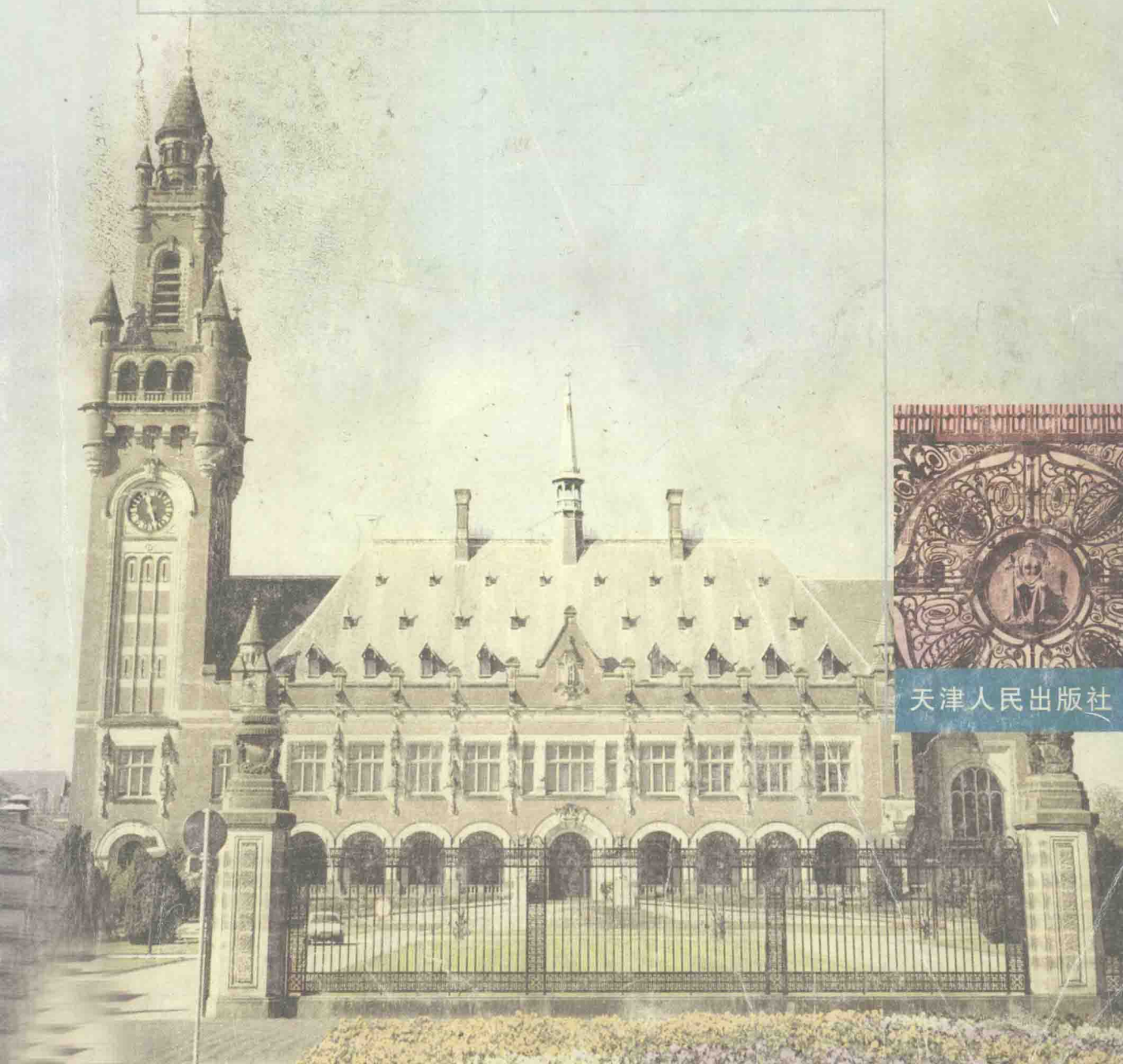


College English Writing

大学英语写作

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天津人民出版社

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Preface

College English Writing, based on our classroom experience, is designed for those who want to improve the writing skill so necessary to success in college and in most careers. With its full range of material and flexible organization, *College English Writing* adapts easily to almost any course design and to a wide range of student needs. Since each chapter is self-contained, the book also works well for self-teaching.

College English Writing begins with six prewriting techniques, then gives an overview of the writing process, relationship between key factors, differences between Chinese and English writing. Unit 2 thoroughly reviews the basic knowledge of diction and rhetoric. Unit 3 covers the more subtle skills of effective sentence writing. Unit 4 guides students through the paragraph writing process: planning, writing topic sentences, developing ideas, organizing, making smooth transitions, and revising, and then moves on to the paragraph writing. In Unit 5, the techniques of paragraph writing are applied step by step to the process of the four types of composition writing: description, narration, exposition and argumentation. Unit 6 explains the skills of writing paraphrase, summary, and book report. The final section, practical writing, tells students how to write different practical requirements that are most commonly used in colleges and in society.

