

基础英语

写作

学生用书

第二册

北京师范大学外语系 武尊民 编著

Titles should be clear, concise, and precise. The title is often an incomplete sentence in the present tense, with articles or even verbs missing. Sometimes, it is simply a phrase. Other rules for titles include:

- 1) Do not use quotation marks
- 2) Center on the top of the first page, or simply begin it on the left of the line
- 3) Capitalize all the letters in the title or capitalize the first letter of all words except small words like "in" and "a" need not be capitalized

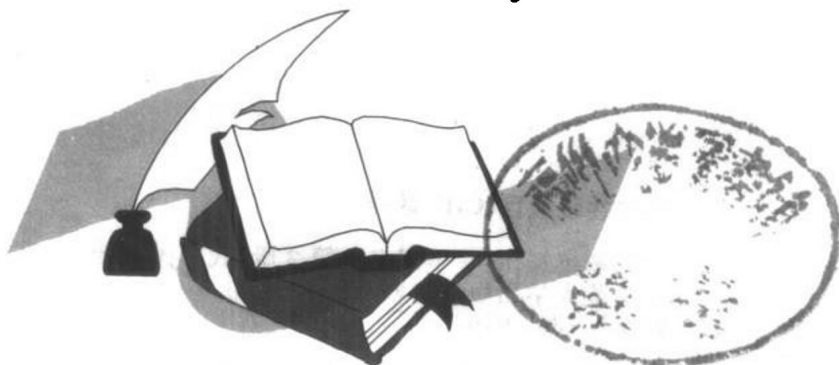
beauty to the essay we give to our essay. A well conceived title can add force or interest to the essay. There is no doubt that we can write very good titles for our essays in our mother tongue. But when we write in English, with elementary writing, the title is usually decided by the teacher. At a more advanced stage of learning, however, we are often given a topic for a writing assignment. This is to give us more flexibility and also an opportunity to show our creativity. We must know a few things about writing titles. In general, titles should serve the following purposes:

- 1) To attract the reader's attention
- 2) To give the reader a clear idea of what the essay is about
- 3) To provide focus for the essay

帮你克服英语写作中的障碍
助你实现英语突破性的飞跃

北京师范大学出版社

A Writing Course
for
English Majors



基础英语写作

(学生用书)

第二册

武尊民 编著

北京师范大学出版社

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前 言

《基础英语写作》共有两册，使用对象为英语专业一二年级学生。但由于本套书重点在于写作训练，因此也应适用于非英语专业、具有中级以上水平的学生。

本教材的编写思想融会了近年来国际上外语教学理论的发展，参考了许多英美国国家英语写作及阅读教材，并且结合中国学生在英语写作方面的困难和大多数地区实际教学条件的局限，多方面采纳适合我国国情的教学办法。主要是基于以下几点考虑：

1. 贯彻《高等学校英语专业基础阶段英语教学大纲》制定的教学任务与要求，通过系统训练使学生达到《大纲》的要求。

2. 把写作作为一个过程对待，通过各种练习使学生在写作的各个阶段中充分发挥自己的主观能动性，从而有效地提高写作能力。在这个过程中，我们特别注重对文稿的修改活动。通过对自己与他人的习作进行修改提高学生的写作技巧以及对语言的敏感性。对于师范生来说也同时进行了教学职业技能的训练。

3. 强调写作过程并使学生了解这种过程的重要性。通过这一过程以达到取得最佳效果的目的，真正达到交流的目的。因此，我们强调学生作者要在写作时明确读者对象，使学生注重交际目的和效果。

4. 强调习作的流畅性 (fluency) 与准确性 (accuracy) 的统一。教材中不仅设计了各种练习来帮助学生提高表达自己思想的能力，还在每一课中就学生习作中常出现的语法错误及一些修辞上的毛病安排了有针对性的练习。

5. 由于在写作的基础阶段模仿性多于创造性，范文的作用是不可忽视的。因此，在每一课中我们都从多种途径选用优秀的例文，为学生提供详细观察英语写作方法的实际应用的机会。考虑到学生水平可能有差异，范文亦

