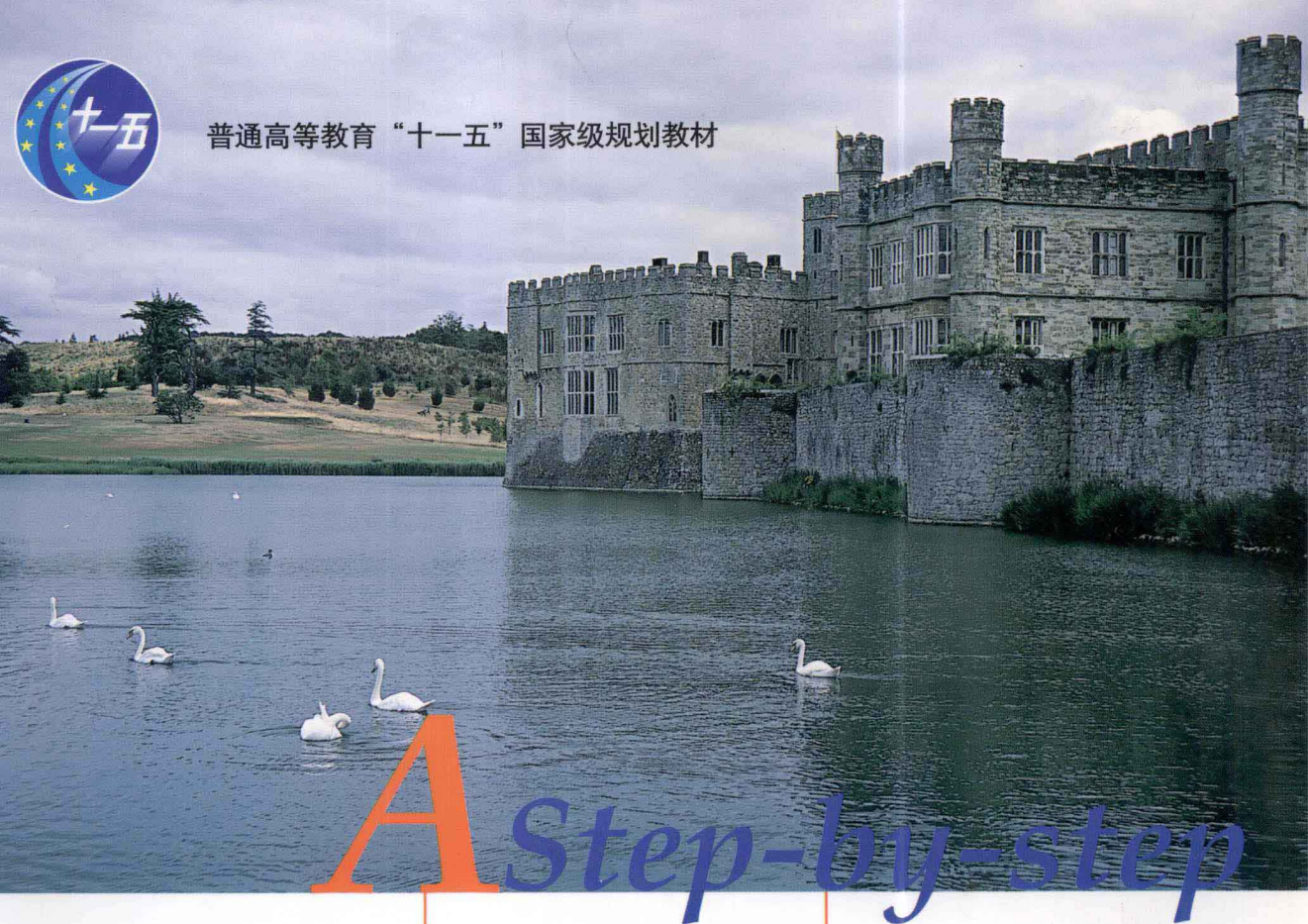




普通高等教育“十一五”国家级规划教材



A Step-by-step

Guide to Writing

大学英语

循序渐进写作教程

李凤芝 / 主编



北京大学出版社
PEKING UNIVERSITY PRESS

大学英语立体化网络化系列教材

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大学英语循序渐进写作教程

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前言

外语教学,如果不能培养学生的写作能力,让学生写出用词准确、条理清楚、言之有物的文章,严格地说教学工作的目标和要求就没有全面实现。英语写作是一项综合运用多种知识和技能的活动,多年的实践表明,写作教学一直是大学英语教学的薄弱环节,制约着英语水平的整体提升。从学生的角度来说,他们普遍认为写作是听说读写几项技能中最难的一项。无论是平时的作业里,还是考场作文中,他们常常局限于使用中学时期接触的基本词汇、句式结构和表达方式,不能得心应手地运用大学英语学习中获得的语言材料。从教师方面来说,写作教学是一门费时低效、让人束手无策的课程。一方面要忙于收集写作素材,另一方面还要花费大量时间批改作文。因此,探索英语写作教学的规律,解开问题的症结,给学生以方法论的指导,编写出一本适合非英语专业学生使用的写作教材,已成为当务之急。本书采用全英文编写,语言通俗易懂,适合大学英语教师和非英语专业学生使用。

本书特色

《大学英语循序渐进写作教程》以《大学英语课程要求》中对写作三个层次的要求为依据,以“过程写作教学法”为理论指导,以现行大学英语教学中的经典篇章为引文范例,强调读写结合的学习理念,从不同写作层面入手,让学生在写作过程中循序渐进地学会写作。该书有以下几个特色:

1. 针对性。本书的使用对象是大学非英语专业的学生,语言浅显易懂,结构系统完整,既有理论知识的全面介绍,又有丰富的例子和切合学生实际水平的课后练习,能够激发学生的学习兴趣,为他们自主能动的学习提供广阔的空间。

2. 实用性。本教材既详细阐述了英语写作从组句、构段到谋篇的运作过程,又简要介绍了英语应用文(概要、评论、便条、通知、电子邮件、报告、个人简历和各类信件)的写作技巧,这对学生平时学习及将来的求学和谋职都具有很大的实用价值。

