

大学公共英语四~六级写作考试必备
EPT, 托福写作考试必备

卢琅华 主编

实践英语 写作技巧 与训练

中国广播电视出版社

PRACTICAL ENGLISH WRITING SKILLS
AND TRAINING

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Practical English Writing Skills and Training

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前 言

在近几年的外语教学过程中，阅读、听和说方面的训练已有很大的加强和提高，而写作技能的训练相比之下则很不充分。这显然不能适应当前形势的要求。例如国内外流行的试题EPT和TOEFL中，对写作的要求日趋提高，在英国的九级分试题中写作的地位也更为突出。同样，在我国目前开展的大学生四、六级全国统考中写作部分也是重要的项目。为此，必须大力加强写作基本技能的训练。

经过几年研究生公共英语写作教学的实践，我们编写成“实践英语写作技巧与训练”一书。本书精选了大量原文例句，编写成具有针对性的练习，通过这些练习，使参学者从用词造句开始，逐步达到会拟写定义、过程、物体、公文信件、常用体裁短文及文章摘要的目的。全书共分九个单元，每单元在充分练习的基础上，总结出本单元写作技能要点。练习形式多样，针对性和目的性强，突出公共英语写作特点。本书选材跨度较大，可作非英语专业本科生四、六级及研究生的写作教材和参考书，也可作为科技人员自学写作用书。书后附有中文说明和全部练习的详细答案，便于学习使用时参考查阅。

本书在编写过程中，美籍语言学专家马美贤和副教授李爱梅都提出了许多宝贵的意见，陆枝立同志承担了全部书稿的打字工作，在此表示衷心的感谢。

由于水平所限，错误之处在所难免，欢迎读者批评指正。

编者

1990年3月

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Chapter One Punctuation

Here is a passage. Does it make sense to you?

- Caesar, entered on his head, his helmet on his feet, armed sandals on his brow, a cloud in his right hand, his faithful sword in his eye, there was an angry glare saying nothing. He sat down.

What is wrong with it? It is only a matter of punctuation. Change the punctuation and it will make sense.

- Caesar entered, on his head his helmet, on his feet armed sandals, on his brow a cloud, in his right hand his faithful sword, in his eye there was an angry glare. Saying nothing, he sat down.

This is just an example to show the importance of punctuation. When it is wrong, a sentence fails to make sense. We shall have two more examples. In an article in the Miami Herald once appeared this sentence,

- When the burglar was arrested, he had several Mercedes, a yacht and \$ 250,000 in cash stashed under his mattress.

From the Frederick, Md., Post, once carried the

sentence,

- A.L. is the son of Mrs. R. W. and a high school graduate.

Just because of the absence of a comma at the appropriate places in both sentences, they sound funny. So punctuation is no small matter. It is as important to writing as stresses and pauses are to speech.

You must have noticed by now, that English punctuation marks are not exactly the same as Chinese ones, though in many ways they are similar. Such marks as the “.”, the “,”, and the “< >” are nonexistent in English. At the end of a declarative sentence, the English use the full stop, not the small circle. The members of a series in English are marked off by commas not the “.” as in Chinese. In Chinese, we use the “< >” to enclose titles of all sorts, but in English, quotation marks are used to enclose the titles of short stories, poems, films, TV shows, paintings, songs, essays, chapters of books, but not for book titles. Titles of books, magazines, and newspapers are in italics. Since we do not have italics on our typewriters, when we type we underline them.

We are not going to take up the punctuation marks one by one. With many years of English study behind us, this would be superfluous. We shall only

take up some points which may prove confusing or vexing.

I Punctuating compound sentences

How should compound sentences be punctuated? The clauses of compound sentences can be separated by commas, semicolons, colons, or are not punctuated at all. Here are some helpful examples;

1. A comma is used in a compound sentence in which the clauses are joined by a conjunction.

- He bought a red evening dress, and he gave it to his wife for her birthday.
- Does the play require a realistic approach, or should it be staged as fantasy?

Two predicates with a common subject constitute a simple sentence, not a compound one, so no comma is needed before the conjunction.

- He bought a red evening dress and gave it to his wife.

2. Use a semicolon between independent clauses;

1) when they are not joined by the coordinating conjunctions such as: "as", "and", "but", "for", "or", "nor",

- Smoking is dangerous in the woods; it may result in a forest fire.
- Ask for directions at the gate; a guide is stationed there to help you.

2) when they are joined by such connectives as: "for example", "for instance", "nevertheless", "otherwise", "that is", "besides", "therefore", "accordingly", "however", "also", "consequently", "hence", "still", "instead", and "thus". The section after the semicolon expresses ideas which carry a stage further the thought in the preceding section.

- I waited for him; moreover, I saved him a seat.
- Electronics is changing the habits of many people; for example, television viewing is becoming popular throughout the world.
- Nobody expected the injured football players to return to the game; however, the coach sent them in during the final quarter.

3) when there are commas within the clauses, that is, when the clauses are internally punctuated by commas:

- The travel agency, the first one to open in our city, offered special tours at reduced rates to any city within the province, and some cities in neighbouring provinces to newlyweds, and groups

organized by peasants associations and workers unions; and within three weeks over 1,000 people bought tickets.

