



renaissance

college of commerce & management

B.A. (HONS.) Mass Communication II Semester

Sub. – Writing For Mass Media

SYLLABUS

Class – B.A. (HONS.) MASS COMMUNICATION

I Year

Subject – ENGLISH (Paper-02)

UNIT-I	Creative writing
UNIT-II	Paragraph, Article, Report, Letters to Editor, Business letters
UNIT-III	Language of newspaper
UNIT-IV	Editing Omission, Jumbled words
UNIT-V	Correction of sentences



UNIT-I

CREATIVE WRITING

The *creative spark* within an individual, leading to *creative endeavours* stems from a basic, yet strong, feeling of dissatisfaction with the usual process and activities. Some may not feel *dissatisfied at all with the way things are*. And, those who do feel discontented may react or respond in one of the following ways:

Simply complaining or feeling frustrated without doing anything about the existing state of things.

- Trying to change the state of affairs by *creating something new* in a new way or even attempting to mould the public opinion or attitude by writing about the state of affairs in an original style with a skillful use of words and expressions.



Definition: Creative writing is the process of inventing or rather presenting your thoughts in an appealing way. The writer thinks critically and reshapes something known into something that is different and original. Each piece of writing has a purpose and is targeted at an audience. It is organized cohesively with a clear beginning, middle and an end. Attention is paid to choice of apt vocabulary, figurative use of language and style. The following can be taken as *key points* for understanding of writing creatively:

1. **The Beginning:** Creative writing takes its first breath when the writer asks, "What can I create out of a particular feeling, image, experience, or memory?"
2. **The Purpose:** It carries out a writer's compelling desire to imagine, invent, explore, or share. Writing satisfies the creative soul. It often takes on a life of its own; the writer merely follows along.
3. **The Form:** Any form using a writer's imagination is suitable for creative development of some element of fiction. Some of the most common types of creative writing are poetry, essays, character-sketches, short-fiction, anecdotes, play-scripts, songs, parodies, reminiscences, historical fiction etc.
4. **The Audience:** A specific audience may not be known in the beginning, and each situation is different. However, if the finished piece has a universal meaning, the story will speak to a wide range of readers and may have varied meaning for various people.
5. **The Style:** A writer's style comes from an array of choices that result in the sole ownership of the finished product. The key to attaining a unique style is focused control. The writer lays out a viewpoint and if it appeals to the readers, it influences them.

CREATIVE PROCESS

- 1) Breathe the fresh air and think.
- 2) Allow your thoughts to float.
- 3) The journey of your thought will find the seeds to plant your story.



- 4) Revisit your ideas for topics and scan through the entries in your Portfolio that focus on your experiences.
- 5) Mind map a simple plan that contains a few characters, a basic setting and a problem that will be resolved.
- 6) Give life to your plan and write your first draft.
- 7) Take time to revise the basic frame of story.
- 8) Evaluate character development, conflict in plot, exciting twist and turns.
- 9) And Voila! You have a creative output!

ELEMENTS OF LANGUAGE

1. **Phonology** - (fuh-nol-uh-jee) (n.) the sound system of a language –Pronunciation.

Ex - Z,S ,th,Dh,

2. **Morphology** - (mawr-fol-uh-jee) (n.) the study of the structure of words

Morphology is the study of word structure. Though it appears on the surface that English words are irregular and idiosyncratic — *go* vs. *went*, *foot* vs. *feet* — there is a limited set of processes that allow speakers to create new words.

First, some preliminaries. All languages have **words** and **morphemes**. Words can be freely moved around in a sentence. For example, *cats* is a word:

I like *cats*.

Cats, I like. (Hamsters, I don't.)

Cats is a complex word, made up of two morphemes; a morpheme is the smallest unit of meaning or function within a language. The two morphemes are the root *cat* and *-s*, which means 'plural'. *-s* is a **bound morpheme**, meaning that it must attach to something else and cannot be freely moved around; I can't just say "*-s*" in response to the question "Do you have one cat or more than one?" **Free morphemes**, on the other hand, can stand alone as words.

English often allows multiple bound morphemes within a single word by a process called **affixation**. Affixation is the addition of prefixes, suffixes, and infixes to a root morpheme Bound morphemes that follow the root are **suffixes** (things like *-ful*, *-ly*, *-ness* in words like *hopeful*, *quickly*, or *weirdness*), while morphemes that precede the root are **prefixes** (for example, *mis-* as in *misunderstand*).

So, in a word like *mistrustful* we have a two bound morphemes, the prefix *mis-* and the suffix *-ful*, surrounding the root, *trust*:

mis-trust-ful

Or in a word like *friendliness*, we have a root followed by two suffixes:

friend-li-ness

3. **Syntax** - (sin-taks) (n.) the study of the structure of sentences : In linguistics, **syntax** (from Ancient Greek σύνταξις "coordination" from σύν *syn*, "together," and τάξις *táxis*, "an ordering") is "the study of the principles and processes by which sentences are constructed in particular languages."

