

实用英语写作基础

A Practical Guide to English Writing

石运志 主编



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前 言

《实用英语写作基础》主要针对高职高专英语类专业学生编写，也可以用作其他高等学校英语类专业的英语写作基础课程，同时可供有一定英语基础的非英语专业学生和英语自学者学习使用。本教材语料真实，贴近高校学生生活，是建构主义教学理念、基于任务的教学方法和元认知策略的引导的有机结合。

本教材包括“主教材”和“学习指导和参考答案”两部分，能够方便学生的学习和教师的教学。本教材共分为19个学习单元，适合开设一学期。本教材在以下几个方面具有鲜明特色：

1. 编写团队

本教材编写团队由担任过教育部高职高专英语类专业教学指导委员会的分委员，高职院校、普通高校和成人高校的一线骨干教师组成。由专业人士提供了行业常用的真实语料，并对教材的内容提出了宝贵的意见。此外，外国专家对全书的英文进行润色，确保其语言地道、流畅。

2. 编写理念

本教材的编写以实用为主体，以就业为导向，不追求和强调英语写作的理论性，而更多地把写作理论知识有机地渗入具体的英语写作任务之中，具有很强的可操作性。

本教材着眼于写作基础知识和学习策略的“融合”。写作基础知识与实用文体的写作能满足学生就业的基本需求，学习策略的引导可以奠定学生可持续发展的基础。通过对学生学习策略的指导，尽可能扩大学生语言输入量，使学生在学习过程中可以不局限于本书的内容，从而在本质上改善学生语言的输出质量，也就是从方法上帮助学生提高英语写作水平和英语学习成绩。

3. 体系架构

对学生进行需求分析之后，本教材确定了“英语写作过程，布局谋篇，英文中常见文体，工作中常见的实用文体写作，应对常见英文考试中的写作任务，更好地规划英语写作学习”等教学要素。

本教材内容编排由简到繁,由易到难,在“句子—段落—篇章—实用文体”这条主线上,用建构主义的教学观对知识进行呈现,不直接告诉学生写作的规则是什么,而是通过真实语料的分析和教学任务的完成,逐步引导学生自己去发现并构建在写作过程中对于其自身有意义的写作规则。

4. 教学内容

本教材内容的选择以满足学生就业的基本需求为标准。每单元主题与学生的就业息息相关,如求职信、简历、商务信函,而且实用文体的语料来自行业,能保障学生所学与工作所用不脱节。此外,本教材内容难度适中,教师易教,学生易学,能满足水平参差的学生们的不同写作需求。基础好的学生可以从段落甚至篇章入手,而基础较差的学生可以从句子写作开始。

在本教材编写过程中,国家开放大学的石运志作为主编统筹全书的编写思路及设计,并完成了全书统稿工作;首都师范大学的赵鹏负责样章的起草,并编写了第1、2、12、13、16章;福建幼儿师范高等专科学校的任远负责第3、4、5、19章内容的编写工作,以及与外国专家协调联络校对工作;西安建筑科技大学的郭宁负责第6、7、8、9、14章的编写工作;山东理工大学的叶湘负责第11、15、17章的编写工作;人大附中的赵惠君与北京服装学院的张慧琴共同完成了第10、18章的编写工作。焦作师范高等专科学校的郭卫民教授对本教材进行了指导、审阅与修改;外籍教师 Douglas Bonner 对英文行文进行了校对与润色。编写组对他们在教材编写过程中付出的辛勤劳动及提出的宝贵建议,深表感谢。

由于编写组成员水平有限,疏漏之处在所难免,恳请专家、读者不吝赐教,以便修订完善。

《实用英语写作基础》教材编写组

2015年5月

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Part One:

Getting Started

Chapter 1 Writing Process in English



Chapter Focus

Do you know what you should do first, second, and so on when you are given a writing assignment? You may find that there are a lot of ways to write, but certain general steps are usually followed by most good writers in the writing process. In this chapter, you are going to learn these general steps in the writing process.

The following list is the seven steps followed by most good writers. Read the list carefully and get an overall impression.

