

高等学校英语专业规划教材

Academic Writing for English Majors 大学英语写作 Organizing an Essay

主编 周丹丹 汪美瑞 汪渭忠

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Telling Your Stories
Introducing Description
Describing a Place
Drawing a Portrait
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Limiting the Topic and Selecting the Material
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第2册



南京大学出版社

丛书总主编 丁言仁 赵文书

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前言

这套英语写作系列教材的编写遵循部颁高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲的精神,努力满足英语专业本科阶段不同年级写作教学的需要,旨在帮助学生在毕业时能够用英语写出高质量的毕业论文。我们希望,写作教学在训练学生的英语书面表达能力的同时,能够培养和提高学生独立从事科研工作所需要的分析和解决问题的能力,为国家经济建设 and 教育发展输送高质量、高水平的英语人才。

目前已经出版的英语写作教材不少,但大多是独立的一册教材或英语写作手册,缺少一套贯穿英语专业本科阶段的全程教学、相互衔接、适合课堂教学使用的系列教材。我们编写这套教材的目的之一就是要填补这一空缺,为英语专业的学生提供一套由浅及深、循序渐进的写作教材,做到老师用了顺手,学生用了有效。为了使这套教材真正对教学起到帮助作用,我们想说明下面几个问题。

书面表达能力是英语专业学生综合素质的一项重要指标,目前越来越受到重视。对于英语专业写作课的教学,大纲已作了规定和要求,但各个地方、各个学校在执行上因具体情况的差别而又各不相同。有的高校新生一入校就开写作课,有的则要到一年级下学期或者二年级才开写作课。在教学进度上各校也不一致,有的因课时不足,不能切实完成大纲所规定的教学任务,学生在撰写学术性的毕业论文时感到有很大困难。同时,大纲本身也有一个在实践中不断完善、不断适应学生毕业后工作需要和国家经济建设快速发展需要的问题。

这套教材大致上第一、二、三册分别供大学一、二、三年级使用,第四册则供四年级使用一个学期。对于一年级下学期才开设写作课的学校来说,第一册的一部分也可供二年级使用,第二、三册也可分别供三、四年级使用。当然也可以适当压缩内容,将第四册提前到三年级使用。为了帮助学生适应英语专业四级考试和八级考试对写作的要求,我们在第二、三册里又分别包括了相应的应试写作内容和相关练习。

一般说来,本科阶段英语写作的学习要上两个台阶、过四道关口。第一个台阶是写记叙文、说明文和一般的议论文,学生上这个台阶就是要用英语写出他们在中学的汉语写作中已经熟悉的各种文体。这里的两道关口,一道是克服畏惧心理,敢于用英语写作,能写得出;另一道是学会用规范的书面英语来写作,要写得好。第二个台阶是写大学本科阶段专业学习所必需的课程论文、科研报告和毕业论文。这里也同样存在着“写得出”和“写得好”这两道关口。

由于学生在这四道关口上所面临的困难不尽相同,写作课的教学也应有不同的侧重,这套教材教学内容的分配在一定程度上反映了这些不同的侧重点。总的说来,第一册重在帮助学生打消顾虑,敢用英语表达自己的思想,能用常用的文体表达自己的思想;第二册则在学生已经能写得出的基础上,帮助他们学会使用规范的英语书面表达,并进一步训练常用的语言修辞和篇章修辞技巧,更深入、更有效地表达自己的思想。第三册的重点是议论文写作,特别是学术性议论文的写作,旨在提供初步的学术论文写作训练,使学生敢于并能够写出学术性的文章,表达和论证自己的观点;第四

- 册侧重增强学生对研究过程的了解和对学术论文写作规范的把握，帮助学生把学术性
- 文章进一步写清楚，并且能写得深入、写得规范，最终能够顺利进入毕业论文写作阶
- 段。

