BASIC READING AND WRITING



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Licensing

*A detailed breakdown of this resource's licensing can be found in **Back Matter/Detailed Licensing**.*

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

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1.3: Learning Outcomes

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1.1: About This Course

Basic Reading and Writing builds a solid foundation around core aspects of the writing process: critical reading; methodical writing; research and documentation; practical grammar and punctuation. An optional module introduces core principles for college success that help students understand and develop good habits to improve their performance in this and other college courses. As the first in a three-course sequence that culminates in *Composition I* (college-level composition), Basic Reading and Writing focuses on helping students identify and apply foundational concepts and skills in reading and writing. Course content may be used for standard instruction or diagnostically to discover and address gaps in student understanding/skill.

This course was developed by Lumen Learning in conjunction with Cerritos College and incorporates material from multiple open sources.

About Lumen

Lumen Learning's mission is to make great learning opportunities available to all students, regardless of socioeconomic background.

We do this by using open educational resources (OER) to create well-designed and low-cost course materials that replace expensive textbooks. Because learning is about more than affordability and access, we also apply learning science insights and efficacy research to develop learning activities that are engineered to improve subject mastery, course completion and retention.

If you'd like to connect with us to learn more about adopting this course, please Contact Us.

You can also make an appointment for OER Office Hours to connect virtually with a live Lumen expert about any question you may have.

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1.2: Course Contents at a Glance

The following list shows the chapter-level topics for the course. To see all of the course pages (including assignments), visit the Table of Contents.

Module 1: Success Skills

- Habits for Success
- Critical Thinking
- Time Management
- Writing in College
- Computer-Based Writing

Module 2: Critical Reading

- Types of Reading Material
- Reading Strategies
- Specialized Reading Strategies
- Vocabulary
- Thesis
- Supporting Claims
- Logic and Structure
- Summary Skills
-

Module 3: Writing Process

- Topic Selection
- Prewriting
- Finding Evidence
- Organizing
- Drafting
- Revising
- Proofreading

Module 4: Research

- Finding Sources
- Source Analysis
- Writing Ethically
- MLA Documentation

Module 5: Grammar

- Noun Usage
- Pronoun Usage
- Verb Usage
- Adjective and Adverb Usage
- Other Parts of Speech
- Punctuation
- Sentence Structure
- Voice

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1.3: Learning Outcomes



The content, assignments, and assessments for Basic Reading and Writing are aligned to the learning outcomes below. Click here for a more detailed list of outcomes.

Chapter 1: Success Skills

Define and evaluate college success skills

- Identify and practice habits for success
- Identify and apply critical thinking skills
- Analyze time management practices
- Define successful approaches toward college-level writing tasks
- Apply word-processing skills to college writing tasks

Module 2: 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

Module 3: Writing Process

Approach writing as a “process”

- Identify topic selection activities
- Identify prewriting activities
- Identify activities to find evidence in support of a claim
- Identify essay organizational techniques
- Identify drafting activities
- Identify revision activities
- Identify proofreading activities

Module 4: Research Process

Identify the components of the research process

- Identify preliminary, intermediate, and advanced search techniques
- Identify methods of analysis to assess the quality and reliability of a source
- Identify issues of plagiarism and academic dishonesty
- Identify MLA document formatting and citation practices

Module 5: Grammar

Identify patterns of academic grammar and usage

- Identify the function of nouns and different noun types
- Identify the function and structure of pronouns
- Identify verb types and their correction conjugation
- Identify adjectives, adverbs, and the differences between the two
- Identify the function other parts of speech, including conjunctions, prepositions, and articles
- Identify common punctuation marks and the rules for their correct usage
- Identify common sentence types and common errors in sentence composition
- Identify the active and passive voices, as well as the reasons to use both

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

2: Faculty Resources

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2.2: PDF
2.3: Assignments
2.4: Question Banks
2.5: I Need Help

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2.1: Faculty Resource Overview



Lumen makes significant investments to ensure our digital courseware is accessible, allowing students to learn using superior interactivity, multimedia, and a variety of accommodations for individuals with varying abilities.

PDFs offer an inferior learning experience compared to the richness and interactivity in our digital courseware. A PDF version of the textbook is available as a print alternative. The PDF does not include interactive content such as simulations, videos, and quizzes and is not vetted for accessibility. For these reasons, **we do not recommend using the textbook in the PDF form**. The offline version should be used as a print backup rather than as the primary textbook.

You can download the PDF using the following link:

- Basic Reading and Writing PDF (14.5 MB)

To share these files with your students, copy and paste the text and download link above into a page or announcement in your learning management system (Blackboard, Canvas, etc.).

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2.2: PDF



PDF versions of the primary textbook are available for offline use. While these versions are a convenient alternative for times when students lack Internet access, they do not include interactive content such as simulations, videos, and quizzes. For that reason, the offline versions should be used as a backup rather than as the primary textbook.

You can download the PDF using the following link:

- PDF (14.5 MB)

To share these files with your students, copy and paste the text and download link above into a page or announcement in your learning management system (Blackboard, Canvas, etc.).

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2.3: Assignments

The assignments in this course are openly licensed, and are available as-is, or can be modified to suit your students' needs.

Basic Reading and Writing includes a series of customizable, scaffolded assignments that build up to four final projects:

1. Success Skills Journal Project: aligns with Success Skills module
2. Reading Journal Project: aligns with Critical Reading module
3. Personal Analysis Essay: aligns with Writing Process module
4. Personal Analysis Essay Revision: aligns with Research Process module

Each of these projects includes an overview and/or a final-draft-submission assignment page with a suggested rubric. Each project also has several smaller associated assignments, one per outcome of the module. The latter are intended to be scaffolded tasks to help the students create the final draft in stages.

All of the assignments can be previewed by clicking on the links in the table, below. If you import this course into your learning management system (Blackboard, Canvas, etc.), the assignments will automatically be uploaded into the assignment tool. As with all other aspects of this course, they are designed to be starting points toward adaptation, NOT a prescriptive set of activities that must be taught in exactly this way. Feel free to use the assignments as is, change them, or remove the ones you don't want.

Module	Assignments
Success Skills	Success Skills Journal Components and Rubric
	Habits for Success Journal Entry
	Critical Thinking Journal Entry
	Time Management Journal Entry
	Writing in College Journal Entry
	Computer-Based Writing Journal Entry
	Success Skills Journal Final Draft
Critical Reading	Reading Journal Rubric and Worked Example
	Types of Reading Material
	Reading Strategies
	Specialized Reading Strategies
	Thesis
	Vocabulary
	Logic and Structure
	Supporting Claims
	Summary Skills
	Reading Journal Final Draft
Writing Process	Personal Analysis Essay
	Topic Selection

Module	Assignments
Success Skills	Success Skills Journal Components and Rubric
	Habits for Success Journal Entry
	Critical Thinking Journal Entry
	Time Management Journal Entry
	Writing in College Journal Entry
	Computer-Based Writing Journal Entry
	Success Skills Journal Final Draft
Critical Reading	Reading Journal Rubric and Worked Example
	Finding Evidence
	Organizing
	Drafting
	Revising
Research Process	Personal Analysis Essay Revision
	Finding Sources
	Source Analysis
	Writing Ethically
	MLA Documentation

What About Grammar?

The grammar module doesn't have a project associated with it currently. However, it offers extensive practice tasks inside the module itself. The "Try It" pages could be adapted to work as homework or in-class assignments, if desired.

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2.4: Question Banks

The machine-graded assessments in this course are organized by module and are aligned to specific learning outcomes. Waymaker courses assess students in three locations: Show What You Know (ungraded pretests at the beginning of each module), Self-Checks (short, ungraded practice tests), and end-of-module quizzes (graded).

Authorized faculty may edit and delete quiz questions and also add new ones using the quiz editing tool inside their Waymaker course(s). To learn more about editing the assessments in Waymaker, visit the Waymaker Faculty User Guide AFTER the course package has been imported to your learning management system (Blackboard, Canvas, etc.).

Optional Download

The Show What You Know and Self-Check questions are also available as a separate file that can be downloaded and imported into the assessment tool in your LMS. This format and extra step are needed ONLY if you want to make your own customized quiz, midterm, or final exam that combines quiz questions from multiple modules.

There are 5 question banks with a total of 220 multiple choice questions.

We provide quiz banks as QTI files, a standard format that allows you to import questions, build, and customize quizzes in most learning management systems (Canvas, Blackboard, etc.). **These files cannot be opened outside of an LMS.**

According to Lumen company policy, we do not provide quizzes in written (e.g. MS Word) form, in order to preserve the academic integrity of our quiz banks on behalf of everyone using our materials. We adopted this policy after observing how easy it is for quiz banks in written formats to find their way onto websites that promote academic cheating.

Click the name of your LMS to prompt the download of the file.

- Canvas
- Blackboard
- D2L
- Moodle

Once you've downloaded the file, visit the Quiz Imports page and click through to the directions for your LMS.

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2.5: I Need Help



Need more information about this course? Have questions about faculty resources? Can’t find what you’re looking for? Experiencing technical difficulties?

We’re here to help! Take advantage of the following Lumen customer-support resources:

- Check out one of Lumen’s Faculty User Guides here.
- Submit a support ticket here and tell us what you need.
- Talk and screen-share with a live human during Lumen’s OER office hours. See available times here.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

3: Module 1- Success Skills

3.1: Why It Matters- Success Skills
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3.1: Why It Matters- Success Skills

Why should we define and evaluate our college success skills?

When we think about going to college, we think about learning a subject deeply, getting prepared for a profession. We tend to associate colleges and universities with **knowledge**, and we're not wrong in that regard.

But going to college, and doing well once we're there, also relies heavily on our **behaviors** while we're there. Professors and college administrators will expect you to behave in certain ways, without any explicit instructions on their part. For instance, professors will expect you to spend several hours a week working on class concepts (homework, writing, preparing for exams) on your own time. They will not tell you WHEN to spend those hours, but leave it up to you to recognize the need to put in the effort and schedule the time accordingly.

The good news about behaviors that help us succeed in college:

- **These skills can belearned**, and improved upon. Just because we're not great at something like time management now, doesn't mean we can't get better at it. The more we practice, the better we get (and the more it becomes second nature).
- **These skills aretransferrable**. Patterns of behavior that help us pass difficult classes, also help us succeed in the workplace, and improve our relationships with people who matter to us.

Consider this short video from Richard St. John, who spent years interviewing people who reached the top of their fields, across a wide range of careers. He traces the core behaviors that were common to all of these successful people, and distills them down into 8 key traits.

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To recap, those 8 traits are

Passion	Work	Good	Focus
Push	Serve	Ideas	Persist

All 8 traits are things that you can put into practice immediately. With them, you'll see improvement in your school successes, as well as what lies beyond.

Learning Outcomes

- Identify and practice habits for success
- Identify and apply critical thinking skills
- Analyze time management practices
- Define successful approaches towards college-level writing tasks
- Apply word processing skills to college writing tasks

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3.2: Performance Assessment- Success Skills Journal

Success Skills Journal – Introduction

To get, and keep, a job you typically need a repertoire of technical skills. Dentists need to know how to fill cavities. Secretaries need to type 100+ words per minute. Accountants need to be certified.

Beyond the technical skills, though, which dentist do you go to? The one who is pleasant and takes time to answer your questions; or the one who treats you like a number in a long line of numbered mouths?

Which secretary do you retain when times are lean? The one whose attitude is positive and upbeat, and who is always willing to help; or the one who is inflexible and has a hard time admitting mistakes?

Likewise, think about accountants. The one who has a great work ethic and encourages his colleagues is the one who will, most likely, excel in his position and organization.

In these situations, and all the others like them, it's the soft skills that matter.

While your technical skills may get your foot in the door, your people skills are what open most of the doors to come. Your work ethic, your attitude, your communication skills, your emotional intelligence and a whole host of other personal attributes are the soft skills that are crucial for career success. – "Why Soft Skills Matter: Making Sure Your Hard Skills Shine"

This module addresses "soft skills" that are necessary for success in both college and professional life. While these skills aren't usually taught in school, you will be expected to have them in order to do well in classes and to succeed in the workplace.

The Success Skills Journal will ask you to reflect on the individual components addressed in this module of the course. You will assess how strong your own "soft skills" are at the moment, and what you might do in order to improve them.

Assignment Details

Look for the Try It pages along the way to help you complete the Success Skills Journal project. Examples of successful journal entries will be provided as a model.

Rubric

In order to successfully complete this assessment, a submitted journal must reach "Meets or Exceeds Expectations" in all categories.

Criteria	Ratings		
Habits for Success Journal Entry	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • 200-400 words long • fully addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates thoughtful consideration and planning relevant to the topic • demonstrates application of writing process, to include careful editing and proofreading	**Approaching Expectations** • 125-200 words long • partially addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates some consideration and planning relevant to the topic • may not demonstrate application of writing process, to include editing and proofreading	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • less than 125 words long, or not included in journal • does not address question(s) of prompt • does not demonstrate consideration or planning relevant to the topic • does not demonstrate application of writing process

Critical Thinking Journal Entry	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • 200-400 words long • fully addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates thoughtful consideration and planning relevant to the topic • demonstrates application of writing process, to include careful editing and proofreading	**Approaching Expectations** • 125-200 words long • partially addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates some consideration and planning relevant to the topic • may not demonstrate application of writing process, to include editing and proofreading	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • less than 125 words long, or not included in journal • does not address question(s) of prompt • does not demonstrate consideration or planning relevant to the topic • does not demonstrate application of writing process
Time Management Journal Entry	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • 200-400 words long • fully addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates thoughtful consideration and planning relevant to the topic • demonstrates application of writing process, to include careful editing and proofreading	**Approaching Expectations** • 125-200 words long • partially addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates some consideration and planning relevant to the topic • may not demonstrate application of writing process, to include editing and proofreading	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • less than 125 words long, or not included in journal • does not address question(s) of prompt • does not demonstrate consideration or planning relevant to the topic • does not demonstrate application of writing process
Writing in College Journal Entry	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • 200-400 words long • fully addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates thoughtful consideration and planning relevant to the topic • demonstrates application of writing process, to include careful editing and proofreading	**Approaching Expectations** • 125-200 words long • partially addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates some consideration and planning relevant to the topic • may not demonstrate application of writing process, to include editing and proofreading	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • less than 125 words long, or not included in journal • does not address question(s) of prompt • does not demonstrate consideration or planning relevant to the topic • does not demonstrate application of writing process

Computer-Based Writing Journal Entry	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • 200-400 words long • fully addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates thoughtful consideration and planning relevant to the topic • demonstrates application of writing process, to include careful editing and proofreading	**Approaching Expectations** • 125-200 words long • partially addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates some consideration and planning relevant to the topic • may not demonstrate application of writing process, to include editing and proofreading	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • less than 125 words long, or not included in journal • does not address question(s) of prompt • does not demonstrate consideration or planning relevant to the topic • does not demonstrate application of writing process

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3.3: Outcome- Habits for Success

Identify and Practice Habits for Success

A college education is aligned with greater success in many areas of life. While enrolled in college, most students are closely focused on making it through the next class or passing the next test. It can be easy to lose sight of the overall role that education plays in life. But sometimes it helps to recall what a truly great step forward you are taking!



It's also important to recognize, though, that some students do not succeed; they drop out within the first year. Sometimes this is due to financial problems or a personal or family crisis. But too frequently, students drop out because they're having trouble passing their courses.

In this section, we examine the elements of college success. Are there patterns of success you strive for but aren't yet reaching? Where might you shore up your support? What strategies can you use to achieve success in your college endeavors?

What You Will Learn to Do

- develop a personal definition of success
- identify specific strategies to achieve success
- identify support network options

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3.4: Text- A Personal Definition of Success

How do you define college success? The definition really depends on you. You might think that "success" is earning an associate's degree or attending classes in a four-year college. Maybe success is a bachelor's or master's degree or a PhD. Maybe success means receiving a certificate of completion or finishing skill-based training.



You might be thinking of other measures of college success, too—like grades. For instance, you might be unhappy with anything less than an A in a course, although maybe this depends on the difficulty of the subject. As long as you pass with a C, you might be perfectly content. But no matter how you define success personally, you probably wouldn't think it means earning a D or lower grade in a class.

To help you start to define what success means to you, take this quick self-assessment about your college goals and beyond. How many of these items are important to you?

I Want to Be Able to . . .	YES	NO
Change my major during my college years		
Have good relationships with my professors		
Be eligible for financial aid		
Be eligible for scholarships		
Get awards		
Get reductions on my car insurance		
Prove to my employer that I can work hard		
Keep my parents happy		
Make connections to get a job after graduation		

Finally, consider that we can't be successful all the time at everything. We have to balance our energy and our focus, to get what we really want. The following video stresses the external factors that shape what we consider "success" as a society, and encourages us to think beyond these factors to determine what it really is that motivates us, personally–what we hope will define us, and our value, to others.

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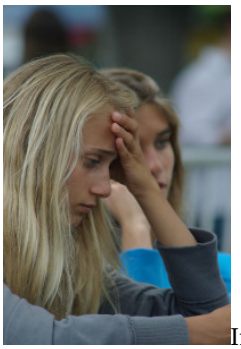
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3.5: Text- Strategies to Achieve Success

 If most students believe that passing a class is the minimum requirement for “success,” and if most students want to be successful in their courses, why aren’t more college students consistently successful in the classroom?

Perhaps some common misconceptions are at play. For example, we often hear students say, “I just can’t do it!” or “I’m not good at math,” or “I guess college isn’t for me…,” or “I’m not smart enough.” But these explanations for success or failure aren’t necessarily accurate. Considerable research into college success reveals that **intellect usually has nothing to do with having difficulty in or failing college courses**. More often, success depends on how fully you embrace and master the following seven strategies:

1. Learn how to take effective notes in class.
2. Review the text and your reading notes prior to class.
3. Participate in class discussion and maybe even join a study group.
4. Go to office hours and ask your instructor questions.
5. Give yourself enough time to research, write, and edit your essays in manageable stages.
6. Take advantage of online or on-campus academic support resources.
7. Spend sufficient time studying.

So if you feel you are not smart enough for college, ask yourself if you can implement some of these skills. Can you make more time for learning? One approach is to create a regular study schedule and make sure you allow yourself ample time. Most college success experts agree that students should study two hours outside of class for every hour in class. Only break away from your committed schedule if an extreme situation prevents you from sticking to it.

Another strategy to consider implementing is group study. For example, rather than relying just on your own knowledge, notes, and skills, try studying with other students in your difficult classes. Studying in a group gives every group member a chance to ask questions and talk about concepts.

You can also add a tutor to your study group. You will really be able to notice a positive difference. Tutoring is generally free in college, and the strategies and knowledge you gain will be invaluable. Usually tutors have taken the class you are currently enrolled in, and they are trained to get the best out of you.



Overall, students struggle in college not because of natural intellect or smarts, but because of poor time management, disorganization, and lack of quality study time. The good news is that there are ways to combat this, specifically by doing things like creating a regular study schedule, studying in groups, and taking advantage of your school’s academic resources, like a tutoring center, instructor office hours, and any available online help.

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3.6: Text- Campus Support Networks

Whether your campus is small, tall, *grande*, or *venti*, you are probably amazed by the array of institutionally supported student activities available for your enrichment and enjoyment. Perhaps your biggest challenge is deciding how much extra time you have after studying and which added activities yield the greatest reward.

Benefits of Participating in Student Life

How is it that becoming fully involved in student life can have such a positive impact on student satisfaction and academic success?



Figure 3.6.1: Image of an Eagles mascot on woman's lap. **(CC BY-NC-ND,** Georgia Southern, Flickr)

The National Survey of Student Engagement—a survey measuring student involvement in academic and cocurricular activities—shows that student success is directly linked to student involvement in the institution. In fact, survey results show that the higher the level of student involvement is, the higher student grades are and the more likely students are to reenroll the next term. All of this seems to translate to satisfaction. The following lists some of the many benefits and rewards that result from active participation in campus and student life.

- **Personal interests are tapped**: Cocurricular programs and activities encourage students to explore personal interests and passions. As students pursue these interests, they learn more about their strengths and possible career paths. These discoveries can be lasting and life-changing.
- **A portfolio of experience develops**: Experience with just about any aspect of college life maybe relevant to a prospective employer. Is freshman year too soon to be thinking about résumés? Definitely not! If you gain leadership experience in a club, for example, be sure to document what you did so you can refer back to it (you might want to keep track of your activities and experiences in a journal, for instance).
- **Fun leads to good feelings**: Students typically pursue cocurricular activities because the activities are enjoyable and personally rewarding. Having fun is also a good way to balance the stress of meeting academic deadlines and studying intensely.
- **Social connections grow**: When students are involved in cocurricular activities, they usually interact with others, which means meeting new people, developing social skills, and being a part of a community. It’s always good to have friends who share your interests and to develop these relationships over time.
- **Awareness of diversity expands**: The multicultural nature of American society is increasingly reflected and celebrated on college campuses today. You will see this not only in the classroom but also in the cocurricular activities, clubs, organizations, and events. For example, your college might have a Black Student Union, an Asian Pacific Student Union, a Japanese Student Association, a Chinese Student Association, and many others. Having access to these resources gives students the opportunity to explore different cultures and prepare to live, work, and thrive in a vibrantly diverse world.
- **Self-esteem grows**: When students pursue their special interests through cocurricular activities, it can be a real boost to self-esteem. Academic achievement can certainly be a source of affirmation and satisfaction, but it’s nice to have additional activities that validate your special contributions in other ways.

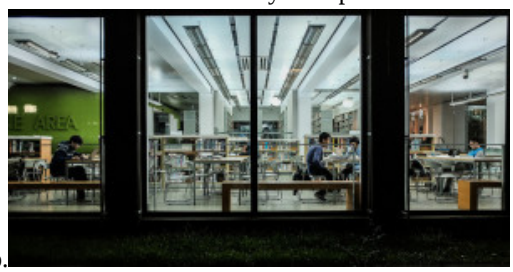
All in all, being involved in the campus community is vital to every student, and it’s vital to the college, too. It’s a symbiotic relationship that serves everyone well.

The key to getting the most out of college is to take advantage of as many facets of student life as possible while still keeping up with your academic commitments. That's pretty obvious, right? What may be less obvious is that focusing exclusively on your academic work and not getting involved in any of the rich and diverse cocurricular activities on campus can come at a real price and even hamper your success.

Major College Resources and How To Use Them

Professors do care about how you are doing in their class; they genuinely want you to succeed, but they will give you the grade you earn. There are people and resources on campus for you to utilize so you can earn the grade you want. Your professors are one of those resources, and are perhaps the most important. Go see them during office hours, ask them questions about the material and get extra help if you need it. … Another resource to utilize can be found in the campus learning center. … The first time I took a paper there, I recall standing outside the door for about ten minutes thinking of an excuse not to go in. Thankfully I saw a classmate walk in and I followed suit. … Thanks to that first visit, I received an A- on the paper! –Kristen Mruk, "The Student Experience"

College resources to help you reach your educational and career goals are plentiful on most campuses. Here are several campus resources to know about and find early in your college career. You may not need them right away; some you may not need at all. But you will at least find several to be vital. Be familiar with your options. Know where to find the services. Have contact information. Be prepared to visit for help.



Advising

Most colleges and universities assign an academic adviser to each student. The adviser may be associated with your major. There may also be an office or department that provides advising. Call upon your adviser or the advising office if you have an issue with your adviser or you need other help.

Tutoring and Writing Centers

Tutoring and writing centers are established for all students, and seeking help from them is expected and to your advantage. Such services are covered by your tuition dollars, and they can richly enhance performance in any area of your studies. Know where to find these centers and how to schedule appointments.

Other Academic Support Facilities

Your college may also offer academic support in various other forms: for example, computer labs with trained assistants, tutors, mentors, peer advisers, and more. You can research what kinds of special support are available and be ready to take advantage of them.

Library Reference Desk

College libraries are staffed with professionals whose main function is to assist you and the college community in finding needed resources. Don't hesitate to find the reference desk and get to know the reference librarians. Invariably you will learn about valuable resources—many of them online—that you didn't know existed. Reference librarians are also educators, and they're there to help you.

Campus Health Center

In the event that you need any health services whatsoever, the campus health center can be your first destination. Stop into the center and learn about the services offered, the hours of operation, emergency provisions, and routine health services available.

Campus Counseling

Counseling is an essential service that colleges and universities invariably provide. Services can ranges from life-saving care to assistance with minor concerns. Life stressors, such as deaths and divorces in the family, issues with friends, substance abuse, and suicide are just a few of the many issues that college students may experience or witness others struggling with. Don't take matters

into your own hands. Get help! The counseling center can help you and support you in gaining solid footing during difficult times. Don't hesitate to take full advantage of the services and help they offer.

Career Services

One of the most important purposes of college is to prepare students for a career. All colleges and universities have a career office that can assist you with many critical aspects of finding a suitable career. It may also help you find a campus job or review options for your major, help you get an internship, draft your résumé, and practice interview skills. Visiting the career office is a must for every student, and it's worth doing early and often (rather than waiting until you're about to graduate).

Spiritual Life

Most college campus have interfaith facilities to meet the spiritual-life needs of the entire college community. You may find these facilities to be a refuge in special moments of need or resources for your ongoing involvement. A healthy spiritual life can bring greater balance to your student life.

Additional support centers that students may wish to visit include offices for financial aid, students with disabilities, housing, diversity, student organizations, athletics, continuing education, international students, child care, and many others. Refer to your college Web site or other college directory for information about the many, many services that can be part of your college experience.

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3.7: Self Check- Habits for Success

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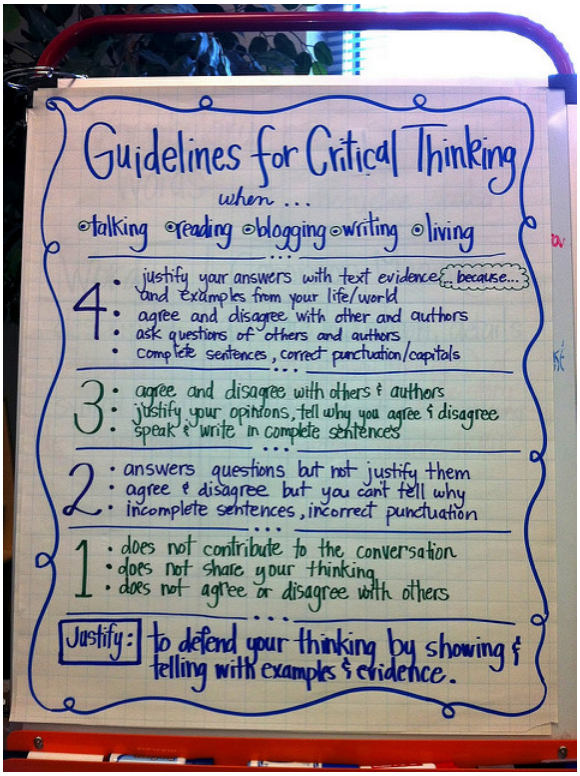
3.8: Text- Defining Critical Thinking

Various Ways to Think

Thinking comes naturally. You don't have to make it happen—it just does. But you can make it happen in different ways. For example, you can think positively or negatively. You can think with "heart" and you can think with rational judgment. You can also think strategically and analytically, and mathematically and scientifically. These are a few of multiple ways in which the mind can process thought.

What are some forms of thinking you use? When do you use them, and why?

As a college student, you are tasked with engaging and expanding your thinking skills. One of the most important of these skills is critical thinking. Critical thinking is important because it relates to nearly all tasks, situations, topics, careers, environments, challenges, and opportunities. It's not restricted to a particular subject area.



Defining Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is clear, reasonable, reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or do. It means asking probing questions like, "How do we know?" or "Is this true in every case or just in this instance?" It involves being skeptical and challenging assumptions, rather than simply memorizing facts or blindly accepting what you hear or read.

Imagine, for example, that you're reading a history textbook. You wonder who wrote it and why, because you detect certain assumptions in the writing. You find that the author has a limited scope of research focused only on a particular group within a population. In this case, your critical thinking reveals that there are "other sides to the story."

Who are critical thinkers, and what characteristics do they have in common? Critical thinkers are usually curious and reflective people. They like to explore and probe new areas and seek knowledge, clarification, and new solutions. They ask pertinent questions, evaluate statements and arguments, and they distinguish between facts and opinion. They are also willing to examine their own beliefs, possessing a manner of humility that allows them to admit lack of knowledge or understanding when needed. They are open to changing their mind. Perhaps most of all, they actively enjoy learning, and seeking new knowledge is a lifelong pursuit.

This may well be you!

No matter where you are on the road to being a critical thinker, you can always more fully develop your skills. Doing so will help you develop more balanced arguments, express yourself clearly, read critically, and absorb important information efficiently. Critical thinking skills will help you in any profession or any circumstance of life, from science to art to business to teaching.

Critical Thinking IS	Critical Thinking is NOT
Skepticism	Memorizing
Examining assumptions	Group thinking
Challenging reasoning	Blind acceptance of authority
Uncovering biases	

Critical Thinking in Action

The following video, from Lawrence Bland, presents the major concepts and benefits of critical thinking.

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3.9: Text- Critical Thinking and Logic

Critical thinking is fundamentally a process of questioning information and data. You may question the information you read in a textbook, or you may question what a politician or a professor or a classmate says. You can also question a commonly-held belief or a new idea. With critical thinking, anything and everything is subject to question and examination.

Logic's Relationship to Critical Thinking

The word **logic** comes from the Ancient Greek *logike*, referring to the science or art of reasoning. Using logic, a person evaluates arguments and strives to distinguish between good and bad reasoning, or between truth and falsehood. Using logic, you can evaluate ideas or claims people make, make good decisions, and form sound beliefs about the world.[1]

Questions of Logic in Critical Thinking

Let's use a simple example of applying logic to a critical-thinking situation. In this hypothetical scenario, a man has a PhD in political science, and he works as a professor at a local college. His wife works at the college, too. They have three young children in the local school system, and their family is well known in the community.

The man is now running for political office. Are his credentials and experience sufficient for entering public office? Will he be effective in the political office? Some voters might believe that his personal life and current job, on the surface, suggest he will do well in the position, and they will vote for him.

In truth, the characteristics described don't guarantee that the man will do a good job. The information is somewhat irrelevant. What else might you want to know? How about whether the man had already held a political office and done a good job? In this case, we want to ask, How much information is adequate in order to make a decision based on logic instead of assumptions?

The following questions, presented in Figure 1, below, are ones you may apply to formulating a logical, reasoned perspective in the above scenario or any other situation:

1. **What's happening?** Gather the basic information and begin to think of questions.
2. **Why is it important?** Ask yourself why it's significant and whether or not you agree.
3. **What don't I see?** Is there anything important missing?
4. **How do I know?** Ask yourself where the information came from and how it was constructed.
5. **Who is saying it?** What's the position of the speaker and what is influencing them?
6. **What else? What if?** What other ideas exist and are there other possibilities?



Figure 1

1. "logic." *Wordnik*. n.d. Web. 16 Feb 2016. ↵

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3.10: Text- Problem-Solving with Critical Thinking

For most people, a typical day is filled with critical thinking and problem-solving challenges. In fact, critical thinking and problem-solving go hand-in-hand. They both refer to using knowledge, facts, and data to solve problems effectively. But with problem-solving, you are specifically identifying, selecting, and defending your solution. Below are some examples of using critical thinking to problem-solve:

- Your roommate was upset and said some unkind words to you, which put a crimp in your relationship. You try to see through the angry behaviors to determine how you might best support your roommate and help bring your relationship back to a comfortable spot.
-  Your campus club has been languishing on account of lack of participation and funds. The new club president, though, is a marketing major and has identified some strategies to interest students in joining and supporting the club. Implementation is forthcoming.
- Your final art class project challenges you to conceptualize form in new ways. On the last day of class when students present their projects, you describe the techniques you used to fulfill the assignment. You explain why and how you selected that approach.
- Your math teacher sees that the class is not quite grasping a concept. She uses clever questioning to dispel anxiety and guide you to new understanding of the concept.
- You have a job interview for a position that you feel you are only partially qualified for, although you really want the job and you are excited about the prospects. You analyze how you will explain your skills and experiences in a way to show that you are a good match for the prospective employer.
- You are doing well in college, and most of your college and living expenses are covered. But there are some gaps between what you want and what you feel you can afford. You analyze your income, savings, and budget to better calculate what you will need to stay in college and maintain your desired level of spending.

Problem-Solving Action Checklist

Problem-solving can be an efficient and rewarding process, especially if you are organized and mindful of critical steps and strategies. Remember, too, to assume the attributes of a good critical thinker. If you are curious, reflective, knowledge-seeking, open to change, probing, organized, and ethical, your challenge or problem will be less of a hurdle, and you'll be in a good position to find intelligent solutions.

	STRATEGIES	ACTION CHECKLIST[1]
1	Define the problem	• Identify the problem • Provide as many supporting details as possible • Provide examples • Organize the information logically
2	Identify available solutions	• Use logic to identify your most important goals • Identify implications and consequences • Identify facts • Compare and contrast possible solutions

	STRATEGIES	ACTION CHECKLIST[1]
3	Select your solution	• Use gathered facts and relevant evidence • Support and defend solutions considered valid • Defend your solution

1. "Student Success-Thinking Critically In Class and Online." *Critical Thinking Gateway*. St Petersburg College, n.d. Web. 16 Feb 2016. ↵

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3.11: Text- Evaluating Information With Critical Thinking

Evaluating information can be one of the most complex tasks you will be faced with in college. But if you utilize the following four strategies, you will be well on your way to success:

1. Read for understanding by using text coding
2. Examine arguments
3. Clarify thinking
4. Cultivate “habits of mind”



1. Read for Understanding Using Text Coding

When you read and take notes, use the text coding strategy. Text coding is a way of tracking your thinking while reading. It entails marking the text and recording what you are thinking either in the margins or perhaps on Post-it notes. As you make connections and ask questions in response to what you read, you monitor your comprehension and enhance your long-term understanding of the material.

With text coding, mark important arguments and key facts. Indicate where you agree and disagree or have further questions. You don’t necessarily need to read every word, but make sure you understand the concepts or the intentions behind what is written. Feel free to develop your own shorthand style when reading or taking notes. The following are a few options to consider using while coding text.

Shorthand	Meaning
!	Important
L	Learned something new
!	Big idea surfaced
*	Interesting or important fact
?	Dig deeper
✓	Agree
≠	Disagree

See more text coding from PBWorks and Collaborative for Teaching and Learning.

2. Examine Arguments

When you examine arguments or claims that an author, speaker, or other source is making, your goal is to identify and examine the hard facts. You can use the spectrum of authority strategy for this purpose. The spectrum of authority strategy assists you in identifying the “hot” end of an argument—feelings, beliefs, cultural influences, and societal influences—and the “cold” end of an argument—scientific influences. The following video explains this strategy.

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/braw/?p=66

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3. Clarify Thinking

When you use critical thinking to evaluate information, you need to clarify your thinking to yourself and likely to others. Doing this well is mainly a process of asking and answering probing questions, such as the logic questions discussed earlier. Design your questions to fit your needs, but be sure to cover adequate ground. What is the purpose? What question are we trying to answer? What point of view is being expressed? What assumptions are we or others making? What are the facts and data we know, and how do we know them? What are the concepts we're working with? What are the conclusions, and do they make sense? What are the implications?

4. Cultivate "Habits of Mind"

"Habits of mind" are the personal commitments, values, and standards you have about the principle of good thinking. Consider your intellectual commitments, values, and standards. Do you approach problems with an open mind, a respect for truth, and an inquiring attitude? Some good habits to have when thinking critically are being receptive to having your opinions changed, having respect for others, being independent and not accepting something is true until you've had the time to examine the available evidence, being fair-minded, having respect for a reason, having an inquiring mind, not making assumptions, and always, especially, questioning your own conclusions—in other words, developing an intellectual work ethic. Try to work these qualities into your daily life.

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3.12: Self Check- Critical Thinking

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3.13: Try It- Critical Thinking

Critical Thinking Journal Entry

To Do

1. Visit the Quia Critical Thinking Quiz page and click on Start Now (you don't need to enter your name). Select the best answer for each question, and then click on Submit Answers. A score of 70 percent or better on this quiz is considering passing.
2. Write a 200-400 word reflection on this activity. Based on the content of the questions, do you feel you use good critical thinking strategies in college? In what ways might you improve as a critical thinker?

Worked Example

Journal entry assignments tend to be more flexible than other types of writing assignments in college, and as a result they can be tailored to your own experiences as long as they answer the primary questions asked in the assignment.

One model of a successful entry about this topic can be found below. Feel free to include your own experiences and examples from real life as they pertain to the issue at hand.

Critical Thinking Journal Entry

by Sandy Brown

The thing I like about critical thinking is that is applies to everything. If you get better at using critical thinking in school, that means other things in life get easier, as well (at least that's what I hope is true).

I didn't do so great on the critical thinking quiz. I got a 50% the first time, but I think I would have done better if I had understood the questions more clearly. Question #9, the one about having autonomy, I got wrong because I thought it was saying it was important, rather than it wasn't. Now that I think about it, I guess that's an example of where I could be a better critical thinker—I could take the time to read these questions more closely, and be sure that my answer makes sense to what the question actually asks, rather than what I think it asks.

I was happy with parts of this, though. There were a couple of questions about fair-mindedness, and I got both those right, even though I didn't remember seeing the words "fair-mindedness" in the textbook. That phrase makes a lot more sense to me than "first order" and "second order" thinking.

For me, I think that I'm a better thinker when I'm not in a rush. I tend to panic when I take tests, and then I answer questions too quickly. For things that don't have a timer, like homework or out-of-class assignments, I tend to do a lot better because I can take as long as I need to figure out what exactly I'm supposed to do. So I guess one way to improve my critical thinking skills would be to practice going slower for timed tests, and giving myself time to check my answers before turning something in. I don't want to make mistakes like the one I did on this quiz, when it counts against my actual grade.

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3.14: Outcome- Time Management

Analyze Time Management Practices

The two areas most students struggle with when acclimating to college life are studying and time management. These issues arise from trying to manage newfound freedoms in college and from misunderstanding expectations of college classes. Time management is a means to build a solid foundation for college success.



The following excerpts, from *Foundations of Academic Success: Words of Wisdom*, share a true-to-life short story from a former student at State University of New York (SUNY). The advice he imparts includes a variety of techniques to help you cope with time-management demands at college. The lessons learned are meant to enlarge your awareness of your academic and personal goals and assist you in succeeding in college.

TIME IS ON YOUR SIDE

There I was, having just eaten dinner and realizing that I had less than twenty-four hours to go before my capstone paper was due for my History of Africa class. This paper was the only grade for the class and all I had done was some research. I still had thirty pages that needed to be written! How was I going to get this paper done?

I came to the realization that I was going to have to skip some classes and work through the night. I kept my roommate up with the click clack of the keyboard and worked through the night with breaks only to replenish the caffeine in my system. Morning came and I still had work to do.

I snuck in a twenty minute nap and kept working. I finally finished about thirty minutes before the deadline. Exhausted and not terribly proud of myself, I trudged my way to class to drop off the paper and committed to never working like this again. After all, there was a small likelihood that I would get a decent grade; I was hoping for just a C to keep my GPA respectable. I went back to my room and slept for a long time. Imagine my amazement when I received my grade for the paper (and ultimately the class) and there was an A- staring me back in the face! How could this be possible?

My experience illustrates a very important lesson. Best practices do not always yield the best results. Logic would tell us that to manage a thirty-page paper would require the student to spread out all the tasks over the semester and do a little bit of work over a long period of time as opposed to a lot of work over a short period of time. The problem is that time management is a personal thing. Everyone works differently and excels under different circumstances.

The important thing to remember about time management is that there is not one method. Everyone must find what works best for her or him. There are some strategies that have been used for years and others that are new. While there are multiple perspectives on how best to set personal and professional goals, there are three general themes that influence the development of personal time management plans: identifying priorities, managing time, and managing energy.

The concept of time management is actually personal management. Where you are going or what you are trying to accomplish is more important than how fast you get there. Personal management demands organizing and executing around priorities. One thing to watch out for on your college journey is something called time famine. Time famine is the feeling of having too much to do and not enough time to do it. This happens often to college students and without warning. This was certainly the case with my paper. I certainly felt overwhelmed with thirty pages to write and not a lot of time available to write it in. However, there's one really helpful aspect of time—you always know how much you have in a day. You know that in any given day, you have twenty-four hours to accomplish everything you need to do for that day. With that knowledge in hand it becomes an easy task to make smart choices when planning both the schedule for the day, as well as the energy needed to complete the tasks.

The objective of successful time management is to increase and optimize controllable time. Once you have a schedule made, don't change it unless something of some serious urgency comes up. However, while managing time is challenging enough, there's another concept out there about the management of your energy. Think of energy as money and time as what you'd like to buy. If you're too tired (or energy broke) to be productive, it's hard to accomplish (buy) everything on your schedule. Luckily, at the age of twenty-two, I had lots of energy and stamina to pull an all-nighter and finish the paper. If I tried to do that today at thirty-five, I would be asleep on my keyboard after a few hours. In order to always have enough of time currency, it's important that you are physically energized, emotionally connected, and mentally focused on your purpose.

You need time to play, have fun, and socialize, but it should not come at the expense of higher priority tasks.

Practical and tangible strategies for time and energy management can be the key to success for any undertaking. While each concept related to time and energy management is unique and provides a starting point for you to begin to develop strong personal management skills, these methods and ideas are not one-size-fits-all, and you need to explore the strategies and discover which components of each best fit your lifestyle and circumstances. Through this exercise, you can develop a personal management plan that is best suited to your needs and goals.

—Christopher L. Hockey, *Foundations of Academic Success: Words of Wisdom*

What You Will Learn to Do

- define your current uses of time in daily life
- explore time management strategies to add time for college success activities
- identify procrastination behaviors and strategies to avoid them

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3.15: Text- How You Use Your Time

As most students discover, time in college is not the same as it was in high school. There are many more “unscripted” hours of the day. Fewer hours are devoted to sitting in a classroom, but more hours are expected to be devoted to classwork, on your own. While this can be liberating, you may find that social opportunities conflict with academic expectations. For example, a free day before an exam, if not wisely spent, can spell trouble for doing well on the exam. It is easy to fall behind when there are so many choices and opportunities.

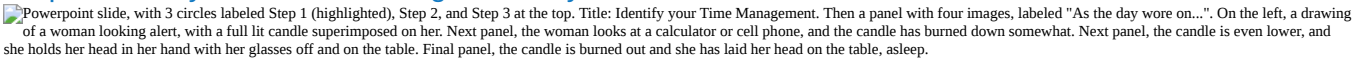
In the following Alleyoop Advice video, Alleyoop (Angel Aquino) discusses what many students discover about college: there is a lot of free time—and many challenges to effectively balance free time with study time.

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In the next few sections, we’ll take three steps towards learning to effectively manage our time. First, we have to see where we are, currently, with our use of time.

Step 1: Identify Your Time Management Style


Powerpoint slide, with 3 circles labeled Step 1 (highlighted), Step 2, and Step 3 at the top. Title: Identify your Time Management. Then a panel with four images, labeled "As the day wore on...". On the left, a drawing of a woman looking alert, with a full lit candle superimposed on her. Next panel, the woman looks at a calculator or cell phone, and the candle has burned down somewhat. Next panel, the candle is even lower, and she holds her head in her hand with her glasses off and on the table. Final panel, the candle is burned out and she has laid her head on the table, asleep.

The following self-assessment survey can help you determine your time-management personality type. Read each question in the Questions column. Then read the possible responses. Select one response for each question. Each response should reflect what you probably would do in a given situation, not what you think is the “right” answer. Put a checkmark in the My Time Management Type column next to your likely response.

	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES: Which response most closely matches what you would do? In the right column, check one response (a, b, c or d) for each question.	MY TIME MANAGEMENT TYPE
1	Your instructor just gave your class the prompts for your first essay, which is due in two weeks. How do you proceed from here?	a. Choose a prompt and begin working on a thesis immediately. Better to get it out of the way!	O Early bird
		b. Read over the prompts and let them sink in for a week or so. You’ll still have one more week to finish the assignment, right?	O Balancing act
		c. Read the prompts and maybe start playing around with ideas, but wait to really start writing until the day before. You swear it’s all in your head somewhere!	O Pressure cooker
		d. Definitely last. You’ll wait until everyone else has done their work, so you can make sure you are not duplicating efforts. Whatever, this is why you hate group work.	O Improviser
2	You are working on a group assignment that requires you to split up responsibilities with three other classmates. When would you typically finish your part?	a. First. Then you’re done and don’t have to worry about it. Plus it could give you time in case you want to tweak anything later.	O Early bird
		b. After one or two of the others have submitted their materials to the group, but definitely not last. You wanted to see how they approached it first.	O Balancing act

	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES: Which response most closely matches what you would do? In the right column, check one response (a, b, c or d) for each question.	MY TIME MANAGEMENT TYPE
		c. Maybe last, but definitely before the assignment due date and hopefully before any of the other group members ask about it.	O Pressure cooker
		d. Definitely last. You'll wait until everyone else has done their work, so you can make sure you are not duplicating efforts. Whatever, this is why you hate group work.	O Improviser
3	Your instructor just shared the instructions for your next assignment and you read them but don't quite understand what he's asking for in a certain part. What would you probably do?	a. Send the instructor an email that afternoon. When he doesn't respond that night, email him again. This is your worst nightmare—you just want to know what he wants!!	O Early bird
		b. Send him an email asking for clarification, giving yourself enough time to wait for his response and then complete the assignment. Better to be safe than sorry.	O Balancing act
		c. Try to figure it out for yourself. You're pretty sure what he's trying to say, and you'll give it your best shot.	O Pressure cooker
		d. Don't say anything until after the assignment is due. Other people in the class felt the same way too, probably!	O Improviser
4	The course you are taking requires you to post in a weekly discussion forum by Sunday night each week so the class can talk about everyone's posts on Monday. When do you submit your posts?	a. Tuesday night, after the first day of class that week. Then it's out of the way.	O Early bird
		b. Thursday or Friday night. You want to let the week's discussion sink in a little so you can collect your thoughts.	O Balancing act
		c. Sunday night. You always forget during the weekend!	O Pressure cooker
		d. Monday at 3 AM. That still counts as Sunday night, right?	O Improviser
5	You have an important assignment due Monday morning, and you have a social/work/family obligation that will keep you busy for most of the weekend. It is now the Wednesday before the assignment is due. How would you approach this dilemma?	a. You already finished it yesterday, the day it was assigned. Done!	O Early bird
		b. You tell yourself that you'll finish it by Friday night, and you manage this by chipping away at it over those 3 days. …Little. By. Little.	O Balancing act
		c. You tell yourself that you'll finish it by Friday night, so you can have your weekend free, but you still have a little left to do on Sunday—no big deal.	O Pressure cooker

	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES: Which response most closely matches what you would do? In the right column, check one response (a, b, c or d) for each question.	MY TIME MANAGEMENT TYPE
		d. You tell yourself that you'll take the weekend off, then stay up late on Sunday or wake up early on Monday to finish it. It's not a final or anything, and you have a life.	O Improviser
6	You have to read 150 pages before your next class meeting. You have 4 days to do so. What would you most likely do?	a. 150 pages divided by 4 days means… a little less than 40 pages a day. You like to chunk it this way because then you'll also have time to go over your notes and highlights, and come up with questions for the instructor.	O Early bird
		b. 150 pages divided by…well … 2 days (because it's been a long week), means 75 pages a day. Totally doable.	O Balancing act
		c. 150 pages, the day before it is due. You did this to yourself, it's fine.	O Pressure cooker
		d. How much time does it take to skim the text for keywords and/or find a summary online?	O Improviser

Assessing Your Responses

Which of the four basic time-management personality types did you select the most? Which did you select the least? Do you feel like these selections match the student you have been in the past? Has your previous way of doing things worked for you, or do you think it's time for a change? Remember, we can all always improve!

Learn more below about your tendencies. Review traits, strengths, challenges, and tips for success for each of the four time-management personality types.

The Early Bird

- **Traits**: You like to make checklists and feel great satisfaction when you can cross something off of your to-do list. When it comes to assignments, you want to get started as soon as possible (and maybe start brainstorming before that), because it lets you stay in control.
- **Strengths**: You know what you want and are driven to figure out how to achieve it. Motivation is never really a problem for you.
- **Challenges**: Sometimes you can get more caught up in getting things done as quickly as possible and don't give yourself enough time to really mull over issues in all of their complexity.
- **Tips for Success**: You're extremely organized and on top of your schoolwork, so make sure you take time to really enjoy learning in your classes. Remember, school isn't all deadlines and checkboxes—you also have the opportunity to think about big-picture intellectual problems that don't necessarily have clear answers.

The Balancing Act

- **Traits**: You really know what you're capable of and are ready to do what it takes to get the most out of your classes. Maybe you're naturally gifted in this way or maybe it's a skill that you have developed over time; in any case, you should have the basic organizational skills to succeed in any class, as long as you keep your balance.
- **Strengths**: Your strength really lies in your ability to be well rounded. You may not always complete assignments perfectly every time, but you are remarkably consistent and usually manage to do very well in classes.

- **Challenges**: Because you're so consistent, sometimes you can get in a bit of a rut and begin to coast in class, rather than really challenging yourself.
- **Tips for Success**: Instead of simply doing what works, use each class as an opportunity for growth by engaging thoughtfully with the material and constantly pushing the boundaries of your own expectations for yourself.

The Pressure Cooker

- **Traits**: You always get things done and almost always at the last minute. Hey, it takes time to really come up with good ideas!
- **Strengths**: You work well under pressure, and when you do finally sit down to accomplish a task, you can sit and work for hours. In these times, you can be extremely focused and shut out the rest of the world in order to complete what's needed.
- **Challenges**: You sometimes use your ability to work under pressure as an excuse to procrastinate. Sure, you can really focus when the deadline is tomorrow, but is it really the best work you could produce if you had a couple of days of cushion?
- **Tips for Success**: Give yourself small, achievable deadlines, and stick to them. Make sure they're goals that you really could (and would) achieve in a day. Then don't allow yourself to make excuses. You'll find that it's actually a lot more enjoyable to not be stressed out when completing schoolwork. Who would have known?

The Improviser

- **Traits**: You frequently wait until the last minute to do assignments, but it's because you've been able to get away with this habit in many classes. Sometimes you miss an assignment or two, or have to pretend to have done reading that you haven't, but everyone does that sometimes, right?
- **Strengths**: You think quickly on your feet, and while this is a true strength, it also can be a crutch that prevents you from being really successful in a class.
- **Challenges**: As the saying goes, old habits die hard. If you find that you lack a foundation of discipline and personal accountability, it can be difficult to change, especially when the course material becomes challenging or you find yourself struggling to keep up with the pace of the class.
- **Tips for Success**: The good news is you can turn this around! Make a plan to organize your time and materials in a reasonable way, and really stick with it. Also, don't be afraid to ask your instructor for help, but be sure to do it before, rather than after, you fall behind.

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3.16: Text- Create a Schedule


Powerpoint slide, with three circles labeled Step 1, Step 2 (highlighted), and Step 3 at the top. Title: Create a Schedule. Three panels appear in the middle, labeled "Manage and Implement." On the left, a close-up drawing of a person writing on a wall calendar; in the middle, the same scene zoomed out to show the larger calendar on the wall, while she still writes on it; final scene, she stands in front of the calendar staring at it.

Once you've evaluated how you have done things in the past, you'll want to think about how you might create a schedule for managing your time well going forward. The best schedules have some flexibility built into them, as unexpected situations will always pop up along the way.

Your schedule will be unique to you, depending on the level of detail you find helpful. There are some things—due dates and exam dates, for example—that should be included in your schedule no matter what. But you also might find it helpful to break down assignments into steps (or milestones) that you can schedule, as well.

Again, this is all about what works best for you. Do you want to keep a record of only the major deadlines you need to keep in mind? Or does it help you to plan out every day so you stay on track? Your answers to these questions will vary depending on the course, the complexity of your schedule, and your own personal preferences.

Your schedule will also vary depending on the course you're taking. So pull out your syllabus and try to determine the rhythm of the class by looking at the following factors:

- Will you have tests or exams in this course? When are those scheduled?
- Are there assignments and papers? When are those due?
- Are there any group or collaborative assignments? You'll want to pay particular attention to the timing of any assignment that requires you to work with others.

You can find many useful resources online that will help you keep track of your schedule. Some are basic, cloud-based calendars (like Google calendar, iCal, Outlook), and some (like iHomework) are specialized for students.

We all have exactly 168 hours per week. How do you spend yours? How much time will you be willing to devote to your studies?

Questions and Answers About Schedules

Student 1: Do I really need to create a study schedule? I can honestly keep track of all of this in my head.

> **Answer**: Yes, you really should create a study schedule. Your instructors may give you reminders about what you need to do when, but if you have multiple classes and other events and activities to fit in, it's easy to lose track. A study schedule helps you carve out sufficient time—and stick to it.
>
> Here is a tool to create a printable class study schedule to help you plan your time during the week from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.
>
> Here are ways to plan time (semester, week, days) from Ohio University's Academic Advancement Center. Ohio University uses a quarterly system (11 weeks); you may need adapt their schedule to reflect your academic needs.

Student 2: Realistically, how much time should I spend studying for class?

> **Answer**: This is a good question and a tough one to answer. Generally speaking, for each hour of class, you should spend a minimum of two to three hours studying. Thus, a typical three-hour class would require a minimum of six to nine hours of studying per week. If you are registered for 15 credits a semester, then you would need to spend 30 to 45 hours each week studying for your classes, which can be as much time needed for a full-time job. If you think of college as a "job," you will understand that it takes work to succeed.
>
> One important college success skill is learning how to interact with the course materials. Think about learning a sport or playing a game. How do you learn how to play it? With lots of practice and engagement. The more you play, the better you get. The same applies to learning. You need to engage with the course material and concentrate on learning.
>
> Access The 168-Hour Exercise—How Do I Use My Time Now? from Ohio University's Academic Advancement Center. It can help you understand how you use your time now and decide if you need to make changes.

Student 3: Aside from class time requirements, should I account for anything else as I draw up my schedule?

> **Answer**: This depends on how detailed you want your schedule to be. Is it a calendar of important dates, or do you need a clear picture of how to organize your entire day? The latter is more successful, so long as you stick with it. This is also where

it will be helpful to determine when you are most productive and efficient. When are you the most focused and ready to learn new things? In the morning, afternoon, or evening?

Here is a time management calculator for first-year students at the University of Texas El Paso.

Student 4: My life and school requirements change on a week-to-week basis. How can I possibly account for this when making a schedule?

Answer: Try creating a variable schedule in case an event comes up or you need to take a day or two off.

Student 5: I'm beginning to think that scheduling and time management are good ideas, but on the other hand they seem unrealistic. What's wrong with cramming? It's what I'll probably end up doing anyway . . .

Answer: Cramming, or studying immediately before an exam without much other preparation, has many disadvantages. Trying to learn any subject or memorize facts in a brief but intense period of time is basically fruitless. You simply forget what you have learned much faster when you cram. Instead, study in smaller increments on a regular basis: your brain will absorb complex course material in a more profound and lasting way because it's how the brain functions.

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3.17: Text- Get Better at Prioritizing


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Due dates are important. Set your short and long-term goals accordingly. Ask yourself the following:

- What needs to get done today?
- What needs to get done this week?
- What needs to get done by the end the first month of the semester?
- What needs to get done by the end the second month of the semester?
- What needs to get done by the end of the semester?

Your time is valuable. Treat it accordingly by getting the most you can out of it.

Above all, avoid procrastination. Procrastination is the kiss of death, because it's difficult to catch up once you've fallen behind. Do you have a problem with procrastination? Be on your guard so that it doesn't become an issue for you.

Procrastination Checklist

Do any of the following descriptions apply to you?

- My paper is due in two days and I haven't really started writing it yet.
- I've had to pull an all-nighter to get an assignment done on time.
- I've turned in an assignment late or asked for an extension when I really didn't have a good excuse not to get it done on time.
- I've worked right up to the minute an assignment was due.
- I've underestimated how long a reading assignment would take and didn't finish it in time for class.
- I've relied on the Internet for information (like a summary of a concept or a book) because I didn't finish the reading on time.

If these sound like issues you've struggled with in the past, you might want to consider whether you have the tendency to procrastinate and how you want to deal with it in your future classes. You're already spending a lot of time, energy, and money on the classes you're taking—don't let all of that go to waste!

Strategies to Combat Procrastination

Below are some effective strategies for overcoming procrastination:

1. **Keep your studying "bite-sized."** When confronted with 150 pages of reading or 50 problems to solve, it's natural to feel overwhelmed. Try breaking it down: What if you decide that you will read for 45 minutes or that you will solve 10 problems? That sounds much more manageable.
2. **Turn off your phone, close your chat windows, and block distracting Web sites**. The best advice we've ever heard is to treat your studying as if you're in a movie theater—just turn it off.
3. **Set up a reward system.** If you read for 40 minutes, you can check your phone for 5 minutes. But keep in mind that reward-based systems only work if you stick to an honor system.
4. **Study in a place reserved for studying ONLY**. Your bedroom may have too many distractions (or temptations, such as taking a nap), so it may be best to avoid it when you're working on school assignments.
5. **Use checklists**. Make your incremental accomplishments visible. Some people take great satisfaction and motivation from checking items off a to-do list. Be very specific when creating this list, and clearly describe each task one step at a time.

Video Guidance

In the following video, Joseph Clough shares key strategies for conquering procrastination once and for all.

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/braw/?p=78

Click here to download a transcript for this video

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- Overcome Procrastination For Good!. **Authored by**: Joseph Clough. **Located at**: https://youtu.be/JjU0GbUDtrk. **License**: *CC BY: Attribution*

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3.18: Self Check- Time Management

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3.19: Try It- Time Management

Time Management Journal Entry

To Do

1. Assess your time management skills by using Ohio University's self-assessment. Make note of your results.
2. Review the University of Georgia's Time Management: 10 Strategies for Better Time Management and consider the strategies that seem most appealing to you.
3. Reflect in a 200-400 word journal entry on your current time management skills, and discuss how you might apply new strategies to improve time management in your life.

Worked Example

Journal entry assignments tend to be more flexible than other types of writing assignments in college, and as a result they can be tailored to your own experiences as long as they answer the primary questions asked in the assignment.

One model of a successful entry about this topic can be found below. Feel free to include your own experiences and examples from real life as they pertain to the issue at hand.

Time Management Journal Entry

by Sandy Brown

I've always considered myself pretty good at time management. Having a full house of a husband, three daughters, and two dogs will do that for you! But I'm realizing that I'm slipping a bit now that I'm going to school on top of being a full-time mom.

The Ohio University quiz was a bit eye-opening. I only scored a 55, which seems very low to me. I liked its advice at the end, and I went back through and clicked on each question to read more about it. One question that I put Never for was "I review my lecture notes after class each day." I hadn't thought about how that might be important before. I usually have some time to kill after classes are over, before I go home. Usually I do something dumb while waiting for my ride, like check Facebook. But I could use that time to look at my notes, and maybe start a bit of the reading before the next class.

One question that I got full points for was the "I allow time for proper meals and exercise" one. We have a family dinner every night, even if it's just fish sticks or chicken nuggets. And I have a regular running schedule. If don't run, I go crazy.

From the "Ten Strategies" reading, there were some good tips in there. Some were pretty obvious, but others made me think. The one I have a hard time with, but should be better about, is #6, Delegate. My girls make such a mess of things, that a lot of times I just end up cleaning myself instead of asking them to do it. I could put more responsibility on them. And my step-mother is always offering to help. I feel guilty about taking advantage of that very much, but I should get over that and call on her more.

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3.20: Outcome- Writing in College

Define Successful Approaches Towards College Writing Tasks

Consider this: a recent survey of employers conducted by the Association of American Colleges and Universities found that **89 percent** of employers say that colleges and universities should place more emphasis on "the ability to effectively communicate orally and in writing."[1] It was the single-most favored skill in this survey.

In addition, several of the other valued skills are grounded in written communication:

- "Critical thinking and analytical reasoning skills" (81 percent)
- "The ability to analyze and solve complex problems" (75 percent)
- "The ability to locate, organize, and evaluate information from multiple sources" (68 percent).

This emphasis on communication probably reflects the changing reality of work in the professions. Employers also reported that employees will have to "take on more responsibilities," "use a broader set of skills," "work harder to coordinate with other departments," face "more complex" challenges, and mobilize "higher levels of learning and knowledge."[2]

If you want to be a professional who interacts frequently with others, you have to be someone who can anticipate and solve complex problems and coordinate your work with others,[3] all of which depend on effective communication.

The pay-off from improving your writing comes much sooner than graduation. Suppose you complete about 40 classes for a 120-credit bachelors' degree, and—averaging across writing-intensive and non-writing-intensive courses—you produce about 2,500 words of formal writing per class. Even with that low estimate, you'll write 100,000 words during your college career. That's roughly equivalent to a 330-page book.

Spending a few hours sharpening your writing skills will make those 100,000 words much easier and more rewarding to write. All of your professors care about good writing.



What You Will Learn to Do

- identify common types of writing tasks given in a college class
- describe the purpose of writing tasks, and what an instructor might expect to see from your work
- recognize strategies for success on particular types of writing tasks
- define writing anxiety

1. Hart Research Associates. *Raising the Bar: Employers' Views on College Learning in the Wake of the Economic Downturn*. 20 Jan 2010, p. 9. ↵
2. Ibid., p. 5. ↵
3. Hart Research Associates. *It Takes More Than a Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success*. 10 Apr 2013. ↵

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- Image of man writing. **Authored by**: Matt Zhang. **Located at**: https://flic.kr/p/pAg6t9. **License**: *CC BY-NC-ND: Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives*

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3.21: Text- What to Do with Essay Assignments

Writing assignments can be as varied as the instructors who assign them. Some assignments are explicit about what exactly you'll need to do, in what order, and how it will be graded. Some assignments are very open-ended, leaving you to determine the best path toward answering the project. Most fall somewhere in the middle, containing details about some aspects but leaving other assumptions unstated. It's important to remember that your first resource for getting clarification about an assignment is your instructor—she or he will be very willing to talk out ideas with you, to be sure you're prepared at each step to do well with the writing.

Most writing in college will be a direct response to class materials—an assigned reading, a discussion in class, an experiment in a lab. Generally speaking, these writing tasks can be divided into three broad categories.

Summary Assignments

Being asked to summarize a source is a common task in many types of writing. It can also seem like a straightforward task: simply restate, in shorter form, what the source says. A lot of advanced skills are hidden in this seemingly simple assignment, however.

An effective summary does the following:

- reflects your accurate understanding of a source's thesis or purpose
- differentiates between major and minor ideas in a source
- demonstrates your ability to identify key phrases to quote
- demonstrates your ability to effectively paraphrase most of the source's ideas
- captures the tone, style, and distinguishing features of a source
- does not reflect your personal opinion about the source

That last point is often the most challenging: we are opinionated creatures, by nature, and it can be very difficult to keep our opinions from creeping into a summary, which is meant to be completely neutral.

In college-level writing, assignments that are *only* summary are rare. That said, many types of writing tasks contain at least some element of summary, from a biology report that explains what happened during a chemical process, to an analysis essay that requires you to explain what several prominent positions about gun control are, as a component of comparing them against one another.

Defined-Topic Assignments

Many writing tasks will ask you to address a particular topic or a narrow set of topic options. Even with the topic identified, however, it can sometimes be difficult to determine what aspects of the writing will be most important when it comes to grading.



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. Below are some tips:

1. **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?
2. **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. If the assignment isn't part of a sequence, think about where it falls in the span of the course (early, midterm, or toward the end), and how it relates to readings and other assignments. 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.

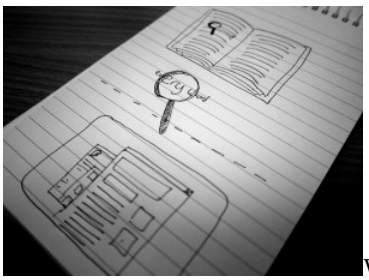
3. **Try a free-write**. A free-write is when you just write, without stopping, for a set period of time. That doesn't sound very "free"; it actually sounds kind of coerced, right? The "free" part is *what* you write—it can be whatever comes to mind.Professional writers use free-writing to get started on a challenging (or distasteful) writing task or to overcome writer's 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.
4. **Ask for clarification**. Even the most carefully crafted assignments may need some verbal clarification, especially if you're new to a course or field. Try to convey to your instructor that you want to learn and you're ready to work, and not just looking for advice on how to get an A.

