

新视野 大学英语写作教程

Elementary Writing
基础写作

总主编：南敬实

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前言

迄今为止，我国高校的大学英语教学中尚未开设专门的写作课程，配套的写作教材亦显匮乏，写作成为大学英语教学中的一个薄弱环节。

写作是一项重要的语言输出活动，最能体现学习者综合应用语言的能力，所以培养学习者的英语写作能力应成为外语教学的核心内容之一。

目前针对非英语专业本科生的写作读物多为应对大学英语四、六级考试中作文写作的辅导类书籍，涉及的常常是应试写作的技巧与攻略，理论深度尚显不足。内容和难易度都能与大学英语精读教材接轨的写作教材难得一见，而相应的需求却日益迫切。

《新视野大学英语写作教程·基础写作》就是在这样的背景下问世的，我们不期望它能成为解决学生所有写作问题的“灵丹妙药”，但却有信心使它成为有效提高学习者英语写作水平的助推器。《新视野大学英语写作教程·基础写作》以大学本科非英语专业一年级学生及其他水平相当的英语学习者为主要对象，以《大学英语课程教学要求》为基本依据，旨在培养学习者的基础英语写作能力。

本书通过循序式阐释、代表性例证、多样化练习的途径讲授了基础写作的理论和技能，引导学习者系统地掌握写作的整体过程以学会如何创作出布局合理、高效达意的段落和篇章。书中深入浅出的讲解、数量可观的练习有助于读者学习和巩固各项写作技能。可见，此书别树一帜地从基础写作阶段就开始强调写作的专业应用意识，从而达到提高学生专门用途英语应用能力的目的。这符合新时代对人才发展的要求，也体现出该书较强的实用价值和鲜明的时代特色。

本书由九个单元构成，涵盖了导言、选词、句子、标点、段落、修辞、篇章、摘要写作以及正式文体和非正式文体的区别等内容。第一单元为导言，是对全书内容的总体介绍。在本单元开篇处，我们设计的测试学生写作知识与能力的习题可帮助教师对学生的写作功底进行初步的了解，以便有的放矢地开展写作教学。第二单元从词汇的分类、词义的内涵和外延、一般词和特定词、抽象词和具体词等方面介绍了英语写作中的选词理论与技巧。第三单元从句子的定义、句子的分类和如何写出好句子的角度引导学生在

遣词的基础上学习造句。第四单元系统地论述了如何恰当地使用标点符号，其中包括句号、问号、叹号、逗号、冒号、分号、撇号、连字符、破折号、引号和一些不太常用的标点符号，以及首字母大写、缩写、斜体的使用。第五单元通过分析和讨论段落的统一性与连贯性，并运用对比法或比较法、因果分析法、分类法和定义法等方法阐述了段落的写作技巧。第六单元推出的几种常见的修辞手法包括明喻、暗喻、拟人、委婉语和夸张等，旨在为学生的作文锦上添花。第七单元围绕谋篇的主题，介绍了完整篇章的写作技巧，主要讲述文章的构成以及各类体裁文章的分类及写法。第八单元从摘要的分类和撰写技巧这两个方面系统地探讨了摘要的写作。第九单元论述了如何从倒装、时态、语态、修饰词、插入语、省略和主谓一致等方面区分正式文体与非正式文体。这九个单元的内容由浅入深、环环相扣、循序渐进。各单元的内容既可独立存在，又共同构成一个整体。从第二至第九单元，每个单元均附有“单元小结”和词汇表；从第二至第八单元，每个单元均附有课后练习题。相信该书能够帮助学习者打下坚实的英语写作基础。

第一、三、四单元由王艳、刘庆国、李莹、韩阳编写（以姓氏笔画为序）；第二、六、七单元由王延慧、赵淑元、郭志敏编写（以姓氏笔画为序）；第五、八、九单元由石磊、徐飞、黄玉英编写（以姓氏笔画为序）。

在本书的编写过程中，我们参阅了大量的文献。澳大利亚西悉尼大学博士生导师 Michael Singh 教授承担了全书的审定工作，对此我们深表谢意。限于编者水平，书中或有错讹与疏漏之处，敬请广大读者斧正。

编者

2012年11月1日

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1

Unit

An Introduction to Writing

Writing helps you express yourself. Writing prepares you for school and employment. If you don't write, you cut yourself off from a large community. This book provides a step-by-step guide to improve your writing. This unit gives a general picture of the whole book. It consists of two parts: introduction and pretest.

Section A

Introduction

You probably can't count how many essays you've written in high school. There were many essays assigned in your English classes. Now you are a college student, you'll probably have to write a piece of writing as part of an exam or a test, or have a large part of your scores based on writing. How can you improve your writing skills, not only to get higher scores in those exams and tests, but also to boost your future employment? This book offers a step-by-step plan that can be fulfilled in one year.

