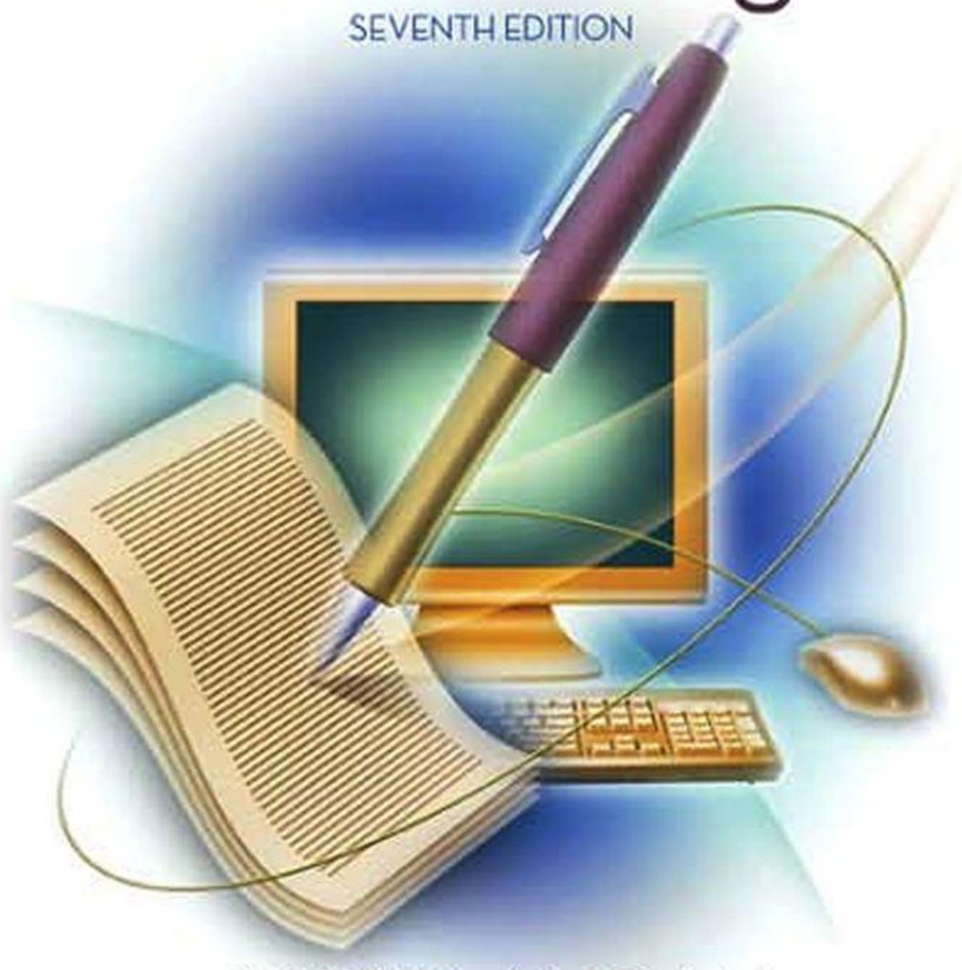
College Writing Skills with Readings

SEVENTH EDITION



JOHN LANGAN

College Writing Skills with Readings

Seventh Edition

John Langan

Atlantic Cape Community College

9780073384085



Boston Burr Ridge, IL Dubuque, IA Madison, WI New York San Francisco St. Louis
Bangkok Bogotá Caracas Kuala Lumpur Lisbon London Madrid Mexico City
Milan Montreal New Delhi Santiago Seoul Singapore Sydney Taipei Toronto

The McGraw-Hill Companies

Mc Graw Hill Higher Education

Published by McGraw-Hill, an imprint of The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. 1221 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY, 10020. Copyright © 2008. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written consent of The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., including, but not limited to, in any network or other electronic storage or transmission, or broadcast for distance learning.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 DOC/DOC 0 9 8 7
ISBN 978-0-07-338408-5 (student edition)
MHID 0-07-338408-9 (student edition)
ISBN 978-0-07-334393-8 (instructor's edition)
MHID 0-07-334393-5 (instructor's edition)
Editor in Chief: *Emily Barrosse*
Sponsoring Editor: *John Kindler*
Developmental Editor: *Alyson Watts*
Editorial Coordinator: *Jesse Hassenger*
Marketing Manager: *Tamara Wederbrand*
Production Editor: *Karol Jurado*
Production Service: *Newgen–Austin*
Project Manager: *Shirley Michels*
Manuscript Editor: *Mary Ann Short*
Photo Research: *Emily Tietz*
Media Project Manager: *Ron Nelms, Jr.*
Media Producer: *Alex Rohrs*
Production Supervisor: *Tandra Jorgensen*
Art Director: *Jeanne M. Schreiber*
Design Manager: *Preston Thomas*
Text Designer: *Maureen McCutcheon*
Cover Illustration: *Tom White Illustrations*
Composition: *11/13 Times by Newgen*
Printing: *45# Pub Matte, R. R. Donnelley & Sons*

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Langan, John
College writing skills with readings / John Langan. — 7th ed.
p. cm.
Includes index.
ISBN-13: 978-0-07-338408-5 (alk. paper)
ISBN-10: 0-07-338408-9 (alk. paper)
1. English language — Rhetoric. 2. English language — Grammar. 3. College readers. I. Title.
PE1408.L3178 2008
808'.042 — dc22
2007022814

The Internet addresses listed in the text were accurate at the time of publication. The inclusion of a Web site does not indicate an endorsement by the authors or McGraw-Hill, and McGraw-Hill does not guarantee the accuracy of the information presented at these sites.

www.mhhe.com

Praise for the Langan series

There can be no legitimate comparison between John Langan's McGraw-Hill developmental composition text series and any other texts available. Other texts are simply not as clear, precise, interesting, or comprehensive.

— Candace C. Mesa, Dixie College

John Langan's pedagogical approach makes all kinds of sense to me. The emphasis on reading and structured writing provides students with a solid foundation in composition.

— Kristine Anderson, Riverside Community College

The writing style, tone, and level are perfect for my target student audience: the explanations are clear, the reading choices are varied and thought-provoking, and the amount of examples and exercises is just enough to help students but not so much that they feel overwhelmed.

— Marcie Sims, Green River Community College

The down-to-earth, believable student samples demonstrate the process of writing absolutely clearly, from a simple prewriting effort into a finished product. A student can identify not only with the content but see concrete examples of the process of writing.

— Gloria Jean Kirby, Lincoln Land Community College

I appreciate the concise and clear presentation of grammar and the grammar review tests. Students have ample examples, yet the grammar pages don't overtake the text.

— Lisa Windham, McLennan Community College

Langan does a wonderful job of reflecting the nontraditional as well as the traditional student, and of providing readings that appeal to a diverse audience.

— Pamela Arlov, Macon State College

The Langan books truly provide the clearest explanations of grammar rules.

— Lisa Moreno, Los Angeles Trade Technical College

About the Author



John Langan has taught reading and writing at Atlantic Cape Community College near Atlantic City, New Jersey, for more than 25 years. The author of a popular series of college textbooks on both writing and reading, John enjoys the challenge of developing materials that teach skills in an especially clear and lively way. Before teaching, he earned advanced degrees in writing at Rutgers University and in reading at Rowan University. He also spent a year writing fiction that, he says, □is now at the back of a drawer waiting to be discovered and acclaimed posthumously.□While in school, he supported himself by working as a truck driver, a machinist, a battery assembler, a hospital attendant, and an apple packer. John now lives with his wife, Judith Nadell, near Philadelphia. In addition to his wife and Philly sports teams, his passions include reading and turning on nonreaders to the pleasure and power of books. Through Townsend Press, his educational publishing company, he has developed the nonprofit □Townsend Library□□ a collection of more than 50 new and classic stories that appeal to readers of any age.

Table of Contents

To the Instructor xvii

PART 1: ESSAY WRITING 1

1: An Introduction to Writing 4
- Point and Support 5
- Structure of the Traditional Essay 8
- Benefits of Writing the Traditional Essay 13
- Writing as a Skill 13
- Writing as a Process of Discovery 14
- Writing as a Way to Communicate with Others 15
- Keeping a Journal 16
- Tips on Using a Computer 17
- Review Activities 19
- Using This Text 22

2: The Writing Process 24
- Prewriting 25
- Writing a First Draft 33
- Revising 35
- Editing 37
- Review Activities 40

3: The First and Second Steps in Essay Writing 51
- Step 1: Begin with a Point, or Thesis 52
- Step 2: Support the Thesis with Specific Evidence 57
- Practice in Advancing and Supporting a Thesis 63

4: The Third Step in Essay Writing 79
- Step3: Organize and Connect the Specific Evidence 80
- Introductions, Conclusions, and Titles 89
- Practice in Organizing and Connecting Specific Evidence 97

5: The Fourth Step in Essay Writing 105
- Revising Sentences 106
- Editing Sentences 124
- Practice in Revising Sentences 127

6: Four Bases for Revising Essays 139
- Base 1: Unity 140

Base 2: Support 144
Base 3: Coherence 147
Base 4: Sentence Skills 150
Practice in Using the Four Bases 154

PART 2: PATTERNS OF ESSAY DEVELOPMENT 168
7: Introduction To Essay Development 170

8: Description 178
Reading: *Lou's Place,* by Beth Johnson 188

9: Narration 202
Reading: *The Yellow Ribbon,* by Pete Hamill 212

10: Exemplification 222
Reading: *Dad,* by Andrew H. Malcolm 232

11: Process 243
Reading: *How to Do Well On A Job Interview,* by Glenda Davis 251

12: Cause and Effect 264
Reading: *Taming the Anger Monster,* by Anne Davidson 272

13: Comparison and Contrast 287
Reading: *Born to Be Different?,* by Camille Lewis 298

14: Definition 311
Reading: *Television Addiction,* by Marie Winn 320

15: Division and Classification 330
Reading: *Wait Divisions,* by Tom Bodett 339

16: Argument 349
Reading: *Ban The Things. Ban Them All.,* by Molly Ivins 362

PART 3: SPECIAL SKILLS 374
17: Taking Essay Exams 376

18: Writing a Summary 385

19: Writing a Report 397

20: Writing a Résumé and Cover Letter 402

21: Using the Library and the Internet 408

22: Writing a Research Paper 422

PART 4: HANDBOOK OF SENTENCE SKILLS 446
GRAMMAR 448

23: Subjects and Verbs 449

24: Fragments 455

25: Run-ons 469

26: Regular and Irregular Verbs 482

27: Subject-Verb Agreement 492

28: Additional Information about Verbs 498

29: Pronoun Agreement and Reference 503

30: Pronoun Types 509

31: Adjectives and Adverbs 516

32: Misplaced Modifiers 522

33: Dangling Modifiers 526

MECHANICS 532

33: Manuscript Form 533

34: Capital Letters 536

35: Numbers and Abbreviations 544

PUNCTUATION 548

36: Apostrophe 549

37: Quotation Marks 556

38: Comma 565

39: Other Punctuation Marks 575

WORD USE 580

40: Spelling Improvement 581

41: Commonly Confused Words 587

42: Effective Word Choice 597

43: Editing Tests 604

44: ESL Pointers 618

PART 5: READINGS FOR WRITERS 634

Introduction to The Readings 636

Looking Inward 641

Three Passions, by Bertrand Russell 641

Shame, by Dick Gregory 645

I Became Her Target, by Roger Wilkins 653

Smash Thy Neighbor, by John McMurtry 660

A Hanging, by George Orwell 669

Observing Others 678

A Legendary Moment, by Haven Kimmel 678

The Professor Is a Dropout, by Beth Johnson 683

The Monster, by Deems Taylor 693

What's Wrong with Schools? Teacher Plays Student, Learns to Lie and Cheat, by Casey Banas 700

Propaganda Techniques in Today's Advertising, by Ann McClintock 706

Confronting Problems 715

Bombs Bursting in Air, by Beth Johnson 715

Here's To Your Health, by Joan Dunayer 723

Sleeping Your Way to the Top, by Sora Song 729

How to Make It In College, Now That You're Here, by Brian O'Keeney 734

College Lectures: Is Anybody Listening?, by David Daniels 743

Seven Ways to Keep The Peace at Home, by Daniel A. Sugarman 750

In Praise of the F Word, by Mary Sherry 761

Is Sex all That Matters?, by Joyce Garity 767

A Scary Time to Raise a Daughter, by Steve Lopez 775

READING COMPREHENSION CHART 781

Appendix A: A Writer's Journal 783

Credits 785

Index 787

To the Instructor

College Writing Skills with Readings is a rhetoric with readings that will help students master the traditional five-paragraph essay and variations of this essay. It is a very practical book with a number of unique features designed to aid instructors and their students.

Key Features of the Book

□*Four principles are presented as keys to effective writing*. These four principles□ unity, support, coherence, and sentence skills□ are highlighted on the inside back cover and reinforced throughout the book.

Part One focuses on the first three principles and to some extent on sentence skills.

Parts Two and Three show, respectively, how the four principles apply in the different patterns of essay development and in specialized types of writing.

Part Four serves as a concise handbook of sentence skills.

Finally, the professional readings in **Part Five** are followed by questions and assignments that encourage students to apply the four principles in a variety of well-developed essays.

The ongoing success of *College Writing Skills with Readings* is evidence that the four principles are easily grasped, remembered, and followed by students.

□*Writing is treated as a process*. The first chapter introduces writing as both a skill and a process of discovery. The second chapter, □The Writing Process,□explains and illustrates the sequence of steps in writing an effective essay. In particular, the chapter focuses on prewriting and revision as strategies to use with any writing assignment. Detailed suggestions for prewriting and revision then accompany many of the writing assignments in Part Two.

□*Activities and assignments are numerous and varied*. For example, Part One contains more than 90 activities to help students apply and master the

four principles, or bases, of effective writing. The entire book has over 250 activities and tests. A variety of writing assignments follow each pattern of essay development in Part Two and each reading in Part Five. Some topics are highly structured, for students who are still learning the steps in the writing process; others are open-ended. Instructors thus have the option of selecting those assignments most suited to the individual needs of their students.

- *Clear thinking is stressed throughout.* This emphasis on logic starts with the opening pages of the book. Students are introduced to the two principles that are the bedrock of clear thinking: *making a point* and *providing support to back up that point*. The focus on these principles then continues throughout the book, helping students learn that clear writing is inseparable from clear thinking.

- *The traditional essay is emphasized.* Students are asked to write formal essays with an introduction, three supporting paragraphs, and a conclusion. Anyone who has tried to write a solidly reasoned essay knows how much work is involved. A logical essay requires a great deal of mental discipline and close attention to a set of logical rules. Writing an essay in which there is an overall thesis statement and in which each of the three supporting paragraphs begins with a topic sentence is more challenging for many students than writing a free-form or expressive essay. The demands are significant, but the rewards are great.

At the same time that students learn and practice the rules of the five-paragraph essay, professional essays representing the nine patterns of development show them variations possible within the essay form. These essays provide models if instructors decide that their students will benefit from moving beyond the traditional essay form.

- *Lively teaching models are provided.* The book includes two high-interest student essays and one engaging professional essay with each chapter in Part Two. Students then read and evaluate these essays in terms of the four bases: unity, support, coherence, and sentence skills. Instructors can also refer their students to appropriate essays from the collection of professional readings in Part Five. After reading vigorous papers by other students as well as papers by professional authors and experiencing the power that good writing can have, students will be encouraged to aim for a similar honesty, realism, and detail in their own work.

- *The book is versatile.* Since no two people use an English text in exactly the same way, the material has been organized in a highly accessible manner. Each of the five parts of the book deals with a distinct area of writing. Instructors can therefore turn quickly and easily to the skills they want to present.

Nineteen professional essays appear in Part Five. These essays, like the nine professional readings in Part Two, deal with both contemporary and timeless concerns. They will stimulate lively class discussions and individual thought as well as serve as a rich source of material for a wide range of writing assignments.

Part Five has three special features. First is the emphasis placed on helping students become stronger readers. An introductory section offers tips on effective reading, and questions after each selection help students practice skills in both reading comprehension and critical thinking. A second feature of Part Five is a set of questions about structure and technique so that students can analyze and learn from a writer's craft in developing an essay. Finally, a series of writing assignments include suggestions and guidelines that will help students think about and proceed with an assignment.

Changes in the Seventh Edition

Here is an overview of what is new in the seventh edition of the book:

Among several changes in this seventh edition is its new, more contemporary design. The enhanced four-color design adds visual appeal for students while highlighting key material for them and helping them make connections and find the information they need.

Over 70 images have been added throughout the text. Because today's students respond so readily to visual images, and must learn to evaluate such images critically, this text features more than seventy new images, each chosen and used for a pedagogical purpose.

- ✔ Every part now opens with an image (or images) accompanied by a writing prompt that introduces students to the lessons that section of the text will cover.
- ✔ Every chapter in Parts One through Three opens with a compelling visual or visuals, all of which are accompanied by writing prompts related to the particular chapter. In addition, every section in Part Four features a visual opener with accompanying writing prompt.
- ✔ Part Five, Readings for Writers, now includes writing prompts for featured images, which are linked thematically to the readings.

Key features have been added to make the book easier to use for instructors and students.

- ✔ Every part and chapter now opens with an outline of its contents, preparing students for the lessons to follow.

✔ Tip, Hint, and Explanation Boxes throughout the text offer advice about grammar rules, hints for students on how to complete selected activities, and explanations of why the answers to sample activities are correct.

✔ Marginal technology icons have been simplified to include just one easily recognizable icon directing students to the book's Online Learning Center, where they can find expanded coverage of a particular topic or hone their skills through completing additional exercises.

✔ A new Collaborative Learning icon highlights all student activities that can be assigned as collaborative activities, either in or outside of class.

✔ Teaching Tips are available in the margins throughout the Annotated Instructor's Edition.

✔ ESL Tips, which offer specific advice for instructing multilingual writers, are also featured in the margins of the Annotated Instructor's Edition.

New checklists reinforce the importance of the four bases during revision. Every chapter in Part Two: Patterns of Essay Development now features a specialized checklist of the four bases that students can use when revising essays written in the different patterns of development. Each checklist is tailored to the particular pattern of writing the students are working on in that chapter.

The book features two new readings. Chosen for their appeal and relevance to today's students, these new essays address the effects of sleep deprivation and what to do about it and the increasing amount of sexuality in the media that is targeted at teens.

A new appendix, A Writer's Journal, has been added to encourage students to keep a writing journal and to give them room to start recording ideas.

Helpful Learning Aids Accompany the Book

Supplements for Instructors

The *Annotated Instructor's Edition* (ISBN 0-07-334393-5) consists of the student text complete with answers to all activities and tests, followed by an Instructor's Guide featuring teaching suggestions and a model syllabus. The Annotated Instructor's Edition of *College Writing Skills with Readings* also includes three diagnostic or achievement tests: two 40-question tests

(A and B), and, for added flexibility, a single 60-question test (C) derived from tests A and B. These tests, along with their scoring keys, are included in print form in the back of the book. The tests are also available via the *College Writing Skills with Readings* Online Learning Center **(www.mhhe.com/langan).** Instructors directing students to take the tests online can have students scores and assessments e-mailed to them directly. (Students taking these tests will receive their final scores and an assessment, but not the correct answers to individual responses.)

 An *Online Learning Center* **(www.mhhe.com/langan)** offers a host of instructional aids and additional resources for instructors, including a comprehensive computerized test bank, the *Instructor's Manual and Test Bank*, online resources for writing instructors, and more.

 PageOut helps instructors create graphically pleasing and professional Web pages for their courses, in addition to providing classroom management, collaborative learning, and content management tools. PageOut is **FREE** to adopters of McGraw-Hill textbooks and learning materials. Learn more at **www.mhhe.com/pageout.**

 The McGraw-Hill Virtual Workbook offers interactive activities and exercises that reinforce the skills students learn in Part Four of *College Writing Skills with Readings.* Authored by Donna T. Matsumoto, Leeward Community College, and powered by Quia, each interactive, Web-based activity corresponds to a key section or chapter in Part Four, giving students additional opportunities for practice in grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. This online workbook is supported by a powerful array of Web-based instructor's tools, including an automated online gradebook.

Supplements for Students

 An *Online Learning Center* **(www.mhhe.com/langan)** includes self-correcting exercises, writing activities for additional practice, a PowerPoint grammar tutorial, guides to doing research on the Internet and avoiding plagiarism, useful Web links, and more.

 The McGraw-Hill Virtual Workbook offers interactive activities and exercises that reinforce the skills students learn in Part Four of *College Writing Skills with Readings*. Authored by Donna T. Matsumoto, Leeward Community College, and powered by Quia, each interactive, Web-based activity corresponds to a key section or chapter in Part Four, giving students additional opportunities for practice in grammar, punctuation, and mechanics.

Dictionary and Vocabulary Resources

- *Random House Webster's College Dictionary* (ISBN 0-07-240011-0) This authoritative dictionary includes over 160,000 entries and 175,000 definitions. The most commonly used definitions are always listed first, so students can find what they need quickly.

- *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (ISBN 0-07-310057-9) Based on the best-selling Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, the paperback dictionary contains over 70,000 definitions.

- *The Merriam-Webster Thesaurus* (ISBN 0-07-310067-6) This handy paperback thesaurus contains over 157,000 synonyms, antonyms, related and contrasted words, and idioms.

- *Merriam-Webster's Vocabulary Builder* (ISBN 0-07-310069-2) This handy paperback introduces 3,000 words, and includes quizzes to test progress.

- *Merriam-Webster's Notebook Dictionary* (ISBN 0-07-299091-0) An extremely concise reference to the words that form the core of English vocabulary, this popular dictionary, conveniently designed for three-ring binders, provides words and information at students fingertips.

- *Merriam-Webster's Notebook Thesaurus* (ISBN 0-07-310068-4) Conveniently designed for three-ring binders, this thesaurus helps students search for words they might need today. It provides concise, clear guidance for over 157,000 word choices.

- *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary and Thesaurus, Electronic Edition* (ISBN 0-07-310070-6) Available on CD-ROM, this online dictionary contains thousands of new words and meanings from all areas of human endeavor, including electronic technology, the sciences, and popular culture.

You can contact your local McGraw-Hill representative or consult McGraw-Hill's Web site at **www.mhhe.com/english** for more information on the supplements that accompany *College Writing Skills with Readings*, Seventh Edition.

Acknowledgments

Reviewers who have contributed to this edition through their helpful comments include
Kristine R. Anderson, Riverside Community College
Ben DeSure, Pittsburgh Technical Institute
Carolyn E. Gordon, Cuyahoga Community College
Laura Hope-Aleman, Chaffey College

Teresa S. Irvin, Columbus State University
Gloria Jean Kirby, Lincoln Land Community College
Gail K. L. Levy, Leeward Community College
Donna T. Matsumoto, Leeward Community College
Christina Putney, Mott Community College
Judi Salsburg, Monroe Community College
Midge Shaw, Rogue Community College
Marcie L. Sims, Green River Community College
Julia L. Smith, Kennedy-King College
J. Christian Tatu, Warren County Community College
Eileen Thompson, Edison Community College
Dennielle True, Manatee Community College
Lisa Windham, McLennan Community College

I am also grateful for the talented support of my McGraw-Hill editors, John Kindler and Alyson Watts. Editorial/marketing team members Jesse Hassenger and Tamara Wederbrand also made valuable contributions to this text. Many thanks to the skilled production and design team Karol Jurado, Shirley Michels at Newgen Austin, Preston Thomas, Maureen McCutcheon, Emily Tietz, and Tandra Jorgensen. Also, I'd like to thank Ron Nelms, Jr. and Alex Rohrs for producing the text's media component.

Joyce Stern, Assistant Professor at Nassau Community College, contributed the ESL Tips to the Annotated Instructor's Edition of *College Writing Skills with Readings.* Professor Stern is also Assistant to the Chair in the department of Reading and Basic Education. An educator for over thirty years, she holds an advanced degree in TESOL from Hunter College, as well as a New York State Teaching Certificate in TESOL. She is currently coordinating the design, implementation, and recruitment of learning communities for both ESL and developmental students at Nassau Community College and has been recognized by the college's Center for Students with Disabilities for her dedication to student learning.

Donna T. Matsumoto, Assistant Professor of English and the Writing Discipline Coordinator at Leeward Community College in Hawaii (Pearl City), wrote the Teaching Tips for the Annotated Instructor's Edition of *College Writing Skills with Readings.* Professor Matsumoto has taught writing, women's studies, and American studies for a number of years throughout the University of Hawaii system, at Hawaii Pacific University, and in community schools for adults. She received a 2005 WebCT Exemplary Course Project award for her online writing course and is the author of *The McGraw-Hill Virtual Workbook,* an online workbook featuring interactive activities and exercises.

John Langan

PART 1: **Essay Writing**

Preview

1 An Introduction to Writing

2 The Writing Process

3 The First and Second Steps in Essay Writing

4 The Third Step in Essay Writing

5 The Fourth Step in Essay Writing

6 Four Bases for Revising Essays

Teaching Tip

Find volunteers to read the rough draft and the final version. Then have students complete this activity in pairs.

Have yourself a merry little Christmas
It may be your last
Next year we may all be living in the past
Have yourself a merry little Christmas
Pop the champagne cork
Next year we may all be living in New York.
No good times like the olden days,
Happy golden days of yore,
Faithful friends who were dear to us
Will be near to us no more.
But at least we all will be together
If the Lord allows.
From now on we'll have to muddle through somehow.
So have yourself a merry little Christmas now.
Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas,
Let your heart be light
From now on, our troubles will be out of sight
Have yourself a merry little Christmas
Make your yuletide gay
From now on our troubles will be miles away.
Here we are as in olden days,
Happy golden days of yore.
Faithful friends who were dear to us
Gather be near to us once more.
Through the years we all will be together
If the fates allow.
Until then, we'll have to muddle through somehow
So have yourself a merry little Christmas now.

Even songwriters often have to write several drafts of lyrics before producing an effective song. Compare this excerpted draft of "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" by Hugh Martin with its final version; what has changed? Choose one revision and explain why and how it makes the lyrics more effective.

1: An Introduction to Writing

This chapter will explain and illustrate

- the importance of supporting a point in writing
- the structure of the traditional essay
- the benefits of writing the traditional essay

This chapter also

- presents writing as both a skill and a process of discovery
- suggests keeping a journal



What is your ideal job? Write two or more paragraphs about what your ideal job would be and what your daily activities on the job would entail. Be sure to include your reasons for wanting such a job.

Teaching Tip

Ask students to complete this writing prompt in class.

The experience I had writing my first college essay helped shape this book. I received a C for the essay. Scrawled beside the grade was the comment "Not badly written, but ill-conceived." I remember going to the instructor after class, asking about his comment as well as the word *Log* that he had added in the margin at various spots. "What are all these logs you put in my paper?" I asked, trying to make a joke of it. He looked at me a little wonderingly. "Logic, Mr. Langan," he answered, "logic." He went on to explain that I had not thought out my paper clearly. There were actually two ideas rather than one in my thesis, one supporting paragraph had nothing to do with either idea, another paragraph lacked a topic sentence, and so on. I've never forgotten his last words: "If you don't think clearly," he said, "you won't write clearly."

I was speechless, and I felt confused and angry. I didn't like being told that I didn't know how to think. I went back to my room and read over my paper several times. Eventually, I decided that my instructor was right. "No more logs," I said to myself. "I'm going to get these logs out of my papers."

My instructor's advice was invaluable. I learned that clear, disciplined thinking is the key to effective writing. *College Writing Skills* develops this idea by breaking down the writing process into a series of four logical, easily followed steps. These steps, combined with practical advice about prewriting and revision, will help you write strong papers.

Here are the four steps in a nutshell:

Teaching Tip

Students might enjoy hearing about your writing experiences. Recount a vivid memory.

1. Discover a clearly stated point, or thesis.
2. Provide logical, detailed support for your thesis.
3. Organize and connect your supporting material.
4. Revise and edit so that your sentences are effective and error-free.

Part One of this book explains each of these steps in detail and provides many practice materials to help you master them.

Teaching Tip

Have students come up with their own examples of bold statements made in school, at work, or among friends. Ask them if these assertions were challenged. You may want to offer examples of your own.

Point and Support

An Important Difference between Writing and Talking

In everyday conversation, you make all kinds of points or assertions. You say, for example, "My boss is a hard person to work for," "It's not safe to walk in our neighborhood after dark," or "Poor study habits keep getting me into trouble." The points that you make concern personal matters as well as, at times, outside issues: "That trade will be a disaster for the team," "Lots of TV commercials are degrading to women," "Students are better off working for a year before attending college."

The people you are talking with do not always challenge you to give reasons for your statements. They may know why you feel as you do, or they may already agree with you, or they simply may not want to put you on the spot; and so they do not always ask why. But the people who read what you write may not know you, agree with you, or feel in any way obliged to you. If you want to communicate effectively with readers, you must provide solid evidence for any point you make. An important difference, then, between writing and talking is this: *In writing, any idea that you advance must be supported with specific reasons or details.*

Think of your readers as reasonable people. They will not take your views on faith, but they are willing to accept what you say as long as you support it. Therefore, remember to support with specific evidence any point that you make.

ESL Tip

Some nonnative speakers have learned English from their peers. Therefore, they may not readily distinguish between writing and talking.

Point and Support in a Paragraph

In conversation, you might say to a friend who has suggested a movie, "No, thanks. Going to the movies is just too much of a hassle. Parking, people, everything." From shared past experiences, your friend may know what you are talking about so that you will not have to explain your statement. But in writing, your point would have to be backed up with specific reasons and details.

Below is a paragraph, written by a student named Diane Woods, on why moviegoing is a nuisance. A *paragraph* is a short paper of around 150 to 200 words. It usually consists of an opening point, called a *topic sentence,* followed by a series of sentences that support that point.

ESL Tip

Nonnative students may not be accustomed to writing a topic sentence that presents a strong or direct point.

The Hazards of Moviegoing

Although I love movies, I've found that there are drawbacks to moviegoing. One problem is just the inconvenience of it all. To get to the theater, I have to drive for at least fifteen minutes, or more if traffic is bad. It can take forever to find a parking spot, and then I have to walk across a huge parking lot to the theater. There I encounter long lines, sold-out shows, and ever-increasing prices. And I hate sitting with my feet sticking to the floor because of other people's spilled snacks. Another problem is my lack of self-control at the theater. I often stuff myself with unhealthy calorie-laden snacks. My choices might include a bucket of popcorn, a box of Milk Duds, a giant soda, or all three. The worst problem is some of the other moviegoers. Kids run up and down the aisle. Teenagers laugh and shout at the screen. People of all ages drop soda cups and popcorn tubs, cough and burp, and talk to one another. All in all, I would rather stay home and watch a DVD in the comfort of my own living room.

Teaching Tip

Introduce students to the correction symbol ¶. Discuss how this symbol tells a writer to indent for a new paragraph.

Teaching Tip

Ask students to underline the author's topic sentence as you read this paragraph aloud.

Notice what the supporting evidence does here. It provides you, the reader, with a basis for understanding *why* the writer makes the point that is made. Through this specific evidence, the writer has explained and successfully communicated the idea that moviegoing can be a nuisance.

The evidence that supports the point in a paper often consists of a series of reasons followed by examples and details that support the reasons. That is true of the paragraph above: three reasons are provided, with examples and details that back up those reasons. Supporting evidence in a paper can also consist of anecdotes, personal experiences, facts, studies, statistics, and the opinions of experts.

The paragraph on moviegoing, like almost any piece of effective writing, has two essential parts: (1) a point is advanced, and (2) that point is then supported. Taking a minute to outline "The Hazards of Moviegoing" will help you understand these basic parts. Write in the following space the point that has been advanced in the paragraph. Then add the words needed to complete the paragraph's outline.

1 Activity

Point Support

There are drawbacks to moviegoing.

1. ***Inconvenience***
   a. Fifteen-minute drive to theater
   b. ***Long time to find parking spot, and long walk to theater***
   c. Long lines, sold-out shows, and increasing prices
   d. ***Sticky floor***
2. Lack of self-control
   a. Often stuff myself with unhealthy snacks
   b. Might have popcorn, candy, soda, or all three
3. ***Other moviegoers***
   a. ***Running kids***
   b. ***Laughing, shouting teenagers***
   c. People of all ages make noise.

Teaching Tip

You may want to do this activity with the entire class. Copy this partial outline onto the board, and then ask students to fill in the blanks.

Teaching Tip

You may want to point out the similarities between an essay and a paragraph.

Point and Support in an Essay

An excellent way to learn how to write clearly and logically is to practice the traditional college *essay*— a paper of about five hundred words that typically consists of an introductory paragraph, two to four supporting paragraphs (the norm in this book will be three), and a concluding paragraph. The central idea, or point, developed in any essay is called a *thesis statement* (rather than, as in a paragraph, a

topic sentence). The thesis appears in the introductory paragraph, and the specific support for the thesis appears in the paragraphs that follow. The supporting paragraphs allow for a fuller treatment of the evidence that backs up the central point than would be possible in a single-paragraph paper.

Structure of the Traditional Essay

A Model Essay

The following model will help you understand the form of an essay. Diane Woods, the writer of the paragraph on moviegoing, later decided to develop her subject more fully. Here is the essay that resulted.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Teaching Tip

Mention that an essay may contain more than one introductory paragraph.

The Hazards of Moviegoing

Introductory paragraph

I am a movie fanatic. My friends count on me to know movie trivia (who was the pigtailed little girl in E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial? Drew Barrymore) and to remember every big Oscar awarded since I was in grade school (Best Picture, 1994? Forrest Gump). My friends, though, have stopped asking me if I want to go out to the movies. While I love movies as much as ever, the inconvenience of going out, the temptations of the concession stand, and the behavior of some patrons are reasons for me to wait and rent the DVD.

First supporting paragraph

To begin with, I just don't enjoy the general hassle of the evening. Since small local movie theaters are a thing of the past, I have to drive for fifteen minutes to get to the nearest multiplex. The parking lot is shared with several restaurants and a supermarket, so it's always jammed. I have to drive around at a snail's pace until I spot another driver backing out. Then it's time to stand in an endless line, with the constant threat that tickets for the show I want will sell out. If we do get tickets, the theater will be so crowded that I won't be able to sit with my friends, or we'll have to sit in a front row gaping up at a giant screen. I have to shell out a ridiculous amount of money□ up to $11□ for a ticket. That entitles me to sit while my shoes seal themselves to a sticky floor coated with spilled soda, bubble gum, and crushed Raisinets.

Second supporting paragraph

Second, the theater offers tempting snacks that I really don't need. Like most of us, I have to battle an expanding waistline. At home I do pretty well by simply not buying stuff that is bad for me. I can make do with snacks like celery and carrot sticks because there is no ice cream in the freezer. Going to the theater, however, is like spending my evening in a 7-Eleven that's been equipped with a movie screen and comfortable seats. As I try to persuade myself to just have a Diet Coke, the smell of fresh popcorn dripping with

butter soon overcomes me. Chocolate bars the size of small automobiles seem to jump into my hands. I risk pulling out my fillings as I chew enormous mouthfuls of Milk Duds. By the time I leave the theater, I feel disgusted with myself.

Third supporting paragraph

Many of the other patrons are even more of a problem than the concession stand. Little kids race up and down the aisles, usually in giggling packs. Teenagers try to impress their friends by talking back to the screen, whistling, and making what they consider to be hilarious noises. Adults act as if they were at home in their own living room. They comment loudly on the ages of the stars and reveal plot twists that are supposed to be a secret until the film's end. And people of all ages create distractions. They crinkle candy wrappers, stick gum on their seats, and drop popcorn tubs or cups of crushed ice and soda on the floor. They also cough and burp, squirm endlessly in their seats, file out for repeated trips to the restrooms or concession stands, and elbow me out of the armrest on either side of my seat.

Concluding paragraph

After arriving home from the movies one night, I decided that I was not going to be a moviegoer anymore. I was tired of the problems involved in getting to the theater, resisting unhealthy snacks, and dealing with the patrons. The next day, I arranged to have premium movie channels added to my cable TV service, and I also got a Netflix membership. I may now see movies a bit later than other people, but I'll be more relaxed watching box office hits in the comfort of my own living room.

ESL Tip

The development of an essay may be different in other countries, so direct instruction about the parts of an essay will be helpful for nonnative speakers, especially the introductory and concluding paragraphs.

Parts of an Essay

□The Hazards of Moviegoing□ is a good example of the standard short essay you will write in college English. It is a composition of over five hundred words that consists of a one-paragraph introduction, a three-paragraph body, and a one-paragraph conclusion. The roles of these paragraphs are described and illustrated below.

Introductory Paragraph

The introductory paragraph of an essay should start with several sentences that attract the reader's interest. It should then advance the central idea, or *thesis,* that will be developed in the essay. The thesis often includes a *plan of development*□ a preview of the major points that will support the thesis. These supporting points should be listed in the order in which they will appear in the essay. In some cases, the plan of development is presented in a sentence separate from the thesis; in other cases, it is omitted.

Teaching Tip

The introductory paragraph serves as the □movie trailer□for the actual □film.□

2 Activity

1. In "The Hazards of Moviegoing," which sentence or sentences are used to attract the reader's interest?

   a. First sentence

   b. First two sentences

   c. First three sentences

2. In which sentence is the thesis of the essay presented?

   a. Third sentence

   b. Fourth sentence

3. Does the thesis include a plan of development?

   a. Yes

   b. No

4. Write the words in the thesis that announce the three major supporting points in the essay:

   a. *inconvenience of going out*

   b. *temptations of the theater*

   c. *behavior of some patrons*

Teaching Tip

Stress to students that not all essays have three body paragraphs.

Body: Supporting Paragraphs

Most essays have three supporting points, developed at length over three separate paragraphs. (Some essays have two supporting points, others four or more. For the purposes of this book, your goal will be three supporting points unless your instructor indicates otherwise.) Each of the supporting paragraphs should begin with a *topic sentence* that states the point to be detailed in that paragraph. Just as a thesis provides a focus for an entire essay, a topic sentence provides a focus for a supporting paragraph.

Teaching Tip

Caution students to avoid announcing their topic.

3 Activity

1. What is the topic sentence for the first supporting paragraph of the model essay?

   To begin with, I just don't enjoy the general hassle of the evening.

   _____

2. The first topic sentence is then supported by the following details (fill in the missing details):

   a. Have to drive fifteen minutes

   b. *Parking lot is always jammed.*

c. Endless ticket line

d. *Tickets may sell out, and theater is crowded.*

e. *Tickets cost up to $11 each.*

f. Sticky floor

3. What is the topic sentence for the second supporting paragraph of the essay?

Second, the theater offers tempting snacks that I really don't need.

_____

4. The second topic sentence is then supported by the following details:

a. At home, only snacks are celery and carrot sticks.

b. Theater is like a 7-Eleven with seats.

(1) fresh popcorn

(2) *chocolate bars*

(3) *Milk Duds*

5. What is the topic sentence for the third supporting paragraph of the essay?

Many of the other patrons are even more of a problem than the concession stand.

_____

6. The third topic sentence is then supported by the following details:

a. *Little kids race up and down the aisles.*

b. *Teenagers talk back to the screen, whistle, make funny noises.*

c. Adults talk loudly and reveal plot twists.

d. People of all ages create distractions.

Teaching Tip

The concluding paragraph serves as the "ending" to a "movie." Unlike a movie, though, writers should avoid cliff-hanger endings.

Concluding Paragraph

The concluding paragraph often summarizes the essay by briefly restating the thesis and, at times, the main supporting points. In addition, the writer often presents a concluding thought about the subject of the paper.

4 Activity

1. Which two sentences in the concluding paragraph restate the thesis and supporting points of the essay?

a. First and second

b. Second and third

c. Third and fourth

2. Which sentence in the concluding paragraph contains the final thought of the essay?

a. Second

b. Third

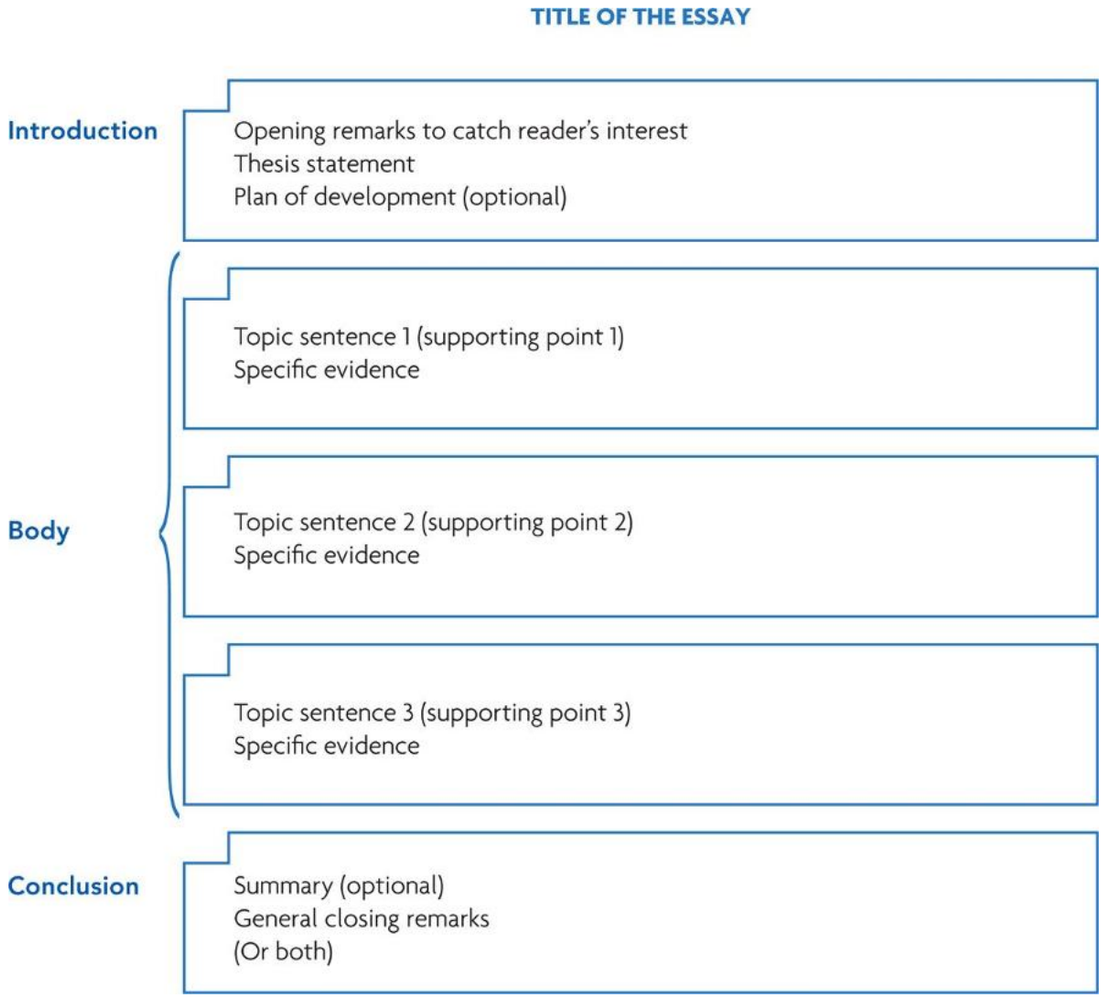
c. Fourth

Diagram of an Essay

The following diagram shows you at a glance the different parts of a standard college essay, also known as a *one-three-one essay*. This diagram will serve as a helpful guide when you are writing or evaluating essays.

Teaching Tip

Encourage students to refer to this diagram when working on an essay.



You now have an overview of the traditional form of the essay. In Chapter 2, you will learn *how* to go about writing an effective essay. First, though, it will be helpful to consider the following: the benefits of writing traditional essays, the advantage of seeing writing as both a skill and a process of discovery, the value of keeping a journal, and the ways a computer can enhance the writing process.

Benefits of Writing the Traditional Essay

Learning to write a traditional essay offers at least three benefits. First of all, mastering the traditional essay will help make you a better writer. For other courses, you'll often compose papers that will be variations on the essay form for example, examination essays, reports, and research papers. Becoming comfortable with the basic structure of the traditional essay, with its emphasis on a clear point and well-organized, logical support, will help with almost every kind of writing that you have to do.

Second, the discipline of writing an essay will strengthen your skills as a reader and listener. As a reader, you'll become more critically aware of other writers ideas and the evidence they provide (or fail to provide) to support those ideas. Essay writing will also help you become a better speaker. You'll be more prepared to develop the three basic parts of an effective speech an appealing introduction, a solidly developed body, and a well-rounded conclusion because of your experience writing three-part essays.

Most important, essay writing will make you a stronger thinker. Writing a solidly reasoned traditional essay requires mental discipline and close attention to a set of logical rules. Creating an essay in which there is an overall thesis statement and in which each of three supporting paragraphs begins with a topic sentence is more challenging than writing a free-form or expressive paper. Such an essay obliges you to carefully sort out, think through, and organize your ideas. You'll learn to discover and express just what your ideas are and to develop those ideas in a logical, reasoned way. Traditional essay writing, in short, will train your mind to think clearly, and that ability will prove to be of value in every phase of your life.

Teaching Tip

Have students discuss the benefits of writing an essay. Urge them to reflect on their own experiences as a writer.

Writing as a Skill

A realistic attitude about writing must build on the idea that *writing is a skill,* not a natural gift. It is a skill like driving, typing, or cooking; and, like any skill, it can be learned. If you have the determination to learn, this book will give you the extensive practice needed to develop your writing skills.

Teaching Tip

Take an opinion poll in class to see if students think that writing is a natural gift or a learned skill.

People often fear they are the only ones for whom writing is unbearably difficult. They believe that everyone else finds writing easy or at least tolerable. Such people typically say, I'm not any good at writing, or English was not one of my good subjects. They imply that they simply do not have a talent for

writing, while others do. Often, the result of this attitude is that people try to avoid writing, and when they do write, they don't try their best. Their attitude becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy: their writing fails chiefly because they have brainwashed themselves into thinking that they don't have the natural talent needed to write.

Teaching Tip

Get students to talk about other skills they have mastered. Draw parallels to writing.

Many people find it difficult to do the intense, active thinking that clear writing demands. It is frightening to sit down before a blank sheet of paper or computer screen and know that an hour later, nothing on it may be worth keeping. It is frustrating to discover how much of a challenge it is to transfer thoughts and feelings from one's head onto the page. It is upsetting to find that an apparently simple subject often turns out to be complicated. But writing is not an automatic process: we will not get something for nothing and we should not expect to. For almost everyone, competent writing comes from plain hard work from determination, sweat, and head-on battle. The good news is that the skill of writing can be mastered, and if you are ready to work, you will learn what you need to know.

Teaching Tip

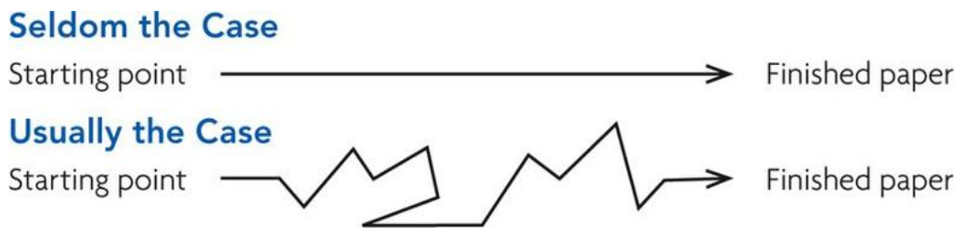
Ask students to recall a time in their lives when they embarked on a journey without having a clear destination (for example, an unplanned road trip). Inquire if they made any discoveries.

Writing as a Process of Discovery

In addition to believing that writing is a natural gift, many people falsely believe that writing should flow in a simple, straight line from the writer's head onto the written page. But writing is seldom an easy, one-step journey in which a finished paper comes out in a first draft. The truth is that *writing is a process of discovery* involving a series of steps, and those steps are very often a zigzag journey. Look at the following illustrations of the writing process:

Teaching Tip

Provide visual pictures of the writing process, such as a spiral or zigzag line. Emphasize to your students that writers often repeat steps. For example, a writer may brainstorm ideas after writing a first draft.



Very often, writers do not discover just what they want to write about until they explore their thoughts in writing. For example, Diane Woods (the author of the paragraph and essay on moviegoing) had been assigned to write about an annoyance in everyday life. She did not know what annoyance she would choose; instead, she just began writing about annoyances in general, in order to discover a topic. One of those annoyances was traffic, which seemed promising, so she began putting down ideas and details that came to her about traffic. One detail was the traffic she had to deal with in going to the movies. That made her think of the traffic in the parking lot at the theater complex. At that point, she realized that moviegoing itself was an annoyance. She switched direction in midstream and began writing down ideas and details about moviegoing.

As Diane wrote, she realized how much other moviegoers annoyed her, and she began thinking that other movie patrons might be her main idea in a paper. But when she was writing about patrons who loudly drop popcorn tubs onto the floor, she realized how much all the snacks at the concession stand tempted her. She changed direction again, thinking now that maybe she could talk about patrons and tempting snacks. She kept writing, just putting down more and more details about her movie experiences, still not having figured out exactly how she would fit both patrons and snacks into the paper. Even though her paper had not quite jelled, she was not worried, because she knew that if she kept writing, it would eventually come together.

The point is that writing is often a process of continuing discovery; as you write, you may suddenly switch direction or double back. You may be working on a topic sentence and realize suddenly that it could be your concluding thought. Or you may be developing a supporting idea and then decide that it should be the main point of your paper. Chapter 2 will treat the writing process more directly. What is important to remember here is that writers frequently do not know their exact destination as they begin to write. Very often they discover the direction and shape of a paper during the process of writing.

Writing as a Way to Communicate with Others

When you talk, chances are you do not treat everyone the same. For example, you are unlikely to speak to your boss in the same way that you chat with a young child. Instead, you adjust what you say to suit the people who are listening to you your *audience.* Similarly, you probably change your speech each day to suit whatever *purpose* you have in mind when you are speaking. For instance, if you wanted to tell someone how to get to your new apartment, you would speak differently than if you were describing your favorite movie.

To communicate effectively, people must constantly adjust their speech to suit their purpose and audience. This same idea is true for writing. When you write for others, it is crucial to know both your purpose for writing and the audience who will be reading your work. The ability to adjust your writing to suit your purpose and audience will serve you well not only in the classroom, but also in the workplace and beyond.

TIP

Purpose and audience, further explained on page 172, are special focuses of each of the nine patterns of essay development in Part Two.

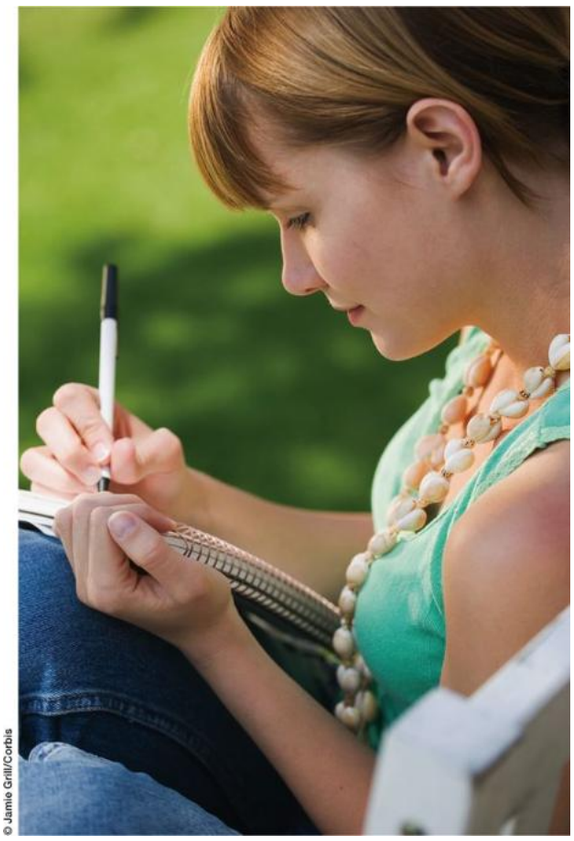
Keeping a Journal

Because writing is a skill, it makes sense that the more you practice writing, the better you will write. One excellent way to get practice in writing, even before you begin composing essays, is to keep a daily or almost daily journal. Writing in a journal will help you develop the habit of thinking on paper and will show you how ideas can be discovered in the process of writing. A journal can make writing a familiar part of your life and can serve as a continuing source of ideas for papers.

ESL Tip

Journals are not evaluted or marked for errors, so remind nonnative speakers they can feel free to express experiences and perceptions they would readily write about in their native language.

At some point during the day perhaps during a study period after your last class of the day, or right before dinner, or right before going to bed spend fifteen minutes or so writing in your journal. Keep in mind that you do not have to plan what to write about, or be in the mood to write, or worry about making mistakes as you write; just write down whatever words come out. You should write at least one page in each session.



You may want to use a notebook that you can easily carry with you for on-the-spot writing. You can also use the journal provided in Appendix A of this book. Or you may decide to write on loose-leaf paper that can be transferred later to a journal folder on your desk. Many students choose to keep their journals on their home computer or laptop. No matter how you proceed, be sure to date all entries.

Teaching Tip

Bring a variety of journals to class to show students. For example, bring a spiral-bound notebook, loose-leaf paper, a marble notebook, an artist's sketchpad, and even a laptop computer. Encourage students to find a journal that suits their personality and style.

Your instructor may ask you to make journal entries a specific number of times a week, for a specific number of weeks. He or she may have you turn in your

journal every so often for review and feedback. If you are keeping the journal on your own, try to make entries three to five times a week every week of the semester.

Tips on Using a Computer

If you are using your school's computer center, allow enough time. You may have to wait for a computer or printer to be free. In addition, you may need several sessions at a computer and printer to complete your paper.

Every word-processing program allows you to save your writing by pressing one or more keys. Save your work frequently as you write your draft. A saved file is stored safely on the computer or network. A file that is not saved will be lost if the computer crashes or if the power is turned off.

Keep your work in two places the hard drive or network you are working on and a backup USB drive. At the end of each session with a computer, copy your work onto the USB drive or e-mail a copy to yourself. Then, if the hard drive or network fails, you'll have the backup copy.

Print out your work at least at the end of every session. Then you will have not only your most recent draft to work on away from the computer but also a copy in case something should happen to your electronic file.

Work in single spacing so that you can see as much of your writing on the screen at one time as possible. Just before you print out your work, change to double spacing.

Before making major changes in a paper, create a copy of your file. For example, if your file is titled Worst Job, create a file called Worst Job 2. Then make all your changes in that new file. If the changes don't work out, you can always go back to the original file.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Teaching Tip

Get students to discuss how blogs are public online journals. In a computer lab, you could ask students to share their blogs with the class.

Teaching Tip

In a computer lab, you could ask students to create a word-processed document as you review these tips.

Using a Computer at Each Stage of the Writing Process

Following are some ways to make word processing a part of your writing. Note that this section may be more meaningful *after* you have worked through Chapter 2 of this book.

Prewriting

If you're a fast typist, many kinds of prewriting will work well on a computer. With freewriting in particular, you can get ideas onto the screen almost as quickly as they occur to you. A passing thought that could be productive is not likely to get lost. You may even find it helpful, when freewriting, to dim the monitor screen so

that you can't see what you're typing. If you temporarily can't see the screen, you won't have to worry about grammar or spelling or typing errors (all of which do not matter in prewriting); instead, you can concentrate on getting down as many ideas and details as possible about your subject.

After any initial freewriting, questioning, and list-making on a computer, it's often very helpful to print out a hard copy of what you've done. With a clean printout in front of you, you'll be able to see everything at once and revise and expand your work with handwritten comments in the margins of the paper.

If you have prepared a list of items, you may be able to turn that list into an outline right on the screen. Delete the ideas you feel should not be in your paper (saving them at the end of the file in case you change your mind), and add any new ideas that occur to you. Then use the cut and paste functions to shuffle the supporting ideas around until you find the best order for your paper.

Word processing also makes it easy for you to experiment with the wording of the point of your paper. You can try a number of versions in a short time. After you have decided on the version that works best, you can easily delete the other versions or simply move them to a temporary leftover section at the end of the paper.

Writing Your First Draft

Like many writers, you may want to write out your first draft by hand and then type it into the computer for revision. Even as you type your handwritten draft, you may find yourself making some changes and improvements. And once you have a draft on the screen, or printed out, you will find it much easier to revise than a handwritten one.

Teaching Tip

Show students how to use the copy and paste functions. Some students may not know the shortcuts Ctrl+C and Ctrl+V.

If you feel comfortable composing directly on a computer, you can benefit from its special features. For example, if you have written an anecdote in your freewriting that you plan to use in your paper, simply copy the story from your freewriting file and insert it where it fits in your paper. You can refine it then or later. Or if you discover while typing that a sentence is out of place, cut it out from where it is and paste it wherever you wish. And if while writing you realize that an earlier sentence can be expanded, just move your cursor back to that point and type in the additional material.

Teaching Tip

For Microsoft Word, suggest that students use Track Changes to keep track of their revisions.

Revising

It is during revision that the virtues of word processing really shine. All substituting, adding, deleting, and rearranging can be done easily within an existing file. All changes instantly take their proper places within the paper, not scribbled above the line or squeezed into the margin. You can concentrate on each change you want to make, because you never have to type from scratch or work on a messy draft. You can carefully go through your paper to check that all your supporting evidence is relevant and to add new support as needed here and there. Anything you decide to eliminate can be deleted in a keystroke. Anything you add can be inserted precisely

where you choose. If you change your mind, all you have to do is delete or cut and paste. Then you can sweep through the paper, focusing on other changes, such as improving word choice, increasing sentence variety, and eliminating wordiness.

TIP

If you are like many students, you might find it convenient to print out a hard copy of your file at various points throughout the revision. You can then revise in longhand adding, crossing out, and indicating changes and later quickly make those changes in the document.

Editing and Proofreading

Editing and proofreading also benefit richly from word processing. Instead of crossing out mistakes, using correction fluid, or rewriting an entire paper to correct numerous errors, you can make all necessary changes within the most recent draft. If you find editing or proofreading on the screen hard on your eyes, print out a copy. Mark any corrections on that copy, and then transfer them to the final draft.

If the word-processing program you're using includes spelling and grammar checks, by all means use them. The spell-checker function tells you when a word is not in the program's dictionary. Keep in mind, however, that the spell-checker cannot tell you how to spell a name correctly or when you have mistakenly used, for example, *their* instead of *there.* To a spell-checker, *Thank ewe four the complement* is as correct as *Thank you for the compliment.* Also, use the grammar-checker with caution. Any errors it doesn't uncover are still your responsibility.

A word-processed paper, with its clean appearance and handsome formatting, looks so good that you may feel it is in better shape than it really is. Do not be fooled. Take sufficient time to review your grammar, punctuation, and spelling carefully.

Even after you hand in your paper, save the computer file. Your teacher may ask you to do some revising, and then the file will save you from having to type the paper from scratch.

Teaching Tip

Remind students to use the spelling and grammar checks with caution.

Review Activities

Answering the following questions will help you evaluate your attitude about writing.

Note:

Answers will vary.

5 Activity

1. How much practice were you given writing compositions in high school?

   _____ Much

   _____ Some

   _____ Little

2. How much feedback (positive or negative comments) from teachers were you given on your compositions?

   _____ Much

   _____ Some

   _____ Little

3. How did your teachers seem to regard your writing?

_____ Good

_____ Fair

_____ Poor

4. Do you feel that some people simply have a gift for writing and others do not?

_____ Yes

_____ Sometimes

_____ No

5. When do you start writing a paper?

_____ Several days before it is due

_____ About a day before it is due

_____ At the last possible minute

Teaching Tip

After students complete this activity, ask them to share their answers with a partner. Students are often surprised to learn that others share their attitudes about writing.

EXPLANATION:

Many people who answer *Little* to questions 1 and 2 often answer *Poor, Yes,* and *At the last possible minute* to questions 3, 4, and 5. On the other hand, people who answer *Much* or *Some* to questions 1 and 2 also tend to have more favorable responses to the other questions. The point is that people with little practice in the skill of writing often have understandably negative feelings about their writing ability. They need not have such feelings, however, because writing is a skill that they can learn with practice.

6. Did you learn to write traditional essays (introductory paragraph, supporting paragraphs, concluding paragraph) in high school?

_____ Yes

_____ No

7. If so, did your teacher explain to you the benefits of writing such essays?

_____ Yes, very clearly

_____ Maybe, but not that I remember

_____ No

EXPLANATION:

If you answered *Maybe* or *No* to question 7, you may not be looking forward to taking the course in which you are using this book. It will be worth your while to read and consider again (on page 13) the enormous benefits that can come from practice in writing traditional essays.

8. In your own words, explain what it means to say that writing is often a zigzag journey rather than a straight-line journey.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Following is an excerpt from one student's journal. As you read, look for a general point and supporting material that could be the basis for an interesting paper.

September 6

My first sociology class was tonight. The parking lot was jammed when I got there. I thought I was going to be late for class. A guard had us park on a field next to the regular lot. When I got to the room, it had the usual painted-cinder-block construction. Every school I have ever been in since first grade seems to be made of cinder block. The students all sat there without saying anything, waiting for the instructor to arrive. I think they were all a bit nervous like me. I hoped there wasn't going to be a ton of work in the course. I think I was also afraid of looking foolish somehow. This goes back to grade school, when I wasn't a very good student and teachers sometimes embarrassed me in class. I didn't like grade school, and I hated high school. Now here I am six years later in college, of all places. Who would have thought I would end up here? The instructor appeared a woman who I think was a bit nervous herself. I think I like her. Her name is Barbara Hanlin. She says we should call her Barbara. We got right into it, but it was interesting stuff. I like the fact that she asks questions but then she lets you volunteer. I always hated it when teachers would call on you whether you wanted to answer or not. I also like the fact that she answers the questions and doesn't just leave you hanging. She takes the time to write important ideas on the board. I also like the way she laughs. This class may be OK.

6 Activity

1. If the writer of the journal entry above was looking for ideas for an essay, he could probably find several in this single entry. For example, he might write a story about the apparently roundabout way he wound up in college. See if you

can find in the entry an idea that might be the basis for an interesting essay, and write your point in the space below.

Answers will vary.

2. Take fifteen minutes now to write a journal entry on this day in your life. On a separate sheet of paper, just start writing about anything that you have seen, said, heard, thought, or felt today, and let your thoughts take you where they may.

Using This Text

Here is a suggested sequence for using this book if you are working on your own.

1. After completing this introduction, read Chapters 2 through 6 in Part One and work through as many of the activities as you need to master the ideas in these chapters. By the end of Part One, you will have covered all the basic theory needed to write effective papers.

2. Work through some of the chapters in Part Two, which describes a number of traditional patterns for organizing and developing essays. You may want to include Exemplification, Process, Comparison or Contrast, and Argument. Each chapter opens with a brief introduction to a specific pattern, followed by two student essays and one professional essay written in that pattern. Included are a series of questions so that you can evaluate the essays in terms of the basic principles of writing explained in Part One. Finally, a number of writing topics are presented, along with hints about prewriting and revising to help you plan and write an effective paper.

3. Turn to Part Three as needed for help with types of writing you will do in college: exam essays, summaries, reports, the résumé and cover letter, and the research paper. You will see that these kinds of writing are variations of the essay form you have already learned.

4. In addition, refer to Part Four as needed for review and practice in the skills needed to write effective, error-free sentences.

5. Finally, if you are using the alternate version of this book *College Writing Skills with Readings* then read some of the selections in Part Five and respond to the activities that follow the selections.

For your convenience, the book includes the following:

- On the inside back cover, there is a checklist of the four basic steps in effective writing.
- On page 632, there is a list of commonly used correction symbols.

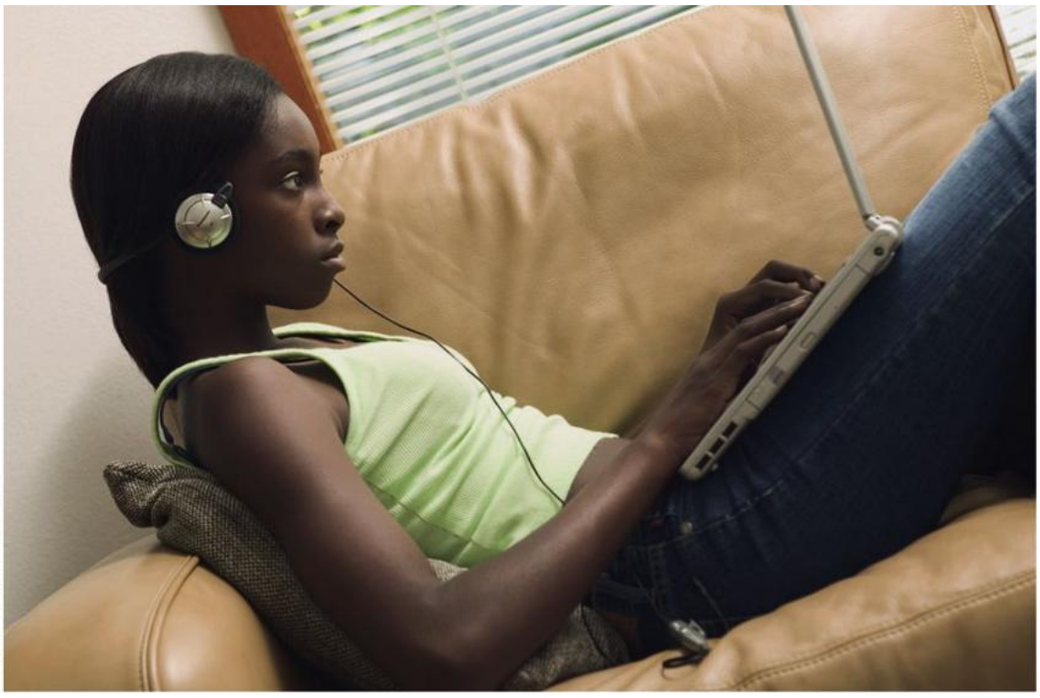
Get into the habit of regularly referring to these guides; they'll help you produce clearly thought-out, well-written essays.

College Writing Skills will help you learn, practice, and apply the thinking and writing skills you need to communicate effectively. But the starting point must be your own determination to do the work needed to become a strong writer. The ability to express yourself clearly and logically can open doors of opportunity for you, both in school and in your career. If you decide□ and only you can decide□ that you want such language power, this book will help you reach that goal.

2: The Writing Process

This chapter will explain and illustrate

- the sequence of steps in writing an effective essay
- prewriting
- revising
- editing



Think about an electronic device you use every day. It could be your cell phone, radio, computer, iPod, Palm Pilot, etc. See if you can write for ten minutes about why you couldn't live without it. Don't worry about spelling and punctuation; just get your thoughts down on paper.

Teaching Tip

Ask students to complete this writing prompt in class. In addition to looking at this photo, students may want to take out their iPod or cell phone.

Chapter 1 introduced you to the essay form and to some basics of writing. This chapter explains and illustrates the sequence of steps in writing an effective essay. In particular, the chapter focuses on prewriting and revising strategies that can help with every essay you write.

For many people, writing is a process that involves the following steps:

1. Discovering a thesis often through prewriting.
2. Developing solid support for the thesis often through more prewriting.
3. Organizing the thesis and supporting material and writing it out in a first draft.
4. Revising and then editing carefully to ensure an effective, error-free essay.

Learning this sequence will help give you confidence when the time comes to write. You'll know that you can use prewriting as a way to think on paper and to gradually discover just what ideas you want to develop. You'll understand that there are four clear-cut goals unity, support, organization, and error-free sentences to aim for in your writing. You'll realize that you can use revision to rework an essay until it is a strong and effective piece of writing. And you'll be able to edit your writing so that your sentences are clear and error free.

Teaching Tip

Begin this lesson by asking students to describe the steps that they take to write a paper. Then have them compare their steps with these steps.

Teaching Tip

Draw a diagram on the board of the writing process.

Prewriting

If you are like many people, you may have trouble getting started with writing. A mental block may develop when you sit down before a blank sheet of paper. You may not be able to think of an interesting topic or thesis. Or you may have trouble coming up with relevant details to support a possible thesis. And even after starting an essay, you may hit snags moments when you wonder, What else can I say? or Where do I go next?

Teaching Tip

Take a quick poll in class. Ask students if they have trouble starting an assignment.

The following pages describe five prewriting techniques that will help you think about and develop a topic and get words on paper: (1) freewriting, (2) questioning, (3) making a list, (4) clustering, and (5) preparing a scratch outline. These techniques help you think about and create material, and they are a central part of the writing process.

Technique 1: Freewriting



www.mhhe.com/langan

Freewriting means jotting down in rough sentences or phrases everything that comes to mind about a possible topic. See if you can write nonstop for ten minutes or more. Do not worry about spelling or punctuating correctly, about erasing mistakes, about organizing material, or about finding exact words. Instead, explore

an idea by putting down whatever pops into your head. If you get stuck for words, repeat yourself until more words come. There is no need to feel inhibited, since mistakes *do not count* and you do not have to hand in your freewriting.

ESL Tip

Encourage nonnative speakers to engage in all types of prewriting activities, as they provide many opportunities for communication in second language acquisition. If students can't think of a word in English, tell them to leave a blank. They can check a dictionary later on.

Freewriting will limber up your writing muscles and make you familiar with the act of writing. It is a way to break through mental blocks about writing. Since you do not have to worry about mistakes, you can focus on discovering what you want to say about a subject. Your initial ideas and impressions will often become clearer after you have gotten them down on paper, and they may lead to other impressions and ideas. Through continued practice in freewriting, you will develop the habit of thinking as you write. And you will learn a helpful technique for getting started on almost any writing you have to do.

Freewriting: A Student Model

Diane Woods's essay "The Hazards of Moviegoing" on page 6 was developed in response to an assignment to write about some annoyance in everyday life. Diane began by doing some general freewriting and thinking about things that annoy her. Here is her freewriting:

Teaching Tip

Point out that writers often want to correct their mistakes or pause to during freewriting. Stress the importance of nonstop writing.

Teaching Tip

Suggest to students that they can use a computer to freewrite.

There are lots of things I get annoyed by. One of them that comes to mind is politishans, in fact I am so annoyed by them that I don't want to say anything about them the last thing I want is to write about them. Another thing that bothers me are people who keep complaining about everything. If you're having trouble, do something about it just don't keep complaining and just talking. I am really annoyed by traffic. There are too many cars in our block and its not surprising. Everyone has a car, the parents have cars and the parents are just too induljent and the kids have cars, and theyre all coming and going all the time and often driving too fast. Speeding up and down the street. We need a speed limit sign but here I am back with politiks again. I am really bothered when I have to drive to the movies all the congestion along the way plus there are just so many cars there at the mall. No space even though the parking lot is huge it just fills up with cars. Movies are a bother anyway because the people can be annoying who are sitting there in the theater with you, talking and dropping popcorn cups and acting like they're at home when they're not.

At this point, Diane read over her notes and, as she later commented, "I realized that I had several potential topics. I said to myself, "What point can I make that I can cover in an essay? What do I have the most information about?" I decided that maybe I could narrow my topic down to the annoyances involved in

going to the movies. I figured I would have more details for that topic. Diane then did more focused freewriting to accumulate details for an essay on problems with moviegoing:

I really find it annoying to go see movies anymore. Even though I love films. Traffic to Cinema Six is awful. I hate looking for a parking place, the lot isn't big enough for the theaters and other stores. You just keep driving to find a parking space and hoping someone will pull out and no one else will pull in ahead of you. Then you don't want there to be a long line and to wind up in one of the first rows with this huge screen right in front of you. Then I'm in the theater with the smell of popcorn all around. Sitting there smelling it trying to ignore it and just wanting to pour a whole bucket of popcorn with melted butter down my throat. I can't stop thinking about the choclate bars either. I love the stuff but I don't need it. The people who are there sometimes drive me nuts. Talking and laughing, kids running around, packs of teens hollaring, who can listen to the movie? And I might run into my old boyfriend the last thing I need. Also sitting thru all the previews and commercals. If I arrive late enough to miss that junk the movie may be selled out.

Teaching Tip

Ask a volunteer to read Diane Woods's general freewriting. Next, ask a volunteer to read her focused freewriting. As a class, discuss the changes that the author made to her paragraph.

Notice that there are errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation in Diane's freewriting. Diane is not worried about such matters, nor should she be. At this stage, she just wants to do some thinking on paper and get some material down on the page. She knows that this is a good first step, a good way of getting started, and that she will then be able to go on and shape the material.

You should take the same approach when freewriting: explore your topic without worrying at all about being correct. Figuring out what you want to say and getting raw material down on the page should have all of your attention at this early stage of the writing process.

Teaching Tip

Get students to talk about why writers worry so much about being correct. Offer a few reasons (for example, being a perfectionist, feeling insecure).

1 Activity

To get a sense of the freewriting process, take a sheet of paper and freewrite about some of the everyday annoyances in your life. See how much material you can accumulate in ten minutes. And remember not to worry about mistakes; you're just thinking on paper.

Technique 2: Questioning

In *questioning,* you generate ideas and details by asking questions about your subject. Such questions include *why, when, where, who,* and *how.* Ask as many questions as you can think of.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Questioning: A Student Model

Here are some questions that Diane Woods might have asked while developing her essay.

Teaching Tip

Once students have worked on Activity 1, you may want to ask them to narrow down their topic and do focused freewriting for ten additional minutes.

Questions	Answers
Why don't I like to go to a movie?	*Just too many problems involved.*
When is going to the movies a problem?	*Could be any time when a movie is popular, the theater is too crowded; when traffic is bad, the trip is a drag.*
Where are problems with moviegoing?	*On the highway, in the parking lot, at the concession stand, in the theater itself.*
Who creates the problems?	*I do by wanting to eat too much. The patrons do by creating disturbances. The theater owners do by not having enough parking space and showing too many commercials.*
How can I deal with the problem?	*I can stay home and watch movies on DVD or cable TV.*

Teaching Tip

Teach your students the acronym 5WH (Who, What, Where, When, Why, How).

Asking questions can be an effective way of getting yourself to think about a topic from a number of different angles. The questions can really help you generate details about a topic.

2 Activity

To get a sense of the questioning process, use a sheet of paper to ask yourself a series of questions about a good or bad experience that you have had recently. See how many details you can accumulate in ten minutes. And remember again not to be concerned about mistakes, because you are just thinking on paper.

Technique 3: Making a List

In *making a list,* also known as *brainstorming,* you collect ideas and details that relate to your subject. Pile these items up, one after another, without trying to sort out major details from minor ones or trying to put the details in any special order. Your goal is just to make a list of everything about your subject that occurs to you.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Making a List: A Student Model

After Diane did her freewriting about moviegoing, she made up the following list of details.

Traffic is bad between my house and theater

Noisy patrons

Don't want to run into Jeremy

Hard to be on a diet

Kids running in aisles

I'm crowded into seats between strangers who push me off armrests

Not enough parking

Parking lot needs to be expanded

Too many previews

Can't pause or fast-forward as you can with a DVD

Long lines

High ticket prices

Too many temptatons at snack stand

Commercials for food on the screen

Can prepare healthy snacks for myself at home

Tubs of popcorn with butter

Huge choclate bars

Candy has always been my downfall

Movie may be sold out

People who've seen movie before talk along with actors and give away

plot twists

People coughing and sneezing

Icky stuff on floor

Teenagers yelling and showing off

Teaching Tip

Explain to your students that writers often use several prewriting techniques. Each technique may provide different results.

One detail led to another as Diane expanded her list. Slowly but surely, more details emerged, some of which she could use in developing her paper. By the time

she was done with her list, she was ready to plan an outline of her paragraph and then to write her first draft.

3 Activity

To get a sense of list-making, list on a sheet of paper a series of realistic goals, major or minor, that you would like to accomplish between today and one year from today. Your goals can be personal, academic, or career-related.

Technique 4: Clustering

Teaching Tip

Mention to your students that clustering helps them see their ideas.

Clustering, also known as *diagramming* or *mapping,* is another strategy that can be used to generate material for an essay. This method is helpful for people who like to do their thinking in a visual way. In clustering, you use lines, boxes, arrows, and circles to show relationships among the ideas and details that occur to you.

Begin by stating your subject in a few words in the center of a blank sheet of paper. Then, as ideas and details come to you, put them in boxes or circles around the subject and draw lines to connect them to each other and to the subject. Put minor ideas or details in smaller boxes or circles, and use connecting lines to show how they relate as well.

Clustering: A Student Model

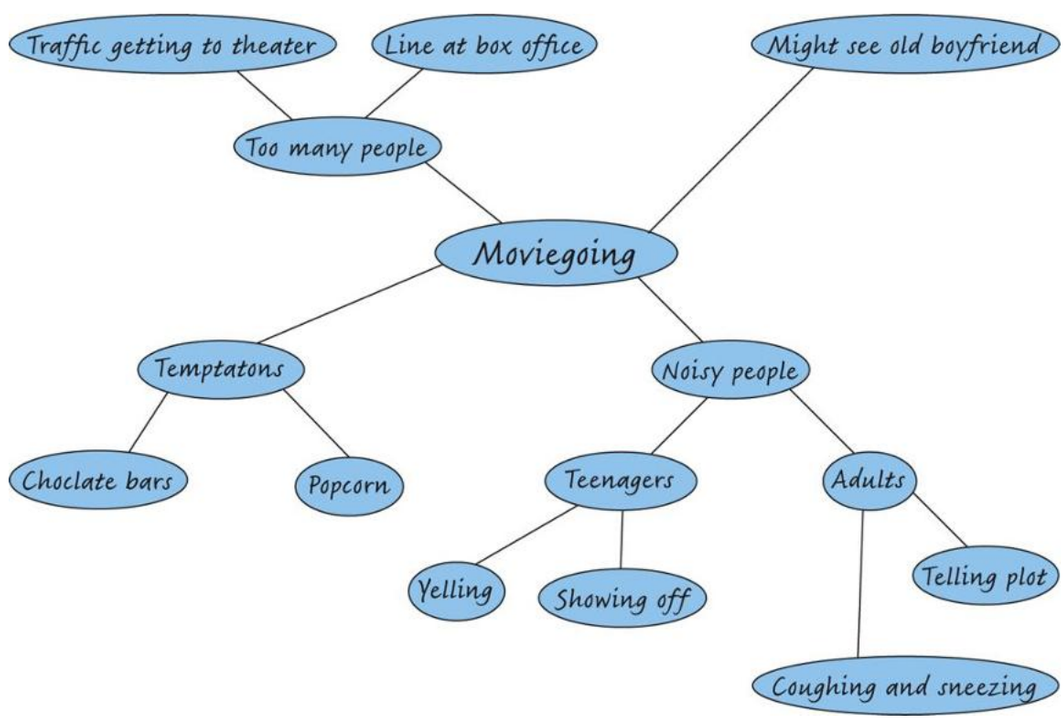
Keep in mind that there is no right or wrong way of clustering or diagramming. It is a way to think on paper about how various ideas and details relate to one another. Below is an example of what Diane might have done to develop her ideas.

