

# A PRACTICAL ENGLISH WRITING COURSE FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

## 高职实用 英语写作

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I don't like the style.  
Could you pass me  
Could you pass me the jacket with wide  
lapels?  
Look, I bought this s  
Look, I bought this skirt for my daughter  
and I think it's a bit long. Could  
have it shortened for me, please?  
What're you  
What're you going to wear today?  
Do you think this b I like the new shirt  
this blouse really suits me?  
I need a pair of trousers  
d a pair of trousers, but I'm a big man  
my size is not regular. Is there anything  
special you can recommend?  
Does the ma  
Does the material stand washing?  
How do yo  
How do you like my new dress?  
uld like to have so  
uld like to have something good to eat  
What kind of re  
What kind of restaurant do you like?  
Where can I enjo  
Where can I enjoy the best local food?  
What do you say to d  
What do you say to dine with me at a res-  
taurant?  
Would you li  
Would you like to eat out tonight?  
Congratulations! Let's  
Congratulations! Let's go out to dinner and  
celebrate  
Do you know a reason  
Do you know a reasonable place with good  
Sichuan food?  
Why don't w  
Why don't we eat at a restaurant?  
Shall we go to a  
Shall we go to a restaurant in the Fifth  
Avenue where I often drop in?  
Could I  
Could I have a menu, please?  
Could you show n  
Could you show me what you've got?  
How do  
How do you l  
Rare, n  
Rare, medium  
done?  
What  
What's special for today?  
What wo  
What would you recommend?



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本书在编写中针对高职学生的实际英语写作水平和存在的问题,本着帮助他们打好英语写作基础,侧重培养其写作应用能力的目的,提供了大量的例句、例段、范文及实用写作方面的用语,总结提炼了重要的写作技巧和方法,设计了大量的练习,以便学生模仿和实践。为配合教师使用该教材,针对书中的教学内容,设计了相应的写作教学活动,以供教师使用。本书可供高职高专学生作为写作教材使用,也可供广大英语爱好者以及大学、中学英语教师在练习、指导写作时使用,还可作为提高英语写作水平的自学教材使用。

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# 前 言

《高职高专教育英语课程基本要求》对学生写作能力的培养做了明确规定。为了给高职高专学生提供一本内容实用、语言规范易懂、配有练习、适合其特点的较系统的写作教材,我们特编写了这本《高职实用英语写作》。

该教材的编者都是在教学一线从事写作教学的教师,素材来源于教师多年的写作教学实践,通过对教学讲义进行整理,并补充最新的写作范文,总结提炼出重要的写作技巧和写作方法。在编写中充分考虑到高职学生的实际英语写作水平和存在的问题,本着帮助他们打好英语写作基础,侧重培养其写作应用能力的目的,以实用、够用为选材原则,提供了大量例句、例段、范文及实用写作方面的用语,以便学生模仿和实践。

在英语教学中,许多教师反映写作课难上,其中一个重要的原因是教师感到在写作课堂上很难组织教师与学生及学生与学生之间的互动教学,其实不然。丰富多彩的教学活动可以让我们的写作课堂变得轻松活泼,使学生在一种愉快的教学中练习写作,提高写作水平。该教材除了给教师提供详实的练习答案及参考例文,供教学参考之外,还对国内外很好的写作教学活动进行收集整理,提供了10个写作教学活动教案,几乎涵盖了全部教学章节,便于教师授课。如有需要可与上海工商外国语学院英语系联系,电子邮件地址:zhuhm@sicfl.edu.cn。

全书共分为10大部分,包括词及修辞的运用、句子构成、段落安排、篇章布局、描写文、记叙文、说明文、议论文、图表图画作文以及实用写作等部分。

全书由上海工商外国语学院祝慧敏、陈琳华、陈诚、杨志霞编著。祝慧敏担任主编,负责统稿,审定修改全文,并承担了四个章节的编写;陈琳华、陈诚、杨志霞各编写了两个章节。

在本书的编写过程中我们得到了上海大学外语系徐钟教授的指导,他给我们提出了许多宝贵的建议,在此深表感谢。在素材提供方面,我们也得到了王皓、王震宇、黄璐等的大力帮助,在此一并表示感谢。

由于编者水平有限,错误疏漏之处在所难免,敬请专家、同行批评指正。

编 者

2006年3月

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# Chapter 1 Use of Words

Diction is the choice and use of words in speech or writing. The English language has a very large vocabulary and no one needs to use so many words. A student learning to write should learn to use the words that are most useful and most often used to convey his meaning best. For example, a man might refer to his car as his “wheels” in casual conversation with a friend, but if he were writing an essay for a group of economists, he would write, “People base their decision to buy an automobile on the following considerations,” not “People base their decision to buy wheels on the following considerations.” Here “wheels” is a common word while “automobile” is a formal word. So, a basic knowledge of diction may be of help to students to make correct choice of the words and the way in which they are used.

## I Formal and Common Words

The words that are often used may be divided into three types: formal, common, and colloquial. Formal words mainly appear in formal writing, such as academic or theoretical works, formal lectures, etc. Many such words contain three or more than three syllables. Common words are those that are often used in daily conversation and appear in all kinds of writing. The following is a list of formal and common words.

