



普通高等教育“十一五”国家级规划教材

新世纪大学英语系列教材

总主编 秦秀白

写作教程 6

文科英语写作

主编 刘海平 丁言仁

COLLEGE ENGLISH



*Research Writing in the
Humanities and
Social Sciences*



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2004年1月,教育部颁布了《大学英语课程教学要求(试行)》,将大学英语的教学目标确定为“培养学生的英语综合应用能力,特别是听说能力,使他们在今后工作和社会交往中能用英语有效地进行口头和书面的信息交流,同时增强其自主学习能力,提高综合文化素养,以适应我国社会发展和国际交流的需要”,提出了分层次(即“一般要求”、“较高要求”和“更高要求”)和分类指导的教学要求。与此同时,教育部在全国180所院校开展多媒体网络教学的试点,推广具有个性化学习特征的多媒体网络教学系统,并于2005年2月颁布了《全国大学英语四、六级考试改革方案(试行)》,2007年7月又下发了修订后的《大学英语课程教学要求》。这些举措进一步推动了我国高校大学英语教学全方位的改革和教学质量的全面提升。新世纪的教学改革呼唤新的教材不断诞生。这既是时代的召唤,也是历史的必然。

正是在这样的时代背景下,上海外语教育出版社于2004年初组织全国数十所高校启动了“新世纪大学英语系列教材”建设项目。项目开始之初,外教社以书面问卷、个别访谈和集体座谈等形式在全国数十所高校中进行了广泛的调查研究,并请专家对编写方案进行了多次论证。在上海外语教育出版社庄智象社长的直接领导和筹划下,经过三年多的努力,我们编写了这套“新世纪大学英语系列教材”,力图为新世纪形势下的我国大学英语教材建设作出新的尝试和努力。经教育部认定,这套教材已被列入“普通高等教育‘十一五’国家级规划教材”。

在编写过程中,我们力求体现以下一些编写理念和特色:

(一)坚持人本主义教育观。在确立“新世纪大学英语系列教材”的指导思想时,我们强调教学过程中的人的因素,强调“以学生为中心”,重视开发学习者的自我潜能,注重“情感”和“态度”在学习活动中的作用和力量,力图使学生成为“自我实现者”。与此同时,我们认为,教师必须在课堂内外发挥指导作用,指导学生学会学习。

(二)尊重外语教学的普遍规律和在国内学习英语的客观条件,充分考虑“人”、“语言”和“社会”之间存在的互为依存、互动互促、密不可分的关系,开拓学习者的跨文化交际视野,让学生置身于广阔的社会文化情景之中,养成用英语进行思维的习惯,做到学有所思、思有所得、得有所用,从而不再感到英语是身外之物,实现英语综合运用能力和学习者人格、素质的同步提升。

(三)立足国情,博采众长,充分吸收我国外语教学长期积累下来的宝贵经验和行之有效的教学方法,全面而辩证地审视国外盛行的教学理念,汲取其精髓和内涵,兼收并蓄地注入我们的教学理念中,确保教材具有更好的系统性、科学性、完整性、针对性和实用性。

(四)全面落实《大学英语课程教学要求》提出的教学原则、教学内容和所倡导的教学方法,确保“分层次教学”和“分类指导”的落实,让不同地区、不同群体、不同层次乃至不同时期的学习者各尽其能、各取所需地选用学习资源。为此,系列教材的主干教程共分8册,旨在实现“一般要求”(1-4册)、“较高要求”(3-6册)和“更高要求”(5-8册)的学习目标。不同类别的学校可根据各自的情况从中选择各自的教学起点。

(五)为了体现人本主义的教育观并贯彻“个性化学习”、“自主式学习”、“合作学习”等先进学习理念,“新世纪大学英语系列教材”在课堂教学活动和课后学习活动的设计和安排等方面为教师和学生都提供了较为广阔的空间,教师和学生都可以根据各自的情况和面对的教学条件选择恰当的教材起点、教学模式和学习模式,实现《大学英语课程教学要求》提出的教学模式的改变,即从“以教师为中心、单纯传授语言知识与技能的教学模式”向“以学生为中心、既传授一般的语言知识与技能,更注重培养语言运用能力和自主学习能力的教学模式”的转变。