Teaching Tip

Remind students that their ideas can overlap in clustering.

Teaching Tip

Students who find clustering helpful may want to use other graphic organizers (for example, Venn diagram and fishbone map). Provide images of these organizers.



TIP

In addition to helping generate material, clustering can give you an early sense of how ideas and details relate to one another. For example, the cluster for Diane's essay suggests that different kinds of noisy people could be the focus of one paragraph and that different kinds of temptations could be the focus of another paragraph.

4 Activity

Use clustering (diagramming) to organize the list of year-ahead goals that you created for the previous activity (page 30).

Technique 5: Preparing a Scratch Outline



www.mhhe.com/langan

A *scratch outline* is an excellent sequel to the first four prewriting techniques. A scratch outline often follows freewriting, questioning, list-making, or diagramming; or it may gradually emerge in the midst of these strategies. In fact, trying to make a scratch outline is a good way to see if you need to do more prewriting. If you cannot come up with a solid outline, then you know you need to do more prewriting to clarify your main point or its several kinds of support.

In a scratch outline, you think carefully about the point you are making, the supporting items for that point, and the order in which you will arrange those items. The scratch outline is a plan or blueprint to help you achieve a unified, supported, well-organized essay.

When you are planning a traditional essay consisting of an introduction, three supporting paragraphs, and a conclusion, a scratch outline is especially important. It may be only a few words, but it will be the framework on which your whole essay will be built.

Teaching Tip

You may want to do Activity 4 with the entire class. Use clustering to organize the details that students created for the previous activity.

Scratch Outline: A Student Model

As Diane was working on her list of details, she suddenly realized what the plan of her essay could be. She could organize many of her details into one of three supporting groups: (1) annoyances in going out, (2) too many tempting snacks, and (3) other people. She then went back to the list, crossed out items that she now saw did not fit, and numbered the items according to the group where they fit. Here is what Diane did with her list:

Teaching Tip

Ask students what the word "scratch" means in "scratch outline." Point out that a scratch outline can be prepared quickly.

1 *Traffic is bad between my house and the theater*

3 *Noisy patrons*

~~*Don't want to run into Jeremy*~~

2 *Hard to be on a diet*

3 *Kids running in aisles*

3 *I'm crowded into seats between strangers who push me off armrests*

1 *Not enough parking*

1 *Parking lot needs to be expanded*

1 *Too many previews*

~~*Can pause or fast-forward as you can with a DVD*~~

1 *Long lines*

1 *High ticket prices*

2 *Too many temptatons at snack stand*

~~*Commercials for food on the screen*~~

2 *Can prepare healthy snacks for myself at home*

2 *Tubs of popcorn with butter*

~~*Candy has always been my downfall*~~

2 *Huge choclate bars*

1 *Movie may be sold out*

3 *People who've seen movie before talk along with actors and give away plot twists*

3 *People coughing and sneezing*

1 *Icky stuff on floor*

3 *Teenagers yelling and showing off*

Under the list, Diane was now able to prepare her scratch outline:

Going to the movies offers some real problems.

1. *Inconvenience of going out*
2. *Tempting snacks*
3. *Other moviegoers*

After all her prewriting, Diane was pleased. She knew that she had a promising essay one with a clear point and solid support. She saw that she could organize the material into a traditional essay consisting of an introduction, several supporting paragraphs, and a conclusion. She was now ready to write the first draft of her essay, using her outline as a guide.

TIP

Chances are that if you do enough prewriting and thinking on paper, you will eventually discover the point and support of your essay.

5 Activity

Create a scratch outline that could serve as a guide if you were to write an essay about your year-ahead goals.

Teaching Tip

Call attention to this tip.

Writing a First Draft

When you write a first draft, be prepared to put in additional thoughts and details that did not emerge during prewriting. And don't worry if you hit a snag. Just leave a blank space or add a comment such as Do later and press on to finish the essay. Also, don't worry yet about grammar, punctuation, or spelling. You don't want to take time correcting words or sentences that you may decide to remove later. Instead, make it your goal to state your thesis clearly and develop the content of your essay with plenty of specific details.

Teaching Tip

Remind students to look over all their prewriting notes when creating a scratch outline for Activity 5.

Writing a First Draft: A Student Model

Here is Diane's first draft:

ESL Tip

Remind nonnative speakers that all good writers need to write multiple drafts, and it's not an indication of poor or weak writing skills.

Even though I love movies, my friends have stopped asking me to go. There are just too many problems involved in going to the movies.

There are no small theaters anymore, I have to drive fifteen minutes to a big multaplex. Because of a supermarket and restarants, the parking lot is filled. I have to keep driving around to find a space. Then I have to stand in a long line. Hoping that they do not run out of tickets. Finally, I have to pay too much money for a ticket. Putting out that much money, I should not have to deal with a floor that ~~is sticky~~ seems coated with rubber cement. By the end of a movie, my shoes are often sealed to a mix of spilled soda, bubble gum, and other stuff.

The theater offers temptatons in the form of snacks I really don't need. Like most of us I have to worry about weight gain. At home I do pretty well by simply watching what I keep in the house and not buying stuff that is bad for me. I can make do with healthy snacks because there is nothing in the house. Going to the theater is like spending my evening in a ~~market~~ 7-Eleven that's been equiped with a movie screen and there are seats which are comfortable. I try to persuade myself to just have a diet soda. The smell of popcorn soon overcomes me. My friends are as bad as I am. Choclate bars seem to jump into your hands, I am eating enormous mouthfuls of milk duds. By the time I leave the theater I feel sick and tired of myself.

Some of the other moviegoers are the worst problem. There are teenagers who try to impress their friends in one way or another. Little kids race up and down the aisles, gigling and laughing. Adults act as if they're watching the movie at home. They talk loudly about the ages of the stars and give away the plot. Other people are droping popcorn tubs or cups of soda crushed ice and soda on the floor. Also coughing a lot and doing other stuff bms!

I decided one night that I was not going to be a moviegoer anymore. I joined Netflix, and I'll watch movies comfortable in my own living room.

Teaching Tip

Writers may feel pressured to write a perfect first draft, which is unreasonable. Emphasize the importance of revision and editing.

Teaching Tip

Ask students to think about why writers should put their draft aside for a while. Mention that a cake needs to cool before it is frosted and a turkey needs to stand before it is carved.

TIP

After Diane finished the first draft, she was able to put it aside until the next day. You will benefit as well if you can allow some time between finishing a draft and starting to revise.



Team up with someone in your class and see if you can fill in the missing words in the following explanation of Diane's first draft.

6 Activity

1. Diane has a very brief introduction no more than an opening sentence and a second sentence that states the ***thesis***. She knows she can develop the introduction more fully in a later draft.
2. Of Diane's three supporting paragraphs, only the ***first*** paragraph lacks a topic sentence. She realizes that this is something to work on in the next draft.
3. There are some misspellings for example, ***(answers may vary) equiped***. Diane doesn't worry about spelling at this point. She just wants to get down as much of the substance of her paper as possible.

4. There are various punctuation errors, such as the run-on sentences in the ***second and third*** paragraphs. Again, Diane is focusing on content; she knows she can attend to punctuation and grammar later.

5. At several points in the essay, Diane revises on the spot to make images more ***specific***: she changes □is sticky□to □seems coated with rubber cement,□□market□ to □7-Eleven,□and □cups of soda□to □cups of crushed ice and soda.□

6. Near the end of her essay, Diane can't think of added details to insert so she simply puts the letters □ ***bms*** □at that point to remind herself to □be more specific□in the next draft. She then goes on to finish her first draft.

7. Her ***conclusion*** is as brief as her introduction. Diane knows she can round off her essay more fully during revision.

Revising

Revising is as much a stage in the writing process as prewriting, outlining, and doing the first draft. *Revising* means rewriting an essay, building on what has already been done, to make it stronger. One writer has said about revision, □It's like cleaning house□ getting rid of all the junk and putting things in the right order.□But it is not just □straightening up□; instead, you must be ready to roll up your sleeves and do whatever is needed to create an effective essay. Too many students think that the first draft *is* the essay. They start to become writers when they realize that revising a rough draft three or four times is often at the heart of the writing process.

Here are some quick hints that can help make revision easier. First, set your first draft aside for a while. A few hours will do, but a day or two would be better. You can then come back to the draft with a fresh, more objective point of view. Second, work from typed or printed text. You'll be able to see the essay more impartially in this way than if you were just looking at your own familiar handwriting. Next, read your draft aloud. Hearing how your writing sounds will help you pick up problems with meaning as well as with style. Finally, as you do all these things, add your thoughts and changes above the lines or in the margins of your essay. Your written comments can serve as a guide when you work on the next draft.

There are three stages to the revising process:

□revising content

□revising sentences

□editing

Teaching Tip

Get students to talk about how they revise. Often students simply fix superficial features, such as spelling and punctuation.

Teaching Tip

Use these tips to help your students revise an essay they created for a previous activity.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Revising Content

To revise the content of your essay, ask these questions:

Teaching Tip

Photocopy this list for your students to use as a checklist for revising content.

1. Is my essay **unified**?

   □ Do I have a thesis that is clearly stated or implied in the introductory paragraph of my essay?

   □ Do all my supporting paragraphs truly support and back up my thesis?

2. Is my essay **supported**?

   □ Are there three separate supporting points for the thesis?

   □ Do I have specific evidence for each of the three supporting points?

   □ Is there plenty of specific evidence for each supporting point?

3. Is my essay **organized**?

   □ Do I have an interesting introduction, a solid conclusion, and an accurate title?

   □ Do I have a clear method of organizing my essay?

   □ Do I use transitions and other connecting words?

ESL Tip

A good technique is to get students to read their essay beginning with the last sentence. Nonnative speakers will find they can concentrate on the errors with missing articles, wrong prepositions, verb tenses, etc., without being concerned about content.

Chapters 3 and 4 will give you practice in achieving **unity, support,** and **organization** in your writing.

Revising Sentences

To revise sentences in your essay, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Do I use parallelism to balance my words and ideas?
2. Do I have a consistent point of view?
3. Do I use specific words?
4. Do I use active verbs?
5. Do I use words effectively by avoiding slang, clichés, pretentious language, and wordiness?
6. Do I vary my sentences?

Teaching Tip

Photocopy this list for your students to use a checklist for revising sentences.

Chapter 5 will give you practice in revising sentences.

Editing

After you have revised your essay for content and style, you are ready to *edit*□ check for and correct□ errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Students often find it hard to edit their writing carefully. They have put so much, or so little, work into their writing that it's almost painful for them to look at the essay one more time. You may simply have to *will* yourself to perform this important closing step in the writing process. Remember that eliminating sentence-skill mistakes will improve an average essay and help ensure a strong grade on a good essay. Further, as you get into the habit of checking your writing, you will also get into the habit of using the sentence skills consistently. They are an integral part of clear and effective writing.

Chapter 5 and Part Four of this book will serve as a guide while you are editing your essay for mistakes in **sentence skills.**

Teaching Tip

Get students to talk about how they edit. Often students submit papers without carefully editing their work. They may expect their teachers to flag and correct their errors.

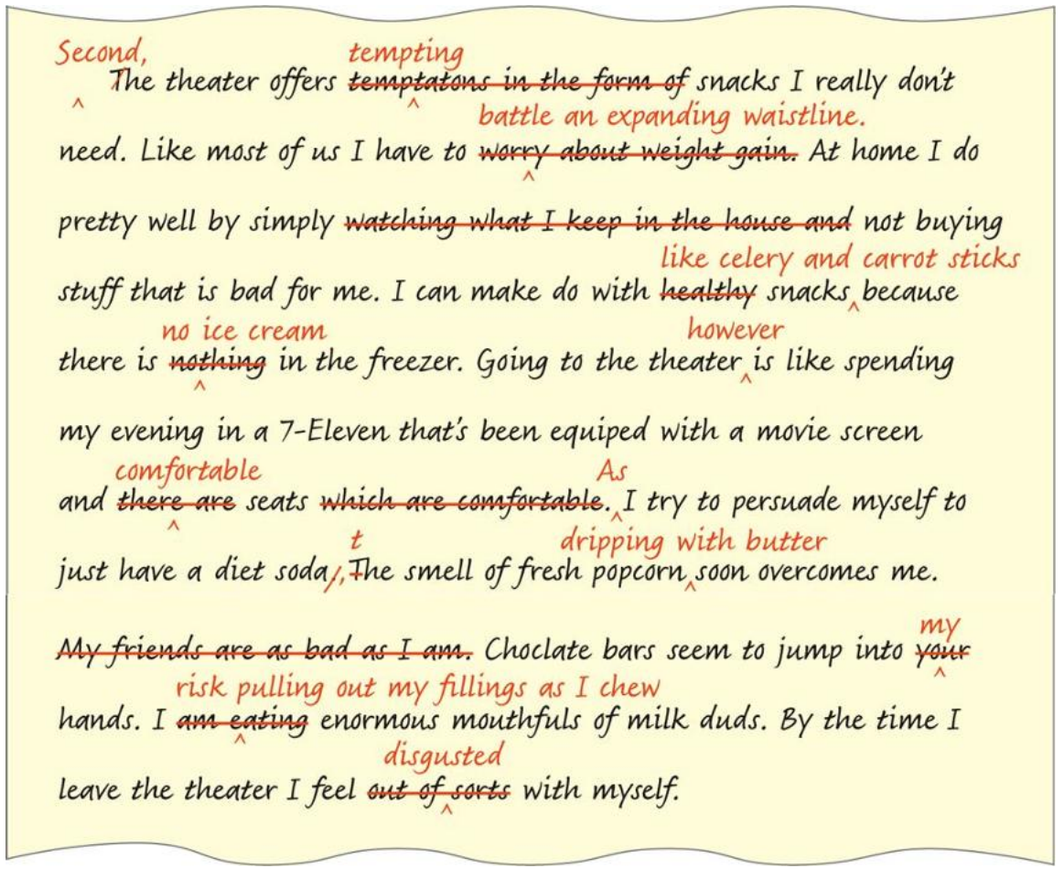
An Illustration of the Revising and Editing Processes:

Revising with a Second Draft: A Student Model

Since Diane Woods was using a word-processing program on a computer, she was able to print out a double-spaced version of her essay about movies, leaving her plenty of room for revisions. Here is one of her revised paragraphs:

Teaching Tip

You may want to ask students to provide additional changes and additions to Diane's second draft. Remind them that there is no right or wrong way to revise.



Diane made her changes in longhand as she worked on the second draft. As you will see when you complete the activity below, her revision serves to make the paragraph more unified, better supported, and better organized.

Teaching Tip

Suggest to your students that they work in pairs to complete this activity. Then go over the answers in class.

7 Activity

Fill in the missing words.

1. To achieve better organization, Diane adds at the beginning of the paragraph the transitional phrase □ ***Second*** ,□making it very clear that her second supporting idea is tempting snacks.

2. Diane also adds the transition □ ***however*** □to show clearly the difference between being at home and being in the theater.

3. In the interest of (*unity, support, organization*) ***unity*** , Diane crosses out the sentence □ ***My friends are as bad as I am*** .□She realizes this sentence is not a relevant detail but really another topic.

4. To add more (*unity, support, organization*) ***support*** , Diane changes □healthy snacks□to □ ***snacks like celery and carrot sticks*** □; she changes □nothing in the freezer□ to □ ***no ice cream in the freezer*** □; she adds □ ***dripping with butter*** □ after □popcorn□; and she changes □am eating□to □ ***risk pulling out my fillings as I chew.*** □

5. In the interest of eliminating wordiness, she removes the words □ ***watching what I keep in the house*** □from the third sentence.

6. In the interest of parallelism, Diane changes □and there are seats which are comfortable□to □ ***comfortable seats*** .□

7. For greater sentence variety, Diane combines two short sentences, beginning the first sentence with the subordinating word □ ***As*** .□

8. To create a consistent point of view, Diane changes □jump into your hands□to □ ***jump into my hands*** .□

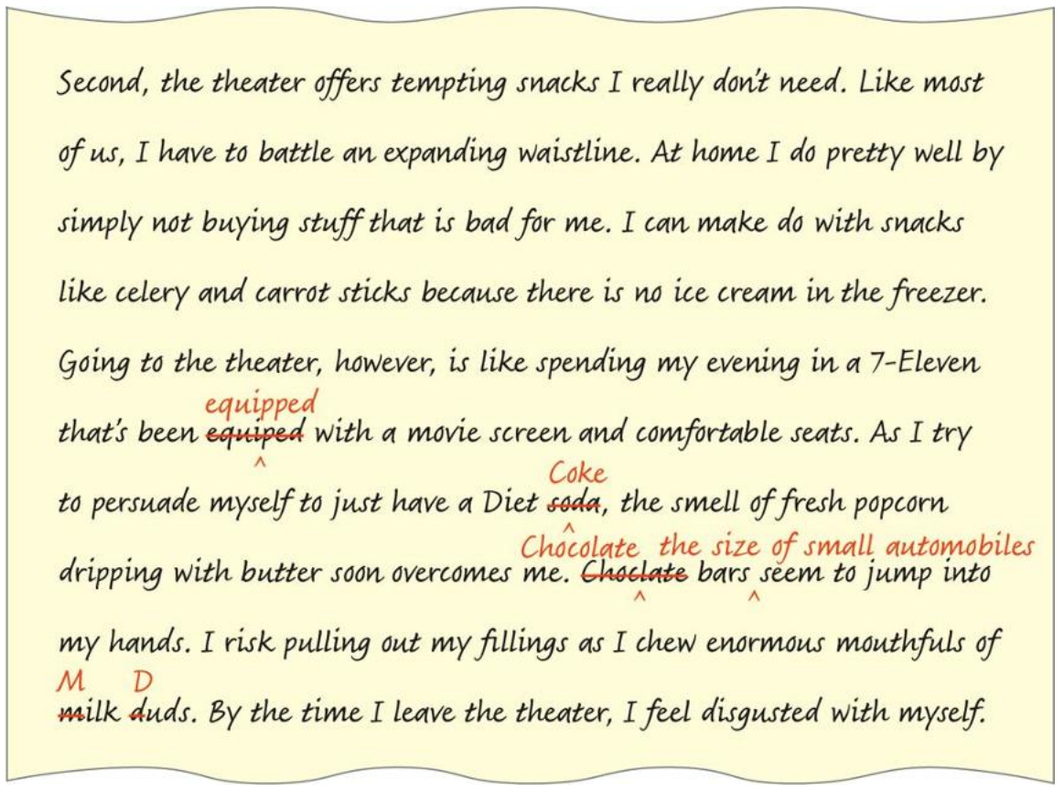
9. Finally, Diane replaces the vague □out of sorts□with the more precise □ ***disgusted*** .□

Editing: A Student Model

After typing into her word-processing file all the changes in her second draft, Diane printed out another clean draft of the essay. The paragraph on tempting snacks required almost no more revision, so Diane turned her attention mostly to editing changes, illustrated below with her work on the second supporting paragraph:

Teaching Tip

Ask students to provide additional changes and additions to Diane's third draft. Remind them that there is no right or wrong way to edit.


Second, the theater offers tempting snacks I really don't need. Like most of us, I have to battle an expanding waistline. At home I do pretty well by simply not buying stuff that is bad for me. I can make do with snacks like celery and carrot sticks because there is no ice cream in the freezer. Going to the theater, however, is like spending my evening in a 7-Eleven that's been ~~equiped~~ equipped with a movie screen and comfortable seats. As I try to persuade myself to just have a Diet ~~soda~~ Coke, the smell of fresh popcorn dripping with butter soon overcomes me. ~~Choclate~~ Chocolate bars seem to jump into the size of small automobiles my hands. I risk pulling out my fillings as I chew enormous mouthfuls of ~~m~~M ~~d~~D ilk duds. By the time I leave the theater, I feel disgusted with myself.

Once again, Diane makes her changes in longhand right on the printout of her essay. To note these changes, complete the activity below.

8 Activity

Fill in the missing words.

1. As part of her editing, Diane checked and corrected the ***spelling*** of two words, *equipped* and *chocolate*.

2. She added ***commas*** to set off two introductory phrases (□Like most of us□in the second sentence and □By the time I leave the theater□in the final sentence) and also to set off the interrupting word *however* in the fifth sentence.

3. She realized that □milk duds□is a brand name and added ***capital letters*** to make it □Milk Duds.□

4. And since revision can occur at any stage of the writing process, including editing, she makes one of her details more vivid by adding the descriptive words □ ***the size of small automobiles***.□

Teaching Tip

Explain why a comma is needed to set off an introductory phrase.

Review Activities

You now have a good overview of the writing process, from prewriting to first draft to revising to editing. The remaining chapters in Part One will deepen your sense of the four goals of effective writing: unity, support, organization or coherence, and sentence skills.

To reinforce the information about the writing process that you have learned in this chapter, you can now work through the following activities:

- taking a writing inventory
- prewriting
- outlining
- revising

Taking a Writing Inventory

Note:

Answers will vary.

Teaching Tip

Consider having your students discuss their answers with a partner.

Answer the questions below to evaluate your approach to the writing process. This activity is not a test, so try to be as honest as possible. Becoming aware of your writing habits will help you realize changes that may be helpful.

9 Activity

1. When you start work on an essay, do you typically do any prewriting?

   _____ Yes

   _____ Sometimes

   _____ No

2. If so, which prewriting techniques do you use?

   _____ Freewriting

   _____ Questioning

   _____ List-making

   _____ Diagramming

   _____ Scratch outline

   _____ Other (please describe)

3. Which prewriting technique or techniques work best for you, or which do you think will work best for you?

4. Many students say they find it helpful to handwrite a first draft and then type that draft on a computer. They then print the draft out and revise it by hand. Describe the way you proceed in drafting and revising an essay.

5. After you write the first draft of an essay, do you have time to set it aside for a while so that you can come back to it with a fresh eye?

   _____ Yes

   _____ No

6. How many drafts do you typically write when working on an essay?_____

7. When you revise, are you aware that you should be working toward an essay that is unified, solidly supported, and clearly organized? Has this chapter given you a better sense that unity, support, and organization are goals to aim for?

8. Do you revise an essay for the effectiveness of its sentences as well as for its content?

_____ Yes

_____ No

9. Do you typically do any editing of the almost-final draft of an essay, or do you tend to hope for the best and hand it in without careful checking?

_____ Edit

_____ Hope for the best

10. What (if any) information has this chapter given you about *prewriting* that you will try to apply in your writing?

11. What (if any) information has this chapter given you about *revising* that you will try to apply in your writing?

12. What (if any) information has this chapter given you about *editing* that you will try to apply in your writing?

Teaching Tip

Follow up to see what information students applied to their writing.

Prewriting

Teaching Tip

Students can do this activity alone or in pairs.

10 Activity

On the following pages are examples of how the five prewriting techniques could be used to develop the topic Problems of Combining Work and College. Identify each technique by writing F (for freewriting), Q (for questioning), L (for list-making), C (for clustering), or SO (for the scratch outline) in the answer space.

L

Never enough time
Miss campus parties
Had to study (only two free hours a night)
Give up activities with friends
No time to rewrite papers
Can't stay at school to play video games or talk to friends

Friends don't call me to go out anymore
Sunday no longer relaxed day—have to study
Missing sleep I should be getting
Grades aren't as good as they could be
Can't watch favorite TV shows
Really need the extra money
Tired when I sit down to study at nine o'clock

Q

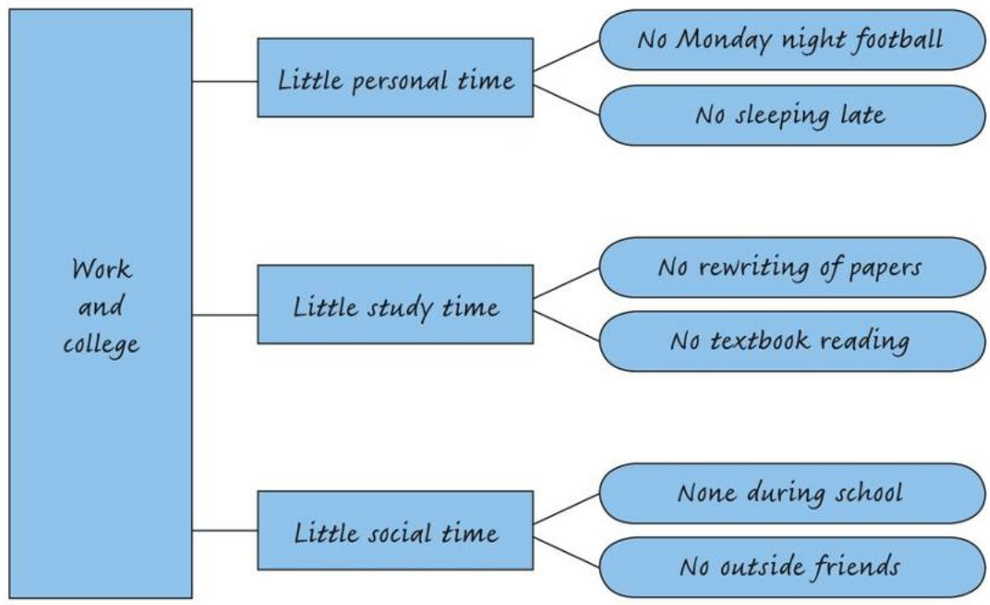
What are some of the problems of combining work and school?	Schoolwork suffers because I don't have time to study or rewrite papers. I've had to give up things I enjoy, like sleep and touch football. I can't get into the social life at college, because I have to work right after class.
How have these problems changed my life?	My grades aren't as good as they were when I didn't work. Some of my friends have stopped calling me. My relationship with a girl I liked fell apart because I couldn't spend much time with her. I miss TV.
What do I do in a typical day?	I get up at 7 to make an 8 a.m. class. I have classes till 1:30, and then I drive to the supermarket where I work. I work till 7 p.m., and then I drive home and eat dinner. After I take a shower and relax for a half hour, it's about 9. This gives me only a couple of hours to study—read textbooks, do math exercises, write essays. My eyes start to close well before I go to bed at 11.
Why do I keep up this schedule?	I can't afford to go to school without working, and I need a degree to get the accounting job I want. If I invest my time now, I'll have a better future.

SO

Juggling a job and college has created major difficulties in my life.

1. Little time for studying
   a. Not reading textbooks
   b. No rewriting papers
   c. Little studying for tests
2. Little time for enjoying social side of college
   a. During school
   b. After school
3. No time for personal pleasures
   a. Favorite TV shows
   b. Sunday football games
   c. Sleeping late

C



F

It's hard working and going to school at the same time. I never realized how much I'd have to give up. I won't be quitting my job because I need the money. And the people are friendly at the place where I work. I've had to give up a lot more than I thought. We used to play touch football games every Sunday. They were fun and we'd go out for drinks afterwards. Sundays now are for catch-up work with my courses. I have to catch up because I don't get home every day until 7, I have to eat dinner first before studying. Sometimes I'm so hungry I just eat cookies or chips. Anyway, by the time I take a shower it's 9 p.m. or later and I'm already feeling tired. I've been up since 7 a.m. Sometimes I write an English paper in twenty minutes and don't even read it over. I feel that

I'm missing out on a lot in college. The other day some people I like were sitting in the cafeteria listening to music and talking. I would have given anything to stay and not have to go to work. I almost called in sick. I used to get invited to parties, I don't much anymore. My friends know I'm not going to be able to make it, so they don't bother. I can't sleep late on weekends or watch TV during the week.

Outlining

As already mentioned (see page 31), outlining is central to writing a good essay. An outline lets you see, and work on, the bare bones of an essay, without the distraction of a clutter of words and sentences. It develops your ability to think clearly and logically. Outlining provides a quick check on whether your essay will be *unified*. It also suggests right at the start whether your essay will be adequately *supported*. And it shows you how to plan an essay that is *well organized*.

The following two exercises will help you develop the outlining skills so important to planning and writing a solid essay.

One key to effective outlining is the ability to distinguish between major ideas and details that fit under those ideas. In each of the four lists below, major and supporting items are mixed together. Working in pairs, put the items into logical order by filling in the outline that follows each list. In items 3 and 4, one of the three major ideas is missing and must be added.



11 Activity

1. Thesis: My high school had three problem areas.

Involved with drugs
Leaky ceilings
Students
Unwilling to help after class
Formed cliques
Teachers
Buildings
Ill-equipped gym
Much too strict

a. Students
   (1) Involved with drugs
   (2) Formed cliques
b. Teachers
   (1) Much too strict
   (2) Unwilling to help after class
c. Buildings
   (1) Leaky ceilings
   (2) Ill-equipped gym

2. Thesis: Working as a dishwasher in a restaurant was my worst job.

Ten-hour shifts
Heat in kitchen
Working conditions

Minimum wage
Hours changed every week
No bonus for overtime
Hours
Pay
Noisy work area

a. Working conditions
(1) Heat in kitchen
(2) Nolsy work area
b. Hours
(1) Ten-hour shifts
(2) Hours changed every week
c. Pay
(1) Mininum wage
(2) No bonus for overtime

3. Thesis: Joining an aerobics class has many benefits.

Make new friends
Reduces mental stress
Social benefits
Strengthens heart
Improves self-image
Mental benefits
Tones muscles
Meet interesting instructors

a. Physical benefits
(1) Strengthens heart
(2) Tones muscles
b. Mental benefits
(1) Reduces mental stress
(2) Improves self-image
c. Social benefits
(1) Make new friends
(2) Meet interesting instructors

4. Thesis: My favorite times in school were the days before holiday vacations.

Lighter workload
Teachers more relaxed
Pep rallies
Less work in class
Friendlier atmosphere
Less homework
Holiday concerts
Students happy about vacation

a. Lighter workload
(1) Less work in class
(2) Less homework
b. Friendlier atmosphere
(1) Teachers more relaxed
(2) Students happy about vacation
c. Appealing activities
(1) Pep rallies
(2) Holiday concerts

12 Activity

Read the following essay and outline it in the spaces provided. Write out the central point and topic sentences, and summarize in a few words the supporting material that fits under each topic sentence. One item is summarized for you as an example.

Teaching Tip

Suggest to your students that they first annotate this essay, underlining the thesis and major ideas.

Losing Touch

Steve, a typical American, stays home on workdays. He logs onto his e-mail. Evenings, he listens to his iPod, watches a DVD, or surfs the Internet. On many days, Steve doesn't talk to any other human beings, and he doesn't see any people except those on television. Steve is imaginary, but his lifestyle is very common. More and more, the inventions of modern technology seem to be cutting us off from contact with our fellow human beings.

Thesis: ***More and more, the inventions of modern technology seem to be cutting us off from contact with our fellow human beings.***

The world of business is one area in which technology is isolating us. Many people now work alone at home. With access to a large central computer, employees such as secretaries, insurance agents, and accountants do their jobs at display terminals in their own homes. They no longer have to actually see the people they're dealing with. In addition, employees are often paid in an impersonal way. Workers□salaries are automatically credited to their bank accounts, eliminating the need for paychecks. Fewer people stand in line with their coworkers to receive their pay or cash their checks. Finally, personal banking is becoming a detached process. Customers interact with machines rather than people to deposit or withdraw money from their accounts. Even some bank loans are approved or rejected, not in an interview with a loan officer, but by a computer program.

First topic sentence: ***The world of business is one area in which technology is isolating us.***

Support:

1. Many people now work alone at home.
2. ***Workers□salaries are automatically credited to their bank accounts.***

3. ***Personal banking is becoming a detached process.***

   a. ***Customers interact with machines to make deposits and withdrawals.***

   b. ***Some loans are accepted or rejected by computer programs, not loan officers.***

Another area that technology is changing is entertainment. Music, for instance, was once a group experience. People listened to music in concert halls or at small social gatherings. For many people now, however, music is a solitary experience. Walking along the street or sitting in their living rooms, they wear headphones to build a wall of music around them. Movie entertainment is changing, too. Movies used to be social events. Now, some people are not going out to see a movie. Some are choosing to wait for a film to appear on cable television or DVD. Instead of being involved with the laughter, applause, or hisses of the audience, viewers watch movies in the isolation of their own living rooms.

Second topic sentence: ***Another area that technology is changing is entertainment.***

Support:

1. ***Music is a solitary experience.***

2. ***Fewer people go out to see movies.***

Education is a third important area in which technology is separating us from others. From elementary schools to colleges, students spend more and more time sitting by themselves in front of computers. The computers give them feedback, while teachers spend more time tending the computers and less time interacting with their classes. A similar problem occurs in homes. **[Punto y seguido].**

As more families buy computers, increasing numbers of students practice their math and reading skills with software programs instead of with their friends, brothers and sisters, and parents. Last, alienation is occurring as a result of DVDs. People are buying DVDs on subjects such as cooking, real estate investment, speaking, and speed-reading. They then practice their skills at home rather than by taking group classes in which a rich human interaction can occur.

Third topic sentence: ***Education is a third important area in which technology is separating us from others.***

Support:

1. ***Students sit alone in front of computers at school.***
2. ***Students use software at home instead of interacting with others.***
3. ***DVDs are replacing class instruction.***

Technology, then, seems to be driving human beings apart. Soon, we may no longer need to communicate with other human beings to do our work, entertain ourselves, or pursue an education. Machines will be the coworkers and companions of the future.

Revising

13 Activity

Following is the second supporting paragraph from an essay called □Problems of Combining School and Work.□The paragraph is shown in four different stages of development: (1) first full draft, (2) revised second draft, (3) edited next-to-final draft, (4) final draft. The four stages appear in scrambled order. Write the number 1

in the answer blank for the first full draft, and number the remaining stages in sequence.

Teaching Tip

You may want to do this activity with the entire class.

2

I have also given up some personal pleasures in my life. On sundays for example I used to play softball or football, now I use the entire day to study. Good old-fashioned sleep is another lost pleasure for me now. I never get as much as I like because their just isn't time. Finally I miss having the chance to just sit in front of the TV, on weeknights. In order to watch the whole lineup of movies and sports that I used to watch regularly. These sound like small pleasures, but you realize how important they are when you have to give them up.

1

I've had to give up pleasures in my life. I use to spend sundays playing games, now I have to study. Im the sort of person who needs a lot of sleep, but I dont have the time for that either. Sleeping nine or ten hours a night woul'dnt be unusual for me. Psycologists say that each individual need a different amount of sleep, some people need as little as five hours, some need as much as nine or ten. So I'm not unusual in that. But Ive given up that pleasure too. And I can't watch the TV shows I use to enjoy. This is another personal pleasure Ive lost because of doing work and school. These may seem like small things, but you realize how good they are when you give them up.

4

Besides missing the social side of college life, I've also had to give up some of my special personal pleasures. I used to spend Sunday afternoons, for example, playing lob-pitch softball or touch football depending on the season. Now I use Sunday as a catch-up day for my studies. Another pleasure I've lost is sleeping late on days off and weekends. I once loved mornings when I could check the clock, bury my head in the pillow, and drift off for another hour. These days I'm forced to crawl out of bed the minute the alarm lets out its piercing ring. Finally, I no longer have the chance to just sit watching the movies and sports programs that I enjoy. A leisurely night of Monday Night Football or a network premiere of a Tom Hanks movie is a pleasure of the past for me now.

3

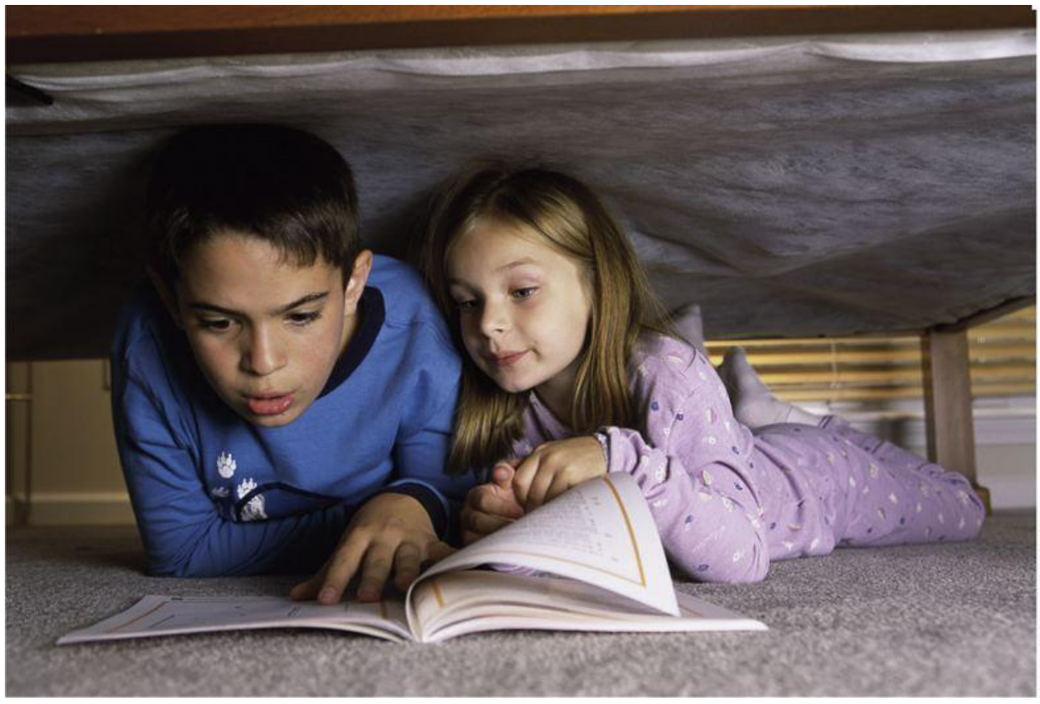
Besides missing the social side of college life, I've also had to give up some of my special personal pleasures. I used to spend sunday afternoons, for example playing lob-pitch softball or touch football depending on the season. Now I use the day as a catch-up day for my studies. Another pleasure I've lost is sleeping late on days off

and weekends. I once loved mornings when I could check the clock, then burying my head in the pillow, and you drift off to sleep for another hour. These days I'm forced to get out of bed the minute the alarm lets out it's ring. Finally I no longer have the chance to just sit watching the movies and also programs with sports that I enjoy. A leisurely night of Monday Night Football or a network premiere of a Tom Hanks movie is a pleasure of the past for me now.

Teaching Tip

Have students underline or highlight the editing changes on the final draft.

3: The First and Second Steps in Essay Writing



Describe a favorite childhood place that made you feel secure, safe, private, or in a world of your own. Begin with a thesis statement, something like this: "_____was a place that made me feel_____when I was a child." Remember to keep the point of your thesis statement in mind as you describe this place. Include only details that will support the idea that your place was one of security, safety, privacy, or the like.

This chapter will show you how to

- start an essay with a point, or thesis
- support that point, or thesis, with specific evidence

Teaching Tip

Ask students to complete this writing prompt in class.

Teaching Tip

You may want to remind students that a thesis statement usually appears as the first sentence but may appear later in the essay.

ESL Tip

Nonnative students may not be accustomed to writing a thesis statement that presents a strong or direct point. In some cultures, this is considered rude and impolite.

Chapter 2 emphasized how prewriting and revising can help you become an effective writer. This chapter focuses on the first two steps in writing an effective essay:

1. Begin with a point, or thesis.
2. Support the thesis with specific evidence.

The chapters that follow will focus on the third and fourth steps in writing:

3. Organize and connect the specific evidence (pages 80–104).
4. Write clear, error-free sentences (pages 105–138).

Step 1: Begin with a Point, or Thesis

Your first step in writing is to discover what point you want to make and to write that point out as a single sentence. There are two reasons for doing this. You want to know right from the start if you have a clear and workable thesis. Also, you will be able to use the thesis as a guide while writing your essay. At any stage you can ask yourself, Does this support my thesis? With the thesis as a guide, the danger of drifting away from the point of the essay is greatly reduced.

Understanding Thesis Statements

In Chapter 1, you learned that effective essays center around a thesis, or main point, that a writer wishes to express. This central idea is usually presented as a *thesis statement* in an essay's introductory paragraph.

A good thesis statement does two things. First, it tells readers an essay's *topic*. Second, it presents the writer's *attitude, opinion, idea,* or *point* about that topic. For example, look at the following thesis statement:

Owning a pet has several important benefits.

In this thesis statement, the topic is *owning a pet;* the writer's main point is that owning a pet *has several important benefits.*

1 Activity

For each thesis statement below, single-underline the topic and double-underline the main point that the writer wishes to express about the topic.

EXAMPLES

Our company president should be fired for three main reasons.

The Internet has led to new kinds of frustration in everyday life.

1. Our cafeteria would be greatly improved if several changes were made.
2. Celebrities are often poor role models because of the ways they dress, talk, and behave.
3. My first night as a security guard turned out to be one of the most frightening experiences of my life.

4. SUVs are inferior to cars because they are harder to control, more expensive, and dangerous to the environment.

5. The twentieth century produced three inventions that dramatically changed the lives of all Americans.

6. Stress in the fast-food workplace has led to serious physical, psychological, and emotional problems for employees.

7. Advertisers target young people when marketing cigarettes, alcohol, and adult movies.

8. Living in the city has certain advantages over living in the suburbs.

9. Before moving away from home, every person should have mastered certain key skills.

10. Independent mom-and-pop stores are superior to larger chain stores for a number of reasons.

Writing a Good Thesis I

Now that you know how thesis statements work, you can begin writing your own. To start, you need a topic that is neither too broad nor too narrow. Suppose, for example, that an instructor asks you to write a paper on marriage. Such a subject is too broad to cover in a five-hundred-word essay. You would have to write a book to support adequately any point you might make about the general subject of marriage. What you would need to do, then, is limit your subject. Narrow it down until you have a thesis that you can deal with specifically in about five hundred words. In the box that follows are (1) several general subjects, (2) a limited version of each general subject, and (3) a thesis statement about each limited subject.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Teaching Tip

You may want to provide your students with other examples of general topics. Ask your students to limit these subjects and create thesis statements.

General Subject	Limited Subject	Thesis
Marriage	Honeymoon	A honeymoon is perhaps the worst way to begin a marriage.
Family	Older sister	My older sister helped me overcome my shyness.
Television	TV preachers	TV evangelists use sales techniques to promote their messages.
Children	Disciplining of children	My husband and I have several effective ways of disciplining our children.
Sports	Players' salaries	Players' high salaries are bad for the game, for the fans, and for the values our children are developing.

2 Activity

Sometimes a subject must go through several stages of limiting before it is narrow enough to write about. Below are four lists reflecting several stages that writers went through in moving from a general subject to a narrow thesis statement. Number the stages in each list from 1 to 5, with 1 marking the broadest stage and 5 marking the thesis.

List 1

2 Teachers
1 Education
3 Math teacher
5 My high school math teacher was incompetent.
4 High school math teacher

List 3

1 Retail companies
2 Supermarkets
4 Dealing with customers
3 Working in a supermarket
5 I've learned how to handle unpleasant supermarket customers.

List 2

3 Bicycles
4 Dangers of bike riding
1 Recreation
2 Recreational vehicles
5 Bike riding in the city is a dangerous activity.

List 4

3 Camping
4 First camping trip
2 Summer vacation
5 My first camping trip was a disastrous experience.
1 Vacations

Later in this chapter, you will get more practice in narrowing general subjects to thesis statements.

Writing a Good Thesis II

Teaching Tip

Discuss why a thesis statement should have only one idea.

When writing thesis statements, people often make mistakes that undermine their chances of producing an effective essay. One mistake is to simply announce the subject rather than state a true thesis. A second mistake is to write a thesis that is too broad, and a third is to write a thesis that is too narrow. A fourth error is to

write a thesis containing more than one idea. Here are tips for avoiding such mistakes and writing good thesis statements.

1 Write Statements, Not Announcements

The subject of this paper will be my parents.

I want to talk about the crime wave in our country.

The baby-boom generation is the concern of this essay.

In this first group, the sentences are not thesis statements but announcements of a topic. For instance, "The subject of this paper will be my parents" does not make a point about the parents but merely tells, in a rather weak and unimaginative way, the writer's general subject. Remember, a thesis statement must make a point about a limited subject. Effective thesis statements based on the above sentences could be as follows:

My parents each struggled with personal demons.

The recent crime wave in our city has several apparent causes.

The baby-boom generation has changed American society in key ways.

Teaching Tip

Use the analogy of Goldilocks and the Three Bears to teach students about thesis statements. Tell them that a topic sentence cannot be "too broad" or "too narrow" but must be "just right."

2 Avoid Statements That Are Too Broad

Disease has shaped human history.

Insects are fascinating creatures.

Men and women are very different.

In the preceding examples, each statement is too broad to be supported adequately in a student essay. For instance, "Disease has shaped human history" would require far more than a five-hundred-word essay. In fact, there are many lengthy books written on the exact same topic. Remember, your thesis statement should be focused enough that it can be effectively supported in a five-paragraph essay. Revised thesis statements based on the topics in the above sentences could be as follows:

In the mid-1980s, AIDS changed people's attitudes about dating.

Strength, organization, and communication make the ant one of nature's most successful insects.

Men and women are often treated very differently in the workplace.

3 Avoid Statements That Are Too Narrow

Here are three statements that are too narrow:

The speed limit near my home is sixty-five miles per hour.

A hurricane hit southern Florida last summer.

A person must be at least thirty-five years old to be elected president of the United States.

In this third group, there is no room in any of the three statements for support to be given. For instance, "The speed limit near my home is sixty-five miles per hour" is too narrow to be expanded into a paper. It is a simple fact that does not require any support. Such a statement is sometimes called a *dead-end statement:* there is no place to go with it. Remember, a thesis statement must be broad enough to require support in an essay. Successful thesis statements based on the preceding sentences are as follows:

The speed limit near my home should be lowered to fifty-five miles per hour for several reasons.

Federal officials made a number of mistakes in their response to the recent Florida hurricane.

The requirement that a U.S. president must be at least thirty-five years old is unfair and unreasonable.

4 Make Sure Statements Develop Only One Idea

Here are three statements that contain more than one idea:

One of the most serious problems affecting young people today is bullying, and it is time more kids learned the value of helping others.

Studying with others has several benefits, but it also has drawbacks and can be difficult to schedule.

Teachers have played an important role in my life, but they were not as important as my parents.

In this fourth group, each statement contains more than one idea. For instance, "One of the most serious problems affecting young people today is bullying, and it is time more kids learned the value of helping others" clearly has two separate ideas ("One of the most serious problems affecting young people today is bullying" *and* "it is time more kids learned the value of helping others"). The reader is asked to focus on two separate points, each of which more logically belongs in an essay of its own. Remember, the point of an essay is to communicate a *single* main idea to readers. To be as clear as possible, then, try to limit your thesis statement to the single key idea you want your readers to know. Revised thesis statements based on each of the examples above are as follows:

One of the most serious problems affecting young people today is bullying.

Studying with others has several benefits.

Teachers have played an important role in my life.

3 Activity

Write TN in the space next to the two statements that are too narrow to be developed in an essay. Write TB beside the two statements that are too broad to be covered in an essay. Then, in the spaces provided, revise one of the too-narrow statements and one of the too-broad statements to make them each an effective thesis.

TB 1. The way our society treats elderly people is unbelievable.

Our society discriminates against elderly people in a number of ways.

TN 2. Up to 70 percent of teenage marriages end in divorce.

Teenage marriages often end in divorce for several reasons.

TB 3. Action must be taken against drugs.

Several steps should be taken to reduce the use of drugs in schools.

TN 4. I failed my biology course.

I am doing poorly in school because of three major distractions in my life.

Note:

Wording of answers may vary.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Step 2: Support the Thesis with Specific Evidence

The first essential step in writing a successful essay is to formulate a clearly stated thesis. The second basic step is to support the thesis with specific reasons or details.

To ensure that your essay will have adequate support, you may find an informal outline very helpful. Write down a brief version of your thesis idea, and then work out and jot down the three points that will support the thesis.

ESL Tip

Remind nonnative students to avoid using circular reasoning, which simply restates the main idea and does not provide supporting details. Although this pattern may be used in some cultures, it is not acceptable in academic writing.

Here is the scratch outline that was prepared by the author of the earlier essay on moviegoing:

A scratch outline like this one looks simple, but developing it often requires a great deal of careful thinking. The time spent on developing a logical outline is invaluable, though. Once you have planned the steps that logically support your thesis, you will be in an excellent position to go on to write an effective essay.

Moviegoing is a problem.

1. *Inconvenience of going out*
2. *Tempting snacks*
3. *Other moviegoers*

Activities in this section will give you practice in the crucial skill of planning an essay clearly.

Note:

Answers will vary; examples are shown.



4 Activity

Following are ten informal outlines. Working with a partner, complete any five of them by adding a third logical supporing point (*c*) that will parallel the two already provided (*a* and *b*).

1. The first day on a new job can be nerve-racking.
   a. Meeting new people
   b. Finding your way around a new place
   c. ***Learning new rules and procedures***
2. My stepmother has three qualities I admire.
   a. Patience
   b. Thoughtfulness
   c. ***Sense of humor***
3. The neighborhood grocery store is poorly managed.
   a. The checkout lines are always long.
   b. The aisles are dirty and understocked.
   c. ***The employees are unhelpful and even rude.***
4. College students should live at home.
   a. Stay in touch with family
   b. Avoid distractions of dorm or apartment life
   c. ***Save money***
5. _____is the worst job I've ever had.
   a. Difficult boss
   b. Poor pay
   c. ***Long hours***
6. College is stressful for many people.
   a. Worry about grades
   b. Worry about being accepted
   c. ***Worry about finances***

7. My landlord adds to the stress in my life.
   a. Neglects repairs
   b. Ignores phone calls
   c. ***Raises rent frequently***
8. Our neighborhood park is an unsafe place to visit.
   a. Aggressive dogs
   b. Broken glass
   c. ***Strangers/Gangs/Teens***
9. Buying a used car is better than buying a new one.
   a. Used cars are less likely to be stolen than new cars.
   b. Used cars don't lose their value as quickly as most new cars.
   c. ***Used cars are cheaper/easier to repair/easier to insure.***
10. Many companies use annoying practices to increase sales.
   a. Junk mail
   b. Spam e-mail
   c. ***Telemarketers/Rebates/Infomercials***

The Importance of *Specific* Details

Just as a thesis must be developed with three supporting points, each supporting point must be developed with specific details. Specific details are valuable in two key ways. First, details excite the reader's interest. They make writing a pleasure to read, for we all enjoy learning particulars about people, places, and things. Second, details serve to explain a writer's points. They give the evidence needed for us to see and understand general ideas.

All too often, the body paragraphs in essays contain only vague generalities, rather than the specific supporting details that are needed to engage and convince a reader. Here is what one of the paragraphs in "The Hazards of Moviegoing" would have looked like if the writer had not detailed her supporting evidence vividly:

Teaching Tip

Have students look at a previously written paragraph to see if they used specific details.

Some of the other patrons are even more of a problem than the theater itself. Many people in the theater often show themselves to be inconsiderate. They make noises and create disturbances at their seats. Included are people in every age group, from the young to the old. Some act as if they were at home in their own living room watching TV. And people are often messy, so that you're constantly aware of all the food they're eating. People are also always moving around near you, creating a disturbance and interrupting your enjoyment of the movie.

The following box contrasts the vague support in the preceding paragraph with the specific support in the essay.

Teaching Tip

You may want to provide students with other examples of vague support. Ask them to provide specific support for each example.

Vague Support	Specific Support
1. Many people in the theater show themselves to be inconsiderate. They make noises and create disturbances at their seats. Included are people in every age group, from the young to the old. Some act as if they were at home in their own living room watching TV.	1. Little kids race up and down the aisles, usually in giggling packs. Teenagers try to impress their friends by talking back to the screen, whistling, and making what they consider to be hilarious noises. Adults act as if they were at home in their own living room and comment loudly on the ages of the stars or why movies aren't as good anymore.
2. And people are often messy, so that you're constantly aware of all the food they're eating.	2. And people of all ages crinkle candy wrappers, stick gum on their seats, and drop popcorn tubs or cups of crushed ice and soda on the floor.
3. People are also always moving around near you, creating a disturbance and interrupting your enjoyment of the movie.	3. They also cough and burp, squirm endlessly in their seats, file out for repeated trips to the restrooms or concession stand, and elbow you out of the armrest on either side of your seat.

The effective paragraph from the essay provides details that make vividly clear the statement that patrons are a problem in the theater. The writer specifies the exact age groups (little kids, teenagers, and adults) and the offenses of

each (giggling, talking and whistling, and loud comments). She specifies the various food excesses (crinkled wrappers, gum on seats, dropped popcorn and soda containers). Finally, she provides concrete details that enable us to see and hear other disturbances (coughs and burps, squirming, constant trips to restrooms, jostling for elbow room). The ineffective paragraph asks us to guess about these details; the effective paragraph describes the details in a specific and lively way.

In the strong paragraph, then, sharp details capture our interest and enable us to share the writer's experience. They provide pictures that make us feel we are there. The particulars also enable us to understand clearly the writer's point that patrons are a problem. Aim to make your own writing equally convincing by providing detailed support.

Teaching Tip

Consider making a game out of this activity. See how quickly your students correctly complete the activity. You may want to ask them to create a set of game rules first.

5 Activity

Write S in front of the two selections below that provide specific evidence to support the opening point. Write X in front of the two selections in which the opening point is followed by vague, general, wordy sentences.

S 1. The people who have moved in beside us are unpleasant neighbors.

They barely say hi when we're in our neighboring yards. When we invited them to a neighborhood barbecue, they said they were going to be busy. They sometimes turn loud music on late at night, and we have to close our window to shut out the noise. To top it off, they own a dog, which they let roam free in our street.

X 2. My mother was a harsh disciplinarian.

When I did something wrong, no matter how small, she would inflict serious punishment. She had expectations that I was to live up to, and she never changed her attitude. When I did not behave as I should, I was dealt with severely. There were no exceptions as far as my mother was concerned.

S 3. Some things are worse when they're □improved.□

A good cheesecake, for one thing, is perfect. It doesn't need pineapple, cherries, blueberries, or whipped cream smeared all over it. Plain old American blue jeans, the ones with five pockets and copper rivets, are perfect too. Manufacturers only made them worse when they added flared legs, took away the pockets, tightened the fit, and plastered white logos and designers□names all over them.

X 4. Pets can be more trouble than children.

My dog, unlike my children, has never been completely housebroken. When he's excited or nervous, he still has an occasional problem. My dog, unlike my children, has never learned how to take care of himself when we're away, despite the fact that we've given him plenty of time

to do so. We don't have to worry about our grown children anymore. However, we still have to hire a dog-sitter.

Teaching Tip

Students often use repetition and wordy generalizations when faced with a word-count or minimum-page requirement. Remind them that brainstorming can be done after a draft is written to generate more support.

The Importance of *Adequate* Details

One of the most common and most serious problems in students□ writing is inadequate development. You must provide *enough* specific details to fully support the point in a body paragraph of an essay. You could not, for example, include a paragraph about a friend's unreliability and provide only a one- or two-sentence example. You would have to extend the example or add several other examples showing your friend as an unreliable person. Without such additional support, your paragraph would be underdeveloped.

Students may try to disguise unsupported paragraphs through repetition and generalities. Do not fall into this □wordiness trap.□Be prepared to do the plain hard work needed to ensure that each paragraph has solid support.

Note:

First paragraph is adequately developed.

Teaching Tip

For added practice, ask students to revise the underdeveloped paragraph by providing adequate, specific details.

6 Activity

Both of the following body paragraphs were written on the same topic, and each has a clear opening point. Which paragraph is adequately developed? Which one has only several particulars and uses mostly vague, general, wordy sentences to conceal that it is starved for specific details?

Eternal Youth?□No, Thanks

I wouldn't want to be a teenager again, first of all, because I wouldn't want to worry about talking to girls. I still remember how scary it was to call up a girl and ask her out. My heart would race, my pulse would pound, and perspiration would trickle down my face, adding to my acne by the second. I never knew whether my voice would come out deep and masculine, like a television anchorman's, or squeaky, like a little boy's. Then there were the questions: Would she be at home? If she was, would she want to talk to me? And if she did, what would I say? The one time I did get up the nerve to take a girl in my homeroom to a movie, I was so tongue-tied that I stared silently at the box of popcorn in my lap until the feature finally started. Needless to say, I wasn't very interesting company.

Terrors of My Teenage Years

I wouldn't want to be a teenager again, first of all, because I wouldn't want to worry about talking to girls. Calling up a girl to ask her out was something that I completely dreaded. I didn't know what words to express or how to express them. I would have all the symptoms of nervousness when I got on the phone. I worried a great deal about how I would sound, and I had a lot of doubts about the girl's reaction. Once, I managed to call up a girl to go out, but the evening turned out to be a disaster. I was too unsure of myself to act in a confident way. I couldn't think of anything to say and just kept quiet. Now that I look back on it, I really made a fool of myself. Agonizing over my attempts at relationships with the opposite sex made adolescence a very uncomfortable time.

ESL Tip

Wordy generalities and repetition may be examples of using circular reasoning, a typical paragraph development in some cultures and languages. Nonnative students may need some closer guidance and examination to understand that this is not acceptable or expected in academic writing.

The first paragraph offers a series of well-detailed examples of the author's nerve-racking experiences, as a teenager, with girls. The second paragraph, on the other hand, is underdeveloped. For instance, the second paragraph makes only the general observation I would have all the symptoms of nervousness when I got on the phone, but the first paragraph states, My heart would race, my pulse would pound, and perspiration would trickle down my face.

The second paragraph makes the general statement I worried a great deal about how I would sound, but in the first paragraph the author wonders if his voice will come out deep and masculine, like a television anchorman's, or squeaky, like a little boy's. And the second paragraph has no specific description of the evening that turned into a disaster. In summary, the second paragraph lacks the full, detailed support needed to develop its opening point convincingly.

7 Activity

Take a few minutes to write a paragraph supporting the point My room is a mess. Afterward, you and your classmates, perhaps working in small groups, should read your paragraphs aloud. The best-received paragraphs are almost sure to be those with plenty of specific details.

Note:

Answers will vary.



Practice in Advancing and Supporting a Thesis

You now know the two most important steps in competent essay writing: (1) advancing a point, or thesis, and (2) supporting that thesis. The purpose of this section is to expand and strengthen your understanding of these two basic steps. You

will first work through a series of activities on *developing* a thesis:

- identifying the parts of an essay
- evaluating thesis statements
- completing thesis statements
- writing a thesis statement
- limiting a topic and writing a thesis

You will then sharpen your understanding of how to *support* a thesis effectively by working through the following activities:

- providing specific evidence
- identifying adequate supporting evidence
- adding details to complete an essay

Identifying the Parts of an Essay

Teaching Tip

You may want to ask your students to come up with an additional support sentence for each cluster.

8 Activity

Each cluster below contains one topic, one thesis statement, and two supporting sentences. In the space provided, label each item as follows:

T—topic
TH—thesis statement
S—supporting sentence

Group 1

_S_ a. TV has forced politicians to focus more on appearance than substance.

_TH_ b. Television has had a massive impact on politics in the United States.

_S_ c. The expense of producing and airing ads has made politicians worry more about fund-raising than serving their public.

_T_ d. Television

Group 2

_S_ a. Community colleges are much more affordable than most four-year colleges.

_TH_ b. There are several advantages to attending a community college instead of a four-year school.

_T_ c. Community colleges

_S_ d. Community colleges typically offer more convenient and more flexible scheduling than traditional schools.

Group 3

T a. Medicine

S b. Antibiotics have enabled doctors to control many diseases that were once fatal.

S c. Organ transplants have prolonged the lives of tens of thousands of people.

TH d. Advances in modern medicine have had great success in helping people.

Group 4

T a. Reading

TH b. Parents can take steps to encourage their children to enjoy reading.

S c. The adults□own behavior can influence children to become readers.

S d. Parents can make sure the physical environment of the home encourages reading.

Group 5

TH a. Insects perform many helpful functions for human beings.

S b. Insects are essential to the growth of many important crops.

T c. Insects

S d. Insects protect the environment by removing wastes and controlling disease-causing germs.

9 Activity

This activity will sharpen your sense of the parts of an essay. The essay that follows, □Coping with Old Age,□has no indentations starting new paragraphs. Read this essay carefully, and then double-underline the thesis and single-underline the topic sentence for each of the three supporting paragraphs and the first sentence of the conclusion. Write the numbers of those sentences in the spaces provided at the end.

Coping with Old Age

[1]I recently read about an area of the former Soviet Union where many people live to be well over a hundred years old. [2]Being 115 or even 125 isn't considered unusual there, and these old people continue to do productive work right up until they die. [3]The United States, however, isn't such a healthy

place for older people. [4]Since I retired from my job, I've had to cope with the physical, mental, and emotional stresses of being old. [5]For one thing, I've had to adjust to physical changes. [6]Now that I'm over sixty, the trusty body that carried me around for years has turned traitor. [7]Aside from the deepening wrinkles on my face and neck, and the wiry gray hairs that have replaced my brown hair, I face more frightening changes. [8]I don't have the energy I used to. [9]My eyes get tired. [10]Once in a while, I miss something that's said to me. [11]My once faithful feet seem to have lost their comfortable soles, and I sometimes feel I'm walking on marbles. [12]In order to fight against this slow decay, I exercise whenever I can. [13]I walk, I stretch, and I climb stairs. [14]I battle constantly to keep as fit as possible. [15]I'm also trying to cope with mental changes. [16]My mind was once as quick and sure as a champion gymnast. [17]I never found it difficult to memorize answers in school or to remember the names of people I met. [18]Now, I occasionally have to search my mind for the name of a close neighbor or favorite television show.

[19]Because my mind needs exercise, too, I challenge it as much as I can.

[20]Taking a college course like this English class, for example, forces me to concentrate. [21]The mental gymnast may be a little slow and out of shape, but he can still do a backflip or turn a somersault when he has to. [22]Finally, I must deal with the emotional impact of being old. [23]Our society typecasts old people. [24]We're supposed to be unattractive, senile, useless leftovers.[25]We're supposed to be the crazy drivers and the cranky customers. [26]At first, I was angry and frustrated that I was considered old at all. [27]And I knew that people were wrong to stereotype me. [28]Then I got depressed. [29]I even started to think that maybe I was a castoff, one of those old animals that slow down the rest of the herd. [30]But I have now decided to rebel against these negative feelings. [31]I try to have friends of all ages and to keep up with what's going on in the world. [32]I try to remember that I'm still the same person who sat at a first-grade desk, who fell in love, who comforted a child, who got a raise at work. [33]I'm not just an old person. [34]Coping with the changes of old age has become my latest full-time job. [35]Even though it's a job I never applied for, and one for which I had no experience, I'm trying to do the best I can.

Thesis statement in "Coping with Old Age": 4

Topic sentence of first supporting paragraph: 5

Topic sentence of second supporting paragraph: 15

Topic sentence of third supporting paragraph: 22

First sentence of the conclusion: 34

Evaluating Thesis Statements

As was explained on pages 54–55, some writers announce a subject instead of stating a true thesis idea. Others write a dead-end thesis statement that is too narrow to need support or development. Contrasting with such a dead-end statement is the statement that is wide open— too broad to be adequately supported in the limited space of a five-hundred-word essay. Other thesis statements are vague or contain more than one idea. They suggest that the writer has not thought out the main point sufficiently.

Teaching Tip

For added practice, ask students to revise the sentences that announce a topic.

10 Activity

Write A beside each sentence that is an announcement rather than a thesis statement. Write OK beside the statement in each pair that is a clear, limited point that could be developed in an essay.

1. A a. This essay will discuss the people you meet in exercise class.
   OK b. The kinds of workout clothes worn in my aerobics class identify "jocks," "strugglers," and "princesses."
2. OK a. I made several mistakes in the process of trying to win the respect and affection of my teenage stepson.
   A b. My thesis in this paper is relationships between stepparents and stepchildren.
3. OK a. A period of loneliness can teach you to use your creativity, sort out your values, and feel empathy for others.
   A b. Loneliness is the subject of this paper.
4. A a. This paper will be about sharing housework.
   OK b. Deciding who will perform certain unpleasant household chores can be the crisis that makes or breaks a marriage.
5. A a. My concern here is to discuss near-death experiences reported by some patients.
   OK b. There are several possible explanations for the similar near-death experiences reported by some patients.

11 Activity

Write TN beside each statement that is too narrow to be developed in an essay. Write OK beside the statement in each pair that is a clear, limited point.

1. TN a. I had squash, tomatoes, and corn in my garden last summer.
   OK b. Vegetable gardening can be a frustrating hobby.
2. TN a. The main road into our town is lined with billboards.
   OK b. For several reasons, billboards should be abolished.
3. TN a. There are now more single-parent households in our country than ever before.
   OK b. Organization is the key to being a successful single parent.
4. OK a. My first job taught me that I had several bad work habits.
   TN b. Because I was late for work yesterday, I lost an hour's pay and was called in to see the boss.
5. OK a. Americans abuse alcohol because it has become such an important part of our personal and public celebrations.
   TN b. Consumption of wine, beer, and hard liquor increases in the United States every year.

Teaching Tip

For added practice, ask students to revise the statements that are too narrow.

12 Activity

Write TB beside each statement that is too broad to be developed in an essay. Write OK beside the statement in each pair that is a clear, limited point.

1. TB a. In many ways, sports are an important part of American life.
   OK b. Widespread gambling has changed professional football for the worse.
2. TB a. Modern life makes people suspicious and unfriendly.
   OK b. A frightening experience in my neighborhood has caused me to be a much more cautious person in several ways.
3. OK a. Toy ads on television teach children to be greedy, competitive, and snobbish.
   TB b. Advertising has bad effects on all of society.
4. TB a. Learning new skills can be difficult and frustrating.
   OK b. Learning to write takes work, patience, and a sense of humor.
5. TB a. I didn't get along with my family, so I did many foolish things.
   OK b. Running away from home taught me that my parents weren't as terrible as I thought.

Teaching Tip

For added practice, ask students to revise the statements that are too broad.

13 Activity

For each pair, write 2 beside the statement that contains more than one idea. Write OK beside the statement that is a clear, limited point.

1. OK a. Working with old people changed my stereotypical ideas about the elderly.

   2 b. My life has moved in new directions since the rewarding job I had working with older people last summer.

2. 2 a. The new architecture on this campus is very unpleasant, although the expansion was desperately needed.

   OK b. Our new college library building is ugly, intimidating, and inefficient.

3. OK a. Among the most entertaining ads on TV today are those for mail-order products.

   2 b. Although ads on TV for mail-order products are often misleading, they can still be very entertaining.

4. 2 a. My roommate and I are compatible in most ways, but we still have conflicts at times.

   OK b. My roommate has his own unique systems for studying, writing term papers, and cleaning our room.

5. 2 a. Although some good movies have come out lately, I prefer to watch old movies because they're more interesting.

   OK b. Movies of the 1930s and 1940s have better plots, sets, and actors than movies made today.

Teaching Tip

For added practice, ask students to rewrite sentences that contain more than one idea (□2□).

Completing Thesis Statements

Note:

Answers will vary; examples are given.

Teaching Tip

You may want to review parallelism with your students.

14 Activity

Complete the following thesis statements by adding a third supporting point that will parallel the two already provided. You might want to first check the section on parallelism in Chapter 5 (page 106) to make sure you understand parallel form.

1. Because I never took college preparatory courses in high school, I entered college deficient in mathematics, study skills, and *science*.

2. A good salesperson needs to like people, to be aggressive, and *to be enthusiastic*.

3. Rather than blame myself for failing the course, I blamed the instructor, my adviser, and even *my boyfriend*.

4. Anyone who buys an old house planning to fix it up should be prepared to put in a lot of time, hard work, and *money*.

5. Our old car guzzles gas, makes funny noises, and *fails to start on cold mornings.*

6. My mother, my boss, and my *coach* are three people who are very important in my life right now.

7. Getting married too young was a mistake because we hadn't finished our education, we weren't ready for children, and *we weren't table to commit* *ourselves to each other*.

8. Some restaurant patrons seem to leave their honesty, their cleanliness, and their *manners* at home.

9. During my first semester at college, I had to learn how to manage my time, my diet, and *my relationships with others*.

10. Three experiences I wish I could forget are the time I fell off a ladder, the time I tried to fix my parents□lawn mower, and *the time I performed* *in a piano recital*.

Writing a Thesis Statement

Note:

Wording of theses may vary.

Teaching Tip

Emphasize to students that thesis statements often need to be revised.

Teaching Tip

Students can do this activity alone or in pairs.

15 Activity

Write a thesis for each group of supporting statements. This activity will give you practice in writing an effective essay thesis□ one that is neither too broad nor too narrow. It will also help you understand the logical relationship between a thesis and its supporting details.

1. Thesis: *My cars have reflected stages in my life.*

   a. My first car was a rebellious-looking one that matched the way I felt and acted as a teenager.

   b. My next car reflected my more mature and practical adult self.

   c. My latest car seems to tell me that I'm aging; it shows my growing concern with comfort and safety.

2. Thesis: *A two-year college has certain advantages.*

   a. All the course credits that are accumulated can be transferred to a fouryear school.

   b. Going to a two-year college can save a great deal of money in tuition and other fees.

   c. If the college is nearby, there are also significant savings in everyday living expenses.

3. Thesis: *I have tried several ways to give up snacks.*

   a. First, I tried simply avoiding the snacks aisle of the supermarket.

   b. Then I started limiting myself to only five units of any given snack.

c. Finally, in desperation, I began keeping the cellophane bags of snacks in a padlocked cupboard.

4. Thesis: ***Halloween is not all fun.***

a. The holiday can be very frightening for little children.

b. Children can be struck by cars while wearing vision-obstructing masks and dark costumes.

c. There are always incidents involving deadly treats: fruits, cookies, and candies that contain razor blades or even poison.

5. Thesis: ***Three factors contributed to my heart attack.***

a. First of all, I was a typical type A personality: anxious, impatient, and hard-driving.

b. I also have a family history of relatives with heart trouble.

c. My unhealthy lifestyle, though, was probably the major factor.

Limiting a Topic and Writing a Thesis Statement

The following two activities will give you practice in distinguishing general from limited subjects and in writing a thesis.

16 Activity

Look carefully at the ten general subjects and ten limited subjects below. Then write a thesis statement for any five of them.

HINT

To create a thesis statement for a limited subject, ask yourself, What point do I want to make about_____(*my limited subject*)?

General Subject	Limited Subject
1. Apartment	1. Sharing an apartment with a roomma
2. Self-improvement	2. Behavior toward others
3. Family	3. My mother
4. Eating	4. Fast-food restaurants
5. Automobiles	5. Bad driving habits
6. Health	6. Regular exercise
7. Owning a house	7. Do-it-yourself home repairs
8. Baseball	8. Free-agent system
9. Parenthood	9. Being a single parent
10. Pollution	10. Noise pollution

Note:

Answers will vary; examples are given.

Thesis statements for five of the limited subjects:

1. Sharing an apartment with a roommate calls for goodwill, a sense of give-and-take, and plenty of intelligence.

2. To improve your behavior toward others, learn to listen, to sympathize, and to share.

5. Three potentially deadly driving habits are inattention, a "tough guy" attitude, and a short temper.

6. Regular exercise is a good way to reduce stress, worry, and your waistline.

10.Interestingly, sources of noise pollution can be loud, moderate, or even very faint.

Teaching Tip

Suggest that students work in pairs to complete this activity. Then go over the answers with the class.

Note:

Answers will vary; examples are given.

17 Activity

Here is a list of ten general subjects. Limit five of the subjects. Then write a thesis statement about each of the five limited subjects.

General Subject	Limited Subject
1. Pets	*Beagles*
2. Teenagers	*Teenage motherhood*
3. Television	*Sports announcers on television*
4. Work	*Working at home*
5. College	*Your first week at college*
6. Doctors	*Our family doctor*
7. Vacations	*Disastrous vacations*
8. Cooking	*Cooking for one*
9. Money	*Unusual things used as money*
10. Shopping	*Shopping for a wedding gown*

Thesis statements for five of the limited subjects:

1. *Beagles make great pets because they are loving, cheerful, and sturdy.*
2. *Teenage motherhood can be harmful to the mother herself, to her child, and to society.*
4. *Working at home is a sensible alternative for many people, including parents of young children, older people, and technology experts.*
5. *A few simple tips will help you survive your first week at college.*
8. *Cooking for one person□ yourself□ can be remarkably pleasant.*

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Providing Specific Evidence

Teaching Tip

For this activity, students could work in pairs so that they might brainstorm more ideas.

Note:

Answers will vary; examples are given.

18 Activity

Provide three details that logically support each of the following points. Your details can be drawn from your own experience, or they can be invented. In each case, the details should show *specifically* what the point expresses only generally. State your details briefly in several words rather than in complete sentences.

EXAMPLE

We quickly spruced up the apartment before our guest arrived.

1. *Hid toys and newspapers in spare closet*
2. *Vacuumed pet hairs off sofa*
3. *Sprayed air freshener around living room*

1. The dinner was a disaster.

Guests arrived two hours late

Roast was burned

Host and hostess got into a huge fight

2. My seven-year-old nephew has some disgusting habits.

Collects dead frogs, birds, and worms

Loves to dunk pizza in his chocolate milk

Combs his hair with his toothbrush

3. There are several reasons why I put off studying.

Too tired

Too hungry

Too disorganized

4. My parents never allowed me to think for myself.

Chose my friends for me

Chose my clothes for me

Chose my college for me

5. I have several ways to earn extra cash.

Babysiting

Gardening

Baking cookies

6. My car needs repairs.

New ignition

New brakes

New heater

7. Friday evening, I didn't sit still for a minute.

Cat got sick

Kids got sick

Roof started to leak

8. Mr.(or Ms.)_____was the worst teacher I ever had.

Slept at his (her) desk

Gave six hours of homework per night

Had a terrible temper

Identifying Adequate Supporting Evidence

Teaching Tip

For added practice, ask students to revise the underdeveloped paragraphs by providing adequate, specific details.

19 Activity

The following body paragraphs were taken from student essays. Two of the paragraphs provide sufficient details to support their topic sentences convincingly. Write AD for *adequate development* beside those paragraphs. Three paragraphs use vague, wordy, general, or irrelevant sentences instead of real supporting details. Write U for *underdeveloped* beside those paragraphs.

AD 1. Another consideration in adopting a dog is the cost. Initial fees for shots and a license might add up to $50. Annual visits to the vet for heartworm pills, rabies and distemper shots, and general checkups could cost $100 or more. Then there is the cost of food. A twenty-five-pound bag of dry food (the cheapest kind) costs around $15. A large dog can eat that much in a couple of weeks.

U 2. People can be cruel to pets simply by being thoughtless. They don't think about a pet's needs, or they simply ignore those needs. It never occurs to them that their pet can be experiencing a great deal of discomfort as a result of their failure to be sensitive. The cruelty is a result of the basic lack of attention and concern qualities that should be there, but aren't.

U 3. If I were in charge of the night time programming on a TV network, I would make changes. I would completely eliminate some shows. In fact, all the shows that proved to be of little interest would be canceled. Commercials would also change so that it would be possible to watch them without wanting to turn off the TV. I would expand the good shows so that people would come away with an even better experience. My ideal network would be a great improvement over the average lineup we see today on any of the major networks.

AD 4. A friend's rudeness is much more damaging than a stranger's. When a friend says sharply, I don't have time to talk to you just now, you feel hurt instead of angry. When a friend shows up late for lunch or a shopping trip, with no good reason, you feel that you're being taken for granted. Worst, though, is when a friend pretends to be listening to you but his or her wandering eyes show a lack of attention. Then you feel betrayed. Friends, after all, are supposed to make up for the thoughtless cruelties of strangers.

U 5. Giving my first shampoo and set to a real person, after weeks of practicing on wigs, was a nerve-racking experience. The customer was a woman who acted very sure about what she came for. She tried to describe what she wanted, and I tried without much success to understand what she had in mind. Every time I did something, she seemed to be indicating in one way or another that it was not what she wanted. I got more and more nervous as I worked on her hair, and the nervousness showed. The worst part of the ordeal happened at the very end, when I added the final touches. Nothing, to this woman, had turned out right.

Adding Details to Complete an Essay

Note:

Answers will vary.

Teaching Tip

Suggest that students work in pairs to complete this activity.

20 Activity

The following essay needs specific details to back up the ideas in the supporting paragraphs. Using the spaces provided, add a sentence or two of clear, convincing details for each supporting idea. This activity will give you practice at supplying specific details and an initial feel for writing an essay.

Introduction

Life without Television

When my family's only television set went to the repair shop the other day, my parents, my sister, and I thought we would have a terrible week. How could we get through the long evenings in such a quiet house? What would it be like without all the shows to keep us company? We soon realized, though, that living without television for a while was a stroke of good fortune. It became easy for each of us to enjoy some activities alone, to complete some postponed chores, and to spend rewarding time with each other and friends.

First supporting paragraph

First of all, with no television to compete for our time, we found plenty of hours for personal interests. We all read more that week than we had read during the six months before._____

_____

_____

We each also enjoyed some hobbies we had ignored for ages._____

_____

_____

_____

In addition, my sister and I both stopped procrastinating with our homework._____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Second supporting paragraph

Second, we did chores that had been hanging over our heads for too long. There were many jobs around the house that had needed attention for some time._____

_____

_____

We also had a chance to do some long-postponed shopping._____

_____

_____

_____

And each of us also caught up with e-mail and did paperwork that was long

overdue._____

_____

_____

Third supporting paragraph

Finally, and probably most important, we spent time with each other. Instead of just being in the same room together while we stared at a screen,

we actually talked for many pleasant hours._____

_____

_____

Moreover, for the first time in years, my family played some games

together._____

_____

_____

And because we didn't have to worry about missing this or that show, we had some family friends over on a couple of evenings and spent an enjoyable time with them._____

_____

_____

Conclusion

Once our television returned, we were not prepared to put it in the attic. But we had a sense of how it can take over our lives if we are not careful. We are now more selective. We turn on the set for our favorite shows, certain sports events, and the news, but we don't leave it running all evening. As a result, we find we can enjoy television and still have time left over for other activities and interests.



© Comstock Select/Corbis

What are some ways besides watching TV that you and your family or friends spend quality time together? Write about one of these activities and why you enjoy it.

4: The Third Step in Essay Writing



In the previous chapter, you helped complete one student's essay about life without television. Without television, the student had time to enjoy a host of other activities he or she otherwise would not have had time to do. Write an essay about what, in your life, keeps you from completing tasks or doing what you enjoy. Also include what you would do with your time if this obstacle was removed.