3. 创新性。我们把当前大学英语教学过程中语言纯正的句子、段落和篇章作为主要引文范例,并且在编写本书过程中格外注重选篇体裁的多样性,选材的代表性,使其成为学生学习写作的优秀范本。《大学英语循序渐进写作教程》遵循语言教学规律,做到阅读和写作的有机结合,实现从输入(读)到输出(写)的成功过渡,这对培养和提高学生的英语书面表达能力,无疑将起到很大的推动作用。

内容简介

学习英文写作,首先要对篇章形成的过程有一个整体认识。第一章“写作过程”论述了五个常见的写作环节,即写前准备、打草稿、修改、编辑和提交。本章重点介绍了写前构思的各种常用技巧,同时还分析了各类写作话题。句子是构成文章的基本单位,要写出好文章必须首先写出完整准确的句子。第二章“句子写作”不求对英语句子做面面俱到的分析,而是选择写作中出现问题比较集中的方面,进行讲解和演练。文章是由观点组成的,不同的观点要用不同的段落去陈述。第三章“段落写作”重点讲解主题句的写作与扩展,并用实例阐释

各种段落的写作方法。让学生写出结构完整、内容充实的文章是我们写作教学的最终目的。第四章“短文写作”介绍了如何通过各种有效的衔接手段来组句成段、构段成篇,并对四种常见文体进行了宏观结构的分析。本章作者还以经典段落、篇章为范例,提炼出3+6+3的短文结构模式,具有非常重要的启发作用。第五章“概要和评论写作”通过例文,简要介绍了概要、摘要和几种常见评论的结构和写作方法。在第六章“实用写作”中,作者通过实例讲解了便条、通知、电子邮件、报告、个人简历和各类信件的写作。这类写作不仅在日常生活中常用,而且近年来也是各类考试的重要组成部分。写出高质量的考试作文也是我们学习写作的一项内容,第七章“考试作文写作”对近年来四、六级作文和考研作文进行了比较系统的分析,重点介绍了考试作文的要求、评分标准和写作方法,提供了各类短文的篇章结构,并配有演练和范文。同时,本章还简要介绍了海外英语考试——托福(TOEFL)、美国研究生入学考试(GRE)和雅思(IELTS)写作部分的有关知识。规范的文稿格式和准确的标点符号使用,是写作的一个有机组成部分。第八章“文稿格式和标点符号”通过大量的实例,给读者提供了非常有用的参考。书后的三个附录分别为:《新视野大学英语读写教程》1-4册典型句子,考试作文句型结构,常用短语和固定搭配。