The book is a step-by-step process teaching skills. Each unit includes detailed descriptions of skills involved as well as examples and exercises to practice the skills. Its clear, paced lessons, plentiful practices, and engaging writing assignments have guided thousands of students through the process of writing effective paragraphs and essays, from prewriting to final draft, and we hope it will provide students and teachers with clear insight into the English composition.

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Unit 1

Getting Started

Part A Gathering Ideas

Students are always complaining that they have nothing to write about. This part will present six effective prewriting techniques that will help you get your ideas onto paper and overcome the “blank page jitters” that many students have faced when they sit down to write. Try all of them and see which one works best for you, alone or in combination.

1. Freewriting

Freewriting means that you write for ten minutes or more without stopping. It is an excellent method that many writers use to warm up and get ideas. It can best be compared to the warm – up exercise that a team does when it comes on to the playing field. It is an activity that loosens up your mind as well as your pen and gets you ready for a writing assignment just as stretching and loosening up and getting you ready for a game or a Marathon race.

Firstly, write rapidly, without stopping, about anything that comes into your head for five, ten, or fifteen minutes. If you feel stuck, just repeat or rhyme the last word you wrote, but do not stop writing. And do not worry about grammar, logic, unity, or grades.

Secondly, after you freewrite, read what you have written, underlining any parts you like.

Freewriting often goes against everything you have been taught. It forces you to be messy and to tolerate chaos. On the other hand, it frees you to think about what you mean without worrying so much about the way you are saying it. A couple of comparisons might help. Convince yourself that you are working in clay, not marble. You are free to shape and mold and adjust. You are free to make mistakes, look silly, be foolish, and then to go off in another direction. You are working on paper, not bronze, and your blunders are not eternal. No one is waiting to seize your paper and print it as it stands. The point of freewriting here is to write so fast that ideas can flow without comments from your inner critic. The inner critic is the voice inside that says, every time you have an idea, “That’s dumb; that’s no good; cross that out.” Freewriting helps you tell this voice, “Thank you for your opinion. Once I have lots of ideas and words on paper,

I'll invite you back for comment."

Practice

1. Now, set a timer for ten minutes or have someone time you. Freewrite without stopping for the full ten minutes. If you get stuck, repeat or rhyme the last word you wrote until words start flowing again but don't stop writing!

Next, when you finish, write down one or two words that describe how you felt while freewriting.

Then, read your freewriting, and underline any words or lines you like—anything that strikes you as interesting, powerful, worthwhile, funny. If nothing strikes you, that is okay.

2. Try more freewriting after class. Do them at different times of day or night when you have a quiet moment.

2. Focused Freewriting

Focused freewriting is another excellent method that many writers or students use to get ideas or narrow a topic assigned.

First of all, you simply try to focus your thoughts on one subject as you freewrite. The subject might be one assigned by your teacher, one you choose, or one you have discovered in unfocused freewriting.

Next, read what you have written, underlining any parts you like.

The goal of most writing is a polished, organized piece of writing, and focused freewriting can help you generate ideas or limit a topic to one aspect that interests you.

The benefits of freewriting or focused freewriting are many. It will not only help you overcome your fear of writing, it will also help you discover what is on your mind. It encourages you to get on with it. Do not worry whether these are right or wrong words, but think, instead, of your meaning. It helps to think about topics to write about; give your mind free rein and let it take your pen wherever it leads. It is a powerful tool for helping you turn thoughts and feeling into words, especially when you are unsure about what you want to say. And finally, it is particularly helpful for developing ideas on topics you have been assigned. As you write ideas as they come to you, other ideas will come cascading forth. You will be able to select those that are pertinent to your topic and develop them further. Sometimes freewriting produces only nonsense, but often, freewriting can help you zoom in on possible topics, interests, and powerful writing you can use later.

Practice

1. Do a four – minute focused freewriting on each of these words:

rain, snow, red, highway, our college, father (or mother), friendship, success

Did you surprise yourself by having a lot to say about any one word? Maybe this is something you would like to write more about.

2. Read over your earlier freewritings and notice your underlining. Would you like to write more about any underlined words or ideas? Write two or three such words or ideas then.
3. Choose one word or idea. Focus your thoughts on it and do a ten – minute focused freewriting. Try to keep the topic as you write but do not carry too much about that; just keep writing.

3. Brainstorming

Brainstorming or freely jotting down ideas about a topic is another prewriting technique that may work for you, and is very helpful in generating ideas on a specific topic. When you are assigned a topic for an essay, write down anything and everything that the topic brings to mind. Write for at least fifteen minutes, putting down all of the words and phrases that come to mind. As in the case of freewriting, do not stop to correct your grammar and spelling. The purpose is to get lots of ideas on paper so you have something to work with and choose from. Unlike freewriting, however, brainstorming involves the listing of words and phrases rather than complete sentences.

1. Write down everything that comes to you about a topic——words, phrases, ideas, details and examples.
2. After you have brainstormed, read over your list and underline interesting or powerful ideas you might develop further.
3. Focus on one aspect that you have underlined and brainstorm again.
4. Each time you move toward a more focused topic until you discover a topic about which you really have something to say. Then you can brainstorm once more for more reasons, details, and examples to support the topic.