有难有易以适应不同水平的学生的需要。

《基础英语写作》第一册分为两大部分，共有十七单元。第一部分是书信与便条写作；第二部分是段落写作。通过本册书的学习，学生应该能够写一般性的感谢信、邀请信、日程安排信、询问信、道歉信等信函，以及描述性、叙述性、说明性、论说性等类型的段落。第二册主要是学习描述性、叙述性、说明性、论说性短文的写作。由于比较一对照方法与因果关系分析在应用文中的重要作用，在第二册中仍然单独设课，以帮助学生加深了解并达到熟练使用的程度。本册还安排了一个单元让学生学习比较正式信函的写作，使学生注意语气与句式的不同对信函正式程度的影响。另有一个单元是教授文章概要的写作原则与方法，为学生下一步进行专业学习做准备。通过第二年的写作训练学生应该能够把握一般题材文章的写作方法，根据不同读者对象、不同写作要求决定文章体裁和组织形式。文章应通达，符合一般英语国家的表达习惯，能够明确表达作者意图与思想。

两册课本根据不同的教学目的分别配有附录。两册书都选了一些比较好的学生习作收在附录里面，教材使用者可以看到相应水平的学生究竟能够用英语写些什么。他们能够争取写得比这些习作更好。第一册把修改作文用的常用符号附在书后以便学生使用。第二册附上一位学生的英语随笔(journals)，目的在于展示学生在无课堂及教师要求的压力下英语习作的魅力，鼓励学生自觉加强练习，提高英语书面表达能力。由于英语写作中英国英语或美国英语的问题时常困扰中国学生，第二册附录3编入了一个英国英语和美国英语一般生活用词汇差异比较表。它是参照《英语大词典》的附录采编的。

为了方便教学本套教材还配有一套教师用书。教师用书包括详细的教学要求、课堂教学活动安排的参考建议、学生写作中的难点分析与解决方法的建议、学生习作以及练习题的参考答案。教师用书的编写目的是：(1)保证教材编写思想的贯彻；(2)为教师的教学工作提供方便与指导。

教材编写期间在北京师范大学外语系英语专业试用、反复修改达五年之久。其间不断得到学校有关领导、校内外同事以及外籍教师的鼓励与支持。英语教学专家钱瑗先生和前辈张韵斐先生分别详细审阅了两册教材，为完善教材提出了极其宝贵的意见。在我系任教的美籍教师 Laurie Liu 和在上海外

国语大学任教的英籍教师 **Betry Barr** 女士为整套教材语言润色，保证了教材语言的通畅。对此，教材编写者表示衷心的感谢。

由于作者理论及教学实践水平局限，加上教材试用范围比较小，一定有很多不足或缺陷之处，诚请使用者提出宝贵的批评意见。

王星、武尊民

1997 年 5 月于 北京师范大学外语系

A Writing Course for English Majors
Second Year

UNITS	TOPICS	WRITING ASSIGNMENTS	LANGUAGE FOCUS
1	Essay Development -comparing the essay and the paragraph -selecting a topic from a given subject -deciding the title -writing the thesis statement - writing an outline - introductory paragraph - concluding paragraph	①Writing an outline on the subject 'university' ②Supply an introduction and a conclusion for the incomplete essay printed in the book	① Rewriting sentences ② Editing a paragraph
2	Comparison and Contrast -item-by-item method -point-by-point method -comparing/ contrasting signals	①Similarities/differences between high school and university ②Comparing two types of activities — indoor activity and outdoor activity	① Faulty comparisons ② Error corrections ③ Editing an essay
3	Cause and Effect -analysing causes and effects -distinguishing causes and effects in writing -organising cause/ effects for the essay	①(CAUSE) -Some freshmen's inability to cope with college life and study -Some students' health becoming poor after being in university for about a year ②(EFFECT) -Tutoring 3 pupils/times each week -Being a member of a student's organization	① Cause and effect relations ② Error correction exercises ③ Editing an essay
4	Expository essays -the HOW question -the WHY question -explaining a picture/diagram -explanation based on personal experience or knowledge -explanation based on a conversation	①Writing on 'Facing setbacks in a university' ②Writing to explain the process of doing something ③Explaining a travel plan from a conversation	① Word usage: EVER ② Position of ONLY in sentences ③ Editing an essay