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各学校的教学情况有自己的特点，任课老师在教材内容的选用上应该有很大的灵活性，不必拘泥于教材的每一章、每一节、每一个练习，可以根据学生的具体兴趣和要求，对于书中的练习，有的可做深，有的可做浅，有的可多做、反复做，有的则可以不做了，一切从教学出发，从调动学生积极性出发。写作是一个不断挖掘深化、不断修改提高的过程；如果课本上每一个练习都要做，就难免会占用过多的时间，影响到一篇作文的深化和提高。

老师对学生帮助最有效的时机是在写作过程之中，而不是在这一过程结束之后来写评语、批分数。在写作过程中，老师可以指出问题，提出修改意见，启发学生，全程参与学生的写作过程，帮助他们写出更好的作文。因此，课堂的主要时间应该是用来评讲学生的作文，帮助他们修改第二稿、第三稿。

这套教材是原《大学英语写作》的修订本。原教材于1997年出版后，被国内多所高校采用，受到广大师生的欢迎，前后重印十多次。但原教材编写于1990年代初，其中有些写作话题和例文反映的是当时学生所关心的问题，与目前学生的兴趣不尽吻合。在修订过程中，我们对教材内容作了更新，换上了更贴近目前形势的写作话题和例文，以期激发学生写作的积极性，收到更好的学习效果。

这套教材的编写和出版得到了校、院、系各级领导的长期支持，藉此表示衷心感谢。这次教材的修订得到了南京大学出版社的大力支持，特别是出版社的杨金荣先生和董颖女士的关心，特此致谢。我们还要感谢所有给予这项工作各种支持的老师和同学，他们在使用教材过程中对教材提出的反馈意见使修订工作得以顺利进行。

丁言仁

2007年7月

Words for the Teacher

This textbook is the second in the series. It aims to improve the writing skills of English majors who are already familiar with describing their personal experiences and with writing paragraphs and narrative essays. These students should continue their practice and gradually move towards more independent academic study in their final years of college education.

To reach this goal, they must learn to do two things concurrently: 1) develop their own ideas, and 2) express these ideas correctly and effectively in English using appropriate rhetorical patterns. As teachers, therefore, we aim at a balance between content and form, between idea development and rhetorical organization. Writing is communicating ideas, but communication cannot be effective without clear language and organization. We do need to call the students' attention to the organization of samples and encourage them to select and use in their own work the patterns these samples demonstrate.

There are a few ideas you may like to consider when you use the sample essays:

First, **use a hands-on approach**. That is, let students learn as they write and write as they learn. Most units in this book begin with "Learning Activities" from which the class may choose one to start with. The students' initial work thus serves as a point of departure in the classroom discussion, which proceeds as they write and rewrite their drafts.

Second, **concentrate on student writing in class** and do not waste time going over a sample essay sentence by sentence and turning the discussion into another intensive reading class. For the most part, students can skim the readings outside of class at their own pace. In class, use the "Points for Discussion" to direct students' attention to various writing issues.

For example, the article "The Blast Furnace" in Unit 6 has six "Points for Discussion." Point 1 calls attention to the writing purpose of the essay, which the class may use to talk about how to write with a particular purpose. Point 2 encourages students to interpret the author's and her father's characteristics by using the details in the essay.

Points 3, 4 and 5 are about writing techniques: by using similes, images, and precise words, the author describes the unique beauty of her hometown and the sights of her childhood. The last point can be used for group (or pair) work in class. It is aimed at helping students improve the drafts of their own essays.

The third thing you may bear in mind when using a sample essay is to **skip vocabulary learning** so as to give maximum time to student writing in class. Comprehension of the samples in this book does not require that we know all the difficult words in them. These words are often explained in footnotes so that the time spent on discussing them can be reduced to a minimum.