4. **Semantics** -(si-man-tiks) (n.) the study of meaning in language

5. **Pragmatics** - (prag-mat-iks) (n.) , the appropriate use of language in different contexts

ELEMENTS OF GOOD WRITING

PLOT OR STRUCTURE: It is a true that '*all art is an order*'. The creative artist seeks to capture the world in a certain form, so that it could make some sense. Thus there has to be a formal structure to the writing subject. You will wish to write an arrangement of characters interacting with incidents/ situations for greater effectiveness. However, your skill lies in making it appear that it is no conscious arrangement, no plan, and no 'plot'. You need to have a well thought-out design or scheme, so that the story is neither dull, nor meaningless. Whatever the story, theme, or purpose may be, creative writers try to infuse meaning into the story. Creative writers always try to make their stories interesting and try to make it lively.



ATMOSPHERE: It is the *context* in which write-ups are written. Atmosphere is also referred to as *settings*. Writers use atmosphere or settings to attract and engage readers in their stories or write-ups. Most writers try to create a world or realm in which the readers can lose themselves. This setting could be realistic or imaginary. Many writers, particularly in short stories or novels, try to mix reality and imaginary. This mix of facts and fantasies makes write-ups more credible and reading more believable. Atmosphere is an important element of writing. It creates moods. It creates physical as well as psychological settings. It helps in creating the texture of the settings in which the writer sets the characters, locale, etc.

CHARACTERS: Characters are another important element of writing. Most writing involves people. And people form the characters in stories and write-ups. Also most writing is about human conditions. Human characters in various settings form the backbone of most writing. Also readers mostly identify and like to read about fellow human beings.

FUNDAMENTALS/ ESSENTIALS OF WRITING

1.USING SIMPLE LANGUAGE: Simplicity, it is said, is the hardest thing to achieve in writing. Most good writers have this art. But this is more of a craft or skill. Practice helps us achieve simplicity. And simplicity is the best way to achieve clarity, coherency, and comprehension.

2.USING SIMPLE WORDS: Some people use complex, high-sounding, and bombastic words in their writing. This is usually done to impress the readers. In reality such complex words have the opposite effect.

3.USING SIMPLE SENTENCES: It is easier to write many simple sentences than one complex or compound sentence. So why not write simple sentences? Long winding sentences only distract the reader.

4.ECONOMIZING ON WORDS: Most writers use too many words in their drafts. A careful editor deletes these at the time of editing. (This sentence itself can be written in simpler way – A careful editor edits this out). There is no substitute for simple, straightforward prose. You should not try to use one word more than is necessary.

5.AVOIDING JARGONS: Each profession has a technical language of its own. This is called jargon. You may be using certain abbreviations or names in your schools, sports field or in an office. Scientists do so in their labs. These are jargons. Only the select group understands them. As a writer, you should not use them. You should rather explain the jargon if you have to use it. Your aim should be to make your message clear to the people who have no direct relationship to such groups. Your writings should not cut people off from receiving your ideas by a language that they cannot understand.

6.AVOIDING ADJECTIVES: Adjectives and adverbs are often superfluous. You should build up your sentences around nouns and verbs. Usage of adjectives often weakens your message. We would suggest that you write two simple sentences than use an adjective, which more often is unnecessary if your descriptions are clear and vivid.

7.INTRODUCING CONTINUITY OF FLOW: While introducing a new idea or piece of information, do not do so without tying it to other parts of a story, springing up with sudden thoughts jolts a reader and like a sudden jerk on a smooth road, he is thrown off balance. Connect any new information in a story to information already introduced. You have to develop a mental discipline and read your copy with discerning eyes.

8.BEING SPECIFIC: Brevity is the soul of wit. Just as you try to avoid someone who talks too much, so do readers about writing, which have too many superfluous or high sounding words or piles of phrases or



long- winding, and sentences that have run out of thoughts. Eliminate all that which you have said once. Have to have accuracy and clarity. But never try to sacrifice these for the sake of brevity.

9.AVOIDING REPETITIONS AND REDUNDANCIES: Both these traits show lack of discipline on the part of the writer. Sometimes facts need to be repeated but that is not the case very often. Cut out unnecessary words: Avoid adjectives and adverbs. As you write, such words often creep in. Be alert to weed these words out. Quite often you write really, actually, very, in fact and similar others.

CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD, EFFECTIVE WRITING

A common misconception among bloggers and writers alike is that good writing can only be achieved with years of experience, which is far from the truth. If you even think about starting a blog, you immediately realize that blogs consist primarily of writing new content and further promoting that content through other forms of writing, advertisements, and copy.

While you do need basic education to begin, very few bloggers have a Ph.D. in English or grammar – as they probably wouldn't be working as an independent blogger, with the large risk involved. There is one set of core elements that you need to achieve whenever you write. As long as you strive for this, you won't fail in your pursuit to create the blog that others desire to read *everyday*.

