

英语写作教程

AN ENGLISH COMPOSITION READER

华泉坤 张定兴 编著

吴娴华 主审



中国科学技术大学出版社

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内 容 简 介

本书按照国家教委颁布的《高等院校英语专业高年级教学大纲》对英文写作课的要求,根据编著者近十年英语写作教学的实践经验和我国大学生的实际水平编写,观点正确新颖,内容丰富。全书以英文编著而成,主要包括:写作格式、写作程序、叙述文、描写文、例证文、程序文、因果文、比较与对比文、归纳与分类文、定义文、论说文等。不但为读者提供外国大学生写的范文及对范文的评点,而且也为读者提供中国大学生写的范文及对范文的评点,是一本既有较高学术水平,又很实用的书。

本书可供大专院校英语专业和非英语专业高年级学生、研究生、TOEFL 应试者、成人自学本科应试者、大学英语教师以及英语爱好者使用。

序

由安徽大学外语系华泉坤、张定兴两位副教授编著、吴娴华教授主审,由中国科技大学出版社出版的《英语写作教程》是一本编得很好的、颇有特色的大学英语专业高年级英语教科书。该书符合高等院校英语专业高年级英语教学大纲对英语写作课的要求。作者根据多年英语写作课教学的丰富经验,吸收国外先进的写作理论和方法,结合我国大学生英语写作的具体实践,编出了这样一本既有较高学术水平,又很实用的书。这是为广大英语师生和自学英语的读者做了一件好事,值得大学称赞和感谢的。

下面我想强调一下写作的重要性。我认为区别一个受过教育和没有受过教育的人最有效的标准是看他会不会写作,因为能够准确地、系统地表达思想是文明人的标志。十七世纪英国学者培根曾说:“阅读使人充实,谈话使人机智,写作使人准确。”学文科的人需要锻炼写作能力、学理、工、农、医的人也不能不具有较好的写作训练,因为科学家和工程师,如同文学家一样,都要用语言和文字来表达思想。十七世纪,英国成立了皇家学会(相当于我国的科学院),牛顿是皇家学会的会员。所有的会员都是科学家,只有德莱登(Dryden)是例外。德莱登虽然是文学家,但由于他对英语语言和文体所做的净化、规范化和优美化的重要贡献而当选为皇家学会的会员。他使英文散文变得既准确、明晰、又优美动人,富于说服力,使现代英语成为既是文学语言,又是科学语言。从这个例子我们可以看到学习英语写作的重要性。目前英语已成为世界性的通用语言,它在外交、外贸、国际学术和文化交流、通讯、邮政、航空各方面都是必不可少的媒介和工具。

对于我国高等院校来说,提高英语写作能力也已成为提高我国高等教育的教学质量和科研水平的一个重要措施。高校一切课程都要提出对英语写作能力的要求。有一位美国教授甚至说:“大学一切课程都是写作课”(Every course is a writing course)。这就是说,大学每一门课程既要讲授专业知识,也要兼顾提高学生的写作能力,使学生成为真正受过高等教育的文明人。

基于以上的认识,我谨向读者推荐这本好书《英语写作教程》。

李赋宁

1990年11月

于北京大学

Content

Chapter	1	Manuscript Form	(1)
Chapter	2	Bibliographical Form and Footnote Form ...	(12)
Chapter	3	The Writing Process	(40)
Chapter	4	Narration	(70)
Chapter	5	Description	(82)
Chapter	6	Exemplification	(96)
Chapter	7	Process	(112)
Chapter	8	Cause and Effect	(123)
Chapter	9	Comparison and Contrast	(143)
Chapter	10	Division and Classification	(160)
Chapter	11	Definition	(180)
Chapter	12	Argumentation	(193)
Chapter	13	Business and Personal Correspondence ...	(213)
Appendix	1	Correction Symbols	(222)
Appendix	2	Rhetorical Devices	(225)

CHAPTER 1

MANUSCRIPT FORM

A. Use the proper materials.

Unless you are given other instructions, follow these general rules:

Handwritten papers Use regular notebook papers, size $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$ inches, with widely spaced lines (Narrow spaces between lines do not allow sufficient room for corrections.) To make your handwriting more readable or to provide extra room for revisions, you may wish to write on every other line. Use black or blue ink. Write on only one side of the paper.

