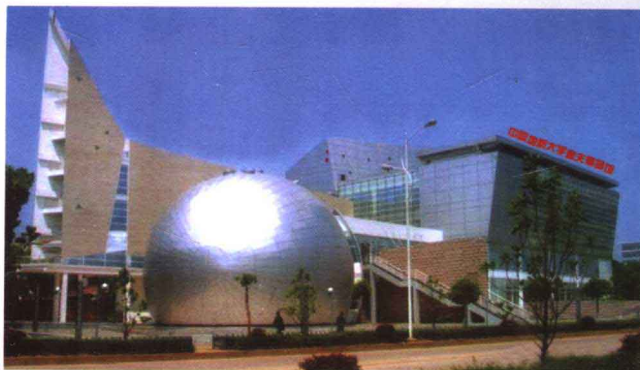


中国地质大学（武汉）
“十一五”教材规划资助

College English Writing
大学英语写作教程

主 编 葛亚非
副主编 刘 芳 汪卫红



中国地质大学出版社

中国大学
英语写作教程

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主编 李海英
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College English Writing

Student's Book

大学英语写作教程

学生用书

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前 言

培养学习者的英语写作能力是外语教学的核心内容之一。写作是一种语言输出活动,最能体现学习者综合应用语言的能力,要求学习者具备熟练的词汇和语法知识、一定的想象力和较强的逻辑思维能力以及语言组织能力。随着国际间交流与合作的日益增加,中国与外界的交往日趋频繁,国家和社会对大学生的英语应用能力提出了更迫切的要求,用英语写作的重要性已经得到广泛认同。

《大学英语写作教程》以大学非英语专业本科生为主要对象,以《大学英语教学大纲》(修订本)(2004)和《大学英语课程教学要求》(试行)(2004)为基本依据,突出英语写作的趣味性和可操作性。针对非英语专业学生在写作中存在内容贫乏、结构松散、句子单一、词汇不足等突出的实际问题,本书采取话题式的导入法,抛弃传统的写作知识直接输入法,将极大地激发学生的写作兴趣;采取过程教学法逐步完善和提高学生写作的篇章能力;针对每一个主题提供的表达方法和词汇也能促进学生语言表达的突飞猛进。每一章节在论述写作方法的基础上,提供了范文分析和课堂练习,还配有一些常用词组和写作技巧,既便于教师课堂使用,又便于学生自学参考。总之,这本教材从一个崭新的角度,采用了新型的教学方法和写作思路,必将有效地提高大学非英语专业学生的英语写作水平。

本书是以2005年我校试用的大学英语写作教材为基础,结合编者多年从事大学英语写作教学和英语写作研究的成果而成。主编葛亚非教授负责规划全书的总体布局和审稿。各章的编写人员分别是:葛亚非(Unit 1)、汪卫红(Unit 2、Unit 3)、严瑾(Unit 4)、胡志红(Unit 5)、刘芳(Unit 6)、许峰、李孝奎(Unit 7)、左年念(Unit 8)、胡冬梅(Unit 9)。唐树华负责教材的前期准备工作;李孝奎负责后期教材的试用和完善工作。写译教研室其他成员宋干锋、彭林、蓝希君、张艳明、邹晶、王国念等老师也参与了本书的编写和试用。本书的出版还得到了中国地质

大学(武汉)“十一五”教材规划的立项资助,得到了中国地质大学教务处和外国语学院的大力支持。华中科技大学熊敦礼教授,武汉大学汪火焰教授以及中国地质大学张保红教授对本书的出版提出了宝贵的意见和建议。在此一并表示衷心的感谢。

由于作者水平有限,书中难免有错误和疏漏之处,恳请专家和读者不吝赐教,以便在实践中不断完善。

编者

2007年6月

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Unit 1 Introduction

It is universally known that language is a tool for communication. An essay is a written form for this purpose. The essay attempts to communicate information, opinion, or feeling, and/or to present an argument about a topic.

In the university context, an English essay is an exercise that gives the students an opportunity to explore and clarify thoughts about a subject. In the larger world the essay appears in newspapers or on the Internet as opinion articles, editorials, reviews, and the more thorough commentary on news.