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本书在编写过程中,得到了学校领导和教务处领导的关心支持,获得学校教材建设立项经费资助;同时也得到了外语部领导和同事们的大力帮助。北京大学出版社的编辑为本书的出版,在审稿、修改等方面都给予诸多帮助。编写过程中,我们参考并吸收了国内外许多专家学者的研究成果,在此一并表示感谢。

由于编者水平所限,书中错误和不足之处在所难免,敬请读者批评指正。

作者

于曲阜师范大学

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Content

Chapter One The Writing Process	1
1.1 Introduction and Focus	1
1.2 A Brief Account about the Writing Process	1
1.2.1 Prewriting	2
1.2.2 Drafting	3
1.2.3 Revising	5
1.2.4 Editing	6
1.2.5 Publishing	6
1.3 Invention Techniques	7
1.3.1 Brainstorming	7
1.3.2 Freewriting	8
1.3.3 Mapping	9
1.3.4 Journalist's Questions	9
1.3.5 Aristotle's "Common Topics"	10
1.3.6 Cubing	11
1.3.7 Outlining	11
1.4 The Topic of Writing	14
1.4.1 When the Topic is Provided	14
1.4.2 When the Topic is Not Provided	14
1.4.3 When the Topic is a Question	15
1.5 Summary	16
Chapter Two Sentence Writing	18
2.1 Introduction and Focus	18
2.2 Sentence Types	18
2.2.1. Sentence Classification According to Function	18
2.2.2. Sentence Classification According to Grammar	18
2.2.3. Sentence Classification According to Style	19
2.3 Effective Sentences	20
2.3.1 Unity	20
2.3.2 Coherence	20
2.3.3 Conciseness	21

2.3.4 Variety	23
2.4 Error Analysis	26
2.5 Summary	30
Chapter Three Paragraph Writing	35
3.1 Introduction and Focus	35
3.2 Paragraph Features	35
3.2.1 Unity	35
3.2.2 Coherence	36
3.2.3 Completeness	37
3.3 Paragraph Structure	37
3.3.1 Topic Sentence	37
3.3.2 Supporting Sentence	38
3.3.3 Paragraph Development	38
3.4 Summary	43
Chapter Four Essay Writing	51
4.1 Introduction and Focus	51
4.2 Coherent Devices	51
4.2.1 Reference	52
4.2.2 Substitution	52
4.2.3 Ellipsis	52
4.2.4 Conjunction	53
4.2.5 Lexical Cohesion	53
4.3 Types of Essay Writing	54
4.3.1 Narration	54
4.3.2 Description	56
4.3.3 Exposition	57
4.3.4 Argumentation	58
4.4 A Writing Model of 3+6+3	60
4.4.1 Narrative Pattern	60
4.4.2 Problem-Solution Pattern	61
4.4.3 Claim-Counterclaim Pattern	62
4.4.4 General-Specific Pattern	63
4.5 Summary	64
Chapter Five Summary and Review Writing	66
5.1 Introduction and Focus	66
5.2 Summary Writing	66