Although the topic may be defined, you can't just grind out four or five pages of discussion, explanation, or analysis. It may seem strange, but even when you're asked to "show how" or "illustrate," you're still being asked to make an argument. You must shape and focus that discussion or analysis so that it supports a **claim** that you discovered and formulated and that all of your discussion and explanation develops and supports.

Defined-topic writing assignments are used primarily to identify your familiarity with the subject matter.

Undefined-Topic Assignments

Another writing assignment you'll potentially encounter is one in which the topic may be only broadly identified ("water conservation" in an ecology course, for instance, or "the Dust Bowl" in a U.S. History course), or even completely open ("compose an argumentative research essay on a subject of your choice").

 Where defined-topic essays demonstrate your knowledge of the *content*, undefined-topic assignments are used to demonstrate your *skills*—your ability to perform academic research, to synthesize ideas, and to apply the various stages of the writing process.

The first hurdle with this type of task is to find a focus that interests you. Don't just pick something you feel will be "easy to write about"—that almost always turns out to be a false assumption. Instead, you'll get the most value out of, and find it easier to work on, a topic that intrigues you personally in some way.

The same getting-started ideas described for defined-topic assignments will help with these kinds of projects, too. You can also try talking with your instructor or a writing tutor (at your college's writing center) to help brainstorm ideas and make sure you're on track. You want to feel confident that you've got a clear idea of what it means to be successful in the writing and not waste time working in a direction that won't be fruitful.

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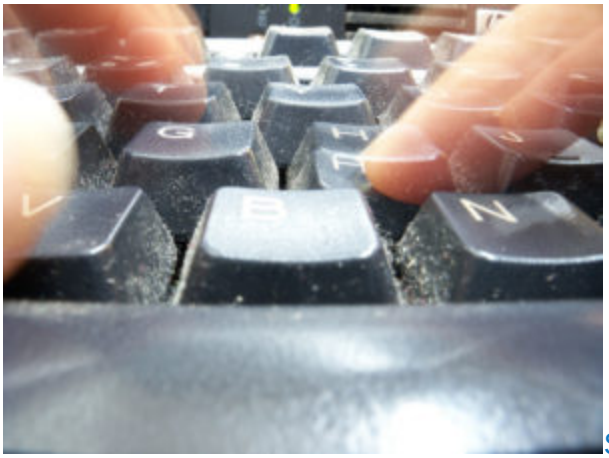
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3.22: Text- Strategies for Writing Success

The secret to strong writing, no matter what kind of assignment you've been given, is to apply your personalized version of the **writing process** to the task. We'll discuss the writing process in greater depth elsewhere in this course.

For now, here are some "quick-start" guides for how to approach writing with confidence.



Summaries

Start with a Clear Identification of the Work

This automatically lets your readers know your intentions and that you're covering the work of another author.

- Clearly identify (in the present tense) the background information needed for your summary: the type of work, title, author, and main point. Example: *In the featured article "Five Kinds of Learning," the author, Holland Oates, justifies his opinion on the hot topic of learning styles — and adds a few himself.*

Summarize the Piece as a Whole

Omit nothing important and strive for overall coherence through appropriate transitions. Write using "summarizing language." Your reader needs to be reminded that this is not your own work. Use phrases like *the article claims, the author suggests, etc.*

- Present the material in a neutral fashion. Your opinions, ideas, and interpretations should be left in your brain — don't put them into your summary. Be conscious of choosing your words. Only include what was in the original work.
- Be concise. This is a summary — it should be much shorter than the original piece. If you're working on an article, give yourself a target length of 1/4 the original article.

Conclude with a Final Statement

This is not a statement of your own point of view, however; it should reflect the significance of the book or article from the author's standpoint.

- Without rewriting the article, summarize what the author wanted to get across. Be careful not to evaluate in the conclusion or insert any of your own assumptions or opinions.



Informative and Persuasive Essay Assignments

Brainstorm

Write down topic ideas. If you have been assigned a particular topic or focus, it still might be possible to narrow it down, or personalize it to your own interests.

If you have been given an open-ended essay assignment, the topic should be something that allows you to enjoy working with the writing process. Select a topic that you'll want to think about, read about, and write about for several weeks, without getting bored.

Research

If you're writing about a subject you're not an expert on and want to make sure you are presenting the topic or information realistically, look up the information or seek out an expert to ask questions.

- Search for information online. Type your topic into a search engine and sift through the top 10 or 20 results.
  - **Note**: Be cautious about information you retrieve online, especially if you are writing a research paper or an article that relies on factual information. Internet sources can be unreliable. Published books, or works found in a journal, have to undergo a much more thorough vetting process before they reach publication, and are therefore safer to use as sources.
- Check out a library. Yes, believe it or not, there *is* still information to be found in a library that hasn't made its way to the Web. For an even greater breadth of resources, try a college or university library.

Write a Rough Draft

It doesn't matter how many spelling errors or weak adjectives you have in it. This copy is just jotting down those random uncategorized thoughts. Write down anything you think of that you want included in your writing, and worry about organizing everything where it belongs later.

If You're Having Trouble, Try F reewriting

Set a timer and write continuously until that time is up. You won't have time to worry about errors and mistakes if you're rushing to get the words out.

Edit for Your Second Draft

Review the rough draft and begin to put what you've written in the order you'll want it in. Clean up misspellings, grammatical errors and weak writing such as repetitive words. Flesh out the plot and start thinking of anything you want to cut out.

- Edit ruthlessly. If it doesn't fit in with the overall thesis, if it's unnecessary, or if you don't like what you've written, cut it out.
- Check for coherency. Do all parts of the essay make sense together? If so, continue. If not, consider revising whatever doesn't fit in.
- Check for necessity. Do all parts of the essay contribute? Does each section give necessary background, advance the argument, address counterarguments, or show potential resolutions?
- Check for anything missing. Do the topic sub-points flow smoothly into one another, or are there some logical gaps?

Keep Rewriting until You're Ready for a Second Opinion

This is an important step, as other people will see what you actually wrote, and not just what you *think* you wrote.

- Get feedback from people whose opinion you respect and trust, and who either read a lot or write themselves.
- Ask them to be honest and thorough. Only honest feedback, even if it's a wholesale criticism of your entire story, can make you a better writer.
- If they need some guidance, give them the same questions you've been asking yourself.
- This is particularly critical if any aspect of your essay revolves around a technical area in which you're not an expert. Make sure at least one of your readers is an expert in that area.
- Join a writer's group in your area or online to share your writing, read others' writing, and provide mutual feedback.

Evaluate the Response You Received

You don't have to like or agree with everything that's said to you about your work. On the other hand, if you get the same comment from more than one person, you should probably take it very seriously. Strike a balance between keeping aspects that you want and making changes based on input you trust.

- Re-read the essay with your readers' comments in the back of your head. Note any gaps, places that need to be cut, or areas needing revision.
- Re-write using the insights gained from your readers and from your own subsequent critical reading.

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3.23: Text- Writing Through Fear

Writing is an activity that can cause occasional anxiety for anyone, even professional writers. The following essay about writing anxiety, by Hillary Wentworth, from the Walden Writing Center, offers insight about how to handle issues surrounding writer's block.

I suppose fall is the perfect time to discuss fear. The leaves are falling, the nights are getting longer, and the kids are preparing ghoulish costumes and tricks for Halloween.



So here's my scary story: A few weeks ago, I sat down at my computer to revise an essay draft for an upcoming deadline. This is old hat for me; it's what I do in my personal life as a creative writer, and it's what I do in my professional life as a Walden Writing Center instructor. As I was skimming through it, though, a feeling of dread settled in my stomach, I began to sweat, and my pulse raced. I was having full-on panic. About my writing.

This had never happened to me before. Sure, I have been disappointed in my writing, frustrated that I couldn't get an idea perfectly on paper, but not completely fear-stricken. I Xed out of the Word document and watched *Orange Is the New Black* on Netflix because I couldn't look at the essay anymore. My mind was too clouded for anything productive to happen.

The experience got me thinking about the role that fear plays in the writing process. Sometimes fear can be a great motivator. It might make us read many more articles than are truly necessary, just so we feel prepared enough to articulate a concept. It might make us stay up into the wee hours to proofread an assignment. But sometimes fear can lead to paralysis. Perhaps your anxiety doesn't manifest itself as panic at the computer; it could be that you worry about the assignment many days—or even weeks—before it is due.

Here are some tips to help:

1. **Interrogate your fear**. Ask yourself why you are afraid. Is it because you fear failure, success, or judgment? Has it been a while since you've written academically, and so this new style of writing is mysterious to you?
2. **Write through it**. We all know the best way to work through a problem is to confront it. So sit at your desk, look at the screen, and write. You might not even write your assignment at first. Type anything—a reflection on your day, why writing gives you anxiety, your favorite foods. Sitting there and typing will help you become more comfortable with the prospect of more.
3. **Give it a rest**. This was my approach. After realizing that I was having an adverse reaction, I called it quits for the day, which ultimately helped reset my brain.
4. **Find comfort in ritual and reward**. Getting comfortable with writing might involve establishing a ritual (a time of day, a place, a song, a warm-up activity, or even food or drink) to get yourself into the writing zone. If you accomplish a goal or write for a set amount of time, reward yourself.
5. **Remember that knowledge is power.** Sometimes the only way to assuage our fear is to know more. Perhaps you want to learn about the writing process to make it less intimidating. Check out the Writing Center's website for tips and tutorials that will increase your confidence. You can also always ask your instructor questions about the assignment.
6. **Break it down.** If you feel overwhelmed about the amount of pages or the vastness of the assignment, break it up into small chunks. For example, write one little section of the paper at a time.
7. **Buddy up.** Maybe you just need someone with whom to share your fears—and your writing. Ask a classmate to be a study buddy or join an eCampus group.

The writing centers at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and University of Richmond, as well as the news site Inside Higher Ed, also have helpful articles on writing anxiety.

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3.24: Self Check- Writing in College

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3.25: Try It- Writing in College

Writing in College Journal Entry

To Do



The video above discusses beliefs students hold about college and demonstrates how those beliefs relate to test performance. Consider how beliefs might also impact a student's performance on writing assignments.

Develop a 200-400 word journal entry that identifies three beliefs, mentioned in the video or discovered through your own observations, that relate to a student's ability to write academic essays. Explain how these beliefs might be adjusted through the practice of metacognition to improve writing results.

Worked Example

Journal entry assignments tend to be more flexible than other types of writing assignments in college, and as a result they can be tailored to your own experiences as long as they answer the primary questions asked in the assignment.

One model of a successful entry about this topic can be found below. Feel free to include your own experiences and examples from real life as they pertain to the issue at hand.

Writing in College Journal Entry

by Sandy Brown

Belief: Learning is fast

Related to writing essays, I could see how I could easily fall into this trap of thinking that fast is good. I have such limited time in the day to work on school assignments, that I think that whatever I can manage to get done must be the best possible work that I'm capable of doing. I should allow myself more time, though that's easier said than done. Even with smaller writing assignments, like this one, if I give myself a day or two to sketch out ideas for what I want to say, and then reflect on it before writing it, I think I'll do a much better job in the long run.

Belief: I'm really good at multi-tasking

This one is very related to the "learning is fast" idea. Watching the girl in the video do a million things while she's studying is just like watching my own kids at night! And I'm pretty guilty of this, as well. If I can set aside a quiet part of my night, and just focus on only one assignment at a time, I think I'll do a lot better with my writing overall. And I'll be happier with the results.

Belief: Being good at a subject is a matter of inborn talent

This is actually not a belief I personally hold. I always loved to read growing up, and I still do read fiction as much as time allows. But working as a business administrator for the past 15 years has shown me that I'm pretty good with numbers and bookkeeping, too, which I wouldn't have guessed before this job.

One of my daughters is very drawn towards English and writing, and another struggles with it. They both seem to feel this is a matter of fate. I'm going to share this video with them, because I think there are ways that my daughter who struggles can be empowered to think that she CAN get better at writing, if she just keeps practicing. (This is also something I'm going to do myself…I'm very out of practice with writing for school!)

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3.26: Outcome- Computer-Based Writing

Apply Word Processing Skills to College Writing Tasks

Popular culture holds a romantic image of writers as solitary figures, scribbling with pen and paper in attics by candlelight.

Realistically speaking, though, most writing we do these days is electronic. While there is great joy in putting pencil to paper, keyboarding and word processing are survival skills in college. Your professors will expect much of the work you do for classes to be typed, and either printed or submitted electronically. Additionally, most employers will expect and require you to be comfortable with using Microsoft Word and similar programs.



This section is designed to hold a little something for everyone. The video series walks viewers through features of Microsoft Word. Start at the level that seems the best fit for you. Even if you're a seasoned word processor, you'll encounter some tips that will save you time and effort in formatting documents for college.

What You Will Learn to Do

- demonstrate proficiency with basic word processor features
- demonstrate proficiency with intermediate word processor features
- demonstrate proficiency with advanced word processor features

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3.27: Video- Beginning Word Processing Skills

Most writing you do for college will need to be typed, and often submitted electronically. Mastering the basics of word processing tools will make this process much more comfortable to do.

The most popular word processing program is Microsoft Word, part of the Microsoft Office Suite. Most college computer labs have this program available, and you can often purchase it for a reduced rate through your college bookstore.

Some classes will explicitly require you to use Microsoft Word for your classwork. Otherwise, you're free to use whatever program you wish. Apple's Pages and Google's Google Docs, are two other widely-used examples.

The videos in this section use Microsoft Word 2013 as a model. If you use a different word processing program (or a different version of Word), the specific tools might appear in different places, but you'll still be able to perform the same activities.

Getting to Know Word

Let's start by reviewing the program as a whole, and what it's capable of.



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Creating and Opening Documents

Now, let's look at getting started with a new document file.



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Saving and Sharing

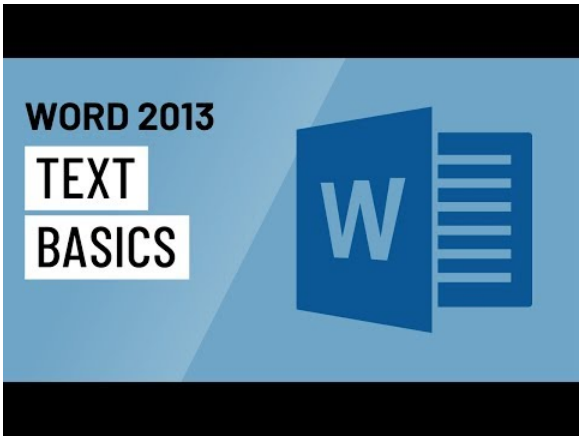
The ever-important “Save” feature is going to be your new best friend in college.



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Text Basics

Cutting, copying, pasting, and deleting are all reviewed here. “Find and replace” is a tool that will be handy for revising documents, especially.



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Formatting Text

Making your document look attractive is one of the most fun parts of using a word processor. This video demonstrates quick ways to change your text’s appearance.



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Page Layout

Your professor may have specific instructions for how she wants you to format the documents you write for her class. If that's the case, review how to change layout and formatting settings here.



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Printing

Finally, we end with the ever-important step of getting a hard copy of your work.



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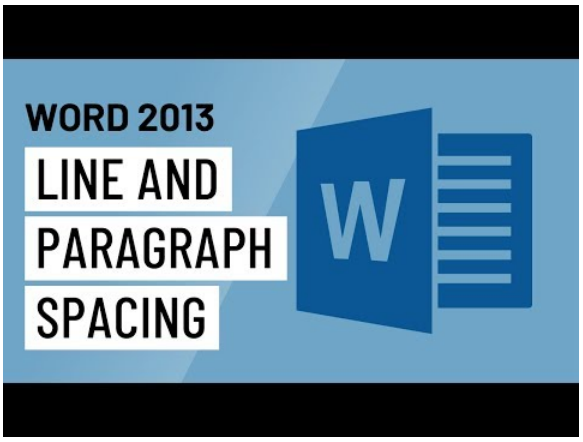
3.28: Video- Intermediate Word Processing Skills

Now that you've mastered the basics, it's time to focus on the parts of word processing that make life easier!

The videos in this section use Microsoft Word 2013 as a model. If you use a different word processing program (or a different version of Word), the specific tools might appear in different places, but you'll still be able to perform the same activities.

Line and Paragraph Spacing

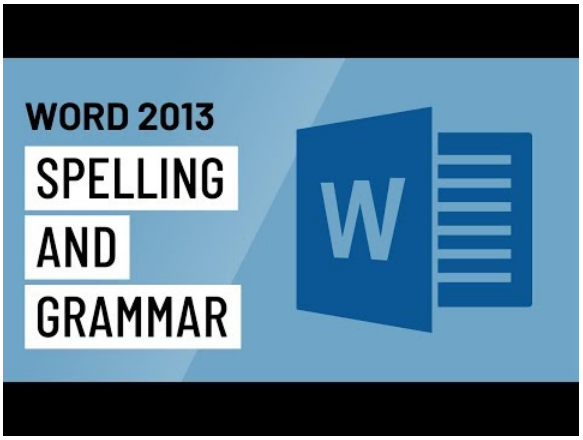
Having trouble getting things to line up the way you want them to on the page? This video shows how to simplify the appearance of your text with a couple of clicks.



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Spell Check and Grammar Check

Probably everyone's favorite tool since the invention of computers is automatic spell check. Grammar check is also quite useful. Though neither tool is perfect, both will provide you a good leg up in the proofreading process.



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Headers, Footers, and Page Numbers

Your instructor will often ask you to include page numbers on your document, along with some specific formatting procedures. MLA and APA document formats, for instance, both rely upon the use of Headers. See how to insert these easily here.



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Track Changes

Some built-in tools allow you to add comments on a draft, which is useful for doing peer review, or making notes to yourself as you build a project. Your instructor might also add notes to your essay document when he grades it, so it's useful to know how to turn on Track Changes so you don't miss his input.



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Word Count

Many writing assignments you have in college will ask for a particular word count range (such as a 500-750 word essay assignment). It's useful to know how to easily locate the word count in a document you've created.

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3.29: Video- Advanced Word Processing Skills

Even people who have been using word processors for years often don't know about some of the advanced tips below.

Most of the videos in this section use Microsoft Word 2013 as a model. If you use a different word processing program (or a different version of Word), the specific tools might appear in different places, but you'll still be able to perform the same activities.

Hanging Indents

MLA and APA bibliography pages use a special type of indent, called a "hanging indent." Where a normal paragraph indents the first line but not any others, a hanging indent paragraph DOESN'T indent the first line, but DOES indent all the others. Luckily, it's very easy to have your word processor do the hard work of this type of formatting for you, as this video demonstrates.



(This video has no audio)

Bibliography Pages

Speaking of bibliographies (or Works Cited pages, or References pages), did you know that many word processors have ways to help you create those quickly?



Click here to download a transcript for this video

Alphabetizing Bibliographies (and other Lists)

One more bibliography tip…if you create your citation list as you use sources, you'll need to put these in alphabetical order at the end. An easy way to do that is to use the Sort feature in your word processor. This video demonstrates that in Word 2007.



Click here to download a transcript for this video

Inserting Pictures

Many college projects will require you to include visuals in your essays. The following video addresses how to add an image and then how to get the text around it to behave properly afterwards.



Change Default Settings

If the first thing you do each time you open a new document, is change your font size or style, as well as readjust your margins, then you probably will save time by changing the default settings so it starts just the way you like it.



Click here to download a transcript for this video

Free Alternatives to Word

Word is the most common word processor, but it's expensive, especially if it didn't come with the computer you bought. Here are some **free** options to explore as an alternative.

- **Office Online**. You'll need to register with an account, but can then access your saved files from any internet-connected device.
- **OpenOffice**. This is software you download on your computer, so you don't have to be online to use it.
- **LibreOffice**. Similar to OpenOffice, you download this software directly to your computer.
- **Google Drive**. Connected to a Gmail / Google personal account, this flexible tool lets you access your saved files from any internet-connected device. You can also download files to work on offline, and they will automatically sync when you go online again.

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3.30: Try It- Habits for Success

Habits for Success Journal Entry

To Do

For this activity, create your own definition of success. Dictionary.com defines success as “the favorable outcome of something attempted.” For many students in college, success means passing a class, earning an A, or learning something new. Beyond college, some people define success in terms of financial wealth; others measure it by the quality of their relationships with family and friends.

Here is an example of a brief, philosophical definition of success:

To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded. –Ralph Waldo Emerson

Ultimately, before we can know if we are successful, we must first define what success means for ourselves.

Develop a 200-400 word journal entry defining what success means to you in college and beyond. To help you write this entry, consider some of the following:

- Find a quote (or make one up) that best summarizes your definition of success. Note the author of the quote, and use quotation marks as appropriate.
- Why does this quote best represent your personal definition success?
- What people do you consider to be successful and why?
- What is your definition of success?
- What will you do to achieve success?
- What is the biggest change you need to make in order to be successful in college?
- How will you know you’ve achieved success?

Worked Example

Journal entry assignments tend to be more flexible than other types of writing assignments in college, and as a result they can be tailored to your own experiences as long as they answer the primary questions asked in the assignment.

One model of a successful entry about this topic can be found below. Feel free to include your own experiences and examples from real life as they pertain to the issue at hand.

Habits for Success Journal Entry

by Sandy Brown

I found this quote online, and I thought it was both funny and true: “Success is often the result of taking a misstep in the right direction” by Al Bernstein. I’m not sure exactly who Mr. Bernstein is, but he hit the nail right on the head. It seems like the best things in my life have come from some initial screw-up or unintended action on my part.

I enrolled in college the first time right after I graduated high school, but it just didn’t work out for me. My dad offered me a job instead, when he saw how miserable I was, since his office manager had just quit. I’d been helping out at his place all my life, but I didn’t know anything about managing the books. I made some silly mistakes, and some sort of serious ones, but I figured things out pretty quickly.

Now that my dad is looking towards retirement, I’m come back to school to get formal recognition of the work I’ve been doing for the past fifteen years. I originally thought I just wanted to get a Payroll Accounting certificate, but my adviser here talked me into pursuing a full AA degree. I’m glad I made that decision, but it’s been hard. I came home everyday the first week too exhausted to speak to my family. Withdrawing from a couple of classes was the right thing for me to do, even if it means I’ll only be a part-time student for now.

For me, success will be getting my first accounting job after I graduate with my degree and pass the certification exam. I want my future employer to recognize not only the years of experience I have but also the formal education I get with my AA. Success is

also being a good role model for my daughters. I don’t want them to just settle for “good enough” like I did when I became an adult, and want them to work hard in order to get to a place where they’re comfortable.

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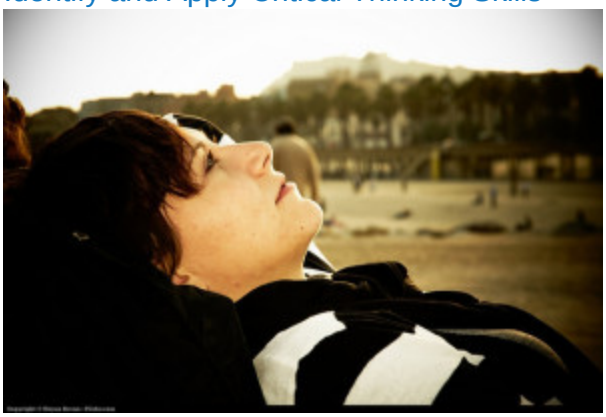
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3.31: Outcome- Critical Thinking

Identify and Apply Critical Thinking Skills



Consider these thoughts about the critical thinking process, and how it applies not just to our school lives but also our personal and professional lives.

"Thinking Critically and Creatively"

Critical thinking skills are perhaps the most fundamental skills involved in making judgments and solving problems. You use them every day, and you can continue improving them.

The ability to think critically about a matter—to analyze a question, situation, or problem down to its most basic parts—is what helps us evaluate the accuracy and truthfulness of statements, claims, and information we read and hear. It is the sharp knife that, when honed, separates fact from fiction, honesty from lies, and the accurate from the misleading. We all use this skill to one degree or another almost every day. For example, we use critical thinking every day as we consider the latest consumer products and why one particular product is the best among its peers. Is it a quality product because a celebrity endorses it? Because a lot of other people may have used it? Because it is made by one company versus another? Or perhaps because it is made in one country or another? These are questions representative of critical thinking.

The academic setting demands more of us in terms of critical thinking than everyday life. It demands that we evaluate information and analyze myriad issues. It is the environment where our critical thinking skills can be the difference between success and failure. In this environment we must consider information in an analytical, critical manner. We must ask questions—What is the source of this information? Is this source an expert one and what makes it so? Are there multiple perspectives to consider on an issue? Do multiple sources agree or disagree on an issue? Does quality research substantiate information or opinion? Do I have any personal biases that may affect my consideration of this information?

It is only through purposeful, frequent, intentional questioning such as this that we can sharpen our critical thinking skills and improve as students, learners and researchers.

—Dr. Andrew Robert Baker, *Foundations of Academic Success: Words of Wisdom*

What You Will Learn to Do

- define critical thinking
- identify the role that logic plays in critical thinking
- apply critical thinking skills to problem-solving scenarios
- apply critical thinking skills to evaluation of information

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3.32: Self Check- Computer-Based Writing

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3.33: Try It- Computer-Based Writing

Computer-Based Writing Journal Entry

To Do

Develop a 200-400 word journal entry describing your proficiency with using word processors, and what you might still need to practice further. To help you write this entry, consider some of the following questions:

- Would you consider yourself a beginner, intermediate, or advanced user of word processors? Why?
- What do you find yourself frustrated by, when you use a word processor?
- What comes easily to you, when you use a word processor?
- What do you feel you need more practice with?
- What do you feel you could explain how to do to others?

Worked Example

Journal entry assignments tend to be more flexible than other types of writing assignments in college, and as a result they can be tailored to your own experiences as long as they answer the primary questions asked in the assignment.

One model of a successful entry about this topic can be found below. Feel free to include your own experiences and examples from real life as they pertain to the issue at hand.

Computer-Based Writing Journal Entry

by Sandy Brown

I would categorize myself as an intermediate word processor user. I've used Word a lot, both for work and for personal use. I write letters, and have no trouble with the basics like saving or attaching to emails. I have definitely had the experience of losing documents in Word, which is very frustrating. I would like to know more about how I can prevent that from happening again.

One of the classes I withdrew from was going to use Google Drive for submitting essays. I've never used that before, and I'm a bit nervous about other classes that may require the same thing. I set up an account but didn't get very far with it.

I consider myself much better at programs like Excel, because I use those all the time for work. Some of the things I recognized in the Word tutorial videos were things I do regularly in Excel, like changing formatting. Changing the default settings seems like a good idea, because it sounds like many instructors will require the same kinds of document formatting for the written assignments I turn in. I don't know why the default settings are different from what we use in school, but that's okay. It helps knowing that I can change them once and then not have to worry about it anymore.

I've never had to do bibliography pages before, though my oldest daughter has for school projects. I hope that she can help me figure out the harder parts when it comes time for that. And having these videos to refer back to will be very helpful, as well.

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3.34: Putting It Together- Success Skills

Your Success Track

You've completed an important first step in this course, by finishing the College Success module! May the new skills and strategies you've gained serve you well not only in this course, but at also in other classes this term and beyond.

Application of Ideas

Consider this talk by Freeman Hrabowski, president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC). At the young age of twelve, he marched with Martin Luther King, and now, at UMBC, he works to create an environment that helps underrepresented students—specifically African American, Latino, and low-income learners—get degrees in math and science. In the following video, he shares the four pillars of UMBC's approach. It's an inspiring talk for any college student, no matter what your major may be. You can also read the transcript.



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/braw/?p=108

Symbols of Success

As you move more deeply into student life, consider selecting a symbol of your commitment to success. Consider your personal definition of "success" you determined earlier in this section. What would a physical representation of that success look like? Many people consider graduation caps or diplomas as symbols of college success. If those are meaningful to you, consider one of those as an option. Alternatively, yours can become more personal–an item that speaks to you as a sign of what you're working towards, and how you'll know you've "made it."

Some ideas from previous students include:

- a stethoscope, for an aspiring medical student
- a set of professional salon scissors, for an aspiring beautician
- an office door nameplate, for an aspiring law student



Once you find a meaningful symbol—perhaps an object or an image or even an idea—keep it in a place where you can easily access it. In moments when you may need a boost, you can remind yourself that college success begins and ends with your commitment to learning well.

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3.35: Assignment- Success Skills Journal Final Draft

Success Skills Journal

Throughout this module you have been writing individual journal entries. Revise your entries as necessary, as you've discussed with your tutor. Submit the final version of all entries as one combined document, here.

Rubric

In order to successfully complete this assessment, a submitted journal must reach "Meets or Exceeds Expectations" in all categories.

Criteria	Ratings		
Habits for Success Journal Entry	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • 200-400 words long • fully addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates thoughtful consideration and planning relevant to the topic • demonstrates application of writing process, to include careful editing and proofreading	**Approaching Expectations** • 125-200 words long • partially addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates some consideration and planning relevant to the topic • may not demonstrate application of writing process, to include editing and proofreading	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • less than 125 words long, or not included in journal • does not address question(s) of prompt • does not demonstrate consideration or planning relevant to the topic • does not demonstrate application of writing process
Critical Thinking Journal Entry	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • 200-400 words long • fully addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates thoughtful consideration and planning relevant to the topic • demonstrates application of writing process, to include careful editing and proofreading	**Approaching Expectations** • 125-200 words long • partially addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates some consideration and planning relevant to the topic • may not demonstrate application of writing process, to include editing and proofreading	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • less than 125 words long, or not included in journal • does not address question(s) of prompt • does not demonstrate consideration or planning relevant to the topic • does not demonstrate application of writing process
Time Management Journal Entry	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • 200-400 words long • fully addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates thoughtful consideration and planning relevant to the topic • demonstrates application of writing process, to include careful editing and proofreading	**Approaching Expectations** • 125-200 words long • partially addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates some consideration and planning relevant to the topic • may not demonstrate application of writing process, to include editing and proofreading	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • less than 125 words long, or not included in journal • does not address question(s) of prompt • does not demonstrate consideration or planning relevant to the topic • does not demonstrate application of writing process

Writing in College Journal Entry	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • 200-400 words long • fully addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates thoughtful consideration and planning relevant to the topic • demonstrates application of writing process, to include careful editing and proofreading	**Approaching Expectations** • 125-200 words long • partially addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates some consideration and planning relevant to the topic • may not demonstrate application of writing process, to include editing and proofreading	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • less than 125 words long, or not included in journal • does not address question(s) of prompt • does not demonstrate consideration or planning relevant to the topic • does not demonstrate application of writing process
Computer-Based Writing Journal Entry	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • 200-400 words long • fully addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates thoughtful consideration and planning relevant to the topic • demonstrates application of writing process, to include careful editing and proofreading	**Approaching Expectations** • 125-200 words long • partially addresses question(s) of prompt • demonstrates some consideration and planning relevant to the topic • may not demonstrate application of writing process, to include editing and proofreading	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • less than 125 words long, or not included in journal • does not address question(s) of prompt • does not demonstrate consideration or planning relevant to the topic • does not demonstrate application of writing process

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3.36: Assignment- Habits for Success Journal Entry

To Do

For this activity, create your own definition of success. Dictionary.com defines success as “the favorable outcome of something attempted.” For many students in college, success means passing a class, earning an A, or learning something new. Beyond college, some people define success in terms of financial wealth; others measure it by the quality of their relationships with family and friends.

Here is an example of a brief, philosophical definition of success:

To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded. –Ralph Waldo Emerson

Ultimately, before we can know if we are successful, we must first define what success means for ourselves.

Develop a 200-400 word journal entry defining what success means to you in college and beyond. To help you write this entry, consider some of the following:

- Find a quote (or make one up) that best summarizes your definition of success. Note the author of the quote, and use quotation marks as appropriate.
- Why does this quote best represent your personal definition success?
- What people do you consider to be successful and why?
- What is your definition of success?
- What will you do to achieve success?
- What is the biggest change you need to make in order to be successful in college?
- How will you know you’ve achieved success?

Worked Example

Journal entry assignments tend to be more flexible than other types of writing assignments in college, and as a result they can be tailored to your own experiences as long as they answer the primary questions asked in the assignment.

One model of a successful entry about this topic can be found below. Feel free to include your own experiences and examples from real life as they pertain to the issue at hand.

Habits for Success Journal Entry

by Sandy Brown

I found this quote online, and I thought it was both funny and true: “Success is often the result of taking a misstep in the right direction” by Al Bernstein. I’m not sure exactly who Mr. Bernstein is, but he hit the nail right on the head. It seems like the best things in my life have come from some initial screw-up or unintended action on my part.

I enrolled in college the first time right after I graduated high school, but it just didn’t work out for me. My dad offered me a job instead, when he saw how miserable I was, since his office manager had just quit. I’d been helping out at his place all my life, but I didn’t know anything about managing the books. I made some silly mistakes, and some sort of serious ones, but I figured things out pretty quickly.

Now that my dad is looking towards retirement, I’m come back to school to get formal recognition of the work I’ve been doing for the past fifteen years. I originally thought I just wanted to get a Payroll Accounting certificate, but my adviser here talked me into pursuing a full AA degree. I’m glad I made that decision, but it’s been hard. I came home everyday the first week too exhausted to speak to my family. Withdrawing from a couple of classes was the right thing for me to do, even if it means I’ll only be a part-time student for now.

For me, success will be getting my first accounting job after I graduate with my degree and pass the certification exam. I want my future employer to recognize not only the years of experience I have but also the formal education I get with my AA. Success is also being a good role model for my daughters. I don’t want them to just settle for “good enough” like I did when I became an adult, and want them to work hard in order to get to a place where they’re comfortable.

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3.37: Assignment- Critical Thinking Journal Entry

To Do

1. Visit the Quia Critical Thinking Quiz page and click on Start Now (you don't need to enter your name). Select the best answer for each question, and then click on Submit Answers. A score of 70 percent or better on this quiz is considering passing.
2. Write a 200-400 word reflection on this activity. Based on the content of the questions, do you feel you use good critical thinking strategies in college? In what ways might you improve as a critical thinker?

Worked Example

Journal entry assignments tend to be more flexible than other types of writing assignments in college, and as a result they can be tailored to your own experiences as long as they answer the primary questions asked in the assignment.

One model of a successful entry about this topic can be found below. Feel free to include your own experiences and examples from real life as they pertain to the issue at hand.

Critical Thinking Journal Entry

by Sandy Brown

The thing I like about critical thinking is that is applies to everything. If you get better at using critical thinking in school, that means other things in life get easier, as well (at least that's what I hope is true).

I didn't do so great on the critical thinking quiz. I got a 50% the first time, but I think I would have done better if I had understood the questions more clearly. Question #9, the one about having autonomy, I got wrong because I thought it was saying it was important, rather than it wasn't. Now that I think about it, I guess that's an example of where I could be a better critical thinker—I could take the time to read these questions more closely, and be sure that my answer makes sense to what the question actually asks, rather than what I think it asks.

I was happy with parts of this, though. There were a couple of questions about fair-mindedness, and I got both those right, even though I didn't remember seeing the words "fair-mindedness" in the textbook. That phrase makes a lot more sense to me than "first order" and "second order" thinking.

For me, I think that I'm a better thinker when I'm not in a rush. I tend to panic when I take tests, and then I answer questions too quickly. For things that don't have a timer, like homework or out-of-class assignments, I tend to do a lot better because I can take as long as I need to figure out what exactly I'm supposed to do. So I guess one way to improve my critical thinking skills would be to practice going slower for timed tests, and giving myself time to check my answers before turning something in. I don't want to make mistakes like the one I did on this quiz, when it counts against my actual grade.

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3.38: Assignment- Writing in College Journal Entry

To Do

https://youtu.be/RH95h36NChI

The video above discusses beliefs students hold about college and demonstrates how those beliefs relate to test performance. Consider how beliefs might also impact a student's performance on writing assignments.

Develop a 200-400 word journal entry that identifies three beliefs, mentioned in the video or discovered through your own observations, that relate to a student's ability to write academic essays. Explain how these beliefs might be adjusted through the practice of metacognition to improve writing results.

Worked Example

Journal entry assignments tend to be more flexible than other types of writing assignments in college, and as a result they can be tailored to your own experiences as long as they answer the primary questions asked in the assignment.

One model of a successful entry about this topic can be found below. Feel free to include your own experiences and examples from real life as they pertain to the issue at hand.

Writing in College Journal Entry

by Sandy Brown

Belief: Learning is fast

Related to writing essays, I could see how I could easily fall into this trap of thinking that fast is good. I have such limited time in the day to work on school assignments, that I think that whatever I can manage to get done must be the best possible work that I'm capable of doing. I should allow myself more time, though that's easier said than done. Even with smaller writing assignments, like this one, if I give myself a day or two to sketch out ideas for what I want to say, and then reflect on it before writing it, I think I'll do a much better job in the long run.

Belief: I'm really good at multi-tasking

This one is very related to the "learning is fast" idea. Watching the girl in the video do a million things while she's studying is just like watching my own kids at night! And I'm pretty guilty of this, as well. If I can set aside a quiet part of my night, and just focus on only one assignment at a time, I think I'll do a lot better with my writing overall. And I'll be happier with the results.

Belief: Being good at a subject is a matter of inborn talent

This is actually not a belief I personally hold. I always loved to read growing up, and I still do read fiction as much as time allows. But working as a business administrator for the past 15 years has shown me that I'm pretty good with numbers and bookkeeping, too, which I wouldn't have guessed before this job.

One of my daughters is very drawn towards English and writing, and another struggles with it. They both seem to feel this is a matter of fate. I'm going to share this video with them, because I think there are ways that my daughter who struggles can be empowered to think that she CAN get better at writing, if she just keeps practicing. (This is also something I'm going to do myself…I'm very out of practice with writing for school!)

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3.39: Assignment- Time Management Journal Entry

To Do

1. Assess your time management skills by using Ohio University's self-assessment. Make note of your results.
2. Review the University of Georgia's Time Management: 10 Strategies for Better Time Management and consider the strategies that seem most appealing to you.
3. Reflect in a 200-400 word journal entry on your current time management skills, and discuss how you might apply new strategies to improve time management in your life.

Worked Example

Journal entry assignments tend to be more flexible than other types of writing assignments in college, and as a result they can be tailored to your own experiences as long as they answer the primary questions asked in the assignment.

One model of a successful entry about this topic can be found below. Feel free to include your own experiences and examples from real life as they pertain to the issue at hand.

Time Management Journal Entry

by Sandy Brown

I've always considered myself pretty good at time management. Having a full house of a husband, three daughters, and two dogs will do that for you! But I'm realizing that I'm slipping a bit now that I'm going to school on top of being a full-time mom.

The Ohio University quiz was a bit eye-opening. I only scored a 55, which seems very low to me. I liked its advice at the end, and I went back through and clicked on each question to read more about it. One question that I put Never for was "I review my lecture notes after class each day." I hadn't thought about how that might be important before. I usually have some time to kill after classes are over, before I go home. Usually I do something dumb while waiting for my ride, like check Facebook. But I could use that time to look at my notes, and maybe start a bit of the reading before the next class.

One question that I got full points for was the "I allow time for proper meals and exercise" one. We have a family dinner every night, even if it's just fish sticks or chicken nuggets. And I have a regular running schedule. If don't run, I go crazy.

From the "Ten Strategies" reading, there were some good tips in there. Some were pretty obvious, but others made me think. The one I have a hard time with, but should be better about, is #6, Delegate. My girls make such a mess of things, that a lot of times I just end up cleaning myself instead of asking them to do it. I could put more responsibility on them. And my step-mother is always offering to help. I feel guilty about taking advantage of that very much, but I should get over that and call on her more.

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3.40: Assignment- Computer-Based Writing Journal Entry

To Do

Develop a 200-400 word journal entry describing your proficiency with using word processors, and what you might still need to practice further. To help you write this entry, consider some of the following questions:

- Would you consider yourself a beginner, intermediate, or advanced user of word processors? Why?
- What do you find yourself frustrated by, when you use a word processor?
- What comes easily to you, when you use a word processor?
- What do you feel you need more practice with?
- What do you feel you could explain how to do to others?

Worked Example

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by Sandy Brown

I would categorize myself as an intermediate word processor user. I've used Word a lot, both for work and for personal use. I write letters, and have no trouble with the basics like saving or attaching to emails. I have definitely had the experience of losing documents in Word, which is very frustrating. I would like to know more about how I can prevent that from happening again.

One of the classes I withdrew from was going to use Google Drive for submitting essays. I've never used that before, and I'm a bit nervous about other classes that may require the same thing. I set up an account but didn't get very far with it.

I consider myself much better at programs like Excel, because I use those all the time for work. Some of the things I recognized in the Word tutorial videos were things I do regularly in Excel, like changing formatting. Changing the default settings seems like a good idea, because it sounds like many instructors will require the same kinds of document formatting for the written assignments I turn in. I don't know why the default settings are different from what we use in school, but that's okay. It helps knowing that I can change them once and then not have to worry about it anymore.

I've never had to do bibliography pages before, though my oldest daughter has for school projects. I hope that she can help me figure out the harder parts when it comes time for that. And having these videos to refer back to will be very helpful, as well.

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4.1: Why It Matters- Reading

Why should we identify academic 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:

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/braw/?p=124

Click here to download a transcript for this video

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.

Learning Outcomes

- 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

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4.2: Performance Assessment- Reading Journal

Reading Journal Introduction

 You'll be putting the reading skills you're encountering in this module to immediate use, by keeping a Reading Journal as you progress. Select an option from the reading anthology available in this course. Pick anything that initially sounds interesting to you.

Assignment Details

Look for the Try It pages along the way to help you complete the Reading Journal. The Try It activities will walk you through the completion of the finished product, by working on each component individually.

Worked Example

Journal entry assignments tend to be more flexible than other types of writing assignments in college, and as a result they can be tailored to your own experiences as long as they answer the primary questions asked in the assignment.

One model of a successful Reading Journal Final Draft can be found below. This is the completed project; in later Try It pages you'll see each individual component come to life as this student progressed through the course.

The article this student wrote about can be read here: "Multiple Intelligences" by Fred Mednick.

READING JOURNAL Final Draft: "MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES" by Fred Mednick

by Betina Ortiz

Types of Reading Material

This reading selection is from a textbook.

I know this because its primary purpose seems to be to educate me. It is fact-based, uses research, and includes a table that I can refer to later to quickly remind myself about the different types of intelligences. The author of this writing seems to want to teach me about multiple intelligences, and doesn't seem to expect that I know a lot about this topic already.

Reading Strategies

When I was scanning this document, I focused primarily on the headings of the text, the words in bold, the table, and external links.

Just from scanning, it seems like this is going to be a balanced article about the concept of multiple intelligences. It's got an overview section, which seems to contain history of the subject. The next two sections appear to be a Pro/Con discussion—"The appeal of multiple intelligences" and then "Some issues and problems." I like the table of the various types of intelligences that appears about mid-way through, and am interested in the external link for exploring what my own intelligences are. It seems like the concept of emotional intelligence might have been added later, since it wasn't on the table, but does have two extra sections about it at the end of the document. That might be important, since it's got a lot written about it overall.

Specialized Reading Strategies

Option A

My reading selection does contain a table. It has two columns: one is "Multiple Intelligences" and the other is "Overview." Each row defines a specific type of intelligence that Howard Gardner identified, and then gives a demonstration of what type of intelligence is and how it works. I think a table is a nice way to convey this information, because it lets you see what all the types of intelligences are at a glance, and get a sense of how each one works. I get the feeling that it would be easy to consult that table again later, like if I had to study to prepare for a test on this subject. There are 7 types of intelligences listed on this table. The rest of the article goes on to describe a few more types, and it would be nice if all of those appeared on the table, too, so that we could see them all in one place.

Vocabulary

#1: Linguistic

From the text, it describes “linguistic intelligence” as “sensitivity to spoken and written language, the ability to learn languages, and the capacity to use language to accomplish certain goals.”

Therefore, I would describe linguistic as meaning, having to do with language.

#2: Kinesthetic

When I looked for “Kinesthetic” online, all the answers had to do with “kinesthetic learning.” Dictionary.com defined “kinesthesia” as “The sensation of movement or strain in muscles, tendons, and joints; muscle sense.” So it seems to me that the word has more to do with movement of the body, rather than just the body itself.

Therefore, I would describe kinesthetic as a type of learning involving the movement of the body.

#3: Amoral

I recognize the word “moral,” but I didn’t know amoral before reading this. I do remember that the letter a at the beginning of a word means “without.”

Therefore, it would seem that the word amoral means without morals. The article presents this as a neutral thing, rather than a good or bad thing.

Thesis

In the essay, the last sentence of the 2nd paragraph seems to say something very similar: “The readings and assignments that follow discuss multiple intelligences, provide an opportunity for you to apply them, and a way of determining how to assess students.”

Topic sentence #1: “Mindy L. Kornhaber, a researcher at Harvard University, has identified a number of reasons why teachers and policymakers have responded positively to Howard Gardner’s presentation of multiple intelligences.” This sentence indicates that the paragraph that follows will be explaining an application of multiple intelligences, which is the 2nd part of the thesis statement.

Topic sentence #2: “To explore your intelligences, visit ‘Lessons for Hope.’” This sentence addresses the last part of the thesis statement, “a way of determining how to assess students.”

Supporting Claims

This paragraph is supported by research. It doesn’t use quotes, but clearly all the information in the paragraph comes from Kornhaber’s work. So it paraphrases her findings about how teachers react to multiple intelligences. It also seems to summarize her thesis at the end of the paragraph.

Topic sentence #2: “To explore your intelligences, visit ‘Lessons for Hope.’”

This paragraph turns out to be quite short (only 1 more sentence after the topic sentence), so I’m going to also address the paragraph immediately after this one. Between the two short paragraphs, they describe what a user will see when you visit the external link. It is supported by fact: its descriptions of the multiple intelligences self-assessment activity are all verifiable when a reader visits this website for herself.

Since this is a reading from a textbook, it makes sense that the author uses facts and outside research as supporting details in his paragraphs. He wants us to learn from the reading, and we can trust that what he says is true because it’s easy to confirm his facts elsewhere.

Logic and Structure

In addition, this essay also uses the mode of **Definition**. It takes something we think we know the meaning of (intelligence) and uses it in a slightly different way, one that I personally find rewarding to those of us who aren’t always book-smart. Really, each one of the types of multiple intelligences becomes a new definition for what it means to be intelligent or not.

Summary Skills

According to Medick, the founder of this idea was Howard Gardner, who defined the first seven intelligences in his book *Frames of Mind*: linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, spatial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. These intelligences are not accepted by psychologists, but are welcomed by educators. Some see drawbacks to multiple intelligences because most cannot be measured or tested for improvement.

The article encourages readers to take an online test to determine their own strengths across the intelligences. It concludes by addressing additional intelligences that have been proposed by others: naturalistic, spiritual, moral, and emotional. Emotional intelligence in particular seems to have a large impact on people's success in life, and Daniel Goleman is referenced to explain what emotional intelligence is and why it is so valuable in school and beyond.

Though this final product might look long (and is in fact 1088 words), it will be completed in smaller stages. None of the individual pieces of this Reading Journal example is longer than 150 words.

Rubric

In order to successfully complete this assessment, a submitted journal must reach "Meets or Exceeds Expectations" in all categories.

Criteria	Ratings		
Identify Type of Reading	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • includes a paragraph identifying the type of reading and justifying that identification	**Approaching Expectations** • identifies the type of reading but includes no justification for that identification	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • does not include a paragraph identifying the the type of reading
Scanning the Reading	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • includes a paragraph describing the scanning / prereading experience in detail	**Approaching Expectations** • includes a brief statement describing the scanning / prereading experience	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • does not include a paragraph describing the scanning / prereading experience
Specialized Reading Strategies	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • includes a paragraph closely examining a visual element of the reading, or • includes a detailed demonstration of the Cornell Method of notetaking	**Approaching Expectations** • includes a paragraph broadly examining a visual element of the reading, or • includes a brief demonstration of the Cornell Method of notetaking	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • does not include a paragraph closely examining a visual element of the reading, nor a demonstration of the Cornell Method of notetaking
Vocabulary	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • includes 3 vocabulary words • all vocabulary words are defined using paraphrases of dictionary definitions	**Approaching Expectations** • includes 1-2 vocabulary words, or • 1-2 vocabulary words are defined using paraphrases of dictionary definitions	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • does not include vocabulary words, or • does not define words using paraphrases of dictionary definitions

Thesis	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • identifies a thesis statement from the reading and notes it as implicit or explicit • includes a paragraph showing the relationship between thesis and topic sentences, including quotes as appropriate	**Approaching Expectations** • identifies a thesis statement from the reading, but does not define it as explicity or implicit • includes a paragraph showing the relationship between thesis and topic sentences, but quotes may not be included	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • does not identify a thesis statement from the reading, or • does not include a paragraph showing the relationship between thesis and topic sentences
Supporting Claims	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • includes a paragraph describing the types of support used in 2 body paragraphs	**Approaching Expectations** • includes a paragraph describing the types of support used in 1 body paragraphs	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • does not include a paragraph describing the types of support used in 2 body paragraphs
Logic and Structure	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • identifies the primary rhetorical mode used in the reading, with justification of that identification • identifies secondary rhetorical modes used in the reading, with justification of that identification	**Approaching Expectations** • identifies the primary rhetorical mode used in the reading, but does not identify secondary rhetorical modes used in the reading	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • does not identify the primary rhetorical mode used in the reading
Summary Skills	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • includes a 1-2 paragraph summary of the text, noting the text's thesis and main ideas, and maintaining a neutral tone	**Approaching Expectations** • includes a 1-2 paragraph summary of the text, noting the text's thesis and main ideas, but does not maintain a neutral tone	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • does not include a summary, or • does not note the text's thesis and main ideas

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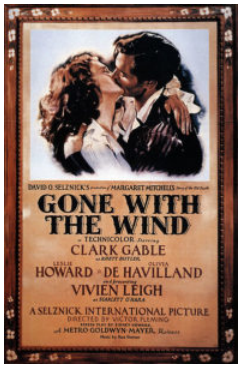
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4.3: Outcome- Types of Reading Material

Identify and Differentiate Between Different Types of 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.



vs.


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.

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify various forms of writing, from various sources
- identify distinguishing characteristics of journalism, literature, nonfiction, and academic texts

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4.4: Text- 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



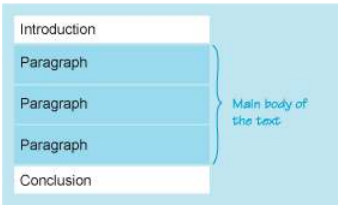
Academic writers use cautious, considered language in an effort to be as *exact* as they can in their analysis. They try to say *only* what they mean and what they think can be *justified*. In daily life we cheerfully use language as a blunt instrument, to cudgel our way through the discussions that 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:



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.

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4.5: Text- 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.

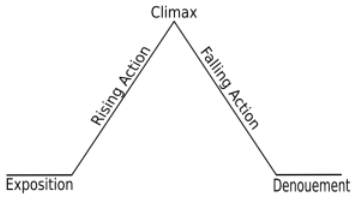
Literature

Literature includes poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, and drama.

Primary goal: to entertain.

Distinguishing Features

- Artistic use of language
- Plot = action
- Characters



The dramatic arc that many fictional stories follow.

Works of fiction and drama usually follow a similar plot structure, called a **dramatic arc**. "Exposition" provides setting and background information. "Rising action" is where the events of the story start to get complicated. The "climax" is where the drama reaches its most dramatic moment. "Falling action" then shows the fallout from the climax, and "resolution" (also known as a *denouement*) is the closing action where the issues of the plot are fully resolved.

Examples

- 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



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.

Examples

- 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.

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/braw/?p=132

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:



- **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.



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4.6: Self Check- Types of Reading Material

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4.7: Try It- Types of Reading Material

Journal Entry Component #1: Types of Reading Material

To Do



1. Select an option from the reading anthology available in this course. Pick anything that initially sounds interesting to you. Don't read it yet!
2. Begin **Reading Journal Entry** for that source.
3. In a word processing program, start a file that you can return to repeatedly throughout this module. Title it Reading Journal: "Name of Reading Selection." (For example, Reading Journal: "Multiple Intelligences")
4. Identify the type of reading that this source illustrates.
5. Write a short paragraph explaining how you made that identification of type.

Worked Example

This video demonstrates how to complete this step of the Reading Journal assignment. Note that **you aren't reading** the piece yet– just scanning and getting a feel for what it contains overall.

https://youtu.be/dONZSh4b4H4

At the end of this process, this student writes:

Reading Journal Component #1

Reading Journal: "Multiple Intelligences"

This reading selection is from a textbook.

I know this because its primary purpose seems to be to educate me. It is fact-based, uses research, and includes a table that I can refer to later to quickly remind myself about the different types of intelligences. The author of this writing seems to want to teach me about multiple intelligences, and doesn't seem to expect that I know a lot about this topic already.

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4.8: Outcome- Reading Strategies

Identify Reading Strategies for Academic Texts

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.



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.

What You Will Learn to Do

- 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

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4.9: Presentation- 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.



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4.10: Text- 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.

 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.

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4.11: Text- Skimming



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.

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4.12: Text- SQ3R

Introduction

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.



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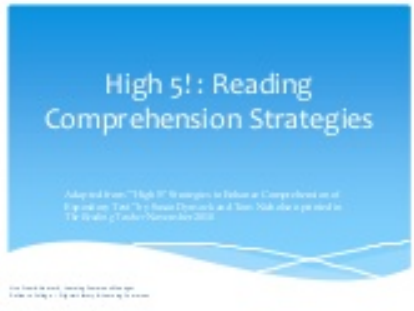
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4.13: Presentation- High-5 Reading Strategies

Click through following presentation to learn about a 5-step process for deeper reading comprehension and retention.



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4.15: Try It- Reading Strategies

Journal Entry Component #2: Reading Strategies

To Do



1. With your selected text from the reading list in front of you, scan the document.
2. Write a paragraph about this experience. Describe what your process of scanning entails, and what you learn about the document, from this process.

Worked Example

This video demonstrates how to complete this step of the Reading Journal assignment. Note that **you STILL aren't reading** the piece yet–just scanning and getting a feel for what it contains overall.



At the end of this step, this student writes:

Reading Journal Component 2

"Multiple Intelligences" by Fred Mednick

When I was scanning this document, I focused primarily on the headings of the text, the words in bold, the table, and external links.

Just from scanning, it seems like this is going to be a balanced article about the concept of multiple intelligences. It's got an overview section, which seems to contain history of the subject. The next two sections appear to be a Pro/Con discussion—"The appeal of multiple intelligences" and then "Some issues and problems." I like the table of the various types of intelligences that appears about mid-way through, and am interested in the external link for exploring what my own intelligences are. It seems like the concept of emotional intelligence might have been added later, since it wasn't on the table, but does have two extra sections about it at the end of the document. That might be important, since it's got a lot written about it overall.

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4.16: Outcome- Specialized Reading Strategies

Identify Specialized Reading Strategies for Specific Types of Texts, Including Content in Disciplines and Visual Information

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.

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify strategies for reading on digital devices
- identify strategies for reading math, social science, and science texts
- identify strategies for reading graphics (charts, etc.)

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4.17: Text- 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 wrap up with some questions about online reading, courtesy of students just like you.

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 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.

Question: I once had a teacher who didn't want us use our phones to read our assigned texts. Why did she care?

Answer 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.

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 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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4.18: Text- 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.



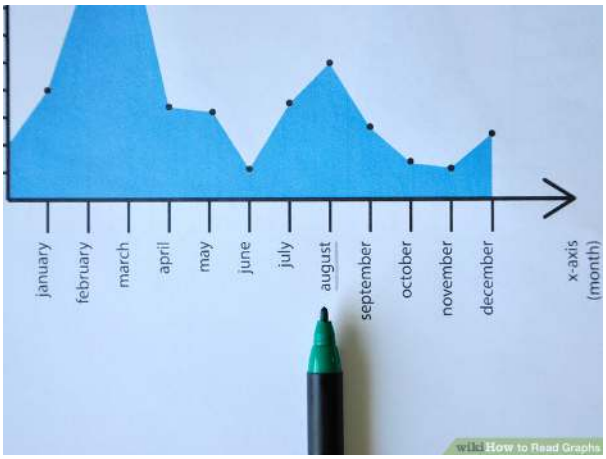
2. Check the scale for each graph element. This applies to both line graphs and bar graphs.

- 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.



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.



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.



Final Tips

- 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.

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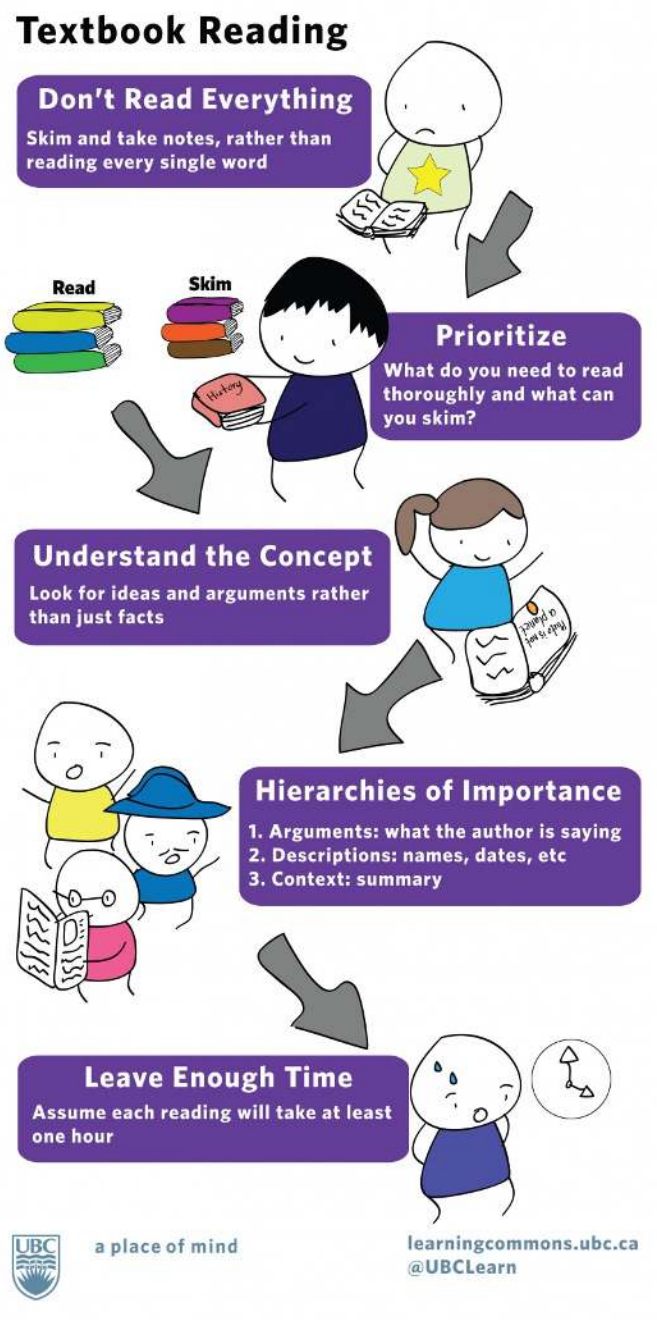
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4.19: Video- Reading Textbooks

Introduction

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.



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.

Click here to download a transcript for this video

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.



Click here to download a transcript for this video

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.



Click here to download a transcript for this video

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.



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4.20: Self Check- Specialized Reading Strategies

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4.21: Try It- Specialized Reading Strategies

Reading Journal Component #3: Specialized Reading Strategies

To Do



Does your selected text include a chart, table, or graph?

OPTION A

If yes, write a paragraph that describes what you learn from reading this chart, table, or graph closely. Why do you think the author(s) might have included this information in a visual form, rather than in sentence form in the body of the text?

OPTION B

If your selected text **does not** include a chart, table, or graph, you'll instead take this opportunity to practice the Cornell Method of Note-taking. Review the Science Texts video (repeated below). Apply the Cornell Method to one part of your selected reading. Even if your selected text isn't a scientific essay, this method of note-taking is still useful to apply in many situations where you will need to remember the information later.



Worked Example

This student completed Option A:

Reading Journal Component 3

"Multiple Intelligences" by Fred Mednick

Option A

My reading selection does contain a table. It has two columns: one is "Multiple Intelligences" and the other is "Overview." Each row defines a specific type of intelligence that Dr. Howard Gardner identified, and then gives a demonstration of what type of intelligence is and how it works. I think a table is a nice way to convey this information, because it lets you see what all the types of intelligences are at a glance, and get a sense of how each one works. I get the feeling that it would be easy to consult that table again later, like if I had to study to prepare for a test on this subject. There are 7 types of intelligences listed on this table. The rest

of the article goes on to describe a few more types, and it would be nice if all of those appeared on the table, too, so that we could see them all in one place.

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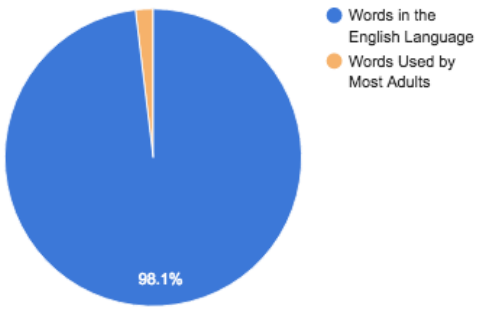
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4.22: Outcome- Vocabulary

Identify Techniques for Strengthening 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!



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. Music can be a fun option, as this video illustrates.



Click here to download a transcript for this video

See related activities, here.

What You Will Learn to Do

- 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

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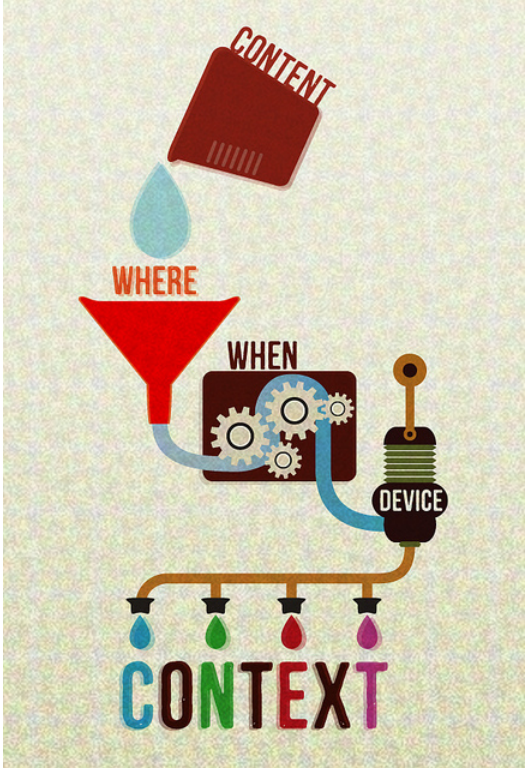
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4.23: Text- Using Context Clues

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.

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4.24: Text- 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.

Dictionaries



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.

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4.25: Video- 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.

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4.26: Self Check- Vocabulary

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4.27: Try It- Vocabulary

Journal Entry Component #4: Vocabulary

To Do



1. From your selected reading, identify 3 words which are new to you, or used in a way you're unfamiliar with.
2. Use whatever tool seems appropriate to define each word. Write a paraphrase of each meaning as it is used in the selected reading.

Worked Example

The same student we've been following so far writes this:

Reading Journal Component 4

"Multiple Intelligences" by Fred Mednick

#1: Linguistic

From the text, it describes "linguistic intelligence" as " sensitivity to spoken and written language, the ability to learn languages, and the capacity to use language to accomplish certain goals."

Therefore, I would describe linguistic as meaning, having to do with language.