Typewritten papers Use regular typing paper (not yellow second sheets or sheets torn from a spiral notebook), size $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$ inches. Or use a good grade of bond paper (not onion skin or the kind that smears easily and resists inked-in revisions). Double-space between lines. Use a black ribbon. Type on only one side of the paper.

B. Arrange your writing in clear and orderly fashion on the page. Divide a word at the end of a line only between syllables.

ARRANGEMENT

Margins Leave sufficient margins—about an inch and a half at the left and top, an inch at the right and at the bottom—to prevent a crowded appearance.

Indentation Indent the first lines of paragraphs uniformly, about an inch in handwritten copy.

Paging Use Arabic numerals—without parentheses or periods—in the upper right-hand corner to mark all pages after the first.

Title Do not put quotation marks around the title. or underline it (unless it is a quotation or the title of a book), and use no period after the title. Center the title on the page about an inch and a half from the top or on the first ruled line. Leave the next line blank and begin the first paragraph on the third line. In this way the title will stand off from the text. Capitalize the first and last words of the title and all other words except articles, short conjunctions, and prepositions fewer than six letters long.

Poetry Quoted lines of poetry are ordinarily arranged and indented as in the original.

Punctuation Never begin a line with a comma, a colon, a semi-colon, or a terminal mark of punctuation ; never end a line with the first of a set of brackets, parentheses, or quotation marks.

Identification Papers are identified in the way prescribed by the instructor to facilitate handling. Usually papers carry the name of the student, the course, the date, and the number of the assignment. Often the name of the instructor is also given.

WORD DIVISION

When you need to divide a word at the end of a line, use a hyphen to mark the separation of syllables. (Of course, one-syllable words such as *through*, *twelfth*, and *beamed* are not divided.)

Dictionary syllabication In college dictionaries, dots usually mark the divisions of the syllables of a word ; i. so. late, re. peat. ed, set. ting, sell. ing

Conventional practice Not every division between syllables in an appropriate place for dividing a word at the end of a line. The following principles are useful guidelines:

(a) Do not put a single letter of a word at the end or at the beginning of a line ; e. vade, perk. y.

(b) Do not put any two-letter ending at the beginning of a line : dat. ed, tax. is.

(c) Do not make divisions that may temporarily mislead the reader ; re. ally, mag. ical, sour. ces.

(d) Divide hyphenated words only at the hyphen; mass-produced, broken-down, father-in-law.

For easy readability, avoid having a series of word divisions at the ends of consecutive lines. Also try to avoid dividing proper names like Mexico, Agnes, or T. E. Stowe.

C. Write or type the manuscript so that it can be read easily and accurately.

Legible handwriting Form each letter clearly; distinguish between each o and a, i and e, t and l, b and f. Be sure that capital letters differ from lower-case letters. Use firm dots, not circles, for periods. Make each word a distinct unit. Avoid flourishes.

Legible typing Before typing your final draft, check the quality of the ribbon and the cleanliness of the type. Do not forget to double space between lines. Do not strike over an incorrect letter; make neat corrections. Leave one space after a comma or a semicolon, one or two after a colon, and two or three after a period, a question mark, or an exclamation point. To indicate a dash, use two hyphens without spacing before, between, or after. Use ink to insert marks that are not on your typewriter, such as accent marks, mathematical symbols, or brackets.

D. Proofread and revise the manuscript with care.

Proofread the paper and correct mistakes before submitting it to the instructor. Changes and corrections should be kept to a minimum, particularly on important papers. When you have to make major changes in the final copy (rewording sentences, revising paragraphs), do the page over. For minor changes (spelling, punctuation, adding or striking out a word), make the corrections neatly and according to standard practices.

