs to anticipate all of it so the reader knows what to expect. Anticipating the structure of a complex argument in I-less mode is tricky. Often, it comes out as a summary of the document that follows and is redundant. First person can clear that problem right up. Consider the introduction to this article; when I come to the part where I need to tell you what I'm going to do, I just . . . tell you what I'm going to do! My writing students usually find this rhetorical trick (or is it an un-trick?) refreshing and liberating. The same concept can be applied to transitions between sections and ideas: "Now that I've done this thing, I'd like to move into this other part of my argument . . ." I'll use this type of transition, myself, when I move into the section of this text called, "When, and When not?"

Academic Examples

The fact is, using first person for rhetorical clarity and to ease transitions isn't just easier—it's common in many academic contexts. It's accepted, even expected, in some cases, for scholarly writing such as abstracts, position papers, theses, and dissertations in many fields to employ first person in the ways I've just described. In almost all genres, formats, and fields, the scholarly writer is expected to describe the research done thus far by her peers and then make her own claims—a structure that lends itself to first person.

Robert Terrill, a cultural studies scholar, begins his article, "Put on a Happy Face: Batman as Schizophrenic Savior," with an evaluation of Tim Burton's movie's box office success, and then spends several paragraphs discussing other scholars' applications of psychological frameworks to film studies. Throughout the literature review section, Terrill's own voice stays remote; he uses third person. But look at what happens when he is ready to begin his own argument:

> Because much of my analysis is grounded in the theories of Carl C. Jung, I will begin by outlining relevant aspects of that theory. Then I suggest that Gotham City is a dream world, a representative projection of image-centered dreams. Within the framework of Jung's model, I show the principal characters to be archetypal manifestations that erupt from Gotham's unconscious. Wayne/Batman is a splintered manifestation of a potential whole; his condition represents the schizophrenia required of a hero dedicated to preservation of the shattered psyche of Gotham. (321)

Terrill's move to first person separates his own claims from the scholars he's summarized in his introduction, and it allows him to take ownership of his main claim. The way he "maps out" his article is also typical of academic argument.

First person is used similarly in the sciences. Unlike Terrill, who argues for a certain interpretation of a text, psychologists Jennifer Kraemer and David Marquez report research findings in their article, "Psychosocial Correlates and Outcomes of Yoga or Walking Among Older Adults." Much like Terrill, however, their introduction consists of a review of literature in the third person. For almost three pages, Kraemer and Marquez describe studies which have explored health and injury patterns in old age, as well as studies which have investigated various fitness programs for the elderly. When it comes time for Kraemer and Marquez to describe their own study, they shift into first person:

> We hypothesized that an acute bout of yoga would be more effective at improving mood and reducing state anxiety among older adults when compared with acute bouts of walking. We further hypothesized that older adults who practice yoga would have lower levels of depression and higher quality of life when compared with those who walk for exercise. We did not make direct hypotheses for exercise barriers and barriers self-efficacy because, to date, there is no research that has examined those variables in this population. (393)

Kraemer and Marquez continue in first person as they describe their methodology. "We recruited a total of 51 participants (8 men, 43 women)" they write, "through classes at local yoga studios and mall walking groups" (393). The researchers themselves, in first person, are the subjects who "do" every action in the methods: "We asked questions on . . . We measured state anxiety by . . . We measured mood using . . ."(393–4). By putting themselves in the picture, Kraemer and Marquez acknowledge themselves as variables in their own study—a key aspect of any scientific methodology, and especially those which involve human subjects and use interviews to collect data.

On the other hand, some academic communities and genres stay away from first person. Susan Clark, a professor at Yale who writes about the communication and implementation of sustainable forestry practices, describes her study without putting herself in the picture. Where Kraemer and Marquez describe themselves "doing" the methods of their study, Clark has her article as the agent in her description of analysis:

> This article (a) describes the intelligence function in conceptual terms, including its sequential phases (as described by McDougal, Lasswell, & Reisman, 1981); (b) uses examples to illustrate the intelligence activity from Reading and Miller (2000), *Endangered Animals: A Reference Guide to Conflicting Issues*, which gives 70 cases by 34 authors in 55 countries that focus on species, ecosystem, and sustainability challenges; and employs a "problem-oriented" look at intelligence activities across all these cases (Lasswell, 1971). It does so by asking and answering five questions . . . (637)

Clark's methods are to analyze others' processes—hers, then, is metaanalysis. It's appropriate for her to remove herself rhetorically as she deals with many actions and many, diverse actors. She is more a describer than a "do-er."

At the very end of her article, in a "call to action" that directly applies her findings, Clark does finally use first person. "We can increase the possibility of better biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, and better sustainability overall," she writes, "if we choose to use an effective intelligence activity. Success is more likely if we increase the rationality of our own directed behavior" (659). Clark's "we" is different from Kraemer and Marquez's "we," though. It refers to Clark's audience—the community of sustainable forestry as a whole—and predicts future action in which she will be active.

When (And When Not) to Use First Person?

Now that I've convinced you to try first person in some of your academic writing, I should talk about how to use it appropriately. (See? I just used "I" for a clear transition to a new idea.) The key is: don't go "I" crazy. Remember the self-discipline you practiced with I-less writing.

Probably the best way to approach first person in an academic context is this: use it to make yourself clear. You'll need "I" for clarity when one of the ideals I described above is in question. Either 1) you'll need to describe an aspect of your personal perspective that will help the reader see (your) whole picture; 2) you'll need to make the divide between your voice and the scholars' as clear as possible in order to avoid misrepresenting the scholars' claims; 3) your own claim will need to stand apart from the other perspectives you've presented as something new; or 4) you'll need to guide your reader through the organization of your text in some way.

Below, I've listed a few common writing situations/assignments that first person can potentially support.

Try "I" when . . .

. . . the assignment asks you to. Personal position papers, personal narratives, and assignments that say "tell what you did/read and provide your reaction," all explicitly ask you to use first person.

. . . you're asked to "Summarize and respond." You might transition into the response part of the paper with "I."

. . . you're introducing a paper with a complicated structure: "I will summarize Wagstaff's argument, and then respond to a few key points with my own interpretation."

. . . you are proud of and intellectually invested in what you have to say, and you want to arrange it in reference to others' voices: "Many scholars have used psychological frameworks to interpret the Batman movies, but I would argue that a historical perspective is more productive . . ."

. . . you are unsure of your interpretation of a source, or you feel that the claim you're making may be bigger than your level of expertise: "If I read Wagstaff correctly, her conclusions imply . . ."

"I" Is a Bad Idea When . . .

. . . you use it only once. You don't want to overuse the first person, but if you're going to assert your position or make a transition with "I," give the reader a hint of your voice in the introduction. An introduction that anticipates structure with "I will," for instance, works well with transitions that use "I" as well. If you use first person only once, the tone shift will jar the reader.

. . . The assignment is a simple summary. In that case, you need only report; you are "eye," not "I."

. . . you're writing a lab report for a science class, as a general rule. But you might ask your teacher about the issues of objectivity I've addressed above, especially in terms of objective methodology.

Discussion

1. Can you remember a writing task during which you struggled to avoid using the first person? What about the nature of the content made "I" hard to avoid? Can you link the difficulty to one of the four values that first person "supports," according to this essay?
2. McKinney Maddalena claims that scientists use "I" more often in research reports, nowadays. Find a scientific article in your school's research databases that employs first person: "I" or "we." In what section is first person used, and how? Does its usage reflect one of the values this essay points out?

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13.2.9: Navigating Genres

Kerry Dirk

There's a joke that's been floating around some time now that you've likely already heard.* It goes something like the following:

> Q: What do you get when you rewind a country song?
> A: You get your wife back, your job back, your dog back . . .

Maybe this joke makes you laugh. Or groan. Or tilt your head to the side in confusion. Because it just so happens that in order to get this joke, you must know a little something about country music in general and in particular country music lyrics. You must, in other words, be familiar with the country music genre.

Let's look into country music lyrics a bit more. Bear with me on this is if you're not a fan. Assuming I want to write lyrics to a country song, how would I figure out what lyrics are acceptable in terms of country songs? Listening to any country station for a short period of time might leave one with the following conclusions about country songs:

- Country songs tend to tell stories. They often have characters who are developed throughout the song.
- Country songs often have choruses that are broad enough to apply to a variety of verses.
- Country songs are often depressing; people lose jobs, lovers, and friends.
- Country songs express pride for the country style and way of life.
- Country songs are often political, responding to wars and economic crises, for example.

Given these characteristics, I would feel prepared to write some new country lyrics. But what would happen if I wanted to write a country song that didn't do any of the above things? Would it still be a country song?

You are probably already familiar with many genres, although you may not know them as such; perhaps your knowledge of genres is limited to types of books, whether mystery, horror, action, etc. Now I'm going to ask you to stick with me while I show you how knowledge of genres goes far beyond a simple discussion of types. My purposes are to expand your definition of genre (or to introduce you to a definition for the first time) and to help you start thinking about how genres might apply to your own writing endeavors. But above all, I hope to give you an awareness of how genres function by taking what is often quite theoretical in the field of rhetoric and composition and making it a bit more tangible. So why was I talking about country songs? I think that using such references can help you to see, in a quite concrete way, how genres function.

When I started writing this essay, I had some ideas of what I wanted to say. But first, I had to determine what this essay might look like. I've written a lot—letters, nonfiction pieces, scholarly articles, rants—but this was my first time writing an essay to you, a composition student. What features, I asked myself, should go into this essay? How personal could I get? What rhetorical moves might I use, effectively or ineffectively? I hoped that a similar type of essay already existed so that I would have something to guide my own writing. I knew I was looking for other essays written directly to students, and after finding many examples, I looked for common features. In particular, I noted the warm, personal style that was prevalent through every essay; the tone was primarily conversational. And more importantly, I noticed that the writer did not talk as an authoritative figure but as a coach. Some writers admitted that they did not know everything (we don't), and others even went so far as to admit ignorance. I found myself doing what Mary Jo Reiff, a professor who studies rhetoric and composition, did when she was asked to write about her experience of writing an essay about teaching for those new to the field of composition. She writes, "I immediately called on my genre knowledge—my past experience with reading and writing similar texts in similar situations—to orient me to the expectations of this genre" (157).

I further acknowledged that it is quite rare that teachers of writing get to write so directly to students in such an informal manner. Although textbooks are directed at students, they are often more formal affairs meant to serve a different purpose than this essay. And because the genre of this essay is still developing, there are no formal expectations for what this paper might look like. In my excitement, I realized that perhaps I had been granted more freedom in writing this essay than is typical of an already established, although never static, genre. As a result, I decided to make this essay a mix of personal anecdotes, examples, and voices from teachers of writing. Such an essay seems to be the most fitting response to this situation, as I hope to come across as someone both informative and friendly. Why am I telling you this? Because it seems only appropriate that given the fact that I am talking about genre awareness, I should make you aware of my own struggles with writing in a new genre.

I will admit that the word genre used to have a bad reputation and may still make some people cringe. Genre used to refer primarily to form, which meant that writing in a particular genre was seen as simply a matter of filling in the blanks. Anne Freadman, a specialist in genre theory, points out that "it is this kind of genre theory with its failures that has caused the discredit of the very notion of genre, bringing about in turn its disuse and the disrepair many of us found it in" (46). But genre theory has come a long way since then. Perhaps the shift started when the rhetorician Lloyd Bitzer wrote the following:

> Due to either the nature of things or convention, or both, some situations recur. The courtroom is the locus for several kinds of situations generating the speech of accusation, the speech of defense, the charge to the jury. From day to day, year to year, comparable situations occur, prompting comparable responses; hence rhetorical forms are born and a special vocabulary, grammar, and style are established. (13)

In other words, Bitzer is saying that when something new happens that requires a response, someone must create that first response. Then when that situation happens again, another person uses the first response as a basis for the second, and eventually everyone who encounters this situation is basing his/her response on the previous ones, resulting in the creation of a new genre. Think about George Washington giving the first State of the Union Address. Because this genre was completely new, he had complete freedom to pick its form and content. All presidents following him now have these former addresses to help guide their response because the situation is now a reoccurring one. Amy Devitt, a professor who specializes in the study of genre theory, points out that "genres develop, then, because they respond appropriately to situations that writers encounter repeatedly" ("Generalizing" 576) and because "if each writing problem were to require a completely new assessment of how to respond, writing would be slowed considerably. But once we recognize a recurring situation, a situation that we or others have responded to in the past, our response to that situation can be guided by past responses" ("Generalizing" 576). As such, we can see how a genre like the State of the Union Address helps for more effective communication between the president and citizens because the president already has a genre with which to work; he/she doesn't have to create a new one, and citizens know what to expect from such an address.

The definition of genre has changed even more since Bitzer's article was written; genres are now viewed as even more than repeating rhetorical situations. Carolyn Miller, a leading professor in the field of technical communication, argues that "a rhetorically sound definition of genre must be centered . . . on the action it is used to accomplish" (151). How might this look? These actions don't have to be complex; many genres are a part of our daily lives. Think about genres as tools to help people to get things done. Devitt writes that:

> genres have the power to help or hurt human interaction, to ease communication or to deceive, to enable someone to speak or to discourage someone from saying something different. People learn how to do *small talk* to ease the social discomfort of large group gatherings and meeting new people, but advertisers learn how to disguise *sales letters* as *winning sweepstakes entries*. (Writing 1)

In other words, knowing what a genre is used for can help people to accomplish goals, whether that goal be getting a job by knowing how to write a stellar resume, winning a person's heart by writing a romantic love letter, or getting into college by writing an effective personal statement.

By this point you might realize that you have been participating in many different genres—whether you are telling a joke, writing an email, or uploading a witty status on Facebook. Because you know how these genres function as social actions, you can quite accurately predict how they function rhetorically; your joke should generate a laugh, your email should elicit a response, and your updated Facebook status should generate comments from your online friends. But you have done more than simply filled in the blanks. Possibly without even thinking about it, you were recognizing the rhetorical situation of your action and choosing to act in a manner that would result in the outcome you desired. I imagine that you would probably not share a risqué joke with your mom, send a "Hey Buddy" email to your professor, or update your Facebook status as "X has a huge wart on his foot." We can see that more than form matters here, as knowing what is appropriate in these situations obviously requires more rhetorical knowledge than does filling out a credit card form. Devitt argues that "people do not label a particular story as a joke solely because of formal features but rather because of their perception of the rhetorical action that is occurring" (Writing 11). True, genres often have formulaic features, but these features can change even as the nature of the genre remains (Devitt, Writing, 48). What is important to consider here is that if mastering a form were simply a matter of plugging in content, we would all be capable of successfully writing anything when we are given a formula. By now you likely know that writing is not that easy.

Fortunately, even if you have been taught to write in a formulaic way, you probably don't treat texts in such a manner. When approaching a genre for a the first time, you likely view it as more than a simple form: "Picking up a text, readers not only classify it and expect a certain form, but also make assumptions about the text's purposes, its subject matter, its writer, and its expected reader" (Devitt, Writing 12). We treat texts that we encounter as rhetorical objects; we choose be tween horror movies and chick flicks not only because we are familiar with their forms but because we know what response they will elicit from us (nail-biting

fear and dreamy sighs, respectively). Why am I picking popular genres to discuss? I think I agree with Miller when she argues the following:

> To consider as potential genres such homely discourse as the letter of recommendation, the user manual, the progress report, the ransom note, the lecture, and the white paper, as well as the eulogy, the apologia, the inaugural, the public proceeding, and the sermon, is not to trivialize the study of genres; it is to take seriously the rhetoric in which we are immersed and the situations in which we find ourselves. (155)

In other words, Miller is saying that all genres matter because they shape our everyday lives. And by studying the genres that we find familiar, we can start to see how specific choices that writers make result in specific actions on the part of readers; it only follows that our own writing must too be purposefully written.

I like examples, so here is one more. Many of you may be familiar with *The Onion*, a fictitious newspaper that uses real world examples to create humorous situations. Perhaps the most notable genre of *The Onion* is its headlines. The purpose of these headlines is simple: to make the reader respond by laughing. While many of the articles are also entertaining, the majority of the humor is produced through the headlines. In fact, the headlines are so important to the success of the newspaper that they are tested on volunteers to see the readers' immediate responses. There are no formal features of these headlines besides the fact that they are all quite brief; they share no specific style. But they are a rhetorical action meant to bring about a specific response, which is why I see them as being their own genre. A few examples for those of you unfamiliar with this newspaper would help to explain what I'm saying. Here are a few of my personal favorites (politically charged or other possibly offensive headlines purposefully avoided):

- "Archaeological Dig Uncovers Ancient Race of Skeleton People"
- "Don't Run Away, I'm Not the Flesh-Eating Kind of Zombie"
- "Time Traveler: Everyone In The Future Eats Dippin' Dots"
- "'I Am Under 18' Button Clicked For First Time In History Of Internet"
- "Commas, Turning Up, Everywhere"
- "Myspace Outage Leaves Millions Friendless."
- "Amazon.com Recommendations Understand Area Woman Better Than Husband"
- "Study: Dolphins Not So Intelligent On Land"
- "Beaver Overthinking Dam"
- "Study: Alligators Dangerous No Matter How Drunk You Are"
- "Child In Corner To Exact Revenge As Soon As He Gets Out" (*The Onion*)

I would surmise with near certainty that at least one of these headlines made you laugh. Why? I think the success lies in the fact that the writers of these headlines are rhetorically aware of whom these headlines are directed toward—college students like you, and more specifically, educated college students who know enough about politics, culture, and U.S. and world events to "get" these headlines.

And now for some bad news: figuring out a genre is tricky already, but this process is further complicated by the fact that two texts that might fit into the same genre might also look extremely different. But let's think about why this might be the case. Devitt points out, "different grocery stores make for different grocery lists. Different law courts make for different legal briefs. And different college classes make for different research papers. Location may not be the first, second, and third most important qualities of writing, as it is for real estate, but location is surely among the situational elements that lead to expected genres and to adaptations of those genres in particular situations" ("Transferability" 218). Think about a time when you were asked to write a research paper. You probably had an idea of what that paper should look like, but you also needed to consider the location of the assignment. In other words, you needed to consider how your particular teacher's expectations would help to shape your assignment. This makes knowing a genre about much more than simply knowing its form. You also need to consider the context in which it is being used. As such, it's important to be aware that the research paper you might be required to write in freshman composition might be completely different than the research paper you might be asked to write for an introductory psychology class. Your goal is to recognize these shifts in location and to be aware of how such shifts might affect your writing.

Let's consider a genre with which you are surely familiar: the thesis statement. Stop for a moment and consider what this term means to you. Ask your classmates. It's likely that you each have your own definition of what a thesis statement should and should not look like. You may have heard never to start a thesis statement with a phrase like "In this essay." Or you might have been taught that a thesis statement should have three parts, each of which will be discussed in one paragraph of the essay. I learned that many good thesis statements follow the formula "X because Y," where "X" refers to a specific stance, and "Y" refers to a specific reason for taking that stance. For example, I could argue "School uniforms should be required because they will help students to focus more on academics and less on fashion." Now, whether or not this is a good thesis statement is irrelevant, but

you can see how following the “X because Y” formula would produce a nicely structured statement. Take this a step further and research “thesis statements” on the Internet, and you’ll find that there are endless suggestions. And despite their vast differences, they all fit under the genre of thesis statement. How is this possible? Because it comes back to the particular situation in which that thesis statement is being used. Again, location is everything.

I think it’s time to try our hand at approaching a genre with which I hope all of you are only vaguely familiar and completely unpracticed: the ransom note.

A Scenario

I’ve decided to kidnap Bob’s daughter Susie for ransom. I’m behind on the mortgage payments, my yacht payments are also overdue, and I desperately need money. It is well known that Bob is one of the wealthiest people in Cash City, so I’ve targeted him as my future source of money. I’ve never met Bob, although one time his Mercedes cut me off in traffic, causing me to hit the brakes and spill my drink; the stain still glares at me from the floor of the car. The kidnapping part has been completed; now I need to leave Bob a ransom note. Let’s look at a few drafts I’ve completed to decide which one would be most appropriate.

Ransom Letter 1:

> If you ever want to see your daughter alive again, leave 1 million dollars by the blue garbage can at 123 Ransom Rd. at Midnight. Come alone and do not call the police.

Ransom Letter 2:

> Hav daughter. Million $. Blu grbg can 123 Ransom Rd. 12AM. No poliz.

Ransom Letter 3:

> Dear Bob,
>
> Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. You have a lovely house, and I very much enjoyed my recent visit while you were out of town. Unfortunately, I have kidnapped your daughter. As I am currently unable to meet several financial demands, I am graciously turning to you for help in this matter. I am sure that we will be able to come to some mutually beneficial agreement that results in the return of your daughter and the padding of my wallet. Please meet with me at the Grounds Coffee House on First Street so that we may discuss what price is most fitting. Your daughter, meanwhile, remains in safe and competent hands. She is presently playing pool with my son Matt (a possible love connection?), and she says to tell you “Hi.”
>
> Yours truly,
>
> Jim
>
> P.S. Please order me a skim vanilla latte, should you arrive before I do.

Immediately, you can probably determine that ransom letter one is the best choice. But have you considered why? What does the first letter have that the other two are lacking? Let’s first eliminate the most obvious dud—letter number three. Not only does it mimic the friendly, familiar manner of two friends rather than the threatening note of a deranged kidnapper, but it also suggests both that there is no rush in the matter and that the price is negotiable. Letters one and two are closer; they both contain the same information, but letter two fails to be as rhetorically strong as number one. The spelling errors and choppy feel might suggest that the writer of the note is not intelligent enough to get away with the kidnapping. The first letter is the most rhetorically strong because it is well written and direct. All of these letters would qualify as fitting the genre of ransom letter, but the first one most obviously fits the rhetorical situation.

It may be worthwhile to note some particular challenges you might have to approaching your writing genres as rhetorical situations. Perhaps you have come from a writing background where you learned that certain rules apply to all writing. Just nod if these sound familiar:

- You must have a thesis statement at the end of the introduction.
- Every thesis statement should introduce three points of discussion.
- You cannot use “I” in writing.

- You cannot begin a sentence with a coordinating conjunction.
- Every paragraph should start with a topic sentence.

You get the point. These rules are appealing; they tell us exactly what to do and not to do with regard to writing. I remember happily creating introductions that moved from broad to specific (often starting with "In our world"), constructing three point thesis statements, and beginning paragraphs with "first," "second," and "third." I didn't have to think about audience, or purpose, or even much about content for that matter. All that really mattered was that essay followed a certain formula that was called good writing. But looking back, what resulted from such formulas was not very good; actually, it was quite bad.

That is, of course, not to say that there aren't rules that come with genres; the difference is that the rules change as the genre changes, that no rules apply to all genres, and that genres require more effort than simply following the rules. Because genres usually come with established conventions, it is risky to choose not to follow such conventions. These similarities within genres help us to communicate successfully; imagine the chaos that would ensue if news broadcasts were done in raps, if all legal briefs were written in couplets, or if your teacher handed you a syllabus and told you that it must first be decoded. In sum, "too much choice is as debilitating of meaning as is too little choice. In language, too much variation results eventually in lack of meaning: mutual unintelligibility" (Devitt, "Genre" 53).

But on a brighter note, genres also help us to make more efficient decisions when writing, as we can see how people have approached similar situations. Creating a new genre each time that writing was required would make the writing process much longer, as we would not have past responses to help us with present ones (Devitt, "Generalizing" 576). As a result, the more you are able to master particular genres, the better equipped you may be to master genres that you later encounter:

> When people write, they draw on the genres they know, their own context of genres, to help construct their rhetorical action. If they encounter a situation new to them, it is the genres they have acquired in the past that they can use to shape their new action. Every genre they acquire, then, expands their genre repertoire and simultaneously shapes how they might view new situations. (Devitt, Writing 203)

Taking what Devitt says into account, think back to the previous discussion of the research paper. If you already have some idea of what a research paper looks like, you do not have to learn an entirely new genre. Instead, you just have to figure out how to change that particular genre to fit with the situation, even if that change just comes from having a different teacher.

Learning about genres and how they function is more important than mastering one particular genre; it is this knowledge that helps us to recognize and to determine appropriate responses to different situations—that is, knowing what particular genre is called for in a particular situation. And learning every genre would be impossible anyway, as Devitt notes that "no writing class could possibly teach students all the genres they will need to succeed even in school, much less in the workplace or in their civic lives. Hence the value of teaching genre awareness rather than acquisition of particular genres" (Writing 205). This approach helps to make you a more effective writer as well, as knowing about genres will make you more prepared to use genres that you won't learn in college. For example, I recently needed to write a letter about removing a late fee on a credit card. I had never written this particular type of letter before, but I knew what action I was trying to accomplish. As a result, I did some research on writing letters and determined that I should make it as formal and polite as possible. The body of the letter ended up as follows:

> I have very much enjoyed being a card carrier with this bank for many years. However, I recently had a late fee charged to my account. As you will note from my previous statements, this is the first late fee I have ever acquired. I do remember making this payment on time, as I have all of my previous payments. I hope to remain a loyal customer of this bank for many years to come, so I would very much appreciate it if you would remove this charge from my account.

You can see that this letter does several things. First, I build credibility for myself by reminding them that I have used their card for many years. Second, I ask them to check my records to show further that I am typically a responsible card carrier. And third, I hint that if they do not remove the late fee, I might decide to change to a different bank. This letter is effective because it considers how the situation affects the genre. And yes, the late fee was removed.

Chances are that I have left you more confused than you were before you began this essay. Actually, I hope that I have left you frustrated; this means that the next time you write, you will have to consider not only form but also audience, purpose, and genre; you will, in other words, have to consider the rhetorical effectiveness of your writing. Luckily, I can leave you with a few suggestions:

- First, determine what action you are trying to accomplish. Are you trying to receive an A on a paper? Convince a credit card company to remove a late fee? Get into graduate school? If you don't know what your goal is for a particular writing situation, you'll have a difficult time figuring out what genre to use.
- Second, learn as much as you can about the situation for which you are writing. What is the purpose? Who is the audience? How much freedom do you have? How does the location affect the genre?
- Third, research how others have responded to similar situations. Talk to people who have written what you are trying to write. If you are asked to write a biology research paper, ask your instructor for examples. If you need to write a cover letter for a summer internship, take the time to find out about the location of that internship.
- And finally, ask questions.

Discussion

1. What are some genres that you feel you know well? How did you learn them? What are their common rhetorical features?
2. What rules have you been told to follow in the past? How did they shape what you were writing?
3. How much freedom do you enjoy when writing? Does it help to have a form to follow, or do you find it to be limiting?

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13.2.10: Reflective Writing and the Revision Process- What Were You Thinking?

Sandra L. Giles

"Reflection" and "reflective writing" are umbrella terms that refer to any activity that asks you to think about your own thinking.* As composition scholars Kathleen Blake Yancey and Jane Bowman Smith explain, reflection records a "student's process of thinking about what she or he is doing while in the process of that doing" (170). In a writing class, you may be asked to think about your writing processes in general or in relation to a particular essay, to think about your intentions regarding rhetorical elements such as audience and purpose, or to think about your choices regarding development strategies such as comparison-contrast, exemplification, or definition. You may be asked to describe your decisions regarding language features such as word choice, sentence rhythm, and so on. You may be asked to evaluate or assess your piece of writing or your development as a writer in general. Your instructor may also ask you to perform these kinds of activities at various points in your process of working on a project, or at the end of the semester.

A Writer's Experience

The first time I had to perform reflective writing myself was in the summer of 2002. And it did feel like a performance, at first. I was a doctoral student in Wendy Bishop's Life Writing class at Florida State University, and it was the first class I had ever taken where we English majors actually practiced what we preached; which is to say, we actually put ourselves through the various elements of process writing. Bishop led us through invention exercises, revision exercises, language activities, and yes, reflective writings. For each essay, we had to write what she called a "process note" in which we explained our processes of working on the essay, as well as our thought processes in developing the ideas. We also discussed what we might want to do with (or to) the essay in the future, beyond the class. At the end of the semester, we composed a self-evaluative cover letter for our portfolio in which we discussed each of our essays from the semester and recorded our learning and insights about writing and about the genre of nonfiction.

My first process note for the class was a misguided attempt at goodstudent-gives-the-teacher-what-she-wants. Our assignment had been to attend an event in town and write about it. I had seen an email announcement about a medium visiting from England who would perform a "reading" at the Unity Church in town. So I went and took notes. And wrote two consecutive drafts. After peer workshop, a third. And then I had to write the process note, the likes of which I had never done before. It felt awkward, senseless. Worse than writing a scholarship application or some other mundane writing task. Like a waste of time, and like it wasn't real writing at all. But it was required.

So, hoop-jumper that I was, I wrote the following: "This will eventually be part of a longer piece that will explore the Foundation for Spiritual Knowledge in Tallahassee, Florida, which is a group of local people in training to be mediums and spirituals healers. These two goals are intertwined." Yeah, right. Nice and fancy. Did I really intend to write a book-length study on those folks? I thought my professor would like the idea, though, so I put it in my note. Plus, my peer reviewers had asked for a longer, deeper piece. That statement would show I was being responsive to their feedback, even though I didn't agree with it. The peer reviewers had also wanted me to put myself into the essay more, to do more with first-person point of view rather than just writing a reporter-style observation piece. I still disagree with them, but what I should have done in the original process note was go into why: my own search for spirituality and belief could not be handled in a brief essay. I wanted the piece to be about the medium herself, and mediumship in general, and the public's reaction, and why a group of snarky teenagers thought they could be disruptive the whole time and come off as superior. I did a better job later—more honest and thoughtful and revealing about my intentions for the piece—in the self-evaluation for the portfolio. That's because, as the semester progressed and I continued to have to write those darned process notes, I dropped the attitude. In a conference about my writing, Bishop responded to my note by asking questions focused entirely on helping me refine my intentions for the piece, and I realized my task wasn't to please or try to dazzle her. I stopped worrying about how awkward the reflection was, stopped worrying about how to please the teacher, and started actually reflecting and thinking. New habits and ways of thinking formed. And unexpectedly, all the hard decisions about revising for the next draft began to come more easily.

And something else clicked, too. Two and a half years previously, I had been teaching composition at a small two-year college. Composition scholar Peggy O'Neill taught a workshop for us English teachers on an assignment she called the "Letter to the Reader." That was my introduction to reflective writing as a teacher, though I hadn't done any of it myself at

that point. I thought, “Okay, the composition scholars say we should get our students to do this.” So I did, but it did not work very well with my students at the time. Here’s why: I didn’t come to understand what it could do for a writer, or how it would do it, until I had been through it myself.

After Bishop’s class, I became a convert. I began studying reflection, officially called metacognition, and began developing ways of using it in writing classes of all kinds, from composition to creative nonfiction to fiction writing. It works. Reflection helps you to develop your intentions (purpose), figure out your relation to your audience, uncover possible problems with your individual writing processes, set goals for revision, make decisions about language and style, and the list goes on. In a nutshell, it helps you develop more insight into and control over composing and revising processes. And according to scholars such as Chris M. Anson, developing this control is a feature that distinguishes stronger from weaker writers and active from passive learners (69–73).

My Letter to the Reader Assignment

Over recent years, I’ve developed my own version of the Letter to the Reader, based on O’Neill’s workshop and Bishop’s class assignments. For each essay, during a revising workshop, my students first draft their letters to the reader and then later, polish them to be turned in with the final draft. Letters are composed based on the following instructions:

> This will be a sort of cover letter for your essay. It should be on a separate sheet of paper, typed, stapled to the top of the final draft. Date the letter and address it to “Dear Reader.” Then do the following in nicely developed, fat paragraphs:
>
> 1. Tell the reader what you intend for the essay to do for its readers. Describe its purpose(s) and the effect(s) you want it to have on the readers. Say who you think the readers are.
>
> - Describe your process of working on the essay. How did you narrow the assigned topic? What kind of planning did you do? What steps did you go through, what changes did you make along the way, what decisions did you face, and how did you make the decisions?
> - How did comments from your peers, in peer workshop, help you? How did any class activities on style, editing, etc., help you?
>
> 2. Remember to sign the letter. After you’ve drafted it, think about whether your letter and essay match up. Does the essay really do what your letter promises? If not, then use the draft of your letter as a revising tool to make a few more adjustments to your essay. Then, when the essay is polished and ready to hand in, polish the letter as well and hand them in together.

Following is a sample letter that shows how the act of answering these prompts can help you uncover issues in your essays that need to be addressed in further revision. This letter is a mock-up based on problems I’ve seen over the years. We discuss it thoroughly in my writing classes:

> Dear Reader,
>
> This essay is about how I feel about the changes in the financial aid rules. I talk about how they say you’re not eligible even if your parents aren’t supporting you anymore. I also talk a little bit about the HOPE scholarship. But my real purpose is to show how the high cost of books makes it impossible to afford college if you can’t get on financial aid. My readers will be all college students. As a result, it should make students want to make a change. My main strategy in this essay is to describe how the rules have affected me personally.
>
> I chose this topic because this whole situation has really bugged me. I did freewriting to get my feelings out on paper, but I don’t think that was effective because it seemed jumbled and didn’t flow. So I started over with an outline and went on from there. I’m still not sure how to start the introduction off because I want to hook the reader’s interest but I don’t know how to do that. I try to include many different arguments to appeal to different types of students to make the whole argument seem worthwhile on many levels.
>
> I did not include comments from students because I want everyone to think for themselves and form their own opinion. That’s my main strategy. I don’t want the paper to be too long and bore the reader. I was told in peer workshop to include information from other students at other colleges with these same financial aid problems. But I didn’t do that because I don’t know anybody at another school. I didn’t want to include any false information.

Thanks,

(signature)

Notice how the letter shows us, as readers of the letter, some problems in the essay without actually having to read the essay. From this (imaginary) student's point of view, the act of drafting this letter should show her the problems, too. In her first sentence, she announces her overall topic. Next she identifies a particular problem: the way "they" define whether an applicant is dependent on or independent of parents. So far, pretty good, except her use of the vague pronoun "they" makes me hope she hasn't been that vague in the essay itself. Part of taking on a topic is learning enough about it to be specific. Specific is effective; vague is not. Her next comment about the HOPE scholarship makes me wonder if she's narrowed her topic enough. When she said "financial aid," I assumed federal, but HOPE is particular to the state of Georgia and has its own set of very particular rules, set by its own committee in Atlanta. Can she effectively cover both federal financial aid, such as the Pell Grant for example, as well as HOPE, in the same essay, when the rules governing them are different? Maybe. We'll see. I wish the letter would address more specifically how she sorts that out in the essay. Then she says that her "real purpose" is to talk about the cost of books. Is that really her main purpose? Either she doesn't have a good handle on what she wants her essay to do or she's just throwing language around to sound good in the letter. Not good, either way.

When she says she wants the readers to be all college students, she has identified her target audience, which is good. Then this: "As a result, it should make students want to make a change." Now, doesn't that sound more in line with a statement of purpose? Here the writer makes clear, for the first time, that she wants to write a persuasive piece on the topic. But then she says that her "main strategy" is to discuss only her own personal experience. That's not a strong enough strategy, by itself, to be persuasive.

In the second section, where she discusses process, she seems to have gotten discouraged when she thought that freewriting hadn't worked because it resulted in something "jumbled." But she missed the point that freewriting works to generate ideas, which often won't come out nicely organized. It's completely fine, and normal, to use freewriting to generate ideas and then organize them with perhaps an outline as a second step. As a teacher, when I read comments like this in a letter, I write a note to the student explaining that "jumbled" is normal, perfectly fine, and nothing to worry about. I'm glad when I read that sort of comment so I can reassure the student. If not for the letter, I probably wouldn't have known of her unfounded concern. It creates a teaching moment.

Our imaginary student then says, "I'm still not sure how to start the introduction off because I want to hook the reader's interest but don't know how to do that." This statement shows that she's thinking along the right lines—of capturing the reader's interest. But she hasn't quite figured out how to do that in this essay, probably because she doesn't have a clear handle on her purpose. I'd advise her to address that problem and to better develop her overall strategy, and then she would be in a better position to make a plan for the introduction. Again, a teaching moment. When she concludes the second paragraph of the letter saying that she wants to include "many different arguments" for "different types of students," it seems even more evident that she's not clear on purpose or strategy; therefore, she's just written a vague sentence she probably thought sounded good for the letter.

She begins her third paragraph with further proof of the problems. If her piece is to be persuasive, then she should not want readers to "think for themselves and form their own opinion." She most certainly should have included comments from other students, as her peer responders advised. It wouldn't be difficult to interview some fellow students at her own school. And as for finding out what students at other schools think about the issue, a quick search on the Internet would turn up newspaper or newsletter articles, as well as blogs and other relevant sources. Just because the official assignment may not have been to write a "research" paper doesn't mean you can't research. Some of your best material will come that way. And in this particular type of paper, your personal experience by itself, without support, will not likely persuade the reader. Now, I do appreciate when she says she doesn't want to include any "false information." A lot of students come to college with the idea that in English class, if you don't know any information to use, then you can just make it up so it sounds good. But that's not ethical, and it's not persuasive, and just a few minutes on the Internet will solve the problem.

This student, having drafted the above letter, should go back and analyze. Do the essay and letter match up? Does the essay do what the letter promises? And here, does the letter uncover lack of clear thinking about purpose and strategy? Yes, it does, so she should now go back and address these issues in her essay. Without having done this type of reflective exercise, she likely would have thought her essay was just fine, and she would have been unpleasantly surprised to get the grade back with my (the teacher's) extensive commentary and critique. She never would have predicted what I would say because she wouldn't have had a process for thinking through these issues—and might not have known how to begin thinking this way. Drafting the letter should help her develop more insight into and control over the revising process so she can make more effective decisions as she revises.

How it Works

Intentions—a sense of audience and purpose and of what the writer wants the essay to do—are essential to a good piece of communicative writing. Anson makes the point that when an instructor asks a student to verbalize his or her intentions, it is much more likely that the student will have intentions (qtd. in Yancey and Smith 174). We saw this process in mid-struggle with our imaginary student's work (above), and we'll see it handled more effectively in real student examples (below). As many composition scholars explain, reflective and self-assessing activities help writers set goals for their writing. For instance, Rebecca Moore Howard states that "writers who can assess their own prose can successfully revise that prose" (36). This position is further illustrated by Xiaoguang Cheng and Margaret S. Steffenson, who conducted and then reported a study clearly demonstrating a direct positive effect of reflection on student revising processes in "Metadiscourse: A Technique for Improving Student Writing." Yancey and Smith argue that self-assessment and reflection are essential to the learning process because they are a "method for assigning both responsibility and authority to a learner" (170). Students then become independent learners who can take what they learn about writing into the future beyond a particular class rather than remaining dependent on teachers or peer evaluators (171). Anson echoes this idea, saying that reflection helps a writer grow beyond simply succeeding in a particular writing project: "Once they begin thinking about writing productively, they stand a much better chance of developing expertise and working more successfully in future writing situations" (73).

Examples from Real Students

Let's see some examples from actual students now, although for the sake of space we'll look at excerpts. The first few illustrate how reflective writing helps you develop your intentions. For an assignment to write a profile essay, Joshua Dawson described his purpose and audience: "This essay is about my grandmother and how she overcame the hardships of life. [. . .] The purpose of this essay is to show how a woman can be tough and can take anything life throws at her. I hope the essay reaches students who have a single parent and those who don't know what a single parent goes through." Joshua showed a clear idea of what he wanted his essay to do. For a cultural differences paper, Haley Moore wrote about her mission trip to Peru: "I tried to show how, in America, we have everything from clean water to freedom of religion and other parts of the world do not. Also, I would like for my essay to inspire people to give donations or help in any way they can for the countries that live in poverty." Haley's final draft actually did not address the issue of donations and focused instead on the importance of mission work, a good revision decision that kept the essay more focused.

In a Composition II class, Chelsie Mathis wrote an argumentative essay on a set of controversial photos published in newspapers in the 1970s which showed a woman falling to her death during a fire escape collapse. Chelsie said,

> The main purpose of this essay is to argue whether the [newspaper] editors used correct judgment when deciding to publish such photos. The effect that I want my paper to have on the readers is to really make people think about others' feelings and to make people realize that poor judgment can have a big effect. [. . .] I intend for my readers to possibly be high school students going into the field of journalism or photojournalism.

Chelsie demonstrated clear thinking about purpose and about who she wanted her essay to influence. Another Comp II student, Daniel White, wrote, "This essay is a cognitive approach of how I feel YouTube is helping our society achieve its dreams and desires of becoming stars." I had no idea what he meant by "cognitive approach," but I knew he was taking a psychology class at the same time. I appreciated that he was trying to integrate his learning from that class into ours, trying to learn to use that vocabulary. I was sure that with more practice, he would get the hang of it. I didn't know whether he was getting much writing practice at all in psychology, so I was happy to let him practice it in my class. His reflection showed learning in process.

My students often resist writing about their composing processes, but it's good for them to see and analyze how they did what they did, and it also helps me know what they were thinking when they made composing decisions. Josh Autry, in regards to his essay on scuba diving in the Florida Keys at the wreck of the Spiegel Grove, said, "Mapping was my preferred method of outlining. It helped me organize my thoughts, go into detail, and pick the topics that I thought would be the most interesting to the readers." He also noted, "I choose [sic] to write a paragraph about everything that can happen to a diver that is not prepared but after reviewing it I was afraid that it would scare an interested diver away. I chose to take that paragraph out and put a few warnings in the conclusion so the aspiring diver would not be clueless." This was a good decision that did improve the final draft. His earlier draft had gotten derailed by a long discussion of the dangers of scuba diving in general. But he came to this realization and decided to correct it without my help—except that I had led the class through reflective revising activities. D'Amber Walker wrote, "At first my organization was off because I didn't know if I should start off with a personal experience which included telling a story or start with a statistic." Apparently, a former teacher had told her not to include personal experiences in her essays. I reminded her that in our workshop on introductions, we had discussed how a personal story can be a very effective hook to grab the reader's attention. So once

again, a teaching moment. When Jonathan Kelly said, “I probably could have given more depth to this paper by interviewing a peer or something but I really felt unsure of how to go about doing so,” I was able to scold him gently. If he really didn’t know how to ask fellow students their opinions, all he had to do was ask me. But his statement shows an accurate assessment of how the paper could have been better. When Nigel Ellington titled his essay “If Everything Was Easy, Nothing Would Be Worth Anything,” he explained, “I like this [title] because it’s catchy and doesn’t give too much away and it hooks you.” He integrated what he learned in a workshop on titles. Doing this one little bit of reflective thinking cemented that learning and gave him a chance to use it in his actual paper.

How It Helps Me (the Instructor) Help You

Writing teachers often play two roles in relation to their students. I am my students’ instructor, but I am also a fellow writer. As a writer, I have learned that revision can be overwhelming. It’s tempting just to fiddle with words and commas if I don’t know what else to do. Reflection is a mechanism, a set of procedures, to help me step back from a draft to gain enough distance to ask myself, “Is this really what I want the essay (or story or poem or article) to do? Is this really what I want it to say? Is this the best way to get it to say that?” To revise is to re-vision or re-see, to re-think these issues, but you have to create a critical distance to be able to imagine your piece done another way. Reflection helps you create that distance. It also helps your instructor better guide your work and respond to it.

The semester after my experience in Bishop’s Life Writing Class, I took a Fiction Writing Workshop taught by Mark Winegardner, author of *The Godfather Returns* and *The Godfather’s Revenge*, as well as numerous other novels and short stories. Winegardner had us create what he called the “process memo.” As he indicated in an interview, he uses the memo mainly as a tool to help the workshop instructor know how to respond to the writer’s story. If a writer indicates in the memo that he knows something is still a problem with the story, then the instructor can curtail lengthy discussion of that issue’s existence during the workshop and instead prompt peers to provide suggestions. The instructor can give some pointed advice, or possibly reassurance, based on the writer’s concerns that, without being psychic, the instructor would not otherwise have known about. Composition scholar Jeffrey Sommers notes that reflective pieces show teachers what your intentions for your writing actually are, which lets us respond to your writing accurately, rather than responding to what we think your intentions might be (“Enlisting” 101–2). He also points out that we can know how to reduce your anxiety about your writing appropriately (“Behind” 77). Thus, without a reflective memo, your teacher might pass right over the very issue you have been worried about.

The Habit of Self-Reflective Writing

One of the most important functions of reflective writing in the long run is to establish in you, the writer, a habit of self-reflective thinking. The first few reflective pieces you write may feel awkward and silly and possibly painful. You might play the teacher-pleasing game. But that’s really not what we want (see Smith 129). Teachers don’t want you to say certain things, we want you to think in certain ways. Once you get the hang of it and start to see the benefits in your writing, you’ll notice that you’ve formed a habit of thinking reflectively almost invisibly. And not only will it help you in writing classes, but in any future writing projects for biology class, say, or even further in the future, in writing that you may do on the job, such as incident reports or annual reports for a business. You’ll become a better writer. You’ll become a better thinker. You’ll become a better learner. And learning is what you’ll be doing for the rest of your life. I recently painted my kitchen. It was a painful experience. I had a four-day weekend and thought I could clean, prep, and paint the kitchen, breakfast nook, and hallway to the garage in just four days, not to mention painting the trim and doors white. I pushed myself to the limit of endurance. And when I finished the wall color (not even touching the trim), I didn’t like it. The experience was devastating. A very similar thing had happened three years before when I painted my home office a color I now call “baby poop.” My home office is still “baby poop” because I got so frustrated I just gave up. Now, the kitchen was even worse. It was such a light green it looked like liver failure and didn’t go with the tile on the floor. Plus, it showed brush marks and other flaws. What the heck?