This chapter will show you how to

- organize and connect specific evidence in the body paragraphs of an essay
- begin and end an essay with effective introductory and concluding paragraphs

Teaching Tip

Ask students to complete this writing prompt in class.

You know from Chapter 3 that the first two steps in writing an effective essay are advancing a thesis and supporting it with specific evidence. This chapter deals with the third step: organizing and connecting the supporting information in a paper. You'll also learn how to start an essay with a suitable introductory paragraph and how to finish it with a well-rounded concluding paragraph.

Teaching Tip

To illustrate coherence, bring a spiral-or comb-bound book to class. Tell your students that the pages of the book are supporting details and the spine serves as the method of organization.

Step 3: Organize and Connect the Specific Evidence

As you are generating the specific details needed to support a thesis, you should be thinking about ways to organize and connect those details. All the details in your essay must *cohere,* or stick together, so that your reader will be able to move smoothly from one bit of supporting information to the next. This section shows you how to organize and connect supporting details by using (1) common methods of organization, (2) transitions, and (3) other connecting words.

Common Methods of Organization

Two common methods used to organize the supporting material in an essay are time order and emphatic order. (You will learn more specific methods of development in Part Two of this book.)

Time order, or *chronological order,* simply means that details are listed as they occur in time. *First* this is done; *next* this; *then* this; *after* that, this; and so on. Here is an outline of an essay in this book that uses time order:



www.mhhe.com/langan

Thesis

To exercise successfully, you should follow a simple plan consisting of arranging the time, making preparations, and warming up properly.

1. *To begin with, set aside a regular hour for exercise.*
2. *Next, prepare for your exercise session.*
3. *Finally, do a series of warm-up activities.*

Fill in the missing words: The topic sentences in the essay use the words or phrases ***To begin with***, ***Next***, and ***Finally*** to help show time order.

Here is one supporting paragraph from the essay:

Next, prepare for your exercise session. You do this, first, by not eating or drinking anything for an hour before the session. Why risk an upset stomach? Then, dress comfortably in something that allows you to move freely. Because you'll be in your own home, there's no need to invest in a high-fashion dance costume. A loose T-shirt and shorts are good. A bathing suit is great in summer, and in winter long underwear is warm and comfortable. If your hair tends to flop in your eyes, pin it back or wear a headband or scarf. After dressing, prepare the exercise area. Turn off the phone and lock the door to prevent interruptions. Shove the coffee table out of the way so that you won't bruise yourself on it. Finally, get out the simple materials you'll need to exercise on.

Fill in the missing words: The paragraph uses the following words to help show time order: ***Next*** , ***first*** , ***Then*** , ***After*** , and ***Finally*** .

Teaching Tip

Writers often rely too much on one transition word. For example: *Yesterday I went to school. After school, I met my friends at the mall. After going to the mall, I went home.* Encourage your students to use a variety of transitions.

Emphatic order is sometimes described as saving the best till last. It is a way to put *emphasis* on the most interesting or important detail by placing it in the last part of a paragraph or in the final supporting paragraph of an essay.

TIP

In cases where all the details seem equal in importance, the writer should impose a personal order that seems logical or appropriate.



www.mhhe.com/langan

The last position in a paper is the most emphatic position because the reader is most likely to remember the last thing read. *Finally, last of all,* and *most important* are typical words or phrases showing emphasis. Here is an outline of an essay in this book that uses emphatic order:

Thesis

Celebrities lead very stressful lives.

1. *For one thing, celebrities don't have the privacy an ordinary person does.*
2. *In addition, celebrities are under constant pressure.*
3. *Most important, celebrities must deal with the stress of being in constant danger.*

Teaching Tip

Students often need help finding a logical or appropriate personal order. What may be obvious to the writer may not be obvious to the reader.

Fill in the missing words: The topic sentences in the essay use the words or phrases ***For one thing***, ***In addition***, and ***Most important*** to help show emphatic order.

Here is the third supporting paragraph from the essay:

> Most important, celebrities must deal with the stress of being in constant danger. The friendly grabs, hugs, and kisses of enthusiastic fans can quickly turn into uncontrolled assaults on a celebrity's hair, clothes, and car. Celebrities often get strange letters from people who become obsessed with their idols or from people who threaten to harm them. Worst of all, threats can turn into deeds. The attempt to kill Ronald Reagan and the murder of John Lennon came about because two unbalanced people tried to transfer the celebrity's fame to themselves. Famous people must live with the fact that they are always fair game and never out of season.

Fill in the missing phrase: The words ***Worst of all*** are used to mark the most emphatic detail in the paragraph.

Some essays use a combination of time order and emphatic order. For example, the essay on moviegoing in Chapter 1 (page 6) includes time order: the writer first describes getting to the theater, then the theater itself, and finally the behavior of audience members during the movie. At the same time, the writer uses emphatic order, ending with the most important reason for her dislike of moviegoing: Some of the other patrons are even more of a problem than the theater itself.

Teaching Tip

Ask students to work alone on this activity. Then review the answers with the entire class.

1 Activity

Part A Read the essays listed below (page numbers are in parentheses) and identify their method of organizing details time order, emphatic order, or a combination of both.

1. Adopting a Handicap (page 203)

   time order

2. A Vote for McDonald's (page 290)

   emphatic order

3. Everyday Cruelty (page 223)

   combination of time order and emphatic order

Part B Now see if you can complete the explanations that follow.

The essay titled "Adopting a Handicap" uses (*add the missing word*) ***time*** order. The author begins with the challenge of learning to sit properly in the wheelchair, then moves on to learning to move in the wheelchair, and ends with several problems that occurred next, during the church service. "A Vote for McDonald's" uses (*add the missing word*) ***emphatic*** order. The writer presents three advantages of eating at McDonald's and ends with the most important one: reasonable prices. "Everyday Cruelty" uses a combination of (*add the missing words*) ***time*** and ***emphatic*** order. It moves from the beginning to the end of a particular workday. It also ends with the "worst incident of mean-spiritedness" that the writer witnessed that day.

Transitions

Transitional Words

Transitions signal the direction of a writer's thoughts. They are like the road signs that guide travelers. In the box that follows are some common transitions, grouped according to the kind of signal they give to readers. Note that certain words provide more than one kind of signal.



www.mhhe.com/langan

ESL Tip

Some nonnative speakers will have difficulty with addition signals that contain a phrase.

ESL Tip

Nonnative speakers may require a more in-depth explanation of these transitional words.

Common Transitions

Addition signals: one, first of all, second, the third reason, also, next, another, and, in addition, moreover, furthermore, finally, last of all

Time signals: first, then, next, after, as, before, while, meanwhile, soon, now, during, finally

Space signals: next to, across, on the opposite side, to the left, to the right, above, below, near, nearby

Change-of-direction signals: but, however, yet, in contrast, although, otherwise, still, on the contrary, on the other hand

Illustration signals: for example, for instance, specifically, as an illustration, once, such as

Conclusion signals: therefore, consequently, thus, then, as a result, in summary, to conclude, last of all, finally

Teaching Tip

Suggest that students work in pairs to complete this activity.

2 Activity

1. Underline the three *addition* signals in the following selection:

   To create the time you need to pass difficult courses, find some easy courses. These are the ones that combine the least amount of work with the fewest tests and the most lenient professors. One way to find such courses is to ask friends and classmates about courses in which they received A's after attending only 25 percent of the classes. Also, inquire around to see which instructors lecture with the same notes every year and give the same tests. Photocopies of the class notes are usually cheap and widely available. Another great way of finding simple courses is to pick up a copy of the master schedule and study it carefully. Find the telltale course titles that signal an easy glide through a painless subject. Look for titles like "History of the Animated Cartoon," "Arts and Crafts for Beginners," and "Rock Music of the 1950s."

2. Underline the four *time* signals in the following selection:

   After you've snagged the job of TV sports reporter, you have to begin working on the details of your image. First, invest in two or three truly loud sports jackets. Look for gigantic plaid patterns in odd color combinations like purple and green or orange and blue. These should become familiar enough to viewers so that they will associate that crazy jacket with that dynamic sportscaster. Next, try to cultivate a distinctive voice that will be just annoying enough to be memorable. A nasal whine or a gravelly growl will do it. Be sure to speak only in tough, punchy sentences that seem to be punctuated with imaginary exclamation points. Finally, you must share lots of pompous, obnoxious opinions with your viewers. Your tone of voice must convey the hidden message "I dare anyone to disagree with me." If the home teams lose, call them bums. If players strike, talk sarcastically about the good old days. If a sports franchise leaves town, say, "Good riddance."

3. Underline the three *space* signals in the following selection:

The vegetable bin of my refrigerator contained an assortment of weird-looking items. Next to a shriveled, fuzz-coated lemon were two oranges covered with blue fuzz. To the right of the oranges was a bunch of carrots that had begun to sprout points, spikes, knobs, and tendrils. The carrots drooped into U shapes as I picked them up with the tips of my fingers. Near the carrots was a net bag of onions; each onion had sent curling shoots through the net until the whole thing resembled a mass of green spaghetti. The most horrible item, though, was a head of lettuce that had turned into a pool of brown goo. It had seeped out of its bag and coated the bin with a sticky, evil-smelling liquid.

4. Underline the two *change-of-direction* signals in the following selection:

Taking small children on vacation, for instance, sounds like a wonderful experience for the entire family. But vacations can be scary or emotionally overwhelming times for children. When children are taken away from their usual routine and brought to an unfamiliar place, they can become very frightened. That strange bed in the motel room or the unusual noises in Grandma's spare bedroom may cause nightmares. On vacations, too, children usually clamor to do as many things in one day as they can and to stay up past their usual bedtime. And since it is vacation time, parents may decide to give in to the children's demands. A parental attitude like this, however, can lead to problems. After a sixteen-hour day of touring the amusement park, eating in a restaurant, and seeing a movie, children can experience sensory and emotional overload. They become cranky, unhappy, or even rebellious and angry.

5. Underline the two *illustration* signals in the following selection:

Supermarkets also use psychology to encourage you to buy. For example, in most supermarkets, the milk and the bread are either at opposite ends of the store or located far away from the first aisle. Even if you've stopped at the market only for staples like these, you must pass hundreds of items to reach them. The odds are that, instead of leaving with just a quart of milk, you'll leave with additional purchases as well. Special displays, such as a

pyramid of canned green beans in an aisle and a large end display of cartons of paper towels, also increase sales. Because you assume that these items are a good buy, you may pick them up. However, they may not even be on sale! Store managers know that the customer is automatically attracted to a display like this, and they will use it to move an overstocked product.

6. Underline the two *conclusion* signals in the following selection:

Finally, my grandmother was extremely thrifty. She was one of those people who hoard pieces of used aluminum foil after carefully scrubbing off the cake icing or beef gravy. She had a drawer full of old eyeglasses that dated back at least thirty years. The lens prescriptions were no longer accurate, but Gran couldn't bear to throw away a good pair of glasses. She kept them just in case, but we could never figure out what situation would involve a desperate need for a dozen pairs of old eyeglasses. We never realized the true extent of Gran's thriftiness, though, until after she died. Her house was to be sold, and therefore we cleaned out its dusty attic. In one corner was a cardboard box filled with two- and three-inch pieces of string. The box was labeled, in Gran's spidery hand, String too short to be saved.

Transitional Sentences

Transitional sentences, or *linking sentences,* are used between paragraphs to help tie together the supporting paragraphs in an essay. They enable the reader to move smoothly from the idea in one paragraph to the idea in the next paragraph.

Here is the linking sentence used in the essay on moviegoing:

Many of the other patrons are even more of a problem than the concession stand.

The words *concession stand* remind us of the point of the first supporting paragraph, while *Many of the other patrons* presents the point to be developed in the second supporting paragraph.

Teaching Tip

Suggest that students work in pairs to complete Activity 3.

3 Activity

Following is a brief sentence outline of an essay. The second and third topic sentences serve as transitional, or linking, sentences. Each reminds us of the point in the preceding paragraph and announces the point to be developed in the current paragraph. In the spaces provided, add the words needed to complete the second and third topic sentences.

Thesis

The most helpful values I learned from my parents are the importance of family support, of hard work, and of a good education.

First supporting paragraph

First, my parents taught me that family members should stick together, especially in times of trouble. . . .

Second supporting paragraph

In addition to teaching me about the importance of ___*family support*___,

_____,

my parents taught me the value of ___*hard work*___

_____. . . .

Third supporting paragraph

Along with the value of ___*hard work,*___

my parents emphasized the benefits of ___*a good education*___

_____ . . . .

Other Connecting Words

In addition to transitions, there are three other kinds of connecting words that help tie together the specific evidence in a paper: *repeated words, pronouns,* and *synonyms.*



www.mhhe.com/langan

Repeated Words

Many of us have been taught correctly not to repeat ourselves in writing. However, repeating *key* words helps tie together the flow of thought in a paper. Below, repeated words remind readers of the selection's central idea.

One reason for studying psychology is to help you deal with your children. Perhaps your young daughter refuses to go to bed when you want her to and bursts into tears at the least mention of lights out. A little knowledge of psychology comes in handy. Offer her a choice of staying up until 7:30 with you or going upstairs and playing until 8:00. Since she gets to make the choice, she does not feel so powerless and will not resist. **[Punto y seguido].**

Psychology is also useful in rewarding a child for a job well done. Instead of telling your ten-year-old son what a good boy he is when he makes his own bed, tell him how neat it looks, how happy you are to see it, and how proud of him you are for doing it by himself. The psychology books will tell you that being a good boy is much harder to live up to than doing one job well.

ESL Tip

Nonnative speakers have difficulty using correct pronouns/forms. Possessive adjectives can present a particular problem for Spanish speakers.

Teaching Tip

Explain pronoun-antecedent agreement and pronoun reference to your students.

Teaching Tip

Suggest that your students consult a thesaurus to locate synonyms, but caution against using unfamiliar words.

Pronouns

Pronouns (*he, she, it, you, they, this, that,* and others) are another way to connect ideas. Also, using pronouns in place of other words can help you avoid needless repetition. (Note, however, that pronouns should be used with care to avoid the problems described on pages 504–506.) Here is a selection that makes good use of pronouns:

Another way for people to economize at an amusement park is to bring their own food. If they pack a nourishing, well-balanced lunch of cold chicken, carrot sticks, and fruit, they will avoid having to pay high prices for hamburgers and hot dogs. They will also save on calories. Also, instead of filling up on soft drinks, they should bring a thermos of iced tea. Iced tea is more refreshing than soda, and it is a great deal cheaper. Every dollar that is not spent at a refreshment stand is one that can be spent on another ride.

Synonyms

Synonyms are words alike in meaning. Using synonyms can also help move the reader easily from one thought to the next. In addition, the use of synonyms increases variety and interest by avoiding needless repetition.

Note the synonyms for *method* in the following selection:

ESL Tip

Nonnative speakers may use a thesaurus to check for synonyms.

Several methods of fund-raising work well with small organizations. One technique is to hold an auction, with everyone either contributing an item from home or obtaining a donation from a sympathetic local merchant. Because all the merchandise and the services of the auctioneer have been donated, the entire proceeds can be placed in the organization's treasury. A second fund-raising procedure is a car wash. Club members and their children get together on a Saturday and wash all the cars in the neighborhood for a few dollars apiece. A third, time-tested way to raise money is to hold a

bake sale, with each family contributing homemade cookies, brownies, layer cakes, or cupcakes. Sold by the piece or by the box, these baked goods will satisfyingly fill both the stomach and the pocketbook.

Read the selection below and then answer the questions about it that follow.

[1]When I think about my childhood in the 1930s, life today seems like the greatest of luxuries. [2]In our house, we had only a wood-burning cookstove in the kitchen to keep us warm. [3]In the morning, my father would get up in the icy cold, go downstairs, and light a fire in the black iron range. [4]When he called us, I would put off leaving my warm bed until the last possible minute and then quickly grab my school clothes. [5]The water pitcher and washing basin in my room would be layered with ice, and my breath would come out as white puffs as I ran downstairs. [6]My sisters and I would all dress as quickly as possible in the chilly but bearable air of the kitchen. [7]Our schoolroom, once we had arrived, didn't provide much relief from the cold. [8]Students wore woolen mitts that left their fingers free but covered their palms and wrists. [9]Even with these, we occasionally suffered chilblains. [10]The throbbing swellings on our hands made writing a painful process. [11]When we returned home in the afternoon, we spent all our indoor hours in the warm kitchen. [12]We hated to leave it at bedtime to make the return trip to those cold bedrooms and frigid sheets. [13]My mother made up hot-water bottles and gave us hot bricks to tuck under the covers, but nothing could eliminate the agony of that penetrating cold when we first slid under the bedclothes.

4 Activity

1. How many times is the key word *cold* used? ***4***

2. Write here the pronoun that is used for *father* (sentence 4): ***he***

3. Write here the words in sentence 3 that are used as a synonym for *cookstove*: ***iron range***; write in the words in sentence 10 that are used as a synonym for *chilblains:* ***throbbing swellings***; write in the word in sentence 12 that is used as a synonym for *cold:* ***frigid***.

Introductions, Conclusions, and Titles

So far, this chapter has discussed ways to organize and connect the supporting paragraphs of an essay. A well-organized essay, however, also needs a strong introductory paragraph, an effective concluding paragraph, and a good title.

Introductory Paragraph

Functions of the Introduction



www.mhhe.com/langan

A well-written introductory paragraph performs four important roles:

1. It attracts the reader's interest, encouraging him or her to continue reading the essay.

2. It supplies any background information that the reader may need to understand the essay.

3. It presents a thesis statement. This clear, direct statement of the main idea of the paper usually appears near the end of the introductory paragraph.

4. It indicates a plan of development. In this preview, the major supporting points for the thesis are listed in the order in which they will be presented. In some cases, the thesis and plan of development appear in the same sentence. However, writers sometimes choose not to describe the plan of development.

Teaching Tip

Writers may want to write several introductions for the same topic, and then decide which introductory paragraph is most effective.

Common Methods of Introduction

Here are some common methods of introduction. Use any one method, or a combination of methods, to introduce your subject to the reader in an interesting way.

- **Begin with a broad, general statement of your topic and narrow it down to your thesis statement.** Broad, general statements ease the reader into your thesis statement by first introducing the topic. In the example below, the writer talks generally about diets and then narrows down to comments on a specific diet.

  Bookstore shelves today are crammed with dozens of different diet books. The American public seems willing to try any sort of diet, especially the ones that promise instant, miraculous results. And authors are more than willing to invent new fad diets to cash in on this craze. Unfortunately, some of these fad diets are ineffective or even unsafe. One of the worst fad diets is the Palm Beach plan. It is impractical, doesn't achieve the results it claims, and is a sure route to poor nutrition.

- **Start with an idea or a situation that is the opposite of the one you will develop.** This approach works because your readers will be surprised, and then intrigued, by the contrast between the opening idea and the thesis that follows it.

When I decided to return to school at age thirty-five, I wasn't at all worried about my ability to do the work. After all, I was a grown woman who had raised a family, not a confused teenager fresh out of high school. But when I started classes, I realized that those confused teenagers sitting around me were in much better shape for college than I was. They still had all their classroom skills in bright, shiny condition, while mine had grown rusty from disuse. I had to learn how to locate information in a library, how to write a report, and even how to speak up in class discussions.

- **Explain the importance of your topic to the reader.** If you can convince your readers that the subject in some way applies to them, or is something they should know more about, they will want to keep reading.

Diseases like scarlet fever and whooping cough used to kill more young children than any other cause. Today, however, child mortality due to disease has been almost completely eliminated by medical science. Instead, car accidents are the number-one killer of our children. And most of the children fatally injured in car accidents were not protected by car seats, belts, or restraints of any kind. Several steps must be taken to reduce the serious dangers car accidents pose to children.

- **Use an incident or a brief story.** Stories are naturally interesting. They appeal to a reader's curiosity. In your introduction, an anecdote will grab the reader's attention right away. The story should be brief and should be related to your main idea. The incident in the story can be something that happened to you, something you have heard about, or something you have read about in a newspaper or magazine.

Early Sunday morning, the young mother dressed her little girl warmly and gave her a candy bar, a picture book, and a well-worn stuffed rabbit. Together, they drove downtown to a Methodist church. There the mother told the little girl to wait on the stone steps until children began arriving for Sunday school. Then the young mother drove off, abandoning her five-year-old because she couldn't cope with being a parent anymore. This incident is one of thousands of cases of child neglect and abuse that occur annually. **[Punto y seguido].**

Perhaps the automatic right to become a parent should no longer exist. Would-be parents should be forced to apply for parental licenses for which they would have to meet three important conditions.

 Ask one or more questions. You may simply want the reader to think about possible answers, or you may plan to answer the questions yourself later in the paper.

What is love? How do we know that we are really in love? When we meet that special person, how can we tell that our feelings are genuine and not merely infatuation? And, if they are genuine, will these feelings last? Love, as we all know, is difficult to define. But most people agree that true and lasting love involves far more than mere physical attraction. Love involves mutual respect, the desire to give rather than take, and the feeling of being wholly at ease.

 Use a quotation. A quotation can be something you have read in a book or an article. It can also be something that you have heard: a popular saying or proverb ("Never give advice to a friend"), a current or recent advertising slogan ("Can you hear me now?"), or a favorite expression used by friends or family ("My father always says . . ."). Using a quotation in your introductory paragraph lets you add someone else's voice to your own.

"Fish and visitors," wrote Benjamin Franklin, "begin to smell after three days." Last summer, when my sister and her family came to spend their two-week vacation with us, I became convinced that Franklin was right. After only three days of my family's visit, I was thoroughly sick of my brother-in-law's lame jokes, my sister's endless complaints about her boss, and their children's constant invasions of our privacy.

5 Activity

The box that follows summarizes the six kinds of introductions. Read the introductions that come after it and, in the space provided, write the letter of the kind of introduction used in each case.

A. General to narrow	D. Incident or story
B. Starting with an opposite	E. Questions
C. Stating importance of topic	F. Quotation

B 1. The ad, in full color on a glossy magazine page, shows a beautiful kitchen with gleaming counters. In the foreground, on one of the counters, stands a shiny new food processor. Usually, a feminine hand is touching it lovingly. Around the main picture are other, smaller shots. They show mounds of perfectly sliced onion rings, thin rounds of juicy tomatoes, heaps of matchstick-sized potatoes, and piles of golden, evenly grated cheese. The ad copy tells you how wonderful, how easy, food preparation will be with a processor. Don't believe it. My processor turned out to be expensive, difficult to operate, and very limited in its use.

F 2. My father stubbornly says, "You can often tell a book by its cover," and when it comes to certain paperbacks, he's right. When you're browsing in the drugstore or supermarket and you see a paperback featuring an attractive young woman in a low-cut dress fleeing from a handsome dark figure in a shadowy castle, you know exactly what you're getting. Every romance novel has the same elements: an innocent heroine, an exotic setting, and a cruel but fascinating hero.

A 3. We Americans are incredibly lazy. Instead of cooking a simple, nourishing meal, we pop a frozen dinner into the oven. Instead of studying a daily newspaper, we are contented with the capsule summaries on the network news. Worst of all, instead of walking even a few blocks to the local convenience store, we jump into our cars. This dependence on the automobile, even for short trips, has robbed us of a valuable experience— walking. If we drove less and walked more, we would save money, become healthier, and discover fascinating things about our surroundings.

Teaching Tip

You may want to do this activity with the entire class.

Concluding Paragraph

A concluding paragraph is your chance to remind the reader of your thesis idea and bring the paper to a natural and graceful end.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Common Methods of Conclusion

You may use any one of the methods below, or a combination of methods, to round off your paper.

- **End with a summary and final thought.** When army instructors train new recruits, each of their lessons follows a three-step formula:

1. Tell them what you're going to tell them.
2. Tell them.
3. Tell them what you've told them.

An essay that ends with a summary is not very different. After you have stated your thesis (Tell them what you're going to tell them) and supported it (Tell them), you restate the thesis and supporting points (Tell them what you've told them). However, don't use the exact wording you used before. Here is a summary conclusion:

> Online shopping at home, then, has several advantages. Such shopping is convenient, saves you money, and saves you time. It is not surprising that growing numbers of people are doing the majority of their shopping on the Internet, for everything from turnip seeds to televisions.

Note that the summary is accompanied by a final comment that rounds off the paper and brings the discussion to a close. This combination of a summary and a final thought is the most common method of concluding an essay.

- **Include a thought-provoking question or short series of questions.** A question grabs the reader's attention. It is a direct appeal to your reader to think further about what you have written. A question should follow logically from the points you have already made in the paper. A question must deal with one of these areas:

1. Why the subject of your paper is important
2. What might happen in the future
3. What should be done about this subject
4. Which choice should be made

In your conclusion, you may provide an answer to your question. Be sure, though, that the question is closely related to your thesis. Here is an example:

> What, then, will happen when most of the population will be over sixty years old? Retirement policies could change dramatically, with the age-sixty-five testimonial dinner and gold watch postponed for five or ten years. Even television would change as the Red Bull generation replaces the Pepsi generation. Glamorous gray-haired models would sell everything from toilet paper to televisions. New soap operas and situation comedies would reveal the secrets of the sunset years. It will be a different world indeed when the young find themselves outnumbered.

Teaching Tip

> Writers sometimes ask a question that is unrelated to the thesis, which is like opening a can of worms. Caution students against this practice.

- **End with a prediction or recommendation.** Like questions, predictions and recommendations also involve your readers. A prediction states what may happen in the future:

If people stopped to think before acquiring pets, there would be fewer instances of cruelty to animals. Many times, it is the people who adopt pets without considering the expense and responsibility involved who mistreat and neglect their animals. Pets are living creatures. They do not deserve to be treated as carelessly as one would treat a stuffed toy.

A recommendation suggests what should be done about a situation or problem:

Stereotypes such as the ditzy blonde, harried executive, and annoying in-law are insulting enough to begin with. In magazine ads or television commercials, they become even more insulting. Now these unfortunate characters are not just being laughed at; they are being turned into hucksters to sell products to an unsuspecting public. Consumers should boycott companies whose advertising continues to use such stereotypes.

In the space provided, note how each concluding paragraph ends: with a summary and final thought (write S in the space), with a prediction or recommendation (write P/R), or with a question (write Q).

6 Activity

P/R 1. Disappointments are unwelcome, but regular, visitors in everyone's life. We can feel depressed about them, or we can try to escape from them. The best thing, though, is to accept a disappointment and then try to use it somehow: step over the unwelcome visitor and then get on with life.

Q 2. Holidays, it is clear, are often not the fulfilling experience they are supposed to be. They can, in fact, be very stressful. But would we rather have a holiday-free calendar?

S 3. Some people dream of starring roles, their names in lights, and their pictures on the cover of People magazine. I'm not one of them, though. A famous person gives up private life, feels pressured all the time, and is never completely safe. So let someone else have that cover story. I'd rather lead an ordinary, but calm, life than a stress-filled one.

Teaching Tip

Writers sometimes forget that a title should be a phrase, not a complete sentence.

Titles

A title is usually a very brief summary of what your paper is about. It is often no more than several words. You may find it easier to write the title *after* you have completed your paper.

Following are the introductory paragraphs for two of the essays in this text, along with the titles of the essays.

Introductory paragraph

I'm not just a consumer□ I'm a victim. If I order a product, it is sure to arrive in the wrong color, size, or quantity. If I hire people to do repairs, they never arrive on the day scheduled. If I owe a bill, the computer is bound to overcharge me. Therefore, in self-defense, I have developed the following consumer's guide to complaining effectively.

Title: How to Complain

Introductory paragraph

Schools divide people into categories. From first grade on up, students are labeled □advanced□ or □deprived□ or □remedial□ or □antisocial.□ Students pigeonhole their fellow students, too. We've all known the □brain,□the □jock,□the □dummy,□and the □teacher's pet.□In most cases, these narrow labels are misleading and inaccurate. But there is one label for a certain type of college student that says it all: □zombie.□

Title: Student Zombies

Note that you should not underline the title. Nor should you put quotation marks around it. On the other hand, you should capitalize all but small connecting words in the title. Also, you should skip a space between the title and the first line of the text. (See □Manuscript Form,□page 534.)

Note:

Answers may vary.

Write an appropriate title for each of the introductory paragraphs that follow.

7 Activity

1. For my birthday this month, my wife has offered to treat me to dinner at the restaurant of my choice. I think she expects me to ask for a meal at the Chalet, the classiest, most expensive restaurant in town. However, I'm going to eat my birthday dinner at McDonald's. When I compare the two restaurants, the advantages of eating at McDonald's are clear.

Title: ***Advantages of McDonald's***

2. I've been in lots of diners, and they've always seemed to be warm, busy, friendly, happy places. That's why, on a recent Monday night, I stopped at a diner for a cup of coffee. I was returning home after an all-day car trip and needed something to help me make the last forty-five miles. A diner at midnight, however, was not the place I had expected. It was different□ and lonely.

Title: ***A Lonely Diner***

3. If you see punk-rock-concert audiences only on television or in newspaper photos, the people at these events may all seem to be excited teenagers. However, if you attended a few punk-rock shows, you would see that several kinds of people make up the crowd. At any concert, you would find the typical fan, the out-of-place person, and the troublemaker.

Title: ***Audiences at Rock Concerts***



© Topham/The Image Works



Peace Lily, 2001 (oil on canvas) by Copeland, Mark (b.1956) (Contemporary Artist) © Private Collection/ © Portal Gallery Ltd/ The Bridgeman Art Library

For further practice in writing titles, write an appropriate title for each image pictured here.

Practice in Organizing and Connecting Specific Evidence

You now know the third step in effective writing: organizing the specific evidence used to support the thesis of a paper. This closing section will expand and strengthen your understanding of the third step in writing. You will work through the following series of activities:

□organizing through time or emphatic order

□providing transitions

□identifying transitions and other connecting words

□completing transitional sentences

□identifying introductions and conclusions

Teaching Tip

Consider making a game out of the next two activities. See how quickly your students can complete them correctly. You may want to ask them to create a set of game rules first.

Organizing through Time or Emphatic Order

Use time order to organize the scrambled lists of supporting ideas below. Write *1* beside the supporting idea that should come first in time, *2* beside the idea that logically follows, and *3* beside the idea that comes last in time.

8 Activity

1. Thesis: When I was a child, Disney movies frightened me more than any other kind.

   1 As a five-year-old, I was terrified by the movie *Pinocchio,* about a puppet transformed into a boy.

   3 Although I saw *Bambi* when I was old enough to begin poking fun at □baby movies,□the scene during which Bambi's mother is killed has stayed with me to this day.

   2 About a year after *Pinocchio*, I gripped my seat in fear as the witches and goblins of *Fantasia* flew across the screen.

2. Thesis: There are techniques to help you overcome three common pitfalls in making a cheesecake.

   3 There's only one way to remove the cake cleanly and easily from its pan.

   1 Plan in advance to have your equipment ready and the ingredients at room temperature.

   2 Remember to time the baking process and regulate the oven temperature while the cake is baking.

3. Thesis: Applying for unemployment benefits was a confusing, frustrating experience.

   1 It was difficult to find both the office and a place to park.

   3 When I finally reached the head of the line after four hours of waiting, the clerk had problems processing my claim.

   2 There was no one to direct or help me when I entered the large office, which was packed with people.

Use emphatic order (order of importance) to arrange the following scrambled lists of supporting ideas. For each thesis, write 1 in the blank beside the point that is perhaps less important or interesting than the other two, 2 beside the point that appears more important or interesting, and 3 beside the point that should be most emphasized.

9 Activity

1. Thesis: My part-time job has been an invaluable part of my life this year.

   2 Better yet, it has taught me how to get along with many kinds of people.

   1 Since it's in the morning, it usually keeps me from staying up too late.

   3 Without it, I would have had to drop out of school.

2. Thesis: We received some odd gifts for our wedding.

   3 The winner in the odd-gift category was a large wooden box with no apparent purpose or function.

   1 Someone gave us a gift certificate for a massage.

   2 Even stranger, my uncle gave me his favorite bowling ball.

3. Thesis: Donna is my most loyal friend.

   2 She has taken time to do special favors for me.

   3 She's always there in real emergencies or emotional crises.

   1 She once lent me her favorite necklace to wear on a date.

Providing Transitions

In the spaces provided, add appropriate transitions to tie together the sentences and ideas in the following essay. Draw from the words given in the boxes above the paragraphs. Use each word only once.

Teaching Tip

For this activity, read each sentence aloud as your students fill in the blanks.

10 Activity

Annoying People

President Richard Nixon used to keep an enemies list of all the people he didn't especially like. I'm ashamed to confess it, but I, too, have an enemies list□ a mental one. On this list are all the people I would gladly live without, the ones who cause my blood pressure to rise to the boiling point. The top three places on the list go to people with annoying nervous habits, people

who talk in movie theaters, and people who talk on cell phones while driving.

For example

First of all

Another

However

First of all, there are the people with annoying nervous habits.

For example, there are the ones who make faces. When in deep thought, they twitch, squint, and frown, and they can be a real distraction when I'm trying to concentrate during an exam. ***Another*** type of nervous character makes useless designs. These people bend paper clips into abstract sculptures or string the clips into necklaces as they talk.

However, neither of these groups is as bad as the people who make noises. These individuals, when they are feeling uncomfortable, bite their fingernails or crack their knuckles. If they have a pencil in their hands, they tap it rhythmically against whatever surface is handy□ a desk, a book, a head. Lacking a pencil to play with, they jingle the loose change or keys in their pockets. These people make me wish I were hard of hearing.

On the contrary

Then

As a result

After

Second

A ***second*** category of people I would gladly do away with is the ones who talk in movie theaters. These people are not content to sit back, relax, and enjoy the film they have paid to see. ***On the contrary***, they feel compelled to comment loudly on everything from the hero's hairstyle to the appropriateness of the background music. ***As a result***, no one hears a word of any dialogue except theirs. ***After*** these people have been in the theater for a while, their interest in the movie may fade. ***Then*** they will start discussing other things, and the people around them will be treated to an instant replay of the latest family scandal or soap-opera episode. These stories may be entertaining, but they don't belong in a movie theater.

In addition

But

Last of all

Last of all, there are the people who talk on the phone while they're driving. One of the things that irritates me about them is the way they seem to be showing off. They're saying, "Look at me! I'm so important I have to make phone calls in my car." ***In addition***, such behavior is just plain dangerous. Instead of concentrating on adjusting carefully to ever-changing traffic conditions, they're weaving all over the road or getting much too close to the car in front of them as they gossip with a friend, make an appointment with a doctor, or order a pizza.

So long as murder remains illegal, the nervous twitchers, movie talkers, and cell-phone users of the world are safe from me. ***But*** if ever I am granted the power of life or death, these people had better think twice about annoying me. They might not have long to live.

Identifying Transitions and Other Connecting Words

The following sentences use connecting words to help tie ideas together. The connecting words you are to identify are set off in italics. In the space, write T for *transition,* RW for *repeated word,* S for *synonym,* or P for *pronoun.*

Teaching Tip

Consider making a game out of this activity. See how quickly your students can complete the activity correctly. You may want to ask them to create a set of game rules first.

11 Activity

S 1. Kate wears a puffy, quilted, down-filled jacket. In this *garment,* she resembles a stack of inflated inner tubes.

P 2. Plants like poinsettias and mistletoe are pretty. *They* are also poisonous.

T 3. A strip of strong cloth can be used as an emergency fan-belt replacement. *In addition,* a roll of duct tape can be used to patch a leaky hose temporarily.

P 4. I'm always losing my soft contact lenses, which resemble little circles of thick Saran Wrap. One day I dropped both of *them* into a cup of hot tea.

RW 5. The molded plastic chairs in the classrooms are hard and uncomfortable. When I sit in one of these *chairs,* I feel as if I were sitting in a bucket.

P 6. One way to tell if your skin is aging is to pinch a fold of skin on the back of your hand. If *it* doesn't smooth out quickly, your skin is losing its youthful tone.

P 7. I never eat sloppy joes. *They* look as if they've already been eaten.

T 8. Clothing intended just for children seems to have vanished. *Instead,* children wear scaled-down versions of everything adults wear.

RW 9. Some successful salespeople use voice tones and hand gestures that are almost hypnotic. Customers are not conscious of this *hypnotic* effect but merely feel an urge to buy.

S 10. The giant cockroaches in Florida are the subject of local legends. A visitor, according to one tale, saw one of the *insects,* thought it was a Volkswagen, and tried to drive it away.

T 11. Some thieves scour garbage cans for credit-card receipts. *Then* they use the owner's name and card number to order merchandise by phone.

P 12. When the phone rang, I dropped the garden hose. *It* whipped around crazily and squirted water through the kitchen screen door.

RW 13. There are many phobias other than the ones described in psychology textbooks. I have *phobias,* for instance, about toasters and lawn mowers.

T 14. My mother believes that food is love. *Therefore,* when she offers homemade cookies or cupcakes, I hate to hurt her feelings by refusing them.

Teaching Tip

Suggest that students work in pairs to complete Activity 12.

Completing Transitional Sentences

Following are brief sentence outlines from two essays. In each outline, the second and third topic sentences serve as transitional, or linking, sentences. Each reminds us of the point in the preceding paragraph and announces the point to be developed in the current paragraph. In the spaces provided, add the words needed to complete the second and third topic sentences.

To set up a day care center in your home, you must make sure your house conforms to state regulations, obtain the necessary legal permits, and advertise your service in the right places.

12 Activity

Thesis 1

First supporting paragraph

First of all, as a potential operator of a home day care center, you must make sure your house conforms to state regulations. . . .

Second supporting paragraph

After making certain that ***your house conforms to regulations,***

_____,

you must obtain ***legal permits***. . . .

Third supporting paragraph

Finally, once you have the necessary ___*legal permits,*___

you can begin to ___*advertise*___.

Thesis 2

Cheaper cost, greater comfort, and superior electronic technology make watching football at home more enjoyable than attending a game at the stadium.

First supporting paragraph

For one thing, watching the game on TV eliminates the cost of attending the game. . . .

Second supporting paragraph

In addition to saving me money, watching the game at home is more ___*comfortable*___ than sitting in a stadium. . . .

Third supporting paragraph

Even more important than ___*cost*___ and ___*comfort,*___ though, is the ___*technology*___ that makes a televised game better than the □real thing.□. . .

Identifying Introductions and Conclusions

The following box lists six common kinds of introductions and three common kinds of conclusions. Read the three pairs of introductory and concluding paragraphs that follow. Then, in the space provided, write the letter of the kind of introduction and conclusion used in each paragraph.

Teaching Tip

Consider making a game out of this activity. See how quickly your students can complete the activity correctly. You may want to ask them to create a set of game rules first.

Introductions	Conclusions
A. General to narrow	G. Summary and final thought
B. Starting with an opposite	H. Question(s)
C. Stating importance of topic	I. Prediction or recommendation
D. Incident or story	
E. Question(s)	
F. Quotation	

13 Activity

D Shortly before Easter, our local elementary school sponsored a fund-raising event at which classroom pets and their babies□ hamsters, guinea pigs, and chicks□ were available for adoption. Afterward, as I was driving home, I saw a hand drop a baby hamster out of the car ahead of me. I couldn't avoid running over the tiny creature. One of the parents had taken the pet, regretted the decision, and decided to get rid of it. Such people have never stopped to consider the several real obligations involved in owning a pet.

Pair 1

I A pet cannot be thrown onto a trash heap when it is no longer wanted or tossed into a closet if it begins to bore its owner. A pet, like us, is a living thing that needs attention and care. Would-be owners, therefore, should think seriously about their responsibilities before they acquire a pet.

Pair 2

E What would life be like if we could read each other's minds? Would communications be instantaneous and perfectly clear? These questions will never be answered unless mental telepathy becomes a fact of life. Until then, we will have to make do with less perfect means of communication. Letters, telephone calls, and e-mail messages do have serious drawbacks.

G Neither letters, phone calls, nor e-mails guarantee perfect communication. With all our sophisticated skills, we human beings often communicate less effectively than howling wolves or chattering monkeys. We always seem to find some way to foul up the message.

Pair 3

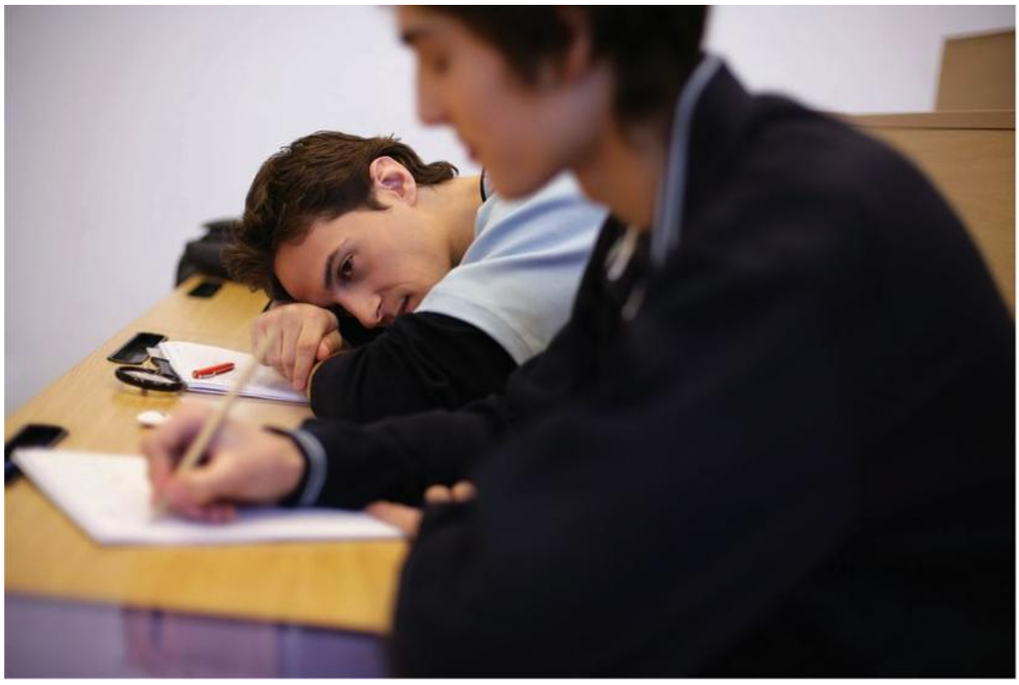
F □Few things are harder to put up with,□said Mark Twain, □than the annoyance of a good example.□Twain obviously knew the problems faced by siblings cursed with older brothers or sisters who are models of perfection. All our lives, my older sister Shelley and I have been compared. Unfortunately, in competition with my sister's virtues, my looks, talents, and accomplishments always ended up on the losing side.

G Although I always lost in the sibling contests of looks, talents, and accomplishments, Shelley and I have somehow managed not to turn into deadly enemies. Feeling like the dud of the family, in fact, helped me to develop a drive to succeed and a sense of humor. In our sibling rivalry, we both managed to win.

5: The Fourth Step in Essay Writing

This chapter will show you how to

- revise so that your sentences flow smoothly and clearly
- edit so that your sentences are error free



© Image Source/Corbis

What differences do you notice about the two students in the photograph above? Most likely, you can identify with both of them. Thinking about your own experiences in the classroom, write an essay about one or more teachers or instructors who have conducted classes that made you glad to learn or, alternatively, left you daydreaming in class. Once you have written your first draft, read it aloud to make sure all your sentences flow smoothly and clearly.

Teaching Tip

Ask students to complete this writing prompt in class.

Up to now, this book has emphasized the first three goals in effective writing: unity, support, and coherence. This chapter focuses on the fourth goal of writing effectively: sentence skills. You'll learn how to revise an essay so that your sentences flow smoothly and clearly. Then you'll review how to edit a paper for mistakes in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Revising Sentences

These strategies will help you to revise your sentences effectively:

- Use parallelism.
- Use a consistent point of view.
- Use specifi c words.
- Use active verbs.
- Use concise words.
- Vary your sentences.

Teaching Tip

Explain the concept of parallelism to students. Provide an image of parallel bars. Ask them what might happen to a gymnast if the bars are not properly balanced.

Use Parallelism

Words in a pair or a series should have parallel structure. By balancing the items in a pair or a series so that they have the same kind of structure, you will make the sentence clearer and easier to read. Notice how the parallel sentences that follow read more smoothly than the nonparallel ones.

ESL Tip

Remind nonnative students that when items in a sentence are combined with coordinating conjunctions (*and, or, nor, so, but, yet*), they should use the same grammatical form.

Nonparallel (Not Balanced)	Parallel (Balanced)
My job includes checking the inventory, initialing the orders, and *to call* the suppliers.	My job includes checking the inventory, initialing the orders, and calling the suppliers. (A balanced series of *-ing* words: *checking, initialing, calling*)
The game-show contestant was told to be cheerful, charming, and *with enthusiasm.*	The game-show contestant was told to be cheerful, charming, and enthusiastic. (A balanced series of descriptive words: *cheerful, charming, enthusiastic*)
Grandmother likes to read mystery novels, to do needlepoint, and *browsing* the Internet.	Grandmother likes to read mystery novels, to do needlepoint, and to browse the Internet. (A balanced series of *to* verbs: *to read, to do, to browse*)
We painted the trim in the living room; *the wallpaper was put up by a professional.*	We painted the trim in the living room; a professional put up the wallpaper. (Balanced verbs and word order: *We painted . . .; a professional put up . . .*)

Balanced sentences are not a skill you need worry about when writing first drafts. But when you rewrite, you should try to put matching words and ideas into matching structures. Such parallelism will improve your writing style.

1 Activity

Cross out and revise the unbalanced part of each of the following sentences.

EXAMPLE Chocolate makes me gain weight, lose my appetite, and ~~breaking~~ *break* out in hives.

1. The novelty store sells hand buzzers, plastic fangs, and *fake* insects ~~that are fake~~.
2. Many people share the same three intense fears: being in high places, working with numbers, and *making* speeches.
3. To decide on a career, students should think closely about their interests, hobbies, and ~~what they are skilled at~~ *skills*.
4. At the body shop, the car was sanded down to the bare metal, painted with primer, and *sprayed with* red enamel ~~was sprayed on~~.
5. To become a dancer, Lola is taking lessons, working in amateur shows, and ~~auditioned~~ *auditioning* for professional companies.
6. Juan's last job offered security; a better chance for advancement ~~is offered by his new job~~ *his new job offers*.
7. People in today's world often try to avoid silence, whether on the job, in school, or ~~when relaxing~~ at home.
8. Because the dying woman was dignified and ~~with courage~~ *courageous*, she won everyone's respect.
9. The politician trusted no one, rewarded loyalty, and ~~was dependent~~ *depended* only on his own instincts.
10. If we're not careful, we'll leave the next generation polluted air, contaminated water, and *dying* forests ~~that are dying~~.

Teaching Tip

For this activity, read each sentence aloud so that students can hear the unbalanced part.

Use a Consistent Point of View

Consistency with Verbs

Do not shift verb tenses unnecessarily. If you begin writing a paper in the present tense, do not shift suddenly to the past. If you begin in the past, do not shift without reason to the present. Notice the inconsistent verb tenses in the following example:

Incorrect Jean *punched* down the risen yeast dough in the bowl. Then she *dumps* it onto the floured worktable and *kneaded* it into a smooth, shiny ball.

The verbs must be consistently in the present tense:

Correct Jean *punches* down the risen yeast dough in the bowl. Then she *dumps* it onto the floured worktable and *kneads* it into a smooth, shiny ball.

Or the verbs must be consistently in the past tense:

Correct Jean *punched* down the risen yeast dough in the bowl. Then she *dumped* it onto the floured worktable and *kneaded* it into a smooth, shiny ball.

ESL Tip

Nonnative speakers need to know that time is an important message expressed by a verb in English. If You shift tenses, readers will have difficulty following the sequence of events in your writing.

Teaching Tip

Writers sometimes may not realize that they are shifting tenses. Stress to your students that verb consistency can be achieved during editing.

2 Activity

Make the verbs in each sentence consistent with the *first* verb used. Cross out the incorrect verb and write the correct form in the space at the left.

EXAMPLE

ran Aunt Flo tried to kiss her little nephew, but he ~~runs~~ out of the room.

arrived 1. An aggressive news photographer knocked a reporter to the ground as the movie stars ~~arrive~~ for the Academy Awards.

asked 2. The winning wheelchair racer in the marathon slumped back in exhaustion and ~~asks~~ for some ice to soothe his blistered hands.

slices 3. On the commercial for mail-order kitchen knives, an actor cuts a tree branch in half and ~~sliced~~ an aluminum can into ribbons.

goes 4. "My husband is so dumb," said Martha, "that when he ~~went~~ to Las Vegas, he tries to play the soda machines."

tipped 5. The Jeep swerved around the corner, went up on two wheels, and ~~tips~~ over on its side.

floats 6. In a zero-gravity atmosphere, water breaks up into droplets and ~~floated~~ around in space.

grabbed 7. Ralph ripped open the bag of cheese puffs with his teeth, ~~grabs~~ handfuls of the salty orange squiggles, and stuffed them into his mouth.

swoops 8. From his perch high up on the rocky cliff, the eagle spots a white-tailed rabbit and ~~swooped~~ down toward his victim.

recharge 9. Several times a year, I like to take a day off, go away by myself, and ~~recharged~~ my mental batteries.

burned 10. When the great earthquake struck San Francisco in 1906, the entire city ~~burns~~ to the ground in less than twenty-four hours.

Consistency with Pronouns

When writing a paper, you should not shift your point of view unnecessarily. Be consistent in your use of first-, second-, or third-person pronouns.

ESL Tip

For nonnative speakers, this error often occurs because of unfamiliarity with rules for agreement.

Point of View

	Singular	Plural
First-person pronouns	I (my, mine, me)	we (our, us)
Second-person pronouns	you (your)	you (your)
Third-person pronouns	he (his, him)	they (their, them)
	she (her)	
	it (its)	

Teaching Tip

Explain point of view to your students.

Teaching Tip

Draw attention to this tip.

TIP

Any person, place, or thing, as well as any indefinite pronoun such as *one, anyone, someone,* and so on (page 505), is a third-person word.

Teaching Tip

Caution students against using the pronoun *you* unnecessarily.

For instance, if you start writing in the first person, *I,* do not jump suddenly to the second person, *you.* Or if you are writing in the third person, *they,* do not shift unexpectedly to *you.* Look at the following examples.

Inconsistent	Consistent
One of the fringe benefits of my job is that *you* can use a company credit card for gasoline.	One of the fringe benefits of my job is that *I* can use a company credit card for gasoline.
(The most common mistake people make is to let *you* slip into their writing after they start with another pronoun.)	
Though *we* like most of *our* neighbors, there are a few *you* can't get along with.	Though *we* like most of *our* neighbors, there are a few *we* can't get along with.
(The writer begins with the first-person pronouns *we* and *our* but then shifts to the second-person *you.)*	

3 Activity

Cross out inconsistent pronouns in the following sentences, and revise with the correct form of the pronoun above each crossed-out word.

EXAMPLE When I examined the used car, ~~you~~ could see that one of the front fenders had been replaced.

1. Many people are ignorant of side effects that diets can have on ~~your~~ their health.
2. When I buy lipstick or nail polish, ~~you~~ I never know how the color will actually look.
3. It is expensive for us to take public transportation to work every day, but what choice do ~~you~~ we have if ~~you~~ we can't afford a car?
4. During the border crisis, each country refused to change ~~their~~ its aggressive stance.
5. If you want to do well in this course, ~~one~~ you should plan on attending every day.
6. One of the things I love about my new apartment is that ~~you~~ I can own a pet.
7. Toni refuses to eat pepperoni pizza because she says that it gives ~~you~~ her indigestion.
8. It's hard for us to pay for health insurance, but ~~you~~ we don't dare go without it.
9. People often take a first-aid course so that ~~we~~ they can learn how to help choking and heart attack victims.
10. There are several ways you can impress your new boss. For example, ~~one~~ you should dress well, arrive at work on time, and complete tasks efficiently.

Teaching Tip

Read each sentence aloud to help students hear the shifts in point of view.

Use Specific Words

To be an effective writer, you must use specific words rather than general words. Specific words create pictures in the reader's mind. They help capture interest and make your meaning clear. Compare the following sentences:

General	Specific
She walked down the street.	Anne wandered slowly along Rogers Lane.
Animals came into the place.	Hungry lions padded silently into the sawdust-covered arena.
The man signed the paper.	The biology teacher hastily scribbled his name on the course withdrawal slip.



www.mhhe.com/langan

ESL Tip

Nonnative speakers should consult a thesaurus for synonyms and more specific words. Extensive reading can also help ESL students develop a richer vocabulary.

The specific sentences create clear pictures in our minds. The details *show* us exactly what has happened.

Here are four ways to make your sentences specific.

1. Use exact names.

He sold his *camper.*

Luke sold his *Winnebago.*

2. Use lively verbs.

The flag *moved* in the breeze.

The flag *fluttered* in the breeze.

3. Use descriptive words (modifiers) before nouns.

A man strained to lift the crate.

A *heavyset, perspiring* man strained to lift the *heavy wooden* crate.

4. Use words that relate to the senses□ sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch.

That woman jogs five miles a day.

That *fragile-looking, gray-haired* woman jogs five miles a day. (*sight*)

A noise told the crowd that there were two minutes left to play.

A *piercing whistle* told the *cheering* crowd that there were two minutes left to play. (*hearing*)

When he returned, all he found in the refrigerator was bread and milk.

When he returned, all he found in the refrigerator was *stale* bread and *sour* milk. (*taste*)

Neil stroked the kitten's fur until he felt its tiny claws on his hand.

Neil stroked the kitten's *velvety* fur until he felt its tiny, *needle-sharp* claws on his hand. (*touch*)

Fran placed a sachet in her bureau drawer.

Fran placed a *lilac-scented* sachet in her bureau drawer. (*smell*)

4 Activity

Revise the following sentences, replacing vague, indefinite words with sharp, specific ones.

EXAMPLE

Several of our appliances broke down at the same time.

Our washer, refrigerator, and television broke . . .

1. *Salty snacks* are my diet downfall.

Potato chips, pretzels, and salted peanuts . . .

_____

_____

2. I swept aside the *things* on my desk to spread out the road map.

. . . papers, books, and magazines . . .

_____

_____

3. Our neighbor's family room has *a lot of electronic equipment.*

. . . a TV, a stereo, and a computer.

_____

_____

4. *Several sections* of the newspaper were missing.

The comics, the sports pages, the obituaries, and the styles section . . .

_____

_____

5. The doctor examined *various parts of my body* before diagnosing my illness as bronchitis.

. . . my throat, my ears, and my lungs . . .

_____

_____

Note:

Answers will vary; examples are shown.

Teaching Tip

For a memorable lesson, do something outrageous or unexpected as you enter the classroom. When students complete this activity, ask them to recall what you did.

5 Activity

Again, you will practice changing vague, indefinite writing into lively, image-filled writing that helps capture the reader's interest and makes your meaning clear. With the help of the methods described on page 111, add specific details to the five sentences that follow. Note the two examples.

EXAMPLES

The person got off the bus.

The teenage boy bounded down the steps of the shiny yellow school bus.

She worked hard all summer.

All summer, Eva sorted peaches and blueberries in the hot, noisy canning factory.

1. The car would not start.

The rusty old Buick sputtered, whined, and refused to start.

_____

_____

2. The test was difficult.

The mathematics final was filled with tricky, baffling problems.

_____

_____

3. The boy was tired.

Little Robbie was so exhausted that he could scarcely keep his eyes open.

_____

_____

4. My room needs cleaning.

My cluttered, jumbled, dusty bedroom needs to be swept out, scrubbed, and reorganized.

_____

5. A vehicle blocked traffic.

A broken-down city bus blocked Main Street and stopped traffic for an hour.

_____

_____

Note:

Answers will vary; examples are shown.

Teaching Tip

You may want to ask students to work in pairs. Encourage them to create funny, imaginative sentences.



Rewrite the sign pictured here using lively, image-filled writing that will grab people's attention.

Use Active Verbs

When the subject of a sentence performs the action of the verb, the verb is in the *active voice.* When the subject of a sentence receives the action of a verb, the verb is in the *passive voice.*



www.mhhe.com/langan

Teaching Tip

You may want to mention that passive verbs are encouraged in certain contexts, such as scientific writing.

Passive voice uses a form of the verb *to be* (*am, is, are, was, were*) and the past participle of the main verb (usually the same as its past-tense form). Look at the following active and passive forms.

Passive	Active
The computer *was turned on* by Hakim.	Hakim *turned on* the computer.
The car's air conditioner *was fixed* by the mechanic.	The mechanic *fixed* the car's air conditioner

In general, active verbs are more effective than passive verbs. Active verbs give your writing a simpler and more vigorous style.

6 Activity

Revise the following sentences, changing verbs from the passive to the active voice and making any other word changes necessary.

EXAMPLE

Fruits and vegetables are painted often by artists.

Artists often paint fruits and vegetables.

1. Many unhealthy foods are included in the typical American diet.

   The typical American diet includes many unhealthy foods.

2. The family picnic was invaded by hundreds of biting ants.

   Hundreds of biting ants invaded the family picnic.

3. Antibiotics are used by doctors to treat many infections.

   Doctors use antibiotics to treat many infections.

4. The fatal traffic accident was caused by a drunk driver.

   A drunk driver caused the fatal traffic accident.

5. Final grades will be determined by the instructor on the basis of class performance.

   The instructor will determine final grades . . .

Teaching Tip

Take an opinion poll in class to see if students think that wordiness is a sign of lazy or careless writing. Writers may not realize that their readers resent having to wade through unnecessary words.

Use Concise Words

Wordiness□ using more words than necessary to express a meaning□ is often a sign of lazy or careless writing. Your readers may resent the extra time and energy they must spend when you have not done the work needed to make your writing direct and concise.

Here are two examples of wordy sentences:

Wordy

In this paper, I am planning to describe the hobby that I enjoy of collecting old comic books.

In Ben's opinion, he thinks that cable television will change and alter our lives in the future.

Omitting needless words improves these sentences:

Clear

I enjoy collecting old comic books.

Ben thinks that cable television will change our lives.

Following is a list of some wordy expressions that could be reduced to single words.

Wordy Form	Short Form
at the present time	now
in the event that	if
in the near future	soon
due to the fact that	because
for the reason that	because
is able to	can
in every instance	always
in this day and age	today
during the time that	while
a large number of	many
big in size	big
red in color	red
five in number	five
return back	return
good benefit	benefit
commute back and forth	commute
postponed until later	postponed

ESL Tip

What might appear as □wordiness□might actually be an attempt to translate an expression from a native language. Encourage nonnative speakers to think in English.

Teaching Tip

Ask your students to cover the right column with a sheet of paper. Then ask them to replace the wordy expressions with single words.

Note:

Answers will vary.

7 Activity

Revise the following sentences, omitting needless words.

1. In conclusion, I would like to end my essay by summarizing each of the major points that were covered within my paper.

I will conclude by summarizing my major points.

2. Controlling the quality and level of the television shows that children watch is a continuing challenge to parents that they must meet on a daily basis.

Every day, parents must control their children's television watching.

3. In general, I am the sort of person who tends to be shy, especially in large crowds or with strangers I don't know well.

I am shy.

4. Someone who is analyzing magazine advertising can find hidden messages that, once uncovered, are seen to be clever and persuasive.

Magazine advertising contains clever hidden messages.

_____

5. My greatest mistake that I made last week was to hurt my brother's feelings and then not to have the nerve to apologize and say how sorry I was.

My worst mistake last week was to hurt my brother's feelings and not apologize.

_____

6. In today's uncertain economic climate, it is clear that people, namely, average middle-class working people, have great difficulty saving much money or putting anything aside for emergencies.

In today's uncertain economy, the middle class finds it hard to save.

_____

7. We thought the television program that was on last night was enjoyable, whereas our parents reacted with dislike to the content of the show.

We liked last night's television show, but our parents didn't.

_____

8. Because of the bad weather, the school district felt it would be safer to cancel classes and let everyone stay home than to risk people having accidents on the way to school.

The school district canceled classes because of the bad weather.

_____

9. Out of all the regrets in my life so far, one of my greatest ones to the present time is that I did not take additional art classes when I was still in high school and had a chance to do so.

I regret not having taken additional art classes in high school.

_____

10. It seems obvious to me, and it should be to everyone else, too, that people can be harmed as much by emotional abuse as by physical abuse, even if you don't lay a hand on them.

People are harmed by emotional as well as physical abuse.

_____

Vary Your Sentences

One part of effective writing is to vary the kinds of sentences you write. If every sentence follows the same pattern, writing may become monotonous to read. This section explains four ways you can create variety and interest in your writing style. It also describes coordination and subordination two important techniques for achieving different kinds of emphasis in writing.

Teaching Tip

Provide an example for each method. Students may need to see these sentences, which you could write on the board. Caution your students against relying too much on *be* verbs, which may become monotonous.

The following are four methods you can use to revise simple sentences, making them more complex and sophisticated:

- Add a second complete thought (coordination).
- Add a dependent thought (subordination).
- Begin with a special opening word or phrase.
- Place adjectives or verbs in a series.

Revise by Adding a Second Complete Thought

Teaching Tip

Teach your students the acronym FANBOYS (For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet and So).

When you add a second complete thought to a simple sentence, the result is a *compound* (or double) sentence. The two complete statements in a compound sentence are usually connected by a comma and a joining or coordinating word (*and, but, for, or, nor, so, yet*).

A compound sentence is used to give equal weight to two closely related ideas. The technique of showing that ideas have equal importance is called *coordination.* Following are some compound sentences. In each case, the sentence contains two ideas that the writer considers equal in importance.

Greg worked on the engine for three hours, but the car still wouldn't start.

Bananas were on sale this week, so I bought a bunch for the children's lunches.

We laced up our roller blades, and then we moved cautiously onto the rink.

8 Activity

Combine the following pairs of simple sentences into compound sentences. Use a comma and a logical joining word (*and, but, for, so*) to connect each pair of statements.

HINT

If you are not sure what *and, but, for,* and *so* mean, review pages 472 473.

EXAMPLE

The weather was cold and windy.

Al brought a thick blanket to the football game.

The weather was cold and windy, so Al brought a thick blanket to the football game.

1. My son can't eat peanut butter snacks or sandwiches.

He is allergic to peanuts.

. . . sandwiches, for he is allergic . . .

_____

2. I tried to sleep.

The thought of tomorrow's math exam kept me awake.

. . . sleep, but the thought . . .

_____

3. This diner has its own bakery.

It has take-out service as well.

. . . bakery, and it has . . .

_____

4. The cardboard storage boxes were soggy.

Rainwater had seeped into the basement during the storm.

. . . soggy, for rainwater had . . .

_____

5. I didn't have enough money to buy my parents an anniversary present.

I offered to mow their lawn for the whole summer.

. . . present, so I offered . . .

_____

Teaching Tip

Caution students against using the word *and* too often. Encourage them to use a variety of coordinating conjunctions.

Revise by Adding a Dependent Thought



www.mhhe.com/langan

When you add a dependent thought to a simple sentence, the result is a *complex* sentence. *A dependent thought begins with one of the following subordinating words:

Subordinating Words		
after	if, even if	when, whenever
although, though	in order that	where, wherever
as	since	whether
because	that, so that	which, whichever
before	unless	while
even though	until	who
how	what, whatever	whose

A complex sentence is used to emphasize one idea over another. Look at the following complex sentence:

ESL Tip

Nonnative speakers may confuse or not understand some of the dependent words (*even if* vs. *even though; who* vs. *that*). They may also write fragments because they don't understand the concept of subordination. Dependent words that indicate a time relationship will also present a problem for nonnative speakers. They might select the wrong verb tense.

Although the exam room was very quiet, I still couldn't concentrate.

The idea that the writer wishes to emphasize here *I still couldn't concentrate* is expressed as a complete thought. The less important idea *Although the exam room was very quiet* is subordinated to the complete thought. The technique of giving one idea less emphasis than another is called *subordination.*

Following are other examples of complex sentences. In each case, the part starting with the dependent word is the less emphasized part of the sentence.

Even though I was tired, I stayed up to watch the horror movie.

Before I take a bath, I check for spiders in the tub.

When Ivy feels nervous, she pulls on her earlobe.

Teaching Tip

Ask students to underline the dependent words in these sentences.

9 Activity

Use logical subordinating words to combine the following pairs of simple sentences into sentences that contain a dependent thought. Place a comma after a dependent statement when it starts the sentence.

EXAMPLE

Rita bit into the hard taffy.

She broke a filling.

When Rita bit into the hard taffy, she broke a filling.

_____

1. I had forgotten to lock the front door.

I had to drive back to the house.

Because I had forgotten to lock the front door, I . . .

_____

2. The bear turned over the rotten log.
Fat white grubs crawled in every direction.
When the bear turned over the rotten log, fat . . .

3. Kevin had ordered a set of tools.
He changed his mind about spending the money.
After Kevin had ordered a set of tools, he . . .

4. Some people are allergic to wool.
They buy sweaters made only from synthetic fibers.
Because some people are allergic to wool, they . . .

5. An older woman in my typing class can type almost one hundred words a minute.
She is having trouble landing a secretarial job.
Even though an . . . minute, she is . . .

Note:

Answers may vary.

Teaching Tip

Suggest that students work in pairs to complete this activity. Then go over the answers in class.

ESL Tip

Nonnative speakers often confuse adjectives that end in *-ed* or *-ing*.

Teaching Tip

Remind students that an opener might also be placed at the end of a sentence. For example, the second sentence might be written as "The woman browsed through the rack of dresses, humming softly."

Revise by Beginning with a Special Opening Word or Phrase

Among the special openers that can be used to start sentences are *-ed* words, *-ing* words, *-ly* words, *to* word groups, and prepositional phrases. Here are examples of all five kinds of openers:

***-ed* word**

Concerned about his son's fever, Paul called a doctor.

***-ing* word**

Humming softly, the woman browsed through the rack of dresses.

***-ly* word**

Hesitantly, Sue approached the instructor's desk.

***to* word group**

To protect her hair, Eva uses the lowest setting on her blow dryer.

Prepositional phrase

During the exam, drops of water fell from the ceiling.

Teaching Tip

You may want to do this activity with the entire class. Ask students to "talk out" their answers.

10 Activity

Combine each of the following pairs of simple sentences into one sentence by using the opener shown at the left and omitting repeated words. Use a comma to set off the opener from the rest of the sentence.

EXAMPLE *-ing word* The pelican scooped small fish into its baggy bill. It dipped into the waves.

Dipping into the waves, the pelican scooped small fish into its baggy bill.

1. Shirley signed the repair contract.
   She was reluctant.
   Reluctantly, Shirley signed the repair contract.

   _____

   ***-ly* word**
2. The interns volunteered to work overtime.
   They wanted to improve their chances of promotion.
   To improve their chances of promotion, the interns . . .

   _____

   ***to* word group**
3. The accused murderer grinned at the witnesses.
   He did this during the trial.
   During the trial, the accused murderer . . .

   _____

   Perpositoinal pharse
4. The vet's office was noisy and confusing.
   It was crowded with nervous pets.
   Crowded with nervous pets, the vet's office . . .

   _____

   ***-ed* word**
5. Barry tried to find something worth watching.
   He flipped from channel to channel.
   Trying to find something worth watching, Barry flipped from channel to channel.

   _____

   ***-ing* word**

Teaching Tip

Point out to students that adjectives and verbs in a series need to be parallel.

ESL Tip

Nonnative speakers require practice in the order of adjectives in English.

Revise by Placing Adjectives or Verbs in a Series

Various parts of a sentence may be placed in a series. Among these parts are adjectives (descriptive words) and verbs. Here are examples of both in a series:

Adjectives

I gently applied a *sticky new* Band-Aid to the *deep, ragged* cut on my finger.

Verbs

The truck *bounced* off a guardrail, *sideswiped* a tree, and *plunged* down the embankment.

Note:

Answers may vary.

Teaching Tip

For this activity, read the sentences aloud so that students can "hear" the sound of choppy, simple sentences.

11 Activity

Combine the simple sentences into one sentence by using adjectives or verbs in a series and by omitting repeated words. Use a comma when necessary between adjectives or verbs in a series.

EXAMPLE

Jesse spun the basketball on one finger.

He rolled it along his arms.

He dribbled it between his legs.

Jesse spun the basketball on one finger, rolled it along his arms, and dribbled it between his legs.

1. The baby toddled across the rug.

   He picked up a button.

   He put the button in his mouth.

   The baby toddled across the rug, picked up a button, and put the button in his mouth.

   _____

2. Water dribbled out of the tap.

   The water was brown.

   The water was foul-tasting.

   The tap was rusty.

   The tap was metal.

   Brown, foul-tasting water dribbled out of the rusty metal tap.

   _____

3. By 6 a.m., I had read the textbook chapter.
   I had taken notes on it.
   I had studied the notes.
   I had drunk eight cups of coffee.
   By 6 a.m., I had read the textbook chapter, taken notes on it, studied the notes, and drunk eight cups of coffee.

4. The exterminator approached the wasps□nests hanging under the eaves.
   The nests were large.
   The nests were papery.
   The eaves were old.
   The eaves were wooden.
   . . . approached the large, papery wasps□nests hanging under the old wooden eaves.

   _____

5. Reeds bordered the pond.
   The reeds were slim.
   The reeds were brown.
   The pond was green.
   The pond was stagnant.
   Slim brown reeds bordered the stagnant green pond.

   _____

ESL Tip

When combining verbs, remind nonnative speakers to be consistent with verb tense.

Editing Sentences

Teaching Tip

Ask your students if first impressions matter. Provide examples, such as a job interview or a blind date. Then ask them to consider how errors in their writing might influence their readers.

After revising sentences in a paper so that they flow smoothly and clearly, you need to edit the paper for mistakes in grammar, punctuation, mechanics, usage, and spelling. Even if a paper is otherwise well-written, it will make an unfavorable impression on readers if it contains such mistakes. To edit a paper, check it against the agreed-upon rules, or conventions, of written English□ simply called *sentence skills* in this book. Here are the most common of these conventions:

- ✓ Write complete sentences rather than fragments.
- ✓ Do not write run-on sentences.
- ✓ Use verb forms correctly.
- ✓ Make sure that subject, verbs, and pronouns agree.
- ✓ Eliminate faulty modifiers.
- ✓ Use pronoun forms correctly.
- ✓ Use capital letters where needed.
- ✓ Use the following marks of punctuation correctly: apostrophe, quotation marks, comma, semicolon, colon, hyphen, dash, parentheses.
- ✓ Use correct manuscript form.
- ✓ Eliminate slang, clichés, and pretentious words.
- ✓ Check for possible spelling errors.
- ✓ Eliminate careless errors.

ESL Tip

It might be helpful to point to consistent problems in a particular area (*verb tenses, omission of article, etc.*). Then nonnative speakers will be aware of typical errors and edit for them.

Teaching Tip

You may want to suggest that students keep a log of their errors. This log will help them recognize error patterns.

These sentence skills are treated in detail in Part Four of this book, and they can be referred to easily as needed. Both the list of sentence skills on the inside back cover of this book and the correction symbols on page 632 include page references so that you can turn quickly to any skill you want to check.

Hints about Editing

These hints can help you edit the next-to-final draft of a paper for sentence-skill mistakes:

1. Have at hand two essential tools: a good dictionary and a grammar handbook (you can use the one in this book beginning on page 446).

2. Use a sheet of paper to cover your essay so that you will expose only one sentence at a time. Look for errors in grammar, spelling, and typing. It may help to read each sentence out loud. If a sentence does not read clearly and smoothly, chances are something is wrong.

3. Pay special attention to the kinds of errors you tend to make. For example, if you tend to write run-ons or fragments, be especially on the lookout for those errors.

4. Try to work on a typewritten or word-processed draft, where you'll be able to see your writing more objectively than you can on a handwritten page; use a pen with colored ink so that your corrections will stand out.

Teaching Tip

Students may want to use a pencil to erase corrections.

TIP

A series of editing tests appears on pages 604–617. You will probably find it most helpful to take these tests after reviewing the sentences skills in Part Four.

Proofreading

Proofreading means closely checking the final, edited draft of your paper for typos and other careless errors. A helpful strategy is to read your paper backward, from the last sentence to the first. This helps keep you from getting caught up in the flow of the paper and missing small mistakes. Here are six helpful proofing symbols:

Proofing Symbol	Meaning	Example
^	insert missing letter or word	acheve
	omit	draw two two conclusions
	reverse order of words or letters	lived happily after ever
#	add space	allright
⁀	close up space	base ball
cap, lc	Add a capital (or a lowercase) letter	My english Class

Teaching Tip

Ask students to use the correction symbols on page 632. Remind students that instructors may use their own correction symbols.

If you make many corrections, retype the page or enter corrections into your word-processor file and reprint the page.

Note:

Corrections may vary.

Teaching Tip

Suggest that students work in pairs to complete this activity. Then go over the answers in class.

12 Activity

In the spaces below this paragraph, write the numbers of the ten word groups that contain fragments or run-ons. Then, in the spaces between the lines, edit by making the necessary corrections. One is done for you as an example.

[1]A unique object in my family's living room is an ashtray. [2]Which I made in second grade. [3]I can still remember the pride I felt [4]When I presented it to my mother. [5]Now, I'm amazed that my parents didn't hide it away at the back of a shelf it is a remarkably ugly object. [6]The ashtray is made out of brown clay that I had tried to mold into a perfect circle unfortunately my class was only forty-five minutes long. [7]The best I could do was to shape it into a lopsided oval. [8]Its most distinctive feature, though, is the grooves carved into its rim. [9]I had theorized that each groove could hold a cigarette or cigar I made at least fifty of them. [10]I somehow failed to consider that the only person who smoked in my family was my father, [11]Who smoked about five cigars a year. [12]Further, although our living room is decorated in sedate tans and blues, my ashtray is bright purple, [13]My favorite color at the time. [14]For variety, it has stripes around its rim they are colored neon green. [15]My parents have proudly displayed my little masterpiece on their coffee table for the past ten years. [16]If I ever wonder if my parents love me, [17]I look at that ugly ashtray the answer is plain to see.

1. 2 **3.** 5 **5.** 9. **7.** 13 **9** 16

2. 4 **4.** 6 **6.** 11 **8.** 14 **10.** 17

Practice in Revising Sentences

You now know the fourth step in effective writing: revising and editing sentences. You also know that practice in *editing* sentences is best undertaken after you have worked through the sentence skills in Part Four. The focus in this section, then, will be on *revising* sentences using a variety of methods to ensure that your sentences flow smoothly and are clear and interesting. You will work through Review Tests on the following:

Teaching Tip

You may want to use these review tests to assess what your students have learned.

using parallelism

using a consistent point of view

using specific words

using active verbs

using concise words

varying your sentences

Using Parallelism

Review Test 1

Cross out the unbalanced part of each sentence. In the space provided, revise the unbalanced part so that it matches the other item or items in the sentence.

EXAMPLE

Cigarette smoking is expensive, disgusting, and ~~a health risk~~. ***unhealthy***

1. Jesse prefers books that are short, scary, and ~~filled with suspense~~.

   suspenseful

2. A sale on electrical appliances, ~~furniture for the office~~, and stereo equipment begins this Friday.

   office furniture

3. To escape the stresses of everyday life, I rely on watching television, reading books, and ~~my kitchen~~.

   working in my kitchen

4. The keys to improving grades are to take effective notes in class, to plan study time, and ~~preparing~~ carefully for exams.

   to prepare

5. Qualities that I look for in friends are a sense of humor, ~~being kind~~, and dependability.

   kindness

6. My three favorite jobs were veterinary assistant, gardener, and ~~selling toys~~.

   toy salesperson

7. Housekeeping shortcuts will help you speed up doing laundry, cleaning rooms, and ~~food on the table~~.

   putting food on the table

8. Studying a little every day is more effective than ~~to cram~~.

   cramming

9. The chickens travel on a conveyor belt, where they are plucked, washed, rinsed, and ~~bags are put on them~~.

   bagged (or put into bags)

10. The speaker impressed the audience because of his clear, reasonable presentation ~~with friendliness as well~~.

    and his friendliness

Review Test 2

Cross out the unbalanced part of each sentence. In the space provided, revise the unbalanced part so that it matches the other item or items in the sentence.

1. Paying college tuition and not studying is as sensible as ~~to buy~~ tickets to a movie and not watching it. *buying*

2. The best programming on television includes news coverage, ~~shows on sci-ence~~, and children's series. *science shows*

3. Curling overgrown vines, ~~porch furniture that was rotted~~, and sagging steps were my first impressions of the neglected house. *rotting porch furniture*

4. The little girl came home from school with a tear-streaked face, a black eye, and ~~her shirt was torn~~. *a torn shirt*

5. There are two ways to the top floor: climb the stairs or ~~taking~~ the elevator. *take (or climbing . . . taking)*

6. While waiting for the exam to start, small groups of nervous students glanced over their notes, drank coffee, and ~~were whispering~~ to each other. *whispered*

7. In many ways, starting college at forty is harder than ~~to start~~ at eighteen. *starting*

8. Interesting work is as important to me as ~~pay that is good~~. *good pay*

9. The homeless woman shuffled along the street, bent over to pick something up, and ~~was putting~~ it in her shopping bag. *put*

10. A teamsters strike now would mean interruptions in food deliveries, a slowdown in the economy, and ~~losing~~ wages for workers. *lost*

Using a Consistent Point of View

Review Test 3

Change verbs as needed in the following selection so that they are consistently in the past tense. Cross out each incorrect verb and write the correct form above it, as shown in the example. You will need to make ten corrections.

[El contenido de la siguiente página también forma parte de la 129].

My uncle's shopping trip last Thursday was discouraging to him. First of all, he had to drive around for fifteen minutes until he ~~finds~~ found a parking space. There was a half-price special on paper products in the supermarket, and every spot ~~is~~ was taken. Then, when he finally got inside, many of the items on his list were not where he expected. For example, the pickles he wanted ~~are~~ were not on the same shelf as all the other pickles. Instead, they were in a refrigerated case next to the bacon. And the granola was not on the cereal shelves but in the health-food section. Shopping thus ~~proceeds~~ proceeded slowly. About halfway through his list, he knew there would not be time to cook dinner and ~~decides~~ decided to pick up a barbecued chicken. The chicken, he learned, was available at the end of the store he had already passed. So he ~~parks~~ parked his shopping cart in an aisle, ~~gets~~ got the chicken, and came back. After adding half a dozen more items to his cart, he suddenly ~~realizes~~ realized it contained someone else's food. So he retraced his steps, found his own cart, ~~transfers~~ transferred the groceries, and continued to shop. Later, when he began loading items onto the checkout counter, he ~~notices~~ noticed that the barbecued chicken was missing. He must have left it in the other cart, certainly gone by now. Feeling totally defeated, he returned to the deli counter and ~~says~~ said to the clerk, "Give me another chicken. I lost the first one." My uncle told me that when he saw the look on the clerk's face, he felt as if he'd flunked Food Shopping.