To add a word, use a caret (^) and write the missing word directly above it:

Manuscript should ^{be} easy to read.

To strike out a word, draw a straight line through it (don't use parentheses or brackets).

Final copy should be as accurate as possible.

To indicate the beginning of a new paragraph where you have failed to indent, write the symbol π immediately before the first word of the new paragraph:

So ended my first day away from home. π the second day....

To correct a misspelled word, draw a line through it and write the correct form directly above. This makes a neater and more legible correction than an erasure:

quantity

Quality is more important than ~~quantity~~.

To indicate in typed copy that two letters should be reversed in order (transposed), use a curved line:

be w t e e n r e c i e v e

Proofreader's checklist:

Title. Is there any unnecessary punctuation in the title? Is it centered on the first line? Are key words capitalized?

Logic. Is the central idea of the paper stated clearly and developed logically? Does the paper contain any questionable generalizations? Does it contain any irrelevant material?

Shifts. Are there any needless shifts in tense, mood, voice, person, number, type of discourse, tone, or perspective?

Paragraphs. Is the first line of each paragraph clearly indented? Are ideas carefully organized and adequately developed?

Transitions. Do ideas follow one another smoothly? Do all conjunctions and transitional expressions relate ideas precisely?

Sentences. Are there any sentence fragments, comma splices, or fused sentences? Are ideas properly subordinated? Are modifiers correctly placed? Is there any faulty parallelism? Are the references of pronouns clear? Are sentences as effective as possible?

Grammar. Are appropriate forms of modifiers, pronouns, and verbs used? Do subjects and verbs agree?

Spelling and diction. Is the spelling correct? Are words carefully

chosen, appropriate, exact? Should any be deleted? Should any be inserted? Should any be changed because of ambiguity?

Punctuation. Are apostrophes correctly placed? Are end marks appropriate? Is any one mark of punctuation overused?

Mechanics. Do word divisions at the ends of lines follow conventional practices? Are capitals and underlining (italics) used correctly? Should any abbreviations or numbers be spelled out?

To detect errors in spelling, try reading lines backward so that you will see each word separately, proofread individual sentences, look at each one as a unit, apart from its context.

Revise the paper after the instructor has marked it.

In composition, as in other areas of experience, you often learn by making mistakes. No matter how conscientiously you have applied yourself to a written assignment, you may find that the instructor has marked a number of corrections on the returned paper. To improve your writing skills, you must give serious attention to these corrections. Many instructors require their students to revise all corrected papers and resubmit them. But even if the instructor does not ask for revisions, it is worth your time to make a careful analysis of all correction marks and to revise or rewrite the paper accordingly. A cursory glance down the margins is not enough — if errors and weaknesses are not studied and corrected they will no doubt recur in other papers.

Some papers, of course, may contain only minor errors, requiring the change of a few words or punctuation marks on the original. Often, though, a satisfactory revision means sentences or even whole paragraphs must be rewritten or rearranged. For passages that require extensive changes, experiment with different versions. Then read the revisions through several times to determine which is the best one.

In correcting a paper, it is important to understand why the corrections are necessary. If the instructor's mark is not immediately clear to you, consult the correction symbol key at the back of this book and then read the relevant section in the text, noting the examples and comparing them with the passage marked.

Compare the original and corrected versions of the student paper. This paper was used because it exhibited a variety of faults. (The most

serious fault was pointed out in the instructor's overall comment : "Your general approach is vague and unrealistic. What do you actually do when you are studying your best?" Study the instructor's marks on the original version and determine their meaning. Then examine the changes (underlined)made in the corrected paper. In working out the revision, the student has learned such things as the following.

MS

Good Study Habits

It is important for every college student to develop good study habits. A lucky few have already developed them in high school, but for the majority of students the greater demands of college work requires some adjustment. Good study habits consist primarily of two things; a mature mental attitude and appropriate physical techniques.