Writing that reports information to others can vary greatly in content and format. Many learning experiences are fulfilled with expository or informative writing activities. Each of us must have opportunities to read a variety of resources and printed materials for information. During writing, our knowledge of the structures and formats of these materials can be applied to organize and convey information in an essay.

If at times an English essay form may seem a little artificial, or even rigid, the skills of thinking, organizing, and developing the essay to be learned in this book will not only help the students pass an examination at national level but also assist their future careers.

In view of practical purposes, this book will deal with some skills in different modes of writing, graphic writing and practical writing. Also, it will present some information about different writing tests and some mechanics or conventions for the sentence writing.

1.1 Writing Modes

Language is the power that enables us to reason and allows us to share our understanding and knowledge. It is through the language we use in the writing that our hearts and minds are stimulated. In return, this language helps us to stimulate the hearts and minds of others.

Whatever the language we use in the writing, we express our ideas in different modes or styles for different purposes. Generally the writing modes are distinguished into four types.

Narration: writing that tells a story

Narration documents what happened and when and where. The usual organization pattern for narration is chronology: first, next, then, finally.

Exposition: writing that informs

Exposition explains or provides information by giving examples and/or reasons. The usual organization pattern for exposition is logic, or reasonableness of thinking, from topic i-

dea to supporting details. Most of the practical writings are expository, such as papers for class, essay exams, job applications and business reports.

Description: writing that appeals to the senses

Description creates a sensory image. It portrays people, places, things, moments and theories with enough vivid details to help the reader to create a mental picture of what is being written about. The usual organization pattern for description is to provide a picture from general to specific or specific to general for a person; or from left to right, from top to bottom and from inside to outside for a scene.

Argumentation: writing that attempts to convince and/or lead to action of agreement

Argumentation works by appealing to a reader's reason through the use of logical argument. The usual organization pattern for argumentation is to state clearly one's opinion earlier and support it with facts and details in order of importance from least compelling to most compelling. Its due purpose is to convince the reader.

1.2 Basic Essay Structure

Everyone knows how to write a Chinese essay no matter how long it is. In fact, an English essay can be written in the same way as a Chinese article. However, this English essay is not simply a direct translation from Chinese.

Whatever we write and whatever the purpose of the writing is, we will definitely experience some stages in completing an article. Whatever the article, it will generally fall into three parts:

- 1) Opening or Introduction: to start the essay by introducing the main thesis or topic.
- 2) Main body or Development: to support the thesis with enough details.
- 3) Closing or Conclusion: to summarize the thesis and put an end to the essay.

1.2.1 The writing of opening paragraph

The opening paragraph or introductory paragraph, usually introduces the main theme or topic of the essay. In order to hook the readers, a thesis statement should be stated. The thesis generally is present at the end of the paragraph. This part may include any of the following aspects:

- 1) Definition of the subject to be dealt with on a specialized topic.
- 2) A concrete example that leads to the discussion and general conclusion in the essay.
- 3) A general statement to be supported by examples or specific details in the rest of the essay.
- 4) An anecdote or quotation to introduce the theme of the essay.
- 5) A personal experience from which the main theme develops.
- 6) A topic which will serve as a contrast or exception to what follows.

7) A special question in reference to some word or idea in the title.

1.2.2 The writing of body paragraph(s)

The body paragraph(s), also called developing or transitional paragraph(s), is(are) the one(s) whose discussions closely follow the thesis statement introduced in the opening and all the discussions naturally lead to the closing paragraph in an essay. In other words, this part provides support to the thesis or theme with relevant details or examples.

Like the opening and the closing paragraphs, each body paragraph should possess a topic sentence or a central idea around which the other sentences coherently develop. All the other sentences must move naturally around the topic sentence. No irrelevant elements should be allowed in this part.

1.2.3 The writing of concluding paragraph

The concluding paragraph or closing paragraph should be short, forceful and thought provoking. The essay on a specialized subject may have various endings. In this part such aspects can be found as suggestions for the reader to have further thought or a topic related to the theme of the introduction so as to bring the essay to a full circle. A reasonable conclusion may end in any of the following ways:

- 1) A summary of the thought which has been expressed.
- 2) Restatements of what has been discussed.
- 3) Conclusions drawn from the previous discussion.
- 4) Suggestions for future developments.

