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高级 英语写作教程

A Course in Advanced English Writing

 苏州大学出版社

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(A Course in Advanced English Writing)

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内容提要

《高级英语写作教程》(A Course in Advanced English Writing)主要为高等学校学生而编写,同时也可供英语水平相近的中、高级学习者作参考。

本书编排条理清晰,在内容安排上循序渐进。全书分3个部分,共16章,内容涵盖了段落写作方法,各种体裁的短文写作方法,句子的写作方法,以及常见的书写规范。每一章节后都附有相关实践题,以培养学习者的写作能力,逐步提高学习者的英语写作水平。

高级英语写作教程

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高级英语写作教程

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前 言

《高级英语写作教程》主要为高等学校学生而编写,同时也可供英语水平相近的中、高级学习者作参考。

本书编排条理清晰,在内容安排上循序渐进。全书分3个部分,共16章,内容涵盖了英语写作的各个环节。本书具有以下特点:

1. 系统性

本书共有16章,内容涵盖了英语写作的各个环节。第1章到第5章讨论段落写作;第6章到第8章讨论短文写作;第9章到第16章讨论句子写作和书写规范。段落写作和短文写作部分详细讲解了英语写作常用的写作原则、写作过程、写作体裁和写作技巧,具体内容则由浅入深,从主题句、各种体裁的段落写作、记叙文写作,直至结构较为复杂的议论文写作。在注重篇章与结构分析的同时,我们还分别在段落和短文写作的有关章节里加入实例分析。第3部分除了标点和书写规范的讲解外,重点放在句子写作上。对于中、高级英语学习者来说,遣词造句尤为重要。在这部分主要通过实例讲解了中国学生易犯的语法错误和表达方面的错误。

2. 实用性

读与写是不能分割的一个整体。唐代诗人杜甫说得好:读书破万卷,下笔如有神(He who reads tremendously owns a gifted pen.)。我们在范例的编写过程中,参阅了大量中外写作材料和阅读材料,并参考了有关的网络资源。范例取材广泛,绝大部分是英、美作者所写,难度深入浅出,写作风格迥异,学习者从中可以了解到各种体裁、题材的段落和短文写作。另外,在选材时考虑到可模仿性,所选材料贴近生活。从我们的分析和讲解中学习者可以由学会欣赏英语语言和英语写作风格到模仿写作,并最终进行创造性写作。

3. 创新性

在教学内容的编排上,考虑到英语写作的自身特点——行文和篇章结构以及中、高级英语学习者的英语水平,我们将段落写作与短文写作放在第1和第2部分,而将句子写作

和书写规范等内容放在第3部分。这与传统的“词句—段落—短文”的写作顺序有所不同,旨在引导学生从篇章入手,快速进入写作角色。

另外,我们在分析讲解部分和实践练习部分的编排上,遵循讲练结合的原则。在一章或一小节后,直接安排实践练习。我们设计的练习题充分考虑到了为学生提供练习写作的机会。根据相关章节的讲解,选取一段相关的段落或短文,让学生分析和欣赏,然后在后续的练习中给出话题,让学生进行实际写作练习。句子写作部分除传统的题型设计外,还设计了给出单词造句的练习。

教学中,教师可以根据学生的实际英语水平,选取相关内容进行教学;也可以重新调整教学顺序,以期达到最佳教学效果。用外语写作是一个日积月累、熟能生巧的过程,希望通过本书的学习,学习者能够切实提高英语写作能力。

由于编者学识和水平所限,以及时间紧迫,疏漏之处难免,尚祈专家读者不吝指正。

编者
2008年10月

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Part I

PARAGRAPH WRITING

Chapter 1



Topic Sentence

In this chapter we will learn:

- What a paragraph is
- What a topic sentence is
- The chief functions of a topic sentence
- How to write a topic sentence

Writing is no trouble; you just jot down ideas as they occur to you. The jotting is simplicity itself—it is the occurring which is difficult.

—Stephen Leacock

1. What is a paragraph?

What is a paragraph? A paragraph is a section of a piece of writing, which always begins on a new line and contains at least one sentence (Collins Cobuild on CD-ROM). In other words, a paragraph has a sentence or sentences that are closely related and together develop one main theme. It can be one sentence long, or it can consist of ten or even more sentences.

