GRASSROOTS

From *Grassroots: The Writer's Workbook*, Twelfth Edition
by Susan Fawcett

If found, please return to:

Name: _____

Phone: ( ) _____

Personal Error Patterns Chart

Error Type & Symbol	Specific Error	Correction	Rule or Reminder	Assignment & Number of Errors

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Proofreading Strategies

Many writers have found that the proofreading strategies described below help them see their own writing with a fresh eye. You will learn more strategies throughout *Grassroots*. Try a number of methods and see which ones work best for you.

Proofreading Strategy: Allow enough time to proofread.

Many students don't proofread at all, or they skim their paper for grammatical errors two minutes before class. This just doesn't work. Set aside enough time to proofread slowly and carefully, searching for errors and hunting especially for your personal error patterns.

Proofreading Strategy: Work from a paper copy.

People who proofread on computers tend to miss more errors. If you write on a computer, do not proofread on the monitor. Instead, print a copy of your paper, perhaps enlarging the type to 14 point. Switching to a paper copy seems to help the brain see more clearly.

Proofreading Strategy: Read your words aloud.

Reading silently makes it easier to skip over small errors or mentally fill in missing details, whereas listening closely is a great way to hear mistakes. Listen and follow along on your printed copy, marking errors as you hear them.

a. Read your paper aloud to *yourself*. Be sure to read *exactly* what's on the page, and read with enthusiasm.

b. Ask a *friend* or *writing tutor* to read your paper out loud to you. Tell the reader you just want to hear your words and that you don't want any other suggestions right now.

Proofreading Strategy: Read "bottom up," from the end to the beginning.

One way to fool the brain into taking a fresh look at something you've written is to proofread the last sentence first. Read slowly, word by word. Then read the second-to-last sentence, and so on, all the way back to the first sentence.

Proofreading Strategy: Isolate your sentences.

If you write on a computer, spotting errors is often easier if you reformat so that each sentence appears isolated, on its own line. Double-space between sentences. This visual change can help the brain focus clearly on one sentence at a time.

Proofreading Strategy: Check for one error at a time.

If you make many mistakes, proofread separately all the way through your paper for each error pattern. Although this process takes time, you will catch many more errors this way and make real progress. You will begin to eliminate some errors altogether as you get better at spotting and fixing them. You will learn more recommended proofreading strategies in upcoming chapters.

Checklist: Revising Paragraphs and Essays

- Can a reader understand and follow my ideas?
- Is my topic sentence (or thesis statement) clear?
- Have I fully supported the topic sentence (or thesis) with details, facts, and examples?
- Does the paragraph (or essay) have unity? Does every sentence or paragraph support the main idea?
- Does the paragraph or essay have coherence? Does it follow a logical order, guiding the reader from point to point?
- Is my language exact, concise, and fresh?
- Does my composition conclude, not just leave off?
- Have I proofread my work carefully, double checking for my personal error patterns?

Checklist: Proofreading for Common Errors

- Have I proofread for sentence fragments, comma splices, and run-on sentences?
- Have I proofread for incorrect present tense *-s* endings, past tense *-ed* endings, past participles, and for tense consistency?
- Have I proofread for confused singular and plural nouns, wrong pronouns, confused adjectives and adverbs, and incorrect prepositions?
- Have I made sure my punctuation is correct: commas, periods, apostrophes, semicolons, quotation marks, and other marks?
- Have I proofread for correct capitalization?
- Have I proofread for spelling and "look-alike" mistakes?
- Have I checked for omitted words?
- Have I made sure my layout and format, including title, date, and spacing, are correct?
- Did I proofread with special care for my personal error patterns?

Grassroots
WITH READINGS

The Writer's Workbook

TWELFTH EDITION

Annotated Instructor's Edition

Susan Fawcett

CENGAGE

Australia • Brazil • Mexico • Singapore • United Kingdom • United States

***Grassroots with Readings: The Writer's Workbook,* Twelfth Edition**
Susan Fawcett

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Brief Contents

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Preface

Grassroots with Readings grew out of my experience teaching English and directing the writing lab at Bronx Community College of the City University of New York. Existing texts labeled correct forms, the way handbooks do, but failed to teach my basic writing students how to write correctly. I began creating my own lessons, with clear, minimal instruction and lots of practice. Students loved these "sheets," which grew into the first edition of *Grassroots*. I designed *Grassroots* for a range of students—native and non-native speakers diverse in age, ethnicity, and background—who have not yet mastered the basic writing skills so crucial for success in college and most careers. The hallmarks of *Grassroots*' successful pedagogy are its clear, inductive lessons in writing and grammar; modular organization; inspiring student and professional models; numerous engaging practices and writing assignments; focus on critical thinking; top-quality reading selections; and ESL coverage that is carefully integrated throughout the text. I am proud that *Grassroots* has remained the leading basic writing text through eleven editions and has won peer-juried awards for excellence.

In planning this important Twelfth Edition, my publisher and I consulted instructors across the country to learn how *Grassroots* might better serve their needs and those of their students in this high-pressure time of course redesign and constrained budgets. They told us that while they wanted *Grassroots* to remain a writing text, they would like more coverage of reading strategies, a broader range of professional reading selections, some vocabulary work, and of course, many grammar-in-context practices on current topics. Their thoughtful comments inspired the changes in this edition: more focus on reading tools and strategies; many new professional readings, with a wider variety of nonfiction for students to analyze; new material on vocabulary building; and many fresh practices, thinking tasks, and writing assignments to keep students engaged. My goal in this edition is to help instructors prepare students more quickly for the academic and work challenges they will face, while still maintaining the clear, user-friendly approach that has helped millions of *Grassroots* students learn.

IMPORTANT NEW FEATURES OF *GRASSROOTS 12th EDITION*

New! Expanded focus on reading for writers

- Redesigned unit openers highlight *Grassroots*' read-think-write pedagogy, sometimes called the Fawcett MAP. Throughout the book, students learn by

reading a written MODEL, ANALYZING it, and then PRACTICING what they have learned, usually by writing.

- New Chapter 1, Part A: The Reading and Writing Connection, describes active reading, introduces the Fawcett MAP method, explains the positive influence of reading on writing, and introduces six useful reading strategies.
- Reading Tools for Writers, the new introduction to Unit 9, Reading Selections, includes a section on Active Reading, expanded Reading Strategies for Writers (emphasizing textbook chapters, essays, and longer pieces of writing), an Annotated Model Essay, and a section titled Connecting Your Reading and Writing that concludes with a colorful ***Checklist for the Reader* & *Checklist for the Writer*.**

New! Nine professional reading selections

- *Grassroots*' diverse and powerful array of 19 nonfiction selections, many by top authors, now includes nine fresh articles, textbook excerpts, and essays: Andrew Lam on American wastefulness, Constance Staley on single-tasking as the premiere skill for college success, comedian Kunal Nayyar on his first college job, Christine Porath on incivility at work, Karen Castellucci Cox on video games that foster four types of learning, Esther Cepeda on the right to dislike tamales, James Campbell on our fading connection to nature, Angela Johnston on the ethics of carebots, and Rebecca Sutton on the power of secrets. Student and instructor favorites from the previous edition—by authors like Sherman Alexie, Maya Angelou, Leonard Pitts, and Diane Sawyer—have been retained to round out this thought-provoking collection. Each reading is accompanied by a headnote, language-awareness and vocabulary questions, discussion questions, and writing assignments.
- *Grassroots* offers the strongest collection of readings anywhere. And for instructors who want even more professional selections to supplement their courses, Questia, a bank of digital readings, is available through *Grassroots*' MindTap.

Reorganized. Paragraph patterns newly configured in 3 chapters

The nine rhetorical modes have been reorganized into three, not two, chapters. Instructors requested this far more logical and easy-to-use division:

Chapter 5—illustration, narration, description
Chapter 6—process, comparison, contrast
Chapter 7—definition, cause and effect, persuasion

New! Language Awareness and Vocabulary Feature

- The questions accompanying each reading selection in Unit 9 now include two Language Awareness Questions, which focus on vocabulary building or language in context.

New! Thirty-two new high-interest practice exercises that teach grammar in context

- *Grassroots*' hundreds of carefully crafted practices on current topics set it apart from competitors. Not only does *Grassroots* offer more grammar in context than any other text, but it includes many more engaging paragraph- and

essay-length practices relevant to students' lives, education, and cultural literacy. Engagement with the text leads to persistence, and persistence is key to success in this course.

- Fresh subjects chosen to make students *want* to keep reading include 3-D printing • career skills taught on TV's *Shark Tank* • urban farmer Will Allen • the opioid epidemic • successful Latina businesswomen • Utah's canyons • the career of a medical sonographer • NBA and community star Kevin Durant • the effects of more female police officers on communities • San Diego Comic-Con • the drone debate • Lin-Manuel Miranda and the creation of *Hamilton* • the fastest-growing job in America • Paralympian Melissa Stockwell • Facebook pros and cons • NASA mathematician Katherine Johnson
- In addition, 42 more practices, like that on CTE brain damage in NFL players, have been updated with current research, thus modeling the research skills we hope to instill in our students.

Improved. Visual Program with 42 new images

The rich visual-image program that students so enjoy has been refreshed with 42 new photographs, graphs, public-service announcements, paintings, and cartoons. Reflecting the author's belief that today's students need critical viewing skills and deserve exposure to high-quality images as well as fine written models and readings, all visuals are chosen to engage students and augment the instruction at hand.