1.2.4 Sample analysis

The following two samples provide some picture about the structure or organization of an essay.

Sample 1

Campus Opening to Tourists

Since they were open to the public, university campuses have become a new tourist attraction. Many universities, especially the reknown ones, are always found full of tourists. However, crowds of visitors have already violated the tranquility of the university. Some university even claims that its campus will be open only to middle school students and people from education institutions. Whether the university campuses should be open to the public brings about pros and cons from all sides of walks.

Some people are quite in favor of the campus opening to the public. They believe that the opening of a university campus will stimulate the tourist industry and allow people to appreciate some of the cultural heritage. Moreover, people at all levels will be able to enjoy the university culture and learning atmosphere, for example, the posters, lecture rooms and li-

baries. In particular, students from middle or primary schools may have an opportunity to see earlier what the university life will be like so as to foster their interest to pursue a university degree.

While others argue that the easy access to campus will lead to some problems. The pouring of tourists to the campus may not only break the normal order of university life but also threaten its security. Sometimes too many visitors on a university campus will interfere with both the students and teachers. It is complained by some teachers that their work or research is often disturbed by the loud speakers of the tour guides. What is worse, the careless littering from tourists often damages the beautiful environment.

Whatever the opinions will be, it is not proper just to prevent tourists from visiting the campus. Some measures can be conducted to benefit both the university and tourists. It is suggested that the campus should be open to tourists on weekends and/or tours should be allowed during the holiday season. On the other hand, the visitors should behave themselves and try to protect the environment wherever they go. It is certain that restricted opening of campus will shorten the distance between the university and the real world.

Sample 2

Internet Benefits Our Life

“Do you have a QQ number?” “We can talk on MSN.” QQ and MSN are the two terms we often hear recently. Since the internet connected every household, our life has been greatly benefited and enriched.

The first and foremost benefit of the internet is the conveniences brought to our life except the instant access to the latest news. Every one of us, old or young, can use the internet to talk to our family and friends at anytime via QQ or MSN. We can even see or hear each other with the help of a video camera. Also, we can organize an international meeting on line without bothering about the travel expenses. Moreover, we can go shopping, book a hotel and buy tickets online at a reasonable price or a good discount. Apart from all the conveniences, the internet is a good source for entertainment. We can see films or listen to music online. When we have some favorites, we can download them for later enjoyment. If we are sports fans, we can watch NBA or football games without worrying about the tickets. Of course, the internet provides us with rich academic resources. We not only can learn the latest advances in science and technology, but also are able to search for and exchange the information for our own research. In addition, we can pursue a university degree through distance education without going to the classroom in person.

Like anything else, the internet also produces problems, for example, the safety, privacy, virus and pornographic problems. However, its benefits always outweigh its defects. If we follow certain rules and behave ourselves, we will take the best advantage of the internet.

Comments:

- 1) Both essays can be structured into three parts: introduction, development and conclu-

sion, though Sample 1 has two paragraphs for its development.

2) A thesis statement is presented in the last sentence of the introductory paragraph.

3) A topic idea is stated in each of the developing paragraph, which is supported with enough details. The only difference is that in Sample 1 the two developing paragraphs offer respectively two opposite opinions about the campus opening.

4) The conclusion is drawn naturally from what is discussed above. Sample 1 differs from Sample 2 in that the former gives suggestions to the issue and the latter just ends with a summary.

1.3 Writing Process

In the medium of the written word, the communication of complex ideas is a process—a process that requires thinking and rethinking, working and reworking. Writing is a complex process and requires a lot of practice, and no formula can guarantee a good essay.

We often think that when professional writers begin a new piece of writing the words just flow effortlessly to the page. Actually, we know that all writers, professionals or green hands, use a process approach when writing an article or even a novel which includes some of the steps listed below. Our minds do not always work to create logical paragraphs and to present carefully planned-out thesis sentences. If we wait for those to appear before we begin writing, we will wait a long time. It's better to start by getting something down on paper and then working through these steps to create a finished article.

Although different people may have different ideas about the steps of writing, they generally have an agreement on the following process:

- 1) Predict the readers/audience.
- 2) Discover what to write.
- 3) Check up / Look for references (consult literature).
- 4) Organize a draft.

