

高等学校英语专业规划教材

Academic Writing for English Majors 大学英语写作 Developing an Argument

主编 丁言仁

Learning about Learning to Write
Keep a Reading Diary
Writing a Letter
Reflecting on a Learning Strategy
Discussing a Quotation
Preparing a Speech
Discussing Controversial Issues
Writing Against the Clock
Developing an Argument
Criticizing an Argument
Writing a Short Story
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Finding the Hidden Meaning
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Writing Your Way into Literature (1)
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Comparing Different Works



第3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上的需要，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，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，为国家经济建设和教育发展输送高质量、高水平的英语人材。

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。

一般的说来，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、更有效的表达自己的思想。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。

iv 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，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《大学英文写作》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 is the third book in the series. The aim is to help English majors reflect on ideas, opinions and various readings with a critical eye so as to get prepared for the writing of research theses in language, literature or other related subjects. The book consists of two parts. The first ten units focus on various skills of writing a clear, effective argumentative essay. The second ten build on the first by leading students to exercise their argumentative skills in the criticism of various literary works. Importance is attached to critical examination of literature because such practice, I believe, helps students gain a good understanding of the cultures of the Western world; good English majors must have such understanding although in our curriculum today, culture and literature do not always occupy an important place.

The book contains many units and tasks, but teachers may only adopt and adapt those which they know will “make a good lesson.” After all, they know best what their students need, and there is no need to follow a textbook to letter. There are, however, a few points I think worth considering*for whoever uses this book in the writing class. These are the same points made in the preface to the first edition of this book.

1. **Attending to the process of idea development.** The process approach to writing instruction sees writing an essay as a process whereby students continuously discover, reformulate and recognize their ideas; therefore, the theory goes, teachers should provide help when it is most wanted, that is, when this idea development process is still taking place, not when it is over. There might be problems with this theory, but there is nothing wrong with encouraging students to write; rewrite and make progress through multiple drafts, especially when they are still at early stages of writing academic papers. For that matter, we would like to encourage them to choose and develop topics that are truly of their own concern and interest. It is indeed true that they write well only when they “have things to say,” not when they “have to say things.”

2. **Responding to the content of student journals.** Students learn to write well by writing a lot. A good way of writing a lot is to keep journals, a method also discussed in the first two books in this series. This book introduces a new sub-category, reading diary.

The journals may be handed in once a week, and the teacher may read them and respond to the content by writing a short entry at the end, for instance, by commenting on an idea discussed in the entry and giving reasons why he or she agrees or disagrees with the student. This means that an already overworked teacher does not need to correct language errors or may keep it to a minimum (for instance, one or two corrections for each entry).

Journal keeping can be made an integral part of the course. From time to time, we may ask students to select an entry and develop it into a full-fledged essay. With the essay, we may make careful comments and have students revise and edit them again and again.

- 3. **Helping students to correct errors themselves.** This book contains little discussion
□ on how to use correct English. This, however, does not mean that the correct use of the lan-
□ guage is unimportant. Perhaps no one else attaches more importance to it than we teachers.
vi The problem is that too often we assume the role of editor or proofreader, spending long hours
at night trying to catch every error in student writing, only to find similar errors appearing
again in the very next assignment. Excessive editing dampens the enthusiasm of both the
teacher and the student.

The responsibility of us as teachers is to not correct all errors but to help students grow into independent writers who, among other skills, are able to edit, correct and proofread their own writings. Editing should be made part of their learning experience. We may consider the following techniques:

1) In the students' drafts, we may tick or circle the errors that they should be able to or should learn to correct themselves, and have them correct them themselves.

2) We may have them edit each other's writings, sometimes focusing on specific types of essays.

3) We may edit one essay thoroughly, show it to the class, and explain or have students explain the reasons for each bit of editing.

