

高等学校英语应用能力提升系列 



英语基础写作

文体类型、语言训练及写作策略

车宁薇 主编

A

Handbook for English
Writing Practice



北京第二外国语学院
旅游教育出版社

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Preface

前言

在多年的英语写作教学实践中，笔者接触并教授过不同程度的英语学习者。他们中有英语及非英语专业的在校大学生，也有利用业余时间提高英语能力的非脱产学习者，有工作在各个领域、希望提高英语能力的成年人，也有因为考级、出国进修等原因参加考前辅导的各年龄段学生。由于客观条件所限，很多英语学习者处于两难处境，既无法投入大量学习时间，又面临英语基本功需要提升的现实困难；而他们往往又希望能够在相对短的时间内对英语某项技能有所提升。本书编写的出发点，就是为了帮助他们提升英语写作方面的能力。

为了满足广大目标人群的需要，本书在以英文常见文体为切入点的同时，充分考虑到了学习者常见语言难点和工作需要，因此在编排上具有以下特征：

1. 精选最常用的英语写作文体

各章节内容安排，充分考虑学习者的时间投入及工作需要，不求大求全，精选最常用的英语写作文体，包括人物描写、事物描写、事件叙述、空间描写、过程说明、观点论述及常用应用文写作。其中应用文写作包括摘要、商务信件、备忘录、电子邮件等最实用的文体形式。

2. 提供经典例文及解析

各章节的内容编排考虑到读者在英语写作过程中往往无处着笔的情况，不仅提供了经典例文，还对例文进行了相应解析，尤其注重对例文结构、中心、主要写作手法的分析，让读者能够有所参照，可以从仿写着手，逐步加深。

3. 对不同文体类型涉及的语言点进行注解并配相关练习

各章节均筛选了与写作相关度高的语言点，进行讲解并配以相关练习，

尤其适合没有精力全面提升英语能力的读者，帮助他们规范和夯实英语语言技能，将提升英语语言，尤其是句法使用能力，和提高写作水平相结合。

4. 设计有写作策略讲解及练习

各章节均配合主题设计了相应写作策略讲解和练习，从写作手法角度助力英语写作。

5. 适合不同层次的学习者有针对性地选择使用

本书在编写过程中，考虑到了英语写作在文体、语言、策略、实用性等方面的需求，因此具有较好的普适性。如果是英语水平高一些的读者，可以更加关注本书中与写作文体类型相关的写作策略及配套练习；如果是英语水平需要更多提升的读者，则可以从本书的例文、注释、分析等方面获得英语写作的助力。本书也适合作为参考书或自学手册，为希望快速掌握英语应用写作基本要点的读者服务。如果作为教材使用，考虑到文字难易程度及教学时间安排，本书则尤其适合中级及中低级英语水平的学习者。

简而言之，本书是笔者对多年英语写作教学经验的归纳，也是长期教学实践和技巧的积累。本书如能对各位读者了解英语写作、开始并提升英语写作有所帮助，则笔者幸甚。

编者

2021年元月

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Unit 1 Writing about People

人物描写

Composition Focus: Appearance Description

Introduction

In literary writing, to describe people is one of the most commonplace skills. Personal description may include physical, emotional, intellectual, moral and habitual attributes.

Sample Text 1

He was a man of between sixty and seventy. From a little distance he had the bland aspect of a philanthropist. His slightly bald head, his domed forehead, the smiling mouth that displayed a very white set of false teeth, all seemed to speak of a benevolent personality. Only the eyes belied this assumption. They were small, deep set and crafty. Not only that. As the man, making some remark to his young companion, glanced across the room, his gaze stopped on Poirot for a moment, and just for that second there was a strange malevolence, and unnatural tensivity in the glance. For the second time, Poirot studied that unprepossessing face, noting the false benevolence of the brow and the small, cruel eyes. Then he rose. "Pay the bill, Hector," he said. His voice was slightly husky in tone. It had a queer, soft, dangerous quality.

... ..