Using this textbook will bring large quantities of student writings for our correction and comment, and driven by professional conscience, we tend to spend day and night trying to catch every error. This does not have to be the case. Because students cannot pay attention to

- ☐ all our corrections and tend to repeat most of the errors, we may as well only correct the most
- ☐ obvious errors and concentrate their attention on those few. Step by step, they will make
- ☐ progress and eliminate more and more errors. Demanding perfection all at once proves to be the greatest imperfection.

vi A textbook is only a tool, and as teachers we know best how this tool should be used. Ultimately, this question has to be answered in the classroom; by how well our students improve their writing.

The original draft of this book was written by Mary Wang and Wang Weizhong. Mary, in fact, initiated the idea of compiling this series of four books in the early 1990s and pushed us on. After the Wangs left China, Linell Davis and I completed the first edition of Book II based on their design and materials.

Now my colleague Zhou Dandan has taken over the responsibility of developing a new edition. She has carefully examined every unit and included many new student essays and professional writings to replace samples that have become outdated. She and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Barbara Penney, our former colleague, and Janet Roberts, a teacher from Nanjing Normal University, for their careful review and editing of this manuscript.

Ting Yenren

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Keeping a Diary

Overview

Topic

- ◆ Introduction to different types of diaries

Learning Activities

- ◆ Choose one type of diary and start practicing

Learning Goals

- ◆ Understand the importance of keeping a diary
- ◆ Understand different types of diaries

The only way that anyone ever learns to write is by writing a lot. Reading helps, expanding one's vocabulary helps, but in the end, only practice will make writers out of us students.

This is why we would like you to keep a reading diary. In addition to building writing skills, a diary supports your learning in other classes. When you use a newly acquired word in a day's diary entry, or make use of a grammatical structure to which you have just been introduced, or record a fact or idea which interests you, you are far more likely to remember these new additions to your knowledge.

Diaries in an English writing class have the further value of helping you learn to write in the way you write in Chinese. When you write in Chinese, you are not writing to practice your knowledge of grammar and vocabulary of the language; rather, you write to pass on a real message to an audience, be the audience your teacher, your classmates or only you yourself. Unless you can use English for such natural communication, you cannot be said to have learned the language.

There are several different types of diaries which you can keep in this writing course. You may choose one of them, or your teacher may choose one for you.

PERSONAL DIARY. You may write daily or three, four, five times a week (depending on what your teacher tells you). Prepare two diary notebooks so that the teacher can have a whole week to go over the diaries without interrupting your daily writing habit.

This should not be difficult for you at all. The following example shows how an entry can begin:

September 10

The happiest thing for me today was to receive an unexpected letter from a high school friend of mine whom I haven't seen since I came to university. From the letter, I learned that he is now studying at a PLA academy and in a little bit more than two years' time will realize his dream of becoming a young officer. Compared with his, my life on campus is rather dull...

If you do not want to confide your personal matters to your teacher, this is your right. Some students may fill the diary with stories and "lies" to avoid getting too personal.

Some students may complain of having nothing to write. "We do the same old things everyday," they will say, "so what can we possibly write about?" Here are some ideas:

- Dig into your memory and describe an event from your past. For instance, your memory of the first class in primary school grade one.
- Define a word that you have met in your reading; define it at length. Think about any personal meaning that new word has for you. Experiment with using it.
- Vary your tone—serious, journalistic, sarcastic, pathetic, lightly humorous—or play with the idea of style or audience.
- Describe your "boring" life to a peasant, a child, or your grandmother.
- Describe an emotion you felt today or one that you often feel; try to involve all the senses in your description.
- Recount in dialogue form, with quotation marks and reporting verbs, a conversation you had with your classmates.

These are just a few ideas. You yourself can come up with many others.

DIALOGUE JOURNAL. You find (or your teacher helps you find) a partner in the class, and the two of you will carry out a dialogue in writing. One of you starts off the written conversations by writing whatever you like and then passing on the journal to the other. You may ask questions of your partner, comment about the content or utility of the lessons, or launch into any topic that interests you. If one comments on a terrible movie, the other may join in the criticism or may disagree by talking about how wonderful the movie is.