5.2.1 What is a Summary?	66
5.2.2 How to Write a Summary?	66
5.2.3 Summary of Different Types of Writing	67
5.3 Abstract Writing	68
5.3.1 Purpose and Limitations of Abstract	68
5.3.2 Structure of Abstract	69
5.4 Abridgement Writing	69
5.4.1 Abridgement for Audio	69
5.4.2 Abridgement for Print	70
5.4.3 Abridgement for TV Program	70
5.5 Book and Article Review Writing	71
5.6 Film Review Writing	73
5.7 Summary	75
Chapter Six Practical Writing	77
6.1 Introduction and Focus	77
6.2 Note Writing	77
6.2.1 The Components of Note	77
6.2.2 Notes for Different Purposes	78
6.3 Notice Writing	79
6.4 E-mail Writing	81
6.4.1 Salutation	81
6.4.2 Message	81
6.4.3 Signature	81
6.4.4 Tips for Writing E-Mail Messages	81
6.5 Report Writing	83
6.5.1 What is a Report?	83
6.5.2 Report Structure	83
6.5.3 Report Writing Process	83
6.6 Resume Writing	85
6.6.1 Resume Format	86
6.6.2 Basic Types of Resume	87
6.7 Letter Writing	89
6.7.1 Letter Styles	90
6.7.2 Envelope Writing	90
6.7.3 Business Letters	91
6.7.4 Personal Letters	95
6.8 Summary	96

Chapter Seven Essay Writing on Tests	98
7.1 Introduction and Focus	98
7.2 CET-4 and CET-6 Writing	98
7.2.1 Curriculum Requirement about CET-4 and CET-6 Writing	98
7.2.2 Scoring Criteria	98
7.2.3 A Breif Introduction of CET-4 and CET-6 Writing	99
7.2.4 How to Get a High Grade?	100
7.2.5 Writing Models for CET-4 and CET-6 Writing	100
7.3 Postgraduate Writing on Entrance Test	103
7.3.1 Curriculum Requirement about Postgraduate Writing	103
7.3.2 A Comprehensive Survey of the Topics in the Last 15 Years	104
7.3.3 Picture Writing	104
7.3.4 Model Writing	106
7.4 Essay Writing on Overseas Tests	109
7.4.1 TOEFL Essay Writing	109
7.4.2 GRE Essay Writing	112
7.4.3 IELTS Essay Writing	116
7.5 Summary	119
 Chapter Eight Manuscript Form and Punctuation	 120
8.1 Introduction and Focus	120
8.2 Manuscript Form	120
8.2.1 Arrangement	120
8.2.2 Word Division	121
8.2.3 Capitalization	121
8.2.4 Italics and Underlining	122
8.2.5 Handwriting	123
8.3 Punctuation	123
8.3.1 Comma (,)	123
8.3.2 Period (.)	124
8.3.3 Semicolon (;)	125
8.3.4 Colon (:)	126
8.3.5 Question Mark (?)	126
8.3.6 Exclamation Mark (!)	127
8.3.7 Quotation Mark (“ ”)	127
8.3.8 Parentheses (())	128
8.3.9 Dash (—)	128
8.4 Summary	128

Keys for Reference 130

Appendix I—Effective Sentences for Writing 140

Appendix II — Typical Sentence Patterns on Tests 148

Appendix III —Phrases and Collocations 151

Bibliography 160

Chapter One

The Writing Process

1.1 Introduction and Focus

Writing involves much more than taking a pen in hand (or putting the fingers on a keyboard) and expecting words to flow naturally and smoothly in an organized manner. Skilled writers plan, write and rewrite multiple drafts before achieving a finished product. They divide a task into different steps, and by completing each part, writing becomes pleasant and satisfying.

In this chapter, we will focus on the writing process from the first stage, prewriting to the last one, publishing. We will discuss in detail about various invention techniques, and we will also talk about how to deal with different writing topics. The purpose is taking our readers through the writing process step by step. Thus, they will know how to come up with ideas about a topic, how to turn ideas into a rough draft, how to revise and edit the draft, and how to present an error-free final copy.

1.2 A Brief Account about the Writing Process

Writing is a process, and it is composed of several stages linking together, focusing on how writers draft, revise, and edit texts. This process is recursive, and experienced writers do not follow the same order in their writing. However, the basic components of the process are similar from writer to writer, which consists of five main stages: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. As student writers, we need to bear in mind that this is not a formula, but a guide. Knowing this, we may experience less pressure to “get it right the first time” and are more willing to experiment, explore, revise, and edit.

The following chart gives us a clear picture of the different steps of the writing process.