Agr
WW

Everyone should remember that being a college student is a demanding full-time job, and they should be prepared to spend about forty -five or more hours a week at it. Like any other job, it requires effort and concentration. Some students are indifferent toward required courses, which they feel are uninteresting or cannot see how they are related to their chosen course of study. Students should remember that if colleges require certain courses, usually of a general nature, this means that they present basic knowledge that every educated person is expected to acquire while in coll-ege. If you are indifferent yourself to a lopsided intellectual development, which you will probably regret later on in life.

Agr

//

Wdy

Ref

Div

Shift

Dm

Whether attending class of studying at home full concentration is essential. Students sometimes complain that they do poorly in courses even though they spend many hours studying everyday. "Studying means inattentively running their eyes over a page between frequent distractions from the radio, conversing with their roommates, and daydreams."

con

//

Five hours of this kind of studying is worth less than an hour of uninterrupted concentration on the material. A student who goes to a lecture without having done the assigned reading and without having reeviewed his notes from the last lecture is not really in a good mood to acquire new information and relate it to what he already knows.

No ,
WW

Sp

An erratic and undisciplined approach to study is usually disasterous. Many students ignore course assignments until just before an examination. Then they frantically do all the required reading in one or two nights, try to decipher sloppy, disorganised notes, and stay up all night over black coffee cramming hundreds of facts into their heads. The result is usually that he comes to the examination fatigued and stupefied by a plethora of chaotic data.

Awk

Shift
Big W

All of this could have been avoided if the student had kept up with his assignments and had gotten into the habit of taking neat, orderly notes which were reviewed by him regularly. Studying for an examination should involve only glancing over his notes and readings and planning how to organize related facts to answer the questions most likely to be asked.

Pass

Inf	A student should not be afraid that his <u>roommates and friends will call him a square</u> if he sets aside regular times for daily study and refuses to be interrupted. On the contrary, most good students are respected by
Log	their fellow students and popular because they devote more time to social activities than students with poor study habits.
<hr/>	
MS	Titles of papers are not enclosed in quotes or underlined. They should be set off from the body of the paper by extra space.
Agr	Blind agreement should be avoided. Despite intervening words, subject and verb must agree; demands (S) require (V).
WW	Words should be chosen for their exact meaning.
Agr	Pronouns must agree in number with their antecedents. <u>Everyone</u> is singular and should be referred to by a singular pronoun (<i>he</i> or <i>she</i> rather than <i>they</i>).
//	Constructions joined by coordinating conjunctions should be equivalent in rank and meaning.
Wdy	Ideas should be expressed as directly and economically as possible.
Ref	Pronouns should refer clearly to a definite antecedent. The pronoun <u>they</u> , marked for faulty reference in the original version, might seem to refer to <u>colleges</u> or <u>students</u> as well as to <u>courses</u> .
Div	A word should be divided at the end of a line according to the syllabication shown in a dictionary.
Shift	Shifts in person (<u>they</u> to <u>you</u> in the second paragraph, <u>they</u> to <u>he</u> in the fourth paragraph) should be avoided.
DM	The sentence should include the word to which the modifier refers.
πcon	The relationships among ideas in a paragraph should be made clear to the reader.
No,	Subject and verb should not be separated by a comma ; A

	student (S) is (V).
Awk	Awkward passages should be smoothed out when revising a first draft.
Big W	Stilted, unnecessarily heavy language is out of place in all kinds of writing.
Pass	The awkward use of the passive voice should be avoided, especially an unnecessary shift to passive from active.
Inf	Writers should be consistent in their level of usage. The informal <u>call him a square</u> is probably out of place in this relatively formal paper.
Log	The logic of a statement must be made clear to the reader. Devoting a large amount of time to social activities does not necessarily make a student popular; neither do good study habits. This writer's intended meaning is made clear in the revision.

Good Study Habits

It is important for every college student to develop good study habits. A lucky few have already developed them in high school, but for the majority of students the greater demands of college work require some adjustment. Good study habits are based on two things; amateur mental attitude and appropriate physical techniques.