Formal	Common / Informal
accommodation(s)	home(s), house(s), room(s)
accomplish	do, achieve, perform, succeed, carry out
accordingly	so
additionally	and, also
alternative	other
approximately	about, around, close to, nearly, or so
biannually	twice a year
commencement	beginning, start
component(s)	part, parts, ingredient, item, unit
consequently	so, thus

## Examples

**Common words and phrases:** To **take a look** at the problem of declining numbers of visitors to Hong Kong, we decided to **do** a really **big** survey.

**Formal words and phrases:** To **investigate** the problem of declining numbers of visitors to Hong Kong, we decided to **conduct** a really **large-scale** survey.

**Common words and phrases:** We **made** a questionnaire and **handed it out** to 2,000 people.

**Formal words and phrases:** We **designed** a questionnaire and **distributed it** to 2,000 people.

## Exercise 1

Give common words to the following formal words.

① abbreviate \_\_\_\_\_

⑥ currently \_\_\_\_\_

② beverage \_\_\_\_\_

⑦ modifications \_\_\_\_\_

③ utilize \_\_\_\_\_

⑧ endeavor (as a verb) \_\_\_\_\_

④ terminate \_\_\_\_\_

⑨ subsequently \_\_\_\_\_

⑤ purchase \_\_\_\_\_

⑩ expenditure \_\_\_\_\_

## II General and Specific Words

Adjectives and nouns are commonly used when we describe a person or something. Some adjectives and nouns like "rosy" and "slippers" are **specific** because they give clear, exact information to our readers. Adjectives such as "beautiful", and "white shoes" are **general**; they express vague impressions, attitudes and feelings which can be interpreted differently by different readers. In writing a description, we want to help readers see what we see, hear what we hear and feel what we feel, so we should avoid general words and use specific ones.

General	Specific
a good man	kind, honest, just, generous, sympathetic, warm-hearted, selfless, brave, honorable, responsible, reliable, open-minded, hearty
good food	tasty, delicious, nourishing, rich, fresh, appetizing, abundant
clothing	dress, skirt, jacket, coat, pants
shoes	slippers, sneakers, sandals
office equipment	fax, video, camera, cabinet, portable computer

### Examples

**General:** The secretary was unable to complete the task that had been assigned.

**Specific:** The secretary was unable to type the document.

**General:** She is a great communicator.

**Specific:** She speaks persuasively.

### Exercise 2

1) The following words are rather general in meaning. Think of words that are more specific.

① tall \_\_\_\_\_

② professionals \_\_\_\_\_

③ house \_\_\_\_\_

④ laugh \_\_\_\_\_

⑤ animal \_\_\_\_\_

2) Arrange each group from the most general to the most specific by writing a "1" for the most general, a "2" for the one in the middle, and a "3" for the one that is the most specific.

① mammal, cat, animal \_\_\_\_\_

② plant, tulip, flower \_\_\_\_\_

③ music, folksong, Oh Susanna \_\_\_\_\_

④ brick house, red brick house, house \_\_\_\_\_

⑤ clothes, shirt, white shirt with button down collar \_\_\_\_\_

3) Fill in the blanks with appropriate words from the following list. Consult your dictionary if necessary.

<b>boisterous</b>	<b>dismal</b>	<b>awesome</b>	<b>spacious</b>
<b>tranquil</b>	<b>elegant</b>	<b>cluttered</b>	<b>musty</b>

- ① \_\_\_\_\_ can be used to describe a peaceful place.
- ② \_\_\_\_\_ is used to describe a very roomy place.
- ③ \_\_\_\_\_ can describe a gloomy place.
- ④ \_\_\_\_\_ is used to describe a graceful place.
- ⑤ \_\_\_\_\_ describes a place that inspires respect.
- ⑥ \_\_\_\_\_ describes a place of noise and excitement.
- ⑦ \_\_\_\_\_ means things are heaped in a disorderly way.
- ⑧ \_\_\_\_\_ means old and smelly.

### III Figures of Speech

A figure of speech is a word or phrase that departs from straightforward, literal language which are often used for emphasis, freshness of expression, or clarity. Some important figures of speech are: *simile*, *metaphor*, *hyperbole*, *personification*, *onomatopoeia* and *euphemism*, etc.

#### 1. Simile

Simile, as a figure of speech, is a formal comparison drawn between two different things which are similar at least in one respect, though quite unlike otherwise. A simile is usually made up of three parts, namely, the tenor (the thing described), the vehicle (the thing compared to) and words used to show the relationship of comparison. For example, in the sentence "The world is like a stage", here the word "world" is the tenor, "stage" is the vehicle, "like" is the word used to show the relationship of comparison.



The following examples demonstrate the common patterns such as **like**, **as**, **as if**, **what**, **no more than**, **and**, etc.

### Examples

- ① The wind sounded **like** the roar of a train passing a few yards away.
- ② That man can't be relied upon. He's **as** slippery **as** an eel.
- ③ The first time I read an excellent book, it is to me **as if** I had gained a new friend.
- ④ Reading is to the mind **what** exercise is to the body.
- ⑤ A home without love is **no more than** a body without a soul.
- ⑥ A word **and** a stone let go cannot be recalled.