There was a half-price special on paper products in the supermarket, and every spot ~~is~~ was taken. Then, when he finally got inside, many of the items on his list were not where he expected. For example, the pickles he wanted ~~are~~ were not on the same shelf as all the other pickles. Instead, they were in a refrigerated case next to the bacon. And the granola was not on the cereal shelves but in the health-food section. Shopping thus ~~proceeds~~ proceeded slowly. About halfway through his list, he knew there would not be time to cook dinner and ~~decides~~ decided to pick up a barbecued chicken. The chicken, he learned, was available at the end of the store he had already passed. So he ~~parks~~ parked his shopping cart in an aisle, ~~gets~~ got the chicken, and came back. After adding half a dozen more items to his cart, he suddenly ~~realizes~~ realized it contained someone else's food. So he retraced his steps, found his own cart, ~~transfers~~ transferred the groceries, and continued to shop. Later, when he began loading items onto the checkout counter, he ~~notices~~ noticed that the barbecued chicken was missing. He must have left it in the other cart, certainly gone by now. Feeling totally defeated, he returned to the deli counter and ~~says~~ said to the clerk, "Give me another chicken. I lost the first one." My uncle told me that when he saw the look on the clerk's face, he felt as if he'd flunked Food Shopping.

Review Test 4

Cross out inconsistent pronouns in the following sentences, and revise with the correct form of the pronoun above each crossed-out word.

EXAMPLE Dog owners should put tags on their dogs in case ~~you~~ they lose their pets.

1. These days, people never seem to get the recognition they deserve no matter how hard ~~you~~ they work.
2. All ~~you~~ I could hear was the maddening rattle of the heating register, even though I buried my face in the pillow.
3. When we answer the telephone at work, ~~you~~ we are supposed to say the company's name.
4. Each year I pay more money for my college tuition. But despite the cost, ~~one~~ I must complete college to get a better, more meaningful job.
5. Gary bought the used car from a local dealership. The car was so clean and shiny that ~~you~~ he could not tell that the engine needed to be replaced.
6. I would like to go to a school where ~~one~~ I can meet many people who are different from me.
7. When I first began to work as a waitress, I was surprised at how rude some customers were to ~~you~~ me.
8. When ~~you~~ I drive on the highway, I get disgusted at the amount of trash I see.
9. Students may not leave the exam room unless ~~you~~ they have turned in the exam.
10. Nina wanted to just browse through the store, but in every department a salesperson came up and asked to help ~~you~~ her.

Using Specific Words

Review Test 5

Revise the following sentences, changing vague, indefinite words to sharp, specific ones.

Note:

Answers will vary; examples are shown.

1. When my marriage broke up, I felt *various emotions.*.

. . . I felt sad, angry, and worried.

_____

_____

2. The *food choices* in the cafeteria were unappetizing.

The lukewarm soup, stale sandwiches, and limp salads . . .

_____

_____

3. *Bugs* invaded our kitchen and pantry this summer.

Ants, moths, and spiders . . .

_____

_____

4. All last week, *the weather was terrible.*

. . . it rained nonstop, with a bone-chilling wind.

5. In the car accident, our teacher suffered *a number of injuries.*

. . . a broken arm, two broken ribs, and a concussion.

Review Test 6

With the help of the methods described on page 111, add specific details to the sentences that follow.

Note:

Answers will vary; examples are shown.

1. The salesperson was obnoxious.

The haughty, scowling salesman told us not to waste his time with stupid questions.

2. The child started to cry.

Betty dug her fists into her eyes and shook with sobs.

3. The game was exciting.

The third game of the World Series turned into a tense pitchers duel

4. The lounge area was busy.

Holiday travelers thronged the airport lounge.

5. A passenger on the bus was acting strangely.

The woman in the front seat muttered to herself and trembled.

Using Active Verbs

Review Test 7

Revise the following sentences, changing verbs from the passive to the active voice and making any other necessary word changes.

Note:

Answers will vary; examples are shown.

EXAMPLE

Soccer is played by children all over the world.

Children all over the world play soccer.

1. The pizza restaurant was closed by the health inspector.

The health inspector closed the pizza restaurant.

2. Huge stacks of donated books were sorted by the workers in the library.

The workers in the library sorted huge stacks of donated books.

3. My computer was infected by a virus.

A virus infected my computer.

4. Gasoline prices will not be increased by oil companies this winter.

Oil companies will not increase gasoline prices this winter.

5. High-powered bombs were dropped by our airplanes onto enemy bases.

Our airplanes dropped high-powered bombs onto enemy bases.

6. An additional charge was placed on our phone bill by the telephone company.

The telephone company placed an additional charge on our phone bill.

7. The community center was damaged by a group of vandals.

A group of vandals damaged the community center.

8. Stress is relieved by physical activity, meditation, and relaxation.

Physical activity, meditation, and relaxation relieve stress.

9. Taxes will be raised by the federal government to pay for highway improvements.

The federal government will raise taxes to pay . . .

10. Studies show that violent behavior among young children is increased by watching violent TV programs.

Studies show that watching violent TV programs increases violent behavior.

Using Concise Words

Review Test 8

Note:

Answers will vary; examples are given.

Revise the following sentences, omitting needless words.

1. I finally made up my mind and decided to look for a new job.

I finally decided to look for a new job.

_____

2. Due to the fact that the printer was out of paper, Renee went to the store for the purpose of buying some.

Because her printer was out of paper, Renee went to buy some.

_____

3. Tamika realized suddenly that her date had stood her up and was not going to show up.

Tamika realized suddenly that her date had stood her up.

_____

4. Our teacher does not know at this point in time whether she will return to our school next year.

Our teacher does not yet know whether she will return next year.

_____

5. The salesperson advised us not to buy the laptop at this time because it was going to have a drop in price in the very near future.

The salesperson advised us to wait until the price dropped before buying our laptop.

_____

Review Test 9

Revise the following sentences, omitting needless words.

1. The policy at our company at the present time is that there are two coffee breaks, with each of them being fifteen minutes long.

Our company allows two fifteen-minute coffee breaks.

_____

2. Permit us to take this opportunity to inform you that your line of credit has been increased.

Your line of credit has been increased.

_____

3. I have a strong preference for candy over fruit, which, in my opinion, doesn't taste as good as candy does.

I prefer candy to fruit.

Or I think candy tastes better than fruit.

4. Lynn is one of those people who rarely admits being wrong, and it is very unusual to hear her acknowledge that she has made a mistake.

Lynn rarely admits that she has made a mistake.

_____

5. Many people are of the opinion that children should be required by law to attend school until they reach the age of sixteen years old.

Many people think that children should, by law, attend school until age sixteen.

Note:

Answers will vary; examples are given.

Varying Your Sentences

Review Test 10

Note:

Answers will vary; examples are shown.

Combine each of the following groups of simple sentences into one longer sentence. Omit repeated words. Various combinations are often possible, so try to find the combination in each group that flows most smoothly and clearly.

1. Sophie had repaired her broken watchband with a paper clip.

The clip snapped.

The watch slid off her wrist.

. . . with a paper clip, but the clip snapped and the watch slid . . .

_____

2. The physical therapist watched.

Julie tried to stand on her weakened legs.

They crumpled under her.

. . . watched as Julie tried to stand on her weakened legs, and they crumpled under

her.

3. There were parking spaces on the street.

Richard pulled into an expensive garage.

He did not want to risk damage to his new car.

Although there were parking spaces on the street, Richard pulled . . . garage

because he did not want . . .

4. The truck was speeding.

The truck was brown.

The truck skidded on some ice.

The truck almost hit a police officer.

The police officer was startled.

The police officer was young.

Speeding, the brown truck skidded on some ice and almost hit a startled young police officer.

5. The rainstorm flooded our basement.

The rainstorm was sudden.

The rainstorm was terrible.

It knocked slates off the roof.

It uprooted a young tree.

A sudden terrible rainstorm flooded our basement, knocked slates off the roof, and uprooted a young tree.

Review Test 11

Note:

Answers will vary; examples are shown.

Combine each of the following groups of simple sentences into two longer sentences. Omit repeated words. Various combinations are often possible, so try to find combinations in each group that flow most smoothly and clearly.

1. A sudden cold front hit the area.

Temperatures dropped thirty degrees in less than an hour.

My teeth began to chatter.

I was not wearing a warm jacket.

When a sudden . . . area, temperatures dropped . . . hour. I was not wearing a warm jacket, so my teeth . . .

2. Vern works as a model.

He has to look his best.

He gained ten pounds recently.

He had to take off the extra weight.

He would have lost his job.

Vern works as a model, so he has to look his best. When he gained ten pounds recently, he had to take off the extra weight, since he would have lost his job.

_____

3. The ball game was about to begin.

A dog ran onto the field.

The dog began nipping the infielders□ankles.

The game had to be delayed.

The dog was chased away.

As the ball game was about to begin, a dog ran onto the field and began nipping the infielders□ankles. The game had to be delayed until the dog was chased away.

_____

4. The lion was hungry.

It watched the herd of gazelle closely.

A young or sick animal wandered away from the group.

The lion would move in for the kill.

The hungry lion watched the herd of gazelle closely. If a young . . . group, the lion would move in for the kill.

_____

5. My aunt decided to find a helpful form of exercise.

She was suffering from arthritis.

She learned that swimming is very healthful.

It works every muscle group in the body without straining the muscles.

My aunt, suffering from arthritis, decided . . . exercise. She learned that swimming is very helpful because it works . . .

_____

Review Test 12

Combine the sentences in the following paragraph into four sentences. Omit repeated words. Try to find combinations in each case that flow as smoothly and clearly as possible.

Note:

Answers will vary. An example is shown.

Lena and Miles wanted a vacation. They wanted a vacation that was nice. They wanted one that was quiet. They wanted one that was relaxing. They rented a small lakeside cabin. Their first day there was very peaceful. The situation quickly changed. A large family moved into a nearby cabin. They played music at top volume. They raced around in a speedboat with a loud whining engine. Lena and Miles were no longer very relaxed. They packed up their things. They drove off. They returned to their quiet apartment.

Lena and Miles wanted a nice, quiet, relaxing vacation, so they rented a small lake-side cabin. Their first day there was very peaceful, but the situation quickly changed when a large family moved into a nearby cabin. They played music at top volume and raced around in a speedboat with a large whining engine. Lena and Miles, no longer very relaxed, packed up their things, drove off, and returned to their quiet apartment.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

* The two parts of a complex sentence are sometimes called an *independent clause* and a *dependent clause*. A *clause* is simply a word group that contains a subject and a verb. An independent clause expresses a complete thought and can stand alone. A dependent clause does not express a complete thought in itself and depends on the independent clause to complete its meaning. Dependent clauses always begin with a dependent or subordinating word.

6: Four Bases for Revising Essays

This chapter will show you how to evaluate an essay for

- unity
- support
- coherence
- sentence skills



© Michael Ainsworth/Dallas Morning News/Corbis

What emotions come to mind as you look at this photograph taken in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina? Write an essay about a tragedy you have experienced in your own life. What was the experience like and how did it change you for better or worse? After writing the first draft of your essay, check that you have covered the four bases of writing: unity, support, coherence, *and* sentence skills.

Teaching Tip

Ask students to complete this writing prompt in class.

In the preceding chapters, you learned four essential steps in writing an effective paper. The box below shows how the steps lead to four standards, or bases, you can use in revising an essay.

Teaching Tip

After you discuss the four bases, you may want to quiz your students on the meaning of unity, support, coherence, and sentence skills.

	Four Steps →	Four Bases
1	If you advance a single point and stick to that point,	your paper will have *unity.*
2	If you support the point with specific evidence,	your paper will have *support.*
3	If you organize and connect the specific evidence,	your paper will have *coherence.*
4	If you write clear, error-free sentences,	your paper will demonstrate effective *sentence skills.*

This chapter discusses these four bases□ unity, support, coherence, and sentence skills□ and shows how the four bases can be used to evaluate and revise a paper.

ESL Tip

In English, it is not uncommon to digress while speaking. In some native languages, digression is also acceptable in written expression. Explain to nonnative students that all details should support the main point; otherwise, the reader will get confused.

Base 1: Unity

Understanding Unity

The following student essays are on the topic □Problems or Pleasures of My Teenage Years.□ Which one makes its point more clearly and effectively, and why?

Teenage Pranks

Essay 1

1 Looking back at some of the things I did as a teenager makes me break out in a sweat. The purpose of each adventure was fun, but occasionally things got out of hand. In my search for good times, I was involved in three notable pranks, ranging from fairly harmless to fairly serious.

2 The first prank proved that good, clean fun does not have to be dull. As a high school student, I was credited with making the world's largest dessert. With several friends, I spent an entire year collecting boxes of Jell-O. Entering our school's indoor pool one night, we turned the water temperature up as

high as it would go and poured in box after box of the strawberry powder. The next morning, school officials arrived to find the pool filled with thirteen thousand gallons of the quivering, rubbery stuff. No one was hurt by the prank, but we did suffer through three days of a massive cleanup.

3 Not all my pranks were harmless, and one involved risking my life. As soon as I got my driver's license, I wanted to join the Fliers Club. Membership in this club was limited to those who could make their cars fly a distance of at least ten feet. The qualifying site was an old quarry field where friends and I had built a ramp made of dirt. I drove my battered Ford Pinto up this ramp as fast as it would go. The Pinto flew ten feet, but one of the tires exploded when I landed. The car rolled on its side, and I luckily escaped with only a bruised arm.

4 Risking my own life was bad enough, but there was another prank where other people could have been hurt, too. On this occasion, I accidentally set a valley on fire. Two of my friends and I were sitting on a hill sharing a few beers. It was a warm summer night, and there was absolutely nothing to do. The idea came like a thunderclap. We collected a supply of large plastic trash bags, emergency highway flares, and a half tank of helium left over from a science-fair experiment. Then we began to construct a fleet of UFOs. Filling the bags with helium, we tied them closed with wire and suspended several burning flares below each bag. Our UFOs leaped into the air like an army of invading Martians. Rising and darting in the blackness, they convinced even us. Our fun turned into horror, though, as we watched the balloons begin to drop onto the wooded valley of expensive homes below. Soon, a brushfire started and, quickly sobered, we hurried off to call the fire department anonymously.

5 Every so often, I think back on the things that I did as a teenager. I chuckle at the innocent pranks and feel lucky that I didn't harm myself or others with the not-so-innocent ones. Those years were filled with wild times. Today I'm older, wiser and maybe just a little more boring.

Teaching Tip

Ask a volunteer to read these essays aloud. Ask students to underline the topic sentence in each paragraph.

Problems of My Adolescence

Essay 2

1 In the unreal world of television situation comedies, teenagers are carefree, smart, funny, wisecracking, secure kids. In fact, most of them are more together than the adults on the shows. This, however, isn't how I

recall my teenage years at all. As a teen, I suffered. Every day, I battled the terrible physical, family, and social troubles of adolescence.

2 For one thing, I had to deal with a demoralizing physical problem□ acne. Some days, I would wake up in the morning with a red bump the size of a taillight on my nose. Since I worried constantly about my appearance anyway, acne outbreaks could turn me into a crying, screaming maniac. Plastering on a layer of (at the time) orange-colored Clearasil, which didn't fool anybody, I would slink into school, hoping that the boy I had a crush on would be absent that day. ~~Within the last few years, however, treatments for acne have improved. Now, skin doctors prescribe special drugs that clear up pimples almost immediately.~~ An acne attack could shatter whatever small amount of self-esteem I had managed to build up.

3 In addition to fighting acne, I felt compelled to fight my family. As a teenager, I needed to be independent. At that time, the most important thing in life was to be close to my friends and to try out new, more adult experiences. Unfortunately, my family seemed to get in the way. My little brother, for instance, turned into my enemy. ~~We are close now, though. In fact, Eddie recently painted my new apartment for me.~~ . Eddie used to barge into my room, make calls on my cell phone, and read my e-mail. I would threaten to tie him up and leave him in a garbage dumpster. He would scream, my mother would yell, and all hell would break loose. My parents, too, were enemies. They wouldn't let me stay out late, wear the clothes I wanted to wear, or hang around with the friends I liked. So I tried to get revenge on them by being miserable, sulky, and sarcastic at home.

4 Worst of all, I had to face the social traumas of being a teenager. Things that were supposed to be fun, like dates and dances, were actually horrible. On the few occasions when I had a real date, I agonized over everything□ my hair, my weight, my pimples. After a date, I would come home, raid the kitchen, and drown my insecurities in a sea of junk food. Dances were also stressful events. My friends and I would sneak a couple of beers just to get up the nerve to walk into the school gym. ~~Now I realize that teenage drinking is dangerous. I read recently that the number-one killer of teenagers is drunk driving.~~ At dances, I never relaxed. It was too important to look exactly right, to act really cool, and to pretend I was having fun.

5 I'm glad I'm not a teenager anymore. I wouldn't ever want to feel so unattractive, so confused, and so insecure again. I'll gladly accept the crow's-feet and stomach bulge of adulthood in exchange for a little peace of mind.

1 Activity

Fill in the blanks.

Essay *1* makes its point more clearly and effectively because_____

it is more unified.

EXPLANATION:

Essay 1 is more effective because it is unified. All the details in this essay are on target; they support and develop each of its three topic sentences (□The first prank proved that good, clean fun does not have to be dull□; □Not all my pranks were harmless, and one involved risking my life□; and □Risking my own life was bad enough, but there was another prank where other people could have been hurt, too□).

On the other hand, essay 2 contains some details irrelevant to its topic sentences. In the first supporting paragraph (paragraph 2), for example, the sentences □Within the last few years, however, treatments for acne have improved. Now, skin doctors prescribe special drugs that clear up pimples almost immediately□do not support the writer's topic statement that she had to deal with the physical problem of acne. Such details should be left out in the interest of unity.

The difference between these first two essays leads us to the first base, or standard, of effective writing: *unity.* To achieve unity is to have all the details in your paper related to your thesis and to your three supporting topic sentences. Each time you think of something to put into your paper, ask yourself whether it relates to your thesis and your supporting points. If it does not, leave it out. For example, if you were writing a paper about the problems of being unemployed and then spent a couple of sentences talking about the pleasures of having a lot of free time, you would be missing the first and most essential base of good writing.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Revising for Unity

2 Activity

Go back to essay 2 and cross out the two sentences in the second supporting paragraph (paragraph 3) and the two sentences in the third supporting paragraph (paragraph 4) that are off target and do not support their topic sentences.

Teaching Tip

Suggest that students create a scratch outline for each of the essays.

Base 2: Support

Understanding Support

The following essays were written on "Dealing with Disappointment." Both are unified, but one communicates more clearly and effectively. Which one, and why?

Teaching Tip

Ask a volunteer to read these essays aloud. Ask students to underline the thesis statements and specific examples.

Dealing with Disappointment

Essay 1

1 One way to look at life is as a series of disappointments. Life can certainly appear that way because disappointment crops up in the life of everyone more often, it seems, than satisfaction. How disappointments are handled can have a great bearing on how life is viewed. People can react negatively by sulking or by blaming others, or they can try to understand the reasons behind the disappointment.

2 Sulking is one way to deal with disappointment. This attitude" Why does everything always happen to me?" is common because it is easy to adopt, but it is not very productive. Everyone has had the experience of meeting people who specialize in feeling sorry for themselves. A sulky manner will often discourage others from wanting to lend support, and it prevents the sulker from making positive moves toward self-help. It becomes easier just to sit back and sulk. Unfortunately, feeling sorry for oneself does nothing to lessen the pain of disappointment. It may, in fact, increase the pain. It certainly does not make future disappointments easier to bear.

3 Blaming others is another negative and unproductive way to cope with disappointment. This all-too-common response of pointing the finger at someone else doesn't help one's situation. This posture will lead only to anger, resentment, and, therefore, further unhappiness. Disappointment in another's performance does not necessarily indicate that the performer is at fault. Perhaps expectations were too high, or there could have been a misunderstanding as to what the performer actually intended to accomplish.

4 A positive way to handle disappointment is to try to understand the reasons behind the disappointment. An analysis of the causes of disappointment can have an excellent chance of producing desirable results. Often understanding alone can help alleviate the pain of disappointment and can help prevent future disappointments. Also, it is wise to try to remember that what would be ideal is not necessarily what is reasonable to expect in any given situation. The ability to look disappointment squarely in the face and then go on from there is the first step on the road back.

5 Continuous handling of disappointment in a negative manner can lead to a negative view of life itself. Chances for personal happiness in such a

state of being are understandably slim. Learning not to expect perfection in an imperfect world and keeping in mind those times when expectations were actually surpassed are positive steps toward allowing the joys of life to prevail.

Reactions to Disappointment

Essay 2

1 Ben Franklin said that the only sure things in life are death and taxes. He left something out, however: disappointment. No one gets through life without experiencing many disappointments. Strangely, though, most people seem unprepared for disappointment and react to it in negative ways. They feel depressed or try to escape their troubles instead of using disappointment as an opportunity for growth.

2 One negative reaction to disappointment is depression. For example, Helen, a woman trying to win a promotion, works hard for over a year in her department. Helen is so sure she will get the promotion, in fact, that she has already picked out the car she will buy when her salary increase comes through. However, the boss names one of Helen's coworkers to the spot. The fact that all the other department employees tell Helen that she is the one who really deserved the promotion doesn't help her deal with the crushing disappointment. Deeply depressed, Helen decides that all her goals are doomed to defeat. She loses her enthusiasm for her job and can barely force herself to show up every day. Helen tells herself that she is a failure and that doing a good job just isn't worth the work.

3 Another negative reaction to disappointment, and one that often follows depression, is the desire to escape. Jamal fails to get into the college his brother is attending, the college that was the focus of all his dreams, and decides to escape his disappointment. Why worry about college at all? Instead, he covers up his real feelings by giving up on his schoolwork and getting completely involved with friends, parties, and □good times.□Or Carla doesn't make the varsity basketball team□ something she wanted very badly□ and so refuses to play sports at all. She decides to hang around with a new set of friends who get high every day; then she won't have to confront her disappointment and learn to live with it.

4 The positive way to react to disappointment is to use it as a chance for growth. This isn't easy, but it's the only useful way to deal with an inevitable part of life. Helen, the woman who wasn't promoted, could have handled her disappointment by looking at other options. If her boss doesn't

recognize her talent and hard work, perhaps she could transfer to another department. Or she could ask the boss how to improve her performance so that she would be a shoo-in for the next promotion. Jamal, the boy who didn't get into the college of his choice, should look into other schools. Going to another college may encourage him to be his own person, step out of his brother's shadow, and realize that being turned down by one college isn't a final judgment on his abilities or potential. Rather than escape into drugs, Carla could improve her basketball skills for a year or pick up another sport like swimming or tennis that would probably turn out to be more useful to her as an adult.

5 Disappointments are unwelcome but regular visitors to everyone's life. We can feel depressed about them, or we can try to escape from them. The best thing, though, is to accept a disappointment and then try to use it somehow: step over the unwelcome visitor on the doorstep and get on with life.

3 Activity

Fill in the blanks.

Essay *2* makes its point more clearly and effectively because_____

it has better support for its thesis.

EXPLANATION:

Here, essay 2 is more effective, for it offers specific examples of the ways people deal with disappointment. We see for ourselves the kinds of reactions people have to disappointment.

Essay 1, on the other hand, gives us no specific evidence. The writer tells us repeatedly that sulking, blaming others, and trying to understand the reasons behind a disappointment are the reactions people have to a letdown. However, the writer never *shows* us any of these responses in action. Exactly what kinds of disappointments is the writer talking about? And how, for instance, does someone analyze the causes of disappointment? Would a person write a list of causes on a piece of paper, or review the causes with a concerned friend, or speak to a professional therapist? In an essay like this, we would want to see *examples* of how sulking and blaming others are negative ways of dealing with disappointment.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Consideration of these two essays leads us to the second base of effective writing: *support.* After realizing the importance of specific supporting details, one student writer revised a paper she had done on being lost in the woods as the worst

experience of her childhood. In the revised paper, instead of talking about "the terror of being separated from my parents," she referred to such specifics as "tears streamed down my cheeks as I pictured the faces I would never see again" and "I clutched the locket my parents had given me as if it were a lucky charm that could help me find my way back to the campsite." All your papers should include such vivid details.

Revising for Support

4 Activity

On a separate sheet of paper, revise one of the three supporting paragraphs in "Dealing with Disappointment" by providing specific supporting examples.

Note: Answers will vary.

Base 3: Coherence

Understanding Coherence

The following two essays were written on the topic "Positive or Negative Effects of Television." Both are unified, and both are supported. However, one communicates more clearly and effectively. Which one, and why?

Teaching Tip

Ask a volunteer to read these essays aloud. Ask students to underline the thesis statements, specific examples, and transitions.

Harmful Effects of Watching Television

Essay 1

1 In a recent cartoon, one character said to another, "When you think of the awesome power of television to educate, aren't you glad it doesn't?" It's true that television has the power to educate and to entertain, but unfortunately, these benefits are outweighed by the harm it does to dedicated viewers. Television is harmful because it creates passivity, discourages communication, and presents a false picture of reality.

2 Television makes viewers passive. Children who have an electronic babysitter spend most of their waking hours in a semiconscious state. Older viewers watch tennis matches and basketball games with none of the excitement of being in the stands. Even if children are watching Sesame Street or Barney & Friends, they are being educated passively. The child actors are going on nature walks, building crafts projects, playing with animals, and participating in games, but the little viewers are simply watching. Older viewers watch guests discuss issues with Oprah Winfrey, but no one will turn to the home viewers to ask their opinion.

3 Worst of all, TV presents a false picture of reality that leaves viewers frustrated because they don't have the beauty or wealth of the characters on

television. Viewers absorb the idea that everyone else in the United States owns a lavish apartment, a suburban house, a sleek car, and an expensive wardrobe. Every detective, police officer, oil baron, and lawyer, male or female, is suitable for a pinup poster. The material possessions on TV shows and commercials contribute to the false image of reality. News anchors and reporters, with their perfect hair and makeup, must fit television's standard of beauty. From their modest homes or cramped apartments, many viewers tune in daily to the upper-middle-class world that TV glorifies.

4 Television discourages communication. Families watching television do very little talking except for brief exchanges during commercials. If Uncle Bernie or the next-door neighbors drop in for a visit, the most comfortable activity for everyone may be not conversation but watching ESPN. The family may not even be watching the same set; instead, in some households, all the family members head for their own rooms to watch their own sets. At dinner, plates are plopped on the coffee table in front of the set, and the meal is wolfed down during NBC Nightly News. During commercials, the only communication a family has all night may consist of questions like "Do we have any popcorn?" and "Where's TV Guide?"

5 Television, like cigarettes or saccharin, is harmful to our health. We are becoming isolated, passive, and frustrated. And, most frightening, the average viewer now spends more time watching television than ever before.

ESL Tip

Many grammatical structures, including verb tenses, conjunctions, and transitions, create coherence. Since all of these are areas of difficulty for nonnative speakers, it is important to emphasize how each one improves coherence. For example, as you review each rhetorical pattern, discuss specific grammatical structures that will facilitate coherence and improve writing.

The Benefits of Television

Essay 2

1. We hear a lot about the negative effects of television on the viewer. Obviously, television can be harmful if it is watched constantly to the exclusion of other activities. It would be just as harmful to listen to CDs all the time or to eat constantly. However, when television is watched in moderation, it is extremely valuable, as it provides relaxation, entertainment, and education.

2 First of all, watching TV has the value of sheer relaxation. Watching television can be soothing and restful after an eight-hour day of pressure, challenges, or concentration. After working hard all day, people look forward to a new episode of a favorite show or yet another showing of Casablanca or Anchorman. This period of relaxation leaves viewers refreshed and ready to take on the world again. Watching TV also seems to reduce stress in some people. This benefit of television is just beginning to be recognized. One doctor, for example, advises his patients with high blood pressure to relax in the evening with a few hours of television.

3 In addition to being relaxing, television is entertaining. Along with the standard comedies, dramas, and game shows that provide enjoyment to viewers, television offers a variety of movies and sports events. Moreover, viewers can pay a monthly fee and receive special cable programming or Direct TV. Viewers can watch first-run movies, rock and classical music concerts, and specialized sports events, like international soccer and Grand Prix racing. Viewers can also buy or rent movies and TV shows on DVD. Still another growing area of TV entertainment is video games. PlayStation, Xbox, and Nintendo consoles allow the owner to have a video-game arcade in the living room.

4 Most important, television is educational. Preschoolers learn colors, numbers, and letters from public television programs, like Sesame Street, that use animation and puppets to make learning fun. On the Discovery Channel, science shows for older children go on location to analyze everything from volcanoes to rocket launches. Adults, too, can get an education (college credits included) from courses given on television. Also, television widens our knowledge by covering important events and current news. Viewers can see and hear presidents□ speeches, state funerals, natural disasters, and election results as they are happening.

5 Perhaps because television is such a powerful force, we like to criticize it and search for its flaws. However, the benefits of television should not be ignored. We can use television to relax, to have fun, and to make ourselves smarter. This electronic wonder, then, is a servant, not a master.

5 Activity

Fill in the blanks.

Essay *2* makes its point more clearly and effectively because_____

it is more clearly organized.

EXPLANATION:

In this case, essay 2 is more effective because the material is organized clearly and logically. Using emphatic order, the writer develops three positive uses of television, ending with the most important use: television as an educational tool. The writer includes transitional words that act as signposts, making movement from one idea to the next easy to follow. The major transitions include *First of all, In addition,* and *Most important;*

transitions within paragraphs include such words as *Moreover, Still another, too,* and *Also*. And this writer also uses a linking sentence (□In addition to being relaxing, television is entertaining□) to tie the first and second supporting paragraphs together clearly.

Although essay 1 is unified and supported, the writer does not have any clear and consistent way of organizing the material. The most important idea (signaled by the phrase *Worst of all*) is discussed in the second supporting paragraph instead of being saved for last. None of the supporting paragraphs organizes its details in a logical fashion. The first supporting paragraph, for example, discusses older viewers, then goes to younger viewers, then jumps back to older people again. The third supporting paragraph, like the first, leaps from an opening idea (families talking only during commercials) to several intervening ideas and then back to the original idea (talking during commercials). In addition, essay 1 uses practically no transitional devices to guide the reader.

These two essays lead us to the third base of effective writing: *coherence.* All the supporting ideas and sentences in a paper must be organized so that they cohere, or □stick together.□As has been discussed in Chapter 4, key techniques for tying together the material in a paper include a clear method of organization (such as time order or emphatic order), transitions, and other connecting words.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Revising for Coherence

6 Activity

On a separate sheet of paper, revise one of the three supporting paragraphs in □Harmful Effects of Watching Television□ by providing a clear method of organizing the material and transitional words.

Note: Answers will vary.

Base 4: Sentence Skills

Understanding Sentence Skills

Following are the opening paragraphs from two essays. Both are unified, supported, and organized, but one version communicates more clearly and effectively. Which one, and why?

□revenge□

Essay 1, First Part

1 [1]Revenge is one of those things that everyone enjoy. [2]People don't like to talk about it, though. [3]Just the same, there is nothing more tempting, more satisfying, or with the reward of a bit of revenge. [4]The purpose is not to harm your victims. [5]But to let them know that you are upset about something they are doing. [6]Careful plotting can provide you with relief from bothersom coworkers, gossiping friends, or nagging family members.

2 [7]Coworkers who make comments about the fact that you are always fifteen minutes late for work can be taken care of very simply. [8]The first thing that you should do is to get up extra early one day. [9]Before the sun comes up, drive to each coworker's house, reach under the hood of his car, and disconnected the center wire that leads to the distrib. cap. [10]The car will be unharmed, but it will not start, and your friends at work will all be late for work on the same day. [11]If your lucky, your boss might notice that you are the only one there and will give you a raise. [12]Later if you feel guilty about your actions you can call each person anonymously and tell them how to get the car running. . . .

Teaching Tip

Slowly read these paragraphs. Allow students to □hear□many of the errors in Essay 1.

ESL Tip

While nonnative speakers may struggle with unity, their greatest weakness is in the area of sentence skills. Many of the areas are global and need to be addressed. Nonnative speakers may require a lot of additional practice in correct verb forms and tenses, subject-verb agreement, faulty pronouns, faulty parallelism, and modifiers.

A Bit of Revenge

Essay 2, First Part

1 Revenge is one of those things that everyone enjoys. People don't like to talk about it, though. Just the same, there is nothing more tempting, more satisfying, or more rewarding than a bit of revenge. The purpose is not to harm your victims but to let them know that you are upset about something they are doing to you. Careful plotting can provide you with relief from bothersome coworkers, gossiping friends, or nagging family members.

2 Coworkers who make comments about the fact that you are always fifteen minutes late for work can be taken care of very simply. The first thing that you should do is to get up extra early one day. Before the sun comes up, drive to each coworker's house. Reach under the hood of your coworker's car and disconnect the center wire that leads to the distributor cap. The car will be unharmed, but it will not start, and your friends at work will all be late for work on the same day. If you're lucky, your boss might notice that you are the only one there and will give you a raise. Later, if you feel guilty about your actions, you can call your coworkers anonymously and tell them how to get their cars running again. . . .

7 Activity

Fill in the blanks.

Essay ___2___ makes its point more clearly and effectively because_____

it is free of errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. It shows good use of sentence skills.

EXPLANATION:

Essay 2 is more effective because it uses *sentence skills,* the fourth base of competent writing. Here are the sentence-skills mistakes in essay 1:

- The title should not be set off in quotation marks.
- The first letter of the title should be capitalized.
- The singular subject *everyone* in sentence 1 should have a singular verb: *enjoy* should be *enjoys.*
- There is a lack of parallelism in sentence 3: *with the reward of* should be *more rewarding.*
- Word group 5 is a fragment; it can be corrected by attaching it to the previous sentence.
- The word *bothersom* in sentence 6 is misspelled; it should be *bothersome.*
- The word *disconnected* in sentence 9 should be *disconnect* to be consistent in tense with *reach,* the other verb in the sentence.
- The word *distrib.* in sentence 9 should be spelled out in full: *distributor.*
- The first *your* in sentence 11 stands for *you are;* an apostrophe and an *e* must be added: *you're.*
- Commas must be added in sentence 12 to set off the interrupting words.
- The words *each person* and *the car* in sentence 12 need to be changed to plural forms to agree with *them.*

Revising for Sentence Skills

8 Activity

Here are the final three paragraphs from the two essays. Edit the sentences in the first essay to make the corrections needed. Note that comparing essays 1 and 2 will help you locate the mistakes. This activity will also help you identify some of the sentence skills you may want to review in Part Four.

Essay 1, Last Part

. . . [13]Gossiping friends at school are also perfect targets for a simple act 3
of revenge. [14]A way to trap either male or female friends ~~are~~ *is* to leave phony
messages on their lockers. [15]If the friend that you want to get is male, leave
a message that a certain girl would like him to stop by her house later that
day. [16]With any luck, her boyfriend will be there. [17]The girl won't know what's
going on, and the victim will be so embarrassed that he probably won't leave
his home for a month. [18]The plan works just as well for female friends, too.

[19]When Mom and Dad and your sisters and brothers really begin to 4
annoy you, harmless revenge may be just the way to make them ~~quite~~ *quiet*
down for a while. [20]The dinner table, where most of the nagging probably
happens, is a likely place. [21]Just before the meal begins, throw a handful of
raisins into the food. [22]Wait about ~~5~~ *five* minutes and, after everyone has ~~began~~ *begun*
to eat, clamp your hand over your mouth and begin to make odd noises.
[23]When they ask you what the matter is, point to a raisin and yell, "Bugs!"
[24]~~Dumping the~~ *They'll all dump their* food in the disposal, *jump into* the car, ~~will~~ *and* head quickly for ~~mcdonald's~~ *McDonald's*
[25]That night, you'll have your first quiet, peaceful meal in a long time.

[26]Well-planned revenge does not have to hurt anyone. [27]The object 5
is simply to let other people know that they are beginning to bother you.
[28]You should remember, though, to stay on your guard after completing your
revenge. [29]The reason for this is simple, ~~coworkers~~ *Coworkers,* friends, and family can
also plan revenge on you.

Teaching Tip

You may want to do this activity with the entire class.

Note:

Editing may vary slightly.

Essay 2, Last Part

3 . . . Gossiping friends at school are also perfect targets for a simple act of revenge. A way to trap either male or female friends is to leave phony messages on their lockers. If the friend that you want to get is male, leave a message that a certain girl would like him to stop by her house later that day. With any luck, her boyfriend will be there. The girl won't know what's going on, and the victim will be so embarrassed that he probably won't leave his home for a month. The plan works just as well for female friends, too.

4 When Mom and Dad and your sisters and brothers really begin to annoy you, harmless revenge may be just the way to make them quiet down for a while. The dinner table, where most of the nagging probably happens, is a likely place. Just before the meal begins, throw a handful of raisins into the food. Wait about five minutes and, after everyone has begun to eat, clamp your hand over your mouth and begin to make odd noises. When they ask you what the matter is, point to a raisin and yell, □Bugs!□ They'll all dump their food in the disposal, jump into the car, and head quickly for McDonald's. That night, you'll have your first quiet, peaceful meal in a long time.

5 Well-planned revenge does not have to hurt anyone. The object is simply to let other people know that they are beginning to bother you. You should remember, though, to stay on your guard after completing your revenge. The reason for this is simple. Coworkers, friends, and family can also plan revenge on you.

Practice in Using the Four Bases

You are now familiar with four standards, or bases, of effective writing: *unity, support, coherence,* and *sentence skills.* In this section you will expand and strengthen your understanding of the four bases as you evaluate and revise essays for each of them.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Revising Essays for Unity

9 Activity

Both of the following essays contain irrelevant sentences that do not relate to the thesis of the essay or support the topic sentence of the paragraph in which they appear. Cross out the irrelevant sentences and write the numbers of those sentences in the spaces provided.

Playing on the Browns

Essay 1

1 [1]For the past three summers, I have played first base on a softball team known as the Browns. [2]We play a long schedule, including playoffs, and everybody takes the games pretty seriously. [3]In that respect, we're no different from any other of the thousand or so teams in our city. [4]But in one respect, we are different. [5]In an all-male league, we have a woman on the team□ me. [6]Thus I've had a chance to observe something about human nature by seeing

how the men have treated me. [7]Some have been disbelieving; some have been patronizing; and, fortunately, some have simply accepted me.

2 [8]One new team in the league was particularly flabbergasted to see me start the game at first base. [9]Nobody on the Comets had commented one way or the other when he saw me warming up, but playing in the actual game was another story. [10]The Comets first-base coach leaned over to me with a disbelieving grin and said, "You mean, you're starting, and those three guys are on the bench?" [11]I nodded and he shrugged, still amazed. [12]He probably thought I was the manager's wife. [13]When I came up to bat, the Comet pitcher smiled and called to his outfielders to move way in on me. [14]Now, I don't have a lot of power, but I'm not exactly feeble. [15]~~I used to work out on the exercise machines at a local health club until it closed, and now I lift weights at home a couple of times a week~~.[16]I wiped the smirks off their faces with a line drive double over the left fielder's head.

The number of the irrelevant sentence: ***15***

3 [17]The next game, we played another new team, the Argyles, and their attitude was patronizing. [18]The Argyles had seen me take batting practice, so they didn't do anything so rash as to draw their outfield way in. [19]They had respect for my ability as a player. [20]However, they tried to annoy me with phony concern. [21]For example, a redheaded Argyle got on base in the first inning and said to me, "You'd better be careful, hon. [22]When you have your foot on the bag, somebody might step on it. [23]You can get hurt in this game." [24]~~I was mad, but I have worked ou several mental techniques to control my anger because it interferes with my playing ability~~. [25]Well, this delicate little girl survived the season without injury, which is more than I can say for some of the he-men on the Argyles.

The number of the irrelevant sentence: ***24***

4 [26]Happily, most of the teams in the league have accepted me, just as the Browns did. [27]The men on the Browns coached and criticized me (and occasionally cursed me) just like anyone else. [28]~~Because I'm a religious person, I don't approve of cursing, but I don't say anything about it to my teammates~~. **[Punto y seguido].**

[29]They are not amazed when I get a hit or stretch for a wide throw. [30]My average this year was higher than the averages of several of my teammates, yet none of them acted resentful or threatened. [31]On several occasions I was taken out late in a game for a pinch runner, but other slow players on the team were also lifted at times for pinch runners. [32]Every woman should have a team like the Browns!

The number of the irrelevant sentence: *28*

5 [33]Because I really had problems only with the new teams, I've concluded that it's when people are faced with an unfamiliar situation that they react defensively. [34]Once a rival team has gotten used to seeing me on the field, I'm no big deal. [35]Still, I suspect that the Browns secretly feel we're a little special. [36]After all, we won the championship with a woman on the team.

How to Con an Instructor

Essay 2

1 [1]Enter college, and you'll soon be reminded of the old saying "The pen is mightier than the sword." [2]That person behind the instructor's desk holds your future in his or her ink-stained hands. [3]So your first important assignment in college has nothing to do with required readings, examinations, or even the hazards of registration. [4]It is, instead, how to con an instructor.

2 [5]The first step in conning an instructor is to use body language. [6]You may be able to convince your instructor that you are special without even saying a word. [7]When you enter the classroom, be sure to sit in the front row. [8]That way, the instructor can't possibly miss you. [9]Then, as the instructor lectures, take notes frantically. [10]The instructor will be flattered that you think so much of his or her words that you want to write them all down. [11]~~A felt-tip pen is superior to a pen or pencil; it will help you write faster and prevent aching wrists~~. [12]While you are writing, be sure to smile at the instructor's jokes and nod violently in agreement with every major point. [13]Most important, as class continues, sit with your body pitched forward and your eyes wide open, fixed firmly, as if hypnotized, on your instructor's face. [14]Make your whole body suggest that you are watching a star.

The number of the irrelevant sentence: *11*

3 [15]Once you have mastered body language, it is time to move on to the second phase of conning the instructor: class participation. [16]Everyone knows that the student who is most eager to learn is the one who responds to the questions that are asked and even comes up with a few more. [17]Therefore, be sure to be responsive. [18]Questions such as "How does this affect the future of the United States?" or "Don't you think that someday all this will be done by computer?" can be used in any class without prior knowledge of the subject matter. [19]~~Many students, especially in large classes, get lost in the crowd and never do anything to make themselves stand out:~~[20]Another good participation technique is to wait until the instructor has said something that sounds profound and then ask him or her to repeat it slowly so you can get it down word for word in your notes. [21]No instructor can resist this kind of flattery.

The number of the irrelevant sentence: *19*

4 [22]However, the most advanced form of conning an instructor happens after class. [23]Don't be like the others who slap their notebooks closed, snatch up their books, and rush out the door before the echoes of the final bell have died away. [24]~~Did you ever notice how students begin to get restless about . ve minutes before class ends, even if there's no clock on the wall?~~[25]Instead, be reluctant to leave. [26]Approach the instructor's desk hesitantly, almost reverently. [27]Say that you want to find out more about the topic. [28]Is there any extra reading you can do? [29]Even better, ask if the instructor has written anything on the topic and whether you could borrow it. [30]Finally, compliment your instructor by saying that this is the most interesting course you've ever taken. [31]Nothing beats the personal approach for making an instructor think you care.

The number of the irrelevant sentence: *24*

5 [32]Body language, questions, after-class discussions— these are the secrets of conning an instructor that every college student should know. [33]~~These kinds of things go on in high school, too, and they're just as effective on that level~~.[34]Once you master these methods, you won't have to worry about a thing— until the final exam.

The number of the irrelevant sentence: *33*

Revising Essays for Support

Both of the essays below lack supporting details at certain key points. In each essay, identify the spots where details are needed.

Teaching Tip

After students complete this activity, suggest that they provide the needed details for each essay.

10 Activity

Formula for Happiness

Essay 1

1 [1]Everyone has his or her own formula for happiness. [2]As we go through life, we discover the activities that make us feel best. [3]I've already discovered three keys to happiness. [4]I depend on karate, music, and self-hypnosis.

2 [5]Karate helps me feel good physically. [6]Before taking karate lessons, I was tired most of the time, my muscles felt like foam rubber, and I was twenty pounds overweight. [7]After three months of these lessons, I saw an improvement in my physical condition. [8]Also, my endurance has increased. [9]At the end of my workday, I used to drag myself home to eat and watch television all night. [10]Now, I have enough energy to play with my children, shop, or see a movie. [11]Karate has made me feel healthy, strong, and happy.

The spot where supporting details are needed occurs after sentence *7*.

3 [12]Singing with a chorus has helped me achieve emotional well-being by expressing my feelings. [13]In situations where other people would reveal their feelings, I would remain quiet. [14]Since joining the chorus, however, I have an outlet for joy, anger, or sadness. [15]When I sing, I pour my emotions into the music and don't have to feel shy. [16]For this reason, I most enjoy singing certain kinds of music, since they demand real depth of feeling.

The first spot where supporting details are needed occurs after sentence *13*.

The second spot occurs after sentence *16*.

4 [17]Self-hypnosis gives me peace of mind. [18]This is a total relaxation technique, which I learned several years ago. [19]Essentially I breathe deeply and concentrate on relaxing all my muscles. [20]I then repeat a key suggestion to myself. [21]Through self-hypnosis, I have gained control over several bad habits that have long been haunting me. [22]I have also learned to reduce the stress that goes along with my secretarial job. [23]Now I can handle the boss's demands or unexpected work without feeling tense.

The first spot where supporting details are needed occurs after sentence *20*.

The second spot occurs after sentence *21*.

5 [24]In short, my physical, emotional, and mental well-being have been greatly increased through karate, music, and self-hypnosis. [25]These activities have become important elements in my formula for happiness.

Problems of a Foreign Student

Essay 2

1 [1]About ten months ago I decided to leave my native country and come to the United States to study. [2]When I got here, I suddenly turned into someone labeled □foreign student.□ [3]A foreign student, I discovered, has problems. [4]Whether from Japan, like me, or from some other country, a foreign student has to work twice as hard as Americans do to succeed in college.

2 [5]First of all, there is the language problem. [6]American students have the advantage of comprehending English without working at it. [7]But even they complain that some professors talk too fast, mumble, or use big words. [8]As a result, they can't take notes fast enough to keep up, or they misunderstand what was said. [9]Now consider my situation. [10]I'm trying to cope with a language that is probably one of the hardest in the world to learn. [11]Dozens of English slang phrases□ □mess around,□□hassle,□□get into□□ were totally new to me. [12]Other language problems gave me trouble, too.

The spot where supporting details are needed occurs after sentence *12*.

3 [13]Another problem I face has to do with being a stranger to American culture. [14]For instance, the academic world is much different in Japan. [15]In the United States, instructors seem to treat students as equals. [16]Many classes are informal, and the relationship between instructor and student is friendly; in fact, students call some instructors by their first names. [17]In Japan, however, the instructor-student relationship is different. [18]Lectures, too, are more formal, and students show respect by listening quietly and paying attention at all times. [19]This more casual atmosphere occasionally makes me feel uncomfortable in class.

The spot where supporting details are needed occurs after sentence *17*.

4 [20]Perhaps the most difficult problem I face is social. [21]American students may have some trouble making new friends or may feel lonely at times. [22]However, they usually manage to find other people with the same background, interests, or goals. [23]It is twice as hard to make friends, though, if a person has trouble making the small talk that can lead to a relationship. [24]I find it difficult to become friends with other students because I don't understand some aspects of American life. [25]Students would rather talk to someone who is familiar with these things.

The spot where supporting details are needed occurs after sentence *24*.

5 [26]Despite all the challenges that I, as a foreign student, have to overcome, I wouldn't give up this chance to go to school in the United States. [27]Each day, the problems seem a little bit less overwhelming. [28]Like a little child who is finally learning to read, write, and make sense of things, I am starting to enjoy my experience of discovering a brand-new world.

Revising Essays for Coherence

Both of the essays that follow could be revised to improve their coherence. Answer the questions about coherence that come after each essay.

Teaching Tip

Read each essay aloud. Ask students to underline the thesis statement, specific examples, and transitions before answering the questions.

11 Activity
Noise Pollution

Essay 1

1 [1]Natural sounds□ waves, wind, birdsong□ are so soothing that companies sell recordings of them to anxious people seeking a relaxing atmosphere at home or in the car. [2]One reason why □environmental sounds□ are big business is that ordinary citizens, especially city dwellers, are bombarded by noise pollution. [3]On the way to work, on the job, and on the way home, the typical urban resident must cope with a continuing barrage of unpleasant sounds.

2 [4]The noise level in an office can be unbearable. [5]From nine to five o'clock, phones and fax machines ring, computer keyboards chatter, intercoms buzz, and copy machines thump back and forth. [6]Every time the receptionists can't find people, they resort to a nerve-shattering public address system. [7]And because the managers worry about the employees□ morale, they graciously provide the endless droning of canned music. [8]This effectively eliminates any possibility of a moment of blessed silence.

3 [9]Traveling home from work provides no relief from the noisiness of the office. [10]The ordinary sounds of blaring taxi horns and rumbling buses are occasionally punctuated by the ear-piercing screech of car brakes. [11]Taking a shortcut through the park will bring the weary worker face to face with chanting religious cults, freelance musicians, screaming children, and barking dogs. [12]None of these sounds can compare with the large radios many park visitors carry. [13]Each radio blasts out something different, from heavy-metal rock to baseball, at decibel levels so strong that they make eardrums throb in pain. [14]If there are birds singing or wind in the trees, the harried commuter will never hear them.

4 [15]Even a trip to work at 6 or 7 a.m. isn't quiet. [16]No matter which route a worker takes, there is bound to be a noisy construction site somewhere along the way. [17]Hard hats will shout from third-story windows to warn their coworkers below before heaving debris out and sending it crashing to earth. [18]Huge front-end loaders will crunch into these piles of rubble and back up, their warning signals letting out loud, jarring beeps. [19]Air hammers begin an earsplitting chorus of rat-a-tat-tat sounds guaranteed to shatter sanity as well as concrete. [20]Before reaching the office, the worker is already completely frazzled.

5 [21]Noise pollution is as dangerous as any other kind of pollution. [22]The endless pressure of noise probably triggers countless nervous breakdowns, vicious arguments, and bouts of depression. [23]And imagine the world problems we could solve, if only the noise stopped long enough to let us think.

1. In "Noise Pollution," what is the number of the sentence to which the transition word *Also* could be added in paragraph 2? ***6***

2. In the last sentence of paragraph 2, to what does the pronoun *This* refer? ***endless droning of canned music***

3. What is the number of the sentence to which the transition word *But* could be added in paragraph 3? ***12***

4. What is the number of the sentence to which the transition word *Then* could be added in paragraph 4? ***18***

5. What is the number of the sentence to which the transition word *Meanwhile* could be added in paragraph 4? ***19***

6. What word is used as a synonym for *debris* in paragraph 4? ***rubble***

7. How many times is the key word *sounds* used in the essay? ***six times***

8. The time order of the three supporting paragraphs is confused. What is the number of the supporting paragraph that should come first? *4* Second? *2* Third? *3*

Weight Loss

Essay 2

1 [1]The big fraternity party turned out to be the low point of my first year at college. [2]I was in heaven until I discovered that my date with handsome Greg, the fraternity vice president, was a hoax: he had used me to win the "ugliest date" contest. [3]I ran sobbing back to the dorm, wanting to resign from the human race. [4]Then I realized that it was time to stop kidding myself about my weight. [5]Within the next two years, I lost forty-two pounds and turned my life around. [6]Losing weight gave me self-confidence socially, emotionally, and professionally.

2 [7]I am more outgoing socially. [8]Just being able to abandon dark colors, baggy sweaters, and tent dresses in favor of bright colors, T-shirts, and designer jeans made me feel better in social situations. [9]I am able to do more things. [10]I once turned down an invitation for a great camping trip with my best friend's family, making up excuses about sun poisoning and allergies. [11]Really, I was too embarrassed to tell them that I couldn't fit into the bathroom in their Winnebago! [12]I made up for it last summer when I was one of the organizers of a college backpacking trip through the Rockies.

3 [13]Most important, losing weight helped me seek new professional goals. [14]When I was obese, I organized my whole life around my weight, as if it were a defect I could do nothing about. [15]With my good grades, I could have chosen almost any major the college offered, but I had limited my goal to teaching kindergarten because I felt that little children wouldn't judge how I looked. [16]Once I was no longer fat, I realized that I love working with all sorts of people. [17]I became a campus guide and even had small parts in college theater productions. [18]As a result, last year I changed my major to public relations. [19]The area fascinates me, and I now have good job prospects there.

4 [20]I have also become more emotionally honest. [21]Rose, at the college counseling center, helped me see that my "fat and jolly" personality had been false. [22]I was afraid others would reject me if I didn't always go along with their suggestions. [23]I eventually put Rose's advice to the test. [24]My roommates were planning an evening at a Greek restaurant. [25]I loved the restaurant's atmosphere, but there wasn't much I liked on the menu. [26]Finally, in a shaky voice I said, "Actually, I'm not crazy about lamb. [27]How about Chinese food?" [28]They scolded me for not mentioning it before, and we had dinner at a Chinese restaurant. [29]We all agreed it was one of our best evenings out.

5 [30]Fortunately, the low point of my first year turned out to be the turning point, leading to what promises to be an exciting senior year. [31]Greg's cruel joke became a strange sort of favor, and I've gone from wanting to resign from the human race to welcoming each day as a source of fresh adventure and self-discovery.

1. In "Weight Loss," what is the number of the sentence to which the transition words *For one thing* could be added in paragraph 2? ***8***

2. What is the number of the sentence to which the transition word *Also* could be added in paragraph 2? ***9***

3. What is the number of the sentence to which the transition word *But* could be added in paragraph 2? ***12***

4. In sentence 11, to what does the pronoun *them* refer? ***my best friend's family***

5. What is the number of the sentence to which the transition word *However* could be added in paragraph 3? ***16***

6. What word is used as a synonym for *obese* in paragraph 3? ***fat***

7. How many times is the keyword *weight* used in the essay? ***four times***

8. What is the number of the supporting paragraph that should be placed in the emphatic final position? ***3***

Revising Essays for All Four Bases: Unity, Support, Coherence, and Sentence Skills

In this activity, you will evaluate and revise two essays in terms of all four bases: unity, support, coherence, and sentence skills. Comments follow each supporting paragraph. Circle the letter of the statement that applies in each case.

Teaching Tip

You may want to use this activity to assess student learning.

12 Activity
Chiggers

Essay 1

1 I had lived my whole life not knowing what chiggers are. I thought they were probably a type of insect Humphrey Bogart encountered in The African Queen. I never had any real reason to care, until one day last summer. Within

twenty-four hours, I had vividly experienced what chigger bites are, learned how to treat them, and learned how to prevent them.

2 First of all, I learned that chiggers are the larvae of tiny mites found in the woods and that their bites are always multiple and cause intense itching. A beautiful summer day seemed perfect for a walk in the woods. I am definitely not a city person, for I couldn't stand to be surrounded by people, noise, and concrete. As I walked through the ferns and pines, I noticed what appeared to be a dusting of reddish seeds or pollen on my slacks. Looking more closely, I realized that each speck was a tiny insect. I casually brushed off a few and gave them no further thought. I woke up the next morning feeling like a victim staked to an anthill by an enemy wise in the ways of torture. Most of my body was speckled with measlelike bumps that at the slightest touch burned and itched like a mosquito bite raised to the twentieth power. When antiseptics and calamine lotion failed to help, I raced to my doctor for emergency aid.



Paragraph 2 contains an irrelevant sentence.

b. Paragraph 2 lacks supporting details at one key spot.

c. Time order in paragraph 2 is confused.

d. Paragraph 2 contains two run-ons.

3 Healing the bites of chiggers, as the doctor diagnosed them to be, is not done overnight. It seems that there is really no wonder drug or commercial product to help. The victim must rely on a primitive home remedy and mostly wait out the course of the painful bites. First, the doctor explained, the skin must be bathed carefully with warm soapy water. An antihistamine spray applied several hours later will not cure the bites but will soothe the intense itching and help prevent infection. A few days after the treatment, the bites finally healed. Although I was in pain, and desperate for relief, I followed the doctor's instructions.

a. Paragraph 3 contains an irrelevant sentence.

b. Paragraph 3 lacks supporting details at one key spot.



Time order in paragraph 3 is confused.

d. Paragraph 3 contains one fragment.

4 Most important of all, I learned what to do to prevent getting chigger bites in the future. Mainly, of course, stay out of the woods in the summertime. But if the temptation is too great on an especially beautiful day, I'll be sure to wear the right type of clothing, like a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, knee socks, and closed shoes. In addition, I'll cover myself with clouds of superstrength insect repellent. I will then shower thoroughly as

soon as I get home, I also will probably burn all my clothes if I notice even one suspicious red speck.

a. Paragraph 4 contains an irrelevant sentence.

b. Paragraph 4 lacks supporting details at one key spot.

c. Paragraph 4 lacks transitional words.



Paragraph 4 contains a run-on and a fragment.

5 I will never forget my lessons on the cause, cure, and prevention of chigger bites. I'd gladly accept the challenge of rattlesnakes and scorpions in the wilds of the West but will never again confront a siege of chiggers in the pinewoods.

The Hazards of Being an Only Child

Essay 2

1 Many people who have grown up in multichild families think that being an only child is the best of all possible worlds. They point to such benefits as the only child's annual new wardrobe and the lack of competition for parental love. But single-child status isn't as good as people say it is. Instead of having everything they want, only children are sometimes denied certain basic human needs.

2 Only children lack companionship. An only child can have trouble making friends, since he or she isn't used to being around other children. Often, the only child comes home to an empty house; both parents are working, and there are no brothers or sisters to play with or to talk to about the day. At dinner, the single child can't tell jokes, giggle, or throw food while the adults discuss boring adult subjects. An only child always has his or her own room but never has anyone to whisper to half the night when sleep doesn't come. Some only children thrive on this isolation and channel their energies into creative activities like writing or drawing. Owing to this lack of companionship, an only child sometimes lacks the social ease and self-confidence that come from being part of a close-knit group of contemporaries.



Paragraph 2 contains an irrelevant sentence.

b. Paragraph 2 lacks supporting details at one key spot.

c. Paragraph 2 lacks transitional words.

d. Paragraph 2 contains one fragment and one run-on.

3 Second, only children lack privacy. An only child is automatically the center of parental concern. There's never any doubt about which child tried to sneak in after midnight on a weekday. And who will get the lecture the next morning. Also, whenever an only child gives in to a bad mood, runs into his or her room, and slams the door, the door will open thirty seconds later, revealing an anxious parent. Parents of only children sometimes don't even understand the child's need for privacy. For example, they may not understand why a teenager wants a lock on the door or a personal telephone. After all, the parents think, there are only the three of us, there's no need for secrets.

a. Paragraph 3 contains an irrelevant sentence.

b. Paragraph 3 lacks supporting details at one key spot.

c. Paragraph 3 lacks transitional words.



Paragraph 3 contains one fragment and one run-on.

4 Most important, only children lack power. They get all the love; but if something goes wrong, they also get all the punishment. When a bottle of perfume is knocked to the floor or the television is left on all night, there's no little sister or brother to blame it on. Moreover, an only child has no recourse when asking for a privilege of some kind, such as permission to stay out late or to take an overnight trip with friends. There are no other siblings to point to and say, □You let them do it. Why won't you let me?□With no allies their own age, only children are always outnumbered, two to one. An only child hasn't a chance of influencing any major family decisions, either.

a. Paragraph 4 contains an irrelevant sentence.



Paragraph 4 lacks supporting details at one key spot.

c. Paragraph 4 lacks transitional words.

d. Paragraph 4 contains one fragment and one run-on.

5 Being an only child isn't as special as some people think. It's no fun being without friends, without privacy, and without power in one's own home. But the child who can triumph over these hardships grows up self-reliant and strong. Perhaps for this reason alone, the hazards are worth it.

PART 2: **Patterns of Essay Development**

Preview

7 Introduction to Essay Development

8 Description

9 Narration

10 Exemplification

11 Process

12 Cause and Effect

13 Comparison or Contrast

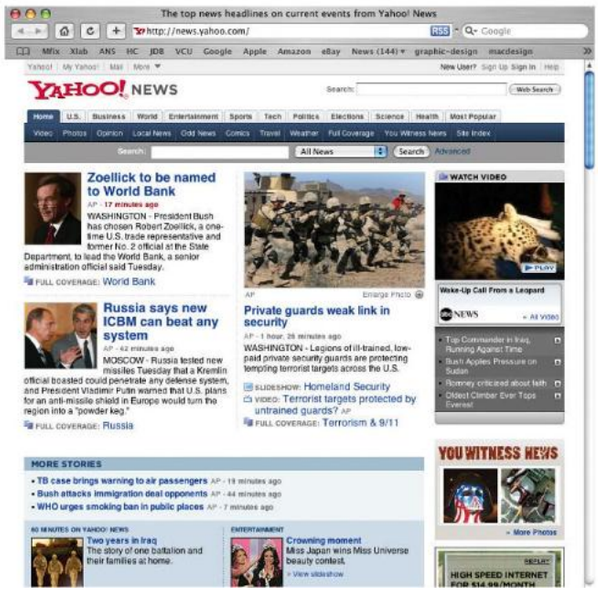
14 Definition

15 Division-Classification

16 Argument







What do all of the images shown here have in common? They can all be classified as news sources. Think about the many different formats available for getting the news today. Then select three formats and write an essay in which you discuss the unique qualities of each.

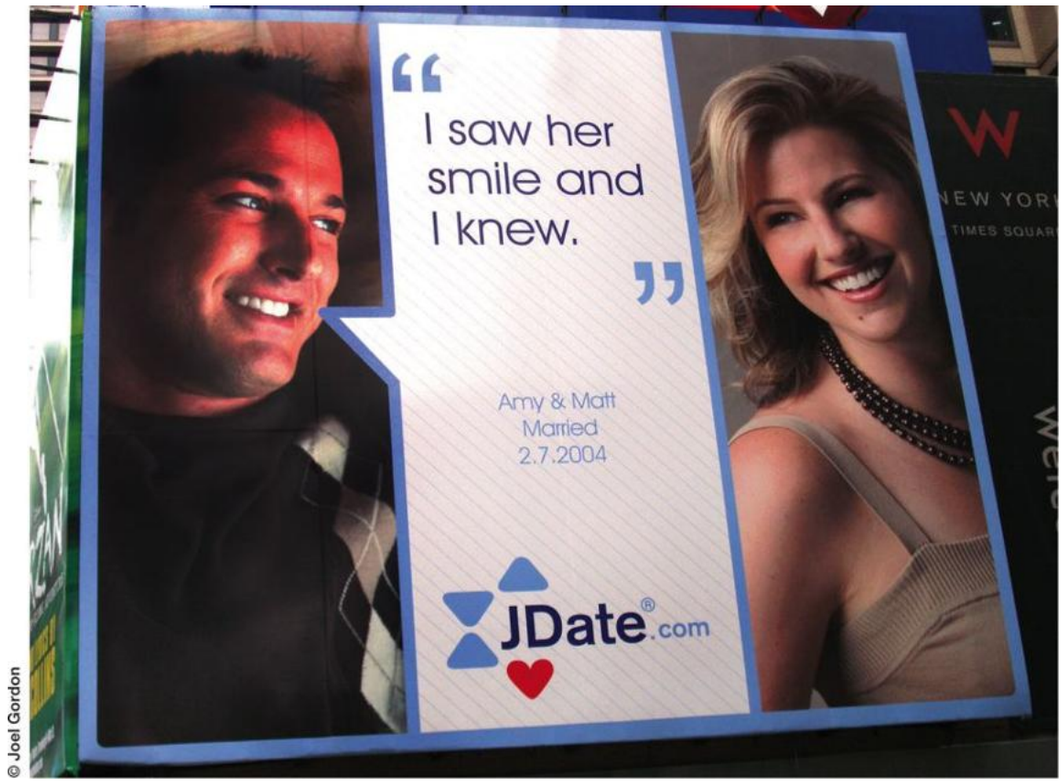
Teaching Tip

Ask students to complete this writing prompt in class.

7: Introduction to Essay Development

This chapter will

- introduce you to nine patterns of essay development
- explain the importance of understanding the nature and length of an assignment
- explain the importance of knowing your subject, your purpose, and your audience
- explain the three different points of view used in writing
- show you how to conduct a peer review and personal review



Who is the intended audience of this advertisement? Write a description of the intended audience.

Teaching Tip

Ask students to complete this writing prompt in class.

Important Considerations in Essay Development

When you begin work on particular types of essays, keep in mind several general considerations about writing; they are discussed in the following pages.

Understanding the Nature and Length of an Assignment

In all likelihood, your college writing assignments will have a good deal of variety. Sometimes you will be able to write on a topic of your own choosing or on a point you discover within a given topic; at other times you may be given a very specific assignment. In any case, do not start writing a paper until you know exactly what is expected.

First of all, be clear about *what kind of paper* the instructor has in mind. Should it be primarily a research paper summarizing other people's ideas? Should it consist entirely of your own ideas? Should it consist of a comparison of your ideas with those of a given author? Should it be something else? If you are not sure about the nature of an assignment, other students may be confused as well. Do not hesitate, then, to ask an instructor about an assignment. Most instructors are more than willing to provide an explanation. They would rather spend a few minutes of class time explaining an assignment than spend hours reading student essays that miss the mark.

Second, find out right at the start *how long* a paper is expected to be. Many instructors will indicate the approximate length of the papers they assign. Knowing the expected length of a paper will help you decide exactly how detailed your treatment of a subject should be.

Knowing Your Subject

Whenever possible, try to write on a subject that interests you. You will then find it easier to put more time into your work. Even more important, try to write on a subject that you already know something about. If you do not have direct experience with the subject, you should at least have indirect experience□ knowledge gained through thinking, reading, or talking about the subject as well as from prewriting.

Teaching Tip

Ask your students to create a list of high-interest topics. Suggest that they include their hobbies.

If you are asked to write on a topic about which you have no experience or knowledge, do whatever research is required to gain the background information you may need. Chapter 21, □Using the Library and the Internet,□ will show you how to look up relevant information. Without direct or indirect experience, or the information you gain through research, you may not be able to provide the specific evidence needed to develop an essay.

Knowing Your Purpose and Audience

The three most common purposes of writing are *to inform, to persuade,* and *to entertain*. As noted previously, much of the writing you do in this book will involve some form of argumentation or persuasion. You will advance a point or thesis and then support it in a variety of ways. To some extent, also, you will write papers to inform□ to provide readers with information about a particular subject. And since, in practice, writing often combines purposes, you might also find yourself at times providing vivid or humorous details to entertain your readers.

ESL Tip

In some cultures, arguing a point is frowned upon. Emphasize that academic writing may often require you to take a position and defend your point.

Your audience will be primarily your instructor and sometimes other students. Your instructor is really a symbol of the larger audience you should see yourself writing for□ educated adult readers who expect you to present your ideas in a clear, direct, organized way. If you can learn to write to persuade or inform such a general audience, you will have accomplished a great deal.

It will also be helpful for you to write some papers for a more specific audience. By doing so, you will develop an ability to choose words and adopt a tone and point of view that are just right for a given audience. This part of the book includes assignments asking you to write with very specific purposes in mind and for very specific audiences.

Determining Your Point of View

When you write, you can take any of three approaches, or points of view: first person, second person, or third person.

Teaching Tip

Bring to class examples of writing with different points of view. These examples might be found in magazine articles, advertisements, and other published sources. If your classroom has access to the Internet, find examples from Web sites. Help your students make connections.

First-Person Approach

In the first-person approach□ a strongly individualized point of view□ you draw on your own experience and speak to your audience in your own voice, using pronouns like *I, me, mine, we, our,* and *us.*

The first-person approach is most common in narrative essays based on personal experience. It also suits other essays where most of the evidence presented consists of personal observation.

Here is a first-person supporting paragraph from an essay on camping:

> First of all, I like comfort when I'm camping. My motor home, with its completely equipped kitchen, shower stall, toilet, double bed, and flatscreen television, resembles a mobile motel room. I can sleep on a real mattress, clean sheets, and fluffy pillows. Next to my bed are devices that make me feel at home: a Bose radio, an alarm clock, and a remote control. Unlike the poor campers huddled in tents, I don't have to worry about cold, rain, heat,

or annoying insects. After a hot shower, I can slide into my best nightgown, sit comfortably on my down-filled quilt, and read the latest best seller while a thunderstorm booms outside.

Second-Person Approach

In the second-person approach, the writer speaks directly to the reader, using the pronoun *you.* The second-person approach is considered appropriate for giving direct instructions and explanations to the reader. That is why *you* is used throughout this book.

You should plan to use the second-person approach only when writing a process essay. Otherwise, as a general rule, never use the word *you* in writing.

TIP

If using *you* has been a common mistake in your writing, you should review the rule about pronoun point of view on pages 109–110.

Third-Person Approach

The third-person approach is by far the most common point of view in academic writing. In the third person, the writer includes no direct references to the reader (*you*) or the self (*I, me*). Third person gets its name from the stance it suggests— that of an outsider or "third person" observing and reporting on matters of public rather than private importance. In this approach, you draw on information achieved through observation, thinking, or reading.

Here is a similar paragraph on camping, recast in the third person. Note the third-person pronouns *their, them,* and *they,* which all refer to *campers* in the first sentence.

First of all, modern campers bring complete bedrooms with them. Winnebagos, Airstream motor homes, and fleetwood recreational vehicles lumber into America's campgrounds every summer like mobile motel rooms. All the comforts of home are provided inside. Campers sleep on real mattresses with clean sheets and fluffy pillows. Next to their beds are the same gadgets that litter their night tables at home— Bose radios, alarm

clocks, and remote controls. It's not necessary for them to worry about annoyances like cold, heat, rain, or buzzing insects, either. They can sit comfortably in bed and read the latest best sellers while a thunderstorm booms outside.

Using Peer Review

In addition to having your instructor as an audience for your writing, you will benefit from having other students in your class as an audience. On the day a paper is due, or on a day when you are writing papers in class, your instructor may ask you to pair up with another student (or students). That student will read your paper, and you will read his or her paper.



Ideally, read the other paper aloud while your peer listens. If that is not practical, read it in a whisper while your peer looks on. As you read, both you and your peer should look and listen for spots where the paper does not read smoothly and clearly. Check or circle the trouble spots where your reading snags.

Teaching Tip

Ask students to list the benefits of peer review. Often students think that peer review is a waste of time.

Your peer should then read your paper, marking possible trouble spots. Then each of you should do three things.

1 Identification

At the top of a separate sheet of paper, write the title and author of the paper you have read. Under it, write your name as the reader of the paper.

2 Scratch Outline

□X-ray□ the paper for its inner logic by making up a scratch outline. The scratch outline need be no more than twenty words or so, but it should show clearly the logical foundation on which the essay is built. It should identify and summarize the overall point of the paper and the three areas of support for the point.

Your outline can look like this:

Point: _____

Support:

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

For example, here is a scratch outline of the essay on moviegoing on page 6:

Point: ***Moviegoing is a problem.***

Support:

(1) ***Inconvenience of going out***

(2) ***Tempting snacks***

(3) ***Other movie-goers***

3 Comments

Under the outline, write a heading: Comments. Here is what you should comment on:

- Look at the spots where your reading of the paper snagged. Are words missing or misspelled? Is there a lack of parallel structure? Are there mistakes with punctuation? Is the meaning of a sentence confused? Try to figure out what the problems are and suggest ways to fix them.

- Are there spots in the paper where you see problems with *unity, support,* or *organization*? (You'll find it helpful to refer to the Four Bases checklist on the inside back cover of this book.) If so, offer comments. For example, you might say, More details are needed in the first supporting paragraph, or, Some of the details in the last supporting paragraph don't really back up your point.

- Finally, note something you really liked about the paper, such as good use of transitions or an especially realistic or vivid specific detail.

After you have completed your evaluation of the paper, give it to your peer. Your instructor may give you the option of rewriting a paper in light of the feedback you get. Whether or not you rewrite, be sure to hand in the peer-evaluation form with your paper.

Doing a Personal Review

1. While you're writing and revising an essay, you should be constantly evaluating it in terms of *unity, support,* and *coherence.* Use as a guide the detailed checklist on the inside back cover of the book.

2. After you've finished the next-to-final draft of an essay, check it for the *sentence skills* listed on the inside back cover. It may also help to read the paper out loud. If a given sentence does

not sound right that is, if it does not read clearly and smoothly chances are something is wrong. Then revise or edit as needed until your paper is error-free.

Patterns of Essay Development

Traditionally, essay writing has been divided into the following patterns of development:



www.mhhe.com/langan

- Description
- Narration
- Exposition
  - Exemplification
  - Process
  - Cause and effect
  - Comparison or contrast
  - Definition
  - Division-classification
- Argument

Teaching Tip

Bring to class examples of these writing patterns. Bring magazines, newspapers, and other published sources. If your classroom has access to the Internet, find examples from Web sites. Help your students make connections.

A *description* is a verbal picture of a person, place, or thing. In *narration,* a writer tells the story of something that happened.

In *exposition,* the writer provides information about and explains a particular subject. Patterns of development within exposition include giving examples (*exemplification*), detailing a *process* of doing or making something, analyzing *causes and effects, comparing or contrasting, defining* a term or concept, and *dividing* something into parts or *classifying* it into categories.

Finally, in *argument,* a writer attempts to support a controversial point or to defend a position on which there is a difference of opinion.

The pages ahead present individual chapters on each pattern. You will have a chance, then, to learn nine different patterns or methods for organizing material in your papers. Each pattern has its own internal logic and provides its own special strategies for imposing order on your ideas. As you practice each pattern, keep these two points in mind:

While each essay that you write will involve one predominant pattern, very often one or more additional patterns may be involved. For example, consider the two student essays in Chapter 10, Exemplification. The first essay there, Everyday Cruelty (page 223), is developed through a series of *examples.* But there is also an element of *narration,* because the writer presents examples that occur as he proceeds through his day. In the second essay, Altered States (page 225), *exemplification* is again the predominant pattern, but in a lesser way the author is also explaining the *causes* of altered states of mind.

No matter which pattern or patterns you use, each essay will probably involve some form of argumentation. You will advance a point and then go on to support that point. In Everyday Cruelty, for instance, the author uses *exemplification* to support his point that people inflict little cruelties on each other. In The Diner at Midnight, a writer supports the point that a particular diner is depressing by providing a number of *descriptive details* (see page 180). In A Night of Violence, another writer claims that a certain experience in his life was frightening and then uses a *narrative* to persuade us of the truth of this statement (see page 205). Yet another author states that a fast-food restaurant can be preferable to a fancy one and then supplies *comparative information* about both to support his statement (see page 296, A Vote for McDonald's). Much of your writing, in short, will have the purpose of persuading your reader that the idea you have advanced is valid.

The Progression in Each Chapter

In Chapters 8 through 16, after each type of essay development is explained, student essays and a professional essay illustrating that pattern are presented, followed by questions about the essays. The questions relate to unity, support, and coherence principles of effective writing explained earlier in this book and outlined on the inside back cover. You are then asked to write your own essay. In most cases, the first assignment is fairly structured and provides a good deal of guidance for the writing process. The other assignments offer a wide choice of writing topics. In each case, one assignment involves writing an essay with a specific purpose and for a specific audience. And in three instances (exemplification, cause and effect, and comparison or contrast), the final assignments require outside reading of literary works; a student model is provided for each of these assignments.

8: Description



Think about your college graduation day and write an essay about what you imagine it will be like. How will you feel? What sights and sounds will surround you? Will your family and friends be there to congratulate you? Describe the day and bring it to life in your essay.

This chapter will explain and illustrate how to

- develop a descriptive essay
- write a descriptive essay
- revise a descriptive essay

In addition, you will read and consider

- two student descriptive essays
- one professional descriptive essay

Teaching Tip

Ask students to complete this writing prompt in class.

When you describe someone or something, you give your readers a picture in words. To make the word picture as vivid and real as possible, you must observe and record specific details that appeal to your readers senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch). More than any other type of essay, a descriptive paper needs sharp, colorful details.

Here is a sentence in which there is almost no appeal to the senses: In the window was a fan. In contrast, here is a description rich in sense impressions: The blades of the rusty window fan clattered and whirled as they blew out a stream of warm, soggy air. Sense impressions in this second example include sight *(rusty window fan*, *whirled)*, hearing (*clattered*), and touch (*warm*, *soggy air*). The vividness and sharpness provided by the sensory details give us a clear picture of the fan and enable us to share the writer's experience.

In this chapter, you will be asked to describe a person, place, or thing sharply, by using words rich in sensory details. To prepare for this assignment, first read the student essays and the professional essay that follow and work through the questions that accompany each piece of writing.

Teaching Tip

Bring to class examples of descriptive writing. These examples might be found in novels, magazines, and other published sources. If your classroom has access to the Internet, find examples from Web sites. Help your students make connections.

Teaching Tip

Read these essays aloud. Ask students to underline the topic sentence, specific examples, and transitions in each paragraph before answering the questions.

Student Essays to Consider

Family Portrait

1 My great-grandmother, who is ninety-five years old, recently sent me a photograph of herself that I had never seen before. While cleaning out the attic of her Florida home, she came across a studio portrait she had had taken about a year before she married my great-grandfather. This picture of my great-grandmother as a twenty-year-old girl and the story behind it have fascinated me from the moment I began to consider it.

2 The young woman in the picture has a face that resembles my own in many ways. Her face is a bit more oval than mine, but the softly waving brown hair around it is identical. The small, straight nose is the same model I was born with. My great-grandmother's mouth is closed, yet there is just the slightest hint of a smile on her full lips. I know that if she had smiled, she would have shown the same wide grin and down-curving smile lines that appear in my own snapshots. The most haunting feature in the photo, however, is my great-grandmother's eyes. They are an exact duplicate of my own large, dark brown ones. Her brows are plucked into thin lines, which are like two pencil strokes added to highlight those fine, luminous eyes.

3 I've also carefully studied the clothing and jewelry in the photograph. Although the photo was taken seventy-five years ago, my great-grandmother is wearing a blouse and skirt that could easily be worn today. The blouse is made of heavy eggshell-colored satin and reflects the light in its folds and

hollows. It has a turned-down cowl collar and smocking on the shoulders and below the collar. The smocking (tiny rows of gathered material) looks hand-done. The skirt, which covers my great-grandmother's calves, is straight and made of light wool or flannel. My great-grandmother is wearing silver drop earrings. They are about two inches long and roughly shield-shaped. On her left wrist is a matching bracelet. My great-grandmother can't find this bracelet now, despite our having spent hours searching through the attic for it. On the third finger of her left hand is a ring with a large, square-cut stone.