After all, we should encourage students to be careful reader-learners, who, in the course of reading (and listening), will direct some attention to how native speakers use those function words and inflectional morphemes—things non-native speakers often have trouble with—in collocation with other words to express their meanings. Only by attending to and memorizing those collocations can students use them and produce correct, idiomatic written English. Classic Chinese was very different from its spoken counterpart, but ancient scholars learned to use it correctly simply by reading and memorizing long texts of the classics. If they, who lived a very secluded life, could do it, why can't our students today, who have a broad exposure to English?

Acknowledgements

For the first edition of this book, I should thank Anne Fraenckel, my tutor at Thames Valley University, London, and Linell Davis, who is currently teaching at Nanjing Normal University and has been instrumental in compiling this set of textbooks. Anne read and commented on the first draft, and Linell helped with proofreading and made some important revisions.

For the second edition, I am grateful to Janet Roberts, who carefully read and edited every single section of the manuscript and offered many insightful suggestions. I would also like to thank my former students whose essays are included in this volume; in fact, I could not reach all of them for permission to use their works—for this, I apologize.

Ting Yenren



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Learning about Learning to Write

Overview

Objective

- ✧ Learning to develop ideas for communication

Writing Skills in Focus

- ✧ Cherish one's own ideas
- ✧ Explore one's own topics
- ✧ Treasure others' opinions

This unit is like a preamble, which you may read on your own.

We are now at an advanced stage of learning where the primary goal of the composition course is to sharpen our ability to think critically, organize our thinking and present it in clear, forceful writing. This textbook is compiled for this purpose.

Naturally, we would like to know how to use this book and, more broadly, how to learn more effectively in order to succeed at this stage. The question merits our thinking and discussion.

Learning to write is like learning to swim. You learn to swim by being in the water, not by reading books about swimming. Similarly, when you learn to write, you learn best by writing a lot. A textbook helps, but you should never worship it.

The next question to think about is: when do you think you write best? Our answer is: you write best when you have things to say and poorest when you have to say things. When you have the need to communicate some ideas, you think about how to communicate them effectively and you make an effort. A good piece of writing falls into place. By contrast, when you have to produce an essay on a topic you do not like and have to finish it the night before the writing class, you will never write well.

Question: Do you agree? Does your own experience bear this out? When do you have things to say? When do you have to say things?

TASK ONE

What was the worst essay you have written since you entered university? Analyze the reasons you did poorly on that assignment, and write a 300-word essay about that experience.

- ☐ The essay should include
- ☐ 1. How the failure happened (i.e., when, what course, which teacher, what assignment, what you did, what result, how you felt, etc.);
- ☐ 2. Why it happened as you can see it today; and
- 2 3. How you or any other student can prevent such failure from happening.

In order to develop ideas worth sharing with the teacher and with other students, we would like to give you three pieces of advice, and we would like you to bear them in mind.

1. Cherish your own ideas.

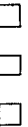
You are learning to develop, organize and express your ideas in English, not practicing your written English or demonstrating your knowledge of organizational patterns. Your own ideas count more than anything else.

You may wonder why, unlike Book One, this book does not follow a clear format and wonder whether it should be called a writing textbook at all because it does not contain many “model essays,” which many English majors like to, or are asked to, emulate in a writing course. Models can be useful in illustrating the rhetorical patterns we are trying to learn, but it is also true that if you become dependent on “model essays,” you may have trouble going beyond them and learning to explore and develop your own ideas. Writing, after all, should be a means by which we express and exchange our ideas, feelings and viewpoints. It should be fun, not a dull job of imitating models, or fitting ideas into the straitjacket of rhetorical patterns. Your own ideas are often more important than those rules of rhetoric and essay organization on which we teachers may like to lecture at length.

Indeed, writing teachers—ourselves included—may talk excessively about techniques of narration, description, exposition and argumentation. It does help if we have some knowledge of these patterns, especially when we begin to learn to write. However, do bear in mind that the division of writing into these patterns is often arbitrary because, in real life, we often get an intersection of all of them. Many experienced writers will tell you that when they are at work, they can forget about rules and models but are entirely bent on doing their best to say what they want to say. This is not because they do not know them—perhaps they know them as well as they know the rules of their own language. They do not have to think about them because what to say is always more important than how to say it, and a good writer is always more concerned about the purpose and audience than about the strategies of writing. Our own feeling for the subject, the purpose and the reader should suggest the most appropriate method or combination of methods.

