

甄艳华◎主编



Advanced English Writing

高级英语写作

新体例

新视角

新感受

——打造英语专业写作高手



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Advanced English Writing

高级英语写作

主 编 甄艳华

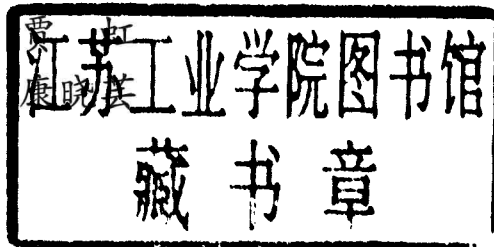
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前 言

从事高校英语写作教学及研究多年，一直希望编写一本供师生从低年级到高年级使用的综合性写作教程。本教程包括基础阶段的英语段落写作、篇章写作以及高年级阶段的英语专业毕业论文写作和英语应用文写作。从段落到篇章、从基础到应用，最终实现英语写作水平的全面提高。

本教程共分四个部分：段落写作、篇章写作、毕业论文写作和应用文写作，其中篇章写作和应用文写作为主体。第二部分的篇章写作是英语基础写作的核心内容，它涉及英语写作的四种主要文体和方法，本教程提供典型例文和学生范文，学生通过对例文的阅读与分析，并结合自己的写作实践，学习英文写作技巧，提高书面表达能力。篇章由段落组成，每一个段落都有其个性和共性，因此段落写作是篇章写作的基础。本教材的段落写作部分将分析、讲解段落的构成、各类段落的特点及写作方法；通过各种段落的表面个性，分析各类段落在性质、功能等方面具有的共性，为学生提供认知和效仿的空间。一旦将其习得，学生便可以顺利完成从段落写作到篇章写作的过渡。段落写作和篇章写作构成了本教程的基础写作部分，该部分还配有相应的练习，练习难易有致，教师和学生可以自由取舍，灵活选用；同时还配有学生习作，使学生能够及时认识自己的不足并加以改正。应用文写作是写作学的分支，它不同于常见的“基础写作”，而是侧重于人们社会工作、生活中的各种应用文体的写作。本教程应用文写作部分涵盖求职写作、办公室日常写作、商务书信、商务报告与商务合同等日常工作、生活中出现频率极高的应用文体，内容全面、结构合理，极具实用价值。同时，大量真实案例的范文和模板使读者能够轻松掌握必要的应用文写作方法和技巧。

本教程专为高校英语专业中、高年级学生编写，起点高，选材原汁原味，内容覆盖面广，具有较强的综合性和应用性特点，学生可通过大量的写作指导与实践迅速掌握英语各种文体的写作要领并提高写作水平，供两到三个学期使用；也可作为非英语专业学生的选修课教材，教师可根据具体教学要求酌情选材使用；还可作为广大英语爱好者的写作参考书。

参与本教程编写的有九位教师。甄艳华教授负责制订编写原则和全书的整体设计，编写了第四部分的第一单元和“附录”，并通读了全书；刘云秋和康晓芸老师编写了第一部分的四个单元；梁玉、庞宝坤和田旭老师编写了第二部分的七个单元；马艳辉和杨鑫老师编写了第三部分的五个单元；贾虹老师编写了第四部分的第二至第六单元。在编写过程中，我们广泛参考了各种书籍，在此向各位专家学者表示敬意。本书的出版得到了科学出版社领导的大力支持，在此一并表示感谢。同时我们要特别感谢朱琳编辑，是她的鼓励与帮助使本书能够在较短时间内与广大读者见面并发挥作用。

由于编者水平有限，疏漏和欠妥之处在所难免，欢迎同行专家和广大读者批评指正。

编 者

2008年2月27日

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Part One

Paragraph Writing

Unit 1

Introduction to the Paragraph

Paragraphs are essential building blocks of writing, ones that every writer can come to understand and use to good effect. Most simply a paragraph is a group of related sentences that present and develop one main idea. Having no set length, paragraphs typically range from 100 to 150 words. In a sense, a paper is created by bringing together a series of related paragraphs, each one a “mini-composition” itself. An effective paragraph is well-structured and carefully organized.

