

# *Writing* ACADEMIC ENGLISH

Third Edition



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LONGMAN

## **Writing Academic English, Third Edition**

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Addison Wesley Longman, 10 Bank Street, White Plains, NY 10606

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## **Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Oshima, Alice

Writing academic English/Alice Oshima, Ann Hogue.—3rd ed.  
p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 0-201-34054-2 (alk. paper)

1. English language—Rhetoric—Handbooks, manuals, etc. 2.  
English language—Grammar—Handbooks, manuals, etc. 3. English  
language—Textbooks for foreign speakers. 4. Academic writing—  
Handbooks, manuals, etc. 5. Report writing—Handbooks, manuals,  
etc. I. Hogue, Ann. II. Title.

PE1408.073 1998

808'.042—dc21

98-23607  
CIP

# Preface

*Writing Academic English*, Third Edition, is a comprehensive rhetoric and sentence structure textbook/workbook. It has been written for intermediate to advanced college or college-bound international and English as a Second Language students. It can also be used by native speakers of English who need to develop their basic composition skills or to brush up on sentence structure and mechanics.

The book teaches writing in a straightforward manner, using a process-oriented approach. At the same time, the structure of paragraphs and essays and their important components are taught in small, learnable steps. Clear, relevant models illustrate each step, and varied practices reinforce each lesson. Sentence structure, with special emphasis on subordinated structures, is taught in a separate section.

Because most academic writing is expository in nature, we have purposely limited the rhetorical components to exposition. The models and practices feature current and general academic topics relevant to students' interests in a rapidly changing world. Many also provide practice using English in technical, scientific, and business contexts.

Other features of the book include four appendixes offering punctuation rules with exercises, a comprehensive chart of transition signals, a chart of correction symbols, and a list of topic suggestions for in-class "writing under pressure" practice. Uncommon vocabulary items are glossed, and each chapter ends with a convenient review of the main teaching points and a writing or editing assignment. A Peer Editing Checklist ends Chapters 2 through 8.

## ***What's New in the Third Edition***

Instructors familiar with the second edition will find these changes:

- The book now has three main sections instead of four. The chapter on library research has been deleted. A revised chapter on quotations, summary, and paraphrase has been renamed Concrete Support II.
- The Writing under Pressure assignments, formerly found at the end of each chapter in Part I, have been consolidated in Appendix C.
- A list of correction symbols has been added to the appendixes (Appendix D).
- Interactive Peer Editing Checklists now accompany each writing assignment.
- Important teaching points, rules, and examples appear in charts within the text for quick, easy reference.
- Small boxes cross-referencing relevant sections of the book appear in the margins.
- Other boxes offering computer tips are sprinkled throughout the book.
- Compositions to edit for specific sentence errors have been added to the end of each sentence structure chapter.

Finally, models have been updated, practice material freshened, and explanations streamlined, always with the intention of making the material more accessible to our students.

### ***Order of Lesson Presentation***

*Writing Academic English* is intended to be covered in one 15-week semester, with classes meeting five days a week. The chapters in Part I, Writing a Paragraph, and Part II, Writing an Essay, should be taught in sequence. The sentence structure chapters in Part III should be taught alongside the chapters in Parts I and II on the paragraph and essay in order to encourage students to write a variety of complex structures. Chapter 10, Types of Sentences, should be taught at the beginning of the course; subsequent chapters may be taught in any order. Wherever possible, instructors should integrate sentence structure with rhetoric. For example, adverbial time clauses in Part III may be taught simultaneously with chronological order in Part II.

### ***Topic Suggestions***

The topics listed for each writing assignment are only suggestions. Keep an eye open for interesting topics from current events or for interesting graphs, photographs, and charts in newspapers on which to base other assignments.

### ***In-Class Writing***

Group brainstorming and in-class writing of first drafts are especially helpful in the early stages because you are available for immediate consultation. Also, you can check to make sure everyone is on the right track. Pair and group collaboration is appropriate for brainstorming and editing work; however, writing is essentially an individual task even when done in class.