Question: Pay a visit to an experienced writer, either one who writes in English or Chinese. What does this writer tell you about the use of organizational patterns? How do these writers allocate their attention, or, direct their attention to idea development, organization, grammar and so on when they are working on a draft? How often do they remind themselves of the rules and models they learned in school?

2. Explore your own topics.



3

You should always choose the topics about which you have something to say and are dying to say it. In addition, when you are writing, you should feel free to change the topic as you deepen and sharpen your thoughts.

You may find this book does not usually give you very specific essay topics. Instead, you have to find them with your own effort. Writing is fun, but at the same time, it is also a challenging, laborious process, requiring close and sustained attention. This is especially true when we are writing in English, a language with which we are not quite at home. Therefore, instead of going directly from topic to essay, we would like to encourage extensive reading, thinking, discussing and researching. We would like to encourage you to find a topic you really like, write a draft, and revise it many times, with each revision, ideally, bringing the argument to a newer and clearer stage. Writing a good essay is a cyclical process, with repeated exploration, expansion, revision, re-organization, proofreading and editing. Unless you have a topic you truly like, you will not survive this process.

Question: How do you feel about this point? Do you agree that you often know better about what topics work for you than your teacher?

TASK TWO

From primary school onwards, you have written many essays, many in Chinese and some in English. What was the essay in which you took great pride, the one that really gave you a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment? Analyze the reasons you did well on that assignment, and write a 300-word essay about that experience. The essay should include

- (1) How you achieved success (i.e., when, what course, which teacher, what assignment, what you did, what result, how you felt, etc.);
- (2) Why you “made it” as you can recall it today; and
- (3) How you or any other student can succeed in writing a good essay.

TASK THREE

Share with other students the short essays you wrote for Tasks One and Two. Meanwhile, read as many essays by other students as you can, take some notes, and write a third essay, which discusses some “rules” of essay writing on the basis of student experiences.

3. Treasure your classmates’ opinion on your work.

In a writing class, you are not writing for Teacher X alone. Rather, you are writing for a real or imagined audience that would include, in addition to this Teacher X, other teachers and other students. Your fellow students can often help you better than your teacher because they have more time for your draft and, more importantly, they understand you much better.

The teacher’s comments on our essays are important, but too often, an over-worked writing

- ☐ teacher may play the role of a coroner¹ pronouncing the cause of the death of a student essay.
- ☐ For instance, "Your discussion is out of focus, C" or "You should be able to produce better work, C-." Such pronouncements may not help us locate the cause to the problems, much less to help stimulate our interest for improvement. On the part of us students, on the other hand,
- 4 ☐ there is too much dependence on the teacher for the final judgment as to whether a piece of writing is good or bad; we no longer care much about how to make sound judgment ourselves.

Weaning from your teacher is critical since you cannot take her (or him) along to your workplace when you graduate. Partly for this purpose, we would like to emphasize the concept of peer help. By helping others and being helped, you will learn how to write for an audience; how to develop your ideas and how to proofread and edit your own writing. This is also why this book contains many student essays even though these essays may still have some problems. So, do get help from your fellow students. If they cannot understand the discussion in your essay, do not expect a teacher to be able to understand it.

Question: To what extent do you agree on the importance of peer help? From your past experience, what kinds of help by your classmates are useful? What kinds are not so useful?

The above three pieces of advice point to one principle: you should **take your own initiative**.