THE BEST OF GRASSROOTS

Grassroots with Readings, Twelfth Edition, retains the features that have made it the most popular first-level developmental writing text in the country:

- Clear, step-by-step lessons
- Hundreds of thought-provoking practices that teach grammar in context and keep students involved
- Provocative activities, writing assignments, and reading selections
- Critical thinking and viewing opportunities integrated throughout
- Modular organization and flexible flow of chapters
- Dynamic, clear design that supports basic readers and writers
- Numerous quality photos, paintings, cartoons, and graphics
- Integrated ESL coverage, with typical problems anticipated in the text
- "Exploring Online" web links for self-initiated practice and mini-research
- Unit openers, *Follow the MAP to Better Reading and Writing*, showcasing professional paragraphs
- Unit closers, collaborative Writers' Workshops, featuring student writing for guided peer review and writing
- Instructor's Annotated Edition that includes answers and the author's Teaching Tips and ESL Tips to guide new instructors or adjuncts and inspire even seasoned instructors

- Extensive, updated Test Bank
- Student answer key for faculty who want students to self-check

DIGITAL RESOURCES FOR *GRASSROOTS*

MINDTAP From Cengage

MindTap for Grassroots is a fully digital, highly personalized learning experience that combines student learning tools—the full e-book, including interactive versions of chapter activities, graphic organizers, flashcards, additional assessments, and more—into a singular Learning Path that guides students through their course. Instructors can personalize the experience by customizing respected Cengage content and learning tools with their own content. Engaging activities reinforce key concepts and provide students with the practice they need to build fundamental reading, writing, and grammar skills. *MindTap* can also be integrated with your school's learning management system.

- **Promotes students' study skills:** The e-book includes highlighting and note-taking tools that allow students to annotate and engage with the content and a Study Hub app that lets students create their own study guides.
- **Provides interactive exercises and activities to engage students:** Interactive activities and *Aplia* problem sets provide engaging exercises that challenge students and offer them a variety of ways to learn and connect with the content. Instant feedback reinforces key concepts.
- **Addresses students' busy lives:** Students can listen to chapters via the ReadSpeaker app while on the go. The *MindTap* mobile app also allows students to digest and interact with course content to stay on top of all assignments and class activities. The *MindTap* app features the e-book, flashcards, practice quizzes, notifications, reminders, and more.
- **Offers the option of Write Experience:** *Write Experience* encourages students to learn how to write well in order to communicate effectively and think critically. *Write Experience* provides students with additional writing practice without adding to an instructor's workload. Utilizing artificial intelligence to score student writing instantly and accurately, it provides students with detailed revision goals and feedback on their writing to help them constantly improve. *Write Experience* is powered by e-Write IntelliMetric Within—the gold standard for automated scoring of writing—used to score the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT) analytical writing assessment. Visit **www.cengage.com/training/mindtap** and check "WriteExperience" under "MindApps" to learn more.
- **Includes free access to Questia:** *Questia* is an online research tool containing more than 78,000 online books from reputable commercial and academic presses and more than nine million quality journal, newspaper, and magazine articles. *Questia* also guides students through the entire research and writing process, from selecting topics and finding sources to creating and organizing notes, building paper outlines, and formatting proper citations. In addition, *Questia* allows instructors to select and assign additional readings in *MindTap*.

aplia™

Aplia for Grassroots. Through diagnostic tests, succinct instruction, and engaging assignments, *Aplia* for *Grassroots* reinforces concepts and provides students with the practice they need to build fundamental reading, writing, and grammar skills.

- Diagnostic tests provide an overall picture of a class's performance, allowing instructors to instantly see where students are succeeding and where they need additional help.

- Assignments include immediate and constructive feedback, reinforcing important ideas and motivating students to improve their reading and writing skills.
- Grades are automatically recorded in the *Aplia* gradebook, keeping students accountable while minimizing time spent grading.
- **The Individualized Study Path (ISP).** An ISP course generates a personalized list of assignments for each student that is tailored to his or her specific strengths and weaknesses. ISP assignments are randomized, auto-graded problems that correspond to skills and concepts for a specific topic. Students get as much help and practice as they require on topics where they are weak. Conversely, if there are topics they understand well, no remediation is necessary and no additional assignments will be present.

On the ***Grassroots* Instructor Companion Website**, find everything you need for your course in one place. This collection of book-specific tools is available online via **cengage.com/login**.

- The **Instructor's Manual** offers suggestions for the new instructor looking for support or the more experienced teacher looking for ideas. Advice about instructional methods, assignments, and uses of the book's features are based on the author's many years of classroom teaching experience. Chapter-by-chapter notes provide an overview of concepts and skills addressed in each chapter, along with specific teaching suggestions.
- A robust and revised **Test Bank**, including hundreds of diagnostic and mastery tests, chapter tests, and unit tests, offers instructors a wide array of supplementary assessments that can be used as additional practice or as a way to monitor students' progress.
- **PowerPoint® lecture slides** are available for each chapter in the text.

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UNIT 1

Writing Effective Paragraphs

The goal of Grassroots is to make you a better writer, and Unit 1 is key to your success. In this unit, you will

- Follow the MAP to better reading and writing
- Learn the importance of subject, audience, and purpose
- Learn the parts of a good paragraph
- Practice the paragraph-writing process
- Learn how to revise and improve your paragraphs
- Apply these skills to exam questions and short essays
- Learn proofreading strategies to find and correct your own errors

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Follow the MAP to Better Reading and Writing

MODEL

Read, aloud if possible, this model paragraph, in which writer Alice Walker recalls her mother's extraordinary talent.

My mother adorned with flowers whatever shabby house we were forced to live in, and not just your typical straggly country stand of zinnias, either. She planted ambitious gardens—and still does—with over fifty different varieties of plants that bloom profusely from early March until late November. Before she left home for the fields, she watered her flowers, chopped up the grass, and laid out new beds. When she returned from the fields, she might divide clumps of bulbs, dig a cold pit, uproot and replant roses, or prune branches from her taller bushes or trees—until night came and it was too dark to see.

Alice Walker, "In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens"

ANALYSIS

- Ms. Walker's well-written paragraph brings to life her mother's passion for flowers. Are any words and details especially vivid? Why do you think Walker's mother worked so hard on her gardening?
- Good writing can make us remember, see, feel, or think in certain ways. Unit 1 will guide you through the steps of writing well and give you tools to improve your writing.

PRACTICE

- Write about an activity that you or someone close to you passionately enjoys.
- Write about someone who inspires you with her or his ambition or creativity.

CHAPTER 1

Exploring the Writing Process

Did you know that the most successful students and employees are people who read and write well? In fact, many good jobs today require excellent writing and communication skills in fields as varied as computer technology, health sciences, education, and social services. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, 73.4 percent of all employers want job candidates with strong written communication skills.

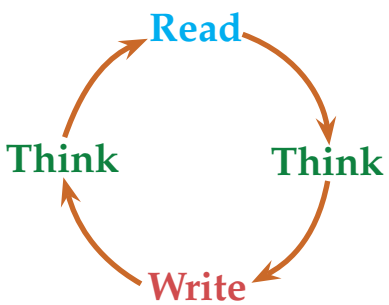
TEACHING TIP
You might engage students in a discussion about the kinds of reading and writing they expect to do in their future professions.

The goal of this book is to help you become a better and more confident writer. You will realize that the ability to write well is not a magical talent that some people possess and others don't but rather a life skill that can be learned. I invite you to make a decision now to excel in this course. It will be one of the best investments you could ever make in yourself, your education, and your future. Let *Grassroots* be your guide, and enjoy the journey.

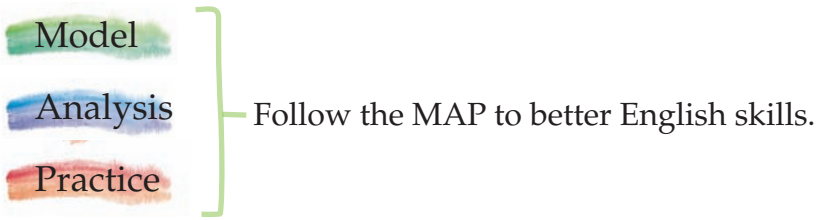
A. The Reading and Writing Connection

Reading and writing go hand in hand; practice in one improves the other. Often, people who loved to read as children become strong writers as well. They learn what good writing is through the books and magazines they read. But many others arrive in college without solid reading and writing habits; if you belong to the latter group, this course is an ideal opportunity for you to develop these skills. Your effort will pay off.

Reading and writing both require that you think critically. You can visualize the **reading, writing, thinking** process as a circle:



I have built the *reading-thinking-writing* process into every lesson in *Grassroots*. Instruction follows this simple three-step MAP to better English skills: (1) You will read a written MODEL (a sentence, paragraph, or longer piece of writing). (2) You will ANALYZE the model with the help of questions. (3) You will PRACTICE what you just learned, usually by writing. My publisher calls this the **Fawcett MAP**.



Model

Here's a sample of the kind of *model* paragraph, bulleted questions for *analysis*, and *practice* that will guide you through this book:

TEACHING TIP
You might wish to survey your students on their use of social media, or have the class create questions and conduct its own survey (e.g. What forms of social media do you use most frequently? Where do you get your news?). Use the results as the basis of a lesson.

In 2016, Stanford University researchers released the alarming results of a year-long study of how well American middle school, high school, and college students could evaluate information they read in articles, tweets, and comments online. Even the researchers were shocked by how easily and how often students were fooled. They tested 7,800 students in 12 states, and the poor results were consistent. In exercise after exercise, students could not tell the difference between a paid advertisement, an opinion piece, and a factual news article. Eighty percent of middle school students thought "sponsored content" was real news. At every level, most students had no idea that they need to check to see whether the news or information is factual and real or not—especially if they received that information through social media like Facebook and Twitter—and most didn't know *how* to check a source. The Stanford study itself became concerning national news.

Analysis

- What is the main idea of this paragraph? A 2016 Stanford study found that the majority of students are unable to evaluate information online.
- What facts and details are used to support the main idea? Did you find any details especially surprising or convincing? Which ones and why?

Practice

PRACTICE 1

Small group discussion: How serious, in your view, is the study's finding that most students don't know how to evaluate information online or tell facts from fiction? What, if anything, should be done about this problem? Take notes for a possible paper on this subject.