### ***Writing under Pressure***

Appendix C suggests topics for writing under pressure. These assignments are to be done in class under time pressure to simulate the experience of writing essay examinations. We feel that this is valuable practice for college-bound students.

### ***Practice Exercises***

The final practice exercises of the sentence structure chapters usually ask students to write original sentences. Because these practices prove whether the students understand the structures and can produce them correctly on their own, we hope that you are not tempted to skip them.

### ***Peer Editing***

Interactive Peer Editing Checklists appear with each writing assignment. One method of using these lists is to ask pairs of students to exchange books as well as first drafts of compositions. Each student in a pair edits the other student's work and writes comments and suggestions about the other's composition in that student's book. A second method is to provide photocopies of the checklists for peer editors to record their comments. A third method is to have each student read his or her draft out loud to a small group of classmates and then to solicit oral comments and suggestions by asking the checklist questions. The student who has read then writes down the group's suggestions in his or her own book. Of course, the instructor can also respond to student writing by commenting on photocopies of the checklists.

### ***Photographs***

The photographs introducing each chapter of the book depict some of the forms of written communication used by diverse cultures throughout the evolution of civilization.



# To the Student

Many people have the mistaken idea that being able to write well is a talent that one either has or doesn't have. This idea is not necessarily true. You can learn to write effectively if you are willing to learn some strategies and practice them.

Good writing in English requires the ability to write good sentences and to organize them logically into paragraphs and essays. In this book, you will learn how to do both. Nine chapters will help you write good paragraphs and essays, and five chapters will help you write good sentences.

We hope you will enjoy the teaching approach and writing challenges offered in our book. If you study each lesson carefully and do all of the practices thoughtfully, not only will your writing skills improve, but you will also develop greater confidence in your ability as a writer.



# Acknowledgments

Many people contribute to the making of a book. We especially thank Artelia Court, whose expert editing resulted in countless instances of improved clarity and consistency; Diana Nott, whose diligent research provided the photographs that greatly enhance the book; our editors at Addison Wesley Longman, Louisa Hellegers, Françoise Leffler, and Lynn Contrucci, whose experience guided everyone through the various stages of book production; and our families and friends, who suffered uncomplainingly through the process with us once again. To everyone, we are truly grateful.