5	Narrative essays -about a person -about events/incidents	① Writing about a person ② Writing about an event	① Word usage: EVEN ② Sentence paraphrasing ③ Sentence rewriting ④ Editing an essay
6	Descriptive essays -general and specific -appealing to the senses -figurative language	① Describing the dormitory before and after the military training ② Describing a person	① Dangling problems ② Error correction exercises ③ Editing an essay
7	Argumentative essays - the proposition - the proof -studying the issues and taking sides -considering opposing opinion	① Writing on 'the tightening of examination administrations' ② Writing on 'Younger workers are better employees'	① Connecting devices ② Repeating for clarity, 'this' 'these' ③ Emphatic statements, 'indeed', 'in fact', 'that is', 'in other words' ④ Editing an essay
8	Writing a Summary -process of summarising materials -important steps in summary writing -learning to extract meaning from a passage	① Writing a summary (timed) ② Writing a summary based on a passage (timed)	① Style ② Error correction exercises ③ Editing an essay
9	More (Formal) Letters and Notes -request and inquiry -apology and explanation -complaint -congratulations -condolence and sympathy	① Writing a formal letter of request or inquiry ② Writing a letter of complaint (timed)	① Formal and informal ② Rewrite sentences paying attention to style changes ③ Sentence combining ④ Editing a letter

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UNIT ONE Essay Development

Based on what we have learned in our writing course last year, the focus of our course this year will turn from mostly letter writing and paragraph writing to essay writing. An essay, by definition, is a short piece of writing on one particular subject by a student. It can also be a piece of writing on one subject for publication. What we describe in Chinese as 论说文, 散文, 随笔、小品文 can all be classified as an 'essay'. It usually explains or discusses a subject to a much fuller extent compared with the paragraph.

Organization of the essay

The structure of an essay is much like that of a paragraph, except that an essay is an extended discussion, much longer and with a number of paragraphs. An essay can be divided into three main parts: the introduction (beginning), the body (middle), and the conclusion (end). The introduction paragraph starts the essay by introducing the writer's purpose of writing or the main idea of the essay. The statement which does this job is called '**the thesis statement**'. The body of the essay can be composed of several paragraphs, depending on the number of points the writer wants to deal with and the time that he is allowed to work on it. Each paragraph in the body will have a topic idea, usually referred to as '**the topic sentence**', and will expand upon the essay's main idea through use of appropriate supporting materials: examples and details, illustration, facts, or statistics. We will look at the essay more closely now.

I. Comparing the paragraph and the essay

Read the following paragraph and notice the sentences that support the topic idea, paying attention to the supporting materials used.

Topic →	<u>I was not treated nearly as well as the other employees during my work at Father's firm, as most people would imagine.</u> Father was generous and tolerant with other employees. He offered them good salaries and paid commissions for their sales. When anyone asked for some time off, he granted him it promptly. He demonstrated great patience when other employees made mistakes in their work. But things were never the same with me. I was not entitled to any raises, and there was no encouragement for the sales I made in the form of commissions. I had no chance of asking for leave from work and if I made any mistakes, Father would be outrageous. My experience tells me that I will not play the role of boss's son for long.
Support →	

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We can see that the writer uses comparison/contrast method to show how he felt he was unfairly treated by his father at work. All the supporting details serve to illustrate the difference.

Now read the essay below. The thesis statement is underlined for us. Try to find the topic sentences in the supporting paragraphs. Notice the points that are made and how each point is discussed in further detail in an expanded supporting paragraph.

	<p style="text-align: center;">No More Favours, Please</p> <p>Many times in a conversation I heard it said that 'a boss's son has it made.' I doubt whether a person who makes that statement has ever worked for his father. <u>At any rate, during the four years that I worked for my father's water softener firm, I was not treated nearly as well as the other employees.</u></p>
THESIS	
SUPPORT	<p>With them my father was generous and tolerant. They received \$2.50 an hour or \$100.00 for their standard forty-hour week. And if Jerry or Fred helped to sell a new water softener to one of our customers, he was awarded a \$20.00 commission. Whenever Jerry asked for a little time off to go fishing, my father promptly granted his request. And once Fred got two days off to take a trip to Chicago, and Dad didn't even dock his pay. If Jack and Kenny botched an installation job, my father would reprove them in a kindly tone and explain how they could have avoided the mistake. Once when Kenny failed to tighten a packing nut on a valve, and the water leaked all over the customer's floor, Father sent over a man to clean up the mess and just told Kenny to be more careful next time. On another occasion Jack and Kenny dropped a softener down a customer's stairs, ruining the softener and damaging several steps. When they reported the incident to him with worried and anxious looks, Father calmed their fears and told them in his dispute with a customer over a repair bill, it was his employee, and not the customer, who was always right.</p> <p>But where I was concerned, my father was a close-fisted and harsh employer. My weekly paycheck was an unvarying fifty dollars, whether I worked forty hours or fifty-five, and the occasional salary raises the other employees enjoyed were never extended to me. I rarely received a commission on the sales I made; my father would either say that he couldn't afford to pay me any extra just then, or else that I wasn't really entitled to the money. If I wanted to take part in some school activity or go on a beach party with some friends, my father would not only refuse to give me time off, but he would often find extra jobs that would force me to work overtime. My mistakes called forth only anger from my father,</p>