Steps	Description
Prewriting	An activity leading the writer to think about the subject, through which he generates and organizes his ideas before starting to write.
Drafting	The process of putting ideas down on paper, with the focus of content instead of mechanics.
Revising	The process of refining the writing, in which the writer reorganizes the draft, shares it and gets feedback from others.
Editing	The stage when grammatical, mechanical and other errors are fixed in the writing piece.
Publishing	The process of showing the writing in its final form to others, including the teacher, classmates, family, and even the public.

1.2.1 Prewriting

The purpose of this stage is to focus our attention on the writing project at hand and to explore the different possibilities. One important task in prewriting is choosing a topic and then narrowing it to a length that can be covered in a certain space. Since most people are, to varying degrees, visual learners, prewriting allows us to capture the ideas and thoughts inside our head and place them on paper, leaving spelling, grammar and punctuation for much later concern.

1. Using Prewriting Techniques to Gather Ideas

Professional writers use different methods to gather ideas, and most often, relevant ideas of a certain topic are revealed through some activities known as “Invention Techniques”. The following is a list of the most often used techniques, and the details will be discussed in the following section in this chapter.

- Brainstorming (letting our mind wander, thinking about and writing down things that we would like to explore more)
- Free writing (nonstop writing on an intended subject to crystallize ideas and feelings)
- Mapping or webbing (drawing thought webs or graphic representations of the topic)
- The Journalist’s Questions (answering such questions as who, what, where, when, why, helps us focus our attention on the specifics of a given topic)
- Aristotle’s “Common Topics” (definition, relationship, testimony, circumstance, and comparison/ contrast)
- Cubing (considering a subject from six points of view)
- Outlining (helping the writer develop a logical and systematic plan for presenting the material)

2. Knowing the Purpose

Writers write to express ideas, feelings, emotions, and opinions, so before writing we need to ask ourselves, “What is my purpose for writing this piece?” It might be:

- Narrating
- Entertaining/ Amusing
- Describing
- Informing
- Explaining
- Expressing personal feelings or viewpoints
- Persuading/ Convincing
- Evaluating
- Inquiring/ Questioning
- Exploring and experimenting with ideas and formats
- Clarifying thinking
- Applying for some position

3. Considering the Audience

As writers, we must consider who we are writing for, so we need to ask ourselves “Who is my intended audience?” Some possible answers might be:

- Specific person (teacher, friend, family, older person, younger person)
- Specific group (test-paper markers, team/ club, special interest group)
- General audience (school, peers, public)

Once we know who our audience is, we can use the following questions to guide our writing.

What have my audience already known about this topic?

What do I need to tell them about the topic?

What parts of this topic will be hard to explain or will require technical terms?

What will my audience find most interesting about this topic?

What should be the reader's attitudes and expectations regarding the topic?

What reasoning might cause the reader to dismiss my viewpoint?

Why should the reader want to read this article?

How would the reader be able to use the article?

4. Deciding the Writing Forms

Experienced writers like to say that content dictates form. They know instinctively which form they are going to apply according to what they are writing because of their rich experiences. Student writers should learn to determine the writing form (or genre) before beginning to write. We may choose from the following according to specific situation.

- Diary
- Personal experience narrative
- Fictional narrative (short story and novel)
- News story
- Poetry (ballad, free verse, song)
- Essay
- Research report
- Review
- Editorial
- Advertisement
- Note
- Notice
- Instructions and advice
- Resume
- Correspondence (invitation, letter of thanks, complaint, application, sympathy, inquiry, protest, congratulation, apology, etc.)

1.2.2 Drafting

Good writing is actually rewriting. Once we have finished our prewriting, we are ready to start writing the first draft. At this point in the process, the emphasis is on content and meaning. This is the time for us to put down ideas and thoughts based on what has been done in the prewriting stage. Only after we have put our thoughts on paper can we critically examine and evaluate our work. As we compose, we begin to determine what to include and exclude, and make initial decisions about how ideas should be organized. Keeping drafting allows us to work on our writing until we feel it meets our goals.