*Writing*

ACADEMIC ENGLISH

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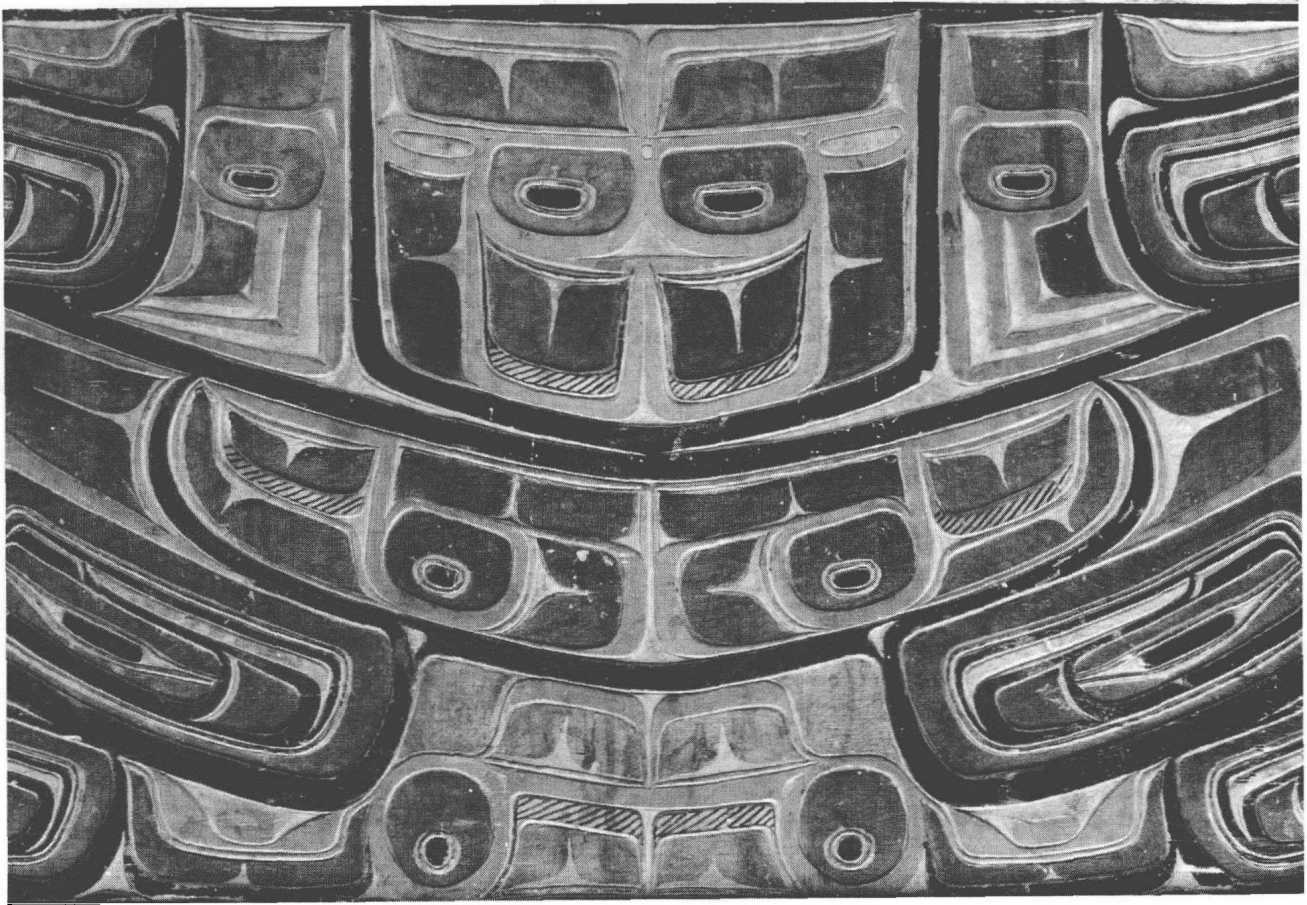
***I***

# Writing a Paragraph

## CHAPTER

# 1

# The Process of Academic Writing



Native American symbols from Alaska

## *Introduction*

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Academic writing, as the name implies, is the kind of writing that you are required to do in college or university. It differs from other kinds of writing such as personal, literary, journalistic, or business writing. Its differences can be explained in part by its special audience, tone, and purpose.


Whenever you write, consider your specific audience, that is, the people who will read what you have written. Knowing your audience will help you to communicate clearly and effectively. In academic writing, your audience is primarily your professors or instructors.

In addition, you should also consider the tone of your writing, which depends on your subject matter and on your audience. Tone is your style or manner of expression. It is revealed by your choice of words and grammatical structures and even the length of your sentences. The tone of a piece of writing can be, for example, serious, amusing, personal, or impersonal. Academic writing is formal and serious in tone.

Finally, the purpose of a piece of writing determines the rhetorical form<sup>1</sup> chosen for it. A persuasive essay will be organized in one way and an expository<sup>2</sup> essay in another way. In this book, you will learn the basic rhetorical forms of academic writing, from single paragraphs to multiparagraph essays.

As you write each assignment in this course and in other college courses, keep in mind your audience, tone, and purpose so that the message your reader will receive is the message you intend to convey.<sup>3</sup>

## ***The Writing Process, Stage I: Prewriting***



**COMPUTER TIP**

Writing is so important in academic life that some universities have on-line writing centers. These sites offer extra writing advice and information. Ask your instructor how to find them.

Writing, particularly academic writing, is not easy. It takes study and practice to develop this skill. For both native speakers and new learners of English, it is important to note that writing is a *process*, not a “product.” This means that a piece of writing, whether it is a composition for your English class or a lab report for your chemistry class, is never complete; that is, it is always possible to review and revise, and review and revise again.

There are four main stages in the writing process: prewriting, planning, writing and revising drafts, and writing the final copy to hand in. Each stage will be explained and practiced in Part I of this book. In this chapter, you will concentrate on prewriting techniques, which are activities to help you generate<sup>4</sup> ideas for your writing assignments.