Hercule Poirot was a moment before replying.

“When he passed me in the restaurant,” he said at last, “I had a curious impression. It was as though a wild animal — an animal savage, but savage! You understand — had passed me by... The body — the cage — is everything of the most respectable — but through the bars, the wild animal looks out.” (Quoted from Christie, 1994: 22)

Exercise for Useful Vocabulary from Sample Text 1

Directions: Match the following English expressions with their Chinese equivalents.

philanthropist	adj. 不吸引人的，不妩媚的
a man of	n. 恶意，狠毒
domed	adj. 未开化的；野蛮的
benevolent	n. 紧张，紧张度的
crafty	adj. 嗓子哑的；强壮的
malevolence	n. 慈善家
tensity	adj. 慈善的，仁慈的，乐善好施的
unprepossessing	adj. 狡猾的，狡诈的；巧妙的，灵巧的
husky	adj. 有穹顶的，半球形的
savage	一个……样的人

Sample Text 2

Scarlet O'Hara was not beautiful, but men seldom realized it when caught by her charm as the Tarleton twins were. In her face were too sharply blended the delicate features of her mother, a Coast aristocrat of French descent, and the heavy ones of her florid Irish father. But it was an arresting face, pointed of chin, square of jaw. Her eyes were pale green without a touch of hazel, starred with bristly black lashes and slightly tilted at the ends. Above them, her thick black brows slanted upward, cutting a startling oblique line in her magnolia-white shin ... Her manners

had been imposed upon her by her mother's gentle admonitions and the sterner discipline of her mammy: her eyes were her own. (Quoted from Mitchell, 1980: 3)

Exercise for Useful Vocabulary from Sample Text 2

Directions: Match the following English expressions with their Chinese equivalents.

delicate	<i>vt. & vi.</i> (使) 倾斜; 有倾向; 使倾向于
aristocrat	<i>adj.</i> 斜的; 不正大光明的; 拐弯抹角的
descent	<i>n.</i> 告诫; 劝告; 轻责
pointed	<i>v.</i> 推行, 强制实行; 把……强加于
tilt	<i>n.</i> 贵族
slant	<i>n.</i> [植] 木兰; 木兰花; 奶白色
oblique	<i>vt. & vi.</i> (使) 倾斜, 翘起
magnolia	<i>n.</i> 血统; 下降; 倾斜
impose	<i>adj.</i> 尖的, 尖锐的; 直截了当的
admonition	<i>adj.</i> 脆弱的; 纤细的; 精致的

Notes and Explanations

1. In describing a person, you are likely to include how he looks like, such as his physical appearance, dress, behavior, words and voice, as well as his actions and feelings, etc.

The following areas may form part of a personal description:

- A. physical attributes such as hair, eyes, complexion, facial features, height, gesture, dress, etc.
- B. emotional, intellectual, and moral attributes, such as nervous, perceptive, intelligent, trustworthy, greedy, etc.
- C. habitual attributes, such as opinions and expressions

2. In describing a person, details of the physical appearance is necessary but

not sufficient enough in many cases. You may as well show your audience or readers the characteristics, feelings, thoughts, attitudes, and the background of the person, which may be displayed in what the person does and says. Besides, it is possible for you to reveal the character of a person in how other people think of or treat him or her, and what impression other people have upon him or her.

3. Remarks given by other people contribute to the description of a person.

For example, in Sample 1, the man's false benevolence is revealed through the description of his appearance, words, behavior and voice, as well as by others' impression upon him: "wild" and "a savage animal in the cage".

4. To describe a person impressively requires sorting out his or her uniqueness which distinguishes this person from all others. In other words, to describe a person does not necessarily mean including every minute detail; rather, one or two peculiarities of this person can often leave a deep impression upon the audience or readers.

Instructions for Students' Writing

1. Descriptive essay can be a portrait of a person, a place, an object, or a scene. To work out a vivid description, you need to employ as much senses as possible, such as sight, taste, hearing, smell, and touch. It is especially necessary in object and place description. For example, to describe a cup may include its color, size, shape, and touch. Different senses bring about various sensory impressions to make what is described true to life.

e.g.