4 The story behind the picture is as interesting to me as the young woman it captures. Great-Grandmother, who was earning twenty-five dollars a week as a file clerk, decided to give her boyfriend (my great-grandfather) a picture of herself. She spent almost two weeks□ salary on the skirt and blouse, which she bought at a fancy department store downtown. She borrowed the earrings and bracelet from her older sister, Dorothy. The ring she wore was a present from another young man she was dating at the time. Great-Grandmother spent another chunk of her salary to pay the portrait photographer for the hand-tinted print in old-fashioned tones of brown and tan. Just before giving the picture to my great-grandfather, she scrawled at the lower left, □Sincerely, Beatrice.□

5 When I study this picture, I react in many ways. I think about the trouble that my great-grandmother went to in order to impress the young man who was to be my great-grandfather. I laugh when I look at the ring, which was probably worn to make him jealous. I smile at the serious, formal inscription my great-grandmother used at this stage of the budding relationship. Sometimes, I am filled with a mixture of pleasure and sadness when I look at this frozen long-ago moment. It is a moment of beauty, of love, and□ in a way□ of my own past.

The Diner at Midnight

1 I've been in lots of diners, and they've always seemed to be warm, busy, friendly, happy places. That's why, on a recent Monday night, I stopped in a diner for a cup of coffee. I was returning home after an all-day car trip and needed something to help me get through the last forty-five miles. I'd been visiting my cousins, whom I try to get together with at least twice a year. A diner at midnight, however, was not the place I had expected□ it was different, and lonely.

2 Even the outside of the diner was uninviting. My Focus pulled to a halt in front of the dreary gray aluminum building, which looked like an old

railroad car. A half-lit neon sign sputtering the message "Fresh baked goods daily," reflected on the surface of the rain-slick parking lot. Only half a dozen cars and a battered pickup were scattered around the lot. An empty paper coffee cup made a hollow scraping sound as it rolled in small circles on one cement step close to the entrance. I pulled hard at the balky glass door, and it banged shut behind me.

3 The diner was quiet when I entered. As there was no hostess on duty, only the faint odor of stale grease and the dull hum of an empty refrigerated pastry case greeted me. The outside walls were lined with vacant booths that squatted back to back in their black vinyl upholstery. On each black-and-white checkerboard-patterned table were the usual accessories— glass salt and pepper shakers, ketchup bottle, sugar packets— silently waiting for the next morning's breakfast crowd. I glanced through the round windows on the two swinging metal doors leading to the kitchen. I could see only part of the large, apparently deserted cooking area, with a shiny stainless-steel range and blackened pans of various sizes and shapes hanging along a ledge.

4 I slid onto one of the cracked vinyl seats at the Formica counter. Two men in rumpled work shirts also sat at the counter, on stools several feet apart, smoking cigarettes and staring wearily into cups of coffee. Their faces sprouted what looked like a day-old stubble of beard. I figured they were probably shift workers who, for some reason, didn't want to go home. Three stools down from the workers, I spotted a thin young man with a mop of curly black hair. He was dressed in new-looking jeans and a black polo shirt, unbuttoned at the neck. He wore a blank expression as he picked at a plate of limp french fries. I wondered if he had just returned from a disappointing date. At the one occupied booth sat a middle-aged couple. They hadn't gotten any food yet. He was staring off into space, idly tapping his spoon against the table, while she drew aimless parallel lines on her paper napkin with a bent dinner fork. Neither said a word to the other. The people in the diner seemed as lonely as the place itself.

5 Finally, a tired-looking waitress approached me with her thick order pad. I ordered the coffee, but I wanted to drink it fast and get out of there. My car, and the solitary miles ahead of me, would be lonely. But they wouldn't be as lonely as that diner at midnight.

Teaching Tip

After students complete the questions, review their answers with the class.

1 Questions

About Unity

1. In which supporting paragraph of "The Diner at Midnight" does the topic sentence appear at the paragraph's end, rather than the beginning?

a. paragraph 2

b. paragraph 3

c. paragraph 4

2. Which sentence in paragraph 1 of "The Diner at Midnight" should be eliminated in the interest of paragraph unity? (*Write the opening words.*)

I'd been visiting my cousins . . .

3. Which of the following sentences from paragraph 3 of "Family Portrait" should be omitted in the interest of paragraph unity?

a. Although the photo was taken fifty years ago, my great-grandmother is wearing a blouse and skirt that could easily be worn today.

b. It has a turned-down cowl collar and smocking on the shoulders and below the collar.

c. My great-grandmother can't find this bracelet now, despite our having spent hours searching the attic for it.

d. On the third finger of her left hand is a ring with a large, square-cut stone.

About Support

4. How many separate items of clothing and jewelry are described in paragraph 3 of "Family Portrait"?

a. four

b. five

c. seven

5. Label as sight, touch, hearing, or smell all the sensory details in the following sentences taken from the two essays. The first one is done for you as an example.

a. "As there was no hostess on duty, only the faint odor of stale grease and the dull hum of an empty refrigerated pastry case greeted me."

b. "He was staring off into space, idly tapping his spoon against the table, while she drew aimless parallel lines on her paper napkin with a bent dinner fork."

c. "The blouse is made of heavy eggshell-colored satin and reflects the light in its folds and hollows."

d. Her brows are plucked into thin lines, which are like two pencil strokes added to highlight those fine, luminous eyes.

6. What are three details in paragraph 3 of "The Diner at Midnight" that reinforce the idea of "quiet" expressed in the topic sentence?

. . . dull hum . . .

. . . silently waiting . . .

. . . deserted cooking area . . .

About Coherence

7. Which method of organization does paragraph 2 of "Family Portrait" use?

a. Time order



Emphatic order

8. Which sentence in paragraph 2 of "Family Portrait" suggests the method of organization? (*Write the opening words.*)

The most haunting feature in the photo, . . .

9. The last paragraph of "The Diner at Midnight" begins with a word that serves as which type of signal?



time

b. addition

c. contrast

d. illustration

About the Introduction and Conclusion

10. Which statement best describes the introduction to "The Diner at Midnight"?



It starts with an idea that is the opposite of the one then developed.

b. It explains the importance of the topic to its readers.

c. It begins with a general statement of the topic and narrows it down to a thesis statement.

d. It begins with an anecdote.

Developing a Descriptive Essay

Considering Purpose and Audience

The main purpose of a descriptive essay is to make readers see" or hear, taste, smell, or feel" what you are writing about. Vivid details are the key to descriptive essays, enabling your audience to picture and, in a way, experience what you describe.

ESL Tip

Nonnative students may need to consult a dictionary to find colorful and vivid vocabulary.

As you start to think about your own descriptive essay, choose a topic that appeals strongly to at least one of your senses. It's possible to write a descriptive essay, maybe even a good one, about a boiled potato. But it would be easier (not to mention more fun) to describe a bowl of potato salad, with its contrasting textures of soft potato, crisp celery, and spongy hard-boiled egg: the crunch of the diced onion, the biting taste of the bits of pickle, the salad's creamy dressing and its tangy

seasonings. The more senses you involve, the more likely your audience is to enjoy your paper.

Also, when selecting your topic, consider how much your audience already knows about it. If your topic is a familiar one for instance, potato salad you can assume your audience already understands the general idea. However, if you are presenting something new or unfamiliar to your readers perhaps a description of one of your relatives or a place where you've lived you must provide background information.

Once you have selected your topic, focus on the goal or purpose of your essay. What message do you hope to convey to your audience? For instance, if you chose as your topic a playground you used to visit as a child, decide what dominant impression you want to communicate. Is your goal to make readers see the park as a pleasant play area, or do you want them to see it as a dangerous place? If you choose the second option, focus on conveying that sense of danger to your audience. Then jot down any details that support that idea. You might describe broken beer bottles on the asphalt, graffiti sprayed on the metal jungle gym, or a pack of loud teenagers gathered on a nearby street corner. In this case, the details support your overall purpose, creating a threatening picture that your audience can see and understand.

Development through Prewriting

When Cindy, the author of Family Portrait, sat down to think about a topic for her essay, she looked around her apartment for inspiration. First she thought about describing her own bedroom. But she had moved into the apartment only recently and hadn't done much in the way of decorating, so the room struck her as too bare and sterile. Then she looked out her window, thinking of describing the view. That seemed much more promising: she noticed the sights and sounds of children playing on the sidewalks and a group of older men playing cards, as well as smells neighbors cooking and exhaust from passing traffic. She was jotting down some details for such an essay when she glanced up at the framed portrait of her great-grandmother on her desk. I stopped and stared at it, as I often do, wondering again about this twenty-year-old girl who became my great-grandmother, she said. While I sat there studying it, I realized that the best topic of all was right under my nose.

As she looked at the photograph, Cindy began to freewrite. This is what she wrote:

Teaching Tip

You may want to provide a supplemental activity. Have students describe a popular spot on campus, such as the cafeteria or library. Encourage them to visit their chosen location, which will help them make a list of details.

Great-Grandma is twenty in the picture. She's wearing a beautiful skirt and blouse and jewelry she borrowed from Dorothy. Looks a lot like me nose, eyes, mouth. She's shorter than I am but you really can't tell in picture. Looks a lot like old photos I've seen of Grandma too all the Diaz women resemble each other. Earrings and bracelet are of silver and they match. **[Punto y seguido].**

Ring might be amber or topaz? We've laughed about the □other man□who gave it to her. Her brown hair is down loose on her shoulders. She's smiling a little. That doesn't really look like her□ her usual smile is bigger and opens her mouth. Looking at the photo makes me a little sad even though I really like it. Makes me realize how much older she's getting and I wonder how long she'll be with us. It's funny to see a picture of your great-grandmother at a younger age than you are now□ stirs up all kinds of weird feelings. Picture was taken at a studio in Houston to give to Great-Grandpa. Signed □Sincerely, Beatrice.□So serious! Hard to imagine them being so formal with each other.

Cindy looked over her notes and thought about how she might organize her essay. First she thought only of describing how the photograph *looked.* With that in mind, she thought her main points might be (1) what her great-grandmother's face looked like and (2) what her great-grandmother was wearing. But she was stuck for a third main point.

Teaching Tip

Next, ask them to write their first draft.

Studying her notes again, Cindy noticed two other possible main points. One was her own emotional reaction to the photo□ how it made her feel. The other was the story of the photo□ how and why it was taken. Not sure which of those two she would use as her third main point, she began to write. Her first draft follows.

Family Portrait

First Draft

I have a photograph of my great-grandmother that was taken seventy-five years ago, when she was only twenty. She sent it to me only recently, and I find it very interesting.

In the photo, I see a girl who looks a good deal like I do now at twenty-two. Like most of the women in her family, including me, the girl in the picture has the Diaz family nose, waving brown hair, and large brown eyes. Her mouth is closed and she is smiling slightly. That isn't my great-grandmother's usual big grin that shows her teeth and her □smile lines.□

In the photo, Great-Grandmother is wearing a very pretty skirt and blouse. They look like something that would be fashionable today. The blouse is made of heavy satin. The satin falls in lines and hollows that reflect the light. It has a turned-down cowl collar and smocking on the shoulders and under the collar. Her skirt is below her knees and looks like it is made of light wool. She is wearing jewelry. Her silver earrings and bracelet match. **[Punto y seguido].**

She had borrowed them from her sister. Dorothy eventually gave them both to her, but the bracelet has disappeared. On her left hand is a ring with a big yellow stone.

When I look at this photo, I feel conflicting emotions. It gives me pleasure to see my great-grandmother as a pretty young woman. It makes me sad, too, to think how quickly time passes and realize how old she is getting. It amuses me to read the inscription to my great-grandfather, her boyfriend at the time. She wrote, "Sincerely, Beatrice." It's hard for me to imagine them ever being so formal with each other.

My great-grandmother had the photograph taken at a studio near where she worked in Houston. She spent nearly two weeks' salary on the outfit she wore for it. She must have really wanted to impress my great-grandfather to go to all that trouble and expense.

Development through Revising

Cindy showed this first draft to her classmate Elena, who read it and returned it with these notes jotted in the margin:

Teaching Tip

Ask students to read their drafts to a partner and discuss how their draft might be revised.

Reader's Comments

Was this the first time you'd seen it? Where's it been? And "very interesting" doesn't really say anything. Be more specific about why it interests you.

The "Diaz family nose" isn't helpful for someone who doesn't know the Diaz family. Describe it!

Nice beginning, but I still can't quite picture her. Can you add more specific detail? Does anything about her face really stand out?

Color?

This is nice. I can picture the material.

What is smocking?

How? what are they like?

It'd make more sense for the main points of the essay to be about your great-grandma and the photo.

How about making this your reaction the conclusion of the essay?

This is interesting stuff. she really did go to a lot of trouble to have the photo taken. I think the story of the photograph deserves to be a main point.

Family Portrait

I have a photograph of my great-grandmother that was taken seventy-five years ago, when she was only twenty. She sent it to me only recently, and I find it very interesting.

In the photo, I see a girl who looks a good deal like I do now at twenty-two. Like most of the women in her family, including me, the girl in the picture has the Diaz family nose, waving brown hair, and large brown eyes. Her mouth is closed and she is smiling slightly. That isn't my great-grandmother's usual big grin that shows her teeth and her "smile lines."

In the photo, Great-Grandmother is wearing a very pretty skirt and blouse. They look like something that would be

fashionable today. The blouse is made of heavy satin. The satin falls in lines and hollows that reflect the light. It has a turned-down cowl collar and smocking on the shoulders and under the collar. Her skirt is below her knees and looks like it is made of light wool. She is wearing jewelry. Her silver earrings and bracelet match. She had borrowed them from her sister. Dorothy eventually gave them both to her, but the bracelet has disappeared. On her left hand is a ring with a big yellow stone.

When I look at this photo, I feel conflicting emotions. It gives me pleasure to see my great-grandmother as a pretty young woman. It makes me sad, too, to think how quickly time passes and realize how old she is now. It amuses me to read the inscription to my great-grandfather, her boyfriend at the time. She wrote, □Sincerely, Beatrice.□ It's hard for me to imagine them ever being so formal with each other.

My great-grandmother had the photograph taken at a studio near where she worked in Houston. She spent nearly two weeks□ salary on the outfit she wore for it. She must have really wanted to impress my great-grandfather to go to all that trouble and expense.

Making use of Elena's comments and her own reactions upon rereading her essay, Cindy wrote the final draft that appears on page 179.

A Professional Essay to Consider

Read the following professional essay. Then answer the questions and read the comments that follow.

Lou's Place: by Beth Johnson



www.mhhe.com/langan

1 Imagine a restaurant where your every whim is catered to, your every want satisfied, your every request granted without hesitation. The people on the staff live to please you. They hover anxiously as you sample your selection, waiting for your judgment. Your pleasure is their delight, your dissatisfaction their dismay.

2 Lou's isn't that kind of place

3 At Lou's Kosy Korner Koffee Shop, the mock abuse flows like a cup of spilled Folgers. Customers are yelled at, lectured, blamed, mocked, teased, and ignored. They pay for the privilege of pouring their own coffee and scrambling their own eggs. As in a fond but dysfunctional family, Lou displays his affection through criticism and insults, and his customers respond in kind. If Lou's had a slogan, it might be, "If I'm polite to you, ask yourself what's wrong."

4 Lou's is one of three breakfast joints located in the business district of a small mid-Atlantic town. The county courthouse is nearby, supplying a steady stream of lawyers, jurors, and office workers looking for a bite to eat. A local trucking firm also provides Lou with customers as its drivers come and go in town. Lou's is on the corner. Beside it is a jewelry shop ("In Business Since 1946" Watch Repairs Our Speciality") and an upscale home accessories store that features bonsai trees and hand-painted birdhouses in its window. There's a bus stop in front of Lou's. Lou himself has been known to storm out onto the sidewalk to shoo away people who've dismounted from the bus and lingered too long on the corner.

5 The sign on Lou's front door says "Open 7 a.m."3 p.m." But by 6:40 on a brisk spring morning, the restaurant's lights are on, the door is unlocked, and Lou is settled in the booth nearest the door, with the *Philadelphia Inquirer* spread over the table. Lou is sunk deep into the booth's brown vinyl seat, its rips neatly mended with silver duct tape. He is studying the box scores from the night before as a would-be customer pauses on the sidewalk, unsure whether to believe the sign or her own eyes. She opens the door enough to stick her head in.

6 "Are you open?"she asks.

7 Without lifting his eyes from the paper, Lou answers. "I'm here, aren't I?"

8 Unsure how to interpret this remark, the woman enters and sits at a booth. Lou keeps studying the paper. He begins to hum under his breath. The woman starts tracing a pattern on the glass-topped table with her fingernail. She pulls out her checkbook and pretends to balance it. After a few long minutes, Lou apparently reaches a stopping point in his reading. He rises, his eyes still on the folded newspaper he carries with him. His humming breaks into low-volume song as he trudges behind the counter. "Maaaaaaaake someone happy . . . Make-make-maaaaaake someone happy,"he croons as he lifts the steaming pot that has infused the room

with the rich aroma of freshly brewed coffee. He carries it to the woman's table, fills her cup, and drops two single-serving containers of half-and-half nearby. He then peers over the tops of his reading glasses at his customer. "You want anything else, dear?" he asks, his bushy gray eyebrows rising with the question.

9 She shakes her head. "I'm meeting someone. I'll order when he gets here."

10 Lou nods absently, his eyes back on his paper. As he shuffles back to his seat, he mutters over his shoulder, "Hope he shows up before three. I close then."

11 Lou reads his paper; the woman drinks her coffee and gazes around the room. It's a small restaurant: just an eight-seat counter and seven padded booths. A grill, coffeepots, and a huge stainless-steel refrigerator line the wall behind the counter. Under the glass top of the tables is the breakfast menu: it offers eggs, pancakes, home fries, bacon, and sausage. A wall rack holds Kellogg's Jumbo Packs of single-serving cereals: smiling toucans and cheerful tigers offer Froot Loops and Frosted Flakes.

12 Two poster-size photographs hang side by side at the far wall. One is of Lou and his wife on their wedding day. They appear to be in their midtwenties. He is slim, dark-haired, beaming; his arm circles the shoulders of his fair-haired bride. The other photo shows the same couple in an identical pose" only in this one, Lou looks much as he is today. His short white hair is parted at the side; a cropped white beard emphasizes his prominent red mouth. His formerly slim figure now expands to take up much of the photograph. But the smile is the same as he embraces his silver-haired wife.

13 The bell at the door tinkles; two sleepy-eyed men in flannel shirts, work boots, and oil-company caps walk in. Lou glances up and grunts at them; they nod. One picks up an *Inquirer* from the display stand and leaves two quarters on the cash register. They drop onto seats at the counter, simultaneously swivel to look at the woman in the booth behind them, and then turn back. For a few minutes, they flip through the sports section. Lou doesn't move. One man rises from his seat and wanders behind the counter to find cups and the coffeepot. He fills the cups, returns to his seat, and immerses himself in the paper. There is no noise but the occasional slurping of men sipping hot coffee.

14 Minutes pass. Finally one of the men speaks. "Lou," he says. "Can I maybe get some breakfast?"

15 "I'm reading the paper," says Lou. "Eggs are in the refrigerator."

16 The man sighs and lumbers behind the counter again. "In some restaurants, they actually cook for ya," he says, selecting eggs from the carton.

17 Lou doesn't raise his eyes. "In some restaurants, they wouldn't let a guy with a face like yours in."

18 The room falls silent again, except for the splatter of grease on the grill and the scrape of the spatula as the customer scrambles his eggs. He heaps them onto his plate, prepares some toast, and returns to his seat. The bell at the door begins

tinkling as the breakfast rush begins— men, mostly, about half in work clothes and the rest in suits. They pour in on a wave of talk and laughter. Lou reluctantly rises and goes to work behind the counter, volleying comments with the regulars:

19 "Three eggs, Lou," says one.

20 "Three eggs. One heart attack wasn't enough for you? You want some bacon grease on top of that?"

21 A large red-haired man in blue jeans and a faded denim shirt walks in with a newspaper, which he reads as he waits for his cup of takeout coffee. "Anything good in the paper, Dan?" Lou asks.

22 "Not a thing," drawls Dan. "Not a *damn* thing. The only good thing is that the machine down the street got my fifty cents instead of you."

23 Lou flips pancakes as the restaurant fills to capacity. The hum of voices fills the room as the aromas of coffee, bacon, eggs, and toasting bread mingle in the air. A group of suits* from the nearby courthouse slide into the final empty booth. After a moment one rises, goes behind the counter, and rummages in a drawer.

24 "Whatcha need, Ben?" Lou asks, pouring more batter.

25 "Rag," Ben answers. He finds one, returns to the booth, and wipes crumbs off the tabletop. A minute later he is back to drop a slice of ham on the hot grill. He and Lou stand side by side attending to their cooking, as comfortable in their silence as an old married couple. When the ham is sizzling and its rich fragrance reaches the far corners of the room, Ben slides it onto a plate and returns to his booth.

26 Filled plate in hand, Lou approaches a woman sitting at the counter. Her golden hair contrasts with her sunken cheeks and her wrinkled lips sucking an unfiltered Camel. "You wanna I put this food in your ashtray, or are you gonna move it?" Lou growls. The woman moves the ashtray aside.

27 "Sorry, Lou," she says.

28 "I'm not really yelling at you, dear," he answers.

29 "I know," says the woman. "I'm glad *you're* here this morning." She lowers her voice. "That girl you've got working here sometimes, Lou— she doesn't *like* me." Lou rolls his eyes, apparently at the poor taste of the waitress, and moves down to the cash register. As he rings up a bill, a teenage girl enters and walks by silently. Lou glares after her. "Start the day with a "Good morning," please," he instructs.

30 "Good morning, Lou," she replies obediently.

31 "*Very* nice," he mutters, still punching the cash-register buttons. "Thank you *so* much for your concern. I get up at the crack of dawn to make your breakfast, but don't bother saying "good morning" to *me*."

32 The day's earliest arrival, the woman in the booth, has been joined by a companion. They order eggs and hash browns. As Lou slides the filled plates before them, he reverts briefly to the conventional manners he saves for first-timers. "Enjoy your meal," he says.

33 □Thank you,□says the woman. □May I have some hot sauce?□

34 Lou's reserve of politeness is instantly exhausted. □Hot sauce. Jeez. She wants *hot sauce*!□he announces to the room at large. □Anything else? Some caviar on the side, maybe?□ He disappears behind the counter, reemerging with an enormous red bottle. □Here you are. It's a new bottle. Don't use it all, please. I'd like to save a little for other customers. Hey, on second thought, use it all if you want. Then I'll know you'll like my chili.□Laughing loudly at his own joke, he refills the woman's coffee cup without being asked. Golden-brown coffee splashes into her saucer. Lou ignores it.

35 Lou's waitress, Stacy, has arrived, and begins taking orders and delivering meals. Lou alternates between working the grill and clearing tables. Mid-stride, he halts before the golden-haired woman at the counter, who has pushed her plate aside and is lighting another cigarette. □What? What is this?□he demands.

36 □Looouuu . . . □she begins soothingly, a stream of smoke jetting from her mouth with the word.

37 □Don't □Lou□me,□he retorts. □You don't eat your toast, you don't eat your potatoes, you barely touch your eggs. Whatcha gonna live on? Camels?□

38 □Awww, Lou,□she says, but she pulls her plate back and eats a few more bites.

39 As the rush of customers slows to a trickle, Lou returns to the register, making change and conversation, talking Phillies and the weather. One of the flannel-shirted men rises from his counter seat and heads for the door, dropping his money on the counter. □'Bye, Stacy,□he says to the waitress. □Have a nice day.□

40 □'Bye, Mel,□she replies. □You too.□

41 □What about me?□Lou calls after Mel.

42 Mel doesn't pause. □Who cares what kind of a day *you* have?□

43 Mel disappears into the morning sunshine; the Camel lady pulls a crossword puzzle out of her purse and taps an unlit cigarette rapidly against the counter. Stacy wipes the tables and empties a wastebasket of its load of dark, wet coffee grounds. Lou butters a piece of toast and returns to his favorite booth. He spreads out his newspaper again, then glances up to catch the eye of the hot-sauce woman. □Where's your friend?□he asks.

44 □He left,□she replies.

45 □He left you, eh?□Lou asks.

46 □No, he didn't *leave* me. He just had to go to work . . .□

47 □Dump him,□Lou responds automatically. □And now, if you don't mind *very* much, I would like to finish my newspaper.□

Note:

Wording may vary.

2 Questions

About Unity

1. What is the thesis of Johnson's essay? If it is stated directly, locate the relevant sentence or sentences. If it is implied, state the thesis in your own words.

Lou's coffee shop is like □a fond but dysfunctional family.□

2. Which statement would best serve as a topic sentence for paragraph 13?

a. Many of Lou's customers are, like him, interested in the Philadelphia sports teams.

b. Lou doesn't mind if customers serve themselves coffee.

c. Lou apparently disliked the two men in oil-company caps who came into the restaurant.

d. Regular customers at Lou's are used to taking care of themselves while Lou reads his paper.

About Support

3. In paragraph 3, Johnson claims that Lou and his customers are fond of one another. How does she support that claim in the case of the golden-haired woman who is first mentioned in paragraph 26?

Lou is concerned that she is smoking rather than eating.

---

4. Which of these sentences from "Lou's Place" best supports the idea that customers enjoy the unusual atmosphere at the coffee shop?

a. "The bell at the door tinkles; two sleepy-eyed men in flannel shirts, work boots, and oil-company caps walk in."

b. "He and Lou stand side by side attending to their cooking, as comfortable in their silence as an old married couple."

c. "As [Lou] rings up a bill, a teenage girl enters and walks by silently."

d. "Mid-stride, [Lou] halts before the golden-haired lady at the counter, who has pushed her plate aside and is lighting another cigarette."

5. Check each sense appealed to in the passage below from "Lou's Place."

"Maaaaaaaake someone happy . . . Make-make-maaaaaake someone happy," he croons as he lifts the steaming pot that has infused the room with the rich aroma of freshly brewed coffee. He carries it to the woman's table, fills her cup, and drops two single-serving containers of half-and-half nearby.

Sight	✓		Hearing	✓	Taste
	✓	Smell		✓	Touch

About Coherence

6. Which of the following sentences contains a change-of-direction signal?

a. "You want anything else, dear?" he asks, his bushy gray eyebrows rising with the question."

b. "In some restaurants, they wouldn't let a guy with a face like yours in.""

c. “After a moment one rises, goes behind the counter, and rummages in a drawer.”

d. “I get up at the crack of dawn to make your breakfast, but don't bother saying “good morning” to *me*.”

7. Which sentence in paragraph 23 begins with a time signal? (*Write the opening words of that sentence.*)

After a moment . . .

8. The sentence that makes up paragraph 38 includes which of the following types of transition?

a. time

b. addition

c. change of direction

d. conclusion

About the Introduction and Conclusion

9. Which statement describes the style of Johnson's introduction?

a. It presents a situation that is the opposite of the one that will be developed.

b. It explains the importance of the topic to the reader.

c. It asks a question.

10. Which statement describes the conclusion of “Lou's Place”?

a. It summarizes its description of the coffee shop.

b. It ends with a comment of Lou's that characterizes the mood of his shop.

c. It ends with a prediction of the future of the coffee shop.

ESL Tip

To improve coherence and grammatical accuracy when describing a place, nonnative speakers should review adverbs of place or prepositional expressions that indicate spatial organization.

Writing a Descriptive Essay

Teaching Tip

You may want to model the writing process for your students by doing this assignment along with them. Go through all the stages, including prewriting and revising, and seek feedback from them. They will appreciate your efforts to create a writing community.

1 Writing Assignment

Write an essay about a particular place that you can observe carefully or that you already know well. You might choose one of the following or another place that you think of:

Pet shop

Doctor's waiting room

Laundromat

Bar or nightclub

Video arcade

Library study area

Your bedroom or the bedroom of someone you know

Locker room after the winning or losing of an important game

Waiting room at train station, bus terminal, or airport

Antique shop or some other small shop



© James Leynse/Corbis

Prewriting

a. Remember that, like all essays, a descriptive paper must have a thesis. Your thesis should state a dominant impression about the place you are describing. Write a short single sentence in which you name the place you want to describe and the dominant impression you want to make. Don't worry if your sentence doesn't seem quite right as a thesis□ you can refine it later. For now, you just want to find and express a workable topic. Here are some examples of such sentences:

The study area was noisy.

The bedroom was well-organized.

The pet shop was crowded.

The restaurant was noisy.

The bus terminal was frightening.

The locker room was glum.

The exam room was tense.

b. Once you have written your sentence, make a list of as many details as you can to support that general impression. For example, this is the list made by the writer of □The Diner at Midnight□:

Tired workers at counter

Rainy parking lot

Vacant booths

Quiet

Few cars in lot

Dreary gray building

Lonely young man

Silent middle-aged couple

Out-of-order neon sign

No hostess

Couldn't see anyone in kitchen

Tired-looking waitress

c. Organize your paper according to one or a combination of the following:

Physical order□ move from left to right or from far to near, or follow some other consistent order.

Size□ Begin with large features or objects and work down to smaller ones.

A special order□ Use an order that is appropriate to your subject.

For example, the writer of □The Diner at Midnight□ builds his essay around the dominant impression of loneliness. The paper is organized in terms of physical order (from the parking lot to the entrance to the interior); a secondary method of organization is size (large parking lot to smaller diner to still smaller people).

d. Use as many senses as possible in describing a scene. Chiefly you will use sight, but to some extent you may be able to use touch, hearing, smell, and perhaps even taste. Remember that it is through the richness of your sense impressions that the reader will gain a picture of the scene.

e. Proceed to write the first draft of your essay.

Revising

After you have completed the first draft of the paper, set it aside for a while if possible, until the next day. When you review the draft, try to do so as critically as you would if it were not your own work. Ask yourself these questions:

FOUR BASES Checklist for Description

About *Unity*

- ☑ Does my essay have a clearly stated thesis, including a dominant impression?
- ☑ Is there any irrelevant material that should be eliminated or rewritten?

About *Support*

- ☑ Have I provided rich, specific details that appeal to a variety of senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch)?

About *Coherence*

- ☑ Have I organized my essay in some consistent manner physical order, size, time progression, or another way that is appropriate to my subject?
- ☑ Have I used transition words to help readers follow my train of thought?
- ☑ Do I have a concluding paragraph that provides a summary, a final thought, or both?

About *Sentence Skills*

- ☑ Have I used a consistent point of view throughout my essay?
- ☑ Have I used specific rather than general words?
- ☑ Have I avoided wordiness and used concise wording?
- ☑ Are my sentences varied?
- ☑ Have I proofread my essay for spelling and other sentence skills, as listed on the inside back cover of the book?

As you revise your essay through one or more additional drafts, continue to refer to this checklist until you can answer yes to each question.

2 Writing Assignment

Write an essay about a family portrait. (The picture may be of an individual or a group.)

Prewriting

a. Decide how you will organize your essay. Your decision will depend on what seems appropriate for the photograph. Two possibilities are these:

As in "Family Portrait," you might use the first supporting paragraph to describe the subjects' faces, the second to describe their clothing and jewelry, and the third to describe the story behind the picture.

Another possible order might be, first, the people in the photograph (and how they look); second, the relationships among the people (and what they are doing in the photo); and third, the story behind the picture (time, place, occasion, other circumstances).

b. Make a scratch outline for your essay, based on the organization you have chosen.

c. Using your scratch outline as a guide, make a list of details that support each of your main points. As practice in doing this, complete the following list of details based on "Family Portrait":

A. *Great-Grandmother's face*

Small, straight nose

Slight smile on her full lips

Large, dark eyes

Plucked eyebrows

Oval face

Wavy brown hair

B. *Great-Grandmother's clothing and jewelry*

Blouse of heavy satin

Blouse is eggshell-colored

Cowl collar

Smocking on blouse

Light wool skirt

Silver earrings

Bracelet

Ring

C. *Story behind the photo*

Great-Grandmother spent two weeks salary on clothing

Borrowed jewelry from sister

Ring from another man

Signature (Sincerely . . .)

d. Use your scratch outline and list of details to write your first draft.

Revising

HINT Refer to the FOUR BASES Checklist for Description provided on page 196 with Writing Assignment 1.

3 Writing Assignment

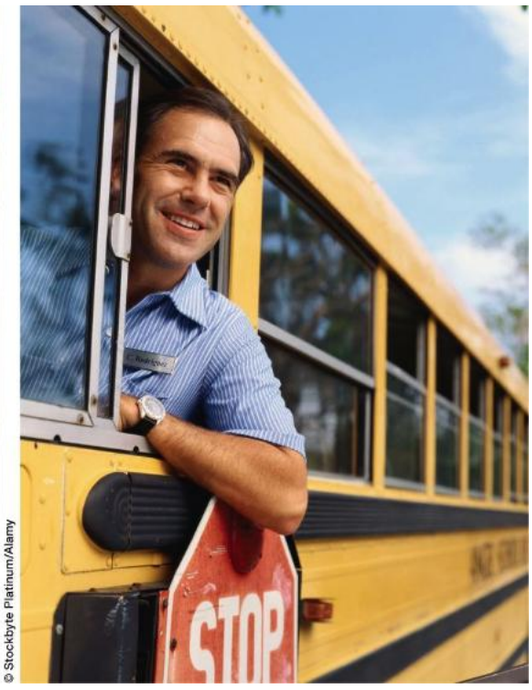
Teaching Tip

Encourage students to use the prewriting and revising ideas mentioned in Writing Assignment 1.

Write an essay describing a person. First, decide on your dominant impression of the person, and then use only those details that will add to it. Here are some examples of interesting types of people you might want to write about:

Campus character	Competitor
Employer	Clergyman
TV or movie celebrity	Clergywoman
Close friend	Teacher
Rival	Child
White-collar crook	Relative





Drunk

Dentist

Bus driver

Homeless person

Older person

Hero

4 Writing Assignment

Writing for a Specific Purpose and Audience

In this descriptive essay, you will write with a specific purpose and for a specific audience. Imagine that you have subscribed to an online dating service. Clients of the service are asked to create a detailed profile and submit photographs. Write a paper in which you describe yourself. Your goal is to give interested members of the dating service a good sense of what you are like.

Prewriting

a. Decide how you will organize your profile. What aspects of yourself will you describe? Remember, your profile will include photos, so viewers of the site will see for themselves what you look like. Therefore, it won't be necessary to describe your appearance.

You might organize your profile in terms of describing your attitudes and beliefs, your interests, and your personal habits. Other ideas you might use as main points could be your hopes for the future, how you spend a typical day, or your imaginary perfect date.

b. Focus on each of the main points you've decided to write on, and ask yourself questions to generate details to support each one. For example, if you were going to write about your perfect date, you would ask questions like these:

Where would I go?

What would I do?

What time of day would the date occur?

Why would I enjoy this date so much?

How would I travel to my destination?

Continue questioning until you have a number of rich, specific, sensory details to support each of your main points.

c. Plan a brief introductory paragraph that will indicate how you'll organize your profile. For instance, one student might write, "I'm Terry Jefferson. I'm going to tell you something about what I believe, what I enjoy doing, and what I hope to accomplish in the future."

d. Write the first draft of your profile.

Revising

Once you have the first draft of your paper completed, read it to a partner who will give you honest feedback. You and your partner should consider these questions:



FOUR BASES Checklist for Description

About *Unity*

✔ Does my introduction indicate a clear plan of development?

About *Support*

✔ Have I filled each of my supporting paragraphs with rich, descriptive details that help potential dates vividly imagine me?

About *Coherence*

✔ Is my profile clearly organized according to three main points?

- ✔ Have I rounded off my profile with an appropriate concluding paragraph?

About *Sentence Skills*

- ✔ Have I used a consistent point of view throughout?
- ✔ Have I used specific rather than general words?
- ✔ Have I avoided wordiness and used concise wording?
- ✔ Are my sentences varied?
- ✔ Have I proofread my profile, referring to the list of sentence skills on the inside back cover?



www.mhhe.com/langan

* *suits:* business executives or professionals (people wearing business suits).

9: Narration



Imagine that you are the owner of your own very successful company, which you have built from the ground up. You have been asked to share your experience with a group of young entrepreneurs who have hopes of owning their own businesses someday. Write a narrative of your success story, including the type of business you own, how you came up with the idea, and how you managed to make it a success.

This chapter will explain and illustrate how to

- develop a narrative essay
- write a narrative essay
- revise a narrative essay

In addition, you will read and consider

- two student narrative essays
- one professional narrative essay

Teaching Tip

Ask students to complete this writing prompt in class.

Children beg to hear a beloved story read again and again. Over dinner, tired adults tell each other about their day. A restless class is hushed when a teacher says, "Let me tell you something strange that happened to me once." Whatever our age, we never outgrow our hunger for stories. Just as our ancestors entertained and instructed each other with tales of great hunts and battles, of angry gods and foolish humans, we still love to share our lives and learn about others through storytelling.

Narration is storytelling, whether we are relating a single story or several related ones. Through narration, we make a statement clear by relating in detail something that has happened to us. In the story we tell, we present the details in the order in which they happened. A person might say, for example, "I was really embarrassed the day I took my driver's test," and then go on to develop that statement with an account of the experience. If the story is sharply detailed, we will be able to see and understand just why the speaker felt that way.

In this chapter, you'll be asked to tell a story that illustrates a specific point. To prepare for this assignment, first read the student essays and the professional essay that follow and work through the questions that accompany each piece of writing. All three essays use narratives to develop their points.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Teaching Tip

Bring to class examples of narrative writing. These examples might be found in biographies, memoirs, magazines, and other published sources. If your classroom has access to the Internet, find examples from Web sites. Help your students make connections.

Student Essays to Consider

Adopting a Handicap

1 My church recently staged a "Sensitivity Sunday" to make our congregation more aware of the problems faced by people with physical disabilities. We were asked to "adopt a disability" for several hours one Sunday morning. Some members, like me, chose to use wheelchairs. Others wore sound-blocking earplugs, hobbled around on crutches, or wore blindfolds.

2 Just sitting in the wheelchair was instructive. I had never considered before how awkward it would be to use one. As soon as I sat down, my weight made the chair begin to roll. Its wheels were not locked, and I fumbled clumsily to correct that. Another awkward moment occurred when I realized I had no place to put my feet. I fumbled some more to turn the metal footrest into place. I felt psychologically awkward as well, as I took my first uneasy look at what was to be my only means of transportation for several hours. I realized that for many people, "adopting a wheelchair" is not a temporary experiment. That was a sobering thought as I sank back into my seat.

3 Once I sat down, I had to learn how to cope with the wheelchair. I shifted around, trying to find a comfortable position. I thought it might be restful, even kind of nice, to be pushed around for a while. I glanced around to see who would be pushing me and then realized I would have to navigate the contraption by myself! My palms reddened and my wrist and forearm muscles started to ache as I tugged at the heavy metal wheels. I realized, as I veered this way and that, that steering and turning were not going to be easy tasks. Trying to make a right-angle turn from one aisle to another, I steered straight into a pew. I felt as though everyone was staring at me and commenting on my clumsiness.

4 When the service started, other problems cropped up to frustrate me further. Every time the congregation stood up, my view was blocked. I could not see the minister, the choir, or the altar. Also, as the church's aisles were narrow, I seemed to be in the way no matter where I parked myself. For instance, the ushers had to squeeze by me to pass the collection plate. This made me feel like a nuisance. Thanks to a new building program, however, our church will soon have the wide aisles and well-spaced pews that will make life easier for the disabled. After the service ended, when people stopped to talk to me, I had to strain my neck and look up at them. This made me feel like a little child being talked down to and added to my sense of powerlessness.

5 My wheelchair experiment was soon over. It's true that it made an impression on me. I no longer resent large tax expenditures for ramp-equipped buses, and I wouldn't dream of parking my car in a space marked □Handicapped Only.□But I also realize how little I know about the daily life of a truly disabled person. A few hours of voluntary □disability□gave me only a hint of the challenges, both physical and emotional, that people with handicaps must overcome.

Teaching Tip

Read these essays aloud. Ask students to underline the thesis statement, specific examples, and transitions in each essay before answering the questions.

A Night of Violence

1 According to my history instructor, Adolf Hitler once said that he wanted to sign up □brutal youths□to help him achieve his goals. If Hitler were still alive, he wouldn't have any trouble recruiting the brutal youths he wanted; he could get them right here in the United States. I know, because

I was one of them. As a teenager, I ran with a gang. And it took a frightening incident for me to see how violent I had become.

2 The incident was planned one Thursday night when I was out with my friends. I was still going to school once in a while, but most of my friends weren't. We spent our days on the streets, talking, showing off, sometimes shoplifting a little or shaking people down for a few dollars. My friends and I were close, maybe because life hadn't been very good to any of us. On this night, we were drinking wine and vodka on the corner. For some reason, we all felt tense and restless. One of us came up with the idea of robbing one of the old people who lived in the high-rise close by. We would just knock him or her over, grab the money, and party with it.

3 The robbery did not go as planned. After about an hour, and after more wine and vodka, we spotted an old man. He came out of the glass door of the building and started up the street. Pine Street had a lot of antique stores as well as apartment buildings. Stuffing our bottles in our jacket pockets, we closed in behind him. Suddenly, the old man whipped out a homemade wooden club from under his jacket and began swinging. The club thudded loudly against Victor's shoulder, making him yelp with pain. When we heard that, we went crazy. We smashed our bottles over the old man's head. Not content with that, Victor kicked him savagely, knocking him to the ground. As we ran, I kept seeing him sprawled on the ground, blood from our beating trickling into his eyes. Victor, the biggest of us, had said, "We want your money, old man. Hand it over."

4 Later, at home, I had a strong reaction to the incident. My head would not stop pounding, and I threw up. I wasn't afraid of getting caught; in fact, we never did get caught. I just knew I had gone over some kind of line. I didn't know if I could step back, now that I had gone so far. But I knew I had to. I had seen plenty of people in my neighborhood turn into the kind of people who hated their lives, people who didn't care about anything, people who wound up penned in jail or ruled by drugs. I didn't want to become one of them.

5 That night, I realize now, I decided not to become one of Hitler's "brutal youths." I'm proud of myself for that, even though life didn't get any easier and no one came along to pin a medal on me. I just decided, quietly, to step off the path I was on. I hope my parents and I will get along better now, too. Maybe the old man's pain, in some terrible way, had a purpose.

ESL Tip

Nonnative speakers may benefit from reviewing grammatical structures that help them achieve coherence and grammatical accuracy in writing (e.g., the simple present and past verb tenses, adverbials of time and sequence, and prepositions in time expressions).

1 Questions

About Unity

1. Which essay lacks an opening thesis statement?

"Adopting a Handicap"

2. Which sentence in paragraph 4 of "Adopting a Handicap" should be omitted in the interest of paragraph unity? (*Write the opening words.*)

Thanks to a new building program . . .

3. What sentence in paragraph 3 of "A Night of Violence" should be omitted in the interest of paragraph unity? (*Write the opening words.*)

Pine Street had a lot of antique stores . . .

4. What sentence in the final paragraph of "A Night of Violence" makes the mistake of introducing a new topic and so should be eliminated? (*Write the opening words.*)

I hope my parents and I . . .

About Support

5. Label as *sight*, *touch*, *hearing*, or *smell* all the sensory details in the following sentences taken from the essays.

a. "My palms reddened (sight) and my wrist and forearm muscles started to ache (touch) as I tugged (sight) at the heavy metal (touch) wheels."

b. "I could not see (sight) the minister, the choir, or the altar."

c. "The club thudded (hearing) loudly against Victor's shoulder, making him yelp (hearing) with pain."

d. "As we ran, I kept seeing (sight) him sprawled on the ground, blood from our beating trickling into his eyes."

6. In a narrative, the main method of organization is time order. Which sentence in paragraph 3 of "A Night of Violence" is placed out of order? (*Write the opening words.*)

"Victor, the biggest of us . . ."

7. In "Adopting a Handicap," how many examples support the topic sentence of paragraph 4, "When the service started, other problems cropped up to frustrate me further"? *three*

About Coherence

8. The first stage of the writer's experience in "Adopting a Handicap"might be called *sitting down in the wheelchair*. What are the other two stages of the experience?

Coping with the wheelchair

Dealing with additional problems in the wheelchair

9. List three time transitions used in the third paragraph of "A Night of Violence."

After

When

As

About the Introduction and Conclusion

10. What method of introduction forms the first paragraph of "A Night of Violence"? Circle the appropriate letter.

a. Broad, general statement narrowing to a thesis

b. Idea that is the opposite of the one to be developed

c. Questions

Developing a Narrative Essay

Considering Purpose and Audience

The main purpose of a narrative essay is to make a point by telling your audience a story. Colorful details and interesting events that build up to a point of some kind make narrative essays enjoyable for readers and writers alike.

At one time or another, you have probably listened to someone tell a rambling story that didn't seem to go anywhere. You might have impatiently wondered, Where is this story going? or Is there a point here? Keep such questions in mind as you think about your own narrative essay. To satisfy your audience, your story must have some overall purpose and point.

Also keep in mind that your story should deal with an event or a topic that will appeal to your audience. A group of young children, for example, would probably be bored by a narrative essay about your first job interview. They might, however, be very interested if you wrote about a time you were chased by a pack of mean dogs or when you stood up to a bully in your school. In general, narrative essays that involve human conflict" internal or external" are entertaining to readers of all ages.

Development through Prewriting

Freewriting is a particularly helpful prewriting technique as you're planning your narrative essay. As you think about the story you want to relate, many ideas will crowd into your mind. Simply writing them down in free-form style will jog loose details you may have forgotten and also help you determine what the central point of your story really is.

Teaching Tip

You may want to provide a supplemental activity. Have students narrate an incident in college that made them feel either proud or ashamed. First, ask them to do some freewriting.

TIP

For more about freewriting, see pages 25–27.

Lisa, the writer of "Adopting a Handicap," spent a half hour freewriting before she wrote the first draft of her essay. Here is what she came up with:

> Our church was planning a building renovation to make the church more accessible to handicapped people. Some people thought it was a waste of money and that the disabled could get along all right in the church the way it was. Not many disabled people come to our church anyway. Pastor Henry gave a sermon about disabilities. He suggested that we spend one Sunday pretending to be disabled ourselves. We got to choose our disability. Some people pretended to be blind or deaf or in need of crutches. I chose to use a wheelchair. I thought it might be fun to have someone push me around. It was a lot scarier and more disturbing than I expected. We borrowed wheelchairs and crutches from the local nursing home. I didn't like sitting down in the wheelchair. I didn't know how to work it right. **[Punto y seguido].**

It rolled when I didn't want it to. I felt clumsy trying to make it move. I even ran into a pew. I felt silly pretending to be disabled and also sort of disrespectful because for most people sitting in a wheelchair isn't a choice. It also bothered me to think what it'd be like if I couldn't get up again. It turned out that nobody was going to push me around. I thought Paula would, but instead she put on a blindfold and pretended to be blind. She knocked over a cup of coffee before the morning was over. She told me later she felt really panicky when that happened. Sitting down so low in the wheelchair was weird. I couldn't see much of anything. People ignored me or talked to me like I was a little kid. I was glad when the morning was over. Making the wheels turn hurt my hands and arms.

As Lisa read over her freewriting passage, she decided that the central point of her story was her new realization of how challenging it would be to be truly disabled. To support that central point, she realized, she would need to concentrate on details that demonstrated the frustrations she felt. She created a scratch outline for the first draft of her essay:

Thesis statement: A church experiment led to my spending the morning in a wheelchair.

1. Sitting in the wheelchair

    a. Awkward because it rolled

b. Awkward because footrest was out of place

c. Psychologically awkward

2. Moving the wheelchair

a. I thought someone would push me.

b. It was hard to make the chair move and it hurt my hands.

c. It was difficult to steer.

3. Ways the wheelchair affected me

a. I couldn't see.

b. I felt in the way.

c. I felt funny talking to people as they bent down over me.

Teaching Tip

Next, ask them to write their first draft.

Lisa based her first draft on her scratch outline. Here is the draft:

Adopting a Handicap

First DraftThe pastor at our church suggested that we each □adopt a disability□ for a few hours on Sunday morning. Some members, like me, chose to use wheelchairs. Others wore earplugs, used crutches, or wore blindfolds.

It surprised me that I felt nervous about sitting down in my wheelchair.

I'm not sure why I felt scared about it. I guess I realized that most people who use wheelchairs don't do it by choice□ they have to.

When I sat down, I thought my friend Paula would push me around. We had talked about her doing that earlier. But she decided instead to □adopt□ her own disability and she pretended to be blind. I saw her with a blindfold on, trying to fix herself a cup of coffee and knocking it off the table as she stirred it. So I had to figure out how to make the chair move by myself. It wasn't so easy. Pushing the wheels made my hands and arms sore. I also kept bumping into things. I felt really awkward. I even had trouble locking the wheels and finding the footrest.

I couldn't see well as I sat down low in my chair. When the rest of the congregation stood up, I could forget about seeing entirely. People would nod or chuckle at something that had happened up at the front of the church and I could only guess what was going on. Instead of sitting in the pew with everyone else, I was parked out in the aisle, which was really too narrow for

the chair. The new building program our church is planning will make that problem better by widening the aisles and making the pews farther apart. It's going to be expensive, but it's a worthwhile thing. Another thing I disliked was how I felt when people talked to me. They had to lean down as though I was a kid, and I had to stare up at them as though I was too. One person I talked to who seemed to understand what I was experiencing was Don Henderson, who mentioned that his brother-in-law uses a wheelchair.

Development through Revising

Lisa read over her first draft. Then she showed it to her roommate. After hearing her roommate's comments, Lisa read the essay again. This time she made a list of comments about how she thought it could be improved:

Teaching Tip

Ask students to read their drafts to a partner and discuss how their draft might be revised.

- The introduction should explain why the pastor wanted us to adopt disabilities.
- The second paragraph is sort of weak. Instead of saying, "I'm not sure why I felt scared," I should try to put into specific words what was scary about the experience.
- The stuff about Paula doesn't really add to my main point. The story is about me, not Paula.
- Maybe I shouldn't talk so much about the new building program. It's related to people with disabilities, but it doesn't really support the idea that my morning in a wheelchair was frustrating.
- Eliminate the part about Don Henderson. It doesn't contribute to my feeling frustrated.
- The essay ends too abruptly. I need to wrap it up with some sort of conclusion.

With that list of comments in hand, Lisa returned to her essay. She then wrote the version that appears on pages 203–204.

A Professional Essay to Consider

Read the following professional essay. Then answer the questions and read the comments that follow.

The Yellow Ribbon: by Pete Hamill



www.mhhe.com/langan

1 They were going to Fort Lauderdale, the girl remembered later. There were six of them, three boys and three girls, and they picked up the bus at the old terminal on 34th Street, carrying sandwiches and wine in paper bags, dreaming of golden beaches and the tides of the sea as the gray cold spring of New York vanished behind them. Vingo was on board from the beginning.

2 As the bus passed through Jersey and into Philly, they began to notice that Vingo never moved. He sat in front of the young people, his dusty face masking his age, dressed in a plain brown ill-fitting suit. His fingers were stained from cigarettes and he chewed the inside of his lip a lot, frozen into some personal cocoon of silence.

3 Somewhere outside of Washington, deep into the night, the bus pulled into a Howard Johnson's, and everybody got off except Vingo. He sat rooted in his seat, and the young people began to wonder about him, trying to imagine his life: Perhaps he was a sea captain, maybe he had run away from his wife, he could be an old soldier going home. When they went back to the bus, the girl sat beside him and introduced herself.

4 "We're going to Florida," the girl said brightly. "You going that far?"

5 "I don't know," Vingo said.

6 "I've never been there," she said. "I hear it's beautiful."

7 "It is," he said quietly, as if remembering something he had tried to forget.

8 "You live there?"

9 "I did some time there in the Navy. Jacksonville."

10 "Want some wine?" she said. He smiled and took the bottle of Chianti and took a swig. He thanked her and retreated again into silence. After a while, she went back to the others, as Vingo nodded into sleep.

11 In the morning they awoke outside another Howard Johnson's, and this time Vingo went in. The girl insisted that he join them. He seemed very shy and ordered black coffee and smoked nervously, as the young people chattered about sleeping on the beaches. When they went back on the bus, the girl sat with Vingo again, and after a while, slowly and painfully and with great hesitation, he began to tell his story. He had been in jail in New York for the last four years, and now he was going home.

12 “Four years!” the girl said. “What did you do?”

13 “It doesn't matter,” he said with quiet bluntness. “I did it and I went to jail. If you can't do the time, don't do the crime. That's what they say and they're right.”

14 “Are you married?”

15 “I don't know.”

16 “You don't know?” she said.

17 “Well, when I was in the can I wrote to my wife,” he said. “I told her, I said, Martha, I understand if you can't stay married to me. I told her that. I said I was gonna be away a long time, and that if she couldn't stand it, if the kids kept askin' questions, if it hurt her too much, well, she could just forget me. Get a new guy” she's a wonderful woman, really something” and forget about me. I told her she didn't have to write me or nothing. And she didn't. Not for three and a half years.”

18 “And you're going home now, not knowing?”

19 “Yeah,” he said shyly. “Well, last week, when I was sure the parole was coming through I wrote her. I told her that if she had a new guy, I understood. But if she didn't, if she would take me back she should let me know. We used to live in this town, Brunswick, just before Jacksonville, and there's a great big oak tree just as you come into town, a very famous tree, huge. I told her if she would take me back, she should put a yellow handkerchief on the tree, and I would get off and come home. If she didn't want me, forget it, no handkerchief, and I'd keep going on through.”

20 “Wow,” the girl said. “Wow.”

21 She told the others, and soon all of them were in it, caught up in the approach of Brunswick, looking at the pictures Vingo showed them of his wife and three children, the woman handsome in a plain way, the children still unformed in a cracked, much-handled snapshot. Now they were twenty miles from Brunswick and the young people took over window seats on the right side, waiting for the approach of the great oak tree. Vingo stopped looking, tightening his face into the ex-con's mask, as if fortifying himself against still another disappointment. Then it was ten miles, and then five and the bus acquired a dark hushed mood, full of silence, of absence, of lost years, of the woman's plain face, of the sudden letter on the breakfast table, of the wonder of children, of the iron bars of solitude.

22 Then suddenly all of the young people were up out of their seats, screaming and shouting and crying, doing small dances, shaking clenched fists in triumph and exaltation. All except Vingo.

23 Vingo sat there stunned, looking at the oak tree. It was covered with yellow handkerchiefs, twenty of them, thirty of them, maybe hundreds, a tree that stood like a banner of welcome blowing and billowing in the wind, turned into a gorgeous yellow blur by the passing bus. As the young people shouted, the old con slowly rose from his seat, holding himself tightly, and made his way to the front of the bus to go home.

Note:

Answers will vary.

Note:

Answers may vary; examples are given.

2 Questions

About Unity

1. The thesis of Hamill's essay is implied rather than stated directly. See if you can state the thesis in your own words.

On a very simple level, the theme could be stated: Vingo returned from prison to find that his wife still loved him.

2. Which statement best expresses the implied point of paragraph 2?

a. Vingo sat very still in his seat.

b. Something about Vingo made the young people curious.

c. Vingo appeared to be a nervous person.

d. Vingo was the most unusual person the young people had ever seen.

3. Which statement would best serve as a topic sentence for paragraph 11?

a. The girl's friendliness finally caused Vingo to confide in her.

b. The group woke up outside of a Howard Johnson's.

c. Vingo had been in jail for four years.

d. The girl persisted in being friendly to Vingo.

About Support

4. His fingers were stained from cigarettes and he chewed the inside of his lip a lot, frozen in some personal cocoon of silence. This line from paragraph 2 supports the idea that

a. Vingo had been drinking.

b. Vingo was nervous.

c. Vingo was a hostile person.

d. Vingo knew the young people were watching him.

5. Hamill writes in paragraph 11 that Vingo seemed very shy. Find at least two pieces of evidence in the essay to support the idea that Vingo was shy.

He tells his story slowly and painfully and with great hesitation.

He asks his wife to leave a signal (the handkerchief), rather than confront her directly.

6. Hamill implies that despite his crime, Vingo was an honorable man. Find evidence that supports that point.

Doesn't express any self-pity about being in jail; owns up to his crime.

Offers his wife her freedom.

About Coherence

7. The story in this essay takes place on a trip, so it's especially appropriate that Hamill uses geographical and place names to signal the passing of time and miles. List at least four of the specific places named. ***Any four answers:***

Fort Lauderdale, New Jersey, Washington, Jacksonville, 34th Street terminal in New York, Philadelphia, Brunswick

8. What sentence in paragraph 19 begins with a transition word that indicates contrast? (*Write the opening words.*)

But if she didn't . . .

About the Introduction and Conclusion

9. The introductory paragraph indicates that Hamill
   a. was one of the young people on the bus.
   b. heard the story from Vingo years later.
   c. was a friend of Vingo's wife.
   d. interviewed one of the young girls who'd been on the bus.
10. Hamill has concluded his narrative with
   a. a summary.
   b. a thought-provoking question.
   c. a recommendation.
   d. the last event of his narrative.

Writing a Narrative Essay

1 Writing Assignment

Write an essay narrating an experience in which a certain emotion was predominant. The emotion might be disappointment, embarrassment, happiness, frustration, any of the following, or some other:



© Rachel Epstein/PhotoEdit

Fear	Shock	Nervousness	Loss
Pride	Love	Hate	Sympathy
Jealousy	Anger	Surprise	Violence
Sadness	Nostalgia	Shyness	Bitterness
Terror	Relief	Silliness	Envy
Regret	Greed	Disgust	Loneliness

The experience should be limited in time. Note that each of the three essays presented in this chapter describes an experience that occurred within a relatively short period. One writer described her frustration in acting like a disabled person at a morning church service; another detailed the terror of a minute's mugging that had lifelong consequences; Pete Hamill described an overnight bus trip and its thrilling conclusion.





Prewriting

a. Think of an experience or event in your life in which you felt a certain emotion. Then spend at least ten minutes freewriting about that experience. Do not worry at this point about such matters as spelling or grammar or putting things in the right order; instead, just try to get down as many details as you can think of that seem related to the experience.

b. This preliminary writing will help you decide whether your topic is promising enough to continue working on. If it is not, choose another emotion. If it is, do three things:

First, write out your thesis in a single sentence, underlining the emotion you will focus on. For example, "My first day in kindergarten was one of the scariest days of my life."

Second, think about just what creates the conflict— the source of tension— in your story. What details can you add that will build up enough tension to "hook" readers and keep them interested?

Third, make up a long list of all the details involved in the experience. Then arrange those details in chronological (time) order.

c. Using your list as a guide, prepare a rough draft of your paper.

Revising

Once you have a first draft of your essay completed, consider the following checklist as you work on a second draft:

FOUR BASES Checklist for Narration

About *Unity*

- ☐ Do I state the thesis of my narrative in the introductory paragraph?
- ☐ If not in the introductory paragraph, is the thesis cleary implied somewhere in the essay?
- ☐ Are there any portions of the essay that do not support the thesis and should therefore be eliminated or rewritten?

About *Support*

- ☐ Do I have enough details, including dialogue?
- ☐ Have I included enough vivid, exact details that will help my readers experience the event as it actually happened?

About *Coherence*

- ☐ Have I included time signals such as *first, then, next, after, while, during*, and *finally* to help connect details as you move from the beginning to the middle to the end of the narrative?

About *Sentence Skills*

- ☐ Have I used a consistent point of view throughout my essay?
- ☐ Have I used specific rather than general words?
- ☐ Have I avoided wordiness and used concise wording?
- ☐ Are my sentences varied?
- ☐ Have I checked for spelling and other sentence skills, as listed on the inside back cover of the book?

Teaching Tip

You may want to model the writing process for your students by doing this assignment along with them. Go through all the stages, including prewriting and revising, and seek feedback from them. They will appreciate your efforts to create a writing community.

2 Writing Assignment

Think of an experience in your life that supports one of the statements below:

If you never have a dream, you'll never have a dream come true. popular saying

For fools rush in where angels fear to tread. Alexander Pope

Before I got married I had six theories about bringing up children; now I have six children and no theories. John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester

There are some things you learn best in calm, and some in storm. Willa Cather

Success is 99 percent perspiration and 1 percent inspiration. Thomas Edison

Lying is an indispensable part of making life tolerable. Bergen Evans *What a tangled web we weave / When first we practice to deceive.* Walter Scott

There's a sucker born every minute. P. T. Barnum

We lie loudest when we lie to ourselves. Eric Hoffer

All marriages are happy. It's the living together afterward that causes all the trouble. Raymond Hull

Hoping and praying are easier but do not produce as good results as hard work. Andy Rooney

A little learning is a dangerous thing. Alexander Pope

Nothing is as good as it seems beforehand. George Eliot

You don't like weak women / You get bored too quick / And you don't like strong women / 'Cause they're hip to your tricks. Joni Mitchell

Give a pig a finger, and he'll take the whole hand. folk saying

Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage. Anaïs Nin

When I got to the end of my long journey in life / I realized I was the architect of my own destiny. Amado Nervo

A fool and his money are soon parted. popular saying

From what we get, we can make a living; what we give, however, makes a life. Arthur Ashe

No matter how lovesick a woman is, she shouldn't take the first pill that comes along. Dr. Joyce Brothers

Fear not those who argue but those who dodge. Marie von Ebner-Eschenback

Trust in Allah, but tie your camel. old Muslim proverb

Think of an experience you have had that demonstrates the truth of one of the above statements or another noteworthy saying perhaps one that has been a guidepost for your life. Then, using one of these statements as your thesis, write a narrative essay about that experience. As you develop your essay, refer to the suggestions in the following prewriting strategies and rewriting strategies.

Prewriting

The key to the success of your essay will be your choice of an incident from your life that illustrates the truth of the statement you have chosen. Here are some guidelines to consider as you choose such an incident:

- The incident should include a *conflict*, or a source of tension. That conflict does not need to be dramatic, such as a fistfight between two characters. Equally effective is a quieter conflict, such as a conflict between a person's conscience and desires, or a decision that must be made, or a difficult situation that has no clear resolution.

- The incident should be limited in time. It would be difficult to do justice in such a brief essay to an experience that continued over several weeks or months.

- The incident should evoke a definite emotional response in you so that it might draw a similar response from your reader.

- The incident must *fully support* the statement you have chosen, not merely be linked by some of the same ideas. Do not, for example, take the statement "We lie loudest when we lie to ourselves" and then write about an incident in which someone just told a lie. The essay should demonstrate the cost of being untruthful to oneself.

Here is how one student tested whether her plan for her narrative essay was a good one:

- What statement have I chosen as my thesis?

  The chains of habit are too weak to be felt until they are too strong to be broken. Samuel Johnson

- Does the incident I have chosen include some kind of tension?

  Yes. I am going to write about a day when I overheard my little daughter make a remark that made me realize she was aware of my alcohol abuse. The tension is between my fantasy, which was that my drinking was a secret, and the truth, which was that even a little child knew about it.

- Is the incident limited in time?

  Yes. I am going to write about events that happened in one afternoon.

- Does the incident evoke an emotional response in me?

  Yes. I was ashamed, embarrassed, and angry at myself.

- Does the incident support the statement I have chosen?

  Yes. My "habit" was drinking, and I did not realize I was caught in its "chains" until I was unable to stop without help.

After you have put your essay away for a day, read it to a friend or classmate who will give you honest feedback. You and your reader should consider these questions:



FOUR BASES Checklist for Narration

About *Unity*

- ☐ Have I included the essay's thesis (my chosen statement) in my introductory paragraph, or is it clearly implied?
- ☐ Does each paragraph, and each sentence within that paragraph, help either to keep the action moving or to reveal important things about the characters?
- ☐ Are there portions of the essay that do not support my thesis and therefore should be eliminated or rewritten?

About *Support*

- ☐ Do I have enough details, including dialogue?
- ☐ Have I included enough vivid, exact details that will help my readers experience the event as it actually happened?

About *Coherence*

- ☐ Do transitional words and phrases, and linking sentences between paragraphs, help make the sequence of events clear?
- ☐ Should I break up the essay by using bits of interesting dialogue instead of narration?

About *Sentence Skills*

- ☐ Have I used a consistent point of view throughout my essay?
- ☐ Have I used specific rather than general words?
- ☐ Have I avoided wordiness and used concise wording?
- ☐ Are my sentences varied?
- ☐ Have I checked for spelling and other sentence skills, as listed on the inside back cover of the book?

Continue revising your work until you and your reader can answer □yes□to each question.

3 Writing Assignment

Writing for a Specific Purpose and Audience

In this narrative essay, you will write with a specific purpose and for a specific audience.

Option 1 Imagine that you are in a town fifty miles from home, that your car has broken down several miles from a gas station, and that you are carrying no money. You're afraid you are going to have a terrible time, but the friendly people who help you turn your experience into a positive one. It is such a good day, in fact, that you don't want to forget what happened.

Write a narrative of the day's events in your journal so that you can read it ten years from now and remember exactly what happened. Begin with the moment you realize your car has broken down and continue until you're safely back home. Include a thesis at either the beginning or the end of your narration.

Option 2 Imagine that a friend or sister or brother has to make a difficult decision of some kind. Perhaps he or she must decide how to deal with a troubled love affair, or a problem with living at home, or a conflict with a boss or coworker. Write a narrative from your own experience that will teach him or her something about the decision that must be made.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Teaching Tip

Encourage students to use the prewriting and revising ideas mentioned in Writing Assignments 1 and 2.

10: Exemplification



© AP Photo/James Nachtwey/VII

Did the events of 9/11 bring people in the United States together or are we a more divided nation? Use examples found in the media, in this photograph, or in your own daily observations to support your point.

This chapter will explain and illustrate how to

- develop an exemplification essay
- write an exemplification essay
- revise an exemplification essay

In addition, you will read and consider

- two student exemplification essays
- one professional exemplification essay

Teaching Tip

Ask students to complete this writing prompt in class.

In our daily conversations, we often provide examples□ details, particulars, and specific instances□ to explain statements that we make. Here are several statements and supporting examples:

Statement	Examples
The first day of school was frustrating.	My sociology course was canceled. Then, I couldn't find the biology lab. And the lines at the bookstore were so long that I went home without buying my textbooks.
That washing machine is unreliable.	The water temperature can't be predicted; it stops in midcycle; and it sometimes shreds my clothing.
My grandfather is a thrifty person.	He washes and reuses aluminum foil. He wraps gifts in newspaper. And he's worn the same Sunday suit for twenty years.

Teaching Tip

You may want to provide other statements using your students as subjects (for example, □Yolanda was pleased today□ and □Barry argued with the teacher□). Ask students to work in pairs to create supporting examples for each statement.

In each case, exemplification helps us see for ourselves the truth of the statement that has been made. In essays, too, explanatory examples help your audience fully understand your point. Lively, specific examples also add interest to your paper.

In this chapter, you will be asked to use exemplification to support your thesis. First read the student essays and the professional essay that follow and work through the questions that accompany the essays. All three essays use exemplification to develop their points.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Teaching Tip

You may want to remind students that an academic audience may not share their beliefs and opinions.

Student Essays to Consider

Everyday Cruelty

1 Last week, I found myself worrying less about problems of world politics and national crime and more about smaller evils. I came home one day with a bad taste in my mouth, the kind I get whenever I witness the little cruelties that people inflict on each other. On this particular day, I had seen too much of the cruelty of the world.

2 Every day I walk from the bus stop to the office where I work. This walk is my first step away from the comforts of home and into the tensions

of the city. For me, a landmark on the route is a tiny patch of ground that was once strewn with rubbish and broken glass. The city is trying to make a "pocket park" out of it by planting trees and flowers. Every day this spring, I watched the skinny saplings put out tiny leaves. When I walked past, I always noted how big the tulips were getting and made bets with myself on when they would bloom. To pass time as I walk, I often make silly little bets with myself, such as predicting that the next man I see will be wearing a blue tie. But last Wednesday, as I reached the park, I felt sick. Someone had knocked the trees to the ground and trampled the budding tulips into the dirt. Someone had destroyed a bit of beauty for no reason.

3 At lunchtime on Wednesday, I witnessed more meanness. Along with dozens of other hungry, hurried people, I was waiting in line at McDonald's. Also in line was a young mother with two tired, impatient children clinging to her legs. The mother was trying to calm the children, but it was obvious that their whining was about to give way to full-fledged tantrums. The lines barely moved, and the lunchtime tension was building. Then, one of the children began to cry and scream. As people stared angrily at the helpless mother, the little boy's bloodcurdling yells resounded through the restaurant. Finally, one man turned to her and said, "Lady, you shouldn't bring your kids to a public place if you can't control them." A young woman chimed in with another piece of cruel criticism. The mother was exhausted and hungry. Someone in line could have helped her by kneeling down to interact on eye level with one of the kids. Instead, even though many of the customers in the restaurant were parents themselves, they treated her like a criminal.

4 The worst incident of mean-spiritedness that I saw that day happened after I left work. As I walked to the bus stop, I approached an old woman huddled in a doorway. She was wrapped in a dirty blanket and clutched a cheap vinyl bag packed with her belongings. She was one of the "street people" our society leaves to fend for themselves. Approaching the woman from the opposite direction were three teenagers who were laughing and talking in loud voices. When they saw the old woman, they began to shout crude remarks at her. Then they did even more cruel things to torment her. The woman stared helplessly at them, like a wounded animal surrounded by hunters. Then, having had their fun, the teenagers went on their way.

5 I had seen enough of the world's coldness that day and wanted to leave it all behind. At home, I huddled in the warmth of my family. I wondered why we all contribute to the supply of petty cruelty. There's enough of it already.

Teaching Tip

Read these essays aloud. Ask students to underline the thesis statement, specific examples, and transitions in each essay before answering the questions.

Altered States

1 Most Americans are not alcoholics. Most do not cruise seedy city streets looking to score crack cocaine or heroin. Relatively few try to con their doctors into prescribing unneeded mood-altering medications. And yet, many Americans are traveling through life with their minds slightly out of kilter. In its attempt to cope with modern life, the human mind seems to have evolved some defense strategies. Confronted with inventions like television, the shopping center, and the Internet, the mind will slip□ all by itself□ into an altered state.

2 Never in the history of humanity have people been expected to sit passively for hours, staring at moving pictures emanating from an electronic box. Since too much exposure to flickering images of police officers, detectives, and talk-show hosts can be dangerous to human sanity, the mind automatically goes into a state of TV hypnosis. The eyes see the sitcom or the dog-food commercial, but the mind goes into a holding pattern. None of the televised images or sounds actually enter the brain. This is why, when questioned, people cannot remember commercials they have seen five seconds before or why the TV cops are chasing a certain suspect. In this hypnotic, trancelike state, the mind resembles an armored armadillo. It rolls up in self-defense, letting the stream of televised information pass by harmlessly.

3 If the TV watcher arises from the couch and goes to a shopping mall, he or she will again cope by slipping into an altered state. In the mall, the mind is bombarded with the sights, smells, and sounds of dozens of stores, restaurants, and movie theaters competing for its attention. There are hundreds of questions to be answered. Should I start with the upper or lower mall level? Which stores should I look in? Should I bother with the sweater sale at J.Crew? Should I eat fried chicken or try the healthier-sounding Pita Wrap? Where is my car parked? To combat this mental overload, the mind goes into a state resembling the whiteout experienced by mountain climbers trapped in a blinding snowstorm. Suddenly, everything looks the same. The shopper is unsure where to go next and cannot remember what he or she came for in the first place. The mind enters this state deliberately so that the shopper has no choice but to leave. Some kids can be in a shopping mall for hours, but they are exceptions to the rule.

4 But no part of everyday life so quickly triggers the mind's protective shutdown mode as that favorite pastime of the new millennium: cruising the Internet. A computer user sits down with the intention of briefly checking his or her e-mail or looking up a fact for a research paper. But once tapped into the immense storehouse of information, entertainment, and seemingly

intimate personal connections that the Internet offers, the user loses all sense of time and priorities. Prospects flood the mind: Should I explore the rise of Nazi Germany? Play a trivia game? Hear the life story of a lonely stranger in Duluth? With a mind dazed with information overload, the user numbly hits one key after another, leaping from topic to topic, from distraction to distraction. Hours fly by as he or she sits hunched over the keyboard, unable to account for the time that has passed.

5 Therefore, the next time you see TV viewers, shoppers, or Internet surfers with eyes as glazed and empty as polished doorknobs, you'll know these people are in a protective altered state. Be gentle with them. They are merely trying to cope with the mind-numbing inventions of modern life.

1 Questions

About Unity

1. Which sentence in paragraph 3 of □Altered States□should be omitted in the interest of paragraph unity? *(Write the opening words.)*

Some kids can be . . .

2. Which supporting paragraph in one of the essays lacks a topic sentence?

Paragraph 2 in □Everyday Cruelty□

3. Which sentence in paragraph 2 of □Everyday Cruelty□ should be omitted in the interest of paragraph unity? *(Write the opening words.)*

To pass time as I walk . . .

About Support

4. Which sentence in paragraph 4 of □Everyday Cruelty□needs to be followed by more supporting details? *(Write the opening words.)*

Then they did even more cruel things . . .

5. In paragraph 3 of □Everyday Cruelty,□ what sentence should be followed by supporting details? *(Write the opening words.)*

A young woman chimed in . . .

6. What three pieces of evidence does the writer of □Altered States□offer to support the statement that the Internet is an □immense storehouse of information, entertainment, and seemingly intimate personal connections□?

. . . explore the rise of Nazi Germany . . .

. . . Play a trivia game . . .

. . . Hear the life story of a lonely stranger . . .

About Coherence

7. In paragraph 3 of "Everyday Cruelty," which four *time* signals does the author begin sentences with? *(Write the four signals here.)*

At lunchtime on Wednesday | Then | As people stared | Finally

8. What sentence in "Altered States" indicates that the author has used emphatic order, saving his most important point for last? *(Write the opening words.)*

But no part of everyday life . . .

About the Introduction and Conclusion

9. Of the two student essays, which indicates in its introduction the essay's plan of development?*(Write the title of the essay and the opening words of the sentence that indicates the plan.)*

"Altered States": Confronted with inventions . . .

10. Which statement best describes the concluding paragraph of "Altered States"?

a. It contains a prediction.

b. It combines a summary with a recommendation of how to treat people in an altered state.

c. It refers to the point made in the introduction about alcohol and drugs.

d. It contains thought-provoking questions about altered states.

ESL Tip

To achieve coherence, nonnative students might review connectors that explain or emphasize, that give an example or explain a point, and that add information.

Developing an Exemplification Essay

Considering Purpose and Audience

If you make a statement and someone says to you, "Prove it," what do you do? Most likely, if you can, you will provide an example or two to support your claim. An exemplification essay has the same purpose: to use specific instances or actual cases to convince an audience that a particular point is true.

In an exemplification essay, you support your point by *illustrating* it with examples. If, for instance, you decide to write an essay that claims capital punishment is immoral, you might cite several cases in which an innocent person was executed. Keep in mind that your examples should connect clearly to your main point so that readers will see the truth of your claim.

The number of examples you choose to include in your essay may vary depending, in part, on your audience. For a group already opposed to the death penalty, you would not need detailed examples to support your belief that capital punishment is immoral. However, if you were writing to a group undecided about capital punishment, you would need more instances to get your point across" and

even then, some readers would not believe you. Still, when used well, examples make writing more persuasive, increasing the chances readers will understand and believe your point.

Development through Prewriting

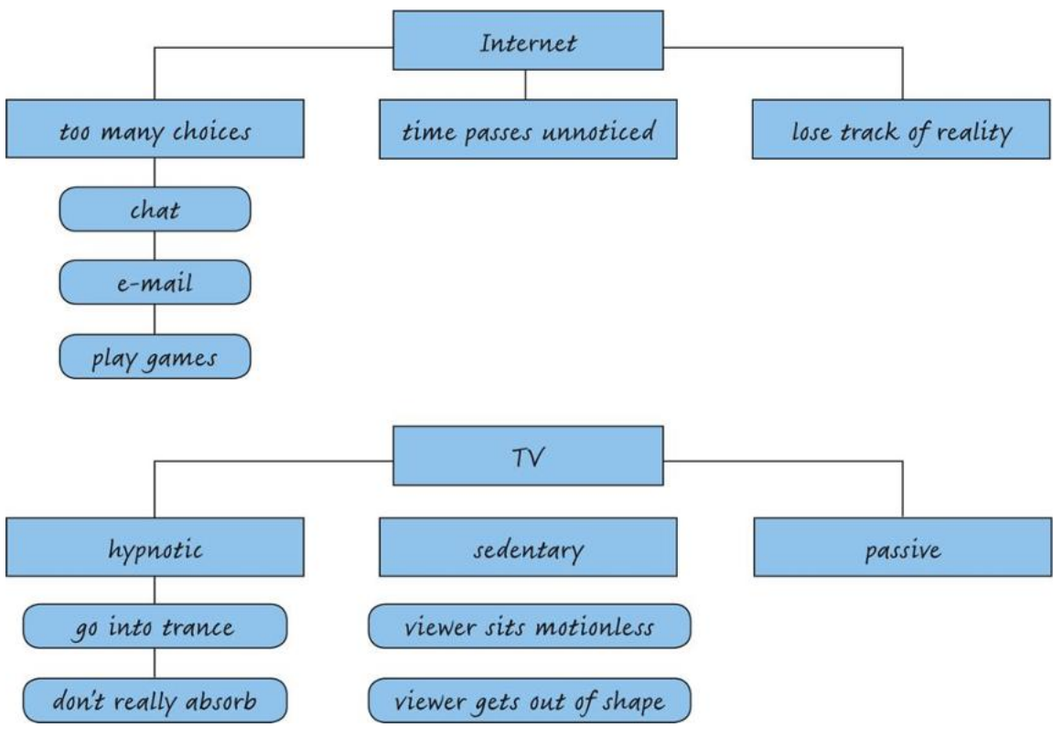
When Cedric, the student author of "Altered States," was considering a topic for his exemplification essay, he looked around his dorm for inspiration. He first considered writing about examples of some different types of people: jocks, dorks, goths. Then he thought about examples of housekeeping in dorm rooms: the Slob Kingdom, the Neat Freak Room, and the Packrat's Place.