Many writing skills, like swimming skills, cannot be passed on to you as packages from the teacher. They are not physical substance that is "in" the teacher's head and can be taken out and put inside your heads. Rather, they have to grow from within in the course of repeated practice. Good writers, from Charles Dickens to Mark Twain and to Lu Xun, never had a Bachelor's or Master's degree in literature or in creative writing. Rather, they are self-taught. In this sense, the teacher can only be of limited help, maybe with explaining the principles of writing. You are responsible for your own learning. It is for this reason that you should selectively use the topics suggested in this book, but do not follow the book line by line, word by word. Always explore your own topics, if you are serious about learning to write.

Keep a Reading Diary

Overview

Objective

- ✧ Learning to keep a reading diary

Writing Skills in Focus

- ✧ Read extensively
- ✧ Reflect on one's readings by raising questions
- ✧ Write down the ideas coming to the mind
- ✧ Share one's opinions (in the group reading diary)
- ✧ Respond to others' opinions (in the group reading diary)

This unit gives you an assignment that, ideally, you will do every week and will not cease while you are learning English. It is to keep a reading diary. Less ideally, you should keep this diary throughout this semester or throughout the rest of your college days.

Here, Tasks One and Two require two different formats of the reading diary. Depending on your own taste, you may alternate between the two or stick to the one you find more helpful.

TASK ONE

When you sit with friends, you often talk about what you have recently read, but with **Task One**, the job is to write about our readings. You are expected to read some English material that you find interesting, be it a classic, an abridged reader, a short story, a journal article, a news story from *21st Century* or *China Daily*, or even a lesson in your textbook. By finding something interesting, it does not necessarily mean finding good things in it. You may also find bad things and talk about them, just like talking about a bad TV program with your friends. For instance, you may find a short story that conveys bad ideas about women, and then you may write down your criticism in your reading diary. That would be "interesting" in its own way.

Read everyday and write down whatever reaction you have to the readings, two to four entries a week. An entry can be based on just a few pages of a long work. (You do not have to finish reading a thick book before writing an entry.)

- ☐ Prepare two diary books and, each week, hand in one book and write in the other.
- ☐ An entry can be either an extensive flow of ideas that goes page after page or simply one flash of thought that is not longer than two paragraphs. The only requirement is that it should be your own reaction to or comment on what you have read, not just a summary of it or passages copied from it.

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If you find reactions or comments hard to come by, ask yourself the following questions (when you are reading a short story):

- Do you like the way the plot is developing?
- Do you think the characters could live in the real world?
- Do you find anything in the work that reminds you of your own experience?
- Do you like or dislike the author's language, viewpoint or attitude?
- Then, in your opinion, why does the author create a story or argue a point the way he or she does? Do you agree or disagree with the way the author looks at the world?

You may raise more questions, the same questions you naturally raise when you read a Chinese text.

Of course, you do not have to answer all these questions, but write down whatever thoughts you have and support them with reason and evidence—this is your reaction.

The following is an example in which the student is criticizing a well-known short story—for the way it treats women:

September 16, 200__

Today I managed, with great effort, to finish reading James Thurber's "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" (in our textbook Developing an Argument, pp. 139-144). Frankly I resent the way women are portrayed in the story. Of the only two characters in the story, Walter Mitty symbolizes the oppressed whereas Mrs. Mitty, the wife, symbolizes the oppressor. This is contrary to reality in which women are often kept subordinate to men. Even in the story, this unequal role-play shows up. In Mr. Mitty's dreams, he becomes a commander, a chief doctor, a court hero, a captain, etc. No matter what he becomes, he has power and prestige. These are dreams of an oppressor. The dreams also show that he does not like to share housework with his wife and regards that as his wife's responsibility. If Mrs. Mitty daydreams, it can be very different.... (omitted.)

Note: This entry has three components: 1) what you have read (including the author, title and content); 2) where it can be found (e.g., "in Developing an Argument"); 3) what you think of it—this is the main body. Also notice that if you are mentioning the title of a book in your diary, you should underline it. (If you are typing, however, you should use italics.)

Writing an entry like this should not be too difficult. But even if you do find it difficult to carry out extended discussion on your readings, that is not the end of the world. You may make your diary look like a notebook. In fact, you may even call it a "reading notebook."