Since the essence of this stage is to focus our attention on the development of meaning, we should try to say what we mean quickly. In this stage, we do not need to worry about spelling, grammar, or even punctuation. We should bear the following points in mind when drafting a composition:

- Starting by writing the easiest part of the composition, not necessarily the beginning

- Keeping the topic and thesis statement in mind
- Being specific with the supporting details
- Supplying the most relevant and interesting information
- Writing the first draft as quickly as possible

1. How Should a Writer Catch the Readers' Attention?

In this stage, when writing the first draft, we need to consider how to grasp the reader's attention. Experienced writers know this instinctively by using various methods. They often use attractive openers to help the reader get an incomplete glimpse of what is to follow. Then the reader would like to read on to see the rest of the picture. In the following, different openers are listed with examples from the textbooks:

- Taking a stand on a controversial issue
While regular schools still exist, the virtual classroom plays an important role in today's learning community.
- Presenting a short anecdote
When I was growing up, I was embarrassed to be seen with my father.
- Beginning with a startling or interesting fact
He worked himself to death, finally and precisely, at 3:00 A.M. Sunday morning.
- Addressing the reader directly
If you often feel angry and overwhelmed, like the stress in your life is spinning out of control, then you may be hurting your heart.
- Beginning with a quotation
"Get yourself up and make something of yourself, buddy!" Though she has passed away, my mother's words are as clear in my head today as when I was a boy.
- Making a comparison
Any artist who seeks fame is like a dog chasing his own tail who, when he captures it, does not know what else to do but to continue chasing it.
- Providing a vivid description
He was born in a poor area of South London. He wore his mother's old red stockings cut down for ankle socks.
- Citing statistics
Here we are, all by ourselves, all 22 million of us by recent count, alone in our rooms, some of us liking it that way and some of us not.
- Asking a question
What is the most valuable contribution employees make to their companies, knowledge or judgment?
- Stating an assertion
It turned out that a scientist can see the future by watching four-year-olds interact with a piece of candy.

2. What Should a Writer Do in Drafting?

Drafting is the preliminary stage of writing in which the author begins to develop a piece of writing. In this stage, we usually do the following:

- Organizing ideas
- Discovering a central argument/ point

- Elaborating on key ideas
- Choosing transitions
- Providing examples
- Developing a more cohesive text

Drafting is rarely completed in one sitting. We usually need to let the work sit for a while and then write a series of successive drafts if we wish to produce a polished composition. We need redrafting, which is often accomplished by crossing out, adding, and rearranging ideas directly on the page. Discussing drafts with others (including peers and the teacher) can help move each of our drafts closer to the final version.

1.2.3 Revising

Once we have finished our first rough draft, we are ready to start revising our work. In this stage the author reviews, alters, and amends her or his message. While drafting reflects the practice to put words down on paper, revising brings a piece of work to completion. This is a very important stage of the writing process, and we often need to repeat it several times before we are satisfied with our writing. Revision means to read again. When we revise our work, we should be examining the writing at different levels, from the thesis statement to the whole passage, and from paragraph structures to sentence patterns. By answering the questions below, we will be able to perfect our work. (Not every question applies to all kinds of writing, so we should be selective.)

1. Evaluating the Thesis Statement

- Is the thesis statement a complete and concise sentence?
- Is the thesis statement put in the proper place?
- Is the thesis statement too broad or too narrow?
- What point am I attempting to make in this essay?

2. Evaluating the Whole Passage

- Is the passage well-organized, or do some parts seem to be in the wrong place?
- Is there a strong introduction and conclusion?
- Is there anything I need to add or cut out?
- Do the different paragraphs link together well?
- Does the writing say what I want it to say?
- Is it interesting and easy to read? If not, what should I do to make it better?

3. Evaluating Paragraphs

- Does each paragraph have a topic sentence?
- Is the topic sentence developed sufficiently?
- Is this topic sentence clearly connected to my thesis statement?
- Is there any irrelevant detail in the paragraph?
- What point am I trying to make in this paragraph?
- How does this paragraph relate to the ones before and after it?
- Do I make the connection clear with transitional words or phrases?
- Do I use examples to support my viewpoint?
- Does this example properly demonstrate my point?
- Have I been as specific, vivid, and descriptive as possible?

4. Evaluating Sentences

Is this sentence complete?