#2: Kinesthetic

When I looked for "Kinesthetic" online, all the answers had to do with "kinesthetic learning." Dictionary.com defined "kinesthesia" as "The sensation of movement or strain in muscles, tendons, and joints; muscle sense." So it seems to me that the word has more to do with movement of the body, rather than just the body itself.

Therefore, I would describe kinesthetic as a type of learning involving the movement of the body.

#3: Amoral

I recognize the word "moral," but I didn't know amoral before reading this. I do remember that the letter a at the beginning of a word means "without."

Therefore, it would seem that the word amoral means without morals. The article presents this as a neutral thing, rather than a good or bad thing.

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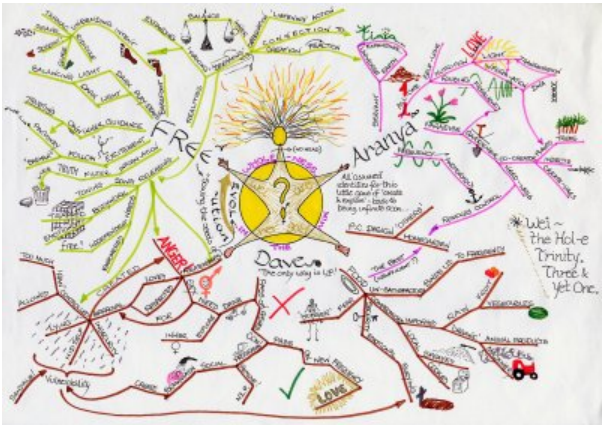
4.28: Outcome- Thesis

Identify Thesis Statements in Texts

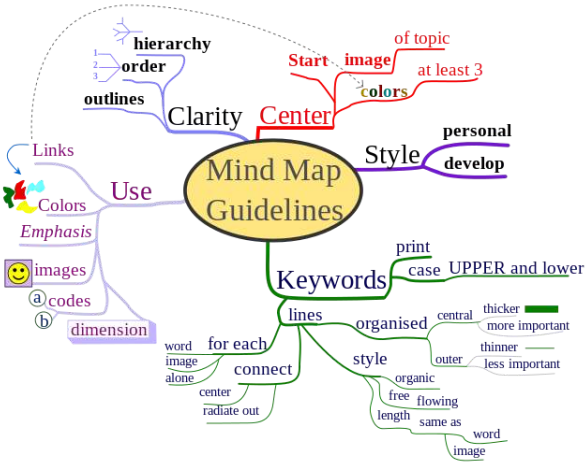
Being able to identify the purpose and thesis of a text, while you're reading it, takes practice. This section will offer you that practice.

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.



Hand-drawn Mind Map



Computer-generated Mind Map

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify explicit thesis statements in texts
- identify implicit thesis statements in texts
- identify strategies for using thesis statements to predict content of texts

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4.29: Video- Identify the Thesis Statement

As the video below argues, every piece of writing has a thesis statement. This is a fancy term for a simple concept. A thesis is the core concept that a piece of writing is trying to convey.

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.

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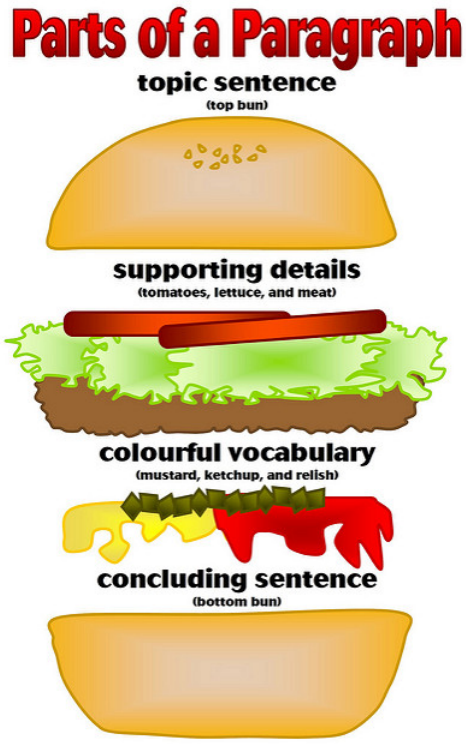
- How to Identify the Thesis Statement. **Authored by**: Martha Ann Kennedy. **Located at**: https://youtu.be/di1cQgc1akg. **License**: *All Rights Reserved*. **License Terms**: Standard YouTube License

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4.30: Text- 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.



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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4.31: Self Check- Thesis

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4.32: Try It- Thesis

Reading Journal Component #5: Thesis

To Do



1. By now, you should have read your reading selection in detail. Put it aside. Without referring to it, write one sentence in your reading notebook that summarizes what you feel the overall purpose of the reading was.
2. Go back to the text. Is there a sentence in the text that says something very similar to what you wrote down? If so, quote it. (This is an explicit thesis statement.) If not, say that there is no thesis in the reading. (This is an implicit thesis statement.)
3. Identify 2 topic sentences from body paragraphs as quotes. Briefly explain how each topic sentence relates back to the explicit or implicit thesis statement of the reading.

Worked Example

The same student we've been following so far writes this:

Reading Journal Component 5

"Multiple Intelligences" by Fred Mednick

I would summarize the thesis of this article as, Describing what multiple intelligences are, where they came from, and what they do for us to understand them.

In the essay, the last sentence of the 2nd paragraph seems to say something very similar: " The readings and assignments that follow discuss multiple intelligences, provide an opportunity for you to apply them, and a way of determining how to assess students."

Topic sentence #1: "Mindy L. Kornhaber, a researcher at Harvard University, has identified a number of reasons why teachers and policymakers have responded positively to Howard Gardner's presentation of multiple intelligences." This sentence indicates that the paragraph that follows will be explaining an application of multiple intelligences, which is the 2nd part of the thesis statement.

Topic sentence #2: "To explore your intelligences, visit 'Lessons for Hope. '" This sentence addresses the last part of the thesis statement, "a way of determining how to assess students."

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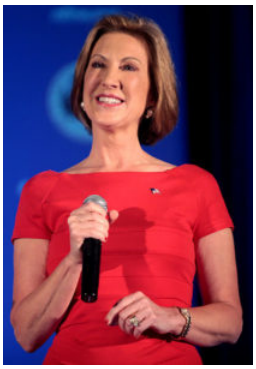
4.33: Outcome- Supporting Claims

Identify Supporting Claims in Texts

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:



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!

What You Will Learn to Do

- 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

1. Gore, D'Angelo. Fiorina's Unsupported Claim about VA Deaths. *FactCheck.org*. 23 Sept. 2015. Web. 3 May 2016. ↵

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4.34: Video- 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.



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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4.35: Text- Support and Elaboration

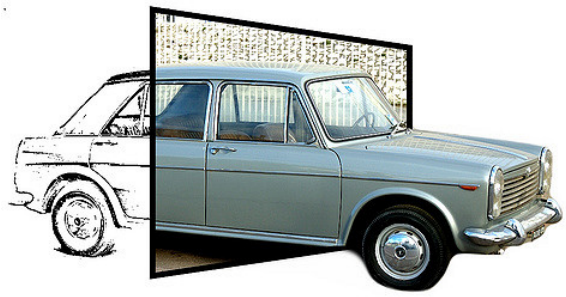
Support and elaboration consist of the specific details and information writers use to develop their topics. The key to developing support and elaboration is getting *specific*. Good writers use concrete, specific details, and relevant information to construct mental images for their readers. Without 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.



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.

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4.36: Video- 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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4.37: Self Check- Supporting Claims

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4.38: Try It- Supporting Claims

Reading Journal Component #6: Supporting Claims

To Do



1. Return to your reading selection and the Try It: Thesis exercise you did previously. As part of that exercise, you identified 2 topic sentences from your selected reading.
2. Now, look more closely at the paragraph where the first topic sentence came from. Write a short paragraph that describes the type of support the first paragraph uses to reinforce its topic sentence. Does it make use of narrative or personal examples? Does it use facts or statistics? Does it use quotes or paraphrases from research materials?
3. Repeat this process for the 2nd topic sentence's paragraph. Write another short paragraph describing its supporting details.
4. Conclude with 1-2 sentences that explain why you think the author chose this type of support in these paragraphs, and how those supporting details relate to the overall thesis of the reading selection.

Worked Example

The same student we've been following so far writes this:

Reading Journal Component 6

"Multiple Intelligences" by Fred Mednick

Topic sentence #1: "Mindy L. Kornhaber, a researcher at Harvard University, has identified a number of reasons why teachers and policymakers have responded positively to Howard Gardner's presentation of multiple intelligences."

> This paragraph is supported by research. It doesn't use quotes, but clearly all the information in the paragraph comes from Kornhaber's work. So it paraphrases her findings about how teachers react to multiple intelligences. It also seems to summarize her thesis at the end of the paragraph.

Topic sentence #2: "To explore your intelligences, visit 'Lessons for Hope.'"

> This paragraph turns out to be quite short (only 1 more sentence after the topic sentence), so I'm going to also address the paragraph immediately after this one. Between the two short paragraphs, they describe what a user will see when you visit the external link. It is supported by fact: its descriptions of the multiple intelligences self-assessment activity are all verifiable when a reader visits this website for herself.

Since this is a reading from a textbook, it makes sense that the author uses facts and outside research as supporting details in his paragraphs. He wants us to learn from the reading, and we can trust that what he says is true because it's easy to confirm his facts elsewhere.

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4.39: Outcome- Logic and Structure

Identify Logic and Structure in Texts

 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.

What You Will Learn to Do

- 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

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4.40: Text- 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.

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4.41: Text- 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

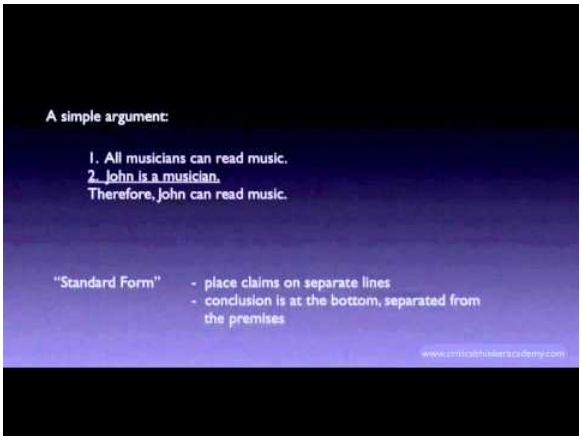
Premises: claims that support and argument's conclusion

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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Test It Out

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.

[reveal-answer q="170878"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="170878"]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.[/hidden-answer]

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

Test It Out

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.

[reveal-answer q=”576671″]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a=”576671″]

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.

[/hidden-answer]

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:

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4.42: Text- Inductive and Deductive Arguments

Deduction

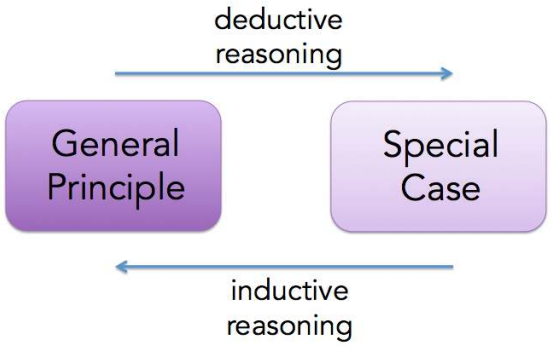
In the process of deduction, you begin with some statements, called “premises,” that are assumed to be true, you then determine what else would have to be true if the premises are true.

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]

Examples of deductive logic:

- 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.



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]

Examples of inductive logic:

- 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]

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 ↵

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4.43: Video- 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.

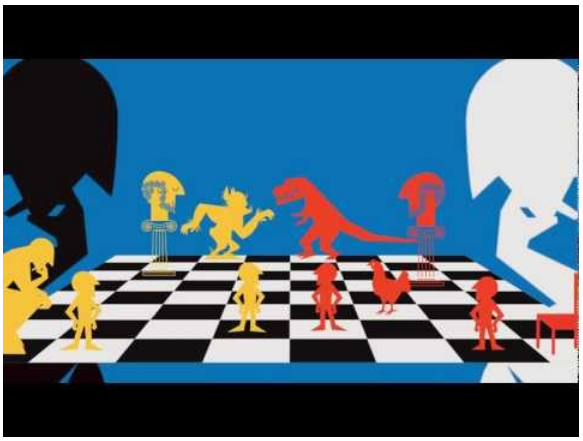
However, logic can be used badly. When you're reading, you'll want to be able to pick out bad logic as well as good logic. This video series helps us identify different types of "bad logic" in reading we might encounter.

Broken Logic



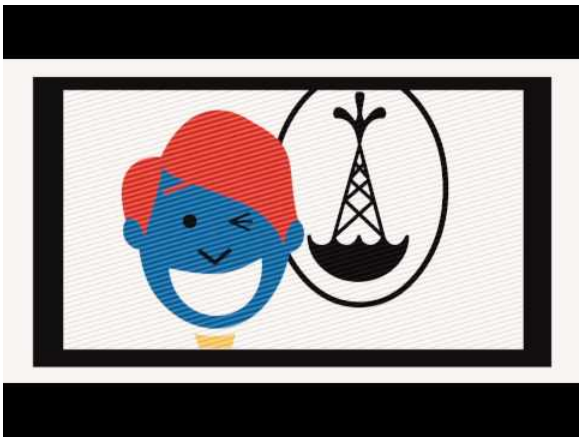
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The Man Who Was Made of Straw



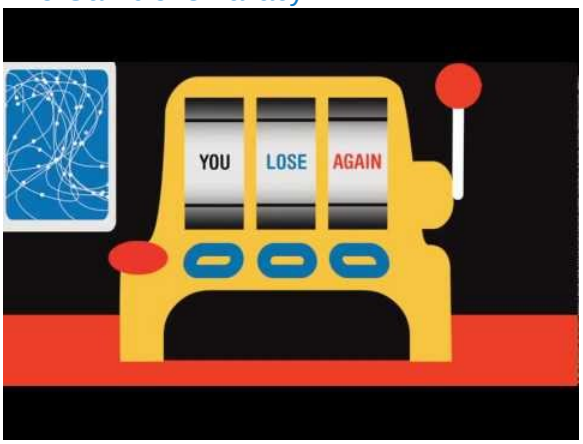
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Getting Personal



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The Gambler's Fallacy



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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.

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4.44: Self Check- Logic and Structure

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4.45: Try It- Logic and Structure

Reading Journal Component #7: Logic and Structure

To Do



1. Look at how your reading selection is organized. Which of the 10 types of rhetorical modes, discussed in this outcome, seems to be most dominant in what you read? Identify it by name, and provide 1-2 sentences explaining why you feel this is true.
2. Many reading selections combine 2 or more of the rhetorical modes. Aside from the dominant one you just identified, find an example of at least one other rhetorical mode used in your selection. Identify it by name, and provide 1-2 sentences that show where it is used.

Worked Example

The same student we've been following so far writes this:

Reading Journal Component 7

"Multiple Intelligences" by Fred Medick

This article uses the mode of **Division/Classification** extensively. It defines a category: Multiple Intelligences. Then it divides that category into multiple pieces, and examines how each one works. It talks about the 7 categories that Dr. Howard Gardner identified, and the 4 others that people have added since then.

In addition, this essay also uses the mode of **Definition**. It takes something we think we know the meaning of (intelligence) and uses it in a slightly different way, one that I personally find rewarding to those of us who aren't always book-smart. Really, each one of the types of multiple intelligences becomes a new definition for what it means to be intelligent or not.

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4.46: Outcome- Summary Skills

Identify Summary Strategies for Reading Comprehension

You're most likely familiar with summaries. Being able to accurately summarize a reading to someone else is the ultimate demonstration that you understand the reading's contents.

What You Will Learn to Do

- 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

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4.47: Text- Annotating

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. This video provides a demonstration of annotation in action.



Click here to download a transcript for this video

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.

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4.48: Text- Paraphrasing a 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.

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4.49: Text- 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**.



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.

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4.50: Presentation- Major and Minor Details

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.



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On slide 6, can you identify which are the major ideas of the paragraph, and which are the minor ones?

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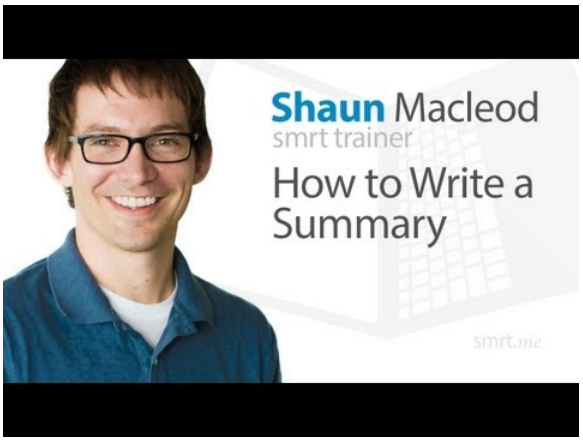
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4.51: Video- Summarizing

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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4.52: Self Check- Summary Skills

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4.53: Try It- Summary Skills

Reading Journal Component #8: Summary Skills

To Do

 Write a 2-3 paragraph summary of your reading selection. This summary should include

- the text's thesis statement
- an overview of the text's main ideas
- a neutral tone (your opinions about the content will not be included)

Worked Example

The same student we've been following so far writes this:

Reading Journal Component 8

"Multiple Intelligences" by Fred Medick

The article "Multiple Intelligences" by Fred Medick provides an definition and description of the concept of multiple intelligences, and addresses positives and negatives for educators associated with this idea.

According to Medick, the founder of this idea was Howard Gardner, who defined the first seven intelligences in his book *Frames of Mind*: linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, spatial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. These intelligences are not accepted by psychologists, but are welcomed by educators. Some see drawbacks to multiple intelligences because most cannot be measured or tested for improvement.

The article encourages readers to take an online test to determine their own strengths across the intelligences. It concludes by addressing additional intelligences that have been proposed by others: naturalistic, spiritual, moral, and emotional. Emotional intelligence in particular seems to have a large impact on people's success in life, and Daniel Goleman is referenced to explain what emotional intelligence is and why it is so valuable in school and beyond.

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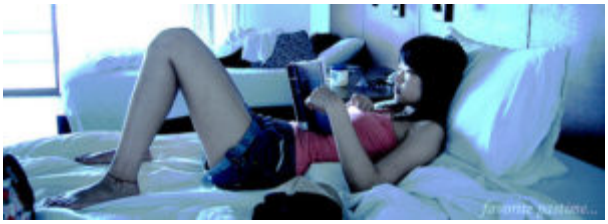
4.54: Putting It Together- Reading

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).



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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4.55: Assignment- Types of Reading Material

Journal Entry Component #1: Types of Reading Material

To Do



1. Select an option from the reading anthology available in this course. Pick anything that initially sounds interesting to you. Don't read it yet!
2. Begin **Reading Journal Entry** for that source.
3. In a word processing program, start a file that you can return to repeatedly throughout this module. Title it Reading Journal: "Name of Reading Selection." (For example, Reading Journal: "Multiple Intelligences")
4. Identify the type of reading that this source illustrates.
5. Write a short paragraph explaining how you made that identification of type.

Worked Example:

At the end of this process, this student writes:

Reading Journal Component #1

Reading Journal: "Multiple Intelligences"

This reading selection is from a textbook.

I know this because its primary purpose seems to be to educate me. It is fact-based, uses research, and includes a table that I can refer to later to quickly remind myself about the different types of intelligences. The author of this writing seems to want to teach me about multiple intelligences, and doesn't seem to expect that I know a lot about this topic already.

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4.56: Assignment- Reading Strategies

Journal Entry Component #2: Reading Strategies

To Do



1. With your selected text from the reading list in front of you, scan the document.
2. Write a paragraph about this experience. Describe what your process of scanning entails, and what you learn about the document, from this process.

Worked Example

This video demonstrates how to complete this step of the Reading Journal assignment. Note that **you STILL aren't reading** the piece yet–just scanning and getting a feel for what it contains overall.

https://youtu.be/e7AxQ765Joc

At the end of this step, this student writes:

Reading Journal Component 2

"Multiple Intelligences" by Fred Mednick

When I was scanning this document, I focused primarily on the headings of the text, the words in bold, the table, and external links.

Just from scanning, it seems like this is going to be a balanced article about the concept of multiple intelligences. It's got an overview section, which seems to contain history of the subject. The next two sections appear to be a Pro/Con discussion—"The appeal of multiple intelligences" and then "Some issues and problems." I like the table of the various types of intelligences that appears about mid-way through, and am interested in the external link for exploring what my own intelligences are. It seems like the concept of emotional intelligence might have been added later, since it wasn't on the table, but does have two extra sections about it at the end of the document. That might be important, since it's got a lot written about it overall.

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4.57: Assignment- Specialized Reading Strategies

Reading Journal Component #3: Specialized Reading Strategies

To Do

 Does your selected text include a chart, table, or graph?

OPTION A

If yes, write a paragraph that describes what you learn from reading this chart, table, or graph closely. Why do you think the author(s) might have included this information in a visual form, rather than in sentence form in the body of the text?

OPTION B

If your selected text **does not** include a chart, table, or graph, you'll instead take this opportunity to practice the Cornell Method of Note-taking. Review the Science Texts video (repeated below). Apply the Cornell Method to one part of your selected reading. Even if your selected text isn't a scientific essay, this method of note-taking is still useful to apply in many situations where you will need to remember the information later.



Worked Example

This student completed Option A:

Reading Journal Component 3

"Multiple Intelligences" by Fred Mednick

Option A

My reading selection does contain a table. It has two columns: one is "Multiple Intelligences" and the other is "Overview." Each row defines a specific type of intelligence that Dr. Howard Gardner identified, and then gives a demonstration of what type of intelligence is and how it works. I think a table is a nice way to convey this information, because it lets you see what all the types of intelligences are at a glance, and get a sense of how each one works. I get the feeling that it would be easy to consult that table again later, like if I had to study to prepare for a test on this subject. There are 7 types of intelligences listed on this table. The rest of the article goes on to describe a few more types, and it would be nice if all of those appeared on the table, too, so that we could see them all in one place.

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4.58: Assignment- Vocabulary

Journal Entry Component #4: Vocabulary

To Do



1. From your selected reading, identify 3 words which are new to you, or used in a way you're unfamiliar with.
2. Use whatever tool seems appropriate to define each word. Write a paraphrase of each meaning as it is used in the selected reading.

Worked Example

The same student we've been following so far writes this:

Reading Journal Component 4

"Multiple Intelligences" by Fred Mednick

#1: Linguistic

From the text, it describes "linguistic intelligence" as " sensitivity to spoken and written language, the ability to learn languages, and the capacity to use language to accomplish certain goals."

Therefore, I would describe linguistic as meaning, having to do with language.

#2: Kinesthetic

When I looked for "Kinesthetic" online, all the answers had to do with "kinesthetic learning." Dictionary.com defined "kinesthesia" as "The sensation of movement or strain in muscles, tendons, and joints; muscle sense." So it seems to me that the word has more to do with movement of the body, rather than just the body itself.

Therefore, I would describe kinesthetic as a type of learning involving the movement of the body.

#3: Amoral

I recognize the word "moral," but I didn't know amoral before reading this. I do remember that the letter a at the beginning of a word means "without."

Therefore, it would seem that the word amoral means without morals. The article presents this as a neutral thing, rather than a good or bad thing.

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4.59: Assignment- Thesis

Reading Journal Component #5: Thesis

To Do



1. By now, you should have read your reading selection in detail. Put it aside. Without referring to it, write one sentence in your reading notebook that summarizes what you feel the overall purpose of the reading was.
2. Go back to the text. Is there a sentence in the text that says something very similar to what you wrote down? If so, quote it. (This is an explicit thesis statement.) If not, say that there is no thesis in the reading. (This is an implicit thesis statement.)
3. Identify 2 topic sentences from body paragraphs as quotes. Briefly explain how each topic sentence relates back to the explicit or implicit thesis statement of the reading.

Worked Example

The same student we've been following so far writes this:

Reading Journal Component 5

"Multiple Intelligences" by Fred Mednick

I would summarize the thesis of this article as, Describing what multiple intelligences are, where they came from, and what they do for us to understand them.

In the essay, the last sentence of the 2nd paragraph seems to say something very similar: " The readings and assignments that follow discuss multiple intelligences, provide an opportunity for you to apply them, and a way of determining how to assess students."

Topic sentence #1: "Mindy L. Kornhaber, a researcher at Harvard University, has identified a number of reasons why teachers and policymakers have responded positively to Howard Gardner's presentation of multiple intelligences." This sentence indicates that the paragraph that follows will be explaining an application of multiple intelligences, which is the 2nd part of the thesis statement.

Topic sentence #2: "To explore your intelligences, visit 'Lessons for Hope. '" This sentence addresses the last part of the thesis statement, "a way of determining how to assess students."

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4.60: Assignment- Supporting Claims

Reading Journal Component #6: Supporting Claims

To Do



1. Return to your reading selection and the Try It: Thesis exercise you did previously. As part of that exercise, you identified 2 topic sentences from your selected reading.
2. Now, look more closely at the paragraph where the first topic sentence came from. Write a short paragraph that describes the type of support the first paragraph uses to reinforce its topic sentence. Does it make use of narrative or personal examples? Does it use facts or statistics? Does it use quotes or paraphrases from research materials?
3. Repeat this process for the 2nd topic sentence's paragraph. Write another short paragraph describing its supporting details.
4. Conclude with 1-2 sentences that explain why you think the author chose this type of support in these paragraphs, and how those supporting details relate to the overall thesis of the reading selection.

Worked Example

The same student we've been following so far writes this:

Reading Journal Component 6

"Multiple Intelligences" by Fred Mednick

Topic sentence #1: "Mindy L. Kornhaber, a researcher at Harvard University, has identified a number of reasons why teachers and policymakers have responded positively to Howard Gardner's presentation of multiple intelligences."

> This paragraph is supported by research. It doesn't use quotes, but clearly all the information in the paragraph comes from Kornhaber's work. So it paraphrases her findings about how teachers react to multiple intelligences. It also seems to summarize her thesis at the end of the paragraph.

Topic sentence #2: "To explore your intelligences, visit 'Lessons for Hope.'"

> This paragraph turns out to be quite short (only 1 more sentence after the topic sentence), so I'm going to also address the paragraph immediately after this one. Between the two short paragraphs, they describe what a user will see when you visit the external link. It is supported by fact: its descriptions of the multiple intelligences self-assessment activity are all verifiable when a reader visits this website for herself.

Since this is a reading from a textbook, it makes sense that the author uses facts and outside research as supporting details in his paragraphs. He wants us to learn from the reading, and we can trust that what he says is true because it's easy to confirm his facts elsewhere.

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4.61: Assignment- Logic and Structure

Reading Journal Component #7: Logic and Structure

To Do



1. Look at how your reading selection is organized. Which of the 10 types of rhetorical modes, discussed in this outcome, seems to be most dominant in what you read? Identify it by name, and provide 1-2 sentences explaining why you feel this is true.
2. Many reading selections combine 2 or more of the rhetorical modes. Aside from the dominant one you just identified, find an example of at least one other rhetorical mode used in your selection. Identify it by name, and provide 1-2 sentences that show where it is used.

Worked Example

The same student we've been following so far writes this:

Reading Journal Component 7

"Multiple Intelligences" by Fred Medick

This article uses the mode of **Division/Classification** extensively. It defines a category: Multiple Intelligences. Then it divides that category into multiple pieces, and examines how each one works. It talks about the 7 categories that Dr. Howard Gardner identified, and the 4 others that people have added since then.

In addition, this essay also uses the mode of **Definition**. It takes something we think we know the meaning of (intelligence) and uses it in a slightly different way, one that I personally find rewarding to those of us who aren't always book-smart. Really, each one of the types of multiple intelligences becomes a new definition for what it means to be intelligent or not.

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4.62: Assignment- Summary Skills

Reading Journal Component #8: Summary Skills

To Do

 Write a 2-3 paragraph summary of your reading selection. This summary should include

- the text's thesis statement
- an overview of the text's main ideas
- a neutral tone (your opinions about the content will not be included)

Worked Example

The same student we've been following so far writes this:

Reading Journal Component 8

"Multiple Intelligences" by Fred Medick

The article "Multiple Intelligences" by Fred Medick provides an definition and description of the concept of multiple intelligences, and addresses positives and negatives for educators associated with this idea.

According to Medick, the founder of this idea was Howard Gardner, who defined the first seven intelligences in his book *Frames of Mind*: linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, spatial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. These intelligences are not accepted by psychologists, but are welcomed by educators. Some see drawbacks to multiple intelligences because most cannot be measured or tested for improvement.

The article encourages readers to take an online test to determine their own strengths across the intelligences. It concludes by addressing additional intelligences that have been proposed by others: naturalistic, spiritual, moral, and emotional. Emotional intelligence in particular seems to have a large impact on people's success in life, and Daniel Goleman is referenced to explain what emotional intelligence is and why it is so valuable in school and beyond.

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4.63: Assignment- Reading Journal Final Draft Submission

Reading Journal

Throughout this module you have been writing individual journal entries about a reading selection of your choice from the reading anthology. Revise your entries as necessary, as you've discussed with your tutor. Submit the final version of all entries as one combined document, here.

Worked Example

Journal entry assignments tend to be more flexible than other types of writing assignments in college, and as a result they can be tailored to your own experiences as long as they answer the primary questions asked in the assignment.

One model of a successful Reading Journal Final Draft can be found below. This is the completed project; in later Try It pages you'll see each individual component come to life as this student progressed through the course.

The article this student wrote about can be read here: "Multiple Intelligences" by Fred Mednick.

READING JOURNAL Final Draft: "MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES" by Fred Mednick

by Betina Ortiz

Types of Reading Material

This reading selection is from a textbook.

I know this because its primary purpose seems to be to educate me. It is fact-based, uses research, and includes a table that I can refer to later to quickly remind myself about the different types of intelligences. The author of this writing seems to want to teach me about multiple intelligences, and doesn't seem to expect that I know a lot about this topic already.

Reading Strategies

When I was scanning this document, I focused primarily on the headings of the text, the words in bold, the table, and external links.

Just from scanning, it seems like this is going to be a balanced article about the concept of multiple intelligences. It's got an overview section, which seems to contain history of the subject. The next two sections appear to be a Pro/Con discussion—"The appeal of multiple intelligences" and then "Some issues and problems." I like the table of the various types of intelligences that appears about mid-way through, and am interested in the external link for exploring what my own intelligences are. It seems like the concept of emotional intelligence might have been added later, since it wasn't on the table, but does have two extra sections about it at the end of the document. That might be important, since it's got a lot written about it overall.

Specialized Reading Strategies

Option A

My reading selection does contain a table. It has two columns: one is "Multiple Intelligences" and the other is "Overview." Each row defines a specific type of intelligence that Howard Gardner identified, and then gives a demonstration of what type of intelligence is and how it works. I think a table is a nice way to convey this information, because it lets you see what all the types of intelligences are at a glance, and get a sense of how each one works. I get the feeling that it would be easy to consult that table again later, like if I had to study to prepare for a test on this subject. There are 7 types of intelligences listed on this table. The rest of the article goes on to describe a few more types, and it would be nice if all of those appeared on the table, too, so that we could see them all in one place.

Vocabulary

#1: Linguistic

From the text, it describes "linguistic intelligence" as "sensitivity to spoken and written language, the ability to learn languages, and the capacity to use language to accomplish certain goals."

Therefore, I would describe linguistic as meaning, having to do with language.

#2: Kinesthetic

When I looked for “Kinesthetic” online, all the answers had to do with “kinesthetic learning.” Dictionary.com defined “kinesthesia” as “The sensation of movement or strain in muscles, tendons, and joints; muscle sense.” So it seems to me that the word has more to do with movement of the body, rather than just the body itself.

Therefore, I would describe kinesthetic as a type of learning involving the movement of the body.

#3: Amoral

I recognize the word “moral,” but I didn’t know amoral before reading this. I do remember that the letter a at the beginning of a word means “without.”

Therefore, it would seem that the word amoral means without morals. The article presents this as a neutral thing, rather than a good or bad thing.

Thesis

In the essay, the last sentence of the 2nd paragraph seems to say something very similar: “The readings and assignments that follow discuss multiple intelligences, provide an opportunity for you to apply them, and a way of determining how to assess students.”

Topic sentence #1: “Mindy L. Kornhaber, a researcher at Harvard University, has identified a number of reasons why teachers and policymakers have responded positively to Howard Gardner’s presentation of multiple intelligences.” This sentence indicates that the paragraph that follows will be explaining an application of multiple intelligences, which is the 2nd part of the thesis statement.

Topic sentence #2: “To explore your intelligences, visit ‘Lessons for Hope.’” This sentence addresses the last part of the thesis statement, “a way of determining how to assess students.”

Supporting Claims

This paragraph is supported by research. It doesn’t use quotes, but clearly all the information in the paragraph comes from Kornhaber’s work. So it paraphrases her findings about how teachers react to multiple intelligences. It also seems to summarize her thesis at the end of the paragraph.

Topic sentence #2: “To explore your intelligences, visit ‘Lessons for Hope.’”

This paragraph turns out to be quite short (only 1 more sentence after the topic sentence), so I’m going to also address the paragraph immediately after this one. Between the two short paragraphs, they describe what a user will see when you visit the external link. It is supported by fact: its descriptions of the multiple intelligences self-assessment activity are all verifiable when a reader visits this website for herself.

Since this is a reading from a textbook, it makes sense that the author uses facts and outside research as supporting details in his paragraphs. He wants us to learn from the reading, and we can trust that what he says is true because it’s easy to confirm his facts elsewhere.

Logic and Structure

In addition, this essay also uses the mode of **Definition**. It takes something we think we know the meaning of (intelligence) and uses it in a slightly different way, one that I personally find rewarding to those of us who aren’t always book-smart. Really, each one of the types of multiple intelligences becomes a new definition for what it means to be intelligent or not.

Summary Skills

According to Medick, the founder of this idea was Howard Gardner, who defined the first seven intelligences in his book *Frames of Mind*: linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, spatial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. These intelligences are not accepted by psychologists, but are welcomed by educators. Some see drawbacks to multiple intelligences because most cannot be measured or tested for improvement.

The article encourages readers to take an online test to determine their own strengths across the intelligences. It concludes by addressing additional intelligences that have been proposed by others: naturalistic, spiritual, moral, and emotional. Emotional intelligence in particular seems to have a large impact on people’s success in life, and Daniel Goleman is referenced to explain what emotional intelligence is and why it is so valuable in school and beyond.

Though this final product might look long (and is in fact 1088 words), it will be completed in smaller stages. None of the individual pieces of this Reading Journal example is longer than 150 words.

Rubric

In order to successfully complete this assessment, a submitted journal must reach “Meets or Exceeds Expectations” in all categories.

Criteria	Ratings		
Identify Type of Reading	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • includes a paragraph identifying the type of reading and justifying that identification	**Approaching Expectations** • identifies the type of reading but includes no justification for that identification	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • does not include a paragraph identifying the the type of reading
Scanning the Reading	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • includes a paragraph describing the scanning / prereading experience in detail	**Approaching Expectations** • includes a brief statement describing the scanning / prereading experience	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • does not include a paragraph describing the scanning / prereading experience
Specialized Reading Strategies	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • includes a paragraph closely examining a visual element of the reading, or • includes a detailed demonstration of the Cornell Method of notetaking	**Approaching Expectations** • includes a paragraph broadly examining a visual element of the reading, or • includes a brief demonstration of the Cornell Method of notetaking	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • does not include a paragraph closely examining a visual element of the reading, nor a demonstration of the Cornell Method of notetaking
Vocabulary	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • includes 3 vocabulary words • all vocabulary words are defined using paraphrases of dictionary definitions	**Approaching Expectations** • includes 1-2 vocabulary words, or • 1-2 vocabulary words are defined using paraphrases of dictionary definitions	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • does not include vocabulary words, or • does not define words using paraphrases of dictionary definitions
Thesis	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • identifies a thesis statement from the reading and notes it as implicit or explicit • includes a paragraph showing the relationship between thesis and topic sentences, including quotes as appropriate	**Approaching Expectations** • identifies a thesis statement from the reading, but does not define it as explicity or implicit • includes a paragraph showing the relationship between thesis and topic sentences, but quotes may not be included	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • does not identify a thesis statement from the reading, or • does not include a paragraph showing the relationship between thesis and topic sentences

Supporting Claims	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • includes a paragraph describing the types of support used in 2 body paragraphs	**Approaching Expectations** • includes a paragraph describing the types of support used in 1 body paragraphs	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • does not include a paragraph describing the types of support used in 2 body paragraphs
Logic and Structure	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • identifies the primary rhetorical mode used in the reading, with justification of that identification • identifies secondary rhetorical modes used in the reading, with justification of that identification	**Approaching Expectations** • identifies the primary rhetorical mode used in the reading, but does not identify secondary rhetorical modes used in the reading	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • does not identify the primary rhetorical mode used in the reading
Summary Skills	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • includes a 1-2 paragraph summary of the text, noting the text's thesis and main ideas, and maintaining a neutral tone	**Approaching Expectations** • includes a 1-2 paragraph summary of the text, noting the text's thesis and main ideas, but does not maintain a neutral tone	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • does not include a summary, or • does not note the text's thesis and main ideas

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5.1: Why It Matters- Writing Process

Why is it necessary to think of writing as a process?

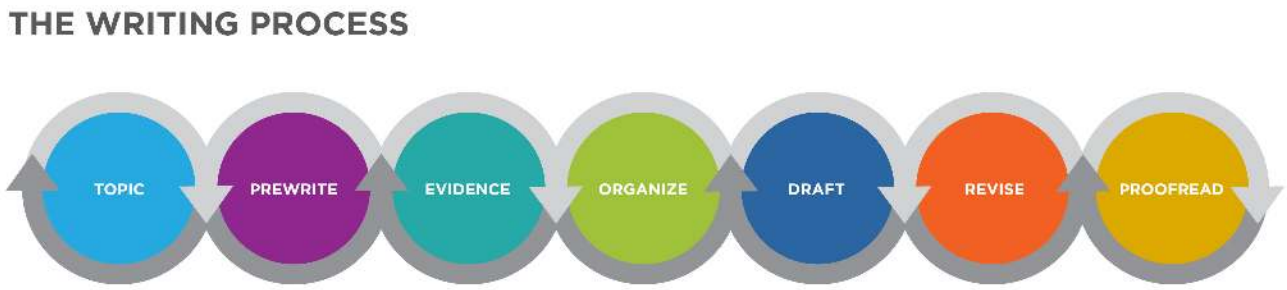
As students, we're used to thinking of "essay" as a noun. It's often seen as an obligation, a task, a chore.



But the origin of the word "essay" is actually as a verb, meaning "to attempt." Thought of in this way, writing an essay can be seen as an open, inviting exercise. It's a way of exploring a new concept. It's using writing as thinking.

A mountain climber wouldn't attempt a new technically-challenging climb without a lot of planning and preparation ahead of time. Essayists also need planning and preparation for new technical challenges.

The **writing process** supports the exploratory, open-ended nature of essay writing. It gives you guidance towards a final product, while still allowing you room to explore along the way.



We'll spend this module exploring each stage of the writing process, showing how stages overlap and intersect to lead you towards writing success.

Learning Outcomes

- Identify topic selection activities
- Identify prewriting activities
- Identify activities to find evidence in support of a claim
- Identify essay organizational techniques
- Identify drafting activities
- Identify revision activities
- Identify proofreading activities

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5.2: Performance Assessment- Personal Analysis Essay

Personal Analysis Essay Introduction

This module will ask you to practice the stages of the writing process. You will develop an essay about your personal experiences relating to your ethical values, to be finalized by the end of this module.



This essay asks you to reflect on your own ethical values. As a writer, you have two options in crafting this essay:

1. You can narrate and reflect on the process of "coming to consciousness," focusing on a personal experience(s) leading to a deeper awareness of a social or ethical issue or a more general commitment to social justice. For example, you might write about one or two key influences on your ethical development. The influence(s) may be person(s), experience(s), religion(s) or text(s) (e.g., books, films). You might write about the development of a generalized social consciousness, or focus on your experiences of becoming aware of social issues such as climate change, hunger, gender inequality, or unemployment.
2. You can focus on "ethics in action," reflecting on an experience or moral choice that affirmed a personal commitment to particular ethical or social values. Some writers may choose a pivotal life choice or moral decision, while others focus on "everyday ethics," smaller expressions of ethical values such as compassion, cooperation, or integrity in daily settings such as colleges, workplaces, homes, houses of worship, or playing fields. You might write about the difficulty of living up to your ethical standards, or narrate an internal struggle or confusion about what you believe in respect to a particular question or issue.

Be richly descriptive in your writing. Take the reader inside the experience(s) to appreciate its power. When focusing on an individual or a setting, for example, use rich description; include dialogue, if appropriate. Alternately, if you are writing about a film, book, or political speech, describe visual images, scenes, quotations, or excerpts to communicate the power of the text(s).

Writing Ideas

If you are (or have been) involved in community service, this assignment enables you to draw on that experience. If you have a strongly held position on a social issue (such as capital punishment, gun control, or abortion rights), this essay offers you the opportunity to trace the roots of that stance or show how your position on this issue influences your daily life. Remember that writing about an internal ethical conflict or confusion is an option.

Assignment Details

The final essay will be 500-750 words long. It will include a thesis statement that is supported by evidence. It will be well-organized, and display evidence of careful application of the writing process.

Rubric

In order to successfully complete this assessment, a submitted essay must reach "Meets or Exceeds Expectations" in all categories.

Criteria	Ratings		
Topic & Thesis Statement	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • essay topic has been personalized to refine the assignment prompt • contains a clearly identifiable thesis statement that drives the essay content	**Approaching Expectations** • essay topic is a generic answer to the assignment prompt • contains a thesis statement that relates to most essay content	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • essay topic does not match the assignment prompt • does not contain a thesis statement, *or* thesis statement does not relate to most essay content

Evidence	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • sufficient and varied evidence provided to justify the thesis statement	**Approaching Expectations** • insufficient evidence provided to justify the thesis statement	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • no evidence provided, *or* evidence does not justify the thesis statement
Organization	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • contains a clearly identifiable introduction, body section, and conclusion • follows a logical pattern of development • applies transitions effectively	**Approaching Expectations** • contains an introduction, and/or body section, and/or conclusion • has a pattern of development, but needs further attention to paragraphing • insufficient use of transitions	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • missing introduction, body section, or conclusion elements • no clear pattern of development • little to no use of transitions
Editing and Proofreading	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • evidence that higher-order editing concerns have been identified and addressed • evidence that lower-order proofreading concerns have been identified and addressed, though minor patterns of error might remain	**Approaching Expectations** • higher-order editing concerns may not have been addressed • lower-order editing concerns may not have been addressed. Significant patterns of error remain.	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • fundamental issues with higher-order editing concerns present in draft • fundamental issues with lower-order editing concerns present in draft

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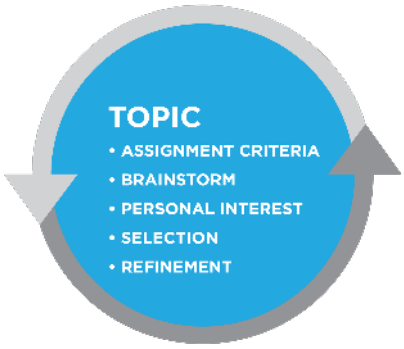
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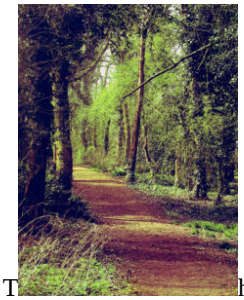
5.3: Outcome- Topic Selection

Identify Topic Selection Activities



The Problem of Topic vs. Approach

Some instructors who assign writing projects will leave the choice of what to write about up to you. Others will have a very defined set of topics for you to write from. But even when an instructor assigns a given topic or offers a choice of assigned topics, you have a lot of opportunity for creativity.



The real issue here is **approach**. When you come to an assigned essay as a project, how you first engage with it will determine your overall experience. Some students see any writing assignment as an externally imposed task — something they have to do in order to pass the course. This approach will guarantee that those students will eventually hate their assignments, possibly their instructor, and when push comes to shove the whole project of being in school.

Solution: Choosing an Approach to Your Topic

Deliberately choosing how you approach your topic will help you not only choose one that will satisfy the requirements, but also ensure that you enjoy the process of research and writing. After all, no one on earth can do what you do. So, only you can figure out how to write a great essay in your own voice.

It all starts with selecting a topic. How you approach that selection process is vastly important.

The key is to identify what made you take the class in the first place. Something about this class captured your fancy and made you register (particularly in the case of an elective), so place that interest at the heart of your topic.

Look to what you were interested in as a way of finding your paper topic! Use that initial fascination to twist the topic of your paper so that it becomes an excuse to wallow in whatever got you interested in that class in the first place.

Avoiding the Pit of Despair

Whatever you do, don’t fall into the trap of thinking that your work is simply a required box that needs to be checked and you can’t bring any creativity to the table. Even if the class was required for your program or degree, you still chose that program. There are ways to make almost any writing task enjoyable, or at least something you gain something interesting out of.

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify strategies for personalizing an assigned topic
- identify strategies for finding a focus for an unassigned topic
- identify strategies for moving from general to specific

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5.4: Text- How to Come Up with a Topic to Write About

Many people are intimidated by the thought of writing. One of the biggest factors that can contribute to writers' block is not knowing what to write about. If you can find a topic that interests you, your writing will likely flow more readily and you will be more likely to write a successful piece. Use a variety of strategies for coming up with something to write about to find what works best for your writing and learning style.



Understand the Essay Assignment

Understanding the assigned essay is the first step to coming up with a topic. Knowing the type of essay that is expected, the length of the essay, and to what degree research is expected will all determine the scope of the topic you will choose.

Evaluate the Purpose of the Assignment

The purpose of the assignment will also determine the type of topic. A persuasive essay, for example, will have a much different type of topic than a personal experience essay.

- Look for key action words like *compare*, *analyze*, *describe*, *synthesize*, and *contrast*. These words will help you determine what your teacher wants you to do in the essay.

Select a Topic from a Provided List

If your instructor has provided a list of topics for you, choose a topic from the given list. It is likely that the topics have been gathered together because they are an appropriate scope and breadth and the instructor has found that the topics have led to successful essays in the past .

- Choose the topic for which a main idea comes most naturally and for which you feel you can develop the paper easily.

Brainstorm a List of Ideas

Write down a list of ideas that come to mind. They don't have to be good ideas, but it's good to just start writing a list to get your ideas flowing. Just write down everything you can think of; you can evaluate the ideas later.

This video demonstrates that writers of all levels and experiences value the process of brainstorming. Watch brainstorming in action for a television sitcom.

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Freewrite for a Predetermined Amount of Time

Decide ahead of time how long you want to freewrite, then just write without stopping.

- Most people write for 10-20 minutes.

- Do not stop writing, even if you need to just write “blah blah blah” in the middle of a sentence.
- Hopefully, you will write yourself towards a useful thought or idea through freewriting. Even if it does not give you content you can use in your essay, it can be a valuable writing warm-up.

Create a Visual Representation of Your Ideas

Especially if you are a visual learner, creating a visual representation of your ideas may help you stumble onto or narrow down ideas to a good topic.

- Use a mind map. The center of the mind map contains your main argument, or thesis, and other ideas branch off in all directions.
- Draw an idea web. This a visual that uses words in circles connected to other words or ideas. Focusing on the connections between ideas as well as the ideas themselves may help you generate a topic.

Remember What the Teacher Focused On In Class

If you are writing an essay for a class, think about what the teacher spent a lot of time talking about in class. This may make a good choice for an essay, as the teacher clearly thinks it’s something important.

- Review your class notes and see if there is anything that stands out as interesting or important.
- Review any handouts or focus sections of a text that were assigned.

Think About What Interests You

Writing something you care about or that you are interested in is much easier than making yourself write about things that seem boring. Make a list of your interests and see if there is a way to connect one or more of them to your essay.



Consider the List You Have Generated

Write a few additional notes next to each potential topic and evaluate whether each item would be an appropriate topic. At this point, you should be able to narrow your list down to a few good choices.

- You may want to ask your teacher if you have narrowed down your ideas to two or three items. She may have some insight as to which topic would be the most successful.
- Go back and look at the original assignment again and determine which of your narrowed topics will best fit with the intent of the essay assignment.

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5.5: Text- Ways to Narrow Down a Topic

When to Narrow a Topic

Most students will have to narrow down their topic at least a little. The first clue is that your paper needs to be narrowed is simply the length your professor wants it to be. You can't properly discuss "war" in 1,000 words, nor talk about orange rinds for 12 pages.

Steps to Narrowing a Topic

1. First start out with a general topic. Take the topic and break it down into categories by asking the five W's and H.
   - Who? (American Space Exploration)
   - What? (Manned Space Missions)
   - Where? (Moon Exploration)
   - When? (Space exploration in the 1960's)
   - Why? (Quest to leave Earth)
   - How? (Rocket to the Moon: Space Exploration)
2. Now consider the following question areas to generate specific ideas to narrow down your topic.
   - Problems faced? (Sustaining Life in Space: Problems with space exploration)
   - Problems overcome? (Effects of zero gravity on astronauts)
   - Motives? (Beating the Russians: Planning a moon mission)
   - Effects on a group? (Renewing faith in science: aftershock of the Moon mission)
   - Member group? (Designing a moon lander: NASA engineers behind Apollo 11)
   - Group affected? (From Test Pilots to Astronauts: the new heroes of the Air force)
   - Group benefited? (Corporations that made money from the American Space Program)
   - Group responsible for/paid for _____ (The billion dollar bill: taxpayer reaction to the cost of sending men to the moon)
3. Finally, refine your ideas by by considering the **S.O.C.R.A.P.R**. model.
   - **S** = Similarities (Similar issues to overcome between the 1969 moon mission and the planned 2009 Mars Mission)
   - **O** = Opposites (American pro and con opinions about the first mission to the moon)
   - **C** = Contrasts (Protest or patriotism: different opinions about cost vs. benefit of the moon mission)
   - **R** = Relationships (the NASA family: from the scientists on earth to the astronauts in the sky)
   - **A** = Anthropomorphisms [interpreting reality in terms of human values] (Space: the final frontier)
   - **P** = Personifications [giving objects or descriptions human qualities] (the eagle has landed: animal symbols and metaphors in the space program)
   - **R** = Repetition (More missions to the moon: Pro and Con American attitudes to landing more astronauts on the moon)

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5.6: Self Check- Topic Selection

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5.7: Try It- Topic Selection

Topic Selection Activity

To Do



1. Apply the steps from "Ways to Narrow Down a Topic." Write your answers to all questions on that page in a new document that you can return to throughout this module.

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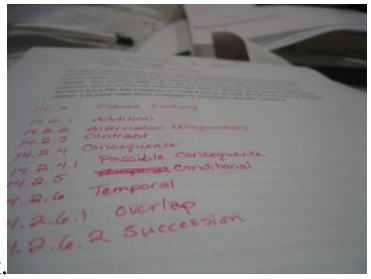
5.8: Outcome- Prewriting



Identify Prewriting Activities

Many students — and some teachers — want to skip the pre-writing stage of the writing process because they see it as unnecessarily burdensome and time-consuming. However, teachers who dismiss the pre-writing stage as being completely unnecessary are performing a disservice to many of their students. Pre-writing is an essential part of the entire writing process because it enables you to begin documenting the process by which the eventual essay will be formed and evaluated.

The term “pre-writing” may be a bit misleading because writing can and often does occur at this critical stage. For example, written notes and outlines, including graphic organizers, can serve as a record of one’s ideas and the sources of those ideas. A preliminary thesis or hypothesis could inform the process and the product.



Many people do brainstorm via their thoughts without recording those ideas and sources in permanent form prior to the next steps in the writing process. Most developing writers, however, need to record their pre-writing ideas in permanent form so that those ideas can clearly inform and guide the thinking and writing process, resulting in a coherent, well-organized product or text.

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify purpose and defining characteristics of prewriting
- identify various prewriting strategies, including freewriting, listing, questioning, clustering, and dialoguing
- identify rhetorical context for the writing task
- identify working thesis statement

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5.9: Text- Prewriting Strategies

The term “pre-writing” conjures up a lot of strange activities and practices. You’ve probably tried many different prewriting strategies in the past, and may have a good idea of what works for you and what doesn’t.

Keep in mind that the KIND of writing project you’re working on can impact how effective a particular technique is to use in a given situation. Something that you’ve relied on before may not be as effective as you move into new subjects. Experiment often.

Make it fun! Here are some to try:

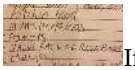
Freewriting



Set a timer for a short amount of time (5 minutes or 10 minutes are good options). During that period, write anything that comes to mind related to your topic. The goal is to not worry about what comes out of your pen or keyboard. Instead, just free your mind to associate as it wishes. It’s amazingly productive for rich ideas, and it’s nice not to have to worry about spelling and grammar.

If it’s hard for you to “turn off” the worry about writing well, challenge yourself to write a few awful, terrible sentences as the beginning.

List-Making



If you’re a list-maker by nature, there’s no reason not to harness that for academic writing purposes. Jot notes about major ideas related to the subject you’re working with. This also works well with a time limit, like 10 minutes. A bonus feature–after you’ve had time to reflect on your list, you can rearrange it in hierarchical order, and create a basic outline quickly.

Clustering



Also known as “mapping,” this is a more visual form of brainstorming. It asks you to come up with topic ideas, and draw lines to connect ideas and figure out sub-categories and related ideas. You can end up with a quite extensive “bubble cloud” as a result. This also works well within a time limit, like 10 minutes.

Questioning



The way to find answers is to ask questions–seems simple enough. This applies to early-stage writing processes, just like everything else. When you have a topic in mind, asking and answering questions about it is a good way to figure out directions your writing might take.

Start with just listing the questions. What do you want or need to know the answers to regarding your topic?

Dialoging



Another approach to getting inside a topic is to imagine two people talking about it. Write out a script for two characters you invent. Give them names and brief personalities–why are they interested in this subject? Assume one of them knows more than the other about it.

An option is to find another person to participate with you. Write down a back and forth conversation you have about the topic. Try texting or emailing one another to make it feel authentic.

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5.10: Presentation- Rhetorical Context For Yourself as a Writer

External forces work to shape any text you read. The author's background, the intended audience, and the intended purpose of a text combine to influence the text itself.

The same is true for items *you* write. Who you are as an author, who you anticipate as your audience, and what your purpose for writing is, will all shape what you produce.

This presentation addresses considerations about Author, Audience, and Purpose when you write.



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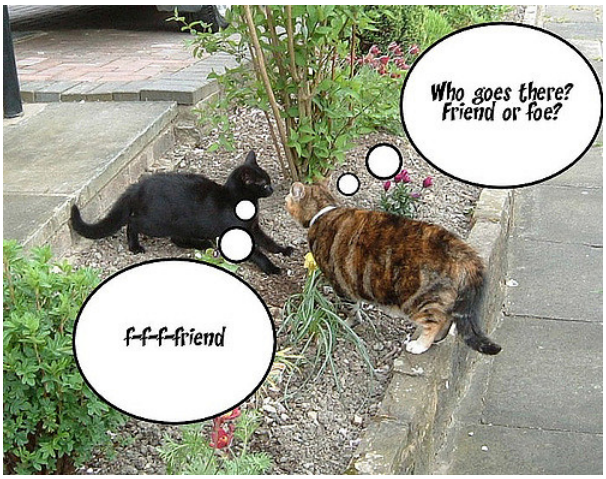
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5.11: Text- The Working Thesis Statement

Students often see a thesis statement as an object of mystery. It helps to realize that they are friend, not foe. They are often quite useful tools, both in helping you write and in making sure the final product is powerful.



Simply put, a **thesis** tells the reader your topic and your position on that topic.

When you've decided on a topic and explored it with prewriting activities, drafting a **working thesis** is a very helpful next step. As the name implies, a working thesis is a work in progress–it helps you form initial ideas, but is open to change as you keep working on the project.

A working thesis statement is just like a regular thesis statement, except that you can tweak it and change it as you research and write. It's sort of like making a plan for the weekend on Tuesday night: you know the plan will probably be modified, but it's a good place to start. — Portland State University Writing Center[1]

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1. "Step Three: Developing a Working Thesis Statement" *Writing Resources Guided Tour* ↵

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5.12: Self Check- Prewriting

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5.13: Try It- Prewriting

Prewriting Activity

To Do



1. Select one of the prewriting activities in this outcome. Set a timer for 10 minutes, and try this activity for that time. Write down whatever comes out.
2. Reflect on what you've written. What jumps out to you as most important? Circle or underline that.
3. Draft a working thesis statement.

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5.14: Outcome- Finding Evidence



Identify Activities to Find Evidence in Support of a Claim

Watch this clip from the TV show *Mythbusters*. It presents a common argument : that the U.S. government perpetrated a conspiracy to fake the moon landing in 1969.



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(The video has an instrumental soundtrack but no voice-over.)

The argument for the Moon Landing Hoax depends upon two pieces of evidence : the flag was waving when there should be no wind; and the sun did not cast parallel shadows, as it apparently should have. How did you react to this evidence ?

If you are like most people, you reacted with skepticism. Did the picture alone convince you that the shadows were wrong? Is it possible that the shadows were actually parallel, and that the photograph was simply unclear? Could you tell that the flag's movement was caused by the wind on the moon, or could the astronaut have been moving the flagpole? Did you even know that flags are not supposed to flap on the moon?

Even if you offer "hard" facts like photographs or smoking guns as evidence , your readers will not find your argument convincing unless you show that these facts actually support your claims. You should provide as evidence not only reliable facts—facts drawn from sources your readers trust—but also the right kinds of facts—facts that are directly relevant to your claim and appropriate to the kind of argument you are making. If you can't do this, you may have to make an additional argument showing that your evidence is relevant, reliable , and connected to your claims. If you can't show this, you shouldn't expect your evidence to persuade your readers.

For these reasons , the evidence presented in the Moon Landing Hoax clip is not convincing. No source is listed for the information given; we cannot be sure that these are the most reliable photographs and video footage available. The evidence is also unexplained. In short, the evidence here does not prove that the moon landing was a hoax—but it may accomplish the ad's goal, which is to provide just enough evidence to get us to watch the show.

The following section will address how to supply evidence that is convincing, and supportable, as part of your academic writing.

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify experience or examples from personal life as they relate to the topic
- identify strategies for preliminary research on the topic
- identify strategies for synthesis of research and personal ideas
- identify effective techniques for quoting a source
- identify effective techniques for paraphrasing a source
- identify effective techniques for summarizing a source

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5.15: Text- Support and Elaboration

Support and elaboration consist of the specific details and information writers use to develop their topic. The key to developing support and elaboration is getting *specific*. Good writers use concrete, specific details, and relevant information to establish mental images for their readers.

Two important concepts in support and elaboration are *sufficiency* and *relatedness*.



Sufficiency refers the amount of detail — is there enough detail to support the topic? Any parent who has asked his or her child what happened at school knows how hard it is to get a child to elaborate on a subject. 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 reader to construct a picture of the story in their mind. In expository writing, this means not only finding enough information to support your purpose, whether it is to inform or persuade your audience, but also finding information that is credible and accurate.

Sufficiency, however, is not enough. The power of your 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 included only if they are concrete, specific details that contribute to, rather than detract from, the picture provided by the narrative. In expository writing, information should be included only if it is relevant to the writer's goal and strengthens rather than weakens the writer's ability to meet that goal.

Guiding Questions for Support and Elaboration

FOR NARRATIVE WRITING:

- Is your story developed with specific details that are related to the main event?
- Do all of the details move the story along?
- Does your story have enough elaboration so that your reader can see and feel what is happening? Can you show me an example where your reader can see or feel what is happening?

FOR INFORMATIONAL WRITING:

- Is your essay developed with specific information (facts, statistics, etc.) that is related to the main topic?
- Does all of the information support the main topic?
- Does your essay have enough information to fulfill your reader's needs?

FOR ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING:

- Is your essay developed with specific details that are related to the main topic?
- Does all of the information support the main argument?
- Does your essay have enough supporting evidence to persuade your reader?

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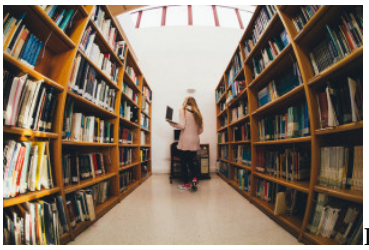
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5.16: Text- Preliminary Research

 In the preliminary research stage, the you'll begin the process of finalizing your topic, continuing to refine your working thesis, and documenting the sources to be used for guidance and support.

Techniques and Strategies

- use an online search engine (like Google) or print resources (like magazines and books) at the local media center or library to gain familiarity with a topic
- read a text's table of contents, index, and chapter headings in order to determine your primary interest for the assignment
- examine sources to determine the availability of authentic, credible, current resources for your topic
- select a final topic for a thesis that permits focused research and writing

Finding the Scope

The preliminary research stage serves as an important connection between pre-writing and formulating a thesis. This stage is characterized by many of the components of the pre-writing stage, such as gathering information from a variety of sources. But rather than thinking broadly, as in pre-writing, the goal in the preliminary research stage is to narrow things down and home in on a reasonable scope for the topic.

This stage enables you to understand which of your ideas can be documented by sources. Even an opinion piece needs to be validated through documented research. Preliminary research also permits you to change your mind about the intended topic before too much time and effort are committed to the process.

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5.17: Text- Blending Source Material with Your Own Work

The process of research can be fun, interesting work. Sometimes it can be hard to stop researching, and start writing. You may also find that you find so many great ideas from research, that it's hard to say anything unique yourself.

The goal of most college writing, though, is to showcase your own ideas. The research should take a back seat to your personal thoughts.



In practical terms, some ways to develop and back up your assertions include:

- **Blend sources with your assertions.** Organize your sources before and as you write so that they blend, even within paragraphs. Your paper—both as a whole and at the paragraph level—should reveal relationships among your sources, and should also reveal the relationships between your own ideas and those of your sources.
- **Write an original introduction and conclusion.** As much as is practical, make the paper's introduction and conclusion your own ideas or your own understanding of the ideas from your research. Use sources minimally in your introduction and conclusion.
- **Open and close paragraphs with originality.** In general, use the openings and closing of your paragraphs to reveal your work —"enclose" your sources among your assertions. At a minimum, create your own topic sentences and wrap-up sentences for paragraphs.
- **Use transparent rhetorical strategies.** When appropriate, outwardly practice such rhetorical strategies as analysis, synthesis, comparison, contrast, summary, description, definition, evaluation, classification, and even narration. Prove to your reader that you are *thinking* as you write.

Also, you must clarify where your own ideas end and the cited information begins. Part of your job is to help your reader draw the line between these two things, often by the way you create context for the cited information. A phrase such as "A 1979 study revealed that…" is an obvious announcement of citation to come.

Another recommended technique is the insertion of the author's name into your sentence to announce the beginning of your cited information.

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5.18: Text- When to Quote, Paraphrase, or Summarize a Source

When you present evidence from a source, you have three options:



- **Quote** the source by using its exact language with quotation marks or in a block quotation.
- **Paraphrase** the source by restating a short passage in your own words.
- **Summarize** the source by restating its ideas in fewer words than the original.

Which option you choose depends on how much of a source you are using, how you are using it, and what kind of paper you are writing, since different fields use sources in different ways. You have to decide each case individually, but here are some general guidelines:

- **If it's long, summarize.** If a passage is more than a paragraph or two, summarize it. Never quote or paraphrase long passages.
- **Don't quote too much.** If you use many passages from sources, do not quote them all. Too many quotations will make readers wonder whether you have contributed any of your own ideas.
- **In the sciences and experimental social sciences, paraphrase and summarize.** In these fields, it's usually the results that matter, not the words used to report them.
- **In the humanities and qualitative social sciences, quote only when the exact words matter.** If a passage from a source is your primary evidence, quote it (or, if it is too long, quote parts of it). If you address the exact words of a secondary source , quote them.

NOTE: You must **always** cite the source of every quotation, paraphrase, and summary, both in your text and in your bibliography or works cited. If you fail to do so, even by accident, you open yourself to a charge of plagiarism.