TEACHING TIP

For ideas on teaching your students to distinguish between factual and doctored information, try these sites: Digital Resource Center, Stony Brook University, NY, **drc.centerfornewsliteracy.org**, or "How to Tell Fake News from Real News" by journalist Laura McClure, **blog.ed.ted.com/2017/01/12/how-totell-fake-news-from-realnews.**

Caution: Reading on the Internet

Reading books, reputable newspapers, and magazines will improve your writing skills because these publications model good research and writing. You will find that analyzing good writing teaches you ways to develop and organize ideas and entice the reader with well-chosen details. On the Internet, however, be very cautious because many websites have no professional editors and researchers to review stories, fact-check, or correct grammar. Social media has revolutionized the way we connect with friends and the world, but valuable tools like Facebook and Twitter also have helped promote the viral spread of rumors and stories that are not factual. Because social media users trust their friendship circles, they rarely check the source or truth of information and "news" forwarded by friends.

Groups that write and send out false information are usually trying to sell something, make money with "click bait" headlines, or promote their own cause. They know that people often click on a shocking headline or "news" that supports their prejudices and quickly forward the story without thinking critically about it or checking the facts. So be wary when you read on the Web, especially on social media. Get your college and work information from government or university websites that post research-based, factual information and your news from respected organizations like the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Washington Post* that do solid research and reporting.

Active Reading Strategies for Writers

In Practice 1, you experienced **active reading**, as you will each time you complete a lesson or chapter in this book. The active reader doesn't just move his or her eyes down the page or screen, but is actively engaged—thinking, asking and answering questions, and marking the reading selection in ways that help him or her understand and remember. If you are reading celebrity gossip or a brochure from the supermarket, you will no doubt skim it and set it aside. But in order to master college textbook chapters, works of literature, and increasingly, to evaluate material on the Internet, you will need to become an *active reader*, armed with tools and strategies to help you understand and retain what you read.

In Unit 9, Reading Selections, you will find 19 provocative professional essays and articles, many by America's most respected authors. Unit 9 opens with tools and strategies to help you become a better reader, especially of longer material. For now, try out these six specific strategies to help you become a more active and effective reader:

1. Focus. Find a quiet, pleasant place to read or work on an assignment, in the library, for instance. Mute and put away your electronic devices. Distraction is a major barrier to college and work success.*

2. Preview the reading selection. This strategy is important for longer, more difficult reading assignments like textbook chapters. Before you read, scan the title, the article, and any subtitles to get an idea of what the piece is about. Look for the main idea and supporting ideas.

3. Read and Annotate. Now carefully read the piece through, thinking about its meaning. What is the main point the author is making? What details support this main idea? As you read, **annotate** the book or online text to help you follow and understand. For example, underline or highlight the most important or striking points. Write down notes or questions you have. Jotting as you read will help you remember.

4. Build Vocabulary. As you read and annotate, mark any words you don't know, so you can look up their meanings in your print or online dictionary. Keep a list of new words, and practice using them in your writing.

*"Zoom In and Focus" by college success expert Constance Staley, in Unit 9, explains why this step is a key to both college and work success.

5. Reread. Now read the piece again. You'll be surprised how much more you understand the second time.

6. Review and Retell. Before you discuss the material in class or are tested on it, be sure to review: go over your annotations, underlinings, questions to refresh your memory. A helpful tool for many people is to retell out loud the main points of the reading or chapter—what it is about. This refreshes your memory and helps prepare you to share your thoughts with more confidence.

PRACTICE 2 SELF-ASSESSMENT AS A READER

Think about something you read recently for college or work and about how you approached that task. In your journal or notebook, answer these questions: How would I describe myself as a reader? How many of the six strategies do I use when reading? Which ones sound most helpful? What one change would most improve my reading skills?

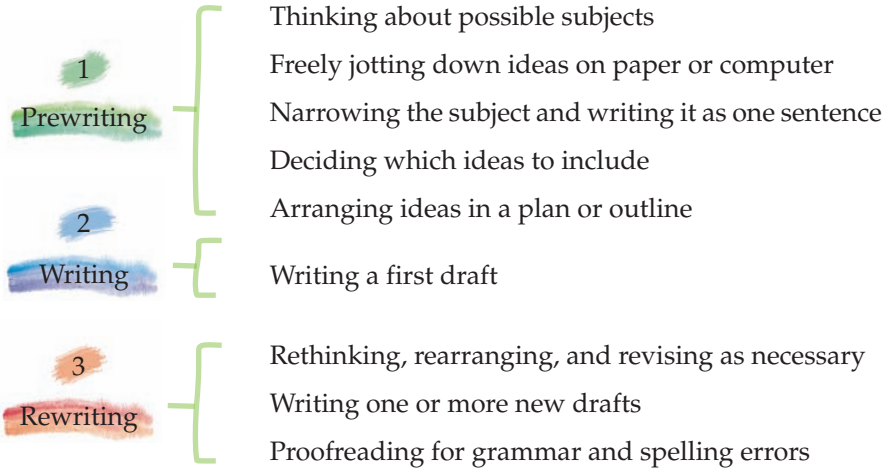
PRACTICE 3

Choose three careers you might wish to pursue and imagine what reading and writing tasks you might need to take on in each career. On a separate piece of paper, list them.

B. The Writing Process

The rest of this chapter will give you an overview of the writing process, as well as some tips on how to approach your writing assignments in college. Many people have the mistaken idea that good writers just sit down and write a perfect paper or assignment from start to finish. In fact, experienced writers go through a **process** consisting of steps like these:

TEACHING TIP
Visual representations of verbal processes help *visual and other learners.* To underscore the recursive nature of the writing process, write the three steps in a circle on the board, using arrows to show how a writer can move forward or back, from step to step.



Writing is a personal and often messy process. Writers don't all perform these steps in the same order, and they may have to go through some steps more than once. However, most writers **prewrite**, **write**, **rewrite**—and **proofread**.

It is important that you set aside enough time to complete every step in the writing process. A technique called **backward planning** helps many students manage their writing time. Begin with the assignment's due date and plan to complete each step on a different day. Using the calendar below, one student first wrote down the Friday deadline for her paragraph assignment. Then, working backward, she decided to proofread on Thursday and again Friday morning, to revise her paragraph on Wednesday, write her first draft on Tuesday, and start jotting and organizing her ideas on Monday.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2 *Jot down and organize ideas for paragraph.*	3 *Write first draft of paragraph.*	4 *Revise paragraph.*	5 *Proofread.*	6 *Proofread again. Final draft due!*	7

PRACTICE 4 SELF-ASSESSMENT AS A WRITER

Choose something that you wrote recently for a class or for work and think about the *process* you followed in writing it. With a group of three or four classmates, or in your notebook, answer these questions:

TEACHING TIP
Encourage students to perform similar self-assessments each time they receive feedback on their writing and to use self and instructor assessment to set personal goals in this course.

1. Did I do any planning or prewriting—or did I just start writing the assignment?
2. How much time did I spend improving and revising my work?
3. Was I able to spot and correct my own grammar and spelling errors?
4. What ideas or beliefs do I have about writing? (Examples: *In my field, I won't need to write*, or *English teachers make a bigger deal about errors than anyone else*.) Do any of my beliefs get in the way of my progress?
5. What one change in my writing process would most improve my writing? Spending more time for prewriting? Spending more time revising? Improving my proofreading skills?

PRACTICE 5

Bring in some help-wanted ads from a newspaper or print some from career sites such as **www.indeed.com** or **www.careerbuilder.com.** Study the ads in career fields that interest you. Next, count the number of ads that stress writing and communication skills. Be prepared to present your findings to the class.

PRACTICE 6

Using a calendar, employ the *backward planning technique* to plan the steps needed to complete your next writing assignment.

C. Subject, Audience, and Purpose

As you begin a writing assignment, give some thought to your **subject**, **audience**, and **purpose**.

When your instructor assigns a broad **subject**, try to focus on one aspect that interests you. For example, suppose the broad subject is *music*, and you play the conga drums. You might focus on why you play them rather than some other instrument or on what drumming means to you. Whenever possible, choose subjects you know and care about: observing your neighborhood come to life in the morning, riding a dirt bike, helping a child become more confident, learning more about your computer. Your answers to questions like those listed below will suggest promising writing ideas. Keep a list of the best ones.

TEACHING TIP
You might want to have students write their answers to these boxed questions.

To find or focus your subject, ask

- What special experience or knowledge do I have?
- What angers, saddens, or inspires me?
- What campus, job, or community problem do I have ideas about solving?
- What story in the news affected me recently?

How you approach your subject will depend on your **audience**, your readers. Are you writing for classmates, a professor, people who know about your subject, or people who do not? For instance, if you are writing about weight training, and your readers have never been inside a gym, you will approach your subject in a simple and basic way, perhaps stressing the benefits of weightlifting. An audience of bodybuilders, however, already knows these things; for bodybuilders, you would write in more depth, perhaps focusing on how to develop one muscle group.

ESL TIP
Studies show that it is harder to remember information exchanged orally in a second language; thus, for ESL students (and *visual learners*), writing on the board, working directly from pages in the text, and using charts are helpful memory aids.

To focus on your audience, ask

- For whom am I writing? Who will read this?
- Are they beginners or experts? How much do they know about the subject?
- Do I think they will agree or disagree with my ideas?

Finally, keeping your **purpose** in mind helps you know what to write. Do you want to *explain* something to your readers, *convince* them that a certain point of view is correct, *describe* something, or just *tell a good story*? If your purpose is to persuade parents to support having school uniforms, you can explain that uniforms lower clothing costs and may reduce student crime. However, if your purpose is to convince students that uniforms are a good idea, you might approach the subject differently, emphasizing how stylish the uniforms look or why students from other schools feel that uniforms improve their school atmosphere.

PRACTICE 7

List five subjects you might like to write about. Consider your audience and purpose. For whom are you writing? What do you want them to know about your subject? For ideas, reread the boxed questions.

	Subject	Audience	Purpose
EXAMPLE:	*how to make a Greek salad*	*inexperienced cooks*	*to show how easy it is to make a great Greek salad*

TEACHING TIP
Developmental students may think they have nothing to write about. To help counter this myth, ask volunteers to share their answers to some of the boxed questions. Do these help them complete Practice 7?

	Subject	Audience	Purpose
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

PRACTICE 8

With a group of three or four classmates, or on your own, jot down ideas for the following two writing tasks. Notice how your points and details differ depending on your audience and purpose. (If you are not employed, write about a job with which you are familiar.)