Does this sentence make sense?

Does this sentence lead smoothly to the following one?

Is this sentence clear and focused?

Can I add an adjective or an adverb?

Can I find a more suitable verb?

Is there enough sentence variety?

When I read the sentence aloud, does it sound awkward?

1.2.4 Editing

After we have revised the draft as much as it is needed, editing comes into play. Editing involves a number of small changes in a draft that can make a big difference in its readability and coherence. For discussion purposes, we divide editing into three main aspects — editing the content, editing the structure, and editing the mechanics.

1. Editing the Content

When editing the content of our writing, it is important to make sure our work has a clear focus or main idea. By asking ourselves a few questions, we can avoid incomplete thoughts and/or irrelevant material. The following is a checklist we use in editing our content:

- I have expressed the main idea clearly.
- I have covered what is important about my topic.
- I have removed the material that is unnecessary, confusing, or irrelevant.

2. Editing the Structure

Editing the structure ensures that our ideas are presented in a logical order, the passage is a unified whole in structure, each paragraph contains only one idea, and transitions are used to make the relationship between ideas clear. The following checklist is helpful in editing the structure:

- The whole passage is a unified whole.
- My ideas are logically connected to one another.
- Each paragraph deals with only one main idea.
- I have included appropriate transitional words and phrases.

3. Editing/Proofreading the Mechanics

Refining the mechanics in the editing phase helps the reader follow our ideas smoothly. Grammar and usage errors may be avoided by keeping a dictionary and a grammar book handy. Meanwhile, a checklist as the following can help us catch the errors in the writing:

- All subjects and verbs agree.
- Pronouns and the parts they modify agree.
- There are not any run-on sentences or sentence fragments.
- I have used words with the correct meaning in their proper context.
- I have checked the spelling of unfamiliar words and those of easily misspelled words.
- I have used punctuation marks and capitalization correctly.

1.2.5 Publishing

The writing process usually comes to an end when we are ready to share or present what we

have written. Publishing in its broadest sense means “making public” or “sharing with others”. Having a wider audience can often give us more pride. What is more, after we have finished writing something, we should share our work with others besides handing it in to our teacher as required assignment. We could do the following:

- Giving it to our teacher for response or for grading
- Reading it aloud in class
- Posting it on a bulletin board
- Submitting it for publication in a newspaper or magazine
- Sending it to someone who should be interested in the writing
- Showing it in our blog
- Publishing it on the Internet
- Participating in writing contests

As writing is recursive in nature, writers do not necessarily engage in these activities by following the above order. They may move within the components as necessary, perhaps from prewriting to drafting, then back to prewriting again, then forward to editing and back to drafting before polishing a piece for sharing or publication. For some writers, drafting may occur during revision; for others, revision and editing may be actually combined.

1.3 Invention Techniques

We often hear people say it is difficult to start doing anything in the world. It is especially true in writing. On the one hand, sometimes we are not quite sure about what to say, and on the other, we usually do not know how to say it. Skillful writers like to use some special methods to develop and organize their thoughts. These methods are generally known as invention techniques. As student writers, we can also try these techniques. The following is a brief introduction about several such techniques.

1.3.1 Brainstorming

Brainstorming is one of the most effective prewriting techniques. It is a good method to gather ideas either alone or in a group. First, we just generate ideas, and later, we can come back to them and delete the ones that won't work. It is easy to handle because there are no rules for doing this. What we need to do is just let our mind wander and think about things that we would like to explore more. We should write down as many ideas concerning the subject as possible, so when we are doing this we should not worry about spelling or grammar errors, leaving the lightning of ideas to strike us as they may. The following are some tips for brainstorming:

- Writing a subject on a piece of paper
- Listing every idea about the subject that comes to your mind
- Recording all the ideas given if you are brainstorming with a partner or a group
- Not stopping to judge the ideas
- Keeping going until you have no more ideas

Such tips will help us get started on our writing process before we even put pen to paper or fingers to keys. Once we have a topic in mind, we are ready to move on to gather relevant details. The following is an example as how to brainstorm about the topic: *What Should I Do if I Have Earned One Million Dollars?*