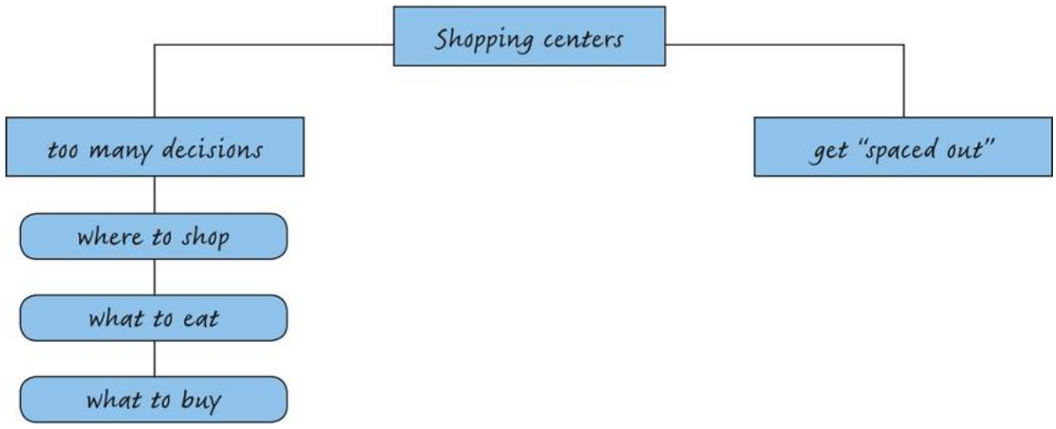
"But that evening I was noticing how my roommate acted as he was cruising the Internet," Cedric said. "He sat down to write his brother a brief e-mail, and three hours later he was still there, cruising from Web site to Web site. His eyes were glassy and he seemed out of touch with reality. It reminded me of how spaced out I get when I go to a busy shopping mall. I began to think about how our minds have to adjust to challenges that our grandparents didn't grow up with. I added "watching television" as the third category, and I had a pretty good idea what my essay would be about."

Teaching Tip

You may want to provide a supplemental activity. First, ask students to think about the politics in your classroom and have them cluster their ideas.

Cedric had his three categories, but he needed to do some more work to generate supporting details for each. He used the technique of clustering, or diagramming, to help inspire his thinking. Here is what his diagram looked like:





Looking at his diagram, Cedric saw that he would have no trouble supporting the thesis that people's minds go into an altered state when they watch TV, go to shopping centers, or use the Internet. As he quickly jotted down details in cluster form, he had easily come up with enough ideas for his essay. He started writing and produced this first draft.

Teaching Tip

Next, ask students to write a draft.

Altered States

First Draft

Modern life makes demands on the human mind that no other period of history has made. As society becomes more and more complex, the mind has developed some defense mechanisms. Confronted with inventions like the Internet, television, and the shopping center, the mind will slip all by itself into an altered state.

Cruising the Internet can quickly make the mind slip into a strange state. A computer user sits down to check his e-mail or look up something. But once tapped into the Internet, the user loses all sense of time. He can chat with strangers, research any topic, play a game, or shop for any product. Some people begin to think of the online world and online friends as more real than the people in their own homes. While my roommate is absorbed in the Internet, he can even have brief conversations with people who come into our room, yet not be able to remember the conversations later. He sits there in a daze from information overload. He seems numb as he hits key after key, going from Web site to Web site.

Then there's TV. Growing up, our grandparents could not have imagined the idea of sitting passively for hours, staring at moving pictures emanating from a box. It's not a normal state of affairs, so the mind goes into something like a hypnotic trance. You see the sitcom or the dog-food commercial, but your mind goes into a holding pattern. You don't really absorb the pictures or sounds. Five minutes after I watch a show I can't remember commercials I've seen or why the TV cops are chasing a certain suspect.

If the TV watcher arises from the couch and journeys into the real world, he often goes to the shopping center. Here, the mind is bombarded with the sights, smells, and sounds of dozens of stores, restaurants, and movie theaters competing for its attention. Dazed shoppers begin to feel like mountain climbers trapped in a blinding snowstorm. Suddenly, everything looks the same. My father is the worst of all when it comes to shopping in an altered state. He comes back from the mall looking like he'd been through a war. After about fifteen minutes of shopping, he can't concentrate enough to know what he's looking for.

Internet surfers, TV viewers, and shoppers all have one thing in common. They're just trying to cope with the mind-numbing inventions of modern life. I hope that someday we'll turn away from such inventions and return to a simpler and more healthy way of life.

Teaching Tip

Ask students to read their drafts to a partner and discuss how their drafts might be revised.

Development through Revising

Cedric showed his first-draft essay to a classmate for her critique. She returned his essay with these comments:

Reader's Comments

This seems to me like a separate topic□ people's relationships with people they meet on the Internet.

Sometimes you write about □a user,□ other times about □you,□ and then about □my roommate.□ It's confusing. Also, is the paragraph about your roommate on the Internet or what people in general are like?

Altered States

Modern life makes demands on the human mind that no other period of history has made. As society becomes more and more complex, the mind has developed some defense mechanisms. Confronted with inventions like the Internet, television, and the shopping center, the mind will slip□ all by itself□ into an altered state.

Cruising the Internet can quickly make the mind slip into a strange state. A computer user sits down to check his e-mail or look up something. But once tapped into the Internet, the user loses all sense of time. He can chat with strangers, research any topic, play a game, or shop for any product. Some people begin to think of the online world and online friends as more real than the people in their own homes. While my roommate is absorbed in the Internet, he can even have brief conversations with people who come into our room, yet not be able to remember

the conversations later. He sits there in a daze from information overload. He seems numb as he hits key after key, going from Web site to Web site.

Then there's TV. Growing up, our grandparents could not have imagined the idea of sitting passively for hours, staring at moving pictures emanating from a box. It's not a normal state of affairs, so the mind goes into something like a hypnotic trance. You see the sitcom or the dog-food commercial, but your mind goes into a holding pattern. You don't really absorb the pictures or sounds. Five minutes after I watch a show I can't remember commercials I've seen or why the TV cops are chasing a certain suspect.

If the TV watcher arises from the couch and journeys into the real world, he often goes to the shopping center. Here, the mind is bombarded with the sights, smells, and sounds of dozens of stores, restaurants, and movie theaters competing for its attention. Dazed shoppers begin to feel like mountain climbers trapped in a blinding snowstorm. Suddenly, everything looks the same. My father is the worst of all when it comes to shopping in an altered state. He comes back from the mall looking like he'd been through a war. After about fifteen minutes of shopping, he can't concentrate enough to know what he's looking for.

Internet surfers, TV viewers, and shoppers all have one thing in common. They're just trying to cope with the mind-numbing inventions of modern life. I hope that someday we'll turn away from such inventions and return to a simpler and more healthy way of life.

These last two sentences are good. I'd like to read more about this "altered state" you think people go into.

The idea of the "hypnotic trance" is interesting, but you need more details to back it up.

The point of view is a problem again. You skip from "you" to "I."

Good image!

I don't think this works. The essay isn't about your father. It should be about modern shoppers, not just one man.

This final sentence seems to introduce a new topic—that we shouldn't get caught up in TV and the Internet, etc.

Cedric read his classmate's comments and reviewed the essay himself. He agreed with her criticisms about point of view and the need for stronger supporting details. He also decided that the Internet was his strongest supporting point and should be saved for the last paragraph. He then wrote the final version of his essay, the version that appears on page 225.

A Professional Essay to Consider

Read the following professional essay. Then answer the questions and read the comments that follow.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Dad: by Andrew H. Malcolm

1 The first memory I have of him□ of anything, really□ is his strength. It was in the late afternoon in a house under construction near ours. The unfinished wood floors had large, terrifying holes whose yawning darkness I knew led to nowhere good. His powerful hands, then age thirty-three, wrapped all the way around my tiny arms, then age four, and easily swung me up to his shoulders to command all I surveyed.

2 The relationship between a son and his father changes over time. It may grow and flourish in mutual maturity. It may sour in resented dependence or independence. With many children living in single-parent homes today, it may not even exist.

3 But to a little boy right after World War II, a father seemed a god with strange strengths and uncanny powers enabling him to do and know things that no mortal could do or know. Amazing things, like putting a bicycle chain back on, just like that. Or building a hamster cage. Or guiding a jigsaw so it formed the letter F; I learned the alphabet that way in those pretelevision days, one letter or number every other evening plus a review of the collection. (The vowels we painted red because they were special somehow.)

4 He seemed to know what I thought before I did. □You look like you could use a cheeseburger and a chocolate shake,□he would say on hot Sunday afternoons. When, at the age of five, I broke a neighbor's garage window with a wild curveball and waited in fear for ten days to make the announcement, he seemed to know about it already and to have been waiting for something.

5 There were, of course, rules to learn. First came the handshake. None of those fishy little finger grips, but a good firm squeeze accompanied by an equally strong gaze into the other's eyes. □The first thing anyone knows about you is your handshake,□he would say. And we'd practice it each night on his return from work, the serious toddler in the battered Cleveland Indians cap running up to the giant father to shake hands again and again until it was firm enough.

6 When my cat killed a bird, he defused the anger of a nine-year-old with a little chat about something called □instinked.□The next year, when my dog got run over and the weight of sorrow was just too immense to stand, he was there, too, with his big arms and his own tears and some thoughts on the natural order of life and death, although what was natural about a speeding car that didn't stop always escaped me.

7 As time passed, there were other rules to learn. □Always do your best.□ □Do it now.□ □NEVER LIE!□And, most important, □You can do whatever you have to do.□By my teens, he wasn't telling me what to do anymore, which was scary and heady at the same time. He provided perspective, not telling me what was around the great corner of life but letting me know there was a lot more than just today and the next, which I hadn't thought of.

8 When the most important girl in the world□ I forget her name now□ turned down a movie date, he just happened to walk by the kitchen phone. □This may be

hard to believe right now,□he said, □but someday you won't even remember her name.□

9 One day, I realize now, there was a change. I wasn't trying to please him so much as I was trying to impress him. I never asked him to come to my football games. He had a high-pressure career, and it meant driving through most of Friday night. But for all the big games, when I looked over at the sideline, there was that familiar fedora. And, by God, did the opposing team captain ever get a firm handshake and a gaze he would remember.

10 Then, a school fact contradicted something he said. Impossible that he could be wrong, but there it was in the book. These accumulated over time, along with personal experiences, to buttress[1] my own developing sense of values. And I could tell we had each taken our own, perfectly normal paths.

11 I began to see, too, his blind spots, his prejudices, and his weaknesses. I never threw these up at him. He hadn't to me, and, anyway, he seemed to need protection. I stopped asking his advice; the experiences he drew from no longer seemed relevant to the decisions I had to make. On the phone, he would go on about politics at times, why he would vote the way he did or why some incumbent was a jerk. And I would roll my eyes to the ceiling and smile a little, though I hid it in my voice.

12 He volunteered advice for a while. But then, in more recent years, politics and issues gave way to talk of empty errands and, always, to ailments□ his friends', my mother's, and his own, which were serious and included heart disease. He had a bedside oxygen tank, and he would ostentatiously[2] retire there during my visits, asking my help in easing his body onto the mattress. □You have very strong arms,□he once noted.

13 From his bed, he showed me the many sores and scars on his misshapen body and all the bottles of medicine. He talked of the pain and craved much sympathy. He got some. But the scene was not attractive. He told me, as the doctor had, that his condition would only deteriorate. □Sometimes,□he confided, □I would just like to lie down and go to sleep and not wake up.□

14 After much thought and practice (□You can do whatever you have to do□), one night last winter, I sat down by his bed and remembered for an instant those terrifying dark holes in another house thirty-five years before. I told my father how much I loved him. I described all the things people were doing for him. But, I said, he kept eating poorly, hiding in his room, and violating other doctors' orders. No amount of love could make someone else care about life, I said: it was a two-way street. He wasn't doing his best. The decision was his.

15 He said he knew how hard my words had been to say and how proud he was of me. □I had the best teacher,□I said. □You can do whatever you have to do.□He smiled a little, and we shook hands, firmly, for the last time.

16 Several days later, at about 4 a.m., my mother heard Dad shuffling about their dark room. □I have some things I have to do,□he said. He paid a bundle of bills. He

composed for my mother a long list of legal and financial what-to-do's □in case of emergency.□And he wrote me a note.

17 Then he walked back to his bed and laid himself down. He went to sleep, naturally. And he did not wake up.

2 Questions

About Unity

1. In the story about Malcolm and his father, which sentence expresses Malcolm's thesis?

a. The last sentence of paragraph 1



The first sentence of paragraph 2

c. The last sentence of paragraph 2

d. The first sentence of paragraph 3

2. Which statement would best serve as a topic sentence for paragraph 6?

a. My dad loved my dog as much as I did.

b. Pets were a subject that drew my dad and me together.



My dad helped me make sense of life's tragedies.

d. I was angry at my cat for killing a bird.

3. Which statement would best serve as a topic sentence for paragraph 10?

a. School set the author against his father.

b. The author came to see more and more that his father was usually wrong.

c. It is best for father and son to see eye to eye.



Some of the author's ideas gradually came to differ from those of his father.

About Support

4. How many details does the author use in paragraph 3 to support the idea that his father □seemed a god with strange strengths and uncanny powers□?

a. one

b. two



three

5. With which sentence does Malcolm support his statement in paragraph 14 that his father □wasn't doing his best□? *(Write the opening words.)*

But, I said, he kept . . .

6. Which of these points is supported by the anecdote in paragraph 8?

a. □As time passed, there were other rules to learn.□



□He provided perspective . . . letting me know there was a lot more than just today and the next . . .□

c. □One day, I realize now, there was a change.□

d. □I wasn't trying to please him so much as I was trying to impress him.□

About Coherence

7. Initially, Malcolm saw his father as all-wise and all-powerful. Which paragraph in the essay signals the turning point at which he began seeing his father in more realistic, less idealized terms? ***10***

8. In paragraph 6, find each of the following:

a. two time transition signals

When

The next year

b. one addition transition signal

too

c. one change-of-direction transition signal

although

9. Which method of organization does Malcolm use in his essay?

a. Time

b. Emphatic

About the Conclusion

10. The conclusion of □Dad□is made up of

a. a summary of the narrative and a final thought.

b. a question about fatherhood.

c. the last event of the story about Malcolm and his father.

d. a prediction of what kind of father Malcolm hopes to be himself.

Writing an Exemplification Essay

1 Writing Assignment

For this assignment, you will complete an unfinished essay by adding appropriate supporting examples. Here is the incomplete essay:

Problems with My Apartment

When I was younger, I fantasized about how wonderful life would be when I moved into my own apartment. Now I'm a bit older and wiser, and my dreams have turned into nightmares. My apartment has given me nothing but headaches. From the day I signed the lease, I've had to deal with an uncooperative landlord, an incompetent janitor, and inconsiderate neighbors.

Teaching Tip

You may want to model the writing process for your students by doing this assignment along with them. Go through all the stages, including prewriting and revising, and seek feedback from them. They will appreciate your efforts to create a writing community.

First of all, my landlord has been uncooperative. . . .

I've had a problem not only with my landlord but also with an incompetent janitor. . . .

Perhaps the worst problem has been with the inconsiderate neighbors who live in the apartment above me. . . .

Sometimes, my apartment seems like a small, friendly oasis surrounded by hostile enemies. I never know what side trouble is going to come from next: the landlord, the janitor, or the neighbors. Home may be where the heart is, but my sanity is thinking about moving out.



© Journal-Courier/Steve Warmowski/ The Image Works

If you do not have experience with living in an apartment, write instead about problems of living in a dormitory or problems of living at home. Revise the introduction and conclusion so that they fit your topic. Problems of living in a dorm might include these:

Restrictive dorm regulations
Inconsiderate students on your floor
A difficult roommate

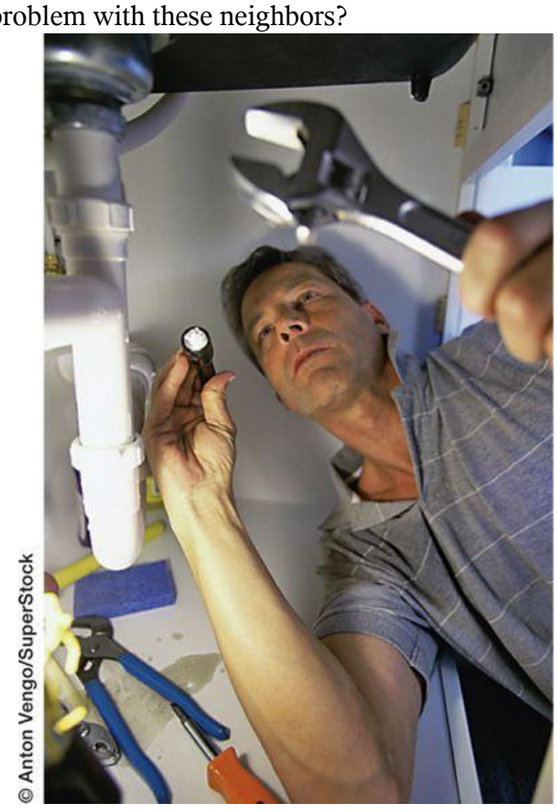
Problems of living at home might be these:

Lack of space
Inconsiderate brothers and sisters
Conflict with your parent or parents

Prewriting

a. Generate details for your paper by using questioning as a prewriting technique. Write answers to the following questions. *(Use separate paper.)*

How has the landlord been uncooperative?
In what ways have you been inconvenienced?
Has he (or she) been uncooperative more than once?
How have you reacted to the landlord's lack of cooperation?
What has been the landlord's reaction?
What kinds of things have you said to each other?
What is the most uncooperative thing the landlord has done?
Who is the janitor?
What has he (or she) tried to fix in the apartment?
In what ways has the janitor been incompetent?
How has the janitor inconvenienced you?
Has the janitor's incompetence cost you money?
What is the worst example of the janitor's incompetence?
Who are the neighbors?
How long have they lived upstairs?
What kind of problems have you had with them?
Have these problems occurred more than once?
If you have spoken to the neighbors about the problems, how did they respond?
What is the worst problem with these neighbors?


© Anton Vengo/SuperStock

b. Use the details generated by your questioning to flesh out the three paragraphs with details and examples. Remember that you may use one extended example in each paragraph (as in "Everyday Cruelty") or several brief examples (as in "Altered States").

c. As you write your first draft, keep asking yourself these questions:

Do my examples truly show my landlord as *uncooperative?*

Do my examples truly show the janitor as *incompetent?*

Do my examples truly show my neighbors as *inconsiderate?*

d. Write the first draft of your essay.



Revising

After you have completed the first draft of the paper, set it aside for a while if you can. When you review it, try to do so as critically as you would if it were not your own work. Better yet, read it aloud to a friend or classmate whose judgment you trust. Read the essay with these questions in mind:

FOUR BASES Checklist for Exemplification

About *Unity*

- ✔ Do I have a clearly stated (or implied) thesis?

About *Support*

- ✔ Have I provided *relevant* specific details for the landlord's uncooperativeness, the janitor's incompetence, and the neighbors' inconsiderateness?
- ✔ Have I provided *enough* specific details to support each of the three qualities?

About *Coherence*

- ✔ Have I used transitions, including transitions between paragraphs, to help readers follow my train of thought?
- ✔ Do I have a concluding paragraph that provides a summary or final thought or both?

About *Sentence Skills*

- ✔ Have I used a consistent point of view throughout my essay?
- ✔ Have I used specific rather than general words?
- ✔ Have I avoided wordiness and used concise wording?
- ✔ Are my sentences varied?
- ✔ Have I proofread my essay for sentence skills, as listed on the inside back cover of the book?

As you revise your essay through one or more additional drafts, continue to refer to this checklist until you can answer yes to each question.

2 Writing Assignment

ESL Tip

Nonnative speakers may need to look up some of these words.

Write an exemplification essay on the outstanding qualities (good or bad) of a person you know well. This person might be a member of your family, a friend, a roommate, a boss, a neighbor, an instructor, or someone else.

You may approach this assignment in one of two ways. You may choose to write about three related qualities of one person. For example, "My brother is stubborn, bad-tempered, and suspicious." Or you may write about one quality that is apparent in three different aspects of a person's life. For example, "My sister's patience is apparent in her relationships with her students, her husband, and her teenage son."

Just to jog your thinking, here are some descriptive words that can be applied to people. You are *not* restricted to writing about these qualities. Write about whatever qualities the person you choose possesses.

Honest	Persistent	Flirtatious	Spineless
Bad-tempered	Shy	Irresponsible	Good-humored
Ambitious	Sloppy	Stingy	Cooperative
Prejudiced	Hardworking	Aggressive	Disciplined
Considerate	Outgoing	Trustworthy	Sentimental
Argumentative	Supportive	Courageous	Defensive
Softhearted	Suspicious	Compulsive	Dishonest
Energetic	Lazy	Jealous	Insensitive
Patient	Cynical	Modest	Neat
Reliable	Independent	Sarcastic	
Generous	Stubborn	Self-centered	

Prewriting

a. Ask yourself questions to come up with supporting details for your thesis. For instance, if you are writing about your sentimental father, you would ask questions like these:

Why do I think of Dad as being sentimental?

When have I seen him be sentimental?

What sort of occasions make him sentimental?

Where are some places he's become sentimental about?

Whom does Dad become sentimental about?

What are some memorable examples of Dad's acting sentimental?

b. Look over the material generated by your questioning and decide what your three main points will be.

c. Decide on the order of your supporting paragraphs. If one of your main points seems stronger than the others, consider making it the final point in the body of the essay.

d. Decide whether to use one extended example or two or three brief examples to support each main point.

e. Prepare a scratch outline for your essay. To find your main points and supporting examples, draw on details generated by your questioning.

f. Write the first draft of your essay.

Revising

Refer to the guidelines for revising provided on page 238.

3 Writing Assignment

Teaching Tip

For the following writing assignment, encourage your students to use the prewriting and revising ideas mentioned in Writing Assignments 1 and 2.

Write an exemplification essay based on an outside reading. It might be a selection recommended by your instructor, or it might be a piece by one of the following authors, all of whom have written books of essays that should be available in your college library.

Annie Dillard	David Sedaris
Malcolm Gladwell	Amy Tan
Ellen Goodman	Deborah Tannen
Molly Ivins	Henry David Thoreau
Maxine Hong Kingston	Calvin Trillin
George Orwell	Alice Walker
Anna Quindlen	E. B. White
Richard Rodriguez	Marie Winn
Andy Rooney	

Base your essay on some idea in the selection you have chosen, and provide a series of examples to back up your idea. A student model follows.

Paying Attention to a Death

1 In □A Hanging,□ George Orwell describes the execution of a man in a Burmese prison. The prisoner, a Hindu, is marched from his cell, led to a gallows, and killed when the drop opens and the noose tightens. The entire procedure takes eight minutes. As he depicts this incident, Orwell uses a series of details that make us sharply aware of the enormity of killing a human being.

2 The moments leading up to the hanging are filled with tension. Six tall guards, two of them armed with rifles, surround the prisoner, □a puny wisp of a man.□The guards not only handcuff the man but also chain his handcuffs to their belts and lash his arms to his sides. The guards, nervous about fulfilling their duty, treat the Hindu like □a fish which is still alive and may jump back into the water.□ Meanwhile, the jail superintendent prods the head jailer to get on with the execution. The superintendent's irritability is a mask for his discomfort. Then, the procession toward the gallows is interrupted by the appearance of a friendly dog, □wagging its whole body, wild with glee at finding so many human beings together.□This does not ease the tension but increases it. The contrast of the lively dog licking the doomed man's face momentarily stuns the guards and arouses in the superintendent a sense of angry urgency.

3 Next, in the gallows scene, Orwell uses vivid details that emphasize the life within the man who is about to die. The condemned prisoner, who has been walking steadily up to this point, moves □clumsily□up the ladder. And until now, he has been utterly silent. But, after the noose is placed around his neck, he begins □crying out to his god.□The repeated cry of □Ram! Ram! Ram!□is □like the tolling of a bell,□a death knell. The dog begins to whine at the sound, and the guards go □gray,□their bayonets trembling. It is as if the hooded, faceless man on the wooden platform has suddenly become a human being, a soul seeking aid and comfort. The superintendent, who has been hiding his emotions behind a stern face, gives the execution order □fiercely.□The living man of moments ago simply ceases to be.

4 After the hanging, Orwell underscores the relief people feel when the momentous event is over. The jail superintendent checks to be sure that the prisoner is dead and then blows out □a deep breath□and loses his □moody look.□□One felt an impulse,□Orwell says, □to sing, to break into a run, to snigger.□ Suddenly, people are talking and chattering, even laughing. The head jailer's story about a condemned prisoner who clung to the bars of his cell so tightly that it took six men to move him sets off a gale of laughter. On the road outside the prison, everyone who participated in the execution has a whiskey. The men, having been so close to death, need to reassure themselves of the fact that they are alive. They must laugh and drink, not because they are insensitive, but because they are shaken. They must try to forget that the dead man is only a hundred yards away.

5 □A Hanging□sets out to create a picture of death in the midst of life. Orwell tries to make us see, through the details he chooses, that killing a person results in □one mind less, one world less.□Such an act□ □cutting a life short when it is in full tide□□ violates the laws of life and nature.

4 Writing Assignment

Writing for a Specific Purpose and Audience

In this exemplification essay, you will write with a specific purpose and for a specific audience. Imagine that you have completed a year of college and have agreed to take part in your college's summer orientation program for incoming students. You will be meeting with a small group of new students to help them get ready for college life.

Prepare a presentation to the new students in which you make the point that college is more demanding than high school. Make vividly clear using several hypothetical students as examples just what the consequences of being unprepared for those demands can be. Focus on three areas of college and the demands of each. Some areas you might consider are these: instructors, class attendance, time management, class note-taking, choosing courses, studying a textbook, work habits, balancing work and social life, and getting help when it is needed. Each of the areas you choose should be developed in a separate paragraph. Each paragraph should have its own detailed examples.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Teaching Tip

Encourage students to use the four steps to complete this assignment, including prewriting and revision.

[1]*buttress:* strengthen and support.

[2]*ostentatiously:* dramatically.

11: Process



© Mike Watson Images/Corbis

Write an essay that informs a reader how to perform a particular hobby or activity you enjoy. Depending on the hobby or activity you are writing about, you may prefer to use a humorous approach.

This chapter will explain and illustrate how to

- develop a process essay
- write a process essay
- revise a process essay

In addition, you will read and consider

- two student process essays
- one professional process essay

Teaching Tip

Ask students to complete this writing prompt in class.

Teaching Tip

Find everyday examples of process writing. Bring to class several household items, such as a shampoo bottle, a tube of toothpaste, and laundry detergent. Read aloud the directions included on these products. Help students make connections.

Teaching Tip

Read these essays aloud. Ask students to underline the thesis statement, specific examples, and transitions in each essay before answering the questions.

Every day we perform many activities that are *processes*, that is, series of steps carried out in a definite order. Many of these processes are familiar and automatic: for example, loading film into a camera, diapering a baby, or making an omelet. We are thus seldom aware of the sequence of steps making up each activity. In other cases□ for example, when someone asks us for directions to a particular place, or when we try to read and follow directions for a new table game that someone has given us□ we may be painfully conscious of the whole series of steps involved in the process.

In this chapter, you will be asked to write a process essay□ one that explains clearly how to do or make something. To prepare for this assignment, you should first read the student process papers and the professional essay and then answer the questions that follow them.

Student Essays to Consider

Successful Exercise

1 Regular exercise is something like the weather□ we all talk about it, but we tend not to do anything about it. Exercise classes on television and exercise programs on DVDs□ as well as instructions in books, magazines, and pamphlets□ now make it easy to have a low-cost personal exercise program without leaving home. However, for success in exercise, you should follow a simple plan consisting of arranging time, making preparations, and starting off at a sensible pace.

2 Everyone has an excuse for not exercising: a heavy schedule at work or school; being rushed in the morning and exhausted at night; too many other responsibilities. However, one solution is simply to get up half an hour earlier in the morning. Look at it this way: if you're already getting up too early, what's an extra half hour? Of course, that time could be cut to fifteen minutes earlier if you could lay out your clothes, set the breakfast table, fill the coffeemaker, and gather your books and materials for the next day before you go to bed.

3 Next, prepare for your exercise session. To begin with, get yourself ready by not eating or drinking anything before exercising. Why risk an upset stomach? Then, dress comfortably in something that allows you to move freely. Since you'll be in your own home, there's no need to invest in a high-fashion dance costume. A loose T-shirt and shorts are good. A bathing suit is great in summer, and in winter long underwear is warm and comfortable.

If your hair tends to flop in your eyes, pin it back or wear a headband or scarf. Prepare the exercise area, too. Turn off the phone and lock the door

to prevent interruptions. Shove the coffee table out of the way so you won't bruise yourself on it or other furniture. Then get out the simple materials you'll need to exercise with.

4 Finally, use common sense in getting started. Common sense isn't so common, as anyone who reads the newspapers and watches the world can tell you. If this is your first attempt at exercising, begin slowly. You do not need to do each movement the full number of times at first, but you should try each one. After five or six sessions, you should be able to do each one the full number of times. Try to move in a smooth, rhythmic way; this will help prevent injuries and pulled muscles. Pretend you're a dancer and make each move graceful, even if it's just getting up off the floor. After the last exercise, give yourself five minutes to relax and cool off□ you have earned it. Finally, put those sore muscles under a hot shower and get ready for a great day.

5 Establishing an exercise program isn't difficult, but it can't be achieved by reading about it, talking about it, or watching models exercise on television. It happens only when you get off that couch and do something about it. As my doctor likes to say, □If you don't use it, you'll lose it.□

How to Complain

1 I'm not just a consumer□ I'm a victim. If I order a product, it is sure to arrive in the wrong color, size, or quantity. If I hire people to do repairs, they never arrive on the day scheduled. If I owe a bill, the computer program is bound to overcharge me. Therefore, in self-defense, I have developed the following consumer's guide to complaining effectively.

2 The first step is getting organized. I save all sales slips and original boxes. Also, I keep a special file for warranty cards and appliance guarantees. This file does not prevent a product from falling apart the day after the guarantee runs out. One of the problems in our country is the shoddy workmanship that goes into many products. However, these facts give me the ammunition I need to make a complaint. I know the date of the purchase, the correct price (or service charge), where the item was purchased, and an exact description of the product, including model and serial numbers. When I compose my letter of complaint, I find it is not necessary to exaggerate. I just stick to the facts.

3 The next step is to send the complaint to the person who will get results quickly. My experience has shown that the president of the company

is the best person to contact. I call the company to find out the president's name and make sure I note the proper spelling. Then I write directly to that person, and I usually get prompt action. For example, the head of AMF arranged to replace my son's ten-speed □lemon□when it fell apart piece by piece in less than a year. Another time, the president of a Philadelphia department store finally had a twenty-dollar overcharge on my bill corrected after I had spent three months arguing uselessly with a computer program.

4 If I get no response to a written complaint within ten days, I follow through with a personal telephone call. When I had a new bathtub installed a few years ago, the plumber left a gritty black substance on the bottom of the tub. No amount of scrubbing could remove it. I tried every cleanser on the supermarket shelf, but I still had a dirty tub. The plumber shrugged off my complaints and said to try Comet. The manufacturer never answered my letter or e-mail. Finally, I made a personal phone call to the president of the firm. Within days a well-dressed executive showed up at my door. In a business suit, white shirt, striped tie, and rubber gloves, he cleaned the tub. Before he left, he scolded me in an angry voice, □You didn't have to call the president.□The point is, I did have to call the president. No one else cared enough to solve the problem.

5 Therefore, my advice to consumers is to keep accurate records, and when you have to complain, go right to the top. It has always worked for me.

1 Questions

About Unity

1. The (*fill in the correct answer:* first, second, third) ***first*** supporting paragraph of □Successful Exercise□lacks a topic sentence. Write a topic sentence that expresses its main point:

First, arrange time for exercise.

_____

2. Which of the following sentences from paragraph 4 of □Successful Exercise□should be omitted in the interest of paragraph unity?

a. □Finally, use common sense in getting started.□

b. □Common sense isn't so common, as anyone who reads newspapers and watches the world can tell you.□

c. □If this is your first attempt at exercising, begin slowly.□

d. □You do not need to do each movement the full number of times at first, but you should *try* each one.□

3. Which sentence in paragraph 2 of "How to Complain" should be omitted in the interest of paragraph unity? *(Write the opening words.)*

One of the problems ...

About Support.

4. Which sentence in paragraph 3 of "Successful Exercise" needs to be followed by more supporting details? *(Write the opening words.)*

Then get out the simple materials ...

5. Which supporting paragraph in "How to Complain" uses one extended example? Write the number of that paragraph and tell (in just a few words) what the example was about.

Paragraph 4 describes an incident with a plumber who left a bathtub dirty.

ESL Tip

Since process essays are organized sequentially, nonnative students would benefit from reviewing time words and adverbial clauses of time. Participial phrases would also achieve greater coherence by being used to indicate the sequence of actions between clauses. They also add variety to sentence structure. A review of the imperative would also be important because it is often used in describing the steps in a process.

6. Which supporting paragraph in "How to Complain" depends on two short examples? Write the number of that paragraph and tell (in just a few words) what each example was about.

Paragraph 3 describes an incident with a "lemon" bicycle and an incident about an overcharge by a department store.

About Coherence

7. Read paragraph 3 of "Successful Exercise" and find the four sentences that begin with time signals. Write those four signals here.

Next

Then

To begin with

Then

8. In "How to Complain," which time transition word is used in the topic sentence of paragraph 2? ***first*** In the topic sentence of paragraph 3? ***next***

About the Introduction and Conclusion

9. Which statement best describes the introduction of "Successful Exercise"?

a. It begins with a couple of general points about the topic and then narrows down to the thesis.

b. It explains the importance of daily exercise to the reader.

c. It uses a brief story about the author's experience with exercise.

d. It asks a question about the role of exercise in life.

10. Which method of conclusion is used in both "Successful Exercise" and "How to Complain"?

a. Summary

b. Thought-provoking question

c. Prediction



Recommendation

Developing a Process Essay

Considering Purpose and Audience

Glance at a newsstand and you'll see magazine cover stories with titles such as "How to Impress Your Boss," "How to Seduce Anyone," or "How to Dress Like a Celebrity." These articles promise to give readers directions or information they can follow, and they are popular versions of process essays.

In general, the purpose of a process essay is to explain the steps involved in a particular action, process, or event. Some process essays focus on giving readers actual instructions, while others concentrate on giving readers information. The type of essay you write depends on the specific topic and purpose you choose.

As you prepare to write your process essay, begin by asking yourself what you want your readers to know. If, for example, you want your audience to know how to make the ultimate chocolate chip cookie, your process essay would include directions telling readers exactly what to do and how to do it. On the other hand, if you want your audience to know the steps involved in the process of digesting a chocolate chip cookie, you would instead detail the events that happen in the body as it turns food into energy. In this second instance, you would not be giving directions; you would be giving information.

No matter what your main point, keep your audience in mind as you work. As with any essay, select a topic that will interest readers. A group of college students, for example, might be interested in reading an essay on how to get financial aid but be bored by an essay on how to prepare for retirement. In addition, consider how much your readers already know about your topic. An audience unfamiliar with financial aid may need background information in order to understand the process you have chosen to describe. Also, be sure to follow a clear sequence in your essay, putting events or steps in an order that readers can easily follow.

TIP

Typically, steps in a process essay should be presented in time order, though not always. For more information about words that signal time, see page 84.

Teaching Tip

Suggest that students survey their audience before writing an essay.

A final consideration for writing a process essay is point of view. If you are writing specific directions to readers (something done in this book), it is acceptable

to write in *second person*, directly addressing your audience as "you." However, if you are presenting information, as in the example about digestion above, it is better to write in the more formal *third person*. In all cases, the goal is to choose the point of view that best suits your audience of readers and increases the likelihood that they will understand your main point.

TIP

For more information about point of view, see pages 172–174.

Development through Prewriting

A process essay requires the writer to think through the steps involved in an activity. As Marian, the author of "How to Complain," thought about possible topics for her essay, she asked herself, What are some things I do methodically, step by step? A number of possibilities occurred to her, including getting herself and her children ready for school in the morning, shopping for groceries (from preparing a shopping list to organizing her coupons), and the one she finally settled on: effective complaining. "People tell me I'm "so organized" when it comes to getting satisfaction on things I buy," Marian said. "I realized that I do usually get results when I complain because I go about complaining in an organized way. To write my essay, I just needed to put those steps into words."

Marian began by making a list of the steps she follows when she makes a complaint. This is what she wrote:

Save sales slips and original boxes

Engrave items with ID number in case of burglary

Write or e-mail letter of complaint

Save or make photocopy of letter

Create file of warranties and guarantees

Send complaint letter directly to president

Call company for president's name

Follow through with telephone call if no response

Make thank-you call after action is taken

Teaching Tip

You may want to provide a supplemental activity. First, ask students to list all the steps needed to deal with a verbally abusive partner. Then ask them to use this list to create a scratch outline.

Next, she numbered those steps in the order in which she performs them. She struck out some items she realized weren't really necessary to the process of complaining:

1 *Save sales slips and original boxes*

~~*Engrave items with ID number in case of burglary*~~

4 *Write or e-mail letter of complaint*

~~*Save or make photocopy of letter*~~

2 *Create file of warranties and guarantees*

5 *Send complaint letter directly to president*

3 *Call company for president's name*

6 *Follow through with telephone call if no response*

~~*Make thank-you call after action is taken*~~

Next, she decided to group her items into three steps: (1) getting organized, (2) sending the complaint to the president, and (3) following up with further action.

With that preparation done, Marian wrote her first draft.

Teaching Tip

Next, ask students to write a draft.

How to Complain

First Draft

Because I find that a consumer has to watch out for herself and be ready to speak up if a product or service isn't satisfactory, I have developed the following consumer's guide to complaining effectively.

The first step is getting organized. I save all sales slips, original boxes, warranty cards, and appliance guarantees. This file does not prevent a product from falling apart the day after the guarantee runs out. One of the problems in our country is the shoddy workmanship that goes into many products. That way I know the date of the purchase, the correct price, where the item was purchased, and an exact description of the product.

The next step is to send the complaint to the person who will get results quickly. I call the company to find out the president's name and then I write directly to that person. For example, the head of AMF arranged to replace my son's bike. Another time, the president of a Philadelphia department store finally had a twenty-dollar overcharge on my bill corrected.

If I get no response to a written complaint within ten days, I follow through with a personal telephone call. When I had a new bathtub installed a few years ago, the plumber left a gritty black substance on the bottom of the tub. I tried everything to get it off. Finally, I made a personal phone call

to the president of the firm. Within days a well-dressed executive showed up at my door. In a business suit, white shirt, striped tie, and rubber gloves, he cleaned the tub. Before he left, he said, "You didn't have to call the president."

Therefore, my advice to consumers is to keep accurate records, and when you have to complain, go right to the top. It has always worked for me.

Development through Revising

After she had written the first draft, Marian set it aside for several days. When she reread it, she was able to look at it more critically. These are her comments:

I think this first draft is OK as the "bare bones" of an essay, but it needs to be fleshed out everywhere. For instance, in paragraph 2, I need to explain why it's important to know the date of purchase etc. And in paragraph 3, I need to explain more about what happened with the bike and the department store overcharge. In paragraph 4, especially, I need to explain how I tried to solve the problem with the bathtub before I called the president. I want to make it clear that I don't immediately go to the top as soon as I have a problem" I give the people at a lower level a chance to fix it first. All in all, my first draft looks as if I just rushed to get the basic ideas down on paper. Now I need to take the time to back up my main points with better support.

Teaching Tip

Ask students to read their drafts to a partner and discuss how their draft might be revised.

With that self-critique in mind, Marian wrote the version of "How to Complain" that appears on page 245.

A Professional Essay to Consider

Read the following professional essay. Then answer the questions and read the comments that follow.

How to Do Well on a Job Interview: by Glenda Davis



www.mhhe.com/langan

1 Ask a random selection of people for a listing of their least favorite activities, and right up there with "getting my teeth drilled" is likely to be "going to a job interview." The job interview is often regarded as a confusing, humiliating, and

nerve-racking experience. First of all, you have to wait for your appointment in an outer room, often trapped there with other people applying for the same job. You sit nervously, trying not to think about the fact that only one of you may be hired. Then you are called into the interviewer's office. Faced with a complete stranger, you have to try to act both cool and friendly as you are asked all sorts of questions. Some questions are personal: "What is your greatest weakness?" Others are confusing:

2 "Why should we hire you?" The interview probably takes about twenty minutes but seems like two hours. Finally, you go home and wait for days and even weeks. If you get the job, great. But if you don't, you're rarely given any reason why.

3 The job-interview "game" may not be much fun, but it is a game you *can* win if you play it right. The name of the game is standing out of the crowd" in a positive way. If you go to the interview in a Bozo the Clown suit, you'll stand out of the crowd, all right, but not in a way that is likely to get you hired.

4 Here are guidelines to help you play the interview game to win:

5 **Present yourself as a winner.** Instantly, the way you dress, speak, and move gives the interviewer more information about you than you would think possible. You doubt that this is true? Consider this: a professional job recruiter, meeting a series of job applicants, was asked to signal the moment he decided *not* to hire each applicant. The thumbs-down decision was often made *in less than forty-five seconds" even before the applicant thought the interview had begun*.

How can you keep from becoming a victim of an instant "no" decision?

- *Dress appropriately*. This means business clothing: usually a suit and tie or a conservative dress or skirt suit. Don't wear casual student clothing. On the other hand, don't overdress: you're going to a job interview, not a party. If you're not sure what's considered appropriate business attire, do some spying before the interview. Walk past your prospective place of employment at lunch or quitting time and check out how the employees are dressed. Your goal is to look as though you would fit in with that group of people.

- *Pay attention to your grooming*. Untidy hair, body odor, dandruff, unshined shoes, a hanging hem, stains on your tie, excessive makeup or cologne, a sloppy job of shaving" if the interviewer notices any of these, your prospect of being hired takes a probably fatal hit.

- *Look alert, poised, and friendly*. When that interviewer looks into the waiting room and calls your name, he or she is getting a first impression of your behavior. If you're slouched in your chair, dozing or lost in the pages of a magazine; if you look up with an annoyed "Huh?"; if you get up slowly and wander over with your hands in your pockets, he or she will not be favorably impressed. What *will* earn you points is rising promptly and walking briskly toward the interviewer. Smiling and looking directly at that person, extend your hand to shake his or hers, saying, "I'm Lesley Brown. Thank you for seeing me today."

- *Expect to make a little small talk.* This is not a waste of time; it is the interviewer's way of checking your ability to be politely sociable, and it is your opportunity to cement the good impression you've already made. The key is to follow the interviewer's lead. If he or she wants to chat about the weather for a few minutes, do so. But don't drag it out; as soon as you get a signal that it's time to talk about the job, be ready to get down to business.

6 **Be ready for the interviewer's questions.** The same questions come up again and again in many job interviews. *You should plan ahead for all these questions!* Think carefully about each question, outline your answer, and memorize each outline. Then practice reciting the answers to yourself. Only in this way are you going to be prepared. Here are common questions, what they really mean, and how to answer them:

- *Tell me about yourself.* This question is raised to see how organized you are. The *wrong* way to answer it is to launch into a wandering, disjointed response or worse yet to demand defensively, What do you want to know? or What do you mean? When this question comes up, you should be prepared to give a brief summary of your life and work experience where you grew up, where your family lives now, where you went to school, what jobs you've had, and how you happen to be here now looking for the challenge of a new job.

- *What are your strengths and weaknesses?* In talking about your strong points, mention traits that will serve you well in this particular job. If you are well-organized, a creative problem-solver, a good team member, or a quick learner, be ready to describe specific ways those strengths have served you in the past. Don't make the mistake of saying, I don't have any real weaknesses. You'll come across as more believable if you admit a flaw but make it one that an employer might actually like. For instance, admit that you are a workaholic or a perfectionist.

- *Why should we hire you?* Remember that it is up to *you* to convince the interviewer that you're the man or woman for this job. If you just sit there and hope that the interviewer will magically discern your good qualities, you are likely to be disappointed. Don't be afraid to sell yourself. Tell the recruiter that from your research you have learned that the interviewer's company is one you would like to work for, and that you believe the company's needs and your skills are a great match.

- *Why did you leave your last job?* This may seem like a great opportunity to cry on the interviewer's shoulder about what a jerk your last boss was or how unappreciated you were. It is not. The experts agree: never bad-mouth *anyone* when you are asked this question. Say that you left in order to seek greater responsibilities or challenges. Be positive, not negative. No matter how justified you may feel about hating your last job or boss, if you give

voice to those feelings in an interview, you're going to make the interviewer suspect that you're a whiner and hard to work with.

□ □*Do you have any questions?*□ This is the time to stress one last time how interested you are in this particular job. Ask a question or two about specific aspects of the job, pointing out again how well your talents and the company's needs are matched. Even if you're dying to know how much the job pays and how much vacation you get, don't ask. There will be time enough to cover those questions after you've been offered the job. Today, your task is to demonstrate what a good employee you would be.

7 **Send a thank-you note**. Once you've gotten past the interview, there is one more chance for you to make a fine impression. As soon as you can□ certainly no more than one or two days after the interview□ write a note of thanks to your interviewer. In it, briefly remind him or her of when you came in and what job you applied for. As well as thanking the interviewer for seeing you, reaffirm your interest in the job and mention again why you think you are the best candidate for it. Make the note courteous, businesslike, and brief□ just a paragraph or two. If the interviewer is wavering between several equally qualified candidates, such a note could tip the scales in your favor.

8 No amount of preparation is going to make interviewing for a job your favorite activity. But if you go in well-prepared and with a positive attitude, your potential employer can't help thinking highly of you. And the day will come when you are the one who wins the job.

2 Questions

About Unity

1. Either of two sentences in □How to Do Well on a Job Interview□might serve as the thesis. Write the opening words of either of these sentences:

The job-interview □game□may not be much fun, but ... you can win if you play it right.

Here are guidelines to help you play the interview game to win.

2. Which statement would make the best topic sentence for paragraph 4?

a. Beauty is only skin-deep.

b. Interviewers care only about how applicants dress.

c. Professional job recruiters meet many applicants for a single job.



You should present yourself as a winner because first impressions count a lot.

3. In paragraph 6, which statement would best serve as a topic sentence for the list item about strengths and weaknesses?

a. A quality such as perfectionism or workaholism can be seen as both a strength and a weakness.



As you talk about your strengths and weaknesses, tailor what you say to the job you're applying for.

c. Claiming to be a "creative problem-solver" is a good idea as you apply for almost any position.

d. The interviewer is not likely to be impressed if you claim to have no major weaknesses.

About Support

4. In paragraph 5, the supporting details for the list item "dress appropriately" are

a. reasons for dressing appropriately.

b. quotations of experts on how to dress for job interviews.



ideas on how to dress appropriately.

d. statistics on how people who are interviewed dress and how well they succeed.

5. Which sentence from paragraph 7 best provides a *reason* for the author's suggestion about sending a thank-you note?

a. "As soon as you can" certainly no more than one or two days after the interview" write a note of thanks to your interviewer."

b. "In it, briefly remind him or her of when you came in and what job you applied for."

c. "Make the note courteous, businesslike, and brief" just a paragraph or two."



"If the interviewer is wavering between several equally qualified candidates, such a note could tip the scales in your favor."

About Coherence

6. In paragraph 1, what three transitional words or phrases are used to begin sentences as the author describes the process of interviewing?

First of all

Then

Finally

7. The main method of organization of paragraph 1 is



time order.

b. emphatic order.

8. In paragraph 5, find the "change of direction" signal that begins a sentence in the first list item. Write the opening words of that sentence here.

On the other hand

About the Introduction and Conclusion

9. Which statement best describes the introductory paragraph of "How to Do Well on a Job Interview"?

a. It begins with a broad, general statement about job interviews and narrows it down to the thesis statement.

b. It describes a typical job interview and its aftermath.

c. It explains the importance of doing well on a job interview.

d. It asks a series of questions that encourage readers to think about how they prepare for a job interview.

10. Which statement best describes the concluding paragraph of "How to Do Well on a Job Interview"?

a. It ends with a summary of the article.

b. It ends with a prediction of what will happen if advice in the article is followed.

c. It ends with a series of questions that prompt the reader to think further about what's been written.

Writing a Process Essay

1 Writing Assignment



Choose a topic from the list below to use as the basis for a process essay.

How to shop for groceries in a minimum amount of time
How to choose a car, rent an apartment, or buy a house
How to do household cleaning efficiently
How to gain or lose weight
How to get over a broken heart
How to plan an event (party, wedding, garage sale, etc.)
How to choose a pet
How to quit smoking (or another bad habit)

ESL Tip

Additional topics for nonnative students:

- How to get a driver's license
- How to prepare for a natural disaster (flood, storm)
- How to adapt to a new country/culture

a. Freewrite for ten minutes on the topic you have tentatively chosen. Don't worry about spelling, grammar, organization, or anything other than getting your thoughts down on the page. If ideas are still flowing at the end of ten minutes, keep on writing. This freewriting will give you a base of raw material that you can draw on in the next phase of your work. Judging from your freewriting, do you think you have enough material to support a process essay? If so, keep following the steps below. If not, choose another topic and freewrite about *it* for ten minutes.

b. Develop a single clear sentence that will serve as your thesis. Your thesis can either (1) say it is important that your readers know about this process ("Knowing how to choose a pet wisely can ensure that the two of you have a happy relationship") or (2) state your opinion of this process ("Quitting smoking is the most important single thing you can do for your health").

c. Make a list of the steps you are describing. Here, for example, is the list prepared by the author of "Successful Exercise."

Teaching Tip

You may want to model the writing process for your students by doing this assignment along with them. Go through all the stages, including prewriting and revising, and seek feedback from them. They will appreciate your efforts to create a writing community.

Wear comfortable, loose clothing

Clear an area for exercise

Lock the door and turn off the phone

Tie hair back

Move smoothly and gracefully

Start slowly

Take hot shower afterward

Make time— get up early, give up a TV show

Get out weights or other equipment

Turn on music

Cool down

d. Number your items in time order. Strike out items that do not fit in the list; add others as they occur to you. Thus:

2 Wear comfortable, loose clothing

4 Clear an area for exercise

6 Lock the door and turn off the phone

3 Tie hair back

8 Move smoothly and gracefully

7 Start slowly

10 Take hot shower afterward

1 Make time□ get up early, give up a TV show

5 Get out weights or other equipment

~~Turn on music~~

9 Cool down

e. After making the list, decide how the items can be grouped into a minimum of three steps. For example, with □Successful Exercise,□ you might divide the process into (1) setting a regular time, (2) preparing for exercise, and (3) doing the exercise. With a topic like □How to Quit Smoking,□ you might divide the process into (1) keeping a journal of your smoking, (2) preparing mentally and physically, and (3) getting through the first days.

f. Use your list as a guide to write the first rough draft of your paper. Do not expect to finish your paper in one draft. You should be ready to write a series of drafts as you work toward the goals of unity, support, and coherence.

Revising



After you have completed the first draft of the paper, set it aside for a while if you can. Then read the paper out loud to a friend or classmate whose judgment you respect. Keep these points in mind as you hear your own words, and ask your friend to respond to them as well:

FOUR BASES Checklist for Process

About *Unity*

- ✔ Does my essay describe the steps in a clear, logical way?

About *Support*

- ✔ Does the essay describe the necessary steps so that a reader could perform the task described, or is essential information missing?

About *Coherence*

- ✔ Have I used transitions such as *first, next, also, then, after, now, during*, and *finally* to make the essay move smoothly and clearly from one step to another?
- ✔ Do I have a concluding paragraph that provides a summary or final thought or both?

About *Sentence Skills*

- ✔ Have I used a consistent point of view throughout my essay?
- ✔ Have I used specific rather than general words?
- ✔ Have I avoided wordiness and used concise wording?
- ✔ Are my sentences varied?
- ✔ Have I proofread my essay for spelling and other sentence skills, as listed on the inside back cover of the book?

As you revise your essay through one or more additional drafts, continue to refer to this list until you can answer yes to each question.

2 Writing Assignment

Everyone is an expert at something. Write a process essay on some skill that you can perform very well. Write from the point of view that "This is how_____ *should* be done." Remember that your skill need not be unusual. It can be anything from making a perfect pie crust to hooking up a car stereo to dealing with unpleasant customers to using a digital camcorder.

Prewriting

a. If possible, perform the task and, as you go along, take notes on what you're doing. If that's not possible (as when dealing with unpleasant customers), think through a particular time you had to deal with such a task and make notes about just what you did.

b. Look over your notes and make a list of the steps you followed.

c. Considering your list, decide how you can divide the items listed into at least three steps. For instance, look at the following list of items for the process of "Cooking a Pot Roast." Then fill in the blanks in the scratch outline that follows:

1 Marinate the roast for thirty minutes with Adolph's Marinade.

2 Sprinkle the roast with seasoned flour.

3 Heat oil in a heavy pot.

4 Brown roast on all sides in the hot oil.

5 Cover the roast with one-third water, one-third beef broth, and one-third red wine.

6 Bring roast and liquid to boil.

7 Cover pot.

8 Turn down heat and simmer for an hour.

9 Taste broth and add seasonings as desired— salt, pepper, Worcestershire sauce.

10 Peel potatoes and carrots and cut into chunks.

11 Cut onions into chunks.

12 Add vegetables to pot for the last half hour of cooking.

13 Cook until meat flakes easily when you stick a fork in it.

14 Remove meat and vegetables from broth.

15 Dissolve two tablespoons of flour in half-cup cold water.

16 Stir flour mixture into boiling broth to thicken into gravy.

17 Serve gravy with the meat and vegetables.

Step 1: Preparing and cooking the meat

Items *1* through *9*

Step 2: Preparing and cooking the vegetables

Items *10* through *12*

Step 3: Preparing the gravy and serving

Items *13* through *17*

d. Prepare such a scratch outline of your main points. Use it as your guide as you write the rough draft of your paper.

Revising

As you read through your first draft and subsequent drafts, ask yourself these questions:

FOUR BASES Checklist for Process

About *Unity*

☑ Have I introduced my essay with either a statement of the importance of the process or my opinion of the process?

About *Support*

☑ Have I provided a clear step-by-step description of the process?

About *Coherence*

☑ Have I divided the items in the process into at least three logical steps (main points of the essay)?

☑ Have I used transitions such as *first, next, also, then, during*, and *finally* to help readers follow my train of thought?

About *Sentence Skills*

☑ Have I used a consistent point of view throughout my essay?

☑ Have I used specific rather than general words?

☑ Have I avoided wordiness and used concise wording?

☑ Are my sentences varied?

☑ Have I checked for spelling and other sentence skills, as listed on the inside back cover of the book?

As you revise your essay through one or more additional drafts, continue to refer to this checklist until you can answer yes to each question.

3 Writing Assignment

Any one of the topics below can be written as a process paper. Follow the steps suggested for Writing Assignment 1. Note that some of these topics invite a humorous point of view.



How to cook a favorite dish

How to break a bad habit

How to live with a two-year-old, a teenager, or a parent

How to make someone like you

How to make excuses

How to fall out of love

How to improve your reading skills

How to care for an aging relative

How to improve a school or a place of work

Teaching Tip

Encourage students to use the prewriting and revising ideas mentioned in Writing Assignment 1.

4 Writing Assignment

Writing for a Specific Purpose and Audience

In this process essay, you will write with a specific purpose and for a specific audience. Imagine that you have a younger brother or sister who has asked you to be a guest editor of his or her high school paper. Prepare an informal essay in which you summarize, in your own words, the steps involved in successfully managing your time in college or in preparing for and taking an essay exam.

Teaching Tip

Encourage students to use the four steps to complete this assignment, including prewriting and revision.



www.mhhe.com/langan

12: Cause and Effect

This chapter will explain and illustrate how to

- develop a cause-and-effect essay
- write a cause-and-effect essay
- revise a cause-and-effect essay

In addition, you will read and consider

- two student cause-and-effect essays
- one professional cause-and-effect essay



Craig Sjodin/© ABC/Courtesy Everett Collection

Write an essay in which you discuss the causes or effects of our society's fascination with reality TV. An essay on the causes would discuss why Americans are so intrigued with reality television shows. An essay on the effects would show how this fascination with reality TV has affected American society.

Teaching Tip

Ask students to complete this writing prompt in class.

Why did Gail decide to move out of her parents house? What made you quit a well-paying job? Why are horror movies so popular? Why has Ben acted so depressed lately? Why did our team fail to make the league play-offs?

Every day we ask questions like these and look for answers. We realize that many actions do not occur without causes, and we realize also that a given action can have a series of effects good or bad. By examining the causes or effects of an action, we seek to understand and explain things that happen in our lives.

You will be asked in this chapter to do some detective work by examining the cause of something or the effects of something. First read the student essays and the professional essay that follow and work through the questions that accompany the essays. All three essays support their thesis statements by explaining a series of causes or a series of effects.

Student Essays to Consider

Teaching Tip

Read these essays aloud. Ask students to underline the thesis statement, specific examples, and transitions in each essay before answering the questions.

The Joys of an Old Car

1 Some of my friends can't believe that my car still runs. Others laugh when they see it parked outside the house and ask if it's an antique. But they aren't being fair to my twenty-year-old Toyota Corolla. In fact, my antique has opened my eyes to the rewards of owning an old car.

2 One obvious reward of owning my old Toyota is economy. Twenty years ago, when my husband and I were newly married and nearly broke, we bought the car a shiny red year-old leftover for a mere $4,200. Today it would cost four times as much. We save money on insurance, since it's no longer worthwhile for us to have collision coverage. Old age has even been kind to the Toyota's engine, which has required only three major repairs in the last several years. And it still delivers twenty-eight miles per gallon in the city and forty-one on the highway not bad for a senior citizen.

3 I've heard that when a Toyota passes the twenty-thousand-mile mark with no problems, it will probably go on forever. I wouldn't disagree. Our Toyota breezed past that mark many years ago. Since then, I've been able to count on it to sputter to life and make its way down the driveway on the coldest, snowiest mornings. When my boss got stuck with his brand-new BMW in the worst snowstorm of the year, I sauntered into work on time. The single time my Toyota didn't start, unfortunately, was the day I had a final exam. The Toyota may have the body of an old car, but beneath its elderly hood hums the engine of a teenager.

4 Last of all, having the same car for many years offers the advantage of familiarity. When I open the door and slide into the driver's seat, the soft

vinyl surrounds me like a well-worn glove. I know to the millimeter exactly how much room I have when I turn a corner or back into a curbside parking space. When my gas gauge points to □empty,□I know that 1.3 gallons are still in reserve, and I can plan accordingly. The front wheels invariably begin to shake when I go more than fifty-five miles an hour, reminding me that I am exceeding the speed limit. With the Toyota, the only surprises I face come from other drivers.

5 I prize my twenty-year-old Toyota's economy and dependability, and most of all, its familiarity. It is faded, predictable, and comfortable, like a well-worn pair of jeans. And, like a well-worn pair of jeans, it will be difficult to throw away.

Stresses of Being a Celebrity

1 A woman signing herself □Wants the Truth in Westport□wrote to Ann Landers with a question she just had to have answered. □Please find out for sure,□ she begged the columnist, □whether or not Oprah Winfrey has had a face-lift.□ Fortunately for Ms. Winfrey's privacy, Ann Landers refused to answer the question. But the incident was disturbing. How awful it would be to be a celebrity, always in the public eye. Celebrities lead very stressful lives, for no matter how glamorous or powerful they are, they have too little privacy, too much pressure, and no safety.

2 For one thing, celebrities don't have the privacy an ordinary person has. The most personal details of their lives are splashed all over the front pages of US Weekly and the Globe so that bored supermarket shoppers can read about □Leonardo DiCaprio's Awful Secret□or □The Heartbreak Behind Jessica Simpson's Smile.□Even a celebrity's family is hauled into the spotlight. A teenage son's arrest for pot possession or a wife's drinking problem becomes the subject of glaring headlines. Photographers hound celebrities at their homes, in restaurants, and on the street, hoping to get a picture of Halle Berry in curlers or Vince Vaughn guzzling a beer. When celebrities try to do the things that normal people do, like eat out or attend a football game, they run the risk of being interrupted by thoughtless autograph hounds or mobbed by aggressive fans.

3 In addition to the loss of privacy, celebrities must cope with the constant pressure of having to look great and act right. Their physical appearance is always under observation. Famous women, especially, suffer from the spotlight, drawing remarks like □She really looks old□ or □Boy, has she put on weight.□ Unflattering pictures of celebrities are photographers□

prizes to be sold to the highest bidder; this increases the pressure on celebrities to look good at all times. Famous people are also under pressure to act calm and collected under any circumstances. Because they are constantly observed, they have no freedom to blow off steam or to do something just a little crazy.

4 Most important, celebrities must deal with the stress of being in constant danger. The friendly grabs, hugs, and kisses of enthusiastic fans can quickly turn into uncontrolled assaults on a celebrity's hair, clothes, and car. Most people agree that photographers bear some responsibility for the death of one of the leading celebrities of the 1990s Princess Diana. Whether or not their pursuit caused the crash that took her life, it's clear she was chased as aggressively as any escaped convict by bloodhounds. And celebrity can even lead to deliberately lethal attacks. The attempt to kill Ronald Reagan and the murder of John Lennon came about because two unbalanced people became obsessed with these world-famous figures. Famous people must live with the fact that they are always fair game and never out of season.

5 Some people dream of starring roles, their name in lights, and their picture on the cover of People magazine. But the cost is far too high. A famous person gives up private life, feels pressured to look and act certain ways all the time, and is never completely safe. An ordinary, calm life is far safer and saner than a life of fame.

1 Questions

About Unity

1. Which supporting paragraph in The Joys of an Old Car lacks a topic sentence?

a. 2

b. 3

c. 4

2. Which sentence in paragraph 3 of The Joys of an Old Car should be omitted in the interest of paragraph unity? *(Write the opening words.)*

The single time

Note:

Wording of answers may vary.

3. Rewrite the thesis statement of The Joys of an Old Car to include a plan of development.

In fact, my antique has opened my eyes to the advantages of owning an old car: economy, reliability, and familiarity.

_____

_____

About Support

4. In paragraph 4 of "Stresses of Being a Celebrity," the author supports the idea that "celebrities must deal with the stress of being in constant danger" with *(circle the letters of the two answers that apply)*

a. statistics.
b. an explanation.
c. a quotation by an expert.
d. examples.

5. After which sentence in paragraph 3 of "Stresses of Being a Celebrity" are more specific details needed? *(Write the opening words.)*

***Because they are constantly observed ***

6. In "The Joys of an Old Car," how many examples are given to support the topic sentence "One obvious reward is economy"?

a. two
b. three
c. four
d. five

ESL Tip

To achieve greater coherence, nonnative speakers should review connectors that show reason or cause and a result. Special attention to adverbial clauses that begin with *if* is very critical for ESL students. Errors with conditional sentences will affect the meaning of an individual sentence and whole paragraphs.

About Coherence

7. Which topic sentence in "Stresses of Being a Celebrity" functions as a linking sentence between paragraphs? *(Write the opening words.)*

***In addition to the loss of privacy ***

8. Paragraph 3 of "Stresses of Being a Celebrity" includes two main transition words or phrases. List those words or phrases.

In addition ***also***

9. What are the two transition words or phrases in "The Joys of an Old Car" that signal two major points of support for the thesis?

One ***Last of all***

About the Introduction and Conclusion

10. Which method is used in the conclusion of "The Joys of an Old Car"?

a. Summary and final thought
b. Thought-provoking question
c. Recommendation

Developing a Cause-and-Effect Essay

Considering Purpose and Audience

The main purpose of a cause-and-effect essay is to explain to your audience (1) the causes of a particular event or situation; (2) the effects of an event or a situation; or more rarely, (3) a combination of both.

The type of cause-and-effect essay you write will depend on the topic you choose and the main point you wish to communicate. If, for example, your purpose is to tell readers about the impact a special person had on your life, your essay would focus mainly on the *effects* of that person. However, if your purpose is to explain why you moved out of your family home, your essay would focus on the *causes* of your decision.

As with all essays, try to pick a topic that will appeal to your audience of readers. An essay on the negative effects of steroids and other drugs on professional athletes may be especially interesting to an audience of sports fans. On the other hand, this same topic might not be as appealing to people who dislike sports. In addition to selecting a lively topic, be sure to make your main point clear so that your audience can follow the cause-and-effect relationship you've chosen to develop. In the preceding instance, you might even announce specific causes or effects by signaling them to readers: One effect drug use has on athletes is to

Development through Prewriting

The best essays are often those written about a topic that the author genuinely cares about. When Janine, the author of The Joys of an Old Car, was assigned a cause-and-effect essay, she welcomed the assignment. She explains, My husband and I believe in enjoying what we have and living simply, rather than keeping up with the Joneses. Our beat-up old car is an example of that way of life. People often say to me, Surely you could buy a nicer car! I enjoy explaining to them why we keep our old clunker. So when I heard cause-and-effect essay, I immediately thought of the car as a topic. Writing this essay was just an extension of a conversation I've had many times.

Teaching Tip

You may want to provide a supplemental activity. First, ask students to make a list of the reasons why students might receive low grades. Then ask them to use this list to create a scratch outline. Next, direct them to jot down details that support each reason.

Although Janine had often praised the virtues of her old car to friends, she wasn't sure how to divide what she had to say into three main points. To get started, she made a list of all the good things about her car. Here is what she wrote:

Starts reliably

Has needed few major repairs

Reminder of Bill's and my first days of marriage

Gets good gas mileage

Don't need to worry about scratches and scrapes

I know exactly how much room I need to turn and park

Saves money on insurance

I'm very comfortable in it

No car payments

Cold weather doesn't seem to bother it

Don't worry about its being stolen

Uses regular gas

Can haul anything in it dog, plants and not worry about dirt

Know all its little tics and shimmies and don't worry about them

When Janine reviewed her list, she saw that the items fell into three major categories. There was (1) the car's economy, (2) its familiarity, and (3) its dependability. She went back and noted which category each of the items best fit. Then she crossed out those items that didn't seem to belong in any of the categories.

3 Starts reliably

1 Has needed few major repairs

~~Reminder of Bill's and my first days of marriage~~

1 Gets good gas mileage

~~Don't need to worry about scratches and scrapes~~

2 I know exactly how much room I need to turn and park

1 Saves money on insurance

2 I'm very comfortable in it

1 No car payments

3 Cold weather doesn't seem to bother it

~~Don't worry about its being stolen~~

1 Uses regular gas

~~Can haul anything in it—dog, plants—and not worry about dirt~~

2 Know all its little tics and shimmies and don't worry about them

Now Janine had three main points and several items to support each point. She produced this as a first draft:

Teaching Tip

Next, ask students to write a draft.

The Joys of an Old Car

First Draft

When people see my beat-up old car, they sometimes laugh at it. But I tell them that owning a twenty-year-old Toyota has its good points.

One obvious reward is economy. My husband and I bought the car when we were newly married. We paid $4,200 for it. That seemed like a lot of money then, but today we'd spend four times that much for a similar car. We also save money on insurance. In the twenty years we've had it, the Toyota has needed only a few major repairs. It even gets good gas mileage.

I like the familiar feel of the car. I'm so used to it that driving anything else feels very strange. When I visited my sister recently, I drove her new Prius to the grocery store. Everything was so unfamiliar! I couldn't even figure out how to turn on the radio. I was relieved to get back to my own car.

Finally, my car is very dependable. No matter how cold and snowy it is, I know the Toyota will start quickly and get me where I need to go. Unfortunately, one day it didn't start, and naturally that day I had a final exam. But otherwise it just keeps on going and going.

My Toyota reminds me of a favorite piece of clothing that you wear forever and can't bear to throw away.

Development through Revising

Janine traded first drafts with a classmate, Sharon, and each critiqued the other's work before it was revised. Here is Janine's first draft again, with Sharon's comments in the margins.

Teaching Tip

Ask students to read their drafts to a partner and discuss how their draft might be revised.

The Joys of an Old Car

When people see my beat-up old car, they sometimes laugh at it. But I tell them that owning a twenty-year-old Toyota has its good points.

One obvious reward is economy. My husband and I bought the car when we were newly married. We paid $4,200 for it. That seemed like a lot of money then, but today we'd spend four times that much for a similar car. We also save money on insurance. In the twenty years we've had it, the Toyota has needed only a few major repairs. It even gets good gas mileage.

I like the familiar feel of the car. I'm so used to it that driving anything else feels very strange. When I visited my sister recently, I drove her new Prius to the grocery store. Everything was so unfamiliar! I couldn't even figure out how to turn on the radio. I was relieved to get back to my own car.

Finally, my car is very dependable. No matter how cold and snowy it is, I know the Toyota will start quickly and get me where I need to go. Unfortunately, one day it didn't start, and naturally that day I had a final exam. But otherwise it just keeps on going and going.

My Toyota reminds me of a favorite piece of clothing that you wear forever and can't bear to throw away.

Reader's Comments

How? Is the insurance less expensive just because the car is old?

Here would be a good place for a specific detail—how good is the mileage?

This topic sentence doesn't tie in with the others—shouldn't it say "Second," or "Another reason I like the car"?

This is too much about your sister's car and not enough about yours.

This is a good comparison. But draw it out more—how is the car like comfortable old clothes?

Making use of Sharon's comments, Janine wrote the final version of "The Joys of an Old Car" that appears on page 265.

A Professional Essay to Consider

Read the following professional essay. Then answer the questions and read the comments that follow.

Taming the Anger Monster: by Anne Davidson

1 Laura Houser remembers the day with embarrassment.

2 "My mother was visiting from Illinois," she says. "We'd gone out to lunch and done some shopping. On our way home, we stopped at an intersection. When the

light changed, the guy ahead of us was looking at a map or something and didn't move right away. I leaned on my horn and automatically yelled well, what I generally yell at people who make me wait. I didn't even think about what I was doing. One moment I was talking and laughing with my mother, and the next I was shouting curses at a stranger. Mom's jaw just dropped. She said, Well, I guess *you've* been living in the city too long. That's when I realized that my anger was out of control.

3 Laura has plenty of company. Here are a few examples plucked from the headlines of recent newspapers:

- Amtrak's Washington New York train: When a woman begins to use her cell phone in a designated quiet car, her seatmate grabs the phone and smashes it against the wall.

- Reading, Mass.: Arguing over rough play at their ten-year-old sons hockey practice, two fathers begin throwing punches. One of the dads beats the other to death.

- Westport, Conn.: Two supermarket shoppers get into a fistfight over who should be first in a just-opened checkout line.

Reading these stories and countless others like them which happen daily, it's hard to escape the conclusion that we are one angry society. An entire vocabulary has grown up to describe situations of out-of-control fury: road rage, sideline rage, computer rage, biker rage, air rage. Bookstore shelves are filled with authors advice on how to deal with our anger. Court-ordered anger management classes have become commonplace, and anger-management workshops are advertised in local newspapers.

4 Human beings have always experienced anger, of course. But in earlier, more civil decades, public displays of anger were unusual to the point of being aberrant. Today, however, whether in petty or deadly forms, episodes of unrepressed rage have become part of our daily landscape.

5 What has happened to us? Are we that much angrier than we used to be? Have we lost all inhibitions about expressing our anger? Are we, as a society, literally losing our ability to control our tempers?

Why Are We So Angry?

6 According to Sybil Evans, a conflict-resolution expert in New York City, there are three components to blame for our societal bad behavior: time, technology and tension.

7 What's eating up our time? To begin with, Americans work longer hours and are rewarded with less vacation time than people in any other industrial society. Over an average year, for example, most British employees work 250 hours less than most Americans; most Germans work a full 500 hours less. And most Europeans are given four to six weeks vacation every year, compared to the average American's two weeks. To make matters worse, many Americans face long stressful commutes at the beginning and end of each long workday.

8 Once we Americans finally get home from work, our busy day is rarely done. We are involved in community activities; our children participate in sports, school programs, and extra-curricular activities; and our houses, yards and cars cry out for maintenance. To make matters worse, we are reluctant to use the little bit of leisure time we do have to catch up on our sleep. Compared with Americans of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, most of us are chronically sleep-deprived. While our ancestors typically slept nine-and-a-half hours a night, many of us feel lucky to get seven. We're critical of □lazy□people who sleep longer, and we associate naps with toddlerhood. (In doing so, we ignore the example of successful people including Winston Churchill, Albert Einstein, and Napoleon, all of whom were devoted to their afternoon naps.)

9 The bottom line: we are time-challenged and just plain tired□ and tired people are cranky people. We're ready to blow□ to snap at the slow-moving cashier, to tap the bumper of the slowpoke ahead of us, or to do something far worse.

10 Technology is also to blame for the bad behavior so widespread in our culture. Amazing gadgets were supposed to make our lives easier□ but have they? Sure, technology has its positive aspects. It is a blessing, for instance, to have a cell phone on hand when your car breaks down far from home or to be able to □instant message□a friend on the other side of the globe. But the downsides are many. Cell phones, pagers, fax machines, handheld computers and the like have robbed many of us of what was once valuable downtime. Now we're *always* available to take that urgent call or act on that last-minute demand. Then there is the endless pressure of feeling we need to keep up with our gadgets□latest technological developments. For example, it's not sufficient to use your cell phone for phone calls. Now you must learn to use the phone for text-messaging and downloading games. It's not enough to take still photos with your digital camera. You should know how to shoot ultra high-speed fast-action clips. It's not enough to have an enviable CD collection. You should be downloading new songs in MP3 format. The computers in your house should be connected by a wireless router, and online via high-speed DSL service. In other words, if it's been more than ten minutes since you've updated your technology, you're probably behind.

11 In fact, you're not only behind; you're a stupid loser. At least, that's how most of us end up feeling as we're confronted with more and more unexpected technologies: the do-it-yourself checkout at the supermarket, the telephone □help center□that offers a recorded series of messages, but no human help. And feeling like losers makes us frustrated and, you guessed it, angry. □It's not any one thing but lots of little things that make people feel like they don't have control of their lives,□says Jane Middleton-Moz, an author and therapist. □A sense of helplessness is what triggers rage. It's why people end up kicking ATM machines.□

12 Her example is not far-fetched. According to a survey of computer users in Great Britain, a quarter of those under age 25 admitted to having kicked or punched their computers on at least one occasion. Others confessed to yanking out cables in a rage, forcing the computer to crash. On this side of the Atlantic, a Wisconsin man, after repeated attempts to get his daughter's malfunctioning computer repaired,

took it to the store where he had bought it, placed it in the foyer, and attacked it with a sledgehammer. Arrested and awaiting a court appearance, he told local reporters, "It feels good, in a way." He had put into action a fantasy many of us have had— that of taking out our feelings of rage on the machines that so frustrate us.

13 Tension, the third major culprit behind our epidemic of anger, is intimately connected with our lack of time and the pressures of technology. Merely our chronic exhaustion and our frustration in the face of a bewildering array of technologies would be enough to cause our stress levels to skyrocket, but we are dealing with much more. Our tension is often fueled by a reserve of anger that might be the result of a critical boss, marital discord, or (something that many of today's men and women experience, if few will admit it) a general sense of being stupid and inadequate in the face of the demands of modern life. And along with the challenges of everyday life, we now live with a widespread fear of such horrors as terrorist acts, global warming, and antibiotic-resistant diseases. Our sense of dread may be out of proportion to actual threats because of technology's ability to so constantly bombard us with worrisome information. Twenty-four hours a day news stations bring a stream of horror into our living rooms. As we work on our computers, headlines and graphic images are never more than a mouseclick away.

The Result of Our Anger

14 Add it all together— our feeling of never having enough time; the chronic aggravation caused by technology; and our endless, diffuse sense of stress— and we become time bombs waiting to explode. Our angry outbursts may be briefly satisfying, but afterwards we are left feeling— well, like jerks. Worse, flying off the handle is a self-perpetuating behavior. Brad Bushman, a psychology professor at Iowa State University, says, "Catharsis is worse than useless." Bushman's research has shown that when people vent their anger, they actually become more, not less, aggressive. "Many people think of anger as the psychological equivalent of the steam in a pressure cooker. It has to be released, or it will explode. That's not true. The people who react by hitting, kicking, screaming, and swearing just feel more angry."

15 Furthermore, the unharnessed venting of anger may actually do us physical harm. The vigorous expression of anger pumps adrenaline into our system and raises our blood pressure, setting the stage for heart attack and strokes. Frequently-angry people have even been shown to have higher cholesterol levels than even-tempered individuals.

How to Deal with Our Anger

16 Unfortunately, the culprits behind much of our anger— lack of time, frustrating technology, and mega-levels of stress— are not likely to resolve themselves anytime soon. So what are we to do with the anger that arises as a result?

17 According to Carol Tavris, author of *Anger: The Misunderstood Emotion*, the keys to dealing with anger are common sense and patience. She points out that almost no situation is improved by an angry outburst. A traffic jam, a frozen

computer, or a misplaced set of car keys are annoying. To act upon the angry feelings those situations provoke, however, is an exercise in futility. Shouting, fuming, or leaning on the car horn won't make traffic begin to flow, the screen unlock, or keys materialize.

18 Patience, on the other hand, is a highly practical virtue. People who take the time to cool down before responding to an anger-producing situation are far less likely to say or do something they will regret later. "It is as true of the body as of arrows," Tavris says, "that what goes up must come down. Any emotional arousal will simmer down if you just wait long enough." When you are stuck in traffic, in other words, turn on some soothing music, breathe deeply, and count to ten" or thirty or forty, if need be.

19 Anger-management therapist Doris Wild Helmering agrees. "Like any feeling, anger lasts only about three seconds," she says. "What keeps it going is your own negative thinking." As long as you focus on the idiot who cut you off on the expressway, you'll stay angry. But if you let the incident go, your anger will go with it. "Once you come to understand that you're driving your own anger with your thoughts," adds Helmering, "you can stop it."

20 Experts who have studied anger also encourage people to cultivate activities that effectively vent their anger. For some people, it's reading the newspaper or watching TV, while others need more active outlets, such as using a treadmill, taking a walk, hitting golf balls, or working out with a punching bag. People who succeed in calming their anger can also enjoy the satisfaction of having dealt positively with their frustrations.

21 For Laura Houser, the episode in the car with her mother was a wake-up call. "I saw myself through her eyes," she said, "and I realized I had become a chronically angry, impatient jerk. My response to stressful situations had become habitual" I automatically flew off the handle. Once I saw what I was doing, it really wasn't that hard to develop different habits. I simply decided I was going to treat other people the way I would want to be treated." The changes in Laura's life haven't benefited only her former victims. "I'm a calmer, happier person now," she reports. "I don't lie in bed at night fuming over stupid things other people have done and my own enraged responses." Laura has discovered the satisfaction of having a sense of control over her own behavior" which ultimately is all any of us can control.