TEACHING TIP
Use actual emails, memoranda, letters of introduction, and other real-world documents to engage students and underscore the relevancy of effective writing.

1. For a new co-worker, you plan to write a description of a typical day on your job. Your purpose is to help train this person, who will perform the same duties you do. Your supervisor will need to approve what you write.
2. For one of your closest friends, you plan to write a description of a typical day on your job. Your purpose is to make your friend laugh because he or she has been feeling down recently.

PRACTICE 9

CRITICAL VIEWING AND WRITING

Study the advertisement shown below and then answer these questions: What *subject* is the ad addressing? Who do you think is the target *audience*? What is the ad's intended *purpose*? In your view, how successful is the ad in achieving its purpose? Explain.

TEACHING TIP
Print ads and cartoons are excellent tools to spark student interest and prompt critical thinking about subject, audience, and purpose.

PETA

PRACTICE 10

Read the following classified ads from real city newspapers around the country, if possible in a group with three or four classmates. The *subject* of each ad is a product or service that is for sale, the *audience* is the potential customer, and the *purpose* is to convince that customer to buy the product or service. How does each ad writer undercut his or her purpose? How would you revise each ad so that it better achieves its intended purpose?

ESL TIP
ESL students, like some native English speakers, may require intensive explanation before they undertake a new task, assignment, or unit. Clarifying and rephrasing instructions can sometimes improve their performance on a task.

1. Do you need a dramatic new look? Visit our plastered surgeons.
2. We do not tear your clothing with machinery. We do it carefully by hand.
3. Now is your chance to have your ears pierced and get an extra pair to take home free.
4. Tired of cleaning yourself? Let me do it.
5. Auto repair service. Try us once, and you'll never go anywhere again.

D. Guidelines for Submitting Written Work

Learn your instructor's requirements for submitting written work, as these may vary from class to class. Here are some general guidelines. Write in any special instructions.

TEACHING TIP
Discuss with students the negative impression that messy or unattractive written work gives readers.

1. Choose sturdy, white, 8 ½-by-11-inch paper, plain if you use a computer, lined if you write by hand.
2. Type or clearly write your name, the date, and any other required information, using the format requested by your instructor.
3. Double-space if you write on a computer. Some instructors also want handwriting double-spaced.
4. If you write by hand, do so neatly in black or dark blue ink.
5. Write on only one side of the paper.
6. Leave margins of at least one inch on all sides.
7. Number each page of your assignment, starting with page 2. Place the numbers at the top of each page, either centered or in the top right corner. (Your instructor may prefer your paper to be formatted differently.)

ESL TIP
Nonnative students may not understand the importance of speaking English whenever possible. Urge them to find a partner or study group with whom to practice speaking and writing English—other students truly dedicated to achieving success.

Other guidelines: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Chapter Highlights

Tips for Succeeding in this Course

- **Remember that writing is a process: prewriting, writing, rewriting, and proofreading.**
- **Before you write, always be clear about your subject, audience, and purpose.**
- **Follow your instructor's guidelines for submitting written work.**
- **Practice in reading will improve your writing and vice versa.**
- **Online, get your information and news only from respected sources until you learn to evaluate media stories yourself.**
- **Practice the six reading strategies.**

EXPLORING ONLINE

Throughout this text, the Exploring Online feature will suggest ways that you can use the Internet to improve your writing and grammar skills. You will find that if you need extra writing help, online writing centers (called OWLs) can be a great resource. Many provide extra review or practice in areas in which you might need assistance. You will want to do some searching to find the best sites for your needs, but here are two excellent OWL sites to explore:

owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/1

Purdue University

grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar

Capital Community College

Visit **MindTap** for *Grassroots* to access this chapter's ebook, flashcards, additional practice and quizzes, and more!

CHAPTER 2

Prewriting to Generate Ideas

The author of this book used to teach ice skating. On the first day of class, her students practiced falling. Once they knew how to fall without fear, they were free to learn to skate.

Writing is much like ice skating: the more you practice, the better you get. If you are free to make mistakes, you'll want to practice, and you'll look forward to new writing challenges.

The problem is that many people avoid writing. Faced with an English composition or a report at work, they put it off and then scribble something at the last minute. Other people sit staring at the blank page or computer screen—writing a sentence, crossing it out, unable to get started. In this chapter, you will learn four useful prewriting techniques that will help you jump-start your writing process and generate lots of ideas: **freewriting**, **brainstorming**, **clustering**, and **keeping a journal**.

TEACHING TIP
Emphasize to students that freewriting and other prewriting techniques are tools for the writer—not meant to be shared with others; therefore, the writer can feel free to explore.

A. Freewriting

Freewriting is a method many writers use to warm up and get ideas. Here are the guidelines: For five or ten full minutes, write without stopping. Don't worry about grammar or about writing complete sentences; just set a timer and go. If you get stuck, repeat or rhyme the last word you wrote, but keep writing nonstop until the timer sounds. Afterward, read what you have written, and underline any parts you like.

Freewriting is a wonderful way to let your ideas pour out without getting stuck by worrying too soon about correctness or "good writing." Sometimes freewriting produces nonsense, but often it provides interesting ideas for further thinking and writing. **Focused freewriting** can help you find subjects to write about.

TEACHING TIP
Mention to students that they can freewrite using a computer or paper and pencil, whichever method works better for them.

Focused Freewriting

In *focused freewriting*, you try to focus your thoughts on one subject as you freewrite. The subject can be one assigned by your instructor, one you choose, or one you discover in unfocused freewriting.

Here is one student's focused freewriting on the topic *someone who strongly influenced me*:

TEACHING TIP
Research indicates that freewriting can be confusing to some students with learning disabilities. Instead, they need to *verbalize* ideas before writing. Suggest that they talk with a partner for two minutes before they start to write or, outside of class, discuss ideas and record them with a small recorder.

Thin, thinner, weak, weaker. You stopped cooking for yourself—forced yourself to choke down cans of nutrition. Your chest caved in; your bones stuck out. You never asked, Why me? With a weak laugh you asked, Why not me? I had a wonderful life, a great job, a good marriage while it lasted. Have beautiful kids. Your wife divorced you—couldn't stand to watch you die, couldn't stand to have her life fall apart the way your body was falling apart. I watched you stumble, trip over your own feet, sink, fall down. I held you up. Now I wonder which one of us was holding the other one up. I saw you shiver in your summer jacket because you didn't have the strength to put on your heavy coat. Bought you a feather-light winter jacket, saw your eyes fill with tears of pleasure and gratitude. You said they would find you at the bottom of the stairs. When they called to tell me we'd lost you, the news wasn't unexpected, but the pain came in huge waves. Heart gave out, they said. Your daughter found you crumpled at the foot of the stairs. How did you know? What else did you guess?

Daniel Corteau, Student

- This student later used his freewriting as the basis for an excellent paragraph.
- Underline any words or lines that you find especially striking or powerful. Be prepared to discuss your choices.
- How was the writer influenced by the man he describes?

PRACTICE 1

1. Set a timer for ten minutes, or have someone time you. Freewrite without stopping for the full ten minutes. Repeat or rhyme words if you get stuck, but keep writing! Don't let your pen or pencil leave the page or your fingers leave the keyboard.
2. When you finish, write down one or two words that describe how you felt while freewriting. _____
3. Now read your freewriting. Underline any words or lines you like—anything that strikes you as powerful, moving, funny, or important. If nothing strikes you, that's okay.

PRACTICE 2

Now choose one word or idea from your freewriting or from the following list. Focus your thoughts on it, and do a ten-minute focused freewriting. Try to stick to the topic, but don't worry too much about it. Just keep writing! When you finish, read and underline any striking lines or ideas.

1. home
2. a good student
3. the biggest lie
4. a dream
5. someone who influenced you
6. your experiences with writing
7. the smell of _____
8. strength

PRACTICE 3

Try two more focused freewritings at home, each one ten minutes long. Do them at different times of the day when you have a few quiet moments. If possible, use a timer: set it for ten minutes, and then write fast until it rings. Later, read your freewritings, and underline any ideas or passages you might like to write more about.

B. Brainstorming

ESL TIP
To draw out nonnative students who hesitate to share aloud, try the anonymous brainstorming game, in which each student writes an idea related to the chosen topic (on precut scraps of paper if you wish). Ideas are then chosen randomly and discussed by the class.

Brainstorming means freely jotting down ideas about a topic on paper or on a computer. As in freewriting, the purpose of brainstorming is to get as many ideas down as possible so that you will have something to work with later. Just write down everything that comes to mind about a topic—words and phrases, ideas, details, examples, little stories. Once you have brainstormed, read over your list, underlining any ideas you might want to develop further.

Here is one student's brainstorming list on *an interesting job*:

midtown messenger
frustrating but free
I know the city backward and forward
good bike needed
fast, ever-changing, dangerous
drivers hate messengers—we dart in and out of traffic
old clothes don't get respect
I wear the best Descente racing gear, a Giro helmet
people respect you more
I got tipped $100 for carrying a crystal vase from the showroom to Wall Street in 15 minutes
other times I get stiffed
lessons I've learned—controlling my temper
having dignity
staying calm no matter what—insane drivers, deadlines, rudeness
weirdly, I like my job

As he brainstormed, this writer produced many interesting facts and details about his job as a bicycle messenger, all in just a few minutes. He might want to underline the ideas that most interest him—perhaps the time he was tipped $100—and then brainstorm again for more details.

PRACTICE 4

Choose one of the following topics that interests you, and write it at the top of your page. Then brainstorm! Write anything that comes into your head about the topic. Let your ideas flow.