Quoting

In general, do not quote a source unless its exact words matter to your argument . You should think about quoting a source

- when the quoted words are your primary evidence (for instance, in an English paper you might quote from a novel; in a history paper you might quote from an official record; or in a sociology paper you might quote an informant)
- when the passage raises an important objection that you rebut, and you want to show that you are not misrepresenting it or taking it out of context
- when the words of a passage are original, odd, or otherwise too useful to lose in a paraphrase
- when a secondary source supports your claim and is written by an important authority who will give your argument credibility

Paraphrasing

In a paraphrase, you restate a passage in your own words. You should think about paraphrasing a source

- when a source's ideas or information, but not its language, are important to your argument (for example, if the result of a study of earthworms supports your claim, but its exact language doesn't matter)
- when you can state the ideas of a source more clearly or concisely than the original
- when a source uses technical terms that are unfamiliar to your readers
- when you use many passages from sources (so that you can avoid having too many quotations)

Summarizing

In a summary, you report the main ideas in a passage in fewer words than the original. You should think about summarizing a source

- when a passage from a source is too long to quote or paraphrase
- when only the main ideas of a source are relevant to your argument (for example, if you want to address only the claim and reasons in an argument, not its evidence or warrants)

- when the details in a source might distract or confuse readers (for example, if a source raises issues that might interest your readers but are not relevant to your argument)

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5.19: Self Check- Finding Evidence

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5.20: Try It- Finding Evidence

Finding Evidence Activity

To Do



1. Revisit the working thesis you have for your essay so far. That thesis makes **claims**.
2. Make a list of evidence that will be required to prove to your reader that each claim is true. Include 3-5 items on that list.
3. For each item on the list, do some initial research that helps you understand each. That research might include informal methods, such as talking to friends and classmates about their experiences.
4. Include a brief paragraph (3-5 sentences) summarizing what you find in your initial research for each item on the list.

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5.21: Outcome- Organizing



Identify Essay Organizational Techniques

You may hear the terms **structure** and **organization** used interchangeably when it comes to essay writing. Both are important aspects, but they do have an important distinction.

Structure refers to the function a particular piece of your essay serves in the essay. Elements like introductions, body paragraphs, and conclusions are structural components of an essay. It's similar to the structure of a house: certain spaces are designated as a bedroom, a bathroom, a kitchen, and so forth.

As we know, houses appear in many different shapes and sizes, even though they contain all of these similar features. You might say that the *structure* of a house can be *organized* in many different ways. In writing, organization is where your unique approach as an author comes into play. In what particular order are body paragraphs placed? Why?






In short, structure is the **what**, and organization is the **why**.

As a writer, you'll identify what pieces are necessary for your essay to include. Then you'll determine what order those pieces will appear in, and how they connect together.

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify appropriate rhetorical pattern for the topic and the task
- identify components of an effective thesis statement
- identify components of an effective logical argument
- identify components of an effective paragraph
- identify components of an effective essay body
- identify components of an effective introduction
- identify components of an effective conclusion

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5.22: Text- How to Write a Thesis Statement

Whether you are writing a short essay or a doctoral dissertation, your thesis statement will arguably be the most difficult sentence to formulate. An effective thesis statement states the purpose of the paper and, therefore, functions to control, assert and structure your entire argument. Without a sound thesis, your argument may sound weak, lacking in direction, and uninteresting to the reader.

Start with a question — then make the answer your thesis

Regardless of how complicated the subject is, almost any thesis can be constructed by answering a question.



- **Question:** "What are the benefits of using computers in a fourth-grade classroom?"
  - **Thesis:** "Computers allow fourth graders an early advantage in technological and scientific education."
- **Question:** "Why is the Mississippi River so important in Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*?"
  - **Thesis:** "The river comes to symbolize both division and progress, as it separates our characters and country while still providing the best chance for Huck and Jim to get to know one another."
- **Question:** "Why do people seem to get angry at vegans, feminists, and other 'morally righteous' subgroups?"
  - **Thesis:** "Through careful sociological study, we've found that people naturally assume that "morally righteous" people look down on them as "inferior," causing anger and conflict where there generally is none."

Tailor your thesis to the type of paper you're writing

N ot all essays persuade, and not all essays teach. The goals of your paper will help you find the best thesis.

- **Analytical:** Breaks down something to better examine and understand it.
  - Ex. "This dynamic between different generations sparks much of the play's tension, as age becomes a motive for the violence and unrest that rocks King Lear."
- **Expository:** Teaches or illuminates a point.
  - Ex. "The explosion of 1800's philosophies like Positivism, Marxism, and Darwinism undermined and refuted Christianity to instead focus on the real, tangible world."
- **Argumentative:** Makes a claim, or backs up an opinion, to change other peoples' minds.
  - Ex. "Without the steady hand and specific decisions of Barack Obama, America would never have recovered from the hole it entered in the early 2000's."

Ensure your thesis is provable



Do not come up with your thesis and then look it up later. The thesis is the end point of your research, not the beginning. You need to use a thesis you can actually back up with evidence.

Good Theses Examples:

- "By owning up to the impossible contradictions, embracing them and questioning them, Blake forges his own faith, and is stronger for it. Ultimately, the only way for his poems to have faith is to temporarily lose it."
- "According to its well-documented beliefs and philosophies, an existential society with no notion of either past or future cannot help but become stagnant."
- "By reading "Ode to a Nightingale" through a modern deconstructionist lens, we can see how Keats viewed poetry as shifting and subjective, not some rigid form."

Bad Theses Examples:

- "The wrong people won the American Revolution." While striking and unique, who is "right" and who is "wrong" is exceptionally hard to prove, and very subjective.
- "The theory of genetic inheritance is the binding theory of every human interaction." Too complicated and overzealous. The scope of "every human interaction" is just too big
- "Paul Harding's novel *Tinkers* is ultimately a cry for help from a clearly depressed author." Unless you interviewed Harding extensively, or had a lot of real-life sources, you have no way of proving what is fact and what is fiction."

Get the sound right



You want your thesis statement to be identifiable as a thesis statement. You do this by taking a very particular tone and using specific kinds of phrasing and words. Use words like "because" and language which is firm and definitive.

Example thesis statements with good statement language include:

- "Because of William the Conqueror's campaign into England, that nation developed the strength and culture it would need to eventually build the British Empire."
- "Hemingway significantly changed literature by normalizing simplistic writing and frank tone."

Know where to place a thesis statement

Because of the role thesis statements play, they appear at the beginning of the paper, usually at the end of the first paragraph or somewhere in the introduction. Although most people look for the thesis at the end of the first paragraph, its location can depend on a number of factors such as how lengthy of an introduction you need before you can introduce your thesis or the length of your paper.

Limit a thesis statement to one or two sentences in length

Thesis statements are clear and to the point, which helps the reader identify the topic and direction of the paper, as well as your position towards the subject.

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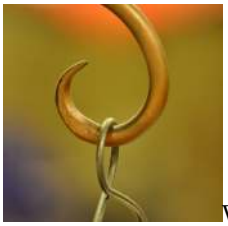
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5.23: Text- Text Structures

A **text structure** is the framework of a text's beginning, middle, and end. Different narrative and expository genres have different purposes and different audiences, and so they require different text structures. Beginnings and endings help link the text into a coherent whole.

BEGINNINGS: HOOKING YOUR READER



Where to begin is a crucial decision for a writer. Just as a good beginning can draw a reader into a piece of writing, a mediocre beginning can discourage a reader from reading further. The beginning, also called the **lead** or the **hook**, orients the reader to the purpose of the writing by introducing characters or setting (for narrative) or the topic, thesis, or argument (for expository writing). A good beginning also sets up expectations for the purpose, style, and mood of the piece. Good writers know how to hook their readers in the opening sentences and paragraphs by using techniques such as dialogue, flashback, description, inner thoughts, and jumping right into the action.

WHAT'S IN THE MIDDLE?

The organization of the middle of a piece of writing depends on the genre. Researchers have identified five basic organizational structures: **sequence**, **description**, **cause and effect**, **compare and contrast**, and **problem and solution**.

Sequence uses time, numerical, or spatial order as the organizing structure. Some narrative genres that use a chronological sequence structure are personal narrative genres (memoir, autobiographical incident, autobiography), imaginative story genres (fairytales, folktales, fantasy, science fiction), and realistic fiction genres. Narrative story structures include an initiating event, complicating actions that build to a high point, and a resolution. Many narratives also include the protagonist's goals and obstacles that must be overcome to achieve those goals.

Description is used to describe the characteristic features and events of a specific subject ("My Cat") or a general category ("Cats"). Descriptive reports may be arranged according to categories of related attributes, moving from general categories of features to specific attributes.

Cause and Effect structure is used to show causal relationships between events. Essays demonstrate cause and effect by giving reasons to support relationships, using the word "because." Signal words for cause and effect structures also include if/then statements, "as a result," and "therefore."

Comparison and Contrast structure is used to explain how two or more objects, events, or positions in an argument are similar or different. Graphic organizers such as venn diagrams, compare/contrast organizers, and tables can be used to compare features across different categories. Words used to signal comparison and contrast organizational structures include "same," "alike," "in contrast," "similarities," "differences," and "on the other hand."

Problem and Solution requires writers to state a problem and come up with a solution. Although problem/solution structures are typically found in informational writing, realistic fiction also often uses a problem/solution structure.

ENDINGS: BEYOND "HAPPILY EVER AFTER"

Anyone who has watched a great movie for ninety minutes only to have it limp to the finish with weak ending knows that strong endings are just as critical to effective writing as strong beginnings. And anyone who has watched the director's cut of a movie with all the alternate endings knows that even great directors have trouble coming up with satisfying endings for their movies. Just like directors, writers have to decide how to wrap up the action in their stories, resolving the conflict and tying up loose ends in a way that will leave their audience satisfied.



The type of ending an author chooses depends on his or her purpose. When the purpose is to entertain, endings may be happy or tragic, or a surprise ending may provide a twist. Endings can be circular, looping back to the beginning so readers end where they began, or they can leave the reader hanging, wishing for more. Endings can be deliberately ambiguous or ironic, designed to make the reader think, or they can explicitly state the moral of the story, telling the reader what to think. Strong endings for expository texts can summarize the highlights, restate the main points, or end with a final zinger statement to drive home the main point to the audience.

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5.24: Text- Components of an Effective Paragraph

Every paragraph in the body of an essay consists of three main parts: a topic sentence, some supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence. Transition words and phrases provide links between individual paragraphs, and so are important to consider, as well.

Of these elements, the **topic sentences** are the most important to building a strong essay, and deserve the most attention.

Topic Sentences

A clear topic sentence in each paragraph will assist with essay organization. Consider writing topic sentences early in the process, while you're working on an outline. You can return later to fill in the rest of the paragraph. Having these single sentences figured out early makes the rest of the essay much easier to write!

Devote each body paragraph of an essay to discussing only the point of its topic sentence. If something is interesting to you, but not directly related to the topic sentence, save it for elsewhere in the essay (or hang on to it for a future writing task!). This will help keep your essay focused and effective.

Ensure that your topic sentence is directly related to your main argument or thesis.

Make sure that your topic sentence offers a "preview" of your paragraph's discussion. Many beginning writers forget to use the first sentence this way, and end up with sentences that don't give a clear direction for the paragraph.

For example, compare these two first sentences:

Thomas Jefferson was born in 1743.

Thomas Jefferson, who was born in 1743, became one of the most important people in America by the end of the 18th century.

- The first sentence doesn't give a good direction for the paragraph. It states a fact but leaves the reader clueless about the fact's relevance. The second sentence contextualizes the fact and lets the reader know what the rest of the paragraph will discuss.

Supporting & Concluding Sentences

This video walks through all three components of an effective paragraph, giving good examples of what supporting statements and concluding sentences might look like.

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/braw/?p=298

Click here to download a transcript for this video

Transitions

You spend so much time thinking about the ideas of an academic essay that the way these ideas connect makes perfect sense to you. Keep in mind, though, that readers of your essay aren't nearly as familiar with the subject as you are, and will need your guidance.

Transitional phrases, usually found at the beginning of body paragraphs, will allow your reader to follow your train of thought. Phrases like "likewise" or "in contrast" are key indicators as to what relationship different paragraphs have to one another.

- Transitions help underline your essay's overall organizational logic. For example, beginning a paragraph with something like "Despite the many points in its favor, Mystic Pizza also has several elements that keep it from being the best pizza in town" allows your reader to understand how this paragraph connects to what has come before.
- Transitions can also be used inside paragraphs. They can help connect the ideas within a paragraph smoothly so your reader can follow them.
- If you're having a lot of trouble connecting your paragraphs, your organization may be off. Experiment with different paragraph order, to see if that helps.

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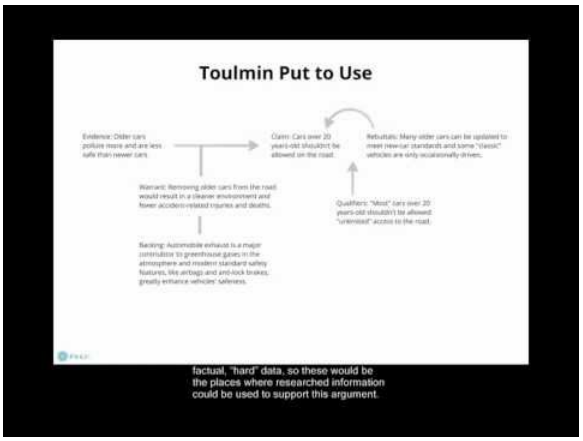
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5.25: Video- The Toulmin Model

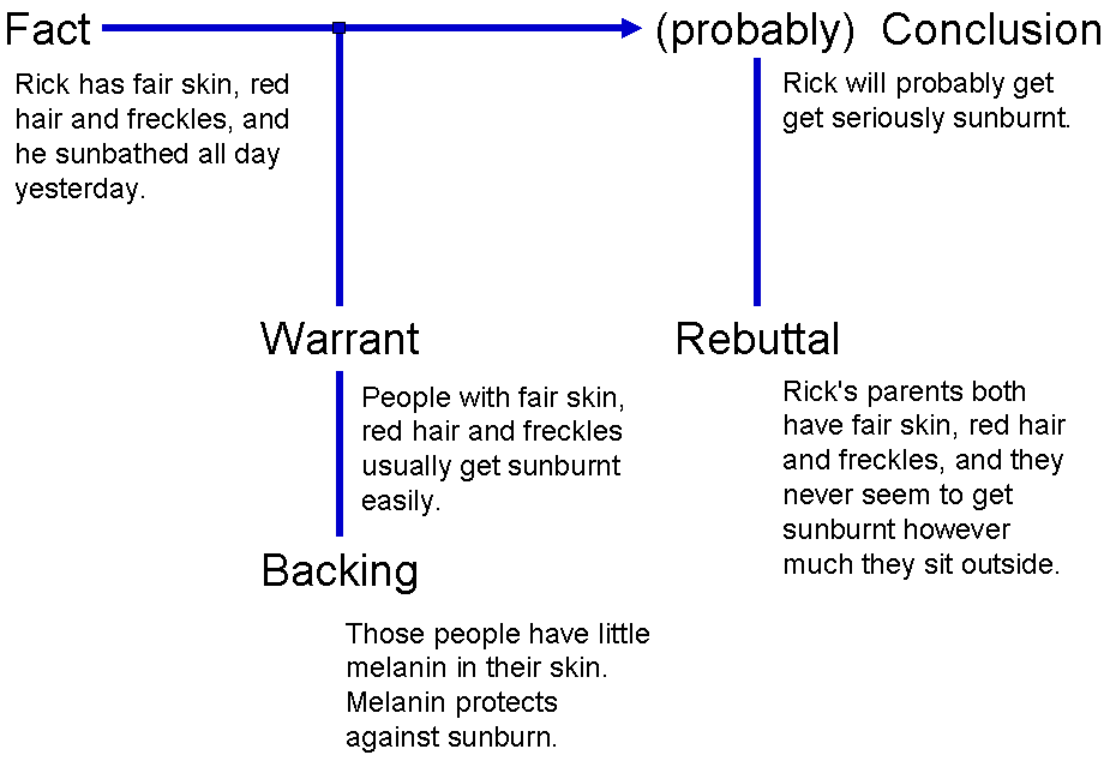
The following video introduces the components of a particular type of persuasive writing, The Toulmin Model. It can be useful to think about **claims** and **evidence** in your writing, and what unstated assumptions (**warrants**) might be influencing you.



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/braw/?p=300

Click here to download a transcript of this video.

This image shows how conclusions are reached, using the Toulmin model of arguments.



In essays using the Toulmin model, warrants aren't usually stated explicitly in writing. They are often shared beliefs between a reader and the writer, however.

Consider what assumptions you make about your chosen subject, that your reader likely also agrees with. What assumptions do you have that your readers may not share?

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5.26: Self Check- Organizing

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5.27: Try It- Organizing

Organizing Activity

To Do

 Revisit the prewriting, working thesis, and initial evidence you've gathered for your essay so far. It's time to start organizing the content into a plan, so you know what you're ready to write and what will need more thought, research, or investigation.

1. Determine what kind and how many body paragraphs you'll need. Write a draft of a topic sentence for each body paragraph.
2. Determine what kind of introduction will be appropriate for this essay. Write a draft of a "hook" statement to catch the reader's attention.
3. Determine what kind of conclusion will be appropriate for this essay. Write a draft of a "takeaway" or "zinger" statement to leave your reader with.
4. Compare the sentences you've developed to your thesis statement. Do your topic sentences all relate directly to your thesis? If not, consider revising your thesis, and/or the topic sentences.

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5.28: Outcome- Drafting



Identify Drafting Activities

We're ready to dive into the process of writing, proper.

As we do, consider these observations from Dr. Pat Thomson, from the School of Education at The University of Nottingham.

There is a strong temptation to send things off too early. Finishing a first draft usually feels like a win – even a triumph. You didn't know that it was going to be possible to write that much and here it is – all your words in one place. You rush to get it to your professor and then wait impatiently for the response. And when it comes, it suggests major revisions… Corrections beyond editing? This is a disaster. I am hopeless. The thesis/paper is doomed. I will never finish. The professor is an unfeeling monster.

Not true. All it takes is revision, some of which could have been done in the first place if we hadn't felt so darned elated that we'd actually produced a text.

But on the other hand…some people are feel deeply that their writing isn't going to be good enough, now in the first draft, and probably ever.  All of the research on writer's block suggests that people who aim for perfection the first time round are likely to seriously inhibit their writing. They agonize over phrases, work on a first sentence until they can't face it any more, take weeks to get a few pages written to their impossibly high expectations. We often see this kind of person characterized in movies – the unsuccessful writer who begins confidently on a first sentence but some hours later is surrounded by crumpled-up papers and sits despondently, staring sadly at a blank screen. Academic writers do this too.

Part of the problem seems to be that in conversations about academic writing we don't talk enough about the inevitability of the crappy first draft and the importance of revising. We don't suggest that it takes more than one go to reach the levels of polished prose that we admire. But really – let me reiterate – it doesn't happen straight away. If we just read finished articles and never see work in progress – and how many of us actually do get to see the work of experienced writers along the way – then we have no idea how much revising good academic writers actually do.

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify strategies for drafting from an outline
- identify considerations unique to early drafts
- identify the value of multiple drafts

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5.29: Text- Using an Outline to Write a Paper

The main difference between outlining a reading and outlining your own paper is the source of the ideas. When you outline something someone else wrote, you are trying to represent their ideas and structure. When outlining your own paper, you will need to focus on your own ideas and how best to organize them. Depending on the type of writing assignment, you might want to incorporate concepts and quotations from various other sources, but your interpretation of those ideas is still the most important element. Creating an outline based on the principles outlined above can help you to put your ideas in a logical order, so your paper will have a stronger, more effective argument.

Step 1: Figure out your main points and create the headings for your outline

Once you have come up with some ideas for your paper, you will need to organize those ideas. The first step is to decide what your main points will be. Use those main ideas as the headings for your outline. Remember to start with your introduction as the first heading, add headings for each main idea in your argument, and finish with a conclusion.

For example, an outline for a five-paragraph essay on why I love my dog might have the following headings:

I. INTRODUCTION

II. BODY PARAGRAPH 1: My Dog is a Good Companion

III. BODY PARAGRAPH 2: My Dog is Well-Behaved

IV. BODY PARAGRAPH 3: My Dog is Cute

V. CONCLUSION

Since the topic is why I love my dog, each of the body paragraphs will present one reason why I love my dog. Always make sure your main ideas directly relate to your topic!

You can order your main ideas based on either the strength of your argument (i.e. put your most convincing point first) or on some other clear organizing principle. A narrative on how you became a student at this college would most likely follow a chronological approach, for example. Don't worry if you are not completely satisfied with the ordering; you can always change it later. This is particularly easy if you are creating your outline in a word-processing program on a computer: you can drag the items into different positions to test out different orderings and see which makes the most sense.

Step 2: Add your supporting ideas

The next step is to fill in supporting ideas for each of your main ideas. Give any necessary explanations, descriptions, evidence, or examples to convince the reader that you are making a good point. If you are using quotes, add those here. Remember to include the appropriate citation based on whichever format your teacher requires; having that information in your outline will speed things up when you write your paper (since you won't have to go hunting for the bibliographic information) and make it easier to avoid plagiarism.

To continue the example above, a writer might fill in part II of the outline as follows:

II. Body Paragraph 1: My Dog is a Good Companion

A. My dog is fun

1. My dog likes to play
2. My dog likes to go on walks

B. My dog is friendly

1. My dog likes to cuddle
2. My dog likes people

This section is focused on the idea that "I love my dog because he is a good companion." The two first-level subheadings are general reasons why he is a good companion: he is fun (A) and he is friendly (B). Each of those ideas is then further explained through examples: My dog is fun because he like to play and go on walks. I know my dog is friendly since he enjoys cuddling and

like people. Even more detail could be added by including specific games my dog likes to play, behaviors that tell me he like to go on walks, and so. The more detail you add, the easier it will be to write you paper later on!

In terms of how to organize your subheadings, again try to present these supporting ideas in a logical order. Group similar ideas together, move from general concepts to more specific examples or explanations, and make sure each supporting idea directly relates to the heading or subheading under which it falls.

When you have finished adding supporting ideas, read through the outline to see if there is anywhere you think your argument has holes or could be further fleshed out. Make sure that your ideas are in the most logical order. Don't be afraid to test out different orderings to see what makes the most sense!

Step 3: Turn your headings and subheadings into complete sentences

Once you have added as much detail as possible and your outline is complete, save it as a new file on your computer (or type it into the computer). If your main and supporting ideas in the outline are not already in sentence form, turn each item into one or more complete sentences. This will help you to see more clearly idea where to divide up your paragraphs. When writing a short to medium length paper, each heading (or main idea) will typically correspond to one paragraph. For longer papers, each heading may be a section and your first (or even second) level of subheading will eventually become your paragraphs. See how many sentences fall under each heading to get a rough idea of what correspondence makes the most sense for your paper.

Step 4: Construct your paragraphs

Next, start at the beginning of your outline and go through point by point. Delete the outline formatting (indentations and letter/numeral designations) and start to put your sentences together into paragraphs. You may need to add transition phrases or even extra sentences to make sure your prose flows naturally. You might also find that even though your ideas seemed to make sense in the outline, you need to add still more details here or change the order of your ideas for everything to fully make sense. You may even find that you have too many ideas or that some ideas are not really all that relevant and need to be cut. That is perfectly normal. The outline is a plan to help you get organized, but you always have the flexibility to change it to fit the needs of your assignment.

Remember to start a new paragraph whenever you introduce a new idea (or when a paragraph has gotten very long and the reader needs a break). Again, you will probably want to add transition phrases or sentences to connect each paragraph to what came before and to help the reader follow your argument.

Once you have finished turning your outline into paragraphs, you should have a decent first draft of your paper. Now you just need to proofread and revise (and repeat) until you are ready to turn in your assignment!

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5.30: Text- Crappy First Drafts

Essay assignments are such high-stakes tasks, that we feel a lot of pressure to do serious work, and perform well, at every stage of the writing process. Sure, prewriting can be kind of fun, and outlining can get us excited about the possibilities a project can hold.

At the time of starting to write a first draft, however, the pressure starts to mount. Sometimes we can feel locked into the need to get everything perfect, that it can be paralyzing.

The thing to remember is that EVERY first draft is crappy. Everyone's.



Consider this blog post by Melissa Ward:

"The first draft of anything is shit." —Ernest Hemingway

I should be able to stop here, leaving you with Hemingway's sage and true statement, and go work onto something else, maybe my own shitty first draft of a blog post. But I won't because I know most of you refuse to accept this truth.

No, instead you think if you beat your head against your desk hard enough and long enough, you will craft some 24k golden prose, words so sweet and deftly written that you'll bring tears to the eyes of babes.

Well you won't. So stop it.

Still don't believe me? Are you saying, "Melissa, how do you know how well I write?" To this, I say, that doesn't matter. If you can't learn to write a shitty first draft, getting whatever it is out of your system, then you're never going to have the energy to keep writing. You're not going to learn how to take risks, because you'll never let yourself write anything less than perfect on the first go.

FREAKING STOP IT. Write some garbage. Let it spew forth, and once you've finally emptied that stinking pustule, take a step away and come back later. Put on some gloves and dig through the pile you emptied out on those pages, and you'll begin to find some gems. Use them to write a good second draft, and then repeat until you have an excellent final draft.

If you don't believe me, then see what Anne Lamott has to say about it. Lamott's *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life* has a chapter titled "Shitty First Drafts." The book was required reading when I took my short fiction workshop in college, and it's a great book for all writers.

The shitty first draft isn't about encouraging bad writing … it's about encouraging writing AT ALL. You'll never write a page if you keep stopping yourself within the first sentence or two and rewriting. Free yourself and learn to love the shitty first draft.

The crappy first draft can be very liberating. If it doesn't have to be good, then we feel a lot more freedom to get started and get it over with.

Trust in the process. Write crap. Plenty of time later to refine it.

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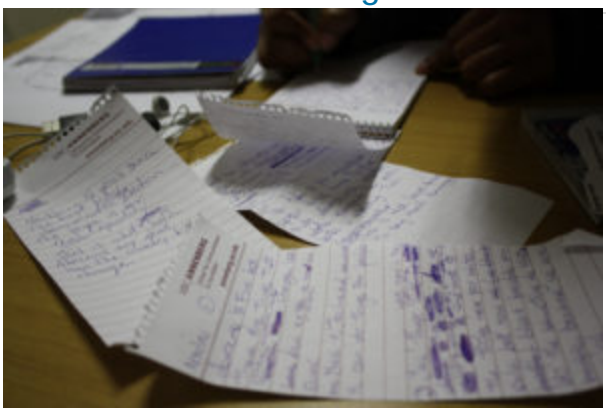
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5.31: Text- Time Management for College Writers



Your only goal during the first draft is to get things down on the page so that you can start rewriting. The first draft has no other value. Regardless of how many faults it has, the first draft accomplishes its entire purpose merely by coming into existence. — Richard K. Neumann, *Legal Reasoning and Legal Writing*

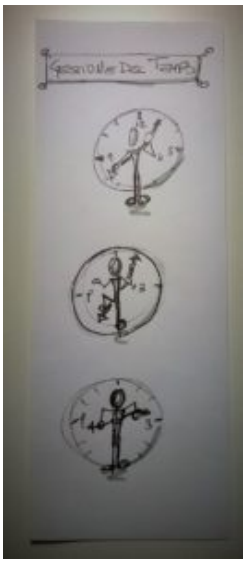
Budgeting the time it takes to create an essay is really important, but it's not usually explicitly discussed in classrooms. Consider the following advice as you map out your time between the date you're given a writing assignment and the date it's due.

Writing

- **Plan on 20 minutes, minimum, per typed page.**
- **Start writing your rough draft as soon as you can.** Once you have those first words on paper, the rest is much easier.
- **Find your best time of day and write then.** Never put off writing until you are tired or sleepy. Tired writing is almost always bad writing.
- **For short essays, a llow an absolute minimum of 10 minutes per paragraph.** "Short" means fewer than 3 pages of typed text. Thus, for a four-paragraph essay allow at least 40 minutes for the first draft.
- **For longer essays, allow an absolute minimum of one hour to produce every three typed pages of rough draft.** You don't have to write it all at one sitting, but budget enough total time to complete a rough draft without feeling any time pressure.
- **Once your rough draft is done, leave it until the next day (at least!) before revising it.** This way you'll be able to look at it with "fresh eyes" and recognize room for improvement.

Rewriting

You and your classmates may assume that the first draft is the most important part of writing. Actually, the first draft is the LEAST important part. The analysis and reflection you do in the process of revision and proofreading are much more valuable contributions toward a strong final product.



- **Allow at least the same amount of time for revision and proofreading as you did for writing the rough draft.** The more important the writing project, the more time will be needed in revising and proofreading. This means that a very important three-page, typed paper would require a total of at least two to three hours to complete in final form.
- **R evise first.** Allow enough time before your final deadline to rewrite nine-tenths of your paper (or to start over with some components, if necessary).
- **L eave enough time to read the text out loud or to have someone else read it out loud to you.** This is one of the most important things you can do to as a scholar to ensure the quality of your text. Your ears will detect elements that are out of place more readily than your eyes will see them.
- **If your mother language is not English, or if you have more than average difficulty with spelling, punctuation, or grammar, consult a tutor.** While you don't want anyone else to rewrite your paper, a native speaker of English can offer advice and coaching on wording things most effectively.
- **P roofread last.** The time necessary for this process depends on the length of the paper. The best method for this is to print out the paper, proofread it in hard copy (or, even better, have someone else correct it), make the necessary corrections on the computer text, and only then print out the final version.
- **Save your final copy in several ways.** Back it up on your computer files, through a cloud storage, on a flash drive, and/or in your school's electronic class platform. You never know when the unexpected will happen. Almost every student experiences a major electronic data loss at some point, and it can be devastating.
- **Keep secure, permanent electronic and paper files of all papers you write in college.** You never know when you may need to consult them again.

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5.32: Self Check- Drafting

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5.33: Try It- Drafting

Drafting Activity

To Do

 Pen to paper time (or fingers to keyboard time).

1. Using all the writing you've done up to this point, including your prewriting, outlining, and most current draft of your thesis statement, build a **complete first draft** of your essay.

Right now, it's all about generating content. Remember from the reading in this section that first drafts are rarely pretty. Do your best to ignore the critical part of your brain, and turn loose your creative energies, instead.

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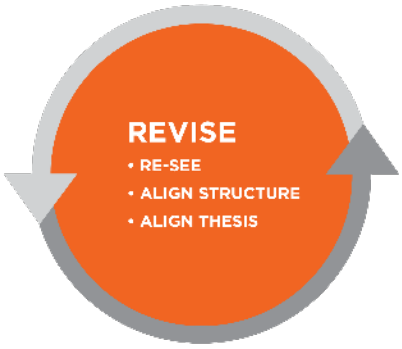
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5.34: Outcome- Revising



Identify Revision Activities

Taken literally, revision is re-vision — literally re-seeing the paper in front of you.

The act of revision centers heavily around the practice of questioning your work. As you read through this section, and consider your own habits when it comes to revision, consider this list of guiding questions from The Writing Center at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Revision Checklist

Subject, Audience, Purpose

1. What's the most important thing I want to say about my subject?
2. Who am I writing this paper for? What would my reader want to know about the subject? What does my reader already know about it?
3. Why do I think the subject is worth writing about? Will my reader think the paper was worth reading?
4. What verb explains what I'm trying to do in this paper (tell a story, compare X and Y, describe Z)?
5. Does my first paragraph answer questions 1-4? If not, why not?

Organization

1. How many specific points do I make about my subject? Did I overlap or repeat any points? Did I leave my points out or add some that aren't relevant to the main idea?
2. How many paragraphs did I use to talk about each point?
3. Why did I talk about them in this order? Should the order be changed?
4. How did I get from one point to the next? What signposts did I give the reader?

Paragraphing (Ask these questions of every paragraph)

1. What job is this paragraph supposed to do? How does it relate to the paragraph before and after it?
2. What's the topic idea? Will my reader have trouble finding it?
3. How many sentences did it take to develop the topic idea? Can I substitute better examples, reasons, or details?
4. How well does the paragraph hold together? How many levels of generality does it have? Are the sentences different lengths and types? Do I need transitions? When I read the paragraph out loud, did it flow smoothly?

Sentences (Ask these questions of every sentence)

1. Which sentences in my paper do I like the most? The least?
2. Can my reader "see" what I'm saying? What words could I substitute for people, things, this/that, aspect, etc.?
3. Is this sentence "fat"?
4. Can I combine this sentence with another one?
5. Can I add adjectives and adverbs or find a more lively verb?

Things to Check Last

1. Did I check spelling and punctuation? What kinds of grammar or punctuation problems did I have in my last paper?
2. How does my paper end? Did I keep the promises I made to my reader at the beginning of the paper?

3. When I read the assignment again, did I miss anything?
4. What do I like best about this paper? What do I need to work on in the next paper?

— from *A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers* by Erika Lindemann

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify the process of seeking input on writing from others
- identify strategies for incorporating personal and external editorial comments
- identify methods for re-seeing a piece of writing
- identify higher order concerns for revision

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5.35: Text- Respond and Redraft

There are several steps to turn a first (or second, or third!) draft of a piece of writing into the final version. There is no way to get to that wonderful final draft without all the steps in between.

Professors often ask for draft essays in order to guide you as your writing develops. As you progress from 1st to 2nd draft, or from 2nd (3rd or 4th) to final draft, seeking input from others can help you get a fresh perspective on your work.

Find a Trusted Reader

A survival tip for college is to develop relationships with people whose opinions you trust. You'll want to be able to draw on these people to give valuable, helpful, supportive feedback on your writing.

 As you first get started with college classes, you'll likely participate in peer reviews for essay assignments. Show your appreciation to your classmates who offer you helpful feedback. Note which of your classmates whose writing you admire. Try to continue working with these people as much as possible.

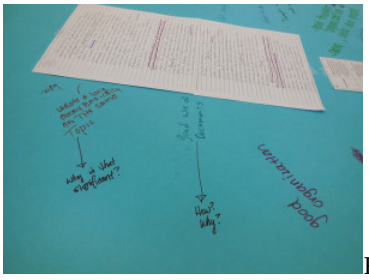
Also take advantage of your school's Writing Center, if possible. Most tutoring centers will welcome talking with you at any stage of your essay-writing process. **Note**: tutors won't just "fix" a paper draft. They will talk with you about what areas you are concerned with, and offer strategies to help focus YOU as YOU revise your paper.

Finally, your professor will likely be happy to talk over a draft with you, as well. Some classes will require you to turn in a rough draft for a grade and instructor comments, but most won't. Nonetheless, your professors expect you to write multiple drafts, and will welcome a visit during office hours to talk about how to make your paper as strong as it can possibly be.

Respond to your reader's comments

Whether you received comments from your professor, your friends, or a peer review, your edits are a way to *respond* to their questions and comments. Was your reader confused by what you thought was a really good point? Edit your paragraph so that your idea becomes clearer. Use specific pieces of evidence, such an important quote or statistic, to strengthen the paragraph. You can even try responding to the comments aloud–and then write them down in your draft in appropriately "academic" language.

Redraft your essay

 Really going from draft to final version requires rethinking the flow of logic in your writing. For instance, you might realize that a sentence buried on the 3rd page of your paper would be an excellent "hook." To use it well, you will need to redraft, moving it to the opening and altering the rest of the material on page 3 as well.

Redrafting means looking again at how each piece of your argument fits together in the whole.

- Shift paragraphs around–don't worry about losing your train of thought.
- Delete unnecessary information–or if you think it fits better elsewhere, re-place it.
- Outlining your paper as it stands in the current draft can be very helpful for figuring out how you are presenting your ideas and can make it much easier to see where you need to reorder your information, add more support, or delete unnecessary material.

- If you are a visual person, try a craftsy approach. Print your essay out (single-sided) and cut it into paragraph-long pieces. Shuffle the pieces around so that you've mixed up their original order entirely. Then individually read and place the pieces/paragraph in the order that the ideas connect. As you tape or pin the parts together, you might find that the paragraphs are coming together in different ways than in your original draft.

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5.36: Text- Higher Order Concerns

You've written a draft of your paper. Now your work is done, so you should just turn it in, right? No, WAIT! Step away from the computer, take a deep breath, and don't submit that assignment just yet.

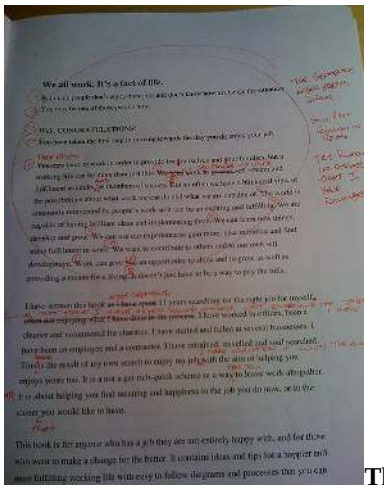
You should always revise and proofread your paper. A first draft is usually a very rough draft. It takes time and at least two (or more!) **additional**  passes through to really make sure your argument is strong, your writing is polished, and there are no typos or grammatical errors. Making these efforts will always give you a better paper in the end.

Try to wait a day or two before looking back over your paper. If you are on a tight deadline, then take a walk, grab a snack, drink some coffee, or do something else to clear your head so you can read through your paper with fresh eyes. The longer you wait, the more likely it is you will see what is actually on the page and not what you meant to write.

What to Look for in the First Pass(es): Higher-Order Concerns

Typically, early review passes of a paper should focus on the larger issues, which are known as **higher-order concerns**. Higher-order concerns relate to the strength of your ideas, the support for your argument, and the logic of how your points are presented. Some important higher-order concerns are listed below, along with some questions you can ask yourself while proofreading diting to see if your paper needs work in any of these areas:

- **The Thesis Statement:**
  - Does your paper have a clear thesis statement? If so, where is it?
  - Does the introduction lead up to that thesis statement?
  - Does each paragraph directly relate back to your thesis statement?
- **The Argument:**
  - Is your thesis statement supported by enough evidence?
  - Do you need to add any explanations or examples to better make your case?
  - Is there any unnecessary or irrelevant information that should be removed?
- **Large-Scale Organization:**
  - Could your paper be easily outlined or tree-diagrammed?
  - Are your paragraphs presented in a logical order?
  - Are similar ideas grouped together?
  - Are there clear transitions (either verbal or logical) that link each paragraph to what came before?
- **Organization within Paragraphs:**
  - Is each paragraph centered around one main idea?
  - Is there a clear topic sentence for each paragraph?
  - Are any of your paragraphs too short or too long?
  - Do all the sentences in each paragraph relate back to their respective topic sentences?
  - Are the sentences presented in a logical order, so each grows out of what came before?

-  **The Assignment Instructions:**
  - Does your paper answer all aspects of the writing prompt?
  - Have you completed all of the tasks required by the instructor?
  - Did you include all necessary sections (for example, an abstract or reference list)?
  - Are you following the required style for formatting the paper as a whole, the reference list, and/or your citations? (That last question is technically a lower-order concern, but it falls under the assignment instructions and is something where you could easily lose points if you don't follow instructions.)

When reading through your early draft(s) of your paper, mark up your paper with those concerns in mind first. Keep revising until you have fixed all of these larger-scale issues.

Your paper may change a lot as you do this – that's completely normal!

You might have to add more material; cut sentences, paragraphs, or even whole sections; or rewrite significant portions of the paper to fix any problems related to these higher-order concerns. This is why you should be careful not to get too bogged down with small-scale problems early on: **there is no point in spending a lot of time fixing sentences that you end up cutting because they don't actually fit in with your topic.**

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5.37: Self Check- Revising

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5.38: Try It- Revising

Revising Activity

To Do



1. Write answers to all questions found on the Higher Order Concerns page of the text.
2. Reflect on what your answers tell you about what aspects of your essay still need to be addressed. Complete a second draft that satisfies all the higher order concerns raised by that reflection.

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5.39: Outcome- Proofreading

Identify Proofreading Activities



Proofreading is the final dust-and-polish pass-through of your writing. Though it's the last step of writing, it's what will make the first impression people have of your work.

John Green, author of *The Fault in Our Stars*, walks through some of his favorite typos from history in the video below. Each of these fundamentally changed the way people read the works in question. Proofreading (or a lack thereof) can have lasting impact!



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/braw/?p=328

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify lower order concerns for revision
- identify strategies for improving sentence clarity
- identify strategies for recognizing potential grammatical issues in a draft
- identify strategies for recognizing potential spelling issues in a draft
- identify strategies for recognizing potential punctuation issues in a draft

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5.40: Text- Lower-Order Concerns

What to Look for in the Later Proofreading Pass(es): Lower-Order Concerns

Once you have fully addressed the higher-order concerns with an essay draft, you can focus on more local fixes or **lower-order concerns**. Lower-order concerns include writing style, wording, typos, and grammar issues.



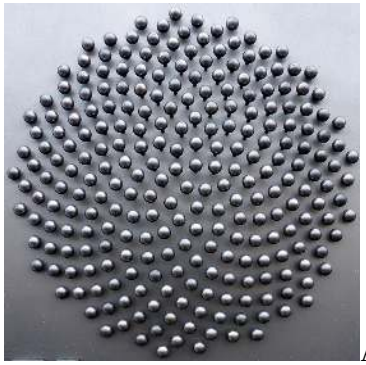
Yes, it's true: grammar is a lower-order concern! Even though students are often very concerned that their grammar needs to be fixed, it is actually more important to focus on the quality of your ideas and the logic of how they are presented first. That's not to say you shouldn't worry about grammar; it's just that you shouldn't make it a main focus until closer to the end of the writing process.

Some typical lower-order concerns are listed below, along with some questions that can help you recognize aspects in need of revision:

- **Style**:
  - Are you using an appropriate tone?
  - Are you following the conventions that are typical of your discipline?
  - Are you using the required style for formatting?
- **Wording**:
  - Are you always picking the word that has the precise meaning you want?
  - Are there any places where your wording is confusing or where your sentences are long and hard to follow?
  - Are there any awkward phrases?
  - Are you writing as simply and concisely as possible?
  - Are there any redundant words or sentences that should be removed?
- **Grammar**:
  - Do you have any sentence fragments or run-on sentences?
  - Are your subjects and verbs in agreement?
  - Are you handling your plurals and possessives correctly?
  - Are there any punctuation errors?
- **Typos**:
  - Are there missing words?
  - Are any words misspelled (be especially careful to watch out for words that spell-check won't catch, for example typing "can" when you meant "van")?
  - Are there any extra spaces that need to be removed?

Cleaning up these local issues is the final stage in the writing process. Think of this as polishing up your writing, so that the quality of your prose matches the quality of your ideas.

Other Tips for Proofreading



- Always read slowly and carefully when proofreading. Don't rush! If you try to go too fast, you will probably miss errors you would otherwise catch.
- Read your paper out loud. This can be very helpful for catching typos, missing words, awkward phrasings, and overly long or confusing sentences.
- Pretend you are the reader, not the author of the paper. Try to look at what you wrote from the perspective of someone who does not know all the things you know. Would a reasonably intelligent audience be able to understand your prose and be convinced by your argument?
- Keep track of any errors you consistently make (within a single paper or in multiple papers).
- Get feedback on your paper from your teacher, a classmate or friend, a tutor, or all of the above.

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5.41: Video- The Change-Up Method

The following video walks us through a simple but effective way to proofread our writing. It's helpful to see that even professional writers and editors make mistakes in their drafts that need to be corrected before sharing with the world.

https://youtu.be/Tk0x6tEWXzs

A transcript for this video can be downloaded here (.docx file).

The steps include

- changing the font style and size
- making the line spacing bigger
- reading the text backwards, from last sentence to first sentence

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5.42: Text- Proofreading Strategies

Below, you'll see a long list of potential items to look for in the proofreading process. Because everyone has a unique writing style, some of these items are much more likely to apply to you (and be helpful for you to consider) than others.

As you continue to write papers and get feedback on them in college, make note of the concerns that show up in your writing again and again. Make your own customized list of proofreading tips, to save time in the future.

Some suggestions to get you started–again, not all of these will apply to each paper, each time.



Editing for Language

With language, the overall question is whether you are using the most accurate language possible to describe your ideas. Your reader will have an easier time understanding what you want to say if you're precise. Be sure to check for the following.

- **Pronoun clarity**: Make sure it's clear what each "it," "he," and "she" refers to.
- **Precise vocabulary**: Make sure every word means what you intend it to mean. Use a dictionary to confirm the meaning of any word about which you are unsure.
- **Defined terms**: When using terms specific to your topic, make sure you define them for your readers who may not be familiar with them. If that makes the paragraph too bulky, consider using a different term.
- **Properly placed modifiers**: Make sure your reader can clearly discern what each adjective and adverb is meant to describe.
- **Hyperbole**: See if you can eradicate words like "amazing" and "gigantic" in favor of more precise descriptions. Also examine each use of the word "very" and see if you can find a more precise adjective that doesn't require its use.

Finally, pay attention to wordiness. Writing that is clean, precise, and simple will always sound best.

Editing for Sentence Construction

If you want to make everything easy for your audience to read and understand, start by simplifying your sentences. If you think a sentence is too complicated, rephrase it so that it is easier to read, or break it into two sentences. Clear doesn't have to mean boring.



Consider how balanced your sentences are within a paragraph. You don't want every sentence to have identical length and structure or to begin the same way. Instead, vary your sentence style.

This is also the time to add transitions between phrases and sentences that aren't connected smoothly to each other. You don't need to introduce every sentence with "then," "however," or "because." Using these words judiciously, though, will help your reader see logical connections between the different steps of your argument.

Suggestions While Proofreading

1. Remove unnecessary words such including *that*, *very*, *just*, *so*, and *actually*.
2. Avoid the passive voice. Rewrite sentences that include *am*, *is*, *was*, *were*, *be*, *being*, and *been* so that the sentence reads in the active voice.
3. Don't end sentences with a preposition. For example, don't end sentences with these words: *in*, *for*, *at*, *with*, *by*, and *from*.

4. Is the content in past, present, or future tense? Do a scan to make sure you use the same tense from start to finish.
5. Are you writing in first, second, or third person? Do a scan to make sure you use a consistent voice throughout. Generally, avoid second person pronouns–"you"–throughout an essay, unless you have specific reasons to in the assignment. Use the "find" feature in your word processor to locate any that may have slipped in. Likewise, only use first person pronouns–"I," "me," "we," etc.,–if your assignment calls for it.
6. Have you used one space after each sentence or two spaces? Double check for consistency.
7. Run spell check, but also check for commonly misspelled words that your spell check might not pick up. Here's a quick list:
    - To/ Too/ Two
    - Than/ Then
    - Trail/ Trial
    - Were/ Where/ We're
    - It's/ Its
    - Lose/ Loose
    - Complement/ Compliment
    - Their/ There/ They're
    - Compliant/ Complaint
8. What words do you commonly misspell?
9. Eliminate words you overuse. Keep a running list near your workspace that notes words you rely heavily on, and edit use the "Find" feature of your word processor to search for them while editing.

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5.43: Self Check- Proofreading

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5.44: Try It- Proofreading

Proofreading Activity

To Do

1.  Work through your essay draft at least one more time, this time focusing on lower-order concerns. Follow the proofreading advice offered in this section.
2. Prepare the final draft of your essay, making the strongest version of your work possible. Work with your instructor, your peers, and your Writing Center as needed.

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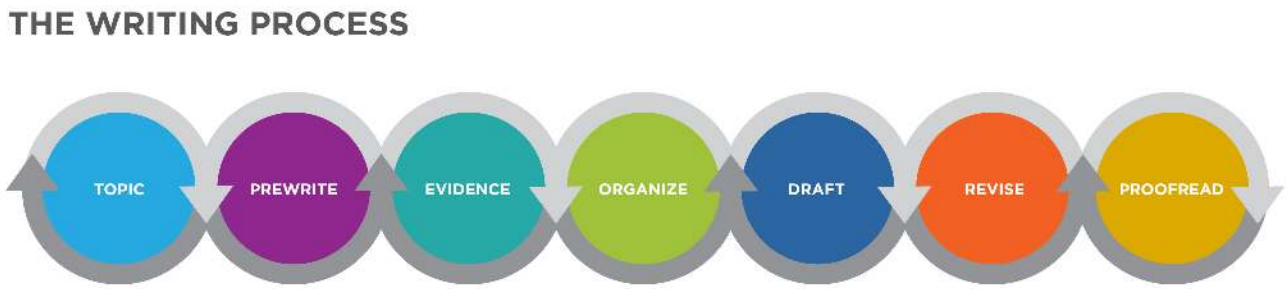
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5.45: Putting It Together- Writing Process



As this module emphasizes, a LOT happens behind the scenes when it comes to writing. We are used to seeing, and reading, finished works: books, course materials, online content. We aren't often exposed to all of the preparation and elbow grease that goes into the creation of those finished works.

It helps to recognize that incredibly successful people put just as much time into those behind-the-scenes efforts as the rest of us: maybe even MORE time. Consider this video, where Jerry Seinfeld creates a single joke:



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Download a transcript for this video here (.docx file).

Did you notice that he's been working on this joke for 2 years? Of course, some works of creative genius take longer than others. Unfortunately, deadlines are generally a lot tighter than that for most college writing.

The writing process is a tool that will help you through many large projects in your college career. You'll customize it to fit the way you work, and find that the process will change, depending on the project, the timeline, and the needs you have at the time.

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5.46: Assignment- Personal Analysis Essay

Personal Analysis Essay Introduction

This module will ask you to practice the stages of the writing process. You will develop an essay about your personal experiences relating to your ethical values, to be finalized by the end of this module.

This essay asks you to reflect on your own ethical values. As a writer, you have two options in crafting this essay:

1. You can narrate and reflect on the process of "coming to consciousness," focusing on a personal experience(s) leading to a deeper awareness of a social or ethical issue or a more general commitment to social justice. For example, you might write about one or two key influences on your ethical development. The influence(s) may be person(s), experience(s), religion(s) or text(s) (e.g., books, films). You might write about the development of a generalized social consciousness, or focus on your experiences of becoming aware of social issues such as climate change, hunger, gender inequality, or unemployment.
2. You can focus on "ethics in action," reflecting on an experience or moral choice that affirmed a personal commitment to particular ethical or social values. Some writers may choose a pivotal life choice or moral decision, while others focus on "everyday ethics," smaller expressions of ethical values such as compassion, cooperation, or integrity in daily settings such as colleges, workplaces, homes, houses of worship, or playing fields. You might write about the difficulty of living up to your ethical standards, or narrate an internal struggle or confusion about what you believe in respect to a particular question or issue.

Be richly descriptive in your writing. Take the reader inside the experience(s) to appreciate its power. When focusing on an individual or a setting, for example, use rich description; include dialogue, if appropriate. Alternately, if you are writing about a film, book, or political speech, describe visual images, scenes, quotations, or excerpts to communicate the power of the text(s).

Writing Ideas

If you are (or have been) involved in community service, this assignment enables you to draw on that experience. If you have a strongly held position on a social issue (such as capital punishment, gun control, or abortion rights), this essay offers you the opportunity to trace the roots of that stance or show how your position on this issue influences your daily life. Remember that writing about an internal ethical conflict or confusion is an option.

Assignment Details

The final essay will be 500-750 words long. It will include a thesis statement that is supported by evidence. It will be well-organized, and display evidence of careful application of the writing process.

Rubric

In order to successfully complete this assessment, a submitted essay must reach "Meets or Exceeds Expectations" in all categories.

Criteria	Ratings		
Topic & Thesis Statement	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • essay topic has been personalized to refine the assignment prompt • contains a clearly identifiable thesis statement that drives the essay content	**Approaching Expectations** • essay topic is a generic answer to the assignment prompt • contains a thesis statement that relates to most essay content	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • essay topic does not match the assignment prompt • does not contain a thesis statement, *or* thesis statement does not relate to most essay content
Evidence	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • sufficient and varied evidence provided to justify the thesis statement	**Approaching Expectations** • insufficient evidence provided to justify the thesis statement	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • no evidence provided, *or* evidence does not justify the thesis statement

Organization	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • contains a clearly identifiable introduction, body section, and conclusion • follows a logical pattern of development • applies transitions effectively	**Approaching Expectations** • contains an introduction, and/or body section, and/or conclusion • has a pattern of development, but needs further attention to paragraphing • insufficient use of transitions	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • missing introduction, body section, or conclusion elements • no clear pattern of development • little to no use of transitions
Editing and Proofreading	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • evidence that higher-order editing concerns have been identified and addressed • evidence that lower-order proofreading concerns have been identified and addressed, though minor patterns of error might remain	**Approaching Expectations** • higher-order editing concerns may not have been addressed • lower-order editing concerns may not have been addressed. Significant patterns of error remain.	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • fundamental issues with higher-order editing concerns present in draft • fundamental issues with lower-order editing concerns present in draft

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5.47: Assignment- Topic Selection

To Do

1. Apply the steps from "Ways to Narrow Down a Topic." Write your answers to all questions on that page in a new document that you can return to throughout this module.

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5.48: Assignment- Prewriting

To Do

1. Select one of the prewriting activities in this outcome. Set a timer for 10 minutes, and try this activity for that time. Write down whatever comes out.
2. Reflect on what you've written. What jumps out to you as most important? Circle or underline that.
3. Draft a working thesis statement.

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5.49: Assignment- Finding Evidence

To Do

1. Revisit the working thesis you have for your essay so far. That thesis makes **claims**.
2. Make a list of evidence that will be required to prove to your reader that each claim is true. Include 3-5 items on that list.
3. For each item on the list, do some initial research that helps you understand each. That research might include informal methods, such as talking to friends and classmates about their experiences.
4. Include a brief paragraph (3-5 sentences) summarizing what you find in your initial research for each item on the list.

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5.50: Assignment- Organizing

To Do

Revisit the prewriting, working thesis, and initial evidence you've gathered for your essay so far. It's time to start organizing the content into a plan, so you know what you're ready to write and what will need more thought, research, or investigation.

1. Determine what kind and how many body paragraphs you'll need. Write a draft of a topic sentence for each body paragraph.
2. Determine what kind of introduction will be appropriate for this essay. Write a draft of a "hook" statement to catch the reader's attention.
3. Determine what kind of conclusion will be appropriate for this essay. Write a draft of a "takeaway" or "zinger" statement to leave your reader with.
4. Compare the sentences you've developed to your thesis statement. Do your topic sentences all relate directly to your thesis? If not, consider revising your thesis, and/or the topic sentences.

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5.51: Assignment- Drafting

To Do

Pen to paper time (or fingers to keyboard time).

1. Using all the writing you've done up to this point, including your prewriting, outlining, and most current draft of your thesis statement, build a **complete first draft** of your essay.

Right now, it's all about generating content. Remember from the reading in this section that first drafts are rarely pretty. Do your best to ignore the critical part of your brain, and turn loose your creative energies, instead.

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5.52: Assignment- Revising

To Do

1. Write answers to all questions found on the Higher Order Concerns page of the text.
2. Reflect on what your answers tell you about what aspects of your essay still need to be addressed. Complete a second draft that satisfies all the higher order concerns raised by that reflection.

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5.53: Assignment- Proofreading

To Do

1. Work through your essay draft at least one more time, this time focusing on lower-order concerns. Follow the proofreading advice offered in this section.
2. Prepare the final draft of your essay, making the strongest version of your work possible. Work with your instructor, your peers, and your Writing Center as needed.

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6.2: Performance Assessment- Personal Analysis Essay Revision
6.3: Outcome- Finding Sources
6.4: Text- Preliminary Research Strategies
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6.1: Why It Matters- Research

Why is it necessary to identify components of the research process?

The Pacific Northwest Tree Octopus



A few years ago a little-known animal species suddenly made headlines. The charming but elusive Tree Octopus became the focal point of internet scrutiny.

If you've never heard of the Pacific Northwest Tree Octopus, take a few minutes to learn more about it on this website, devoted to saving the endangered species.

You can also watch this brief video for more about the creatures:



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/braw/?p=360

(The video has an instrumental soundtrack but no voice-over.)

Source Reliability

If you're starting to get the feeling that something's not quite right here, you're on the right track. The Tree Octopus website is a hoax, although a beautifully done one. There is no such creature, unfortunately.

Many of us feel that "digital natives"–people who have grown up using the internet–are naturally web-savvy. However, a 2011 U.S. Department of Education study that used the Tree Octopus website as a focal point revealed that students who encountered this website completely fell for it. According to an NBC news story by Scott Beaulieu, "In fact, not only did the students believe that the tree octopus was real, they actually refused to believe researchers when they told them the creature was fake."[1]

While this is a relatively harmless example of a joke website, it helps to demonstrate that anyone can say anything they want on the internet. A good-looking website can be very convincing, regardless of what it says. The more you research, the more you'll see that sometimes the least-professional-looking websites offer the most credible information, and the most-professional-looking websites can be full of biased, misleading, or outright wrong information.

There are no hard and fast rules when it comes to resource reliability. Each new source has to be evaluated on its own merit, and this module will offer you a set of tools to help you do just that.



In this module, you'll learn about tips and techniques to enable you to find, analyze, integrate, and document sources in your research.

Learning Outcomes

- Identify preliminary, intermediate, and advanced search techniques
- Identify methods of analysis to assess the quality and reliability of a source
- Identify issues of plagiarism and academic dishonesty
- Identify MLA document formatting and citation practices

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1. http://www.nbcconnecticut.com/news/local/An-Octopus-in-a-Tree-Seems-Real-115497484.html ↵

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6.2: Performance Assessment- Personal Analysis Essay Revision

Personal Analysis Essay Revision Introduction

In the Writing module, you completed an essay asking you to reflect on your ethical values.

In this module, we will revisit that essay, **expanding it to include outside sources found through research** to help illustrate and clarify the points your essay makes.

Assignment Details



The revised essay will be 600-850 words long. It will demonstrate a clear, supported thesis statement, strong organizational skills, and attention to proofreading and editing.

Additionally, it will incorporate 1-2 credible outside sources to help support the essay's thesis. These sources will be cited using MLA in-text citations and the essay will include a MLA Works Cited page.

Rubric

In order to successfully complete this assessment, a submitted essay must reach "Meets or Exceeds Expectations" in all categories.

Criteria	Ratings		
Thesis Statement	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • contains a clearly identifiable thesis statement that drives the essay content, which has been adjusted to fit the new scope of the revision	**Approaching Expectations** • contains a thesis statement that relates to most essay content. May not have been adjusted to fit the new scope of the revision	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • does not contain a thesis statement, *or* thesis statement does not relate to most essay content
Sources	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • authoritative, appropriate source(s) included in essay	**Approaching Expectations** • source included in essay which may not be relevant or authoritative	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • no outside source included in essay
Documentation	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • quotations, paraphrases, and/or summaries are clearly attributed through MLA in-text citation • Works Cited page follows patterns of MLA citation formatting	**Approaching Expectations** • quotations, paraphrases, or summaries may not be attributed through MLA in-text citations in all cases • one or more entries missing on the Works Cited page, or Works Cited page does not follow MLA formatting	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • in-text citations and/or Works Cited page missing

MLA Formatting	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • document formatted according to MLA specifications, including four-line header on first page, centered title, and heading on all pages showing last name and page number • text is double-spaced and uses an appropriate font	**Approaching Expectations** • document generally formatted according to MLA specifications, but may be missing key elements • text may not be double-spaced or may not use an appropriate font	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • document not formatted according to MLA specifications
Writing Process	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • evidence that higher-order editing concerns have been identified and addressed • evidence that lower-order proofreading concerns have been identified and addressed, though minor patterns of error might remain	**Approaching Expectations** • higher-order editing concerns may not have been addressed • lower-order editing concerns may not have been addressed. Significant patterns of error remain.	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • fundamental issues with higher-order editing concerns present in draft • fundamental issues with lower-order editing concerns present in draft

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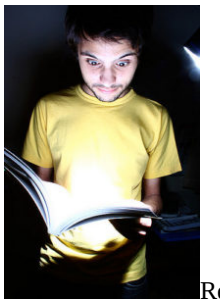
- Image of revision. **Authored by**: Marco Buonvino. **Located at**: https://flic.kr/p/7KN9jf. **License**: *CC BY-NC: Attribution-NonCommercial*

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6.3: Outcome- Finding Sources

Identify and Practice Preliminary, Intermediate, and Advanced Search Techniques

There are lots of reasons to include research in an academic essay.



- Reading what others have written about a topic clearly helps you become better-informed about it
- Sharing what you've learned about the topic in your essay demonstrates your knowledge
- Quoting or paraphrasing experts in the field establishes your own credibility as an author on the topic
- Responding to what's already been said on a topic, by including your unique perspective, allows your essay to enter the broader conversation, and shape how others feel about the issue

And, the biggest motivation of all: it's a requirement for an assignment (because your instructor wants you to do all of those things above).

We've learned that the writing process is a series of flexible steps that help you break a large project into smaller, bite-size pieces. Research is also a **process**. It's not something that can be accomplished well in one single step, but rather done in stages, with time for reflection and analysis in between.

The first part of that process is simply knowing where to look, and that's what we'll explore in the following pages.

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify preliminary research strategies (developing a research plan, basic online searching, using Google)
- identify intermediate research strategies (advanced online searches, finding scholarly sources and primary and secondary sources, librarian consultation)
- identify advanced search strategies (advanced library searches, library databases, keyword and field searches)

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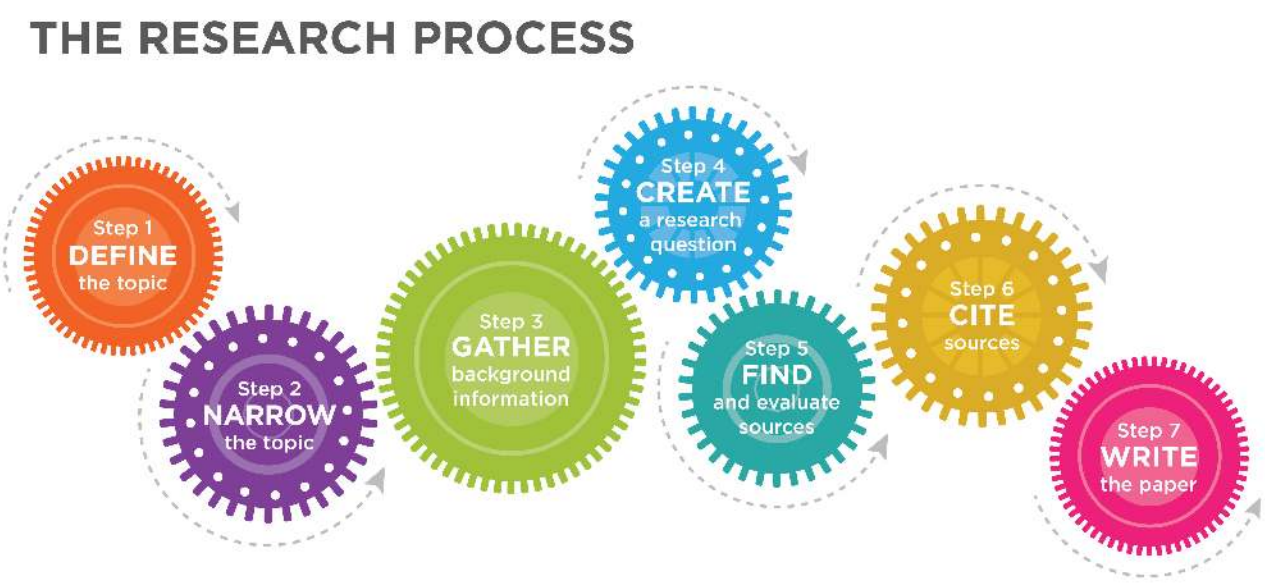
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6.4: Text- Preliminary Research Strategies



The first step towards writing a research paper is pretty obvious: find sources. Not everything that you find will be good, and those that are good are not always easily found. Having an idea of what you're looking for–what will most help you develop your essay and enforce your thesis–will help guide your process.

Example of a Research Process

A good research process should go through these steps:

1. Decide on the topic.
2. Narrow the topic in order to narrow search parameters.
3. Create a question that your research will address.
4. Generate sub-questions from your main question.
5. Determine what kind of sources are best for your argument.
6. Create a bibliography as you gather and reference sources.

Each of these is described in greater detail below.