(六)在教学内容的安排上,本系列教材讲求科学性和系统性;在培养学生英语综合运用能力方面,本系列教材注重听说训练,强调听、说、读、写、译等诸方面技能协调而全面的发展;在练习设计上,本系列教材突出实用性、新颖性和可操作性。

(七)为适应新形势下我国高校英语教育的需求,“新世纪大学英语系列教材”增加了诸如“经贸类”和“文化类”的选修课教程。这些用英文撰写的选修课教程旨在拓宽学生的相关专业知识,进一步提高学生的英语思维能力和听、说、读、写、译诸方面的语言应用技能。

“新世纪大学英语系列教材”由《综合教程》、《阅读教程》、《视听说教程》、《写作教程》、《快速阅读》和选修课系列教程等部分组成。除《快速阅读》外,各教程均配有教师手册。《综合教程》和《视听说教程》配有学习光盘和电子教案;《写作教程》配有电子教案;《快速阅读》配有学习光盘。各教程虽自成体系,但理念相通、联系密切、相得益彰,为学生和教师提供了比较完整的、多元的、立体化的英语教学平台。

“新世纪大学英语系列教材”各教程及主编如下:

教材名称	主编
综合教程	秦秀白 华南理工大学
阅读教程	黄源深 上海对外贸易学院
视听说教程	杨惠中 上海交通大学
写作教程	刘海平 南京大学
快速阅读	束定芳 上海外国语大学
经贸类选修课教程	黄震华 对外经济贸易大学
文化类选修课教程	石坚 四川大学

新世纪呼唤新教材,新教材体现新理念。和外语界的众多前辈一样,我们在特定的历史条件下做了一件我们认为有意义的工作。我们培育的这棵新苗需要更多园丁的抚育和护理。我们期待着她的成长、壮大、开花、结果。

秦秀白

“新世纪大学英语系列教材”是我国普通高等教育“十一五”国家级规划教材，根据教育部高等教育司颁发《大学英语课程教学要求》的原则精神与具体目标编写。《写作教程》为该系列教材的有机组成部分。

《写作教程》(*Writing as Communication*)前四册旨在培养高校学生英语写作意识，传授英语写作基本概念，训练写作技巧，提高学生英语书面表达和沟通能力，并在此基础上带动听、说、读、译等其他能力的提高。《写作教程》前四册目标设定为《大学英语课程教学要求》对写作的“一般要求”，并向“较高要求”过渡。而《写作教程》第五至第八册的目标设定和内容设计与前四册均有较大不同。后四册写作教材不再需要、也无法再以写作知识和技巧为各册之间循序递进的线索，与大学英语四六级测试也无直接关系。它们面向我国教育、文化、经济和科学技术国际化步伐不断加快的发展态势，突出英语写作与学生现在或未来选修以英语讲授的专业课程、撰写课程论文和学术报告之间的联系，强调英语写作能力与毕业后工作岗位上各种需要的结合。《写作教程》第五至第八册基于“学术英语”(English for academic purposes, EAP)及“特殊用途英语”(English for special purposes, ESP)之理念，分别面对学术研究和职场应用的实际问题，编写均从完成项目、办理实事的角度出发，要求学生收集资料，分析问题，组成小组，分解任务，齐心协力，写出有深度有质量的作文。

本书为第六册《文科英语写作》(*Research Writing in the Humanities and Social Sciences*)，内容为研究型论文的写作，要求学生根据自己的专业和研究兴趣自选题目，独立研究，并学会使用规范的英语书面语来报告自己的研究结果。这样的写作对学生是有一定难度的。对老师来说，要想教好，就应该针对学生的专业、论文撰写所处不同阶段，以及不同的研究问题而灵活使用教材。本书兼顾人文和社科，因此根据不同专业方向的教学对象，每个单元的教学内容可以有所侧重和取舍。再者，第二单元Writing the Body涉及到一些大部分本科学生尚未掌握的学术研究方法，教师可根据学生的专业和水平，另选一些合适的范文，帮助他们理解课文内容。