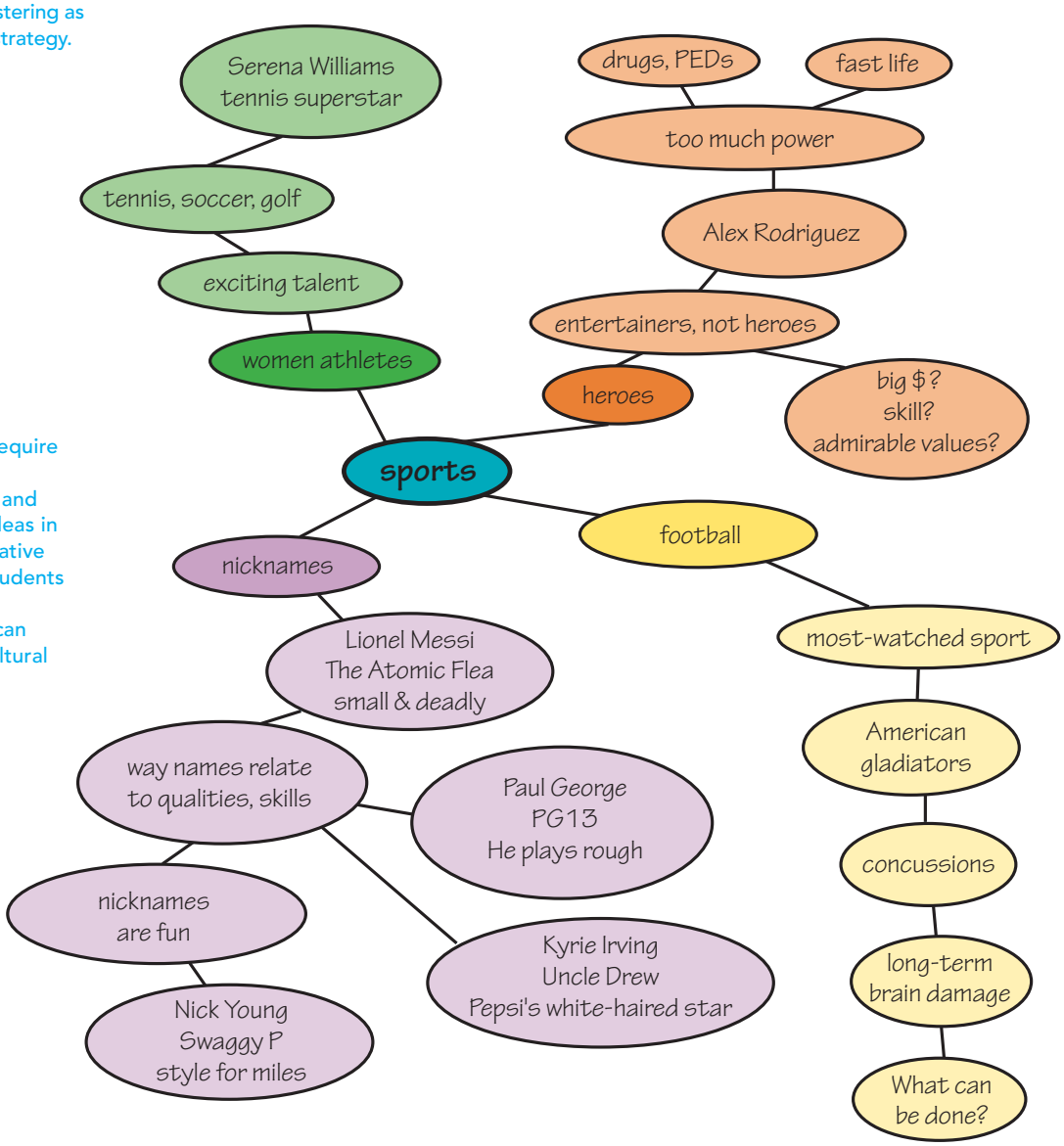
1. a singer or a musician
2. the future
3. an intriguing job
4. a story in the news
5. the best/worst class I've ever had
6. making a difference
7. a place to which I never want to return
8. a community problem

After you fill a page with your list, read it over, underlining the most interesting ideas. Draw arrows to connect related ideas. Do you find one idea that might be the subject of a paper?

C. Clustering

LEARNING STYLES TIP
Clustering works especially well for generating sensory details about descriptive topics. Encourage *visual learners* in particular to experiment with clustering as an idea-generation strategy.

Some writers find *clustering* or mapping an effective way to get ideas onto paper. To begin clustering, write one idea or topic—usually one word—in the center of your paper. Then let your mind make associations, and write those ideas down, branching out from the center. When one idea suggests other ideas, details, or examples, jot down those around it in a cluster, like this:



ESL TIP
ESL students may require an explanation of idiomatic language and culturally specific ideas in exercises. Having native English-speaking students explain unfamiliar terms or concepts can encourage cross-cultural discussion.

Once this student filled a page with clustered ideas about the word *sports*, his next step was choosing the cluster that most interested him and writing further. He might even have wanted to freewrite for more ideas.

PRACTICE 5

Read over the clustering map above. If you were giving advice to the writer, which cluster or branch do you think would make the most interesting paper? Why?

PRACTICE 6

Choose one of these topics or another topic that interests you. Write it in the center of a piece of paper and then try clustering. Keep writing down associations until you have filled the page.

1. movies
2. voting
3. a lesson
4. sports
5. my hometown
6. self-esteem
7. a relative
8. someone I don't understand

D. Keeping a Journal

Keeping a journal is an excellent way to practice your writing skills and to discover ideas for future writing. Most of all, your journal is a place to record your private thoughts and important experiences. Open a journal file on your computer, or get a special notebook. Every night, or several times a week, write for at least ten minutes in your journal.

What you write about will be limited only by your imagination. Here are some ideas:

TEACHING TIP
Ask students who are already in the habit of keeping a journal to share with the class the benefits of journaling.

- Write in detail about things that matter to you—family relationships, falling in (or out of) love, an experience at school or work, something important you just learned, something you did well.
- List your personal goals, and brainstorm possible steps toward achieving them.
- Write about problems you are having, and "think on paper" about ways to solve them.
- Comment on classroom instruction or assignments, and evaluate your learning progress. What needs work? What questions do you need to ask? Write out a study plan for yourself and refer to it regularly.
- Write down your responses to your reading—class assignments, newspaper items, magazine articles, websites that impress or anger you.
- Search online for great or famous quotations until you find one that strikes you. Or try this list if you wish: **www.goodreads.com/quotes**. Then copy it into your journal, think about it, and write. For example, Agnes Repplier says, "It is not easy to find happiness in ourselves, and it is not possible to find it elsewhere." Do you agree with her?

TEACHING TIP
Explain to students that although they may prefer one prewriting technique, they should try using several techniques if they need to generate more ideas about a topic.

- Be alert to interesting writing topics all around you. If possible, carry a notebook during the day for "fast sketches." Jot down moving or funny moments, people, or things that catch your attention—an overworked waitress in a restaurant, a scene at the day-care center where you leave your child, a man trying to persuade an officer not to give him a parking ticket.

You will soon find that ideas for writing will occur to you all day long. Before they slip away, capture them in words. Writing is like ice skating. You have to practice.

PRACTICE 7

Write in your journal for at least ten minutes three times a week.

At the end of each week, read what you have written. Underline striking passages, and mark interesting topics and ideas that you would like to explore further.

As you complete the exercises in this book and work on the writing assignments, try all four techniques—freewriting, brainstorming, clustering, and keeping a journal—and see which ones work best for you.

PRACTICE 8

From your journal, choose one or two passages that you might want to rewrite and allow others to read. Put a check beside each of those passages or mark them with sticky notes so that you can find them easily later. Underline the parts you like best. Can you already see ways you might rewrite and improve the writing?

Chapter Highlights

To get started and to discover your ideas, try these techniques.

- **Focused freewriting: freewriting for five or ten minutes about one topic**
- **Brainstorming: freely jotting down many ideas about a topic**
- **Clustering: making word associations on paper**
- **Keeping a journal: writing regularly about things that interest and move you**

EXPLORING ONLINE

owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/673/1

If you still feel stuck when you start to write, try these techniques from Purdue University's OWL (Online Writing Lab).

wvde.state.wv.us/strategybank/GraphicOrganizersforWriting.html

If you like clustering, click this list to view other ways to graph your ideas visually.

Visit **MindTap** for *Grassroots* to access this chapter's ebook, flashcards, additional practice and quizzes, and more!

CHAPTER 3

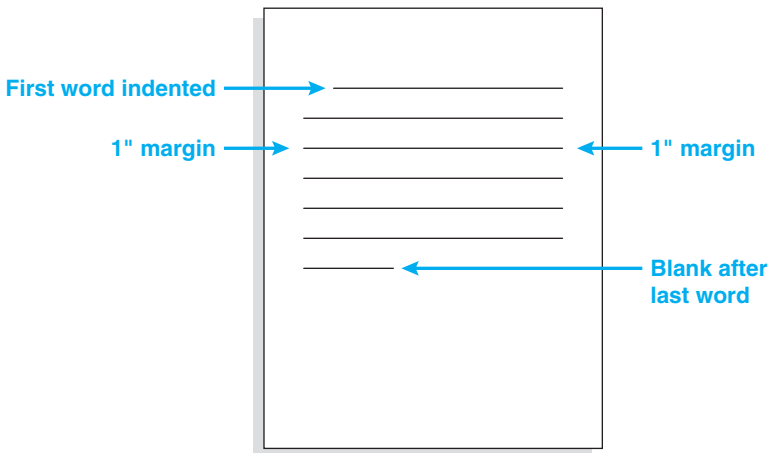
Developing Effective Paragraphs

The paragraph is the basic unit of writing. This chapter will guide you through the process of writing paragraphs.

A. Defining the Paragraph and the Topic Sentence

A *paragraph* is a group of related sentences that develop one main idea. Although a paragraph has no definite length, it is often four to twelve sentences long. A paragraph usually appears with other paragraphs in a longer piece of writing—an essay, a letter, or an article, for example.

A paragraph looks like this on the page:



- Clearly **indent** the first word of every paragraph about 1 inch (or one tab on the computer).
- Extend every line of a paragraph as close to the right-hand margin as possible.
- If the last word of the paragraph comes before the end of the line, however, leave the rest of the line blank.