1. You make a **clear point**. Don't let your readers have to ask themselves what your point is. Are you trying to market a product or simply review a product that you enjoyed, for example. On many blogs, the entire focus is oblique – it is difficult to define the “overall” focus of the website.
2. A common mistake is **length**. Good writing is never too long, never too short. It is concise, not elaborating on too many separate areas. This is particularly true when trying to get points across. Readers become easily distracted if you focus on one point (especially in list-type posts), leading them to avoid the rest of the post for that one block.
3. There is information to **back up your point**. No one is able to store the world's information in their head. It's a simple fact. You need to link to sources within your content, include images, diagrams, and other forms of media to draw in the readers. Words don't cut it every time.
4. **Time** is the best solution for the **quality** dilemma. Just because you *want* to create more shouldn't mean that the quality of your writing has to take a dive, too. Would people that aren't a part of your field be able to understand, even if you leave out something crucial? If your answer was no, that means that you'll need to spend more time adding references, details, or elaborate on the finer details.
5. The writing is **logical**. Understand that some people don't want to read through the entire post. Few people do, especially as the content length increases. Although words are words, a paragraph blurred together with no spaces between any sentences or words is just a long word. People won't read it. Although this is an extreme example, be sure that you have set up a post structure that allows readers to quickly scan the main points (bold, heading text, etc).
6. **Good grammar, English, and spelling**. Just because you can't accomplish these two to three main areas of good writing doesn't mean that you have “failed” as a writer. Simply improve on these, and readers will *thank* you.
7. **Readers become engaged**. With the focused point and effective writing style that you have developed (remember, it takes time), readers will become engaged in what you have to say. Writing the content is one part, but you'll also need to bring the *complete package* to your readers in order to truly accomplish this. Feel what your readers might be going through in order to truly connect with them.
8. **Rules are broken** all over the place. Writing like everyone else is easy. Writing as yourself; creating, developing, and mastering a style is the hard part. Similarity is the greatest enemy for writers – once you become unique, there is little to stop you from reaching great heights.
9. **Influence**. One powerful word, one powerful point. Set the stage for what may lead to success, even if you don't have confidence in yourself. Good writing challenges the reader to think about what



they have done in their life and how they can prepare for a reoccurrence of the event or situation in the future. Captivating your readers and evaluating their *needs* can help you accomplish the *influence* factor.

10. Finally, and one of most important of all, is that great writers and the posts that they create are **from their heart, not just created to profit or for gains**. Text is one of the most powerful mediums out there. When you read text, you can get a good idea of how the writer feels about what they are writing about, even though no clear evidence is given. Readers can draw conclusions that you aren't writing your best copy due to the fact that you are *tired* and *exhausted* from writing. This is something that can't happen as long as you run your blog.

Good writing does more than just these ten main characteristics – it inspires, informs, and involves your readers. When you harness your full potential, you will be able to accomplish this with less work than you think. It will take quite a few revisions, modifications, and testing before you get it right, but it will happen.

The now-famous authors born during the past century didn't start writing with any advanced education – just the skills and knowledge that they had when they “decided” to pursue writing novels or other forms of literature. They didn't become instant sensations, they didn't lead lives that were extravagant, and their ideas were often challenged during the time that they were alive. But there was something that set apart their work from the millions of other aspiring authors – they brought their entire package to the table, taking enormous risks simply to pursue their passion.

LUCIDITY

1. Easily understood; intelligible.
2. Mentally sound; sane or rational.
3. Translucent or transparent.

Lucidity is basically clarity of thoughts in sense of creative writing. So that we consider the word 'Clarity' or 'Clearness' in the place of lucidity to understand the importance of LUCIDITY i.e. Clarity in writing.

Why does it matter if your writing is clear or not? Surely, anyone with half a brain can make out what you're trying to say! Well, when what you're saying is not very important to you or to your reader, you don't need to write with much care.

But when your message is *important* enough to make you want to get it across clearly, and when it's *important* to the reader that he or she understand it fully, clarity is obviously essential. Importance calls for understanding on the recipient's part; achievement of the understanding that both writer and reader want is possible only in the presence of clarity. If this sounds really obvious to you – it is. Just think, though, of how much garbled nonsense pours into the world every day, in every form of speech.

Here are some suggestions to help you keep your important writing clear in order to accomplish your desired impact, whether you're writing for publication, for a client, for a speech, or just for yourself:

1. Be very clear about what it is you want to convey.
2. Have a good understanding of who you want to convey it to Focus on that audience (and no other), and get some accurate idea of how to introduce your subject to that audience so they will willingly read your writing or listen to you.
3. Decide on an approach to your reader or audience (such as: formal, informal, academic, poetic, journalistic, adversarial, persuasive, explanatory, satirical, ironic, dramatic, familiar, casual, buddy-buddy, and so on) and match your writing style to that approach; avoid mixing approaches and styles.
4. Plan out the presentation of your ideas from a beginning that is (a) acceptable to your audience, (b) encourages their interest, and (c) helps them track with you while they read on.
5. In your designing, clearly envision the end result or objective or product of your writing, and build up to it connectedly and as strongly as you can, and put it in place like an anchor for the whole piece. If you'll be wanting the readers to take some action, then prepare the ground for asking or



directing them to take it in such a way as to leave them in no doubt about what you are asking them to do. And build up the flow of your piece so that as many as possible will be minded to agree with your request or direction.