- 3 Use a semicolon or a colon between independent clauses when the second clause explains or restates the idea in the first.
 - Exposure to the sun will not cause these drapes to fade , they are made of a color-fast synthetic material.
4. When a compound sentence is very short, a comma before the conjunction is not essential.
 - The thunder roared and the lightning flashed.

Exercise 1

Punctuate the following compound sentences.

- ① You can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink.
- ② Hot air rises but cold air sinks.
- ③ Lawrence has worked after school and on Saturdays and he has bought a car with his savings.
- ④ They rang the doorbell nobody answered.
- ⑤ My English instructor had me revise my composition twice first to correct the spelling

second to improve the sentence structure.

- ⑥ Tension rose during the meeting nevertheless most of the council members remained calm.
- ⑦ Take with you all the necessary items leave all others behind.
- ⑧ At 2:30 p. m. the fire alarm sounded we rushed out of the building.
- ⑨ Agriculture is changing because of the new system for centre point irrigation water is supplied from a central well by a novel rotating machine.
- ⑩ They decided not to take a vacation this year nor did they plan for many long weekend trips.

I Punctuating series

In the past it was regarded as wrong to place a comma before "and" in a series, but nowadays it is generally regarded advisable to place a comma before the conjunction in all series constructions, because the missing comma before the conjunction in a series will sometimes confuse the reader.

- Mr Bruce ordered grapefruit, coffee with sugar and ham and eggs.
- The Restaurant served four variations of sandwiches, corned beef, peanut butter, salami and egg and bacon.

Here are some rules which can be of help to us,

1. Place a comma after each item in a series except the last one.

- They sent books for the son, records for the daughter, and a set of dishes for the parents.

2. If all of the items in a series are connected by "and" or "or", do not use commas.

- They telephoned Ruth and Alice and Jane.
- We could leave on Wednesday or Thursday or even Friday of next week.

3. Words customarily used in pairs, such as "ham and eggs", "bread and butter", "cup and saucer", "knife and fork", "ice cream and soda", and "pen and ink" are set off as one item in a series.

- For a late supper we had roast beef, rolls and butter, asparagus, and ice cream and cake.

4. Do not use a comma before the final adjective in a series if the adjective is thought of as part of the noun.

- It was a hot, humid, bright August day.
- She is a sweet, charming, obedient young girl.

5. Short independent clauses in a series may be separated by commas.

- We worked, we swam, we read, we slept,

and we saw the summer pass by too quickly.

6. Use a colon before a series of appositives, or a series of any kind introduced by such words as "the following" or "as follows" .

- They locked the cabin and carried in our furniture: a couch, four chairs, a table, and two beds.
- We made appointments with the following people: the admissions officer, the dean for men, and the dormitory supervisor.

7. Use a semicolon between items in a series if the items contain internal commas.

- Three men were selected to the board of directors: Arthur Crane, an insurance executive; George Blakeley, the owner of a lumber mill; and Fred Blankenship, the manager of a department store chain.

Exercise 2

Write out these sentences, adding commas where they are needed.

① The states you must visit include New York, Massachusetts, Colorado, and California.

② Mrs Evans asked the waitress for coffee, toast and ham and eggs.

- ③ Our ship shuddered as the waves battered it the rain beat on its deck and the wind tore its sails.
- ④ A man reveals his character by his actions by the things he says and by the people he associates with.
- ⑤ In everyone's opinion, she was a very sweet generous and thoughtful girl.
- ⑥ The package contained three gifts, a watch a hunting knife and a compass.
- ⑦ We had two choices the first was to plant a vegetable garden the second to plant a fruit orchard.
- ⑧ To cook clams dip them in beaten egg roll them in flour and fry them in deep fat for three minutes.

II Punctuating introductory clauses and phrases

1. Place a comma after an introductory adverbial clause.

- After he wrote the poem, he sent it to the magazine.

2. Place a comma after an introductory participle or participial phrases.

- Waiting, he listened carefully.
- Jumping across the river, he grabbed for the rope.

3. Place a comma after an introductory prepositional phrase if it is long and complicated. No comma is needed after a short introductory prepositional phrase.

- During the first half of the movie we saw last week, I found it hard to become interested in the plot.
- For her birthday she received a byke.

4. Place a comma after any other introductory clause or phrase if it contains two or more adjectives, if it is transitional, if there is a chance of misreading the sentence, or if it is an appositive.

- Tired and dirty, they returned to the camp.
- On the other hand, it may be wise to wait.
- For only two, two pounds of steak is too much.
- A famous opera singer, the visiting speaker told of his experiences working at La Scala Opera House.

Exercise 3

Write out these sentences, adding commas where necessary.

① A Nobel Prize winner the mathematician was

offered a post at the university.

②Feeling a chill go down my spine I reached for the flashlight.

③When we first met Stephen was a college student.

④Ever since the invention of printing man's educational level has steadily risen.

⑤On the ship he felt seasick.

⑥Running I caught up with them strolling ahead down the road.

⑦Because the water comes from artesian wells it is very pure.

⑧In order to provide for the physical fitness of their students Switzerland's schools place much emphasis on physical education and calisthenics courses.

⑨In the early days of the automobile industry cars were expensive because so few of them were produced.

⑩Possessing unusual mechanical ability Claude is active in the construction business building roads docks and bridges.

⑪Expecting an explosion at any moment we plunged toward the airfield.