1. Choosing a topic
2. Gathering ideas for the essay
3. Writing an outline
4. Writing the first draft
5. Peer editing
6. Revising the draft
7. Proofreading the final draft

The seven steps can be divided into three stages: prewriting stage, in-writing stage and after writing stage. We will discuss these stages one by one.

Imagine that a girl named Karen has been given a writing assignment by her teacher: Write an essay entitled "Why should people quit smoking?" Now let's see how Karen went through all three stages to complete the assignment.



I. Prewriting stage

☆ Step 1: Choosing a topic

Every essay has a topic which can be either one that you choose or one that your teacher assigns.

The writing assignment given to Karen had a clear topic: the reasons why people should quit smoking. Then what Karen had to do was to ask herself some questions: What do I know about this topic? What do my readers know? What else do I need to know to explain the topic better to my readers? When Karen tried to answer these questions, she actually had moved to the second step, which is brainstorming.

☆ Step 2: Gathering ideas for the essay

To gather ideas for an essay, different methods can be used, such as free writing,

brainstorming, branching, cubing, and questioning. Karen decided to use brainstorming to do the job, which means she had to write down every idea that popped into her head about the topic. It is true that some of her ideas were good; however, there might be others that were useless. She just wrote them all down because the main purpose of brainstorming is to write down as many ideas as a person can think of. Figure 1-1 is Karen's brainstorming diagram on this topic.

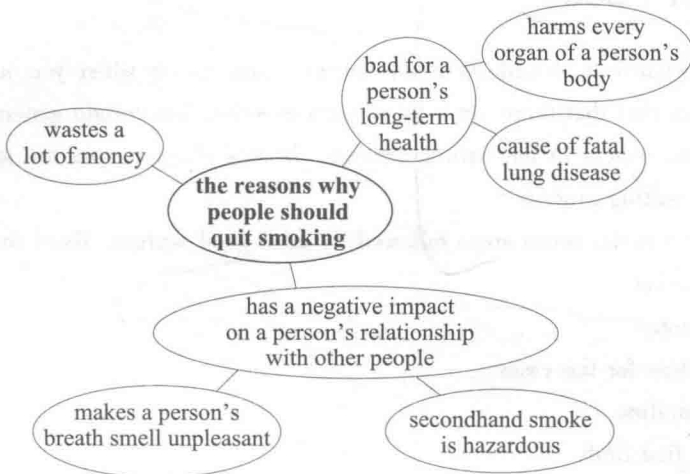


Figure 1-1 Karen's brainstorming diagram on this topic

Another effective way to get ideas for an essay is to ask yourself as many questions about the topic as possible. For example, Karen can ask herself the following questions.

1. Why do people smoke?
2. How does smoking damage a person's health?
3. How does smoking damage a person's relations with other people?
4. How does smoking waste money?
5. Can I find any data or examples to illustrate my viewpoints?
6. ...

The question list can go on and on so that you can get more and more useful ideas for your essay.

Practice 1: Have a brainstorm about the topic "What are the causes of happiness?" and exchange your ideas with your classmates.

Step 3: Writing an outline

After Karen brainstormed her ideas, the next step is to write an outline. An outline helps writers to organize the information they have got so that the writers will see clearly which areas of the essay are strong and which are weak. Most good writers frame their outlines with Roman numerals and capital letters. Outlines can be written in words, phrases or full sentences. The following is Karen's outline.

Title

Why should people quit smoking?

Introductory paragraph

Thesis statement: People should quit smoking due to several reasons.

Body paragraphs**Paragraph 1**

1. Topic sentence: Smoking is bad for a person's long-term health.
2. Supporting details:
 - A. Smoking is the leading cause of fatal lung disease and various cancers.
 - B. Since 1964, 12 million Americans have died from smoking-related illnesses.
 - C. Smoking harms every organ of a person's body.
3. Concluding sentence: Therefore, a person should quit smoking for the sake of his/her health.

Paragraph 2

1. Topic sentence: Smoking can have a negative impact on a person's relationship with other people.
2. Supporting details:
 - A. Smoking repels non-smokers because secondhand smoke is hazardous.
 - B. Smoking makes a person's breath smell unpleasant, and smoke also tends to cling to clothing.
3. Concluding sentence: Hence, if a person does want to maintain good relationships with others, he/she should quit smoking.