Topic Sentence and Body

TEACHING TIP
Review with students the concepts of *general* and *specific* before covering the information about the main idea and topic sentence.

Most paragraphs contain one main idea to which all the sentences relate. The **topic sentence** states this main idea. The **body** of the paragraph supports this main idea with specific details, facts, and examples.

When I was growing up, my older brother Joe was the greatest person in my world. If anyone teased me about my braces or buckteeth, he fiercely defended me. When one boy insisted on calling me "Fang," Joe threatened to knock his teeth out. It worked—no more teasing. My brother always chose me to play on his baseball teams though I was a terrible hitter. Even after he got his driver's license, he didn't abandon me. Instead, every Sunday, the two of us went for a drive. We might stop for cheeseburgers, go to a computer showroom, drive past some girl's house, or just laugh and talk. It was one of childhood's mysteries that such a wonderful brother loved me.

Jeremiah Woolrich, Student

- The first sentence of this paragraph is the *topic sentence*. It states in a general way the main idea of the paragraph: that *Joe was the greatest person in my world*. Although the topic sentence can appear anywhere in the paragraph, it is often the first sentence.
- The rest of the paragraph, the *body*, fully explains this statement with details about braces and buckteeth, baseball teams, Sunday drives, cheeseburgers, and so forth.
- Note that the final sentence provides a brief conclusion so that the paragraph *feels* finished.

PRACTICE 1

Read this paragraph and answer the questions.

TEACHING TIP
Addiction is defined as "a compulsive need for a habit-forming substance or activity." Ask students whether they think video games really can be addictive. Do they know anyone who seems addicted to gaming? What specific behaviors lead them to this conclusion?

Millions of people play video games as a way to relax and have fun. Yet because video game addiction is a growing problem, gamers and their loved ones should know the warning signs. One warning sign of video game addiction is abandoning former interests. A gamer who stops participating in activities or social events he or she once enjoyed to play video games may be in the grip of a harmful addiction. Another indication of possible addiction is constantly thinking or talking about a game even while doing other things. If thoughts about the next gaming session prevent someone from paying attention to commitments, coursework, or other people, that player could be in trouble. A final warning sign is fighting with or lying to loved ones about the amount of time spent gaming. Neglecting relationships with family and friends is a classic sign of addiction. As with gambling and other addictive behavior, people close to the addict often spot these signs first while the addict vigorously denies having a problem.

1. Is the topic sentence of this paragraph sentence 1 or 2? Which of these best states the main idea explained by the rest of the paragraph?

   sentence 2

2. How many supporting points does this writer provide?

   three

3. What words help introduce each of the three warning signs of gaming addiction?

   One warning sign; Another indication of possible addiction; A final warning sign

PRACTICE 2

ESL TIP

Because ways of organizing ideas and language vary from culture to culture, Practice 2 is very important. Teachers should explicitly point out the *topic sentence (main idea) and support* organizational pattern to ESL students.

TEACHING TIP

Practice 2 works well in class.

Each group of sentences below can be arranged and written as a paragraph. Circle the letter of the sentence that would be the best topic sentence. REMEMBER: The topic sentence states the main idea of the entire paragraph and includes all the other ideas.

EXAMPLE: a. Speed-walking three times a week is part of my routine.
(b.) Staying healthy and fit is important to me.
c. Every night, I get at least seven hours of sleep.
d. I eat as many fresh fruits and vegetables as possible.

(Sentence b is more general than the other sentences; it would be the best topic sentence.)

1. a. Runners, hikers, and bicyclists sometimes use smartphone apps as personal trainers that plan a route and then provide maps, distances, and time goals.
   b. Many colleges are using smartphones to deliver instructional material, complete with course materials, music clips, and video.
   (c.) Smartphones are not just for calling or texting people, but can be used in many creative and innovative ways.
   d. Smartphone users can search for their soul mates, using dating apps to view multimedia profiles of available singles.

2. a. Each prisoner in the program receives a puppy, which he feeds, cares for, and trains to be a service dog for a combat veteran.
   b. The convicted felons often feel, many for the first time, a sense of responsibility, compassion for other creatures, and the power of unconditional love.
   (c.) The successful Puppies Behind Bars program improves the lives of both inmates and disabled war veterans.
   d. When a dog "graduates," each trainer presents his dog to a vet who returned from Iraq or Afghanistan with brain or bodily injuries.
   e. The disabled soldiers say that the dogs not only open doors, turn on lights, and dial 911 on special phones but greatly ease their anxiety and depression.

3. a. After meeting at band camp while in middle school in Virginia, Williams and his friend Chad Hugo began performing together.
   b. After releasing successful albums with his group N*E*R*D, Williams debuted his first solo album in 2006.
   c. Williams is now a Grammy-winning musician, producer, and TV star with fans all over the world.
   d. In 2013, Williams wrote and performed in three smash hits, Robin Thicke's "Blurred Lines," Daft Punk's "Get Lucky," and his own global hit, "Happy."
   (e.) An early love of music and performance launched Pharrell Williams on the path to stardom.

f. In high school, the two friends formed a producing duo, The Neptunes, later breaking through with stars Jay-Z, Britney Spears, and Usher in the early 2000s.

4. a. Physical courage allows soldiers or athletes to endure bodily pain or danger.
   b. Those with social courage dare to expose their deep feelings in order to build close relationships.
   c. Those rare people who stand up for their beliefs despite public pressure possess moral courage.
   d. Inventors and artists show creative courage when they break out of old ways of seeing and doing things.
   e. Psychologist Rollo May claimed that there are four different types of courage.

5. a. In middle school, she devoured books about detective Nancy Drew, a strong female role model of courage and character.
   b. Born to Puerto Rican parents in the Bronx, NY, Sotomayor fell in love with comics like *Archie*, *Spider-Man*, and *Batman* in elementary school.
   c. Sonia Sotomayor, the first Hispanic U.S. Supreme Court Justice, says that books were her "rocket ship out of the projects" and into a meaningful life.
   d. When she was weighing job offers, great novels like George Orwell's *1984* opened her eyes to the dangers of too much government and the right use of the law.
   e. When teenaged Sotomayor saw *West Side Story*, a modern *Romeo and Juliet* about rival gangs, a lightbulb came on—that great books dealing with human emotion are always relevant.

6. a. Many old toys and household objects are now collectors' items.
   b. A 1959 Barbie doll still in its original box recently sold for $3,552 on the eBay auction website.
   c. Many collectors now hunt for Fiesta dinnerware, made in the 1930s, in garage sales and resale shops.
   d. *Star Wars* action figures and vintage baseball cards are among the 10 most wanted collectibles.

7. a. In our increasingly global economy, employees who can communicate with non-English-speaking customers and overseas colleagues are in demand at many American companies.
   b. People who can speak and write two languages fluently possess a valuable professional, social, and mental asset.
   c. Studies confirm that bilingualism boosts brain power because adults who grew up speaking two languages stay sharper and quicker later in life.
   d. Bilingualism brings personal rewards, such as the ability to bridge cultural boundaries and broaden one's social network to include people of other nationalities and ethnic groups.

8. a. You should read the ingredients list on every package of food you buy.
   b. Children should not eat mandelona, which is made from peanuts soaked in almond flavoring.
   c. Avoid buying food from bins that do not list ingredients.
   d. If your child is allergic to peanuts, you need to be constantly on the alert.
   e. In a restaurant, tongs may have been used to pick up items containing peanuts.

B. Narrowing the Topic and Writing the Topic Sentence

The rest of this chapter will guide you through the process of writing paragraphs of your own. Here are the steps we will discuss:

1. Narrowing the topic and writing the topic sentence
2. Generating ideas for the body
3. Selecting and dropping ideas
4. Grouping ideas in a plan
5. Writing and revising the paragraph
6. Writing the final draft and proofreading

Narrowing the Topic

TEACHING TIP
Students often need extra practice in recognizing topics that are too broad for a paragraph. List topics of varying levels of specificity on the board, or use students' own ideas from the prewriting exercises in Chapter 2. Then lead a discussion about which topics should be narrowed.

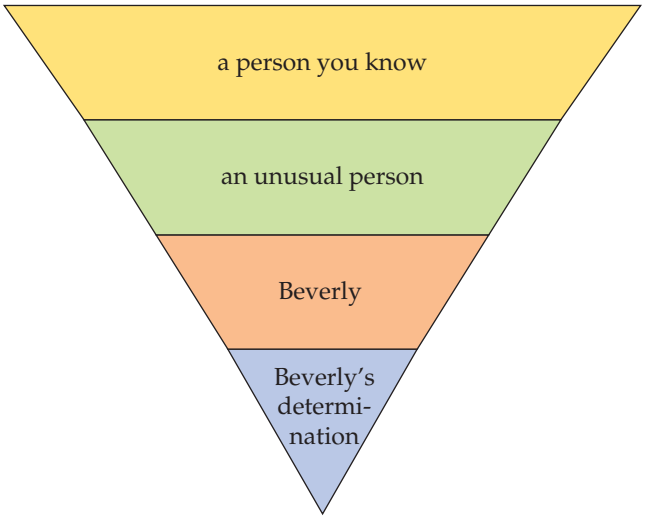
Often your first step as a writer will be **narrowing** a broad topic—one assigned by your instructor, one you have thought of yourself, or one suggested by a particular writing task, like a letter. That is, you must cut the topic down to size and choose one aspect that interests you.

Assume, for example, that you are asked to write a paragraph describing a person you know. The trick is to choose someone you would *like* to write about, someone who interests you and would probably also interest your audience of readers.

At this point, many writers find it helpful to think on paper by *brainstorming**, *freewriting*, or *clustering*. As you jot down or freely write ideas, ask yourself questions. Whom do I love, hate, or admire? Who is the funniest or most unusual person I know? Is there a family member or friend about whom others might like to read?

Suppose you choose to write about your friend Beverly. *Beverly* is too broad a topic for one paragraph. Therefore, you should limit your topic further, choosing just one of her qualities or acts. What is unusual about her? What might interest others? Perhaps what stands out in your mind is that Beverly is a determined person who doesn't let difficulties defeat her. You have now *narrowed* your broad topic to *Beverly's determination*.