But unlike three years ago, when I had given up, I decided to apply reflective practices to the situation. I decided to see it as time for revision-type thinking. Why had I wanted green to begin with? (Because I didn’t want blue in a kitchen. I’ve really been craving that hot dark lime color that’s popular now. So yes, I still want it to be green.) Why hadn’t I chosen a darker green? (Because I have the darker, hotter color into the room with accessories. The lighter green has a more neutral effect that I shouldn’t get sick of after six months. Perhaps I’ll get used to it, especially when I get around to painting the trim white.) What caused the brush strokes? (I asked an expert. Two factors: using satin finish rather than eggshell, and using a cheap paintbrush for cut-in-areas.) How can they be fixed? (Most of the brush strokes are just in the cut-in areas and so they can be redone quickly with a better quality brush. That is, if I decide to keep this light green color.) Is the fact that the trim is still cream-colored rather than white part of the problem? (Oh, yes. Fix that first and the other problems might diminish.) What can I learn about timing for my next paint project? (That the cleaning and prep work take much longer than you think, and that you will need two coats, plus drying time. And so what if you didn’t finish it in four days? Relax! Allow more time

next time.) Am I really worried about what my mother will say? (No, because I'm the one who has to look at it every day.) So the solution? Step one is to paint the trim first and then re-evaluate. Using a method of reflection to think back over my "draft" gives me a method for proceeding with "revision." At the risk of sounding like a pop song, when you stop to think it through, you'll know what to do.

Revision isn't just in writing. These methods can be applied any time you are working on a project—of any kind—or have to make decisions about something. Establishing the habit of reflective thinking will have far-reaching benefits in your education, your career, and your life. It's an essential key to success for the life-long learner.

Discussion

1. Define what metacognitive or reflective writing is. What are some of the prompts or "topics" for reflective writing?
2. Have you ever been asked to do this type of writing? If so, briefly discuss your experience.
3. Why does reflective writing help a student learn and develop as a better writer? How does it work?
4. Draft a Letter to the Reader for an essay you are working on right now. Analyze the letter to see what strengths or problems it uncovers regarding your essay

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13.2.11: Reinventing Invention- Discovery and Investment in Writing

Michelle D. Trim and Megan Lynn Isaac

Part 1: What Is Invention and Why Do We Care?

Invention can be understood as a process of discovery (Conley 317) and creation (Welch 169).* This can mean that you will discover something new about an existing idea or create a new way of looking at something. That seems pretty straightforward on the surface. Writers invent texts the way engineers invent new gadgets. But invention in the rhetorical sense is about a lot more than just coming up with ideas. Invention is also a way to describe what happens when a writer searches for a topic, develops a specific idea about that topic, and then strategizes a plan for fitting that specific idea to the writing situation at hand. In other words, invention is about coming up with something shiny, new, and unique, but it is also about brainstorming, synthesizing, and learning.

You use invention without realizing it every time you solve a problem. When presented with the dilemma of how to complete an assignment after spilling cola all over her new laptop, a student might engage in the following thought process.

She could begin by brainstorming ideas for actions she could take. Some of those might include:

- Call tech support for help.
- Go use a public terminal.
- Handwrite the essay.
- Ask a friend to loan his computer.
- Request an extension from the professor.

Once she has several possible ideas to work with, she has to evaluate her options to see which might best fit the situation. Her evaluation process might go something like this:

- Call tech support for help. “Not enough time; the assignment is due tomorrow.”
- Go use a public terminal. “The nearest lab closes in two hours; that is not enough time to begin again and complete the essay.”
- Handwrite the essay. “This is possible, but the syllabus says the professor accepts only typed work.”
- Ask a friend to loan his computer. “This might work; Sam is next door and enrolled in a different English class.”
- Request an extension from the professor. “This might work, but the professor has a strict policy on late work.”

Now that she has evaluated her options, she can refine the selection to reflect new ideas. That refinement process might result in the following results:

- Sam loaned his computer, but it did not have the same word processing software on it.
- In discussing the problem with Sam, he suggested combining two ideas by handwriting the essay and submitting it while also requesting an extension.

As with this example, invention activities can and do occur at any stage of the writing process. Writers can brainstorm ideas, hone in on a topic, and refine that topic continually, no matter how much drafting, researching, or revising has already occurred.

The first two aspects of invention—brainstorming ideas and developing a workable topic—seem to be the areas of invention that challenge students the most. Unless the professor assigns a specific writing prompt, college students most likely will be expected to develop writing that reflects their—not their teacher’s—ideas. This can be scary. Students in our first year writing classes remarked that they liked knowing what the teacher wanted. For example, Alice[1] writes, “ . . . I never know whether the teacher is going to like the topic I chose, which scares me a lot.” Jared indicates that developing topics from scratch seems too challenging: “I have trouble thinking of my own ideas but when I am given ideas and examples it is a lot

easier . . . ."

It has been suggested that part of the reason why first year college students struggle with invention may be due to widespread standardized testing practices that require students to respond to a pre-formed writing topic in limited ways (Hillocks 64). Such experiences rarely offer students the opportunity to develop a writing topic, let alone forefront their own interests in that topic. They also do not challenge students to think about how one kind of approach to a topic fits some writing situations better than others. For instance, a student wanting to write about date-rape prevention would likely formulate a very different means of constructing his argument for his sociology professor than for his fraternity newsletter. Likewise, a student writing to local businesses about why they should support Autism research would construct a personal essay on the subject very differently.

Without practice doing invention, you may find yourself struggling to meet the demands of your college writing assignments. More than half of the students in our composition classes remarked that they didn't have much experience devising topics in high school. For example, Liz writes, " . . . we did not have a choice about what to write about." Josh explains, "Oftentimes we would have a list of a few topics that everyone had to choose from." With similar past experiences, students may feel antagonized by a professor's resistance to such tried and true topics as "steroid use" or "stem-cell research." A student may perceive herself as reliable and responsible when she chooses a standard topic, but her professor may label it trite and tired. Learning to reimagine writing as an opportunity to create something original rather than as a duty to respond predictably can be challenging. Students are often accustomed to being rewarded for following directions precisely, and thus are conditioned to fear breaking the rules. When college instructors introduce changes to the set of expectations student writers have about the composition process, it is not unusual for them to react with disbelief and dismay.

Even more perplexing, professors may insist you develop more than one workable topic for a particular assignment. For students accustomed to responding to a single prompt or who expect to be rewarded for producing the right answer, the idea that invention is a process including experimenting with and refining ideas can be frustrating. Instructors hope students will think broadly, creatively, and playfully as they craft approaches to a writing assignment—in part because they believe that investing time in invention helps prevent problems during the later stages of the writing process. Students are busy and often value efficiency. They often want to hone in on a topic immediately, proceeding directly to the drafting stage of the writing process. The problem is that the lack of a "Plan B" may lead to various forms of collapse as the project develops. Just as avid hikers spend time studying a topographical map and evaluating several different routes to the summit before they hit the trails, you will find that energy invested in the invisible stages of writing pays dividends later on.

Lack of experience selecting writing topics isn't the only challenge you may face when it comes to invention. Not being excited by one's writing often results in less successful writing (or as writing process researcher Janet Emig argues, less successful learning). Once the opportunity presents itself, invention is the key to identifying writing topics that both satisfy the writing situation and reflect your interest and investment. That is just one reason why many professors disallow those tried and true paper topics; they want their students to write about something that interests them now, not something they have written about since high school. Furthermore, professors want students to learn from their writing rather than circumvent new learning by rehashing a comfortable topic.

While invention skills may be rusty for some, the good news is that they only require practice to become just another part of everyday writing. In order to help our writing students practice their invention skills, we have developed some invention exercises that work well for different kinds of invention tasks and at different stages of the writing process.

Part 2: Practicing Invention

Writers can engage in a variety of invention activities when confronted with a writing task. The key is to develop a practice of invention that works, not to wait for inspiration to strike while staring at a blank screen until the wee hours of the morning. Some writers become so accustomed to writing first drafts that are "good enough," that they may skip aspects of the invention process beyond selecting their first idea for a topic. Others rely on ancillary sources to provide topics, such as a teacher's example or a list of common debate questions and oral presentation topics on the WWW. One of our students stated that she often relied on Facebook quiz topics for ideas. In a pinch, these methods might help a writer squeeze by, but in the long run, writers need to trust themselves to generate topics of importance to them with whatever resources are available.

It is not that teachers mind students working together to develop ideas or to use television, the Internet, or even the lyrics of their favorite song as inspiration for a writing topic. In fact, teachers would likely applaud these activities. Many writers have in their minds an image of the inventor—someone like Thomas Edison, for example—who toils alone until that great idea hits him like an act of nature. This image is a romantic one, but it isn't very realistic. Invention, as writing scholar Karen LeFevre

argues, is “a social act: one in which individuals interact with society and culture in a distinctive way to create something” (121). It is not a solitary experience. In terms of invention, this means that writers should not see invention as something they go off and do by themselves, free of the influence of the world around them. Writers’ ideas are always already impacted by the context and the culture in which they live. The key is not to try to develop an idea that is perfectly unique, but rather to uniquely develop a topic in response to a specific rhetorical situation—that is, for a specific audience and with a specific purpose. Think of how a music lover might build her playlist on her computer. She might have all the same songs as her best friend, but his process for surveying an album, evaluating choices, and selecting tracks to include will be very different. Both friends are part of the culture that decides what music is good, which songs are worth buying and listening to, but they also have their own tastes and their own way of enjoying the music they decide to play. Some songs are perfect for working out while others can only be appreciated after a particularly unpleasant break-up. While listeners might agree about the genres of these kinds of songs, their own choices in similar situations may be very different.

When students ask what they should write about, writing teachers often respond by asking about their interests. Teachers might ask you, “What do you care about?” or “What makes you mad?” Traditionally, teachers might guide you in a prewriting activity like freewriting or clustering. These approaches can help you generate that first initial idea for a topic, but they may not work for everyone. Sometimes writers need help remembering what areas of study they find exciting and what issues stimulate their thinking. More often, writers can feel constricted by the academic setting and automatically eliminate ideas or approaches that don’t seem conventional. You may expect a teacher to value a dry piece of writing because it fits the assignment, despite the fact that you have no interest in producing or reading it. In fact, some of you may never expect to enjoy the topics of their writing. It does not have to be this way. What seems like a dull and prescribed research assignment, or even specific prompt, can actually be an opportunity for creativity. And, if writers find the results of writing about an uninteresting topic to be boring, readers will likely agree.

Considering your individual interests while also engaging with others in a group environment can make for a fun and dynamic invention experience. The following activity builds on this idea by beginning with individual responses before juxtaposing them with those of classmates. The goal is both to spark interesting ideas that might not have been considered otherwise, while also learning how different people, with different experiences can resolve invention activities in unexpected ways.

Classroom Activity 1: Brainstorming as a Group

While on the surface the following activity may appear like a survey for finding the perfect blind date, it works best if you try to take the questions seriously. The questions can be modified to fit a specific writing situation or left more general, as we suggest, to fit a more openended writing task. One of the important elements of this activity is to share your responses with others—a friend, your writing group, a Writing Center consultant, etc.

Step 1

Respond in writing to the following questions.

1. What new place would you most like to visit?
2. What form of technology or invention do you value most?
3. What famous person (alive or dead) would you most like to meet?
4. What is your favorite astral body? (planet, moon, star, etc.)
5. What hands on skill would you like to learn (sailing a boat, making stained glass windows, etc.)?
6. What two qualities do you admire most in a leader?
7. What profession is the most rewarding?
8. What law would you change and why?
9. What one thing should all children learn?
10. What is the most unjust event in history?
11. What historical incident would you most like to witness?
12. What is the most important book written in your lifetime?
13. What is the highest honor a person can achieve?
14. What difference in people do you find most troubling?
15. What product would you take off the market if you could?

(You can add other questions to this list, because the exact formulation of the questions is less important than their potential for stimulating your thinking in unexpected ways.)

Step 2

You should individually compose answers to the questions being careful not to share your ideas with others (yet).

Step 3

You should share your responses to at least three or four of the queries that you found most provocative, paying attention to the responses of others. (Recording the answers as lists helps you focus on the range of your peers' responses).

Step 4

Writers should spend a few minutes listing what top five answers particularly grabbed their attention or seemed most compelling.

Step 5

With others, discuss the individual lists.

Step 6

With others, generate a list of ten possible paper topics based on either the individual lists generated in step 4 or the discussion of the lists in step 5. (It is a good idea to generate more than ten rather than discarding ones that group members find especially exciting.)

Step 7

You may select one topic from the list or lists to develop for the writing assignment or use the topics as a jumping off point for inventing another topic idea altogether.

Responses to Invention Activity 1: "Brainstorming as a Group"

Although our writing students generally found this activity to be interesting and new to them, the same invention activity will not work the same way for every writer. If we return to the original description of invention from Part 1, we see that invention incorporates both discovery and creation. Discovery in this instance is a singular experience since it depends on what writers already know about themselves. In other words, when we discover an idea that we want to explore further, what we are really discovering is our interest in that idea—not the subject matter itself. You create a topic when you fit that interest to the writing task at hand. Since every writer encounters a writing task with a unique set of attitudes and experiences, it makes sense that he or she would generate different topic ideas even when applying the same invention tool.

Unsurprisingly, since we did this as a class activity, the "Brainstorming as a Group" invention activity did not generate a paper topic idea in the same way for every one of our students. Some students commented that they found the questions too random and couldn't see how they fit with the paper assignment. Their comments imply that they expected the activity to entirely lead them to a topic that was already preformed to fit their interests and the writing assignment. But, here's the thing: this activity was designed to do exactly the opposite. Its goal is not to ask a random question with an ideal writing topic as its answer. The objective of this activity is to remind you of your own passions, interests, and opinions on a variety of real life subjects. That is the discovery part of the process. In jogging that part of our your memories, we seek to pull you out of school mode and into everyday life mode where you can bring one of your interests from life outside of school into the classroom via your writing assignments. As one student writes:

> The activity was a great start to open our minds on what topic to write about. It didn't give me a topic but rather sparked certain areas to think about. My answers showed what I was passionate about, things that are important to me, and things I want to do in my life. My own answers showed me personal beliefs and opinions on certain topics. Then listening to other people's answers sparked a whole new way of thinking. Hearing other people's interpretations of the questions and their answers allowed me to broaden my thinking. Different answers sparked different reactions that allowed for topics to debate about. Someone's answer to a question might prompt me to say, "Oh really? That's surprising to me. I thought about it a completely different way," and thus a conversation could ensue. The activity allowed for us to gain our own opinions and then react to other people's opinions. (Cabbie)

Other students amiably completed the questions but did not initially realize that they were inventing a paper topic by doing so. For example, one group of students found that they all enjoyed answering the question about their favorite astral body. Discussing their answers to this question led them to a debate on space exploration. That then led them to a debate on funding such space-related projects—the pros and cons of which formed the nexus of their group argument project. They formed a topic that explored the funding of agencies like NASA, arguing for continued monetary support while acknowledging the unavoidable economic constraints. Despite the seeming lack of successful topic generation by the invention activity, this group used the activity to arrive at a topic that they probably would not have selected otherwise. They discovered their shared interest and conflicting views on funding for space exploration and shaped that interest to fit their writing assignment.

Similarly, Emily writes that the activity,

> " . . . encouraged my creativity, and sparked my curiosity, but it did not help me to select a topic . . . . It did however guide my entire group to the decision to write about something with a more objective feel. We immediately all decided we wanted an issue with concrete sides and arguments that could be supported by evidence instead of opinions (like which invention is the most important). The activity also steered us to choose a broader topic, instead of concentrating so much on the answer. For example, in response to my answer about which law I would change we thought of immigration from Cuba as a possible topic."

Like many other aspects of the writing process, the success of invention strategies cannot always be measured by the 'product' (in this case a clearly stated topic for a writing assignment). Sometimes, the most successful invention activity is the one that gets you thinking so that ideas are more accessible and easier to formulate. As Mary states, "[b]ecause this activity asked such broad questions, we were able to get ideas from our classmates' answers and from other ideas that occurred as a result of the questions of the activity."

Individual Activity: Brainstorming Based on Interests

While Activity 1 asks you to interact with others about your ideas and responses, answering the same set of questions can be equally helpful when you are working on your own to generate a writing topic. In this case, writers can work entirely alone by looking at their responses and then spending time freewriting or clustering in response to any one given answer. You may also interrogate a specific answer to flesh out your revealed interests more fully. Using the reporter's 5 W's and an H is one way to do this. See the following fictional example.

Oscar decided that he wanted to develop a paper idea based on his answer to the question about a leader's qualities. He believed that a leader should be open-minded and have integrity. In order to try to see how these ideas could become a topic, he had to ask himself the following questions:

1. Who did he have in mind when naming these qualities? Oscar did not have a specific person in mind when generating this answer.
2. What kind of leader needed these qualities? These qualities might have applied to any leadership position, but Oscar was thinking of the recent undergraduate student government meeting he had attended.
3. When would these qualities matter the most? There had been some student protesting lately over the school's policies regarding its observation of certain religious holidays. That kind of conflict seemed to need leadership from a person with these qualities.
4. Where would a leader like this exist? Oscar did not have a specific place in mind, but he wasn't thinking of someplace unknown or unfamiliar.
5. Why this answer? Oscar assumed that the recent happenings on his campus combined with the discussion at the last student government meeting had triggered this response. The current president was stepping down due to problems with academic achievement, and the representatives had to decide if the current vice president would take her place or if there would be an election. Oscar was concerned that the vice president seemed to see only one side to the current problem and tended to make fun publically of the opposition.
6. How would these qualities take shape? Oscar believed that an open-minded leader would listen to all sides before responding and that a sign of integrity would be when she/he treated constituents with respect, no matter her/his side on an issue.

In this instance, Oscar discovered that he wanted to write about the need for a leader to be open-minded and have integrity. The assignment had asked students to make an argument that was supported by examples or reasons. Specifically, after the above exercise, he discovered that he wanted to argue for the importance of these two qualities above all else and connect that argument to times of conflict and disagreement. He decided he would use examples from the current undergraduate

student government dilemma in order to make his points clear to his readers.

Group Activity 2: Inventing for Genre, Audience, and Purpose

Although we think strong writing often develops out of a writer's own interests, we also like invention activities that help writers think about the rhetorical context of a writing task. Good writers, whether generating a text about how to fund NASA or the most significant qualities demanded of a candidate for student government, also think about who will be reading their text, why, and what kind or genre of text will best communicate the necessary information. Some college writing assignments state the audience, genre and purpose of the task absolving you from having to make too many decisions, but others don't. Invention activities that encourage writers to think about rhetorical context are helpful because they forefront these concerns and remind writers that the invention process goes beyond selecting a topic—it includes developing that topic according to the writing situation.

Inventing an Audience

This activity works well either in a group or as an individual writing activity. Begin by reading the following scenario:

> Imagine a friend asked you to move his car for him from one side of campus to the other. He had just discovered that the parking lot where it was located was being closed for a special event, but since he had class, he did not have time to move it himself. While moving the car, you leaned over to adjust the sound system and didn't notice that you were coming up on one of the college's many pedestrian crosswalks. You hit a pedestrian as he entered the walkway. The man's leg was broken. The man also happened to be the college president. The police cite you for reckless driving, and in two weeks, you will be called to appear before the campus Honor Board for possible further sanctioning.

Develop a plan for responding to each of the following five writing activities:

- Write a letter to your parents informing them about the situation.
- Write a letter to a close friend from high school informing him or her about the situation.
- Write a letter to the college president about the situation.
- Write a letter to the Honor Board about the situation in preparation for the upcoming hearing.
- Write a letter to your insurance agent explaining the situation.

Then, select one plan to follow and write the letter using the plan you devised.

Next, you might join a small group and share your different approaches with each other, discussing the following topics:

- What strategies did the writer employ to make this letter appropriate to the audience?
- What purpose does this letter serve?
- What strategies does the writer employ to further its specific purpose?
- How does each writer portray himself or herself?
- Which letter seems most likely to be successful?

Finally, each group might analyze the writing strategies that enabled each writer to address her/his audience and purpose effectively.

Inventing a Genre

Like the previous activity, this exercise asks you to work in a group from a shared prompt to develop a range of different texts geared toward varying rhetorical contexts, but this activity asks writers to complicate the task a bit more by writing not only to different audiences with different purposes, but in a variety of short genres.

Consider the following scenario:

> On the first Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m., the campus residence halls test their fire alarms. No one is required to exit the building during these regularly scheduled tests. Last Monday (the third Monday of the month) at about 7:15, a candle was left unattended on the sill of an open window in a residence hall. Apparently, a billowing curtain was ignited, and the fire quickly spread. When the two students who shared the room returned and discovered the fire, they pulled the alarm in the hallway, but almost no one in the

residence hall paid any attention, mistaking the alarm for the monthly test. The fire department arrived quickly but was forced to spend significant time helping to evacuate the building before they could turn their full attention to controlling the fire. No one was injured, but damage to the building was significant.

Develop a plan for how you might craft one of the following:

- Write the text for a new college brochure on fire safety to be distributed to all occupants of the campus residence halls.
- Write a news article for the college paper.
- Write an email from a student whose room was destroyed by fire to a faculty member requesting an extension on a research paper.
- Write a letter from the President of the university to alumni asking for emergency contributions to repair and refurbish the residence hall.
- Write a letter from the Fire Chief to the Director of the campus residence halls.

Next, share your plans with others and discuss the following questions about each of the five writing assignments' situations:

- What purposes does this text serve?
- How does the intended audience for this text affect the strategies that the writer should employ?
- What constraints does the genre of this text impose on the writer?
- What kinds of information does this genre convey best?

In generating plans for these writing situations, you can perhaps see more clearly some of the ways that genre, audience, and purpose affect how a topic can best be articulated. In this exercise, writers had to decide basic things like length, style of writing (informal versus scholarly), and use of support (reasons or examples). They also had to have an idea of what information, or message, they wanted to convey, what ideas worked to their best advantage, and what ones could be left out. When the audience, purpose, and genre of a text are taken into account at any stage of writing, invention takes place.

Classroom Activity 3: Refining Topics for Research

The following invention activity also aids in finding an initial idea for a research paper, but then goes further by using group work to aid you in developing that idea into a workable paper topic. This activity is especially useful if you are nervous about researching in a subject area new to you.

Writers embarking on a research writing project sometimes encounter two different problems. Either, like one recent student interested in the cognitive skills developed by multiple-player on-line games, they are so deeply invested in their topic, that they have trouble imagining an audience less schooled and enthusiastic than themselves. Or, despite a genuine interest in a topic, like another recent student excited about exploring biofuel alternatives, they have no idea how to begin writing about a subject they know virtually nothing about. These situations are complicated when writers don't have a clear idea of who they are writing for (other than their teacher) or what purpose their writing is intended to serve (other than fulfilling a requirement for a grade.) Are they writing to educate an audience unfamiliar with their topic or are they writing for a community of insiders who are deeply invested in it?

This exercise can help illustrate how writing can be one avenue toward learning and how peers are often a valuable audience.

Step 1

Join together with other students to share a potential research paper topic and a typed paragraph of at least 200 words describing why this topic appeals to you, what kind of text you would like to create, and who would be most interested in reading/seeing it. (One purpose of this step is to ensure that you have the opportunity to engage in some advanced preparation rather than feeling like you are grasping at straws once you arrive in class. A general rule of thumb says that if writers cannot sustain interest in a topic long enough to write 200 words about it, then it is not the best choice for an extended project.)

Step 2

With others, very briefly share your topic, audience, and text ideas. Afterwards, each member of the group should answer in writing the following set of questions about the topics being proposed by all the other group members. You should expect to spend around ten minutes writing about each of the topics introduced by your fellow writers.

1. What do you already know about this topic? (Simply make a list of facts or claims brainstorming as quickly as possible.)
2. Where have you seen information about this topic in the past? (What kinds of texts have you seen that discuss it?)
3. What should a writer exploring this topic do to make it interesting to you as a potential audience member? (Be as specific as possible and provide as many possibilities as you can think of.)
4. What background information, questions, or facts should someone exploring this topic make sure to cover for an audience already interested in the topic? For an audience unfamiliar with the topic?
5. What kinds of sources or authorities do you think the author should consult while researching this topic?

Step 4

Have everyone in the group give their responses back to the original authors of the topics. Then have everyone spend a few minutes reading the responses they received for their topic.

Step 5

With others, discuss your topics with the goal of helping each other understand how to refine each topic, shape it to appeal to the selected audience, develop research strategies, and account for differences in background knowledge between the writer and the chosen audience.

Step 6

Thinking about the experience of your group, you should reflect on what you have learned about the kinds of things that writers should take into account when developing a topic for a specific audience. You should invite other writers to discuss the activity further, focusing on what aspects of topic generation you found most challenging and/or surprising.

Student Response to “Refining Topics for Research”

As with all group work, classes using this invention activity will experience the occasional hiccup. You might become frustrated with your topic and toss it out. Although you may perceive the exercise as a failure since it eliminated your topic instead of enriching it, invention is, among other things, a sorting process and figuring out what won’t work is a very practical use of time. Even those students who find themselves without a topic when the exercise is completed will have a much clearer idea of what kind of topic might work based on those they have helped their peers develop.

Students who do manage to keep their topic intact over the course of the exercise may have a very different idea of how to approach it after it has been vetted and discussed by their peers. In one recent class, Jessica[2] began her research assignment intending to write about post-partum depression. Initially, she was frustrated by the responses provided to the four questions by one of her group members, Kyle, because he claimed he did not know anything at all about post-partum depression and answered the four questions with ideas that she perceived to be ridiculously basic and simplistic. Since she had written thoughtfully and at length about his topic, new developments in artificial intelligence, she believed Kyle was being lazy and irresponsible by not providing her with similar feedback. During the small group discussion, however, Jessica realized that Kyle was being honest. Aside from having a vague idea that post-partum depression had something to do with pregnancy, the concept was foreign to him, and he had no idea why it should concern him. Since Jessica had originally intended to write for an audience unfamiliar with her topic, she not only devoted more of her paper to educating her audience about her topic than she had expected, she also shifted her approach to include arguments about why a phenomenon that only affects women should be of interest to men, even those men who are not themselves fathers.

Group discussion of the topic development exercise also helped our students to see each other as resources. After one student discussed her interest in writing about increased diagnoses of celiac disease, another student volunteered the information that her mother struggled with the condition, and the two students began to discuss the possibility of arranging an interview with the mother. Students also helped narrow each other’s topics by pointing out what aspects of a broad field intrigued them the most. Kaleigh’s group realized that her topic, animal rights, was horribly large when they recognized how diverse their written responses to her topic were. It clearly would not be possible for her to use the topic without further refinement. So they helped her consider and eliminate different aspects of animal rights (in the food industry, in

drug experimentation, and in puppy mills) until they hit upon a focal point that intrigued Kaleigh—the treatment of captive wild animals in zoos and circuses.

Finally, using group work as part of the invention process serves a larger goal in any writing class—it sets you up to be invested readers and editors of each other's work as the writing process progresses. Kyle was a much more enthusiastic peer reviewer of Jessica's paper because it included issues he had raised, and he now saw himself as a genuine audience for the work. Similarly, other students took pride in noticing how their ideas had been incorporated or were able to make very concrete suggestions for revision by reminding their peers of issues that had been raised in the initial invention session.

Conclusion

Invention, like every other aspect of the writing process, is neither a single-faceted nor a static skill. Each new writing situation brings a different set of rhetorical challenges that vary from writer to writer. Experienced writers expect that they will have to wrestle and play with ideas before they begin writing. You should remember that the mental calisthenics that precede the production of a string of words are not a waste of time or indicative of the absence of writing talent; they are instead utterly normal and wonderfully useful. Making choices among ideas is a significant aspect of writing. And making choices is important—whether the decision is as frivolous as picking which flavor of ice cream to order from a store with dozens of options or deciding which college to attend. But making choices can be fun, too. When you focus on invention by using activities like the ones discussed above, you are able to break down stereotypes about "appropriate topics," forefront your interests and areas of expertise, and craft texts that speak to an intended audience while accomplishing an intended purpose.

Discussion

1. How would you describe the invention process? In other words, what are writers doing when they are inventing?
2. Why might some students find generating their own writing topics to be stressful or challenging? List as many reasons as you can.
3. What are the goals of the group-based invention activities? In other words, what are they trying to help students learn about invention?

Notes

1. Direct quotes from student work are cited using students' first names according to the students' stated directives to use their actual first names or pseudonyms.
2. References to student conversations use pseudonyms only.

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13.2.12: So You've Got a Writing Assignment. Now What?

Corrine E. Hinton

It's the first day of the semester and you've just stepped foot into your Intro to American Politics class.* You grab a seat toward the back as the instructor enters, distributes the syllabus, and starts to discuss the course schedule. Just before class ends, she grabs a thin stack of papers from her desk and, distributing them, announces, "This is your first writing assignment for the term. It's due two weeks from Thursday, so I suggest you begin early." Your stomach clenches. For some people, a writing assignment causes a little nervous energy, but for you, it's a deep, vomit-inducing fireball that shoots down your body and out your toes. As soon as the assignment sheet hits your hands, your eyes dart wildly about, frantically trying to decipher what you're supposed to do. How many pages is this thing supposed to be? What am I supposed to write about? What's Chicago style? When is it due? You know your instructor is talking about the assignment right now, but her voice fades into a murmur as you busy yourself with the assignment sheet. The sound of shuffling feet interrupts your thoughts; you look up and realize she's dismissed the class. You shove the assignment into your bag, convinced you're doomed before you've even started.

So you've got a writing assignment. Now what? First, don't panic. Writing assignments make many of us nervous, but this anxiety is especially prevalent in first year students. When that first writing assignment comes along, fear, anxiety, avoidance, and even anger are typical responses. However, negative emotional reactions like these can cloud your ability to be rational, and interpreting a writing assignment is a rational activity and a skill. You can learn and cultivate this skill with practice. Why is learning how to do it so important?

First, you can learn how to manage negative emotional responses to writing. Research indicates emotional responses can affect academic performance "over and above the influence of cognitive ability or motivation" (Pekrun 129). So, even when you have the knowledge or desire to accomplish a particular goal, your fear, anxiety, or boredom can have greater control over how you perform. Anything you can do to minimize these reactions (and potentially boost performance) benefits your personal and intellectual wellness.

Learning to interpret writing assignment expectations also helps encourage productive dialogue between you and your fellow classmates and between you and your instructor. You'll be able to discuss the assignment critically with your peers, ask them specific questions about information you don't know, or compare approaches to essays. You'll also be able to answer your classmates' questions confidently. Many students are too afraid or intimidated to ask their instructors for help, but when you understand an instructor's expectations for an assignment, you also understand the skills being assessed. With this method, when you do not understand a requirement or expectation, you'll have more confidence to approach your instructor directly, using him as valuable resource that can encourage you, clarify confusion, or strengthen your understanding of course concepts.

What follows is a series of practical guidelines useful for interpreting most college writing assignments. In my experience, many students already know and employ many of these strategies regularly; however, few students know or use all of them every time. Along the way, I'll apply some of these guidelines to actual assignments used in university classrooms. You'll also be able to get into the heads of other students as they formulate their own approaches to some of these assignments.[1]

Guidelines for Interpreting Writing Assignments

1. Don't Panic and Don't Procrastinate

> Writing assignments should not incite panic, but it happens. We've already discussed how panicking and other negative reactions work against you by clouding your ability to analyze a situation rationally. So when your instructor gives you that writing assignment, don't try to read the whole assignment sheet at breakneck speed. Instead, take a deep breath and focus. If your instructor talks about the assignment, stop what you're doing and listen. Often, teachers will read through the assignment aloud and may even elaborate on some of the requirements. Write down any extra information or advice your instructor provides about the requirements, his or her expectations, changes, possible approaches, or topic ideas. This information will be useful to you as you begin thinking about the topic and formulating your approach. Also, pay attention to your classmates' questions. You might not need those answers now, but you may find them helpful later.
>
> If you're an undergraduate student taking more than one class, it's not uncommon to have several writing assignments due within days of each other. Hence, you should avoid procrastinating. People procrastinate for different reasons. Maybe you wait because you've always been able to put together a decent paper the night before it's due. Perhaps you wait because

avoiding the assignment until the last minute is your response to academic stress. Waiting until the last minute to complete a writing assignment in college is a gamble. You put yourself at risk for the unexpected: your printer runs out of ink, your laptop crashes and you didn't backup your work, the Internet in the library is down, the books you need are checked out, you can't locate any recent research on your topic, you have a last-minute emergency, or you have a question about the assignment you can't find the answer to. The common result of situations like these is that if the student is able to complete the assignment, it is often a poor representatatoin of her actual knowledge or abilities. Start your assignment as soon as possible and leave yourself plenty of time to plan for the unexpected.

2. Read the Assignment. Read It Again. Refer to It Often

The ability to read critically is a useful skill. When you read a textbook chapter for your history course, for example, you might skim it for major ideas first, re-read and then highlight or underline important items, make notes in the margins, look up unfamiliar terms, or compile a list of questions. These same strategies can be applied when reading writing assignments.

The assignment sheet is full of material to be deciphered, so attack it the same way you would attack your history book. When Bailey[2], an undergraduate at a university in Los Angeles, was asked to respond to a biology writing assignment, here's what she had to say about where she would start:

> When getting a writing assignment, you should read it more than once just to get a knowledge of what they're [the instructors] really asking for and underline important information, which is what I'm doing now. Before starting the assignment, always write some notes down to help you get started.

Here are some other strategies to help you become an active, critical reader of writing assignments:

1. Start by skimming, noting anything in particular that jumps out at you.
2. As soon as you have the time and the ability to focus, re-read the assignment carefully. Underline or highlight important features of the assignment or criteria you think you might forget about after you've started writing.
3. Don't be afraid to write on the assignment sheet. Use the available white space to list questions, define key terms or concepts, or jot down any initial ideas you have. Don't let the margins confine your writing (or your thoughts). If you're running out of space, grab a fresh sheet of paper and keep writing. The sooner you starting thinking and writing about the assignment, the easier it may be to complete.

As you begin drafting, you should occasionally refer back to the official assignment sheet. Maintaining constant contact with your teacher's instructions will help keep you on the right track, may remind you of criteria you've forgotten, and it might even spark new ideas if you're stuck.

3. Know Your Purpose and Your Audience

Instructors give writing assignments so students can demonstrate their knowledge and/or their ability to apply knowledge. On the surface, it may seem like the instructor is simply asking you to answer some questions to demonstrate that you understand the material or to compare and contrast concepts, theorists, or approaches. However, assessing knowledge is usually just one reason for the assignment. More often than not, your instructor is also evaluating your ability to demonstrate other critical skills. For example, she might be trying to determine if you can apply a concept to a particular situation, if you know how to summarize complex material, or if you can think critically about an idea and then creatively apply that thinking to new situations. Maybe she's looking at how you manage large quantities of research or how you position expert opinions against one another. Or perhaps she wants to know if you can form and support a sound, credible argument rather than describing your opinion about a certain issue.

Instructors have different ways of conveying what they expect from their students in a writing assignment. Some detail explicitly what they intend to evaluate and may even provide a score sheet. Others may provide general (even vague) instructions and leave the rest up to you. So, what can you do to ensure you're on the right track? Keep reading through these guidelines, and you'll learn some ways to read between the lines. Once you identify all the intentions at work (that is, what your instructor is trying to measure), you'll be able to consider and address them.

Audience is a critical component to any writing assignment, and realistically, one or several different audiences may be involved when you're writing a paper in college. The person evaluating your essay is typically the audience most college students consider first. However, your instructor may identify a separate audience to whom you should tailor your response. Do not ignore this audience! If your business instructor tells you to write a research proposal that will be delivered to

members of the local chamber of commerce, then adapt your response to them. If you're in an engineering course, and your instructor asks you to write a product design report about a piece of medical equipment geared toward medical practitioners (and not engineers), you should think differently about your terminology, use of background information, and what motivates this particular audience when they read your report. Analyzing the background (personal, educational, professional), existing knowledge, needs, and concerns of your audience will help you make more informed decisions about word choice, structure, tone, or other components of your paper.

4. Locate and Understand the Directive Verbs

One thing you should do when interpreting a writing assignment is to locate the directive verbs and know what the instructor means by them. Directive verbs tell you what you should do in order to formulate a written response. The following table lists common directive verbs used in writing assignments:

analyze	defend	illustrate
apply	describe	investigate
argue	design	narrate
compare	discuss	show
consider	explain	summarize
contrast	explore	synthesize
create	evaluate	trace

Table 1: Frequently used directive verbs.

You might notice that many of the directive verbs have similar general meanings. For example, although explore and investigate are not necessarily synonyms for one another, when used in writing assignments, they may be asking for a similar structural response. Understanding what those verbs mean to you and to your instructor may be the most difficult part of understanding a writing assignment. Take a look at this sample writing assignment from a philosophy course:

Philosophy Writing Assignment *

"History is what the historian says it is." Discuss.

All papers are to be typed, spell-checked and grammar-checked. Responses should be 2000 words. They should be well written, with a logical flow of thought, and double-spaced with 1" margins on all sides. Papers should be typed in 12-pitch font, using Courier or Times Roman typeface. Indent the first line of each new paragraph five spaces. Also include a title page so that the instructor can identify the student, assignment and course number.

Proper standard English is required. Do not use slang or a conversational style of writing. Always avoid contractions (e.g. "can't" for "cannot") in formal essays. Always write in complete sentences and paragraphs! Staple all papers in the upper left-hand corner and do not put them in a folder, binder or plastic cover.

All written work, citations and bibliographies should conform to the rules of composition laid down in The Chicago Manual of Style (15th edition), or Charles Lipson's Doing Honest Work in College (chapter 5). A paper that lacks correct citations and/or a bibliography will receive an automatic 10% reduction in grade.

* Sample undergraduate philosophy writing assignment, courtesy of Dr. Kenneth Locke, Religious Studies Department, University of the West.

You may interpret the word discuss in one way, while your instructor may have a different understanding. The key is to make certain that these two interpretations are as similar as possible. You can develop a mutual understanding of the assignment's directive verbs and calculate an effective response using the following steps:

1. Look up the verb in a dictionary and write down all of the definitions.
2. List all possible synonyms or related terms and look those up as well; then, see if any of these terms suggest a clearer interpretation of what the assignment is asking you to do.

3. Write down several methods you could use to approach the assignment. (Check out guideline eight in this essay for some common approaches.)
4. Consult with your instructor, but do not be discouraged if he/ she is unwilling to clarify or provide additional information; your interpretation of the directions and subsequent approach to fulfilling the assignment criteria may be one of its purposes.
5. Consult a trusted peer or writing center tutor for assistance.
6. Figure out what you know.

When deciphering an assignment's purpose is particularly challenging, make a list. Think about what you know, what you think you know, and what you do not know about what the assignment is asking you to do. Putting this list into a table makes the information easier to handle. For example, if you were given an assignment that asked you to analyze presentations in your business ethics class, like the assignment in Figure 2, your table might look like Table 2 below:

Business Writing Assignment Presentation Analysis

During three weeks of class, you'll observe several small group presentations on business ethics given by your fellow classmates. Choose two of the presentations and write a short paper analyzing them. For each presentation, be sure to do the following:

1. In one paragraph, concisely summarize the group's main conclusions 2.
2. Analyze the presentation by answering any two of the following three:

   a. With which of the group's conclusions do you agree? Why? With which of the conclusions do you disagree? Why? (include specific examples of both)

   b. What particular issue of ethics did the group not address or only address slightly? Analyze this aspect from your perspective.

   c. In what way could you apply one or more of the group's conclusions to a particular situation? (The situation could be hypothetical, one from your personal or professional experience, or a real-world example).

The paper should be no more than 3 pages in length with 12-pt font, 1 ½ line spacing. It is due one week after the conclusion of presentations.

Your grade will depend upon

1. the critical thought and analytical skills displayed in the paper;
2. your use of ethical principles from chapter 7 of our textbook;
3. the professionalism, correctness, and logic of your writing

What I Know	What I Think I Know	What I Don't Know
Need to observe and take notes on 2 presentations	Concisely means "short," so my summaries should be shorter than the other parts of the paper.	What does the professor mean by "critical thought"?
Need to summarize each groups' conclusions	I think I need to apply my own understanding of ethics to figure out which issue the group didn't address	How does the professor evaluate "professionalism"? How do I demonstrate this?
2–3 pages long; 12 pt font and 1 ½ spacing	I think I understand everything from chapter 7	Do I need to apply both groups' conclusions to the same situation or to two different ones?
Need to include personal opinion	I think it's okay to say "I" in the paper.	How much personal opinion should I include and do I need specific examples to support my opinion?
Need to answer 2 of the 3 questions under part 2	I don't think I need an introduction.	Should I separate my essay into two parts, one for each group I observed?

Table 2: Sample knowledge table for undergraduate business writing assignment.

After reviewing the table, you can see that this student has a lot of thoughts about this assignment. He understands some of the general features. However, there are some critical elements that need clarification before he submits the assignment. For instance, he's unsure about the best structure for the paper and the way it should sound. Dividing your understanding of an assignment into a table or list can help you identify the confusing parts. Then, you can formulate specific questions that your instructor or a writing center consultant can help you answer.

6. Ask Yourself: Do I Need an Argument?

Perhaps one of the most important things to know is whether or not your instructor is asking you to formulate and support an argument. Sometimes this is easy to determine. For example, an assignment many instructors include in their courses is a persuasive paper where you're typically asked to choose an issue, take a position, and then support it using evidence. For many students, a persuasive paper is a well known assignment, but when less familiar assignment genres come up, some students may be confused about argument expectations. This confusion may arise because the instructor uses a directive verb that is easily misinterpreted. What about the verb explain? Does it make you think of words like summarize, review, or describe (which would suggest more facts and less opinion)? Or, do you associate it with words like debate, investigate, or defend (which imply the need for a well-supported argument)? You can also look for other clues in the assignment indicating a need for evidence. If your instructor mentions scholarly citations, you'll probably need it. If you need evidence, you'll probably need an argument. Still confused? Talk to your instructor.

7. Consider the Evidence

If your assignment mentions a minimum number of required sources, references a particular citation style, or suggests scholarly journals to review during your research, then these are telltale signs that you'll need to find and use evidence. What qualifies as evidence? Let's review some of the major types:

- Personal experience
- Narrative examples (historical or hypothetical)
- Statistics (or numerical forms of data) and facts
- Graphs, charts, or other visual representatives of data
- Expert opinion
- Research results (experimental or descriptive)

Each of these offers benefits and drawbacks when used to support an argument. Consider this writing assignment from a 200-level biology class on genetics:

Biology Writing Assignment
Genes & Gene Research

Purpose:
This writing assignment will ask you to familiarize yourself with genes, the techniques gene researchers use when working with genes, and the current research programs investigating genes. The report is worth 10% of your final grade in the course.

In a research report of at least 1500 words, you should address the following:

1. Generally, what is a gene and what does it do? Create a universally applicable definition for a gene.
2. Choose a specific gene and apply your definition to it (i.e., what does this particular gene do and how does it work?)
3. Recreate the history of the gene you've chosen including the gene's discovery (and discoverer), the motivation behind the research into this gene, outcomes of the research, and any medical, social, historical, or biological implications to its discovery.
4. Explore the current research available on your gene. Who is conducting the research, what are the goals (big/small; longterm/short-term) of the research, and how is the research being funded?

Research should be properly documented using CSE (Council of Science Editors) style.

The report should be typewritten, double spaced, in a font of reasonable size.

This instructor asks students to demonstrate several skills, including definition, summary, research, and application. Nearly all of these components should include some evidence, specifically scientific research studies on the particular gene the student has chosen. After reading it, here's what Bailey said about how she would start the assignment: "This assignment basically has to do with who you are, so it should be something simple to answer, not too difficult since you should know yourself." Ernest, another student, explains how he would approach the same assignment: "So, first of all, to do this assignment, I would go on the computer, like on the Internet, and I would . . . do research about genes first. And . . . everything about them, and then I would . . . start with the first question, second question, third and fourth, and that's it." For Bailey, using her own life as an example to illustrate genetic inheritance would be the best way to start responding to the assignment. Ernest, on the other hand, thinks a bit differently; he knows he needs "research about genes" to get started, and, like many students, figures the internet will tell him everything he needs to know. So, how do you know what evidence works best? Know the field you're writing in: what type(s) of evidence it values, why it's valuable, and what sources provide that evidence. Some other important questions you should ask yourself include

- Where, in the paper, is the most effective place for this evidence?
- What type of evidence would support my argument effectively?
- What kind of evidence would most convince my audience?
- What's the best way to integrate this evidence into my ideas?
- What reference/citation style does this discipline use?

If your writing assignment calls for evidence, it is important that you answer these questions. Failure to do so could cost you major points—in your assignment and with your instructor.

8. Calculate the Best Approach

When you decide how to approach your paper, you're also outlining its basic structure. Structure is the way you construct your ideas and move from one idea to the next. Typical structural approaches include question/answer, comparison/contrast, problem/solution, methodology, cause/effect, narration/reflection, description/illustration, classification/division, thesis/support, analysis/synthesis, and theory/ application. These patterns can be used individually or in combination with each other to illustrate more complex relationships among ideas. Learning what structures are useful in particular writing situations starts with reviewing the assignment. Sometimes, the instructor clearly details how you should structure your essay. On the other hand, the assignment may suggest a particular structural pattern but may not actually reflect what the instructor expects to see. For example, if the prompt asks four questions, does that mean you're supposed to write a paragraph for each answer and then slap on an introduction and a conclusion? Not necessarily. Consider what structure would deliver your message accurately and effectively.