Here, you are engaged in real discussion. If you do not want to have discussion only with one person, you may change (or your teacher may help you change) your partner once or twice during the term. This way you will have six to eight weeks to build up a written relationship with a classmate you possibly do not otherwise know very well. You may also choose to have three people engaged in the dialogue rather than only two.

BOOK DIARY (reading diary). With this choice, you write about what you are reading. As you read, you react in writing to novels, non-fiction or whatever you read as part of your class work. If you are reading a long book, you may write numerous entries, each responding

to a small section of the book.

It is in fact a good idea to write about what you are learning in your writing or other classes, about the ideas or information that made a strong impression on you. Writing is a process of exploration. It helps you discover where the holes are in your knowledge or understanding.

TRAVELING NARRATIVE. It often is fun to do a bit of creative writing, and this might be a game already familiar to you when you were in the first year. Someone in the class starts a story in a blank notebook. Then, any student can add to the story any time or simply take the notebook and read the story and add nothing. A student can write a sentence, a paragraph or a page, can introduce or kill off characters, can introduce new plot lines.

There are other types of diaries that will help you. The thing to remember is:

Writing is thinking, and the diary is a chance for you to muse on past, present and future.

Telling Your Stories

Overview

Topic

- ✧ Introduction to narrative writing

Learning Activities

- ✧ Write short-short stories
- ✧ Write down your stories and share them with your classmates

Learning Goals

- ✧ Develop the ability of finding something uncommon in common things
- ✧ Form the habit of writing stories whenever they occur

Like keeping a diary, writing stories is another thing you may enjoy doing again and again throughout the semester. Periodically, all in your class may each write a story and post them on the walls. The writing class will thereby turn into a class of short story reading. Of course, this will need the organization by your teacher or your class committee.

There are no fixed rules for creative writing. Just use your imagination, your fantasy and your dreams. And perhaps read a little of works by others.

The following are some of the stories written by students. After you read them, it will be your turn to write a story.

Maternal Care

Lu Qian

No matter how busy and tired, my mother cooked various delicious dishes for me every day during my last spurt¹ towards university. I called her “an excellent cook,” but she would jokingly correct me by saying, “No, I’ve become your exclusive cook.” One day my “exclusive cook” was ill in bed. I asked if the illness hurt her. “No,” she replied, “The illness doesn’t make me uncomfortable, but staying in bed without cooking for you does.”

Not Drunk Enough

Shi Xiaobo

Tom, a five-year-old boy, asks his father why the nurse applies spirit to his hip

¹ spurt: a short, sudden increase of activity or effort

before she gives him an injection.

"She wants to make your hip drunk so that there won't be pain when she gives you the injection," his father tells him.

"But I can still feel the pain."

"That's because your hip is too good at drinking to get drunk."

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Exercise 1 On a slip of paper, write a little story like the two you have just read. Pass these slips around in class and read as many stories as you can.

A Box of Matches

Jiang Min

It was raining outside in the night. In order to kill time, he stayed in bed reading a novel.

He has been in the small village for several days and was deeply impressed by the extraordinarily beautiful scenery here. His roommate was an old blind man who was now sitting at the table. To tell the truth, he sometimes felt sorry for the old shabby roommate.

All of a sudden, the power went out and the room was in complete darkness. Extremely upset, he threw the book heavily on the bed.

"What's the matter?" noticing the sound, the old man spoke to him for the first time in those days.

"I can see nothing now without lights," he answered impatiently still lying in bed.

The old man said nothing, but began to fumble in his own bed.

He was a little surprised and asked, "What are you looking for?"

"A box of matches," the old man murmured, "I got them by accident. Thinking they might be useful one day, I kept them in my bed. But now, where are they?"

Will matches be useful to a blind man? He was a little puzzled.