You might visualize the process like this:



* Brainstorming is discussed further in Part C. Also see Chapter 2 for more information about prewriting.

PRACTICE 3

Good writers need a clear understanding of general and specific—that is, which ideas are general and which are specific. Number the items in each group below, with 1 being the most specific and limited, 2 being the second most specific, and the highest number being the most general.

TEACHING TIP
This type of exercise helps beginning writers think critically about the key writing concepts of general and specific.

1. ___2___ chairs
   ___3___ furniture
   ___1___ Grandma's oak rocking chair
   ___4___ household contents

2. ___1___ Malian singer Habib Koité
   ___4___ music
   ___3___ African music
   ___2___ music of Mali, West Africa
   ___5___ sound

3. ___2___ rose
   ___3___ flowering plants
   ___5___ living things
   ___4___ plants
   ___1___ the Betty Boop rose

4. ___1___ *Union-Tribune* sports writer Jim Jackson
   ___3___ California
   ___4___ North America
   ___2___ *San Diego Union-Tribune* office building
   ___5___ Earth

5. ___5___ athletes
   ___1___ Crosby's passing ability
   ___4___ hockey players
   ___3___ centers
   ___2___ Pittsburgh Penguins captain Sidney Crosby

6. ___3___ actresses
   ___4___ movie stars
   ___1___ Helen Mirren
   ___2___ successful older actresses
   ___5___ human beings

Writing the Topic Sentence

The next step is to write your **topic sentence**, which clearly states, in sentence form, your narrowed topic and a point about that topic. This step helps you further focus your topic by forcing you to make a statement about it. That statement sets forth one main idea that the rest of your paragraph will support and explain. A topic sentence can be very simple (*Beverly is very determined*), or, better yet, it can state your attitude or point of view about the topic (*Beverly's determination inspires admiration*).

Think of the topic sentence as having two parts: a **topic** and a **controlling idea**. The controlling idea states the writer's attitude, angle, or point of view about the topic.

topic **controlling idea**

Topic sentence: Beverly's determination inspires admiration.

All topics can have many possible topic sentences, depending on the writer's interests and point of view. The controlling idea helps you focus on just one aspect. Here are three possible topic sentences about the topic *attending college*:

TEACHING TIP
Suggest that students test out different versions of a topic sentence—with different controlling ideas—until they find the one they like best.

(1) Attending college has revolutionized my career plans.

(2) Attending college has put me in debt.

(3) Attending college is exhausting but rewarding.

- These topic sentences all explore the same topic—attending college—but each controlling idea is different. The controlling idea in topic sentence (1) is *has revolutionized my career plans*.
- What is the controlling idea in topic sentence (2)?

  has put me in debt

- What is the controlling idea in topic sentence (3)?

  is exhausting but rewarding

- Notice the way each controlling idea lets the reader know what that paragraph will be about. By choosing different key words, a writer can angle any topic in different directions. If you were assigned the topic *attending college*, what would your topic sentence be?

PRACTICE 4

Read each topic sentence below. Circle the topic and underline the controlling idea.

EXAMPLE: (Computer games) improved my study skills.

1. (Hybrid cars) offer monetary advantages over gasoline vehicles.
2. (White-water rafting) increased my self-confidence.
3. (Ed Bradley) achieved many firsts as a television journalist.
4. (Immigrants) frequently are stereotyped by some native-born Americans.
5. (A course in financial planning) should be required of all college freshmen.

Writing Limited and Complete Topic Sentences

Check to make sure your topic sentence is *limited* and *complete*. Your topic sentence should be **limited**. It should make a point that is neither too broad nor too narrow to be supported in a paragraph. As a rule, the more specific and well defined the topic sentence, the better the paragraph. Which of these topic sentences do you think will produce the best paragraph?

(1) My recent trip to Colorado was really bad.

(2) My recent trip to Colorado was disappointing because the weather ruined my camping plans.

- Topic sentence (1) is so broad that the paragraph could include almost anything.
- Topic sentence (2), on the other hand, is *limited* enough to provide the main idea for a good paragraph: how terrible weather ruined the writer's camping plans.

(3) The Each-One-Reach-One tutoring program encourages academic excellence at Chester Elementary School.

(4) Tutoring programs can be found all over the country.

- Topic sentence (3) is limited enough to provide the main idea for a good paragraph. Reading this topic sentence, what do you expect the paragraph to include?

It might explain ways in which the program encourages academic excellence at Chester.

- Topic sentence (4) lacks a limited point. Reading this sentence, someone cannot guess what the paragraph will be about.

In addition, the topic sentence must be a **complete sentence**; it must contain a subject and a verb and express a complete thought.* Do not confuse a topic with a topic sentence. For example, *the heroism of Captain "Sully" Sullenberger* cannot be a topic sentence because it is not a complete sentence. Here is one possible topic sentence: *Because Captain "Sully" Sullenberger landed a packed airplane on the Hudson River and saved 155 lives, he is a true hero.*

For now, it is best to place your topic sentence at the beginning of the paragraph. After you have mastered this pattern, you can try variations. Placed first, the topic sentence clearly establishes the focus of your paragraph and helps grab the reader's attention. Wherever the topic sentence appears, all other sentences must relate to it and support it with specific details, facts, examples, arguments, and explanations. If necessary, you can revise the topic sentence later to make it more accurately match the paragraph you have written.

Caution: Do not begin a topic sentence with *This paragraph will be about . . .* or *I am going to write about . . .* . These extra words contribute nothing. Instead, make your point directly. Make every word in the topic sentence count.

TEACHING TIP

An extremely common problem among new writers is awkwardly announcing the subject of their paper with "This paper will be about . . ." Emphasize the role of the topic sentence as stating a point of view about the subject, not announcing it.

PRACTICE 5

Put a check beside each topic sentence that is limited enough to be the topic sentence of a good paragraph. If you think a topic sentence is too broad, limit the topic according to your own interests; then write a new, specific topic sentence.

EXAMPLES:

✔ Texting has changed my life in three ways.

Rewrite: _____

I am going to write about cell phones.

Rewrite: *Talking on a cell phone can distract drivers to the point of causing accidents.*

* For more work on writing complete sentences, see Chapters 10 and 11.

✔1. Working in the complaint department taught me tolerance.

Rewrite: _____

_____

2. A subject I want to write about is money.

Rewrite: Saving money requires discipline but has unexpected rewards.

_____

3. This paragraph will discuss food.

Rewrite: It is hard to change some of the attitudes about food that we learn as children.

_____

4. Some things about college have been great.

Rewrite: Being able to set my own study schedule in college has improved my attitude toward studying.

✔5. Living in a one-room apartment forces a person to be organized.

Rewrite: _____

_____

PRACTICE 6

Here is a list of topics. Choose one that interests you from this list or from your own list in Chapter 1, Practice 7. Narrow the topic, and write a topic sentence limited enough to provide the main idea for a good paragraph. Make sure that your topic sentence is a complete sentence.

A talented musician	An act of courage
Why get an education?	Advertising con jobs
AIDS	Clothing styles on campus

Narrowed topic: _____

Topic sentence: _____

_____

C. Generating Ideas for the Body of the Paragraph

ESL TIP
Many ESL and other students tend to overuse generalizations. Try the acronym FIRE (fact, incident, reason/result, explanation) to remind them to be specific.

Rich supporting detail is one key to effective writing. A good way to generate ideas for the body of a paragraph is by *brainstorming*, freely jotting down ideas. This important step may take just a few minutes, but it gets your ideas on paper and may pull ideas out of you that you didn't even know you had.

Freely jot down anything that might relate to your topic—details, examples, little stories. Don't worry at this point if some ideas don't seem to belong. For now, just keep jotting them down.

TEACHING TIP
Create a paragraph with the class, honing a topic sentence, brainstorming, and selecting ideas for the body.

Here is a possible brainstorming list for the topic sentence *Beverly inspires admiration because she is so determined*.

1. saved enough money for college
2. worked days, went to school nights
3. has beautiful brown eyes
4. nervous about learning to drive but didn't give up
5. failed road test twice—passed eventually
6. her favorite color—wine red
7. received degree in accounting
8. she is really admirable
9. with lots of willpower, quit smoking
10. used to be a heavy smoker
11. married to Virgil
12. I like Virgil too
13. now a good driver
14. never got a ticket
15. hasn't touched another cigarette

As you saw in Part B, some writers brainstorm or use other prewriting techniques *before* they write the topic sentence. Do what works best for you.

PRACTICE 7

Now choose the topic from Practice 5 or Practice 6 that most interests you. Write your limited topic sentence here.

Topic sentence: _____

_____

Next, brainstorm, freewrite, or cluster for specific ideas to develop a paragraph. On paper or on a computer, write anything that comes to you about your topic sentence. Just let ideas pour out—details, memories, facts. Try to fill at least one page.

PRACTICE 8

TEACHING TIP
Practice 8 is difficult for some students and might be best done in small groups.

Many writers adjust the topic sentence after they have finished drafting the paragraph. In a group of three or four classmates, if possible, study the body of each of the following paragraphs. Then, working together, write the most exact and interesting topic sentence you can. Answers will vary.

1. Topic sentence: Students who are the first in their families to attend college often face special challenges.

One challenge is a lack of knowledge about how to apply, register for classes, and obtain financial aid. Students who are first in their families to attend college often lack an experienced guide to help them navigate these procedures. After they do enroll, first-generation college students may also find that their high school classes did not

TEACHING TIP
If many in your class are first-generation college students, you might recommend this site for helpful videos, resources, and inspiration: **www.firstinthefamily.org/.**

adequately prepare them for the academic demands of college work. Consequently, they may have to take courses to strengthen their reading, writing, or math skills. Even as they improve academically and progress through their studies, students whose relatives and friends never attended college must deal with a range of difficult emotions. They may feel anxious about pleasing proud relatives with high hopes for their success. They may fear losing old friends who undercut or even mock their college goals. They may experience stress from the constant struggle to find enough time to study. When they finally receive their college degrees, however, they always swell with pride, knowing that their accomplishment is worth every obstacle they have overcome.