### ***Step 1: Choosing and Narrowing a Topic***

If you are given a specific writing assignment (such as an essay question on an examination), then, of course, what you can write about is limited. On the other hand, when you are given a free choice of topics and can write about something you are interested in, then you must narrow the topic to a particular aspect of that general subject. Suppose you are interested in the environment. It would be impossible to cover such a big topic in a paragraph. You would have to narrow the topic to perhaps environmental pollution, if that is your interest. Environmental pollution, however, is still too broad a topic for a paragraph, so you might even further narrow the topic to a type of environmental pollution, such as pollution of the oceans. However, writing about ocean pollution is still too broad because it would include pollution by oil, chemicals, sewage, and garbage. Therefore, you might decide to write about oil as a source of ocean pollution. Finally, you might make this topic even narrower by writing only about the effects of oil spills on sea life. The point is, you must narrow the subject of your paragraph to a specific focus so that you can write about it clearly and completely.

The diagram on page 4 illustrates the process of narrowing a general topic to a specific one.

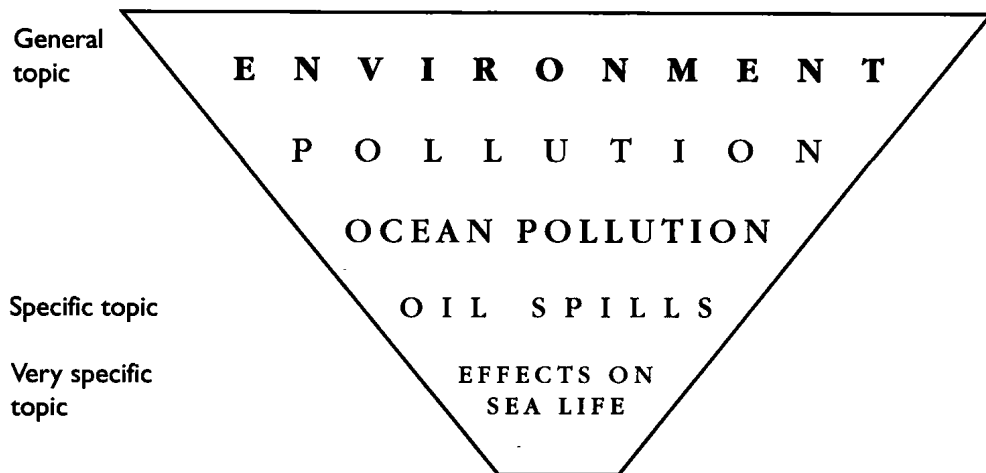
<sup>1</sup>**rhetorical form:** organizational form and style

<sup>2</sup>**expository:** explanatory; one that explains

<sup>3</sup>**convey:** express

<sup>4</sup>**generate:** produce



**PRACTICE I***Choosing and  
Narrowing a Topic*

Individually, in a small group, or with your whole class, narrow each of the following general topics to one specific aspect that could be written about in one paragraph.

School	Entertainment
Television	Food
Sports	

**Step 2:  
Brainstorming**

After you have chosen a topic and narrowed it to a specific focus, the next prewriting step is to generate ideas. This is done by a process called brainstorming. Although these brainstorming activities may seem unnecessary at first, after doing them a few times, you will realize their usefulness. Brainstorming for ideas can get you started writing more quickly and save you time in the later stages of the writing process.

Three useful brainstorming techniques are *listing*, *freewriting*, and *clustering*. Learn how to do each of them and then decide which is the most productive for you.

***Listing***

Listing is a brainstorming technique in which you think about your topic and quickly make a list of whatever words or phrases come into your mind. Your purpose is to produce as many ideas as possible in a short time, and your goal is to find a specific focus for your topic.

Follow this procedure:

1. Write down the general topic at the top of your paper.
2. Then make a list of every idea that comes into your mind about that topic. Keep the ideas flowing. Try to stay on the general topic; however, if you write down information that is completely off the topic, don't worry about it because you can cross it out later.
3. Use words, phrases, or sentences, and don't worry about spelling or grammar.

Here is an example of the listing technique on the topic of the culture shock experienced by international students in the United States.