

ENGLISH
WRITING
FOR
GRADUATE
STUDENTS

附教师手册

研究生
英语写作 第二版

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Introduction

For the convenience of our readers, *English Writing for Graduate Students* consists of two parts: a textbook and reference answers. These were separately published in 1989 as a textbook and a teacher's book. They have been popular with not only doctoral candidates of both liberal arts and science and technology but also college students advanced in English and learners who teach themselves English.

The text book is composed of two parts: (1) Applied English Writing (Units 1-6) and (2) Expository English Writing (Units 7-17). The first part includes everyday writing tasks, such as writing notes, announcements, invitations and their replies, letters—both personal and business ones, and resumes. Each of these tasks involves the basic skills necessary for all good writing—skills of organization, of expression, and of clear communication.

The second part includes information and practice involving the particular types of thought development which are important for expository writing—definition, comparison, cause and effect, and description. Practice is given in writing essays, summaries, and abstracts. Paragraph construction and outlining—two specific writing skills basic to all writing—and making notes from lectures are also included.

This book leads learners through various types of writing using a communicative approach, in which they write while actively thinking. Each type of writing is explained and then followed by creative writing tasks.

One danger in unstructured communicative writing activities—often called “free writing”—is that the writers will think in their native language(s) and then write a translation of those thoughts. The result is usually not English, and therefore such “free writing” does not form a basic part of this textbook.

Diary writing, of course, is one kind of “free writing”, and as a result it carries the danger of being just literal translations from Chinese. However, diary writing has the overriding advantage of being one type of extensive writing which is within the ability of any English learner and which requires original thinking—true creative writing. For these reasons it is encouraged as an ongoing writing activity throughout the teaching of this course.

The reference answers will be useful for those who teach this book and particularly for student self-study. However, the readers are strongly advised not to refer to any of the reference answers before they have completed the corresponding exercise. Only by doing so, can they really benefit from the course.

We wish the greatest success in learning to write academic English to those who use this book.

Zhao Lian
1993. 12

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Academic Writing Course by R. R. Jordan

Study Skills for Students of ESL by Richard C. Yorkey (in our Units 15 and 16)

Developing Research Skills, author unknown (in our Unit 8)

Writing Skills by Norman Coe, Robin Rycroft, and Pauline Ernest (for examples of British-style letters in our Unit 5)

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Unit 1 Suggestions for Creative Writing

Part One: Introduction to Creative Writing Section

“English writing” can mean different things to different people. For example, at its simplest, it may mean nothing more than “handwriting”—practicing the formation of the letters of the English alphabet, something you may want to review to improve your own handwriting style.

For language learners, however, various techniques have been developed for “teaching writing”. They may be called “patterned writing” or “manipulative writing” or “controlled writing” or “imitative writing”. In patterned writing, the learner may actually only be showing a knowledge of certain details of English grammar, as when rewriting sentences by using a different tense or different pronouns. Manipulative writing may go beyond the sentence level and make similar changes throughout an entire paragraph. However, in neither case is the writer supplying any ideas to the exercise; instead, these are basically just written grammar drills (which, of course, can be valuable for teaching and testing grammar).

In controlled writing, the learner is told what to write, but usually after being given certain phrases which are to be put together according to an example. This may be done at the sentence level or in sentence-combining exercises at the paragraph level. In either case, however, the emphasis in this kind of writing is on following the pattern of the example. Therefore the writer demonstrates only his/her ability to join ideas together in a me-

chanical way, without supplying either those ideas or their organization. Imitative writing may be slightly less controlled in that the writer is asked to supply some of the necessary information and to write about it while following the organization of a selection given as an example. In this situation the writer does supply some ideas, but without demonstrating any ability to put them together acceptably.