Books, books, books …Do not start research haphazardly—come up with a plan first.

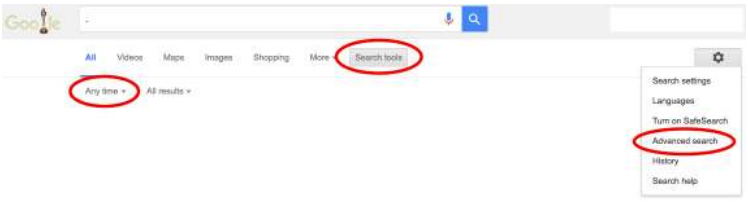
Preliminary Research Strategies

A research plan should begin after you can clearly identify the focus of your argument. First, inform yourself about the basics of your topic (Wikipedia and general online searches are great starting points). Be sure you've read all the assigned texts and carefully read the prompt as you gather preliminary information. This stage is sometimes called **pre-research**.

A broad online search will yield thousands of sources, which no one could be expected to read through. To make it easier on yourself, the next step is to narrow your focus. Think about what kind of position or stance you can take on the topic. What about it strikes you as most interesting? Refer back to the prewriting stage of the writing process, which will come in handy here.

Preliminary Search Tips

1. It is okay to start with Wikipedia as a reference, but do not use it as an official source. Look at the links and references at the bottom of the page for more ideas.
2. Use “Ctrl+F” to find certain words within a webpage in order to jump to the sections of the article that interest you.
3. Use Google Advanced Search to be more specific in your search. You can also use tricks to be more specific within the main Google Search Engine:
    1. Use quotation marks to narrow your search from just tanks in WWII to “Tanks in WWII” or “Tanks” in “WWII”.
    2. Find specific types of websites by adding “site:.gov” or “site:.edu” or “site:.org”. You can also search for specific file types like “filetype:.pdf”.
4. Click on “Search Tools” under the search bar in Google and select “Any time” to see a list of options for time periods to help limit your search. You can find information just in the past month or year, or even for a custom range.



Use features already available through Google Search like Search Tools and Advanced Search to narrow and refine your results.

As you narrow your focus, create a list of questions that you’ll need to answer in order to write a good essay on the topic. The research process will help you answer these questions.

Another part of your research plan should include the type of sources you want to gather. Keep track of these sources in a bibliography and jot down notes about the book, article, or document and how it will be useful to your essay. This will save you a lot of time later in the essay process–you’ll thank yourself!

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6.5: Video- Level Up Your Google Game

10 Google Quick Tips

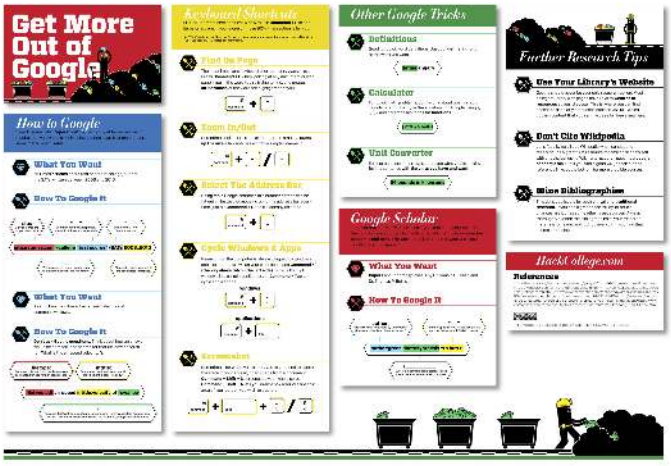
We all know how to Google…but we may not be getting as much out of it as we'd like. The following video walks through ten easy tips for getting you closer to what you're looking for.

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/braw/?p=368

Click here to download a transcript for this video

Getting More Out of Google

For a visual representation of additional online search tips, click the image below.



Click on this Infographic to open it and learn tricks for getting more out of Google.

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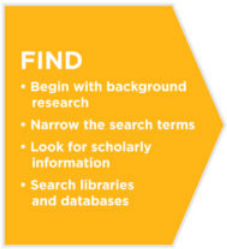
6.6: Text- Intermediate Research Strategies

“Popular” vs. “Scholarly” Sources

Research-based writing assignments in college will often require that you use **scholarly sources** in the essay. Different from the types of articles found in newspapers or general-interest magazines, scholarly sources have a few distinguishing characteristics.

	Popular Source	Scholarly Source
Intended Audience	Broad: readers are not expected to know much about the topic already	Narrow: readers are expected to be familiar with the topic before-hand
Author	Journalist: may have a broad area of specialization (war correspondent, media critic)	Subject Matter Expert: often has a degree in the subject and/or extensive experience on the topic
Research	Includes quotes from interviews. No bibliography.	Includes summaries, paraphrases, and quotations from previous writing done on the subject. Footnotes and citations. Ends with bibliography.
Publication Standards	Article is reviewed by editor and proofreader	Article has gone through a peer-review process, where experts on the field have given input before publication

Where to Find Scholarly Sources



The first step in finding scholarly resources is to look in the right place. Sites like Google, Yahoo, and Wikipedia may be good for popular sources, but if you want something you can cite in a scholarly paper, you need to find it from a scholarly database.

Two common scholarly databases are Academic Search Premier and ProQuest, though many others are also available that focus on specific topics. Your school library pays to subscribe to these databases, to make them available for you to use as a student.

You have another incredible resource at your fingertips: your college’s librarians! For help locating resources, you will find that librarians are extremely knowledgeable and may help you uncover sources you would never have found on your own—maybe your school has a microfilm collection, an extensive genealogy database, or access to another library’s catalog. You will not know unless you utilize the valuable skills available to you, so be sure to find out how to get in touch with a research librarian for support!

Primary and Secondary Sources

A primary source is an original document. Primary sources can come in many different forms. In an English paper, a primary source might be the poem, play, or novel you are studying. In a history paper, it may be a historical document such as a letter, a journal, a map, the transcription of a news broadcast, or the original results of a study conducted during the time period under review. If you conduct your own field research, such as surveys, interviews, or experiments, your results would also be considered a primary source. Primary sources are valuable because they provide the researcher with the information closest to the time period or topic at hand. They also allow the writer to conduct an original analysis of the source and to draw new conclusions.

Secondary sources, by contrast, are books and articles that analyze primary sources. They are valuable because they provide other scholars' perspectives on primary sources. You can also analyze them to see if you agree with their conclusions or not.

Most essays will use a combination of primary and secondary sources.

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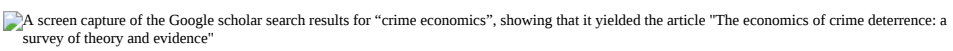
6.7: Video- Google Scholar

Google Scholar

An increasingly popular article database is Google Scholar. It looks like a regular Google search, and it aims to include the vast majority of scholarly resources available. While it has some limitations (like not including a list of which journals they include), it's a very useful tool if you want to cast a wide net.

Here are three tips for using Google Scholar effectively:

1. **Add your topic field (economics, psychology, French, etc.) as one of your keywords**. If you just put in "crime," for example, Google Scholar will return all sorts of stuff from sociology, psychology, geography, and history. If your paper is on crime in French literature, your best sources may be buried under thousands of papers from other disciplines. A set of search terms like "crime French literature modern" will get you to relevant sources much faster.
2. **Don't ever pay for an article**. When you click on links to articles in Google Scholar, you may end up on a publisher's site that tells you that you can download the article for $20 or $30. Don't do it! You probably have access to virtually all the published academic literature through your library resources. Write down the key information (authors' names, title, journal title, volume, issue number, year, page numbers) and go find the article through your library website. If you don't have immediate full-text access, you may be able to get it through inter-library loan.
3. **Use the "cited by" feature**. If you get one great hit on Google Scholar, you can quickly see a list of other papers that cited it. For example, the search terms "crime economics" yielded this hit for a 1988 paper that appeared in a journal called *Kyklos*:


A screen capture of the Google scholar search results for "crime economics", showing that it yielded the article "The economics of crime deterrence: a survey of theory and evidence"

Google Scholar search results.

Using Google Scholar

Watch this video to get a better idea of how to utilize Google Scholar for finding articles. While this video shows specifics for setting up an account with Eastern Michigan University, the same principles apply to other colleges and universities. Ask your librarian if you have more questions.



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6.8: Video- Advanced Search Strategies

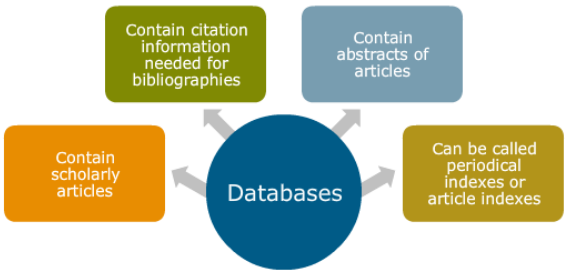
As we learned earlier, the strongest articles to support your academic writing projects will come from scholarly sources. Finding exactly what you need becomes specialized at this point, and requires a new set of searching strategies beyond even Google Scholar.

For this kind of research, you'll want to utilize library databases, as this video explains.

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Many journals are sponsored by academic associations. Most of your professors belong to some big, general one (such as the Modern Language Association, the American Psychological Association, or the American Physical Society) and one or more smaller ones organized around particular areas of interest and expertise (such as the Association for the Study of Food and Society and the International Association for Statistical Computing).



Finding articles in databases

Your campus library invests a lot of time and care into making sure you have access to the sources you need for your writing projects. Many libraries have online research guides that point you to the best databases for the specific discipline and, perhaps, the specific course. Librarians are eager to help you succeed with your research—it's their job and they love it!—so don't be shy about asking.

The following video demonstrates how to search within a library database. While the examples are specific to Northern Virginia Community College, the same general search tips apply to nearly all academic databases. On your school's library homepage, you should be able to find a general search button and an alphabetized list of databases. Get familiar with your own school's library homepage to identify the general search features, find databases, and practice searching for specific articles.

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6.9: Reading- How to Search in a Database

Navigating Databases

Scholarly databases like the ones your library subscribes to work differently than search engines like Google and Yahoo because they offer sophisticated tools and techniques for searching that can improve your results.

Databases may look different but they can all be used in similar ways. Most databases can be searched using **keywords** or **fields**. In a keyword search, you want to search for the main concepts or synonyms of your keywords. A field is a specific part of a record in a database. Common fields that can be searched are author, title, subject, or abstract. If you already know the author of a specific article, entering their "Last Name, First Name" in the author field will pull more relevant records than a keyword search. This will ensure all results are articles written by the author and not articles about that author or with that author's name. For example, a keyword search for "Albert Einstein" will search anywhere in the record for Albert Einstein and reveal 12, 719 results. Instead, a field search for Author: "Einstein, Albert" will show 54 results, all written by Albert Einstein.

Learn More

This short video demonstrates how to perform a title search within the popular EBSCO database, *Academic Search Complete*.

Practice: Keyword Search

1. Identify the keywords in the following research question: "How does repeated pesticide use in agriculture impact soil and groundwater pollution?"

[practice-area rows="2"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="626732"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="626732"]Pesticide, agriculture, soil, groundwater, pollution. You want to focus on the main idea and can ignore common words that don't have any meaning. [/hidden-answer]

2. When you search, it's helpful to think of synonyms for your keywords to examine various results. What synonyms can you think of for the keywords identified in the question above?

[practice-area rows="2"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="333998"]Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="333998"]**Pesticide**: agrochemicals, pest management, weed management, diazinan, malathion. **Agriculture**: farming, food crops, specific types of crops. **Soil**: earth, clay, organic components. **Groundwater**: watershed, water resources, water table, aquatics, rivers, lakes. **Pollution**: environmental impact, degradation, exposure, acid rain
[/hidden-answer]

Sometimes you already have a citation (maybe you found it on Google Scholar or saw it linked through another source), but want to find the article. Everything you need to locate your article is already found in the citation.



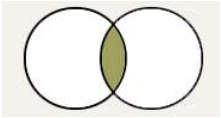
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Many databases, including the library catalog, offer tools to help you narrow or expand your search. Take advantage of these. The most common tools are Boolean searching and truncation.

Boolean Searching

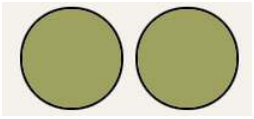
Boolean searching allows you to use AND, OR, and NOT to combine your search terms. Here are some examples:

1. **“Endangered Species” AND “Global Warming”** When you combine search terms with AND, you’ll get results in which BOTH terms are present. Using AND limits the number of results because all search terms must appear in your results.



“Endangered Species” AND “Global Warming” will narrow your search results to where the two concepts overlap.

2. **“Arizona Prisons” OR “Rhode Island Prisons”** When you use OR, you’ll get results with EITHER search term. Using OR increases the number of results because either search term can appear in your results.



“Arizona Prisons” OR “Rhode Island Prisons” will increase your search results.

3. **“Miami Dolphins” NOT “Football”** When you use NOT, you’ll get results that exclude a search term. Using NOT limits the number of results.



“Miami Dolphins” NOT “Football” removes the white circle (football) from the green search results (Miami Dolphins).

Truncation

Truncation allows you to search different forms of the same word at the same time. Use the root of a word and add an asterisk (*) as a substitute for the word’s ending. It can save time and increase your search to include related words. For example, a search for “Psycho*” would pull results on psychology, psychological, psychologist, psychosis, and psychoanalyst.

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6.10: Self Check- Finding Sources

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6.11: Try It- Finding Sources

Finding Sources Activity

You've completed an essay describing your ethical values. In this module, you'll be revising this essay. You'll use research to expand on the original thesis.

To Do

The first step of research is to identify a question you hope to answer in your essay. Brainstorm some potential research questions, and select the one that most appeals to you to use for this project.

Then, answer the following questions.

1. **What is your search term, based on your research question?**
2. **When you Google that search term, how many results do you get?** This number will appear underneath the search box.
3. **What observations do you note about the results that appear on the first page of Google results?** You should have 10 links that aren't sponsored ads on the first page. Do any website names seem familiar to you in this list? Write a sentence or two that says what you may know about the search results, before you open any of the links.
4. **What do you learn from the first few results?** Click on at least 3 of the results on the first page. Write a short paragraph about each, that describes what the page is, how relevant it is to your search topic, and whether it provides any information that you would consider useful in your personal life.
5. **When you use the same search term in Google Scholar, what changes?** Click on at least 3 results in Google Scholar. Write a short paragraph about each that describes what the page is, how relevant it is to your search topic, and whether it provides any information that you would consider useful in your personal life.
6. **Summarize this activity.** In a short paragraph, would you say that this search term gave you the results you were looking for? If you were to do another search after this one, what would you change? Why?

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6.12: Outcome- Source Analysis

Identify Methods of Analysis to Assess the Quality and Reliability of a Source



Good researchers and writers examine their sources critically and actively. They do not just compile and summarize these research sources in their writing, but use them to create their own ideas, theories, and, ultimately, their own, new understanding of the topic they are researching. Such an approach means not taking the information and opinions that the sources contain at face value and for granted, but to investigate, test, and even doubt every claim, every example, every story, and every conclusion.



In this section you'll learn about analyzing sources and how to utilize the C.R.A.A.P test to verify that your source is useful and relevant.

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify the relationship between a potential source and the writing task
- identify strategies for evaluating the rhetorical context (author, purpose, audience) of a source
- identify strategies for evaluating the authority, reliability, and effectiveness of a source (the C.R.A.A.P. method)
- identify strategies for comparison and synthesis between multiple sources

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6.13: Text- Evaluating Sources

You will need to evaluate each source you consider using by asking two questions:

- Is this source trustworthy?
- Is this source suitable?

Not every suitable source is trustworthy, and not every trustworthy source is suitable.

Determining Suitability

Your task as a researcher is to determine the appropriateness of the information your source contains, for your particular research project. It is a simple question, really: will this source help me answer the research questions that I am posing in my project? Will it help me learn as much as I can about my topic? Will it help me write an interesting, convincing essay for my readers?

Determining Trustworthiness

Click through the slideshow to read about techniques for analyzing sources and differentiating between popular and scholarly sources.

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- Suitability, from Chapter 4: Finding and Evaluating Research Sources. **Authored by**: Pavel Zemliansky. **Provided by**: Saylor. **Located at**: https://learn.saylor.org/mod/page/view.php?id=7324. **Project**: Methods of Discovery: A Guide to Research Writing. **License**: *CC BY-NC-SA: Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike*

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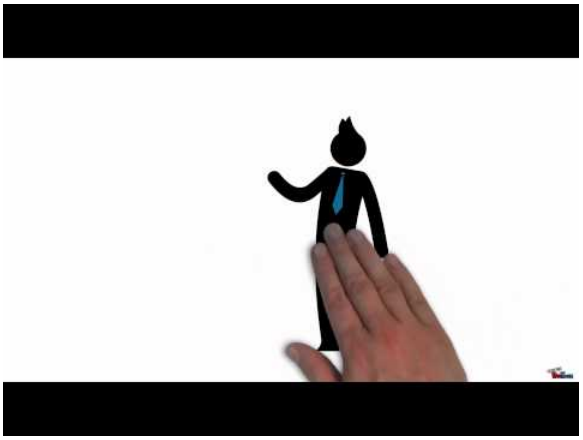
6.14: Video- Tools for Evaluating Sources

Need a good way to evaluate a source? Take a look at its “craap”!

The C.R.A.A.P. method is a way to determine the validity and relevance of a source. C.R.A.A.P. stands for

- **C**: Currency. When was the information published?
- **R**: Relevance. How relevant to your goals is the information?
- **A**: Authority. How well does the author of the information know the information?
- **A**: Accuracy. How reliable is the information?
- **P**: Purpose. Why does this information exist in this way?

If the source you’re looking at is fairly current, relevant, and accurate, it’s probably a good source to use. Depending on the aim of your paper, you’ll be looking for an authority and purpose that are unbiased and informative.



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6.15: Text- Using Sources in Your Paper

Within the pages of your research essay, it is important to properly reference and cite your sources to avoid plagiarism and to give credit for original ideas.

There are three main ways to put a source to use in your essay: you can quote it, you can summarize it, and you can paraphrase it.

Quoting

Direct quotations are words and phrases that are taken directly from another source, and then used word-for-word in your paper. If you incorporate a direct quotation from another author's text, you must put that quotation or phrase in quotation marks to indicate that it is not your language.

When writing direct quotations, you can use the source author's name in the same sentence as the quotation to introduce the quoted text and to indicate the source in which you found the text. You should then include the page number or other relevant information in parentheses at the end of the phrase (the exact format will depend on the formatting style of your essay).

Summarizing

Summarizing involves condensing the main idea of a source into a much shorter overview. A summary outlines a source's most important points and general position. When summarizing a source, it is still necessary to use a citation to give credit to the original author. You must reference the author or source in the appropriate citation method at the end of the summary.

Paraphrasing

When paraphrasing, you may put any part of a source (such as a phrase, sentence, paragraph, or chapter) into your own words. You may find that the original source uses language that is more clear, concise, or specific than your own language, in which case you should use a direct quotation, putting quotation marks around those unique words or phrases you don't change.

It is common to use a mixture of paraphrased text and quoted words or phrases, as long as the direct quotations are inside of quotation marks.



Sources that are not properly integrated into your paper are like "bricks without mortar: you have the essential substance, but there's nothing to hold it together, rendering the whole thing formless" (Smith).

Providing Context for Your Sources

Whether you use a direct quotation, a summary, or a paraphrase, it is important to distinguish the original source from your ideas, and to explain how the cited source fits into your argument. While the use of quotation marks or parenthetical citations tells your reader that these are not your own words or ideas, you should follow the quote with a description, in your own terms, of what the quote says and why it is relevant to the purpose of your paper. You should not let quoted or paraphrased text stand alone in your paper, but rather, should integrate the sources into your argument by providing context and explanations about how each source supports your argument.[1]

1. Smith, Matt. "Putting It All Together: Thesis Synthesis." Web log post. Walden University Writing Center, 12 Apr. 2013. Web. 04 Apr. 2016. ↵

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6.16: Self Check- Writing Ethically

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6.17: Outcome- Writing Ethically

Identify Issues of Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

Building on the ideas of others is a key component of academic writing. It's expected that you will consult what others have done, and use their thinking to inform your own.

Giving credit to those sources as you go is the expectation. It is expected that you will use sources ethically–note whose words and ideas you are using, exactly where you use them.

This is an idea many writers at all levels struggle with, as this video demonstrates.

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Using sources ethically takes practice, which is what we will do in the coming pages.

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify the definition of academic dishonesty
- identify the definition of intentional and unintentional plagiarism
- identify reasons for concerns about plagiarism and academic dishonesty in academic settings
- identify strategies to avoid intentional and unintentional plagiarism and academic dishonesty

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6.18: Self Check- Source Analysis

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6.19: Try It- Source Analysis

Source Analysis Activity

To Do

1. Use this tool from Imagine Easy Academy to analyze the content you find on websites.
2. Select one of the search results you got from the previous activity that seems promising to use in your essay revision. Paste the web address of the article into the tool, and then click “Evaluate.”
3. Look in the right-column of your screen to go through the steps of website analysis: purpose, accuracy, authority, relevance, and currency. Complete all the questions, including the written answers it asks for. When you finish, email the results to yourself so that you can turn this activity in.

Note: the Imagine Easy Academy tool may not work with all web articles. If you wish to evaluate a source that’s not compatible with the tool, you can use the C.R.A.A.P. method instead. Write 1-2 sentences each about your understanding of the source’s currency, relevance, authority, accuracy, and purpose.

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6.20: Video- Using Multiple Sources

Sources are a great help for understanding a topic more deeply. But what about when sources don't quite agree with one another, or challenge what you have experienced yourself?

This is where your skill of **synthesis** comes into play, as a writer. Synthesizing includes comparison and contrast, but also allows you to combine multiple perspectives on a topic to reach a deeper understanding.

This video explains the process of synthesis in action.



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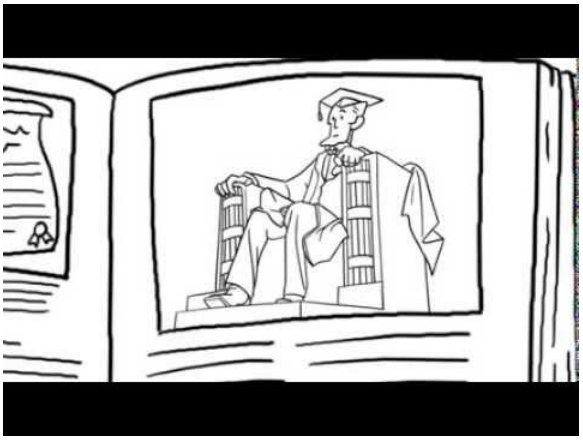
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6.21: Text- Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty or **academic misconduct** is any type of cheating that occurs in relation to a formal academic exercise. It can include

- **Plagiarism**: The adoption or reproduction of original creations of another author (person, collective, organization, community or other type of author, including anonymous authors) without due acknowledgment.
- **Fabrication**: The falsification of data, information, or citations in any formal academic exercise.
- **Deception**: Providing false information to an instructor concerning a formal academic exercise—*e.g.*, giving a false excuse for missing a deadline or falsely claiming to have submitted work.
- **Cheating**: Any attempt to obtain assistance in a formal academic exercise (like an examination) without due acknowledgment.
- **Bribery** or paid services: Giving assignment answers or test answers for money.
- **Sabotage**: Acting to prevent others from completing their work. This includes cutting pages out of library books or willfully disrupting the experiments of others.
- **Professorial misconduct**: Professorial acts that are academically fraudulent equate to academic fraud and/or grade fraud.
- **Impersonation**: assuming a student's identity with intent to provide an advantage for the student.

Watch this video to deepen your understanding about the importance of practicing academic honesty.



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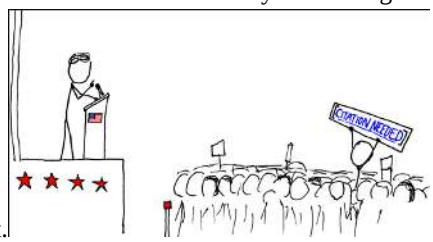
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6.22: Text- Defining Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the unauthorized or uncredited use of the writings or ideas of another in your writing. While it might not be as tangible as auto theft or burglary, plagiarism is still a form of theft.



Examples of plagiarism include:

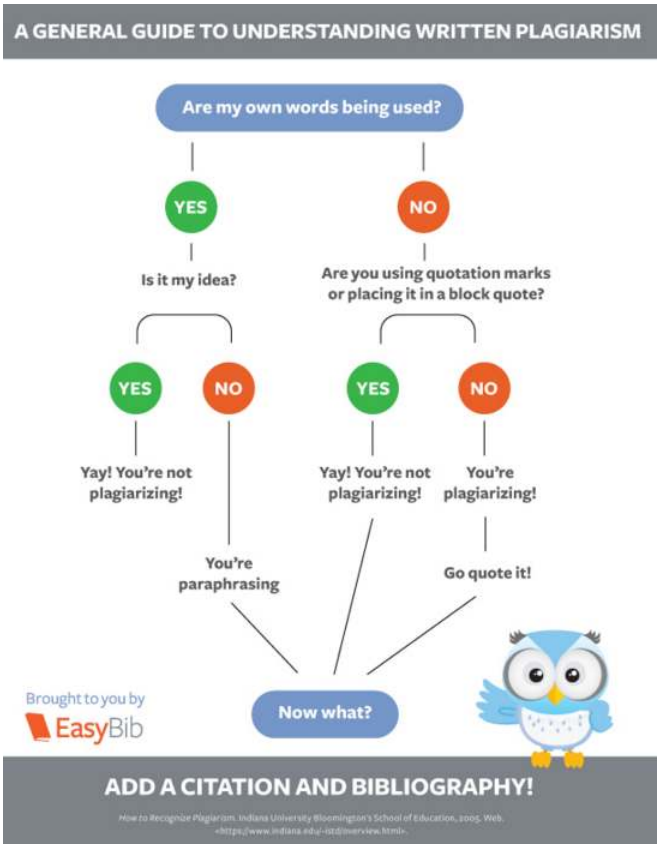
- Turning in someone else's paper as your own
- Using the exact words of a source without quotation marks and/or a citation
- Taking an image, chart, or statistic from a source without telling where it originated
- Copying and pasting material from the internet without quotation marks and/or a citation
- Including another person's idea without crediting the author

In the academic world, plagiarism is a serious matter because ideas in the forms of research, creative work, and original thought are highly valued. Chances are, your school has strict rules about what happens when someone is caught plagiarizing. The penalty for plagiarism is severe, everything from a failing grade for the plagiarized work, a failing grade for the class, or expulsion from the institution.

You might not be aware that plagiarism can take several different forms. The most well known, **intentional or purposeful plagiarism**, is handing in an essay written by someone else and representing it as your own, copying your essay word for word from a magazine or journal, or downloading an essay from the Internet.

A much more common and less understood phenomenon is **unintentional or accidental plagiarism**. Accidental plagiarism is the result of improperly paraphrasing, summarizing, quoting, or citing your evidence in your academic writing. Generally, writers accidentally plagiarize because they simply don't know or they fail to follow the rules for giving credit to the ideas of others in their writing.

Both intentional and unintentional plagiarism are wrong, against the rules, and can result in harsh punishments. Ignoring or not knowing the rules of how to not plagiarize and properly cite evidence might be an *explanation*, but it is not an excuse.



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6.23: Text- Avoiding Plagiarism

How to Avoid Plagiarizing

Tip #1: Make Sure You Are Very Certain about What Is and is Not Plagiarism

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Click here to download a transcript for this video

Tip #2: Give Yourself Plenty of Time to Complete an Assignment

Running out of time on an assignment is a main cause of plagiarism. Rushing to meet a deadline can result in carelessness (leading to unintentional plagiarism – see the next tip) and the desire to find a quick, easy solution such as copying someone else's work. Don't give in to that temptation! Plagiarism is a serious academic offense, and the chance of being caught (which is likely) is not worth it.

Avoid this situation entirely by starting your assignment far ahead of time and planning out when you will complete each phase of the writing process. Even if your teacher does not require you to turn in materials for each stage of the writing process (i.e. brainstorming, creating a thesis statement, outlining, drafting, revising, etc.), set your own personal deadlines for each step along the way and make sure to give yourself more than enough time to finish everything.

Tip #3: Document Everything

Plagiarism isn't always a conscious choice. Sometimes it can be unintentional, typically resulting from poor documentation of one's sources during the research phase. For example, sometimes students will write down an idea from a source using words identical to or very close to those in the original, but then when they go to write their paper forget that the material was not already in their own words. Adopting good research habits can prevent this type of plagiarism.

Print, photocopy, or scan the relevant pages of every source you are using (including the title and copyright pages, since they have the information you need for a bibliographic citation). When taking notes by hand (or typed into a file), list the bibliographic information for each source you use. Make sure to put quotation marks around any wordings taken directly from the source (and note the page where you found it), and remember to put everything else into your own words right away, so there is no danger of forgetting something is a quote. Documenting where all of your ideas, information, quotations, and so on come from is an important step in avoiding plagiarism.

Tip #4: Don't Include Too Much Material Taken from Other Sources



Tips for integrating sources into your research.

Writing assignments are about your ideas, your interpretations, and your ability to synthesize information. You should use relevant sources to support your ideas using evidence such as quotes, paraphrases, and summaries, as well as statistics and other data. But don't lose sight of the fact that your argument is central! Including too much material from other sources can result in a paper that feels like it has been pasted together from a variety of authors, rather than a cohesive essay. Such papers also run a much higher risk of setting off plagiarism warnings in SafeAssign or other plagiarism-detecting software. Try to find a balance: use enough evidence from credible sources to prove your points but don't let the ideas of others take the place of your own thoughts.

Tip #5: When in Doubt, Give a Citation

There are certain types of information – typically referred to as common knowledge – that don't require a citation when you include them in your writing. These are facts that are widely known and can be easily found in a number of sources. They are not ideas that originated with one particular source. Examples include scientific facts (for example, that solid, liquid, and gas are three states of matter), general historical information (for example, that George Washington was the first US president), or even information commonly known to certain groups of people but not others (for example, most musicians know that a C major triad includes the notes C, E, and G, even though many non-musicians would have no idea what a C major triad is).

For everything else, you need to include a citation, regardless of whether you are quoting directly from the source, paraphrasing it, or giving a summary. If you are at all unsure whether something qualifies as common knowledge or not, give a citation. You can also consult a more experienced figure in your field, such as your instructor, to find out if something counts as common knowledge or not.

In academic writing, the **"Quote Sandwich" approach** is useful for incorporating other writers' voices into your essays. It gives meaning and context to a quote, and helps you avoid plagiarism. This 3-step approach offers your readers a deeper understanding of what the quote is and how it relates to your essay's goals.

1. **Step 1***:* Provide context for the source. If you haven't used it yet in the essay, tell us the source's title and author (if known), and any other information that's relevant, like the purpose of the organization that published it, for instance.
2. **Step 2*:*** Provide the quote itself. Be sure to format correctly and use quotation marks around exact language.
3. **Step 3*:*** Provide a summary and/or analysis of what the quote says, and how it relates to the subject matter of your essay and your thesis.

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6.24: Try It- Writing Ethically

Writing Ethically Activity

In academic writing, the **"Quote Sandwich" approach** is useful for incorporating other writers' voices into your essays. It gives meaning and context to a quote, and helps you avoid plagiarism. This 3-step approach offers your readers a deeper understanding of what the quote is and how it relates to your essay's goals.

1. **Step 1***:* Provide context for the source. If you haven't used it yet in the essay, tell us the source's title and author (if known), and any other information that's relevant, like the purpose of the organization that published it, for instance.
2. **Step 2*:*** Provide the quote itself. Be sure to format correctly and use quotation marks around exact language.
3. **Step 3*:*** Provide a summary and/or analysis of what the quote says, and how it relates to the subject matter of your essay and your thesis.

To Do

1. Practice this Quote Sandwich strategy with **two** different potential quotes you'd like to use in the Personal Analysis Essay Revision.
2. For each quote, follow each of the steps above, to form a whole paragraph (or part of a paragraph). Each "quote sandwich" will need to be at least 2 sentences long, and possibly longer.

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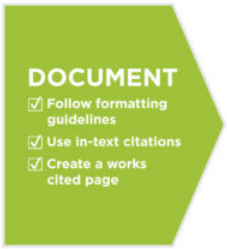
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6.25: Outcome- MLA Documentation

Identify MLA Document Formatting and Citation Practices



Checklist for documenting sources.

“MLA” stands for Modern Language Association. This is a professional organization for scholars of language and literature.

But why does this group of people have so much influence on the appearance of papers you write in college?

The MLA, like many other academic organizations, publishes a scholarly journal and has done so for decades. In years before computers were common, the editors of this journal required typed submissions for publication to follow a common formatting template.

The professors who were following this format to write their own work recognized the value of having some standard of uniform appearance. They started asking their students to follow the same format when they typed essays for class projects.

Fast forward to now, and we have a thick set of guidelines for how the first page of an essay should look, what margins and font are appropriate, and what a Works Cited entry for a blog post should look like.

The ultimate goal for MLA formatting and citation standards is so that everyone has a common template to draw from. While they may feel like unbreakable rules, try to remember that they were created to serve a common need, with your interests in mind.

What You Will Learn To Do

- identify reasons for the use of MLA formatting and documentation
- identify MLA document formatting, including page layout
- identify the components of MLA Works Cited citations
- identify the components of MLA in-text citations

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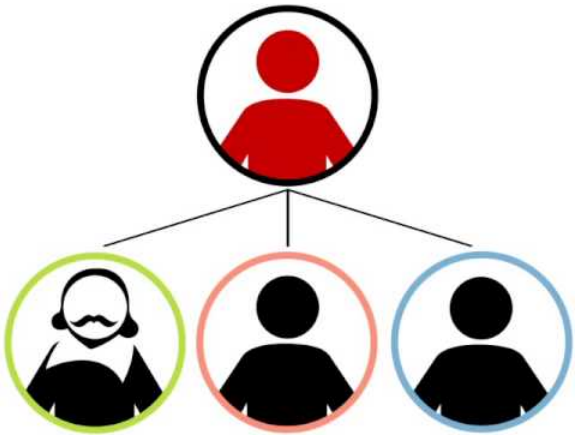
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6.26: Text- Introduction to MLA Documentation

MLA style is one of the most common citation and formatting styles you will encounter in your academic career. Any piece of academic writing can use MLA style, from a one-page paper to a full-length book. It is widely used by in many high school and introductory college English classes, as well as scholarly books and professional journals. If you are writing a paper for a literature or media studies class, it is likely your professor will ask you to write in MLA style.

The importance of using citations is explained in the following video:



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The Purpose of MLA Style

The MLA style guide aims to accomplish several goals:

1. to ensure consistent use of the English language in academic writing;
2. to ensure consistent formatting and presentation of information, for the sake of clarity and ease of navigation; and
3. to ensure proper attribution of ideas to their original sources, for the sake of intellectual integrity.

Citation Resources

There are many fantastic resources out there that can make the formatting and citation process easier. Some common style guides are found at:

- The Purdue Online Writing Lab: this is a popular resource that concisely explains how to properly format and cite in various academic styles.
- EasyBib: in addition to having a style guide, this website allows you to paste in information from your research and will create and save citations for you.

Reference management websites and applications can also assist you in tracking and recording your research. Most of these websites will even create the works cited page for you! Some of the most popular citation tools are:

- Zotero
- RefME
- BibMe

The New Edition

The newest edition of the MLA Handbook, the 8th Edition, was released in April 2016. This text will focus on the newest changes, but you should be aware that some institutions or instructors may still utilize the previous 7th edition of the handbook. While the overall principles of creating a works cited page and using in-text citations remains the same, there are a few key changes and updates that make the citation process easier for our modern uses. For example, the guidelines now state that you should always include a URL of an internet source, you can use alternative author names, such as Twitter handles, and you no longer need to include the publisher (in some instances), and you don't need to include the city where a source was published. These new changes

are less nit-picky and allow for a more streamlined citation process that will work with the wide variety of source locations (i.e., YouTube videos, songs, clips from TV episodes, websites, periodicals, books, academic journals, poems, interviews, etc.).

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6.27: Text- MLA Document Formatting

Overall Structure of an MLA Paper

Your MLA paper should include the following basic elements:

1. Body
2. (*If applicable*) Endnotes
3. Works Cited

Sample Paper

Visit the Modern Language Association website to see an example of a student paper following MLA guidelines.

General MLA Formatting Rules

- **Font**: Your paper should be written in 12-point text. Whichever font you choose, MLA requires that regular and italicized text be easily distinguishable from each other. Times and Times New Roman are often recommended.
- **Line Spacing**: All text in your paper should be double-spaced.
- **Margins**: All page margins (top, bottom, left, and right) should be 1 inch. All text should be left-justified.
- **Indentation**: The first line of every paragraph should be indented 0.5 inches.
- **Page Numbers**: Create a right-justified header 0.5 inches from the top edge of every page. This header should include your last name, followed by a space and the page number. Your pages should be numbered with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3…) and should start with the number 1 on your title page. Most word-processing programs have the ability to automatically add the correct page number to each page so you don't have to do this by hand.
- **Use of Italics:** In MLA style, you should italicize (rather than underline) the titles of books, plays, or other standalone works. You should also italicize (rather than underline) words or phrases you want to lend particular emphasis—though you should do this rarely.
- **Sentence Spacing**: Include just one single space after a period before the next sentence: "Mary went to the store. She bought some milk. Then she went home."
- **The first page:** Like the rest of your paper, everything on your first page, even the headers, should be double-spaced. The following information should be left-justified in regular font at the top of the first page (in the main part of the page, not the header):
  - on the first line, your first and last name
  - on the second line, your instructor's name
  - on the third line, the name of the class
  - on the fourth line, the date
- **The title:** After the header, the next double-spaced line should include the title of your paper. This should be centered and in title case, and it should not be bolded, underlined, or italicized (unless it includes the name of a book, in which case just the book title should be italicized).
- **The Oxford Comma:** The Oxford comma (also called the serial comma) is the comma that comes after the second-to-last item in a series or list. For example: *The UK includes the countries of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.* In the previous sentence, the comma immediately after "Wales" is the Oxford comma. In general writing conventions, whether the Oxford comma should be used is actually a point of fervent debate among passionate grammarians. However, it's a requirement in MLA style, so double-check all your lists and series to make sure you include it!

MLA Formatting

Watch this video to review all of the basic formatting recommendations:

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6.28: Text- MLA Works Cited

Formatting the Works Cited Section

In MLA style, all the sources you cite throughout the text of your paper are listed together in full in the Works Cited section, which comes after the main text of your paper.

- **Page numbers:** Just as the rest of your paper, the top of the page should retain the right-justified header with your last name and the page number.
- **Title:** On the first line, the title of the page—"Works Cited"—should appear centered, and not italicized or bolded.
- **Spacing:** Like the rest of your paper, this page should be double-spaced and have 1-inch margins (don't skip an extra line between citations).
- **Alphabetical order:** Starting on the next line after the page title, your references should be listed in alphabetical order by author. Multiple sources by the same author should be listed chronologically by year within the same group.
- **Hanging indents:** Each reference should be formatted with what is called a hanging indent. This means the first line of each reference should be flush with the left margin (i.e., not indented), but the rest of that reference should be indented 0.5 inches further. Any word-processing program will let you format this automatically so you don't have to do it by hand. (In Microsoft Word, for example, you simply highlight your citations, click on the small arrow right next to the word "Paragraph" on the home tab, and in the popup box choose "hanging indent" under the "Special" section. Click OK, and you're done.)



Freeman 8

Works Cited

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6.29: Video- Creating MLA Citations

Although there are still distinct rules you need to follow to create a citation, the rules in MLA 8 are less rigid than before and allow for you to look for the main components of a citation and construct it yourself. This means you will need to think about the source and its information, select the appropriate components, and organize it in a logical and useful manner.

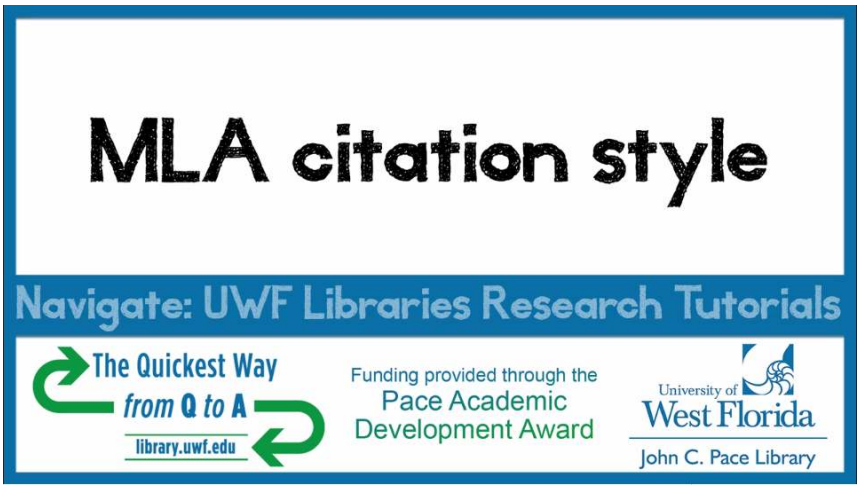
Regardless of the source type, you are now asked to locate the same "core elements" from your sources and place them in a standard order in order to create citations. These core elements are explained in detail below. **Note that you do not need to memorize every step of this process**, but should take this opportunity to understand how citations are created. You can always return to this page, to the MLA handbook, or to online resources to help you create the citations you need for your paper.

Click through the following slides to learn more about each component and to see examples of MLA citations.

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/braw/?p=416

You can also download the presentation here.

Click on the image below to take you to a video explanation on how to identify the core elements of a citation.



MLA 8th edition – UWF from Joshua Vossler on Vimeo.

Practice

Click "Get Started" at the MLA Style Center to practice creating citations.

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6.30: Text- MLA In-Text Citations

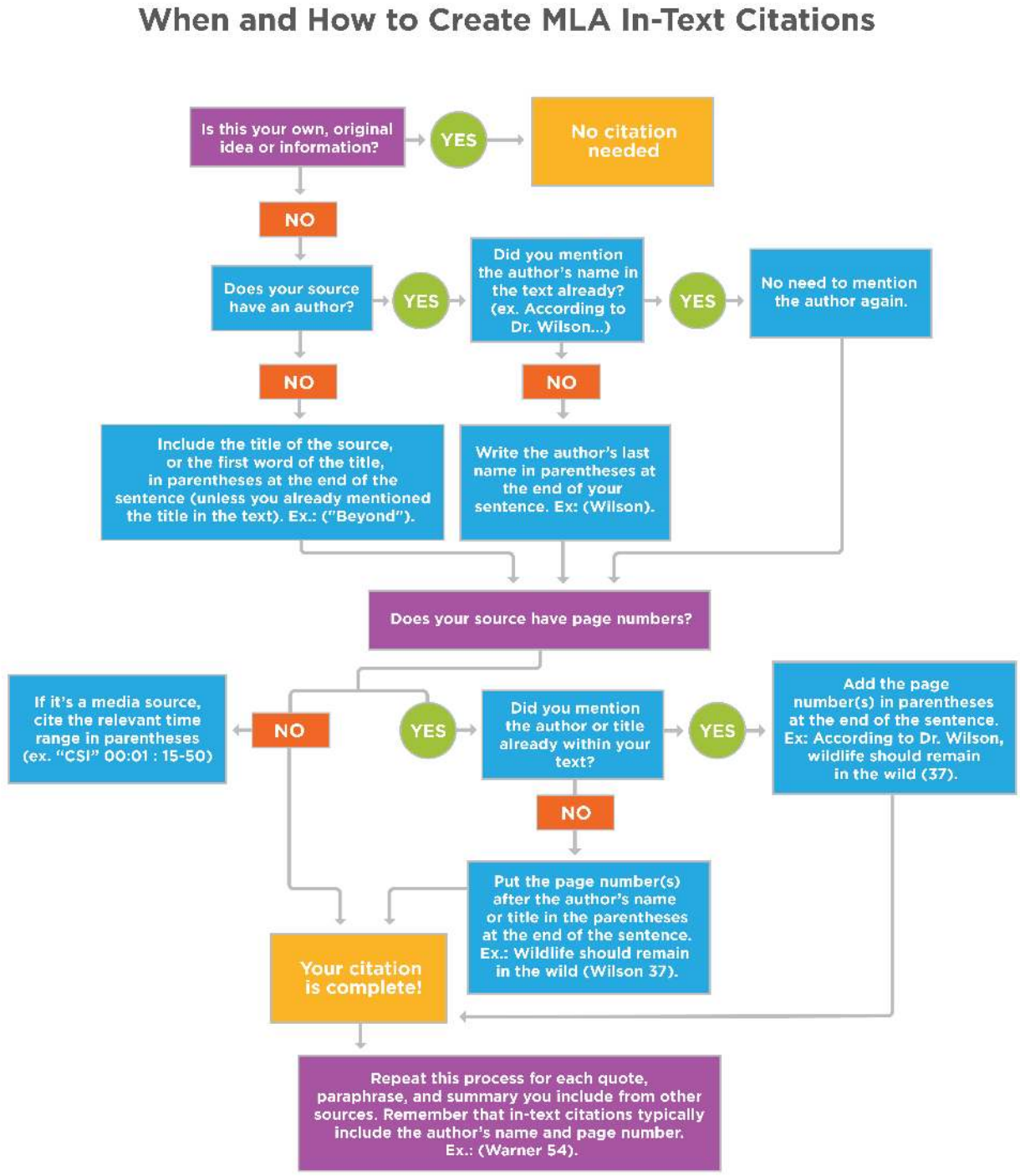
In your paper, when you quote directly from a source in its words, or when you paraphrase someone else's idea, you need to tell the reader what that source is so the author gets credit. When you tell the reader the author's name in the text of your paper, this is called an in-text citation.

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Click here to download a transcript for this video

In-Text citations are placed in parentheses, and have two components:

- The first word found in the full citation on the Works Cited page (usually the last name of the author)
- The location of the direct quote or paraphrase (usually a page number)



In-Text citations should be placed directly after the direct quote or paraphrase, or in a place that is a natural pause and does not cause the reader to become distracted while reading the body of your work.

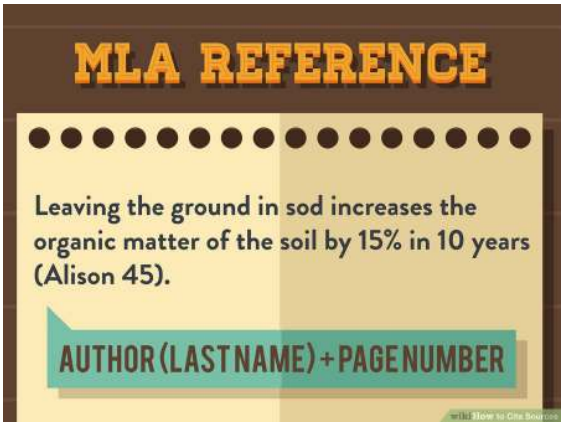
Example:

In order to prevent starvation, Watney knew exactly what he needed to do. “My best bet for making calories is potatoes” (Weir 17).

When using the author's name in the sentence, only include the page number in the parentheses.

Example:

> Seuss's use of words such as "lurk" and "dank" help students understand the type of character that the Once-ler is (6).



Write author (last name) and page number in parentheses. If the author is already mentioned in the statement, just put the page number in parentheses. If there are two authors, name them both with "and" in the middle. Use commas if there are more than two authors. Place the citation before a punctuation mark. E.g. Leaving the ground in sod increases the organic matter of the soil by 15% in 10 years (Alison 45).

When to Use a Block Quotation

A typical quotation is enclosed in double quotation marks and is part of a sentence within a paragraph of your paper. However, if you want to quote **more than four lines of prose (or three lines of verse)** from a source, you should format the excerpt as a block quotation, rather than as a regular quotation within the text of a paragraph. Most of the standard rules for quotations still apply, with the following exceptions: a block quotation will begin on its own line, it will **not** be enclosed in quotation marks, and its in-text citation will come after the ending punctuation, not before it. It should be indented one inch from the left margin.

For example, if you wanted to quote the entire first paragraph of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, you would begin that quotation on its own line and format it as follows:

> Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank, and of having nothing to do: once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, 'and what is the use of a book,' thought Alice, 'without pictures or conversations?' (Carroll 98)

The full reference for this source would then be included in your Works Cited section at the end of your paper.

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6.31: Self Check- MLA Documentation

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6.32: Try It- MLA Documentation

MLA Documentation Activity

To Do

1. Return to the “quote sandwich” practice you completed earlier. Using the guidance in this section, add MLA in-text citations (also known as parenthetical citations) to the end of each quoted passage.
2. Create a MLA Works Cited page that includes an entry for every source you plan on using in your Personal Analysis Essay Revision.

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6.33: Putting It Together- Research

Many of us have experienced research writing projects as a way to “prove” what we already believe. An essay assignment may ask us to take a position on a matter, and then support that position with evidence found in research. You will likely encounter projects like this in several classes in college.

Because you enter a project like this with a thesis in hand (you already know what you believe!), it is very tempting to look for and use only those sources that agree with you and to discard or overlook the others. If you are lucky, you find enough such sources and construct a paper. Ask yourself the following question, though: what have you found out or investigated during your research? Have you discovered new theories, opinions, or aspects of your subject? Did anything surprise you, intrigue you, or make you look further? If you answered no to these questions, you did not fulfill the purpose of true research, which is to explore, to discover, and to investigate.

 The purpose of research is not to look for proofs that would fit the author’s pre-existing theories, but to learn about the subject of the investigation as much as possible and then form those theories, opinions, and arguments on the basis of this newly found knowledge and understanding. And what if there is no data that prove your theory? What if, after hours and days of searching, you realize that there is nothing out there that would allow you to make the claim that you wanted to make? Most likely, this will lead to frustration, a change of the paper’s topic, and having to start all over again.

So, should you begin every research project as a disinterested individual without opinions, ideas, and beliefs? Of course not! There is nothing wrong about having opinions, ideas, and beliefs about your subject before beginning the research process. Good researchers and writers are passionate about their work and want to share their passion with the world. Moreover, pre-existing knowledge can be a powerful research-starter. But what separates a true researcher from someone who simply looks for “proofs” for a pre-fabricated thesis is that a true researcher is willing to question those pre-existing beliefs and to take his or her understanding of the research topic well beyond what he or she knew at the outset. Speaking in terms of the process theory of writing, a good researcher and writer is willing to create new meaning, a new understanding of his or her subject through research and writing and based on the ideas and beliefs that he or she had entering the research project.

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6.34: Assignment- Personal Analysis Essay Revision

Personal Analysis Essay Revision Introduction

In the Writing module, you completed an essay asking you to reflect on your ethical values.

In this module, we will revisit that essay, **expanding it to include outside sources found through research** to help illustrate and clarify the points your essay makes.

Assignment Details

The revised essay will be 600-850 words long. It will demonstrate a clear, supported thesis statement, strong organizational skills, and attention to proofreading and editing.

Additionally, it will incorporate 1-2 credible outside sources to help support the essay's thesis. These sources will be cited using MLA in-text citations and the essay will include a MLA Works Cited page.

Rubric

In order to successfully complete this assessment, a submitted essay must reach "Meets or Exceeds Expectations" in all categories.

Criteria	Ratings		
Thesis Statement	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • contains a clearly identifiable thesis statement that drives the essay content, which has been adjusted to fit the new scope of the revision	**Approaching Expectations** • contains a thesis statement that relates to most essay content. May not have been adjusted to fit the new scope of the revision	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • does not contain a thesis statement, *or* thesis statement does not relate to most essay content
Sources	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • authoritative, appropriate source(s) included in essay	**Approaching Expectations** • source included in essay which may not be relevant or authoritative	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • no outside source included in essay
Documentation	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • quotations, paraphrases, and/or summaries are clearly attributed through MLA in-text citation • Works Cited page follows patterns of MLA citation formatting	**Approaching Expectations** • quotations, paraphrases, or summaries may not be attributed through MLA in-text citations in all cases • one or more entries missing on the Works Cited page, or Works Cited page does not follow MLA formatting	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • in-text citations and/or Works Cited page missing

MLA Formatting	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • document formatted according to MLA specifications, including four-line header on first page, centered title, and heading on all pages showing last name and page number • text is double-spaced and uses an appropriate font	**Approaching Expectations** • document generally formatted according to MLA specifications, but may be missing key elements • text may not be double-spaced or may not use an appropriate font	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • document not formatted according to MLA specifications
Writing Process	**Meets or Exceeds Expectations** • evidence that higher-order editing concerns have been identified and addressed • evidence that lower-order proofreading concerns have been identified and addressed, though minor patterns of error might remain	**Approaching Expectations** • higher-order editing concerns may not have been addressed • lower-order editing concerns may not have been addressed. Significant patterns of error remain.	**Does Not Meet Expectations** • fundamental issues with higher-order editing concerns present in draft • fundamental issues with lower-order editing concerns present in draft

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6.35: Assignment- Finding Sources

To Do

You've completed an essay describing your ethical values. In this module, you'll be revising this essay. You'll use research to expand on the original thesis.

The first step of research is to identify a question you hope to answer in your essay. Brainstorm some potential research questions, and select the one that most appeals to you to use for this project.

Then, answer the following questions.

1. **What is your search term, based on your research question?**
2. **When you Google that search term, how many results do you get?** This number will appear underneath the search box.
3. **What observations do you note about the results that appear on the first page of Google results?** You should have 10 links that aren't sponsored ads on the first page. Do any website names seem familiar to you in this list? Write a sentence or two that says what you may know about the search results, before you open any of the links.
4. **What do you learn from the first few results?** Click on at least 3 of the results on the first page. Write a short paragraph about each, that describes what the page is, how relevant it is to your search topic, and whether it provides any information that you would consider useful in your personal life.
5. **When you use the same search term in Google Scholar, what changes?** Click on at least 3 results in Google Scholar. Write a short paragraph about each that describes what the page is, how relevant it is to your search topic, and whether it provides any information that you would consider useful in your personal life.
6. **Summarize this activity.** In a short paragraph, would you say that this search term gave you the results you were looking for? If you were to do another search after this one, what would you change? Why?

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6.36: Assignment- Source Analysis

To Do

1. Use this tool from Imagine Easy Academy to analyze the content you find on websites.
2. Select one of the search results you got from the previous activity that seems promising to use in your essay revision. Paste the web address of the article into the tool, and then click “Evaluate.”
3. Look in the right-column of your screen to go through the steps of website analysis: purpose, accuracy, authority, relevance, and currency. Complete all the questions, including the written answers it asks for. When you finish, email the results to yourself so that you can turn this activity in.

Note: the Imagine Easy Academy tool may not work with all web articles. If you wish to evaluate a source that’s not compatible with the tool, you can use the C.R.A.A.P. method instead. Write 1-2 sentences each about your understanding of the source’s currency, relevance, authority, accuracy, and purpose.
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6.37: Assignment- Writing Ethically

In academic writing, the **"Quote Sandwich" approach** is useful for incorporating other writers' voices into your essays. It gives meaning and context to a quote, and helps you avoid plagiarism. This 3-step approach offers your readers a deeper understanding of what the quote is and how it relates to your essay's goals.

1. **Step 1***:* Provide context for the source. If you haven't used it yet in the essay, tell us the source's title and author (if known), and any other information that's relevant, like the purpose of the organization that published it, for instance.
2. **Step 2*:*** Provide the quote itself. Be sure to format correctly and use quotation marks around exact language.
3. **Step 3*:*** Provide a summary and/or analysis of what the quote says, and how it relates to the subject matter of your essay and your thesis.

To Do

1. Practice this Quote Sandwich strategy with **two** different potential quotes you'd like to use in the Personal Analysis Essay Revision.
2. For each quote, follow each of the steps above, to form a whole paragraph (or part of a paragraph). Each "quote sandwich" will need to be at least 2 sentences long, and possibly longer.

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6.38: Assignment- MLA Documentation

To Do

1. Return to the “quote sandwich” practice you completed earlier. Using the guidance in this section, add MLA in-text citations (also known as parenthetical citations) to the end of each quoted passage.
2. Create a MLA Works Cited page that includes an entry for every source you plan on using in your Personal Analysis Essay Revision.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

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7.1: Why It Matters- Grammar



Why is it helpful to identify patterns of academic grammar and punctuation usage?

Take a moment and try to imagine a world without language: written, signed, or spoken. It's pretty hard to conceptualize, right? Language is a constant presence all around us. It's how we communicate with others; without language it would be incredibly difficult to connect people.

So what does this have to do with grammar?

Because language is how we connect with others, it's also the way we often form our opinions about people. When you first meet a new person, the way he speaks (or writes or signs) is likely going to be your first impression of him. What if he used some of these phrases?

- I've got y'all's assignments here.
- I might could climb to the top.
- They're fixing to go for a hike.

If you heard someone say these (and say them with a drawl), you would assume he is from the South or Texas. You may use this assumption to then apply stereotypes about Southern people and customs to this person as well. This kind of judgement may or may not be fair, but we all make these kind of judgements every day.

You can't control what other people think about you and your language usage, but you can control how you present yourself in different situations.

Code-Switching

One of the challenges facing college writers is that the language used for academic purposes is quite different in style, shape, and tone than the language we use in other settings: our home lives, our professional lives, our religious lives, our romantic lives.

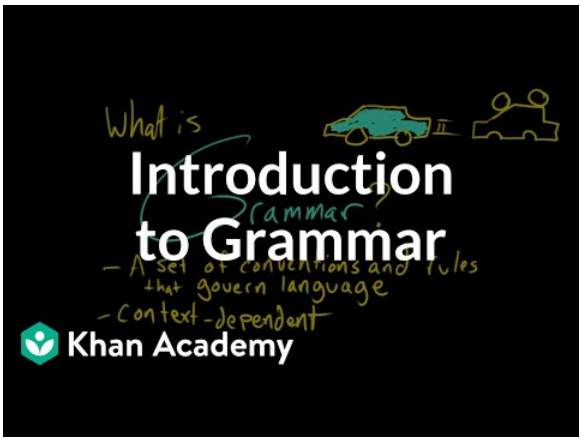
You might have a feeling that the way you talk or write is "wrong." That isn't the case at all! All languages have their appropriate uses and settings. Your grandma would not be happy if you spoke in academic language as you're sitting around the Thanksgiving dinner table. Likewise, your professors aren't happy when you bring Thanksgiving dinner conversation styles into written assignments for their classes.

This is the idea of **code-switching**: that each of use moves between different variations of language in different contexts. Academic language is one variation, and it has a strict set of rules to follow. The rules of academic language will be explored in detail in this section.

About the Videos in this Module

You'll quickly recognize a distinctive voice and format in the videos in this section of the course. Our narrator guide will be David, Grammar Content Fellow from the Khan Academy. He offers charming insights and a straightforward, encouraging approach to understanding our language in all its quirks.

Get started with David, and with Grammar, here.



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Learning Outcomes

- Identify the function of nouns and different noun types.
- Identify the function and structure of pronouns.
- Identify verb types and their correction conjugation.
- Identify adjectives, adverbs, and the differences between the two.
- Identify the function other parts of speech, including conjunctions, prepositions, and articles.
- Identify common punctuation marks and the rules for their correct usage.
- Identify common sentence types and common errors in sentence composition.
- Identify the active and passive voices, as well as the reasons to use both.

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7.2: Outcome- Nouns

Identify the Function of Nouns and Different Noun Types



Nouns are a diverse group of words, and they are very common in English. Nouns are a category of words defining **things**—people, places, items, concepts. The video below is brief introduction to them and the role they play:



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/braw/?p=440

Now that you've seen and identified some nouns, let's get started. In this outcome we will discuss nouns and their proper function in language.

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify functions of nouns
- identify plural nouns
- identify count vs. non-count nouns
- identify compound nouns

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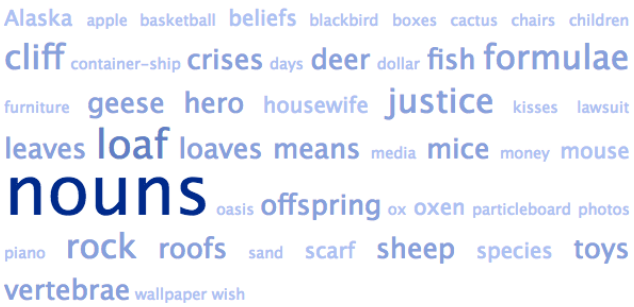
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7.3: Text- Function of Nouns



As we've already learned, a noun is the name of a person (Dr. Sanders), place (Lawrence, Kansas, factory, home), thing (scissors, saw, book), or idea (love, truth, beauty, intelligence).

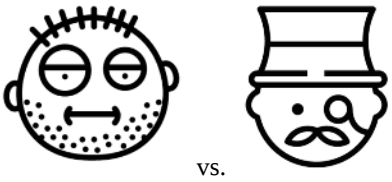
Let's look at the following examples to get a better idea of how nouns work in sentences. All of the nouns have been bolded in blue:

- The one **experiment** that has been given the most **attention** in the **debate** on **saccharin** is the 1977 Canadian **study** done on **rats**.
- The Calorie Control **Council**, a **group** of Japanese and American **manufacturers** of **saccharin**, spent **$890,000** in the first three **months** of the 1977 **ban** on **saccharin** on **lobbying**, **advertisements**, and public **relations**.
- A flat-plate **collector** located on a sloping **roof** heats **water** which circulates through a **coil** and is pumped back to the **collector**.
- The **blades** start turning when the **windspeed** reaches 10 **mph**, and an anemometer is attached to the **shaft** to measure **windspeed**.
- The multi-fuel **capacity** of the Stirling **engine** gives it a versatility not possible in the internal combustion **engine**.
- The regenerative cooling **cycle** in the **engines** of the Space **Shuttle** is made up of high pressure **hydrogen** that flows in **tubes** connecting the **nozzle** and the combustion **chamber**.

Types of Nouns

Of the many different categories of nouns, a couple deserve closer attention here.

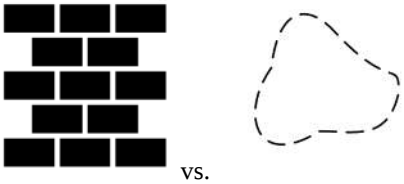
Common vs. Proper Noun


vs.

Common nouns are generic words, like *tissue*. They are lower-cased (unless they begin a sentence). A proper noun, on the other hand, is the name of a specific thing, like the brand name *Kleenex*. Proper nouns are always capitalized.

- common noun: name
- proper noun: Ester

Concrete vs. Abstract Noun


vs.

Concrete nouns are things you can hold, see, or otherwise sense, like *book*, *light*, or *warmth*.

Abstract nouns, on the other hand, are (as you might expect) abstract concepts, like *time* and *love*.

- concrete noun: rock

- abstract noun: justice

The rest of this section will dig into other types of nouns: count v. non-count nouns, compound nouns, and plural nouns.

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7.4: Text- Regular Plural Nouns



A plural noun indicates that there is more than one of that noun (while a singular noun indicates that there is just one of the noun). English has both regular and irregular plural nouns.

Let's start with regular plurals: **regular plural nouns** use established patterns to indicate there is more than one of a thing.

Recognize nouns marked with plural form *–s.*

We add the plural suffix *–s* to most words.

- apple → apples
- key → keys
- computer → computers

However, after sounds *s*, *z*, *sh*, *ch*, and *j*, we add the plural suffix *–es*.

- box → boxes
- wish → wishes
- kiss → kisses

Practice

Do you know how to spell the plurals for the following words?

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
book	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	peach	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]
chair	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	buzz	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]
picture	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	watch	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]

[reveal-answer q="245001"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="245001"]

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
book	*books*	peach	*peaches*
chair	*chairs*	buzz	*buzzes*
picture	*pictures*	watch	*watches*

[/hidden-answer]

After the letter *o*.

We add the plural suffix *–es* to most words that end in *o*.

- tomato → tomatoes
- hero → heroes

We add the plural suffix *–s* to words of foreign origin (Latin, Greek, Spanish, etc.)

- piano → pianos
- photo → photos

- video → videos

Note: While you won't be expected to know which words have a foreign origin, being familiar with (or memorizing) some common words that use this plural can be really helpful. And remember, if you're ever in doubt, the dictionary is there for you!