Knowing what structures are acceptable within the discipline is also important. Many students are uncomfortable with rigidity; they wonder why their chemistry lab reports must be presented "just so." Think about the last time you looked at a restaurant menu. If you're looking for appetizers, those items are usually listed at the front of the menu whereas desserts are closer to the back. If a restaurant menu listed the desserts up front, you might find the design unfamiliar and the menu

difficult to navigate. The same can be said for formalized writing structures including lab reports or literature reviews, for example. Examining scholarly publications (journal articles or books) within that field will help you identify commonly used structural patterns and understand why those structures are acceptable within the discipline.

9. Understand and Adhere to Formatting and Style Guidelines

Writing assignments usually provide guidelines regarding format and/ or style. Requirements like word count or page length, font type or size, margins, line spacing, and citation styles fall into this category. Most instructors have clear expectations for how an assignment should look based on official academic styles, such as the Modern Language Association (MLA), the American Psychological Association (APA), the Chicago Manual of Style (CMS), or the Council of Science Editors (CSE). If your instructor specifically references a style then locate a copy of the manual, so you'll know how to cite source material and how to develop your document's format (font, spacing, margin size, etc.) and style (use of headings, abbreviations, capitalization).

Occasionally, an instructor may modify a standard style to meet her personal preferences. Follow any additional formatting or style guidelines your instructor provides. If you don't, you could lose points unnecessarily. They may also refer you to scholarly journals to use as models. Don't ignore these! Not only will you be able to review professional examples of the kinds of work you're doing (like lab reports, lit reviews, research reports, executive summaries, etc.), you'll also learn more about what style of writing a discipline values.

10. Identify Your Available Resources and Ask Questions

Even after following these steps, you may still have questions. When that happens, you should know who your resources are and what they do (and don't do). After Nicole read the business ethics assignment (provided earlier in this chapter), she said, "I would send a draft to [the instructor] and ask him if he could see if I'm on the right track." Nicole's instincts are right on target; your primary resource is your instructor. Professors may appear intimidating, but they are there to help. They can answer questions and may even offer research recommendations. If you ask ahead of time, many are also willing to review a draft of your project and provide feedback. However, don't expect your teacher to proofread your paper or give you the "right" answer. Writing assignments are one method by which instructors examine your decision making, problem solving, or critical thinking skills.

The library is another key resource. Reference librarians can help you develop an effective research process by teaching you how to use the catalog for books or general references, how to search the databases, and how to use library equipment (copy machines, microfiche, scanners, etc.). They will not choose your topic or conduct your research for you. Spending some time learning from a reference librarian is worthwhile; it will make you a more efficient and more effective student researcher, saving you time and frustration.

Many institutions have student support centers for writing and are especially useful for first year students. The staff is an excellent source of knowledge about academic expectations in college, about research and style, and about writing assignment interpretation. If you're having trouble understanding your assignment, go to the writing center for help. If you're working on a draft and you want to review it with someone, they can take a look. Your writing center tutor will not write your paper for you, nor will he serve as an editor to correct grammar mistakes. When you visit your university's writing center, you'll be able to discuss your project with an experienced tutor who can offer practical advice in a comfortable learning environment.

The above are excellent resources for student assistance. Your instructor, the librarians, and the writing center staff will not do the work for you. Instead, they'll teach you how to help yourself. The guidelines I've outlined here are meant to do exactly the same. So the next time you've got a writing assignment, what will you do?

Discussion

1. Think about a previous writing assignment that was a challenge for you. What strategies did you use at the time? After reading the chapter, what other strategies do you think might have been useful?
2. Choose two verbs from the list of frequently used directive verbs (Table 1). Look up these verbs (and possible synonyms) in the dictionary and write down their definitions. If you saw these verbs in a writing assignment, what potential questions might you ask your professor in order to clarify what he/she means?
3. Choose two of the sample assignments from the chapter and create a chart similar to Table 2 for each assignment. What differences do you notice? If these were your assignments, what evidence do you think would best support your argument and why (review guideline seven for help)?

4. What advice would you give to first year college students about writing, writing assignments, or instructor expectations? Structure this advice in the form of a guideline similar to those included in the chapter.

Notes

1. My thanks to Dr. Kenneth Locke from University of the West for contributing a sample assignment to this project and to the students who participated in this exercise; their interest, time, and enthusiasm helps bring a sense of realism to this essay, and I am indebted to them for their assistance.
2. The names of student participants in this document have been changed to retain confidentiality.

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13.2.13: Taking Flight- Connecting Inner and Outer Realities during Invention

Susan E. Antlitz

One of the toughest challenges beginning writers face is figuring out what to write about.* Connecting personal identity and purpose to more public contexts and subjects can play a significant role in helping people to write confidently. Also, since writing anxiety is a common cause of difficulty getting started, strategies for reducing anxiety including movement, sound, intentional distraction, role playing, journaling, and prayer and meditation can help the invention process to unfold more smoothly. Electronic media such as email, messaging or texting, and presentation software also provide avenues for generating ideas. By exploring these methods, you can also increase your satisfaction with writing, and you can find new ways to build bridges between the ideas and purposes that are meaningful to you and the writing you produce for others.

Understanding the Connection Between the Personal and the Social

Some college writers see the writing that is done for classes as separate or different from one's personal goals and interests. It can be easy to slip into the mindset that those personal activities, commitments, and convictions are off-topic or not relevant to class-work. But it doesn't have to be that way.

Instead of writing being driven either by individual identity or by outside criteria, both of these facets of identity are interwoven, and used in conjunction with one another, these influences act as the two wings that can help get a writing project off the ground. The sense of personal identity and having one's own goals when writing (something that waits to take flight) can play a significant role in a writer's motivation and ability to write confidently. However, a text also needs to connect with the rest of the world in ways the audience can understand if it is to be effective.

That which makes us unique also connects us to others. Our DNA is our individual blueprint, and except for the case of identical twins or clones, each person has his or her own unique combination of genes. Yet, those genes come to us through a long heritage, stretching back countless generations, and have been passed down to us by our ancestors. Much like DNA, the social world of ideas and experiences we are born into both forms the basis of our individuality and deeply connects us to larger contexts in the world around us.

The individual and the collective are not mutually exclusive; in fact, they complement and reinforce one another. The inner world and the outer world are in constant flux, shaping, reinforcing, and challenging one another into new awareness. This matters in writing because it's easy for people to think of writing as more one or the other—as being about personal expression, creativity, inspiration and communicating one's ideas, or as being a task that is required by and for teachers, supervisors, or other audiences. Neither fully captures what writing is, and indeed, these two aspects can work together in many ways.

Trying to divide the personal from the social is ultimately a futile task because they overlap and influence one another so much, but as human beings, we have a tendency to think in terms of categories, porous as they may be. The categories are an illusion, but they can be helpful as a way to get started.

The Two Wings: An Exercise

While thinking about an idea and devising a way to write about it, you may find the following exercise helpful. We can call this exercise Taking Flight, or finding the two wings of your ideas. Since there is a personal as well as an inter-personal, or social, aspect to any idea, this is a way of mapping out those aspects of the idea.

1. Sketch out a blank diagram like the one I've drawn below.
2. Think about your interests, thoughts, activities, goals, and questions.
3. List the ideas that are mostly personal under one wing (leave the corresponding space under the opposite wing blank until step 5).
4. List the ideas that are connected to larger contexts, communities, or issues under the other wing.
5. Once you have your initial list, go back and fill in information relating to each idea under the opposite column, so that each idea now lists both a personal and a social component.

In Figure 1, I've outlined some key areas that will generally fall under each category. You might think of other key areas to include. Figure 2 shows an example of what your actual diagram might look like.

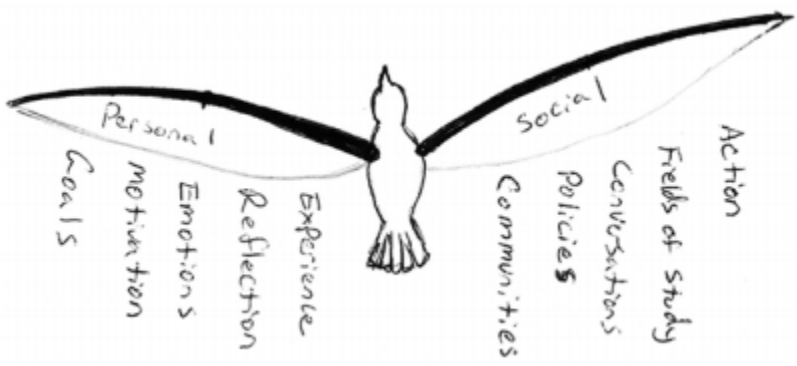


Figure 1: Diagram of Personal and Social Topical Aspects

This diagram can be used with either a list of interests you are using to try to find an idea, or it can be used to focus or develop an idea once you have a general direction.

Here is the diagram I made that lists several possible ideas:

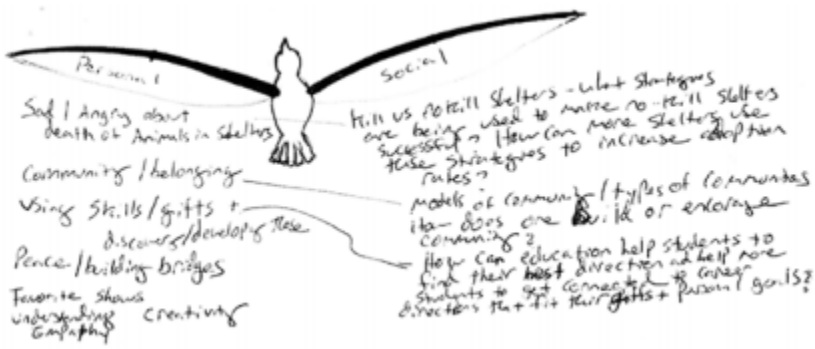


Figure 2: Diagram of Personal Interests and Social Components.

Here, I listed a few of the ideas or causes that are personally important to me, and then tried to pair those with the issues in the outside world by asking questions that I could explore in the process of building an essay. For example, an issue that I have a strong personal and emotional response to is the killing of healthy and potentially adoptable animals in shelters and animal control facilities. To link this to a context beyond myself, I listed the issue of kill versus no-kill shelters in the right-hand column, and in the left-hand column, I asked how the strategies used by no-kill shelters could also help other shelters to increase adoption rates and reduce euthanasia. I now have a question I can research and write about.

Look for Unexpected Connections

Another way to build possibilities for writing is to look over your list of ideas and create connections between options that are not deliberately paired. For example, since I already had three potential ideas and their social aspects listed in the diagram, I didn't put anything in the social column for the last few ideas I had in the personal column. One of these was "Favorite shows." If I had gone into more detail, I might have listed the titles of some of my favorite television series, and then connected that to the social aspects I had listed for other items. In this case, one that would work would be "models or types of community. How does one build or encourage community?" I could write an essay that looks at how the relationships form and change over time between the characters in my favorite shows, and then even do some research into models of community building and community formation and see how well fiction mirrors what the relationship/community scholars have theorized.

Alternately, I could connect the subject of TV programs to the animal shelter idea. It's unlikely I'd find a direct connection, but if I alter the idea of the animal shelter to something like how animals are portrayed on screen, I could also build on that idea, or even write about the different ways our society views or treats animals.

Remember that your diagram and your list of ideas are meant to be a jumping-off place, so you can change them as needed if you think of new ideas or find a new direction you want to explore.

The openness to creating connections where you may not expect to find them can be very useful. Cultivating creativity and connectionbuilding is a very healthy habit that can have unforeseen benefits for your writing.

Random Words

Here is a game you can use to help develop your creative flexibility. It's one of my favorites.

1. Take a sheet of paper and fold it in half.
2. On one half write a list of random words, one per line.
3. Then, with the page still folded down the middle, give the paper to someone else, with your list facing down so the other person can't see it.
4. On the other half of the paper, ask the other person to write a list of random words that he or she thinks of.
5. Then unfold the paper. You should have, on each line, a word you wrote and a word someone else wrote. These words will hopefully have nothing to do with one another.
6. And this is where the game begins: Try to find the connection between the two words on each line. Write a sentence that uses both of them in a logical and believable way.

This exercise can help to build your mental agility and help to make you more alert to forming connections that may not be immediately obvious to other people.

For example, I have picked a word, tree, and using a Facebook status update, asked one of my friends to give me a random word, which has turned out to be svelte. The sentence I created from these two words was, "The svelte tree waved its branchy arms like an ecstatic dancer." I used the metaphor of the dancer to make it more of a challenge, but the sentence could have been simply, "The svelte tree waved its branches."

Half of the game is the sense of anticipation before you know what word or words the other person will give you. It lightly mirrors the anxiety you may feel before you know what to write about. However, since, it's also a game and the stakes are low, it begins to build an association between the anticipation of the unknown and your amusement or enjoyment. The game usually turns out to not be as hard as one anticipates. An element of play can take the edge off of writing anxiety.

Another friend gave me the word bongo. I admit this was slightly harder, but I came up with, "As the tree stood drinking in the sun with its verdant leaves, it had no awareness that its life would soon change forever, and that it was destined to become the frame of a pair of bongo drums for young Sally." I saw a connection between the tree and the word bongo because a bongo is a type of drum, and drum frames are usually made of wood. I've embellished my sentence just to play with the language, but "The wood from the tree was used to make bongo drums" would have also sufficed. Simple or complex, poetic or plain, no sentence that connects the two words is wrong. This is also fun to do with a group of people, where everyone can share what they came up with. It's neat to see the sorts of things people can create out of this.

Build Ideas through Compound Topics

An important part of invention is the ability to make connections. One strategy that I find myself using is to think of my topics not as single ideas, but rather pairs of related ideas. It can be helpful to phrase your topic in such a way that it includes "and," "or," "but," or other connecting words because that can shift your focus to the relationships between parts of the subject. You are more likely to end up with a more specific focus or direction that way.

An example might be to take a broad subject such as the Internet and combine it with another subject, such as the workplace, to focus on the Internet in the workplace. Bringing the two subjects together makes me think of the following questions. How has the workplace changed as a result of the Internet? How has email changed the way a company is run? What do employees or managers need to know about digital communications technologies? What problems might they encounter, and how can those be resolved or prevented? From there, I can keep asking questions until I find one I want to learn more about and eventually write about.

The advantage of focusing your essay around a compound idea is that it will tend to make the subject and focus of what you are writing about more complex. For example, if I make up a pair of subjects like "Animals and the Elderly," "Doctor Who and identity," or "work as spiritual growth," I could then build on each of these ideas and try to think of what sorts of things might be in a resulting essay.

Embracing the Personal

Prayer and Meditation

You may be surprised to find a reference to personal spirituality in an essay of this kind, but when you are doing the invention work for writing, you need to be who you are. If you have your own faith, embrace it as part of your thinking and writing process, and that openness can help to keep your creativity flowing. It's much harder to be creative and generate ideas while closing off a part of yourself. Therefore, love and accept all aspects of yourself as you are in the process of creating a text.

I worked for a time at a private, religious institution, and the classes I taught there were like most writing classes in terms of the content of the class and the use of well known invention techniques for writing such as freewriting, looping, concept mapping, etc. (if you are unfamiliar with these, ask your teacher to explain them to you or look them up online). However, since it was a religious school, I had the freedom and even the institutional support to bring faith into the work the class did.

One day at the beginning of the semester after we had been discussing various aspects of our individual writing processes, I asked the students if they ever included prayer as part of their writing process, and I was surprised when no one in the class had previously thought to do that, even though prayer was a part of their lives in other ways. This demonstrates that using one's personal and even spiritual resources is not always an obvious strategy in a formal class setting, even when it would be welcomed. Sometimes we have to bring those options out into the open and talk about them because it might not automatically occur to us that we can make those connections.

If you belong to a religion or spiritual tradition that uses prayer or meditation, then I encourage you to also include that as part of your writing process and as part of how you generate ideas to write about. Pray for insight and ideas, if that fits with your belief system, or meditate to free up your awareness. These activities may lead to becoming aware of an idea that you had not considered before, and they may help with exploring and developing an idea once you have one. These practices can also lessen anxiety since anxiety is partly about being alone when facing an overwhelming task. If you are a spiritual person who believes in a deity, then use that to remind yourself that you are not alone, even when confronted with a challenging writing task. Or, if you meditate, that can help you to relax your mind and body and let go of stress, which usually increases intellectual and creative performance. Let those parts of your life be part of your writing process as well.

I often pray for insight when I am working on a writing project. There is a certain amount of trust involved—I am generally confident that I will be able to think of something, and I always do, even if I am not sure at first what I am going to come up with. That sort of confidence helps to limit my worrying about what I am going to write, and it puts me more in the frame of mind that discovering possible ideas is an exciting adventure. Then I can't wait to see what happens. If you are a person who prays about other aspects of your life, try doing so with your writing assignments, and see how it turns out. Remember, let all of who you are be part of your inventing. What other aspects of your identity might inform your writing process?

During invention, no aspect of who you are is off limits, though you need to decide for yourself how much of that process you are willing to share publicly, and how much is appropriate to include in the final draft. The final draft should be adjusted to fit the needs and expectations of your audience and to suit the purpose of your writing. The behind-the-scenes work you do, however, is yours to do with as you will, unless an assignment also asks you to try specific invention or pre-writing strategies as part of your work.

Feelings and Ideas

I have learned that feelings and ideas are very closely related during invention, and so it's a good idea to pay attention to them. One of my hobbies is collecting gemstones and crystals, which are to me an inspiring form of natural artwork. Part of what gives me such a sense of delight when looking at stones comes from seeing them through an artist's eye. Consider, for instance, a polished stone made from polychromatic jasper and how my observations led me to think about writing.

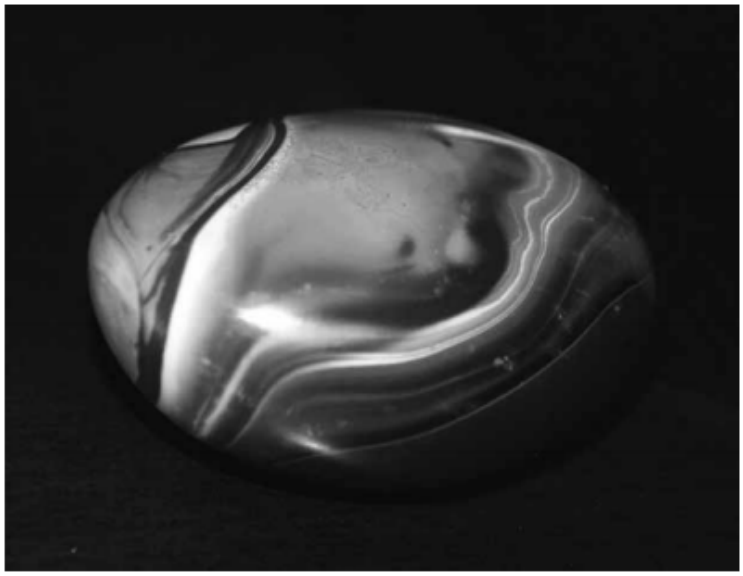


Figure 3. Polychromatic Jasper.

One day, I picked up this stone and took a careful look at it. The bands of color reminded me of the seashore and a beach of pink sand. Since it was late at night, I imagined what it would be like to stand on such a beach, silhouetted by the twilight, and stare out to sea, an endless dark sky stretching into the distance with a single bright star illuminating the silent silvery waves. The scene, if one could touch it, would be soft and even soothing, like velvet. The meaning of this scene to me is one of potential waiting to be explored. It felt like standing on the shores of a world that was waiting to be created, imagined into being. And I thought about people who write stories, and how they create, in their imagination, the worlds they write into being— which in some sense is always what we do when we write. We are creating a picture of the world for our audience, and it is colored and stylized by how it emerges from our own perspectives.

The artist in me also wanted to try to paint this scene. And this is one of the most natural forms of invention of all—we see something and our imagination responds. We feel a desire to create something in response to what we have seen, whether that creation is a painting, a poem, or an essay. Often in a writing class, we are responding to texts, but our response could really be to anything.

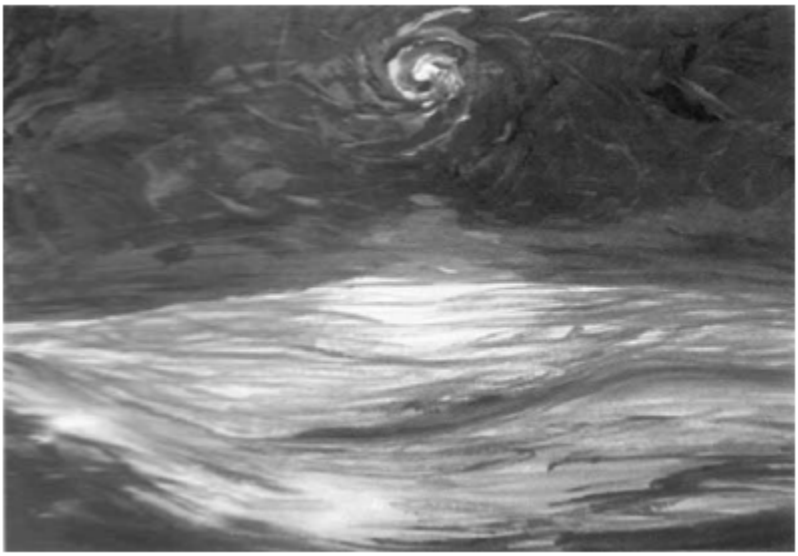


Figure 4: Landscape Painting Inspired by Polychromatic Jasper

My quick painting is far from photorealistic, and if you saw the painting by itself, I very much doubt that “polychromatic jasper” would spring to mind. But that is the beauty of invention. As an artist, photorealism is not, and likely never will be, my style. I accept that about myself, and instead of seeing it as a limitation, I choose to celebrate my own unique style. One of

my art teachers back in high school once told the class that if a perfect recreation of reality was the goal, then one might as well take a photograph, because painting is more about interpreting the world through the artist's vision and way of seeing. I'd like to suggest the same principle to you: your writing is not about trying to recreate what is out there in the world, or to write what someone else—some imaginary perfect writer—could write, but rather to see the subject of your writing through your own vision of it. Even when we write non-fiction, we are recreating a vision of the world with our words and putting that portrayal out there to share with our audience. As my art teacher told the class that day, what you create will be unique because you are unique.

Creativity and Play

Having an attitude of play can help writers to be more open to creativity, and increased creativity means that ideas are likely to flow more easily. Reflective activities, such as journaling, can also lead to creative new insights. While taking time to play with words or reflect on ideas may seem like a distraction from the work of writing a paper, building one's creative fluency tends to save time in the long run.

An example of how taking the time to do some reflective writing can lead to new ideas is illustrated in the following journal entry:

> July 4, 2009
>
> Invention is more than a set of techniques—it's an attitude and an openness to inviting new ideas and experiences into our lives. A willingness to approach writing playfully, without allowing concerns about grades and even the final outcome to intrude into the time and space set aside for that thinking and play is ironically an important practical step in the work of writing. Writing certainly can be hard work, and while that may make having an open and exploratory approach to writing challenging, the play really is part of the work. This is a paradox, but the key to accepting it, I think, is often a matter of giving ourselves permission to be less than serious during the process of creating a serious outcome. Cultivating play is basically practicing generating ideas and trying out new approaches and ways of thinking, which is what is most needed when trying to get a piece of writing started.
>
> Play, and giving oneself the permission to play, is also part of lessening anxiety, since worry about how a text will or will not turn out in the end, or how it will be evaluated, can lead one to second-guess one's work. I often feel like writing is like building a house of cards—when I'm focused on putting one card on top of the others, the house gets built, but when I start worrying about whether it is good enough, whether readers will like it or not, how long it needs to be, or whether I can finish or not, it's like the wind that comes along and blows the house of cards apart, all collapsing in on itself. Some patterns of thinking are not helpful during the early phases of a writing project. It's important to catch these negative patterns and purposefully move oneself back into the mindset of building the house.

What I did when writing these last few paragraphs was to think of the first sentence, and then write to elaborate on it. Be open to the possibility that a text, especially during its generative moments, does not need to conform to a traditional format. Give yourself permission to write an early draft that is a combination of prose, snippets of thoughts, images, or even audio or video, if you have access to those technologies.

It might be helpful to think of your early work on a text as a collection of all sorts of documents and items. Don't limit yourself just to paper. Let your thinking grow, without regard to traditional formats. Once you have a grasp on the ideas and direction for your writing, you can make the final draft fit the guidelines you have been given and the expectations of your audience. Working with non-traditional formats can be helpful when generating ideas for a traditional paper assignment.

Writing Anxiety

The idea-based play writers engage in can serve a dual purpose. It helps to generate ideas and possibilities for writing, and it can also help to alleviate writing anxiety. Even for experienced writers, the pressure to produce something substantial can be intimidating. I think one's expectations for oneself grow proportionately to one's abilities—as human beings, I think we tend to always be looking ahead, envisioning the level we would like to be at.

I know for myself, I can imagine what I want a text or a painting to be, and the way I picture it often exceeds what I know how to produce. It's not a weakness, per se, but rather, a tendency that shows how we are always growing into something new. I'd be more concerned if my ideas never pushed the limits of my current abilities. So, if you get frustrated because

your writing is never quite how you want it to be, just accept it as a sign of your potential to grow. I think over time, we move ourselves closer to what we envision.

One can be a successful writer and still experience moments of anxiety or frustration. I have known students who were very anxious writers, but produced wonderful texts despite those feelings. Feeling stressed or overwhelmed when faced with a writing assignment does not mean that you are a bad writer. It means that you are a writer who needs to learn, and can learn, ways to overcome those challenges. The strategies in the following sections can help you to work around any writing anxiety you may have; however, these strategies can be used by any writer as part of his or her invention process.

Anxiety and Procrastination

Anxiety can be a cause for procrastination for me. I don't panic, really. I get just nervy enough to not be able to concentrate. And so I'll put off writing. I have, however learned something along the way: whether I write a text weeks in advance or the night before, it still takes the same number of hours to write it. If you find you tend to procrastinate, it may be possible (though not optimal) to write a paper the day before it is due. But make sure you block out the hours you will need, say about eight hours for a five-to-seven page paper. And make sure you have access to sources and other people to talk to and get feedback from if you can—the conversation helps to break up the time, and other people can help keep you motivated if they are there to help.

A very common recommended strategy is to put a draft away for at least a few days and then reread it and make changes. Keep in mind that you will miss out on that if you do wait until the last day. But if it can't be helped, and you find yourself having put off the paper until the end, then at least make sure you have enough hours available to put a solid effort into the paper. I'll confess to having put papers off to the last day before, but I will also admit that I always ended up wishing that I had more time to work over the finished draft than what I ended up with. Planning ahead can spare you some anxiety if you don't respond well to feeling rushed.

Invention and Anxiety Reducing Activities

Journaling as a Way to Reflect on Writing (and to discover new ideas)

The following is a brief journal entry I wrote while gathering my ideas for this essay that reflects on the connection between feelings of anxiety and other related emotions that can affect one's writing processes:

> Notes: April 18, 2009 (Visual Feelings)
>
> When I think about starting to write, I feel both an excitement about the possibilities, but also some uncertainty as well—some anxiety about creating an actual text that resembles the one I can imagine. The feeling of potential often comes to me as a vague sense impression of a visual image. For example, around 2:00 A.M. yesterday as I was thinking about writing this, what I felt was an image of a starlit midnight with crickets chirping and perhaps a moon in the sky, or a streetlight. And I suppose that image makes sense as a way to think about the feeling of anticipation that comes with starting to write—the very early morning hours tend to be cool and crisp, and one tingles a bit as a result of that coolness. Anticipation or the sense that one is on the verge of creating a text that is somewhat stirring or artistic has the same kind of tingle to it. Sometimes, creativity feels like an eagle soaring or like a bright, warm sun. These feelings and faint visual impressions are almost always part of what's going on in my mind and spirit when I am planning a piece of writing. Once, when I found myself with only two hours to write a seven-page paper, my feeling was that of being like a racecar driver, with the keyboard as my steering wheel. (Incidentally, my limited time wasn't because I procrastinated—it was because I had thought so much about the topic that I couldn't get the ideas organized, and so, even though I had put a lot of hours into the paper, I found myself running out of time.)

I had little idea what I would I write in that journal entry when I first touched pen to paper, but while writing, I became consciously aware of the way anticipation and excitement feel very similar to anxiety. And that gave me an idea—what if there was a way to turn one emotion into another? Essentially, this is what many of the activities I use to reduce stress do—redirect the emotions into a more constructive direction.

Just as it did for me, taking the time to journal about your thoughts and feelings related to the activity of writing and to specific writing assignments can help you to gain insight and find new ideas and directions.

Be a Star

Even though you may not think of writing as fun, try to enjoy it and role-play having a positive attitude. The following role-playing activity may help you:

1. Pretend you are an established writer, that everyone loves your work, and that your audience is eager to read your next exciting publication, which they will love simply because they adore you. You have to do the work of writing eventually anyway, and optimism yields better results than worrying. Staying positive gives you the best chance of doing your best. So, imagine an audience that will be delighted with everything and anything you write.
2. If this is hard to imagine, ask a friend or two to role-play your adoring public and make the whole thing a game.
3. Pretend you're giving them the press release about what your next book will be about. Let them ask questions, and let it become a conversation.
4. Let yourself be over-the-top with the ideas you share, and have a good time.
5. Dress up in pretentious or obnoxious clothing and pretend to be more eccentric than you actually are if this helps to create the mood and make you feel more outgoing.

If you are anything like me, you and your friends will likely find yourselves laughing at some point during this activity. Laughter is a great way to beat anxiety and build a positive attitude. You'll be retraining your gut response to writing tasks, and you may even find yourself looking forward to these sorts of fun interactions with your friends or classmates during the early stages of writing. Take turns being the star and audience. A more serious peer review can be done later, after you actually have a completed draft.

If You Can't Avoid Distractions, Use Them

I find that being slightly distracted helps with invention, and that sometimes, it's helpful to watch TV or a movie while thinking about a writing project. Doing so lets me take micro breaks and keeps anxiety to a minimum. It can be counterproductive to see all distractions as a problem—rather, use and even create distractions to consciously adjust the emotions you feel when trying to get started with writing. It may help to have a couple of fun objects within reach. Items that light up and make sounds are great for this. Small puzzles can also help, especially the kind where you try to fit different plastic geometric shapes together to form a particular outline. A glass of water to drink or a healthy snack can serve as a brief distraction.

I do find that activities involving sound can help. I have a Bodhran, which is an Irish frame drum, and a singing bowl. If I seriously need to de-stress, I go and bang on my drum. Both of these instruments require movement to produce the sound. The drum has to be stuck with fast, rhythmic movements using a stick called a cipin or beater, and the singing bowl is made to sing, or produce harmonic tones, by rubbing the outside rim of the bowl with a suede covered striking tool or mallet. Listening to the drumbeat or whirring of the bowl is calming, giving the mind one thing to focus on, and the arm movement releases tension by using up excess adrenaline.



Figure 5: Bodhran



Figure 6: Singing Bowl

Once you've indulged in a few of these methods of intentional distraction, bring yourself back to the page or screen. I have found that it is important to make the very small step of writing something, even if it is not much. Even if it is only a word or two, or one sentence, write it down. Take a break, and come back in five minutes and write down another few words or another line. Eventually, you'll find you have more to say.

Movement

Movement helps. With as much work as I often to do, it is very easy to be sedentary, and sitting for long periods of time each day can lead to sluggishness and fatigue. Students with a full load of classes and the accompanying hours of studying are likely to face similar issues. Getting up and moving gets the circulation and adrenaline going and can sometimes build enjoyment. I find that I become more excited about my writing projects—usually because I will have had a miniepiphany by then—after I take some time to engage in some type of physical activity, whether it is taking a walk or doing some manual labor around the house. If you feel nervous, physical activity like lifting weights or taking a walk can help. I like to go for a walk or a drive and listen to music just to unwind and think. Getting the circulation moving improves thinking for me. When writing, I often feel the urge to get up and pace for a few minutes before getting back to work. It's both a way to release excess energy as well as to celebrate the energy that writing tends to generate for me. Keeping the adrenaline regulated can help you to avoid getting too worked up, or feeling too overwhelmed.

Change of Scenery or Method

Another strategy that I find helpful is periodically moving to a new location. If I am writing at the table downstairs and start to get stuck, I'll take the laptop upstairs, or take it to the office and work there instead. Changing the scenery every few hours helps. Also, even though my composing primarily takes place on the computer, I do switch back and forth between the computer and paper if I am at a sticking point. Usually, the change is all I need to get going again.

Describe Your Plans—Even if You Don't Have Any Yet

One strategy that I often use is to write a brief summation of what I plan to do with an essay I am starting to work on. I am someone who usually doesn't have more than a vague idea of what I will write until I actually start writing. The activity of writing a plan jumpstarts that process. I make up my plan as I start to put it down in writing. I recommend that you try this and write a paragraph or so about what you plan to put in your paper, even if you aren't sure where you are going with your general idea yet. At first, this may sound like a paradox, but for some people this will get the ideas flowing. Some writers are more comfortable with paradox than others, but it can't hurt to give it a try.

Electronic Strategies

Email and Messaging

Email or instant messaging can be used as part of this planning and reflecting. I have even used my Facebook wall in this way. The exchange that follows was prompted by a document I wrote while just playing around with ideas. I wrote my 1400

word essay because I thought my sister and sister-in-law would find it amusing, and I am aware that other people in my field have presented conference papers that link science fiction or fantasy programs to theoretical concepts. You might try to pair one of your own favorite programs to theories from psychology, sociology, or from your major area of study for one of your papers, if your instructor allows you to develop your own topics for class papers.

Susan Antlitz

Wrote 1400+ words on the spiritual aspects of technology in Torchwood and Doctor Who yesterday evening. Starting a new status here for comments from the readers. I must say that I really enjoyed exploring the theme of the interplay between technology and humanity.

Laurel Antltiz at 11:09am April 21

I read the whole paper and it is very inspirational

Susan Antlitz at 12:26pm April 21

Tell me more about how it inspired you. I want to develop it some more and maybe turn it into something

Laurel Antltiz at 1:00pm April 21

Let's see what inspired me. I need to think about this some then I will give you an answer

Laurel Antltiz at 3:15pm April 21

I have thought and thought about this. I like the way that you described each show and the technology that goes into what each character portrays. I am also inspired by the fact that you outline certain show in detail and especially the characters role in each show

Debbie Antlitz at 5:30pm April 21

My feeling on RTDs stuff is he is never talking so much about what the technology makes us do or not. And in many instances it is not the *technilogy* but the concept behind the technology which is just a carrier (a magic potion would fit the same bill if he were writing Harry Potter). For example, Cybermen are not about ear buds, but about emotionless conformity.

The bliss patch that killed the senate in [the episode Gridlock] was not about drug abuse, but about mood-motivation detached from a community sense. The general gist of RTD is that humans are/should be responsible for their own actions—never say the technology, or the Devil, or the Doctor made you do it . . .

Susan Antlitz at 5:34pm April 21

well, what you said is pretty much what I was saying. The technology brings the human tendencies to the surface and amplifies them.

Susan Antlitz at 5:35pm April 21

it doesn't cause them, but rather creates the occasion.

Debbie Antlitz at 5:44pm April 21

Yeah, but the technology is also a distraction. It's like
writing a thesis on "uses of muscle mass in Spirit Stallion of the Cimeron"

Laurel Antltiz at 5:45pm April 21

True the technology does bring the human tendencies to the surface but it also shows how each character is portrayed in their role

Susan Antlitz at 6:04pm April 21

But I think I am most interested, as I said earlier, in how shows, as a technology in themselves, present ways of thinking and imagining the human. I'd probably be most interested in the cohesion and disintegration of group identity and identification.

Laurel Antltiz at 6:05pm April 21

write about group identity and identification of technology in shows.

Susan Antlitz at 9:18am April 22

The group dynamics are interesting.

Debbie Antlitz at 6:33pm April 24

Like at the end of *Journey's End* you have a very happy and dynamic family group bringing the Earth Home. Then they peel off one by one leaving him alone, like the whole group was "about" him but not about "him" Except for the one with Wilfred at the end. At the end, community comes down to the resonance of the person.

I began with the idea about the way the technology relates to humanity, but by the end of the Facebook thread, I realized what I was really interested in was the social dynamics among the characters. Exchanges like this can happen through message boards, Instant Messenger, text messages, email, Twitter, or other social networking tools.

When I was a graduate student, I used to use instant messaging to talk with one of my friends from my undergraduate years after she had moved away to Tennessee. I would message her about my work, and we would chat about it online. In addition to the feedback, it really helped me to put my plans into words. Usually, by the time I had finished explaining to her what I was writing, I had a much clearer idea about it. I find I can get a lot more done than I think I can by taking a little time to explain to myself or someone else, in writing, where I am at with my work. Usually, in the process of explaining it, the next idea or next step will occur to me, and then I can move forward with the writing.

Another strategy I use is to send my notes to myself on email. I will write just a short paragraph or so of the ideas I have so far, and hit send. Then, later when I've had more time to think about my project, I'll reply to my message with additional notes and ideas, and I'll do that several times over the course of a few days. The paper begins to emerge from my collection of notes and reflections. It's kind of like a journal, only it's on email.

Using PowerPoint as an Invention Space

Presentation software such as PowerPoint can also be used as a space for invention. If you find you have a vague idea of what to write about, or if you have many ideas but aren't sure how to bring them together into enough focus for a rough draft, creating a slide show presentation of your ideas may help.

- Put each main idea as a heading on a slide
- List your thoughts about each point, using more than one slide per point when needed.
- Add images, audio, or video when these capture an idea you haven't yet put into words but want to eventually address in your rough draft.
- Add Web links to your slides if there is online content you think you may want to eventually cite within your document. Since school libraries often provide students with free access to full-text databases for professional journals and other periodicals, you are likely to find that a good many of your sources can be linked to. This way, you will be able to find them quickly when you need to.
- If you aren't sure what order to put the points in, or which points should be main or sub-points, that's okay for now. PowerPoint makes it easy to reorder slides and move the content around later.
- While not directly related to the content of your writing, choosing a slide design template or color scheme can make your presentation-draft look more visually appealing and help to reinforce a certain tone or mood while you are generating your ideas and sense of direction.
- Making your ideas literally look good on the screen may help to boost confidence for anxious writers or provide a welcome change from the typical black text on a white screen.
- While the traditional background and text color will be required in the final draft that you turn in to your instructor (unless your assignment guidelines specify otherwise), your behind-scenes invention work can be much more flexible.

PowerPoint or other software designed for presentation has potential as an invention tool because it helps us to work with the overall points or ideas in a text rather than becoming focused on the minute details. If you haven't used PowerPoint before, or if you are unfamiliar with some of its features, there are several free tutorial videos available on YouTube.

Growth and Change

While I enjoy concept maps and am very good at creating them, they aren't one of my primary invention strategies anymore. I used to love them. When I was in high school, I once made a concept map that was an arm span wide and an arm span tall, filled with intricate detail. I filled the entire page with miniscule writing, ovals, squares, and webbed lines. I even wrote all of the connections on the lines between the bubbles. It was an exquisite masterpiece, and it helped me to write a very detailed paper. However, over the years, the techniques I use have changed, and now my invention work typically includes listing, journaling, prayer and reflection, and instant messaging. I don't think the methods I used to use have lost any of their value, but rather, the ways of thinking and connecting ideas they represent have become second nature, making it easier to make intuitive leaps. When one uses a particular strategy frequently, it can become intuitively ingrained and become instinctual.

When I am inventing, I don't try to make my notes fit into any particular form, and I allow them to switch form as I feel moved to do so. I often do still use a form of freewriting. I also use other ways of keeping the ideas flowing, like taking a short break, getting up and moving around, taking a sip of water, rereading what I have written and then adding more, or switching from writing on the computer or writing on paper or vice-versa. If you use a variety of strategies and write regularly, over time, your fluency and ability to keep generating text will grow. And as it does, you are likely to find that the strategies you use also change over time, and you'll probably even develop some of your own.

Discussion

1. Name something in your environment that inspires you. What thoughts and feelings come to mind when you look at it or think about it? What objects do you encounter throughout a usual day that are meaningful to you? Take some time to describe them and their significance.
2. What emotions do you experience when you begin to write? One a scale of 1–10, how much anxiety do you tend to have about writing? What aspect of the writing concerns you the most? What additional strategies can you think of that might help to lessen or redirect nervous energy?
3. What strategies have you used to generate ideas in the past? What has worked or not worked for you? Try several of the strategies discussed in this essay. Which ones appeal to you most, and why?

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13.2.14: The Inspired Writer vs. the Real Writer

Sarah Allen

Several years ago, in a first year writing course, a student nervously approached me after class, asking if we could talk about her latest draft of a formal paper.* She was worried about the content of the draft, about the fact that in writing about her writing process (the assignment for the paper), she found her tone to be at best frustrated, at worst grumbling and whiney. “I don’t really like writing. Is that okay?” she asked.

This is the first time that I remember a student confessing aloud (to me) that she did not like writing, and I remember struggling for an appropriate response—not because I couldn’t fathom how she had the gall to admit this to me, a writing teacher, but because I couldn’t understand why admitting to not liking writing worried her. In the next class, I asked my students if they liked writing. I heard a mixed response. I asked them if they assumed that someone like me, a writing teacher/scholar, always liked writing. The answer was a resounding “yes.” I rephrased, “So you believe that every day I skip gleefully to my computer?” Again, though giggling a bit, my students answered “yes.” And, at last, one student piped up to say, “Well, you’re good at it, right? I mean, that’s what makes you good at it.”

My student, quoted above, seems to suggest that I am good at writing because I like doing it. But I’d have to disagree on at least two points: First, I wouldn’t describe my feelings toward writing as being a “like” kind of thing. It’s more of an agonistic kind of thing. Second, I am not “good” at writing, if being good at it means that the words, the paragraphs, the pages come easily.

On the contrary, I believe that I write because I am driven to do so—driven by a will to write. By “will,” I mean a kind of purposefulness, propensity, diligence, and determination (which, I should mention, does not lead to perfection or ease . . . unfortunately). But, I should qualify this: the will to write is not innate for me, nor is it always readily available. In fact, the common assumption that a will to write must be both innate and stem from an ever-replenishing source never ceases to surprise (and annoy) me. I’ve worked with a lot of enviably brilliant and wonderful writers—teachers, students, scholars, and freelancers. I’ve yet to meet one who believes that she/he is innately and/or always a brilliant writer, nor have I met one who says she/he always wants to write.

And yet, I confess that I find myself to be genuinely surprised when some well-respected scholar in my field admits to struggling with his writing. For example, David Bartholomae (a very successful scholar in the field of Rhetoric and Composition) confesses that he didn’t learn to write until after he completed his undergraduate studies, and that he learned it through what must have been at least one particularly traumatic experience: his dissertation was rejected for being “poorly written” (22–23).

If at first glance the rejection of a dissertation means little to you, let me explain: imagine spending years (literally, years) on a piece of writing (a very long piece of writing), for which you’ve sacrificed more than you ever thought you’d sacrifice for anything (your time, your freedom, sleep, relationships, and even, at times, your sanity), only to have it rejected. And worse, it’s rejected for being “poorly written,” which is like being booted off of a pro-league baseball team for not being able to tie your shoes properly. We’re talking basics here, or so we (writers) like to think. And yet, if writing were nothing more than “practicing the basics,” why’s it so hard—hard even for one of the best of the best in my field?

It’s alarming how many great scholars have admitted to struggling with writing. Bartholomae is not the only one. In a rather famous admission, one of the “fathers” of the field of Rhetoric and Composition, Peter Elbow—the guy who put freewriting on the map, wrote one of the first book-length studies of the writing process, and has been the virtual MLK, Jr. for voice-in-writing (yeah, that guy)—dropped out of graduate school because he suffered so badly from writer’s block.[1]

My own story of my frustrated struggle with writing is not nearly so heroic as Elbow’s or Bartholomae’s. I did not fight the dragon beasts of poor writing skills or writer’s block, return to the (writing) field as the victorious knight, and then settle in for a long, successful reign as one of the rulers of the land of Rhetoric and Composition. Rather, mine was (and, sometimes, still is) more Hamlet-like, more like a battle with a ghost—the ghost being the “Inspired Writer.”

The Inspired Writer, as I understand her/him, is a figure for whom writing comes easily—the sort of Romantic hero who writes purely out of an awe-full state, generating perfect prose without the frustrated process of revision (or failure). This Inspired Writer is everywhere, in all the great stories of great writers who were so full of “writerliness” that they were tormented by their need to write; they were relentlessly pursued by their muses . . . as was evidenced by their inked hands, tangled hair, ringed eyes, and profoundly watchful stares. They did not have to go crawling about in the muck of what-everybody’s-alreadywritten, across the

desert of what-could-I-possibly-say, and over the mountain of an-audience-who-probably-knows-a-lot-more-than-I-do.

Of course, the great irony of this figure's story is that the Inspired Writer is really the transcendent distortion of real-life writers. It's much more likely that most of those great, real-life writers got their inked hands from gripping too hard their quills or pens in frustration, as they hovered over pages with more slashes, margin-notes, and edits than clean, untouched sentences set in perfect lines. They probably got their tangled hair from wrenching it; their ringed eyes from spending too many hours staring at black squiggles over white pages; and their profoundly watchful stares from their consequent, bad eyesight.