The old man began to comfort him while still fumbling. "Don't worry. You will be able to see everything clearly as soon as I find the matches."

He felt his face turning red, upon hearing these words.

Suddenly the old man shouted, "Here, I've found them!" And at the same time, lights came back in the room. The power was on again.

He looked up and in the bright light saw the old man lifting a firing match smiling warmly.

Saying nothing, he returned to reading in the bright light. He knew he would never forget the firing match in this raining night.

Exercise 2 Write a story about the uncommon things you have observed in a common person.

If you still have a mental block, try the following:

Without trying to think of a story, describe a character: male or female, their age, occupation, physical appearance and mood at the moment. Where is this character: city, country; inside, outside; rich or poor surroundings; cold, hot environment; alone or with others?

Now describe the same things about another character. The second character needn't have anything to do with the first. Then connect the two characters. Do they already know each

- ☐ other? If they don't, is there a way in which they meet each other? If they already know each other, are they related by love, hate, accident, physical proximity? Is there an object which is important to the characters? Does one of the five senses predominate? What is the overall mood: menacing, domestic, meditative, conflicting, etc.? Write a page in which these two characters interact.
- 6

Read the following:

A Pitiful Person

Qian Xiaoling

She walks beside him, slowly, keeping some distance, having a glance at him now and then, full of sympathy. Carrying some books in his right arm, he seems to be also a student here. Of course, she does not know him, but she sympathizes with him because of the crutch under his left arm. How cruel it is for a young man to be disabled! What a pitiable person! It is still not very hot, but the back of his shirt is already wet with sweat.

Suddenly, she hears some brisk steps from behind, and then the sound of somebody falling down. They both look back. A little girl has just thrown herself onto the ground and is now crying: "Mum, Ugh..." She hesitates a little; her hands are full of books and she supposes the girl could stand up by herself. Just at that moment, she finds him turning round and going to the child. He transfers his books from one hand to the other, stoops a little, and reaches out his hand: "Come on. Don't cry..."

She turns about and goes on. It is still not very hot, but she feels her face burning a little.

In your draft, you may retell a story from somewhere: a newspaper story, a myth, a fairy tale, a joke, a story your mother told you.

Then, ask yourself why you have chosen that particular story rather than another. Are the events of the story or the people in it intriguing? Do you find something puzzling that makes you want to retell the story? Does some idea inspire you? Did something similar happen to you? If it is sad, what exactly makes it sad? If funny, what makes it funny?

Change the point of view of the story. Tell it from the point of view of a character (or another character) of the story. What might be a part of the story line that was not told in the original? Change elements of the story to change the outcome, the theme or central idea. Tell the story from the point of view of a photographer, a detective, a filmmaker, or a specialist in some aspect of the story. If your mother knew the people in this story, what would she say about them?

Read the following two stories, written in different styles, and for each of them, discover: what is implied or not directly said in the story?

Slips of Love

Qian Xiaolin

Before I was ten years old, I lived with Dad alone. Teaching in a school far from home, mother came to see us only over the weekend. During the week, Dad assumed all the responsibilities of taking care of me both in my daily life and study.

Occasionally, Dad had to be out for work all day, from early morning to late night. Then, in the morning, I would be awakened by an alarm clock near the pillow. Opening

eyes reluctantly and looking at the clock, I was sure I could find a slip by it which read: "You had better get up right now before you fall asleep again. Nobody will wake you up for a second time." Such a slip made me "alarmed." I would get up immediately because I didn't want to be late for school. Going to the table, I would find another slip lying on it. Reading it, I could know how Dad had made arrangements for my meals, which were always seen to by those kind neighbors. When I sat at the desk for my homework in the evening, I could see a slip just beside the desk-lamp: "Always remember to keep a proper distance between your eyes and your book." Though Dad was away from home, I could hear his voice and feel his care everywhere.