## 2. Metaphor

Metaphor is a name or term or expression transferred from its common usage to another with a similar quality. It is also a comparison, but the comparison is implied, not expressed with the word **as** or **like**. The following demonstrate the common patterns: noun pattern, verb pattern, adjective pattern, of pattern, etc.

### Examples

- ① Beauty, strength, youth, are **flowers** but fading soon; duty, faith, love are **roots**, and ever green.
- ② The road **snaked** down the side of the mountain.
- ③ The **mountainous** waves swallowed up the ship.
- ④ While most of us are only too ready to apply to others **the cold wind of criticism**, we are somewhat reluctant to give our fellow **the warm sunshine of praise**.

## 3. Hyperbole

Hyperbole serves to express an exaggeration, frequently used in colloquial speech and fictitious writing, to convey intensity of feeling, but never used in scientific texts where precision of expression is necessary. Most common patterns are: number pattern, subjunctive mood pattern, comparative degree pattern, etc.

### Examples

- ① I've told you **fifty times**. Thanks **a million**. I'm on the top of the world. I'm



starving to death.

- ② ... and the fattest woman I have ever seen in my life dozing in a straight-backed chair. It was **as if** a sack of grain **was supported** by a matchbox.
- ③ From his mouth flowed speech sweeter **than** honey.
- ④ He is so mean, he won't let his little baby have **more than** one measles at a time.

## 4. Personification

Personification is a representation of a thing or an idea in the form of a person.

### Examples

- ① The white clouds are **running** in the sky and little stars are **blinking their eyes** in the night.
- ② A proper history of civilization **should tell** us more about those who really **helped** civilization forward.
- ③ Laziness **travels so slowly**, that poverty **soon overtakes him**. (Benjamin Franklin)

## 5. Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is a kind of formation of words in imitation of the sounds associated with the thing concerned. Common phrases of onomatopoeia are: jingle, clink, boo, cockoo, cock-a-doodle- doo, wow, buzz, giggle, clap, patter, etc.

### Examples

- ① The rain drops **drip-drop**, or **splatter-splash**.
- ② The door opened with a **creak** and was shut with a **bang**.

apes gibber	asses heehaw	bees buzz
bulls bellow	cows low (moo)	cocks crow (cock-a-doodle-doo)
hens cackle (cluck)	chickens cheep	cats mew (purr)
dogs bow-wow	doves coo	ducks quack
elephants trumpet	elephants trumpet	frogs croak
geese gaggle	horses neigh (snot)	magpies chatter
ice squeak	pigs grunt	
lions roar	tigers growl (roar)	

snakes hiss

wolves howl

## 6. Euphemism

Euphemism is a substitution of a mild, indirect, or vague expression for one thought to be offensive, harsh, or blunt.

### Examples

- ① On the 14th of March, at a quarter to three in the afternoon, the greatest living thinker ceased to think. He had been left alone for scarcely two minutes, and when we came back we found him in his armchair, peacefully **gone to sleep** but forever.

F. Engels, "Speech at the Graveside of Karl Marx"

Here "gone to sleep" is an indirect expression for "die", which is always avoided in this situation. The following is a list of euphemism expressions for a harsh or unpleasant expression "to die".

He is gone.

He passed away.

He closed his life.

He kicked the bucket.

He went west.

He went to his last home.

He deceased.

He joined the majority.

He expired.

He breathed his last.

He went hence.

He yielded up the ghost.

He went to his last reckoning.

His time has come.

His star has set.

His number is up.

He has met his end.

He is resting in peace.

He has gone to heaven.

He is sleeping with his fathers.

He has departed from life.

② She is in the family way.

Here "in the family way" is an euphemism expression for "pregnant". The following is a list of euphemism expressions for "be pregnant".

She is in a family way.

She is inconvenient.

She is expecting.

She has cancelled all her social engagements.

She is in an interesting condition.

She is in a delicate condition.

She is knitting little booties.

She is having her periods, so she cannot join us.

She is a woman for a week, so she cannot join us.

### Exercise 3

Name the figure of speech used in each of the following sentences.

- ① Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.

\_\_\_\_\_

- ② Wrong ideas may harm a man just like diseases.

\_\_\_\_\_

- ③ The leaves are trembling in the cold wind.

\_\_\_\_\_

- ④ His friends praised his daughter's performances to the skies.

\_\_\_\_\_

- ⑤ He had been left alone for scarcely two minutes, and when came back we found him in an armchair, peacefully gone to sleep.

---

⑥ The storm was so angry that it wanted to destroy everything in its way.

---

⑦ What blood vessel is to a man's body that railway is to transportation.

---

⑧ I love Ophelia: four thousand brothers  
Could not, with their quantity of love  
Make up my sum ...

---

---

⑨ Australia is so kind that, just tickle her with a hoe, and she laughs with a harvest.

---

⑩ As you approach it (copper-Smith's market), a tinkling and banging and clashing  
begins to impinge on your ear.

---

---