Practice

What are the correct plurals for the following words?

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
solo	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	portfolio	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]
veto	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	memo	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]
echo	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	radio	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]
avocado	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	zero	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]
studio	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	potato	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]

[reveal-answer q="245002"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="245002"]

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
solo	*solos*	portfolio	*portfolios*
veto	*vetoes*	memo	*memos*
echo	*echoes*	radio	*radios*
avocado	*avocados*	zero	*zeroes*
studio	*studios*	potato	*potatoes*

[/hidden-answer]

After *–y* and *–f*, *–fe*

When a word ends in *y* and there is a consonant before *y*, we change the *y* to *i* and add *–es*.

- baby → babies
- fly → flies

But not after a vowel + *y*

- toy → toys
- monkey → monkeys
- day → days

Practice

What are the correct plurals for the following words?

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
supply	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	key	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
fry	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	play	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]
ally	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	boy	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]

[reveal-answer q="245003"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="245003"]

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
supply	*supplies*	key	*keys*
fry	*fries*	play	*plays*
ally	*allies*	boy	*boys*

[/hidden-answer]

When a word ends in *–f* or *–fe*, we change the *f* to *v* and add *–es*.

- leaf → leaves
- life → lives
- scarf → scarves
- calf → calves
- loaf → loaves

But not in these words

- cliff → cliffs
- roof → roofs
- belief → beliefs
- chief → chiefs

Practice

What are the correct plurals for the following words?

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
wolf	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	self	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]
chief	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	half	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]
sheaf	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	roof	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]
knife	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	thief	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]

[reveal-answer q="245004"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="245004"]

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
wolf	*wolves*	self	*selves*
chief	*chiefs*	half	*halves*

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
sheaf	*sheaves*	roof	*roofs*
knife	*knives*	thief	*thieves*

[/hidden-answer]

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7.5: Text- Irregular Plural Nouns



Irregular plurals, unlike regular plurals, don't necessarily follow any pattern, and require a lot of memorization. Mastering this type of pluralization uses a different region of your brain than regular pluralization, meaning it's an entirely different skill set than regular pluralization. So don't get too frustrated if you can't remember the correct plural. If you're ever in doubt, the dictionary is there for you.

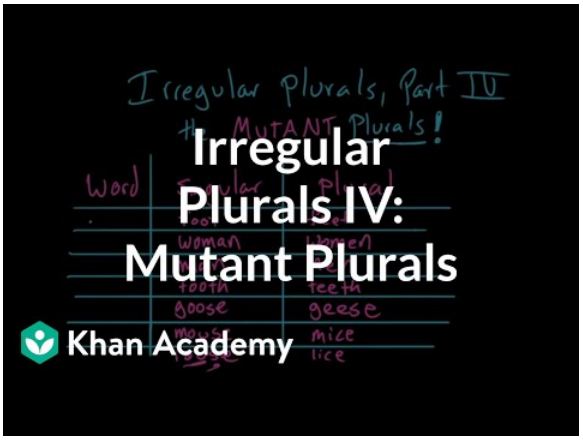
No Change (Base Plurals)

In some words, the singular form is used for both singular and plural.

- fish
- deer
- sheep
- offspring
- series
- species

Mid-Word Vowel Change

In a few words, the mid-word vowels are changed to form the plural. This video lists all seven of these words and their plurals.



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/braw/?p=446

Note: The plural for a computer mouse (as opposed to the fuzzy animal) can either be *mice* or *mouses*. Some people prefer *mouses* as it creates some differentiation between the two words.

Plural *–en*

- child → children
- ox → oxen
- brother → brethren
- sister → sistren

Note: *Brethren* and *sistren* are antiquated terms that you're unlikely to run into in your life; however, since these are the only four words in English that use this plural, all four have been included above.

Practice

What are the correct plurals for the following words?

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
goose	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	moose	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]
fish	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	child	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]
man	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	tooth	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]

[reveal-answer q="245006"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="245006"]

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
goose	*geese*	moose	*moose*
fish	*fish*	child	*children*
man	*men*	tooth	*teeth*

[/hidden-answer]

Borrowed Words *–i*, *–en*, *–a*, *–es*, *–ae*

In words borrowed from Latin and Greek, the plural from the original language is used.

Singular *–us*; Plural *–i*

- cactus → cacti
- fungus → fungi
- syllabus → syllabi

In informal speech, *cactuses* and *funguses* are acceptable. *Octopuses* is preferred to *octopi*, but *octopi* is an accepted word.

Singular *-a*; Plural *–ae*

- formula → formulae (sometimes *formulas*)
- vertebra → vertebrae
- larva → larvae

Singular *–ix*, *–ex*; Plural *–ices*, *–es*

- appendix → appendices (sometimes *appendixes*)
- index → indices

Singular *–on*, *–um*; Plural *–a*

- criterion → criteria
- bacterium → bacteria
- medium → media

Singular *–is*; Plural *–es*

- analysis → analyses
- crisis → crises
- thesis → theses

Practice

What are the correct plurals for the following words?

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
memorandum	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	emphasis	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]
focus	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	basis	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]
nucleus	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	phenomenon	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]
appendix	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	curriculum	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]
parenthesis	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	hypothesis	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]
stimulus	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	vertebra	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]

[reveal-answer q="245005"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="245005"]

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
memorandum	*memoranda*	emphasis	*emphases*
focus	*foci* (*focuses* is also acceptable)	basis	*bases*
nucleus	*nuclei*	phenomenon	*phenomena*
appendix	*appendices* (*appendixes* is also acceptable)	curriculum	*curricula*
parenthesis	*parentheses*	hypothesis	*hypotheses*
stimulus	*stimuli*	vertebra	*vertebrae*

[/hidden-answer]

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7.6: Text- Count vs. Non-Count Nouns

Count Nouns

A **count noun** (also **countable noun**) is a noun that can be modified by a numeral (*threechairs*) and that occurs in both singular and plural forms (*chair*, *chairs*). The can also be preceded by words such as *a*, *an*, or *the* (*a chair*).

Quite literally, count nouns are nouns which can be counted.

Non-Count Nouns

A **non-count noun** (also **mass noun**), on the other hand, has none of these properties. It can't be modified by a numeral (*three furniture* is incorrect), occur in singular/plural (*furnitures* is not a word), or co-occur with *a*, *an*, or *the* (*a furniture* is incorrect).

Again, quite literally, non-count nouns are nouns which cannot be counted.

Example: Chair vs. Furniture

The sentence pairs below compare the count noun *chair* and the non-count noun *furniture*.



There are **chairs** in the room. (correct)
There are **furnitures** in the room. (incorrect)

There is **a chair** in the room. (correct)
There is **a furniture** in the room. (incorrect)

There is **chair** in the room. (incorrect)
There is **furniture** in the room. (correct)

Every chair is man made. (correct)
Every furniture is man made. (incorrect)

All chair is man made. (incorrect)
All furniture is man made. (correct)

There are **several chairs** in the room. (correct)
There are **several furnitures** in the room. (incorrect)

Determining the Type of Noun

In general, a count noun is going to be something you can easily count—like *rock* or *dollar bill*. Non-count nouns, on the other hand, would be more difficult to count—like *sand* or *money*. If you ever want to identify a singular non-count noun, you need a phrase beforehand—like *a grain of sand* or *a sum of money*.

Practice

Select the correct word to complete each sentence (in some cases, both words may be correct). Determine whether the correct word is a count or a non-count noun.

1. The internet is contains a lot of (information / fact).
2. The internet contains a lot of (informations / facts).
3. We each have a (work / job) to do.
4. We each have (work / job) to do.

[reveal-answer q="169413"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="169413"]

1. The internet is full of **information**. *Information* is a non-count noun.
2. The internet contains many **facts**. *Facts* is a count noun. The word "informations" is incorrect because *information* is non-count and doesn't have a plural form.
3. We each have a **job** to do. *Job* is a count noun, so it needs an article (*a*).
4. We each have **work** to do. *Work* is a non-count noun.

[/hidden-answer]

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7.7: Text- Compound Nouns

A **compound noun** is a noun phrase made up of two nouns, e.g. *bus driver*, in which the first noun acts as a sort of adjective for the second one, but without really describing it. (For example, think about the difference between *a black bird* and *a blackbird*.)




Figure 1. A crow is a black bird, while a blackbird is a specific species of bird.

Compound nouns can be made up of two or more other words, but each compound has a single meaning. They may or may not be hyphenated, and they may be written with a space between words—especially if one of the words has more than one syllable, as in *living room*. In that regard, it's necessary to avoid the over-simplification of saying that two single-syllable words are written together as one word. Thus, *tablecloth* but *table mat*, *wine glass* but *wineglassful* or *key ring* but *keyholder*. Moreover, there are cases which some people/dictionaries will write one way while others write them another way. Until very recently we wrote *(the) week's end*, which later became *week-end* and then our beloved *weekend*.

There are three typical structures of compound nouns.

Types of Compound Nouns

Short compounds may be written in three different ways:

- **The solid or closed forms** in which two usually moderately short words appear together as one. Solid compounds most likely consist of short units that often have been established in the language for a long time. Examples are *housewife*, *lawsuit*, *wallpaper*, *basketball*, etc.
- **The hyphenated form** in which two or more words are connected by a hyphen. This category includes compounds that contain suffixes, such as *house-build*(*er*) and *single-mind*(*ed*)(*ness*). Compounds that contain articles, prepositions or conjunctions, such as *rent-a-cop* and *mother-of-pearl*, are also often hyphenated.
- **The open or spaced form** consisting of newer combinations of usually longer words, such as *distance learning*, *player piano*, *lawn tennis*, etc.

Hyphens are often considered a squishy part on language (we'll discuss this further in Text: Hyphens and Dashes). Because of this, usage differs and often depends on the individual choice of the writer rather than on a hard-and-fast rule. This means open, hyphenated, and closed forms may be encountered for the same compound noun, such as the triplets *container ship*/*container-ship*/*containership* and *particle board*/*particle-board*/*particleboard*. If you're ever in doubt whether a compound should be closed, hyphenated, or open, dictionaries are your best reference.

Plurals

The process of making compound nouns plural has its own set of conventions to follow. In all forms of compound nouns, we pluralize the chief element of a compound word (i.e., we pluralize the primary noun of the compound).

- fisher**man** → fisher**men**
- black **bird** → black **birds**
- **brother**-in-law → **brothers**-in-law

The word *hand-me-down* doesn't have a distinct primary noun, so its plural is *hand-me-downs*.

Practice

What are the correct plurals for the following words?

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
do-it-yourself	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	rabbit's foot	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]
have-not	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	time-out	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]
spoonful	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	lieutenant general	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]
runner-up	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	passerby	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]

[reveal-answer q="87309"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="87309"]

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
do-it-yourself	*do-it-yourselves*	rabbit's foot	*rabbits' feet*
have-not	*have-nots*	time-out	*time-outs*
spoonful	*spoonfuls*	lieutenant general	*lieutenant generals*
runner-up	*runners-up*	passerby	*passersby*

[/hidden-answer]

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7.8: Self Check- Nouns

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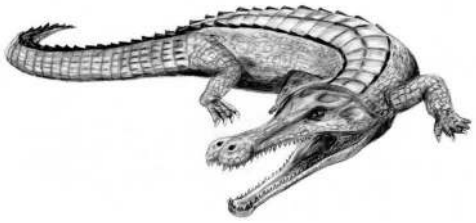
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7.9: Try It- Nouns

This activity is not graded. The text fields below are purely for self-reflection; you do not need to submit anything for this assignment.

Identify

Identify the nouns in the following paragraph. Type them in the text frame below:



The giant croc *Sarcosuchus imperator*

> Crocodiles are freakin' amazing animals. They've been around for about 250 million years, and throughout this time have survived two mass extinctions, and at least twice decided to hitch up and take to the seas. Their historical diversity, and general weirdness, was vast compared to what we see in modern crocs, which are all fairly similar—visually at least. Extinct forms included both those that looked like armadillos and ate plants and those that became gigantic and streamlined for swimming out to sea. Other crocs were up to 12 meters long, and snacked on dinosaurs!

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="496962"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="496962"]

Your typed answer should look something like this:

> crocodiles; animals; years; time; extinctions; seas; diversity; weirdness; crocs; forms; armadillos; plants; sea; crocs; dinosaurs

Here is the paragraph with all the nouns bolded:

> **Crocodiles** are freakin' amazing **animals**. They've been around for about 250 million **years**, and throughout this **time** have survived two mass **extinctions**, and at least twice decided to hitch up and take to the **seas**. Their historical **diversity**, and general **weirdness**, was vast compared to what we see in modern **crocs**, which are all fairly similar—visually at least. Extinct **forms** included both those that looked like **armadillos** and ate **plants** and those that became gigantic and streamlined for swimming out to **sea**. Other **crocs** were up to 12 meters long, and snacked on **dinosaurs**!

[/hidden-answer]

Pluralize

Look at this table of nouns. Type the correct plural for each word into the text frames below:

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
caramel	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	taco	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	life	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]
dump truck	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	vertebra	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	analysis	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]
swatch	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	ox	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	focus	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
spy	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	belief	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	species	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]
sister-in-law	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	deer	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	tooth	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]

[reveal-answer q="57879"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="57879"]Your typed answer should look something like this:

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
caramel	**caramels**	taco	**tacos**	life	**lives**
dump truck	**dump trucks**	vertebra	**vertebrae**	analysis	**analyses**
swatch	**swatches**	ox	**oxen**	focus	**foci (or focuses)**
spy	**spies**	belief	**beliefs**	species	**species**
sister-in-law	**sisters-in-law**	deer	**deer**	tooth	**teeth**

[/hidden-answer]

Categorize

Select the correct word to complete each sentence. Determine whether the correct word is a count or a non-count noun. Type your answers in the text frame below:

1. Much of the (equipment/computers) in our office needs updating.
2. Several of the (equipment/computers) are being updated.
3. Not much (luggage/bags) can be taken aboard an airplane.
4. Most people usually travel with a couple of (luggage/bags).
5. I get several (mail/letters) each day.
6. Much of my (mail/letters) is ads.
7. Your (clothing/shirts) needs washing.
8. Your (clothing/shirts) need washing.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="169413"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="169413"]

1. equipment; e*quipment* is a non-count noun.
2. computers; *computers* is a count noun.
3. luggage; *luggage* is a non-count noun.
4. bags; *bags* is a count noun.
5. letters; *letters* is a count noun.
6. mail; m*ail* is a non-count noun.
7. clothing; *clothing* is a non-count noun.
8. shirts; *shirts* is a count noun.

[/hidden-answer]

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7.10: Outcome- Pronouns

Identify the Function and Structure of Pronouns



Anna decided at the beginning of Anna's first semester of college that Anna would run for thirty minutes every day. Anna knew that Anna would be taking a literature class with a lot of reading, so instead of buying print copies of all the novels Anna's teacher assigned, Anna bought the audiobooks. That way Anna could listen to the audiobooks as Anna ran.

Does this paragraph feel awkward to you? Let's try it again using pronouns:

> Anna decided at the beginning of **her** first semester of college that **she** would run for thirty minutes every day. **She** knew that **she** would be taking a literature class with a lot of reading, so instead of buying hard copies of all the novels **her** teacher assigned, Anna bought the audiobooks. That way **she** could listen to **them** as **she** ran.

This second paragraph is much more natural. Instead of repeating nouns multiple times, we were able to use pronouns. You've likely hear the phrase "a pronoun replaces a noun"; this is *exactly* what a pronoun does.

In this outcome, you'll learn how pronouns work, how to use pronouns in different situations, and how to select the correct pronouns.

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify functions of pronouns
- identify pronoun person and number
- identify pronoun case (subjects, objects, possessives)
- identify pronoun and antecedent clarity
- identify pronoun and antecedent agreement

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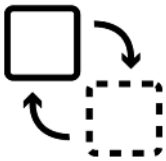
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7.11: Text- Pronouns



A pronoun stands in the place of a noun. Because a pronoun is replacing a noun, its meaning is dependent on the noun that it is replacing. This noun is called the **antecedent**. Let's look at the two sentences we just read again:

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

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

- Jason likes it when people look to him for leadership.
- Trini brushes her hair every morning.
- Billy often has to clean his glasses.
- Kimberly is a gymnast. She has earned several medals in different competitions.

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

- *Jason* is the antecedent for the pronoun *him*.
- *Trini* is the antecedent for the pronoun *her*.
- *Billy* is the antecedent for the pronoun *his*.
- *Kimberly* is the antecedent for the pronoun *she*.

Practice

Identify the antecedent in the following examples:

1. The bus is twenty minutes late today, like it always is.
2. I would never be caught dead wearing boot sandals. They are an affront to nature.

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

1. **The bus** is the antecedent for the pronoun *it*.
2. **boot sandals** is the antecedent for the pronoun *they*.

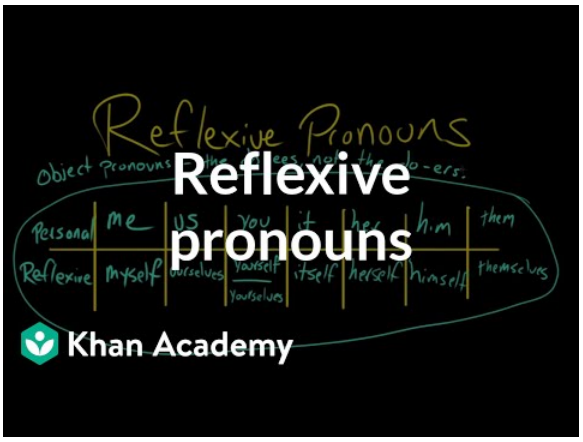
[/hidden-answer]

There are several types of pronouns, including personal, demonstrative, and indefinite pronouns. Let's discuss each of these types.

Personal Pronouns

The following sentences give examples of particular types of pronouns used with antecedents:

- Third-person personal pronouns:
  - **That poor man** looks as if **he** needs a new coat. (the noun phrase *that poor man* is the antecedent of *he*)
  - **Kat** arrived yesterday. I met **her** at the station. (*Kat* is the antecedent of *her*)
  - When **they** saw us, **the lions** began roaring (*the lions* is the antecedent of *they*)
- Other personal pronouns in some circumstances:
  - **Adam and I** were hoping no-one would find **us**. (*Adam and I* is the antecedent of *us*)
  - **You and Aisha** can come if **you** like. (*you and Aisha* is the antecedent of the second, plural, *you*)
- Reflexive pronouns:
  - **Jason** hurt **himself**. (*Jason* is the antecedent of *himself*)
  - **We** were teasing **each other**. (*we* is the antecedent of *each other*)



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Demonstrative Pronouns

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

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

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

Note: these pronouns are often combined with a noun (when this happens, they act as a kind of adjective instead of a pronoun).

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

The antecedents of demonstrative pronouns can be more complex than those of personal pronouns:

> **Animal Planet's puppy cam has been taken down for maintenance.** I never wanted *this* to happen.

The antecedent for *this* is the concept of the puppy cam being taken down.

Note: The pronoun *it* can also have more complex antecedents:

> I love Animal Planet's panda cam. **I watched a panda eat bamboo for half an hour.** *It* was amazing.

The antecedent for *it* in this sentence is the experience of watching the panda. That antecedent isn't explicitly stated in the sentence, but comes through in the intention and meaning of the speaker.

Practice

Read each sentence pair. The pronouns have been bolded. Identify the antecedent.

1. I can see forty bracelets. Are you telling me you made all of **these**?
2. I can't get rid of my country-shaped mugs. Tommy gave **those** to me for my birthday!
3. Have I seen the video of a skateboard-riding bulldog? I showed **that** to you last week!
4. He's been talking for over two hours. **This** is unbearable.

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

1. The antecedent is *forty bracelets*.
2. The antecedent is *country-shaped mugs*.
3. The antecedent is *the video of a skateboard-riding bulldog*.
4. The antecedent is the experience of him talking for over two hours.

[/hidden-answer]

Indefinite Pronouns

Indefinite pronouns, the largest group of pronouns, refer to one or more unspecified persons or things, for example: ***Anyone*** *can do that.* The table below shows the most common indefinite pronouns:

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

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

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

Please note that all of these pronouns are singular. Look back at the example "To **each** his or her own." Saying "To each their own" would be incorrect, since *their* is a plural pronoun and *each* is singular. We'll discuss this in further depth in Text: Antecedent Agreement.

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

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

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7.12: Text- Pronoun Person, Number, and Case

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

Person



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

First

First-person is the most informal. The author is saying, this is about me and people I know.

- First-person pronouns include *I*, *me*, *we*

Second

Second-person is also informal, though slightly more formal than first-person. The author is saying, this is about you, the reader.

- All second-person pronouns are variations of *you*, which is both singular and plural

Third

Third-person is the most formal. The author is saying, this is about other people.

In the third person singular there are distinct pronoun forms for male, female, and neutral gender. Here is a short list of the most common pronouns and their gender:

Person		Pronouns
First		I, me, we, us
Second		you
Third	Male	he, him
	Female	she, her
	Neutral	it, they, them

Practice

Select the response from the list that best completes the sentence.

1. This is Theo. (He / She / It) has a nickname—"Fast Draw."
2. Meet my parents. (He / It / They) don't understand me.
3. Luiza is an actress. Everybody knows (him / her / them).
4. These flowers are for you and your family. I picked them for (them / you / yous).
5. Look at these guys. Look at (him / it / them).

[reveal-answer q="808310″]**Click to Show Answers**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="808310″]

1. This is Theo. **He** has a nickname—"Fast Draw."
2. Meet my parents. **They** don't understand me.
3. Luiza is an actress. Everybody knows **her**.
4. These flowers are for you and your family. I picked them for **you**.
5. Look at these guys. Look at **them**.

[/hidden-answer]

Number



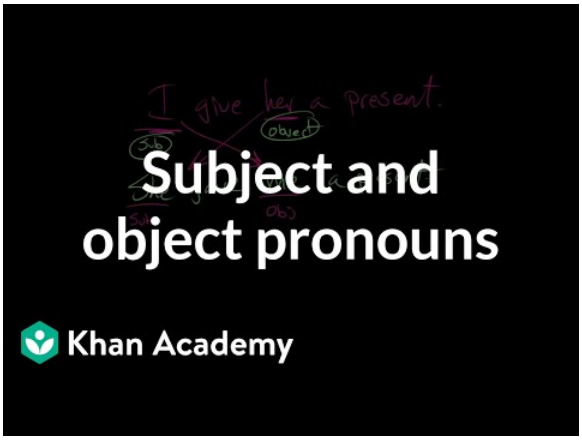
There are two numbers: singular and plural. The table below separates pronouns according to number. You may notice that the second person is the same for both singular and plural: *you*.

Person	Number	Pronouns
First	Singular	I, me
	Plural	we, us
Second	Singular	you
	Plural	you
Third	Singular	he, him
		she, her
		it
	Plural	they, them

Case



English personal pronouns have two cases: **subject** and **object** (there are also possessive pronouns, which we'll discuss next). **Subject-case pronouns** are used when the pronoun is doing the action. (I like to eat chips, but she does not). **Object-case pronouns** are used when something is being done to the pronoun (John likes me but not her). This video will further clarify the difference between subject- and object-case:



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Practice

Select the response from the list that best completes the sentence.

1. I don't know if I should talk to (he / him). (He / Him) looks really angry today.

2. Enrico and Brenna are coming over for dinner tomorrow night. (They / Them) will be here at 6:00.
3. Melissa loves music. (She / Her) listens to it when I drive (she / her) to work.

[reveal-answer q="387333"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="387333"]

1. I don't know if I should talk to **him**. **He** looks really angry today.
2. Enrico and Brenna are coming over for dinner tomorrow night. **They** will be here at 6:00.
3. Melissa loves music. **She** listens to it when I drive **her** to work.

[/hidden-answer]

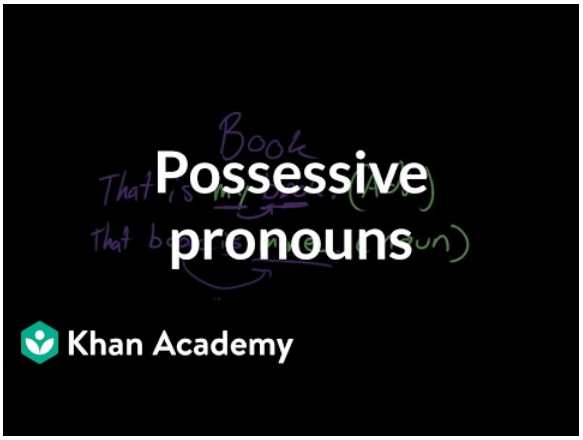
Possessive Pronouns



Possessive pronouns are used to indicate possession (in a broad sense). Some occur as independent phrases: *mine*, *yours*, *hers*, *ours*, *yours*, *theirs*. For example, "Those clothes are **mine**." Others must be accompanied by a noun: *my*, *your*, *her*, *our*, *your*, *their*, as in "I lost **my** wallet." *His* and *its* can fall into either category, although *its* is nearly always found in the second.

Both types replace possessive noun phrases. As an example, "Their crusade to capture our attention" could replace "The advertisers' crusade to capture our attention."

This video provides another explanation of possessive pronouns:



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Practice

Select the response from the list that best completes the sentence.

1. Hey, that's (my / mine)!
2. Carla gave Peter (her / hers) phone number.
3. Remember to leave (their / theirs) papers on the table.

[reveal-answer q="685429"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="685429"]

1. Hey, that's **mine**!
2. Carla gave Peter **her** phone number.
3. Remember to leave **their** papers on the table.

[/hidden-answer]

Review

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

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

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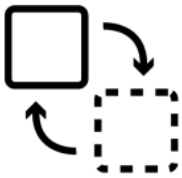
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7.13: Text- Antecedent Clarity



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

Let's take a look at our first sentence:

> Rafael told Matt to stop eating his cereal.

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

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

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

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

What if the cereal is Matt's?:

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

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

[/hidden-answer]

Were those revisions what you expected them to be?

Let's take a look at another example:

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

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

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

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="654516"]**Show Possible Revisions**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="654516"]Let's assume that is is the French who make great cuisine:

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

[/hidden-answer]

As you write, keep these two things in mind:

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

Practice

Use the context clues to figure out which pronoun to use to complete the sentences. Select the response from the list that best completes the sentence.

1. Pat is fifteen and Robin is thirteen. (Pat / he / she) likes swimming, but (Robin / he / she) doesn't know what he likes.
2. Because (Robin / he) can swim now, (Robin / he) can join the swim team.

[reveal-answer q="877215"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="877215"]

1. Pat is fifteen and Robin is thirteen. **Pat** likes swimming, but **Robin** doesn't know what he likes. (We cannot use a pronoun until we know the person. In this case, repeat the name. Note the last *he* gives us the clue that Robin is male.)
2. Because **Robin** can swim now, **he** can join the swim team. (Mention noun before using the pronoun.)

[/hidden-answer]

Let's try a more complicated paragraph:

3. When my identical twin girls, Andrea and Renee, were about a month old, (she / Renee) developed a very high temperature, so I took her to the hospital where (she / Renee) spent the night. Meanwhile, at home, (she / Andrea) was twisting and turning; (she / Andrea) was unable to sleep. The next night, (she / Andrea) was the same.

[reveal-answer q="877216"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="877216"]

3. When my identical twin girls, Andrea and Renee, were about a month old, **Renee** developed a very high temperature, so I took her to the hospital where **she** spent the night. Meanwhile, at home, **Andrea** was twisting and turning; **she** was unable to sleep. The next night, **she** was the same.

[/hidden-answer]

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7.14: Text- Antecedent Agreement



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Practice

Replace each bolded word with the correct pronoun:

1. **Hannah** had always loved working with plants.
2. People often lost patience with **Colin**.
3. Justin was unsure how well **Justin** and Terry would together.
4. **Alicia and Katie** made a formidable team.

[reveal-answer q="697932"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="697932"]

1. **She** had always loved working with plants.
2. People often lost patience with **him**.
3. Justin was unsure how well **he** and Terry would together.
4. **They** made a formidable team.

[/hidden-answer]

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

Person and Number

Some of the trickiest agreements are with indefinite pronouns:

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

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

anybody	anyone	anything	each	either	every

everybody	everyone	everything	neither	no one	nobody
nothing	one	somebody	someone	something	

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

However, the phrase “he or she” (and its other forms) can often make your sentences clunky. When this happens, it may be best to revise your sentences to have plural antecedents.

Practice

Here’s a paragraph that uses “he or she” liberally:

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

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

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

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

[/hidden-answer]

Were those revisions what you expected them to be?

Case

You and I versus *You and Me*

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

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

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

Note: This is the same principle that is behind the *who* versus *whom* debate. *Who* is the subject case of the word, and *whom* is the object case.

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7.15: Self Check- Pronouns

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7.16: Try It- Pronouns

This activity is not graded. The text fields below are purely for self-reflection; you do not need to submit anything for this assignment.

Identify

Identify all the pronouns in the following excerpt. Type them in the text frame below:



Figure 1. The Chicxulub impact spewed hundreds of billions of tons of sulfur into the atmosphere, producing a worldwide blackout and freezing temperatures that persisted for at least a decade.

> It's dark. It's always dark these days. Lights in the sky burn your eyes, so you keep your face to ground in the hopes that they'll go away. But they don't. The air is heavy. Heavy with poisons that make it difficult to breathe. Heavy with foreboding dread.
>
> You, my unfortunate friend, are going through a mass extinction!
>
> There have been five periods of mass extinction in the past. These represent major phases in the history of life where we see global reorganizations of ecosystems and their inhabitants. Perhaps the most infamous is the end-Cretaceous mass extinction, 66 million years ago. This even saw the extinction of numerous weird and wonderful marine reptile groups, the flying pterosaurs, ammonites, and of course, the non-avian (bird-like) dinosaurs.
>
> Scientifically speaking, we're in broad agreement about what caused this upheaval of life: the combination of a huge asteroid impact at Chicxulub in Mexico and a massive eruption of the Deccan Traps in western India.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="526335"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="526335"]

Your typed answer should look something like this:

> it; it; these; your; you; your; they; they; it; you; my; there; these; we; their; this; we; this

Here is the paragraph with all the pronouns bolded:

> **It**'s dark. **It**'s always dark **these** days. Lights in the sky burn **your** eyes, so **you** keep **your** face to ground in the hopes that **they**'ll go away. But **they** don't. The air is heavy. Heavy with poisons that make **it** difficult to breathe. Heavy with foreboding dread.
>
> **You**, **my** unfortunate friend, are going through a mass extinction!
>
> **There** have been five periods of mass extinction in the past. **These** represent major phases in the history of life where **we** see global reorganizations of ecosystems and **their** inhabitants. Perhaps the most infamous is the end-Cretaceous mass extinction, 66 million years ago. **This** saw the extinction of numerous weird and wonderful marine reptile groups, the flying pterosaurs, ammonites, and of course, the non-avian (bird-like) dinosaurs.
>
> Scientifically speaking, **we**'re in broad agreement about what caused **this** upheaval of life: the combination of a huge asteroid impact at Chicxulub in Mexico and a massive eruption of the Deccan Traps in western India.

[/hidden-answer]

Complete the Table

Identify the missing pronouns to complete the table:

Person	Number	Nominative	Objective	Possessive	
First	Singular	I	me	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	mine
	Plural	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	us	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	ours
Second	Singular	you	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	your	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]
	Plural	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	you	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]
Third	Singular	he	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	his	his
		[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	her	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	hers
		[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]
	Plural	they	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	[practice-area rows="1"] [/practice-area]	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]

[reveal-answer q="587889"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="587889"]

Your completed table should look something like this:

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

[/hidden-answer]

Selecting for Case

Each of the following sentences is missing a pronoun. Possible pronouns are listed in the sentence; choose the best pronoun to complete the sentence. Type your answers in the text frame below:

1. Eric has to get to the bakery at 4:00 a.m. every morning. It's hard to wake up, but (he / him / his) thinks it's worth it.
2. Larissa likes sequins more than (I / me / my / mine) do.
3. Hockey isn't (I / me / my / mine) favorite sport (first person singular), but it sure is (she / her / hers).
4. (You / your / yours) have left (this / that / these / those) papers out on the table for a week now. Throw (it / its / they / them / their / theirs) away before I do.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="587860"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="587860"]

Your answer should look something like the following:

1. Eric has to get to the bakery at 4:00 a.m. every morning. It's hard to wake up, but **he** thinks it's worth it.
2. Larissa likes sequins more than **I** do.
3. Hockey isn't **my** favorite sport (first person singular), but it sure is **hers**.
4. **You** have left **these** (or **those**) papers out on the table for a week now. Throw **them** away before I do.
    - In this question, the context—how close the speaker is to the papers—will determine *these* or *those* should be used. If the speaker is near the papers, *these* is the correct pronoun. If the speaker is far, *those* is the correct pronoun.

[/hidden-answer]

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7.17: Outcome- Verbs

Identify Verb Types and Their Correct Conjugation

From 2002 to 2006, The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) ran a media campaign entitled “Verb: It’s What You Do.” This campaign was designed to help teens get and stay active, but it also provided a helpful soundbite for defining verbs: “It’s what you do.”

Verbs are often called the “action” words of language. As we discuss verbs, we will learn that this isn’t always the case, but it is a helpful phrase to remember just what verbs are.



Traditionally, verbs are divided into three groups: active verbs (these are “action” words), linking verbs, and helping verbs (these two types of verbs are *not* “action” words). In this outcome, we’ll discuss all three of these groups. We’ll also learn how verbs work and how they change to suit the needs of a speaker or writer.

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify functions and categories of verbs
- identify helping verbs
- identify verb tenses
- identify subject and verb agreement
- identify verb tense consistency
- identify gerunds
- identify participles
- identify infinitives

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7.18: Text- Active Verbs



Active verbs are the simplest type of verb: they simply express some sort of action. Watch this video introduction to verbs:



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Let's look at the example verbs from the video one more time:

- *contain*
- *roars*
- *runs*
- *sleeps*

All of these verbs are active verbs: they all express an action.

Practice

Identify the active verbs in the following sentences:

1. Dominic paints the best pictures of meerkats.
2. Sean's hair curled really well today.
3. Elephants roam the savanna.
4. Billy ate an entire loaf of bread in one sitting.

[reveal-answer q="365406"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="365406"]

1. Dominic **paints** the best pictures of meerkats.
2. Sean's hair **curled** really well today.
3. Elephants **roam** the savanna.
4. Billy **ate** an entire loaf of bread in one sitting.

[/hidden-answer]

Transitive and Intransitive Verbs

Active verbs can be divided into two categories: transitive and intransitive verbs. A **transitive verb** is a verb that requires one or more objects. This contrasts with intransitive verbs, which do not have objects.

It might be helpful to think of it this way: transitive verbs have to be *done to* something or someone in the sentence. Intransitive verbs only have to be done *by* someone.

Let's look at a few examples of transitive verbs:

- We are going to **need** a bigger boat.
  - The object in this sentence is the phrase "a bigger boat." Consider how incomplete the thought would be if the sentence only said "We are going to need." Despite having a subject and a verb, the sentence is meaningless without the object phrase.
- She hates **filling out** forms.
  - Again, leaving out the object would cripple the meaning of the sentence. We have to know that "forms" is what she hates filling out.
- Sean **hugged** his brother David.
  - You can see the pattern. . . . "Hugged" in this sentence is only useful if we know who Sean squeezed. David is the object of the transitive verb.

Intransitive verbs, on the other do not take an object.

- John **sneezed** loudly.
  - Even though there's another word after *sneezed*, the full meaning of the sentence is available with just the subject *John* and the verb *sneezed*: "John sneezed." Therefore, *sneezed* is an intransitive verb. It doesn't have to be done to something or someone.
- My computer completely **died**.
  - Again, *died* here is enough for the sentence to make sense. We know that the computer (the subject) is what died.

This video provides a more in-depth explanation of transitive and intransitive verbs and how they work:



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Note: there are some verbs that can act as both transitive and intransitive verbs (the video defined these as bitransitive verbs):

Intransitive	Transitive
The fire has **burned** for hundreds of years.	Miranda **burned** all of her old school papers.
Don't let the engine stop **running**!	Karl **ran** the best horse track this side of the river.
The vase **broke**.	She **broke** the toothpick.
Does your dog **bite**?	The cat **bit** him.
Water **evaporates** when it's hot.	Heat **evaporates** water.

Practice

Read the following sentences. Are the verbs in each transitive or intransitive?

1. Liv fell out of the car.
2. Ian has written over four hundred articles on the subject.
3. Christopher sings really well.
4. Marton wondered about a lot of things.
5. Cate gave great gifts.

[reveal-answer q="682679"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="682679"]

1. Liv **fell** out of the car. *Fell* is intransitive.
2. Ian **has written** over four hundred articles on the subject. *Has written* is transitive.
3. Christopher **sings** really well. *Sings* is intransitive.
4. Marton **wondered** about a lot of things. *Wondered* is intransitive.
5. Cate **gave** great gifts. *Gave* is transitive.

[/hidden-answer]

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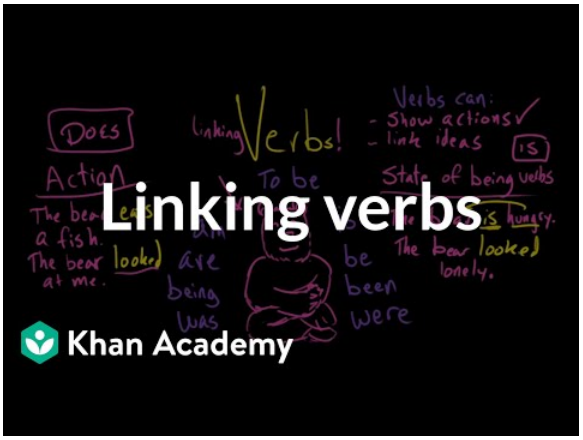
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7.19: Text- Linking Verbs

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



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As the video establishes, *to be* verbs are the most common linking verbs (*is*, *was*, *were*, etc.). David and the bear establish that there are other linking verbs as well. Here are some illustrations of other common linking verbs:

- Over the past five days, Charles **has become** a new man.
  - It's easy to reimagine this sentence as "Over the past five days, Charles = a new man."
- Since the oil spill, the beach **has smelled** bad.
  - Similarly, one could also read this as "Since the oil spill, the beach = smelled bad."
- That word processing program **seems** adequate for our needs.
  - Here, the linking verb is slightly more nuanced than an equals sign, though the sentence construction overall is similar. (This is why we write in words, rather than math symbols, after all!)
- This calculus problem **looks** difficult.
- With every step Jake took, he could **feel** the weight on his shoulders growing.

Practice

Read each sentence and determine whether its verb is a linking verb or not:

1. Terry smelled his yogurt to see if it was still good.
2. Rosa looks intimidating.
3. Amy looked over at the clock to check the time.
4. Gina smelled like chrysanthemums and mystery.
5. Raymond is a fantastic boss.

[reveal-answer q="593412"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="593412"]

1. Terry **smelled** his yogurt to see if it was still good. *Smelled* is an active verb in this sentence.
2. Rosa **looks** intimidating. *Looks* is a linking verb in this sentence.
3. Amy **looked** over at the clock to check the time. *Looked* is an active verb in this sentence.
4. Gina **smelled** like chrysanthemums and mystery. *Smelled* is a linking verb in this sentence.
5. Raymond **is** a fantastic boss. *Is* is a linking verb in this sentence.

[/hidden-answer]

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7.20: Text- Helping Verbs



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

- By 1967, about 500 U.S. citizens **had** received heart transplants.
  - While *received* could function on its own as a complete thought here, the helping verb *had* emphasizes the distance in time of the date in the opening phrase.
- Better immunosuppression management in transplant operations **has** yielded better results.
  - This time, the helping verb adds clarity to the main verb *yielded*. Without it, the sentence would be difficult to understand.
- Researchers **are** finding that propranolol is effective in the treatment of heartbeat irregularities.
  - The helping verb *are* adds immediacy to the verb *finding*.

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

- Do you want tea?
  - *Do* is a helping verb accompanying the main verb *want*, used here to form a question.
- He has given his all.
  - *Has* is a helping verb used in expressing the tense of *given*.

A list of verbs that (can) function as helping verbs in English is as follows:

- *be* (and all its forms)
- *can, could*
- *dare*
- *do* (and all its forms)
- *have* (and all its forms)
- *may, might, must*
- *need*
- *ought*
- *shall, should*
- *will, would*

The negative forms of these words (*can't, don't, won't,* etc.) are also helping verbs.

Practice

Identify the helping verbs in the sentences below:

1. Do you want Tim's shift tonight?
2. Cassandra couldn't afford to give up.
3. Richard was exercising when Barbara finally found him.

[reveal-answer q="893071″]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="893071″]

1. **Do** you want Tim's shift tonight? (*Do* accompanies *want*. In this sentence, it is used to make a question.)
2. Cassandra **couldn't** afford to give up. (*Couldn't* helps *afford*. In this sentence, it indicates how possible the verb *afford* is.)
3. Richard **was** exercising when Barbara finally found him. (*Was* accompanies *exercising*. In this sentence, it is used to indicate the tense.)

[/hidden-answer]

The following table shows examples of the helping verbs in standard English. Some helping verbs have more than one example as they can be used in multiple ways.

Helping Verb	Examples
be	He **is** sleeping. They **were** seen.
can	I **can** swim. Such things **can** help.
could	I **could** swim. That **could** help.
dare	How **dare** you!
do	You **did** not understand.
have	They **have** understood.
may	**May** I stay? That **may** take place.
might	We **might** give it a try.
must	You **must** not mock me. It **must** have rained.
need	You **need** not water the grass.
ought	You **ought** to play well.
shall	You **shall** not pass.
should	You **should** listen. That **should** help.
will	We **will** eat pie. The sun **will** rise tomorrow at 6:03. He **will** make that mistake every time.
would	Nothing **would** accomplish that. After 1990, we **would** do that again. Back then we **would** always go there

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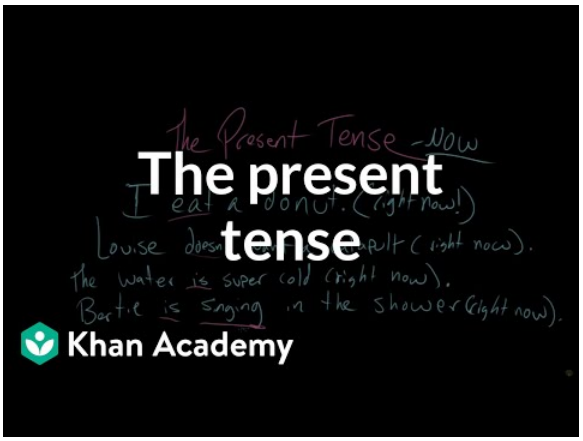
7.21: Text- Verb Tenses

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

Tenses

Present Tense

Watch this quick introduction to the present tense:



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/braw/?p=478

Past Tense

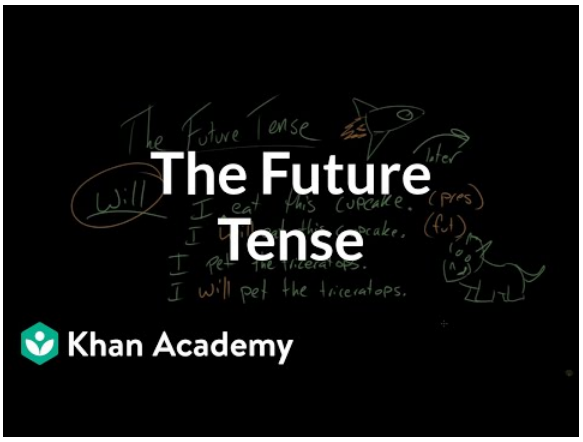
Watch this quick introduction to the past tense:



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Future Tense

Watch this quick introduction to the future tense:



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Other Forms of the Past, Present, and Future

You may have noticed that in the present tense video David talked about “things that are happening right now” and that he mentioned there were other ways to create the past and future tense. We won’t discuss these tenses in too much depth, but it’s important to recognize them.

We already discussed these briefly in Text: Helping Verbs. These forms are created with different forms of *to be* and *to have*:

- He had eaten everything by the time we got there.
- She is waiting for us to get there!
- He will have broken it by next Thursday, you can be sure.
- She was singing for eight hours.

When you combine *to be* with the *–ing* form of a verb you create a sense of continuity. The subject of the sentence was (or is, or will be) doing that thing for awhile. When you combine *to have* with the past participle of a verb, you create a sense of completion. This thing had been done for a while (or has been, or will have been). The sense of past, present, or future comes from the conjugation of *to be* or *to have*. For further discussion on this topic, look at the “Participles” section in Text: Non-Finite Verbs.

Conjugation

Most verbs will follow the pattern that we just learned in the previous videos:

Person	Past	Present	Future
I	verb + *ed*	verb	will verb
We	verb + *ed*	verb	will verb
You	verb + *ed*	verb	will verb
He, She, It	verb + *ed*	verb + *s* (or *es*)	will verb
They	verb + *ed*	verb	will verb

To Walk

Let’s look at the verb *to walk* for an example:

Person	Past	Present	Future
I	walked	walk	will walk
We	walked	walk	will walk
You	walked	walk	will walk

He, She, It	walked	walks	will walk
They	walked	walk	will walk

Practice

Change the tense of each sentence as directed below. You can type your answers in the text field below:

1. Make this sentence present tense: Alejandra directed a play.
2. Make this sentence past tense: Lena will show me how to use a microscope.
3. Make this sentence future tense: Gabrielly eats a lot of hamburgers.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="474777"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="474777"]

1. Alejandra **directs** a play.
2. Lena **showed** me how to use a microscope.
3. Gabrielly **will eat** a lot of hamburgers.

[/hidden-answer]

Irregular Verbs

There are a lot of irregular verbs. Unfortunately, there's a lot of memorization involved in keeping them straight. This video shows a few of the irregular verbs you'll have to use the most often (*to be*, *to have*, *to do*, and *to say*):



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7.22: Text- Subject and Verb Agreement



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

Person

Agreement based on grammatical person (first, second, or third person) is found mostly between verb and subject. For example, you can say “I am” or “he is,” but not “I is” or “he am.” This is because the grammar of the language requires that the verb and its subject agree in person. The pronouns *I* and *he* are first and third person respectively, as are the verb forms *am* and *is*. The verb form must be selected so that it has the same person as the subject.

Number

Agreement based on grammatical number can occur between verb and subject, as in the case of grammatical person discussed above. In fact the two categories are often conflated within verb conjugation patterns: there are specific verb forms for first person singular, second person plural and so on. Some examples:

- **I** really **am** (1st pers. singular) vs. **We** really **are** (1st pers. plural)
- The **boy sings** (3rd pers. singular) vs. The **boys sing** (3rd pers. plural)

More Examples

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

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

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

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

The subject of “my talk” is *direction*, not *plays*, so the verb should be singular.

In the English language, verbs usually follow subjects. But when this order is reversed, the writer must make the verb agree with the subject, not with a noun that happens to precede it. For example:

> Beside the house **stand** sheds filled with tools.

The subject is *sheds*; it is plural, so the verb must be *stand*.

Agreement

All regular verbs (and nearly all irregular ones) in English agree in the third-person singular of the present indicative by adding a suffix of either *-s* or *-es*.

Look at the present tense of *to love*, for example:

Person	Number	
	Singular	Plural
First	*I love*	*we love*
Second	*you love*	*you love*
Third	*he/she/it loves*	*they love*

The highly irregular verb *to be* is the only verb with more agreement than this in the present tense:

Person	Number	
	Singular	Plural
First	*I am*	*we are*
Second	*you are*	*you are*
Third	*he/she/it is*	*they are*

Here's a list of several irregular past tense verbs.

Practice

Choose the correct verb to make the sentences agree:

1. Ann (walk / walks) really slowly.
2. You (is / am / are) dating Tom?
3. Donna and April (get / gets) along well.
4. Chris and Ben (is / am / are) the best duo this company has ever seen.

[reveal-answer q="813087"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="813087"]

1. Ann **walks** really slowly.
2. You **are** dating Tom?
3. Donna and April **get** along well.
4. Chris and Ben **are** the best duo this company has ever seen.

[/hidden-answer]

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7.23: Text- Verb Tense Consistency

One of the most common mistakes in writing is a lack of tense consistency. Writers often start a sentence in one tense but ended up in another. Look back at that sentence. Do you see the error? The first verb *start* is in the present tense, but *ended* is in the past tense. The correct version of the sentence would be "Writers often start a sentence in one tense but end up in another."

These mistakes often occur when writers change their minds halfway through writing the sentence, or when they come back and make changes but only end up changing half the sentence. It is very important to maintain a consistent tense, not just in a sentence but across paragraphs and pages. Decide if something happened, is happening, or will happen and then stick with that choice.

Read through the following paragraphs. Can you spot the errors in tense?

 If you want to pick up a new outdoor activity, hiking is a great option to consider. It's a sport that is suited for a beginner or an expert—it just depended on the difficulty hikes you choose. However, even the earliest beginners can complete difficult hikes if they pace themselves and were physically fit.

Not only is hiking an easy activity to pick up, it also will have some great payoffs. As you walked through canyons and climbed up mountains, you can see things that you wouldn't otherwise. The views are breathtaking, and you will get a great opportunity to meditate on the world and your role in it. The summit of a mountain is unlike any other place in the world.

What errors did you spot? Let's take another look at this passage. This time, the tense-shifted verbs have been bolded, and the phrases they belong to have been underlined:

If you want to pick up a new outdoor activity, hiking is a great option to consider. It's a sport that is suited for a beginner or an expert—it just **depended** on the difficulty hikes you choose. However, even the earliest beginners can complete difficult hikes if they pace themselves and **were** physically fit.

Not only is hiking an easy activity to pick up, it also **will have** some great payoffs. As you **walked** through canyons and **climbed** up mountains, you can see things that you wouldn't otherwise. The views are breathtaking, and you **will get** a great opportunity to meditate on the world and your role in it. The summit of a mountain is unlike any other place in the world.

As we mentioned earlier, you want to make sure your whole passage is consistent in its tense. You may have noticed that the most of the verbs in this passage are in present tense—this is especially apparent if you ignore those verbs that have been bolded. Now that we've established that this passage should be in the present tense, let's address each of the underlined segments:

- It's a sport that is suited for a beginner or an expert—it just **depended** on the difficulty hikes you choose.
  - *depended* should be the same tense as *is*; it just **depends** on the difficulty
- if they pace themselves and **were** physically fit.
  - *were* should be the same tense as *pace*; if they pace themselves and **are** physically fit.
- Not only is hiking an easy activity to pick up, it also **will have** some great payoffs.
  - *will have* should be the same tense as *is*; it also **has** some great pay offs
- As you **walked** through canyons and **climbed** up mountains
  - *walked* and *climbed* are both past tense, but this doesn't match the tense of the passage as a whole. They should both be changed to present tense: As you **walk** through canyons and **climb** up mountains.
- The views are breathtaking, and you **will get** a great opportunity to meditate on the world and your role in it.
  - *will get* should be the same tense as *are*; you **get** a great opportunity

Here's the corrected passage as a whole; all edited verbs have been bolded:

> If you want to pick up a new outdoor activity, hiking is a great option to consider. It's a sport that can be suited for a beginner or an expert—it just **depends** on the difficulty hikes you choose. However, even the earliest beginners can complete difficult hikes if they pace themselves and **are** physically fit.
>
> Not only is hiking an easy activity to pick up, it also **has** some great payoffs. As you **walk** through canyons and **climb** up mountains, you can see things that you wouldn't otherwise. The views are breathtaking, and you **get** a great opportunity to meditate on the world and your role in it. The summit of a mountain is unlike any other place in the world.

Practice

Read the following sentences and identify any errors in verb tense:

1. Whenever you go to the store, you should have made a list and stick to it.
2. This experiment turned out to be much more complicated than I thought it would be. I ended up with a procedure that was seventeen steps long, instead of the original eight that I planned.
3. I applied to some of the most prestigious medical schools. I hope the essays I write get me in!

[reveal-answer q="615298"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="615298"]

1. *have made* and *stick* do not match tense. The sentence should read, "Whenever you go to the store, you should **make** a list and stick to it."
2. This sentence is correct.
3. *applied* and *write* do not match tense. If you've already applied, hopefully you've already written your essays as well! The sentences should read, "I applied to some of the most prestigious medical schools. I hope the essays I **wrote** get me in!"

[/hidden-answer]

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7.24: Text- Non-Finite Verbs

Just when we thought we had verbs figured out, we're brought face-to-face with a new animal: the non-finite verbs. These words *look* similar to verbs we've already been talking about, but they *act* quite different than those other verbs.

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

Gerunds

Gerunds all end in *-ing*: *skiing*, *reading*, *dancing*, *singing*, etc. Gerunds **act like nouns** and can serve as subjects or objects of sentences. Let's take a look at a few examples:

The following sentences illustrate some uses of gerunds:

- **Swimming** is fun.
  - Here, the subject is *swimming*, the gerund.
  - The verb is the linking verb *is*.
- I like **swimming**.
  - This time, the subject of this sentence is the pronoun *I*.
  - The verb is *like*.
  - The gerund *swimming* becomes the direct object.
- I never gave **swimming** all that much effort.
- Do you fancy **going out**?
- After **being elected president**, he moved with his family to the capital.

Gerunds can be created using helping verbs as well:

- **Being deceived** can make someone feel angry.
- **Having read the book once before** makes me more prepared.

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

- We enjoyed **singing** yesterday (we ourselves sang)
- The cat responded by **licking** the cream (the cat licked the cream)
- His heart is set on **being** awarded the prize (he hopes that he himself will be awarded the prize)
- Tomás likes **eating** apricots (Tomás himself eats apricots)

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

- We enjoyed their **singing.**
- We were delighted at Bianca **being** awarded the prize.

Practice

Identify the gerunds and their roles in the following sentences:

1. Sam was really bad at gardening.
2. Studying is one of Jazz's favorite things to do.
3. Danny just wanted to go skateboarding.

[reveal-answer q="274304″]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="274304″]

1. Sam was really bad at **gardening**. *Gardening* is the object of the prepositional phrase "bad at gardening."
2. **Studying** is one of Jazz's favorite things to do. *Studying* is the subject of the sentence.
3. Danny just wanted to go **skateboarding**. *Skateboarding* is the direct object of the sentence.

[/hidden-answer]

Participles

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

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

The Present Participle

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

The present participle, or participial phrases (clauses) formed from it, are used as follows:

- as an adjective phrase modifying a noun phrase: *The man **sitting** over there is my uncle.*
- adverbially, the subject being understood to be the same as that of the main clause: ***Looking** at the plans, I gradually came to see where the problem lay.He shot the man, **killing** him.*
- more generally as a clause or sentence modifier: *Broadly **speaking**, the project was successful.*

The present participle can also be used with the helping verb *to be* to form a type of present tense: *Jim was **sleeping**.* This is something we learned a little bit about in helping verbs and tense.

The Past Participle

Past participles often look very similar to the simple past tense of a verb: *finished*, *danced*, etc. However, some verbs have different forms. Reference lists will be your best help in finding the correct past participle. Here is one such list of participles. Here's a short list of some of the most common irregular past participles you'll use:

Verb	Simple Past	Past Participle
to be	was/were	been
to become	became	become
to begin	began	begun
to come	came	come
to do	did	done
to drink	drank	drunk
to eat	ate	eaten
to get	got	gotten
to give	gave	given
to go	went	gone
to know	knew	know
to run	ran	run
to see	saw	seen
to show	showed	shown
to speak	spoke	spoken
to take	took	taken
to throw	threw	thrown
to write	wrote	written

Note: Words like *bought* and *caught* are the correct past participles—not *boughten* or *caughten*.

Past participles are used in a couple of different ways:

- as an adjective phrase: *The chicken **eaten** by the children was contaminated.*
- adverbially: ***Seen** from this perspective, the problem presents no easy solution.*
- in a nominative absolute construction, with a subject: *The task **finished**, we returned home.*

The past participle can also be used with the helping verb *to have* to form a type of past tense: *The chicken has **eaten***. This is something we learned about in helping verbs and tense.

Practice

Identify the participles in the following sentences, as well as the functions they perform:

1. Tucker had always wanted a pet dog.
2. Having been born in the 1990s, Amber often found herself surrounded by nostalgia.
3. Rayssa was practicing her flute when everything suddenly went wrong.

[reveal-answer q="397305"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="397305"]

1. The past participle is *wanted*. In this case, it is used alongside the helping verb *had* to form the past tense.
2. *Having been born in the 1990s* is a present participle phrase. It is used adverbially, and the subject is the same as the subject of the main phrase: Amber. Additionally, *been* is the past participle. It is used alongside the helping verb *having* to give a sense of the past tense.
3. *Practicing* is the present participle. It, along with the helping verb *was*, create a sense of continuity or process.

[/hidden-answer]

Note: The past participle can also be used to form the passive voice: *The chicken was **eaten***. We'll discuss the passive voice more in Text: Active and Passive Voice.

Infinitives

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

—Hamlet

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

With Other Verbs

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

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

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

As a Noun Phrase

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

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

As a Modifier

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

In Questions

Infinitives can be used in elliptical questions as well, as in “I don’t know where **to go**.”

Note: The infinitive is also the usual dictionary form or citation form of a verb. The form listed in dictionaries is the bare infinitive, although the *to*-infinitive is often used in referring to verbs or in defining other verbs: “The word *amble* means ‘to walk slowly'”; “How do we conjugate the verb *to go*?”

Certain helping verbs do not have infinitives, such *will*, *can*, and *may*.

Split Infinitives?

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

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

Practice

Identify the infinitives in the following sentences:

1. Paulina is the girl to beat.
2. It was really nice to hear from you again.
3. It looks like Dash wants to fail.

[reveal-answer q=”875706″]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a=”875706″]

1. The infinitive *to beat* is used in this instance. It acts as an adjective, describing what kind of girl Paulina is.
2. The infinitive *hear* is used in this instance. It acts as the object of the sentence.
3. The infinitive *to fail is used in this instance.* It works along with the verb *want*.

[/hidden-answer]

The Bare Infinitive

As we mentioned previously, the infinitive can sometimes occur without the word *to*. The form without *to* is called the **bare infinitive** (the form with *to* is called the ***to*-infinitive**). In the following sentences both *sit* and *to sit* would each be considered an infinitive:

- I want **to sit** on the other chair.
- I can **sit** here all day.

Infinitives have a variety of uses in English. Certain contexts call for the *to*-infinitive form, and certain contexts call for the bare infinitive; they are not normally interchangeable, except in occasional instances like after the verb *help*, where either can be used.

As we mentioned earlier, some verbs require the bare infinitive instead of the *to*-infinitive:

- The helping verb *do*
  - Does she **dance**?
  - Zi doesn’t **sing**.
- Helping verbs that express tense, possibility, or ability like *will*, *can*, *could*, *should*, *would*, and *might*
  - The bears will **eat** you if they catch you.
  - Lucas and Gerardo might **go** to the dance.
  - You should **give** it a try.
- Verbs of perception, permission, or causation, such as *see*, *watch*, *hear*, *make*, *let*, *and have* (after a direct object)
  - Look at Caroline **go**!
  - You can’t make me **talk**.
  - It’s so hard to let someone else **finish** my work.

The bare infinitive can be used as the object in such sentences like “What you should do is **make** a list.” It can also be used after the word *why* to ask a question: “Why **reveal** it?”

The bare infinitive can be tricky, because it often looks exactly like the present tense of a verb. Look at the following sentences for an example:

- You **lose** things so often.
- You can **lose** things at the drop of a hat.

In both of these sentences, we have the word *lose*, but in the first sentence it’s a present tense verb, while in the second it’s a bare infinitive. So how can you tell which is which? The easiest way is to try changing the subject of the sentence and seeing if the verb should change:

- She **loses** things so often.
- She can **lose** things at the drop of a hat.

Practice

Identify the infinitives in the following sentences:

1. What you should do is stop talking for a moment and listen.
2. Oh, that must be Lebo at the door.
3. Why walk when I could run?

[reveal-answer q=”875787″]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a=”875787″]

1. What you should do is **stop** talking for a moment and **listen**.
   - There are two infinitives in this sentence: *stop* and *listen.* They are both the objects of the sentence. This sentence also includes the gerund *talking*, which the object in the phrase “stop talking.”
2. Oh, that must **be** Lebo at the door.
   - The infinitive *be* works with the helping verb *must.*
3. Why **walk** when I could **run**?
   - There are two infinitives in this sentence: *walk* and *run*. *Walk* follows the word *why*, and it is asking a question. *Run* works with the helping verb *could*.

[/hidden-answer]

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7.25: Self Check- Verbs

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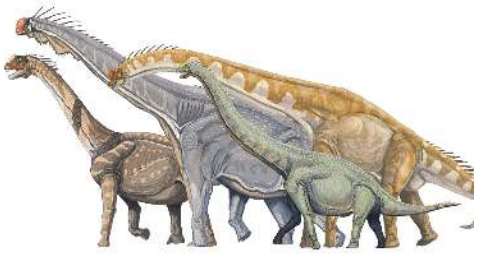
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7.26: Try It- Verbs

This activity is not graded. The text fields below are purely for self-reflection; you do not need to submit anything for this assignment.

Categorize

Look at the bolded verbs in the following paragraphs, and identify each as an active verb, a linking verb, or a helping verb. (**Note:** Gerunds, participles, and infinitives have not been bolded.) Record your answers in the text frame below



Several macronarian sauropods; from left to right, *Camarasaurus*, *Brachiosaurus*, *Giraffatitan*, and *Euhelopus*.

> In terms of iconic dinosaurs, the gargantuan sauropods **are** certainly up there. Sauropods **form** one of the three major groups of dinosaurs (along with the mostly meat eating-theropods and the herbivorous ornithischians), and they **were** the biggest animals to ever walk this Earth.
>
> The end of the Jurassic period, some 145 million years ago, **was** a pretty important time for sauropods. Their diversity **was** already in decline through some of the latter part of the Jurassic, but it **seems** that they **werehit** pretty badly at the Jurassic/Cretaceous boundary in an extinction event that **may have been** quite severe among land- and marine-dwelling animals.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="873972"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="873972"]Your answer should look something like this. Please note that the helping verbs are followed by the verbs they help in brackets.

Active verbs: form, hit

Linking verbs: are, were, was, was, seems, been

Helping verbs: were [hit], may have [been]

[/hidden-answer]

Agreement

Read through the paragraph below and select the verbs that agree in each sentence:

> It (was/were) previously thought that diplodocids, a group of sauropods with narrow teeth, went extinct at the Jurassic/Cretaceous boundary, along with other sauropods. Other sauropod groups—such as rebbachisaurids and titanosauriforms—(seems/seem) to (has/have) been unaffected at the Jurassic/Cretaceous boundary. This group-based selectivity of extinction (suggests/suggest) that there (was/were) a degree of targeting in extinction across the boundary, possibly as a result of different feeding styles or different environments which the different sauropods lived in at the time.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="682838"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="682838"]Your answer should look something like this:

> was; seem; have; suggests; was

Here is the full paragraph with the correct verbs selected:

It **was** previously thought that diplodocids, a group of sauropods with narrow teeth, went extinct at the Jurassic/Cretaceous boundary, along with other sauropods. Other sauropod groups—such as rebbachisaurids and titanosauriforms—**seem** to **have** been unaffected at the Jurassic/Cretaceous boundary. This group-based selectivity of extinction **suggests** that there **was** a degree of targeting in extinction across the boundary, possibly as a result of different feeding styles or different environments which the different sauropods lived in at the time.

[/hidden-answer]

Non-Finite Clauses

Identify if each sentence uses a gerund, participle, or infinitive. Record your answers in the text frame below:

1. Having lost the race, Karen felt as if she had also lost all hope.
2. Levi wanted to win.
3. Losing is not an option.
4. The other team was beaten by us.
5. The team beaten by us were bad sports about it.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="342824"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="342824"]Your answer should look something like this:

1. *Having lost the race* is a present participle. In this sentence, it acts as an adverbial phrase.
2. *To win* is an infinitive. In this sentence, it is a direct object.
3. *Losing* is a gerund. In this sentence, it is the subject.
4. *Beaten* is a past participle. In this sentence, it is a part of the passive voice.
5. *Beaten by us* is a past participle. In this sentence, it is an adjective phrase.