Sometimes it would be me who wrote a lot of slips, especially when I had done something wrong. It was too embarrassing for me to confess my faults to Dad face to face. Like father, like daughter. I also chose the way of writing slips: "Dad, I'm sorry to tell you that ... I promise I will not make such an error for a second time ... Please do not mention it again." I would put the slip on his desk, and I knew the result. Dad would not mention it to me face to face, as if he didn't know it at all. And I would try to avoid making similar mistakes. Mutual trust was much valued here. I believed Dad could understand me. He would give me chances to draw lessons, instead of severe words that I could hardly accept. Dad believed I would act as I had promised.

Once Dad went to his office for a meeting at night. Having finished my homework, I went to bed early, leaving a slip on the table: "Dad, please check my homework as usual. I must be awakened if there is any mistake, no matter how sleepy I might be." But, when awakened by "force," I was so annoyed for being disturbed in a dream, my brain refused to accept anything no matter how hard Dad tried to explain the problem. Finally, Dad lost his patience and raised his voice: "Open your eyes and read the slip for me. What do you say in it yourself?" I was frightened to sobriety¹ at once, and my brain worked much better.

The next day we held the mid-term examination in mathematics, and I got 100 points. I owed my success to that slip. The last question in the paper was just similar to the one Dad had explained to me the night before.

Whenever I recall the slips, I cannot help smiling. Carried in those light slips is the deep love between father and daughter, which will accompany me and warm my heart wherever I go.

Mr. Sweet

Alice Walker

Mr. Sweet was a diabetic and an alcoholic and a guitar player and lived down the road from us on a neglected cotton farm. He had been ambitious as a boy, wanted to be a doctor or lawyer or sailor, only to find that black men fare better if they are not. Since he could be none of those things he turned to fishing as his only earnest career and playing the guitar as his only claim to doing anything extraordinarily well.

Toward all of us children he was very kind, and had the grace to be shy with us,

¹ sobriety: the state of being sober

which is unusual in grown-ups. He had great respect for my mother for she never held his drunkenness against him and would let us play with him even when he was about to fall in the fireplace from drink. Although Mr. Sweet would sometimes lose complete or nearly complete control of his head and neck so that he would loll in his chair, his mind remained strangely acute and his speech not too affected. His ability to be drunk and sober at the same time made him an ideal playmate, for he was as weak as we were and we could usually best him in wrestling, all the while keeping a fairly coherent conversation going.

We never felt anything of Mr. Sweet's age when we played with him. We loved his wrinkles and would draw some on our brows to be like him, and his white hair was my special treasure and he knew it and would never come to visit us just after he had had his hair cut off at the barbershop. Once he came to our house for something, probably to see my father about fertilizer for his crops, for although he never paid the slightest attention to his crops he liked to know what things would be best to use on them if he ever did. Anyhow, he had not come with his hair since he had just had it shaved off at the barbershop. He wore a huge straw hat to keep off the sun and also to keep his head away from me. But as soon as I saw him I ran up and demanded that he take me up and kiss me, with his funny beard which smelled so strongly of tobacco. Looking forward to burying my small fingers into his woolly hair I threw away his hat only to find he had done something to his hair, that it was no longer there! I let out a squall which made my mother think that Mr. Sweet had finally dropped me in the well or something and from that day I've been wary of men in hats. However, not long after, Mr. Sweet showed up with his hair grown out and just as white and kinky and impenetrable as it ever was.

Adapted from *The Writing Project: A Collection of Contemporary Prose*, by Alan H. Casty and Richard H. Dodge, eds. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1982.

Suggested Writing Activities

As you read through these stories one by one, what memories came back to you? What ideas welled up? What meaning do they have to others?

Write down your stories and share them with your roommates and classmates.

This should be made an assignment that you do from time to time, preferably whenever a story occurs to you. The more you write, the sharper your mind will become. Good writers can often find something uncommon in things common to most of us. Can you do this? Can you observe important things that people normally miss?