never understanding. If anything went wrong with one of the company trucks while I was driving, he always assumed I had been driving like my 'hot rod friends.' If a customer complained about my service or her bill, my father bawled me out for giving him and his business a bad name. Once when I forgot to reduce the water pressure in the backwash machine and caused about twenty dollars worth of mineral to be washed down the drain, he spent half an afternoon sarcastically analyzing my mistake and showing me, in minute detail, how my carelessness had 'cut into the profits for the year.' Insurance never covered my accidents; their cost was deducted from my salary, 'to teach me to be more careful.'

CONCLUSION I don't know whether my father was so harsh with me because he didn't want to appear to be favouring me; but I do know that his constant criticism convinced me that the role of boss's son is not a role I want to play for a life time.

In this essay, we can see an organized pattern of thought. The writer's main idea is stated in the **thesis statement** in the *introduction*, referred to indirectly in each *supporting paragraph* through the **topic sentence** and stated again in the *conclusion*. In each paragraph of the body, the topic sentence helps explain the main idea or the thesis statement. The following table may give us a clearer idea of the difference between the paragraph and the essay.

	Paragraph	Essay
Introduction	The <u>topic sentence</u> presents the main idea. It is often the first sentence in the paragraph.	The thesis statement presents the controlling idea of the whole composition. It is usually found to be the last statement in the introductory paragraph.
Body	Supporting sentences include details, facts, and examples to explain the idea presented in the topic sentence.	Supporting paragraphs develop the main idea and include topic sentences that support the thesis statement.
Conclusion	The concluding statement refers to the topic sentence and sums up the ideas presented in the body (supporting sentences).	The concluding paragraph refers to the thesis statement and sums up the ideas presented in the body (supporting paragraphs).

Unit 1

II. Important steps in planning the essay

Although the essay is similar in basic structure to the paragraph, we have to realize that it does require more to write a good essay. The usual situation with us students is that we often feel at a loss when we are faced with an essay assignment. However, if we work step by step, the whole thing will not seem so difficult.

1. Selecting a topic (for a given subject).

This is to decide what we would like to concentrate our work on. We need to consider a number of things before we make the decision:

- a. write about what we know
- b. identify our audience (i.e. who will read our essays)
- c. decide on the purpose of the essay
- d. select a topic that will interest our audience.

Take care that our topic is not too broad to cover in a single essay. Once we have chosen our topic, decide what methods of development (e.g. process, classification, definition, explanation, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, etc.) we could use to present our topic to our audience. Sometimes, there are several methods of development possible for each topic.

Exercise 1: Study the topics within the given subjects on the following page and decide possible methods of development.

SUBJECTS	TOPICS
EDUCATION IN CHINA	The Educational Program for the Mentally Retarded _____
	Paying Your Way through College: Advantages and Disadvantages _____
	Raising Dogs in Urban Areas _____
ANIMALS	The Importance of Zoos _____
	How to Catch a Dragonfly _____

Remember, the more abstract our topic is, the more difficult it is to support, and the more difficult it is to keep our audience's interest. For that reason, abstract topics are usually not as successful as concrete topics.

- 1) Abstract topics are usually more difficult to support, especially when the essay is supposed to be a fairly short one:

Examples:

- 1) Patriotism: The Greatest Virtue
- 2) How to Judge Bad Art
- 3) Relationships: Love and Hate

- 2) Concrete topics are usually more successful as things can be explained rather clearly and supporting materials are easily found:

Examples:

- 1) Four Types of Waitresses
- 2) How to Make a Long Distance Call
- 3) Getting a Used Bicycle or Buying a New One
- 4) Investigations into the Collapse of the Shopping Tower

Exercise 2: Narrow the following subjects to manageable topics and decide the principal methods of development for each topic.