6. When your design and objective are clear to you, start writing. As you write, envision a reader's response to what you are writing; see if you can pick up any questions the reader might have, or some element of your persuasion that might make an un-smooth progression of thought for the reader as he or she follows you along.

7. Although I've emphasized writing according to prepared design and plan, I also advise that as you start writing, you be alert for the possibility that your writing might just decide to go off in a direction you hadn't envisioned. In some circumstances, such as personal writing, essays, op-ed pieces, term papers, short stories, or novels, and others, this writing can be far more authentic and interesting than the design would ever be. To succeed in this way of writing, you must (a) keep sight of your original objective – or you must restate it as soon as you can, and (b) avoid violating any contractual or other agreements with another for the piece you are writing

8. Whichever way you do it, employ words whose meanings and uses you clearly understand. If you have any question about what a word means or how to use it correctly, look it up in the dictionary before including it. Choose words that are themselves clear. When you find yourself writing words like "awesome," "unbelievable," "great," "cool," and so on, recognize that you're introducing distracting fuzz into your flow – and cut it out. Look for the words that clearly convey what you want the reader to grasp. If fuzz is part of your design, though, keep it in.

9. There is no substitute for correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Some people will not be offended by errors in these but they may misdirect themselves away from your message because, for example, the placing of one comma can completely change the meaning of a sentence. A person who is familiar with grammar, spelling, and punctuation might reject your message (even though your message is valid and valuable) if he or she considers that your errors undermine trust in your judgment.

10. Use words and expressions that your audience is familiar with; if you need or want to use a term, abbreviation, or phrase outside of their presumed vocabulary, use it -- but give a helpful definition in parenthesis.

11. Design your paragraphs and sentences for greatest impact as your actual writing builds up to the climax and completion of your message and request for action. Here are some techniques to help you increase impact:

* In your sentences, try to use the passive mood as little as possible.

* See if you can put the important idea of the sentence at or near its end.

* Vary your sentence lengths and do not be afraid of the occasional long sentence. It is quite all right to have people think about what they're reading.

* Ideally, you build up your paragraph so that its most important point comes out in its last sentence; sometimes it's better to put the point in the first sentence. In the latter case, be sure that you end the paragraph with one of your strongest arguments for that point, and put it in a strong sentence.

* Review your paragraph for smoothness by reading it out loud, listening for any awkward sounds or rhythms, and for any jumps in your logic, any excess verbiage, and possibly for a more inspiring phrase.

12. If you come to the point of not seeing clearly where you should go next in writing your build-up to your climax, take a break. When you come back, read your piece from the beginning. If you don't see clearly where you go next, read over your outline and your notes. Should the way forward still not be clear, examine your last paragraph or two to see if one of them is a little too condensed and needs to be fleshed out, perhaps even fleshed out into two separate paragraphs.

13. When you're all done, put the piece away for at least a day. After the break, read it, mark all the errors you see and the improvements you think of as you read, look to mercilessly slash everything that is not closely relevant, note any questions that come up for you -- but don't make any major revisions yet. Once through the first time, consider the questions and notes you made, and determine how much substantial editing you will do, and do it. Write your new draft. Put the piece away for at least a day; share



your manuscript with a friend who will give you an objective pair of eyes and ears and perhaps very helpful comments. Review your piece yet again.

14. Publish! Or deliver! Or read your speech! Observe how it goes down. Note how you can do better next time, and take all your lessons from the experience to heart. Use them!

DIRECTNESS

The challenge to directness comes from two fronts: WORDINESS and VAGUENESS. A wordy writer uses more words than are necessary to convey his meaning; a vague writer fails to convey her meaning as sharply and clearly as she might. Our objective in writing is to convey our meaning as directly and as economically as possible, without sacrificing clarity and completeness.

This document focuses on WORDINESS, i.e., on how to spot and eliminate wordiness.

1. **Nominals**

Nominals are nouns that have been created by adding suffixes to verbs: ESTABLISHMENT, COMPLETION, DELIVERANCE and so on. While there is nothing wrong with those words, using unnecessary nominals tends to make writing ponderous and slow moving. That is, VERBS (words which convey action) have been transformed into NOUNS (words which point to objects). Learn to spot nominals suffixes, which include -MENT, -TION, -ENCE, -ITY, -IZE, and -NESS.

e.g., Strict ENFORCEMENT of the speed limit by the police will cause a REDUCTION in traffic fatalities. / If the police strictly enforced the speed limit, traffic fatalities will be reduced.