I. What Is a Paragraph

We have learned the basic ways to use correct words and to write effective sentences. Now we come to deal with the element that is also very important and essential in composing an essay, that is a paragraph. As a beginner in writing, it is essential for you to know the characteristics of a paragraph and to know how to construct a well-organized paragraph because writing an effective paragraph is a preparatory step for you to write a good essay.

A paragraph is the necessary and important unit of thought in writing. It is usually a series of sentences that develop one main point or controlling idea. It is a part of a larger piece of writing composition or chapter in a book. It must be about one single topic. Each sentence should be logically and structurally joined to the one before it. A paragraph should be adequately developed. The first sentence often tells the reader the main idea of the paragraph. This sentence is called the topic sentence. The other sentences in the paragraph give more information about the main idea, such as examples, details, facts, and reasons. These sentences are called supporting sentences. The last sentence in a paragraph is often a concluding sentence. This sentence is more general than the supporting sentences.

II. The Form of a Paragraph

A paragraph can be easily distinguished. It begins with an empty space called an introduction. When you write a paragraph, leave a space to the left of the beginning of the first sentence. This is called indenting. Indenting shows the reader that you are starting a new paragraph. A paragraph also has margins on the left and right side of the paper. A margin is a space between the edge of the paper and the paragraph. The left margin should be the same for all lines. The right margin may not be exactly the same for every line. There will also be top and bottom margins for a single paragraph. When you write a paragraph, the sentences follow one another. Do not begin a new line with each sentence. Your paragraph should not look like a list.

There is no specific number of sentences in a good paragraph. If you have all three parts described in one item, of course you will have at least three sentences. However, this is not usually enough when you are writing for college classes. To develop and explain the main idea for the reader, a good paragraph should have several supporting sentences. In general, the average paragraph runs from about 100 to 150 words, but sometimes the length of a paragraph depends on the complication of the topic being discussed. The more complicated the topic, the longer the paragraph. One thing you should keep in mind is that the length of a paragraph depends on the complete development of the main idea.

III. Functions of a Paragraph

Before we set out the fundamental functions of the paragraph, let's consider what will happen without paragraphing. Suppose what you have been reading in this book thus far was unparagraphed, you would certainly feel uncomfortable after two or three pages and would have to stop reading for breath. If you are not interested in our book or if it is not compulsory for you, you probably would put it away. The reason is fairly simple: our span of concentrated attention is very limited, a matter of a few minutes in most cases. To allow no relaxation of mental tension in a reader eventually leads to the same consequence as failure to create in him attention, interest, suspense, and the like. Paragraphing therefore helps to break the writer's flow of thoughts so that the reader can rest in his brain as well as his eye, as the full stop does in a sentence. In this sense, it is also a way of punctuation.

Again, like the full stop, paragraphing does not break the writer's flow of thoughts arbitrarily; it separates one idea from another, one aspect of a matter from another, one stage of development from another. Consequently, an essay becomes a series of ordered steps towards the set goal. Paragraphing is based as much on the need for the reader to breathe as on the writer's need to sort out his thoughts.

When we say that the paragraph has resting and separating functions, we have in mind the complete essay. But if we proceed from the sentence, the paragraph is an accumulation, a way of combining sentences into a larger unit of discourse. These two apparently opposite movements—dividing an essay into paragraphs and combining sentences into paragraphs—occur simultaneously in any writing process; with the paragraph as their converging point.

IV. Guidelines for Paragraph Writing

When you are composing a paragraph, you must first make clear what your topic is. To put it in other words, your first duty is to let your readers know what your paragraph deals with. In the paragraph you may describe something, narrate something, classify something, define something, compare something with another, etc.; you do this by using a topic sentence in each paragraph. The topic sentence should state the main idea of the paragraph, and all the details and descriptions should relate to that main idea. In the following chapter, we shall discuss this in detail.