The fact is that they, too, had to answer to the great works that had been written before them; they, too, had to struggle with their own fears about sounding stupid; and they, too, had to answer to an often discerning and demanding audience. Yet, despite reality, the awesome figure of the Inspired Writer still holds sway, hovering over us like bad lighting, blinding us to our own work.

The pervasiveness of this myth of the Inspired Writer and the continued celebration of her/him works against us, as writers, for we often assume that if writing does not come easily, then our writing is not good—and in turn, that we cannot be good writers. Consequently, we believe that the writing that comes easily is the only good writing, so we will turn in papers that have been drafted quickly and without revision, hoping for the best (grade).

Now, in the days when I was clawing my way through classes as an English major, literature teachers didn't spend much time on revision. I don't ever remember being told anything about strategies for revision. I remember doing peer reviews, where we read each other's drafts and marked punctuation problems, having no idea how to examine— much less comment on—structure and analysis. Other than the fiveparagraph formula I'd learned in high school, I had no idea what a paper should or could look like. In other words, when I was learning to write college papers some fifteen years ago, I was totally on my own. The most useful strategy in my bag of tricks? Trial and error. And believe me, good grades or no, having had the opportunity recently (thanks to my mother moving and insisting, "take your STUFF!") to look at the papers I wrote back then, I see an awful lot of the latter.

You see, the awful, honest truth is that I'm no rabbit, no natural digger, no lover of thick, tangled messes, and I had no idea how to find my way through the knotted ideas at work in any first drafts, much less how to dig my way into more root (e.g. to go further with my claims, to push the analysis, to discover the "so what" of my work). I didn't find this place (the page) to be a comfy, hide-out-worthy home. In fact, I confess that I still don't. I have always loved to read, but writing has been much more work than I ever anticipated. And even after so many years of graduate school, and even more years of teaching writing and of writing scholarship, when one might think I should have fully embraced and embodied the status of "veteran" digger, I still, very often feel like I'm trudging through some thick of hard branches and harder roots to find my way down a page.

After years of reflecting on this trudging and of talking with students about how they, too, often feel as though they are trudging down a page—through ideas, among the cacophony of words (our own and others')—I've come to this (admittedly, unimpressive) realization: this is, for many of us, an alien discourse. I'm not like my two closest friends from graduate school, whose parents were academics. We didn't talk at breakfast about "the problematic representations of race in the media." Instead, my father told racist jokes that my sisters and I didn't recognize—until later—were racist. We didn't talk at dinner about "the mass oppression of 'other(ed)' cultures by corporate/national tyrants." My sisters and I talked about how the cheerleaders were way cooler than we were because they had better clothes, cars, hair, bodies, and boyfriends, and that we would, consequently, be losers for the rest of our lives.

Again, this is an alien discourse, even now. Well, not this. This is more like a personal essay, but the papers I was supposed to write for my literature classes, those were strange. I didn't normally think in the order that a paper would suggest—first broadly, then moving to specifics, which are treated as isolated entities, brought together in transitions and at the end of the paper. I didn't understand, much less use, words like "Marxism," "feminism," or even "close reading." I didn't know that Shakespeare may not have been Shakespeare. I didn't know that Hemingway was a drunk. I didn't know that really smart people spent their entire careers duking it out about who Shakespeare really was and whether Hemingway's alcoholism influenced his work.

I didn't know the vocabulary; I didn't know the issues; I didn't think in the right order; I didn't quote properly; and I was far too interested in the sinking, spinning feeling that writing—and reading— sometimes gave me, instead of being interested in the rigorousness of scholarly work, in modeling that work, and in becoming a member of this strange discourse community. Consequently, when a teacher finally sat me down to explain that this was, in fact, a community—one that occurred on pages, at conferences, in coffee shops, and over listservs—and that if I wanted to stay on the court, I'd have to learn the rules of the game, I was both intrigued and terrified. And no surprise, writing then became not just a way to induce the sinking, spinning thing of which I spoke earlier, but a way to think, a way to act—e.g. a way to figure out little things, like who "Mr. W.H." is in Shakespeare's dedication to his Sonnets, as well as big things, like how we can better fight the "isms" of this world.

No doubt, the sinking, spinning feeling that I experience when I write or read comes and goes now, but it always did. I feel it

alternately, as it shares time with the "trudging" feeling I described earlier. But, please don't think that this trudging comes from having to learn and practice the writing conventions of an alien community. Rather, the feeling of "trudging" is a consequence, again, of that haunting specter, the Inspired Writer. The feeling comes from the expectation that writing should come from "the gods" or natural talent, and it is a consequence, too, of the expectation that this inspiration or talent should be always available to us—always there, though sometimes hidden, in some reservoir of our beings.

Thus, even now, when I hit a blank spot and the sentence stumbles off into white space, I feel . . . inadequate . . . or worse, like a fraud, like I'm playing a game that I've got no business playing. The reader is gonna red-card me. And what makes it worse: I have to write. Writing teacher and scholar or not, I have to write memos and emails and resumes and reports and thank you notes and on and on.

But the upshot of all of this is that you'd be amazed what talking about this frustration (and all of the attendant fears) will do for a writer, once she/he opens up and shares this frustration with other writers, other students, teachers . . . with anyone who has to write. For example, once my students see that everyone sitting in this classroom has a gnawing fear about their work failing, about how they don't have "it," about how they don't feel justified calling themselves "writers," because most of them are "regular folks" required to take a writing class, well . . . then we can have ourselves a getting-down-to-it, honest and productive writing classroom. Then, we can talk about writer's block—what it is, what causes it, and what overcomes it. We can talk about how to develop "thick skins"—about how to listen to readers' commentaries and critiques without simultaneously wanting to rip our writings into tiny pieces, stomp them into a trashcan, and then set fire to them. And most importantly, then, we can talk about writing as a practice, not a reflection of some innate quality of the writer.

My work, for example, is more a reflection of the scholarship I spend the most time with than it is a reflection of me, per se. One strategy I learned in graduate school (and I swear, I picked it up by watching my first year composition students) is to imitate other, successful pieces of writing. By "imitate," of course I don't mean plagiarize. I mean that I imitate the form of those texts, e.g. the organization, and the ways that they engage with, explore, and extend ideas.

For example, a Rhetoric and Composition scholar named Patricia Bizzell has written scholarship that I use a lot in my own work. In fact, even when I don't use her work directly, I can see her influence on my thinking. A couple of years ago, after reading one of her books for about the hundredth time (seriously), I noticed that her articles and chapters are organized in predictable kinds of ways (not predictable as in boring, but predictable as in she's-a-pro). She seems to have a formula down, and it works. Her work is consistently solid—i.e. convincing, important—and using that formula, she's able to tackle really dense material and make it accessible to readers.

To be more specific, she tends to start with an introduction that demonstrates, right away, why the coming work is so important. For example, in "Foundationalism and Anti-Foundationalism in Composition Studies," she starts off the article by reminding us, basically (I'm paraphrasing here), that everybody's down with "the social," that we are all invested in examining how language—and writing—occurs in a context and how that context dictates meaning. So, for example, the word "we" in the previous sentence is a reference to Rhetoric and Composition teachers and scholars; however, in this sentence, it's not a reference to a group of people, but to the word "we," as it occurs in the previous sentence. See? Meaning changes according to context.

So, Bizzell starts with this premise: that everybody's down with the social, that we're invested in examining contexts, that we know that meaning happens in those contexts. Then, she introduces the problem: that we still want something pre-contextual (e.g. I know what "we" means because I can step outside of any contexts—including this one—and examine it objectively). Then, she gives two in-depth examples of where she sees the problem at work in the field. She then examines how we've tried to address that problem, then how we've failed at addressing it, and then she poses another/new perspective on the problem and, consequently, another/new way of addressing it.

This is her formula, and I imitate it, frequently, in my own work. It's rigorous, thorough, and like I said earlier, accessible. It works. But, sometimes I'm working on something totally different, something new (to me), and that formula starts to box me in too much; the formula becomes a tomb instead of a foundation. That's when I turn to outside readers.

Now, this one, actually, is a tougher strategy to use . . . because it requires that you share a piece of work that looks like a train wreck to you with another human being—ideally, another smart, patient, open-minded human being. I have four people I send my work out to consistently. One is my boss; one my mentor; one a (very successful) peer; and the other, a senior colleague I come dangerously close to worshipping. In other words, I don't send my stuff to my mom. I don't give it to my best friend, my boyfriend, my dance teacher, or my sisters. I only send my stuff to people who seem to be a lot better at writing scholarship than I feel like I am.

Again, it's hard to do, but I can't tell you how many students I'll see in my office over the course of a semester who will say, "But

my mom read my paper, and she says it looks great"—while gripping a paper marked with a D or F. Mom may have been the final authority when you were negotiating curfews and driving and dating, but unless Mom's a (college-level) writing teacher, she'll be no more of an expert in college-level writing than your dentist will. Send it to her if you want an outside reader, but don't expect her final word to be similar to your teacher's final word. And while I'm on my soapbox . . . don't let anyone edit your papers . . . including your mom. It's called "collusion"—a kind of plagiarism—and it's really easy to spot, especially if you were the Comma Splice King in the first paper and use commas flawlessly in the second.

More importantly, keep in mind that if you only use your mom, or your coach, or some other person who's not in the same class, then you may be making the revision process (and the reading for that person) more difficult than necessary, since that reader will have no idea what you've read in class, what you've talked about in class, or what the assignment guidelines and grading criteria are. Writing occurs—and is assessed—in a context, remember?

The best strategy for finding and using readers is to start with the teacher (no, it's not cheating). Ask him/her to read a draft before you submit the final. Then, share the paper with a classmate, as well as someone who's not in the class. That way, you'll get an "insider's" perspective as well as an "outsider's."[2] I've heard students say that using anyone but the teacher for feedback seems to be a waste of time. However, I find that when a student brings me a draft, I (and most writing professors) read it in terms of how it should be revised, not how I'd grade it. So, after you revise based on the teacher's feedback, get other readers to take a look, again, at the newly revised version and have them read it as a finished product. This will help you get a better sense of how it's working as a text that will be graded.

The best piece of advice I can give you, though, is to tell the Inspired Writer to shut up and let you write. If you have to, find out about a few of your favorite writers. I guarantee that they struggle, too. If not them, try talking to your classmates and/or your teacher. Again, if they have written anything in their lives worth writing, then it took some effort to do so. And, once the insecurities are out there, so to speak, and not trapped in Pandora's little box to drive us mad with their "what if" whispers, you may discover that there's more to the writing process than just getting lost in branches and stumbling over roots.

There's nothing quite like finding that the black squiggles you typed onto that white page actually invoke a feeling in or change the mind of your reader(s). Of course, too, there's the emotion, revelation, clench of teeth, slackening of shoulders, or any other response, that a text elicits from even its own writer. The latter is, for my part, the biggest reason why I write—even now, and even and especially as I write scholarship. For me, the text is like a fire in the room. And I am often awed by the way it moves, sleeps, devours, and sustains, while I am simultaneously trying to master it (knowing full well that if I let it go, it will run riot, but knowing, too, that I can't push too hard or it will disappear altogether).

For what I've found in my own relationship to writing, and in talking to my students about theirs, is that it's about the connection, really—even if the connection is an antagonistic one. We like to think that thinking isn't for nothing; that communicating with another (even and especially with ourselves) is never entirely in vain; that what we have to say is perhaps/probably not brilliant but is, still, worth the attempt of saying, of writing, and of considering/being considered. No doubt, a whole lot of practice can give us the means to write in such a way that not only we, the writers, but others will want to listen, will want to read. And in that listening-talking, reading-writing relation, a collision, the inevitable momentary connection, happens.

Maybe we smack the dirt and roots; maybe we smack white space. Maybe a reader's jaw drops at the "gets it" insight of some obscure line in your paper that you don't even remember writing because you spent forty-five minutes working on the line right after it. Maybe you make someone stop and think for just a moment about something they've never considered before. Maybe you make friends with a bunch of classmates because of that story you wrote about the roadtrip you took last summer to a music festival. Maybe you inspired a heated class debate because of that paper you wrote about your personal project for saving the world.

But for all the misunderstandings, all the fears and so-called failings that happen among writer and paper and reader, there's always another white page, and there's always more to say. This is why we must write, why we must continue to practice: to keep talking, keep thinking, keep revising. Nobody's ever got the final word, not even on the page. We've all got the will to write: it's called "communication." Maybe you do so in music or in paint or in graphics or, even, in gossip. But here, in these black squiggles on this white page, you've listened to something I've had to say. Maybe you've not listened closely; maybe you're yawning or rolling your eyes. But if this is a decent piece of writing, you're giving some response right now—a smile? An exasperated sigh? A tensed shoulder? A clenched fist? Whatever the case, here, response is happening. And that's at least a (good) start.

Discussion

1. What are you most anxious about, when writing? For example, do you worry most about grammar and mechanics? About organization? About the deadline? About page length? Why?

2. No doubt most students are at least peripherally, if not entirely, concerned with what grade they get on a paper. Given that pressure and/or in addition to that pressure, what are you most anxious about, when sharing your writing with others—e.g. classmates and/or the teacher? For example, do you worry most about your audience thinking your ideas are stupid? About readers misunderstanding your argument? About your peers/ teacher judging you according to how well you write?
3. How are your answers to numbers 1 and 2 related? For example, does your anxiety about the deadline have anything to do with your anxiety about readers misunderstanding your argument? If so, how and/or why?
4. What, if any, strategies do you use to address these anxieties? Do they work?

Notes

1. See his "Autobiographical Digression" in the second chapter of *Writing without Teachers*.
2. Most universities have a Writing Center, too, and that can be a valuable resource, since the staff are trained to read papers and often allot as much as an hour to focus on your draft.

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13.2.15: What Is "Academic" Writing?

L. Lennie Irvin

Introduction: The Academic Writing Task

As a new college student, you may have a lot of anxiety and questions about the writing you'll do in college.* That word "academic," especially, may turn your stomach or turn your nose. However, with this first year composition class, you begin one of the only classes in your entire college career where you will focus on learning to write. Given the importance of writing as a communication skill, I urge you to consider this class as a gift and make the most of it. But writing is hard, and writing in college may resemble playing a familiar game by completely new rules (that often are unstated). This chapter is designed to introduce you to what academic writing is like, and hopefully ease your transition as you face these daunting writing challenges.

So here's the secret. Your success with academic writing depends upon how well you understand what you are doing as you write and then how you approach the writing task. Early research done on college writers discovered that whether students produced a successful piece of writing depended largely upon their representation of the writing task. The writers' mental model for picturing their task made a huge difference. Most people as they start college have wildly strange ideas about what they are doing when they write an essay, or worse—they have no clear idea at all. I freely admit my own past as a clueless freshman writer, and it's out of this sympathy as well as twenty years of teaching college writing that I hope to provide you with something useful. So grab a cup of coffee or a diet coke, find a comfortable chair with good light, and let's explore together this activity of academic writing you'll be asked to do in college. We will start by clearing up some of those wild misconceptions people often arrive at college possessing. Then we will dig more deeply into the components of the academic writing situation and nature of the writing task.

Myths About Writing

Though I don't imagine an episode of *MythBusters* will be based on the misconceptions about writing we are about to look at, you'd still be surprised at some of the things people will believe about writing. You may find lurking within you viral elements of these myths—all of these lead to problems in writing.

Myth #1: The "Paint by Numbers" myth

> Some writers believe they must perform certain steps in a particular order to write "correctly." Rather than being a lock-step linear process, writing is "recursive." That means we cycle through and repeat the various activities of the writing process many times as we write.

Myth #2: Writers only start writing when they have everything figured out

> Writing is not like sending a fax! Writers figure out much of what they want to write as they write it. Rather than waiting, get some writing on the page—even with gaps or problems. You can come back to patch up rough spots.

Myth #3: Perfect first drafts

> We put unrealistic expectations on early drafts, either by focusing too much on the impossible task of making them perfect (which can put a cap on the development of our ideas), or by making too little effort because we don't care or know about their inevitable problems. Nobody writes perfect first drafts; polished writing takes lots of revision.

Myth #4: Some got it; I don't—the genius fallacy

> When you see your writing ability as something fixed or out of your control (as if it were in your genetic code), then you won't believe you can improve as a writer and are likely not to make any efforts in that direction. With effort and study, though, you can improve as a writer. I promise.

Myth #5: Good grammar is good writing

> When people say "I can't write," what they often mean is they have problems with grammatical correctness. Writing, however, is about more than just grammatical correctness. Good writing is a matter of achieving your desired effect upon an intended audience. Plus, as we saw in myth #3, no one writes perfect first drafts.

Myth #6: The Five Paragraph Essay

Some people say to avoid it at all costs, while others believe no other way to write exists. With an introduction, three supporting paragraphs, and a conclusion, the five paragraph essay is a format you should know, but one which you will outgrow. You'll have to gauge the particular writing assignment to see whether and how this format is useful for you.

Myth #7: Never use "I"

Adopting this formal stance of objectivity implies a distrust (almost fear) of informality and often leads to artificial, puffed-up prose. Although some writing situations will call on you to avoid using "I" (for example, a lab report), much college writing can be done in a middle, semi-formal style where it is ok to use "I."

The Academic Writing Situation

Now that we've dispelled some of the common myths that many writers have as they enter a college classroom, let's take a moment to think about the academic writing situation. The biggest problem I see in freshman writers is a poor sense of the writing situation in general. To illustrate this problem, let's look at the difference between speaking and writing.

When we speak, we inhabit the communication situation bodily in three dimensions, but in writing we are confined within the twodimensional setting of the flat page (though writing for the web—or multimodal writing—is changing all that). Writing resembles having a blindfold over our eyes and our hands tied behind our backs: we can't see exactly whom we're talking to or where we are. Separated from our audience in place and time, we imaginatively have to create this context. Our words on the page are silent, so we must use punctuation and word choice to communicate our tone. We also can't see our audience to gauge how our communication is being received or if there will be some kind of response. It's the same space we share right now as you read this essay. Novice writers often write as if they were mumbling to themselves in the corner with no sense that their writing will be read by a reader or any sense of the context within which their communication will be received.

What's the moral here? Developing your "writer's sense" about communicating within the writing situation is the most important thing you should learn in freshman composition.

Figure 1, depicting the writing situation, presents the best image I know of describing all the complexities involved in the writing situation.

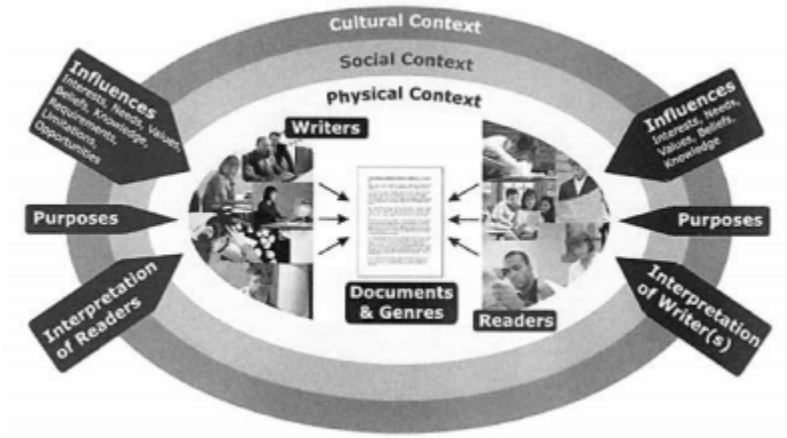


Figure 1: Source: "A Social Model of Writing." Writing@CSU. 2010. Web. 10 March 2010. Used by permission from Mike Palmquist.

Looking More Closely at the "Academic Writing" Situation

Writing in college is a fairly specialized writing situation, and it has developed its own codes and conventions that you need to have a keen awareness of if you are going to write successfully in college. Let's break down the writing situation in college:

Who's your audience?	Primarily the professor and possibly your classmates (though you may be asked to include a secondary outside audience).
What's the occasion or context?	An assignment given by the teacher within a learning context and designed to have you learn and demonstrate your learning.
What's your message?	It will be your learning or the interpretation gained from your study of the subject matter.
What's your purpose?	To show your learning and get a good grade (or to accomplish the goals of the writing assignment).
What documents/ genres are used?	The essay is the most frequent type of document used.

So far, this list looks like nothing new. You've been writing in school toward teachers for years. What's different in college? Lee Ann Carroll, a professor at Pepperdine University, performed a study of student writing in college and had this description of the kind of writing you will be doing in college:

> What are usually called 'writing assignments' in college might more accurately be called 'literacy tasks' because they require much more than the ability to construct correct sentences or compose neatly organized paragraphs with topic sentences. . . . Projects calling for high levels of critical literacy in college typically require knowledge of research skills, ability to read complex texts, understanding of key disciplinary concepts, and strategies for synthesizing, analyzing, and responding critically to new information, usually within a limited time frame. (3–4)

Academic writing is always a form of evaluation that asks you to demonstrate knowledge and show proficiency with certain disciplinary skills of thinking, interpreting, and presenting. Writing the paper is never "just" the writing part. To be successful in this kind of writing, you must be completely aware of what the professor expects you to do and accomplish with that particular writing task. For a moment, let's explore more deeply the elements of this college writing "literacy task."

Knowledge of Research Skills

Perhaps up to now research has meant going straight to Google and Wikipedia, but college will require you to search for and find more in-depth information. You'll need to know how to find information in the library, especially what is available from online databases which contain scholarly articles. Researching is also a process, so you'll need to learn how to focus and direct a research project and how to keep track of all your source information. Realize that researching represents a crucial component of most all college writing assignments, and you will need to devote lots of work to this researching.

The Ability to Read Complex Texts

Whereas your previous writing in school might have come generally from your experience, college writing typically asks you to write on unfamiliar topics. Whether you're reading your textbook, a short story, or scholarly articles from research, your ability to write well will be based upon the quality of your reading. In addition to the labor of close reading, you'll need to think critically as you read. That means separating fact from opinion, recognizing biases and assumptions, and making inferences. Inferences are how we as readers connect the dots: an inference is a belief (or statement) about something unknown made on the basis of something known. You smell smoke; you infer fire. They are conclusions or interpretations that we arrive at based upon the known factors we discover from our reading. When we, then, write to argue for these interpretations, our job becomes to get our readers to make the same inferences we have made.

The Understanding of Key Disciplinary Concepts

Each discipline whether it is English, Psychology, or History has its own key concepts and language for describing these important ways of understanding the world. Don't fool yourself that your professors' writing assignments are asking for your opinion on the topic from just your experience. They want to see you apply and use these concepts in your writing. Though different from a multiple-choice exam, writing similarly requires you to demonstrate your learning. So whatever writing assignment you receive, inspect it closely for what concepts it asks you to bring into your writing.

Strategies for Synthesizing, Analyzing, and Responding Critically to New Information

You need to develop the skill of a seasoned traveler who can be dropped in any city around the world and get by. Each writing assignment asks you to navigate through a new terrain of information, so you must develop ways for grasping new subject matter in order, then, to use it in your writing. We have already seen the importance of reading and research for these literacy tasks, but beyond laying the information out before you, you will need to learn ways of sorting and finding meaningful patterns in this information.

In College, Everything's an Argument: A Guide for Decoding College Writing Assignments

Let's restate this complex "literacy task" you'll be asked repeatedly to do in your writing assignments. Typically, you'll be required to write an "essay" based upon your analysis of some reading(s). In this essay you'll need to present an argument where you make a claim (i.e. present a "thesis") and support that claim with good reasons that have adequate and appropriate evidence to back them up. The dynamic of this argumentative task often confuses first year writers, so let's examine it more closely

Academic Writing Is an Argument

To start, let's focus on argument. What does it mean to present an "argument" in college writing? Rather than a shouting match between two disagreeing sides, argument instead means a carefully arranged and supported presentation of a viewpoint. Its purpose is not so much to win the argument as to earn your audience's consideration (and even approval) of your perspective. It resembles a conversation between two people who may not hold the same opinions, but they both desire a better understanding of the subject matter under discussion. My favorite analogy, however, to describe the nature of this argumentative stance in college writing is the courtroom. In this scenario, you are like a lawyer making a case at trial that the defendant is not guilty, and your readers are like the jury who will decide if the defendant is guilty or not guilty. This jury (your readers) won't just take your word that he's innocent; instead, you must convince them by presenting evidence that proves he is not guilty. Stating your opinion is not enough—you have to back it up too. I like this courtroom analogy for capturing two importance things about academic argument: 1) the value of an organized presentation of your "case," and 2) the crucial element of strong evidence.

Academic Writing Is an Analysis

We now turn our attention to the actual writing assignment and that confusing word "analyze." Your first job when you get a writing assignment is to figure out what the professor expects. This assignment may be explicit in its expectations, but often built into the wording of the most defined writing assignments are implicit expectations that you might not recognize. First, we can say that unless your professor specifically asks you to summarize, you won't write a summary. Let me say that again: don't write a summary unless directly asked to. But what, then, does the professor want? We have already picked out a few of these expectations: You can count on the instructor expecting you to read closely, research adequately, and write an argument where you will demonstrate your ability to apply and use important concepts you have been studying. But the writing task also implies that your essay will be the result of an analysis. At times, the writing assignment may even explicitly say to write an analysis, but often this element of the task remains unstated.

So what does it mean to analyze? One way to think of an analysis is that it asks you to seek How and Why questions much more than What questions. An analysis involves doing three things:

1. Engage in an open inquiry where the answer is not known at first (and where you leave yourself open to multiple suggestions)
2. Identify meaningful parts of the subject
3. Examine these separate parts and determine how they relate to each other

An analysis breaks a subject apart to study it closely, and from this inspection, ideas for writing emerge. When writing assignments call on you to analyze, they require you to identify the parts of the subject (parts of an ad, parts of a short story, parts of Hamlet's character), and then show how these parts fit or don't fit together to create some larger effect or meaning. Your interpretation of how these parts fit together constitutes your claim or thesis, and the task of your essay is then to present an argument defending your interpretation as a valid or plausible one to make. My biggest bit of advice about analysis is not to do it all in your head. Analysis works best when you put all the cards on the table, so to speak. Identify and isolate the parts of your analysis, and record important features and characteristics of each one. As patterns emerge, you sort and connect these parts in meaningful ways. For me, I have always had to do this recording and thinking on scratch pieces of paper. Just as critical reading forms a crucial element of the literacy task of a college writing assignment, so too does this analysis process. It's built in.

Three Common Types of College Writing Assignments

We have been decoding the expectations of the academic writing task so far, and I want to turn now to examine the types of assignments you might receive. From my experience, you are likely to get three kinds of writing assignments based upon the instructor's degree of direction for the assignment. We'll take a brief look at each kind of academic writing task.

The Closed Writing Assignment

- Is Creon a character to admire or condemn?
- Does your advertisement employ techniques of propaganda, and if so what kind?
- Was the South justified in seceding from the Union?
- In your opinion, do you believe Hamlet was truly mad?

These kinds of writing assignments present you with two counter claims and ask you to determine from your own analysis the more valid claim. They resemble yes-no questions. These topics define the claim for you, so the major task of the writing assignment then is working out the support for the claim. They resemble a math problem in which the teacher has given you the answer and now wants you to "show your work" in arriving at that answer.

Be careful with these writing assignments, however, because often these topics don't have a simple yes/no, either/or answer (despite the nature of the essay question). A close analysis of the subject matter often reveals nuances and ambiguities within the question that your eventual claim should reflect. Perhaps a claim such as, "In my opinion, Hamlet was mad" might work, but I urge you to avoid such a simplistic thesis. This thesis would be better: "I believe Hamlet's unhinged mind borders on insanity but doesn't quite reach it."

The Semi-Open Writing Assignment

- Discuss the role of law in Antigone.
- Explain the relationship between character and fate in Hamlet.
- Compare and contrast the use of setting in two short stories.
- Show how the Fugitive Slave Act influenced the Abolitionist Movement.

Although these topics chart out a subject matter for you to write upon, they don't offer up claims you can easily use in your paper. It would be a misstep to offer up claims such as, "Law plays a role in Antigone" or "In Hamlet we can see a relationship between character and fate." Such statements express the obvious and what the topic takes for granted. The question, for example, is not whether law plays a role in Antigone, but rather what sort of role law plays. What is the nature of this role? What influences does it have on the characters or actions or theme? This kind of writing assignment resembles a kind of archeological dig. The teacher cordons off an area, hands you a shovel, and says dig here and see what you find.

Be sure to avoid summary and mere explanation in this kind of assignment. Despite using key words in the assignment such as "explain," "illustrate," analyze," "discuss," or "show how," these topics still ask you to make an argument. Implicit in the topic is the expectation that you will analyze the reading and arrive at some insights into patterns and relationships about the subject. Your eventual paper, then, needs to present what you found from this analysis—the treasure you found from your digging. Determining your own claim represents the biggest challenge for this type of writing assignment.

The Open Writing Assignment

- Analyze the role of a character in Dante's The Inferno.
- What does it mean to be an "American" in the 21st Century?
- Analyze the influence of slavery upon one cause of the Civil War.
- Compare and contrast two themes within *Pride and Prejudice*.

These kinds of writing assignments require you to decide both your writing topic and you claim (or thesis). Which character in the Inferno will I pick to analyze? What two themes in Pride and Prejudice will I choose to write about? Many students struggle with these types of assignments because they have to understand their subject matter well before they can intelligently choose a topic. For instance, you need a good familiarity with the characters in The Inferno before you can pick one. You have to have a solid understanding defining elements of American identity as well as 21st century culture before you can begin to connect them. This kind of writing assignment resembles riding a bike without

the training wheels on. It says, “You decide what to write about.” The biggest decision, then, becomes selecting your topic and limiting it to a manageable size.

Picking and Limiting a Writing Topic

Let’s talk about both of these challenges: picking a topic and limiting it. Remember how I said these kinds of essay topics expect you to choose what to write about from a solid understanding of your subject? As you read and review your subject matter, look for things that interest you. Look for gaps, puzzling items, things that confuse you, or connections you see. Something in this pile of rocks should stand out as a jewel: as being “do-able” and interesting. (You’ll write best when you write from both your head and your heart.) Whatever topic you choose, state it as a clear and interesting question. You may or may not state this essay question explicitly in the introduction of your paper (I actually recommend that you do), but it will provide direction for your paper and a focus for your claim since that claim will be your answer to this essay question. For example, if with the Dante topic you decided to write on Virgil, your essay question might be: “What is the role of Virgil toward the character of Dante in The Inferno?” The thesis statement, then, might be this: “Virgil’s predominant role as Dante’s guide through hell is as the voice of reason.” Crafting a solid essay question is well worth your time because it charts the territory of your essay and helps you declare a focused thesis statement.

Many students struggle with defining the right size for their writing project. They chart out an essay question that it would take a book to deal with adequately. You’ll know you have that kind of topic if you have already written over the required page length but only touched one quarter of the topics you planned to discuss. In this case, carve out one of those topics and make your whole paper about it. For instance, with our Dante example, perhaps you planned to discuss four places where Virgil’s role as the voice of reason is evident. Instead of discussing all four, focus your essay on just one place. So your revised thesis statement might be: “Close inspection of Cantos I and II reveal that Virgil serves predominantly as the voice of reason for Dante on his journey through hell.” A writing teacher I had in college said it this way: A well tended garden is better than a large one full of weeds. That means to limit your topic to a size you can handle and support well.

Three Characteristics of Academic Writing

I want to wrap up this section by sharing in broad terms what the expectations are behind an academic writing assignment. Chris Thaiss and Terry Zawacki conducted research at George Mason University where they asked professors from their university what they thought academic writing was and its standards. They came up with three characteristics:

1. Clear evidence in writing that the writer(s) have been persistent, open-minded, and disciplined in study. (5)
2. The dominance of reason over emotions or sensual perception. (5)
3. An imagined reader who is coolly rational, reading for information, and intending to formulate a reasoned response. (7)

Your professor wants to see these three things in your writing when they give you a writing assignment. They want to see in your writing the results of your efforts at the various literacy tasks we have been discussing: critical reading, research, and analysis. Beyond merely stating opinions, they also want to see an argument toward an intelligent audience where you provide good reasons to support your interpretations.

The Format of the Academic Essay

Your instructors will also expect you to deliver a paper that contains particular textual features. The following list contains the characteristics of what I have for years called the “critical essay.” Although I can’t claim they will be useful for all essays in college, I hope that these features will help you shape and accomplish successful college essays. Be aware that these characteristics are flexible and not a formula, and any particular assignment might ask for something different.

Characteristics of the Critical Essay

“Critical” here is not used in the sense of “to criticize” as in find fault with. Instead, “critical” is used in the same way “critical thinking” is used. A synonym might be “interpretive” or “analytical.”

1. It is an argument, persuasion essay that in its broadest sense MAKES A POINT and SUPPORTS IT. (We have already discussed this argumentative nature of academic writing at length.)
2. The point (“claim” or “thesis”) of a critical essay is interpretive in nature. That means the point is debatable and open to interpretation, not a statement of the obvious. The thesis statement is a clear, declarative sentence that often works best when it comes at the end of the introduction.

3. Organization: Like any essay, the critical essay should have a clear introduction, body, and conclusion. As you support your point in the body of the essay, you should "divide up the proof," which means structuring the body around clear primary supports (developed in single paragraphs for short papers or multiple paragraphs for longer papers).
4. Support: (a) The primary source for support in the critical essay is from the text (or sources). The text is the authority, so using quotations is required. (b) The continuous movement of logic in a critical essay is "assert then support; assert then support." No assertion (general statement that needs proving) should be left without specific support (often from the text(s)). (c) You need enough support to be convincing. In general, that means for each assertion you need at least three supports. This threshold can vary, but invariably one support is not enough.
5. A critical essay will always "document" its sources, distinguishing the use of outside information used inside your text and clarifying where that information came from (following the rules of MLA documentation style or whatever documentation style is required).
6. Whenever the author moves from one main point (primary support) to the next, the author needs to clearly signal to the reader that this movement is happening. This transition sentence works best when it links back to the thesis as it states the topic of that paragraph or section.
7. A critical essay is put into an academic essay format such as the MLA or APA document format.
8. Grammatical correctness: Your essay should have few if any grammatical problems. You'll want to edit your final draft carefully before turning it in.

Conclusion

As we leave this discussion, I want to return to what I said was the secret for your success in writing college essays: Your success with academic writing depends upon how well you understand what you are doing as you write and then how you approach the writing task. Hopefully, you now have a better idea about the nature of the academic writing task and the expectations behind it. Knowing what you need to do won't guarantee you an "A" on your paper—that will take a lot of thinking, hard work, and practice—but having the right orientation toward your college writing assignments is a first and important step in your eventual success.

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13.2.16: Why Visit Your Campus Writing Center?

Ben Rafoth

There is something about the experience of speaking with someone one-on-one—the facial expressions, enunciations, gestures—that makes us feel alive and energized.* Who we talk with can matter more than the topic itself, but either way most people love a good conversation. Among strangers traveling through an airport or waiting in a doctor's office, words seem to gather like stones in a pool. People gravitate to conversations so naturally that they make time and travel far to experience them. When time is short and travel impractical, people buy conversations by the minute.

Conversation is the key idea behind writing centers, and it's the number one reason why it pays to visit your campus writing center. Writing is too hard to do alone, and writing center tutors can help. I asked several tutors from different writing centers to tell me how students benefit from the writing center, and I hope you will find what they said as convincing as I did.

Taking It Up

Every day, tens of thousands of students across the U.S. and around the world walk into (or go online for) their campus writing center, many for the first time. They usually say something like, "I need someone to look at my paper." They don't literally mean they want someone to look at the paper and that's all. They want someone to spend time with them, read the paper carefully, show appreciation, and say what they think about it. They also don't merely want to hear what a tutor thinks about the paper. They want to ask questions, explain what they've written, and see how the tutor reacts. They want a conversation that revolves around questions such as:

> What do you think about my paper? Is it any good? What do you think my instructor and my classmates will think about it? Does it need to be improved? And how would I go about that?

A conversation develops around these and other questions, writer and tutor sitting in chairs or on a couch, pages fanned out on the table before them. The tutor might invite the writer to read the paper aloud, but that's not a requirement; tutors also like to read the paper silently and absorb its content, structure, and stylistic nuances.

Reflecting back on her senior year as a tutor at Niles West High School's Literacy Center in Chicago, Susan Borkowski told me,

> I quickly learned that a tutoring session is mostly about asking questions. Writing is a way to communicate thoughts. It follows naturally that in order to produce good writing, we have to start by stimulating our minds to think deeply about our topics. So often we *think* we've pushed our minds to the limit and can't see a way to make a thesis any deeper or more complex . . . until someone asks a question about it. We *think* we've explained ourselves as much as we can because we are only thinking about it in a limited way. But when someone else asks a question, we start talking out loud and soon we find that we're thinking in completely different ways about a concept we thought we had already flushed out completely.

Susan tutored her classmates in a place where every day, hundreds of students stop by on their own to write and read and talk and listen. Literacy Center tutors would be the first to acknowledge that not everyone leaves one hundred percent satisfied, but the many students who keep coming back for help says something about the good things that happen there. Could these students do as well by themselves, sitting alone in front of a computer and waiting for inspiration? I tell my students to try it sometime, and when that doesn't work, visit the writing center.

Tutors try to focus on things that are important to the writer: the challenge of the assignment, the ideas there seem to be no words for, the little editing stuff that attracts red ink. Tutors encourage writers to take notes and start writing when the ideas begin to flow. Tutors are usually paid by the hour, so they'll wait while you write. The important thing is to build enough momentum so that when you go home to finish the paper, you'll already be on a roll.

Anthony, a first-year undergraduate from Philadelphia, had been coming to the Writing Center at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, where I teach, three to four times per week to write a rhetorical analysis for his freshman writing class. At first, he only wanted help in finding examples to illustrate logos, ethos, and pathos in an article he was assigned to read. It was a good session, and Anthony got the examples he wanted. Then he told his tutor that this was a hard assignment because

all of the examples in the article seemed to fit more than one element. This observation might have ended then and there, but his tutor urged him to say more about the overlap. They talked for another fifteen minutes or so, and on his next paper, Anthony focused on the overlap in his thesis, claiming that logos, ethos, and pathos are not distinct elements in persuasive writing. Anthony was one of the few students in the class who wrote about the overlap, and when the instructor read his paper aloud in class, he looked pretty smart. He thought of the overlap on his own, but it took a conversation with a tutor to see how he could go in that direction and still stay within guidelines of the assignment.

When I asked tutors why they believe students benefit from visiting the writing center, it would have been perfect if they had all said, "It's the quality of the conversations we have here" because that's my thesis. Instead, they gave richer and more interesting answers. One wrote to me from a pool where he was lifeguarding, another wrote during downtime while working at the writing center, and another used a mobile phone on the road. All responses exuded the passion that leaps out from people who are totally committed to what they do, whether they make any money at it or not.

Daniel Phillips tutors in the Writing Studio at the Fashion Institute of Technology in Manhattan. Anyone who has ever seriously considered a career with Armani or Chanel or Claiborne would soon find that FIT is the first step to landing a job with these top tier design houses, and while there they learn that fashion designers spend a lot of time writing. Daniel said:

> When I sit down with a student for the first time, there's always a brief and slightly awkward introduction, and then we talk for a few minutes about their major, what they do, their assignment, the food they're eating hurriedly ("I'm so sorry, but I never get time for lunch"). And then for me comes the challenge. This is a new person. I have no idea how they learn, what works for them, if I should speak more or sit and listen, if I should focus on their grammar or on making the subject of their essay more focused and apparent. For you the student, it is a game of expectation. You want us to help you with your writing, probably. For us, it is a matter of pedagogy, the way we can teach you what you're asking to learn, but without simply laying it out for you to gather up. Sometimes in a session, I make almost no statements. I simply ask questions. We are not so much tutors as we are a presence that encourages you to write, to question your own logic, to revise, to reconsider.

How does it happen, this conversation that leads to better writing? There are many ways, but it starts with getting ideas out of your head, through your lips, and into someone else's head. When you verbalize something you have been thinking, several things happen:

- You hear what you just said and how it sounds, as if you were hearing someone else say it.
- The tutor hears what you said, and you have to respect their need to make sense of it.
- Once you speak, you become motivated to listen to what the other person says—because you started it.
- Once you both speak, there is momentum to keep going and to influence what comes next, or not. You can sit back, or disengage. It's up to you.
- Both of you have fired neurons in your brains that change what is in your heads.

Finding Confidence

Students go to the writing center not only because they are looking for ways to put their thoughts into words but also because they want reassurance. Daniel Phillips, the FIT tutor, wrote, "Sometimes we are there to tell you how good your writing already is (and it probably is already pretty good) and that you don't need to change much at all. It's different with every student and every session." I've never met anyone who went to a writing center to feel bad about themselves; there's ninth grade for that. Hearing that your writing is good and that you don't need to change what you have written is actually quite valuable.

Yecca Zeng, at FIT, told me,

> I can see an instant confidence arise when students walk through the door and find other students with whom they may discuss any idea, any step, any type of writing that they may be having trouble with. When students realize their peers are the ones who are helping, it is easier for them to relax and be more outgoing and elaborate on exactly what they want to accomplish.

Sometimes tutors can cure a case of cold feet, as when students invest time in a topic and even write most of their paper before they decide to change the topic and write about something else. Such last-minute, impulsive topic changes are usually a mistake. Most students would be better off if they had had the confidence to keep what they had written and sought input from others about how to revise it. "I have not come near to outgrowing the need to share my writing with a responsive, receptive person who can provide feedback and engage me in a discussion about how to move forward with

revision," said Sam Van Horne of the University of Iowa.

On the east coast, at Loyola University in Baltimore, Paige Godfrey put it this way:

> Ever since I started working in the writing center, I have had a student who always requests a consultation with me. Being that there are so many wonderful consultants in the writing center, I always questioned what it was that made this student a "regular." At the end of the semester, the student pulled me aside to thank me for all that I had done to help her throughout the year. She stated that the most helpful thing I had done for her was make her feel more confident about her writing. Rather than pointing out the areas that needed improvement, I like to focus on the areas full of strength and work off of them to improve the weaker areas. There is no doubt that many students need improvement with their papers—I am certainly not Shakespeare myself. However, if you show them their own potential, it allows them to look deeper inside themselves as writers and grow from it.

For many people, the hardest part is showing their writing to someone else.

According to a popular website for health information, WebMD (www.webmd.com/anxiety-panic/g...xiety-disorder), the most common situations in which people feel anxiety due to potentially negative judgments from others are:

- Eating or drinking in front of others
- Being the center of attention
- Interacting with people, including dating or going to parties
- Asking questions or giving reports in groups
- Using public toilets
- Talking on the telephone
- Writing or working in front of others

Most people are okay with toilets and telephones, but who hasn't experienced writing anxiety? The important thing is to reduce the feeling of vulnerability. Here is the University of Iowa's Erica Bazemore again:

> The ability to share something as personal as a piece of writing can be a daunting task for some students, but getting into the habit of not only sharing writing, but having someone respond to it can help to make someone a more confident writer. In addition, face-to-face communication through writing and speaking can help people develop effective ways of self-expression and comfortable ways of communicating with each other. Our society is becoming increasingly less personal on the level of language and through our daily interactions, but writing centers have a built-in mechanism to counter this trend. The writing center is a place for taking the abstract and making it concrete. It is a place for collaboration, sharing, expression, and empowerment.

For a few students, visiting a writing center feels like admitting they are not good enough to be in the course they're taking. I spoke to one of the graduate student tutors in my writing center, Motasim Almwaja, an excellent writer from Jordan who is cautious about what he says and writes in front of his friends from the Middle East because he does not want to appear foolish. (He had to remind me that even in soccer, accepting defeat in his culture is not an option.) For him, strength vs. weakness is a matter of how you look at it. Motasim has worked very hard to perfect his English, constantly memorizing words and phrases and then using them when he speaks and writes. He points out that instead of admitting a weakness, going to the writing center shows strength and the resolve to work for what you want.

When you share your writing with a tutor, you can be pretty sure the tutor is not going to laugh at your writing (unless you write comedy) or criticize your paper. They've seen it all and are not interested in judging you or your ideas. They will help you to discover something good about your writing that you can build on. They want to see you succeed because helping students to write is their job.

A Sense of Audience

A writing center can help students to refine their sense of audience so that they better understand how readers will respond to their writing. Acquiring this sense of audience is a bit mysterious because it depends a lot on experience. When a comedian causes an audience to convulse in laughter about ordinary things that happen to everyone, it's the comedian's keen sense of audience and timing that makes the jokes so hilarious.

Great comedians make telling jokes only seem effortless; we don't see the hours of preparation, false starts, and flops that preceded it— all things they probably relied on teachers and coaches to overcome. Tutors seem to understand that writing

a good paper is a team effort. The part that tutors contribute as readers is crucial because they draw writers outside of themselves to see the paper as others are likely to see it. This is a hard thing to do on one's own. We tend to steep in our own thoughts. But a tutor stands apart, reading the draft with fresh eyes and pointing out the gaps the writer needs to fill so that ideas flow smoothly. Over time, writers learn to read their writing from the perspective of their readers by internalizing the responses of tutors and replaying them in their heads when they write the next time. We all develop a sense of audience, but we never outgrow the need for someone else's fresh eyes. Mike Czajkowski, an undergraduate at Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington, Indiana, told me,

> I do think it is important to seek another pair of experienced eyes when writing a paper, especially an academic one. I generally go see a professor I'm comfortable discussing my writing with, who knows my style really well, or I see a friend whose writing and opinion I trust (generally in the same class as me). I think it's important because we need to realize we aren't writing those papers for ourselves, so we should inherently seek anything that allows us to see a paper outside of our own bias toward it.