Brainstorming: Get various ideas, concepts, examples, etc. and write them down in a random order without giving any special attention about what is necessary or specific or even right to the point.

Sorting out the ideas in a list: Classify the ideas and put them into different categories. If necessary delete some unnecessary or unrelated ideas.

Thesis writing: Decide topic idea or the theme for the whole article.

Outlining: Structure the sorted ideas into different paragraphs and fit each thesis or topic sentence for each part.

Drafting: Write out the essay freely following the outline.

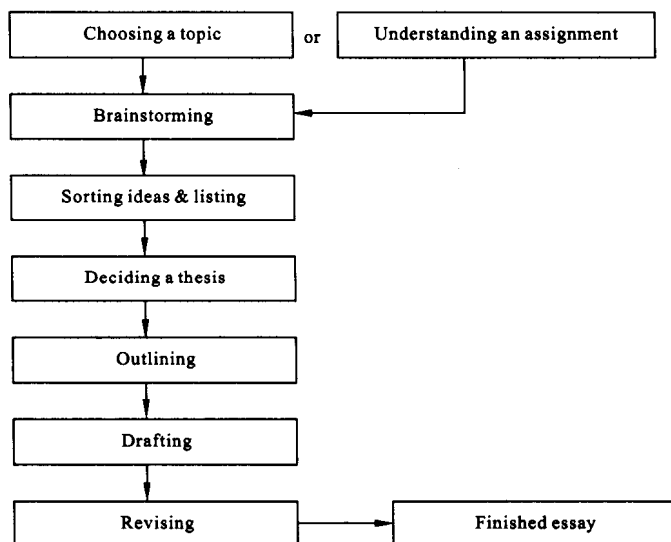
5) **Revise the draft:** Make sure the ideas are closely related and the sentences and paragraphs are coherent with each other. Add transitional words if necessary.

6) **Edit the draft:** Make sure of the style, logic, grammar, spelling and punctuations,

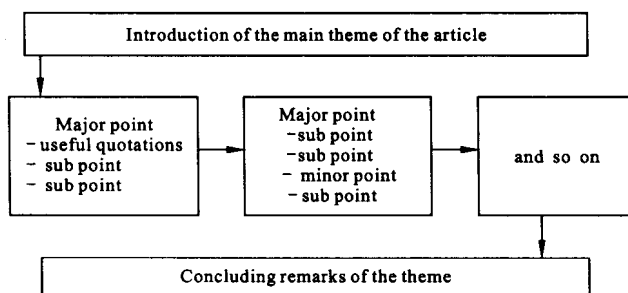
etc.

7) Article ready.

In the college English writing context, essay writing preferably follows a workable linear model for the writing purpose. It could be summed up in a chart, thus:



But the actual process will be far more complicated. Sometimes when a longer essay is to be written, the whole process will be more like this:



1.4 Effectiveness and Coherence of the Essay

1.4.1 Effectiveness

A good essay is composed of carefully organized paragraphs. A good paragraph, on the other hand, should contain effective sentences to convey explicit information apart from a proper development pattern.

However, it is often found in students' writings that the whole essay is full of loosely organized sentences though each is basically right in grammar. Yet, it cannot be assumed that grammatically correct sentences can convey an idea with clarity and style. Good and ef-

fective sentences tell readers what is important with a minimum of words. The logic relation between sentences connected by conjunctions or transitional words will help exhibit the writer's ideas explicitly and effectively. Hence effective sentences connected logically will definitely lead to the coherence of an essay. The effective sentences are usually concerned with unity, coherence, conciseness, emphasis and variety, which will be discussed at length in Unit 9.

1.4.2 Coherence

The most convincing ideas expressed in the most beautiful sentences will move no one unless those ideas are properly connected. Unless readers can move easily from one thought to another, they will understand what we want to convey.

Providing transitions between ideas is largely concerned with the coherence of an essay. The transition words or phrases work as stepping stones to the accessible ideas. With the ideas connected by coherence, the reader will not only obtain all the information we have but also see exactly how we arrive at the point.

Generally, there are four basic considerations in providing transitions: using transitional expressions, repeating key words and phrases, using pronouns, and using parallel forms.