Paragraphs are integral components in an essay. However, a paragraph itself focuses on just one central idea. Now let's read a paragraph.



Example 1: A paragraph

[1] Benjamin Franklin has been accused with some justice of a good many faults and vices, but for all that, he was an extraordinary man. [2] He was thrifty and industrious. [3] He amassed a moderate fortune before he was 40, but he did not settle back in idle luxury. [4] His restless mind was interested in everything from simplified spelling to musical water glasses, for which Mozart composed a sonata. [5] He devised spectacles and a surgical instrument. [6] He served the colonies in England before the Revolution and the United States in France afterward. [7] He was respected alike by European scholars, political leaders, and scientists.

Lee C. Deighton: *Reading and Vocabulary*

* * * *Here the numbers on the left column and before each sentence are given for the convenience of explanation of the text. Do not write them in your essay.* * * *

>>> Analysis

This is a well-written paragraph. The main idea of this paragraph is presented in the first sentence after “but:” “he was an extraordinary man.” This paragraph has seven sentences. They are closely related to one another and together develop the above main idea. Sentences [2] to [6] support the main idea by giving examples, and sentence [7] serves as a conclusion and a reminder that Franklin was an extraordinary man.

1.1 Paragraph structure

A paragraph can contain a wide variety of information. Yet, to convey an idea in an effective way, it usually includes the following parts:

1) A Topic Sentence

This serves as an introduction to the topic of the paragraph.

2) Several Supporting Sentences

These sentences serve to support the topic sentence.

3) A Concluding Sentence

This last sentence serves to conclude the paragraph.



Example 2: Three parts of a paragraph

Topic Sentence	Benjamin Franklin has been accused with some justice of a good many faults and vices, but for all that, he was an extraordinary man.
Supporting Sentences	He was thrifty and industrious. He amassed a moderate fortune before he was 40, but he did not settle back in idle luxury. His restless mind was interested in everything from simplified spelling to musical water glasses, for which Mozart composed a sonata. He devised spectacles and a surgical instrument. He served the colonies in England before the Revolution and the United States in France afterward.
Concluding Sentence	He was respected alike by European scholars, political leaders, and scientists.

1.2 The topic sentence

A well-organized paragraph usually contains a sentence called the topic sentence, which states the main idea of the paragraph. This sentence is the most important one in the whole paragraph, for it tells the readers what the paragraph is going to discuss, and all the other sentences are closely related to this topic sentence. They further explain or support the central idea.

1.2.1 The two parts of a topic sentence

A topic sentence states the main idea of the paragraph, and it includes two parts: (1) a topic, which is an idea or a noun that the sentence is about; (2) a controlling statement, which says something about the topic.

For example, “*Scientists have learned to supplement the sense of sight in numerous ways.*” is a good topic sentence in that it has the topic “*Scientists*” and a good controlling statement “*learned to supplement the sense of sight in numerous ways.*”

A topic sentence can be long, such as the above sentence. It can also be short, so short as to only have two words, such as “*He left.*” Whether we write a long topic

sentence or a short one, it is better for the topic sentence to have the above two parts.

Now let's look at more examples:



Example 3: The structure of a topic sentence: Topic + Controlling Idea

(1) In the past oysters were raised in much the same way as dirt farmers raised tomatoes—by transplanting them.

>>> Analysis

The topic is “oysters,” and the other parts control this topic, which is about the way of raising oysters: by transplantation.

(2) The negative effects of pollution can be shown in the following aspects.

>>> Analysis

The topic is “pollution,” and a narrower topic is “the negative effects of pollution.” The other parts control this narrower topic by discussing the aspects of the negative effects.

(3) Since I've been working as a cashier at Wal-Mart, I've discovered there are several kinds of customers who drive me crazy.

>>> Analysis

The topic is “customers,” and the other parts control this topic by explaining that several kinds of them “drive me crazy.”

(4) In fact, advertisements may be classified into three types according to the kind of appeals they use.

>>> Analysis

The topic is “advertisements,” and the other parts control this topic by further discussing that there are three types of them.

From the above examples, we can see that a good topic sentence should have a good controlling idea to limit the main point of the topic, and then the central idea of the whole paragraph.

1.2.2 Functions of the topic sentence

A topic sentence usually states a more general meaning than the other sentences of the paragraph, but it should also express an idea limited enough to be developed within a paragraph.