[/hidden-answer]

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7.27: Outcome- Adjectives and Adverbs

Identify Adjectives, Adverbs, and the Differences Between the Two

Adjectives and adverbs describe things. For example, compare the phrase “the bear” to “the red bear” or the phrase “run” to “run slowly.”

In both of these cases, the adjective (*red*) or adverb (*slowly*) changes how we understand the phrase. When you first read the word *bear*, you probably didn’t imagine a red bear. When you saw the word *run* you probably didn’t think of it as something done slowly.

Adjectives and adverbs modify other words; they change our understanding of things.

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify functions of adjectives and adverbs
- identify differences between adjectives and adverbs
- identify common mistakes with adjectives and adverbs

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7.28: Text- Functions of Adjectives



An adjective modifies a noun; that is, it provides more detail about a noun. This can be anything from color to size to temperature to personality. Adjectives usually occur just before the nouns they modify. In the following examples, adjectives are in bold, while the nouns they modify are in italics (the **big** *bear*):

- The generator is used to convert **mechanical***energy* into **electrical***energy*.
- The **steel***pipes* contain a **protective sacrificial***anode* and are surrounded by **packing***material*.

Adjectives can also follow a linking verb. In these instances, adjectives can modify pronouns as well. In the following examples, adjectives are still bold, while the linking verb is in italics this time (the sun *is***yellow**):

- The schoolhouse *was***red**.
- I *looked***good** today.
- She *was***funny**.

Numbers can also be adjectives in some cases. When you say "Seven is my lucky number," *seven* is a noun, but when you say "There are seven cats in this painting," *seven* is an adjective because it is modifying the noun *cats*.

Practice

Identify the adjectives in the following sentences:

1. Of the four seasons, fall is my favorite; I love the red leaves, the cool weather, and the brisk wind.
2. My roommate, on the other hand, thinks that summer is the best season.
3. I think she is crazy.
4. Fall is better than summer. Summer is too hot and muggy to be enjoyable.

[reveal-answer q="383934"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="383934"]

The adjectives have been bolded in the sentences below:

1. Of the **four** seasons, fall is my **favorite**; I love the **red** leaves, the **cool** weather, and the **brisk** wind.
2. My roommate, on the other hand, thinks that summer is the **best** season.
3. I think she is **crazy**.
4. Fall is **better** than summer. Summer is too **hot** and **muggy** to be **enjoyable**. (All of these adjectives follow linking verbs.)

[/hidden-answer]

Comparable Adjectives



Some adjectives are **comparable**. For example, a person may be polite, but another person may be more polite, and a third person may be the most polite of the three. The word *more* here modifies the adjective *polite* to indicate a comparison is being made (a **comparative**), and *most* modifies the adjective to indicate an absolute comparison (a **superlative**).

There is another way to compare adjectives in English. Many adjectives can take the suffixes *–er* and *–est* (sometimes requiring additional letters before the suffix; see forms for *far* below) to indicate the comparative and superlative forms, respectively:

great, *greater*, *greatest*

deep, *deeper*, *deepest*

far, *farther*, *farthest*

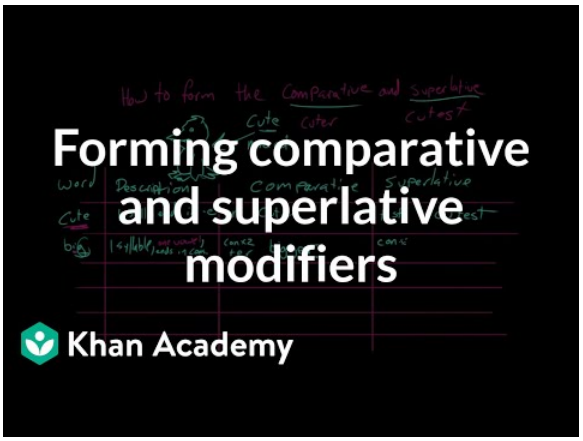
Some adjectives are *irregular* in this sense:

good, *better*, *best*
bad, *worse*, *worst*
little, *less*, *least*

Another way to convey comparison is by incorporating the words *more* and *most*. There is no simple rule to decide which means is correct for any given adjective, however. The general tendency is for shorter adjectives to take the suffixes, while longer adjectives do not—but sometimes *sound* of the word is the deciding factor.

more beautiful not *beautifuller*
more pretentious not *pretentiouser*

While there is no perfect rule to determine which adjectives will or won't take *–er* and *–est* suffixes, this video lays out some "sound rules" that can serve as helpful guidelines:



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A Note about *Fun*

The adjective *fun* is one of the most notable exceptions to the rules. If you follow the sound rules we just learned about, the comparative should be *funner* and the superlative *funnest*. However, for a long time, these words were considered non-standard, with *more fun* and *most fun* acting as the correct forms.

The reasoning behind this rule is now obsolete (it has a lot to do with the way *fun* became an adjective), but the stigma against *funner* and *funnest* remains. While the tides are beginning to change, it's safest to stick to *more fun* and *most fun* in formal situations (such as in academic writing or in professional correspondence).

Practice

What are the correct comparative and superlative forms for the adjectives below?

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
fun	*more fun* (or *funner*, conversationally)	*most fun* (or *funnest*, conversationally)
red	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]
shimmery	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]
fresh	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]
popular	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
squishy	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]
quiet	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]
large	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]	[practice-area rows="1"][/practice-area]

[reveal-answer q="393114"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="393114"]

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
fun	*more fun* (or *funner*, conversationally)	*most fun* (or *funnest*, conversationally)
red	redder	reddest
shimmery	more shimmery	most shimmery
fresh	fresher	freshest
popular	more popular	most popular
squishy	squishier	squishiest
quiet	quieter	quietest
large	larger	largest

[/hidden-answer]

Non-Comparable Adjectives

Many adjectives do not naturally lend themselves to comparison. For example, some English speakers would argue that it does not make sense to say that one thing is "more ultimate" than another, or that something is "most ultimate," since the word *ultimate* is already an absolute. Such adjectives are called **non-comparable adjectives**. Other examples include *dead*, *true*, and *unique*.

Note: Native speakers will frequently play with non-comparable adjectives. Although *pregnant* is logically non-comparable (someone is pregnant or she is not), you may hear a sentence like "She looks more and more pregnant each day." Likewise *extinct* and *equal* appear to be non-comparable, but one might say that a language about which nothing is known is "more extinct" than a well-documented language with surviving literature but no speakers, and George Orwell once wrote "All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others."

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7.29: Text- Functions of Adverbs



Adverbs can perform a wide range of functions: they can modify verbs, adjectives, and even other adverbs. They can come either before or after the word they modify. In the following examples, adverbs are in bold, while the words they modify are in italics (the **quite***handsome* man):

- The desk is made of an **especially***corrosion-resistant industrial* steel.
- The power company uses huge generators which are **generally***turned* by steam turbines.
- Jaime won the race, because he *ran* **quickly**.
- This fence was *installed* **sloppily**. It needs to be redone.

An adverb may provide information about the manner, place, time, frequency, certainty, or other circumstances of the activity indicated by the verb. Some examples, where again the adverb is in bold and the words modified are in italics:

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

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

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

Practice

Identify the adverbs in these paragraphs:

> Mass extinctions are insanely catastrophic—but important—events that punctuate the history of life on Earth. The Jurassic/Cretaceous boundary was originally thought of to represent a mass extinction, but has subsequently been "downgraded" to a minor extinction event based on new discoveries.
>
> However, compared to other important stratigraphic boundaries, like the end-Triassic or the end-Cretaceous, the Jurassic/Cretaceous boundary remains really poorly understood.

[reveal-answer q="138389″]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="138389″]There are five adverbs in the paragraphs:

> insanely; originally; subsequently; really; poorly

Here the adverbs have been bolded:

> Mass extinctions are **insanely** catastrophic—but important—events that punctuate the history of life on Earth. The Jurassic/Cretaceous boundary was **originally** thought of to represent a mass extinction, but has **subsequently** been "downgraded" to a minor extinction event based on new discoveries.
>
> However, compared to other important stratigraphic boundaries, like the end-Triassic or the end-Cretaceous, the Jurassic/Cretaceous boundary remains **reallypoorly** understood.

[/hidden-answer]

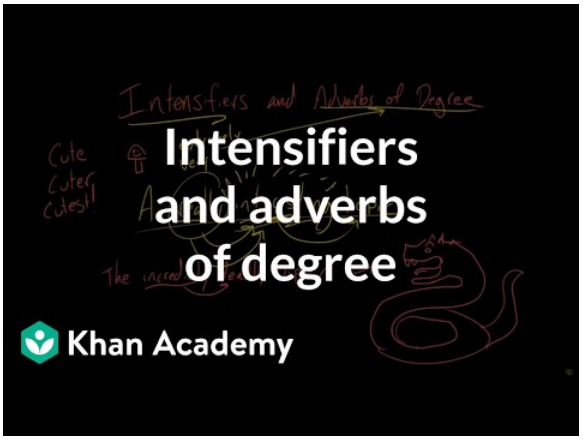
Intensifiers and Adverbs of Degree

Adverbs can also be used as modifiers of adjectives, and of other adverbs, often to indicate degree. Here are a few examples:

- You are **quite** right (the adverb *quite* modifies the adjective *right*)
- Milagros is **exceptionally** pretty (the adverb *exceptionally* modifies the adjective *pretty*)
- She sang **very** loudly (the adverb *very* modifies another adverb—*loudly*)
- Wow! You ran **really** quickly! (the adverb *really* modifies another adverb—*quickly*)

Other intensifiers include *mildly*, *pretty*, *slightly*, etc.

This video provides more discussion and examples of intensifiers:



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Note: Adverbs may also undergo comparison, taking comparative and superlative forms. This is usually done by adding *more* and *most* before the adverb (*more slowly, most slowly*). However, there are a few adverbs that take non-standard forms, such as *well*, for which *better* and *best* are used.

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7.30: Text- Differences between Adjectives and Adverbs

As we've learned, adjectives and adverbs act in similar but different roles. A lot of the time this difference can be seen in the structure of the words:

- A **clever** new idea.
- A **cleverly** developed idea.

Clever is an adjective, and *cleverly* is an adverb. This adjective + *ly* construction is a short-cut to identifying adverbs.

While *–ly* is helpful, it's not a universal rule. Not all words that end in *–ly* are adverbs: *lovely*, *costly*, *friendly*, etc. Additionally, not all adverbs end in *-ly*: *here*, *there*, *together*, *yesterday*, *aboard*, *very*, *almost*, etc.

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

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

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7.31: Text- Common Mistakes with Adjectives and Adverbs

Mistaking Adverbs and Adjectives

One common mistake with adjectives and adverbs is using one in the place of the other. For example:

- I wish I could write as neat as he can.
  - The word should be *neatly*, an adverb, since it's modifying a verb.
- Well, that's real nice of you.
  - Should be *really*, an adverb, since it's modifying an adjective

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

Good v. Well

One of the most commonly confused adjective/adverb pairs is *good* versus *well*. There isn't really a good way to remember this besides memorization. *Good* is an adjective. *Well* is an adverb. Let's look at a couple of sentence where people often confuse these two:

> She plays basketball good.

In this sentence *good* is supposed to be modifying *plays*, a verb; therefore the use of *good*—an adjective—is incorrect. *Plays* should be modified by an adverb. The correct sentence would read "She plays basketball well."

> I'm doing good.

In this sentence, *good* is supposed to be modifying *doing*, a verb. Once again, this means that *well*—an adverb—should be used instead: "I'm doing well."

Note: The sentence "I'm doing good" can be grammatically correct, but only when it means "I'm doing good things," rather than when it is describing how a person is feeling.

Practice

Select the correct modifier for each sentence:

1. Billy has to work (real / really) hard to be (healthy / healthily).
2. Kate is really (good / well) with bows. She shoots really (good / well).
3. Eli reads (quick / quickly), and he retains the information (good / well).

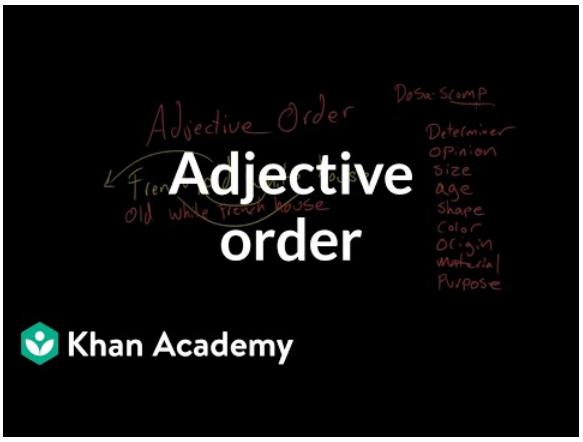
[reveal-answer q="483134"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="483134"]

1. Billy has to work **really** hard to be **healthy**.
   - Remember that *to be* is a linking verb. Linking verbs often connect the subject of the sentence (Billy) to an adjective that describes it (*healthy*).
2. Kate is really **good** with bows. She shoots really **well**.
3. Eli reads **quickly**, and he retains the information **well**.

[/hidden-answer]

Adjectives

If you're a native English speaker, you may have noticed that "the big red house" sounds more natural than "the red big house." The video below explains the order in which adjectives occur in English:



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Practice

Select the adjectives that are in a natural sounding word order for each sentence.

1. A(n) _____ sports car was parked in front of the restaurant.
   a. beautiful, new, Italian
   b. Italian, new, beautiful
   c. Italian, beautiful, new
2. A _____ barber pole was next to the front door of the barber shop.
   a. red and white, striped, big
   b. big, red and white, striped
   c. striped, red and white, big
3. We put an _____ tree in the corner of their office.
   a. ugly, tiny, artificial
   b. artificial, ugly, tiny
   c. ugly, artificial, tiny
4. The elf lived in a _____ house in the forest.
   a. little, charming, mushroom
   b. mushroom, little, charming
   c. charming, little, mushroom

[reveal-answer q="5845"]**Click to Show Answers**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="5845"]

1. a: beautiful, new, Italian
2. b: big, red and white, striped
3. a: ugly, tiny, artificial
4. c: charming, little, mushroom

[/hidden-answer]

Adverbs

Only

Have you ever noticed the effect the word *only* can have on a sentence, especially depending on where it's placed? Let's look at a simple sentence:

> She loves horses.

Let's see how *only* can influence the meaning of this sentence:

- *Only* she loves horses.
  - No one loves horses but her.
- She *only* loves horses.
  - The one thing she does is love horses.
- She loves *only* horses.
  - She loves horses and nothing else.

Only modifies the word that directly follows it. Whenever you use the word *only* make sure you've placed it correctly in your sentence.

Literally

A linguistic phenomenon is sweeping the nation: people are using *literally* as an intensifier. How many times have you heard things like "It was literally the worst thing that has ever happened to me," or "His head literally exploded when I told him I was going to be late again"? Some people love this phrase, while it makes other people want to pull their hair out.

So what's the problem with this? According to *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary*, the actual definition of *literal* is as follows:

- involving the ordinary or usual meaning of a word
- giving the meaning of each individual word
- completely true and accurate : not exaggerated[1]

According to this definition, *literally* should be used only when something actually happened. Our cultural usage may be slowly shifting to allow *literally* as an intensifier, but it's best to avoid using *literally* in any way other than its dictionary definition, especially in formal writing.

Practice

Which of the following sentences use the adverb *literally* correctly?

1. David often takes things too literally.
2. Tommy literally died when he heard the news.
3. Teddy is literally the best person on the planet.

[reveal-answer q="648403"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="648403"]

1. This sentence is correct.
2. This sentence is incorrect (hopefully). Try replacing *literally* with *practically* or *nearly*.
3. This sentence may or may not be true; it's something that would be very hard to verify. When you're being purposefully hyperbolic, this may be okay in a non-formal setting, but you may want to consider replacing *literally* with an intensifier like *actually* or omitting the adverb altogether, since *literally* has such a stigma around it.

[/hidden-answer]

---

1. "Literal." *Merriam-Webster.com*. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 20 June 2016. ↵

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7.32: Self Check- Adjectives and Adverbs

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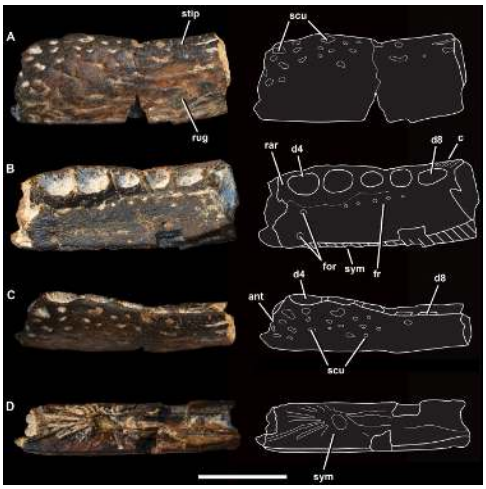
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7.33: Try It- Adjectives and Adverbs

This activity is not graded. The text fields below are purely for self-reflection; you do not need to submit anything for this assignment.

Identify

Read the paragraphs below. Identify any adjectives and adverbs. Record them in the text frame below:



The new fossil, identified as Theriosuchus, in different views

> Colleagues from the University of Edinburgh and myself have described the first Scottish crocodile fossil! It's from the Isle of Skye, from a time known as the Middle Jurassic, and it dates back about 160 million years. Based on a partial bit of a jawbone, it's not going to be the most spectacular fossil we've ever found, but it tells a pretty neat story.
>
> Based on the identifiable features of the jawbone, we were able to identify the specimen as belonging to *Theriosuchus*. This genus has a quite complicated history, and currently the five species that are assigned to it span 100 million years! That's pretty long lived for a single genus.
>
> *Theriosuchus* belongs to a group known as Atoposauridae. Atoposaurids are a pretty cool group of crocodile ancestors, often characterized by a small, dwarfed body size; multiple tooth types; and a costal or an inland habitation. They also show an unusual combination of "primitive" characteristics and features that we associate with more "advanced" crocs.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="786835"]Click to Show Adjectives[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="786835"]

Your list of adjectives should look something like this:

> first Scottish crocodile; Middle; 160 million; partial; most spectacular; neat; identifiable; complicated; five; 100 million; long lived; single; cool; crocodile; small, dwarfed body; multiple tooth; costal; inland; unusual; primitive; more "advanced"

Here's the paragraph with the adjectives bolded:

> Colleagues from the University of Edinburgh and myself have described the **first Scottish crocodile** fossil! It's from the Isle of Skye, from a time known as the **Middle** Jurassic, and it dates back about **160 million** years. Based on a **partial** bit of a jawbone, it's not going to be the **mostspectacular** fossil we've ever found, but it tells a pretty **neat** story.
>
> Based on the **identifiable** features of the jawbone, we were able to identify the specimen as belonging to *Theriosuchus*. This genus has a quite **complicated** history, and currently the **five** species that are assigned to it span **100 million** years! That's pretty **long lived** for a **single** genus.
>
> *Theriosuchus* belongs to a group known as Atoposauridae. Atoposaurids are a pretty **cool** group of **crocodile** ancestors, often characterized by a **small**, **dwarfedbody** size; **multipletooth** types; and a **costal** or an **inland** habitation. They also show an **unusual** combination of "**primitive**" characteristics and features that we associate with **more** "**advanced**" crocs.

[/hidden-answer]

[reveal-answer q="786838"]Click to Show Adverbs[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="786838"]

Your list of adverbs should look something like this:

> pretty; quite; currently; pretty; pretty; often; also

Here's the paragraph with the adverbs bolded:

> Colleagues from the University of Edinburgh and myself have described the first Scottish crocodile fossil! It's from the Isle of Skye, from a time known as the Middle Jurassic, and it dates back about 160 million years. Based on a partial bit of a jawbone, it's not going to be the most spectacular fossil we've ever found, but it tells a **pretty** neat story.
>
> Based on the identifiable features of the jawbone, we were able to identify the specimen as belonging to *Theriosuchus*. This genus has a **quite** complicated history, and **currently** the five species that are assigned to it span 100 million years! That's **pretty** long lived for a single genus.
>
> *Theriosuchus* belongs to a group known as Atoposauridae. Atoposaurids are a **pretty** cool group of crocodile ancestors, **often** characterized by a small, dwarfed body size; multiple tooth types; and a costal or an inland habitation. They **also** show an unusual combination of "primitive" characteristics and features that we associate with more "advanced" crocs.

[/hidden-answer]

Look back at the adjectives and adverbs you've just identified. Are any of them comparatives, superlatives, or intensifiers? Record your answers in the text frame below:

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="786834"]Click to Show Comparatives, Superlatives, and Intensifiers[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="786834"]

There is one comparative (more), one superlative (most), and four intensifiers (pretty; quite; pretty; pretty).

> Colleagues from the University of Edinburgh and I have described the first Scottish crocodile fossil! It's from the Isle of Skye, from a time known as the Middle Jurassic, and it dates back about 160 million years. Based on a partial bit of a jawbone, it's not going to be the **most** spectacular fossil we've ever found, but it tells a **pretty** neat story.
>
> Based on the identifiable features of the jawbone, we were able to identify the specimen as belonging to *Theriosuchus*. This genus has a **quite** complicated history, and currently the five species that are assigned to it span 100 million years! That's **pretty** long lived for a single genus.
>
> *Theriosuchus* belongs to a group known as Atoposauridae. Atoposaurids are a **pretty** cool group of crocodile ancestors, often characterized by a small, dwarfed body size; multiple tooth types; and costal or inland habitation. They also show an unusual combination of "primitive" characteristics and features that we associate with **more** "advanced" crocs.

[/hidden-answer]

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- Nessie dwarfed by new Scottish crocodile. **Authored by**: Jon Tennant. **Provided by**: European Geosciences Union . **Located at**: http://blogs.egu.eu/network/palaeoblog/2015/09/11/nessie-dwarfed-by-new-scottish-crocodile/. **Project**: Green Tea and Velociraptors. **License**: *CC BY: Attribution*

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7.34: Outcome- Other Parts of Speech

Identify the Function of Other Parts of Speech, Including Conjunctions, Prepositions, and Articles



We've covered the majority of parts of speech: nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. So, what's left?

What remains are the little connecting word categories: conjunctions, prepositions, and articles. These small words may not seem as important as verbs, nouns, and adjectives, but they are the backbone of English: these are the words that give our language structure.

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify functions of conjunctions, and potential usage issues with them
- identify functions of prepositions, and potential usage issues with them
- identify functions of articles, and potential usage issues with them

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7.35: Text- Conjunctions

Conjunctions are the words that join sentences, phrases, and other words together. Conjunctions are divided into several categories, all of which follow different rules. We will discuss coordinating conjunctions, adverbial conjunctions, and correlative conjunctions.

Coordinating Conjunctions



The most common conjunctions are *and*, *or*, and *but*. These are all **coordinating conjunctions**. Coordinating conjunctions are conjunctions that join, or coordinate, two or more equivalent items (such as words, phrases, or sentences). The mnemonic acronym *FANBOYS* can be used to remember the most common coordinating conjunctions: *for*, *and*, *nor*, *but*, *or*, *yet*, and *so*.

- **For:** presents a reason ("They do not gamble or smoke, for they are ascetics.")
- **And:** presents non-contrasting items or ideas ("They gamble, and they smoke.")
- **Nor:** presents a non-contrasting negative idea ("They do not gamble, nor do they smoke.")
- **But:** presents a contrast or exception ("They gamble, but they don't smoke.")
- **Or:** presents an alternative item or idea ("Every day they gamble, or they smoke.")
- **Yet:** presents a contrast or exception ("They gamble, yet they don't smoke.")
- **So:** presents a consequence ("He gambled well last night, so he smoked a cigar to celebrate.")

Here are some examples of these used in sentences:

- Nuclear-powered artificial hearts proved to be complicated, bulky, **and** expensive.
- In the 1960s, artificial heart devices did not fit well **and** tended to obstruct the flow of venous blood into the right atrium.
- The blood vessels leading to the device tended to kink, obstructing the filling of the chambers **and** resulting in inadequate output.
- Any external injury **or** internal injury put patients at risk of uncontrolled bleeding because the small clots that formed throughout the circulatory system used up so much of the clotting factor.
- The current from the storage batteries can power lights, **but** the current for appliances must be modified within an inverter.

As you can see from the examples above, a comma only appears before these conjunctions sometimes. So how can you tell if you need a comma or not? There are three general rules to help you decide.

Rule 1: Joining Two Complete Ideas

Let's look back at one of our example sentences:

> The current from the storage batteries can power lights, but the current for appliances must be modified within an inverter.

There are two complete ideas in this sentence. A complete idea has both a subject (a noun or pronoun) and a verb. The subjects have been italicized, and the verbs bolded:

- the *current* from the storage batteries **can power** lights
- the *current* for appliances **must be modified** within an inverter.

Because each of these ideas could stand alone as a sentence, the coordinating conjunction that joins them must be preceded by a comma. Otherwise you'll have a run-on sentence.

Run-on sentences are one of the most common errors in college-level writing. Mastering the partnership between commas and coordinating conjunctions will go a long way towards resolving many run-on sentence issues in your writing.

Rule 2: Joining Two Similar Items

So what if there's only one complete idea, but two subjects or two verbs?

- Any external injury or internal injury put patients at risk of uncontrolled bleeding because the small clots that formed throughout the circulatory system used up so much of the clotting factor.

- In the 1960s, artificial heart devices did not fit well and tended to obstruct the flow of venous blood into the right atrium.

The first sentence has two subjects: *external injury* and *internal injury*. The second sentence has two verbs: *did not fit well* and *tended to obstruct*. In each sentence, the two similar items are separated from each other by a conjunction, but no comma is required.

Rule 3: Joining Three or More Similar Items

So what do you do if there are three or more items?

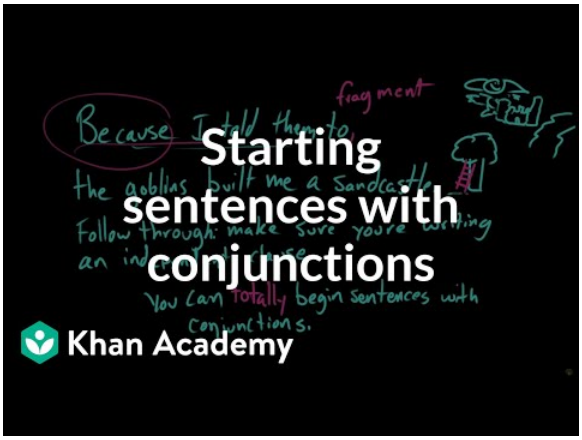
- Anna loves to run, David loves to hike, and Luz loves to dance.
- Fishing, hunting, and gathering were once the only ways for people do get food.
- Emanuel has a very careful schedule planned for tomorrow. He needs to work, study, exercise, eat, and clean.

As you can see in the examples above, there is a comma after each item, including the item just prior to the conjunction. There is a little bit of contention about this, but overall, most styles prefer to keep the additional comma (also called the serial comma). We discuss the serial comma in more depth in Text: Commas.

Starting a Sentence

Many students are taught—and some style guides maintain—that English sentences should not start with coordinating conjunctions.

This video shows that this idea is not actually a rule. And it provides some background for why so many people may have adopted this writing convention:



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Practice

Are the following sentences correctly punctuated?

1. I heard some news on the radio about a fire and my family saw it on the television.
2. The fire chief called in all his men, but ordered them to stay back.
3. The building became engulfed in flames, so they stood by.
4. They needed to examine everything for they did not think it was an accident.
5. The police could not find the source of the fire, nor could the fire chief.

[reveal-answer q="652898"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="652898"]

1. Incorrect: a comma is required before *and*.
   - I heard some news on the radio about a fire**, and** my family saw it on the television.
2. Incorrect: there is no comma required before *but*.
   - The fire chief called in all his men **but** ordered them to stay back.
3. Correct.

4. Incorrect: a comma is required before *for*.
    - They needed to examine everything**, for** they did not think it was an accident.
5. Correct.

[/hidden-answer]

Adverbial Conjunctions



Adverbial conjunctions link two separate thoughts or sentences. When used to separate thoughts, as in the example below, a comma is required on either side of the conjunction.

> The first artificial hearts were made of smooth silicone rubber, which apparently caused excessive clotting and, **therefore**, uncontrolled bleeding.

When used to separate sentences, as in the examples below, a semicolon is required before the conjunction and a comma after.

- The Kedeco produces 1200 watts in 17 mph winds using a 16-foot rotor; **on the other hand**, the Dunlite produces 2000 watts in 25 mph winds.
- For short periods, the fibers were beneficial; **however**, the eventual buildup of fibrin on the inner surface of the device would impair its function.
- The atria of the heart contribute a negligible amount of energy; **in fact**, the total power output of the heart is only about 2.5 watts.

Adverbial conjunctions include the following words; however, it is important to note that this is by no means a complete list.

therefore	however	in other words
thus	then	otherwise
nevertheless	on the other hand	in fact

Practice

Fill in the missing punctuation marks for the sentences below:

1. Alícia works behind the counter in the family bakery after school __ however __ Benjamin doesn’t.
2. On the one hand __ Benjamin loves goes to soccer games __ on the other hand __ he doesn’t like to play soccer.

[reveal-answer q=”316451″]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a=”316451″]

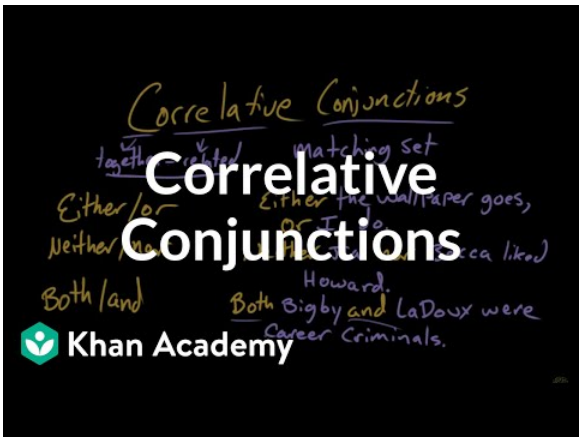
1. Alícia works behind the counter in the family bakery after school; however, Benjamin doesn’t.
2. On the one hand, Benjamin loves goes to soccer games; on the other hand, he doesn’t like to play soccer.

[/hidden-answer]

Correlative Conjunctions



Correlative conjunctions are word pairs that work together to join words and groups of words of equal weight in a sentence. This video will define this types of conjunction before it goes through five of the most common correlative conjunctions:



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The table below shows some examples of correlative conjunctions being used in a sentence:

Correlative Conjunction	Example
either…or	You **either** do your work **or** prepare for a trip to the office. (Either do, or prepare)
neither…nor	**Neither** the basketball team **nor** the football team is doing well.
not only…but (also)	He is **not only** handsome, **but also** brilliant. (Not only A, but also B)
	Not only is he handsome, **but also** he is brilliant. (Not only is he A, but also he is B.)
both…and	**Both** the cross country team **and** the swimming team are doing well.
whether…or	You must decide **whether** you stay **or** you go. (It's up to you)
	Whether you stay **or** you go, the film must start at 8 pm. (It's not up to you)
just as…so	**Just as** many Americans love basketball, **so** many Canadians love ice hockey.
as much…as	Football is **as much** an addiction **as** it is a sport.
no sooner…than	**No sooner** did she learn to ski, **than** the snow began to thaw.
rather…than	I would **rather** swim **than** surf.
the…the	**The** more you practice dribbling, **the** better you will be at it.
as…as	Football is **as** fast **as** hockey (is (fast)).

Practice

Select the correct conjunction for each sentence:

1. (Both / Not only) you but also Paul forgot to do the annual report last week.
2. You will need to finish it by (either / neither) today or tomorrow. Just get it done by Friday.
3. (Both / Not only) you and Paul have been wasting too much time.
4. Not only (she yells / does she yell / is she yell) at me, but also she screams at me.
5. Either (she stops / does she stop) yelling at me or I quit.
6. She both (annoys / does she annoy) and angers me.

[reveal-answer q="608544"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="608544"]

1. **Not only** you but also Paul forgot to do the annual report last week.
2. You will need to finish it by **either** today or tomorrow. Just get it done by Friday.
3. **Both** you and Paul have been wasting too much time.
4. Not only **does she yell** at me, but also she screams at me.
5. Either **she stops** yelling at me or I quit.
6. She both **annoys** and angers me.

[/hidden-answer]

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- Basic Patterns and Elements of the Sentence. **Authored by**: David McMurrey. **Located at**: https://www.prismnet.com/~hcexres/textbook/twsent.html. **License**: *CC BY: Attribution*
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- Correlative conjunctions. **Authored by**: David Rheinstrom. **Provided by**: Khan Academy. **Located at**: https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/grammar/partsofspeech/conjunctions/v/correlative-conjunctions. **License**: *CC BY-NC-SA: Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike*
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7.36: Text- Prepositions

Prepositions are relation words; they can indicate location, time, or other more abstract relationships. Prepositions are noted in bold in these examples:

- The woods **behind** my house are super creepy **at** night.
- She sang **until** three in the morning.
- He was happy **for** them.

A preposition combines with another word (usually a noun or pronoun) called the complement. Prepositions are still in bold, and their complements are in italics:

- The woods **behind** *my house* are super creepy **at***night*.
- She sang **until***three in the morning*.
- He was happy **for***them*.

Prepositions generally come before their complements (e.g., **in** England, **under** the table, **of** Jane). However, there are a small handful of exceptions, including **notwithstanding** and **ago**:

- *Financial limitations***notwithstanding**, Phil paid back his debts.
- He was released *three days***ago**.

Prepositions of location are pretty easily defined (*near*, *far*, *over*, *under*, etc.), and prepositions about time are as well (*before*, *after*, *at*, *during*, etc.). Prepositions of "more abstract relationships," however, are a little more nebulous in their definition. The video below gives a good overview of this category of prepositions:



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Note: The video said that prepositions are a closed group, but it never actually explained what a closed group is. Perhaps the easiest way to define a closed group is to define its opposite: an open group. An open group is a part of speech allows new words to be added. For example, nouns are an open group; new nouns, like *selfie* and *blog*, enter the language all the time (verbs, adjectives, and adverbs are open groups as well).

Thus a closed group simply refers to a part of speech that doesn't allow in new words. All of the word types in this section–prepositions, articles, and conjunctions–are closed groups.

Practice

Identify the prepositions in the following sentences:

1. The cow jumped over the moon.

2. My favorite painting is *The Girl with the Pearl Earring.*
3. Beatriz wanted to know if she would see Alexandre before lunch.
4. All he does is talk about his band.

[reveal-answer q="478512"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="478512"]

The prepositions have been bolded in the sentences below:

1. The cow jumped **over** the moon.
2. My favorite painting is *The Girl **with** the Pearl Earring*
3. Beatriz wanted to know if she would see Alexandre **before** lunch.
4. All he does is talk **about** his band.

[/hidden-answer]

So far, all of the prepositions we've looked at have been one word (and most of them have been one syllable). The most common prepositions are one-syllable words. According to one ranking, the most common English prepositions are *on*, *in*, *to*, *by*, *for*, *with*, *at*, *of*, *from*, *as*.

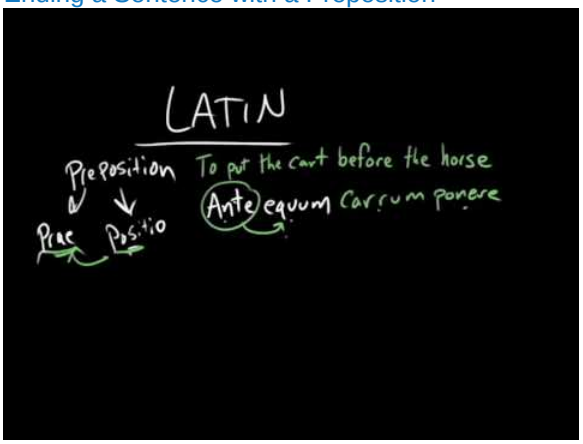
There are also some prepositions that have more than one word:

- in spite of (She made it to work in spite of the terrible traffic.)
- by means of (He traveled by means of boat.)
- except for (Joan invited everyone to her party except for Ben.)
- next to (Go ahead and sit down next to Jean-Claude.)

Prepositions in Sentences

You'll often hear about **prepositional phrases**. A prepositional phrase includes a preposition and its complement (e.g., "**behind***the house*" or "*along time* **ago**").

Ending a Sentence with a Preposition



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As we just learned, it is totally okay to end a sentence with a preposition. And, as we saw, it can often make your writing smoother and more concise to do so.

However, it's still best to avoid doing it unnecessarily. If your sentence ends with a preposition and would still mean the same thing without the preposition, take it out. For example:

> Where are you at?
>
> That's not what it's used for.

If you remove *at*, the sentence becomes "Where are you?" This means the same thing, so removing *at* is a good idea. However, if you remove *for*, the sentence becomes "That's not what it's used," which doesn't make sense.

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7.37: Text- Articles

There are three articles in the English language: *the*, *a*, and *an*. These are divided into two types of articles: definite (*the*) and indefinite (*a*, *an*). The definite article indicates a level of specificity that the indefinite does not. “An apple” could refer to any apple; however “the apple” is referring back to a specific apple.

Thus, when using the definite article, the speaker assumes the listener knows the identity of the noun’s referent (because it is obvious, because it is common knowledge, or because it was mentioned in the same sentence or an earlier sentence). Use of an indefinite article implies that the speaker assumes the listener does not have to be told the identity of the referent.

There are also cases where no article is required:

- with generic nouns (plural or uncountable): *cars have accelerators*, *happiness is contagious*, referring to cars in general and happiness in general (compare *the happiness I felt yesterday*, specifying particular happiness);
- with many proper names: *Sabrina*, *France*, *London*, etc.

Watch this quick introduction to indefinite and definite articles and the difference between the two:



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Indefinite Article

The indefinite article of English takes the two forms *a* and *an*. These can be regarded as meaning “one,” usually without emphasis.

Distinction between *a* and *an*



You’ve probably learned the rule that *an* comes before a vowel, and that *a* comes before a consonant. While this is generally true, it’s more accurate to say that *an* comes before a vowel *sound*, and *a* comes before a consonant *sound*. Let’s look at a couple of examples with *a*:

- *a box*
- *a HEPA filter* (HEPA is pronounced as a word rather than as letters)
- *a one-armed bandit* (pronounced “won. . . “)
- *a unicorn* (pronounced “yoo. . . “)



Let's try it again with *an*:

- *an apple*
- *an EPA policy* (the letter *E* read as a letter still starts with a vowel sound)
- *an SSO* (pronounced "es-es-oh")
- *an hour* (the *h* is silent)
- *an heir* (pronounced "air")

Note: Some speakers and writers use *an* before a word beginning with the sound *h* in an unstressed syllable: *an historical novel*, *an hotel*. However, where the *h* is clearly pronounced, this usage is now less common, and *a* is preferred.

Practice

Look at the following words. When they require an indefinite article, should it be *a* or *an*?

1. ewe
2. SEO specialist
3. apple
4. URL
5. herb

[reveal-answer q="172524"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="172524"]

1. a ewe: pronounced "you"
2. an SEO specialist: pronounced "es-ee-oh"
3. an apple: *a* is a vowel sound
4. a URL: pronounced "yoo-ar-el"
5. an herb: the *h* is silent

[/hidden-answer]

Definite Article



The definite article *the* is used when the referent of the noun phrase is assumed to be unique or known from the context. For example, in the sentence "The boy with glasses was looking at the moon," it is assumed that in the context the reference can only be to one boy and one moon.

The can be used with both singular and plural nouns, with nouns of any gender, and with nouns that start with any letter. This is different from many other languages which have different articles for different genders or numbers. *The* is the most commonly used word in the English language.

Practice

Choose the article that should go in each sentence:

1. Every day, I eat (a / an / the) egg salad sandwich.
2. I love looking at (a / an / the) stars with you.
3. Dani was planning to buy (a / an / the) book she had been eyeing as soon as she got paid.
4. (A / An / The) brain like that will get you far in life.

[reveal-answer q="170373"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="170373"]

1. an; Every day, I eat **an** egg salad sandwich.
2. the; I love looking at **the** stars with you.
3. the; Dani was planning to buy **the** book she had been eyeing as soon as she got paid.
4. a; **A** brain like that will get you far in life.

[/hidden-answer]

Word Order

In most cases, the article is the first word of its noun phrase, preceding all other adjectives and modifiers.

> *The* little old red bag held *a* very big surprise.

There are a few exceptions, however:

- Certain determiners, such as *all*, *both*, *half*, *double*, precede the definite article when used in combination (*all the team*, *both the girls*, *half the time*, *double the amount*).
- *Such* and *what* precede the indefinite article (*such an idiot*, *what a day!*).
- Adjectives qualified by *too*, *so*, *as* and *how* generally precede the indefinite article: *too great a loss*, *so hard a problem*, *as delicious an apple as I have ever tasted*, *I know how pretty a girl she is*.
- When adjectives are qualified by *quite* (particularly when it means "fairly"), the word *quite* (but not the adjective itself) often precedes the indefinite article: *quite a long letter*.

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7.38: Self Check- Other Parts of Speech

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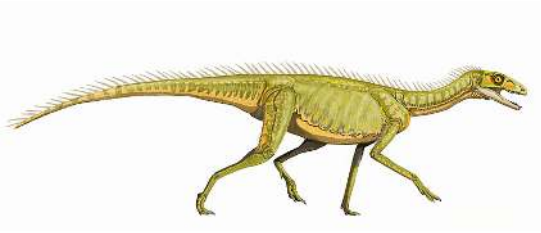
7.39: Try It- Other Parts of Speech

This activity is not graded. The text fields below are purely for self-reflection; you do not need to submit anything for this assignment.

Identify

Read the following paragraphs. Identify the conjunctions, prepositions, and articles. Record your answers in the text frame below:

> Often the early evolution of dinosaurs is an overlooked part of their tale, ignored in favor of the more dramatic tales of their later extinctions. It is also a fairly poorly understood part of their evolution; the timing and actual mechanism that drove them to become the most successful land group ever is still somewhat a mystery. We are, however, learning more and more about this important phase of their history: the time known as the Late Triassic, which took place some 231–201 million years ago. A new fossil site from this time in Poland is helping to fill in the blanks.



Life restoration of *Silesaurus*

> So what is present in this new site? One animal is known as a silesaurid—a weird reptile from a group of dinosaur-like relatives called a dinosauriform, known just from a thigh bone. Another is probably one of the most ancestral theropod dinosaurs, typically known from South America, called a herrerasaurid; however, there's still some debate about what position these guys occupied around the origin of dinosaurs. Other specimens include a definite theropod dinosaur (known from parts of the hip bones) as well as a neotheropod (known from a portion of the tibia).

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="257163"]**Click to Show Conjunctions**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="257163"]

Your answer should look something like this:

> and; however; and; So; however; as well as

Here is the paragraph with the conjunctions highlighted:

> Often the early evolution of dinosaurs is an overlooked part of their tale, ignored in favor of the more dramatic tales of their later extinctions. It is also a fairly poorly understood part of their evolution; the timing **and** actual mechanism that drove them to become the most successful land group ever is still somewhat a mystery. We are, **however**, learning more **and** more about this important phase of their history: the time known as the Late Triassic, which took place some 231–201 million years ago. A new fossil site from this time in Poland is helping to fill in the blanks.
>
> **So** what is present in this new site? One animal is known as a silesaurid—a weird reptile from a group of dinosaur-like relatives called a dinosauriform, known just from a thigh bone. Another is probably one of the most ancestral theropod dinosaurs, typically known from South America, called a herrerasaurid; **however**, there's still some debate about what position these guys occupied around the origin of dinosaurs. Other specimens include a definite theropod dinosaur (known from parts of the hip bones) **as well as** a neotheropod (known from a portion of the tibia).

[/hidden-answer]
[reveal-answer q="515608"]**Click to Show Prepositions**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="515608"]

Your answer should look something like this:

> of; of; in favor of; of; of; about; of; ago; from; in; in; in; as; from; of; from; of; from; about; around; of; from; of; from; of

Here is the paragraph with the prepositions highlighted:

Often the early evolution **of** dinosaurs is an overlooked part **of** their tale, ignored **in favor of** the more dramatic tales **of** their later extinctions. It is also a fairly poorly understood part **of** their evolution; the timing and actual mechanism that drove them to become the most successful land group ever is still somewhat a mystery. We are, however, learning more and more **about** this important phase **of** their history: the time known as the Late Triassic, which took place some 231–201 million years **ago**. A new fossil site **from** this time **in** Poland is helping to fill **in** the blanks.

So what is present **in** this new site? One animal is known **as** a silesaurid—a weird reptile **from** a group **of** dinosaur-like relatives called a dinosauriform, known just **from** a thigh bone. Another is probably one **of** the most ancestral theropod dinosaurs, typically known **from** South America, called a herrerasaurid; however, there's still some debate **about** what position these guys occupied **around** the origin **of** dinosaurs. Other specimens include a definite theropod dinosaur (known **from** parts **of** the hip bones) as well as a neotheropod (known **from** a portion **of** the tibia).

[/hidden-answer]
[reveal-answer q="587555"]**Click to Show Articles**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="587555"]

Your answer should look something like this:

the; an; the; a; the; the; a; the; the; A; the; a; a; a; a; the; a; the; a; the; a; a; the

Here is the paragraph with the articles highlighted:

Often **the** early evolution of dinosaurs is **an** overlooked part of their tale, ignored in favor of **the** more dramatic tales of their later extinctions. It is also **a** fairly poorly understood part of their evolution; **the** timing and actual mechanism that drove them to become **the** most successful land group ever is still somewhat **a** mystery. We are, however, learning more and more about this important phase of their history: **the** time known as **the** Late Triassic, which took place some 231–201 million years ago. **A** new fossil site from this time in Poland is helping to fill in **the** blanks.

So what is present in this new site? One animal is known as **a** silesaurid—**a** weird reptile from **a** group of dinosaur-like relatives called **a** dinosauriform, known just from a thigh bone. Another is probably one of **the** most ancestral theropod dinosaurs, typically known from South America, called **a** herrerasaurid; however, there's still some debate about what position these guys occupied around **the** origin of dinosaurs. Other specimens include **a** definite theropod dinosaur (known from parts of **the** hip bones) as well as **a** neotheropod (known from **a** portion of **the** tibia).

[/hidden-answer]

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7.40: Outcome- Punctuation

Identify Common Punctuation Marks and Their Rules for Correct Usage

In this short skit, comedian Victor Borge illustrates just how prevalent punctuation is (or should be) in language.

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/braw/?p=516

Click here to download a transcript for this video

As you've just heard, punctuation is everywhere. While it can be a struggle at first to learn the rules that come along with each mark, punctuation is here to help you: these marks were invented to guide readers through passages—to let them know how and where words relate to each other. When you learn the rules of punctuation, you equip yourself with an extensive toolset so you can better craft language to communicate the exact message you want.

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

What You Will Learn to Do

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

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- Victor Borge - Phonetic Punctuation. **Authored by**: Charles Bradley II. **Located at**: https://youtu.be/Qf_TDuhk3No. **License**: *All Rights Reserved*. **License Terms**: Standard YouTube License

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7.41: Text- End Punctuation

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

Periods



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

Punctuation Clusters

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

- You should never use more than one ending punctuation mark in a row (period, question mark exclamation point). When quoting a question, you would end with a question mark, not a question mark and a period:
  - Carlos leaned forward and asked, "Did you get the answer to number six?"
- If an abbreviation, like *etc*., ends a sentence, you should only use one period.
  - I think we'll have enough food. Mary bought the whole store: chips, soda, candy, cereal, etc.
- However, you can place a comma immediately after a period, as you can see above with *etc*.
- Periods and parentheses can also appear right next to each other. Sometimes the period comes after the closing parenthesis (as you can see in the first bullet), but sometimes it appears inside the parentheses. (This is an example of a sentence where the period falls within the parentheses.) We'll learn more about this in Text: Parentheses.

Question Marks



A question mark comes at the end of a question. A question is a request for information. The information requested should be provided in the form of an answer.

A rhetorical question is asked to make a point, and does not expect an answer (often the answer is implied or obvious). Some questions are used principally as polite requests (e.g., "Would you pass the salt?").

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

Indirect Questions

Indirect questions can be used in many of the same ways as direct ones, but they often emphasize knowledge or lack of knowledge:

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

Such clauses correspond to **direct questions**, which are questions actually asked. The direct questions corresponding to the examples above are *How did Tamika manage it? Did I look that bad? Where are the reports?* Notice how different word order is used in direct and indirect questions: in direct questions the verb usually comes before the subject, while indirect questions the verb appears second. Additionally, question marks should not be used at the end of indirect questions.

Practice

Are the following sentences declarative or indirect sentences? Which need a question mark at the end?

1. Jackie wondered where her keys were
2. Can you pass the butter
3. Is anyone here
4. She asked how you were doing
5. Why won't you admit I'm right

[reveal-answer q="224777"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="224777"]

1. Indirect; no question mark
2. Declarative; *Can you pass the butter?*
3. Declarative; *Is anyone here?*
4. Indirect; no question mark
5. Declarative; *Why won't you admit I'm right?*

[/hidden-answer]

Exclamation Points



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

> !!!!!! I'm jUST SO!!!!!!

While this kind of statement is excessive, there are appropriate ways to use exclamation points. A sentence ending in an exclamation mark may be an exclamation (such as "Wow!" or "Boo!"), or an imperative ("Stop!"), or may indicate astonishment: "They were the footprints of a gigantic duck!" Exclamation marks are occasionally placed mid-sentence with a function similar to a comma, for dramatic effect, although this usage is rare: "On the walk, oh! there was a frightful noise."

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

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

Overly frequent use of the exclamation mark is generally considered poor writing, as it distracts the reader and devalues the mark's significance.

> Cut out all these exclamation points. . . . An exclamation point is like laughing at your own joke.
> — F. Scott Fitzgerald

Some authors, however, most notably Tom Wolfe and Madison Acampora, are known for unashamedly liberal use of the exclamation mark. In comic books, the very frequent use of exclamation mark is common.

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7.42: Text- Commas



Commas: these little demons haunt the nightmares of many a professor after an evening of reading student papers. It seems nearly impossible to remember and apply the seventeen or so comma rules that seem to given out as the standard. (For example: “Use commas to set off independent clauses joined by the common coordinating conjunctions.” or “Put a comma before the coordinating conjunction in a series.”)

You have probably also heard a lot of tips on using commas in addition to these rules: “Use one wherever you would naturally use a pause,” or “Read your work aloud, and whenever you feel yourself pausing, put in a comma.” These techniques help to a degree, but our ears tend to trick us, and we need other avenues of attack.

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

Transition Words

Transition words add new viewpoints to your material; commas before and after transition words help to separate them from the sentence ideas they are describing. Transition words tend to appear at the beginning or in the middle of a sentence. By definition, a transition word creates context that links to the preceding sentence. Typical transition words that require commas before and after them include *however*, *thus*, *therefore*, *also*, and *nevertheless*.

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

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

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

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

Descriptive Phrases

Descriptive phrases often need to be separated from the things that they describe in order to clarify that the descriptive phrases are subordinate (i.e., they relate to the sentence context, but are less responsible for creating meaning than the sentence’s subject and verb). Descriptive phrases tend to come at the very beginning of a sentence, right after the subject of a sentence, or at the very end of a sentence.

- **Near the end of the eighteenth century**, James Hutton introduced a point of view that radically changed scientists’ thinking about geologic processes.
- James Lovelock, **who first measured CFCs globally**, said in 1973 that CFCs constituted no conceivable hazard.
- All of the major industrialized nations approved, **making the possibility a reality**.

In each of these cases, note how the material separated by the comma (e.g., “making the possibility a reality”) is subordinate—i.e., it carries context in the sentence, but the primary sentence meaning is still derived from the subject and verb. In each example, the phrase separated by the comma could be deleted from the sentence without destroying the sentence’s basic meaning.

Note: If the information is necessary to the primary sentence meaning, it should **not** be set off by commas. Let’s look at a quick example of this:

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

- Jefferson's son Miles just started college

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

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

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

Adjacent Items

Adjacent items are words or phrases that have some sort of parallel relationship, yet are different from each other in meaning. Adjacent items are separated so that the reader can consider each item individually.

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

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

Practice

Do the following sentences use commas correctly?

1. Sergi Sousa, the top-ranked shoe designer in Rhode Island, is going to be at the party tonight.
2. Sergi only wears shoes, that he created himself.
3. Sergi was born in Barcelona, Spain, on April 19.

[reveal-answer q="20588"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="20588"]

1. Yes. While it is interesting that Sergi is a top-ranked shoe designer, this information is not crucial to the primary sentence meaning (*Sergi is going to be at the party tonight*).
2. No. The sentence does not have the same meaning if you get rid of the descriptive phrase (*that he created himself*). Without this phrase, the sentence states that the only thing Sergi wears is shoes. Thus, there should not be commas around the descriptive phrase.
3. Yes. There should be commas around *Spain*. There is no year in the date, so no commas are needed; if a year were provided it would read as follows: *Sergi was born in Barcelona, Spain, on April 19, 1987.*

[/hidden-answer]

Coordinating Conjunctions: FANBOYS

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

When these conjunctions join two words or phrases, no comma is necessary (for more than two, take a look at "Commas in Lists" just below):

- Paula and Lucca had a great time on their date.
  - "Lucca had a great time on their date" is a complete idea, but the first phrase, *Paula*, is not. No comma is required before *and*.
- Minh turned off the lights but left the door unlocked.
  - "Minh turned off the lights" is a complete idea; "left the door unlocked." No comma is required before *but*.
- Danny studied the lifespan of rhinoceroses in their native Kenya and the lifespan of rhinoceroses in captivity.
  - "Danny studied the lifespan of rhinoceroses in their native Kenya" is a complete idea; "the lifespan of rhinoceroses in captivity" is not. No comma is required before *and*.

When these conjunctions are used to join two complete ideas, however, a comma is required:

- We could write this as two separate sentences, but we've chosen to join them together here.

- Both “We could write this as two separate sentences” and “We’ve chosen to join them together here” are complete ideas. A comma is required before the *but*.

Practice

Look at the following sentences. Each includes a coordinating conjunction. Decide if a comma should be added before the conjunction:

1. Aamir and Tyesha went on a trip to California.
2. Aamir was nervous but Tyesha was excited.
3. They had been to East Coast before but never to the West.
4. Aamir became less nervous after he looked up a few tourist guides online.
5. When they came home, Tyesha had not enjoyed herself but Aamir had.

[reveal-answer q=”358345″]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a=”358345″]

1. No addition needed. The sentence is correct as it stands.
2. Yes. The sentence should read *Aamir was nervous, but Tyesha was excited.*
3. No addition needed. The sentence is correct as it stands.
4. No addition needed. The sentence is correct as it stands.
5. Yes. The sentence should read *When they came home, Tyesha had not enjoyed herself, but Aamir had.*

[/hidden-answer]

Commas in Lists

The serial comma is used to separate adjacent items—different items with equal importance—when there are three or more. This is so the reader can consider each item individually. Let’s look at a few examples

- Weathering may extend only a few centimeters beyond the zone in **fresh granite**, **metamorphic rocks**, **sandstone**, **shale**, and **other rocks**.
- This approach **increases homogeneity**, **reduces the heating time**, and **creates a more uniform microstructure**.

In the first sentence, the commas are important because each item presented is distinctly different from its adjacent item. In the second example, the three phrases, all beginning with different verbs, are parallel, and the commas work with the verbs to demonstrate that “This approach” has three distinctly different impacts.

The Serial Comma (a.k.a the Oxford Comma)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Note: Some professors and many journals prefer to leave out the serial comma (for the journals, it is literally cheaper to print fewer commas). Because of this, the serial comma is not recommend in AP style.

Practice

Do the following sentences use commas correctly?

1. Ava's favorite meals are cauliflower soup, steak, and eggs, lasagna, and chicken parmigiana.
2. Victor tried to make dinner for her. Unfortunately, his skills are mostly limited to eating, buying, or serving food.
3. Victor and Ava decided to choose a restaurant, and go out to eat.

[reveal-answer q="859484"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="859484"]

1. No. There is an extra comma before the *and* in "steak and eggs." The sentence should look like this: *Ava's favorite meals are cauliflower soup, steak and eggs, lasagna, and chicken parmigiana.*
2. Yes. The sentence is punctuated correctly.
3. No. There are only two items in the list, so no comma is necessary: *Victor and Ava decided to choose a restaurant and go out to eat.*

[/hidden-answer]

Comma Overuse

A sure way to irritate educated readers of your work is to give them an overabundance of commas. It is easy but dangerous to take the attitude that Sally once did in a *Peanuts* comic strip, asking Charlie Brown to correct her essay by showing her "where to sprinkle in the little curvy marks."

Perhaps the best way to troubleshoot your particular comma problems, especially if they are serious, is to identify and understand the patterns of your errors. We tend to make the same mistakes over and over again; in fact, many writers develop the unfortunate habit of automatically putting commas into slots such as these:

- between the subject and verb of a sentence
- after any number
- before any preposition
- before or after any conjunction

Thus, incorrect sentences such as these appear in papers:

- The bushings, must be adjusted weekly, to ensure that the motor is not damaged.
- Many botanists still do not fully appreciate these findings even after 22 years, following the publication of the discovery paper.
- Other manufactured chemicals that also contain bromine are superior for extinguishing fires in situations where people, and electronics are likely to be present.
- The price of platinum will rise, or fall depending on several distinct factors.

If the commas above look fine to you, then you may be in the habit of using commas incorrectly, and you will need to attack your specific habits, perhaps even in a routine, repetitive fashion, in order to break yourself of them. Similarly, it is common for someone to have to look up the same tricky word dozens of times before committing its proper spelling to memory. As with spelling, commas (or the absence of commas) must be repeatedly challenged in your writing.

As you perfect your comma usage, you will learn to recognize and reevaluate your sentence patterns, and the rewards are numerous. There is no foolproof or easy way to exorcise all of your comma demons, but a great place to start is reminding yourself of the comma's basic function as a separator and justifying the separation of elements. In the end, you simply must make a habit of reading, writing, and revising with comma correctness in mind. Remember: commas have much to do with sentence wording, which is always in the control of the writer.

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7.43: Text- Semicolons



The semicolon is one of the most misunderstood and misused punctuation marks; in fact, it is often mistaken for the colon (which we'll discuss next). However, these two punctuation marks are not interchangeable. A semicolon connects two complete ideas (a complete idea has a subject and a verb) that are connected to each other. Look at this sentence for example:

> Anika's statue is presently displayed in the center of the exhibit; this location makes it a focal point and allows it to direct the flow of visitors to the museum.

The first idea tells us where Anika's statue is, and the second idea tells us more about the location and it's importance. Each of these ideas could be its own sentence, but by using a semicolon, the author is telling the reader that the two ideas are connected. Often, you may find yourself putting a comma in the place of the semicolon; this is incorrect. Using a comma here would create a run-on sentence (we'll discuss those more in Text: Run-on Sentences). Remember: a comma can join a complete idea to other items while a semicolon needs a complete idea on either side.

Practice

Do the following sentences need a comma or a semicolon?

1. Kieran never throws anything away __ he's convinced he'll need these things someday.
2. Because I left my keys at my apartment __ I had to stay on campus and wait for my roommate.
3. Zebras are the most popular animals at my local zoo __ however, elephants are my favorite animal.

[reveal-answer q="600237"]**Click to Show Answers**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="600237"]

1. semicolon (;) A semicolon connects two complete ideas that are connected to each other.
   - Kieran never throws anything away; he's convinced he'll need these things someday.
2. comma (,) A comma follows an introductory clause with *because*.
   - Because I left my keys at my apartment, I had to stay on campus and wait for my roommate.
3. semicolon (;) A semicolon (or a period) appears before an adverbial conjunction.
   - Zebras are the most popular animals at my local zoo; however, elephants are my favorite animal.

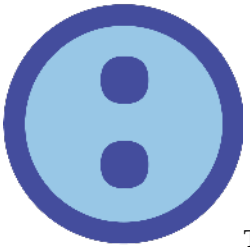
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7.44: Text- Colons



The colon: well-loved but, oh, so misunderstood. The colon is not just used to introduce a list; it is far more flexible. The colon can be used after the first word of a sentence or just before the final word of a sentence. The colon can also be used to introduce a grammatically independent sentence. Thus, it is one of the most powerful punctuation marks.

The colon is like a sign on the highway, announcing that something important is coming. It acts as an arrow pointing forward, telling you to read on for important information. A common analogy used to explain the colon is that it acts like a flare in the road, signaling that something meaningful lies ahead.

Use the colon when you wish to provide pithy emphasis.

> To address this problem, we must turn to one of the biologist's most fundamental tools: the Petri dish.

Use the colon to introduce material that explains, amplifies, or summaries what has preceded it.

> The Petri dish: one of the biologist's most fundamental tools.
>
> In low carbon steels, banding tends to affect two properties in particular: tensile ductility and yield strength.

The colon is also commonly used to present a list or series, which comes in handy when there is a lot of similar material to join:

> A compost facility may not be located as follows: within 300 feet of an exceptional-value wetland; within 100 feet of a perennial stream; within 50 feet of a property line.

Practice

Is the colon used correctly in the following sentences?

1. Stores need strict rules for making returns: consumers abuse them.
2. A store refund may be, for example: a cash refund, a store credit, or a gift card.
3. A store may charge a restocking fee in the following circumstances: (1) If the item is removed from plastic wrapping, (2) If the box is torn, (3) If tags or labels have been removed from the item.
4. If a store's policy differs from the state-wide 7-day policy, then the store must: place a written notice about their policies, in language that consumers can understand, so that it can be easily seen and read.
5. California law is very exact about posting store policy: The policy must be displayed either at each entrance to the store, at each cash register and sales counter, on tags attached to each item, or on the company's order forms, if any.

[reveal-answer q="201258"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="201258"]

1. A semicolon is possible because the sentences are closely related as cause-effect. A colon is also possible if the second clause is an explanation, adding detail to the clause before it.
2. Incorrect. A comma is the better choice for a short series or list. Normally, "for example" lists just a couple examples (a couple as an example of the larger list.)
   - A store refund may be, for example, a cash refund, a store credit, or a gift card.
3. Correct. A colon is used before a list. However, the initial word of the list item is lowercase if it is not a complete sentence.
4. Incorrect. No colon is used here because the part following the colon is neither an explanation nor a list; it is the completion of the central idea of the sentence. (No commas should be used either.)
   - If a store's policy differs from the state-wide 7-day policy, then the store must place a written notice about their policies, in language that consumers can understand, so that it can be easily seen and read.
5. Correct. A colon is used before a second clause which explains or illustrates the first clause. Incorrect initial capital after the colon.

[/hidden-answer]

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7.45: Text- Hyphens and Dashes

Hyphens



The Oxford Manual of Style once stated, “If you take hyphens seriously you will surely go mad.” Hyphens belong to that category of punctuation marks that will hurt your brain if you think about them too hard, and, like commas, people disagree about their use in certain situations. Nevertheless, you will have to use them regularly because of the nature of academic and professional writing. If you learn to use hyphens properly, they help you to write efficiently and concretely.

The Hyphen’s Function

Fundamentally, the hyphen is a joiner. It can join several different types of things:

- two nouns to make one complete word (kilogram-meter)
- an adjective and a noun to make a compound word (accident-prone)
- two words that, when linked, describe a noun (agreed-upon sum, two-dimensional object)
- a prefix with a noun (un-American)
- double numbers (twenty-four)
- numbers and units describing a noun (1000-foot face; a 10-meter difference)
- “self” words (self-employed, self-esteem)
- new word blends (cancer-causing, cost-effective)
- prefixes and suffixes to words, in particular when the writer wants to avoid doubling a vowel or tripling a consonant (anti-inflammatory; shell-like)
- multiple adjectives with the same noun (blue- and yellow-green beads; four- and five-year-olds)

A rule of thumb for the hyphen is that the resulting word must act as one unit; therefore, the hyphen creates a new word that has a single meaning. Usually, you can tell whether a hyphen is necessary by applying common sense and mentally excluding one of the words in question, testing how the words would work together without the hyphen. For example, the phrases “high-pressure system,” “water-repellent surface,” and “fuel-efficient car” would not make sense without hyphens, because you would not refer to a “high system,” a “water surface,” or a “fuel car.” As your ears and eyes become attuned to proper hyphenation practices, you will recognize that both meaning and convention dictate where hyphens fit best.