2 Questions

About Unity

1. Which of the following statements best represents the implied thesis of "Taming the Anger Monster"?

   a. People today have lost their ability to control their anger and to behave in a civil fashion.

   b. Anger would last only a few seconds if we didn't keep it going with negative thinking.

c. While technology has its positive aspects, it has made us constantly available to others and frustrates us with the need to master its endless new developments.



Our out-of-control anger has understandable causes, but common sense and patience are more satisfying than outbursts of rage.

2. Which statement would best serve as a topic sentence for paragraphs 3 and 4?



Anger has become an increasingly common problem in our society.

b. People should be more thoughtful and tolerant of those around them.

c. Displays of anger frequently lead to physical violence and even death.

d. Anger is a natural response to irritating situations.

3. Which statement is the best topic sentence for paragraphs 16–18?

a. "Unfortunately, the culprits behind much of our anger— lack of time, frustrating technology, and mega-levels of stress— are not likely to resolve themselves anytime soon."



"According to Carol Tavris, author of *Anger: The Misunderstood Emotion*, the keys to dealing with anger are common sense and patience."

c. "Patience, on the other hand, is a highly practical virtue."

d. "People who take the time to cool down before responding to an anger-producing situation are far less likely to say or do something they will regret later."

About Support

4. The essay is about one main effect and three possible causes. What is the one main effect? What are the three causes?

Effect: ***An epidemic of anger***

Three causes: ***Lack of time, technology, tension***

5. What are some examples cited to support the idea that technology has contributed to America's anger problem?

Cell phones, faxes, pagers, digital cameras, computers, the do-it-yourself

checkout at the supermarket, the telephone "help center."

Note:

Answers may vary.

About Coherence

6. What is the best description of the organization of this essay?

a. Introduction, Thesis, Three Supporting Parts, Conclusion



Introduction, Thesis, Four Supporting Parts, Conclusion

c. Introduction, Thesis, Five Supporting Parts

d. Thesis, Six Supporting Parts, Conclusion

7. As shown by the outline below, "Taming the Anger Monster" bears a general resemblance to the traditional one-three-one essay model. Fill in the missing paragraph numbers.

Introduction:	Paragraphs:	1–5
Supporting Point 1:	Paragraph(s)	6–9
Supporting Point 2:	Paragraph(s)	10–12
Supporting Point 3:	Paragraph(s)	13
Supporting Point 4:	Paragraphs	14–15
Supporting Point 5:	Paragraphs	16–20
Conclusion:	Paragraph:	21

8. What are the three addition signals used to introduce the three causes of anger?

To begin with Technology is also Tension, the third major culprit

About the Introduction and Conclusion

9. What method best describes the introduction to "Taming the Anger Monster"?

a. Quotation

b. Broad, general statement narrowing to thesis

c. Idea that is the opposite of the one to be developed

d. Anecdote and questions

Note:

Wording of answers may vary.

10. What is the relationship between the essay's first paragraph and its concluding paragraph?

The first paragraph presents a story about a person with anger problems.

The last paragraph shows how that story was successfully resolved.

Writing a Cause-and-Effect Essay

1 Writing Assignment

In scratch-outline form, on a separate piece of paper, provide brief causes *or* effects for at least *four* of the ten statements below. The first is done for you as an example. Make sure that you have three *separate* and *distinct* items for each statement— don't provide two rewordings that say essentially the same thing. Also, indicate whether the items you have listed are causes or effects.

When you have finished your four scratch outlines, decide which of them would provide the best basis for a cause-and-effect essay that you will write.



© Micheal Newman/ PhotoEdit Inc.

1. Many youngsters are terrified of school.

Causes: **Note:** Answers will vary.

a. ***Afraid of not being liked by other students***
b. ***Afraid of failing tests***
c. ***Intimidated by teachers***

2. Having more mothers in the workforce has changed the way many kids grow up.


© Greg Hinsdale/Corbis

3. Americans tend to get married later in life than they used to.

4. Society would benefit if nonviolent criminals were punished in ways other than jail time.

5. Among winners of prestigious academic awards, a high percentage are children of immigrant families who recently arrived in this country.

6. My relationship with (*name a relative or friend*)_____ has changed over time.

7. Growing up in my family has influenced my life in significant ways.

8. A bad (or good) teacher can have long-lasting impact on a student.



© Bubbles Photolibrary/Alamy

9. The average workweek should be no more than thirty hours.

10. It is easy to fall into an unhealthy diet in our society.

Teaching Tip

You may want to model the writing process for your students by doing this assignment along with them. Go through all the stages, including prewriting and revising, and seek feedback from them. They will appreciate your efforts to create a writing community.

Prewriting

a. Look at the outline you produced in the previous step. You will now use it as the basis for a cause-and-effect essay. The statement will serve as your thesis, and the three causes or effects will function as your main points. Make sure that each of your main points is a *separate* and *distinct* point, not a restatement of one of the other points.

b. Decide whether you will support each of your main points with several short examples or with one extended example. You may want to freewrite about

each of these examples for a few minutes, or you may want to make up a list of as many details as you think of that would go with each of the examples.

c. Write a first draft of an introduction that attracts the reader's interest, states your thesis, and presents a plan of development.

Revising

After you have completed the first draft of the paper, set it aside for a while (if possible). Then read it aloud to a friend or classmate. As you listen to your words, you should both keep these questions in mind:

FOUR BASES Checklist for Cause and Effect

About *Unity*

- ✔ Does the essay have a clearly stated thesis?
- ✔ Is there any irrelevant material that should be eliminated or rewritten?

About *Support*

- ✔ Have I backed up each main point with one extended example or several shorter examples?
- ✔ Do I have enough detailed support?

About *Coherence*

- ✔ Have I used transition words to help readers follow my train of thought?
- ✔ Have I provided a concluding paragraph to wrap up the essay?

About *Sentence Skills*

- ✔ Have I used a consistent point of view throughout my essay?
- ✔ Have I used specific rather than general words?
- ✔ Have I avoided wordiness and used concise wording?
- ✔ Are my sentences varied?
- ✔ Have I checked for spelling and other sentence skills, as listed on the inside back cover of the book?

As you revise your essay through one or more additional drafts, continue to refer to this list until you can answer yes to each question.



2 Writing Assignment

If friendly aliens from a highly developed civilization decided to visit our planet, they would encounter a contradictory race of beings□ us. We humans would have reasons to feel both proud and ashamed of the kind of society the aliens would encounter. Write an essay explaining whether you would be proud or ashamed of the state of the human race today. Give reasons for your feelings.

Prewriting

a. You will probably have an instant gut reaction to the question Am I more proud of or ashamed of the human race? Go with that reaction; you will find it easier to come up with supporting points for the thesis that occurred to you immediately.

b. Generate supporting details for your thesis by making a list. Title it □Reasons I am proud of the human race□or □Reasons I am ashamed of the human race.□Then list as many items as you can think of. Don't worry about whether the reasons are important or silly, significant or trivial. Just write down as many as possible.

c. Review your list and ask yourself if some of the items could be grouped into one category. For instance, a list of reasons to be proud of humanity might include items such as □We've come up with cures for major diseases,□ □We've developed the computer,□ and □We've invented wonderful communication devices like the cellular telephone, the Internet, movies, and TV.□ All of these could be grouped into a category called □Important inventions.□That category, in turn, could serve as a main supporting point in your essay.

d. As described in step *c*, decide on three supporting points. Write a scratch outline that includes those points and the examples (one extended example or several shorter ones). The point described in step *c* would be outlined like this:

Point: The human race has come up with wonderful inventions that benefit all society.

1. Cures for diseases
2. Computers
3. Communication devices, including cell phones, the Internet, and TV

e. Using your scratch outline, write a first draft of the paper. Include an introduction that states your thesis and plan of development, and a conclusion that reminds readers of your thesis and leaves them with a final point to consider.

Revising

As you work through subsequent drafts, ask yourself these questions:

FOUR BASES Checklist for Cause and Effect

About *Unity*

- ☐ Have I introduced my essay with a clearly stated thesis and plan of development?

About *Support*

- ☐ Is each of my main points supported by solid, specific details?

About *Coherence*

- ☐ Have I used transition words such as *first, another, in addition*, and *also*?

About *Sentence Skills*

- ☐ Have I used a consistent point of view throughout my essay?
- ☐ Have I used specific rather than general words?
- ☐ Have I avoided wordiness and used concise wording?
- ☐ Are my sentences varied?
- ☐ Have I checked my writing for spelling and other sentence skills, as listed on the inside back cover of the book?

3 Writing Assignment

Teaching Tip

Encourage students to use the prewriting and revising ideas mentioned in Writing Assignments 1 and 2.

Write a cause-and-effect essay in which you advance an idea about a poem, story, play, film, literary essay, or novel. The work you choose may be assigned by your instructor or may require your instructor's approval. To develop your idea, use a series of two or more reasons and specific supporting evidence for each reason. A student model follows.

Paul's Suicide

1 Paul, the main character in Willa Cather's short story □Paul's Case,□is a young man on a collision course with death. As Cather reveals Paul's story, we learn about elements of Paul's personality that inevitably come together and cause his suicide. Paul takes his own life as a result of his inability to conform to his society, his passive nature, and his emotional isolation.

2 First of all, Paul cannot conform to the standards of his own society. At school, Paul advertises his desire to be part of another, more glamorous world by wearing fancy clothes that set him apart from the other students. At home on Cordelia Street, Paul despises everything about his middle-class neighborhood. He hates the houses "permeated by kitchen odors," the "ugliness and commonness of his own home," and the respectable neighbors sitting on their front stoops every Sunday, "their stomachs comfortably protruding." Paul's father hopes that Paul will settle down and become like the young man next door, a nearsighted clerk who works for a corporate steel magnate. Paul, however, is repelled by the young man and all he represents. It seems inevitable, then, that Paul will not be able to cope with the office job his father obtains for him at the firm of Denny & Carson; and this inability to conform will, in turn, lead to Paul's theft of $1,000.

3 Paul's suicide is also due, in part, to his passive nature. Throughout his life, Paul has been an observer and an onlooker. Paul's only escape from the prison of his daily life comes from his job as an usher at Pittsburgh's Carnegie Hall; he lives for the moments when he can watch the actors, singers, and musicians. However, Paul has no desire to be an actor or musician. As Cather says, "What he wanted was to see, to be in the atmosphere, float on the wave of it, to be carried out " away from everything." Although Paul steals the money and flees to New York, these uncharacteristic actions underscore the desperation he feels. Once at the Waldorf in New York, Paul is again content to observe the glamorous world he has craved for so long: "He had no especial desire to meet or to know any of these people; all he demanded was the right to look on and conjecture, to watch the pageant." During his brief stay in the city, Paul enjoys simply sitting in his luxurious rooms, glimpsing the show of city life through a magical curtain of snow. At the end, when the forces of ordinary life begin to close in again, Paul kills himself. But it is typical that he does not use the gun he has bought. Rather, more in keeping with his passive nature, Paul lets himself fall under the wheels of a train.

4 Finally, Paul ends his life because he is emotionally isolated. Throughout the story, not one person makes any real contact with Paul. His teachers do not understand him and merely resent the attitude of false bravado that he uses as a defense. Paul's mother is dead; he cannot even remember her. Paul is completely alienated from his father, who obviously cares for him but who cannot feel close to this withdrawn, unhappy son. To Paul, his father is only the man waiting at the top of the stairs, "his hairy legs sticking out of his nightshirt," who will greet him with "inquiries and reproaches." When Paul meets a college boy in New York, they share a night on the town. But the "champagne friendship" ends with a "singularly cool" parting. Paul is not the kind of person who can let himself go or confide in one of his peers. **[Punto y seguido].**

For the most part, Paul's isolation is self-imposed. He has drifted so far into his fantasy life that people in the "real" world are treated like invaders. As he allows no one to enter his dream, there is no one Paul can turn to for understanding.

5 The combination of these personality factors— inability to conform, passivity, and emotional isolation— makes Paul's tragic suicide inevitable. Before he jumps in front of the train, Paul scoops a hole in the snow and buries the carnation that he has been wearing in his buttonhole. Like a hothouse flower in the winter, Paul has a fragile nature that cannot survive in its hostile environment.

4 Writing Assignment

Writing for a Specific Purpose and Audience

In this cause-and-effect essay, you will write with a specific purpose and for a specific audience. Imagine that several friends of yours say they are having a hard time learning anything in a class taught by Professor X. You volunteer to attend the class and see for yourself. You also get information from your friends about the course requirements.

Teaching Tip

Encourage students to use the four steps to complete this assignment, including prewriting and revision.

Afterward, you write a letter to Professor X, politely calling attention to what you see as causes of the learning problems that students are having in the class. To organize your essay, you might develop each of these causes in a separate supporting paragraph. In the second part of each supporting paragraph, you might suggest changes that Professor X could make to deal with each problem.



www.mhhe.com/langan

13: Comparison or Contrast





Looking at the two photographs above, write an essay in which you compare or contrast lecture classes with smaller classes.

This chapter will explain and illustrate how to

- develop an essay of comparison or contrast
- write an essay of comparison or contrast
- revise an essay of comparison or contrast

In addition, you will read and consider

- two student essays of comparison or contrast
- one professional essay of contrast

Teaching Tip

Get students to talk about the merits of lecture classes and smaller classes. Record their comments on the board.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Comparison and contrast are two thought processes we go through constantly in everyday life. When we *compare* two things, we show how they are similar; when we *contrast* two things, we show how they are different. We may compare or contrast two brand-name products (for example, Pepsi and Coca-Cola), two television shows, two cars, two teachers, two jobs, two friends, or two possible solutions to a problem we are facing. The purpose of comparing or contrasting is to understand each of the two things more clearly and, at times, to make judgments about them.

You will be asked in this chapter to write an essay of comparison or contrast. To prepare for this assignment, first read about the two methods of development you can use in writing your essay. Then read the student essays and the professional essay that follow and work through the questions that accompany the essays.

Teaching Tip

Bring to class everyday examples of comparison or contrast writing. These examples might be found in magazines, newspapers, and other published sources. If your classroom has access to the Internet, find examples from Web sites. Help your students make connections.

Methods of Development

A comparison or contrast essay calls for one of two types of development. Details can be presented *one side at a time* or *point by point.* Each format is illustrated below.

One Side at a Time

Look at the following supporting paragraph from "A Vote for McDonald's," one of the model essays that will follow.

> For one thing, going to the Chalet is more difficult than going to McDonald's. The Chalet has a jacket-and-tie rule, which means I have to dig a sport coat and tie out of the back of my closet, make sure they're semiclean, and try to steam out the wrinkles somehow. The Chalet also requires reservations. Since it is downtown, I have to leave an hour early to give myself time to find a parking space within six blocks of the restaurant. The Chalet cancels reservations if a party is more than ten minutes late. Going to McDonald's, on the other hand, is easy. I can feel comfortable wearing my jeans or warm-up suit. I don't have to do any advance planning. I can leave my house whenever I'm ready and pull into a doorside parking space within fifteen minutes.

The first half of this paragraph fully explains one side of the contrast (the difficulty of going to the Chalet). The second half of the paragraph deals entirely with the other side (the ease of going to McDonald's). When you use this method, be sure to follow the same order of points of contrast (or comparison) for each side. An outline of the paragraph shows how the points for each side are developed in a consistent sequence.

One Side at a Time

Outline

Thesis: Going to the Chalet is more difficult than going to McDonald's.

1. *Chalet*
   a. *Dress code*
   b. *Advance reservations*
   c. *Leave an hour early*
   d. *Find parking space*
2. *McDonald's*
   a. *Casual dress*
   b. *No reservations*
   c. *Leave only fifteen minutes ahead of time*
   d. *Plenty of free parking*

Teaching Tip

Stress to students that they must decide on the format of their comparison or contrast paper ahead of time.

Point by Point

Now look at the supporting paragraph below, which is taken from another essay you will read, "Studying: Then and Now":

> Ordinary studying during the term is another area where I've made changes. In high school, I let reading assignments go. I told myself that I'd have no trouble catching up on two hundred pages during a fifteen-minute ride to school. College courses have taught me to keep pace with the work. Otherwise, I feel as though I'm sinking into a quicksand of unread material. When I finally read the high school assignment, my eyes would run over the words but my brain would be plotting how to get the car for Saturday night. Now, I use several techniques that force me to really concentrate on my reading.

The paragraph contrasts two styles of studying point by point. The following outline illustrates the point-by-point method.

Point by Point

Outline

Thesis: Studying is something I do differently in college than in high school.

1. *Keeping up with reading assignments*
   a. *High school*
   b. *College*
2. *Concentration while reading*
   a. *High school*
   b. *College*

When you begin writing a comparison or contrast paper, you should decide right away which format you will use: one side at a time or point by point. Use that format as you create the outline for your paper. Remember that an outline is an essential step in planning and writing a clearly organized paper.

Student Essays to Consider

Teaching Tip

Read these essays aloud. Ask students to underline the thesis statement, specific examples, and transitions in each essay before answering the questions.

A Vote for McDonald's

1 For my birthday this month, my wife has offered to treat me to dinner at the restaurant of my choice. I think she expects me to ask for a meal at the Chalet, the classiest, most expensive restaurant in town. However, I'm going to eat my birthday dinner at McDonald's. When I compare the two restaurants, the advantages of eating at McDonald's are clear.

2 For one thing, going to the Chalet is more difficult than going to McDonald's. The Chalet has a jacket-and-tie rule, which means I have to dig a sport coat and tie out of the back of my closet, make sure they're semiclean, and try to steam out the wrinkles somehow. The Chalet also requires reservations. Since it is downtown, I have to leave an hour early to give

myself time to find a parking space within six blocks of the restaurant. The Chalet cancels reservations if a party is more than ten minutes late. Going to McDonald's, on the other hand, is easy. I can feel comfortable wearing my jeans or warm-up suit. I don't have to do any advance planning. I can leave my house whenever I'm ready and pull into a doorside parking space within fifteen minutes.

3 The Chalet is a dimly lit, formal place. While I'm struggling to see what's on my plate, I worry that I'll knock one of the fragile glasses off the table. The waiters at the Chalet can be uncomfortably formal, too. As I awkwardly pronounce the French words on the menu, I get the feeling that I don't quite live up to their standards. Even the other diners can make me feel uncomfortable. And though the food at the Chalet is gourmet, I prefer simpler meals. I don't like unfamiliar food swimming in a pasty white sauce. Eating at the Chalet is, to me, less enjoyable than eating at McDonald's. McDonald's is a pleasant place where I feel at ease. It is well lit, and the bright-colored decor is informal. The employees serve with a smile, and the food is easy to pronounce and identify. I know what I'm going to get when I order a certain type of sandwich.

4 The most important difference between the Chalet and McDonald's, though, is price. Dinner for two at the Chalet, even without appetizers or desserts, would easily cost $100. And the $100 doesn't include the cost of parking the car and tipping the waiter, which can come to an additional $20. Once, I forgot to bring enough money. At McDonald's, a filling meal for two will cost around $10. With the extra $110, my wife and I can eat at McDonald's eleven more times, or go to the movies five times, or buy tickets to a football game.

5 So, for my birthday dinner, or any other time, I prefer to eat at McDonald's. It is convenient, friendly, and cheap. And with the money my wife saves by taking me to McDonald's, she can buy me what I really want for my birthday□ a new Sears power saw.

Studying: Then and Now

1 One June day, I staggered into a high school classroom to take my final exam in United States History IV. I had made my usual desperate effort to cram the night before, with the usual dismal results□ I had gotten only to page 75 of a four-hundred-page textbook. My study habits in high school,

obviously, were a mess. But in college, I've made an attempt to reform my note-taking, studying, and test-taking skills.

2 As I took notes in high school classes, I often lost interest and began doodling, drawing Martians, or seeing what my signature would look like if I married the cute guy in the second row. Now, however, I try not to let my mind wander, and I pull my thoughts back into focus when they begin to go fuzzy. In high school, my notes often looked like something written in another language. In college, I've learned to use a semiprint writing style that makes my notes understandable. When I would look over my high school notes, I couldn't understand them. There would be a word like □Reconstruction,□then a big blank, then the word □important.□Weeks later, I had no idea what Reconstruction was or why it was important. I've since learned to write down connecting ideas, even if I have to take the time to do it after class. Taking notes is one thing I've really learned to do better since high school days.

3 Ordinary studying during the term is another area where I've made changes. In high school, I let reading assignments go. I told myself that I'd have no trouble catching up on two hundred pages during a fifteen-minute ride to school. College courses have taught me to keep pace with the work. Otherwise, I feel as though I'm sinking into a quicksand of unread material. When I finally read the high school assignment, my eyes would run over the words but my brain would be plotting how to get the car for Saturday night. Now, I use several techniques that force me to really concentrate on my reading.

4 In addition to learning how to cope with daily work, I've also learned to handle study sessions for big tests. My all-night study sessions in high school were experiments in self-torture. Around 2:00 a.m., my mind, like a soaked sponge, simply stopped absorbing things. Now, I space out exam study sessions over several days. That way, the night before can be devoted to an overall review rather than raw memorizing. Most important, though, I've changed my attitude toward tests. In high school, I thought tests were mysterious things with completely unpredictable questions. Now, I ask instructors about the kinds of questions that will be on the exam, and I try to □psych out□which areas or facts instructors are likely to ask about. These practices really work, and for me they've taken much of the fear and mystery out of tests.

5 Since I've reformed, note-taking and studying are not as tough as they once were. And I am beginning to reap the benefits. As time goes on, my college test sheets are going to look much different from the red-marked tests of my high school days.

Note:

Wording of answers may vary.

ESL Tip

To improve coherence and grammatical accuracy, nonnative speakers should review the comparative and superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs, especially the usage of *less* and *fewer*. They should also practice using adverbial clauses of comparison and contrast.

1 Questions

About Unity

1. Which supporting paragraph in "A Vote for McDonald's" has its topic sentence within the paragraph, rather than at the beginning? *(Write the paragraph number and the opening words of the topic sentence.)*

Paragraph 3: Eating at the Chalet is . . .

2. Which sentence in paragraph 4 of "A Vote for McDonald's" should be omitted in the interest of paragraph unity? *(Write the opening words.)*

Once, I forgot . . .

3. In which supporting paragraph in "Studying: Then and Now" is the topic sentence at the end rather than at the beginning, where it generally belongs in student essays? ***2 (the first supporting paragraph)***

About Support

4. In paragraph 3 of "A Vote for McDonald's," what three points does the writer make to support his statement that, for him, dining at McDonald's is a more pleasant experience than dining at the Chalet?
Chalet is dimly lit; McDonald's is bright.
Waiters at the Chalet are formal; employees at McDonald's are friendly.
Food is unfamiliar at the Chalet; food is familiar at McDonald's.

5. In paragraph 3 of "A Vote for McDonald's," what sentence should be followed up by supporting details? *(Write the opening words of that sentence.)*

Even the other diners . . .

6. Which sentence in paragraph 3 of "Studying: Then and Now" needs to be followed by more supporting details? *(Write the opening words.)*

Now, I use several techniques . . .

About Coherence

7. In paragraph 2 of "A Vote for McDonald's," what "change of direction" signal does the author use to indicate that he has finished discussing the Chalet and is now going to discuss McDonald's? ***on the other hand***

8. Write the words in paragraph 4 of "A Vote for McDonald's" that indicate the writer has used emphatic order in organizing his supporting points.

most important

9. Which sentence best describes the opening paragraph of □Studying: Then and Now□?
   a. It begins with a broad statement that narrows down to the thesis.
   b. It explains the importance of the topic to the reader.
   c. It uses an incident or a brief story.
   d. It asks a question.
10. The conclusion of □Studying: Then and Now□falls into which category?
   a. Some observations and a prediction
   b. Summary and final thought
   c. Question or series of questions

Developing a Comparison or Contrast Essay

Considering Purpose and Audience

Teaching Tip

Ask students to consider what would happen if they did not consider the purpose and audience for an essay assignment.

The purpose of a comparison or contrast essay is to make a point by showing readers that two distinct items are either similar or different. Whether you choose to compare or contrast two items depends on the specific point you want to convey to readers. Suppose, for instance, the main point of your essay is that home-cooked hamburgers are superior to fast-food burgers. To convince your audience of your claim, you might contrast the two items, pointing out those differences□ price, taste, and nutrition□ that make the homemade dish better. If, however, your main point is that tap water is just as good as store-bought bottled water, you could compare the two, pointing out the similarities that support your main point. Tap water and bottled water, for example, might be equally clean, fresh, and mineral-rich. In both examples above, comparing or contrasting is used to convince readers of a larger main point.

As you think about your own essay, ask yourself what two things you wish to discuss. Then determine whether you want to focus on the differences between the two items or their similarities. You may even decide that you want to do both. If, say, you choose as your topic Macintosh and PCs, you may write paragraphs on the similarities and differences between the two computer systems. But remember, no matter what topic you select, be sure that your comparison or contrast is connected to a main point that readers can see and understand.

Be sure to keep your audience in mind when planning your essay. If you were writing about Macs and PCs for computer majors, for example, you could assume your readers were familiar with the two systems. On the other hand, if your audience was made up of liberal arts majors, you could not make such an assumption, and it would be up to you to provide background information. Thinking about your audience will help you determine the tone of your essay as well. Once again,

if you are writing for an audience of programmers, it is appropriate to write in an objective, technical tone. But if you are writing for a more general audience, you should assume a friendly, informal tone.

Development through Prewriting

When Jesse, one of the student writers featured earlier, had to choose two things to compare or contrast, the Chalet and McDonald's quickly came to mind: "My wife and I had been talking that morning about where I wanted to go for my birthday," he said. "I'd been thinking how I would explain to her that I'd really prefer McDonald's. So the comparisons and contrasts between the two restaurants were fresh in my mind."

To generate ideas for his paper, Jesse turned to the technique of free writing. Without concerning himself with organization, finding the perfect word, or even spelling, he simply wrote whatever came into his mind as he asked himself, Why would I rather eat at McDonald's than at the Chalet? Here is what Jesse came up with:

Teaching Tip

You may want to provide a supplemental activity. First, have students compare or contrast their experiences in high school and in college. Ask them to freewrite about this topic. Then ask them to choose a point-by-point or one-side-at-a-time format for their essay.

The Chalet is a beautiful restaurant and it's sweet of Lilly to want to take me there. But I honestly like McDonald's better. To me, food is food, and a meal at the Chalet is not eleven times better than a meal at McDonald's but that's what it costs. I like a plain cheeseburger better than something I can't pronounce or identify. The waiters at the Chalet are snooty and make me feel awkward— how can you enjoy eating when you're tensed up like that? Have to wear jacket and tie to the Chalet and I've gained weight; not sure jacket will even fit. Sweats or jeans are great at McDonald's. Desserts at Chalet are great, better than McCookies or whatever they're called. Parking is a hassle at the Chalet and easy at McD's. No tipping at McD's, either. I don't know why they keep it so dark at the Chalet— guess it's supposed to be relaxing, but seems creepy to me. McD's is bright and cheerful.

As Jesse looked over his freewriting, he saw that most of what he had written fell into three categories that he could use as the three supporting points of his essay. Using these three points, he prepared this first scratch outline for the essay:

Teaching Tip

Now ask the students to create a scratch outline before writing a first draft.

I'd rather eat my special dinner at McDonald's than at the Chalet.

1. *Can wear anything I want to McD's.*
2. *Waiters, lighting, menu at Chalet make me feel awkward.*
3. *Chalet is much more expensive than McD's.*

Next, Jesse went back and inserted some supporting details that fit in with his three main points.

I'd rather eat my special dinner at McDonald's than at the Chalet.

1. *Going to the Chalet is a hassle.*
   a. *Have to wear jacket, tie to Chalet*
   b. *Have to make reservations*
   c. *Long drive; trouble parking*
2. *Waiters, lighting, menu at Chalet make me feel awkward.*
   a. *Waiters are snooty*
   b. *Lighting is dim*
   c. *French names on menu don't mean anything to me*
3. *Chalet is much more expensive than McD's.*
   a. *Meal costs eleven times as much*
   b. *Parking, tips on top of that*
   c. *Rather spend that money on other things*

Working from this scratch outline, Jesse wrote the following first draft of his essay.

A Vote for McDonald's

First Draft

Lilly has offered to take me anywhere I want for my birthday dinner. She thinks I'll choose the Chalet, but instead I want to eat at McDonald's.

The Chalet has a jacket-and-tie rule, and I hate wearing a jacket and tie, and the jacket's probably too tight for me anyway. I have to dig them out of the closet and get them cleaned. I can wear any old thing to McDonald's. We'd also have to leave the house early, since the Chalet requires

reservations. Since it is downtown, I have to leave an hour early so I'm sure to have time to park. The Chalet cancels reservations if a party is more than ten minutes late. Going to McDonald's, on the other hand, is easy. I don't have to do any advance planning. I can leave my house whenever I'm ready.

McDonald's is a pleasant place where I feel at ease. It is bright and well lit. The employees serve with a smile, and the food is easy to pronounce and identify. I know what I'm going to get when I order a certain type of sandwich. I like simple meals more than gourmet ones. The Chalet is dimly lit. While I'm struggling to see what's on my plate, I worry that I'll knock one of the glasses off the table. The waiters at the Chalet can be uncomfortably formal, too. I get the feeling that I don't quite live up to their standards. Even the other diners can make me feel uncomfortable.

There's a big price difference between the Chalet and McDonald's. Dinner for two at the Chalet can easily cost $100, even without any "extras" like appetizers and dessert. And the $100 doesn't include the cost of parking the car and tipping the waiter. Once, I forgot to bring enough money. At McDonald's, a meal for two will cost around $10.

So, for my birthday dinner, or any other time, I prefer to eat at McDonald's. It is convenient, friendly, and cheap.

Development through Revising

Jesse put the first draft of his essay aside and took it to his writing class the next day. His instructor asked Jesse and the other students to work in small groups reading their drafts aloud and making suggestions for revision to one another. Here are the notes Jesse made on his group's comments:

Teaching Tip

Ask students to read their drafts in groups and discuss how their drafts might be revised.

- *I need to explain that Lilly is my wife.*

- *I'm not consistent in developing my paragraphs. I forgot to do a "one side at a time" or "point by point" comparison. I think I'll try "one side at a time." I'll describe in each paragraph what the Chalet is like, then what McDonald's is like.*

- *I could use more support for some of my points, like when I say that the waiters at the Chalet make me uncomfortable. I should give some examples of what I mean by that.*

- *I want to say something about what I'd rather do with the money we save by going to McDonald's. For me that's important" we can "eat" that money at the Chalet, or do other things with it that we both enjoy.*

After making these observations about his first draft, Jesse proceeded to write the version of his essay that appears on page 290.

A Professional Essay to Consider

Read the following professional essay. Then answer the questions and read the comments that follow.

Born to Be Different?: by Camille Lewis



www.mhhe.com/langan

1 Some years ago, when my children were very young, I cut a cartoon out of a magazine and taped it to my refrigerator. It showed a young couple welcoming friends over for Christmas. The hosts rather proudly announce that instead of dolls, they have given their little daughter her own set of tools. And sure enough, the second panel shows their little girl playing in her room, a wrench in one hand and a hammer in the other. But she's making the wrench say, "Would you like to go to the prom, Barbie?" and the hammer answer, "Oh, Ken! I'd love to!"

2 Oh my, did that cartoon strike a chord. I grew up with *Ms.* magazine and the National Organization of Women and a firm belief that gender differences were *learned,* not inborn. Other parents may have believed that pink and baby dolls and kindergarten teaching were for girls, and blue and trucks and engineering were for boys, but by golly, *my* kids were going to be different. They were going to be raised free of all that harmful gender indoctrination. They were just going to be *people.*

3 I don't remember exactly when I began to suspect I was wrong. Maybe it was when my three-year-old son, raised in a "no weapons" household, bit his toast into a gun shape and tried to shoot the cat. Maybe it was when his younger brother nearly levitated out of his car seat, joyously crowing "backhoe!" upon spotting his first piece of earth-moving equipment. Maybe it was when my little daughter first lined up her stuffed animals and began teaching them their ABC's and bandaging their boo-boos.

4 It wasn't that my sons couldn't be sweet and sensitive, or that my daughter wasn't sometimes rowdy and boisterous. But I had to rethink my earlier assumptions. Despite my best efforts not to impose gender-specific expectations on them, my boys and my girl were, well, different. *Really* different.

5 Slowly and hesitantly, medical and psychological researchers have begun confirming my observations. The notion that the differences between the sexes (beyond the obvious anatomical ones) are biologically based is fraught[1] with controversy. Such beliefs can easily be misinterpreted and used as the basis for harmful,

oppressive stereotypes. They can be overstated and exaggerated into blanket statements about what men and women □can□and □can't□do; about what the genders are □good□and □bad□at. And yet, the unavoidable fact is that studies are making it ever clearer that, as groups, men and women differ in almost every measurable aspect. Learning about those differences helps us understand why men and women are simultaneously so attracted and fascinated, and yet so frequently stymied and frustrated, by the opposite sex. To dig into what it really means to be masculine and feminine helps to depersonalize our responses to one another's behavior□ to avoid the □*My* perceptions and behaviors are normal; *yours* don't make sense□ trap. Our differences are deep-rooted, hard-wired, and present from the moment of conception.

6 To begin with, let's look at something as basic as the anatomy of the brain. Typically, men have larger skulls and brains than women. But the sexes score equally well on intelligence tests. This apparent contradiction is explained by the fact that our brains are apportioned differently. Women have about 15 percent more □gray matter□than men. Gray matter, made up of nerve cells and the branches that connect them, allows the quick transference of thought from one part of the brain to another. This high concentration of gray matter helps explain women's ability to look at many sides of an argument at once, and to do several tasks (or hold several conversations) simultaneously.

7 Men's brains, on the other hand, have a more generous portion of □white matter.□White matter, which is made up of neurons, actually inhibits the spread of information. It allows men to concentrate very narrowly on a specific task, without being distracted by thoughts that might conflict with the job at hand. In addition, men's larger skulls contain more cerebrospinal fluid, which cushions the brain. Scientists theorize that this reflects men's history of engaging in warfare and rough sports, activities which bring with them a high likelihood of having one's head banged about.

8 Our brains□very different makeup leads to our very different methods of interacting with the world around us. Simon Baron-Cohen, author of *The Essential Difference: Men, Women and the Extreme Male Brain,* has labeled the classic female mental process as □empathizing.□He defines empathizing as □the drive to identify another person's emotions and thoughts, and to respond to these with an appropriate emotion.□Empathizers are constantly measuring and responding to the surrounding emotional temperature. They are concerned about showing sensitivity to the people around them. This empathetic quality can be observed in virtually all aspects of women's lives: from the choice of typically female-dominated careers (nursing, elementary school teaching, social work) to reading matter popular mainly with women (romantic fiction, articles about relationships, advice columns about how people can get along better) to women's interaction with one another (which typically involves intimate discussion of relationships with friends and family, and sympathy for each others□ concerns). So powerful is the empathizing mindset that it even affects how the typical female memory works. Ask a woman when a particular

event happened, and she often pinpoints it in terms of an occurrence that had emotional content: "That was the summer my sister broke her leg," or "That was around the time Gene and Mary got into such an awful argument." Likewise, she is likely to bring her empathetic mind to bear on geography. She'll remember a particular address not as 11th and Market Streets but being "near the restaurant where we went on our anniversary," or "around the corner from Liz's old apartment."

9 In contrast, Baron-Cohen calls the typical male mindset "systemizing," which he defines as "the drive to analyze and explore a system, to extract underlying rules that govern the behavior of a system." A systemizer is less interested in how people feel than in how things work. Again, the systematic brain influences virtually all aspects of the typical man's life. Male-dominated professions (such as engineering, computer programming, auto repair, and mathematics) rely heavily on systems, formulas, and patterns, and very little on the ability to intuit another person's thoughts or emotions. Reading material most popular with men includes science fiction and history, as well as factual "how-to" magazines on such topics as computers, photography, home repair, and woodworking. When they get together with male friends, men are far less likely to engage in intimate conversation than they are to share an activity: watching or playing sports, working on a car, bowling, golfing, or fishing. Men's conversation is peppered with dates and addresses, illustrating their comfort with systems: "Back in 1996 when I was living in Boston . . ." or "The best way to the new stadium is to go all the way out Walnut Street to 33rd and then get on the by pass. . . ."

10 One final way that men and women differ is in their typical responses to problem-solving. Ironically, it may be this very activity— intended on both sides to eliminate problems— that creates the most conflict between partners of the opposite sex. To a woman, the *process* of solving a problem is all-important. Talking about a problem is a means of deepening the intimacy between her and her partner. The very anatomy of her brain, as well as her accompanying empathetic mindset, makes her want to consider all sides of a question and to explore various possible solutions. To have a partner who is willing to explore a problem with her is deeply satisfying. She interprets that willingness as an expression of the other's love and concern.

11 But men have an almost completely opposite approach when it comes to dealing with a problem. Everything in their mental makeup tells them to focus narrowly on the issue, solve it, and get it out of the way. The ability to fix a problem quickly and efficiently is, to them, a demonstration of their power and competence. When a man hears his female partner begin to describe a problem, his strongest impulse is to listen briefly and then tell her what to do about it. From his perspective, he has made a helpful and loving gesture; from hers, he's short-circuited a conversation that could have deepened and strengthened their relationship.

12 The challenge that confronts men and women is to put aside ideas of "better" and "worse" when it comes to their many differences. Our diverse brain development, our ways of interacting with the world, and our modes of dealing with problems all have their strong points. In some circumstances, a typically feminine approach may be more effective; in others, a classically masculine mode may have the

advantage. Our differences aren't going to disappear: my daughter, now a middle-schooler, regularly tells me she loves me, while her teenage brothers express their affection by grabbing me in a headlock. Learning to understand and appreciate one another's gender-specific qualities is the key to more rich and rewarding lives together.

Note:

Wording of answers may vary.

2 Questions

About Unity

1. Which of the following statements best represents the implied thesis of "Born to Be Different"?
   a. Although the author believed that gender differences were learned rather than inborn, experience with her own children convinced her otherwise.
   b. Researchers have classified the typical female mental process as "empathizing" and the typical male process as "systemizing."
   c. Many of the differences in the ways men and women think and behave may be due to their biological makeup.
   d. In order to live together happily, men and women need to appreciate and understand their gender-based differences.
2. Which statement would best serve as a topic sentence for paragraphs 6 and 7?
   a. Because of their different construction, men's and women's brains function differently.
   b. Women are skilled at doing several tasks or holding several conversations simultaneously.
   c. Although men's brains are larger than women's, men and women score equally on tests of intelligence.
   d. Men's brains have a larger allocation of white matter, which contributes to the ability to focus narrowly on a particular task.
3. What statement below would best serve as the topic sentence of paragraph 11?
   a. Men solve problems quickly to demonstrate power and competence.
   b. Men's approach to solving problems usually involves giving instructions.
   c. Men's gestures of love are often unhelpful to women.
   d. Men's approach to problem solving is the opposite of women's.

About Support

4. Paragraph 8 states that the "empathizing" mindset "can be observed in virtually all aspects of women's lives." What evidence does Lewis provide to support that claim?

She lists a series of examples where the "empathizing" mindset is evident:

female-dominated careers, female reading matter, and female relationships.

5. According to the author, what are the three major differences between men and women?

Brain anatomy

Ways of interacting with the world

Ways of problem solving

About Coherence

6. Has the author presented her evidence one side at a time or point by point? Explain your answer.

Lewis presents her essay point by point. The first point is about brain anatomy, the second is about interacting with the world, and the third is about problem solving. For each point, she discusses women and then men.

7. As shown by the outline below, the organization of "Born to Be Different?" resembles the traditional one-three-one essay model. Fill in the missing paragraph numbers.

Introduction:	Paragraphs	1-5
Supporting Point 1:	Paragraph(s)	6-7
Supporting Point 2:	Paragraph(s)	8-9
Supporting Point 3:	Paragraph(s)	10-11
Conclusion:	Paragraph	12

8. What are the three contrast signals used to introduce the main supporting paragraphs in the essay? Where do they occur? *(Write the paragraph number after the signal.)*

On the other hand (7)

In contrast (9)

But (11)

About the Introduction and Conclusion

9. What method best describes the introductory paragraph to the essay?
   a. Broad, general statement narrowing to a thesis
   b. Questions
   c. Idea that is the opposite of the one to be developed
   (d.) Anecdote
10. With which common method of conclusion does the essay end?
   (a.) A summary and final thought
   b. Questions that prompt the reader to think further about what's been written
   c. A prediction

Note:

Wording of answers may vary.

Writing a Comparison or Contrast Essay

ESL Tip

Additional topics for ESL students:

- English vs. native language
- U.S. vs. native country
- American food vs. food from native country

These topics should be narrowed down. For example, U.S. vs. native country could be discussed in terms of punctuality.

Teaching Tip

You may want to model the writing process for your students by doing this assignment along with them. Go through all the stages, including prewriting and revising, and seek feedback from them. They will appreciate your efforts to create a writing community.

1 Writing Assignment

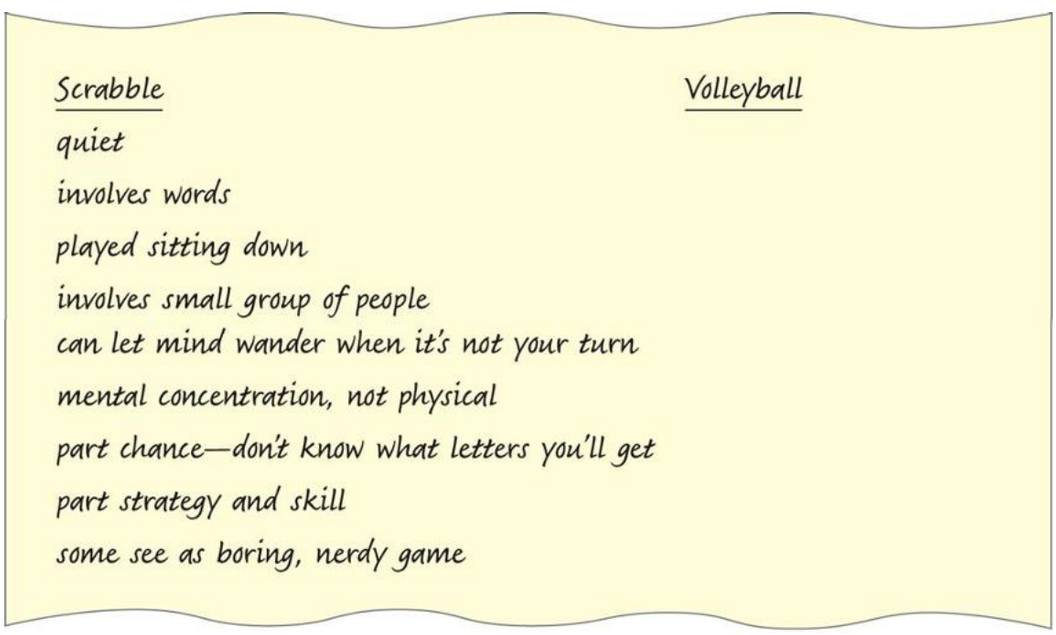
Write an essay of comparison or contrast on one of these topics:

Two teachers you've had
Two jobs you'd held
Two bosses you've worked for
Two restaurants you've eaten in
Two parenting styles you've observed
Two friends you've had
Two pets you've had or seen
Two sports you're acquainted with
Two singers or bands you've heard
Two dates you've been on
Two places you've lived

Prewriting

a. As you select your topic, keep in mind that you won't be merely *describing* the two things you're writing about you will be emphasizing the ways they are alike or different.

b. Make two columns on a sheet of paper, one for each of the two things you'll write about. In the left-hand column, jot down words or phrases that describe the first of the two. Write anything that comes into your head about that half of your topic. Then go back and write a corresponding word or phrase about the item in the right-hand column. For example, here is one student's list of characteristics about two games. He began brainstorming for words and phrases to describe Scrabble.



Then he wrote a corresponding list of characteristics for volleyball, which helped him modify and add to his first list:

Scrabble	Volleyball
quiet	noisy, talking and yelling
involves words	involves ball and a net
played sitting down	played standing up, jumping
involves as few as two players	involves twelve players
can let mind wander when it's not your turn	have to stay alert every minute
mental concentration, not physical	mental and physical concentration required
part chance (what letters you get), part strategy and skill	mostly skill, strategy; little chance
some see as boring, nerdy game	seen as glamorous—stars get advertising contracts
players' sizes don't matter	being tall helps

c. Your list of characteristics will help you decide if the two things you are writing about are more alike (in which case you'll write an essay *comparing* them) or different (in which case you'll emphasize how they *contrast*).

d. As you look over your lists, think how the characteristics you've written down (and others that occur to you) could fit into three categories that can serve

as your supporting points. Prepare a scratch outline for your essay based on these three supporting points.

For instance, the student writing about Scrabble and volleyball came up with these three groupings of characteristics. Fill in the blanks in his outline to indicate the supporting points.

Thesis: Although they are two of my favorite activities, Scrabble and volleyball could hardly be more different.

Point ***Different playing requirements***

Scrabble requires a board and letter tiles.

Volleyball needs a ball and net.

Scrabble can be played by two people.

Twelve people are needed for a volleyball game.

Scrabble can be played anywhere there's room for two people to sit down.

Volleyball needs a large room and high ceilings or an outdoor playing area.

Point ***Different traits and skills involved***

You have to concentrate mentally to play Scrabble.

You need mental and physical concentration to play volleyball.

It doesn't matter what size you are to play Scrabble.

It helps to be tall to play volleyball.

There's some chance involved in playing Scrabble.

Chance is not a big part of volleyball.

Point ***Different images***

Scrabble players are seen as nerdy by the general public.

Star volleyball players are seen as glamorous by the public.

Volleyball players get contracts to endorse athletic shoes.

Scrabble players don't endorse anything, even dictionaries.

Volleyball players are admired for the power of their spike.

Scrabble players are admired for the number of unusual two-letter words they know.

e. Decide which method of development you will use to design your essay: one side at a time or point by point. Be consistent in your use of one method or the other in each of your paragraphs.

f. Write the first draft of your essay.

Note:

Wording of answers may vary.

Revising

Reread your essay and then show it to a friend or classmate who will give you honest feedback. You should both review it with these questions in mind:

FOUR BASES Checklist for Comparison or Contrast

About *Unity*

- ☐ Have I made it clear in my opening paragraph what two things I am writing about, and whether I will compare or contrast them?

About *Support*

- ☐ Do my supporting points offer three areas in which I will compare or contrast my two subjects?

About *Coherence*

- ☐ Have I consistently used a single method of development□ one side at a time or point by point□ in each supporting paragraph?
- ☐ Have I used transition words to help readers follow my train of thought?
- ☐ If one area of comparison or contrast is stronger than the others, am I using emphatic order and saving that area for my final supporting paragraph?
- ☐ Have I rounded off my essay with an appropriate concluding paragraph?

About *Sentence Skills*

- ☐ Have I avoided wordiness and used concise wording?
- ☐ Are my sentences varied?
- ☐ Have I checked my writing for spelling and other sentence skills, as listed on the inside back cover of the book?

As you revise your essay through one or more additional drafts, continue to refer to this list until you and your reader can answer yes to each question.

2 Writing Assignment

Write an essay in which you contrast two attitudes on a controversial subject. You may want to contrast your views with those of someone else, or contrast the way you felt about the subject in the past with the way you feel now. You might consider writing about one of these subjects:

Legalization of narcotics
Abortion
Men and women serving together in military units
Prayer in public schools
Nuclear power plants
Homosexual couples adopting children
Fertility methods that allow older women to have children
Welfare reform
The death penalty
Euthanasia
Prostitution
The public's right to know about elected officials private lives
The Iraq war

Prewriting


© Bob Daemmrich/PhotoEdit


© Peter M. Fisher/Corbis

a. To gather information for the point of view that contrasts with your own, you will need to do some research. You'll find useful material if you go to the library and search through article indexes for recent newsmagazines. (If you need help, ask your instructor or the research librarian.) Or interview friends and acquaintances whose attitude on the subject is different from yours.

b. To generate ideas for your essay, try the following two-part exercise.

- Part 1: Pretend that a visitor from Mars who has never heard of the topic of your paper has asked you to explain it, as well as why you take the attitude you do toward it. Using the technique of freewriting not worrying about sentence structure, organization, spelling, repetition, etc. write an answer for the Martian. Throw in every reason you can think of for your attitude.

- Part 2: Now the Martian asks you to do the same, taking the opposing point of view. Remember that it's up to you to make this interplanetary visitor understand both sides of the issue, so really try to put yourself in the other person's shoes as you represent the contrasting attitude.

ESL Tip

Encourage nonnative students to explore topics about their own culture or native country.

c. As you look over the writing on both sides of the issue you've done for the Martian, note the strongest points on both sides. From them, select your three main supporting points. Are there other thoughts in your writing that can be used as supporting details for those points?

d. Write your three supporting paragraphs. Decide whether it is more effective to contrast your attitude and the opposing attitude point by point within each paragraph, or by devoting the first half of each paragraph to one side's attitude and then contrasting it with the other's.

e. In your concluding paragraph, summarize the contrast between your attitude and the other point of view. Consider closing with a final comment that makes it clear why you stand where you do.

Revising

Refer to the guidelines for rewriting provided on page 306.

3 Writing Assignment

Teaching Tip

Encourage students to use the prewriting and revising ideas mentioned in Writing Assignment 1.

Write an essay that contrasts two characters or two points of view in one or more poems, stories, plays, or novels. The work you choose may be assigned by your instructor, or it may require your instructor's approval. For this assignment, your essay may have two supporting paragraphs, with each paragraph representing one side of the contrast. A student model follows.

Warren and Mary

1 In □Death of the Hired Man,□Robert Frost uses a brief incident□ the return of Silas, an aging farmhand□ to dramatize the differences between a husband and wife. As Warren and Mary talk about Silas and reveal his story, the reader learns their story, too. By the end of the poem, Warren and Mary emerge as contrasting personalities; one is wary and reserved, while the other is open and giving.

2 Warren is a kindly man, but his basic decency is tempered by practicality and emotional reserve. Warren is upset with Mary for sheltering Silas, who is barely useful and sometimes unreliable: □What use he is there's no depending on.□Warren feels that he has already done his duty toward Silas by hiring him the previous summer and is under no obligation to care for him now. □Home,□says Warren, □is the place where, when you have to go there / They have to

take you in.□Warren's home is not Silas's home, so Warren does not have a legal or moral duty to keep the shiftless old man. Warren's temperament, in turn, influences his attitude toward Silas's arrival. Warren hints to Mary□ through a condescending smile□ that Silas is somehow playing on her emotions or faking his illness. Warren considers Silas's supposed purpose in coming to the farm□ to ditch the meadow□ nothing but a flimsy excuse for a free meal. The best that Warren can find to say about Silas is that he does have one practical skill: the ability to build a good load of hay.

3 Mary, in contrast, is distinguished by her giving nature and her concentration on the workings of human emotion. In caring for Silas, Mary sees not his lack of ability or his laziness but the fact that he is □worn out□and needs help. To Mary, home represents not obligation (□They have to take you in□) but unconditional love: □I should have called it/Something you somehow haven't to deserve.□ Mary is observant, not only of outer appearances but also of the inner person; this is why she thinks not that Silas is trying to trick them but that he is a desperate man trying to salvage a little self-respect. She realizes, too, that he will never ditch the meadow, and she knows that Silas's insecurity prompted his arguments with the college boy who helped with the haying. Mary is also perceptive enough to see that Silas could never humble himself before his estranged brother. Mary's attitude is more sympathetic than Warren's; whereas Warren wonders why Silas and his brother don't get along. Mary thinks about how Silas □hurt my heart the way he lay/And rolled his old head on that sharp-edged chairback.□

4 In describing Silas, Warren and Mary describe themselves. We see a basically good man whose spirit has been toughened by a hard life. Warren, we learn, would have liked to pay Silas a fixed wage but simply couldn't afford to. Life has taught Warren to be practical and to rein in his emotions. In contrast, we see a nurturing woman, alert to human feelings, who could never refuse to care for a lonely, dying man. Warren and Mary are both decent people. This is the reason why, as Mary instinctively feels, Silas chooses their home for his final refuge.

4 Writing Assignment

Writing for a Specific Purpose and Audience

In this comparison or contrast essay, you will write with a specific purpose and for a specific audience.

Option 1 Your niece or nephew is finishing high school soon and is thinking about getting a job instead of going to college. You would prefer to see him or her give college a try. Write him or her a letter in which you compare and contrast the advantages and disadvantages of each course of action. Use the one-side-at-a-time method in making your analysis.

Option 2 Write a letter to your boss in which you compare your abilities with those of the ideal candidate for a position to which you'd like to be promoted. Use the point-by-point method, discussing each desired qualification and then describing how well you measure up to it. Use the requirements of a job you are familiar with, ideally a job you would really like to apply for someday.

Teaching Tip

Encourage students to use the four steps to complete this assignment, including prewriting and revision.



www.mhhe.com/langan

[1] *fraught:* filled.

14: Definition



© Digital Vision/Getty Images

What does it mean to be a successful student? What qualities and attributes does a successful student possess? Looking at the photograph above and thinking about these questions, write an essay in which you define what it means to be a successful student.

This chapter will explain and illustrate how to

- develop a definition essay
- write a definition essay
- revise a definition essay

In addition, you will read and consider

- two student definition essays
- one professional definition essay

Teaching Tip

Ask students to complete this writing prompt in class.

In talking with other people, we sometimes offer informal definitions to explain just what we mean by a particular term. Suppose, for example, we say to a friend, "Larry is really an inconsiderate person." We might then explain what we mean by "inconsiderate" by saying, "He borrowed my accounting book "overnight" but didn't return it for a week. And when I got it back, it was covered with coffee stains." In a written definition, we make clear in a more complete and formal way our own personal understanding of a term. Such a definition typically starts with one meaning of a term. The meaning is then illustrated with a series of details.

In this chapter, you will be asked to write an essay in which you define and illustrate a term. To prepare for this assignment, first read the student essays and the professional essay that follow and work through the questions that accompany the essays.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Teaching Tip

Bring in examples of written definitions. These might be found in magazines, newspapers, and other published sources. If your classroom has access to the Internet, find examples from Web sites. Help your students make connections.

Student Essays to Consider

Teaching Tip

Read each essay aloud. Ask students to underline the topic sentence, specific examples, and transitions before answering the questions.

Definition of a Football Fan

1 What is a football fan? The word "fan" is an abbreviation of "fanatic," meaning "an insane or crazy person." In the case of football fans, the term is appropriate. They behave insanely, they are insane about the past, and they are insanely loyal.

2 Football fans wear their official team T-shirts and warm-up jackets to the mall, the supermarket, the classroom, and even" if they can get away with it" to work. If the team offers a giveaway item, the fans rush to the stadium to claim the hat or sports bag or water bottle that is being handed out that day. Baseball fans go similarly nuts when their favorite teams give away some attractive freebie. Football fans just plain behave insanely. Even the fact that fans spend the coldest months of the year huddling on icy metal benches in places like Chicago proves it. In addition, football fans decorate their houses with football-related items of every kind. To them, team bumper stickers belong not only on car bumpers, but also on fireplace mantels and front doors. When they go to a game, which they do as often as possible, they also decorate their bodies. True football fans not only put on their team jackets and grab their pennants but also paint their heads to look like helmets or wear glow-in-the-dark cheeseheads. At the game, these fans devote enormous energy to trying to get a "wave" going.

3 Football fans are insanely fascinated by the past. They talk about William "Refrigerator" Perry's 1985 Super Bowl touchdown as though it had happened last week. They describe the "Fog Bowl" as if dense fog had blanketed yesterday's game, not 1988's playoff match between the

Philadelphia Eagles and the Chicago Bears. They excitedly discuss John Elway's final game before retiring when he won the 1999 Super Bowl and received MVP honors as if it were current news. And if you can't manage to get excited about such ancient history, they look at you as though you were the insane one.

4 Last of all, football fans are insanely loyal to the team of their choice, often dangerously so. Should their beloved team lose three in a row, fans may begin to react negatively as a way to hide their broken hearts. They still obsessively watch each game and spend the entire day afterward reading and listening to the postgame commentary in newspapers, on TV sports segments, and on sports radio. Further, this intense loyalty makes fans dangerous. To anyone who dares to say to a loyal fan that another team has better players or coaches or, God forbid, to anyone wandering near the home cheering section wearing the jacket of the opposing team, physical damage is a real possibility. Bloody noses, black eyes, and broken bones are just some of the injuries inflicted on people cheering the wrong team when fans are around. In 1997, one man suffered a concussion at a game in Philadelphia when Eagles fans beat him up for wearing a jacket with another team's insignia.

5 From February through August, football fans act like any other human beings. They pay their taxes, take out the garbage, and complain about the high cost of living. But when September rolls around, the colors and radios go on, the record books come off the shelves, and the devotion returns. For the true football fan, another season of insanity has begun.

Student Zombies

1 Schools divide people into categories. From first grade on up, students are labeled advanced or deprived or remedial or antisocial. Students pigeonhole their fellow students, too. We've all known the brain, the jock, the dummy, and the teacher's pet. In most cases, these narrow labels are misleading and inaccurate. But there is one label for a certain type of college student that says it all: zombie.

2 Zombies are the living dead. Most of us haven't known a lot of real zombies personally, but we do know how they act. We have horror movies to guide us. The special effects in horror movies are much better these days. Over the years, we've learned from the movies that zombies stalk around graveyards, their eyes glued open by Hollywood makeup artists, bumping like cheap toy robots into living people. Zombie students in college do

just about the same thing. They stalk around campus, eyes glazed, staring off into space. When they do manage to wander into a classroom, they sit down mechanically and contemplate the ceiling. Zombie students rarely eat, dance, talk, laugh, or toss Frisbees on campus lawns. Instead, they vanish when class is dismissed and return only when some mysterious zombie signal summons them back into a classroom. The signal may not occur for weeks.

3 Zombies are controlled by some mysterious force. According to legend, real zombies are corpses that have been brought back to life to do the bidding of a voodoo master. Student zombies, too, seem directed by a strange power. They continue to attend school although they have no apparent desire to do so. They show no interest in college-related activities like tests, grades, papers, and projects. And yet some inner force compels them to wander through the halls of higher education.

4 An awful fate awaits all zombies unless something happens to break the spell they're under. In the movies, zombies are often shot, stabbed, drowned, electrocuted, and run over by large vehicles, all to no avail. Finally the hero or heroine realizes that a counterspell is needed. Once that spell is cast, with the appropriate props of chicken feet, human hair, and bats' eyeballs, the zombie-corpse can return peacefully to its coffin. The only hope for a student zombie to change is for him or her to undergo a similarly traumatic experience. Sometimes the evil spell can be broken by a grade transcript decorated with large red □F's.□ At other times a professor will succeed through a private, intensive exorcism session. But in other cases zombies blunder around for years until they are gently persuaded by the college administration to head for another institution. Then they enroll in a new college or get a job in the family business.

5 Every college student knows that it's not necessary to see Night of the Living Dead or The Dead Don't Die to see zombies in action□ or nonaction. Forget the campus film series or the late-late show. Just sit in a classroom and wait. You know what you're looking for□ the students who walk in without books or papers and sit in the very last row of seats. The ones with personal stereos plugged into their ears don't count as zombies□ that's a whole different category of □student.□Day of the Living Dead is showing every day at a college near you.

1 Questions

About Unity

1. Which supporting paragraph in □Definition of a Football Fan□has a topic sentence buried within the paragraph, rather than at the paragraph's beginning? *(Write the paragraph number and the opening words of the topic sentence.)*

Paragraph 2: Football fans just plain . . .

2. What sentence in paragraph 2 of "Definition of a Football Fan" should be omitted in the interest of paragraph unity? *(Write the opening words.)*

Baseball fans go . . .

3. Which sentence in paragraph 2 of "Student Zombies" should be omitted in the interest of paragraph unity? *(Write the opening words.)*

The special effects . . .

4. What sentence in the final paragraph of "Student Zombies" introduces a new topic and so should be eliminated? *(Write the opening words.)*

The ones with personal stereos . . .

About Support

5. Which essay develops its definitions through a series of comparisons?

"Student Zombies"

6. After which sentence in paragraph 4 of "Definition of a Football Fan" is more support needed? *(Write the opening words.)*

Should their beloved team . . .

7. In the second paragraph of "Definition of a Football Fan," how many examples are given of fans' "insane" behavior? *(Circle the letter of the answer.)*

a. two
b. four
c. six

About Coherence

8. Which paragraph in "Definition of a Football Fan" begins with a transitional phrase?

4

9. Which sentence in paragraph 2 of "Student Zombies" begins with a change-of-direction transitional word? *(Write the opening words.)*

Instead, they vanish . . .

About the Introduction and Conclusion

10. Which method of introduction is used in the opening paragraph of "Student Zombies"? *(Circle the letter of the answer.)*

a. Anecdote
b. Idea that is the opposite of the one to be developed
c. Quotation
d. Broad, general statement narrowing to a thesis
e. Questions

ESL Tip

A review of noun clauses and adjective clauses would improve the coherence of ESL writers.

Developing a Definition Essay

Considering Purpose and Audience

When you write a definition essay, your main purpose is to explain to readers your understanding of a key term or concept, while your secondary purpose is to persuade them that your definition is a legitimate one. Keep in mind that a definition essay does not simply repeat a word's dictionary meaning. Instead, it conveys what a particular term means *to you*. For example, if you were to write about the term *patriotism*, you might begin by presenting your definition of the word. You might say patriotism means turning out for Fourth of July parades, displaying the flag, or supporting the government. Or perhaps you think patriotism is about becoming politically active and questioning government policy. Whatever definition you choose, be sure to provide specific instances so that readers can fully understand your meaning of the term. For example, in writing an essay on patriotism, you might describe three people who you see as truly patriotic. Writing about each person will help ensure that readers see and understand the term as you do.

As with other essay forms, keep your audience in mind. If, for instance, you were proposing a new definition of patriotism, an audience of war veterans might require different examples than would an audience of college students.

ESL Tip

Nonnative speakers should consult a dictionary for new vocabulary.

A thesaurus would also be helpful for synonyms.

Development through Prewriting

Brian, the author of "Definition of a Football Fan," spent a few minutes jotting down a number of possible essay topics, keeping in mind the question, What do I know a good deal about, or at least have an interest in exploring? Here is his list of topic ideas. Notice how they reflect Brian's interest in outdoor activities, sports, and history:

Definition of . . .

- A person who fishes
- A soccer goalie
- A reenactor of Civil War battles
- People who vacation at Gettysburg
- A bodybuilder
- A Green Bay Packers fan
- A history buff
- A Little League coach

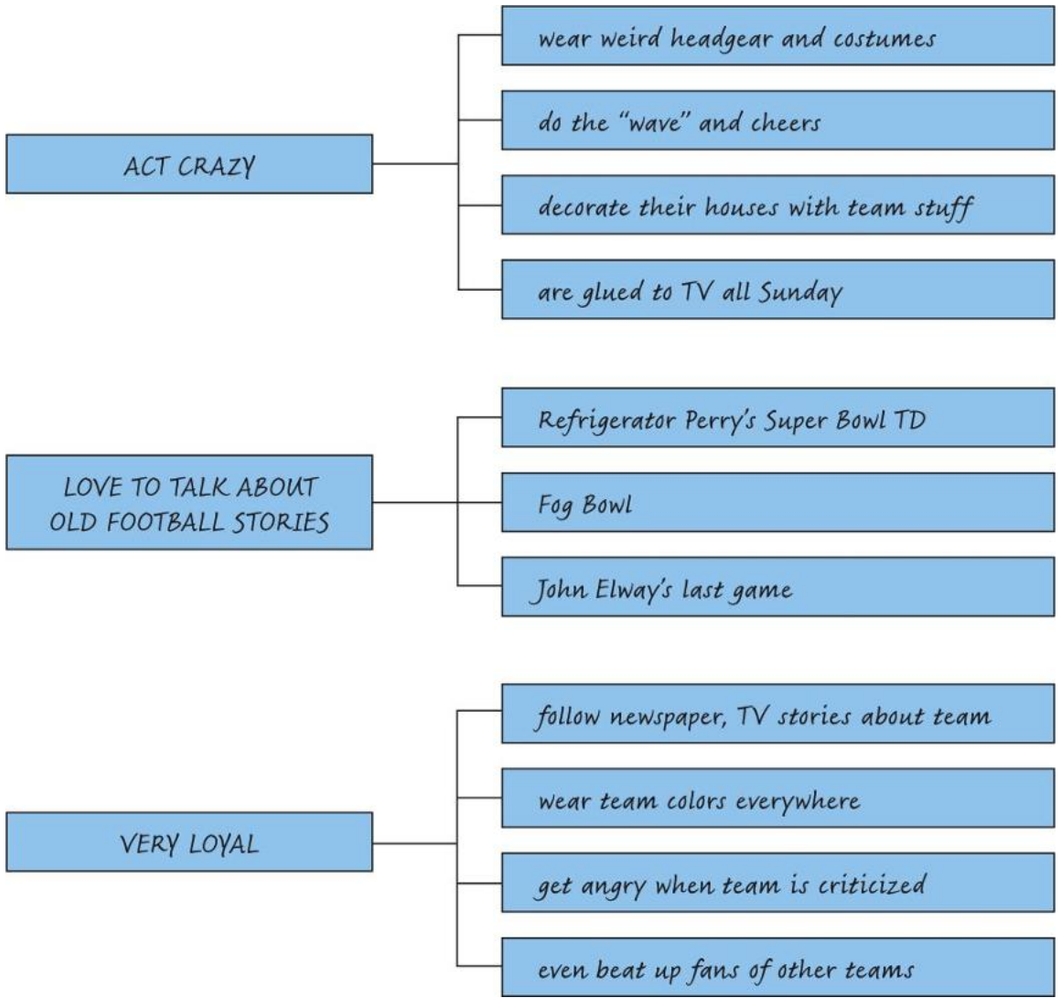
Teaching Tip

You may want to provide a supplemental activity. Have students define the term *effective teacher*. Ask students to cluster their ideas. Then ask them to write their first draft.

After looking over his list, Brian selected "A Green Bay Packers fan" as the topic that interested him most. He thought it would lend itself well to a lighthearted essay that defined the sometimes nutty fans of the Wisconsin football team. After giving it further thought, however, Brian decided to broaden his topic to include all football fans. "I realized I just didn't know enough specifically about Green Bay fans to support an entire essay," he said.

A person who likes to think in visual terms, Brian decided to develop ideas and details about his topic by clustering his thoughts.

Football fans



When he looked over his diagram, Brian realized that he could characterize each of his three main topics as a kind of "insanity." He decided on a thesis (he would define football fans as insane) that would indicate his essay's plan of development ("they behave insanely, they are insane about the past, and they are insanely loyal").

With that thesis and plan of development in mind, Brian wrote the first draft of his essay.

Definition of a Football Fan

First Draft

Football fans are by definition crazy. They behave insanely, they are insane about the past, and they are insanely loyal.

If their team gives away something free, the fans rush to the stadium to get the hat or whatever. Football fans just plain behave insanely. Baseball fans go similarly nuts when their favorite teams give away some attractive freebie. But football fans are even worse. Football fans freeze themselves in order to watch their favorite game. In addition, football fans decorate their houses with football-related items of every kind. When they go to a game, which they do as often as possible, the true football fans make themselves look ridiculous by decorating themselves in weird team-related ways. At the game, these fans do the □wave□ more than they watch the game.

Football fans love to talk about the past. They talk about William □Refrigerator□ Perry's 1985 Super Bowl touchdown as though it had happened last week. They still get all excited about 1988's □Fog Bowl.□ They talk about John Elway's final game as though it's today's news, though it happened in 1999. They think everyone should be as excited as they are about such old stories.

Last of all, football fans are insanely loyal to the team of their choice. Football fans wear their team T-shirts and warm-up jackets everywhere, even to work. Of course, if they have to dress up in business clothes, they can't do that. Should their beloved team lose three in a row, their fans may begin to criticize their team. But these reactions only hide their broken hearts. They still obsessively watch each game and read all the newspaper stories about it. This intense loyalty makes fans dangerous. To anyone who dares to say to a loyal fan that another team is better or, God forbid, to anyone wandering near the home cheering section wearing the jacket of the opposing team, physical damage is a real possibility. Incidents of violence in football stadiums have increased in recent years and are a matter of growing concern.

Football fans really act as if they're crazy. They behave insanely, they are crazy about the past, and they're too loyal.

Teaching Tip

Ask students to read their drafts to a partner and discuss how their draft might be revised.

Development through Revising

The next day, Brian showed his first draft to a study partner from his composition class. She returned it with comments noted in the margins.

Reader's Comments

Huh? I guess this is about the weather□ make it clearer.

Like what? Details here.

Details needed. How do they decorate themselves?

I'm not a football fan, so I don't understand these references. Can you briefly explain them?

Shouldn't this be in the second paragraph? It seems to belong to □they behave insanely,□ not □loyalty.□

This doesn't support your topic statement, so take it out.

Definition of a Football Fan

Football fans are by definition crazy. They behave insanely, they are insane about the past, and they are insanely loyal.

If their team gives away something free, the fans rush to the stadium to get the hat or whatever. Football fans just plain behave insanely. Baseball fans go similarly nuts when their favorite teams give away some attractive freebie. But football fans are even worse. Football fans freeze themselves in order to watch their favorite game. In addition, football fans decorate their houses with football-related items of every kind. When they go to a game, which they do as often as possible, the true football fans make themselves look ridiculous by decorating themselves in weird team-related ways. At the game, these fans do the □wave□more than they watch the game.

Football fans love to talk about the past. They talk about William □Refrigerator□Perry's 1985 Super Bowl touchdown as though it had happened last week. They still get all excited about 1988's □Fog Bowl.□They talk about John Elway's final game as though it's today's news, though it happened in 1999. They think everyone should be as excited as they are about such old stories.

Last of all, football fans are insanely loyal to the team of their choice. Football fans wear their team T-shirts and warm-up jackets everywhere, even to work. Of course, if they have to dress up in business clothes, they can't do that. Should their beloved team lose three in a row, their fans may begin to criticize their team. But these reactions only hide their broken hearts. They still obsessively watch each game and read all the newspaper stories about it.

This intense loyalty makes fans dangerous. To anyone who dares to say to a loyal fan that another team is better or, God forbid, to anyone wandering near the home cheering section wearing the jacket of the

opposing team, physical damage is a real possibility. Incidents of violence in football stadiums have increased in recent years and are a matter of growing concern.

Football fans really act as if they're crazy. They behave insanely, they are crazy about the past, and they're too loyal.

Kind of a boring way to end it.

You're just repeating your thesis.

After reading his classmate's comments, Brian went to work on his next draft. As he worked, he read his essay aloud several times and noticed places where his wording sounded awkward or too informal. (Example: "If their team gives away a freebie, the fans rush to the stadium to get the hat or whatever.") A few drafts later, he produced the version of "Definition of a Football Fan" that appears on page 312.

A Professional Essay to Consider

Read the following professional essay. Then answer the questions and read the comments that follow.



www.mhhe.com/langan

Television Addiction: by Marie Winn

1 The word "addiction" is often used loosely and wryly in conversation. People will refer to themselves as "mystery book addicts" or "cookie addicts." E. B. White writes of his annual surge of interest in gardening, "We are hooked and are making an attempt to kick the habit." Yet nobody really believes that reading mysteries or ordering seeds by catalogue is serious enough to be compared to an addiction to heroin or alcohol. The word "addiction" is here used jokingly to denote a tendency to overindulge in some pleasurable activity.

2 People often refer to being "hooked on TV." Does this, too, fall into the lighthearted category of eating cookies and other pleasures that people pursue with unusual intensity, or is there a kind of television viewing that falls into the more serious category of destructive addiction?

3 When we think about addiction to drugs or alcohol, we frequently focus on negative aspects, ignoring the pleasures that accompany drinking or taking drugs. And yet the essence of any serious addiction is a pursuit of pleasure, a search for a

□high□ that normal life does not supply. It is only the inability to function without the addictive substance that is dismaying, the dependence of the organism upon a certain experience and an increasing inability to function without it. Thus a person will take two or three drinks at the end of the day not merely for the pleasure drinking provides, but also because he □doesn't feel normal□without them.

4 An addict does not merely pursue a pleasurable experience and need to experience it in order to function normally. He needs to repeat it again and again. Something about that particular experience makes life without it less than complete. Other potentially pleasurable experiences are no longer possible, for under the spell of the addictive experience, his life is peculiarly distorted. The addict craves an experience, and yet he is never really satisfied. The organism may be temporarily sated, but soon it begins to crave again.

5 Finally, a serious addiction is distinguished from a harmless pursuit of pleasure by its distinctly destructive elements. A heroin addict, for instance, leads a damaged life: his increasing need for heroin in increasing doses prevents him from working, from maintaining relationships, from developing in human ways. Similarly, an alcoholic's life is narrowed and dehumanized by his dependence on alcohol.

6 Let us consider television viewing in the light of the conditions that define serious addictions.

7 Not unlike drugs and alcohol, the television experience allows the participant to blot out the real world and enter into a pleasurable and passive mental state. The worries and anxieties of reality are as effectively deferred by becoming absorbed in a television program as by going on a □trip□induced by drugs or alcohol. And just as alcoholics are only vaguely aware of their addiction, feeling that they control their drinking more than they really do (□I can cut it out any time I want□ I just like to have three or four drinks before dinner□), people similarly overestimate their control over watching television. Even as they put off other activities to spend hour after hour watching television, they feel they could easily resume living in a different, less passive style. But somehow or other while the television set is present in their homes, the click doesn't sound. With television pleasures available, those other experiences seem less attractive, more difficult somehow.

8 A heavy viewer (a college English instructor) observes: □I find television almost irresistible. When the set is on, I cannot ignore it. I can't turn it off. I feel sapped, will-less, enervated. As I reach out to turn off the set, the strength goes out of my arms. I sit there for hours and hours.□

9 The self-confessed television addict often feels he □ought□to do other things□ but the fact that he doesn't read and doesn't plant his garden or sew or crochet or play games or have conversations means that those activities are no longer as desirable as television. In a way the heavy viewer's life is as imbalanced by his television □habit□as a drug addict's or an alcoholic's. He is living in a holding pattern, as it were, passing up the activities that lead to growth or development or a sense of accomplishment. This is one reason people talk about their television viewing

so ruefully, so apologetically. They are aware that it is an unproductive experience, that almost any other endeavor is more worthwhile by any human measure.

10 Finally, it is the adverse effect of television viewing on the lives of so many people that defines it as a serious addiction. The television habit distorts the sense of time. It renders other experiences vague and curiously unreal while taking on a greater reality for itself. It weakens relationships by reducing and sometimes eliminating normal opportunities for talking, for communicating.

11 And yet television does not satisfy, else why would the viewer continue to watch hour after hour, day after day? "The measure of health," writes Lawrence Kubie, "is flexibility ...and especially the freedom to cease when sated." But the television viewer can never be sated with his television experiences" they do not provide the true nourishment that satiation requires" and thus he finds that he cannot stop watching.

Note:

Answers will vary.

2 Questions

About Unity

1. Winn's thesis is not presented directly in the essay. See whether you can state it in your own words.

Example: Addiction to TV resembles addiction to alcohol or drugs in several ways.

2. Which statement would best serve as a topic sentence for paragraph 4?
   a. Addicts enjoy pleasurable experiences more than nonaddicts.
   b. Addicts feel that their lives are not really complete.
   c. Addicts would give up their addiction if other pleasurable experiences were available.
   d. Addicts need to endlessly repeat the experience on which they are dependent.

3. Which statement would best serve as a topic sentence for paragraph 7?
   a. People become television addicts because they have more troubled lives than most other people.
   b. Television addicts develop a distorted perception of reality and lose self-control.
   c. Few experiences in life are as pleasurable as watching television.
   d. Alcoholics often believe they have more control over their drinking than they really do.

About Support

4. The author defines TV as an addiction by first defining
   a. being hooked on TV.
   b. serious addiction.

c. a heavy viewer.
d. the real world.

5. The topic sentence of paragraph 5 states, "Finally, a serious addiction is distinguished from a harmless pursuit of pleasure by its distinctly destructive elements." What details does the author use to support this point?

heroin addict's damaged life

alcoholic's narrowed and dehumanized life

6. Paragraph 8

a. supports the idea in paragraph 7 that TV addicts overestimate their control over TV watching.

b. raises a point not dealt with elsewhere.

c. supports the idea in paragraph 9 that TV addicts are stuck in a living holding pattern.

About Coherence

7. Which paragraph fully signals the author's switch from discussing addiction in general terms to talking specifically about addiction to television? ***6***

8. What key transitional word is used twice in the essay? ***Finally***

About the Introduction and Conclusion

9. Which statement best describes the introductory paragraph of Winn's essay?

a. It explains the importance of the topic of television addiction.

b. It tells an anecdote that illustrates the nature of television addiction.

c. It presents a type of "addiction" very different from the one discussed in the essay.

10. Which statement best describes the conclusion of "Television Addiction"?

a. Winn recommends that the television addict try to "kick the habit."

b. Winn summarizes the points made in the body of the essay.

c. Winn comments on the damage television does to society at large.

Writing a Definition Essay

1 Writing Assignment

Below are an introduction, a thesis, and supporting points for an essay that defines the word *maturity*. Using a separate sheet of paper, plan out and write the supporting paragraphs and a conclusion for the essay.

Teaching Tip

You may want to model the writing process for your students by doing this assignment along with them. Go through all the stages, including prewriting and revising, and seek feedback from them. They will appreciate your efforts to create a writing community.

The Meaning of Maturity

Being a mature student does not mean being an old-timer. Maturity is not measured by the number of years a person has lived. Instead, the yardstick of maturity is marked by the qualities of self-denial, determination, and dependability.

Self-denial is an important quality in the mature student....

Determination is another characteristic of a mature student....

Although self-denial and determination are both vital, probably the most important measure of maturity is dependability....

In conclusion, ...

Prewriting

a. Prepare examples for the three qualities of maturity. For each quality, you should have either one extended example that takes up an entire paragraph or two or three shorter examples that together form enough material for a paragraph.

b. To generate these details, ask yourself questions like these, based on the topic sentence of the first supporting paragraph:

What could I do, or what have I done, that would be an example of self-denial?

What has someone I know ever done that could be described as self-denial?

What kind of behavior on the part of a student could be considered self-denial?