《文科英语写作》经南京大学外国语学院、大学外语部、金陵学院和南京工业大学外国语学院很多老师数年努力编写而成，部分内容还在教学中试用，但由于水平不够，问题在所难免，欢迎读者指出，以便今后修改订正。

《写作教程》第六册除学生用书外，还配有电子教案(Electronic Teaching Portfolio)等辅助资料。编写过程中，我们得到上海外语教育出版社社长兼总编庄智象教授悉心指导和大力支持；“新世纪大学英语系列教材”编委会秦秀白、黄源深、杨惠中、石坚、黄震华、束定芳等教授审查了《写作教程》各分册选题内容；英籍专家Anthony Ward先生对教材英语文字作了通读润饰；上海外语教育出版社孙玉副总编、高等教育事业部主任谢宇和责任编辑杭海等为教程的出版做了大量仔细工作。编者在此一并致谢。

编者
2011年4月

同十年或更长一段时间以前的情况相比，我国当代的大学教育更加国际化了。有的大学不仅有外籍教师上英语课，学生还可以选修外籍或海归教师用英语上的专业课。还有的大学学生可以出国交流或在海外学习，到英语国家(或用英语教学)的一所大学上一个或两个学期的课，再回来读完本科。在外籍教师的专业课上或者在国外大学的课堂上，英语的课程论文是必不可少的，有的老师还会要求学生提交一篇完整的学术论文。这些论文都必须符合一定学术规范和格式，而我们在一般的英语课上很少能学到这些规范和格式。

这本《文科英语写作》介绍的就是如何写好这样的研究性论文(research paper)。与我们平时英语作文课上的作文相比，研究性论文最突出的特点就是“研究”。在普通的作文课上，老师给了题目后我们往往略加思索就可以动笔了，所写的内容在动笔之前就完全在我们的头脑里。而研究性论文则要求我们收集、分析、整理素材，得出结论，然后再将这一过程和结果写成报告，换句话说，所写内容在动笔之前并不完全在我们的头脑里。譬如说我们要写一篇关于“黄宗羲定律”的论文，我们不可能不查对这位明末清初思想家的有关论述就动笔打草稿。一篇研究性论文报告的不是自己个人的思想、观点、情感，而是自己研究的结果，即使有个人倾向性，也必须有充分的事实依据。因此，写一篇研究性论文也是一个增长知识的过程，可以说，写完一篇有质量的研究性论文，你就成了所写领域的一个小小的专家。比起普通的作文，研究性论文的内容要深刻得多。即使我们将来不从事研究工作，撰写研究性论文也为我们走上工作岗位将遇到的挑战提供了很好的应对训练：在机关或者企业，写一份简单的报告也往往要作一定的“研究”，引用数据，进行分析，得出结论。

研究性论文还有一个特点，就是在报告自己的研究时还要报告别人在同一问题上已做过的研究，说明自己的研究是怎样继续(补充深入或挑战批评)他人研究的。这样做使读者清楚地看到你的结果是怎样得出的，别人给了你多少启示和帮助，你在哪些地方做出了自己的贡献。学术规范反映了学术道德，如果借用别人的观点和文字而不加说明，则是剽窃抄袭，是严重的学术不端行为。为此，研究性论文对于引用和著录参考文献有详细的格式上的要求。凡是正文中引用的文献在正文后面的参考文献中都必须著录，而凡是参考文献中著录的文献在正文中也必须有所引用。英语人文学科论文中引用和著录应该按MLA(即Modern Language Association)格式，社会科学论文中引用和著录要求按APA(即American Psychological Association)格式。

除了以上两点不同以外，要写好一篇研究性论文还要有高度的“激情”，对论文的题目

或观点要能够持续地左思右想，反复考虑，甚至为此茶饭无味、夜不能寐。写好一篇几百字的短文也需要有这样的激情，但是远远不能与写长篇幅研究性论文所需要的那种持续几周、几月的激情相比。正因为这样，写好一篇研究性论文的关键在于找到一个自己真正感兴趣的研究题目。一般说来，对某个领域兴趣越大、了解越多、阅读越多，就越容易找到一个自己喜欢的题目。