2. **Weak Verbs**

Vague, weak verbs such as ALLOW, HAVE, GIVE, MAKE, PROVIDE, and TAKE occur in combination with nominals as replacements for the stronger, more energetic verbs that have been changed into nouns. Another weak verb form, the PASSIVE-VOICE verb, also lengthens sentences and reduces vigor because it focuses on THINGS BEING DONE rather than on DOING THINGS. Consequently, a statement in the passive-voice requires a prepositional phrase to identify the AGENT or the DOER. Your writing will become less wordy if you chose specific, concrete, active-voice verbs.

e.g., At the next meeting, the city council WILL TAKE the fire fighters' request for a raise under consideration. / At the next meeting, the city council will consider the fire-fighters' request for a raise.

A decision WAS REACHED by the council members to amend the zoning laws. / The council members decided to amend the zoning laws.

3. **Roundabout constructions**

Indirect and circuitous wording annoys readers, i.e., it detracts from quick, clear understanding of your meaning. Words like ANGLE, ASPECT, FACTOR and SITUATION, and phrases like AS IN THE CASE OF, IN THE LINE OF, IN THE FIELD OF are usually obstacles to directness.

e.g., Another aspect of the situation that needs to be examined is the matter of advertizing. / We should also examine advertizing.

4. **Unnecessary phrases and clauses**

Wordiness often results from using clauses when phrases will do, or phrases when single words will do. Where appropriate, try reducing clauses to participial or appositive phrases or to single-word compound modifiers.

e.g., The conclusions THAT THE COMMITTEE OF STUDENTS reached are summarized in the newspaper OF THE COLLEGE THAT WAS TODAY. / The conclusions REACHED BY THE STUDENT COMMITTEE are summarized in TODAY'S COLLEGE NEWSPAPER.

5. **Redundancy**

Expressions like I SAW IT WITH MY OWN EYES and AUDIBLE TO YOU EARS are redundant, i.e., they express the same idea twice. Redundancies don't clarify or emphasize; they sound stupid, especially with words that are already absolute and cannot logically be qualified further: UNIQUE, PERFECT, DEAD, for example.

e.g., ADVANCE FORWARD / advance; COMPLETELY ELIMINATE / eliminate; REFER BACK / refer; REPEAT AGAIN / repeat; CIRCLE AROUND / circle; CLOSE PROXIMITY / close; FEW IN NUMBER / few; PAST HISTORY / history, past.



6. **Awkward repetition** / Marking Code W-4

The repetition of important words can lend emphasis and coherence to your writing, but careless repetition is awkward and wordy.

e.g., The investigation revealed that the AVERAGE TEACHERS TEACHING industrial arts in Alberta have an AVERAGE working and TEACHING experience of five years. / The investigation revealed that industrial arts teachers of Alberta have on average five years' experience

CREDIBILITY

Any writer who is looking to build a successful career must gain an authority within the writing/publishing industry. Credibility assures customers that a writer is an established and respected professional. If you are searching for ways to gain credibility as a writer, consider the following steps:

1. Write all the time if you want to be respected in the field. The best way to become a credible writer is to be a better writer, and the best way to improve your writing is to write everyday. Use whatever mediums are available to you, the Internet, local newspapers and magazines.

2. Improve your writing skills by enhancing your writing knowledge. A credible writer is someone who knows as much about writing as possible. Understanding the technicalities, writing rules and styles is imperative in this industry. For this reason, you should take writing classes and workshops in various areas of writing, and specifically in your own genre of writing, as well as attend conventions and conferences.

3. Being associated with an already credible writer is useful. Have an established writer provide some additional content for your site. Once you build your own reputation, ask that credible writer if you can submit an article. If you are a skilled writer, you will be invited to write for other blogs. Write for as many as you can and expand your readership. This in turn will build your writing integrity and reputation.

4. Create a blog so that you can promote your writing skills. If you write a blog that is focused on the art of writing, then you will build credibility with every entry. Potential clients will read your work. A blog is better than a resume because it demonstrates your skill of writing. Just make sure that every entry you write is edited. Just like a blog can build your credibility as a great writer, it can damage it with a single typo.

5. Use social media to get your name recognized. There are so many opportunities to get your name out there. Sign up with twitter and Facebook and other social media sites to offer useful writing tips or update your readers about your professional schedule or calendar. If you are a published author, you can use these forums to entice readers and get them exciting news about upcoming books or conferences you will be attending. Post as much as you can online, and on printed media.

6. Provide your best work to all your clients. Word of mouth can make or break your credibility as a writer. If you do a great job, then you might be asked to do more work for the same client and referred on to others. Therefore, only take work that you know you can do, and do well; always write your own content and create and meet realistic deadlines.

7. Do not let writing take over your life; instead allow it to be part of what you do in your life

OBJECTIVITY

Objectivity means that when covering hard news, reporters don't convey their own feelings, biases or prejudices in their stories. They accomplish this by writing stories using a language that is neutral and avoids characterizing people or institutions in ways good or bad.