Write down quickly whatever answers occur to you. As when you freewrite, don't worry about grammar, punctuation, or spelling. Instead, concentrate on getting down as many details relating to self-denial as you can think of. Then repeat the questioning and writing process, substituting □determination□and □dependability□for □self-denial.□

c. Now go through the material you have compiled. If you think of other details as you read, jot them down. Next, decide just what information you will use in each supporting paragraph. List the details in the order in which you will present them.

d. Now write the first draft of your essay.

Revising

After you have completed the first draft of the essay, set it aside for a while (if possible). When you reread what you have written, prepare for rewriting by asking yourself these questions:

FOUR BASES Checklist for Definition

About *Unity*

- ☐ Have I eliminated or rewritten any irrelevant material?

About *Support*

- ☐ Have I provided enough details to support each of the three characteristics of maturity?

About *Coherence*

- ☐ Have I used transition words to help readers follow my train of thought?
- ☐ Does my concluding paragraph provide a summary or a final thought or both?

About *Sentence Skills*

- ☐ Have I used a consistent point of view throughout my essay?
- ☐ Have I used specific rather than general words?
- ☐ Have I avoided wordiness and used concise wording?
- ☐ Are my sentences varied?
- ☐ Have I checked my writing for spelling and other sentence skills, as listed on the inside back cover of the book?

As you revise your essay through one or more additional drafts, continue to refer to this list until you can answer yes to each question.

2 Writing Assignment

Choose one of the terms below as the subject of a definition essay. Each term refers to a certain kind of person.





Slob
Cheapskate
Loser
Good neighbor
Busybody
Whiner
Con artist
Optimist
Pessimist
Team player
Bully
Scapegoat
Religious person
Hypocrite
Snob
Tease
Practical joker
Procrastinator
Loner
Pig
Type A

Prewriting

a. As you devise your opening paragraph, you may want to refer to the dictionary definition of the term. If so, be sure to use only one meaning of the term. (Dictionaries often provide several different meanings for a term.) *Don't* begin your paper with the overused phrase "According to Webster. . . ."

b. Remember that the thesis of a definition essay is a version of "What _____ means to me." The thesis presents what *your* experience has made *you* think the term actually means.

c. As you plan your supporting paragraphs, think of different parts or qualities of your term. Here, for example, are the three-part divisions of the student essays considered in this chapter:

> Football fans are crazy in terms of their behavior, their fascination with the past, and their loyalty.
>
> Student zombies are the "living dead," are controlled by a "mysterious force," and are likely to suffer an "awful fate."

d. Support each part of your division with either a series of examples or a single extended example.

e. You may find outlining to be the most helpful prewriting strategy for your definition essay. As a guide, write your thesis and three supporting points in the spaces below. **Note: Answers will vary.**

Thesis: _____

Support:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

ESL Tip

Nonnative speakers may not be familiar with some of the terms since they are part of English slang. Direct students to an Internet site on American slang.



Once you have the first draft of your essay completed, read it aloud to a friend or classmate. The two of you should review it with these questions in mind:

FOUR BASES Checklist for Definition

About *Unity*

- ☐ Does my thesis statement indicate how I define the term, and does it indicate my plan of development for the essay?
- ☐ Does each of my supporting paragraphs have a clear topic sentence?

About *Support*

- ☐ Have I supported each of my three topic sentences with one extended example or a series of examples?

About *Coherence*

- ☐ Have I rounded off my essay with an appropriate concluding paragraph?

About *Sentence Skills*

- ☐ Have I used a consistent point of view throughout my essay?
- ☐ Have I used specific rather than general words?
- ☐ Have I avoided wordiness and used concise wording?
- ☐ Are my sentences varied?
- ☐ Have I proofread my essay for spelling and other sentence skills, as listed on the inside back cover of the book?

3 Writing Assignment:

Persistence	Responsibility	Fear
Rebellion	Insecurity	Arrogance
Sense of humor	Assertiveness	Conscience
Escape	Jealousy	Class
Laziness	Practicality	Innocence
Danger	Nostalgia	Freedom
Curiosity	Gentleness	Violence
Common sense	Depression	Shyness
Soul	Obsession	Idealism
Family	Christianity	Spirituality

Teaching Tip

Encourage students to use the prewriting and revising ideas mentioned in Writing Assignments 1 and 2.

4 Writing Assignment: Writing for a Specific Purpose and Audience

In this definition essay, you will write with a specific purpose and for a specific audience.

You work in a doctor's office and have been asked to write a brochure that will be placed in the waiting room. The brochure is intended to tell patients what a healthy lifestyle is. Write a definition of *healthy lifestyle* for your readers, using examples wherever appropriate. Your definition might focus on both mental and physical health and might include eating, sleeping, exercise, and recreational habits.

Alternatively, you might decide to take a playful point of view and write a brochure defining an *unhealthy lifestyle*.

Teaching Tip

Encourage students to use the four steps to complete this assignment, including prewriting and revision.



www.mhhe.com/langan

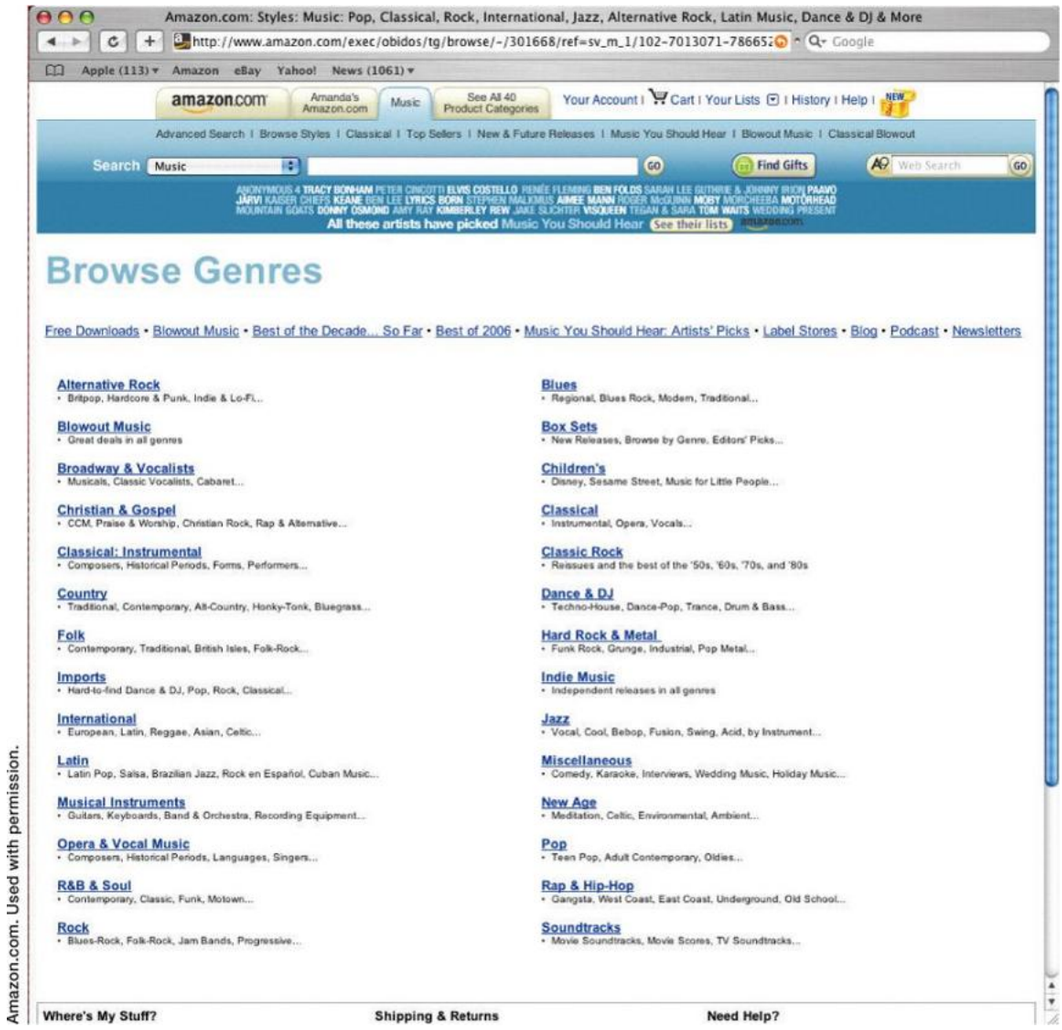
15: Division-Classification

This chapter will explain and illustrate how to

- develop a division-classification essay
- write a division-classification essay
- revise a division-classification essay

In addition, you will read and consider

- two student division-classification essays
- one professional division-classification essay



Visit an online bookstore like Powell's at http://www.powells.com.psection/psection.html and browse through the categories of books. Or visit Amazon at http://www.amazon.com and browse through the categories of music. Then design your own site selling something similar (you can be as creative as you like). Provide at least five different categories for your "product" and explain what distinguishes each one.

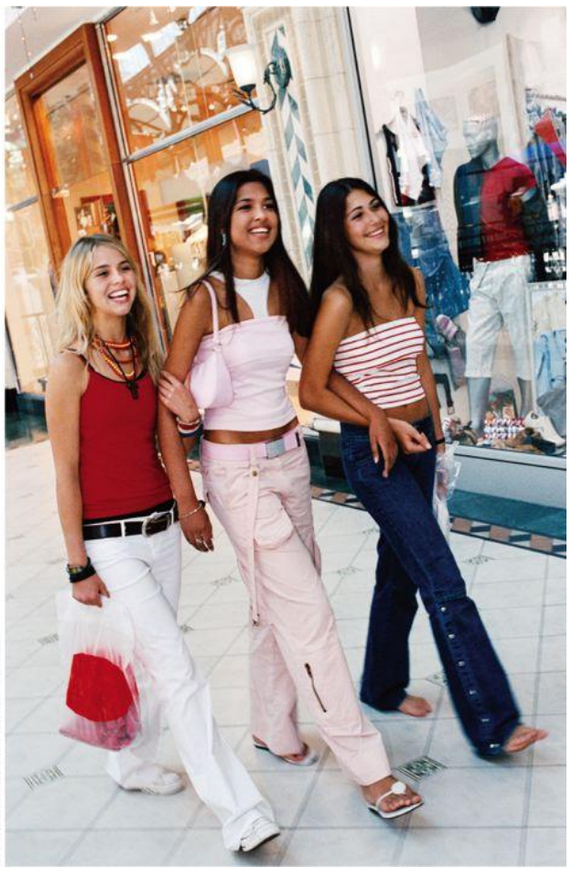
When you return home from your weekly trip to the supermarket with five bags packed with your purchases, how do you sort them out? You might separate food items from nonfood items (like toothpaste, paper towels, and detergent). Or you might divide and classify the items into groups intended for the freezer compartment, the refrigerator, and the kitchen cupboards. You might even put the items into groups like □to be used tonight,□ □to be used soon,□ and □to be used last.□ Sorting supermarket items in such ways is just one simple example of how we spend a great deal of our time organizing our environment in one manner or another.

In this chapter, you will be asked to write an essay in which you divide or classify a subject according to a single principle. To prepare for this assignment, first read the student essays and the professional essay that follow and work through the questions that accompany the essays.

Student Essays to Consider

Mall People

1 Just what goes into □having fun□? For many people, □fun□involves getting out of the house, seeing other people, having something interesting to look at, and enjoying a choice of activities, all at a reasonable price. Going out to dinner or to the movies may satisfy some of those desires, but often not all. But an attractive alternative does exist in the form of the free-admission shopping mall. Teenagers, couples on dates, and the nuclear family can all be observed having a good time at the mall.



© BananaStock/SuperStock

2 Teenagers are drawn to the mall to pass time with pals and to see and be seen by other teens. The guys saunter by in sneakers, T-shirts, and blue jeans, complete with a package of cigarettes sticking out of a pocket. The girls stumble along in midriff-baring tank tops, with a cell phone tucked snugly in the rear pocket of their low-waisted jeans. Traveling in a gang that resembles a wolf pack, the teenagers make the shopping mall their hunting ground. Mall managers have obviously made a decision to attract all this teenage activity. The kids□raised voices, loud

laughter, and occasional shouted obscenities can be heard from as far as half a mall away. They come to □pick up girls,□to □meet guys,□and just to □hang out.□

3 Couples find fun of another sort at shopping malls. The young lovers are easy to spot because they walk hand in hand, stopping to sneak a quick kiss after every few steps. They first pause at a jewelry store window so that they can gaze at diamond engagement rings and platinum wedding bands. Then, they wander into furniture departments in the large mall stores. Finally, they drift away, their arms wrapped around each other's waist.

4 Mom, Dad, little Jenny, and Fred Jr., visit the mall on Friday and Saturday evenings for inexpensive recreation. Hearing the music of the antique carousel housed there, Jenny begs to ride her favorite pony with its shining golden mane. Shouting, □I'm starving!□Fred Jr., drags the family toward the food court, where he detects the seductive odor of pizza. Mom walks through a fabric store, running her hand over the soft velvets and slippery silks. Meanwhile, Dad has wandered into an electronics store and is admiring the sound system he'd love to buy someday. The mall provides something special for every member of the family.

5 Sure, some people visit the mall in a brief, businesslike way, just to pick up a specific purchase or two. But many more are shopping for inexpensive recreation. The teenagers, the dating couples, and the nuclear families all find cheap entertainment at the mall.

Teaching Tip

Bring to class everyday examples of division or classification writing. These examples might be found in magazines, newspapers, and other published sources. If your classroom has access to the Internet, find examples from Web sites. Help your students make connections

Teaching Tip

Read these essays aloud. Ask students to underline the thesis statement, specific examples, and transitions in each essay before answering the questions.

Genuine Draft

1 The other night, my six-year-old son turned to me and asked for a light beer. My husband and I sat there for a moment, stunned, and then explained to him that beer was only for grown-ups. I suddenly realized how many beer ads appear on television and how often they appear. To my little boy, it must seem that every American drinks beer after work, or after playing softball, or while watching a football game. Brewers have pounded audiences with all kinds of campaigns to sell beer. There seems to be an ad to appeal to the self-image of every beer drinker.

2 One type of ad attracts people who think of themselves as grown-up kids. Budweiser's animated frogs, squatting on lily pads and croaking, □Bud,□□Weis,□□Er,□are a perfect example of this type. The frogs are an example of the wonders of computer animation, which is being increasingly mixed in with real-life action in advertisements. The campaign was an immediate hit with the underage set as well as with adult beer-drinkers. Within weeks, the frogs were as recognizable to children as Tony the Tiger or Big Bird. They became so popular that the new Bud ads were a feverishly anticipated part of the Super Bowl□ as much a part of the entertainment as the game itself or the halftime show. These humorous ads suggest that beer is part of a lighthearted approach to life.

3 A second kind of ad is aimed not at wanna-be kids but at macho men, guys who think of themselves as □men's men,□doing □guy things□together. One campaign features men who see themselves as victims of their nagging wives. Ads in this series show men howling with laughter about how they've fooled their wives into thinking they're home doing chores (by leaving dummy-stuffed pants lying under leaky sinks or broken furnaces) while

they're really out drinking. Beer is a man's drink, the ads seem to say, and women are a nuisance to be gotten around.

4 European and European-sounding beers such as Löwenbräu and Heineken like to show handsome, wealthy-looking adults enjoying their money and leisure time. A typical scene shows such people enjoying an expensive hobby in a luxurious location. Beer, these ads tell us, is an essential part of the □good life.□This type of ad appeals to people who want to see themselves as successful and upper class.

5 To a little boy, it may well seem that beer is necessary to every adult's life. After all, we need it to make us laugh, to bond with our friends, and to celebrate our financial success. At least, that's what advertisers tell him□ and us.

1 Questions

About Unity

1. In which supporting paragraph in □Genuine Draft□is the topic sentence at the end rather than, as is more appropriate for student essays, at the beginning?

4

2. Which sentence in paragraph 2 of □Mall People□should be omitted in the interest of paragraph unity? *(Write the opening words.)*

Mall managers have obviously . . .

3. What sentence in paragraph 2 of □Genuine Draft□should be omitted in the interest of paragraph unity? *(Write the opening words.)*

The frogs are an example . . .

About Support

4. After which sentence in paragraph 3 of □Mall People□are more supporting details needed?*(Write the opening words.)*

Then, they wander . . .

5. Which paragraph in □Genuine Draft□lacks sufficient specific details?

4

6. Label as *sight, touch, hearing*, or *smell* all the sensory details in the following sentences taken from □Mall People.□

a. "Hearing (hearing) the music of the antique carousel housed there, Jenny begs to ride her favorite pony with its shining (sight) golden mane."

b. "Shouting, 'I'm starving!' Fred Jr., drags (hearing) the family (sight) toward the food court, where he detects the seductive odor (smell) of pizza."

c. "Mom walks through a fabric store, running her hand over the soft velvets and slippery silks."

sight touch touch

About Coherence

7. What are the time transition words used in paragraph 3 of "Mall People"?

first Then Finally

8. Which topic sentence in "Genuine Draft" functions as a linking sentence between paragraphs? ***(*** *Write the opening words.*)

A second kind of ad . . .

About the Introduction and Conclusion

9. What kind of introduction is used in "Genuine Draft"? *(Circle the appropriate letter.)*

a. Broad, general statement narrowing to a thesis

b. Idea that is the opposite of the one to be developed

c. Quotation

d. Anecdote

e. Questions

10. What conclusion technique is used in "Mall People"? *(Circle the appropriate letter.)*

a. Summary

b. Prediction or recommendation

c. Question

ESL Tip

To achieve greater coherence, nonnative speakers should review the transitions for exemplification and comparison-contrast essays. These include additive transitions (to introduce categories), transitions to show similarities and differences, transitions to introduce examples, and ones to indicate the importance of a category.

Developing a Division-Classification Essay

Considering Purpose and Audience

When writing a division-classification essay, your purpose is to present your audience with your own unique way of dividing and classifying a particular topic. To write a successful essay, you will need to first choose a topic that interests readers and lends itself to being divided and classified. Once you pick your topic, you will then have to come up with your own unique sorting system— one that readers will be able to understand.

For example, if you choose clothing, there are a number of ways to sort this topic into categories. You could divide clothing by the function it serves: shirts and jackets (to cover the upper body), pants and skirts (for the lower body), and shoes and socks (for the feet). Or you could divide clothes according to the materials they are made from: animal products, plant products, and synthetic materials. **[Punto y seguido].**

A more interesting, and potentially humorous, way to divide clothes is by fashion: clothes that are stylish, clothes that are going out of style, and clothes that are so unattractive that they never were in style. Notice that in all three of these cases, the broad topic of clothing has been divided into categories according to a particular principle (function, materials, and fashion). When you divide your topic for your essay, be sure to come up with your own division principle and make it clear to your readers.

Once you've selected your topic and figured out how to divide it, you will need to provide specific details so that readers fully understand the categories you made. For the example about fashion above, you might classify plaid bell-bottom pants as part of the "going out of style" category, while blue jeans might belong in the "clothes that are stylish" group and a mustard-yellow velour jacket might fit in the "never stylish" group. Whatever divisions you make, be sure to include enough details to make your division-classification method, your main point, clear to your readers. Equally important, keep your audience in mind. An audience of fashion-conscious young people, for instance, would probably have very different opinions about what is and isn't stylish than an audience of middle-aged bankers. Or an audience made up of the parents of middle-school students who are clamoring for "cool" clothes would have much more interest in clothing styles than the parents of students about to enter college.

Development through Prewriting

Julia, the writer of "Mall People," believed from her observations that "people at malls" would make a good topic for a division-classification essay. But she did not immediately know how she wanted to group those people or what she wanted to say about them. She decided to begin her prewriting by making a list of observations about mall shoppers. Here is what she came up with:

Families with kids

Lots of snacking

Crowds around special displays: automobiles, kiddie rides

Older people walking in mall for exercise

Groups of teenagers

Women getting made over at makeup counter

Dating couples

Blind woman with Seeing Eye dog

Lots of people talking and laughing rather than shopping

Interviewers stopping shoppers to fill out questionnaires

Kids hanging out, meeting each other

Teaching Tip

You may want to provide a supplemental activity. Have students classify types of students. First ask them to create a list of categories, and then ask them to jot down characteristics for each category.

As Julia reviewed her list, she concluded that the three largest groups of "mall people" were families with children, groups of teens, and dating couples. She decided to organize her essay around those three groups. To further flesh out her idea, she created a scratch outline that her essay would follow. Here is the scratch outline Julia prepared:

Thesis statement: Mall offers inexpensive fun for several groups.

1. *Teens*
   a. *Roam in packs*
   b. *Dress alike*
   c. *Meet new people*
2. *Dating couples*
   a. *Act romantic*
   b. *Window-shop for future home*
   c. *Have lovers' quarrels*
3. *Families*
   a. *Kids' activities*
   b. *Cheap food*
   c. *Adults shop*

Julia's list and outline prepared her to write the first draft of her essay.

Mall People

First Draft

Malls aren't only places to go shopping. They also offer free or at least cheap fun and activities for lots of people. Teenagers, dating couples, and families all like to visit the mall.

Teenagers love to roam the mall in packs, like wolves. They often dress alike, depending on the latest fashion. They're noisy and sometimes rude, and mall security officers sometimes kick them out of the building. Then they find somewhere else to go, maybe one of the warehouse-sized amusement and video-game arcades that are springing up everywhere. Those places are fun, but they tend to be more expensive than just hanging out at the mall. Teens are usually not as interested in shopping at the mall as they are in picking up members of the opposite sex and seeing their friends.

Dating couples also enjoy wandering around the mall. They are easy to spot because they walk along holding hands and sometimes kissing. They stare at diamond rings and wedding bands and shop for furniture together. Sometimes they have spats and one of them stomps off to sulk on a bench for a while.

Little kids and their parents make up a big group of mall-goers. There is something for every member of the family there. There are usually some special displays that interest the kids, and Mom and Dad can always find things they like to window-shop for. Another plus for the family is that there is inexpensive food, like burgers and pizza, available at the mall's food court.

Teaching Tip

Next, ask them to write their first draft.

Teaching Tip

Ask students to read their drafts to a partner and discuss how their draft might be revised.

Development through Revising

After Julia completed her first draft, she put it aside. She knew from previous experience that she was a better critic of her own writing after she took a break from it. The following morning, when Julia read over her first draft, she noticed several places where it could be improved. Here are the observations she put in her writing journal:

- *My first paragraph does present a thesis (malls offer inexpensive entertainment), and it tells how I'm going to develop that thesis (by discussing three groups of people). But it isn't very interesting. I think I could do a better job of drawing readers in by describing what is fun about malls.*

- *Some of the details in the essay aren't necessary; they don't support my main idea. For instance, the stuff about teens being kicked out of the mall and about dating couples having fights doesn't have anything to do with the entertainment malls provide. I'll eliminate this.*

- *Some of my statements that do support the main idea need more support. For example, when I say there are special displays that*

interest the kids in paragraph 4, I should give an example of such a display. I should also back up the idea that many teens dress alike.

With these observations in mind, Julia returned to her essay and revised it, producing the version that appears on page 331.

A Professional Essay to Consider

Now read the following professional essay. Then answer the questions and read the comments that follow.

Wait Divisions: by Tom Bodett



www.mhhe.com/langan

1 I read somewhere that we spend a full third of our lives waiting. I've also read that we spend a third of our lives sleeping, a third working, and a third at our leisure. Now either somebody's lying, or we're spending all our leisure time waiting to go to work or sleep. That can't be true or league softball and Winnebagos never would have caught on.

2 So where are we doing all of this waiting, and what does it mean to an impatient society like ours? Could this unseen waiting be the source of all our problems? A shrinking economy? The staggering deficit? Declining mental health and moral apathy? Probably not, but let's take a look at some of the more classic waits anyway.

3 The very purest form of waiting is what we'll call the *Watched-Pot Wait*. This type of wait is without a doubt the most annoying of all. Take filling up the kitchen sink. There is absolutely nothing you can do while this is going on but keep both eyes glued to the sink until it's full. If you try to cram in some extracurricular activity, you're asking for it. So you stand there, your hands on the faucets, and wait. A temporary suspension of duties. During these waits it's common for your eyes to lapse out of focus. The brain disengages from the body and wanders around the imagination in search of distraction. It finds none and springs back into action only when the water runs over the edge of the counter and onto your socks.

4 The phrase a watched pot never boils comes of this experience. Pots don't care whether they are watched or not; the problem is that nobody has ever seen a pot actually come to a boil. While people are waiting, their brains turn off.

5 Other forms of the Watched-Pot Wait would include waiting for your dryer to quit at the Laundromat, waiting for your toast to pop out of the toaster, or waiting for a decent idea to come to mind at a typewriter. What they all have in common is that they render the waiter helpless and mindless.

6 A cousin to the Watched-Pot Wait is the *Forced Wait*. Not for the weak of will, this one requires a bit of discipline. The classic Forced Wait is starting your car in the winter and letting it slowly idle up to temperature before engaging the clutch. This is every bit as uninteresting as watching a pot, but with one big difference. You have a choice. There is nothing keeping you from racing to work behind a stone-cold engine save[1] the thought of the early demise of several thousand dollars worth of equipment you haven't paid for yet. Thoughts like that will help you get through a Forced Wait.



© John Gress/Reuters/Corbis

What, in your opinion, is worth waiting for? Think about this question and create a scratch outline for a division-classification essay on things you feel are worth waiting for.

7 Properly preparing packaged soup mixes also requires a Forced Wait. Directions are very specific on these mixes. Bring three cups of water to boil, add mix, simmer three minutes, remove from heat, let stand five minutes. I have my doubts that anyone has actually done this. I'm fairly spineless when it comes to instant soups and usually just boil the bejeezus out of them until the noodles sink. Some things just aren't worth a Forced Wait.

8 All in all Forced Waiting requires a lot of a thing called patience, which is a virtue. Once we get into virtues I'm out of my element and can't expound on the virtues of virtue, or even lie about them. So let's move on to some of the more farreaching varieties of waiting.

9 The *Payday Wait* is certainly a leader in the long-term anticipation field. The problem with waits that last more than a few minutes is that you have to actually do other things in the meantime. Like go to work. By far the most aggravating feature of the Payday Wait is that even though you must keep functioning in the interludes,[2] there is less and less you are able to do as the big day draws near. For some of us the last few days are best spent alone in a dark room for fear we'll accidentally do something that costs money. With the Payday Wait comes a certain amount of hope that we'll make it, and faith that everything will be all right once we do.

10 With the introduction of faith and hope, I've ushered in the most potent wait class of all, the *Lucky-Break Wait*, or the *Wait for One's Ship to Come In*. This type of wait is unusual in that it is for the most part voluntary. Unlike the Forced Wait, which is also voluntary, waiting for your lucky break does not necessarily mean that it will happen.

11 Turning one's life into a waiting game of these proportions requires gobs of the aforementioned faith and hope, and is strictly for the optimists among us. For these people life is the thing that happens to them while they're waiting for something to happen to them. On the surface it seems as ridiculous as following the directions on soup mixes, but the Lucky-Break Wait performs an outstanding service to those who take it upon themselves to do it. As long as one doesn't come to rely on it, wishing for a few good things to happen never hurt anybody.

12 In the end it is obvious that we certainly do spend a good deal of our time waiting. The person who said we do it a third of the time may have been going easy on us. It makes a guy wonder how anything at all gets done around here. But things do get done, people grow old, and time boils on whether you watch it or not.

13 The next time you're standing at the sink waiting for it to fill while cooking soup mix that you'll have to eat until payday or until a large bag of cash falls out of the sky, don't despair. You're probably just as busy as the next guy.

2 Questions

About Unity

1. The thesis of Bodett's essay is not presented directly. See if you can state it in your own words.

Note: Answers will vary. An example is given.

Various kinds of waiting interrupt everyone's life.

2. In paragraph 2, Bodett introduces several possible effects of waiting, then dismisses them with a "probably not." Is it a sign of careless writing that Bodett mentions irrelevant topics and then dismisses them? Or does he intend a particular effect by introducing unnecessary topics? If he does intend an effect, how would you describe it?

Note: Answers will vary.

This is intentional; it is done for a humorous effect.

About Support

3. Bodettwrites of four "classic waits": the Watched-Pot Wait, the Forced Wait, the Payday Wait, and the Lucky-Break Wait. For which two "waits" does he provide several examples?

Watched-Pot Wait ***Forced Wait***

4. Bodett refers to the first two waits as cousins. How does he differentiate between them?

"You have a choice" in the Forced Wait.

---

5. How does Bodett support his claim that the Forced Wait "requires a bit of discipline"?

He gives examples: protecting your car by not running it cold and preparing soup properly.

About Coherence

6. Bodett's essay does not follow the strict one-three-one model (introduction, three supporting paragraphs, conclusion) often used in student essays. Instead, its form is a looser one that includes an introduction, four topics for development (the four "waits"), and a conclusion. Indicate in the following outline how the paragraphs of Bodett's essay are broken up:

Introduction:	Paragraph(s)	1-2
Topic 1:	Paragraph(s)	3-5
Topic 2:	Paragraph(s)	6-8
Topic 3:	Paragraph(s)	9
Topic 4:	Paragraph(s)	10-11
Conclusion:	Paragraph(s)	12-13

7. Which words in the first sentence of paragraph 6 link that sentence to the preceding three paragraphs?

A cousin to the Watched-Pot Wait is . . .

8. Bodett organizes the waits
   a. from the most harmful to the least harmful.
   b. from the shortest waits to the longest.
   c. from the most difficult wait to the easiest one.
   d. in no particular order.

About the Introduction and Conclusion

9. Which method best describes the introduction to "Wait Divisions"?
   a. Quotation
   b. Idea that is the opposite of the one to be developed
   c. Anecdote
   d. Broad, general statement narrowing to thesis

10. In what way does the first sentence in paragraph 13 serve as a summary of Bodett's main points?

Note: Wording of answer may vary.

He uses an image in which all the waits are involved.

Writing a Division-Classification Essay

1 Writing Assignment

Shown below are an introduction, a thesis, and supporting details for a classification essay on stress in college. Using separate paper, plan out and write the supporting paragraphs and a conclusion for the essay.

College Stress

Jack's heart pounds as he casts panicky looks around the classroom. He doesn't recognize the professor, he doesn't know any of the students, and he can't even figure out what the subject is. In front of him is a test. At the last minute his roommate awakens him. It's only another anxiety dream. the very fact that dreams like Jack's are common suggests that college is a stressful situation for young people. The causes of this stress can be academic, financial, and personal.



© Myrleen Ferguson Cate/PhotoEdit

Academic stress is common. . . .

In addition to academic stress, the student often feels financial pressure. . . .

Along with academic and financial worries, the student faces personal pressures. . . .

In conclusion . . .

Teaching Tip

You may want to model the writing process for your students by doing this assignment along with them. Go through all the stages, including prewriting and revising, and seek feedback from them. They will appreciate your efforts to create a writing community.

Prewriting

a. To develop some ideas for the division-classification essay in Writing Assignment 1, freewrite for five minutes apiece on (1) *academic*, (2) *financial*, and (3) *personal* problems of college students.

b. Then add to the material you have written by asking yourself these questions:

What are some examples of academic problems that are stressful for students?

What are some examples of financial problems that students must contend with?

What are some examples of personal problems that create stress in students? Write down quickly whatever answers occur to you. As with freewriting, do not worry at this stage about writing correct sentences. Instead, concentrate on getting down as much information as you can think of that supports each of the three points.

c. Now go through all the material you have accumulated. Perhaps some of the details you have written down may help you think of even better details that would fit. If so, write down these additional details. Then make decisions about the exact information that you will use in each supporting paragraph. List the details in the order in which you will present them (1, 2, 3, and so on).

d. Now write the first draft of your essay.

Revising

After you have completed the first draft of the essay (and ideally have set it aside for a while), you should prepare yourself to rewrite by asking the following questions:

FOUR BASES Checklist for Division-Classification

About *Unity*

- ✔ Have I introduced my essay with a clearly stated thesis?
- ✔ Have I eliminated or rewritten any irrelevant material?

About *Support*

- ✔ Have I provided relevant examples for each of the three kinds of stress?
- ✔ Have I provided enough details to support each of the three kinds of stress?

About *Coherence*

- ✔ Have I used transition words to help readers follow my train of thought?
- ✔ Have I added a concluding paragraph that rounds out and completes the essay?

About *Sentence Skills*

- ✔ Have I used a consistent point of view throughout my essay?
- ✔ Have I used specific rather than general words?
- ✔ Have I avoided wordiness and used concise wording?
- ✔ Are my sentences varied?
- ✔ Have I checked my essay carefully for spelling and other sentence skills, as listed on the inside back cover of the book?

As you revise your essay, continue to refer to this list until you can answer yes to each question.

2 Writing Assignment

Choose one of the following subjects as the basis for a division-classification essay:

Music	Pet owners
Videos	Junk food
TV shows	College courses
Fiction	Dating couples
Comic strips	Shoppers
Vacations	Bosses
Answering-machine messages	Parties
Breakfast foods	Advertisements
Pets	Catalogs
Attitudes toward exercise	Technology

Note:

Answers will vary.

Prewriting

a. For a division-classification essay, the prewriting strategy that may be especially helpful is outlining. The success of your essay will depend on your division of your topic into three well-balanced parts. To create those three parts, you must use the same rule, or principle, of division for each. Most topics can be divided in several ways according to several principles. For example, the topic "Hit movies" could be divided in the following ways:

By *film categories:* Action, comedy, romance

By *intended audience:* Families, dating couples, teens

The topic "My favorite books" could be divided like this:

By *book categories:* Novels, how-to books, biographies

By *purpose they serve for me:* Escape, self-improvement, amusement

The topic "Places to eat" could be divided in these ways:

By *cost:* Cheap, moderate, expensive

By *type of food:* American, Italian, Chinese

If you look back at the essays that appear earlier in this chapter, you'll see that the topics are divided according to the following principles:

"Mall People" is divided by *groups of shoppers:* Teens, dating couples, families

"Genuine Draft" is divided by *beer-drinkers' self-images:* Grown-up kids, men's men, upper class

"Wait Divisions" is divided by *types of waits:* Watched-Pot Wait, Forced Wait, Payday Wait, Lucky-Break Wait

The important point to remember is to divide your topic consistently, according to a single principle. It would be illogical, for example, to divide the topic "Places to eat" into "American" (type of food served), "Italian" (type of food served), and "Expensive" (cost). For the essay to be balanced and consistent, choose one principle of division and stick to it.

b. As you consider a topic for your own paper, think of principles of division you might use. Test them by filling out this outline and answering the question.

Topic:_____

Principle of division:_____

Three-part division of topic:_____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Have I used the same principle of division for each of the three parts?

When you are confident that you have chosen a topic of interest to you that you can divide into three parts according to one principle, you are ready to begin writing.

c. Before writing your first draft, you may want to freewrite on each of the three parts, make lists, or ask and answer questions to generate the supporting details you will need to develop your ideas.

Revising



Once you have completed a first draft of your essay, share it with a friend or classmate. You should both review it with these questions in mind:

FOUR BASES Checklist for Division-Classification

About *Unity*

- ✔ Have I included the essay's thesis in my introductory paragraph?
- ✔ Does my thesis state my topic and the principle of division I have chosen?
- ✔ Have I eliminated irrelevant material that does not support my thesis?

About *Support*

- ✔ Have I backed up statements in my essay with relevant examples or illustrations?
- ✔ Have I provided enough details to support each of the three kinds of stress?

About *Coherence*

- ✔ Is each of the paragraphs in the body of my essay based on one division of my topic?
- ✔ Have I used transition words to help readers follow my train of thought?
- ✔ Have I included a concluding paragraph that provides a sense of completion to the essay?

- ✔ Have I used linking sentences between paragraphs to help tie those paragraphs together?

About *Sentence Skills*

- ✔ Have I used a consistent point of view throughout my essay?
- ✔ Have I used specific rather than general words?
- ✔ Have I avoided wordiness and used concise wording?
- ✔ Are my sentences varied?
- ✔ Have I proofread my essay for spelling and other sentence skills, as listed on the inside back cover of the book?

As you revise your essay, continue to refer to this list until you and your reader can answer yes to each question.

3 Writing Assignment

Writing for a Specific Purpose and Audience

In this division-classification essay, you will write with a specific purpose and for a specific audience.

Option 1 Your younger sister or brother has moved to another city and is about to choose a roommate. Write her or him a letter about what to expect from different types of roommates. Label each type of roommate (□The Messy Type,□ □The Neatnik,□ □The Loud-Music Lover,□ etc.), and explain what it would be like to live with each.

Option 2 Unsure about your career direction, you have gone to a vocational counseling service. To help you select the type of work you are best suited for, a counselor has asked you to write a detailed description of your ideal job. You will present this description to three other people who are also seeking to choose a career.

To describe your ideal job, divide work life into three or more elements, such as

Activities done on the job

Skills used on the job

Physical environment

People you work with and under

How the job affects society

In your essay, explain your ideals for each element. Use specific examples where possible to illustrate your points.

Teaching Tip

Encourage students to use the prewriting and revising ideas mentioned in Writing Assignments 1 and 2.

[1] *save:* except.

[2] *interludes:* times in between.

16: Argument



© Bill Aron/PhotoEdit

Should cell phones be permitted in class? Look at the photograph above and write an essay in which you argue for or against the use of cell phones in the classroom. Include at least three separate reasons that support your point of view.

This chapter will explain and illustrate how to

- develop an argument essay
- write an argument essay
- revise an argument essay

In addition, you will read and consider

- two student argument essays
- one professional argument essay

Teaching Tip

Ask students to complete this writing prompt in class.

Do you know someone who enjoys a good argument? Such a person likes to challenge any sweeping statement we might make. For example, when we say something like "Ms. Lucci doesn't grade fairly," he or she comes back with "Why do you say that? What are your reasons?"

ESL Tip

Students from other cultures may not be accustomed to arguing a point or stating an opinion.

Our questioner then listens carefully as we state our case, judging if we really do have solid evidence to support our point of view. We realize that saying, "Ms. Lucci just doesn't, that's all," sounds weak and unconvincing, so we try to come up with stronger evidence to back up our statement. Such a questioner may make us feel uncomfortable, but we may also feel grateful to him or her for helping us clarify our opinions.

The ability to put forth sound and compelling arguments is an important skill in everyday life. You can use argument to make a point in a class discussion, persuade a friend to lend you money, or talk an employer into giving you a day off. Becoming skilled in clear, logical reasoning can also help you see through faulty arguments that others may make. You'll become a better critic of advertisements, newspaper articles, political speeches, and the other persuasive appeals you see and hear every day.

In this chapter, you will be asked to write an essay in which you defend a position with a series of solid reasons. In a general way, you have done the same thing— making a point and then supporting it— with all the essays in this book. The difference here is that argument advances a *controversial* point, a point that at least some of your readers will not be inclined to accept. To prepare for this assignment, first read about five strategies you can use in advancing an argument. Then read the student essays and the professional essay that follow and work through the questions that accompany the essays.

Teaching Tip

Bring to class examples of argumentative writing. These examples might be found in newspaper editorials and other published sources.

If your classroom has access to the Internet, find examples from Web sites. Help your students make connections.

Strategies for Argument

Because argument assumes controversy, you have to work especially hard to convince readers of the validity of your position. Here are five strategies you can use to help win over readers whose viewpoint may differ from yours.

1 *Use Tactful, Courteous Language*

In an argument essay, you are attempting to persuade readers to accept your viewpoint. It is important, therefore, not to anger them by referring to them or their opinions in rude or belittling terms. Stay away from sweeping statements like "Everybody knows that..." or "People with any intelligence agree that...." Also, keep the focus on the issue you are discussing, not on the people involved in the debate. Don't write, "*My opponents* say that orphanages cost less than foster care." Instead, write, "*Supporters of orphanages* say that orphanages cost less

than foster care. Terms like *my opponents* imply that the argument is between you and anyone who disagrees with you. By contrast, a term such as *supporters of orphanages* suggests that those who don't agree with you are nevertheless reasonable people who are willing to consider differing opinions.

2 *Point Out Common Ground*

Another way to persuade readers to consider your opinion is to point out common ground opinions that you share. Find points on which people on all sides of the argument can agree. Perhaps you are arguing that there should be an 11 p.m. curfew for juveniles in your town. Before going into detail about your proposal, remind readers who oppose such a curfew that you and they share certain goals: a safer city, a lower crime rate, and fewer gang-related tragedies. Readers will be more receptive to your idea once they have considered how you and they think alike.

3 *Acknowledge Differing Viewpoints*

It is a mistake to simply ignore points of view that conflict with yours. Acknowledging other viewpoints strengthens your position in several ways. First, it helps you spot flaws in the opposing position as well as in your own argument. Second, and equally important, it gives the impression that you are a reasonable person, willing to look at an issue from all sides. Readers will be more likely to consider your point of view if you indicate a willingness to consider theirs.

At what point in your essay should you acknowledge opposing arguments? The earlier the better ideally, in the introduction. By quickly establishing that you recognize the other side's position, you get your readers on board with you, ready to hear what else you have to say.

One effective technique is to *cite the opposing viewpoint in your thesis statement*. You do this by dividing your thesis into two parts. In the first part, you acknowledge the other side's point of view; in the second, you state your opinion, suggesting that yours is the stronger viewpoint. In the following example, the opposing viewpoint is underlined once; the writer's own position is underlined twice:

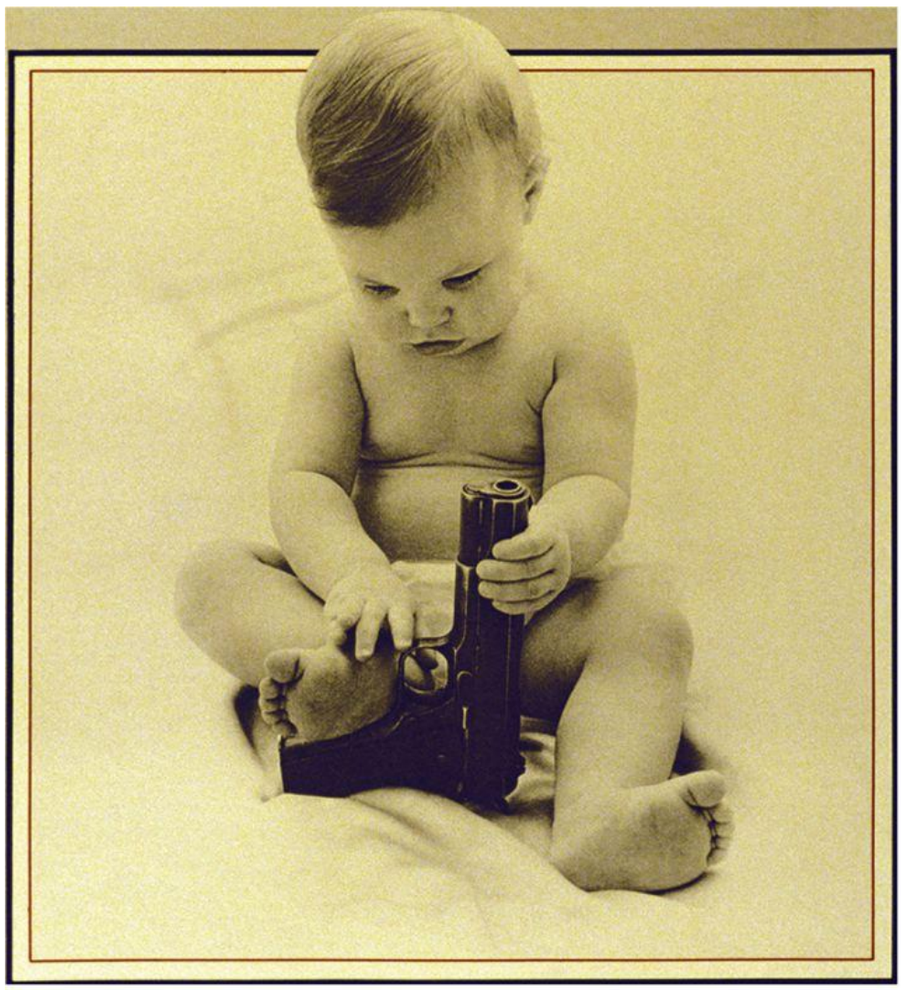
> Although some students believe that studying a foreign language is a waste of time, two years of foreign-language study should be required of all college graduates.

For another example of a thesis that acknowledges an opposing viewpoint, look at this thesis statement, taken from the essay titled Once Over Lightly: Local TV News (page 355):

> While local TV newscasts can provide a valuable community resource, too often such programs provide mere entertainment at the expense of solid news.

Another effective technique is to use one or two sentences (separate from the thesis) in the introduction to acknowledge the alternative position. Such sentences briefly state the other side's argument. To see this technique at work, look at the introduction to the essay "Teenagers and Jobs" (page 354), noting the sentence "Many people argue that working can be a valuable experience for the young."

A third technique is to *use a paragraph within the body of your essay to summarize opposing opinions in greater detail*. To do this successfully, you must spend some time researching those opposing arguments. A fair, evenhanded summary of the other side's ideas will help convince readers that you have looked at the issue from all angles before deciding where you stand. Imagine, for instance, that you are writing an essay arguing that the manufacture and sale of handguns should be outlawed. You would begin by doing some library research to find information on both sides of the issue, making sure to pay attention to material that argues against your viewpoint. You might also talk with local representatives of the National Rifle Association or other organizations that support gun ownership. Having done your research, you would be in a good position to write a paragraph summarizing the opposing viewpoints. In this paragraph, you might mention that many citizens believe that gun ownership is a right guaranteed by the Constitution and that gun owners fear that outlawing handguns would deprive law-abiding people of protection against gun-toting criminals. Once you had demonstrated that you understood opposing views, you would be in a stronger position to present your own point of view.



Arguments can be made through visual images as well. What visual argument is suggested by this photograph? Is it effective? Why or why not?

4 *When Appropriate, Grant the Merits of Differing Viewpoints*

Sometimes an opposing argument contains a point whose validity you cannot deny. What should you do then? The strongest strategy is to admit that the point is a good one. You will lose credibility if you argue against something that clearly makes sense. Admit the merit of one aspect of the other argument while making it clear that you still believe your argument to be stronger overall. Suppose that you were arguing against the use of computers in writing classrooms. You might say, "Granted, students who are already accustomed to computers can use them to write papers more quickly and efficiently" admitting that the other side has a valid point. But you could quickly follow this admission with a statement making your own viewpoint clear: "But for students like me who write and think in longhand, a computer in the classroom is more a hindrance than a help; it would require too long a learning curve to be of any value to me."

5 *Rebut Differing Viewpoints*

Sometimes it may not be enough simply to acknowledge other points of view and present your own argument. When you are dealing with an issue that your readers feel strongly about, you may need to *rebut* the opposing arguments. To *rebut* means to point out problems with an opposing view, to show where an opponent's argument breaks down.

Imagine that you are writing an essay arguing that your college should use money intended to build a campus health and fitness center to upgrade the library instead. From reading the school paper, you know that supporters of the center say it will help attract new students to the college. You rebut that point by citing a study conducted by the admissions office that shows that most students choose a college because they can afford it and because they like its academic programs and facilities. You also emphasize that many students, already financially strapped, would have trouble paying the proposed fee for using the center.

A rebuttal can take two forms: (1) You can first mention all the points raised by the other side and then present your counterargument to each of those points. (2) You can present the first point raised by the opposition and rebut that point, then move on to the second opposing point and rebut that, and so on.

Student Essays to Consider

Teaching Tip

Read these essays aloud. Ask students to underline the thesis statement, specific examples, and transitions in each essay before answering the questions.

Teenagers and Jobs

1 "The pressure for teenagers to work is great, and not just because of the economic plight in the world today. Much of it is peer pressure to have a little bit of freedom and independence, and to have their own spending money. The concern we have is when the part-time work becomes the primary focus." These are the words of Roxanne Bradshaw, educator and officer of the National Education Association. Many people argue that working can be a valuable experience for the young. However, working more than about fifteen hours a week is harmful to adolescents because it reduces their involvement with school, encourages a materialistic and expensive lifestyle, and increases the chance of having problems with drugs and alcohol.

2 Schoolwork and the benefits of extracurricular activities tend to go by the wayside when adolescents work long hours. As more and more teens have filled the numerous part-time jobs offered by fast-food restaurants and malls, teachers have faced increasing difficulties. They must both keep the attention of tired pupils and give homework to students who simply don't have time to do it. In addition, educators have noticed less involvement in the extracurricular activities that many consider a healthy influence on young people. School bands and athletic teams are losing players to work, and sports events are poorly attended by working students. Those teens who try to do it all— homework, extracurricular activities, and work— may find themselves exhausted and prone to illness. A recent newspaper story, for example, described a girl in Pennsylvania who came down with mononucleosis as a result of aiming for good grades, playing on two school athletic teams, and working thirty hours a week.

3 Another drawback of too much work is that it may promote materialism and an unrealistic lifestyle. Some parents claim that working helps teach adolescents the value of a dollar. Undoubtedly that can be true. It's also true that some teens work to help out with the family budget or to save for college. However, surveys have shown that the majority of working teens use their earnings to buy luxuries— computers, video-game systems, clothing, even cars. These young people, some of whom earn $500 or more a month, don't worry about spending wisely— they can just about have it all. In many cases, experts point out, they are becoming accustomed to a lifestyle they won't be able to afford several years down the road, when they no longer

have parents paying for car insurance, food, lodging, and so on. At that point, they'll be hard-pressed to pay for necessities as well as luxuries.

4 Finally, teenagers who work a lot are more likely than others to get involved with alcohol and drugs. Teens who put in long hours may seek a quick release from stress, just like the adults who need to drink a couple of martinis after a hard day at work. Stress is probably greater in our society today than it has been at any time in the past. Also, teens who have money are more likely to get involved with drugs.

5 Teenagers can enjoy the benefits of work while avoiding its drawbacks, simply by limiting their work hours during the school year. As is often the case, a moderate approach will be the most healthy and rewarding.

Once Over Lightly: Local TV News

1 Are local television newscasts a reliable source of news? Do they provide in-depth coverage and analysis of important local issues? Unfortunately, all too often they do not. While local TV newscasts can provide a valuable community resource, too often such programs provide mere entertainment at the expense of solid news. In their battle for high ratings, local programs emphasize news personalities at the expense of stories. Visual appeal has a higher priority than actual news. And stories and reports are too brief and shallow.

2 Local TV newscasters are as much the subject of the news as are the stories they present. Nowhere is this more obvious than in weather reports. Weatherpersons spend valuable news time joking, drawing cartoons, chatting about weather fronts as □good guys□ and □bad guys,□and dispensing weather trivia such as statistics about relative humidity and record highs and lows for the date. Reporters, too, draw attention to themselves. Rather than just getting the story, the reporters are shown jumping into or getting out of helicopters to get the story. When reporters interview crime victims or the residents of poor neighborhoods, the camera angle typically includes them and their reaction as well as their subjects. When they report on a storm, they stand outside in the storm, their styled hair blowing, so we can admire how they □brave the elements.□Then there are the anchorpersons, who are chosen as much for their looks as their skills. They, too, dilute the news by putting their personalities at center stage.

3 Often the selection of stories and the way they are presented are based on visual impact rather than news value. If a story is not accompanied by an interesting film clip, it is not likely to be shown on the local news. The result is an overemphasis on fires and car crashes and little attention to such important issues as the economy. A tractor-trailer spill on the highway slightly injures one person and inconveniences motorists for only an hour. But because it provides dramatic pictures□ the big truck on its side, its load spilled, emergency personnel running around, lots of flashing lights□ it is given greater emphasis in the local newscast than a rise in local taxes, which has far more lasting effect on the viewer. □If it bleeds, it leads□is the unofficial motto of many local news programs. A story that includes pictures of death and destruction, no matter how meaningless, is preferable on the local news to a solid, important story without flashy visuals. The mania for visuals is so strong that local news programs will even slap irrelevant visuals onto an otherwise strong story. A recent story on falling oil prices, for example, was accompanied by footage of a working oil well that drew attention away from the important economic information in the report.

4 On the average, about half a minute is devoted to a story. Clearly, stories that take less than half a minute are superficial. Even the longest stories, which can take up to several minutes, are not accompanied by meaningful analysis. Instead, the camera jumps from one location to another, and the newscaster simplifies and trivializes the issues. For instance, one recent □in-depth□ story about the homeless consisted of a glamorous reporter talking to a homeless person and asking him what should be done about the problem. The poor man was in no condition to respond thoughtfully. The story then cut to an interview with a city bureaucrat who mechanically rambled on about the need for more government funding. Is raising taxes the answer to every social problem? There were also shots of homeless people sleeping in doorways and on top of heating vents, and there were interviews with people in the street, all of whom said that something should be done about the terrible problem of homelessness. There was, in all of this, no real exploration of the issue and no proposed solution. It was also apparent that the homeless were just the issue of the week. After the week's coverage was over, the topic was not mentioned again.

5 Because of the emphasis on newscasters□personalities and on the visual impact of stories and the short time span for stories, local news shows provide little more than diversion. What viewers need instead is news that has real significance. Rather than being amused and entertained, we need to deal with complex issues and learn uncomfortable truths that will help us become more responsible consumers and citizens.

ESL Tip

To achieve coherence and grammatical accuracy in their writing, nonnative students would benefit from instruction in the context of an argumentative paragraph. Among Spanish-speaking students, a typical error is "I *am* agree," which is a direct translation. A review of connectors that show adding information would be helpful too.

1 Questions

About Unity

1. Which paragraph in "Once Over Lightly" lacks a topic sentence? ***4*** Write a topic sentence for the paragraph: **Note:** Answers may vary.

Local news is often lacking in depth.

2. What sentence in paragraph 4 of "Once Over Lightly" should be omitted in the interest of paragraph unity? (*Write the opening words.*)

Is raising taxes...

3. Which sentence in paragraph 4 of "Teenagers and Jobs" should be omitted in the interest of paragraph unity? (*Write the opening words.*)

Stress is probably greater...

About Support

4. Which sentence in paragraph 4 of "Teenagers and Jobs" needs to be followed by more supporting details? Which sentence in paragraph 2 of "Once Over Lightly" needs to be followed by supporting details? (*Write the opening words of each sentence.*)

"Teenagers and Jobs": Also, teens who have money...

"Once Over Lightly": They, too, dilute the news...

5. In "Teenagers and Jobs," which supporting paragraph raises an opposing idea and then argues against that idea? ***3*** What transition word is used to signal the author's change of direction? ***However***

6. In paragraph 2 of "Once Over Lightly," the topic sentence is supported by details about three types of newscasters. What are those three types?

weatherpersons ***reporters*** ***anchorpersons***

About Coherence

7. Which two paragraphs of "Teenagers and Jobs" begin with an addition transition, and what are those words?

3: Another ***4: Finally***

8. Write the change-of-direction transition and the illustration transition in paragraph 3 of "Once Over Lightly."

Change of direction: ***But*** *Illustration:* ***for example***

About the Introduction and Conclusion

9. Two methods of introduction are used in "Teenagers and Jobs." Circle the letters of these two methods.

a. Broad, general statement narrowing to thesis

b. Idea that is the opposite of the one to be developed

c. Quotation

d. Anecdote

e. Questions

10. Both essays end with the same type of conclusion. What method do they use?

a. Summary only

b. Summary and recommendation

c. Prediction

Developing an Argument Essay

Considering Purpose and Audience

When you write an argument essay, your main purpose is to convince readers that your particular view or opinion on a *controversial* issue is correct. In addition, at times, you may have a second purpose for your argument essay: to persuade your audience to take some sort of action.

To convince readers in an argument essay, it is important to provide them with a clear main point and plenty of logical evidence to back it up. Say, for example, you want to argue that public schools should require students to wear uniforms. In this case, you might do research to gather as much evidence as possible to support your point. You may check to see, for instance, if uniforms are cheaper than the alternative. Perhaps you could find out if schools with uniforms have a lower rate of violence than those without them. You may even look for studies to see if students' academic performance improves when school uniforms are adopted. As you search for evidence, be sure that it clearly links to your topic and supports the main point you are trying to get across to your audience,

While consideration of your audience is important for all essay forms, it is absolutely critical to the success of your argument essay. Depending on the main point you choose, your audience may be firmly opposed to your view or somewhat supportive of it. As you begin planning your own argument essay, then, consider what your audience already knows, and how it feels, about the main point of your argument. Using the example above, for instance, ask yourself what opinion your audience holds about school uniforms. What are likely to be their objections to your argument? Why would people *not* support your main point? What, if anything, are the merits of the opposing point of view? To "get inside the head" of your opposition, you might even want to interview a few people you're sure will

disagree with you: say, for instance, a student with a very funky personal style who you know would dislike wearing a uniform. By becoming aware of the points of view your audience might have, you will know how to proceed in researching your rebuttal to their arguments.

TIP

For more information on how to deal with opposing views in your essay, see pages 351–352. By directly addressing your opposition, you add credibility to your argument and increase the chances that others will be convinced that your main point is valid.

Development through Prewriting

Before choosing a topic for her essay, Anna, the writer of "Teenagers and Jobs," asked herself what controversial subject she was particularly well qualified to argue. She wanted to select something she cared about, something she could sink her teeth into. As a person who had been an active member of her high school community— she had worked on the newspaper, played basketball, and sung in a chorus— Anna first thought of writing about student apathy. It had always bothered her to see few students taking advantage of the opportunities available to them in school. But as she thought more about individual students she knew and their reasons for not getting more involved in school and extracurricular activities, she changed her opinion. "I realized that 'apathy' was not really the problem," she explained. "Many of them worked so much that they literally didn't have time for school life."

After narrowing her thesis to the idea of "teenagers and work," Anna made a list of what she perceived as the bad points of students' working too much:

Teaching Tip

You may want to provide a supplemental activity. Have students choose a topic related to college life, such as doing away with attendance policies. Next, ask them to make a list of their ideas, which they can then use to create a scratch outline.

No time for real involvement in school and school activities Students leave right after school— can't stay for clubs, practices Don't have time to attend games, other school functions Students sleep in class and skip homework Stress, extra money contribute to drug and alcohol use Teachers frustrated trying to teach tired students Having extra money makes teens materialistic

Some get so greedy they drop out of school to work full time Students miss the fun of being young, developing talents and social abilities Students burn out, even get sick Hanging around older coworkers can contribute to drug, alcohol use Buying luxuries gives teens unrealistic idea of standard of living

As she reviewed and revised her list of points, Anna identified three main points to develop in her essay. Those she identified as points 1, 2, and 3. She realized that some of the other items she had jotted down were related ideas that might be used to support her main topics. She marked those with the number of the main idea they supported, in parentheses, like this: (1). She also crossed out points that did not fit.

1 No time for real involvement in school and school activities

(1) Students leave right after school□ can't stay for clubs, practices

(1) Don't have time to attend games, other school functions

~~Students sleep in class and skip homework~~

2 Stress, extra money contribute to drug and alcohol use

(1) Teachers frustrated trying to teach tired students

3 Having extra money makes teens materialistic

(3) Some get so greedy for money they drop out of school to work full-time

~~Students miss the fun of being young, developing talents and social abilities~~

~~Students burn out, even get sick~~

(2) Hanging around older coworkers can contribute to drug, alcohol use

(3) Buying luxuries gives teens unrealistic idea of standard of living

Referring to this list, Anna wrote the following first draft of her essay.

Teenagers and Jobs

First Draft

Many people think that working is a valuable experience for young people. But when teenagers have jobs, they are too likely to neglect their schoolwork, become overly materialistic, and get into trouble with drugs and alcohol.

Schoolwork and the benefits of extracurricular activities tend to go by the wayside when adolescents work long hours. As more and more teens have taken jobs, teachers have faced increasing difficulties. They must both keep the attention of tired pupils and give homework to students who simply don't have time to do it. In addition, educators have noticed less involvement in extracurricular activities. School bands and athletic teams are losing players to work, and sports events are poorly attended by working students. Those teens who try to do it all homework, extracurricular activities, and work may find themselves exhausted and burned out.

Another drawback of too much work is that it may promote materialism and an unrealistic lifestyle. Most working teens use their earnings to buy luxuries. These young people don't worry about spending wisely they can just about have it all. They are becoming accustomed to a lifestyle they won't be able to afford several years down the road, when they have to support themselves.

Finally, teenagers who work are more likely than others to get involved with alcohol and drugs. Teens who put in long hours may seek a quick release from stress, just like the adults who need to drink a couple of martinis after a hard day at work. Also, teens who have money are more likely to get involved with drugs.

In short, teens and work just don't mix.

Teaching Tip

Next, ask them to write their first draft.

Development through Revising

Anna's instructor had offered to look over students first drafts and suggest improvements for revision. Here is the note she wrote at the end of Anna's work:

Teaching Tip

Ask students to read their drafts to a partner and discuss how their draft might be revised.

Anna Good beginning. While I think your thesis is overstated, it and each of your main topics are on the right track. Here are some points to consider as you write your next draft:

 Many teenagers find working a limited number of hours a week to be a good experience. I think it's a mistake to state flatly that it's always a

negative thing for teenagers to have jobs. Think about acknowledging that there can be good points to students working part-time.

- You do a pretty good job of supporting your first main point (Schoolwork and the benefits of extracurricular activities tend to go by the wayside when adolescents work long hours) by noting the effect of too much work on scholastic achievement and extracurricular activities. You less effectively support points 2 and 3 (Another drawback of too much work is that it may promote materialism and an unrealistic lifestyle and Finally, teenagers who work are more likely than others to get involved with alcohol and drugs). Show how teens become too materialistic; don't just state that they do. And what evidence do you have that working teens use drugs and alcohol more than others?

- Throughout the essay, can you come up with evidence beyond your own observations to support the idea that too much working is detrimental to teens? Look in the magazine indexes in the library and on the Internet for studies or stories that might support your thesis.

I'll look forward to seeing your final draft.

After considering her instructor's comments, Anna wrote the version of Teenagers and Jobs that appears on page 354.

A Professional Essay to Consider

Read the following professional essay. Then answer the questions and read the comments that follow.

Ban the Things. Ban Them All.: by Molly Ivins



www.mhhe.com/langan

1 Guns. Everywhere guns.

2 Let me start this discussion by pointing out that I am not anti-gun. I'm proknife. Consider the merits of the knife.

3 In the first place, you have to catch up with someone to stab him. A general substitution of knives for guns would promote physical fitness. We'd turn into a whole nation of great runners. Plus, knives don't ricochet. And people are seldom killed while cleaning their knives.

4 As a civil libertarian, [1] I of course support the Second Amendment. And I believe it means exactly what it says: "A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed [2]." Fourteen-year-old boys are not part of a well-regulated militia. Members of wacky religious cults are not part of a well-regulated militia. Permitting unregulated citizens to have guns is destroying the security of this free state.

5 I am intrigued by the arguments of those who claim to follow the judicial doctrine of original intent. How do they know it was the dearest wish of Thomas Jefferson's heart that teenage drug dealers should cruise the cities of this nation perforating their fellow citizens with assault rifles? Channeling[3]?

6 There is more hooey spread about the Second Amendment. It says quite clearly that guns are for those who form part of a well-regulated militia, i.e., the armed forces including the National Guard. The reasons for keeping them away from everyone else get clearer by the day.

7 The comparison most often used is that of the automobile, another lethal object that is regularly used to wreak great carnage. Obviously, this society is full of people who haven't got enough common sense to use an automobile properly. But we haven't outlawed cars yet.

8 We do, however, license them and their owners, restrict their use to presumably sane and sober adults and keep track of who sells them to whom. At a minimum, we should do the same with guns.

9 In truth, there is no rational argument for guns in this society. This is no longer a frontier nation in which people hunt their own food. It is a crowded, overwhelmingly urban country in which letting people have access to guns is a continuing disaster. Those who want guns— whether for target shooting, hunting or potting [4] rattlesnakes (get a hoe)— should be subjected to the same restrictions placed on gun owners in England, a nation in which liberty has survived nicely without an armed populace.

10 The argument that "guns don't kill people—is patent nonsense. Anyone who has ever worked in a cop shop knows how many family arguments end in murder because there was a gun in the house. Did the gun kill someone? No. But if there had been no gun, no one would have died. At least not without a good footrace first. Guns do kill. Unlike cars, that is all they do.

11 Michael Crichton makes an interesting argument about technology in his thriller *Jurassic Park*. He points out that power without discipline is making this society into wreckage. By the time someone who studies the martial arts becomes a master— literally able to kill with bare hands— that person has also undergone years of training and discipline. But any fool can pick up a gun and kill with it.

12 □A well-regulated militia□surely implies both long training and long discipline. That is the least, the very least, that should be required of those who are permitted to have guns, because a gun is literally the power to kill. For years, I used to enjoy taunting my gunnut friends about their psychosexual hangups□ always in a spirit of good cheer, you understand. But letting the noisy minority in the National Rifle Association force us to allow this carnage to continue is just plain insane.

13 I do think gun nuts have a power hangup. I don't know what is missing in their psyches that they need to feel they have the power to kill. But no sane society would allow this to continue.

14 Ban the damn things. Ban them all.

15 You want protection? Get a dog.

2 Questions

About Unity

1. Which of the following statements best represents the implied thesis of the essay?

   a. The author is pro-knife.

   b. The Second Amendment is poorly understood.

   Despite arguments to the contrary, people without long training and discipline should not be allowed to have guns.

   d. In his novel *Jurassic Park,* Michael Crichton argues that power without discipline is wrecking society.

2. Which statement would best serve as a topic sentence for paragraphs 5 and 6?

   a. Drug dealers should not be allowed to purchase assault rifles.

   b. Ivins is interested in other people's points of view concerning gun ownership.

   c. Thomas Jefferson was opposed to the idea of a □well-regulated militia.□

   Applying the original intent of the Second Amendment to modern circumstances is not clear-cut and must be done with common sense.

3. Which is the topic sentence of paragraph 9?

   □In truth, there is no rational argument for guns in this society.□

   b. □This is no longer a frontier nation in which people hunt their own food.□

   c. □It is a crowded, overwhelmingly urban country in which letting people have access to guns is a continuing disaster.□

   d. □Those who want guns . . . should be subjected to the same restrictions placed on gun owners in England. . . .□

About Support

4. Why does Ivins contrast the use of martial arts with the use of guns?

   a. To support the idea that gun owners should be required to study the martial arts

   b. To support the idea that a martial arts master can kill with his bare hands

   To support the idea that power without discipline is dangerous

   d. To support the idea that guns are more practical than the martial arts

5. Which statement best expresses the implied point of paragraph 10?

   Guns kill people.

   b. Many family arguments are surprisingly violent.

   c. Many arguments end in death only because a gun was handy.

   d. Guns and cars are similar.

6. In what ways, according to Ivins, is the knife preferable to the gun? Is Ivins really □pro-knife,□or is she making some other point in her discussion of knives versus guns?

Knives promote physical fitness, don't ricochet, don't kill people cleaning them.

No, she is not really pro-knife; her point is that guns are even more dangerous than knives .

About Coherence

7. In paragraph 3, Ivins uses three addition signals□ one to introduce each of her three reasons for being pro-knife. What are those three signals? (Two are *not* in the list of addition signals on page 83.)

In the first place ***Plus*** ***And***

8. In paragraph 7, Ivins acknowledges an opposing point of view when she mentions that automobiles, like guns, □wreak great carnage.□In paragraph 8, what sentence includes a □change of direction□signal indicating that Ivins will present her argument against that point of view? (*Write the first few words of that sentence.*)

We do, however, license . . .

About the Introduction and Conclusion

9. Ivins's introduction consists of three very brief paragraphs. Which statement best describes the style of her introduction?

   a. It presents an anecdote that is related to the topic of unregulated gun ownership.

   b. It presents a provocative question that grabs the reader's attention.

   It makes a startling point that at first seems unrelated to the topic.

   d. It presents a quotation that puts the topic in some sort of historical context.

10. Which of these best describes the conclusion of □Ban the Things□?

a. It makes a blunt recommendation.

b. It asks a thought-provoking question.

c. It narrates an anecdote about guns.

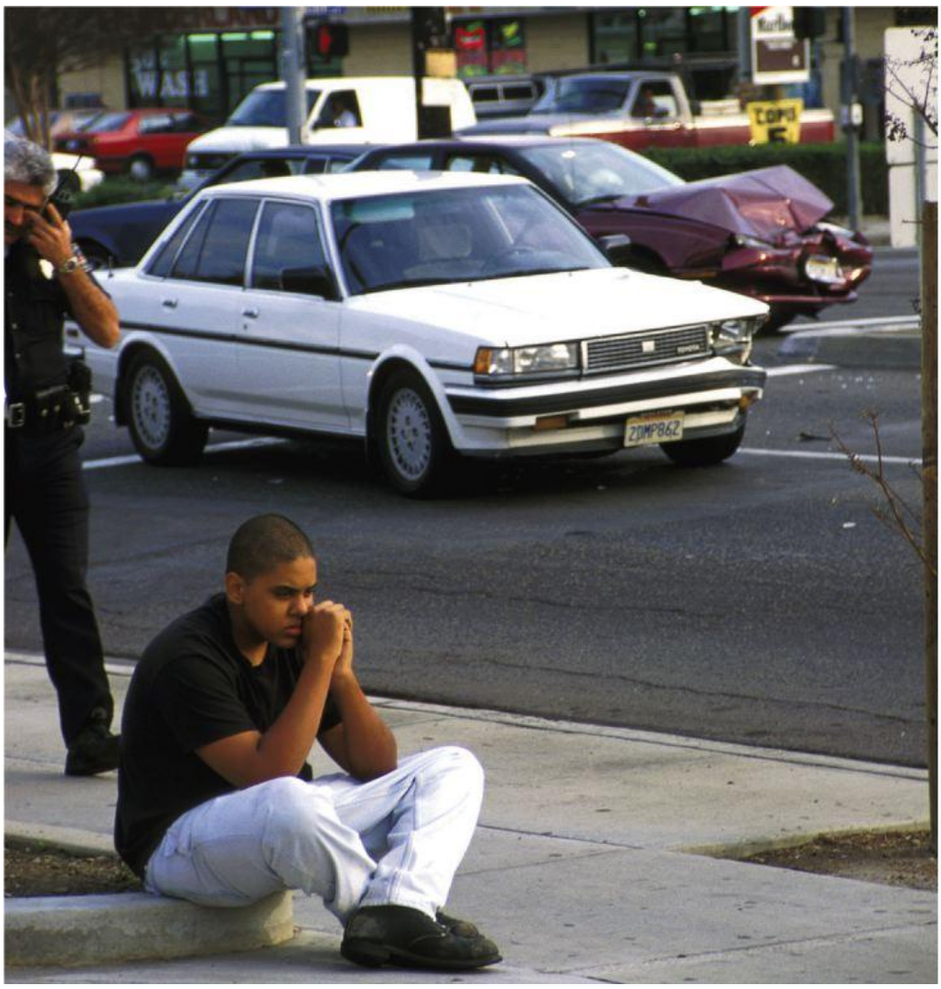
d. It predicts what will happen if guns are not banned.

Note:

Answers may vary.

Writing an Argument Essay

1 Writing Assignment



© Tony Freeman/PhotoEdit

Write an essay in which you argue *for* or *against* any one of the three comments below (options 1□3). Support and defend your argument by drawing on your reasoning ability and general experience.

Option 1 In many ways, television has proved to be one of the worst inventions of modern times. All too often, television is harmful because of the shows it broadcasts and the way it is used in the home.

Option 2 Many of society's worst problems with drugs result from the fact that they are illegal. During Prohibition, Americans discovered that making popular substances unlawful causes more problems than it solves. Like alcohol and tobacco, drugs should be legal in this country.

Option 3 Statistics show that newly licensed teenage boys cause a higher number of serious automobile accidents than any other group. It is evident that many young men are too reckless and impulsive to be good drivers. To protect the larger society, the age at which a boy can earn his license should be raised to eighteen.

Prewriting

a. Take a few minutes to think about the three options. Which one in particular are you for or against, and *why?*

b. On a sheet of paper, make a brief outline of support for your position on one of the options. (Remember, you may choose to argue *against* one of the three comments, as well as for it.) Preparing the outline will give you a chance to think further about your position. And the outline will show whether you have enough support for your position. (If you find that you don't, choose another position and prepare another outline.)

c. Next, decide how you will develop each of your three supporting points. Make up brief outlines of the three supporting paragraphs. In addition to preparing brief outlines, you may want to use other prewriting techniques. You may want to freewrite or ask questions or make up lists.

d. Decide in which order you want to present your paragraphs. *Emphatic order* (in which you *end* with your most important reason) is often the most effective way to organize an argument. Your reader is most likely to remember your final reason.

e. As you write, think of your audience as a jury that will ultimately believe or disbelieve your argument. Have you presented a convincing case? Do you need more details? If *you* were on the jury, would you be favorably impressed with this argument?

f. Proceed to write the first draft of your essay.

Revising

After you have completed the first draft of the essay, set it aside for a while (if possible). When you review it, ask a friend or classmate for feedback. You should both consider the following questions:

FOUR BASES Checklist for Argument

About *Unity*

- ✔ Does each paragraph in my essay have a clear topic sentence?
- ✔ Are there portions of the essay that do not support my thesis and therefore should be eliminated or rewritten?

About *Support*

- ☑ Have I provided persuasive details to support my argument?
- ☑ Does my final supporting paragraph include a strong argument for my position?

About *Coherence*

- ☑ Have I acknowledged the opposing point of view, showing that I am a reasonable person willing to consider other arguments?
- ☑ Have I used transition words to help readers follow my train of thought?
- ☑ Have I provided a concluding paragraph to summarize my argument or add a final persuasive touch?

About *Sentence Skills*

- ☑ Is my language tactful and courteous in order to avoid insulting anyone who doesn't agree with me?
- ☑ Have I used specific rather than general words?
- ☑ Have I avoided wordiness and used concise wording?
- ☑ Are my sentences varied?
- ☑ Have I checked my writing for spelling and other sentence skills, as listed on the inside back cover of the book?

As you revise your essay through added drafts, continue to refer to this list until you and your reader can answer yes to each question.

Teaching Tip

You may want to model the writing process for your students by doing this assignment along with them. Go through all the stages, including prewriting and revising, and seek feedback from them.



2 Writing Assignment

Write an essay in which you argue *for* or *against* any one of the three comments below. Support and defend your argument by drawing on your reasoning ability and general experience.

Option 1 Giving students grades does more harm than good. Schools should replace grades with written evaluations of the student's strengths and weaknesses. These would benefit both students and parents.

Option 2 Jails are overcrowded. Furthermore, jails often function as "schools for crime" in which petty lawbreakers learn to become hardened criminals. Of course, it is necessary to put violent criminals in jail to protect others. But society would benefit if nonviolent criminals received punishments other than jail sentences.

Option 3 Physical punishment "works" in the sense that it may stop a child from misbehaving, but adults who frequently spank and hit are also teaching children that violence is a good method of accomplishing a goal. Nonviolent methods are a more effective way of training children.

Prewriting

a. As you write your opening paragraph, acknowledge the opposing point of view before stating your thesis. If you have trouble figuring out what the "other side" would argue, completing this exercise will give you practice in acknowledging another way of looking at the question.

In each item, you will see a statement and then a question related to that statement. Write *two* answers to each question. Your first will answer yes to the question and briefly explain why. The other will answer no to the question, and also state why. The first item is done for you as an example:

Note:

Answers will vary.

1. Smoking has been proved to be bad for health. Should it therefore be made illegal? Yes: Because smoking has been shown to have so many negative effects on health, the sale of tobacco should be made illegal.

_____

No: Although smoking has been linked to various health problems, adults should have the right to make their own decision about whether or not to smoke. Smoking should not be made illegal.

2. Animals feel pain when they are killed for food. Is eating animals therefore immoral?

Yes:

_____
_____
_____

No:

_____
_____
_____

3. Professional boxing often leads to serious injury. Should it be outlawed? Yes:

_____
_____
_____

No:

_____
_____
_____

4. Some high school students are sexually active. Should birth control devices and information be given out by high schools to their students? Yes:

_____
_____
_____

No:

_____
_____
_____

b. Make a list of the thoughts that support your argument. Don't worry about repetition, spelling, or grammar at this point. Just write down everything that occurs to you.

c. Once you have written down all the thoughts that occur to you, identify what you see as your strongest points. Select your three main supporting points. Are there other thoughts in your list that you can use as supporting details for those points?

d. Write your three supporting paragraphs. Keep in mind that you are writing for an audience of people who, initially, will not all agree with you. It isn't enough to state your opinion. You must show *why* you feel as you do, persuading your reader that your point of view is valid.

e. Your concluding paragraph is your final chance to persuade your readers to accept your argument. Consider ending with a prediction of what will happen if your point of view does not prevail. Will an existing situation grow worse? Will a new problem arise?

Revising

Follow the suggestions for revising provided on pages 367□368.

3 Writing Assignment



Write an essay in which you argue *for* or *against* any one of the three comments below. Support and defend your argument by drawing on your reasoning ability and general experience.

Option 1 Junk food is available in school cafeterias and school vending machines, and the cafeteria menus do not encourage the best eating habits. But good education should include good examples as well as classwork. Schools should practice what they preach about a healthy diet and stop providing junk food.

Option 2 By the time many students reach high school, they have learned the basics in most subjects. Some still have much to gain from the education that high schools offer, but others might be better off spending the next four years in other ways. For their benefit, high school attendance should be voluntary.

Option 3 Many of today's young people are mainly concerned with prestigious careers, making money, and owning things. It seems we no longer teach the benefits of spending time and money to help the community, the country, or the world. Our country can strengthen these human values and improve the world by requiring young people to spend a year working in some type of community service.

Teaching Tip

Encourage students to use the prewriting and revising ideas mentioned in Writing Assignments 1 and 2.

4 Writing Assignment

Writing for a Specific Purpose and Audience

In this argument essay, you will write with a specific purpose and for a specific audience.

Option 1 You'd like to live in a big city, but your parent or spouse refuses to budge from the suburbs. Write him or her a letter in which you argue the advantages of city life. Since the success of your argument will depend to some degree on how well you overcome the other person's objections to city life, be sure to address those as well. Use specific, colorful examples wherever possible.

Option 2 Find an editorial in your local newspaper that you either strongly agree with or strongly disagree with. Write a letter to the editor responding to that editorial. State why you agree or disagree with the position taken by the paper. Provide several short paragraphs of supporting evidence for your position. Actually send your letter to the newspaper. When you turn in a copy of your letter to your instructor, also turn in the editorial that you are responding to.

Teaching Tip

Encourage students to use the four steps to complete this assignment, including prewriting and revision.



www.mhhe.com/langan

[1] *civil liberation*: someone actively concerned with protecting rights guaranteed to the individual by law.
[2] *infringed*: violated.
[3] *channeling*: serving as a medium in order to communicate with spirits.
[4] *potting*: shooting with a potshot (an easy shot).