SUBJECTS	MANAGEABLE TOPICS IN A STUDENT ESSAY
Air Pollution	
Traffic	
Neighbors	

2. Deciding the title of the essay.

The title is a name we give to our essay. A well conceived title can add force or beauty to the essay. Our experience tells us that even for leisure reading we choose to read articles which have interesting titles. There is no doubt that we can write very good titles for our essays in our mother tongue. But that does not happen naturally with our writing in English. With elementary writing, the title is usually decided by the teacher. At a more advanced stage of learning, however, we are often given a topic for a written discussion. This is to give us more flexibility and also an opportunity to demonstrate our creativity. We must know a few things about writing essay titles. First of all, titles should serve the following purposes:

- 1) To attract the reader
- 2) To give the reader an idea of what the essay is about
- 3) To provide focus for the essay

Titles should be clear, concise, and precise. The title is often an incomplete sentence in present tense, with articles or even verbs missing. Sometimes, it is simply a phrase. Other rules for titles include:

- 1) Do not use quotation marks
- 2) Center on the top of the first page, or simply begin it on the left of the line
- 3) Either capitalize all the letters in the title or capitalize the first letter of all the important words (small words like 'in' and 'a' need not be capitalized)

Reading articles from newspapers and magazines may help a lot in learning to write interesting titles. Look at the examples from some newspapers and magazines:

Examples:

- Doctor defends home births
- Duke calls for fresh philosophy on wild life
- P.M. looks to clean up TV
- Tougher rules on use of pesticides
- Insurer acts fast in wake of flooding
- China beefs up meat industry
- Shangdong's Yantai cashes in on vegetables
- Stolen Chinese archives still kept overseas

3. Writing the thesis statement:

An essay will not be a well composed one without a good thesis statement. So a lot of effort should be made for the writing of a good thesis statement. It is important to know what exactly a thesis statement is about.

- 1) The thesis is the strongest, clearest statement in the essay.
- 2) The thesis usually appears at the end of the introductory paragraph of the essay.
- 3) The thesis sentence must not be a simple statement of fact that requires no elaboration.
- 4) The thesis will probably not be expressed as a question, for a question contains no attitude or opinion. The answer to the question is the thesis statement.
- 5) The thesis will contain controlling ideas that will be used in the topic sentences.

Example: A successful soccer coach has four qualities.

- 6) The thesis may be a statement of opinion that we will explain and prove in the body paragraphs of the essay.

Example: My neighbor, Mrs. Brown, owns four cats; these animals present a serious health hazard in our neighborhood.

- 7) The thesis may be a statement of intent that we will explain and illustrate in the body paragraph of the essay.

Example: This essay will show how corn is planted and why this method of planting is successful.

Exercise 3: Read the following statements and decide which can be a good thesis statement.

- a. English is a useful language.
- b. English learning is a required subject of study in school.
- c. English learning is one of the school subjects.
- d. English learning can be great fun for some people while it can be a source of misery for some others.

To write a good thesis statement, we need to think about all possible aspects concerning the given topic. We put down our thoughts in note form on paper. Then we examine these carefully. We may find that some thoughts are closely related to each

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other, while some others are not. In this case, we drop the few points which are not so closely related and which we feel it difficult to handle. Then we check to see whether we could work out a generalisation of all those thoughts. This generalisation will become our thesis statement.

Example:

Topic for assignment: **Problems in education today (a 200-word essay)**

Points jotted down:

- teaching for examination
- private tutors to guarantee students' lead in class
- ineffectual teaching in class to be supplemented by extracurricular, specially paid tutorial sessions
- mismatch between contents of teaching and the actual demand of society

Recorded thinking:

This may not be a complete list of problems in education today. But if we think about them and the limitation of our task (a 200-word essay) more carefully, we can see that the second point 'private tutors to guarantee students' lead in class' may not be so closely related as the other three points are to each other. The other three points concentrate more or less on the side of the educational system.

Therefore, we can probably generalise:

'Defects in the education system cause a number of serious problems which most educators and student parents feel worried about.'

Exercise 4: Discuss in pairs the following topics for which you may have an opinion to express. Write down some notes on a topic and then try to work out the thesis statement, following the procedure in the example.

SUBJECTS	TOPICS
EDUCATION IN CHINA	The 9-Year Compulsory Education _____
	The Educational Program for the Mentally Retarded _____
	Paying Your Way through College: Advantages and