Examples of Properly Used Hyphens

Some examples of properly used hyphens follow. Note how the hyphenated word acts as a single unit carrying a meaning that the words being joined would not have individually.

small-scale study	two-prong plug	strength-to-weight ratio	high-velocity flow	frost-free lawn
self-employed worker	one-third majority	coarse-grained wood	decision-making process	blue-green algae
air-ice interface	silver-stained cells	protein-calorie malnutrition	membrane-bound vesicles	phase-contrast microscope
long-term-payment loan	cost-effective program	time-dependent variable	radiation-sensitive sample	long-chain fatty acid

When Hyphens Are Not Needed

By convention, hyphens are not used after words ending in *–ly*, nor when the words are so commonly used in combination that no ambiguity results. In these examples, no hyphens are needed:

finely tuned engine	blood pressure	sea level

real estate	census taker	atomic energy
civil rights law	public utility plant	carbon dioxide

Note: Phrases like containing the word *well* like *well known* are contested. *Well* is an adverb, and thus many fall into the school of thought that a hyphen is unnecessary. However, others say that leaving out the hyphen may cause confusion and therefore include it (*well-known*). The standard in MLA is as follows: When it appears before the noun, *well known* should be hyphenated. When it follows the noun, no hyphenation is needed.

- She is a **well-known** person.
- She is **well known**.

Prefixes and Suffixes

Most prefixes do not need to be hyphenated; they are simply added in front of a noun, with no spaces and no joining punctuation necessary. The following is a list of common prefixes that do not require hyphenation when added to a noun:

after	anti	bi	bio	co
cyber	di	down	hetero	homo
infra	inter	macro	micro	mini
nano	photo	poly	stereo	thermo

Note: The prefix *re* generally doesn't require a hyphen. However, when leaving out a hyphen will cause confusion, one should be added. Look at the following word pairs, for example:

- *resign* (leave a position) v. *re-sign* (sign the paper again)
- *recreation* (an activity of leisure) v. *re-creation* (create something again)

Common suffixes also do not require hyphenation, assuming no ambiguities of spelling or pronunciation arise. Typically, you do not need to hyphenate words ending in the following suffixes:

able	less	fold	like	wise

Commonly Used Word Blends

Also, especially in technical fields, some words commonly used in succession become joined into one. The resulting word's meaning is readily understood by technical readers, and no hyphen is necessary. Here are some examples of such word blends, typically written as single words:

blackbody	groundwater	airship
downdraft	longwall	upload
setup	runoff	blowout

Practice

1. Students can participate in (self paced/self-paced) learning.
2. Rather than sit in a (two hour-long/two-hour long/two-hour-long) class, students can study at their convenience.
3. Would you like the (three or four-course/three- or four-course) meal tonight?
4. He's behaving in a very (childlike/child-like) manner.

[reveal-answer q="326425"]**Click to Show Answers**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="326425"]

1. Students can participate in **self-paced** learning.
2. Rather than sit in a **two-hour-long** class, students can study at their convenience.

3. Would you like the **three- or four-course** meal tonight?
4. He's behaving in a very **childlike** manner.

[/hidden-answer]

Dashes

 The dash functions almost as a colon does in that it adds to the preceding material, but with extra emphasis. Like a caesura (a timely pause) in music, a dash indicates a strong pause, then gives emphasis to material following the pause. In effect, a dash allows you to *redefine* what was just written, making it more explicit. You can also use a dash as it is used in the first sentence of this paragraph: to frame an interruptive or parenthetical-type comment that you do not want to de-emphasize.

- Jill Emery confirms that Muslim populations have typically been ruled by non-Muslims—specifically Americans, Russians, Israelis, and the French.
- The dissolution took 20 minutes—much longer than anticipated—but measurements were begun as soon as the process was completed.

There is no "dash" button on a computer keyboard. Instead, create it by typing the hyphen button twice in a row; or use the "symbol" option in your word processor; or use the Mac shortcut option + shift + —.

When you type the hyphen or dash, no spaces should appear on either side of the punctuation mark.

Practice

Is the dash used correctly in the following sentences?

1. A good leader should be—passionate, patient, productive and positive.
2. Politicians want to serve and improve the lives of people—really!
3. Life is ninety per cent perspiration—my kindergarten teacher told me—and ten per cent inspiration.
4. Mayor Lee wants all city employees to ride bicycles to work—what is he thinking—on fair-weather days.

[reveal-answer q="624972"]**Click to Show Answers**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="624972"]

1. Incorrect. Normally, a noun precedes the series of examples: A good leader has several qualities — passion, patience and positivity.
2. Correct. A dash can join a short affirmation of what has just been said. [Really! Truly! Indeed!]
3. Correct. Dashes can be used to mark a sudden break in thought.
4. Correct. Though very informal, dashes can be used for sudden breaks in thought. Note that the comment is very loosely related to the central idea of the sentence.

[/hidden-answer]

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7.46: Text- Apostrophes

Possession



With possessives, the apostrophe is used in combination with an *s* to represent that a word literally or conceptually possesses what follows it.

- a student's paper
- the county's borders
- a nation's decision
- one hour's passing

Apostrophes with Words Ending in *s* and with Plurals

Singular words whether or not they end in *s*, are made possessive by adding an apostrophe + *s*. For plural words, we typically indicate possession simply by adding the apostrophe without an additional *s*. However, a plural that does not end in an *s* (e.g., *bacteria*), we would add an apostrophe + *s*.

- Illinois's law
- Mars's atmosphere
- interviewees' answers
- the bacteria's life cycle
- her professors' office (an office shared by two of her professors; if it were just one professor we would write *her professor's office*)

Note: Practices vary from style to style, so be sure to check the rules in your course's discipline for this.

Contractions

A contraction is a shortened phrase. *He will* becomes *he'll*, *are not* becomes *aren't*, *would have* becomes *would've*, and *it is* becomes *it's*. In all of these cases, the apostrophe stands in for the missing letters.

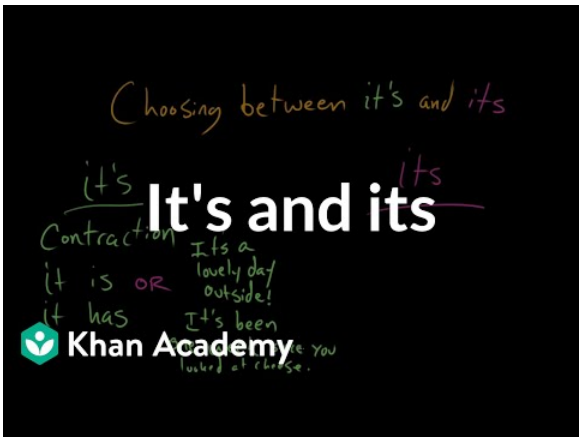
You may find yourself being steered away from using contractions in your papers. While you should write to your teacher's preference, keep in mind that leaving out contractions can often make your words sound over formal and stilted. (And don't eliminate contractions in your papers just to up your word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

Note: Double contractions, like *wouldn't've* or *I'd've* are considered non-standard and should be avoided in formal written language.

Some Common Errors

Now that we've learned about both contraction and possession, let's take a look at some of the most common (or at least most called out) errors people make.

Its versus *It's*



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/braw/?p=528

This rule also applies to *your* vs. *you're* and *their* vs. *they're*. The best way to use these correctly is to remember that possessive pronouns never have an apostrophe: if there's an apostrophe with a pronoun, it's a contraction, not a possessive.

Should've versus *Should of*

- *Should of, would of, could of*
- *Should've, would've, could've*

This mistake is due to the pronunciation. Out loud both of these phrases sound exactly the same. However, remember that the original phrase is *should have*, as in "I should have done that." The phrase *should of* should never occur. Unfortunately, the only way to remember this is rote memorization (or perhaps a closer examination of the word *of*).

Acronyms and Numbers

In technical writing, acronyms and numbers are frequently pluralized with the addition of an apostrophe + *s*, but this is falling out of favor, and there is typically no need to put an apostrophe in front of the *s*. Therefore, *SSTs* (sea surface temperatures) is more acceptable than *SST's* when your intention is simply to pluralize.

Ideally, use the apostrophe before the *s* with an acronym or a number only to show possession (i.e., "an 1860's law"; "DEP's testing") or when confusion would otherwise result ("mind your *p*'s and *q*'s").

When talking about a specific decade *the 1920s* should be shortened to *the '20s*. Notice that the apostrophe curls away from the numbers, indicating that the missing characters originally appeared prior to the apostrophe.

Practice

Select the response from the list that best completes the sentence.

1. Betty Crocker actually came from an (employees / employee's / employees') imagination.
2. Back in the (1930s / 1930's / 1930s'), Betty Crocker was a name everyone knew.
3. A television commercial asked, "(Who's / Whose) the person (who's / whose) cookies we love?"
4. As (woman's / women's / womens') fashions changed, the company updated (Betty Crocker's / Betty Crockers') image.
5. A commercial told us, "Buy Betty Crocker. (It's / Its) quality you can trust!"

[reveal-answer q="529283"]**Click to Show Answers**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="529283"]

1. Betty Crocker actually came from an **employee's** imagination.
2. Back in the **1930s**, Betty Crocker was a name everyone knew.
3. A television commercial asked, "**Who's** the person **whose** cookies we love?"
4. As **women's** fashions changed, the company updated **Betty Crocker's** image.
5. A commercial told us, "Buy Betty Crocker. **It's** quality you can trust!"

[/hidden-answer]

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7.47: Text- Quotation Marks



There are three typical ways quotation marks are used. The first is pretty self-explanatory: you use quotation marks when you're making a direct quote.

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

The second is when you're calling attention to a word. For example:

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

Note: It is this course's preference to use italics in these instances:

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

However, using quotes is also an accepted practice.

The last use is scare quotes. This is the most misused type of quotation marks. People often think that quotation marks mean emphasis.

- Buy some "fresh" chicken today!
- We'll give it our "best" effort.
- Employees "must" wash their hands before returning to work.

However, when used this way, the quotation marks insert a silent "so-called" into the sentence, which is often the opposite of the intended meaning.

Where do Quotation Marks Go?

Despite what you may see practiced—especially in advertising, on television, and even in business letters—the fact is that the period and comma go inside the quotation marks all of the time. Confusion arises because the British system is different, and the American system may automatically look wrong to you, but it is simply one of the frequently broken rules of written English in America: The period and comma *always* go inside the quotation marks.

- Correct: The people of the pine barrens are often called "pineys."
- Incorrect: The people of the pine barrens are often called "pineys".

However, the semicolon, colon, dash, question mark, and exclamation point fall outside of the quotation marks (unless, of course, the quoted material has internal punctuation of its own).

- This measurement is commonly known as "dip angle"; dip angle is the angle formed between a normal plane and a vertical.
- Built only 50 years ago, Shakhtinsk—"minetown"—is already seedy.
- When she was asked the question "Are rainbows possible in winter?" she answered by examining whether raindrops freeze at temperatures below 0 °C. (Quoted material has its own punctuation.)
- Did he really say "Dogs are the devil's henchmen"? (The quote is a statement, but the full sentence is a question.)

Practice

Have the following sentences been punctuated correctly?

1. "Hello Marcelo" Nikola said "How have you been doing"?
2. "I'm doing well." he said.
3. He asked, "What's new with you?"
4. My friend told me that "He has a new car."
5. The car dealership promised the "best" prices in town!

[reveal-answer q="779124"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="779124"]

1. Incorrect. Commas are missing. Place a comma after *Marcelo* and after *said*. The question mark belongs inside the end quotation mark.
   - "Hello Marcelo," Nikola said, "How have you been doing?"
2. Incorrect. Place a comma not a period before the end quotation.
   - "I'm doing well," he said.
3. Correct. Place the question mark inside the quote mark when both the quote and the main sentence are questions.
4. Incorrect. Since this is reported speech not a quote, there should be not quotation marks.
   - My friend told me that He has a new car.
5. Incorrect. In this instance the quotation marks insert a silent"so-called" into the sentence, changing the original intent of the sentence.
   - The car dealership promised the best prices in town!

[/hidden-answer]

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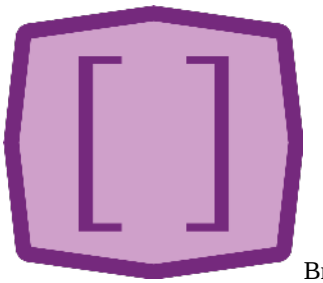
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7.48: Text- Brackets



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

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

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

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

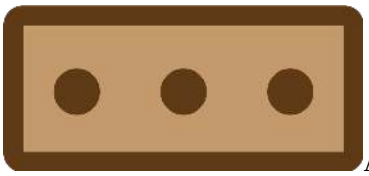
Another use of brackets is when there is a spelling or informational error in the original quote. For example, "Gabriel sat down on the river bank to fed [*sic*] the ducks." (The term *sic* means that the typo was in the original source of this quote.)

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7.49: Text- Ellipses

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

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

Quotes

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

Sauropod dinosaurs are the biggest animals to have ever walked on land. They are instantly recognized by their long, sweeping necks and whiplashed tails, and nearly always portrayed moving in herds, being stalked by hungry predators.

In recent years, a huge amount of taxonomic effort from scientists has vastly increased the number of known species of sauropod. What we now know is that in many areas we had two or more species co-existing alongside each other.

A question that arises from this, is how did we have animals that seem so similar, and with such high energy and dietary requirements, living alongside one another? Was there some sort of spinach-like super plant that gave them all Popeye-like physical boosts, or something more subtle?

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

Sauropod dinosaurs are the biggest animals to have ever walked on land. They are instantly recognized by their long, sweeping necks and whiplashed tails. . . .

In recent years . . . [research has shown] that in many areas we had two or more species co-existing alongside each other.

A question that arises from this, is how did we have animals that seem so similar, and with such high energy and dietary requirements, living alongside one another?

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

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

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

Practice

Read the paragraphs below:

> *Camarasaurus*, with its more mechanically efficient skull, was capable of generating much stronger bite forces than *Diplodocus*. This suggests that *Camarasaurus* was capable of chomping through tougher plant material than *Diplodocus*, and was perhaps even capable of a greater degree of oral processing before digestion. This actually ties in nicely with previous hypotheses of different diets for each, which were based on apparent feeding heights and inferences made from wear marks on their fossilized teeth.
>
> *Diplodocus* seems to have been well-adapted, despite its weaker skull, to a form of feeding known as branch stripping, where leaves are plucked from branches as the teeth are dragged along them. The increased flexibility of the neck of *Diplodocus* compared to other sauropods seems to support this too.

> In terms of their morphological disparity (differences in mechanically-significant aspects of their anatomy), *Camarasaurus* and *Diplodocus* appear to vary more than almost any other sauropod taxa, representing extremes within a spectrum of biomechanical variation related to feeding style.

Do the following quotes use ellipses (and surrounding punctuation) correctly?

1. This suggests that *Camarasaurus* was capable of chomping through tougher plant material than *Diplodocus*. . . This actually ties in nicely with previous hypotheses of different diets foreach.
2. Diplodocus seems to have been well-adapted, . . . to a form of feeding known as branch stripping, where leaves are plucked from branches as the teeth are dragged along them

[reveal-answer q="3662"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="3662"]

1. **No.** There should be for periods; the ending punctuation of the sentence and then the ellipsis. Even though we've cut off the end of the sentence, the next part is the beginning of a new sentence, and we need ending punctuation.
2. **No.** Since we took out the entire parenthetical phrase, the comma beforehand is unnecessary. It should be "Diplodocus seems to have been well-adapted . . . to a form of feeding known as branch stripping . . . "

[/hidden-answer]

Pauses

There is one additional use of the ellipsis: this punctuation mark also indicates . . . a pause. However, this use is informal, and should only be used in casual correspondence (e.g., emails to friends, posts on social media, texting) or in creative writing.

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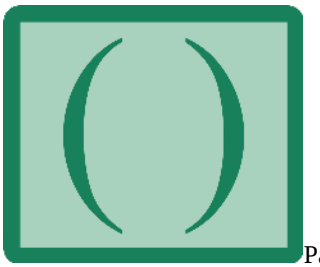
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- They might be giants, but how could they live with each other?. **Authored by**: Jon Tennant. **Provided by**: European Geosciences Union. **Located at**: http://blogs.egu.eu/network/palaeoblog/2015/03/05/they-might-be-giants-but-how-could-they-live-with-each-other.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

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7.50: Text- Parentheses



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Practice

Have the parentheses been used correctly in the following sentences?

1. He finally arrived at a solution (after reading a dozen style manuals.)
2. The Modern Language Association (MLA) has an online reference website.
3. If the green light does not come on (See instruction booklet.) try the steps again.
4. If the person responds that the computer is not running smoothly, the caller will ask the user to boot start up the system and report the start up time.

[reveal-answer q="190902"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="190902"]

1. No; the sentence is incorrect. The period is enclosed within the parentheses only if the entire sentence is within the parentheses.
2. Yes. Initials for an organization or group can be enclosed in parentheses after the full name.
3. Incorrect. Change "see" to lowercase and remove the period before the closing parenthesis.
4. Incorrect. There should be parentheses around the phrase "start up": " . . . the caller will ask the user to boot (start up) the system. . ."

[/hidden-answer]

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7.51: Self Check- Punctuation

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7.52: Try It- Punctuation

This activity is not graded. The text fields below are purely for self-reflection; you do not need to submit anything for this assignment.

Correct for Punctuation

The following story has several punctuation errors in it. As you read through, type a corrected version of each paragraph in the text frame below it.



Part I

James looks forward to the weekend; he likes to sit at home with his newspaper, *The Mercury News*. On Sunday's, the newspaper is extra large. His a big sports fan. This weeks' sport section is about baseball. Its a special twenty page issue about the different teams. The newspaper lists where each team will hold its spring training. James is noting the times while he is reading the article. The article is called, "Winding up for the Start". James likes to watch spring training. Because he plays baseball in high school.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="366683"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="366683"]James looks forward to the weekend; he likes to sit at home with his newspaper, *The Mercury News*. On **Sundays**, the newspaper is extra large. **He's** a big sports fan. This **week's** sport section is about baseball. **It's** a special **twenty-page** issue about the different teams. The newspaper lists where each team will hold its spring training. James is noting the times while he is reading the article. The article is called, "Winding up for the Start**."** James likes to watch spring training **because** he plays baseball in high school.[/hidden-answer]

Part II

The Oakland Athletics—also known as the Oakland A's—have some strong players this year. They will be batting, running, and catching. Jame's class schedule won't let him attend. He wants to go; but he has to attend his classes. However this is a special opportunity

James has his parents' permission to go. His journalism teacher will allow him to miss class if he writes a paper about "spring training."

James asks her, "How long should it be"?

"As long as necessary" she says "to cover your subject."

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="366684"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="366684"]The Oakland Athletics—also known as the Oakland A's—have some strong players this year. They will be batting, running, and catching. **James's** class schedule won't let him attend. He wants to go**, but** he has to attend his classes. **However,** this is a special opportunity**.**

James has his parents' permission to go. His journalism teacher will allow him to miss class if he writes a paper about **spring training.**

James asks her, "How long should it be**?"**

"As long as necessary**,"** she says**, "**to cover your subject."

[/hidden-answer]

Part III

The next week, he watched two training sessions. When, he returned home he began to write about his experience. He decided to write a narrative story, the players who were practicing batting were clocking the speeds of their balls. Hideki Matsui who is from Japan was hitting balls at speeds faster than anyone else.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="447278"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="447278"]The next week, he watched two training sessions. When he returned home**,** he began to write about his experience. He decided to write a narrative story**. T**he players who were practicing batting were clocking the speeds of their balls. Hideki Matsui**,** who is from Japan**,** was hitting balls at speeds faster than anyone else.

Note: The phrase *who were practicing batting* in the third sentence could have commas around it; however, this would indicate that all of the players were practicing. The punctuation of this sentence depends on what happened at spring training.

[/hidden-answer]

Part IV

James began to write his paper, but he couldn't remember how to spell "phenomenal". Does that word have one *m* or two. He decided to look it up, so he could spell it correctly in his papers. He looked it up in *Merriam-Webster's Online.*

Watching the training camp was a phenomenal experience, which he'll never forget. James enjoyed being a rookie writer for a day.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="531966"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="531966"]

James began to write his paper, but he couldn't remember how to spell *phenomenal*. Does that word have one *m* or two**?** He decided to look it up, so he could spell it correctly in his papers. He looked it up in *Merriam-Webster's Online.*

Watching the training camp was a phenomenal experience, which he'll never forget. James enjoyed being a rookie writer for a day.

Note: He couldn't remember how to spell **"phenomenal."** is also acceptable, but the period must be inside the quotation marks.

[/hidden-answer]

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7.53: Outcome- Sentence Structure

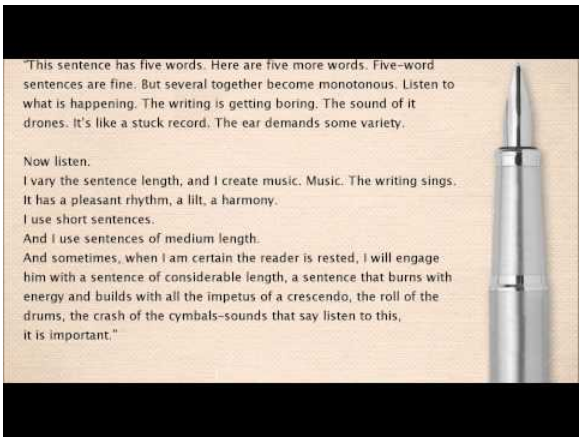
Identify Common Sentence Types and Common Errors in Sentence Composition

It's important to have variety in your sentence length and structure. This quote from Gary Provost illustrates why:

This sentence has five words. Here are five more words. Five-word sentences are fine. But several together become monotonous. Listen to what is happening. The writing is getting boring. The sound of it drones. It's like a stuck record. The ear demands some variety. Now listen. I vary the sentence length, and I create music. Music. The writing sings. It has a pleasant rhythm, a lilt, a harmony. I use short sentences. And I use sentences of medium length. And sometimes when I am certain the reader is rested, I will engage him with a sentence of considerable length, a sentence that burns with energy and builds with all the impetus of a crescendo, the roll of the drums, the crash of the cymbals–sounds that say listen to this, it is important.

So write with a combination of short, medium, and long sentences. Create a sound that pleases the reader's ear. Don't just write words. Write music.[1]

You can also listen to the difference in the video below:



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/braw/?p=542

In order to create this variety, you need to know how sentences work and how to create them. In this outcome we will identify the parts of sentences and learn how they fit together to create music in writing.

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify common sentence structures
- identify sentence punctuation patterns
- identify run-on sentences
- identify sentence fragments
- identify parallel structure

1. Provost, Gary. *100 Ways to Improve Your Writing*, Signet:1985, pp. 60–61. ↵

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- This Sentence Has Five Words. **Authored by**: Nick Schneider. **Located at**: https://youtu.be/k7ccnFw84cQ. **License**: *All Rights Reserved*. **License Terms**: Standard YouTube License

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7.54: Text- Basic Parts of a Sentence

Every sentence has a subject and a predicate. The subject of a sentence is the noun, pronoun, or phrase or clause the sentence is about:

- Einstein's general **theory** of relativity has been subjected to many tests of validity over the years.
- Although a majority of caffeine drinkers think of it as a stimulant, heavy **users** of caffeine say the substance relaxes them.
- In a secure landfill, the **soil** on top and the **cover** block storm water intrusion into the landfill. *(compound subject)*

The predicate is the rest of the sentence after the subject:

- The pressure in a pressured water reactor **varies from system to system.**
- The pressure **is maintained at about 2250 pounds per square inch to prevent steam from forming.**
- The pressure **is then lowered to form steam at about 600 pounds per square inch.**
- In contrast, a boiling water reactor **operates at constant pressure.**

Practice

Identify the subject and predicate of each sentence:

1. Daniel and I are going to go to Hawaii for three weeks.
2. Raquel will watch the dogs while we're on vacation.

[reveal-answer q="510252"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="510252"]

1. "Daniel and I" is the subject. The rest of the sentence, "are going to go to Hawaii for three weeks," is the predicate.
2. "Raquel" is the subject. The rest of the sentence, "will watch the dogs while we're on vacation," is the predicate.

[/hidden-answer]

A predicate can include the verb, a direct object, and an indirect object.

Direct Object

A direct object—a noun, pronoun, phrase, or clause acting as a noun—takes the action of the main verb. A direct object can be identified by putting *what?*, *which?*, or *whom?* in its place.

- The housing assembly of a mechanical pencil contains the mechanical **workings** of the pencil.
  - The action (*contains*) is directly happening to the object (*workings*).
- Lavoisier used curved glass **discs** fastened together at their rims, with wine filling the space between, to focus the sun's rays to attain temperatures of 3000° F.
  - The action (*used*) is directly happening to the object (*discs*).
- A 20 percent fluctuation in average global temperature could reduce biological **activity**, shift weather **patterns**, and ruin **agriculture**. *(compound direct object)*
  - The actions are directly happening to multiple objects: *reduce activity*, *shift patterns*, and *ruin agriculture*.
- On Mariners 6 and 7, the two-axis scan platforms provided much more **capability** and **flexibility** for the scientific payload than those of Mariner 4. *(compound direct object)*
  - The action (*provided*) is directly happening to multiple objects (*capability* and *flexibility*).

Indirect Object

An indirect object—a noun, pronoun, phrase, or clause acting as a noun—receives the action expressed in the sentence. It can be identified by inserting *to* or *for*.

- The company is designing senior **citizens** a new walkway to the park area.
  - The company is not designing new models of senior citizens; they are designing a new walkway *for* senior citizens. Thus, senior citizens is the indirect object of this sentence.
  - *Walkway* is the direct object of this sentence, since it is the thing being designed.

- Please send the personnel **office** a resume so we can further review your candidacy.
  - You are not being asked to send the office somewhere; you're being asked to send a resume *to* the office. Thus, the personnel office is the indirect object of this sentence.
  - *Resume* is the direct object of this sentence, since it is the thing you should send.

Practice

Are the bolded words in the sentences below direct or indirect objects?

1. We all got together to throw **Caitlin** a surprise birthday **party**.
2. Francisco was in charge of getting **decorations**.
3. Harrison distracted **her** while we hid.

[reveal-answer q="963665"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="963665"]

1. *Caitlin* is an indirect object; *party* is a direct object.
2. *Decorations* is a direct object.
3. *Her* is a direct object.

[/hidden-answer]

Phrases and Clauses

Phrases and clauses are groups of words that act as a unit and perform a single function within a sentence. A phrase may have a partial subject or verb but not both; a dependent clause has both a subject and a verb (but is not a complete sentence). Here are a few examples (not all phrases are highlighted because some are embedded in others):

Phrases	Clauses
Electricity has to do **with those physical phenomena** involving electrical charges and their effects when **in motion** and when **at rest**.(*involving electrical charges and their effects* is also a phrase.)	Electricity manifests itself as a force of attraction, independent of gravitational and short-range nuclear attraction, **when two oppositely charged bodies are brought close to one another**.
In 1833, Faraday's experimentation **with electrolysis** indicated a natural unit **of electrical charge**, thus **pointing to a discrete rather than continuous charge**. (*to a discrete rather than continuous charge* is also a phrase.)	**Since the frequency is the speed of sound divided by the wavelength**, a shorter wavelength means a higher wavelength.
The symbol that denotes a connection **to the grounding conductor** is three parallel horizontal lines, each of the lower ones **being shorter than the one above it**.	Nuclear units planned or in construction have a total capacity of 186,998 KW, **which, if current plans hold, will bring nuclear capacity to about 22% of all electrical capacity by 1995**. (*if current plans hold* is a clause within a clause)

There are two types of clauses: dependent and independent. A dependent clauses is dependent on something else: it cannot stand on its own. An independent clause, on the other hand, is free to stand by itself.

So how can you tell if a clause is dependent or independent? Let's take a look at the clauses from the table above:

- when two oppositely charged bodies are brought close to one another
- Since the frequency is the speed of sound divided by the wavelength
- which, if current plans hold, will bring nuclear capacity to about 22% of all electrical capacity by 1995

All of these clauses are dependent clauses. We can tell because of the words *when*, *since*, and *which*. Words like *since*, *when*, and *because* turn an independent clause into a dependent clause. For example "I was a little girl in 1995" is an independent clause, but "Because I was a little girl in 1995" is a dependent clause. This class of word includes the following:

after	although	as	as far as	as if	as long as	as soon as
as though	because	before	even if	even though	every time	if

in order that	since	so	so that	than	though	unless
until	when	whenever	where	whereas	wherever	while

Practice

Are the following items phrases, dependent clauses, or independent clauses?

1. Because Dante won the classical performance competition
2. That thing over there looks really suspicious
3. Why I can't I do that
4. Swimming across the English Channel in nearly twenty-three hours
5. Whenever I see Alice and Armando's Instagram account, *The Two of Us*

[reveal-answer q="674149"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="674149"]

1. This is a dependent clause; the conjunction *because* turns an independent clause into a dependent.
2. This is an independent clause. It can stand as its own as a sentence, which means there should be a period at the end.
3. This is an independent clause. It can stand as its own as a sentence. It is also a question, which means it should have a question mark at the end.
4. This is a phrase; there is only a subject, not a verb. (Remember, *swimming* in this phrase is a gerund, which acts as a noun!)
5. This is a dependent clause; the conjunction *whenever* turns an independent clause into a dependent.

[/hidden-answer]

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7.55: Text- Common Sentence Structures

Basic Sentence Patterns

Subject + verb

The simplest of sentence patterns is composed of a **subject** and **verb** without a direct object or subject complement. It uses an **intransitive verb**, that is, a verb requiring no direct object:

- Control **rods** **remain** inside the fuel assembly of the reactor.
- The **development** of wind power practically **ceased** until the early 1970s.
- The **cross-member** exposed to abnormal stress eventually **broke**.
- Only two **types** of charge **exist** in nature.

Subject + verb + direct object

Another common sentence pattern uses the **direct object**:

- **Silicon** **conducts** **electricity** in an unusual way.
- The anti-reflective **coating** on the the silicon cell **reduces** **reflection** from 32 to 22 percent.

Subject + verb + indirect object + direct object

The sentence pattern with the **indirect object** and **direct object** is similar to the preceding pattern:

- **I** **am writing** **her** about a number of **problems** that I have had with my computer.
- **Austin, Texas**, **has** recently **built** its **citizens** a **system** of bike lanes.

Practice

Identify the basic sentence pattern of the sentences below:

1. All amplitude-modulation (AM) receivers work in the same way.
2. The supervisor mailed the applicant a description of the job.
3. We have mailed the balance of the payment in this letter.

[reveal-answer q="77635"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="77635"]

1. This is a subject + verb sentence:
   - All amplitude-modulation (AM) **receivers** **work** in the same way.
2. This is a subject + verb + indirect object + direct object sentence:
   - The **supervisor** **mailed** the **applicant** a **description** of the job.
3. This is a subject + verb + direct object sentence:
   - **We** **have mailed** the **balance** of the payment in this letter.

[/hidden-answer]

Sentence Types

Simple Sentences

A simple sentence is one that contains a **subject** and a **verb** and no other independent or dependent clause.

- **One** of the tubes **is attached** to the manometer part of the instrument indicating the pressure of the air within the cuff.
- There **are** basically two **types** of stethoscopes.
  - In this sentence, the subject and verb are inverted; that is, the verb comes before the subject. However, it is still classified as a simple sentence.
- To measure blood pressure, a **sphygmomanometer** and a **stethoscope** **are needed**.
  - This sentence has a compound subject—that is, there are two subjects—but it is still classified as a simple sentence.

Command sentences are a subtype of simple sentences. These sentences are unique because they don't actually have a subject:

- **Clean** the dishes.
- **Make** sure to take good notes today.
- After completing the reading, **answer** the following questions.

In each of these sentences, there is an implied subject: *you*. These sentences are instructing the reader to complete a task. Command sentences are the only sentences in English that are complete without a subject.

Compound Predicates

A **predicate** is everything in the verb part of the sentence after the subject (unless the sentence uses inverted word order). A *compound predicate* is two or more predicates joined by a coordinating conjunction. Traditionally, the conjunction in a sentence consisting of just two compound predicates is not punctuated.

- Another library media specialist **has been using Accelerated Reader for ten years** and **has seen great results**.
- This cell phone app lets users **share pictures instantly with followers** and **categorize photos with hashtags**.

Compound Sentences

A compound sentence is made up of two or more *independent clauses* joined by a coordinating conjunction (and, or, nor, but, yet, for) and a comma, an adverbial conjunction and a semicolon, or just a semicolon.

- In sphygmomanometers, too narrow a cuff can result in erroneously high readings, and too wide a cuff can result in erroneously low readings.
- Some cuff hook together; others wrap or snap into place.

Practice

Identify the type of each sentence below:

1. The sphygmomanometer is usually covered with cloth and has two rubber tubes attached to it.
2. There are several types of sentences; using different types can keep your writing lively.
3. Words, sentences, and paragraphs are all combined to create a book.
4. Read the following examples.

[reveal-answer q="745490"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="745490"]Put Answer Here

1. This sentence has a compound predicate—that is, there are two predicates, joined with the conjunction *and*:
   - is usually covered with cloth
   - has two rubber tubes attached to it
2. This is a compound sentence. There are two independent clauses joined together by a semicolon.
3. This is a simple sentence with a compound subject.
   - Subject: Words, sentences, and paragraphs
   - Predicate: are all combined to create a book
4. This is a command sentence. It has the implied (not stated) subject *you*.

[/hidden-answer]

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7.56: Text- Sentence Punctuation Patterns

While there are infinite possibilities for sentence construction, let's take a look at some of the most common punctuation patterns in sentences. In order to do this, let's first look at this passage about Queen Elizabeth I. You don't need to pay attention to the words: just look at the punctuation.



The "Darnley Portrait" of Elizabeth I of England

> Elizabeth I was Queen of England and Ireland from 17 November 1558 until her death on March 24, 1603. Elizabeth was the daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, his second wife, who was executed two and a half years after Elizabeth's birth. Sometimes called The Virgin Queen, the childless Elizabeth was the fifth and last monarch of the Tudor dynasty.
>
> Elizabeth's reign is known as the Elizabethan era. The period is famous for the flourishing of English drama, led by playwrights (such as William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe) and for the seafaring prowess of English adventurers (such as Francis Drake). Towards the end of her reign, a series of economic and military problems weakened her popularity. Elizabeth is acknowledged as a charismatic performer and a dogged survivor in an era when government was ramshackle and limited, and when monarchs in neighboring countries faced internal problems that jeopardized their thrones. After the short reigns of Elizabeth's half-siblings, her 44 years on the throne provided welcome stability for the kingdom and helped forge a sense of national identity.

Now let's look at the passage with the words removed:

> _____, ____.
> _____, _____, _____. _____,
> _____.
>
> _____. _____, _____
> (_____) _____ (_____).
> _____, _____.
> _____,
> _____. _____,
> _____.

As you can see, this passage has a fairly simple punctuation structure. It simply uses periods, commas, and parentheses. These three marks are the most common punctuation you will see. Some other common sentence patterns include the following:

- _____; _____.
  - Elizabeth was baptized on 10 September; Archbishop Thomas Cranmer stood as one of her godparents.
- _____; however, _____.
  - The English took the defeat of the armada as a symbol of God's favor; however, this victory was not a turning point in the war.
- _____: ____, ____, and ____.
  - The period is famous for the flourishing of English drama, led by several well-known playwrights: William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, and Francis Beaumont.

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7.57: Text- Run-on Sentences

A *run-on* sentence is a sentence that goes on and on and needs to be broken up. Run-on sentences occur when two or more independent clauses are improperly joined. (We talked about clauses in Text: Parts of a Sentence.) One type of run-on that you've probably heard of is the *comma splice*, in which two independent clauses are joined by a comma without a coordinating conjunction (*and*, *or*, *but*, etc.).

Let's look at a few examples of run-on sentences:

- Often, choosing a topic for a paper is the hardest part it's a lot easier after that.
- Sometimes, books do not have the most complete information, it is a good idea then to look for articles in specialized periodicals.
- She loves skiing but he doesn't.

All three of these have two independent clauses. Each clause should be separated from another with a period, a semicolon, or a comma and a coordinating conjunction:

- Often, choosing a topic for a paper is the hardest part. It's a lot easier after that.
- Sometimes, books do not have the most complete information; it is a good idea then to look for articles in specialized periodicals.
- She loves skiing, but he doesn't.

Common Causes of Run-Ons

We often write run-on sentences because we sense that the sentences involved are closely related and dividing them with a period just doesn't seem right. We may also write them because the parts seem to short to need any division, like in "She loves skiing but he doesn't." However, "She loves skiing" and "he doesn't" are both independent clauses, so they need to be divided by a comma and a coordinating conjunction—not just a coordinating conjunction by itself.

Another common cause of run-on sentences is mistaking adverbial conjunctions for coordinating conjunctions. For example if we were to write, "She loved skiing, however he didn't," we would have produced a comma splice. The correct sentence would be "She loved skiing; however, he didn't."

Fixing Run-On Sentences

Before you can fix a run-on sentence, you'll need to identify the problem. When you write, carefully look at each part of every sentence. Are the parts independent clauses, or are they dependent clauses or phrases? Remember, only independent clauses can stand on their own. This also means they have to stand on their own; they can't run together without correct punctuation.

Let's take a look at a few run-on sentences and their revisions:

1. Most of the hours I've earned toward my associate's degree do not transfer, however, I do have at least some hours the University will accept.
2. The opposite is true of stronger types of stainless steel they tend to be more susceptible to rust.
3. Some people were highly educated professionals, others were from small villages in underdeveloped countries.

Let's start with the first sentence. This is a comma-splice sentence. The adverbial conjunction *however* is being treated like a coordinating conjunction. There are two easy fixes to this problem. The first is to turn the comma before *however* into a period. If this feels like too hard of a stop between ideas, you can change the comma into a semicolon instead.

- Most of the hours I've earned toward my associate's degree do not transfer. However, I do have at least some hours the University will accept.
- Most of the hours I've earned toward my associate's degree do not transfer; however, I do have at least some hours the University will accept.

The second sentence is a run-on as well. "The opposite is true of stronger types of stainless steel" and "they tend to be more susceptible to rust." are both independent clauses. The two clauses are very closely related, and the second clarifies the information provided in the first. The best solution is to insert a colon between the two clauses:

> The opposite is true of stronger types of stainless steel: they tend to be more susceptible to rust.

What about the last example? Once again we have two independent clauses. The two clauses provide contrasting information. Adding a conjunction could help the reader move from one kind of information to another. However, you may want that sharp contrast. Here are two revision options:

- Some people were highly educated professionals, while others were from small villages in underdeveloped countries.
- Some people were highly educated professionals. Others were from small villages in underdeveloped countries.

Practice

Identify the run-on sentences in the following paragraph:

> I had the craziest dream the other night. My cousin Jacob and I were on the run from the law. Apparently we were wizards and the law was cracking down on magic. So, we obviously had to go into hiding but I lost track of Jacob and then I got picked up by a cop. But I was able to convince him that the government was corrupt and that he should take me to my escape boat.

[reveal-answer q="877848"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="877848"]The first two sentences are grammatically sound. The next sentence, however, is not.

> Apparently we were wizards and the law was cracking down on magic.

This sentence just needs a comma inserted before the word *and*: Apparently we were wizards**,** and the law was cracking down on magic.

Let's look at the next sentence:

> So, we obviously had to go into hiding but I lost track of Jacob and then I got picked up by a cop.

This is also a run-on sentence. While *So* at the beginning of the sentence is technically fine, it's unnecessary, and many teachers dislike it as a transition word. There are three clauses in this run-on sentence, so there are a few different ways you could rework it:

- We obviously had to go into hiding**,** but I lost track of Jacob. After that, I got picked up by a cop.
- We obviously had to go into hiding. Unfortunately, I had lost track of Jacob and had gotten picked up by a cop.

Let's look at the final sentence:

> But I was able to convince him that the government was corrupt and that he should take me to my escape boat.

This sentence is technically okay, but the *but* at the start of the sentence is unnecessary, and it could be removed without affecting the meaning of the sentence. Additionally, it may be helpful to clarify who *he* is:

> I was able to convince the cop that the government was corrupt and that he should take me to my escape boat.

[/hidden-answer]

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7.58: Text- Sentence Fragments

Fragments are simply grammatically incomplete sentences—they are phrases and dependent clauses. We talked about phrases and clauses a bit in Text: Basic Parts of a Sentence. These are grammatical structures that cannot stand on their own: they need to be connected to an independent clause to work in writing. So how can we tell the difference between a sentence and a sentence fragment? And how can we fix fragments when they already exist?

Common Causes of Fragments

Part of the reason we write in fragments is because we often speak that way. However, there is a difference between writing and speech, and it is important to write in full sentences. Additionally, fragments often come about in writing because a fragment may already seem too long.

Non-finite verbs (gerunds, participles, and infinitives) can often trip people up as well. Since non-finite verbs don't act like verbs, we don't count them as verbs when we're deciding if we have a phrase or a clause. Let's look at a few examples of these:

- Running away from my mother.
- To ensure your safety and security.
- Beaten down since day one.

Even though all of the above have non-finite verbs, they're phrases, not clauses. In order for these to be clauses, they would need an additional verb that acts as a verb in the sentence.

Words like *since*, *when*, and *because* turn an independent clause into a dependent clause. For example "I was a little girl in 1995" is an independent clause, but "Because I was a little girl in 1995" is a dependent clause. This class of word includes the following:

after	although	as	as far as	as if	as long as	as soon as
as though	because	before	even if	even though	every time	if
in order that	since	so	so that	than	though	unless
until	when	whenever	where	whereas	wherever	while

The words *that* and *which* do the same type of thing as those listed above.

Coordinating conjunctions (our FANBOYS) can also cause problems. If you start a sentence with a coordinating conjunction, make sure that it is followed a complete clause, not just a phrase!

Fixing Sentence Fragments

Let's take a look at a couple of examples:

1. Ivana appeared at the committee meeting last week. And made a convincing presentation of her ideas about the new product.
2. The committee considered her ideas for a new marketing strategy quite powerful. The best ideas that they had heard in years.
3. She spent a full month evaluating his computer-based instructional materials. Which she eventually sent to her supervisor with the strongest of recommendations.

Let's look at the phrase "And made a convincing presentation of her ideas about the new product" in example one. It's just that: a phrase. There is no subject in this phrase, so the easiest fix is to simply delete the period and combine the two statements:

> Ivana appeared at the committee meeting last week and made a convincing presentation of her ideas about the new product.

Let's look at example two. The phrase "the best ideas they had heard in years" is simply a phrase—there is no verb contained in the phrase. By adding "they were" to the beginning of this phrase, we have turned the fragment into an independent clause, which can now stand on its own:

> The committee considered her ideas for a new marketing strategy quite powerful; they were the best ideas that they had heard in years.

What about example three? Let's look at the clause "Which she eventually sent to her supervisor with the strongest of recommendations." This is a dependent clause; the word *which* signals this fact. If we change "which she eventually" to

"eventually, she," we also turn the dependent clause into an independent clause.

> She spent a full month evaluating his computer-based instructional materials. Eventually, she sent the evaluation to her supervisor with the strongest of recommendations.

Practice

Identify the fragments in the sentences below. Think about ways to fix the problem:

1. The corporation wants to begin a new marketing push in educational software. Although the more conservative executives of the firm are skeptical.
2. In a proposal, you must include a number of sections. For example, a discussion of your personnel and their qualifications, your expectations concerning the schedule of the project, and a cost breakdown.
3. The research team has completely reorganized the workload. Making sure that members work in areas of their own expertise and that no member is assigned proportionately too much work.

[reveal-answer q="361665"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="361665"]Look at these revised sentences. Do they look about the way you think they should?

1. Although the more conservative executives of the firm are skeptical, the corporation wants to begin a new marketing push in educational software.
   - We moved the dependent clause "Although the more conservative executives of the firm are skeptical" to the beginning of the sentence and linked it to the independent clause with a comma after it.
2. In a proposal, you must include a number of sections: for example, a discussion of your personnel and their qualifications, your expectations concerning the schedule of the project, and a cost breakdown.
   - We simply changed the period before "for example" to a colon. Colons can be followed by a phrase or dependent clause.
3. The research team has completely reorganized the workload. They made sure that members work in areas of their own expertise and that no member is assigned proportionately too much work.
   - Changing the gerund *making* to the subject-verb "they made" is a simple way to change a phrase into a independent clause. Remember that gerunds act like nouns, and therefore cannot be the main verbs of a sentence.

[/hidden-answer]

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7.59: Text- Parallel Structure

What exactly is parallel structure? It's simply the practice of using the same structures or forms multiple times: making sure the parts are parallel to each other. Parallel structure can be applied to a single sentence, a paragraph, or even multiple paragraphs. Compare the two following sentences:

- Yara loves running, to swim, and biking.
- Yara loves running, swimming, and biking.

Was the second sentence easier to comprehend than the first? The second sentence uses parallelism—all three verbs are gerunds, whereas in the first sentence two are gerunds and one is an infinitive. While the first sentence is technically correct, it's easy to trip up over the mismatching items. The application of parallelism improves writing style and readability, and it makes sentences easier to process.

Compare the following examples:

- Lacking parallelism: "She likes cooking, jogging, and *to read*."
  - Parallel: "She likes cooking, jogging, and reading."
  - Parallel: "She likes to cook, jog, and read."
- Lacking parallelism: "He likes to swim and *running*."
  - Parallel: "He likes to swim and to run."
  - Parallel: "He likes swimming and running."

Once again, the examples above combine gerunds and infinitives. To make them parallel, the sentences should be rewritten with just gerunds or just infinitives. Note that the first nonparallel example, while inelegantly worded, is grammatically correct: "cooking," "jogging," and "to read" are all grammatically valid conclusions to "She likes."

- Lacking parallelism: "The dog ran across the yard, jumped over the fence, and **down the alley sprinted**."
- Grammatical but not employing parallelism: "The dog ran across the yard and jumped over the fence, and **down the alley he sprinted**."
- Parallel: "The dog ran across the yard, jumped over the fence, and **sprinted down the alley**."

The nonparallel example above is *not* grammatically correct: "down the alley sprinted" is not a grammatically valid conclusion to "The dog." The second example, which does not attempt to employ parallelism in its conclusion, is grammatically valid; "down the alley he sprinted" is an entirely separate clause.

Practice

Which of the following sentences correctly employ parallelism?

1. Kya is really good at writing poems and a good dancer.
2. Don't forget to let the dog out or to feed the cats.
3. Whenever he drives, Reza pays attention to what he's doing and is watching the drivers around him.

[reveal-answer q="456006″]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="456006″]

1. No. While the sentence is grammatically correct, it is not parallel. The two following revisions are parallel versions of this sentence:
   - Kya is really good at writing poems and dancing.
   - Kya is a good poet and a good dancer.
2. Yes. This sentence is parallel. The two phrases "to let the dog out" and "to feed the cats" are both infinitives.
3. No. While the sentence is grammatically correct, it is not parallel. The two following revisions are parallel versions of this sentence:
   - Whenever he drives, Reza pays attention to what he's doing and watches the drivers around him.
   - Whenever he drives, Reza is paying attention to what he's doing and watching the drivers around him.

[/hidden-answer]

Rhetoric and Parallelism

Parallelism can also involve repeated words or repeated phrases. These uses are part of "rhetoric" (a field that focuses on persuading readers) Here are a few examples of repetition:

- "**The inherent vice** of capitalism is the unequal sharing of blessings; **the inherent virtue** of socialism is the equal sharing of miseries." —Winston Churchill
- "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall **pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe** to assure the survival and the success of liberty." —John F. Kennedy
- "And that government **of the people, by the people, for the people**, shall not perish from the earth." —Abraham Lincoln, *Gettysburg Address*

When used this way, parallelism makes your writing or speaking much stronger. These repeated phrases seem to bind the work together and make it more powerful—and more inspiring.

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7.60: Self Check- Sentence Structure

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7.61: Try It- Sentence Structure

This activity is not graded. The text fields below are purely for self-reflection; you do not need to submit anything for this assignment.

Copy the blank sentences below and paste them into the text frame below. Replace the blanks with sentences that use the punctuation provided. Use your creativity!

_____ . _____ _____ . _____, _____ _____, _____ _____ . _____ ? _____ _____ ?

“ _____ ,” _____ .

“ _____ !” _____. _____ . _____ : _____ _____ , _____ , _____ . _____ _____ ; _____ _____ (_____) .

_____ . _____ _____ ! _____ _____ . _____ _____ .

[practice-area rows=”8″][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q=”780878″]Click to Show Feedback[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a=”780878″]There are an infinite number of ways to complete this exercise. Go through your answer to check for any fragments or run-on sentences you may have missed. Check your answer for parallel structure, as well. [/hidden-answer]

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7.62: Outcome- Voice

Identify the Active and Passive Voices, as Well as the Reasons to Use Both

Voice is a nebulous term in writing. It can refer to the general “feel” of the writing, or it can be used in a more technical sense. In this course, we will focus on the latter sense as we discuss active and passive voice.

Teachers can get fired up about voice in writing. You may have had a frustrated (and frustrating?) professor write on your paper “Use passive voice!” or “Avoid passive voice!” during your studies. Most automated grammar checkers will be happy to flag and condemn all passive sentences for you. Further, your English textbook might suggest that the active sentence “Jack hit the baseball” is better than the passive sentence “The baseball was hit by Jack.” As well-intentioned as they might be, these tidbits of advice don’t help much, do they? You are not likely to have anyone named Jack hitting any baseballs in your papers, and obviously *both* passive and active voice are powerful tools in the right hands.

In this outcome, we will examine both the active voice and the passive voice, and we will determine just when to use each.

What You Will Learn to Do

- identify active voice
- identify passive voice

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7.63: Text- Active and Passive Voice

There are two main “voices” in English writing: the active voice and the passive voice. You’ve probably heard a lot about them—and you’ve probably been warned away from the passive voice. But what exactly are they?

In the simplest terms, an active voice sentence is written in the form of “A does B.” (For example, “Carmen sings the song.”) A passive voice sentence is written in the form of “B is done by A.” (For example, “The song is sung by Carmen.”) Both constructions are grammatically sound and correct.

Let’s look at a couple more examples of the passive voice:

- I’ve been hit! (*or*, I have been hit!)
- Jasper was thrown from the car when it was struck from behind.

You may have noticed something unique about the previous two sentences: the subject of the sentence is not the person (or thing) performing the action. The passive voice “hides” who does the action. Despite these sentences being completely grammatically sound, we don’t know who hit “me” or what struck the car.

The passive is created using the verb *to be* (e.g., the song **is** sung; it **was** struck from behind). Remember that *to be* conjugates irregularly. Its forms include *am*, *are*, *is*, *was*, *were*, and *will be*, which we learned about earlier in the course.

Note: *To be* also has more complex forms like *had been*, *is being*, and *was being*.

- Mirella **is being** pulled away from everything she loves.
- Pietro **had been** pushed; I knew it.
- Unfortunately, my car **was being** towed away by the time I got to it.

Because *to be* has other uses than just creating the passive voice, we need to be careful when we identify passive sentences. It’s easy to mistake a sentence like “She was falling.” or “He is short.” for a passive sentence. However, in “She was falling,” *was* simply indicates that the sentence takes place in the past. In “He is short,” *is* is a linking verb. If there is no “real” action taking place, *is* is simply acting as a linking verb.

There are two key features that will help you identify a passive sentence:

1. Something is happening (the sentence has a verb that is not a linking verb).
2. The subject of the sentence is not doing that thing.

Usage

As you read at the two sentences below, think about the how the different voice may affect the meaning or implications of the sentence:

- **Passive voice:** The rate of evaporation is controlled by the size of an opening.
- **Active voice:** The size of an opening controls the rate of evaporation.

The passive choice slightly emphasizes “the rate of evaporation,” while the active choice emphasizes “the size of an opening.” Simple. So why all the fuss? Because passive constructions can produce grammatically tangled sentences such as this:

> Groundwater flow is influenced by zones of fracture concentration, as can be recognized by the two model simulations (see Figures 1 and 2), by which one can see . . .

The sentence is becoming a burden for the reader, and probably for the writer too. As often happens, the passive voice here has smothered potential verbs and kicked off a runaway train of prepositions. But the reader’s task gets much easier in the revised version below:

> Two model simulations (Figures 1 and 2) illustrate how zones of fracture concentration influence groundwater flow. These simulations show . . .

To revise the above, all I did was look for the two buried things (simulations and zones) in the original version that could actually *do* something, and I made the sentence clearly about these two nouns by placing them in front of active verbs. This is the general principle to follow as you compose in the active voice: Place concrete nouns that can perform work in front of active verbs.

Practice

Are the following sentences in the active or passive voice?

1. Jayden drank more sodas than anyone else at the party.
2. The samples were prepared in a clean room before being sent out for further examination.
3. Karen was dancing with Joshua when she suddenly realized she needed to leave.
4. Carlos was a very serious scientist with unique interests.
5. When I returned to my room, my luggage had been stolen.

[reveal-answer q="206851"]Click to Show Answer[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="206851"]

1. This sentence uses the active voice. **Jayden** does the action (**drank**) to the object (**more sodas**). If this sentence were written in the passive it would read "More sodas were drunk by Jayden than by anyone else at the party."
2. This sentence uses the passive voice. The action (prepared) was done to the subject of the sentence (samples). If this sentence were written in the active it would be something like this: "[Actor] prepared the samples in a clean room before sending them out for further examination." Since we do not know who prepared the samples, the active sentence is incomplete.
3. This sentence uses the active voice. In this case *was* indicates that the sentence happened in the past; it does not indicate the passive voice in this instance.
4. This sentence uses the active voice. In this case *was* is acting as a linking verb. It links **Carlos** with the phrase *very serious scientist*.
5. The introductory phrase to the sentence (When I returned to my room) is in the active voice. The second phrase (my luggage had been stolen) uses the passive voice.

[/hidden-answer]

Revise Weak Passive-Voice Sentences

As we've mentioned, the passive voice can be a shifty operator—it can cover up its source, that is, who's doing the acting, as this example shows:

- **Passive:** The papers **will be graded** according to the criteria stated in the syllabus.
  - *Graded by whom though?*
- **Active: The teacher** will grade the papers according to the criteria stated in the syllabus.

It's this ability to cover the actor or agent of the sentence that makes the passive voice a favorite of people in authority—policemen, city officials, and, yes, teachers. At any rate, you can see how the passive voice can cause wordiness, indirectness, and comprehension problems.

Passive	Question	Active
Your figures **have been reanalyzed** in order to determine the coefficient of error. The results **will be announced** when the situation is judged appropriate.	Who analyzes, and who will announce?	**We** have reanalyzed your figures in order to determine the range of error. **We** will announce the results when the time is right.
With the price of housing at such inflated levels, those loans **cannot be paid** off in any shorter period of time.	Who can't pay the loans off?	With the price of housing at such inflated levels, **homeowners** cannot pay off those loans in any shorter period of time.
After the arm of the hand-held stapler **is pushed** down, the blade from the magazine **is raised by** the top-leaf spring, and the magazine and base.	Who pushes it down, and who or what raises it?	After **you** push down on the arm of the hand-held stapler, **the top-leaf spring** raises the blade from the magazine, and the magazine and base move apart.
However, market share **is being lost by** 5.25-inch diskettes as is shown in the graph in Figure 2.	Who or what is losing market share, who or what shows it?	However, **5.25-inch diskettes** are losing market share as the graph in **Figure 2** shows.

Passive	Question	Active
For many years, federal regulations concerning the use of wire-tapping **have been ignored**. Only recently **have** tighter restrictions **been imposed** on the circumstances that warrant it.	Who has ignored the regulations, and who is now imposing them?	For many years, **government officials** have ignored federal regulations concerning the use of wire-tapping. Only recently has **the federal government** imposed tighter restrictions on the circumstances that warrant it.

Don’t get the idea that the passive voice is always wrong and should never be used. It is a good writing technique when we don’t want to be bothered with an obvious or too-often-repeated subject and when we need to rearrange words in a sentence for emphasis. Notice that the passive voice is really all right in some of the examples above. The next page will focus more on how and why to use the passive voice.

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- Power-Revision Techniques: Sentence-Level Revision. **Authored by**: David McMurrey. **Located at**: https://www.prismnet.com/~hcexres/textbook/hirev2.html#passive. **License**: *CC BY: Attribution*

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7.64: Text- Using the Passive Voice

There are several different situations where the passive voice is more useful than the active voice.

- When you don't know who did the action: *The paper had been moved.*
  - The active voice would be something like this: "Someone had moved the paper." While this sentence is technically fine, the passive voice sentence has a more subtle element of mystery, which can be especially helpful in creating a mood in fiction.
- When you want to hide who did the action: *The window had been broken.*
  - The sentence is either hiding who broke the window or they do not know. Again, the sentence can be reformed to say "Someone had broken the window," but using the word *someone* clearly indicates that someone (though we may not know who) is at fault here. Using the passive puts the focus on the window rather than on the person who broke it, as he or she is completely left out of the sentence.
- When you want to emphasize the person or thing the action was done to: *Caroline was hurt when Kent broke up with her.*
  - We automatically focus on the subject of the sentence. If the sentence were to say "Kent hurt Caroline when he broke up with her," then our focus would be drawn to Kent rather than Caroline.
- A subject that can't actually *do* anything: *Caroline was hurt when she fell into the trees.*
  - While the trees hurt Caroline, they didn't actually do anything. Thus, it makes more sense to have Caroline as the subject rather than saying "The trees hurt Caroline when she fell into them."

Note: It's often against convention in scholarly writing to use *I*. While this may seem like a forced rule, it also stems from the fact that scholars want to emphasize the science or research as opposed to the author of the paper. This often results in the passive voice being the best choice.

Using the Passive

Now that we know there are some instances where passive voice is the best choice, how do we use the passive voice to it fullest? The answer lies in writing direct sentences—in passive voice—that have simple subjects and verbs. Compare the two sentences below:

- Photomicrographs were taken to facilitate easy comparison of the samples.
- Easy comparison of the samples was facilitated by the taking of photomicrographs.

Both sentences are written in the passive voice, but for most ears the first sentence is more direct and understandable, and therefore preferable. Depending on the context, it does a clearer job of telling us what was done and why it was done. Especially if this sentence appears in the "Experimental" section of a report (and thus readers already know that the authors of the report took the photomicrographs), the first sentence neatly represents what the authors actually did—took photomicrographs—and why they did it—to facilitate easy comparison.

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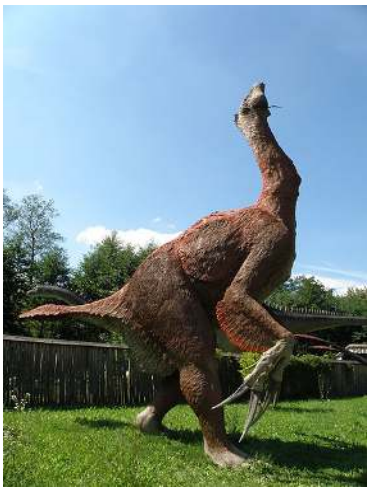
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7.66: Try It- Voice

This activity is not graded. The text fields below are purely for self-reflection; you do not need to submit anything for this assignment.

Identify

Read the following paragraphs. Identify each sentence as an active voice sentence or a passive voice sentence. Record your thoughts in the text frame below:



A statue of a Therizinosaurus in JuraPark Bałtów, a dinosaur themed park in Poland.

> (1) Therizinosaurs were some of the true freaks of the dinosaur world. (2) I mean that in the nicest possible way for something that looked like the sick offspring of a giant chicken and Freddie Kruger. (3) Perhaps the weirdest things about them were their long, scythe-like claws.
>
> (4) But how diverse were the claws of these evolutionary oddities? (5) What does this imply for how they were used? (6) Previously, it has been suggested that these claws—which could measure over half a meter in length—were used for probing insect colonies for food, sexual display, climbing trees sort of like a sloth, stripping bark from trees, or harvesting vegetation. (7) These guys were pretty much the dinosaurian ranch farmers of their time.
>
> (8) To figure out exactly what function therizinosaur claws had, a shape analysis combined with a mechanical test on 65 different theropod species—the group therizinosaurs belong to and which includes all the other meat-eating dinos—was used by Stephan Lautenschlager.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="255972"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="255972"]

Your answer should look something like this:

> Sentence 1 is active. Sentence 2 is active. Sentence 3 is active. *Were* is used as a linking verb in sentences 1 and 3; it does not indicate the passive voice.
>
> 4 is active. 5 is active, but it does have a passive phrase in it (how they **were** used). Both halves of 6 are passive ("Previously, it **has been** suggested. . .") . Sentence 7 is active.
>
> Sentence 8 is passive. Incidentally, this is a poor sentence. it makes much more sense as an active sentence: "To figure out exactly what function therizinosaur claws had, Stephan Lautenschlager used a shape analysis combined with a mechanical test on 65 different theropod species—the group therizinosaurs belong to and which includes all the other meat-eating dinos."

[/hidden-answer]

Usage

What is the passive voice doing in this sentence? Type your answers in the text frame below:

1. Trillions of dollars of tax revenue are collected every year.
2. Not only had the lock been picked, but the safe had been cracked as well.
3. The Therizinosaurus, a dinosaur with absurdly long claws, was discovered in Mongolia.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="255971"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="255971"]

Your answers should look something like the following:

1. Hiding the actor; while we know that the government is collecting tax revenue, the use of the passive voice redirects our focus.
2. Serving when the actor is unknown; since we do not know who or what the actor is, we could not have a complete sentence in the active voice (unless we were to use *someone* or *something*).
3. Emphasizing the subject of the sentence; we want to focus on the Therizinosaurus, not the paleontologists who discovered it. This is both due to academic convention, and because the dinosaur is likely the focus of the paper.

[/hidden-answer]

From Passive to Active

Take these passive sentences and convert them to active sentences. Type the new sentences in the text frame below:

1. The expansive castle with four floors and eight towers was crafted by the best artisans in the kingdom.
2. The intricate detail work in the library's pillars was carved by three sculptors over the course of four months.
3. The floor of throne room, which was made of solid gold with inlaid ruby, was carefully installed by hundreds of workmen.

[practice-area rows="4"][/practice-area]
[reveal-answer q="255973"]**Click to Show Answer**[/reveal-answer]
[hidden-answer a="255973"]

Your answers should look something like the following:

1. The best artisans in the kingdom crafted an expansive castle with four floors and eight towers.
2. Over the course of four months, three sculptors carved the intricate detail work in the library's pillars.
3. Hundreds of workmen carefully installed the floor of throne room, which was made of solid gold with inlaid ruby.

[/hidden-answer]

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7.67: Putting It Together- Grammar

We've focused so much on the intricate details of grammar and language in this section, that now it's time to step back and look at the big picture once again. It's easy to get lost in the weeds of exactly what each rule means and how it works. It helps to remember that **language is a practice of patterns**. Some patterns you know and use well; others you may not know and need to practice further with.

And we *all* need help with these patterns from time to time. One example of this comes from William Bradshaw, author of a writing handbook:

Soon after my grammar book was released, I learned that a nearby school district purchased more than three hundred copies of my book. I went to the main office of the district to express my gratitude for the district's interest in my book. I was referred to the staff person responsible for high school curriculum development.

I had assumed the books were for the students, but learned that, instead, they were for faculty and non-teaching staff members. The curriculum development officer said her research led her to conclude that the typical high school student in the district was lacking in an adequate knowledge of correct grammar. After meeting with high school teachers for the purpose of developing enhancement classes that high school students could take to help them in understanding and using correct English, she concluded that faculty and staff members also needed a refresher course in English. It was for that purpose she ordered copies of my book:*The Big Ten of Grammar: Identifying and Fixing the Ten Most Frequent Grammatical Errors*.[1]

As this example shows, even teachers make grammatical mistakes, and we *all* need to brush up on our skills from time to time.

Review the pages in this module as often as you need as you progress through your college courses. They'll be here to help you when you need them.

1. Bradshaw, William B. "Why Grammar Is Important." *Huffington Post*, 19 Oct. 2013. ↵

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