Brainstorming is based on the psychological principle of free association; words and images trigger other words and images, and your mind is often led to surprising destinations. As you brainstorm, you will see divisions and aspects of the subject that you had not anticipated, and soon your paper will be filled with a list of ideas connected with your topic. Many of those ideas will not be usable, of course, but many will fit your needs. The point is to let your imagination race ahead unhampered and not worry about your thoughts being silly or irrelevant.

Practice

Choose one of the following topics that interests you and write it at the top of your paper. Then brainstorm. Write anything that comes into your head about the topic. Just let ideas pour onto paper!

1. a lesson
2. an event
3. a day I can not forget
4. a place I never want to go back to
5. dealing with different people
6. a famous singer
7. an unforgettable movie character

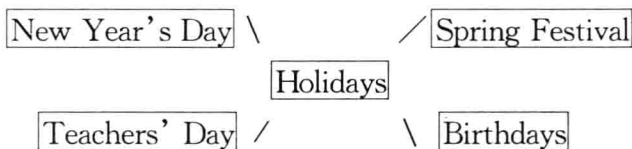
Once you fill a page with your list, read it over, underlining the most interesting ideas. Draw arrows to connect related ideas, and see whether there is one idea that might be the subject of a composition.

4. Clustering

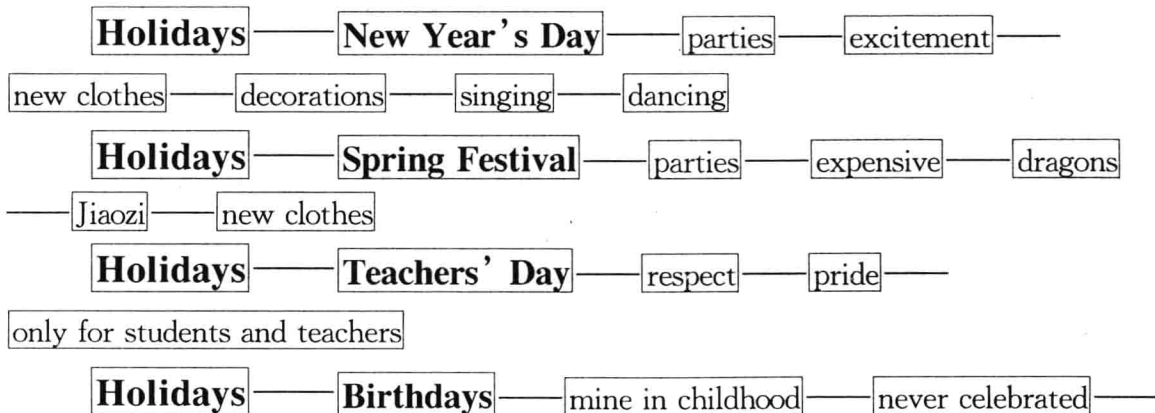
Some writers use clustering or mapping to get their ideas onto paper.

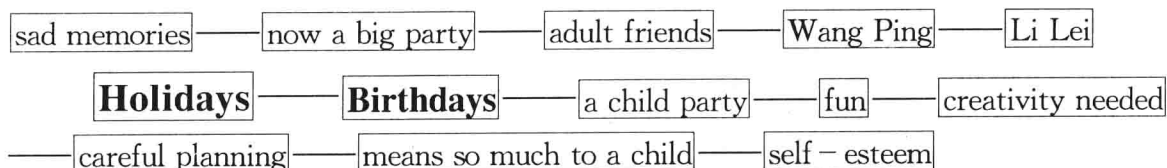
1. To begin clustering, simply write an idea or topic usually one word, in the center of your paper.

2. Then let your mind make associations, and write these ideas down, branching out from the center.



3. When one idea suggests other ideas, details, and examples, write these around it in a "cluster."





4. After you finish, pick the cluster that most interests you.
5. You may wish to freewrite for more ideas.

Practice

Get a piece of paper, and then try clustering. Keep on writing down associations until you have filled most of the page.

- | | | | | |
|----------|---------|------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1. Study | 2. Jobs | 3. Cars | 4. Inspiration | 5. Computers |
| 6. Books | 7. Bike | 8. A Dream | 9. A Town | 10. A School |

5. Asking Questions

Another technique used by writers to explore a topic is that of asking questions. As newspaper reporters often do at the beginning of an article, the most frequently asked questions are the following: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? Like newspaper reporters, many writers get ideas about a subject by asking questions and try to answer them. By applying these questions to a topic you can generate material and develop ideas. Of course, not all six questions will apply to every topic, and there may be topics that will suggest additional questions. If the reporter's six questions seem too confining, just ask the questions you want to be answered about a subject. Let each answer suggest the next question such as:

1. What is happening?
2. When did it begin?
3. What is causing it to happen?
4. What does it do?
5. How is it being done?
6. Where is it being done?
7. Why does it happen?
8. What does it look like? (smell, feel, taste, sound)
9. What are its parts?
10. How many parts does it have?
11. How is it different from others in its class?
12. How does it work?