When you have this first thing in mind, you should also remember that a paragraph must be unified, coherent and complete. To be unified means that all the sentences in the paragraph should be relevant to the main point. To be coherent means that you should always organize all the sentences in a clear and logical order or sequence. To make the paragraph complete means that you should fully develop the main idea with facts, figures, examples and illustrations—in short, concrete details that are relevant to your topic sentence.

Also, when you write a paragraph, you should know very clearly that the construction of a paragraph must follow certain ways of development, such as classification, process, definition, cause and effect, comparison and contrast.

Exercises

1. How do you understand a good paragraph?
2. What's the form of a standard paragraph?
3. How do you understand the functions of a paragraph?
4. What are the guidelines for paragraph writing ?

Unit 2

Paragraph Structure

I. Understanding the Paragraph

The paragraph to prose, like the stanza to poetry, is the organizational foundation. It gives the reader an intermittent breathing space and helps him or her to concentrate on one aspect of the total theme. In a way, the division of a theme into paragraphs, like the setting up signposts at street corners, pointing backwards and forwards, helps the reader to get a clear picture of the organization of the author's thoughts. Just imagine how lost one would feel if given to read a piece without any paragraphing! One certainly would find it as difficult as getting around in a city without street signs.

The typical paragraph is a discourse unit smaller than the complete essay but larger than the sentence, though we sometimes come across one-sentence paragraphs and one-paragraph essays. This middle position makes the paragraph extremely important in essay writing. For one thing, it is possible to write a good essay only when we can write well structured and well-connected paragraphs. (In fact, the paragraph may be regarded as mini-essay because it shares many features

with the complete essay.) For another, producing a well-formed paragraph involve more than the ability to write correct and good sentences. Therefore, for the beginning writers who have teamed the basic English grammar and have acquired a workable vocabulary, the training in writing is the crucial first step towards writing well in English.

II. Topic Sentence

The main point to which a paragraph confines itself is called the topic, and when the topic is definitely stated in one of the sentences in the paragraph, that sentence is called the topic sentence. It must not be supposed, however, that every paragraph must have a topic sentence. While in a paragraph of exposition or argument the topic is as a rule definitely stated in a sentence, it is, in a paragraph of narration or description, usually implied rather than stated.

The topic sentence occurs usually at the beginning of the paragraph, but sometimes at the end and sometimes in the middle. Occasionally the topic is stated at or near the beginning and repeated, in different words, at or near the end.

A topic sentence is important because it tells the reader what the writer will discuss in the paragraph. A good topic sentence has two parts:

- ① The topic is the general subject of the paragraph;
- ② The controlling idea limits the topic so that the paragraph covers only a specific part or aspect of it.

For example:

In the late 19th century, a man named Sir Francis Galton made the first attempt to scientifically measure human intelligence. Galton tried to use a psychological approach to his testing, rather than the medical/anatomical approach of scientists and researchers before him. From 1884 to 1890, Galton ran a service in a museum in London, where people could pay for a test of their intelligence. However, the specific tests that Galton chose to use were not very good ones. For example, in one test, Galton tried to find the highest-pitched sound a person could perceive, so he made a whistle for people to listen to. In another test, he tried to measure people's sensitivity to the smell of roses. Thus, Galton tried to show that intelligence could have a scientific measure, but he was not able to create a test that truly did this.

The first sentence in this paragraph is the topic sentence, which tells the reader that the topic of the paragraph is Sir Francis Galton. There are many different paragraphs that could be written about this person, but the example paragraph focuses on one aspect of his life.

III. Supporting Details

A topic sentence on an interesting subject raises questions in a reader's mind. A good paragraph has several supporting sentences. These sentences give details, such as facts, specific details and examples, which relate to the topic sentence. The supporting sentences, which form the body of a paragraph, answer these questions. A good writer does not include any sentences that are irrelevant, or not related to the topic sentence.

Facts are items of information that can be verified. Using facts in writing is effective because specific information allows the reader to arrive at a clear understanding of the thought you are trying to communicate. Their use also shows the reader that you are a believable source of information.