But for the beginning reporter accustomed to writing personal essays or journal entries, it can be hard to keep one's own feelings out of one's stories. One trap beginning reporters fall into is the frequent use of adjectives. Adjectives can easily convey one's feelings about a subject, subconsciously or otherwise.

Objectivity - This means that the main emphasis should be on the information that you want to give and the arguments you want to make, rather than you. This is related to the basic nature of academic study and academic writing, in particular. Nobody really wants to know what you "think" or "believe". They want to know what you have studied and learned and how this has led you to your various conclusions.



The thoughts and beliefs should be based on your lectures, reading, discussion and research and it is important to make this clear.

1. Compare these two paragraphs:

The question of what constitutes "language proficiency" and the nature of its cross-lingual dimensions is also at the core of many hotly debated issues in the areas of bilingual education and second language pedagogy and testing. Researchers have suggested ways of making second language teaching and testing more "communicative" (e.g., Canale and Swain, 1980; Oller, 1979b) on the grounds that a communicative approach better reflects the nature of language proficiency than one which emphasizes the acquisition of discrete language skills.

We don't really know what language proficiency is but many people have talked about it for a long time. Some researchers have tried to find ways for us to make teaching and testing more communicative because that is how language works. I think that language is something we use for communicating, not an object for us to study and we remember that when we teach and test it.

Which is the most objective?

2. In general, avoid words like "I", "me", "myself".

A reader will normally assume that any idea not referenced is your own. It is therefore unnecessary to make this explicit.

Don't write: "In my opinion, this a very interesting study."

Write: "This is a very interesting study."

Avoid "you" to refer to the reader or people in general.

Don't write: "You can easily forget how different life was 50 years ago."

Write: "It is easy to forget how difficult life was 50 years ago."

3. Examples

Clearly this was far less true of France than ...

This is where the disagreements and controversies begin ...

The data indicates that ...

This is not a view shared by everyone; Jones, for example, claims that ...

...very few people would claim ...

It is worthwhile at this stage to consider ...

Of course, more concrete evidence is needed before ...

Several possibilities emerge ...

A common solution is .

FEATURE WRITING

Features are not meant to deliver the news firsthand. They do contain elements of news, but their main function is to humanize, to add color, to educate, to entertain, to illuminate. They often recap major news that was reported in a previous news cycle. Features often:

- Profile people who make the news
- Explain events that move or shape the news
- Analyze what is happening in the world, nation or community
- Teach an audience how to do something
- Suggest better ways to live
- Examine trends
- Entertain.

TYPES OF FEATURES

- **Personality profiles:** A personality profile is written to bring an audience closer to a person in or out of the news. Interviews and observations, as well as creative writing, are used to paint a vivid picture of the person. The CBC's recent profile of Pierre Elliot Trudeau is a classic example of the genre and makes use of archival film footage, interviews, testimonials, and fair degree of editorializing by the voice-over commentary.



- **Human interest stories:** A human interest story is written to show a subject's oddity or its practical, emotional, or entertainment value.
- **Trend stories:** A trend story examines people, things or organizations that are having an impact on society. Trend stories are popular because people are excited to read or hear about the latest fads.
- **In-depth stories:** Through extensive research and interviews, in-depth stories provide a detailed account well beyond a basic news story or feature.
- **Backgrounders:** A backgrounder--also called an analysis piec--adds meaning to current issues in the news by explaining them further. These articles bring an audience up-to-date, explaining how this country, this organization, this person happens to be where it is now.