学会撰写研究性论文就是学会查找资料，分析、鉴别、判断资料，以便回答书本上没有现成答案的问题；就是学会独立思考，独立地分析问题、解决问题；因而它也是我们成长经历中的一件大事。假如进了大学以后每门课都是老师讲、我们听的模式，那么在开始学习写研究性论文时会感到一定的困难。但是只要坚持不懈，锲而不舍，就没有什么克服不了的困难。但愿我们花了几年时间编写和试用的这本教材，能成为你克服困难抵达彼岸的桥梁。

随着我国综合国力的增强和人民生活水平的提高，我们的高等教育也日趋国际化，部分大学的一些文理课程已经开始用英文授课，学校积极鼓励学生参与国际学术和文化交流活动。然而目前绝大多数高等院校英语教学的内容和方法仍然滞后，难以满足社会对人才的需求。在课堂上，英语写作的讲授仅仅为了应付四六级、四八级考试，往往引导学生背范文，老师出题目，学生按考试要求写上几百个字。学生不需要就作文题目作深入思考和研究，无须查阅资料，他们写的内容与他们的真实思想和实际应用严重脱节。这样的写作课没有给学生任何表达思想、发挥研究能力和创造能力的空间，学生没有兴趣，语言学习效率低下就很自然了。

花了近四年时间完成的《新世纪大学英语写作教程》一至四册在2008年正式出版。现在我们之所以又着手《新世纪大学英语写作教程》后几册的编写工作，一方面是受到出版社转来前四册使用者比较积极的反馈信息的鼓舞，另一方面是希望能进一步探讨英语写作教学改革的新思路、新方法。较长时间以来，我们习惯于“老师布置学生写”，对学生如何去写则考虑较少。而实际生活中的写作往往有一个素材搜集、加工、整理、分析、思考的过程，拿到题目马上动笔的情况可能仅仅发生在考试中，这样写不可能有多少深度或多高的质量。为了调动学生的积极性，鼓励他们真正按照英语文本的规范表达、讨论、交流自己的看法，为进入工作岗位或者研究生阶段的写作打下基础，我们在《写作教程》后几册中，注重培养学生就一个题目进行持续性调查研究和写作修改的能力，鼓励他们认真阅读资料，分析讨论，相互帮助，写出他们最有质量、最有深度的作文。比如第五册《职场英语写作》涉及网页、使用说明、项目报告等不同文体的写作，从内容上说往往超出了学生所掌握的信息，不收集素材不可能完成作业；从作业量上说，也超出了—个学生用—节课或者—周时间所能完成的功课。学生必须组成小组，每组选—个题目，大家分工合作，用几周时间共同完成—份作业。第六册《文科英语写作》的内容是研究性论文的撰写，尽管这样的写作—般是由—个人完成的，但写作的时间可以是几周甚至几个月，要求学生反复调查研究，反复核对修改，不可能像以往在作文课上那样拿到题目—拍脑袋，—蹴而就。

我们这样的一些做法也许可以叫做“项目教学法”，由老师指导学生确定项目，查找资料，完成各自的研究和撰写。这在许多英语国家已经不是什么新方法了。他们从小学就开始普遍使用这种“项目教学法”，叫做project approach或者project-based learning。老师让学生就—个感兴趣的题目收集和阅读大量相关资料，采访调查，分析研究，得出结论，整理成表格、图片、文字材料，向全班报告。与我们所熟悉的作文课当堂写作显著不同的是，学生在

“项目”开始阶段往往并不知道自己会发现什么，得出什么样的结论。所以，完成项目的过程也是一个调查研究、增长知识、形成初步想法和不断深入思考的过程。同时，很多“项目”必须由学生组成小组连续工作相当一段时间才能完成，因此项目教学法能激发学生的学习兴趣，符合知识习得和能力培养的规律，也有利于培养学生的集体观念和团队精神。