Everyone should remember that being a college student is a demanding full-time job, and he or she should be prepared to spend about forty-five or more hours a week at it. Like any other job, it requires effort and concentration. Some students are indifferent toward required courses because they consider them uninteresting or unrelated to their chosen field. They should remember that such courses are required because they provide general knowledge expected of every college graduate. Students who neglect these courses are limiting their intellectual growth and usually regret it later.

Full concentration is essential both in the classroom and in the study room. Students sometimes complain that they do poorly in courses even though they spend many hours studying every day. But to many

of them "studying" means inattentively running their eyes over a page between frequent distractions from the radio, conversations with their roommates, or daydreams. Five hours of this kind of studying is worth less than an hour of uninterrupted concentration, the same principle applies to class attendance. A student who goes to a lecture without having done the assigned reading and without having reviewed his or her notes from the last lecture is not concentrating on acquiring new information and relating it to what he or she already knows.

An erratic and undisciplined approach to study is usually disastrous. Students with poor study habits ignore course assignments until just before an examination. Then they frantically do all the required reading in a day or two, try to decipher their sloppy, disorganized notes, and stay up all night over black coffee cramming hundreds of facts into their heads. The result usually is that they come to the examination not only exhausted but also confused by a mass of unrelated facts. They could have avoided all this by keeping up with their assignments, making orderly notes, and reviewing them regularly. Studying for an examination then would involve no more than glancing over the material and mentally organizing it in terms of the questions most likely to be asked.

Students should not be afraid that their roommates and friends will make fun of them if they set aside regular times for daily study and refuse to be interrupted. On the contrary, good students are usually respected for their scholastic achievements and, because they use their time more efficiently, are usually freer to participate in social activities than are students with poor study habits.

Whenever you write a paper, your last paper is a valuable resource, if you are willing to take the time to use it seriously. If your teacher has marked it thoroughly, his or her marks and suggestions may let you see what kinds of mistakes you are likely to make, where your attention is likely to wander, what you are likely to omit, what you are likely to include unnecessarily. The author of the paper shown above should probably be particularly concerned about the instructor's general comment on the importance of dealing directly and realistically with the subject matter. Even the corrected version of this paper, although it

eliminates most of the specific faults in the original version, is still pretty conventional and not too interesting.

In correcting this paper, the student should also have observed that there are two large categories of weaknesses in his or her writing: faulty diction and awkward sentence construction. The instructor has called the student's attention to poor word use in four instances; the inaccurate *consists of*; the vague and inappropriate *a good mood*; the inflated *fatigued and stupefied by a plethora of chaotic data*; and the colloquial *call him a square*. In addition, the passages marked for sentence economy (Wdy) and awkwardness (Awk) are marred by poor word choice as well as faulty sentence construction. The student author hasn't shown skill in selecting accurate, appropriate, and forceful language to express his or her ideas. If the writer wants to avoid word errors in future papers, he or she will have to read the text sections on diction thoroughly, become more alert to other writers' use of words, consult the dictionary frequently, and study his or her own first drafts critically to eliminate wordiness and pretentiousness.

The instructor has also marked several passages for sentence and paragraph weaknesses. The second paragraph concludes with two long, clumsy sentences (Wdy). The third paragraph lacks continuity (con), because the student has omitted certain words and expressions necessary to indicate connections and transitions between ideas. The fourth paragraph contains two jumbled, awkward sentences (Awk). In the corrected version, the student has made each of these passages more clear and direct, and has gained valuable practice in expressing the ideas as economically as possible. To avoid sentence weaknesses in future papers, he or she should practice reading the sentences and paragraphs aloud to see whether they are difficult to follow, repetitious, or ambiguous. And to assure continuing improvements, the student should become more alert to sentence patterns used by other writers, particularly in published material.

All students who analyze their errors and revise their papers as carefully as the writer of the sample paper did will soon find that even their original drafts are improving.