For example:

Flooding always brings severe damages to Mississippi basin. The flooding in 1995 had caused the death of 12 people, destroyed nearly 3,000 homes, blew down thousands of fruit trees, and wiped out a good portion of the crops and poultry. The flooding altogether caused US \$ 10.2 billion worth of damage, which reduced the Mississippi's 1995 GDP by 0.05%. Therefore, the government should take immediate measures to prevent the disaster's happening again.

Clear writing demands exactness, and one way to achieve exactness is to use specific details. Check for specific details in your writing by asking yourself whether you have answered questions like who, what, when and where.

Examples are illustrations. They give the reader additional information about abstractions—words that stand for ideas rather than for people or things. If the topic sentence is “His workbench is messy”, you would use examples to allow the reader to visualize, to see in his or her mind, the same picture of the workbench that is in your mind.

For example:

The most glaring ill of modern cities is that the people in it are always in a hurry. Business people, wage-earner, laborers, peddlers, crooks, and assorted characters all rush about in their activities. City folks rush to work, rush to get their work done, rush to have lunch, and rush home. Then perhaps they rush to have dinner or rush to party. Finally, in the early hours of the morning, it is a rush too, as they say, grabs some sleep before the rush next morning.

IV. Concluding Sentence

Like a televised sporting event that usually ends with a wrap-up of the highlights and outcome, a good paragraph ends with a concluding sentence that wraps up the main idea, adding the finishing touch. The best concluding sentences avoid an exact repetition of the topic sentence or a dull summary. They offer a fresh insight that locks the main idea in the reader's mind.

The concluding sentence of a paragraph may provide a summary of the paragraph, or give a result. Some typical words or expressions you might find at the beginning of a concluding sentence are *finally, in conclusion, therefore, thus, as a result, in summary*, and *in short*. Make sure you choose the word or expression that has the meaning you want for your concluding sentence.

For example:

Teaching students with different learning styles may seem like a difficult task, but a teacher can find ways to satisfy the various learning preferences found in a class. One effective way might be to use multimedia in the classroom as much as possible. For example, the use of visual aids will help in cases where words alone may not be effective. Regalia, or tangible objects, may be useful for teaching new information as well as motor skills. Other helpful teaching techniques might utilize motion and performance so that students are actively involved in the learning process. Even testing, which most often is done through the printed word, can be handled through electronic media such as computers. In short, teachers may want to use various techniques in the class room in order to help students with different learning styles.

V. Three Special Paragraphs

I. Opening Paragraphs

If we write an essay or a story, we generally have the reader in mind. And we would not want him to lose interest at the very outset, would we? But if our first few sentences are dull or vague, he will feel bored or puzzled, and will very likely put the paper aside. For it is but natural for him to think that nothing worth reading could come out of a dull or vague beginning, and that he will throw his time away if he keeps on reading. So you see how important it is to make your opening paragraph interesting and effective.

A good opening will pique the reader's curiosity, capture his interest, and make him eager to know what comes next. In other words, it will motivate him to take an interest in what we are going to write about, in the ideas we are going to develop, and to read on.

A good opening paragraph is, however, not only to arouse the reader's interest; it should accomplish other important functions as well. It should set the tone—whether it is formal or informal, playful or serious, friendly or hostile, humorous or ironical—of the whole piece of writing and above all, it should make clear, or at least give some idea of, what the writing is about.

Here are some examples of good opening paragraphs:

(1) Begin with an Observation

It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.

—Jane Austin

(2) Begin with a Quotation or Literary Allusion

"Habit the second nature! Habit is ten times nature," the Duke of Wellington is said to have exclaimed; and the degree to which this is true no one probably can appreciate as well as one who is a veteran soldier himself. The daily drill and the years of discipline end by fashioning a man completely over again, as to most of the possibilities of his conduct.

—William James

(3) Begin with an Analogy or Contrast (Original, Not Too Far-fetched)

Music comes in many forms; most countries have a style of their own. Poland has its