The round-faced man went through the door on his short, stumpy legs. His long wavy hair was an extraordinary red-brown color. His eyes were rather deep-set and light-blue. How square and set his jaw was!

How broad his shoulders! Only his long, delicate, restless fingers modified this impression of determination.

2. Whatever to be described, the dominant feature is always the focus of description. Besides, while revealing the most distinctive characteristic of a person, a place, an object, and a scene, you may create a feeling or mood what is described can incite. Therefore, you should decide before writing what effect your description should achieve, and choose the relevant information and delete the irrelevant.

Writing Strategy

Sentence Combination

Sentences need to be combined to avoid monotony and to indicate relationships between ideas. The following is ways to combine ideas.

1. Prepositional phrases to combine ideas.

(1) instead of

e.g.

We had some burger and salad instead of a full meal.

Instead of becoming happy, he was totally surprised when hearing the news that he was promoted.

(2) besides

e.g.

I have my mother to take care of in my spare time besides the homework.

Besides cancer, smoking can lead to other diseases.

(3) because of / due to

e.g.

My flight to New York was cancelled because of / due to the bad weather.

The plan failed at last because of / due to lack of general agreement among

members.

(4) thanks to

e.g.

Thanks to your support, I have finally fulfilled my task.

Thanks to your wise suggestion, our work can go smoothly.

(5) despite / in spite of

e.g.

In spite of the fact that the work was hard and time-consuming, he never thought of giving it up.

Despite his advancing age, he is still active in the field of science.

(6) contrary to

e.g.

Contrary to the popular belief, he was strong both physically and mentally.

Contrary to our expectation, our team lost the game in the last round.

(7) with

e.g.

He is a man with no sense of humor.

He looked at me with deep surprise.

2. Showing relationship between ideas.

(1) Relationship expressions to show cause and effect

A. adverb clause words

because as / so long as since inasmuch as

now that so (that) as

B. transitions

therefore consequently

C. conjunctions

so for

D. prepositions

because of due to

(2) Relationship expressions to show opposition**A. adverbial expressions**

even though whereas although while though

B. transitions

nevertheless nonetheless however on the other hand

C. conjunctions

but (...anyway) yet (...still)

D. prepositional expressions

despite in spite of

(3) Relationship expressions to show condition**A. adverbial expressions**

if unless only if even if whether or not
provided (that) providing (that) in case (that) in the event (that)

B. transitions

otherwise

C. conjunctions

or (else)

D. prepositional expressions

in case of in the event of

Exercises for Writing Strategy

1. Combine the two sentences together with prepositional phrases.

(1) He did not fulfill the task himself.

He asked his friend to do it.

(2) This factory produces cheaper cars.

This factory produces better ones.

- (3) Most reptiles have a menacing appearance.
They are not really vicious if they are left alone.
- (4) New medicine has been invented.
Many more diseases have been cured.
- (5) It is a popular belief that leprosy is a thing of the past.
There are at least 12 million leprosy victims in the world today.

2. Combine the sentences together in whatever types of transitions, conjunctions, prepositional phrases, or adverbial expressions.

- (1) He approached the island.
He noticed a row of newly built houses.
An old man was sitting in front of a house.
- (2) He has got a credit card.
He began to spend money carelessly.
- (3) We have considered everything.
We forgot New York is the world's most exciting city.
- (4) Physics is offered only in the daytime.
Chemistry can be taken at night.
- (5) The man staggered down the stairway.
The man was drunk.
The man was accompanied by a handsome young man.
The young man was neatly dressed.
- (6) He is an excellent student.
He is a promising candidate for the Students' Union.
He is applying for a scholarship of a renowned university.
He has not indicated his shortcomings in the application.
- (7) One cheats on tests repeatedly.
To cheat on tests is against the regulation.
To cheat on tests is risky.