WRITING AND ORGANIZING FEATURE STORIES

- Feature writers seldom use the inverted-pyramid form. Instead, they may write a chronology that builds to a climax at the end, a narrative, a first-person article about one of their own experiences or a combination of these. Their stories are held together by a thread, and they often end where the lead started, with a single person or event. Here are the steps typically followed in organizing a feature story:
 - **Choose the theme.** The theme is similar to the thesis of a scholarly paper and provides unity and coherence to the piece. It should not be too broad or too narrow. Several factors come into play when choosing a theme: Has the story been done before? Is the story of interest to the audience? Does the story have holding power (emotional appeal)? What makes the story worthy of being reported? The theme answers the question, "So what?"
 - **Write a lead that invites an audience into the story.** A summary may not be the best lead for a feature. A lead block of one or two paragraphs often begins a feature. Rather than put the news elements of the story in the lead, the feature writer uses the first two or three paragraphs to set a mood, to arouse readers, to invite them inside. Then the **news peg** or the significance of the story is provided in the third or fourth paragraph, the **nut graph**. Because it explains the reason the story is being written, the nut graph--also called the "so what" graph--is a vital paragraph in every feature. The nut graph should be high in the story. Do not make readers wait until the 10th or 11th paragraph before telling them what the story is about.
 - The body provides vital information while it **educates, entertains, and emotionally** ties an audience to the subject. The ending will wrap up the story and come back to the lead, often with a quotation or a surprising climax. Important components of the body of a feature story are background information, the thread of the story, transition, dialogue, and voice.
 - **Provide vital background information.** If appropriate, a paragraph or two of background should be placed high in the story to bring the audience up to date.
 - **Write clear, concise sentences.** Sprinkle direct quotations, observations and additional background throughout the story. Paragraphs can be written chronologically or in order of importance.
 - **Use a thread.** Connect the beginning, body and conclusion of the story. Because a feature generally runs longer than a news story, it is effective to weave a thread throughout the story, which connects the lead to the body and to the conclusion. This thread can be a single person, an event or a thing, and it usually highlights the theme.
 - **Use transition.** Connect paragraphs with transitional words, paraphrases, and direct quotations. Transition is particularly important in a long feature examining several people or events because it is the tool writers use to move subtly from one person or topic to the next. Transition keeps readers from being jarred by the writing.
 - **Use dialogue when possible.** Feature writers, like fiction writers, often use dialogue to keep a story moving. Of course, feature writers cannot make up dialogue; they listen for it during the reporting process. Good dialogue is like good observation in a story; it gives readers strong mental images and keeps them attached to the writing and to the story's key players.
 - **Establish a voice.** Another key element that holds a feature together is voice, the "signature" or personal style of each writer. Voice is the personality of the writer and can be used to inject colour, tone, and subtle emotional commentary into the story. Voice should be used subtly (unless you're able to make



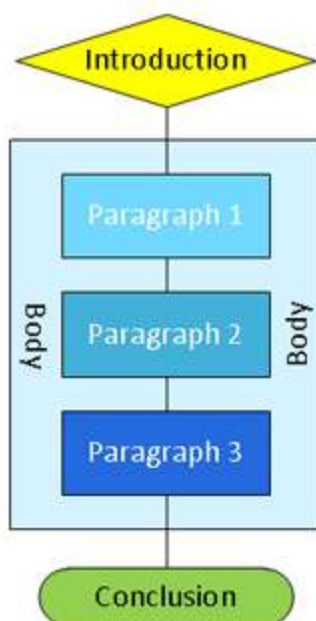
a fetish of it like Hunter S. Thompson!). The blatant intrusion of a distinctive voice into news writing has been called **gonzo journalism**--an irresponsible, if entertaining, trend in contemporary writing according to traditionalists.

- **Conclude with a quotation or another part of the thread.** A feature can trail off like a news story or it can be concluded with a climax. Often, a feature ends where the lead started, with a single person or event.

ESSAY

Essays are brief, non-fiction compositions that describe, clarify, argue, or analyze a subject. Students might encounter essay assignments in any school subject and at any level of school, from a personal experience "vacation" essay in middle school to a complex analysis of a scientific process in graduate school. Components of an essay include an introduction, thesis statement, body, and conclusion.

ESSAY STRUCTURE



Proper essay structure is critical for the success of a paper. It allows you to align your thoughts and ideas logically, making them readable and easy to understand for your reader. Basic essay logic starts out with the introduction of the essay's main idea and then explains it further in the body paragraphs and ends the essay by summing everything up in the last paragraph - the conclusion (see the scheme on the left). To better understand *why essay structure is so important*, try to imagine an essay that starts out with body paragraphs, followed with a thesis and a conclusion. Such essay would be impossible to read because of its faulty logic. Let's take a closer look at each of the components.



Introduction - The introduction is the main component within the structure of your essay. This part contains the main thought of the essay and states the purpose of your writing. The introduction typically consists of a thesis statement (also called “a topic sentence”) and a few more sentences that explain or expand the main statement. The topic sentence together with these few sentences are collectively referred to as the “introduction.”

Body - The two or three paragraphs that follow the introduction are called “the body” of the essay. They are called so because they make up the body, or the main bulk of the paper. This part of the essay usually contains research data and information that supports your thesis. The purpose of every paragraph within the body of your essay should be to support your thesis.

Using Paragraphs - Each paragraph should contain one main idea and should provide supporting details for your topic and thesis. The topic (introductory) sentence of each paragraph should support the main idea.

Paragraph Size - Even though there are no hard and fast rules regarding paragraph length, a general rule of thumb prescribes that a paragraph should not be neither too long (over 8 sentences) nor too short (under 2 sentences). Paragraph size varies depending on the essay style: for example the average paragraph length in business writing is generally 4-5 sentences, while the average paragraph length in academic writing is around 8-10 sentences. Academic writing tends to be longer because the author has to state a point, back it up with research data, and come to a conclusion. Such kind of writing usually requires a greater amount of writing.

Review Your Writing - Reviewing your writing or the post-writing phase takes place when you are done writing your paper. It’s always a good idea to put your essay aside for a couple of hours and then come back to it later. It is important to read through each paragraph to make sure your ideas make sense and convey your points clearly. Also, be sure that you have not strayed away from your main point. Each paragraph should be relevant to your thesis. If you have found that any of your body paragraphs strays from your thesis, a rewrite or omission may be necessary.