I also heard from Marisa Martin, whose writing center shares its mission with her college's Jesuit tradition. The mission states: "In the Jesuit tradition of working with others to reach a common goal, the Loyola Writing Center understands that writing requires input from others. The Loyola Writing Center offers consulting for the entire Loyola community of writers, including undergraduate and graduate students, as well as faculty and staff." Working with others to reach a common goal is also what Marisa wanted me to know: "We are sounding boards for the fears and anxiety of writing. We are there to give writers tools to work through these situations and to give them tips to work it out on their own next time." Working together improves the chances of working independently. Marisa and her colleagues believe they can help students enough that they will be able to succeed on their own.

Getting What You Need

So why visit the writing center? If I had to boil down what I have tried to convey here, I would say students should visit the writing center because:

- Writing isn't easy and tutors can help. (It's pretty basic.)
- Tutors are able to discuss writing in a way that moves you forward. They create idea-rich conversations.
- Writing centers instill confidence that you are on the right track, or help you get there if you're not.
- Writers need readers.

I think these are sound reasons, but some readers may wonder why it has to be a writing center tutor and not a roommate or a gym buddy. Listen to Kelly Ruth Anderson, a tutor at the University of Iowa. I asked her the same question I asked the others, "Why do you believe students should visit the writing center?" For her answer, she posed a slightly different question: "Why do students visit the writing center?" She pointed out that what people should do and what they actually do are often quite different. I like her answer because it demonstrates one of the ways that tutors are trained to help writers: when given an assignment, they turn it to the writer's advantage. Kelly told me:

> Why *do* students visit the Writing Center? For all the wonderful talk about "becoming a better writer," most of my tutees visit the WC—at least initially— out of a sense of real and tangible need. *My teacher said that I need better transitions. English isn't my first language, and I need help with grammar. I need an "A"—how can I get an A on this paper?* And I'm not sure that I can blame students for acting out of these specific needs—we seem to be a pretty results-driven society, and many students overlook the role that writing can play in their future lives. (So why bother with some lofty, perhaps seemingly insurmountable, goal like "becoming a better writer"?) In other words, I can give students the "real" reason to visit the Writing Center—to become a better writer—but I'm not sure that answer will *actually get them to visit the writing Center*.

Kelly eventually answered the question I had asked, but first she said something she felt was just as important. This was a wise move, one that elevated her idea and made it memorable. Kelly knew what I had asked, but first she told me what I needed to hear. Writing center tutors do the same thing, and Kelly's response is a reflection of this. Tutors and teachers know that everybody wants to receive good grades on their papers. But grades are the end product of what you do to earn them. If Kelly were your tutor and you didn't know what to write in response to a question on an assignment, she could help you to see the question in a different light that would show you a different path to take. She cannot give you the A you want, but she can give you the idea you need.

Learning to write is not a uniformly warm fuzzy experience, but it can lead to some of the best encounters you will have in school—with tutors in the writing center who are there just to help.

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13.2.17: Wikipedia Is Good for You!?

James P. Purdy

"I actually do think Wikipedia is an amazing thing. It is the first place I go when I'm looking for knowledge. Or when I want to create some."

—Stephen Colbert

You may not realize it, but creating knowledge is one reason you are asked to do research-based writing[1] in college.[*] And a popular resource you may already use can help you with this task—though perhaps not in the way you might initially think. Wikipedia, the free wiki "encyclopedia,"[2] can provide information to assist you with and model some of the activities frequently characteristic of college-level research-based writing. As with any resource you use, your success with Wikipedia depends on how and why you use it. The goal of this chapter is to show you how and why you might use Wikipedia to help you complete research-based writing tasks for your first year composition class. It offers suggestions for two ways to use—and not to use—Wikipedia. The first is as a source. The second is as a process guide.

My premise for the first is that you are going to use Wikipedia as a source for writing assignments regardless of cautions against it, so it is more helpful to address ways to use it effectively than to ignore it (and ignoring it precludes some potentially beneficial uses of Wikipedia anyway). My premise for the second is that, as I argue else where, Wikipedia can reinforce approaches to research-based writing that many composition teachers support. Wikipedia, that is, can help to illustrate (1) recursive revision based on idea development, (2) textual production based on participation in a conversation rather than isolated thinking, and (3) research based on production rather than only critique (Purdy). The process of successfully contributing to a Wikipedia article, in other words, parallels the process of successfully creating a piece of research-based writing. Both involve putting forth ideas in writing and developing them in response to feedback based on audience members' perceptions of the usefulness, accuracy, and value of those ideas.

I offer two caveats before I proceed. All first year writing instructors teach research-based writing differently and ask you to produce different kinds of texts for assignments, so you will need to adapt the suggestions offered in this essay for your particular course and assignment. My goal is not to mandate one correct, universally applicable process of research-based writing. There is none. Nor is it to claim that products of research-based writing should look like a Wikipedia article. They should not. Wikipedia articles are a different genre than academic research-based writing. Wikipedia seeks to emulate an encyclopedia (that's where the "pedia" part of the name comes from) and, thereby, requires that articles be written in what it calls "NPOV," or neutral point of view; articles are intended to represent all significant sides of a topic rather than to persuade readers to believe one is correct (Bruns 113–114, "Wikipedia:Neutral"). Research-based writing assignments in first year composition commonly ask you to advance and develop your own argument on a topic by drawing on and responding to relevant outside sources. While you may be asked to represent multiple views on a topic for such an assignment, you will frequently be asked to argue for one, so your writing will likely be more overtly persuasive than a Wikipedia article.

Despite these important differences, I believe that some of the practices often involved in successfully writing a Wikipedia article are also often involved in successfully writing a research-based text for college classes: reviewing, conversing, revising, and sharing. As Australian scholar Axel Bruns asserts, "Wikipedia . . . is closely aligned with the live processes of academic exchanges of knowledge" (208, italics in original). Thus, this chapter proceeds with the assumption that it is useful to consider Wikipedia as both a product (i.e., a source) and a representation of process (i.e., a guide to practices).

Using Wikipedia as a Source

The first way you may think to use Wikipedia is as a source—that is, as a text you can quote or paraphrase in a paper. After all, Wikipedia is easy to access and usually pretty easy to understand. Its articles are often current and frequently provide interesting facts and information that can support your ideas. What's not to like?

Usually teachers do not like two primary aspects of Wikipedia. The first is its open participation: anyone, regardless of background, qualifications, or expertise, can write Wikipedia articles. As a result, articles can display incorrect information. There are many examples of such incorrect information on Wikipedia. Perhaps the most infamous involves the Wikipedia article on John Seigenthaler (former journalist, political advisor, and father of the reporter of the same name on NBC news). Brian Chase changed the article to indicate that Seigenthaler played a role in the assassination of President John

F. Kennedy and his brother Robert. This untrue contribution lasted for 132 days (Page, "Wikipedia Biography"). Seigenthaler was understandably upset, which he reported vociferously in an article in *USA Today* (Seigenthaler). Were someone to take Wikipedia's John Seigenthaler[3] article at face value during this time, she or he would come to the wrong conclusion about Seigenthaler. If you quote or paraphrase a Wikipedia article as an authoritative source, then, you are potentially making a claim based on wrong information, and using incorrect information is not a good way to make a convincing argument. Of course, misinformation isn't limited to Wikipedia. As Jim Giles reports in *Nature*, Encyclopaedia Britannica has errors in some of its articles, too; he claims that Wikipedia is almost as accurate as Britannica for a series of articles on science topics (900–901; see also Bruns 127–133, Levinson 93). You should, therefore, read critically all sources, not just Wikipedia articles. It's always a good idea to verify information in multiple sources. To ensure a better chance of accuracy, though, college-level researchbased writing assignments generally ask you to use sources written by academic professionals and recognized experts.

The second aspect of Wikipedia that many teachers do not like is its changeability: Wikipedia articles do not remain the same over time. The *Michael Jackson* article makes this explicit. Its 19:35, 27 June 2009 version begins with a header: "This article is **about a person who has recently died**. Some information, such as that pertaining to the circumstances of the person's death and surrounding events, may change rapidly as more facts become known" (emphasis in original). As this notice implies, the article didn't stay the same for long given the unfolding details of Jackson's death. As a result of such changeability, Wikipedia articles are unreliable; the article you cite today may not exist in that form tomorrow. This variability challenges prevailing understanding of how published texts work so causes some anxiety. Because print texts are (relatively) stable, we expect texts we read (and cite) to be the same when we go back to them later. Even Wikipedia contributors express worry about the implications of article changeability for citation:

> Among other problems . . . if several authors cite the same Wikipedia article, they may all cite different versions, leading to complete confusion. That just linking to the article sans version information is not enough can be seen by those Wikipedia articles themselves which refer to others, where it is clear from following the link that a different version was referred to (and there is no clue which of the many versions in the history was actually read by the person who cited it). ("Why Wikipedia Is Not So Great")

As Wikipedians explain, article variability makes citing hard because it is difficult for readers to know which version of a Wikipedia article an author cited. And academic audiences like to be able to return to the texts you cite to verify the conclusions you draw from them. If the texts you cite don't exist anymore, they cannot do that.

Teachers have concerns about you using Wikipedia as a source for another reason—one that has less to do with Wikipedia itself and more to do with the kinds of texts you are expected to use in research-based writing. Most college-level writing asks you to engage more deeply with a subject than does an encyclopedia, and doing so entails reading more than the general overview of a topic that encyclopedia articles provide.[4] So articles from any encyclopedia are not usually good sources to quote, paraphrase, or summarize in your writing. Indeed, in response to Middlebury College's history department officially banning students from using Wikipedia as a source in their papers, Sandra Ordonez, a spokesperson for Wikipedia, and Roy Rosenzweig, Director of the Center for History and New Media at George Mason University, agreed "the real problem is one of college students using encyclopedias when they should be using more advanced sources" (Jaschik n. pag.). If you wouldn't cite an encyclopedia article in a project, then citing a Wikipedia article likely isn't a good idea either.

Because of their open participation, unreliability, and (potentially) shallow topic coverage, you generally should not cite Wikipedia articles as authoritative sources in college-level writing. This does not mean that Wikipedia is not useful, or that you cannot read it, or that you should not cite it if you do use it. It does mean that Wikipedia is better used in other ways.

Using Wikipedia as a Starting Place

There are productive ways to use Wikipedia. In fact, Wikipedia can be a good source in three different ways. Rather than a source to cite, it can be a source of (1) ideas, (2) links to other texts, and (3) search terms.

To use Wikipedia as a source of ideas, read the Wikipedia article on your topic when you begin a research-based writing project to get a sense of the multiple aspects or angles you might write about. Many Wikipedia articles include a table of contents and headings that provide multiple lenses through which you might frame an argument (e.g., origins, history, economics, impact, production). Looking at the table of contents and headings can help you view your topic from vantage points you might not otherwise consider and can give you directions to pursue and develop in your writing.

You can also use Wikipedia as a gateway to other texts to consult for your research. Wikipedia's Verifiability Policy requires that material posted to articles be verifiable—that is, be cited (Bruns 114, "Wikipedia:Verifiability")—so articles include

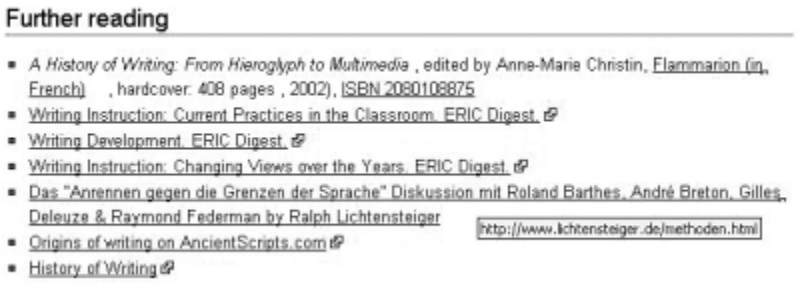
bibliographies, as shown in figure 1. They also frequently include “further reading,” “external link,” or “see also” lists, as shown in figure 2. These lists provide the names of—and often direct links to—other sources. Take advantage of these leads. When you have decided on a topic and are searching for sources to develop and support your thinking, look at these references, external links, and further reading lists. Wikipedia’s Verifiability Policy, however, does not stipulate what kinds of sources contributors must cite to verify the information they post, so these reference and further reading lists do not necessarily provide connections to trustworthy, valid texts appropriate for citing in an academic paper (but, then again, neither do other sources). You still need to evaluate a source to determine if it is suitable for use.



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Figure 1. References section from Wikipedia’s *Web 2.0* article [5]



Further reading

- *A History of Writing: From Hieroglyph to Multimedia* , edited by Anne-Marie Christin, Flammarion (in French) , hardcover: 408 pages , 2002), ISBN 2080108875
- Writing Instruction: Current Practices in the Classroom. ERIC Digest.
- Writing Development. ERIC Digest.
- Writing Instruction: Changing Views over the Years. ERIC Digest.
- Das "Anrennen gegen die Grenzen der Sprache" Diskussion mit Roland Barthes, André Breton, Gilles Deleuze & Raymond Federman by Ralph Lichtensteiger http://www.lichtensteiger.de/methoden.html
- Origins of writing on AncientScripts.com
- History of Writing

Figure 2. Further reading section from Wikipedia’s *Writing* article

Utilizing Wikipedia as a gateway to other sources should not replace going to the library or using your library’s online databases. In fact, reviewing the Wikipedia article on your topic can help you better discover sources in your school’s library. You might read Wikipedia articles to help you generate search terms to use for finding sources in your school library’s catalog and online databases. Ashley Gill (who, like all students quoted in this essay, consented to the use of her real name) explains how she used Wikipedia in this way for an awardwinning research project for her school’s first year composition class:

> For this project, I began on Wikipedia, knowing that results were not accurate, but also knowing I could find useful search terms there. I was only slightly familiar with the psychology angle I was using for my paper, and so Wikipedia gave me a rough sketch of the general background. From here, I used the information I gained from Wikipedia to search for books form [*sic*] the . . . Library. (“Research” 2–3)

Gill acknowledges Wikipedia’s problem with accuracy but outlines ways in which Wikipedia was still really useful in helping her get some general background information to determine search terms to use to find sources through the library. You might find Wikipedia similarly useful.

Using Wikipedia as a Process Guide

Not only is Wikipedia potentially useful for generating ideas, finding sources, and determining search terms, but it is also potentially useful for remembering and understanding some of the tasks that are frequently part of good research-based writing: reviewing, conversing, revising, and sharing. To be clear, I am not suggesting that all types of research-based

writing ask you to do these tasks in exactly the same way or that your writing should emulate a Wikipedia article. However, some of what happens in making successful contributions to Wikipedia parallels some of what happens in producing effective research-based writing. Looking at Wikipedia can help to demystify these practices. These practices happen recursively—that is, they repeat—so the order in which I present them here is not necessarily the best or correct one. While you do not need to move through these practices in a specific order, you will want to engage in these activities for many research-based writing assignments.

The Wkipedia Interface

Before proceeding, let me offer an overview of the Wikipedia interface so that the following discussion, which points to specific aspects of the interface, makes sense. A Wikipedia article's interface has four tabs, as shown in figure 3. These tabs are labeled "article," "discussion," "edit this page," and "history." The "article" tab contains the content of the article. This content is what displays automatically when you open an article in Wikipedia. The "discussion" tab provides access to the conversation surrounding the article, how it is being written, and the topic being written about. On this page users can, among other things, suggest changes to an article, justify changes they made to an article, and ask why other users made changes to an article. You can participate in this conversation. The "edit this page" tab provides a space for users to add, delete, or revise content of an article. This page is where people write the content that is displayed on the "article" page. You can make these changes. Finally, the "history" tab lists all the versions of the article, when they were written, who updated them, and what changes each user made (each author can provide a summary of his or her changes). On the "history" tab users can also compare and contrast selected article versions.



Figure 3: A Wikipedia article interface's four tabs as shown for the Web 2.0 article

Each of the sections below is devoted to a practice common to both successful Wikipedia contributions and research-based writing. In each, I explain how Wikipedia authors engage in that practice, outline how you can learn from what Wikipedians do to engage in that practice for your research-based writing, and finally provide a specific way you can use Wikipedia for help with that practice.

Reviewing

Examining the role of reviewing in contributing to a Wikipedia article can help you understand the role of reviewing in research-based writing. To make a successful contribution to Wikipedia, authors must review what other contributors have already written about the topic. They don't want to include information that the community of people interested in and knowledgeable about the topic has determined to be inappropriate, off topic, or unimportant, or to simply repeat information already published. Such contributions will be deleted—usually quickly—because they do not offer anything new to people's understanding of the topic.

To do this review, successful Wikipedia contributors read texts in and outside of Wikipedia. They look at previous versions of an article on the history page, including the change summaries provided by authors, and read the discussion surrounding an article on the discussion page. To show that they have reviewed other texts published on the topic of the article they are contributing to, Wikipedians also provide citations for material they post. As I indicate above, Wikipedia requires that material posted to articles be verifiable (Bruns 114, "Wikipedia:Verifiability"), so contributors need to demonstrate that they can verify material they post by citing its source. As shown in figure 4, an absence of citations often results in a warning that someone needs to cite a source to support what is written or the text will be removed.

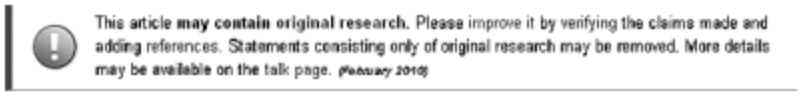


Figure 4: Wikipedia's warning to provide citations to verify claims from the research article

This process parallels what you can do for research-based writing assignments. Review what other contributors have already published about your topic so you avoid writing something that is inappropriate, off topic, or repetitive. Doing this review in formal course writing is somewhat different than doing it in Wikipedia, though. You need to acknowledge in the texts you write that you have reviewed what others have previously published by doing what is called a literature review. A literature review entails summarizing main points from your sources, identifying their insights and/or limitations, and situating these texts in relation to one another and your writing.

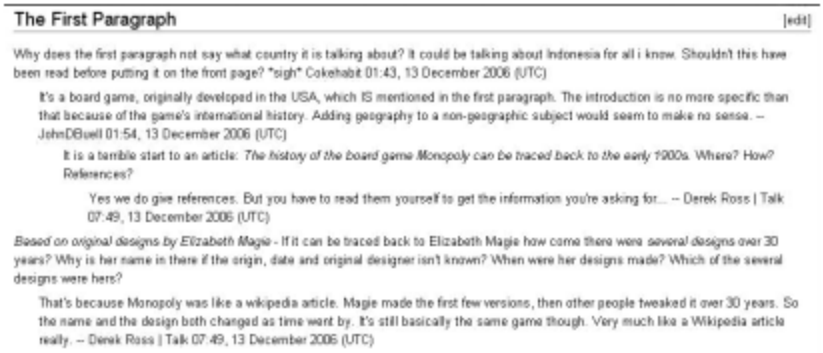
Let's look at an example. Gill provides a literature review in her essay "The Analogical Effects of Neural Hemispheres in 'The Purloined Letter'":

> There are approaches to cognitive, and consequently behavioral, functioning that stem from ideas that each side of the brain thinks differently. Michael Grady asserts that a person who thinks with one side of his brain will differ greatly than a person who thinks with the opposite side (20–21). According to Thomas Regelski, the left side is said to think in the following ways: "linear, sequential, logical, analytical, verbal, fragmenting, differentiating, convergence (seeks closure) . . . conventional symbols, facts (objective, impersonal, confirmable), precision, explicit, Scientific Empiricism/Logical Positivism/certitude/ surety" (30). Conversely, Regelski establishes that the right side is responsible for thinking in the subsequent ways, which seemingly oppose the first set of thinking methods: "circular, simultaneous, paradoxical, combinative, holistic, divergence (content with open-endedness) . . . expressive, vague, implicit . . . Immanence/Introspectionism/Intuitionism/Intuitive Cognition/ indwelling/insight/intuition" (30). Sally Springer and Georg Deutsch assert in their book *Left Brain, Right Brain* that the human brain is divided in this model, and an easier way to interpret this model is "the left hemisphere is something like a digital computer, the right like an analog computer" (185), and that depending on which hemisphere the individual uses most primarily, the individual will think and therefore act in accord with said attributed qualities (186). Poe incorporates many of these characteristics into his characters['] methods during the investigation. The Prefect exemplifies the left side thinking with his systematic and complex approach to finding the purloined letter, while the Minister and Dupin utilize both right and left side attributes, thinking about the cognitions of the other and acting accordingly. (12–13)

Here Gill shows that she has reviewed the work of Grady, Regelski, and Springer and Deutsch by over-viewing their claims about brain function and then connecting those claims to her argument about "The Purloined Letter." Like a successful Wikipedia contributor, she also offers citations, though the form of these citations is different than in Wikipedia. Wikipedia generally uses hyperlinked endnotes, while the most popular academic citation styles from the American Psychological Association (APA) and Modern Language Association (MLA), which Gill uses here, require in-text parenthetical citations and reference and works cited lists, respectively. Despite these differences, the larger idea is the same: in your research-based writing you need to show you have reviewed other relevant texts to demonstrate conversance with appropriate source material and to allow readers to verify your conclusions.

I end this section suggesting a way you can use Wikipedia to help you with this reviewing process. My intention here is to not to prepare you to contribute to a Wikipedia article itself, but rather to use Wikipedia to prepare you to do the reviewing that is part of successful research-based writing. When you are beginning a research-based writing assignment, read the discussion page for the Wikipedia article on the topic you are writing about and identify the debates, questions, and absences that you find. In other words, list what contributors (1) argue about (i.e., what ideas are contentious), (2) have questions about, and (3) think is missing from and should be included in coverage of that topic. Then identify these debates, questions, and absences for the published literature (i.e., books, articles) on your topic. Review what other authors have written about them. Looking at the discussion page first allows you to enact on a smaller scale what you need to do with a wider range of sources for a literature review in a research-based writing project.

Let's consider an example. If you read the discussion page for the Wikipedia article *History of the board game Monopoly*, a section of which is shown in figure 5, you will find that contributors argue about when the game originated and the role Elizabeth Magie played in its creation; they ask questions about the rules for players selling property to one another; and they think information on the volume of game sales, McDonald's Monopoly games/promotions, and the World Monopoly Championships is missing and should be addressed more fully. Were you to write about the history of the board game Monopoly, you now have several avenues (no pun intended!) to read about and know what you might need to review in making an argument on the topic.


The First Paragraph [edit]

Why does the first paragraph not say what country it is talking about? It could be talking about Indonesia for all i know. Shouldn't this have been read before putting it on the front page? *sigh* Cokehabit 01:43, 13 December 2006 (UTC)

It's a board game, originally developed in the USA, which IS mentioned in the first paragraph. The introduction is no more specific than that because of the game's international history. Adding geography to a non-geographic subject would seem to make no sense. -- JohnDBuell 01:54, 13 December 2006 (UTC)

It is a terrible start to an article: *The history of the board game Monopoly can be traced back to the early 1900s.* Where? How? References?

Yes we do give references. But you have to read them yourself to get the information you're asking for... -- Derek Ross | Talk 07:49, 13 December 2006 (UTC)

Based on original designs by Elizabeth Magie - If it can be traced back to Elizabeth Magie how come there were *several designs* over 30 years? Why is her name in there if the origin, date and original designer isn't known? When were her designs made? Which of the several designs were hers?

That's because Monopoly was like a wikipedia article. Magie made the first few versions, then other people tweaked it over 30 years. So the name and the design both changed as time went by. It's still basically the same game though. Very much like a Wikipedia article really. -- Derek Ross | Talk 07:49, 13 December 2006 (UTC)

Figure 5: Section of the discussion page from Wikipedia's History of the board game Monopoly article

Conversing

A second practice successful Wikipedia contributors engage in that reflects a successful practice of research-based writing is conversing. Productive Wikipedia authors situate their contributions to an article in relation to those of past authors, recognizing that making a contribution to an article is like stepping into an ongoing conversation. Wikipedia authors engage in this practice by posting to the discussion page—for example, by asking questions of and responding to other contributors and by arguing for why they made certain changes—and by providing change summaries for their contributions when they edit an article, particularly change summaries that identify briefly why they made a certain change—for example, "corrected factual errors in introduction," "deleted irrelevant information to maintain article focus."

As with reviewing, conversing is another practice frequently characteristic of successful research-based writing. You should respond to the sources you use rather than just report on or parrot them. While Wikipedia contributors can literally insert themselves into a conversation on a Wikipedia article discussion page, you can engage in conversation with sources in research-based writing by quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing them; by indicating agreements, disagreements, and connections among them and you; and by showing their insights, limitations, and applications.

Consider the following example. In a paragraph from "Literacy," an award-winning first year composition essay on the need to "broaden the range of serious reading material for youth to include comic books and the [I]nternet" (16), Lindsey Chesmar acknowledges what two other sources, Bob Hoover (italicized below) and Janell D. Wilson and Linda H. Casey (bolded below), have written about youth reading behaviors and inserts what she wishes to say in response to them (unformatted text below):

> *The NEA report, "To Read or Not to Read,"* [sic] *shows "the startling declines, in how much and how well Americans read" (Hoover 1)*. Although many people could have already guessed, this NEA report officially states what has been on the decline since the early 1990s. However, it seems as though the NEA left out some important data when conducting their study. **According to Wilson and Casey, "comic books have been at the top of the student preference list for sometime, yet it seems that they may not count as 'serious' reading material" (47). Children and young adults have been reading comics and comic books since their beginning. Some educators also use comics in class as a way to interest students who would be otherwise unwilling to read (Wilson and Casey 47)**. However, literary studies rarely include comic books in their questions and surveys of youth. If a young adult spends 3 hours a week reading comic books, the study will not include that in their overall findings. It is as if that time the young adult spends reading means nothing. *The NEA itself did not include the "double-digit growth in recent years" in sales of books aimed at teens (Hoover 1).* This statistic leads me to believe that teens are actually reading more than what the recent studies suggest. Leaving out some young adults' reading time and the growing popularity of young adult books could lead to misrepresentations in the results of the overall literacy studies. This also may lead the young adult to believe that what they are reading is not worthy enough, or "serious" enough, to count towards anything. They may feel discouraged and give up reading all together after finding out the things they like to read are not valid in the literary and educational worlds. (17, italics and boldface added)

In this paragraph, Chesmar makes clear that she knows important components of the ongoing conversation about literacy and reading: the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) released a study that reports reading (amount and proficiency) has declined in the United States and, though popular among young adults, comic books did not count as reading material for the study. She puts sources discussing these ideas into conversation; note the back and forth between the bold, italics, and unformatted text. She then responds to these sources, writing, "This statistic leads me to believe that teens are actually

reading more than what the recent studies suggest" (17). Chesmar thereby establishes her role in the conversation: she thinks the NEA report provides misleading results because it ignores certain types of reading material, which, for her, can have some troubling consequences.

Again, I end this section offering a suggestion for how you can use Wikipedia to help you with the research-based writing process—in this case, by putting your sources into conversation with one another and with you. One way to engage in a conversation like Chesmar does is to construct a dialogue between your sources like the dialogue on a Wikipedia article discussion page. Identify topics your sources address and create headings for them (e.g., concerns, benefits, history). Then quote and paraphrase relevant material from your sources and group it under the appropriate heading. Finally, situate these quotes and paraphrases in relation to one another and add yourself to the discussion. Literally construct a dialogue between them and you. The idea is to see yourself as a participant with a voice in the conversation.

Revising

Another practice that is part of successful Wikipedia and researchbased writing is revising. Effective Wikipedia contributors revise articles frequently. They take advantage of the wiki capability to edit the articles they read. To be successful, they do not give up when other people delete or change their contributions but instead revise in response to the feedback they receive (be that from posts to the discussion page, change summaries on the history page, or administrator explanations for why something was removed). The history page for nearly any Wikipedia article provides evidence of how frequently Wikipedians revise. Figure 6, for instance, shows that authors made eleven revisions to the *Michael Jackson* article in one hour on 28 June 2009. As this page illustrates, making an enduring contribution to a Wikipedia article is an ongoing process of negotiation with the reading audience. Moreover, those contributors who revise the most and have their article contributions last for a long time can gain in status among the Wikipedia community and be promoted to administrators. It is, in other words, through revising that Wikipedia contributors earn respect.

To succeed at research-based writing, you, like a successful Wikipedian, should also revise your texts multiple times in response to feedback you receive. You might receive such feedback from teachers, peers, writing center consultants, roommates, and friends who offer advice and suggestions rather than from strangers who change the text itself, as is the case for Wikipedia contributors. But the larger idea remains: creating an effective text involves multiple iterations of recursive revision. You need to write a draft, get some feedback, respond to that feedback in your next draft, and repeat the process. Good writing entails thinking through your ideas on the page or screen. Rarely do people record perfectly what they think the first time they write it down. Indeed, you often don't know what you think until you write it down. It is not uncommon, therefore, to find at the end of your first draft the thesis to develop in your second. That's okay! Knowledge production through writing is an ongoing process.

One way to use Wikipedia to help with revising a course assignment is to post a change to a Wikipedia article based on a draft you are writing, see how others respond and analyze those responses. In other words, give your idea a test drive with a public audience. If you aren't comfortable posting directly to an article or are afraid your contribution might get taken down, suggest a change on the discussion page and likewise chronicle the responses. Then revise your draft based on the feedback and responses you receive. The point of this activity isn't just to revise the Wikipedia article itself (though you might chose to do that later), but to use responses and what you learn by posting to Wikipedia to help you revise your research-based writing for class.

Sharing

A final practice successful Wikipedians engage in that reflects a successful practice of research-based writing is sharing. To get feedback, Wikipedia contributors share their writing; they post it for public viewing by editing an article and/or contributing to the discussion page for that article. Otherwise, they do not get feedback, their writing cannot have an impact on others' understanding of a topic, and they cannot gain in status among the Wikipedia community. To more fully participate in this sharing, they might even register and create a profile so other contributors and readers know who they are and can contact them. Professor Mark A. Wilson, for example, identifies contact with other people as a beneficial outcome of sharing his writing and photographs on the *Great Inagua Island* Wikipedia article. He was even invited to speak at the school of someone who saw what he shared.

You also need to share your writing to be successful. While this may seem obvious on some level, sharing involves more than turning in a final draft to a teacher. You have to be willing and prepared to share your writing earlier in your writing process. You can share by taking your writing to the writing center,[6] giving it to a classmate for a peer workshop, or reviewing it in a conference with an instructor. This sharing is clearly less public than posting to a widely accessible website like Wikipedia, but it still entails making written work available to a reading audience and is a critical part of the learning process. Key

is that in order to get the most benefit from sharing—that is, to get feedback to which you can respond—you need to be prepared to share your writing prior to its due date. In other words, you cannot procrastinate.

Using Wikipedia as I suggest above in the revising section is also a good way to share your writing. After all, a goal of sharing is to get feedback to revise. You can, however, use wiki technology in another way to share your writing. You can record in a course wiki (or another wiki you create) your writing of a text, provide change summaries for all of the different versions along the way, and ask others to review your progress. Using a wiki in this way allows you to reflect on what you are doing and provides an accessible venue for you to share your work—one where your peers and your teacher can respond.

Conclusion

Understanding how to use (and not to use) Wikipedia as a source can help you avoid relying on Wikipedia in unproductive ways and can help you see sources as more than static products to plunk into your writing. In other words, looking at Wikipedia as a starting place (for ideas, sources, search terms, etc.) shows the importance of engaging with rather than ventriloquizing sources—of viewing sources as means to spur and develop your thinking rather than as means to get someone else to do your thinking for you.

Doing research-based writing can also be less daunting—and more fulfilling and fun—when you understand the practices involved and realize that these activities are an important part of knowledge creation. No one assigned Wikipedia contributors to proceed as they do. Since their goal, however, is to add to our understanding of a topic— the very same goal you have for the research-based writing you do in first year composition—they engage in certain activities: reviewing, conversing, revising, and sharing. Not all Wikipedians perform these practices in the same order in the same way, but successful Wikipedians do them. And the most dedicated contributors stay involved even after their text is shared: they read, respond, and revise, over and over again. The process doesn't stop when their writing is made public. That's just the beginning. If you approach your research-based writing in a similar fashion, it'll likely be the beginning of a journey of knowledge creation for you, too.

Notes

1. You may be familiar with the term research paper and may have been asked to write one for some of your classes. I don't use that term here, however. There are two primary reasons: (1) Research "papers" need not be papers anymore. That is, what you write need not be in the form of a print document. It might be a web site or a video or a poster or some other multimedia form. The term research paper doesn't encapsulate all these possibilities. (2) Research papers are often associated with presentations of what other people have written about a topic. When people hear research paper, in other words, they often think of compiling what other authoritative, smart people have to say about a topic and calling it a day. The kind of writing you are asked to do in college, however, requires more than that. It asks for your response to and application of what others have written. You need to do something with the sources you read (other than just string together quotes from them in your paper). So instead of research paper, I use research-based writing. This term emphasizes the activity (writing) rather than the medium (paper). This term also presents research as the basis (research-based), a beginning rather than an end.
2. I put the word "encyclopedia" in quotation marks because I argue that calling Wikipedia an encyclopedia and evaluating it based on the standards of print-based encyclopedias misrepresents the way it works (see Purdy W352, W357, W365).
3. For clarity, I italicize the names of Wikipedia articles in this chapter.
4. That Wikipedia provides the same shallow coverage as other encyclopedias, or even that it should be considered an encyclopedia, is debatable (Bruns 101–133, Levinson 95–98). Nonetheless, its prevailing classification as an encyclopedia raises concern.
5. This image, like all the images in this chapter, comes from the English version of Wikipedia (http://en.Wikipedia.org/) and, like all Wikipedia content (except the logo, which Wikipedia does not allow to be reproduced), is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike (http:// creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0) and GNU Free Documentation License (http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html), which permit reproduction of content with attribution for non-commercial purposes, as explained by Wikipedia's official policy on reusing Wikipedia content ("Wikipedia:Reusing Wikipedia Content").
6. See Ben Rafoth's "Why Visit Your Campus Writing Center?" chapter in this Writing Spaces volume.

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13.3: NONFICTION

13.3.1: Nonfiction
13.3.2: Nonfiction Exercises

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13.3.1: Nonfiction

Nonfiction[79] is content (often, in the form of a story) whose creator, in good faith, assumes responsibility for the truth or accuracy of the events, people, and/or information presented. Authors of such accounts genuinely believe or claim them to be truthful at the time of their composition or, at least, pose them to a convinced audience as historically or empirically factual.

types of nonfiction:

Common literary examples of nonfiction include expository, argumentative, functional, and opinion pieces; essays on art or literature; biographies; memoirs; journalism; and historical, scientific, technical, or economic writings.

Journals, photographs, textbooks, travel books, blueprints, and diagrams are also often considered non-fictional. Including information that the author knows to be untrue within any of these works is usually regarded as dishonest. Other works can legitimately be either fiction or nonfiction, such as journals of self-expression, letters, magazine articles, and other expressions of imagination. Though they are mostly either one or the other, it is possible for there to be a blend of both. Some fiction may include nonfictional elements.

What is a "life" when it's written down? How does memory inform the present? Why are autobiographies and memoirs so popular?

distinctions:

Simplicity, clarity and directness are some of the most important considerations when producing nonfiction. Audience is important in any artistic or descriptive endeavor, but it is perhaps most important in nonfiction. In fiction, the writer believes that readers will make an effort to follow and interpret an indirectly or abstractly presented progression of theme, whereas the production of nonfiction has more to do with the direct provision of information. Understanding of the potential readers' use for the work and their existing knowledge of a subject are both fundamental for effective nonfiction.

elements

Here are some typical elements in nonfiction pieces:

- Factual information, according to what the writer remembers
- Reflection
- Organization: if not chronological, it should still make sense to reader
- Quality content: the details/description should be concise and vivid
- Dialogue (optional)

a student example of nonfiction[80]

We were sitting in the living room when it happened, and I was so nervous I could have exploded. My heart was in my mouth,

and the pounding of it made me so anxious I struggled to get the words out. But I had to say it. I had no choice. I'd never been extraordinarily brave, but when something was necessary, I could do it.

"Do you even love me anymore?", I asked him, looking down. My voice didn't sound like my own.

I knew his answer long before he said it. He paused, and that silence was hours, years, and endless nights. The end of a relationship with someone I adored with all my heart, but who didn't adore me. His dark eyes found mine, and, very quietly, he answered.

"No," he said. He couldn't look at me, and instead focused his eyes down on the floor. I thought he was a coward. I wasn't angry about it at the time, but disgusted. He had been blatantly unhappy in our relationship for so long, but didn't have the guts to end it. When you find a wounded animal you don't drag out their pain. You do the humane thing and shoot them, ending their suffering. You give them peace. And he was a coward who never had the strength to end mine.

I always despised crying. I was raised in a broken home, one where crying loudly would be met with blind drunken anger. So when he finally admitted what I had known for too long, I kept my cool. I swallowed those feelings into a pit and held them there. I didn't want them anyways. Nobody likes to feel hurt or weak.

"Okay. I'm moving out today then.", I said. Cordially, cool-ly. Like this was a business meeting between coworkers rather than a break-up.

I called my friend, Kaity, and asked her if I could stay with her. She accepted. My roommate-ship with her would not last very long. After it ended I would live with my good friend Parsheana before she moved out and I lived alone. When we were roommates I met some of her band friends from Hazen, including my now-boyfriend Ethan. My happiness with him always makes me wish I left David sooner. Everyone in the world deserves to be with someone who loves them.

When I looked back years later, I could never find where it went wrong. I still can't. When did our relationship turn, from late night dates with Chinese food and video games, into mean remarks about my body? I used to sit behind David on the couch as he sat on the floor, and hunch over him. I would rest my head on his shoulder and twine my fingers through hair. I loved him.

Becoming best friends with David saved me. I got away from my step-family, who promptly kicked me out three weeks after I told them I had a boyfriend. He helped me see that life wasn't so bad. It wasn't stupidly pointless. David wrapped me in his arms and understood that feeling. He had the scars on his arms to prove it. And he was my best friend, but somewhere after our one-year anniversary he stopped being happy. He started saying negative things about me. He stopped sleeping in the same bed, arguing that he wanted to stay up and play games all night. He started pulling away with irritation when I touched him.

I'll never forget one of the first times that David said something mean to me. I can't remember if it was the very first, but I think it was close. His words turned me into a statue. Remembering them brings back that feeling. It's like they're frozen deep in my brain. I was trying on some new summer clothes, some capris and a t-shirt. He and his friend Christian were playing PlayStation in the living room. I wanted to show off my new clothes, and went out to the living room. I was confident. I felt cute, and I liked wearing capris a lot so I was rocking them. I got David's attention, and he looked at me, and said something I never expected him to say.

"Wow, you need to lose weight," he said. Nonchalantly, like his behavior was completely normal.

Ouch. I really did freeze up. It'd have been easier to have been slapped across the face, in a way. Christian stopped playing PlayStation and looked at me. He wasn't the best guy, and had a bad habit of fucking around on his girlfriends, but he had a heart. He had faults, but putting down his girlfriends wasn't one of them. The look he gave me was full of sympathy. That look did it. Staring into Christian's blue eyes pulled me out of my frozen trance. I began to tear up before heading back into the bedroom. David followed me, and told me all about how "he wanted the best for me", and he "wanted to help". Swearing that he loved me and apologizing.

After that happened the comments became pretty regular. When you read about abuse you learn that it escalates a little at a time until it becomes normal. Well, him saying that to me normalized it, and made it regular. Suddenly it was all about me being too fat. [...] I wasn't horrendously overweight or anything, but the comments did their toll on my self-esteem. I started to hate myself and every curve I had.

It hurt to take that leap and force him to admit he didn't want to be with me anymore, but those words ripped off the band-aid. It wasn't easy to heal. Going through a breakup and living on my own forced me to be more independent. I have this journal entry

from that time period where I wrote about how lost I felt. I didn't know who I was and I was just going through the motions. I got my GED because I should, accepted a promotion at work because it paid well, and started college.

Eventually I figured it out, but when I think about this chapter of my life now I think of self-discovery. Leaving David took courage, and everything that came after took even more. I learned to deal with stressful adult responsibilities on my own. Bills, cleaning, and car troubles kept me busy, but it was peaceful. I focused on myself. In the start of my next relationship I stood my ground when I didn't like something, and I still do.

My experiences with my ex taught me that your love for others should not dull the love you have for yourself. For, at the end of the day you should feel good about who you are. There will be times in life where you have to stand alone, where it gets hard to carry on, and in those times you have to hold yourself up. You have to be resilient and look out for yourself. You are your own person, and can be anything you want to be, and I choose to wake up and be myself and find joy in doing so. As Dr. Seuss once said, "There is no one alive who youer than you!". My breakup with David helped me realize this, because it pushed me out of being who I was. I was comfortable and co-dependent. It made me a better person. One that is stronger and knows who I am.

questions / activities.

<Students might be assigned – as part of the final project? – to create questions and activities for chapters that do not contain those pieces quite yet.>

HERE IS THE PRACTICE PROJECT

Compose an original piece about a person, place, or thing in your life. Make sure to include these elements: Factual information, according to what the writer remembers; Reflection; Organization; Quality Content/Details

[79]Wikipedia contributors. "Non-fiction." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, 14 Nov. 2016. Web. 14 Nov. 2016. Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License.

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[80]This piece of nonfiction by Jamie Olson is licensed CC-BY-NC-SA; it was created for NDSCS English 211 in the Spring of 2021.The prompt for this project was "Write about an event that changed you."

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13.3.2: Nonfiction Exercises

exercise 1: jekyll and hyde.[81]

Describe yourself twice. Once as the hero and once as the antagonist.

exercise 2: sweater.[82]

Describe your favorite item of clothing. Is it a favorite because of how it feels, how it looks, or because of an event you wore it to? What do you think the item of clothing shows about you?

exercise 3: blue.[83]

You are talking to a blind man who asks you to describe the color of the sky. Write down what you would tell this man without once using the word "blue" in your explanation.

exercise 4: translate your memories.[84]

Study an old photo of yourself or your family from your childhood. It's probably easy to remember the who, the where, the what. But for this exercise we want to go deeper. Close your eyes and remember the details of the event. How did you feel when anticipating the event? How did you feel if it was a surprise? How did you feel if it didn't turn out as you anticipate? How did others at the event treat you? How did you react to them? Now, translate those FEELINGS into an event, place, child that would take place today.

exercise 5: the food critic.[85]

Write a review of a restaurant at which you recently ate. Describe the food as much as you can. Feel free to be eviscerating as well.

exercise 6: your name.

Why do you have the first name you have? What is the story behind it? What is the history behind your last name? (You might have to interview family for this.)

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[81] https://blog.reedsy.com/writing-exer...kyll-and-hyde/

[82] https://blog.reedsy.com/writing-exer...block/sweater/

[83] https://blog.reedsy.com/writing-exer...-s-block/blue/

[84] https://blog.reedsy.com/writing-exer...your-memories/

[85] https://blog.reedsy.com/writing-exer...e-food-critic/

Sometimes the words come out of my fingers better than they come out of my mouth.

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13.4: 20 MOST COMMON GRAMMAR ERRORS

13.4.1: Wrong Word
13.4.2: Comma After Introductory Element
13.4.3: Documentation Common Error
13.4.4: Pronoun Reference
13.4.5: Spelling
13.4.6: Quotation Error
13.4.7: Unnecessary Comma
13.4.8: Capitalization
13.4.9: Missing Word
13.4.10: Faulty Sentence Structure
13.4.11: Missing Comma with Nonrestrictive Element
13.4.12: Verb Tense Shift
13.4.13: Missing Comma in Compound Sentence
13.4.14: Apostrophe Errors
13.4.15: Run-On Sentences
13.4.16: Comma Splice
13.4.17: Pronoun Agreement
13.4.18: Poorly Integrated Quote
13.4.19: Hyphens
13.4.20: Sentence Fragment
13.4.21: Try It Out
13.4.22: Putting It All Together
13.4.23: Time to Write

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13.4.1: Wrong Word

Wrong Word

Wrong word errors are really common and are number one on the list. Sometimes, we make a wrong word error when we are using the thesaurus and trying to find the biggest word we can find in order to make ourselves sound really smart. This isn't the greatest strategy. Sometimes, it's better just to be simple, and it's always better just to be clear.

We also have to be careful of the spell checker. Sometimes, we misspell words, and then the spell checker makes a change to a word we don't want. Of course, we may be in a hurry and never even notice. Take a look at this sentence to see the problems wrong word errors can create:

- Sometimes, I will just sit and watch strangers in the crowd, but it is defiantly awful when I accidentally make eye contact with one of them.

In this sentence, writing "defiantly" when we mean "definitely", *definitely* changes the meaning in the sentence.

Here is the sentence again with the correct word:

- Sometimes, I will just sit and watch strangers in the crowd, but it is definitely awful when I accidentally make eye contact with one of them.

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13.4.2: Comma After Introductory Element

Comma After Introductory Element

It's important to remember that introductory words and phrases—any words or phrases that come before the main clause in a sentence—should be set off with a comma. Here is an example of a sentence that does not include the required comma and then the correction:

- (Missing Comma) In case you were wondering I never allow myself to be exposed to direct sunlight unless I have my scarf, my sunglasses, and a large umbrella.
- In case you were wondering, I never allow myself to be exposed to direct sunlight unless I have my scarf, my sunglasses, and a large umbrella.