对于英语教学来说，用项目教学法来上写作课还有一个重要的作用，就是促进读写结合。输出(output)的关键在于输入(input)，英语写作的文字水平很大程度上来自于阅读过程中对语句用法的关注度。不少学生阅读时满足于理解内容，很少去关注阅读材料的作者是如何使用语言的，这样，他们的阅读理解可以达到较高的水平，但写作水平却难以提高，读的时候看不到，用的时候想不到。项目教学法相当于二语习得理论中的输出假说，在做“项目”的时候，学生为写而读，读到的马上就用，他们就会关注别人如何使用语言，从而不断掌握新的语言点，提高自己的写作水平。

用好项目教学法，重要的一点是“项目”本身要有一定的难度，必须有一定的工作量，有一定的思想深度。我们往往只想到学生必须先掌握好语言才能写好较难的题目，但实际上我们还应该同时看到：语言服务于交际活动，活动的内容有一定深度才能促使学生去积极学习语言。有深度的写作内容可以帮助学生走出“浅阅读”的怪圈，学会思考和研究，分析别人的观点，用论据支持自己的观点。在英语学习方面，有一定的难度才能使学生看到自己的差距，端正学习态度，不断取得进步。

在我们心中，《写作教程》的这几册书的对象是大学英语六级或者通过六级的学生，当然也适合一定程度的英语专业学生当作教材或教材参考书。这几册新的教材是南京大学、南京大学金陵学院、南京工业大学很多老师花了几年的努力才编写完成的，在教学科研之余挤出点点滴滴时间编写教材，不难想象所遇到的困难。同时，由于时间较紧以及我们自己水平有限，教材一定存在许许多多的问题，我们诚挚地欢迎使用这套教材的老师们对我们提出批评和指正。

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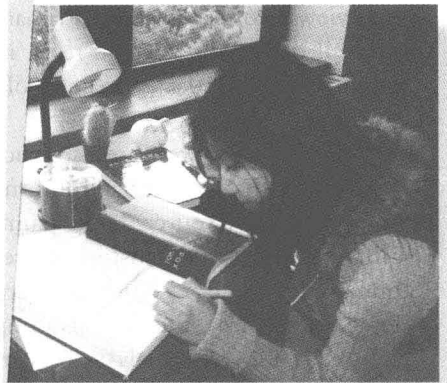
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Introduction

To the student

Do you panic when asked to write a research paper? Perhaps you do, because almost everybody does. But you will agree that being able to write a good research paper in English will give you many advantages in this competitive world, where English is becoming, in a sense, a global language. Research writing becomes easier once you know how to do it. It is the purpose of this book to introduce to you the basics of “how to do it.” These basics include:

- Essential components of a research paper
- Strategies for organizing a research paper
- Language skills you need in writing a research paper
- Proper ways of citing and referencing sources



What Is a Research Paper?

A research paper is a paper that reports the result of your research — whether it is the analysis of a perspective or the argument of a point. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines research as “a search or investigation directed to the discovery of some fact by careful consideration or study of a subject; a course of critical or scientific inquiry.” Therefore, the paper should present the writer’s own thinking, backed up by other people’s ideas and information obtained through research; and the research results should be presented in the required format.

You have probably written in English quite a few essays that present your thoughts, feelings, and opinions. While writing these essays, you did not have to go beyond your personal knowledge or refer to any source of information. With research writing, in contrast, you have to do much research before you can develop a studied opinion. You do a lot before you start the first draft, exploring ideas, solving problems, or putting forward arguments in relation to what others have written. That is, it involves using materials beyond your personal knowledge. As a result, it requires sustained effort, interest and

patience.

Research can be classified into two basic types: primary research and secondary research. Primary research involves the collection of new data through various means such as interviews, surveys, observations, questionnaire surveys or tests. For instance, investigating changes in farmers' income in a remote village is a primary research project. Secondary research is also called library research because it is usually done in libraries where the writer searches for the information already available in previous reports, journals, books, magazines, newspapers, and online sources. Studying the real meaning of the "rectification of names" in Confucianism is a typical library research project.

Researchers in the humanities rely heavily (but not exclusively) on library research, while researchers in social sciences rely heavily (but not exclusively) on primary research.