Conclusion - The final part in your essay structure is the conclusion. It summarizes the points made in the introduction and the body paragraphs of your paper. The core function of the conclusion is not only to summarize ideas stated in the introduction and the body, but to show how they relate to the thesis. A good technique is to use logical connections like: “as we can see”, “therefore”, “naturally”, “summing up” etc. Such connecting phrases help you to tie the points made previously with the actual text of the conclusion that you are writing. Once again, a conclusion should review your thesis and give a summary of your main ideas. Depending on your instructor’s requirements, your conclusion can range from one paragraph to a page in length.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A DESCRIPTIVE ESSAY

The descriptive essay genre encourages a writer to create a striking account of a chosen subject. A descriptive essay provides a good platform for a writer to express his or her feelings on a subject. As the name suggests, the essay is a description of an object, person, location, or experience. The essay generally includes an introduction, body and conclusion centered on a chosen theme. The writing style is expressive and may include descriptions, opinions, comparisons, personal perceptions and sensory perceptions. The main objective of a descriptive essay is to relate the unique qualities of the person, object, etc. vividly and comprehensively.

1) Capture Readers' Interest



A descriptive essay should make for interesting reading. To make the essay appealing, the writer needs to consider audience preferences, and use words and descriptions that pique readers' interest. For example, a descriptive essay about a car, written for potential customers, would describe technical and design specifications but would place greater emphasis on aspects that are more likely to concern or interest customers, such as gas mileage, speed, comfort, special features like a sun roof or add-on features like LCD screens.

2) Visualization

Descriptive essays are based more on "show" than "tell" -- giving readers a visual idea of the subject. For example, a "tell" sentence would be, "The sun disappeared into the water." The same sentence in "show" mode might read, "The setting sun disappeared in a blaze of red and gold glory, swallowed up, it would seem, by the vast expanse of the Pacific Ocean." Through vivid depictions, the writer conveys to readers individual impressions based on emotions or perceptions.

3) Perception: Descriptive essays make use of the five senses. The writer effectively conveys personal perceptions on the subject through the use of sensory details and figurative details. Sensory details are those that appeal to the five senses while figurative details involve the use of similes and metaphors to describe the subject. The use of sensory details makes the essay more vibrant and appealing to the readers' imagination. For example, graphic descriptions of odors -- pleasant or unpleasant -- allows readers to "experience" smells.

4) Objective vs. Subjective Viewpoint

A descriptive essay can be either objective (concrete, factual) or subjective (personal). The type of essay that a writer creates will be determined by the kind of emotion that the writer wants to elicit from readers. Presenting a purely objective can be difficult. Conversely, a writer can reduce subjectivity in an essay by including more objective factors, like size, color, shape and distance, exhausting them before injecting personal opinions or feelings.

PARAGRAPH WRITING

What are the characteristics of an effective paragraph?

1) Unity in paragraph

Unity in the paragraph means oneness of idea. A good paragraph possesses unity when all the sentences develop the main idea. Unity in the paragraph is achieved by the use of (1) a topic sentence with its controlling idea (2) supporting details, and (3) a clinching sentence.

2) Coherence in the paragraph

The word "coherence" derived from "cohere" literally means "to hold together". If the sentences in the paragraph should relate to the topic sentence to effect a unified whole, these sentences should further be arranged in an orderly sequence and linked to one another to ensure a smooth progression of ideas from one sentence to another.

3) Emphasis in the paragraph

Emphasis is concerned with how important the ideas can be made prominent. Ideas in the paragraph are made emphatic through (1) position in the paragraph, (2) proportion in discussion, (3) the use of parallel grammatical structures, (4) the repetition of key ideas, and (5) the arrangement of ideas in a climate order.

Characteristics of a Good Paragraph

Many writers are eager to write their ideas into several paragraphs and to submit their work when it is over. However, you also need to learn on how to determine the quality of your paragraphs. Know how to determine the characteristics of a good paragraph.

Not all the paragraphs are the same. Some are good, others border on clutter.



1. Your paragraphs should be unified. That means all of your sentences are geared towards pushing a central idea. Which idea? Now's a good time to look at what you actually wrote on the topic sentence.
2. Your paragraphs should be clearly linked to the main thesis. If a paragraph has nothing to do with the main thesis, it shouldn't even appear on your paper. Make sure the relationship isn't lost on the reader.
3. Your paragraphs should be coherent. Each sentence on the paragraph should lead right into the next, demonstrating a logical organization that sufficiently develops the idea.
4. Your paragraphs should be well-developed. That means your ideas are sufficiently rounded out and adequately discussed, ably aided by supporting evidence and illustrations that clarify the main points for the reader.
5. Your paragraphs should be correct. By correct, we mean it demonstrates adherence to the proper rules of grammar and sentence structures. Readers should be able to read it, after all, without risk of misunderstanding

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