For more information on this comma rule, be sure to check out the Comma section in the Punctuation chapter.

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13.4.3: Documentation Common Error

Documentation Common Error

Incomplete or Missing Documentation

The third most common error on the list relates to proper documentation. It's so important to remember to cite all borrowed information. No matter your documentation style, whether it is APA format, MLA format, or Chicago Style, all require some kind of citation for quoted, paraphrased, and summarized material.

REMEMBER: You must not only cite people's words, but you must also cite their ideas. Errors of this nature can get you into a lot of trouble because incomplete or missing documentation is plagiarism.

For more information on proper documentation in APA, MLA, or Chicago Style, be sure to check out the Citation & Documentation area of the Excelsior OWL.

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13.4.4: Pronoun Reference

Pronoun Reference

Pronoun reference errors also make the list because pronouns seem to give a lot of beginning writers some trouble. A pronoun reference error occurs when you use a pronoun like "he" or "she", and it's not clear what that pronoun refers to. Here is an example:

- When Darth Vader and Luke Skywalker were battling with their light sabers, he became angry.

Who does "he" refer to? It isn't clear. A pronoun should clearly refer to its antecedent (the word it replaces), so if the antecedent is not clear, you need to revise. Here's an example of how you might correct the pronoun reference error:

- When Darth Vader and Luke Skywalker were battling with their light sabers, Luke became angry.

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13.4.5: Spelling

Spelling

In the age of spell checkers, it's hard to imagine that spelling errors would top the most common error list, but they do. First, it's important to remember to run the spell checker. Even though you have to remember to check your spell checker, spell checkers are a good place to start when it comes to spelling errors.

Still, there are plenty of spelling errors the spell checker won't catch. In addition to possibly creating wrong-word errors, as discussed earlier, spell checkers also miss misspelled words like names and other proper nouns, as illustrated in the following example:

- On my vacation to France, I went to Pares and visited the Eifel Tower, the Louvre museum, and Jim Morrison's grave.

The spell checker missed these errors. Here is the corrected version of the sentence:

- On my vacation to France, I went to Paris and visited the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre museum, and Jim Morrison's grave.

So, be sure to run your spell checker, but, then, don't forget to double and triple check your writing. Spell checkers do not catch everything.

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13.4.6: Quotation Error

Quotation Error

Using quotation marks correctly can be a little tricky, especially when you need to use other types of punctuation with them. Mechanical errors related to quotation marks make the most-common error list because beginning writers often forget that commas and periods go inside the quotation marks. Here is an example:

- “When you are courting a nice girl, an hour seems like a second. When you sit on a red-hot cinder, a second seems like an hour. That’s relativity”, said Einstein.

In this case, the comma placed outside the quotation marks is incorrect. The comma should be placed inside the quotation marks like this:

- “When you are courting a nice girl, an hour seems like a second. When you sit on a red-hot cinder, a second seems like an hour. That’s relativity,” said Einstein.

It’s important to note, however, that not all punctuation automatically goes inside the quotation marks. Question marks are a little trickier. If the only part in quotations is a question, then the question mark should go inside the quotation marks; otherwise, the question mark actually goes outside of the quotation marks. Tricky for sure!

Also, beginning writers often forget that titles of shorter works, like essays and short stories, should be placed inside quotation marks. Longer works, like books and magazines, should be placed in italics.

- I read the essay “The Marginal World” by Rachel Carson in the book *Best American Essays of the Century*.

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13.4.7: Unnecessary Comma

Unnecessary Comma

When beginning writers are first learning comma rules, they have a tendency to forget that the rules all depend upon the situation. So, when you learn to place a comma before a coordinating conjunction like "and, but," or "so" when you join two independent clauses, you might have an urge to place a comma before "and, but," or "so" every time you use these words. You should avoid this urge!

Just because you need to use commas with coordinating conjunctions sometimes doesn't mean you'll use them all the time.

- I have a wide variety of supernatural powers, but wish I had the power to go out in the daylight.

In this example, you don't need a comma before the "but" because you aren't combining two independent clauses. Here is a corrected version of the sentence:

- I have a wide variety of supernatural powers but wish I had the power to go out in the daylight.

You should also be careful that you aren't using commas unnecessarily around information that is essential to the sentence. The comma rule is that non-essential information should be set off with commas, but essential information should not.

- I find that a little fear is the best seasoning, for my food, so I often sneak up on my husband while he cooks and frighten him.

In this example, "for my food" is not extra information that should be set off with commas. But, you do need a comma before the "so" to separate the two independent clauses. Here is a corrected version of the sentence:

- I find that a little fear is the best seasoning for my food, so I often sneak up on my husband while he cooks and frighten him.

For more information on these comma rules, be sure to check out the Comma section in the Punctuation chapter.

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13.4.8: Capitalization

Capitalization

Some teachers blame text messaging. After all, how many times have you written out a quick text message, not worrying about where you need to capitalize? You, like many others, have probably done this quite often.

Interestingly, capitalization errors appeared on the most-common error list even before everyone was walking around with their heads over their cell phones text messaging every other minute.

Of course, the reality is that teachers now often complain that students don't even capitalize "I" in a sentence. That could likely be related to text messaging. Still, other capitalization errors may not be.

Whatever the reasons behind the errors, it's important to be aware of capitalization rules. Be careful to capitalize words that should be capitalized, such as proper nouns, and not capitalize words that should not be capitalized.

But, how can you know what should and shouldn't be capitalized? If you are unsure, review the differences between proper nouns and common nouns in the Parts of Speech chapter.

Capitalization errors can really have a negative impact on the impressions your readers have of your writing. Take a look at the following sentence:

- i took a walk in central park and saw a Mime, who was pretending to be a Policeman, get sprayed with mace by an elderly woman because she thought he was trying to steal her purse.

Now, take a look at the sentence with correct capitalization:

- I took a walk in Central Park and saw a mime, who was pretending to be a policeman, get sprayed with mace by an elderly woman because she thought he was trying to steal her purse.

It's important to edit carefully and review the rules if necessary!

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13.4.9: Missing Word

Missing Word

Missing word errors make this list because we are too often in a hurry when we edit. Our brains are great. We can read right through sentences and put in the words that need to be there even if words are missing. Of course, others might quickly notice the error, so we have to find ways to slow ourselves down and edit carefully. You don't want to write a sentence like the following example that is missing a small word with big meaning:

- I enjoy walking alone in the woods at night because I never what I will meet while I am out there in the dark.

Did you see the error? Look at the revised sentence below:

- I enjoy walking alone in the woods at night because I never know what I will meet while I am out there in the dark.

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13.4.10: Faulty Sentence Structure

Faulty Sentence Structure

Have you ever had a teacher say, “That sentence starts one way and ends another”? If you have, don’t feel badly. Others make this same mistake all the time. Sometimes, we simply lose our train of thought when we write, and we literally start a sentence one way and end it another, as illustrated in the following example:

- I occasionally get the urge to study late at night for instance my exams are going to take me longer than usual to study for because this works.

It’s tough to make sense of this sentence, right?

Of course, this is not the only faulty sentence structure error you might make. It’s important to pay close attention to your sentence structure to make sure you have both a subject and a verb. And, if you are listing items or phrases in a sentence, make sure you keep the items in your list in the same form. Doing so keeps your sentences “parallel,” which is a good thing.

Here is an example of a sentence without parallel structure:

- I start my day with breakfast, exercising, and checking out the latest blogs.

In the sentence above, "breakfast" is a noun, and "exercising" and "checking" begin verb phrases. The items on the list are not in the same form. Here is a correction where the items listed are in the same form:

- I start my day by eating breakfast, exercising, and checking out the latest blogs.

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13.4.11: Missing Comma with Nonrestrictive Element

Missing Comma with Nonrestrictive Element

Just as you should not put commas around essential or restrictive information in a sentence, you must remember to put commas around information that is non-essential or nonrestrictive.

If the information is not essential to the meaning of the sentence, you need to be sure to set it off with commas. Here is an example of a sentence without proper commas around the nonrestrictive element:

- Moving into a cave especially one that is already occupied is not a decision one should make without considerable forethought.

Here is the corrected version:

- Moving into a cave, especially one that is already occupied, is not a decision one should make without considerable forethought.

If you have trouble deciding whether or not you need commas around “extra” information in your sentences, be sure to review the comma rules in the Punctuation chapter.

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13.4.12: Verb Tense Shift

Verb Tense Shift

You want to be sure that you are always consistent with your verb tense. When you shift verb tenses for no reason, and this is an easy mistake to make, you can really confuse your readers.

If you're writing in the present tense, be sure you stay in the present tense. If you're writing in the past tense, be sure you stay in the past tense. The exception would be if you need to shift tenses to tell a story, but that would be purposeful shifting. It's the random, accidental shifting that causes the problems, as illustrated in this example:

She grabs my hand then flipped me like I weighed nothing. This showed what a good self-defense course has done.

Here is what a corrected version of the sentence looks like:

She grabbed my hand then flipped me like I weighed nothing. This showed what a good self-defense course has done.

You should also be aware that certain types of writing require either past or present tense. For example, research in APA format often needs to be presented in the past tense, but a literary analysis written in MLA format needs to be presented using present tense verbs. It's called the literary present tense. Below is a table of APA 7th edition verb tense recommendations for literature reviews and research papers.

If you're ever unsure about tense requirements, be sure to ask your professor.

Paper Section	Recommended tense	Example
Literature review (or whenever discussing other researchers' work)	Past	Quinn (2020) presented
	Present Perfect	Since then, many investigators have used
Method Description of procedure	Past	Participants completed a survey
	Present Perfect	Others have used similar approaches
Reporting of results	Past	Results were nonsignificant Scores increased Hypotheses were supported
Discussion of implications of results	Present	The results indicate
Presentation of conclusions, limitations, future directions, and so forth	Present	We conclude Limitations of the study are

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13.4.13: Missing Comma in Compound Sentence

Missing Comma in Compound Sentence

When you join two independent clauses (complete sentences) with a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet—also known as the FANBOYS), you must place a comma before the coordinating conjunction.

The rule is very clear, here. The comma before the coordinating conjunction works *with* the coordinating conjunction to help make a proper boundary between the two independent clauses.

- I understand that vampires and ghouls need love but I don't think they really understand just how attached I am to my vital, bodily fluids.

In this example, the sentence is missing the comma before the but because the but joins two complete thoughts. Leaving out this necessary comma creates an error because you have two sentences connected without a proper boundary between those sentences.

Here is a correction for the sentence:

- I understand that vampires and ghouls need love, but I don't think they really understand just how attached I am to my vital, bodily fluids.

For more information on this comma rule, be sure to check out the Comma section in the Punctuation chapter.

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13.4.14: Apostrophe Errors

Apostrophe Errors

Apostrophes give many writers a lot of trouble. Sometimes, you might be tempted to put an apostrophe where it does not belong, such as when you are simply making a word plural. Other times, you need to make a word possessive, but you might forget to use the apostrophe.

Then, of course, there is that whole "its" / "it's" thing that confuses most everyone.

Remember, the rule is to use an apostrophe when you need to show possession or ownership. The exception is with its.

"Its" shows ownership because "it's" means "it is". So, it's like "it's" is already taken, so "its" gets to be an ownership exception. To make sure you are using "it's" correctly, just say "it is" when you read it. If it makes sense, you're fine. However, if you're trying to show ownership, and it is would not work in the sentence, you need to make the change to "its".

For more information on the apostrophe, be sure to check out the Apostrophe section in the Punctuation chapter (or if you just need to brush up your skills, visit the Apostrophe Refresher). Otherwise, you might end up with a sentence like this:

- Its abundantly clear, to me, that creature's of the night are just misunderstood and misguided beings who sometimes err in judgment and eat their neighbors' as well as their neighbors families.

And, you would want a sentence like this:

- It's abundantly clear, to me, that creatures of the night are just misunderstood and misguided beings who sometimes err in judgment and eat their neighbors as well as their neighbors' families.

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13.4.15: Run-On Sentences

Run-On Sentences

Fused or Run-On Sentence

A fused sentence is sometimes called a run-on sentence. The concept is simple. If your teacher marks fused sentence or run-on on your paper, it's because you have put two complete thoughts or independent clauses together without the proper punctuation or any kind of sentence boundary. Here is an example:

- There were a thousand zombies cheering for the home team when I walked onto the field I don't think even one of them noticed me.

And, here is the corrected sentence:

- There were a thousand zombies cheering for the home team when I walked onto the field; I don't think even one of them noticed me.

The key is to remember that you must have some kind of boundary between your independent clauses. You can use punctuation, such as the period or the semicolon, or you can use a comma *with* a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, for, nor, so, yet).

NOTE: A comma alone cannot separate independent clauses. Using a comma to separate independent clauses actually creates a comma splice.

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13.4.16: Comma Splice

Comma Splice

Many students think a comma splice is just any kind of comma error, but a comma splice is a very specific type of comma error.

A comma splice occurs when you use a comma to separate two independent clauses. A comma is not strong enough to perform this function, which causes the problem. It's important to remember to use proper punctuation to separate your independent clauses; otherwise, you end up with a sentence like this:

He promised me, if I didn't report him, he would never do it again, however, the next night, he was back, playing his bagpipes under my balcony.

Here, you should notice the only comma error is the one between "again" and "however". The reason this is a comma splice is because "the" actually begins a new sentence or independent clause, but there is not a proper boundary between these two sentences. Here is how the sentence could be corrected:

He promised me, if I didn't report him, he would never do it again; however, the next night, he was back, playing his bagpipes under my balcony.

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13.4.17: Pronoun Agreement

Pronoun Agreement

Pronoun agreement can be trickier than it might seem on the surface. The rule is that we must make sure our pronouns agree in number and gender with the nouns they are replacing. For example, when we write a sentence about a girl named Sophia, we would use "she" as the pronoun to refer to her.

But things get a little more confusing when we are talking about a kind of abstract person, and the “rule” on this subject has recently changed in most circles. In the recent past, to avoid sexist language, we couldn’t write "he" or "she". Instead, we had to write "he or she".

But, because most people would just end up writing "they", which technically does not agree in number, the “rule” began to change. This is a great example of how living languages, like English, change, and the change happens when people make a change happen. It’s really pretty exciting!

It used to be incorrect to use what we now call “the singular they.” Here is an example:

- If you want a child to learn, it is helpful if you make learning fun for them.

Now, many style guides accept the use of "they" or "them" to refer to a singular noun.

So, now, this would be considered correct:

- If you want a child to learn, it is helpful if you make learning fun for them.

When in doubt, using a plural noun is safest:

- If you want children to learn, it is helpful if you make learning fun for them.

This way, you avoid any awkwardness of the singular "them", and your pronoun is now also in agreement with "children".

NOTE: Because the use of the singular "they" is new, you may find some people who disagree, but most academics now agree that the singular "they" is correct. Please always refer to your style guide, as some style guides still recommend not using the singular "they".

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13.4.18: Poorly Integrated Quote

Poorly Integrated Quote

Any teacher who has ever assigned and graded writing has probably complained about this error. Too often, beginning writers will simply “plop” a quote into a paragraph without any setup or context. This is incredibly confusing for your readers, so it’s important to make sure you smoothly integrate your quotes into the sentences around the quote.

Although there are no “rules” for such things, it’s always a good idea to provide a phrase of some kind to set up your quote and some commentary after your quote to make sure your readers understand the relevance of the quote. Otherwise, you may end up with a quote like this:

Albert Einstein was a great man and a great scientist. He was one of the most advanced thinkers of our age. “The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing” (Einstein Quotes, 2012).

Here, it feels like the quote is just dropped in without a clear context. If you struggle with quote integration, you’ll want to check out lessons on effective source integration.

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13.4.19: Hyphens

Hyphens

Hyphens can be a little tricky, but they are important. For example, there is a world of difference between a dirty-movie theater and a dirty movie theater. You probably wouldn't want to go to either one, but there *is* a big difference between the two.

Hyphens are tricky because location is also very important in determining whether or not you need to hyphenate words.

The rule is pretty clear, however. Most of us just need a reminder. When you have two or more words that modify or describe a noun that follows, you should hyphenate those words. You should not hyphenate the same words if they come after the noun.

Take a look at the following example where hyphenation errors exist in several places:

- It was clear that, after his two dollar hair-cut, Bertram began suffering from low self esteem.

Here is what the correction should look like:

- It was clear that, after his two-dollar haircut, Bertram began suffering from low self-esteem.

If you need help figuring out where hyphens should and should not be, be sure to check out the Hyphen section in Punctuation chapter.

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13.4.20: Sentence Fragment

Sentence Fragment

Sentence fragments always make the list of the most common errors, and they are among the most seriously stigmatizing errors we can make. To put it simply, a sentence fragment is an incomplete sentence that you have punctuated as if it is a complete sentence.

Sometimes, fragments are missing a verb. Sometimes, fragments are missing a subject. Sometimes, a fragment is simply a dependent clause punctuated like a complete sentence. Here are some examples:

- The haunting of the house on the craggy hill just outside of town.
- Because they are hairy and frightening with large, pointed fangs and shiny, yellow eyes.

You'll notice that each of these so-called sentences is not a complete sentence. They are both missing parts that would make them complete.

You always have options about how you correct a sentence fragment, but here are some possible corrections for our two sample sentence fragments:

- The haunting of the house on the craggy hill just outside of town was the subject of a recent documentary.
- I am afraid of those spiders because they are hairy and frightening with large, pointed fangs and shiny, yellow eyes.

Tips from the Professor

Fragments are among the most serious errors in academic writing. While you may read fiction and informal prose that contain sentence fragments, in academic writing, fragments are generally frowned upon. In fact, research on how errors are perceived by people indicates that fragments are what we call "status marking" errors, which means people will make negative assumptions about the intelligence of the writer when they see fragments in writing.

Of course, making a sentence fragment error has nothing to do with your intelligence. Usually, for native speakers of English, making a sentence fragment error is more about not editing carefully or just not being practiced in the rules.

In this video, the Grammar Professor will review what a fragment is and how you can avoid fragments in your academic writing.

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13.4.21: Try It Out

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13.4.22: Putting It All Together

Putting It All Together

In this section of Grammar Essentials, you have learned about the 20 most common errors students make and how you can avoid them. Hopefully, you have also learned that, if you have had these errors marked on your papers, you aren't alone. The key is having awareness, as this can help you when you edit.

To help you review, check out the video below, which provides a basic overview of what you have learned about the 20 most common errors students in the United States make.

Interactive Content

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NOTE: Because the use of the singular "they" is new, you may find some people who disagree, but most academics now agree that the singular "they" is correct. Please always refer to your style guide, as some style guides still recommend not using the singular "they".

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13.4.23: Time to Write

Time to Write

Now that you have the knowledge about the most common errors students in the U.S. make, think about your own writing. Which of these errors have you struggled with?

The next step is to be considerate of these errors as you edit. Review the most common errors list, paying close attention to issues you have had marked by teachers. Which ones stand out to you?

It's your turn now. Understanding these common errors can lead to better editing strategies, which helps you have cleaner, clearer writing.

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13.5: Grammar Essentials (Excelsior Online Writing Lab)

Being correct goes beyond the basic grammar that language needs in order to function. Being correct means knowing the rules that a given culture has established to judge the language of individuals. Think about it: many years ago, ain't was not considered incorrect. How might you react to someone using that word today? We speak of this as usage. There are far more usage rules than grammar rules, and they are far more difficult to master. Many of them you just have to learn; and, after you learn them, you have to use them over and over and over in order to incorporate them into your language.



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14: CHAPTER FOURTEEN-PRACTICE EXERCISES

The practice exercises on the following pages will help you polish your skills.

14.1: Comma

14.2: Comma Splice

14.3: Fact and Opinion

14.4: Fragment

14.5: Fused Sentence

14.6: Identifying Dependent and Independent Clauses

14.7: Logical Fallacy

14.8: Patterns

14.9: Proofreading

14.10: Pronoun

14.11: Pronoun/Antecedent Agreement

14.12: Subject Identification

14.13: Subject-Verb Agreement

14.14: Supporting Details

14.15: Grammar and Mechanics Mini-lessons

14.15.1: Grammar and Mechanics Mini-Lessons

14.15.2: Subjects and Verbs, Irregular Verbs, Subject Verb Agreement

14.15.3: Sentence Types

14.15.4: Fragments I

14.15.5: Run-ons and Comma Splices I

14.15.6: Comma Usage

14.15.7: Parallelism

14.15.8: The Apostrophe

14.15.9: Capital Letters

14.15.10: Grammar Practice- Interactive Quizzes

14.15.11: De Copia- Demonstration of the Variety of Language

14.15.12: Style Exercise- Voice

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14.1: Comma

Practice 1

1. Use a comma before a coordinate conjunction (and, but, or, nor, so, for, yet) in a compound sentence.

I am not complaining, but I am stating my opinion.

2. Commas are usually used after introductory words, phrases, and clauses.

When you leave today, remember your umbrella.
From the roof, I could see for miles.
Furthermore, I would like you to mow the lawn.
Yes, Santa Claus, there is no Virginia.

3. Use commas to set off items in a series of three or more.

Of the letters *X, Y*, and *Z*, I prefer *Z*.

Insert commas as needed in the following sentences. Not all sentences need commas.

1. Laura was tired exhausted and frustrated after such a busy day.
2. In addition she was running a temperature of 102.
3. When I was younger I was afraid of the lawnmower man.
4. My son was afraid of spiders when he was younger.
5. Sandra worked during the day and she attended Dalton State on Monday nights.
6. Laura worked nights and attended Dalton State during the day.
7. I admire your problem but I don't have any solutions to offer you.
8. If you don't mind it is my turn to have a crisis.
9. Tom Lizzy and Geoffrey drove to Playalinda and surfed all afternoon.
10. In need of water the desperate travelers searched for an oasis.
11. I was going to do the dishes but I was distracted.
12. During the bomb scare teachers held classes outside on the lawn.
13. Since it was snowing we did not enjoy having class outside.
14. After sitting in the snow for 10 minutes I began to freeze.
15. For example I enjoy reading walking and singing.

Answer

Comma Rules - Practice 1 Answer Key

Practice 2

1. Use a comma before a coordinate conjunction (and, but, or, nor, so, for, yet) in a compound sentence.

I am not complaining, but I am stating my rather unhappy opinion.

2. Commas are usually used after introductory words, phrases, and clauses.

When you leave today, remember your umbrella.
From the roof, I could see for miles.

Furthermore, I would like you to mow the lawn.
Yes, Santa Claus, there is no Virginia.

3. Use commas to set off items in a series of three or more.

Of the letters *X, Y*, and *Z*, I prefer *Z*.

4. Use commas to set off coordinate adjectives not joined by *and*.

The tired, ambitious clerk usually worked through lunch and stayed late.

Insert commas as needed in the following sentences. Not all sentences need commas.

1. In the mid-1970s I had a diabolical intelligent dog named Moonbear.
2. Moonbear was a smart quick and hungry dog.
3. He was also a very useful dog for he had the ability to scare off would-be intruders.
4. Of all his amazing tricks the one that amazed me the most was his speed.
5. When he was hungry he could move at incredible unimaginable speeds.
6. For example I once removed a freshly baked cherry pie from the oven and I put it on the center of the dining room table to cool.
7. Before I knew what was happening Moonbear jumped onto the table and began eating the hot cherry pie.
8. He had eaten half of the pie before I was able to stop him.
9. After the cherry pie incident I was more careful where I put baked goods to cool.
10. However even the top of the refrigerator was not safe from Moonbear.

Answer

Comma Rules - Practice 2 Answer Key

Practice 3

1. Use a comma before a coordinate conjunction (and, but, or, nor, so, for, yet) in a compound sentence.

I am not complaining, but I am stating my rather unhappy opinion.

2. Commas are usually used after introductory words, phrases, and clauses.

When you leave today, remember your umbrella.
From the roof, I could see for miles.
Furthermore, I would like you to mow the lawn.
Yes, Santa Claus, there is no Virginia.

3. Use commas to set off items in a series of three or more.

Of the letters *X, Y*, and *Z*, I prefer *Z*.

4. Use commas to set off coordinate adjectives not joined by *and*.

The tired, ambitious clerk usually worked through lunch and stayed late.

5. Use commas around words, phrases, and clauses that interrupt the flow of a sentence (and are not essential to the meaning).

I never was, by the way, a hippie.
She was, however, too tired to continue studying.
My sister, who lives in Tallahassee, is a talented artist.

Insert commas as needed in the following sentences. Not all sentences need commas. Write the rule number that justifies your use of the comma.

1. When I was in college I used to wear garlands of clover in my hair.
2. Some of these garlands would have extensions of flowers that hung to the ground.
3. My professors pretended not to notice but I suspected that they did.
4. I was however an A student and I believed my As justified my flowery whimsical appearance.
5. My reasoning wild as it may seem convinced my parents that they need not worry about me.
6. I eventually quit wearing garlands of flowers married a manipulative self-centered musician and had a son.
7. Though my son did not wear flowers in his hair he did experiment with his hair color his hairstyles and his clothing.
8. One afternoon before my night class he asked me to help him dye his blonde hair black.
9. He assured me that we would be using nonpermanent hair coloring so I helped him.
10. As you might have guessed the color of course was permanent and I ended up going to class that night with black hands and black fingernails.

Answer

Comma Rules - Practice 3 Answer Key

Practice 4

1. Use a comma before a coordinate conjunction (and, but, or, nor, so, for, yet) in a compound sentence.

I am not complaining, but I am stating my rather unhappy opinion.

2. Commas are usually used after introductory words, phrases, and clauses.

When you leave today, remember your umbrella.
From the roof, I could see for miles.
Furthermore, I would like you to mow the lawn.
Yes, Santa Claus, there is no Virginia.

3. Use commas to set off items in a series of three or more.

Of the letters *X, Y*, and *Z*, I prefer *Z*.

4. Use commas to set off coordinate adjectives not joined by *and*.

The tired, ambitious clerk usually worked through lunch and stayed late.

5. Use commas around words, phrases, and clauses that interrupt the flow of a sentence (and are not essential to the meaning).

I never was, by the way, a hippie.
She was, however, too tired to continue studying.

6. Use commas to set off contrasted elements, geographical names, and most items in dates.

Cats, but not dogs, own themselves.
Maria was born in Rockledge, Florida, on August 16, 2002, at 10:20 p.m.

Insert commas as needed in the following sentences. Not all sentences need commas. Write the rule number that justifies your use of the comma.

1. My family lived in Florence Italy during my high school years.
2. After hearing her excuse I still did not believe her.
3. That's a bathing suit top not a piece of string.
4. Amelia wore sensible durable clothing.
5. Chris ran out the door jumped over the fence and raced down the road.
6. The movie was boring meaningless and confusing.
7. Maria opened her math book and then began doing problems 1 through 10.
8. When you write an essay state your thesis clearly.
9. I will walk on the treadmill or I will walk in the park.
10. Laura lived in Island Grove Florida before moving to Dalton Georgia.
11. The explanation such as it was could not be believed by any rational person.
12. I removed the blackberry pie from the oven and put it on the window sill to cool.
13. Although there are many different comma rules they can be learned.
14. I will explain them to you if you wish.
15. If you will stop nagging I will empty the trash wash the dishes and do the laundry.

Answer

Comma Rules - Practice 4 Answer Key

References

- Dr. Mary Nielsen, Dean of the Dalton State College School of Liberal Arts.

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14.2: Comma Splice

Practice 1

Commas splice (CS): A comma splice occurs when two independent clauses are joined by only a comma.

Comma splice: IC, IC.

Example 14.2.1:

We hiked in the Blue Ridge Mountains for three weeks, we were very tired.

Some Easy Ways to Correct Comma Splices

1. Change the comma to a period and capitalize the next word. (IC. IC.)

Correct: We hiked in the Blue Ridge Mountains for three weeks. We were very tired.

2. Change the comma to a semicolon. (IC; IC.)

Correct: We hiked in the Blue Ridge Mountains for three weeks; we were very tired.

3. Add a coordinating conjunction before the second independent clause.
Coordinating conjunctions: and, or, but, nor, for, so, yet. (IC, CC IC)

Correct: We hiked in the Blue Ridge Mountains for three weeks, so we were very tired.

caution

Don't simply delete the comma; this will create a run-on or fused sentence.

Directions: For each sentence below, write CS if the sentence is a comma splice or C if the sentence is correct.

___ 1. My apartment is too small, I have no room for my treadmill and exercise bike.

___ 2. I'm exhausted, however, I will go to school anyway.

___ 3. Tom opened his freezer, then he noticed that two cans of beer had exploded.

___ 4. Although I understand the definition, comma splices still confuse me.

___ 5. A comma splice occurs when two complete sentences are joined only by a comma, I need to remember that rule.

___ 6. It's means "it is" or "it has," its' is always incorrect.

___ 7. I hiked for five hours yesterday, consequently I am too tired to go hiking again today.

___ 8. For example, I like to read suspense novels, email my friends, and play cards with my daughter.

___ 9. My son Geoffrey plays drums in band called Talent Scam, and he likes to surf at Playalinda Beach.

___10. Some people value money and material possessions, others value love and family.

Answer

Answer Key - Comma Splice Practice 1

Practice 2

Directions: For each sentence below, write CS if the sentence is a comma splice or C if the sentence is correct.

___ 1. Don't go in there, you will be horrified.

___ 2. She was, however, tired and worn out.

___ 3. First, I must go shopping, then I have to decide what to fix for dinner.

___ 4. Maria is running a temperature of 102, therefore, she should not go to school today.

___ 5. Although she had a fever, Maria still wanted to go to school.

___ 6. Mary Grace Thompson lives with her divorced father, for her mother ran away with the local tax collector.

___ 7. Every day Frank brings calm to other people's catastrophes, however, now catastrophe has struck his life.

___ 8. I was sick last week, consequently I've fallen behind in my work.

___ 9. Not only had her goals changed, she spent less time with her friends.

___10. She knew that at home her endless horse talk was boring, yet she wouldn't stop long enough for her father to ask about her symptoms.

Answer

Answer Key - Comma Splice Practice 2

Practice 3

Directions: For each sentence below, write CS if the sentence is a comma splice or C if the sentence is correct. Correct any comma splices using one of the methods described above.

1. Every year I make New Year's resolutions, for example, I will try to drink more water.
2. Every year, however, I seem to fail at my resolutions.
3. I did not want to fail this year, consequently, I changed my resolution.
4. I finally understood that goals needed to be specific, so I modified my goal.
5. This year I will drink four glasses of water every day, this goal is specific and measurable.
6. While this is a measurable goal, however, four glasses of water a day is not sufficient.
7. I don't care, at least this year I will be successful.

8. Today I found out my bad cholesterol is a little high, therefore, I will reduce my fat intake.
9. I was reading the dictionary today, and I read that a "chrisom child" is a child who dies in its first month, this struck me a very sad.
10. Perhaps I should stop reading the dictionary, on the other hand, it is useful for correcting my spelling.

Answer

Answer Key - Comma Splice Practice 3

Practice 4

Directions: For each sentence below, write CS if the sentence is a comma splice or C if the sentence is correct. Correct any comma splices using one of the methods described above.

1. My son was a very healthy child, however, my daughter is often sick.
2. My daughter, however, has never broken a bone.
3. Geoffrey broke his wrist by falling from a seesaw, he broke his arm by falling from a ladder.
4. The seesaw accident was not his fault, however, he should not have been on the ladder.
5. He was supposed to be watching his little sister, instead he was hanging lights for an end-of-year party.
6. I let him invite his friends to the party, I did not know he had 200 friends.
7. The party was a nightmare for me, furthermore, it bothered the neighbors.
8. There were teenagers everywhere, for example, they filled the kitchen, the living room, the deck, and even the loft in the garage.
9. At 10:00 p.m. I asked these teens to go home, by midnight there were only 12 "friends" left.
10. All twelve asked to spend the night, and five of the 12 were girls.

Answer

Answer Key - Comma Splice Practice 4

Practice 5

Identify and correct any comma splices in the following email entitled "Rules of Chocolate."

Chocolate is a vegetable. How so? Chocolate is derived from cacao beans, beans are vegetables. In addition, sugar is derived from either sugar CANE or sugar Beets, both are plants, which places them in the vegetable category. Thus, chocolate is a vegetable, you should have at least five servings of vegetables a day.

To go one step further, chocolate bars also contain milk. Milk is a healthy dairy product, therefore, chocolate bars are a health food.

Chocolate covered raisins, cherries, orange slices, and strawberries all count as fruit, consequently, you can eat as many as you want.

If you've got melted chocolate all over your hands, you're eating it too slowly.

Consider this problem. How do you get 2 pounds of chocolate home from the store in a hot car? The solution is easy, eat it in the parking lot.

If you are trying to lose weight, here is a delicious diet tip. Eat a chocolate bar before each meal, it will take the edge off of your appetite, and you will eat less. If calories are an issue for you, store your chocolate on top of the refrigerator. Calories are known

to be afraid of heights, they will jump out of the chocolate to protect themselves.

If I eat equal amounts of dark chocolate and white chocolate, is that a balanced diet? Don't they actually counteract each other?

Are you having trouble accomplishing your daily goals? Here's a suggestion for you, put "eat chocolate" at the top of your list of things to do today. That way you will get at least one thing done!

Answer

Answer Key - Comma Splice 5

References

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14.3: Fact and Opinion

Practice 1

Determine whether the following sentences are facts, opinions, or a mixture of fact and opinions. Then, check your answers against the key.

1. Marijuana should be legalized to reduce the effects of the current economic crisis.
2. The death penalty should be abolished because it's just too expensive.
3. A California lawmaker Monday introduced legislation that would legalize (and tax) pot there.
4. Last year, in an effort to cut costs, probation and parole agencies in Arizona, Kentucky, Mississippi, New Jersey, and Vermont sadly reduced or dropped prison time for thousands of offenders who foolishly violated conditions of their release.
5. President Barack Obama said Tuesday night that the country must now act "boldly and wisely" to take charge of its future.
6. Everyone is entitled to his or her own opinion.
7. All opinions are equally relevant.
8. Bruce Springsteen wrote "Thunder Road," a classic song of escape.
9. My car, which has only 10,000 miles on the odometer, will last another six years.
10. A city in beautiful north Florida, Tallahassee is the state's capital.

Answer

Fact & Opinion - Practice 1 Answer Key

Practice 2

Determine whether the following sentences are facts, opinions, or a mixture of fact and opinions. Then, check your answers against the key.

1. America's tax laws are very confusing.

a. Fact b. Opinion c. Mixed Fact and Opinion

2. Using the IRS e-file makes doing your taxes easier and faster.

a. Fact b. Opinion c. Mixed Fact and Opinion

3. When you itemize deductions on your tax return, you cannot deduct both state income taxes and general state sales taxes.

a. Fact b. Opinion c. Mixed Fact and Opinion

4. In 2008, more than 92 million Americans filed their taxes electronically.

a. Fact b. Opinion c. Mixed Fact and Opinion

5. It's unfair that the IRS limits educator expense deductions to those who teach in kindergarten through grade 12.

a. Fact b. Opinion c. Mixed Fact and Opinion

6. It's not safe to file your tax return electronically.

a. Fact b. Opinion c. Mixed Fact and Opinion

7. It makes no sense to allow only students in Midwestern disaster areas to deduct the cost of their textbooks when they file their income tax.

a. Fact b. Opinion c. Mixed Fact and Opinion

8. According the U.S. tax laws, course-related books and supplies are not qualified Educational expenses except for students who live in Midwestern disaster areas.

a. Fact b. Opinion c. Mixed Fact and Opinion

9. The maximum Hope education credit has rightly been increased to $2,500 for most taxpayers.

a. Fact b. Opinion c. Mixed Fact and Opinion

10. We should not have to pay taxes.

a. Fact b. Opinion c. Mixed Fact and Opinion

Answer

Fact & Opinion - Practice 2 Answer Key

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14.4: Fragment

Practice 1

Identify any fragments in the following "sentences." Keep in mind that a sentence must have a subject, have a verb, and express a complete thought.

Remember that the "ing" form of a verb is not a true verb unless it is preceded by a helping verb.

Remember that the "to" form of the verb (the infinitive) is not a verb.

1. Martha Stewart not dining with us this Thanksgiving.
2. I'm telling you in advance.
3. So don't act surprised.
4. Since Ms. Stewart won't be coming.
5. I've made a few small changes.
6. Our sidewalk will not be lined with homemade paper bag luminaries.
7. After a trial run.
8. It was decided that, no matter how cleverly done, rows of flaming lunch sacks do not have the desired welcoming effect.
9. Once inside, our guests noting that the entry is not decorated with the swags of Indian corn and fall foliage that I had planned to make.
10. Instead, I've gotten the kids involved in the decorating by having them track in colorful autumn leaves from the front yard.
11. The mud was their idea.
12. The dining table not covered with expensive linens, fancy china, or crystal goblets.
13. However, since this is Thanksgiving.
14. We will refrain from using the plastic Peter Rabit plate and the Santa napkins from last Christmas.

Answer

Fragment - Practice 1 Answer Key

Practice 2

Identify any fragments in the following "sentences." Keep in mind that a sentence must have a subject, have a verb, and express a complete thought.

Remember that the "ing" form of a verb is not a true verb unless it is preceded by a helping verb.

Remember that the "to" form of the verb (the infinitive) is not a verb.

The following selection was adapted from Terry Kay's To Dance with the White Dog.

1. On the day after his father was buried.
2. James drove to the cemetery in the pink-blue glaze of dawn.
3. The plot was still crowded with wreaths of flowers.
4. Flowers with bright, colorful faces and ribbon sashes.
5. And the white, mica-sand covering of the ground was pockmarked where people had stood for the gravesite services.
6. And where chairs had been placed for the family.
7. James stood at the foot of the graves of his parents and his brother.

8. A brother he had not known.
9. A brother dead before his own birth.
10. And stared at the shadowed sand mounds.
11. Nothing was as permanent.
12. He turned and looked across the cemetery.
13. His father had said the white dog would be there.
14. To look for the white dog at sunrise.
15. His father had said the white dog was his mother.
16. His father was wrong; there was no white dog at the cemetery.
17. Suddenly, a chill struck his neck and raced across his shoulders.
18. He could feel his heart racing.
19. His eyes scanning the cemetery.
20. James walked into the plot, between the grave mounds of his mother and father, and he knelt.
21. Then he saw them.
22. Across the chest of sand on the grave of Robert Samuel Peek.
23. He saw the paw prints.
24. Prints so light that they could have been made by air.

Answer

Fragment - Practice 2 Answer Key

Practice 3

Identify any fragments in the following "sentences." Keep in mind that a sentence must have a subject, have a verb, and express a complete thought.

Remember that the "ing" form of a verb is not a true verb unless it is preceded by a helping verb.

Remember that the "to" form of the verb (the infinitive) is not a verb.

1. If you understand what a fragment is.
2. Understanding, however, does not always come easily.
3. Taking the time to practice.
4. Studying long hours and seeking feedback from instructors and tutors.
5. To understand fragments is my goal.
6. Wanting to understand, but not able.
7. Since this sentence begins with a subordinate conjunction.
8. It might be a fragment.
9. For example, blueberry muffins with plenty of hot butter.
10. Driving down the road late one Sunday afternoon.
11. Seeing the Northern Lights for the first time in my life.
12. Second, the folks that drive while asleep.
13. Third, the blind-blinkers.
14. Finally, the folks that never use their turn signals.
15. All of these drivers annoy me.

Answer

Fragment - Practice 3 Answer Key

Practice 5

Identify any fragments in the following "sentences." Keep in mind that a sentence must have a subject, have a verb, and express a complete thought.

Remember that the "ing" form of a verb is not a true verb unless it is preceded by a helping verb.

Remember that the "to" form of the verb (the infinitive) is not a verb.

1. February, a great day in the history of Dalton State College.
2. The announcement of the return of intercollegiate athletics.
3. Because our students say athletics is important.
4. Voting for an athletics fee to improve campus life for future students.
5. Wanting to participate in the full college experience.
6. Derek Waugh will be the college's new athletics director.
7. Launching men's and women's teams at the same time.
8. Although I enjoy college sports.
9. Dalton State's mission is to provide broad access to quality higher education for the population of Northwest Georgia.
10. Dalton State's QEP title is "Getting on the 'Write Path.'"

Answer

Fragment - Practice 4 Answer Key

References

- Dr. Mary Nielsen, Dean of the Dalton State College School of Liberal Arts.

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14.5: Fused Sentence

Practice 1

A fused sentence (or run-on) occurs when two independent clauses are joined without punctuation or without a coordinating conjunction.

Fused sentence: Independent clause independent clause.

Example 14.5.1:

At first I wanted to be a doctor now I don't.

Some easy ways to correct a fused sentence are as follows:

1. Add a period after the first independent clause and capitalize the next word. (IC. IC)

Example 14.5.2:

At first I wanted to be a doctor. Now I don't.

2. Add a semicolon after the first independent clause. (IC; IC)

Example 14.5.3:

At first I wanted to be a doctor; now I don't.

3. Add a comma and a coordinating conjunction after the first independent clause. (IC, CC IC)

Example 14.5.4:

At first I wanted to be a doctor, but now I don't.

Directions: For each sentence below, write FS if it is a fused sentence or C if it is correct.

___ 1. Many young athletes want to play for professional leagues few actually succeed.

___ 2. I lost my train of thought did you find it?

___ 3. Laura was exhausted from hours of study however she made it to class on time.

___ 4. Dolphins have killed sharks they never attack humans.

___ 5. The shrimp was served with its head still on as a result, Mary lost her appetite.

___ 6. Mary's sister, however, ate the shrimp anyway.

___ 7. In later years, Mary developed a shrimp allergy, but her sister still enjoys shrimp.

___ 8. The roads were covered with ice therefore school was cancelled.

___ 9. The typewriter hummed loudly; consequently, I turned it off.

___10. If you understand what a fused sentence is, you will be able to proofread for them in your papers then you will be less likely to make such a mistake.

Answer

Answer Key - Fused Sentence Practice 1

Practice 2

Directions: For each sentence below, write FS if it is a fused sentence or C if it is correct.

1. My Aunt Grattis lives in a mansion on the Delaware River in a small town called Andalusia.
2. She is extremely fussy about her furniture for instance children under 12 cannot sit on her antiques.
3. One of the problems college students face today is credit card debt credit-card companies offer cards to students who don't have jobs.
4. Credit card companies can be unscrupulous one even offered a pre-approved card to my eight-year-old daughter.
5. I went to the walk-in clinic because I was feeling ill in fact, I had walking pneumonia.
6. Dr. Weeks's nurse called today she said that I need to exercise more often.
7. Since I am too busy studying grammar rules, I have no time to exercise the nurse did not think that was a very good excuse.
8. She is probably right I should exercise more.
9. Do you think that typing at the computer counts as exercise?
10. My fingers are certainly getting a good workout today I have been typing for three hours.

Answer

Answer Key - Fused Sentences Practice 2

Practice 3

Directions: For each sentence below, write FS if it is a fused sentence or C if it is correct.

1. According to MSNBC, a New Jersey major wants forecasters held responsible for dire predictions forecasters who predict blizzards should be held accountable for their predictions.
2. Major Richard Bowe wants to know if the forecasts of heavy snow and blizzard conditions were mistakes or a deliberate attempt to generate ratings.
3. He suggests errant forecasters ought to be held responsible for losses by businesses and others who lost money by listening to the forecasts.
4. A spokesperson from the National Weather Service notes that forecasts are judgments based on available information they are not any kind of guarantee.
5. The storm was originally forecast to wreak havoc on the entire northeastern portion of the United States however, the storm left most major cities unscathed.
6. Washington, Philadelphia, and New York took much less of a beating than first predicted the storm came nowhere near to living up to its hype.
7. Snow accumulations from the storm, which began battering the region late Monday, ranged from 18 inches to 30

inches.
8. Red-faced forecasters were scratching their heads over how they could be so wrong in their predictions.
9. Forecasters had grappled with conflicting computer models before predicting that New England would be the hardest-hit area.
10. Forecasters thought the storm would paralyze the entire coast they predicted it could be the worst blizzard in 35 years.
11. Those fears were not realized the storm dissipated.
12. Many areas got slush and rain instead of snow.
13. "Our models aren't perfect we'd be the first to admit that," said the director of the National Centers for Environmental Preditions.
14. I am not sure why those folks are complaining would they have been happier if there had been a disaster?
15. Things could be worse forecasters warn another storm could come as early as Friday.

Answer

Answer Key - Fused Sentence Practice 3

Practice 4

Determine whether any of the following sentence are fused. Correct those that are.

1. One day in the late summer, Frog was not feeling well.
2. Toad said, "Frog, you are looking quite green."
3. "But I always look green," said Frog "I am a frog."
4. "Today you look very green even for a frog go to bed and rest."
5. Toad made Frog a cup of hot tea Frog drank the tea.
6. It's not easy to sit at the computer and make up examples of fused sentences.
7. The sun is shining the world is all aglow.
8. This is the last day of spring break, and I'm sitting here at this computer trying to think of fused sentences.
9. I must be out of my mind everyone else is at the beach.
10. But it's too cold for the beach; furthermore, it's too far to drive.
11. Adjectives modify nouns by adding to their meaning adverbs modify verbs and other adverbs.
12. Nouns are words that name persons, places, things, or abstractions.
13. The comma is the most widely used punctuation mark there is much variation in its usage.
14. I slipped on the wet floor as I ran across the kitchen.
15. I cannot prepare for the seminar because I have misplaced my glasses.

Answer

Answer Key - Fused Sentence Practice 4

Practice 5

Identify and correct any fused sentences.