Inocencia Colón, Student

2. Topic sentence: My hero is my father, who taught me what it is to be a man.

Despite his pressured schedule, he always found time to play with my sisters and me, tell us stories, and make us feel loved. From his example, I learned that men can be loving and show affection. In addition, he often sat with me and discussed the responsibilities of being a man. He instilled in me principles and morals that I would not have learned from the guys on the corner. My hero felt that a man should be the provider for his family. He demonstrated this by working two jobs, seven days a week. After many years, my father saved enough money to make a down payment on a three-bedroom house next to a park. He accomplished all this with only a sixth-grade education. The values on which I now base my life were given to me by my hero, an unknown man who deserves to be famous.

Robert Fields, Student

3. Topic sentence: Winter mornings in Minnesota were bitterly cold but beautiful.

Frigid air would hit us in the eyes when we stepped out the door to catch the school bus. Even though our faces were wrapped in scarves and our heads covered with wool caps, the cold snatched our breath away. A thin layer of snow crunched loudly under our boots as we ran gasping out to the road. I knew that the famous Minnesota windchill was pulling temperatures well below zero, but I tried not to think about that. Instead, I liked to see how everything in the yard was frozen motionless, even the blades of grass that shone like little glass knives.

Ari Henson, Student

D. Selecting and Dropping Ideas

This may be the easiest step in paragraph writing because all you have to do is select those ideas that best support your topic sentence and drop those that do not. Also drop ideas that just repeat the topic sentence and add nothing new to the paragraph.

Here is the brainstorming list for the topic sentence *Beverly inspires admiration because she is so determined.* Which ideas would you drop? Why?

1. saved enough money for college
2. worked days, went to school nights

3. has beautiful brown eyes
4. nervous about learning to drive but didn't give up
5. failed road test twice—passed eventually
6. her favorite color—wine red
7. received degree in accounting
8. she is really admirable
9. with lots of willpower, quit smoking
10. used to be a heavy smoker
11. married to Virgil
12. I like Virgil too
13. now a good driver
14. never got a ticket
15. hasn't touched another cigarette

You probably dropped ideas 3, 6, 11, and 12 because they do not relate to the topic. You also should have dropped idea 8 because it merely repeats the topic sentence.

PRACTICE 9

Read through your own brainstorming list in Practice 7. Select the ideas that best support your topic sentence, and cross out those that do not. In addition, drop ideas that merely repeat the topic sentence. You should be able to give good reasons for keeping or dropping each idea in the list.

TEACHING TIP

Organizing ideas is a key skill that many students lack. You might illustrate the process by "thinking aloud" as you reason out the best order of ideas for a paragraph. That is, model the mental process that writers go through when they plan.

E. Arranging Ideas in a Plan or an Outline

Next, choose an **order** in which to arrange your ideas. First, group together ideas that have something in common, that are related or alike in some way. Then decide which ideas should come first, which second, and so on. Many writers do this by numbering the ideas on their list.

Here is a plan for a paragraph about Beverly's determination.

ESL TIP

Emphasize to ESL and other students that they should include specific details in their paragraphs. How might the writer of this paragraph about Beverly add more specific details (e.g., the specific name of her college or workplace, her job title, and so forth)?

Topic sentence: Beverly inspires admiration because she is so determined.

- worked days, went to school nights
- saved enough money for college
- received degree in accounting

- nervous about learning to drive but didn't give up
- failed road test twice—passed eventually
- now a good driver
- never got a ticket

- used to be a heavy smoker
- with lots of willpower, quit smoking
- hasn't touched another cigarette

- How are the ideas in each group related? The first group of ideas deals with school, the second with driving, and the third with smoking.

- Does it make sense to discuss college first, driving second, and smoking last?

  Why? Yes, it makes sense. This may be the order of importance to the writer.

Keep in mind that there is more than one way to arrange ideas. As you group your own brainstorming list, think of what you want to say; then arrange your ideas accordingly.*

PRACTICE 10

On paper or on a computer, make a plan or outline from your brainstormed list of ideas. First, group together related ideas. Then decide which ideas will come first, which second, and so on.

F. Writing and Revising the Paragraph

Writing the First Draft

By now, you should have a clear plan or outline from which to write the first draft of your paragraph. The **first draft** should contain all the ideas you have decided to use, in the order in which you have chosen to present them. Writing on every other line will leave room for later changes.

Explain your ideas fully, including details that will interest or amuse the reader. If you are unsure about something, put a check in the margin and come back to it later, but avoid getting stuck on any one word, sentence, or idea. If possible, set the paper aside for several hours or several days; this step will help you read it later with a fresh eye.

PRACTICE 11

On paper or on a computer, write a first draft of the paragraph you have been working on.

Revising

Whether you are a beginning writer or a professional, you must **revise**—that is, rewrite what you have written in order to improve it. You might cross out and rewrite words or entire sentences. You might add, drop, or rearrange details.

As you revise, keep the reader in mind. Ask yourself these questions:

ESL TIP
Emphasize that revising is an essential follow-up to writing a first draft. This checklist of revising questions will help students focus as they revise.

- Is my topic sentence clear?
- Can the reader easily follow my ideas?
- Is the order of ideas logical?
- Will this paragraph keep the reader interested?

In addition, revise your paragraph for *support* and for *unity*.

* For more work on choosing an order, see Chapter 4, Part A.

Revising for Support

Make sure your paragraph contains excellent **support**—that is, specific details, facts, and examples that fully explain your topic sentence.

Avoid simply repeating the same idea in different words, especially the idea in the topic sentence. Repeated ideas are just padding, a sign that you need to brainstorm or freewrite again for new ideas. Which of the following two paragraphs contains the best and most interesting support?

A. Every Saturday morning, Fourteenth Street is alive with activity. From one end of the street to the other, people are out doing everything imaginable. Vendors sell many different items on the street, and storekeepers will do just about anything to get customers into their stores. They will use signs, and they will use music. There is a tremendous amount of activity on Fourteenth Street, and just watching it is enjoyable.

B. Every Saturday morning, Fourteenth Street is alive with activity. Vendors line the sidewalks, selling everything from DVD players to wigs. Trying to lure customers inside, the shops blast pop music into the street or hang brightly colored banners announcing "Grand Opening Sale" or "Everything Must Go." Shoppers jam the sidewalks, both serious bargain hunters and families just out for a stroll, munching chili dogs as they survey the merchandise. Here and there, a panhandler hustles for handouts, taking advantage of the Saturday crowd.

- The body of *paragraph A* contains vague and general statements, so the reader gets no clear picture of the activity on Fourteenth Street.
- The body of *paragraph B*, however, includes many specific *details* that clearly explain the topic sentence: *vendors selling everything from DVD players to wigs*, *shops blasting pop music*, *brightly colored banners*.
- What other details in *paragraph B* help you see just how Fourteenth Street is alive with activity?

serious bargain hunters

strolling families

chili dogs

a panhandler

PRACTICE 12

Check the following paragraphs for strong, specific support. Mark places that need more details or explanation, and cross out any weak or repeated words. Then revise and rewrite each paragraph *as if you had written it*, inventing and adding support when you need to.

Answers will vary.

Paragraph A: Aunt Alethia was one of the most important people in my life. She had a strong influence on me. No matter how busy she was, she always had time for me. She paid attention to small things about me that no one else seemed to notice. When I was successful, she praised me. When I was feeling down, she gave me pep talks. She was truly wise and shared her wisdom with me. My aunt was a great person who had a major influence on my life.

Paragraph B: Just getting to school safely can be a challenge for many young people. Young as he is, my son has been robbed once and bullied on several occasions. The robbery was very frightening, for it involved a weapon. What was taken was a small thing, but it meant a lot to my son. It angers me that just getting to school is so dangerous. Something needs to be done.

Revising for Unity

TEACHING TIP
Stress to students that outlining first and then using the outline as a guide while writing will help prevent problems with unity.

While writing, you may sometimes drift away from your topic and include information that does not belong in the paragraph. It is important, therefore, to revise your paragraph for **unity**—that is, to drop any ideas or sentences that do not relate to the topic sentence.

This paragraph lacks unity:

(1) Franklin Mars, a Minnesota candy maker, created many popular candy snacks. (2) Milky Way, his first bar, was an instant hit. (3) Snickers, which he introduced in 1930, also sold very well. (4) Milton Hershey developed the very first candy bar in 1894. (5) M&M's were a later Mars creation, supposedly designed so that soldiers could enjoy a sugar boost without getting sticky trigger fingers.

- What is the topic sentence in this paragraph? sentence (1)
- Which sentence does *not* relate to the topic sentence? sentence (4)
- Sentence (4) has nothing to do with the main idea, that *Franklin Mars created many popular candy snacks*. Therefore, sentence (4) should be dropped.

PRACTICE 13

TEACHING TIP
Practice 13 is fun to do in class.

Check the following paragraphs for unity. If a paragraph is unified, write U in the blank. If it is not, write the number of the sentence that does not belong in the paragraph.

1. U (1) Families who nourish their children with words as well as food at dinnertime produce better future readers. (2) Researchers at Harvard University studied the dinner conversations of 68 families. (3) What they found was that parents who use a few new words in conversation with their three- and four-year-olds each night quickly build the children's vocabularies and their later reading skills. (4) The researchers point out that children can learn from 8 to 28 new words a day, so they need to be "fed" new words. (5) Excellent "big words" for preschoolers include *parachute*, *emerald*, *instrument*, and *education*, the researchers say.

2. 5 (1) 3D printing may soon revolutionize the way many products are made and delivered. (2) A three-dimensional printer can layer ground plastic, metal, or other material, turning a plan into a physical product. (3) For example, Nike, Adidas, and Under Armour already are testing ways to print perfectly-fitted custom shoes for each customer right in the store. (4) Automobile manufacturers have begun to print lightweight aluminum car parts that no longer must be made from heavy metal and shipped from other countries. (5) Artificial intelligence will also transform the future. (6) Perhaps most exciting, medical researchers will be able to print custom human