When you write a research paper, you have to consult many sources. A source is a book, an article, a document or a person that provides you with information. There are two types of sources, primary sources and secondary sources.

Primary sources, in the humanities, are first-hand accounts, for example, historical documents (letters, speeches, and so on), literary works, archival/museum/library materials, oral histories, interview records and so on. Primary sources, in social sciences, are the data collected by the writer himself or herself through tests, interviews, observations and so on. Collecting and analyzing original data is, in fact, a major tool for social scientists in their efforts to interpret and analyze the world.

Secondary sources are also crucial for writing research papers. As the name suggests, secondary sources are the second-hand information about the subject under study, that is, any commentary about a primary source, be it a summary of an issue, an account of an event, an interpretation of a literary work or an historical event. Secondary sources are major tools for researchers in the humanities when it comes to interpreting and analyzing a text or a work of art. For researchers in social sciences, they are also important because they can provide supporting evidence for an argument, ideas for analysis, background to a problem, and evaluation and summaries of related studies.

This discussion of different types of research and different types of sources should not give an impression that research papers are wildly different. They are not. In general, they all follow certain routines and rules, and these rules are broadly similar although may vary slightly between different fields.

Types of Research Paper

Research papers can be divided into several types according to the purpose and the method employed in writing them. Most commonly in humanities and social sciences we would find:

- Historical papers
- Interpretive papers
- Analytical papers
- Argumentative papers
- Reports

A historical paper in any field of the humanities is characterized by the historical approach it uses in examining some human experience of the past to produce clearer pictures and better understanding. It presents information and analyzes events, people, places or ideas of the past. For instance, you may study patterns of math education in China in the first three decades of the 20th century.

An interpretive paper, also written in the disciplines of the humanities, tries to interpret

the intended meaning of a text or its impact on the readers. The text can be a work in literature, history or philosophy. The writer makes a claim as an argument and then supports the claim by citing evidence from the text. Such a paper often asks and answers questions about *what*, *why* and *how*. For instance, the Declaration of Independence was an important document in U.S. history, but why was it written the way it was? You may interpret the document little by little to reveal how it served the interests of certain people.

An analytical paper, as its name suggests, makes extensive analysis about a subject. The writer breaks down the topic into parts and examines each in detail through careful analysis. Different from an argumentative paper, the means to achieve the goal in an analytical paper is objective analysis instead of opinioned argument. The writer analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of a claim, and asks critical questions to evaluate the evidence. Teachers in the humanities often ask students to write such a paper about a reading he or she has finished. Reviewing a book, for instance, may require that you look into every aspect of the book and develop a paper with detailed analysis.

In an argumentative paper, the writer takes a stance and tries to persuade the readers to accept this stance by providing evidence and knocking down counter-evidence. The evidence can be other people's views, facts, data or any other information the writer has collected through research. Going back to the example of Confucianism, you may write a paper arguing that the "rectification of names" suffocated free thinking.

Reports are used widely in various disciplines of the social sciences to give an account of findings from empirical studies. A report informs the readers of an investigation, whether into a problem, a case or a hypothesis. It follows a rather fixed sequence of introduction, methodology, result and discussion, and uses clear, exact and objective language, free of emotional expressions sometimes allowed in humanities writings. For example, if you have investigated changes in farmers' income in a remote village, you should write up your findings in a report.

Task 1

Pause to review

You probably have already learned what components an essay normally has. What is the general format? How many parts are there usually in an essay? What are they? What is the function of each part? You may answer these questions in your group or with any of your peers.

What Are the Main Components of a Research Paper?

The General Format

Almost all writings share the following three-part organization:

- Introduction
- Body
- Conclusion

The Greek philosopher Aristotle said in his famous work *Poetics*: A whole is that which has beginning, middle, and end. This remark applies to research papers, too. A research paper should have fully integrated introduction, body and conclusion. While the introduction is always there for any writing, the body and conclusion parts have several variations depending on the discipline and/or the kind of paper one is writing. The historical, interpretative, analytical or argumentative types of paper usually have various ways of constructing the body part, while a report always has in the body part *methodology* and *results*, and then concludes with a *discussion*.