These and many other writing techniques can serve the useful purpose of drawing a learner's attention to the grammar and mechanics of getting ideas on paper, but they do not in themselves produce "writing" in its basic, communicative sense. Only communicative writing is true writing, since the primary purpose of writing is to send one person's thoughts to another person in written form. In every language and culture, this is the normal use of writing. Unfortunately, in the language classroom "writing" often becomes an end in itself—producing something on paper which conforms to a pattern or example, rather than presenting one's own ideas for others to understand.

Writing which requires the author to select from his/her own thoughts those ideas which are to be communicated and then to express them in written form is often called "creative writing". The writer is responsible for the origin of the ideas, for their organization, and for the way they are presented to the reader. Until a student has learned to write at this level, he/she has not yet "written" anything—nor has the "writing teacher" truly taught "writing".

Based upon these assumptions, the following materials have been compiled to lead the English language learner into "creative writing" as quickly as possible. Shorter and simpler writing tasks are given first, with more complicated tasks following.

For example, writing even a simple note to a friend can require the exercise of true writing skills—but only if the learner is re-

quired to organize the ideas and produce them to fit a real-life situation, not just to fit a pattern or an example. Therefore, in these materials there will be “samples” of what could be written in a given situation, but there will not be any “examples” of things to be mechanically imitated. Since creative writing of necessity allows for a variety of ways to express a particular idea, there usually can be no single “correct” answer. As a result, the answers provided with this text only indicate some acceptable forms chosen from among perhaps many possibly correct ones. The teacher, therefore, must not insist that the students make their written material conform to these sample answers.

Neither the learner nor the teacher should assume that “writing” involves only paragraphs. There are rules and conventions to be followed in all good writing, whether it be when writing shorter informal notes, public announcements, official notices, invitations and their replies, or longer forms such as letters, resumes, summaries, abstracts, and academic papers. These rules and conventions are explained and demonstrated in the following sections of this book, but it is up to the learner to do the writing, to “learn by doing.”

Good writing cannot be taught or learned by explaining, studying, or memorizing “rules of writing.” Good writing comes only by writing, revising, and rewriting—followed by more writing, revising, and rewriting, and then more of the same.

Part Two: A Diary Assignment (For Extensive Writing Practice)

Purpose

Most Chinese students of English writing are accustomed to the “intensive writing” of compositions, but many write very slowly. Few can think in English and write those ideas as they think.

The purpose of this on-going assignment is to give practice with informal, fast writing down of ideas without emphasis on grammatical correctness. If you do this assignment exactly as directed, you can expect to improve your writing speed and to write things which an English-speaking foreigner will understand, even if your grammar is not always correct. This is not a composition assignment, and therefore no assigned topics will be given. You are to write YOUR thoughts, using whatever style of English you know.

Procedure

You will need two standard-size exercise books. Write your name on the outside cover of each book. Write "Diary Book 1" on your first book and "Diary Book 2" on your second one. Write with ball-point pen or with pen and ink. Write on a separate side of a page for each day's entry. Choose three days of each week for which you will keep a diary or journal of your activities and perhaps of your thoughts, opinions, and ideas. Do not write more than one entry on the same day (unless two noteworthy things happen during that day), because it is usually too hard to think of more than one thing to write about at a time.

Format (appearance on the page)

Write the DAY of the week and its DATE on the top line of the page. Write about 100 words (about half a page) for each day, using absolutely no more than 200 words on one side of a page. Do not skip any lines as you write, but be careful that your words "sit" on the line neatly. Write as you think. If you make a mistake, draw a line through it, and continue writing. If you want to insert (add) a word, do so immediately ABOVE where it goes (not below the line). Write directly into your book as you think. This will help you improve your writing speed. DO NOT WRITE YOUR ENTRY ON OTHER PAPER AND THEN

COPY IT INTO YOUR DIARY BOOK. It is expected that all writers will need to make some corrections and additions as they write.

Content

Your diary can be just a record of what happened throughout the day (a “time-sequence” diary), or it can be a record of some thoughts or ideas you had that day (a “personal-feelings” diary), or it might be a blending of these two types. In any case, whatever you write **MUST** be your own original writing, not something copied from elsewhere (unless you are quoting something you have just read in order to comment on it). Use complete sentences, not outline or notation form. You may use the standard abbreviations of common words. If you want to avoid mentioning the name of someone you are writing about, just use the initials of the person’s name.