1. The severe weather warning did not deter some travelers traffic on I-75 was not as heavy as usual.
2. The sky turned black the rain fell in torrents.
3. Many drivers turned on their flashers because visibility was poor.
4. Since I could no longer see the road, I pulled off at the first exit.
5. There was no gas station at the exit I joined the many cars that were pulled off on the side of the road.
6. I was almost out of gas, so I turned off my engine.
7. When the rain slackened, I got back on the interstate I drove to the next exit.

8. I'm glad that I kept driving I later learned that a tornado touched down near where I had been parked.
9. It destroyed several homes fortunately no one was hurt.
10. Now that you have completed questions one through nine, you should check your answers.

Answer

Answer Key - Fused Sentence Practice 5

References

Dr. Mary Nielsen, Dean of the Dalton State College School of Liberal Arts.

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14.6: Identifying Dependent and Independent Clauses

Practice 1

An independent clause, also known as a simple sentence, includes a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought.

Example 14.6.1:

Juliet, a border collie puppy, prefers to **chase** apples and pears.
Subject Verb

A dependent clause has a subject and verb, is introduced by a subordinate conjunction or a relative pronoun, but does not express a complete thought. A dependent clause is not a complete sentence.

Example 14.6.2:

Because the heavy rains **flooded** the entrance to the subdivision.
Sub. Conj. Subject Verb

Example 14.6.3:

After Laura carefully **read** the assigned chapter.
Sub. Conj. Subject Verb

Determine whether the underlined word groups are dependent clauses, independent clauses, or not a clause.

1. Although it was raining, Maria went for a jog at Civitan Park.
2. Brianna eats chocolate whenever she gets a poor grade in math.
3. After the flood, the family moved into a temporary shelter.
4. While walking at the park, John saw a raccoon eating potato chips.
5. Students enrolled in bachelor's and associate's degree programs must pass the Regents' Test as a graduation requirement.
6. Students who fail to show up for the Regents' test must enroll in the Regents' remediation courses.
7. When you finish your homework, please take the dog for a walk.
8. After Juan completed the assignment, he swam laps at the gym.
9. Christa left home at 4:00 a.m. since she had to drive to Atlanta for a meeting.
10. Before completing the assignment, Evan decided to eat a quick lunch.

Answer

Identifying Dependent and Independent Clauses - Practice 1 Answer Key

Practice 2

Determine whether the underlined word groups are dependent clauses, independent clauses, or not a clause.

1. Juan continued playing although he injured his knee.
2. I thought that the offer was too good to be true.
3. While I was scrubbing the floors, Juliet was watching television.
4. Although tired and grumpy, Laura agreed to babysit for her sister-in-law.
5. Inspired and energized, Sean solved the case of the missing energy drink.
6. While driving home from spring break, Maria saw a tornado touch down.
7. People who drink and drive should be arrested.
8. Ever since my daughter purchased a ferret, I have noticed that authors describe their bad guys as ferret-like.
9. Such descriptions are not fair to ferrets.
10. Since I could not go to the Pancake Breakfast, I gave away my tickets.

Answer

Identifying Dependent and Independent Clauses - Practice 2 Answer Key

References

- Dr. Mary Nielsen, Dean of the Dalton State College School of Liberal Arts.

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14.7: Logical Fallacy

Practice 1

1. "You are saying she was killed because she was immoral, and she was immoral because she was killed!" (from Anne Perry, *The Cater Street Hangman*, pp. 71-72)
    a. hasty generalization
    b. circular reasoning
    c. false alternatives
    d. no error
2. You will either complete all of your assigned readings for this class, or you will fail this course.
    a. hasty generalization
    b. circular reasoning
    c. false alternatives
    d. careless comparison
3. You should never schedule your child's dentist appointments during school hours. If you do, your child will miss more and more classes. Before you know it, your child will be an elementary school drop out.
    a. hasty generalization
    b. circular reasoning
    c. slippery slope
    d. false alternatives
4. New Yorkers are so rude! I went to New York City last summer, and two taxi-cab drivers almost ran me down.
    a. hasty generalization
    b. circular reasoning
    c. slippery slope
    d. false alternatives
    e. careless comparison
5. I do not like writing because I do not like to write.
    a. hasty generalization
    b. circular reasoning
    c. false alternatives
    d. careless comparison
6. Students are just like customers: both groups are paying for a product, and both are always right.
    a. hasty generalization
    b. circular reasoning
    c. false alternatives
    d. careless comparison
    e. personal attack
7. We must stop the University System from raising tuition. If we don't, the System will also begin raising technology fees; then the System will increase parking fees. Soon no one will be able to afford college.
    1. hasty generalization
    2. circular reasoning
    3. false alternatives
    4. slippery slope
    5. personal attack
8. You can't believe anything Professor Loca says concerning child development. After all, he has no children of his own.
    a. hasty generalization
    b. circular reasoning
    c. personal attack
    d. careless comparison
    e. slippery slope
9. Having leadership shows others that you can be a great leader. (student essay)
    a. hasty generalization
    b. circular reasoning
    c. false alternatives

d. careless comparison

Answer

Logical Fallacy - Practice 1 Answer Key

Practice 2

1. You should reduce your fat intake because eating too many fats is bad for you.
    a. hasty generalization
    b. circular reasoning
    c. false alternatives
    d. no error
2. “We will move forward together or not at all.” President Barack Obama
    a. hasty generalization
    b. circular reasoning
    c. false alternatives
    d. careless comparison
3. We should not pass a bill that bans the sale of alcohol on Sunday. We such a bill were passed, then lawmakers would eventually pass a bill banning the sale of alcohol after midnight. Soon we would be back to Prohibition.
    a. hasty generalization
    b. circular reasoning
    c. slippery slope
    d. false alternatives
4. Florida Gator fans drink too much. When I was at the Florida-Georgia game, I saw at least ten Gator fans who were intoxicated.
    a. hasty generalization
    b. circular reasoning
    c. slippery slope
    d. false alternatives
    e. careless comparison
5. We must not pass any more gun control laws or we will all be blown up by terrorists.
    a. hasty generalization
    b. circular reasoning
    c. false alternatives
    d. careless comparison
6. Exercising is just like eating candy. Just as eating a little candy won’t hurt you physically, exercising a little won’t hurt you. But too much exercise, like too much candy, will make you sick to your stomach.
    a. hasty generalization
    b. circular reasoning
    c. false alternatives
    d. careless comparison
    e. personal attack
7. We must stop the University System from increasing the requirements to receive the Hope Scholarship. If we don't, the System will make it more and more difficult for students to afford college, and eventually, only the rich will be able to attend the college of their choice.
    a. hasty generalization
    b. circular reasoning
    c. false alternatives
    d. slippery slope
    e. personal attack
8. You can't possibly believe Mr. Smith’s testimony in the money laundering trial. Mr. Smith once plagiarized an essay when he was in college.
    a. circular reasoning
    b. personal attack
    c. careless comparison
    d. slippery slope

9. Dieting is useless because everyone knows that diets don't work.
    a. slippery slope
    b. circular reasoning
    c. false alternatives
    d. careless comparison
10. Either we start making teachers pay into their own pensions or the state government will collapse.
    a. hasty generalization
    b. circular reasoning
    c. false alternatives
    d. careless comparison

Answer

Logical Fallacy - Practice 2 Answer Key

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14.8: Patterns

Practice 1

1. Because the television was too loud, I was not able to concentrate on my studies, and consequently, I did not do well on my algebra test.
    a. comparison
    b. contrast
    c. simple listing
    d. cause & effect
2. Semiconductors are sample devices that use materials that are halfway between the conductors' characteristic of few outermost shell electrons and the table, inert materials with eight valence electrons.
    a. comparison
    b. definition
    c. simple listing
    d. classification
3. My dog Moonbear was very different from my dog Frankie.
    a. comparison
    b. contrast
    c. time order
    d. cause & effect
4. There are several chores that I do every day: wash the dishes, make the beds, and take out the trash.
    a. comparison
    b. contrast
    c. simple listing
    d. time order
5. To make a pasta face, cut a large circle 1 foot in diameter from cardboard. Next, cut 2 large holes 1.5 inches apart in the center of the circle. Then, Cut 2 squares from the plastic packaging to fit over the eye holes and tape onto the back of the mask. Next, paint the front of the mask white and leave to dry.
    a. classification
    b. description
    c. time order
    d. simple listing
6. As we penetrated deeper into the heart of the old city, the narrow winding streets took on the character of a maze, composed of dirty crumbling walls and shuttered windows. The latticed balconies jutting out from the upper stories of the tall old houses cut off the sunlight, so that we walked through a dusty shade. (Elizabeth Peters, Lion in the Valley)
    a. comparison
    b. description
    c. simple listing
    d. cause and effect
7. There are several varieties of movies that I enjoy: musicals, suspense thrillers, and comedies.
    a. comparison
    b. contrast
    c. simple listing
    d. description
8. His father and his brother had been involved in the illegal antiquities trade; both had met terrible ends the previous year. (Elizabeth Peters, Lion in the Valley)
    a. comparison
    b. description
    c. contrast
    d. cause and effect
9. The *Harry Pottter and the Sorcerer*'s *Stone* DVD offered several special features: never before seen footage, self-guided tour of Hogwarts, theatrical trailers, and scene access.
    a. simple listing
    b. description

c. time order
d. cause and effect

10. *Polarity* denotes the relative electrical charge of one point in an electrical circuit "with reference to" another point.
    a. simple listing
    b. description
    c. definition
    d. classification

Answer

Patterns - Practice 1 Answer Key

Practice 2

1. "The simplest and most obvious explanation," Emerson continued angrily, "is that Ronald tried to kill his brother. An act of purely private villainy, Peabody. Why Ronald should hate Donald I do not know, but there are several possibilities: an inheritance, or rivalry for the hand of the young lady, for instance. People do kill people for the most ridiculous reasons". (Elizabeth Peters, Lion in the Valley)
    a. comparison
    b. contrast
    c. cause and effect
    d. time order
2. The grand palette of the heavens was streaked with colors no early painter could achieve, savage-glowing bronze and gleaming crimson, indigo and rose and soft blue-gray. (Elizabeth Peters, Lion in the Valley)
    a. comparison
    b. contrast
    c. definition
    d. description
3. Three types of shoppers are certainly annoying: the aisle blockers, the coupon commandos, and the bargain hunters.
    a. comparison
    b. contrast
    c. classification
    d. simple listing
4. For those who are forgetful, the following tips can make the holiday season just a little easier. One month before the Christmas or Jewish holidays, buy and mail holiday cards. Three weeks before, mail gifts to anyone you won't be seeing in person. Two weeks before, tip service providers that you use regularly. One week before, start planning the menu.
    a. simple listing
    b. time order
    c. cause and effect
    d. definition
5. A growing body of scientific research reveals that alcohol use by pregnant women can result in birth defects in unborn children.
    a. comparison
    b. contrast
    c. time order
    d. cause and effect
6. The *fight-or-flight response* is the body's reaction to a stressor by confrontation or avoidance.
    a. comparison
    b. contrast
    c. time order
    d. definition
7. Alcohol abuse is similar to drug abuse in several ways.
    a. comparison
    b. contrast

c. definition
d. cause and effect

8. Dr. T. Berry Brazelton has identified 14 key parenting points for families with young children.
    a. comparison
    b. contrast
    c. classification
    d. simple listing
    e. cause & effect
9. There are four types of therapeutic approaches to mental disorders: insight-oriented therapy, behavior therapy, group therapy, and biological therapy.
    a. comparison
    b. contrast
    c. classification
    d. simple listing
    e. cause & effect
10. The orange, red, and golden leaves glistened in the bright morning sun and shimmered in the soft breeze.
    a. time order
    b. comparison
    c. description
    d. definition

Answer

Patterns - Practice 2 Answer Key

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14.9: Proofreading

Practice 1

Read the following paragraph and determine whether each sentence is correct, is a fragment, has a subject/verb agreement error, includes a comma splice, or is a fused sentence. No sentence includes more than one error.

1. When I was younger, I had a number of "accidents" with my cars. 2. Not accidents in the traditional sense. 3. For example, as I was driving home from work one day, I smelled smoke. 4. I pulled over to the side of the road then I looked under the hood. 5. Seeing nothing alarming, I got back into my car and continued driving, however, the scent of smoke became even stronger. 6. So strong that I pulled over to the side of the road again. 7. Still seeing nothing unusual, I got back into my car this time it filled up with smoke. 8. A passing motorist stopped to offer his help. 9. He pulled back the carpet from under the accelerator, the carpet burst into flames. 10. Noticing a jug on my front seat, he asked what were in it. 11. When I told him it was iced tea, he poured the tea onto the fire. 12. Putting out the fire before it could do more damage. 13. another incident happened several years later. 14. My sister and I was driving to the beach. 15. Smoke started coming from the cassette player, quickly the smoke filled the car. 16. Forcing us out of the car. 17. It seems my husband had wired the cassette player incorrectly. 18. A fact that is not particularly surprising. 19. I no longer have either car, I no longer have that husband.

Answer

Answer Key - Proofreading Practice 1

Practice 2

Read the following paragraph and determine whether each sentence is correct, is a fragment, has a subject/verb agreement error, includes a comma splice, or is a fused sentence. No sentence includes more than one error.

1. The Internet can be a great source of information for students who are doing research, however, the information on the Internet is not regulated. 2. Anyone can post information that is intentionally or unintentionally inaccurate or misleading anyone can create his or her own Web page. 3. There is information on aging, information on cancer, information on health, and information on weight loss. 4. The Alcoholics Anonymous Web site and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism site provides information related to alcohol abuse. 5. Looking for information on pregnancy and childbirth? 6. Not hard to find on the Internet. 7. Labor and Birth Resources (a good Web site) provide information on the different types of pain medications available to mothers. 8. Interested in weight loss? 9. Try Overeaters Anonymous. 10. Another good site that include assessment tools is Cyberdiet.

Answer

Answer Key - Proofreading Practice 2

Practice 3

Read the following paragraph and determine whether each sentence is correct, is a fragment, has a subject/verb agreement error, includes a comma splice, or is a fused sentence. No sentence includes more than one error.

1. There is a number of risk factors associated with cardiovascular disease. 2. Some of these factors cannot be changed. 3. Increasing age, male gender, and heredity is a few. 4. According to health sources, six risk factors are related to our own

choices in lifestyle, these include smoking, activity level, cholesterol level, blood pressure, weight, and diabetes. 5. Many smokers believe that if you have smoked for years, there is no benefit in quitting the damage has been done. 6. This belief, however, is incorrect. 7. According to the American Heart Association, one's risk of heart disease declines rapidly after one quits smoking. 8. Another changeable factor related to heart disease is lack of regular exercise. 9. Physical activity, including walking, swimming, or jogging, help lower cholesterol levels and encourages weight loss. 10. Another risk factor for heart disease is stress. 11. Especially unresolved stress over an extended period of time. 12. Those who cannot cope with stress are more likely to develop harmful lifestyles that contribute to heart disease, they may smoke, become inactive, or eat fatty foods. 13. Take control of your heart. 14. Before it is too late.

Answer

Answer Key - Proofreading Practice 3

Practice 4

Read the following paragraph and determine whether each sentence is correct, is a fragment, has a subject/verb agreement error, includes a comma splice, or is a fused sentence. No sentence includes more than one error.

1. Some people eat the strangest food items for breakfast. 2. Like roast beef, mashed potatoes, and candied yams. 3. My uncle, who has traveled to China, South America, and Africa, like to eat elephant ears (the plant!) in a coconut cream sauce. 4. My brother Bill likes hot fudge sauce on his grits, my sister likes catsup on her eggs. 5. My father on rare occasions eat cold pepperoni pizza. 6. My former neighbors back in Island Grove, Florida, likes to eat swamp cabbage and heart of palm. 7. Other people serve the strangest foods at parties. 8. For instance, chocolate covered turkey! 9. At my brother Peter's caroling party, he and his wife served an odd variety of finger foods. 10. There was octopus in a lemon butter sauce, squid in a marinara sauce, and oysters in an apricot sauce. 11. A former boyfriend seasoned pancakes in the oddest ways he liked to throw in pinches of cloves, cumin, and nutmeg. 12. Thinking he was a creative genius. 13. No one ate his pancakes. 14. Not even his dog.

Answer

Answer Key - Proofreading Practice 4

Practice 5

Read the following sentences and determine whether each sentence is correct, is a fragment, has a subject/verb agreement error, includes a comma splice, or is a fused sentence. No sentence includes more than one error.

1. The story of the first two years, two months, and two days in the life of a modern Southern marriage.
2. This book is dangerous, it is one of those rare books that causes fits of uncontrollable laughter.
3. In the book The Heart of a Distant Forest, Andrew Lachlan meets a woman he had loved, they soon begin seeing each other.
4. At one point in the novel, Lachlan writes, "It is hard for me to write my hands shake so."
5. A novel written with insight, poetry, beauty, and passion.
6. A book meant to be read again and again.
7. The night became cold, Laura was glad that she packed an extra blanket.
8. Laura would not sleep well that night she would ache from the damp and freezing air.
9. Sometimes my life seems like a novel, I am a character lost in a series of confusing subplots.
10. Living out my life in third person singular.
11. Reading and walking was all she loved.

Answer

Answer Key - Proofreading Practice 5

References

- Dr. Mary Nielsen, Dean of the Dalton State College School of Liberal Arts.

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14.10: Pronoun

Practice 1

	Nominative (Subject) Case		Objective Case	
	Singular	**Plural**	**Singular**	**Plural**
1st Person	I	we	me	us
2nd Person	you	you	you	you
3rd Person	he, she, it, who	they who	him, her, it whom	them

- The nominative case is used when the pronoun is the subject of a verb.
- Also, use a subject pronoun after any form of the verb "to be."
- The objective case is used when the pronoun is the direct object of a verb or the object of a preposition.

Choose the correct case for each pronoun in the sentences below.

1. Maria and (her, she) laughed and talked well into the night.
2. (Him, He) and I just don't seem to get along very well these days.
3. It was (her, she) who tied up the computer for three hours.
4. Cora handed Tom and (I, me) the employment applications.
5. Between you and (I, me), pronoun case can be very confusing.
6. Among the applicants were Tom and (me, I).
7. It was (he, him) and Colleen who solved the problem with my scanner.
8. The vice president will select (you or I, you or me) to serve as acting chair.
9. Between Joseph and (him, he), there really isn't much of a choice.
10. As for my cousin and (I, me), we will not be attending the dinner.
11. That certainly is not (he, him) sitting in the first row of the theater.
12. I gave the note to Laura, (who, whom) gave it to Phil.
13. I gave the left over fudge to Tom and (she, her).
14. Leonardo wrongly believed that (she and Tom, her and Tom) would take the blame for him.
15. (Whom, Who) did you say would be attending in my place?

Answer

Pronoun Case - Practice 1 Answer Key

Practice 2

Choose the correct case for each pronoun in the sentences below.

1. My sister is taller than (I, me).
2. After hearing his sister explain the fight she had had with husband, Jim exclaimed, "the person who should apologize is (him, he)!"
3. The winner of last night's raffle was (her, she).
4. My long-time friend went to dinner with my husband and (I, me).
5. (Her, She) and her friends went to see *Hamlet* on Landis Green.

6. The teacher gave (we, us) students extra credit for an optional term paper.
7. Between you and (I, me), that outfit looks ridiculous on her.
8. He was not as angry as (them, they).
9. Please give the leftovers to Paul and (she, her).
10. My sister Lisa and (me, I) take a trip to Panama City every spring.
11. Lisa enjoys shopping more than (me, I).
12. The child Laura was most concerned about was (her, she).
13. When will you start listening to your mother and (I, me)?
14. I think that (you and him, you and he) are more similar than you think.
15. She selected Troy (who, whom) she thought could do the job right the first time.

Answer

Pronoun Case - Practice 2 Answer Key

References

- Dr. Mary Nielsen, Dean of the Dalton State College School of Liberal Arts.

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14.11: Pronoun/Antecedent Agreement

Practice 1

Remember:

1. Neither, either, and each are singular.
2. Words ending in "one," "body," and "thing" are also singular.
3. A collective noun is singular if the group acts as one unit, plural if the members of the group act as individuals.

Directions: Choose the correct pronoun in the following sentences.

1. Each of the daughters followed (her, their) mother's footsteps.
2. Neither of the actors could remember (his, their) lines correctly.
3. Everyone complained that (his/her, their) food was cold.
4. Neither of my sisters remembered to purchase (her, their) tickets.
5. Late in the evening, the jury finally reached (its, their) verdict.
6. The captains of both teams forgot the words of wisdom that (his, his or her, their) coaches had given the night before the championship.
7. Every student should proof (his or her, their) essay for Type I errors.
8. All of my brothers earned (his, their) degrees from Florida State University.
9. Almost everyone was surprised when (he or she, they) heard the news.
10. Everybody on the voyage complained that (he or she, they) were suffering from food poisoning.

Answer

Pronoun/Antecedent Agreement - Practice 1-Answer Key

Practice 2

Directions: Choose the correct pronoun in the following sentences.

1. Neither Clarissa nor Aleah wore (her, their) own dresses to the prom.
2. Someone in your ENGL 1101 class called and left (his, their) phone number.
3. McDonnell-Douglas recently published (its, their) report on the newly improved Tomahawk missile.
4. One of the cashiers thinks that (her, their) boss has been transferred to a different location.
5. Many of the students at Dalton State College find that school pressures affect (his or her, their) relationships at home.
6. Each of the candidates gave (his or her, their) speech at the Civic Center.
7. Having an obsessive-compulsive personality, Laura likes to have everything in (its, their) place before she goes to sleep at night.
8. Either of the women who parked illegally will soon find that (her, their) car has been towed.
9. Either my brothers or my uncle will fail to purchase (his, their) tickets in time to receive a discount.
10. Either my brother or my uncles will fail to purchase (his, their) tickets in time to receive a discount.

Answer

Pronoun/Antecedent - Practice 2 Answer Key

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14.12: Subject Identification

Practice 1

Finding the Subject

- The subject of the sentence usually answers the following question: Who or what is this sentence about?
- The subject is typically a noun (person, place, animal, or thing) or a pronoun (e.g., *I, he, she, we, you, they*).
- The subject may be a *gerund* (*ing* form a a verb: *running*, *swimming*, *studying*).
- The subject may be an *infinitive* (*to* form of a verb: *to run*, *to swim*, *to study*).
- A sentence may have two or more subjects (compound subjects).
- *There* and *here* are never the subjects of sentences.

Underline the subjects in the following sentences.

1. Today's weather forecast is for partly cloudy skies with temperatures in the upper 80s.
2. A stray thunderstorm is possible through the early evening.
3. There has not been any rain in weeks.
4. The sound of rain would be like music to my ears.
5. Tropical depression Barry brought five inches of rain to Melbourne, Florida.
6. According to the WeatherChannel.com, the United States has the largest number of tornadoes worldwide.
7. The tornado warning for Leon County was cancelled just moments ago.
8. We will not need to go to the basement after all.
9. Cleaning the basement and emptying the garbage are my youngest brother's chores.
10. Here are Tom and Rita.
11. Surfing is dangerous during a tropical depression.
12. To see a tornado form was the tornado hunter's strongest desire.
13. I do not share that desire.
14. Feeling exhausted, Laura lay down on the floor under the ceiling fan.
15. To lose weight requires tremendous effort and willpower.

Answer

Subject Identification - Practice 1 Answer Key

Practice 2

Underline the subjects in the following sentences.

1. For five homeless teenagers, surfing became a way to enjoy life, at least for a week, at Playalinda Beach.
2. However, next week, an upcoming launch of the space shuttle will close the beach.
3. Reading enables children to experience places beyond their reach.
4. All too frequently, your cover letter and resume can keep you from getting a job.
5. According to Kate Lorenz, there are ten ways to ruin a resume.
6. Writing in first person and using passive language are particularly troublesome.
7. Failing to proofread can also be fatal.
8. You should avoid flashy formatting and tiny font sizes.

9. To teach eighth graders requires enormous energy.
10. Quitting work early, Laura stopped at Kroger to buy something to cook for dinner.
11. The Writing Lab is a great place to prepare for final exams.
12. To succeed in college, you should attend every class session and read all assigned material.
13. Laughter is the best medicine.
14. To err is human.
15. To forgive is beyond her abilities or desires.

Answer

Subject Identification - Practice 2 Answer Key

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14.13: Subject-Verb Agreement

Practice 1

Choose the correct verb in the following sentences. Click on the answer key at the end of the practice.

1. There (is, are) an empty cup and a paper bag on the floor.
2. My sister as well as two of my brothers (lives, live) in Florida.
3. The professor, together with twenty-five students, (is, are) happy that the term was almost over.
4. My grandmother and grandfather (look, looks) alike.
5. Either my brothers or my younger sister (is, are) owed my thanks.
6. One of her six children (run, runs) five miles every day.
7. Each of the students (spend, spends) six hours studying for classes every day of the week.
8. Neither of the boys (is, are) willing to study during the weekends.
9. As a result of the conflict, there (is, are) bloodshed and chaos.
10. Do you think that the manager and our supervisor (understands, understand) the problem?
11. Neither my sister nor my brothers (is, are) planning to drive down from New York for my seventh marriage.
12. One of my shoes (is, are) missing.
13. Christopher or Laura (email, emails) me almost every day.
14. Maria's regular salary together with tips (are, is) just enough for her to survive.
15. Under my son's bed (was, were) three *Rolling Stone* magazines.

Answer

Answer Key - Subject/Verb Agreement Practice 1

Practice 2

Reminders: Each, everyone, everybody, and one are singular pronouns.
Watch for prepositional phrases that separate the subject from the verb (of the ___, with the ___). The verb should agree with the subject of the sentence, not the object of the preposition.

Directions: In each of the following sentences, select the appropriate form of the verb.

1. One of my old fillings (need, needs) to be replaced.
2. The young widow with her five small children (want, wants) to get on the bus.
3. In the back of the closet (is, are) some old paperback novels you might like to have.
4. The Chevy with the blue tinted windows (need, needs) washing.
5. Geoffrey (doesn't, don't) have time to finish his work.
6. Along the river's edge (is, are) found many different kinds of wild flowers.
7. Every one of the employees (seem, seems) ready for a vacation.
8. Each of the Academy Award winners (was, were) well-paid.
9. Some of the sweaters that are supposed to be new (have, has) torn seams.
10. One of the clerks (do, does) much better work than the other one.
11. The serving platter with the flowers and vines on it (is, are) pretty.
12. Neither my brothers nor my sister (is, are) going to the beach with me this weekend.
13. Laura, together with Sally and Jon, (is, are) going to Port St. John this weekend.

14. The plumber with his young helper (was, were) at the door only 10 minutes after Maria called.
15. Neither the scouts nor the scoutmaster (was, were) found until the second day of the search.

Answer

Answer Key for Subject/Verb Agreement Practice 2

Practice 3

Directions: In each of the following sentences, select the appropriate form of the verb.

1. A seer, so my friends tell me, (predict, predicts) events or developments.
2. The seer, together with three other psychics, (plans, plan) to make a number of startling predictions.
3. These predictions, including one about how well you will do on this practice, (is, are) not to be believed.
4. My sister, along with her husband and my parents, (is, are) driving to a wedding this weekend.
5. Inside my refrigerator (is, are) a can of Diet Pepsi and an old English muffin.
6. One of my brothers (was, were) in Atlanta last weekend.
7. The teacher as well as her students (believe, believes) that practice makes perfect.
8. However, I believe that perfect practice, including long drills, (is, are) the key to success.
9. Neither of the two politicians (expect, expects) to lose the race.
10. Neither Senator Smith nor her administrative assistants (return, returns) phone calls.
11. Neither her administrative assistants nor Senator Smith (return, returns) phone calls.
12. Each of the twins (has, have) some unusual habits.
13. The first type of driver that I find annoying (is, are) the speeders.
14. She is one of the students who always (answer, answers) correctly.
15. Sara is the only one of the students who always (answer, answers) correctly.

Answer

Answer Key for Subject-Verb Agreement Practice 3

Practice 4

Directions: In each of the following sentences, select the appropriate form of the verb.

1. There (is, are) a pebble and some sand in my shoe.
2. A list of Dalton State College course offerings (is, are) posted on the college webpage.
3. Details of the accident (was, were) not released.
4. The stereo, together with the phone and the CD layer, (go, goes) dead during electrical storms.
5. Maria and Stephanie (play, plays) Dream Phone on Saturday mornings.
6. Here (is, are) Tom and Jerry.
7. Directions for the recipe (is, are) on the back of the box.
8. In the safety-deposit box at the bank (is, are) is an extra key to my house and some important papers.
9. All of the cookies (taste, tastes) stale.
10. In the locker room (is, are) a few old weights.
11. Neither that Internet site nor the article from Time magazine (was, were) helpful to my research.
12. All of the snow (has, have) melted.
13. Larissa or her cousins (is, are) coming to Dalton to visit.

14. Either the articles on the Internet or the one in library (seem, seems) to have relevant information.
15. The article, together with the web pages, (is, are) too much for me to read today.

Answer

Answer Key for Subject-Verb Agreement Practice 4

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14.14: Supporting Details

Practice 1

Determine the number of major details in the paragraphs below. It is useful to identify the topic sentence and to look for transition words that suggest addition (such as *first, second, third, moreover, also, in addition, furthermore*).

1. According to WebMd, there are a number of symptoms associated with hypothyroidism. One common symptom is the inability to tolerate cold. People with hypothyroidism feel cold more intensely and often wear light sweaters, even during the summer. Another symptom is feeling tired throughout the day. In addition, individuals with this disease often experience hair loss. (Some women find that they never have to shave their legs again.) Yet another symptom is dry skin. Perhaps most problematic is modest weight gain. People with undiagnosed hypothyroid disease often gain weight even when they do not overeat.
2. Mystery fiction comes in many varieties, each appealing to different groups of readers. First, there is the "classic" mystery. Classic mysteries include works by Agatha Christie, Edgar Allan Poe, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and allow the reader an equal opportunity to solve the crime. Another category is the hard-boiled variety. Often considered distinctly American, this variety includes tough, solitary detectives who live in a world gone wrong. Then there are police procedurals. These stories offer a step-by-step look at the personnel and methods used in the investigation of a crime and typically include police officers as protagonists. Finally, there is the contemporary cozy, which is similar to the classical style.
3. For a novel to be classified as a "contemporary classic mystery," it must include many of the following characteristics. For one thing, there must be a puzzle to be solved by both the reader and the protagonist. In addition, the detective, usually a reluctant amateur, is the hero. Next, the investigation of the crime must be the central action or plot of the story. Furthermore, the victim of the crime should be someone who will not be terribly missed. Contemporary classic writers must also follow the rules of fair play. That is, all clues should be accessible to the reader and no new evidence should be included when the villain is unmasked.
4. The 1970s saw a number of changes in the mystery fiction publishing world. One change was the importance of regionalism. Novels need not be set in an English country village or on the mean streets of some huge city. Another change was inclusion. Females were no longer excluded in the world of the private eye. Novels of this time period also saw changes in ethnic and racial representation. For instance, James Patterson introduced the African-American detective Alex Cross, and Rabbi David Small and Father Dowling both had crimes to solve. In addition, novels of the 1970s showed increased specialization. Series might focus on horse racing, sports agents, cats, and even antique prints.
5. The writer S. S. Van Dine forbade certain tricks in the writing of mystery and detective fiction. First of all, a writer could not use a seance to trick the guilty party into confessing. The detective also could not use a word association test to determine guilt. Another forbidden trick was the use of phony fingerprints. Nor could writers have a character use a dummy to establish an alibi. Van Dine viewed such tricks as violating the rules of fair play.
6. Father Ronald Knox also offered his own rules for detective fiction. No more than one secret room or secret passageway was allowed. The criminal had to be introduced fairly early in the story. Supernatural forces were also not permitted. Knox also believed that the detective could not be the villain. Perhaps his strangest rule was that no Chinamen could be featured in a story.
7. The Dalton State Portal has many useful features. It includes access to BANNER. Here students can check their grades or register for courses. The Portal also includes campus announcements. These may inform students of new courses or events offered through the Fine Arts series. The Portal's "bookmark" feature is particularly useful. With a few simple steps, the user can have access to the Weather Channel, the Hummingbird Migration Web site, or even the *Daily Citizen* online. Moreover, the Portal offers "tabs". These tabs can take interested students to the Roberts Library Web site or to their DSConnect course page. Finally, the Portal offers access to campus email.
8. According to *Research Methods in the Social Sciences* (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias), using personal interviews is often more advantageous than using questionnaires sent through the mail. Personal interviews offer greater flexibility. For instance, during an interview, the interviewer can clarify questions that might be misunderstood. In addition, personal interviews typically yield a better response rate. Researchers cannot control how many questionnaires are thrown away as junk mail, but they can control the numbers of people they eventually interview. Personal interviews also provide fuller information. The interviewer can observe facial expressions and spontaneous reactions that a mailed survey cannot provide.
9. However, using personal interviews to conduct research is not without disadvantages. The text *Research Methods in*

the Social Sciences(Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias) notes that personal interviews are more expensive than mailed questionnaires. For example, travel costs to interview a single subject for a study may be far more expensive than the cost of a postage stamp. In addition, personal interviews are subject to interviewer bias. During a face-to-face interview, the interviewer may inadvertently send nonverbal signals to the interviewee that might affect his or her responses. A final drawback of personal interviews is the lack of anonymity. If the subject matter is sensitive or controversial, the interviewee could feel too uncomfortable to answer truthfully.

10. American workers change jobs for a variety of reasons. Promotion is one typically positive reason for changing jobs. Relocating is also a common reason for a job change. Sometimes workers relocate to help out an aging parent; others relocate for health reasons. Layoffs are also responsible for many job changes. Employees who find themselves laid off will often take any job available. And of course, some individuals are forced into a new line of work when they are fired.

Answer

Supporting Details - Practice 1 Answer Key

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14.15: GRAMMAR AND MECHANICS MINI-LESSONS

14.15.1: Grammar and Mechanics Mini-Lessons

14.15.2: Subjects and Verbs, Irregular Verbs, Subject Verb Agreement

14.15.3: Sentence Types

14.15.4: Fragments I

14.15.5: Run-ons and Comma Splices I

14.15.6: Comma Usage

14.15.7: Parallelism

14.15.8: The Apostrophe

14.15.9: Capital Letters

14.15.10: Grammar Practice- Interactive Quizzes

14.15.11: De Copia- Demonstration of the Variety of Language

14.15.12: Style Exercise- Voice

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14.15.1: Grammar and Mechanics Mini-Lessons

Use these mini-lessons on grammar and writing mechanics to develop your writing skills based on feedback from the instructor and Writing Community Reviews. They include:

- Subjects and Verbs, Irregular Verbs, and Subject-Verb Agreement
- Sentence Types
- Fragments I
- Run-ons and Comma Splices I
- Comma Usage
- Parallelism
- The Apostrophe
- Capital Letters

Each lesson contains brief videos to teach you or refresh your understanding of proper grammar, punctuation and usage.

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14.15.2: Subjects and Verbs, Irregular Verbs, Subject Verb Agreement

To refresh your understanding of subjects, verbs, irregular verbs and subject-verb agreement, review the videos below:

Subject and Verbs

YouTube Video

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View this YouTube Video online

Subject-Verb Agreement

YouTube Video

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14.15.3: Sentence Types

To refresh your understanding of different types of sentences, their grammar and structure, review the videos below:

Simple Sentences and Compound Sentences

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Complex Sentences

YouTube Video

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Compound Complex Sentences

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14.15.4: Fragments I

To refresh your understanding of sentence fragments, review the videos below:

Sentence Fragments

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Sentence Fragments, How to Identify and Correct Them in Writing

YouTube Video

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Sentences and Sentence Fragments

YouTube Video

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14.15.5: Run-ons and Comma Splices I

To refresh your understanding of run-on sentences and comma splice sentences, review the videos below:

Run-on Sentences

YouTube Video

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Comma Splices and How to Fix Them

YouTube Video

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View this YouTube Video online

How to Avoid Run-on Sentences

YouTube Video

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Identify and Fix Comma Splices

YouTube Video

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14.15.6: Comma Usage

To refresh your understanding of how to correctly use commas, review the videos below:

How to Use Commas – Overview

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Using Commas Correctly

YouTube Video

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14.15.7: Parallelism

To strengthen your understanding of parallelism in sentence structure, review the videos below:

Parallelism in Writing – What it is and how to avoid problems

YouTube Video

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View this YouTube Video online

Parallelism in Grammar

YouTube Video

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14.15.8: The Apostrophe

To strengthen your understanding of how to use apostrophes correctly, review the video below:

Using Apostrophes in Written English

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14.15.9: Capital Letters

To strengthen your understanding of proper use of capitalization in written English, review the video below:

Capitalization in English Grammar and Writing

YouTube Video

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14.15.10: Grammar Practice- Interactive Quizzes

For additional grammar practice, choose the topic(s) you want to develop by taking interactive quizzes from the *Guide to Grammar and Writing* on the following site.

Click the link to access the site: **Grammar Practice Site**

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14.15.11: De Copia- Demonstration of the Variety of Language

In De Copia, Erasmus re-writes the same sentence over and over to demonstrate the variety of language.

You will be assigned a sentence to re-write 25–30 times.

Here is one example:

30 variations of “A loud sound awakes me in the night”

1. In the bewitching hour, a resonant buzz raises me out of my crib.
2. A noisy growl returns me to my consciousness in the dead of night.
3. After dark, I am wide-awake because of a powerful bang.
4. I can no longer sleep due to the harsh noise in darkness of the day
5. I rise out of bed because of a deafening noise in the nighttime.
6. At the time when the moon is out high and bright, I become conscious due to a resonant sound.
7. A crazy roaring awake me at the darkness of the day.
8. In the night, a blaring sound wakes me up.
9. The god of sleep has abandoned me when a loud noise strikes out in the night.
10. In the dark hours, a big wave of sound had me awakened.
11. I am awakened by the vociferous noise after dark.
12. I am forced to end my body resting process at bedtime due to a powerful boom after dark.
13. An extremely harsh buzz forces me out of my dream at the bewitching hour.
14. I am left alone by the god of dream and nightmare when a noisy sound bothers my ears.
15. In the night, a loud sound wakes me up.
16. After dark, I rise out of my crib because of an annoying wailing.
17. I wake up because of a heavy bang in the dark hours.
18. I become conscious due to a resonant sound in the dark time of the day.
19. After dark, an intense buzz forces me out of my body resting process.
20. I am awakened by the thundering sound when the sun had rested long time ago.
21. A powerful boom makes me rise out of my sleepiness in the pitch black.
22. A heavy cry awakes me in the dead of night.
23. A deafening noise in the nighttime has me rise out of bed.
24. An unpleasant sound has awakened me after dark.
25. At a bewitching hour, a blaring noise wakes me up.
26. My dream ends abruptly because of a noisy growl in the pitch-black time of the day.
27. In the night, I come to my conscious due to the blaring noise.
28. When the moon shines bright and high, I am forced out of my dream because of a thundering sound.
29. My sleep is ended when I hear a loud noise after dark.
30. In the night, a resonant howl awakes me.

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14.15.12: Style Exercise- Voice

The **de copia exercise** is useful in showing how style—the third canon of rhetoric (invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery)—has a major impact on one's writing. Paragraphs and essays that feature combined and varied sentences often shine the most.

For this exercise, I would like for you to try to transform your own writing to mimic another's voice. This type of exercise is designed to help make you think about the choices a writer makes in designing his or her writing style.

You'll complete four steps:

- Write a *brief* one-paragraph story that describes a key quality of yours to someone not in our class.
- Read the some sample passages and note their distinct writing styles. These are in very different genres, of course, but that's part of the fun.
- Mimic one of those writing styles to re-tell your story. You can choose a different "audience" for your description if you'd like.
- **Answer the questions**: What choices did you make in re-designing your story? What obstacles did you face? How would you characterize your voice vs. the one you mimicked?

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INDEX

A

academic
- 10.1: Examining the Status Quo
- 13.2.15: What Is "Academic" Writing?
- 2.4.1: Introduction- The Academic Writing Task
- 2.4.2: Myths about Writing
- 2.4.3: In College, Everything's an Argument- A Guide for Decoding College Writing Assignments
- 4.2: Types of Reading Material

academic research
- 6.2.11.14.2: What's Different about Academic Research?

academic writing
- 1.6: Writing Paragraphs (Part 1)
- 5.7: What are Other Types of Academic Writing?

academic writing task
- 2.4.5: Conclusion

analysis
- 1.2: Purpose, Audience, Tone, and Content
- 2.4.3: In College, Everything's an Argument- A Guide for Decoding College Writing Assignments
- 8.1.2.8.1: Situation and Analysis

analyze
- 8.1.2.8.1.1: What Does the Professor Want? Understanding the Assignment

antecedent
- 14.11: Pronoun/Antecedent Agreement

antithetical arguments
- 6.2.11.15.7: Antithetical Arguments and Answers

AP style
- 13.1.1: Formatting a Research Paper

APA
- 11: Chapter Eleven- MLA Style
- 13.1.E: APA and MLA Documentation and Formatting (Exercises)
- 13.4.3: Documentation Common Error
- 7.2.1: What is MLA,?