Paragraph 3

1. Topic sentence: Smoking will waste a lot of money.
2. Supporting details: If a person smokes about 30 cigarettes a day, that's about \$60 per week spent on smoking.
3. Concluding sentence: So, to save money, a person should quit smoking.

Conclusion

In a word, it is definitely worth starting to look for the best ways to quit smoking.



Practice 2: Write an outline based on the brainstorming result of Practice 1 and discuss with your classmates to see whether there is room for improvement.

**II. In-writing stage****Step 4: Writing the first draft**

After Karen had finished her outline, she wrote a rough draft. Here is Karen's first draft.

Why should people quit smoking?

A great number of people smoke in the world. Some may smoke to look cool. Some may smoke because of peer pressure. Others may be unable to stop smoking because they are too addicted. But I think those people should quit smoking. And the reasons are as follows.


First, smoking is bad for a person's long-term health. The U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) say smoking is the leading cause of fatal lung disease and can also lead to various cancers. According to CDC, since 1964, 12 million Americans have died from smoking-related illnesses. CDC also states that smoking harms every organ of a person's body. Therefore, a person should quit smoking for the sake of his/her health.

Second, smoking can have a negative impact on a person's relationship with other people. Smoking repels non-smokers because secondhand smoke is hazardous for people's health. Besides, smoking makes a person's breath smell unpleasant, and smoke also tends to cling to clothing. How would you feel if you were around a person who smelled terrible and blew nasty-smelling air around you? Hence, if a person does want to maintain good relationships with others, he/she should quit smoking.

Third, smoking will not only damage a person's health, but it also will waste a lot of money. A packet of cigarettes costs a lot of money. Cigarettes average out at about \$6 per pack, and if a person smokes about 30 cigarettes a day, that's about \$60 per week spent on smoking. So, to save money, a person should quit smoking.

In a word, smoking will have a harmful effect on a person's life if he/she continues with this nasty habit. Therefore it is definitely worth starting to look for the best ways to quit smoking.

Tips: Writing process is never a linear one because you will make many errors. That means, you have to make many changes. Here is a helpful suggestion: after you finish the first draft, put it away for a period of time (several hours or a few days). Then come back to your draft when your mind is clear. You will find that you are likely to catch more problems in your draft, such as misspelling, misuse of set phrases, and incorrect punctuation.

 **Practice 3:** Write a short paragraph around 60 words about the causes of happiness.



III. After writing stage

☆ Step 5: Peer editing

Peer editing a draft is a very important step because it is often not easy for writers to find out the weaknesses in their own writing. And different views from readers are always helpful for writers. Therefore, after you finish your first draft, ask a friend or classmate to read your essay and provide helpful advice.

Karen asked her friend Joe to peer edit her writing. Here are the two peer editing sheets that Joe completed about Karen's writing.

Peer editing sheet 1

Writer: Karen

Peer editor: Joe

1. What is the essay about? (summarize it in a few sentences)

In this essay, the writer states three reasons why people should quit smoking.

2. Read the introductory paragraph.

Is the thesis statement clear? Yes.

If not, make suggestions for changes. _____

Can you suggest any improvements for the thesis statement?

Maybe "However, in my opinion, those people should quit smoking" is a better sentence.

3. Read the body paragraphs.

4. What are the topic sentences of these paragraph?

A. First, smoking is bad for a person's long-term health.

B. Second, smoking can have a negative impact on a person's relationship with other people.

C. Third, smoking will not only damage a person's health, but it also will waste a lot of money.

Do all the topic sentences support the thesis statement? Yes.

If not, make your suggestions. _____

Can you suggest any improvements for these topic sentences? No.

5. Are the supporting details related to the topic sentence in each paragraph? Yes.

If not, make your suggestions. _____

6. Does the writer use any transition words? Yes.

If yes, are these transition words appropriately used? Yes.

If not, make your suggestions. _____

7. Read the conclusion.

Does the writer restate the thesis statement in the conclusion? Yes.