Style

Write conversationally, as if you were talking to the reader or to your diary book itself. Some Westerners begin each day’s entry with “Dear Diary”, as if they were writing to a close friend named “Diary.” Such people usually write about their personal feelings as well as about what they did that day. You may wish to write directly to your teacher, and could begin with “Dear Mr. —” or another appropriate greeting. It is correct, however, just to start writing without any special opening greeting.

Regulations

One diary book will be due each week, to be placed on the teacher’s desk at the **BEGINNING** of your writing class. Any diaries received after the class begins will receive a failing grade for that week. If you are ill or will be otherwise absent from class,

send your diary book with a classmate. The only exception will be for an absent student who later brings a properly signed and stamped excuse to the teacher from a doctor or an appropriate school official.

Your writing teacher will look over your three entries to see that you have written something appropriate. **NO CORRECTIONS WILL BE MADE** by your teacher. You will be graded only on whether you have done the three entries by the assigned date. Your teacher, however, may occasionally say or write something to you about what you have written, but this will not affect your grade. Your first diary book will be returned at the next class, at which time you should turn in your second, completed diary book. Your diary writing will become a kind of "written conversation" between you and your teacher.

SAMPLE DIARY ENTRIES (You may write something similar to any of these, or anything else which interests you.)

Entry 1 (a "time-sequence" entry)

Thurs., Sept. 1, 1989

Dear Diary,

I woke up at 6:30 but didn't get up until 7. It was raining a bit. I had the usual breakfast, then read most of the a. m. I ate lunch in the cafeteria (not very good rice today) and talked with Xiao P for about an hour after that instead of taking a rest. The sun came out about 6:30, so I rode my bike to look for some apples. They were over ¥2 a jin—too high. I got home about 4:45 and found a letter from Mom and Dad. Not very good news. I felt homesick and skipped supper. I went to bed early. It wasn't a very good day.

Goodbye, Mary

Entry 2 (a "personal-feelings" entry)

Sat., Dec. 31, 1989

This is the end of 1989. I'm glad to see it finished. I had too many disappointments this year. I had really wanted to do research in England, but I didn't get chosen. Maybe 1990 will be a better year for me. At least I have my girlfriend to tell my troubles to. My brother doesn't understand why I'm not happy just to be studying at BeiDa. But I feel that unless I have high goals, I will never do anything meaningful with my life. "Nothing" ventured, nothing gained."

Xiao Hong

Entry 3 (a "time-sequence" entry)

Thurs., Mar. 15, 1990

I got up at 6, and it was still dark, and very cold. My headache was gone, so I must have slept well enough. I read a chapter in my physics book before breakfast, but didn't do any exercises at all. I met R after breakfast; he's going to Shanghai and will bring back some chocolates for me to give to Xiao Y for her birthday. It was still cloudy and cold at noon. I had a long nap and then played ping-pong for almost an hour with R. I worked in the lab on the experiment for so long I couldn't get anything at the cafeteria, and just had 2 boiled eggs and some bread. I went to bed at 11:30.

Liu

Entry 4 (a blending of both types of entries)

Fri., July 2, 1990

Dear Diary,

This morning nothing important happened, but this afternoon was like a dream. Xiao Z asked me to go bike riding out to the Summer Palace with him. We left right after lunch, so the road wasn't too crowded, but it was pretty hot. We sat by the lake with our feet in the water and talked about everything we could think of. We're so happy that he'll be working in Beijing this fall while I finish my Ph. D. Both of us are happy with our life now, and we are pretty sure we'll get everything worked out for us to get married in a few years. We got caught in heavy traffic on the way home, but it wasn't too hot by then. We shared a whole watermelon we bought from a farmer along the road. This was one of the best days of my life.

See you later,
Roujia