APA citation example
- 7.2.5: APA Citation Examples

APA format
- 13.4.12: Verb Tense Shift

APA formatting
- 12.2.3: Making Your Quotes Fit

APA guidelines
- 13.1.3: Creating a References Section (Part 1)

APA signal phrases
- 7.2.6: APA Signal Phrases

APA style
- 12.2.2: Documenting Source Material
- 13.1.5: Using Modern Language Association (MLA) Style
- 6.2.11.15.9: "Works Cited" or "Reference" Information

apostrophe
- 14.15.8: The Apostrophe

apostrophe errors
- 13.4.14: Apostrophe Errors

arguable
- 1.4: Writing Thesis Statements

argument
- 7.3: Argument
- 8.1.2.2: Features of an Argument
- 8.1.2.8.1.2: Backpacks v. Briefcases- Steps Toward Rhetorical Analysis

argument essay
- 7.3.5.1.6: Putting It All Together- Basic Elements of an Argument Essay

Argument Model
- 7.3.5.1.2: Aristotelian (Classical) Argument Model
- 9.3: Toulmin's Argument Model

argument writing
- 7.3.4: What are the Different Types of Argument in Writing?

argumentative writing
- 7.3.5.1.1: Introduction to Argumentative Writing

arguments
- 2.1: What is a Thesis Statement?
- 2.4.3: In College, Everything's an Argument- A Guide for Decoding College Writing Assignments
- 7.3.3: What is Logic?
- 8.1.1.1: Introduction
- 8.1.2.5: Toulmin- Dissecting the Everyday Argument
- 8.1.2.6: Rogerian Argument

audience
- 1.2: Purpose, Audience, Tone, and Content
- 2.2.3: Writing an Exemplification Essay
- 2.4.6: Discussion
- 3.1.1: Prewriting
- 6.2.11.15.5: Background Information (or Helping Your Reader Find a Context)

auditory learner
- 2.3.3: Developing Study Skills (Part 1)

B

background information
- 6.2.11.15.2: Getting Ready- Questions to Ask Yourself About Your Research Essay
- 6.2.11.15.5: Background Information (or Helping Your Reader Find a Context)

basic elements
- 7.3.5.1.6: Putting It All Together- Basic Elements of an Argument Essay

basic questions
- 9.1: Basic Questions for Rhetorical Analysis

basic structure
- 8.1.1.4: Basic Structure and Content of Argument
- 8.1.2.4: Basic Structure and Content of Argument

benefits
- 4.10: Conclusion to Critical Reading

body paragraph
- 1.7: Writing Paragraphs (Part 2)
- 2.2.2: The Structure of an Exemplification Essay
- 3.1.4: Drafting (Part 2)
- 3.1.6.1.9: Revising
- 6.2.11.13: Essay Checklist

body paragraphs
- 1.5: Methods of Organizing Your Writing
- 6.1.1: Writing Body Paragraphs
- 6.2.11.9: Revising

book published
- 11.2.1.5: Creating a References Page (Part 1)
- 13.1.3: Creating a References Section (Part 1)

book report
- 5.7: What are Other Types of Academic Writing?

bowtie method
- 3.1.3: Drafting (Part 1)

brainstorm
- 3.1.6.1.4: Journalist Questions

brainstorming
- 13.2.6: From Topic to Presentation- Making Choices to Develop Your Writing
- 3.1.1: Prewriting
- 3.1.2: Outlining
- 3.1.6.1.3: Brainstorming
- 3.1.6.1.5: Listing
- 6.1.4: End-of-Chapter Exercises
- 6.2.11.3: Brainstorming

C

capital letters
- 14.15.9: Capital Letters

Capitalization
- 13.4.8: Capitalization

case study
- 5.7: What are Other Types of Academic Writing?

certain ideas
- 3.1.6.1.5: Listing
- 6.2.11.5: Listing

charting
- 2.3.4: Developing Study Skills (Part 2)

choosing topic
- 6.2.2: Choosing Your Topic

citation
- 12.2.4: Citation Guidelines

citation example
- 7.2.2: MLA Citation Examples

citation generators
- 11.1: Citation Generators

citations
- 11.2.1.4: Citation Guidelines
- 11.3: Citation Steps for Any Style

cites
- 11.2.1.6.1.3: How to Cite YouTube

citing
- 13.1.2: Citing and Referencing Techniques

claim
- 2.4.4: The Format of the Academic Essay
- 7.3.5.1.6: Putting It All Together- Basic Elements of an Argument Essay
- 8.1.1.4: Basic Structure and Content of Argument
- 8.1.1.5: Toulmin- Dissecting the Everyday Argument
- 8.1.2.4: Basic Structure and Content of Argument
- 9.2: Rogerian Argument
- 9.3: Toulmin's Argument Model
- 9.4: Toulmin's Schema

claims
- 4.8: Supporting Claims
- 8.1.1.6: Rogerian Argument

classical rhetoric
13.2.4: Finding the Good Argument OR Why Bother With Logic?
clustering
3.1.6.1.6: Clustering/Mapping
5.3: How to Organize and Arrange?
6.2.11.6: Clustering/Mapping
CMS
7.2.3: CMS Signal Phrases
college
1.3: Using Sources
13.2.8: "I need you to say 'I'"- Why First Person Is Important in College Writing
2.4.5: Conclusion
2.4.6: Discussion
6.2.11.14.2: What's Different about Academic Research?
college students
2.4.1: Introduction- The Academic Writing Task
Comma
13.4.16: Comma Splice
13.4.2: Comma After Introductory Element
13.4.6: Quotation Error
13.4.7: Unnecessary Comma
14.1: Comma
comma spice
14.2: Comma Splice
comma splice
13.4.16: Comma Splice
comma splices
14.15.5: Run-ons and Comma Splices I
comma usage
14.15.1: Grammar and Mechanics Mini-Lessons
14.15.6: Comma Usage
common error
13.4.23: Time to Write
13.4.3: Documentation Common Error
13.4.5: Spelling
common errors
13.4.22: Putting It All Together
communication skills
5: Chapter Five-The Writing Process
comparison
14.8: Patterns
complex text
2.4.2: Myths about Writing
composing
13.2.3: Composing the Anthology- An Exercise in Patchwriting
3.1.6.1.1: Writing as a Process
6.2.11.1: Writing as a Process
composition
13.2.7: Introduction- Open Source Composition Texts Arrive for College Writers
composition course
8.1.1.7: On the Other Hand- The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses
compound sentences
13.4.13: Missing Comma in Compound Sentence
14.1: Comma
concluding
6.1.2: Writing Introductory and Concluding Paragraphs
conclusion
6.2.11.15.8: The Conclusion
6.2.11.9: Revising
6.2.8: Writing Your Draft
9.2: Rogerian Argument
9.4: Toulmin's Schema
conjunction
14.1: Comma
content
1.2: Purpose, Audience, Tone, and Content
3.1.6.1.9: Revising
6.2.11.9: Revising
content of arguments
8.1.1.4: Basic Structure and Content of Argument
8.1.2.4: Basic Structure and Content of Argument
context
10.2: Posing Productive Questions
contrast
14.8: Patterns
convincing arguments
8.1: Persuasion
coordinating conjunction
14.5: Fused Sentence
cornell notes
2.3.4: Developing Study Skills (Part 2)
creating
6.2.11.15.3: Creating and Revising a Formal Outline
creating references
11.2.1.5: Creating a References Page (Part 1)
creator
11.2.1.6.1.3: How to Cite YouTube
credibility
6.2.11.14.7: Evaluating the Quality and Credibility of Your Research
criteria
8.1.2.1: Introduction
critical reading
4.1: Introduction to Critical Reading
4.10: Conclusion to Critical Reading
7.3.5.1.7: Tips for Writing Academic Persuasive Essays

D

data
8.1.1.5: Toulmin- Dissecting the Everyday Argument
9.3: Toulmin's Argument Model
data sets
13.1.4: Creating a References Section (Part 2)
databases
12.2.5: Creating a References Page (Part 2)
dauting
4.6: Vocabulary
debate
7.3.5.1.6: Putting It All Together- Basic Elements of an Argument Essay
8.1.2.7: On the Other Hand- The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses
demonstration
14.15.11: De Copia- Demonstration of the Variety of Language
developing paragraphs
1.7: Writing Paragraphs (Part 2)
Dissecting the Everyday Argument
8.1.1.5: Toulmin- Dissecting the Everyday Argument
documentation
13.1.E: APA and MLA Documentation and Formatting (Exercises)
13.4.3: Documentation Common Error
documenting
11.2.1.2: Documenting Source Material
7.1: Documenting Your Source Material
draft
12.1.1.1: A strategy for analyzing and revising a first draft
12.1.1.2: Checklist- Revision
12.1.1.3: How to- Be a Constructive Peer Reviewer
12.3.1: Revision (Part 1)
13.2.6: From Topic to Presentation- Making Choices to Develop Your Writing
3.1.4: Drafting (Part 2)
6.2.8: Writing Your Draft
6.2.9: Revising Your Draft (Part 1)
drafting
3.1.3: Drafting (Part 1)
3.1.6: Revising and Editing (Part 2)
3.1.6.1.8: Drafting
5.1: What is the Writing Process?
6.1.3: Drafting
6.1.4: End-of-Chapter Exercises
6.2.11.8: Drafting
7.3.5.1.7: Tips for Writing Academic Persuasive Essays
drafting paper
6.2.1: The Purpose of Research Writing

E

editing
12.3.1: Revision (Part 1)
12.3.4: Editing and Developing a Final Draft of a Research Paper (Part 2)
3.1.6: Revising and Editing (Part 2)
3.1.6.1.1: Writing as a Process
3.1.6.1.11: Editing/Proofreading
5.1: What is the Writing Process?
5.6: What is Done During Editing, Proofreading, and Formatting?
6.1.4: End-of-Chapter Exercises
6.2.11.1: Writing as a Process
6.2.11.11: Editing/Proofreading
edits
3.1.5: Revising and Editing (Part 1)
engage reader
2.2.3: Writing an Exemplification Essay
enlightening
4.6: Vocabulary
essay
1.4: Writing Thesis Statements
1.6: Writing Paragraphs (Part 1)
13.3.1: Nonfiction
2.2.2: The Structure of an Exemplification Essay
2.4.4: The Format of the Academic Essay
3.1.2: Outlining
3.1.6.1.10: Creating Essay Titles
3.1.6.1.12: Final Revision Example
3.1.6.1.2: Freewriting
3.1.6.1.8: Drafting
6.2.11.10: Creating Essay Titles
6.2.11.15.4: The Introduction
6.2.11.15.8: The Conclusion
9.5: Persuasion
essay checklist
3.1.6.1.13: Essay Checklist

essays
1.5: Methods of Organizing Your Writing
ethos
8.1.1.2: Features of an Argument
8.1.2.2: Features of an Argument
evaluate
1.2: Purpose, Audience, Tone, and Content
evaluating
6.2.6: Evaluating and Processing Your Sources
evidence
13.2.12: So You've Got a Writing Assignment. Now What?
8.1.1.3: Failures in Evidence- When "Lots of Quotes" Can't Save a Paper
8.1.1.6: Rogerian Argument
8.1.2.1: Introduction
8.1.2.3: Failures in Evidence- When "Lots of Quotes" Can't Save a Paper
8.1.2.6: Rogerian Argument
Examining
10.1: Examining the Status Quo
example
6.2.11.12: Final Revision Example
excercises
6.1.4: End-of-Chapter Exercises
explicit
4.5: Identifying Thesis Statements

F

fact
14.3: Fact and Opinion
9.4: Toulmin's Schema
failures evidence
8.1.1.3: Failures in Evidence- When "Lots of Quotes" Can't Save a Paper
faulty sentences
13.4.10: Faulty Sentence Structure
features argument
8.1.1.2: Features of an Argument
fial
6.2.11.12: Final Revision Example
final
3.1.6.1.12: Final Revision Example
Final Draft
12.3.3: Editing and Developing a Final Draft of a Research Paper (Part 1)
12.3.4: Editing and Developing a Final Draft of a Research Paper (Part 2)
Formal Outline
6.2.11.15.2: Getting Ready- Questions to Ask Yourself About Your Research Essay
format
2.4.4: The Format of the Academic Essay
formatting
12.3.4: Editing and Developing a Final Draft of a Research Paper (Part 2)
13.1.1: Formatting a Research Paper
13.1.2: Citing and Referencing Techniques
13.1.E: APA and MLA Documentation and Formatting (Exercises)
3.1.6.1.13: Essay Checklist
5.6: What is Done During Editing, Proofreading, and Formatting?
fragment
14.4: Fragment
14.9: Proofreading
fragments
14.15.4: Fragments I
freewrite
6.2.11.4: Journalist Questions
freewriting
2.3.5: Becoming a Successful Writer
3.1.6.1.2: Freewriting
3.1.6.1.3: Brainstorming
6.2.11.2: Freewriting
fused sentences
14.5: Fused Sentence

G

goals
2.3.1: Post-Secondary Reading and Writing (Part 1)
good arguments
13.2.4: Finding the Good Argument OR Why Bother With Logic?
grammar
14.15.1: Grammar and Mechanics Mini-Lessons
3.1.6.1.11: Editing/Proofreading
3.1.6.1.2: Freewriting
6.2.10: Revising Your Draft (Part 2)
grammar essentials
13.4.22: Putting It All Together
13.5: Grammar Essentials (Excelsior Online Writing Lab)
grammar practice
14.15.10: Grammar Practice- Interactive Quizzes
graphic data
12.2.5: Creating a References Page (Part 2)
13.1.4: Creating a References Section (Part 2)
group work
13.2.2: Collaborating Online- Digital Strategies for Group Work

H

headings
13.1.1: Formatting a Research Paper
high school
2.3.1: Post-Secondary Reading and Writing (Part 1)
hyphens
13.4.19: Hyphens

I

ideas
11.2.1.1: Supporting Your Ideas
12.2.1: Supporting Your Ideas
6.2.11.6: Clustering/Mapping
identifying
14.6: Identifying Dependent and Independent Clauses
implicit
4.5: Identifying Thesis Statements
independent clauses
13.4.15: Run-On Sentences
14.6: Identifying Dependent and Independent Clauses
inspired
13.2.14: The Inspired Writer vs. the Real Writer
integrated quote
13.4.18: Poorly Integrated Quote
internet
6.2.11.14.7: Evaluating the Quality and Credibility of Your Research
introduction
13.2.2: Collaborating Online- Digital Strategies for Group Work
6.2.11.15.10: A Student Example- "The Corruption Surrounding University Athletics" by Casey K. Copeman
6.2.11.15.4: The Introduction
7.3.5.1.1: Introduction to Argumentative Writing
7.3.5.1.3: Rogerian Argument Model
8.1.1.1: Introduction
8.1.2.1: Introduction
introductory
6.1.2: Writing Introductory and Concluding Paragraphs
introductory element
13.4.2: Comma After Introductory Element
investment writing
13.2.11: Reinventing Invention- Discovery and Investment in Writing
irregular verbs
14.15.2: Subjects and Verbs, Irregular Verbs, Subject Verb Agreement

J

job letter
7.3.4: What are the Different Types of Argument in Writing?
journalist question
3.1.6.1.4: Journalist Questions
judgment
10.4: Withholding Judgment

K

kinesthetic learner
2.3.3: Developing Study Skills (Part 1)

L

lap report
5.7: What are Other Types of Academic Writing?
learning
10: Chapter Ten-Writing to Think and Writing to Learn
leisure reading
4.10: Conclusion to Critical Reading
letter
5: Chapter Five-The Writing Process
library databases
11.1: Citation Generators
list of references
7.1: Documenting Your Source Material
listing
3.1.6.1.5: Listing
6.2.11.5: Listing
literature
4.2: Types of Reading Material
logic
13.2.4: Finding the Good Argument OR Why Bother With Logic?
4.7: Logic and Structure
7.3.3: What is Logic?
logical fallacies
7.3.5: A Repository of Logical Fallacies
logical fallacy
14.7: Logical Fallacy
logos
8.1.2.2: Features of an Argument

Lots of quotes
8.1.1.3: Failures in Evidence- When "Lots of Quotes" Can't Save a Paper
lots quotes
8.1.2.3: Failures in Evidence- When "Lots of Quotes" Can't Save a Paper

M

magazine
2.2.1: The Purpose of Using Exemplification in Writing
main idea
4.8: Supporting Claims
6.2.11.7: Outlining
main point
2.2.3: Writing an Exemplification Essay
mapping
3.1.6.1.6: Clustering/Mapping
6.2.11.6: Clustering/Mapping
mechanis=cs
14.15.1: Grammar and Mechanics Mini-Lessons
missing coma
13.4.11: Missing Comma with Nonrestrictive Element
missing comma
13.4.13: Missing Comma in Compound Sentence
missing words
13.4.9: Missing Word
MLA
1.3: Using Sources
11.2.1.6.1.3: How to Cite YouTube
13.1.1: Formatting a Research Paper
13.1.E: APA and MLA Documentation and Formatting (Exercises)
13.4.3: Documentation Common Error
7.2.1: What is MLA,?
7.2.2: MLA Citation Examples
MLA format
13.4.12: Verb Tense Shift
MLA signal phrases
7.2.4: MLA Signal Phrases
mla style
11: Chapter Eleven- MLA Style
13.1.5: Using Modern Language Association (MLA) Style
6.2.11.15.10: A Student Example- "The Corruption Surrounding University Athletics" by Casey K. Copeman
6.2.11.15.9: "Works Cited" or "Reference" Information
Modern Language Association
13.1.5: Using Modern Language Association (MLA) Style
murder
8.1.2.8.1.3: Murder! Rhetorically Speaking
myths
2.4.2: Myths about Writing

N

navigating games
13.2.9: Navigating Genres
newspaper
13.1.4: Creating a References Section (Part 2)
non scholarly
6.2.11.14.5: Sources that are Both Scholarly and Non-Scholarly?
nonfiction
13.3.1: Nonfiction
nonfictions
13.3.2: Nonfiction Exercises
nonrestrictive elements
13.4.11: Missing Comma with Nonrestrictive Element

O

one search
11.1: Citation Generators
online databases
6.2.4: Gathering Your Sources (Part 1)
online guide
11.3: Citation Steps for Any Style
opinion
14.3: Fact and Opinion
organization
2.4.4: The Format of the Academic Essay
3.1.6.1.7: Outlining
3.1.6.1.9: Revising
6.2.11.9: Revising
6.2.9: Revising Your Draft (Part 1)
organize
3.1.6.1.5: Listing
5.3: How to Organize and Arrange?
6.2.11.5: Listing
6.2.3: Managing Your Research
organizing
7.3.5.1.7: Tips for Writing Academic Persuasive Essays
outline
3.1.2: Outlining
3.1.4: Drafting (Part 2)
3.1.6: Revising and Editing (Part 2)
6.2.11.8: Drafting
outline format
2.3.4: Developing Study Skills (Part 2)
outlining
3.1.6.1.7: Outlining
5.3: How to Organize and Arrange?
6.2.11.1: Writing as a Process
6.2.11.7: Outlining
overview
11: Chapter Eleven- MLA Style

P

page numbers
11.2.1.4: Citation Guidelines
paper
6.2.8: Writing Your Draft
7.1: Documenting Your Source Material
paper topic
6.2.11.13: Essay Checklist
Paragraph
3.1.3: Drafting (Part 1)
paragraphs
8.1.2.7: On the Other Hand- The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses
parallelism
14.15.1: Grammar and Mechanics Mini-Lessons
14.15.7: Parallelism
paraphrase
1.3: Using Sources
parenthetical citations
13.1.5: Using Modern Language Association (MLA) Style
patchwriting
13.2.3: Composing the Anthology- An Exercise in Patchwriting
pathos
8.1.1.2: Features of an Argument
8.1.2.2: Features of an Argument
patterns
14.8: Patterns
peer review
12.3.2: Revision (Part 2)
3.1.5: Revising and Editing (Part 1)
peer reviewer
12.1.1.3: How to- Be a Constructive Peer Reviewer
peer reviews
12.3.1: Revision (Part 1)
persuasion
7.3.4: What are the Different Types of Argument in Writing?
8.1: Persuasion
9.5: Persuasion
persuasive argument
7.3.5.1.8: Sample Writing Assignments
persuasive essay
7.3.5.1.7: Tips for Writing Academic Persuasive Essays
phrases
14.1: Comma
plagiarism
11.2.1.1: Supporting Your Ideas
11.2.1.6.1.1: Read- Acknowledging Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism
3.1.6.1.13: Essay Checklist
6.2.11.15.6: Weaving in Evidence to Support Your Point
7.1: Documenting Your Source Material
Podcast
11.2.1.6: Creating a References Page (Part 2)
posing
10.2: Posing Productive Questions
post secondary
2.3.1: Post-Secondary Reading and Writing (Part 1)
2.3.2: Post-Secondary Reading and Writing (Part 2)
potential topic
6.2.2: Choosing Your Topic
prewriting
3.1.1: Prewriting
3.1.6.1.1: Writing as a Process
5.1: What is the Writing Process?
5.2: What is Prewriting?
6.2.11.1: Writing as a Process
primary research
11.2.1.1: Supporting Your Ideas
12.2.1: Supporting Your Ideas
6.2.11.14.3: Primary Research Versus Secondary Research
process
3.1: Pre-writing
3.1.6.1.1: Writing as a Process
prompt
3.1.6.1.4: Journalist Questions
pronoun
14.10: Pronoun
14.11: Pronoun/Antecedent Agreement
pronoun agreement
13.4.17: Pronoun Agreement

pronoun reference
13.4.4: Pronoun Reference
proofreading
14.9: Proofreading
3.1.6.1.10: Creating Essay Titles
3.1.6.1.11: Editing/Proofreading
5.1: What is the Writing Process?
5.6: What is Done During Editing, Proofreading, and Formatting?
6.2.11.11: Editing/Proofreading
proper order
3.1: Pre-writing
proposal method
7.3.5.1.5: Proposal Argument Model
punctuation
13.4.14: Apostrophe Errors
13.4.15: Run-On Sentences
13.4.16: Comma Splice
13.4.6: Quotation Error
purpose
1.2: Purpose, Audience, Tone, and Content
2.2.1: The Purpose of Using Exemplification in Writing
2.3.1: Post-Secondary Reading and Writing (Part 1)
3.1.1: Prewriting
3.1.2: Outlining
3.1.5: Revising and Editing (Part 1)
4.1: Introduction to Critical Reading
4.10: Conclusion to Critical Reading
5.2: What is Prewriting?
6.2.1: The Purpose of Research Writing
6.2.11.15.5: Background Information (or Helping Your Reader Find a Context)

Q

questions
6.2.11.4: Journalist Questions
quizzes
14.15.10: Grammar Practice- Interactive Quizzes
quotation error
13.4.6: Quotation Error
quotations
13.1.2: Citing and Referencing Techniques
quote
1.3: Using Sources
quotes
11.2.1.3: Making Your Quotes Fit

R

reader
13.2.10: Reflective Writing and the Revision Process- What Were You Thinking?
13.2.5: "Finding Your Way In"- Invention as Inquiry Based Learning in First Year Writing
reading
13.2: Book- Writing Spaces- Readings on Writing, Vol. I (Lowe and Zemliansky)
2.3.2: Post-Secondary Reading and Writing (Part 2)
3.1.1: Prewriting
4.3: Reading Strategies
reading material
4.2: Types of Reading Material
reading strategies
4.4: Specialized Reading Strategies
reasoning
14.7: Logical Fallacy
rebuttal
9.3: Toulmin's Argument Model
9.4: Toulmin's Schema
reference
6.2.11.15.9: "Works Cited" or "Reference" Information
reference librarian
6.2.5: Gathering Your Sources (Part 2)
references
13.2.6: From Topic to Presentation- Making Choices to Develop Your Writing
14.10: Pronoun
references page
12.2.5: Creating a References Page (Part 2)
12.2.6: Creating a References Page (Part 1)
references section
13.1.3: Creating a References Section (Part 1)
referencing techniques
13.1.2: Citing and Referencing Techniques
reinventing invention
13.2.11: Reinventing Invention- Discovery and Investment in Writing
research
6.2.1: The Purpose of Research Writing
6.2.11.14.1: What is "Research" and Why Should I Use It?
6.2.11.14.7: Evaluating the Quality and Credibility of Your Research
6.2.3: Managing Your Research
6.2.7: Applying Your Research
research essay
6.2.11.15.1: A "Research Essay" or a "Research Project" instead of a "Research Paper"
6.2.11.15.10: A Student Example- "The Corruption Surrounding University Athletics" by Casey K. Copeman
6.2.11.15.2: Getting Ready- Questions to Ask Yourself About Your Research Essay
research paper
12.3.3: Editing and Developing a Final Draft of a Research Paper (Part 1)
12.3.4: Editing and Developing a Final Draft of a Research Paper (Part 2)
13.1.1: Formatting a Research Paper
6.2.11.15.1: A "Research Essay" or a "Research Project" instead of a "Research Paper"
research projects
6.2.11.15.1: A "Research Essay" or a "Research Project" instead of a "Research Paper"
researcher challege
6.2.11.14.6: The Internet- The Researcher's Challenge
researcher challenge
6.2.11.14.6: The Internet- The Researcher's Challenge
review
13.2.2: Collaborating Online- Digital Strategies for Group Work
reviewing
13.2.17: Wikipedia Is Good for You!?
revise
6.2.11.9: Revising
revising
12.1.1.1: A strategy for analyzing and revising a first draft
3.1.5: Revising and Editing (Part 1)
3.1.6: Revising and Editing (Part 2)
3.1.6.1.1: Writing as a Process
3.1.6.1.9: Revising
5.1: What is the Writing Process?
5.5: What is Revising?
6.2.11.1: Writing as a Process
6.2.9: Revising Your Draft (Part 1)
revising formal outline
6.2.11.15.3: Creating and Revising a Formal Outline
revision
12.1.1.2: Checklist- Revision
12.3.1: Revision (Part 1)
12.3.2: Revision (Part 2)
3.1.6.1.12: Final Revision Example
6.2.10: Revising Your Draft (Part 2)
6.2.11.12: Final Revision Example
rhetorical analysis
8.1.2.8.1.2: Backpacks v. Briefcases- Steps Toward Rhetorical Analysis
rhetorical appeals
8.1.1.2: Features of an Argument
8.1.2.2: Features of an Argument
rhetorical modes
4.7: Logic and Structure
Rhetorically Speaking
8.1.2.8.1.3: Murder! Rhetorically Speaking
Rogerian argument
7.3.4: What are the Different Types of Argument in Writing?
8.1.1.6: Rogerian Argument
9.2: Rogerian Argument
rogerian argument model
7.3.5.1.3: Rogerian Argument Model
rough draft
5.4: How to Write a Rough Draft?
Rrhetorical analysis
13.2.1: Backpacks vs. Briefcases- Steps toward Rhetorical Analysis
rthetorical modes
7.3.4: What are the Different Types of Argument in Writing?
run on sentences
13.4.15: Run-On Sentences
runs on
14.15.5: Run-ons and Comma Splices I

S

S.M.A.R.T.
10.2: Posing Productive Questions
scholarly
6.2.11.14.5: Sources that are Both Scholarly and Non-Scholarly?
scholarly versus
6.2.11.14.4: Scholarly versus Non-Scholarly Sources
scientific studies
2.2.1: The Purpose of Using Exemplification in Writing
search terms
6.2.5: Gathering Your Sources (Part 2)

secondary research
11.2.1.1: Supporting Your Ideas
12.2.1: Supporting Your Ideas
6.2.11.14.3: Primary Research Versus Secondary Research
6.2.8: Writing Your Draft

self
10.2: Posing Productive Questions

sense of audiences
13.2.16: Why Visit Your Campus Writing Center?

sentence fragment
13.4.20: Sentence Fragment

sentences type
14.15.3: Sentence Types

signal phrases
7.2.3: CMS Signal Phrases

situation
8.1.2.8.1: Situation and Analysis

skimming
4.3: Reading Strategies

solution
7.3.5.1.8: Sample Writing Assignments

spelling
13.4.5: Spelling

strategies
4.1: Introduction to Critical Reading
4.3: Reading Strategies

structure
4.7: Logic and Structure
9.5: Persuasion

students
6.2.11.14.2: What's Different about Academic Research?

study skills
2.3.3: Developing Study Skills (Part 1)
2.3.4: Developing Study Skills (Part 2)

style
14.15.12: Style Exercise- Voice

subject
14.12: Subject Identification
14.4: Fragment

subject verb
14.15.2: Subjects and Verbs, Irregular Verbs, Subject Verb Agreement

subject verbs
14.13: Subject-Verb Agreement

success
2.4.5: Conclusion

summaries
3.1.6.1.4: Journalist Questions

summarize
1.3: Using Sources

summary skills
4.9: Summary Skills

support
8.1.1.6: Rogerian Argument

supportable
1.4: Writing Thesis Statements

supporting details
14.14: Supporting Details

T

text
10.2: Posing Productive Questions

textbooks reading
4.4: Specialized Reading Strategies

thesis
2.2.2: The Structure of an Exemplification Essay
2.2.3: Writing an Exemplification Essay
2.4.4: The Format of the Academic Essay
3.1.6.1.7: Outlining
4.8: Supporting Claims
6.1.1: Writing Body Paragraphs
6.2.11.7: Outlining
6.2.7: Applying Your Research
8.1.2.7: On the Other Hand- The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses
9.5: Persuasion

thesis statement
1.4: Writing Thesis Statements
2.1: What is a Thesis Statement?
3.1.4: Drafting (Part 2)
4.5: Identifying Thesis Statements
4.9: Summary Skills
6.1.2: Writing Introductory and Concluding Paragraphs

think
10: Chapter Ten-Writing to Think and Writing to Learn

thinking
10.3: Slowing Down Your Thinking
13.2.10: Reflective Writing and the Revision Process- What Were You Thinking?

title
3.1.4: Drafting (Part 2)

titles
3.1.6.1.10: Creating Essay Titles
6.2.11.10: Creating Essay Titles

tone
1.2: Purpose, Audience, Tone, and Content

topic
3.1.1: Prewriting
3.1.6.1.13: Essay Checklist
6.2.3: Managing Your Research

topic sentences
1.4: Writing Thesis Statements
1.6: Writing Paragraphs (Part 1)
1.7: Writing Paragraphs (Part 2)
4.5: Identifying Thesis Statements
6.1.3: Drafting

topic setences
6.1.3: Drafting

Toulmin Argument Model
7.3.5.1.4: Toulmin Argument Model

Toulmin's Elements
9.3: Toulmin's Argument Model

U

understanding assigment
8.1.2.8.1.1: What Does the Professor Want? Understanding the Assignment

URL
11.2.1.6.1.3: How to Cite YouTube
13.1.4: Creating a References Section (Part 2)

V

variety of language
14.15.11: De Copia- Demonstration of the Variety of Language

verb
13.4.20: Sentence Fragment
14.4: Fragment

verb phrases
13.4.10: Faulty Sentence Structure

verb tense
13.4.12: Verb Tense Shift

verbal learner
2.3.3: Developing Study Skills (Part 1)

verbs
14.15.2: Subjects and Verbs, Irregular Verbs, Subject Verb Agreement
14.9: Proofreading
7.2.3: CMS Signal Phrases
7.2.4: MLA Signal Phrases
7.2.6: APA Signal Phrases

version
11: Chapter Eleven- MLA Style

vocabulary
4.6: Vocabulary

voice
14.15.12: Style Exercise- Voice

W

Warrant
9.3: Toulmin's Argument Model
9.4: Toulmin's Schema

weaving evidence
6.2.11.15.6: Weaving in Evidence to Support Your Point

websites
2.2.1: The Purpose of Using Exemplification in Writing
6.2.11.14.6: The Internet- The Researcher's Challenge

words processors
11.1: Citation Generators

works cited
11: Chapter Eleven- MLA Style
13.2.1: Backpacks vs. Briefcases- Steps toward Rhetorical Analysis
13.2.7: Introduction- Open Source Composition Texts Arrive for College Writers
13.2.8: "I need you to say 'I'"- Why First Person Is Important in College Writing
6.2.11.15.9: "Works Cited" or "Reference" Information
7.2.2: MLA Citation Examples
7.2.5: APA Citation Examples

works cites
6.2.11.8: Drafting

write
13.4.23: Time to Write

writer
12.1.1.3: How to- Be a Constructive Peer Reviewer
13.2.10: Reflective Writing and the Revision Process- What Were You Thinking?
13.2.14: The Inspired Writer vs. the Real Writer
13.2.5: "Finding Your Way In"- Invention as Inquiry Based Learning in First Year Writing

writing
1.6: Writing Paragraphs (Part 1)
10: Chapter Ten-Writing to Think and Writing to Learn
12.1.1.2: Checklist- Revision
13.2.15: What Is "Academic" Writing?
13.2.16: Why Visit Your Campus Writing Center?
13.2.5: “Finding Your Way In”- Invention as Inquiry Based Learning in First Year Writing
13.2.6: From Topic to Presentation- Making Choices to Develop Your Writing
2.2.3: Writing an Exemplification Essay
2.3.2: Post-Secondary Reading and Writing (Part 2)
2.4.6: Discussion
3.1.3: Drafting (Part 1)
3.1.6: Revising and Editing (Part 2)
3.1.6.1.1: Writing as a Process
3.1.6.1.10: Creating Essay Titles
3.1.6.1.7: Outlining
5.4: How to Write a Rough Draft?
6.1.1: Writing Body Paragraphs
6.1.3: Drafting
6.2.1: The Purpose of Research Writing
6.2.3: Managing Your Research
6.2.8: Writing Your Draft
8.1.1.7: On the Other Hand- The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses
9.5: Persuasion
writing academic
7.3.5.1.7: Tips for Writing Academic Persuasive Essays
writing assignment
13.2.12: So You’ve Got a Writing Assignment. Now What?
writing assignments
2.4.3: In College, Everything’s an Argument- A Guide for Decoding College Writing Assignments
writing college essays
2.4.5: Conclusion
writing process
2.3.5: Becoming a Successful Writer
5: Chapter Five-The Writing Process
6.2.11.1: Writing as a Process
writing spaces
13.2: Book- Writing Spaces- Readings on Writing, Vol. I (Lowe and Zemliansky)
writing task
2.4.1: Introduction- The Academic Writing Task
7.3.5.1.8: Sample Writing Assignments
writting
1.5: Methods of Organizing Your Writing
wrong words
13.4.1: Wrong Word

Y

youtube video
11.2.1.6.1.3: How to Cite YouTube

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S

Sample Word 1 | Sample Definition 1

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By Page

- ENG-001A: Composition and Reading - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - Front Matter - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - ENG-001A: Composition and Reading - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - InfoPage - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - Table of Contents - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 1.1: Detailed Licensing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - Licensing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 1: Chapter One- Introduction to Writing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 1.1: Becoming a Successful Writer - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 1.2: Purpose, Audience, Tone, and Content - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 1.3: Using Sources - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 1.4: Writing Thesis Statements - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 1.5: Methods of Organizing Your Writing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 1.6: Writing Paragraphs (Part 1) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 1.7: Writing Paragraphs (Part 2) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 2: Chapter Two-Academic Writing/The Thesis Statement - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 2.1: What is a Thesis Statement? - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 2.2: Exemplification- Using Examples to Support a Thesis - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 2.2.1: The Purpose of Using Exemplification in Writing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 2.2.2: The Structure of an Exemplification Essay - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 2.2.3: Writing an Exemplification Essay - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 2.3: Introduction to Academic Writing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 2.3.1: Post-Secondary Reading and Writing (Part 1) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 2.3.2: Post-Secondary Reading and Writing (Part 2) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 2.3.3: Developing Study Skills (Part 1) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 2.3.4: Developing Study Skills (Part 2) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 2.3.5: Becoming a Successful Writer - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 2.4: What Is “Academic” Writing? - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 2.4.1: Introduction- The Academic Writing Task - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 2.4.2: Myths about Writing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 2.4.3: In College, Everything’s an Argument- A Guide for Decoding College Writing Assignments - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 2.4.4: The Format of the Academic Essay - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 2.4.5: Conclusion - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 2.4.6: Discussion - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 3: Chapter Three- Researching, Annotating, and Critical Reading/Literacy Narratives - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 3.1: Pre-writing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 3.1.1: Prewriting - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 3.1.2: Outlining - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 3.1.3: Drafting (Part 1) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 3.1.4: Drafting (Part 2) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 3.1.5: Revising and Editing (Part 1) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 3.1.6: Revising and Editing (Part 2) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
        - 3.1.6.1: The Writing Process - *CC BY-*

NC-SA 4.0
- 3.1.6.1.1: Writing as a Process - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 3.1.6.1.2: Freewriting - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 3.1.6.1.3: Brainstorming - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 3.1.6.1.4: Journalist Questions - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 3.1.6.1.5: Listing - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 3.1.6.1.6: Clustering/Mapping - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 3.1.6.1.7: Outlining - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 3.1.6.1.8: Drafting - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 3.1.6.1.9: Revising - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 3.1.6.1.10: Creating Essay Titles - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 3.1.6.1.11: Editing/Proofreading - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 3.1.6.1.12: Final Revision Example - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 3.1.6.1.13: Essay Checklist - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

◦ 4: Chapter Four-Critical Reading - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.1: Introduction to Critical Reading - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.2: Types of Reading Material - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.3: Reading Strategies - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.4: Specialized Reading Strategies - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.5: Identifying Thesis Statements - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.6: Vocabulary - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.7: Logic and Structure - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.8: Supporting Claims - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.9: Summary Skills - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.10: Conclusion to Critical Reading - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

◦ 5: Chapter Five-The Writing Process - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 5.1: What is the Writing Process? - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 5.2: What is Prewriting? - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 5.3: How to Organize and Arrange? - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 5.4: How to Write a Rough Draft? - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 5.5: What is Revising? - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 5.6: What is Done During Editing, Proofreading, and Formatting? - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 5.7: What are Other Types of Academic Writing? - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

◦ 6: Chapter Six- Working toward the End Product - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 6.1: Working toward the End Product-Composing a Draft - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 6.1.1: Writing Body Paragraphs - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 6.1.2: Writing Introductory and Concluding Paragraphs - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 6.1.3: Drafting - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 6.1.4: End-of-Chapter Exercises - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 6.2: Writing a Research Paper - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 6.2.1: The Purpose of Research Writing - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 6.2.2: Choosing Your Topic - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 6.2.3: Managing Your Research - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 6.2.4: Gathering Your Sources (Part 1) - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 6.2.5: Gathering Your Sources (Part 2) - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 6.2.6: Evaluating and Processing Your Sources - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 6.2.7: Applying Your Research - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 6.2.8: Writing Your Draft - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 6.2.9: Revising Your Draft (Part 1) - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 6.2.10: Revising Your Draft (Part 2) - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 6.2.11: The Writing Process - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 6.2.11.1: Writing as a Process - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 6.2.11.2: Freewriting - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 6.2.11.3: Brainstorming - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 6.2.11.4: Journalist Questions - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 6.2.11.5: Listing - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 6.2.11.6: Clustering/Mapping - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 6.2.11.7: Outlining - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 6.2.11.8: Drafting - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 6.2.11.9: Revising - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 6.2.11.10: Creating Essay Titles - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 6.2.11.11: Editing/Proofreading - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 6.2.11.12: Final Revision Example - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 6.2.11.13: Essay Checklist - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 6.2.11.14: Thinking Critically About Research - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

- 6.2.11.14.1: What is “Research” and Why Should I Use It? - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 6.2.11.14.2: What’s Different about Academic Research? - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 6.2.11.14.3: Primary Research Versus Secondary Research - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 6.2.11.14.4: Scholarly versus Non-Scholarly Sources - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 6.2.11.14.5: Sources that are Both Scholarly and Non-Scholarly? - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 6.2.11.14.6: The Internet- The Researcher’s Challenge - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 6.2.11.14.7: Evaluating the Quality and Credibility of Your Research - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*

- 6.2.11.15: The Research Essay - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 6.2.11.15.1: A “Research Essay” or a “Research Project” instead of a “Research Paper” - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 6.2.11.15.2: Getting Ready- Questions to Ask Yourself About Your Research Essay - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 6.2.11.15.3: Creating and Revising a Formal Outline - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 6.2.11.15.4: The Introduction - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 6.2.11.15.5: Background Information (or Helping Your Reader Find a Context) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 6.2.11.15.6: Weaving in Evidence to Support Your Point - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 6.2.11.15.7: Antithetical Arguments and Answers - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 6.2.11.15.8: The Conclusion - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 6.2.11.15.9: “Works Cited” or “Reference” Information - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 6.2.11.15.10: A Student Example- “The Corruption Surrounding University Athletics” by Casey K. Copeman - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*

- 7: Chapter Seven-Conducting Research - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 7.1: Documenting Your Source Material - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 7.2: MLA Citations - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 7.2.1: What is MLA,? - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 7.2.2: MLA Citation Examples - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 7.2.3: CMS Signal Phrases - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 7.2.4: MLA Signal Phrases - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 7.2.5: APA Citation Examples - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 7.2.6: APA Signal Phrases - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 7.3: Argument - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 7.3.1: What is Argument? - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 7.3.2: What are the Components and Vocabulary of Argument? - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 7.3.3: What is Logic? - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 7.3.4: What are the Different Types of Argument in Writing? - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 7.3.5: A Repository of Logical Fallacies - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 7.3.5.1: Writing to Persuade - *CC BY-NC-SA 2.0*
        - 7.3.5.1.1: Introduction to Argumentative Writing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
        - 7.3.5.1.2: Aristotelian (Classical) Argument Model - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
        - 7.3.5.1.3: Rogerian Argument Model - *CC BY-NC-SA 2.0*
        - 7.3.5.1.4: Toulmin Argument Model - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
        - 7.3.5.1.5: Proposal Argument Model - *CC BY-NC-SA 2.0*
        - 7.3.5.1.6: Putting It All Together- Basic Elements of an Argument Essay - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
        - 7.3.5.1.7: Tips for Writing Academic Persuasive Essays - *CC BY-NC-SA 2.0*
        - 7.3.5.1.8: Sample Writing Assignments - *CC BY-NC-SA 2.0*

- 8: Chapter Eight-Argumentative Writing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 8.1: Persuasion - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 8.1.1: Types of Argumentation - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 8.1.1.1: Introduction - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 8.1.1.2: Features of an Argument - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 8.1.1.3: Failures in Evidence- When “Lots of Quotes” Can’t Save a Paper - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 8.1.1.4: Basic Structure and Content of

Argument - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 8.1.1.5: Toulmin- Dissecting the Everyday Argument - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 8.1.1.6: Rogerian Argument - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 8.1.1.7: On the Other Hand- The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*

8.1.2: Types of Argumentation - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 8.1.2.1: Introduction - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 8.1.2.2: Features of an Argument - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 8.1.2.3: Failures in Evidence- When "Lots of Quotes" Can't Save a Paper - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 8.1.2.4: Basic Structure and Content of Argument - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 8.1.2.5: Toulmin- Dissecting the Everyday Argument - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 8.1.2.6: Rogerian Argument - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 8.1.2.7: On the Other Hand- The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 8.1.2.8: Unit III- Research and Argumentation - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 8.1.2.8.1: Situation and Analysis - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 8.1.2.8.1.1: What Does the Professor Want? Understanding the Assignment - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 8.1.2.8.1.2: Backpacks v. Briefcases- Steps Toward Rhetorical Analysis - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 8.1.2.8.1.3: Murder! Rhetorically Speaking - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*

9: Chapter Nine-Rhetorical Analysis - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 9.1: Basic Questions for Rhetorical Analysis - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 9.2: Rogerian Argument - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 9.3: Toulmin's Argument Model - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 9.4: Toulmin's Schema - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 9.5: Persuasion - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*

10: Chapter Ten-Writing to Think and Writing to Learn - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 10.1: Examining the Status Quo - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 10.2: Posing Productive Questions - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 10.3: Slowing Down Your Thinking - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 10.4: Withholding Judgment - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*

11: Chapter Eleven- MLA Style - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 11.1: Citation Generators - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 11.2: Chapter Nine- MLA Formatting - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 11.2.1: Citations and Referencing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 11.2.1.1: Supporting Your Ideas - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 11.2.1.2: Documenting Source Material - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 11.2.1.3: Making Your Quotes Fit - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 11.2.1.4: Citation Guidelines - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 11.2.1.5: Creating a References Page (Part 1) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 11.2.1.6: Creating a References Page (Part 2) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
      - 11.2.1.6.1: Citing Sources - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
        - 11.2.1.6.1.1: Read- Acknowledging Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
        - 11.2.1.6.1.2: When and How To Use MLA In-Text Citation - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
        - 11.2.1.6.1.3: How to Cite YouTube - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 11.3: Citation Steps for Any Style - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*

12: Chapter Twelve- Edits, Revising, and Publishing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 12.1: Readings - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 12.1.1: Revising - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 12.1.1.1: A strategy for analyzing and revising a first draft - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 12.1.1.2: Checklist- Revision - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 12.1.1.3: How to- Be a Constructive Peer Reviewer - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 12.2: Citations and Referencing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 12.2.1: Supporting Your Ideas - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 12.2.2: Documenting Source Material - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 12.2.3: Making Your Quotes Fit - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 12.2.4: Citation Guidelines - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*

- 12.2.5: Creating a References Page (Part 2) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 12.2.6: Creating a References Page (Part 1) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 12.3: Peer Review and Final Revisions - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 12.3.1: Revision (Part 1) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 12.3.2: Revision (Part 2) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 12.3.3: Editing and Developing a Final Draft of a Research Paper (Part 1) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 12.3.4: Editing and Developing a Final Draft of a Research Paper (Part 2) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*

◦ 13: Chapter Thirteen-Additional Readings - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 13.1: APA and MLA Documentation and Formatting - *CC BY-NC-SA 3.0*
  - 13.1.1: Formatting a Research Paper - *CC BY-NC-SA 3.0*
  - 13.1.2: Citing and Referencing Techniques - *CC BY-NC-SA 3.0*
  - 13.1.3: Creating a References Section (Part 1) - *CC BY-NC-SA 3.0*
  - 13.1.4: Creating a References Section (Part 2) - *CC BY-NC-SA 3.0*
  - 13.1.5: Using Modern Language Association (MLA) Style - *CC BY-NC-SA 3.0*
  - 13.1.E: APA and MLA Documentation and Formatting (Exercises) - *CC BY-NC-SA 3.0*
- 13.2: Book- Writing Spaces- Readings on Writing, Vol. I (Lowe and Zemliansky) - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.2.1: Backpacks vs. Briefcases- Steps toward Rhetorical Analysis - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.2.2: Collaborating Online- Digital Strategies for Group Work - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.2.3: Composing the Anthology- An Exercise in Patchwriting - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.2.4: Finding the Good Argument OR Why Bother With Logic? - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.2.5: “Finding Your Way In”- Invention as Inquiry Based Learning in First Year Writing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.2.6: From Topic to Presentation- Making Choices to Develop Your Writing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.2.7: Introduction- Open Source Composition Texts Arrive for College Writers - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.2.8: “I need you to say ‘I’”- Why First Person Is Important in College Writing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.2.9: Navigating Genres - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.2.10: Reflective Writing and the Revision Process- What Were You Thinking? - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.2.11: Reinventing Invention- Discovery and Investment in Writing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.2.12: So You’ve Got a Writing Assignment. Now What? - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.2.13: Taking Flight- Connecting Inner and Outer Realities during Invention - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.2.14: The Inspired Writer vs. the Real Writer - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.2.15: What Is "Academic" Writing? - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.2.16: Why Visit Your Campus Writing Center? - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.2.17: Wikipedia Is Good for You!? - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 13.3: Nonfiction - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.3.1: Nonfiction - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.3.2: Nonfiction Exercises - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 13.4: 20 Most Common Grammar Errors - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.1: Wrong Word - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.2: Comma After Introductory Element - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.3: Documentation Common Error - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.4: Pronoun Reference - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.5: Spelling - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.6: Quotation Error - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.7: Unnecessary Comma - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.8: Capitalization - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.9: Missing Word - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.10: Faulty Sentence Structure - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.11: Missing Comma with Nonrestrictive Element - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.12: Verb Tense Shift - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.13: Missing Comma in Compound Sentence - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.14: Apostrophe Errors - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.15: Run-On Sentences - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.16: Comma Splice - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.17: Pronoun Agreement - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.18: Poorly Integrated Quote - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.19: Hyphens - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 13.4.20: Sentence Fragment - *CC BY-NC-*

SA 4.0
- 13.4.21: Try It Out - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 13.4.22: Putting It All Together - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 13.4.23: Time to Write - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 13.5: Grammar Essentials (Excelsior Online Writing Lab) - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

◦ 14: Chapter Fourteen-Practice Exercises - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 14.1: Comma - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 14.2: Comma Splice - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 14.3: Fact and Opinion - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 14.4: Fragment - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 14.5: Fused Sentence - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 14.6: Identifying Dependent and Independent Clauses - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 14.7: Logical Fallacy - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 14.8: Patterns - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 14.9: Proofreading - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 14.10: Pronoun - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 14.11: Pronoun/Antecedent Agreement - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 14.12: Subject Identification - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 14.13: Subject-Verb Agreement - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 14.14: Supporting Details - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 14.15: Grammar and Mechanics Mini-lessons - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 14.15.1: Grammar and Mechanics Mini-Lessons - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 14.15.2: Subjects and Verbs, Irregular Verbs, Subject Verb Agreement - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 14.15.3: Sentence Types - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 14.15.4: Fragments I - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 14.15.5: Run-ons and Comma Splices I - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 14.15.6: Comma Usage - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 14.15.7: Parallelism - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 14.15.8: The Apostrophe - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 14.15.9: Capital Letters - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 14.15.10: Grammar Practice- Interactive Quizzes - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 14.15.11: De Copia- Demonstration of the Variety of Language - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 14.15.12: Style Exercise- Voice - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

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