There are nine units in this book. If you learn all of the units and carefully complete the exercises after them, you would become a powerful and effective essay writer. Although each unit is designed for developing skills effectively on its own, it is important that you proceed through the book in order, from Unit 1 to Unit 9. Writing is a process, which involves a series of skills, strategies, and approaches. In reality, this process isn't as linear as this book presents. You might prefer to brainstorm first, and then write a thesis statement—that's fine. However, once you understand the whole writing process, you can incorporate it into your unique writing style.

Units 2, 3, 4, and 5 cover the basic steps that are essential for effective writing. Units 6, 7, and 8 show you how to formulate a solid draft and how to shape your draft into a clear and effective essay. Unit 9 talks about the formal style and informal style of writing.

All units except Unit 9 include some exercises that allow you to practice the skills presented in that unit. The exercises are not simply matching or multiple-choice questions. Instead, you'll practice what you've learned by doing writing on your own. These exercises are important for you to learn this book. No matter how many examples you have read, you won't benefit fully from them unless you complete the exercises.

The suggested answers to the exercises will help you stay on track. Check your own answers carefully against the suggested answers.

Section B Pretest

Before you start the study of grammar and writing skills, you may want to get an idea of what you have already known and what you need to learn. If that's the case, take the following pretest, which contains 20 questions and one writing task, and then check your answers against the keys.

1. Choose an answer to each of the following questions.

1) Which of the following should an essay be?

- A. Short B. Clear C. Assertive D. Both A and B
E. Both B and C

2) In an essay, the best place to put the thesis statement in is _____.

- A. the first sentence B. the last sentence
C. the end of the introduction D. the body

3) Which of the following should a good introduction do?

- A. Grab the reader's attention. B. State the thesis.
C. Provide the main supporting ideas for the thesis.
D. Both A and B E. A, B, and C

4) Your relationship with your supposed readers has an effect on how you write your essay.

A. True

B. False

5) Which of the following choices best describes the problem of the following paragraph?

Sullivan studied 25 city playgrounds. He found several serious problems. The playgrounds were dirty. They were also overcrowded. They were also dangerous. Many parks had broken glass everywhere. Many parks also had broken equipment.

A. Lack of variety in sentence structure

B. Grammatical errors

C. Lack of transitions

D. Poor word choice

6) Which sentence is punctuated correctly?

A. Charlotte, who ran in the Boston Marathon last year will compete in this year's New York Marathon.

B. Charlotte who ran in the Boston Marathon, last year, will compete in this year's New York Marathon.

C. Charlotte who ran in the Boston Marathon last year, will compete in this year's New York Marathon.

D. Charlotte, who ran in the Boston Marathon last year, will compete in this year's New York Marathon.

7) Read the following essay assignment carefully.

Some say "ignorance is bliss." Others claim that ignorance is a form of slavery and that only knowledge can set you free. With which view do you agree? Explain your answer.

Which sentence below best describes the kind of essay you should write?

A. Explain the difference between "ignorance" and "knowledge."

B. Explain which belief you agree with and why.

C. Explain how you think we can improve education.

D. Discuss the evils of slavery.

8) Which of the following organizational patterns applies to all essays?

A. Order of importance

B. Cause and effect

C. Assertion and support

D. Problem and solution

9) A thesis is best defined as _____.

- A. the prompt for an essay
- B. the main idea of an essay
- C. an essay that is at least three pages long
- D. the way a writer introduces an essay

10) Read the following paragraph.

More and more Americans are turning to alternative medicine. The ancient art of aromatherapy has gained a tremendous following, particularly on the West Coast. Acupuncture, the traditional Chinese art of “needle therapy,” has doubled its number of active practitioners in the past decade. And holistic medicine—treating the whole body instead of just one part—is so popular that some HMOs now even pay for holistic care.

Which of the following best describes the first sentence?

- A. A transition sentence
- B. A topic sentence
- C. A supporting idea
- D. A thesis

11) Which of the following best describes the second sentence of the paragraph above?

- A. A transition sentence
- B. A topic sentence
- C. A supporting idea
- D. A thesis

12) Which of the following should a conclusion NOT do?

- A. Bring in a new idea.
- B. Restate the thesis in fresh words.
- C. Provide a sense of closure.
- D. Focus on readers' emotions.

13) Words and phrases like “meanwhile,” “on the other hand,” and “for example” are known as _____.

- A. passive words
- B. assertions
- C. modifiers
- D. transitions

14) Which of the following strategies is particularly useful in an essay exam?

- A. Brainstorming
- B. Free writing
- C. Outlining
- D. Drafting

15) Brainstorming typically takes place in which step of the writing process?