Generally, the topic sentence is placed at the beginning of a paragraph so that it gives the reader an idea of what the paragraph is going to say. A carefully thought-out topic sentence will serve two important functions. First, it will provide us the writer with the means to keep focused on the main idea. It's a lot easier to write if we know what our focus is. Second, a clearly stated topic sentence will equip readers with the tools they need to clearly understand what we are going to say.



Example 4: Functions of a topic sentence

[1] To settlers in early New England, clothes were often a measure of a person's wealth, and people were supposed to dress according to their station in life. [2] The wealthy dressed themselves in expensive clothes imported from London, while poorer people wore clothes made from rough home-spun. [3] Dressing above one's station was actually against the law. [4] In 1676, 68 young people were fined for wearing silken clothes. [5] In a strange new world, settlers tried to hold fast to laws and customs that made their society feel orderly.

马红军等：《高级英语写作教程》

>>> Analysis

The topic sentence, placed at the very beginning of the paragraph, tells the reader the main idea: clothes were a measure of a person's wealth, and people dressed according to their station in life. If the topic sentence is omitted, the reader will find it difficult to get the main idea of the paragraph.

Now let's read the same sample paragraph without the topic sentence.



Example 5: Functions of a topic sentence (no topic sentence)

[1] The wealthy dressed themselves in expensive clothes imported from London, while poorer people wore clothes made from rough home-spun.

[2] Dressing above one's station was actually against the law. [3] In 1676, 68 young people were fined for wearing silken clothes. [4] In a strange new world, settlers tried to hold fast to laws and customs that made their society feel orderly.

>>> Analysis

In the above paragraph, all the sentences just state facts and details. The reader is at a loss as to the main point the writer intends to convey. Therefore, if we want to write a good paragraph, it is necessary to write a good topic sentence first.

1.2.3 Position of the topic sentence

A good idea is to tell the reader what the paragraph is intended to discuss before it is discussed. Thus, the common practice is to begin with the topic sentence and to write supporting sentences after it. With the topic sentence at the beginning of a paragraph, the reader can more easily identify the central point. But sometimes, for special effect, the topic sentence is placed in the middle, or near or at the end of a paragraph.

Now let's read the following paragraph.



Example 6: Topic sentence at the beginning of a paragraph

[1] Einstein's compassion for others made it impossible for him to resist a plea for help. [2] For himself, he was completely indifferent to compliments, awards, medals, prizes. [3] When Israel offered him its Presidency, he respectfully declined. [4] He knew he didn't fit the position. [5] But when an organization approached him with the plea that it needed his name on its letterhead to help raise money for a hospital, a university, or a group of needy people, he frequently consented.

>>> Analysis

In the above paragraph, the topic sentence is located at the beginning. This is the usual position for the topic sentence. It says that “Einstein’s compassion for others made it impossible for him to resist a plea for help.” Then the writer gives examples to support this topic.

It can be seen that when placed at the beginning, the topic sentence clearly establishes the unifying idea of the paragraph and guides the development of the rest of the paragraph.

Now, let’s read a paragraph with the topic sentence in the middle of it, and see if it still makes easy reading.



Example 7: Topic sentence in the middle of a paragraph

[1] Some people fall asleep easily. [2] They drop off as soon as their heads hit the pillows. [3] Others aren’t so lucky. [4] They toss and turn well into the night. [5] Fortunately, there are solutions to sleeplessness. [6] In many cases, one can avoid sleep problems by following a few simple guidelines. [7] First, sleepless people should refrain from drinking alcoholic beverages or drinks with caffeine before bedtime. [8] Next, they should not exercise within three hours of bedtime. [9] Finally, they need plan a sleep routine. [10] Every day, they should go to bed at the same time and get up at the same time.

http://www.cerritos.edu, retrieved on 2007/09/06

>>> Analysis

In the above paragraph, the writer begins by describing a phenomenon: some fall asleep easily, while others find it difficult to go to sleep. This is to attract the reader’s interest. Then, sentence [5] signals a transition and leads to the next topic sentence, sentence [6]. It says that sleep problems can be avoided by following some guidelines. The rest of the paragraph supports this main idea. So, the topic sentence in the middle of a paragraph can achieve special effect if properly and skillfully handled.

Now, let’s read a paragraph with the topic sentence at the end of a paragraph.