The following paragraph starts with a topic sentence, followed by clearly related ideas. Though weak, it can be said unified as it contains no irrelevant details. However, it is not coherent. The sentences are disconnected from each other, making it difficult for the reader to follow the writer's train of thought.

The ancient Egyptians are masters of preserving dead people's bodies by making mummies of them. Mummies several thousand years old have been discovered nearly intact. The skin, hair, teeth, fingernails and toenails, and facial features of the mummies were evident. It is possible to diagnose the disease they suffered in life, such as smallpox, arthritis, and nutritional deficiencies. The process was remarkably effective. Sometimes apparent were the fatal afflictions of the dead people: a middle-aged king died from a blow on the head, and polio killed a child king. Mummification consisted of removing the internal organs, applying natural preservatives inside and out, and then wrapping the body in layers of bandages.

Below is the same paragraph revised for coherence. *Italics* indicates pronouns and repeated/restated key words, **bold** indicates transitional tag-words, and underlining indicates parallel structures.

The ancient Egyptians are masters of preserving dead people's bodies by making mummies of them. In short, mummification consisted of removing the internal organs, applying natural preservatives inside and out, and then wrapping the body in layers of bandages. Meanwhile, the process was remarkably effective. Indeed, mummies several thousand years old have been discovered nearly intact. Their skin, hair, teeth, fingernails and toenails, and facial features are still evident. Their diseases in life, such as smallpox, arthritis, and nutritional deficiencies, are still diagnosable. Even their fatal afflictions are still apparent: a mid-

dle-aged king died from a blow on the head, a child king died from polio.

By using a variety of coherence devices, the paragraph has achieved coherence. The organization of the information and the links between sentences now make it easy for the reader to move from one sentence to the next.

(Adapted from Principles of Composition, 2006, <http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/composition/composition.htm>)

1.5 Classroom Practice

Practice the writing process on the following topic.

Wealth or Success

Different people may have different ideas about their dreams in their life. What is yours, wealth or success?

1. Brainstorming

Free ideas: _____

2. Listing and sorting out ideas

Group 1: _____
Group 2: _____

3. Outlining

Introduction

Thesis: _____

Development

Topic sentence 1: _____

Topic sentence 2: _____

Conclusion

4. Group discussion

Work out a reasonable outline and begin to write the essay.

1.6 Tips for Writing

1.6.1 Characteristics of a good essay

1. Organization

The opening is inviting and compelling. The development flows smoothly with logic and coherence. The conclusion is strong, providing a summary or some suggestions. The main

topic is stated in each paragraph, and everything in that paragraph is relevant to the main idea. Thoughtful transitions are used to show how ideas are connected. Ideas move from general to specific (more important to less important) or vice versa.

2. Ideas/content

Ideas are fresh and original. Examples are supportive to the main idea. Insight from knowledge or experience is evident. Relevant and quality details provide informations.

3. Sentence fluency

Sentence construction creates clarity. Sentences are effective in unity, coherence and conciseness. Sentence structures vary and are well connected by conjunctions. Sentences are not fragmental or monotonous but express explicit ideas.

4. Choice of words

Words used are accurate, specific, and natural. Precise nouns and modifiers create pictures. Verbs energize the writing striking words and phrases linger in the reader's mind-words of similar meaning are not grouped in one phrase.

5. Conventions/mechanics

Words are spelled correctly.

Grammar and its usage are correct and contribute to clarity and style. Punctuation and capitalization should be correct and accurate.

(Adapted from Six Traits, 2006, <http://www.ginnyhoover.com/>)

1. 6. 2 Rules for writing the introduction

State the thesis or theme clearly.

The opening should hook the reader.

1. 6. 3 Rules for writing the development

Present a topic for the paragraph.

Provide enough details, such as facts and examples.

Move from the more general to the more specific or vice versa.

Proceed from the more detailed to the more declarative and conclusive.

1. 6. 4 Rules for writing the conclusion

It is the last paragraph for the reader to encounter and so there should be nothing new. It should remind the reader of the most important aspects of the essay. Mostly, it should creatively restate the main idea of the essay. It should also leave the reader even more interested in the topic and idea.

1. 6. 5 Strategies for coherence

Use transitional words: first, next, after, before, meanwhile, immediately, finally,