If not, make your suggestions. _____

8. Any additional suggestions? No. Thank you for your time and effort.

Peer editing sheet 2

Writer: Karen

Peer editor: Joe

1. Is every paragraph indented? Yes.

2. Is the first word of every sentence capitalized? Yes.

3. Are there any punctuation problems? Yes.

If yes, circle the problems on the paper and provide your corrections here.

In the sentence "And the reasons are as follows.", the period should be changed into a colon.

4. Are there any grammatical problems? Yes.

If yes, underline the errors and provide your corrections here.

A. In the sentence “The U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say smoking is the leading cause...”, the word “say” should be used in its third person singular form “says”.

B. In the sentence “Smoking repels non-smokers because secondhand smoke is hazardous for...”, the word “hazardous” should be followed by the preposition “to” instead of “for”.


5. Do you have any trouble understanding the essay? No.

6. Write down your comments about this essay.

This is a well-organized essay, although there are some grammatical and punctuation errors. The thesis statement is clear and all the topic sentences support the thesis statement. Besides, some transition words are used to help essays read more smoothly.

Well done, Karen!

Thank you for your time and effort.

 **Practice 4:** After you finish your short paragraph about the causes of happiness, exchange your first draft with another student and peer edit each other's draft using the above “Peer editing sheet”.

☆ Step 6: Revising the draft

After you have gotten feedback from your peer, you can use that feedback to improve your essay in the second draft. Karen read the peer editing sheet from Joe carefully and revised her first draft. Here is Karen's second draft.

Why should people quit smoking?

A great number of people smoke in the world. Some may smoke to look cool. Some may smoke because of peer pressure. Others may be unable to stop smoking because they are too addicted. However, in my opinion, those people should quit smoking. And the reasons are as follows:

First, smoking is bad for a person's long-term health. The U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says smoking is the leading cause of fatal lung disease and can also lead to various cancers. According to CDC, since 1964, 12 million Americans have died from smoking-related illnesses. CDC also states that smoking harms every organ of a person's body. Therefore, a person should quit smoking for the sake of his/her health.

Second, smoking can have a negative impact on a person's relationship with other people. Smoking repels non-smokers because secondhand smoke is hazardous to people's health. Besides, smoking makes a person's breath smell unpleasant, and smoke also tends to cling to clothing. How would you feel if you were around a person who smelled terrible

and blew nasty-smelling air around you? Hence, if a person does want to maintain good relationships with others, he/she should quit smoking.

Third, smoking will not only damage a person's health, but it also will waste a lot of money. A packet of cigarettes costs a lot of money. Cigarettes average out at about \$6 per pack, and if a person smokes about 30 cigarettes a day, that's about \$60 per week spent on smoking. So, to save money, a person should quit smoking.


In a word, smoking will have a harmful effect on a person's life if he/she continues with this nasty habit. Therefore it is definitely worth starting to look for the best ways to quit smoking.

Tips:

After you receive the feedback from your peer, you have four choices.

1. If you think the feedback from your peer is questionable, then do nothing.
2. If your peer found that some parts of your essay were not clearly expressed, then you might need to add more information to make them understood.
3. If your peer found any errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation, then you should correct them.
4. If your peer found any wordy expressions, you should think about his or her suggestions carefully. If you think he/she is right, then you should edit out the wordiness.

Remember: Revising your first draft is not an easy job. Usually, you have to rewrite the draft one more time.

 **Practice 5:** Think about your peer's feedback carefully and revise your rough writing about the causes of happiness.

☆ Step 7: Proofreading the final draft

Before you hand in your writing to your teacher, remember to proofread your writing carefully. You should read your writing again to see if some careless mistakes are left uncorrected.

Remember: Even at the last step, there is still room for improvement.

Why should people quit smoking?

A great number of people smoke in the world. Some may smoke to look cool. Some may smoke because of peer pressure. Others may be unable to stop smoking because they are too addicted. However, in my opinion, those people should quit smoking. And the reasons are as follows:

First, smoking is bad for a person's long-term health. The U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says smoking is the leading cause of fatal lung disease and can also lead to various cancers. According to CDC, since 1964, 12 million Americans have died from smoking-related illnesses. CDC also states that smoking harms every organ of a person's body. Therefore, a person should quit smoking for the sake of his/her health.