This textbook will talk in detail about the functions of these three parts and the ways of writing them in Units 1, 2, 3 and 4. Just briefly, an introduction is to present the background for your research — what the issue or problem is, what has been said or studied on this issue or problem, and what is the writer’s view, assumption or hypothesis. For argumentative and analytical papers, the writer usually ends the introduction with a thesis statement, that is, the writer’s own opinion on the topic. In the body part, the writer addresses the topic in detail, either by logical reasoning and analysis in a few or many paragraphs (or sections or chapters), or, as in the social sciences, by presenting researched information step by step until an answer is found. Then the writer concludes the topic either by summarizing the arguments and restating the thesis, as in most analytical and argumentative papers, or by discussing implications and suggesting possibilities for further research, as in experimental reports.

How to Cite Others’ Work and Avoid Plagiarism

Another very important characteristic of research writing is the citations that scatter throughout the paper. By definition, a citation is a reference to a published or unpublished source that the writer uses in the writing. The source here could be a person or document that supplies information. A citation can be any of the following:

- A direct quotation of words from the source
- A paraphrase (i.e., indirect quotation) of words from the source
- A summary of the major point(s) of the source

With a quotation, you record the material exactly as it appears in the source, word for word, and you put it in quotation marks. With a paraphrase, you restate the material in your own words as you do not need the exact wording. With a summary, you mention the general idea of a large amount of material.

Providing citation is the writer’s way of informing the readers where the ideas come from and where the writer’s research is in the field. If a paper does not cite any outside source, it means the writer is isolated and not informed of any development in the academic community. The paper is, therefore, worthless. Besides, providing citation is also a way of acknowledging the help the writer has received during the process of research; therefore, this shows his or her integrity and honesty.

However, some students may use ideas or copy long paragraphs from a source without making any due acknowledgement, that is, without mentioning the contribution of the source. This theft in the academic world is called *plagiarism* (剽窃), that is, the use (both intentional and unintentional) of somebody else’s words or ideas without giving them

credit. A charge of plagiarism in many countries can have serious consequences, including expulsion from a university or loss of a job, not to mention a loss of credibility. As students, in addition to being honest and upright, we should also learn to avoid unintentional plagiarism. There are many ways to avoid it.

Research writing follows many rules that beginning writers are not aware of or do not know how to apply, and many of these rules have to do with proper citation and acknowledgement. Familiarity with these rules and methods is critically important. Therefore, Unit 5 introduces how to integrate the language of outside sources with one's own through quoting, paraphrasing and summarizing. Units 6 and 7 will introduce, in some detail, the two most widely used styles of presenting sources, the MLA (Modern Language Association) style for humanities majors, and the APA (American Psychology Association) style for social science majors. Your research writing will be much strengthened once you grasp the skills of referencing.

What Is the Process of Writing a Research Paper?

Research writing usually proceeds through the following steps, with some steps more important than the others:

Finding a topic → Researching the topic → Narrowing it down to form a proper title → Searching for materials → Taking notes of useful information → Planning the organization of the paper → Drafting → Researching more and reading more → Keeping drafting → completing the first draft → Revising for more drafts → Editing → Producing the final draft

As can be seen, the whole process involves much research and critical thinking. Two of these steps deserve a close look here.

Finding a Good Topic

The importance of a good topic can never be overemphasized. It is the very beginning of your research writing, and a proper topic sets up the steer for the whole journey. In order to have a good title, you may consider taking the following substeps:

- Substep 1: Think of a topic that you are interested in and that you already have some knowledge about.
- Substep 2: Explore the topic from different angles (typically ask questions about *who*, *what*, *why*, *how*, *when*, and *where*), try to understand the context of the topic, see how this topic relates to other things that you know, and then narrow it down to a more specific one that fits your purpose, required paper length and time limit.
- Substep 3: Search for related materials and see if you can find enough resources for your topic.
- Substep 4: When you have enough ideas about your topic, develop a title that reflects your thesis (i.e., your opinion). This title will also be the controlling idea of your entire paper.