- A. Planning
- B. Drafting
- C. Proofreading
- D. Revising

- 16) Revising and proofreading are interchangeable terms.
 A. True B. False
- 17) In which form(s) can a supporting idea for a thesis be put forward?
 A. Specific examples B. Expert opinions
 C. Anecdotes D. Both A and B
 E. A, B, and C
- 18) Which of the following would be a problem in a concluding paragraph?
 A. It doesn't restate the thesis.
 B. It frames the essay.
 C. It arouses readers' emotions.
 D. It doesn't bring up any other ideas that aren't related to the thesis.
- 19) What is the main problem of the following sentence?
Newman lost the election because of the fact that the opponent whom he ran against had a lot more money for ads.
 A. It's a run-on sentence. B. It's not properly punctuated.
 C. It's unnecessarily wordy. D. It lacks parallel structure.
 E. There is no problem with this sentence.
- 20) Which of the following strategies will make an essay more convincing?
 A. Avoiding run-on sentences
 B. Acknowledging counter arguments
 C. Providing specific examples and details
 D. Both B and C
 E. Both A and C

2. Writing Task

Many people have been profoundly affected by great works of art. Describe a piece of art—a book, a movie, a photograph, a painting, a song, or a musical composition—that had a powerful impact on your life. What kind of art is it? How did it affect you? Why?

Write a composition of no less than 150 words by following the frame below in 30 minutes.

My Favorite...

You are to write it in three parts:

In the first part, state your general view.

In the second part, support your view with one or two reasons.

In the third part, bring what you have written to a natural conclusion or a summary.

Marks will be awarded for content, organization, grammar, and appropriateness.

Failure to follow the instructions may result in a loss of marks.

2

Unit

Wording Skills

Colors are to painters what words are to writers. Not only do words have meaning, but also have vitality. Hence they can mark your attitude toward something, your understanding of a topic, and so on.

English has a large vocabulary and new words keep coming into this large vocabulary almost every day. However, it is unnecessary to master all of them. Instead, you should develop the ability to use words properly, which will make you a real writer.

Sometimes, you may feel it is easy to express yourself grammatically, but hard to make yourself understood by your readers. Why does this happen? This is partly due to your inexactness in choosing words. Therefore, some knowledge of wording skills will be helpful for you to be a good writer.

Section A

Levels of Words

From a stylistic point of view, words can be roughly classified into three levels: formal, common, and colloquial.

1 Formal words

Formal words are also called “literary words.” Very often, they appear in formal writing, such as scholarly or theoretical works, political and legal documents, and formal lectures and addresses. Most of the formal words are of Greek, Latin, or French origin, which usually contain three or more syllables.

Example

A market is a group of *individuals, organizations*, or both who have needs for products in a given *category* and who have the ability, *willingness*, and *authority* to purchase such products. They must be able to purchase the products with money, goods, or services that can be exchanged for the products. They must be willing to use their buying power. Finally, they must be socially and legally *authorized* to purchase the products.

This is a paragraph defining the term “market” by using a business theory. Obviously, it is a piece of formal writing since long sentences and formal words (in italics) are frequently seen in it.

2 Common words

Common words are connected with ordinary things or activities in everyday life. They form the core of English vocabulary and are usually stylistically neutral, and hence are appropriate in both formal and informal writing.

Example

My experience with learning a foreign language began in junior high school, when I took my first English class. I had a kind and patient teacher who often praised all of the students. Because of this positive method, I was eager to answer as many questions as I could, never worrying about making mistakes.

In the paragraph above, almost all the words are common words. The sentences are relatively shorter compared with those in formal pieces. These words and sentence patterns are appropriate for a paragraph narrating one's story.

3 Colloquial words

Colloquial words refer to the familiar words which are used in informal speeches and writing. They are not considered as formal enough for serious conversations; therefore, they seldom appear in formal writing, except for some special purposes. These include words like *dump*, *guy*, or *pal*.

Examples

- (1) John was *fired* for being always late. (*fire* for *dismiss*)
- (2) I don't like the taste of *soda*. (*soda* for *a carbonated soft drink*)
- (3) The tobacco industry completely *won over* those who were hopelessly *hooked by* cigarettes. (*win over* for *conquer*; *hook* for *attract*)

With the use of colloquial words, the above sentences do not sound formal, and they seldom appear in formal writing.

All the three categories of words are often used by educated people. There are also some substandard words such as slang words and dialect words, which also seldom appear in formal writing, thereby we are not going to talk about them further.

In brief, the classification of words in terms of style is often difficult and controversial, because languages are constantly changing. However, you should try to choose the words that fit readers' interest. Since most of the writing pieces in college are literary papers or essays, you'd better choose formal or common words, and avoid the words and expressions labeled "informal" or "slang." Furthermore, good writers should avoid blending informal and formal writing in a composition.

Section B Meaning of Words

The sense or meaning of a word or term usually consists of two aspects: denotation and connotation. Denotation is the direct and explicit meaning of a word or term, while connotation is the idea or notion suggested by or associated with a word or term.

Examples

	Connotation	Denotation
housetop	the top of a house	roof, ceiling, cover...
house	the dwelling unit	bedroom, bathroom, sitting room...
quarters	the rooms	flat, house, villa...

The connotation of the word *housetop* is *the top of a house*, but it may denote the