

English Writing
Guided Writing

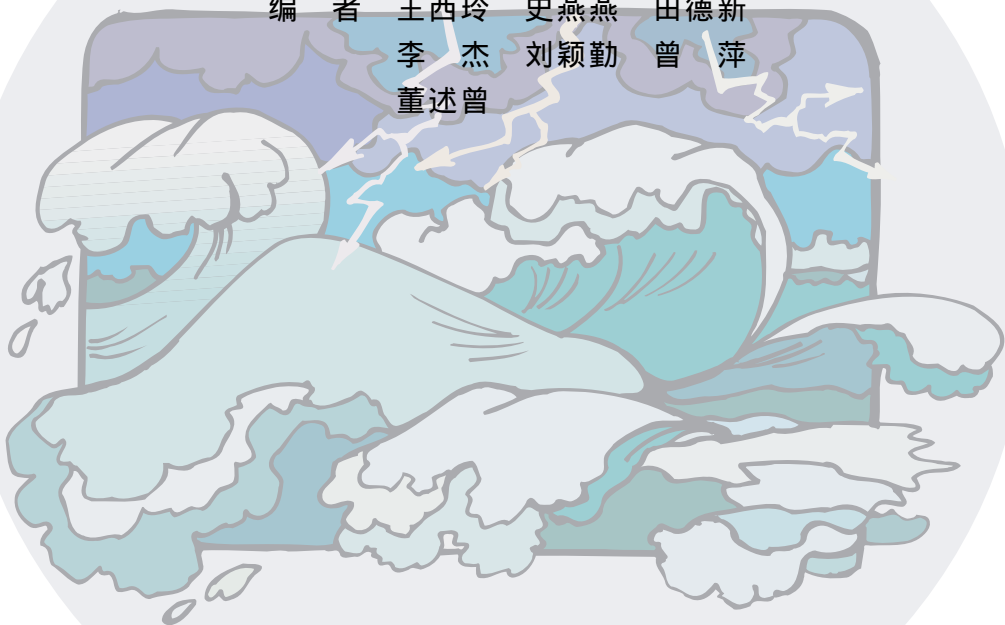
— From Paragraph to Essay

英语写作

——段落·短文

(第3版)

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第3版前言

English Writing — From Paragraph to Essay English Writing — From Paragraph to Essay

一篇佳作，仍需反复推敲，不断修改，才有可能成为脍炙人口的上乘之作。《英语写作——段落·短文》自1997年8月问世以来，深受全国英语专业和非英语专业广大师生的厚爱，被越来越多的院校选作英语基础课写作教材。在实际使用中，本书的优点得到了充分肯定。同时，我们得到了读者朋友们的大力支持，收到不少很有价值的反馈意见，及时弥补了不足之处，于1999年8月推出了第2版。现根据时代发展的要求和使用中的进一步反馈意见，我们在保持本书原有特色和优点的前提下，对其进行了如下修订：

1. 对部分章节的理论概念、指导规则和例文分析进行了更新、规范与充实，并增添了所需例证，使本书提纲挈领的引导性文字、概念定义和例文分析部分更加标准规范、丰富多彩和有血有肉；

2. 删去了部分章节中内容相对过时和代表性欠佳的例文和练习，取而代之的是经实践证明广大师生更加喜闻乐见的例文和练习；

3. 对书中的文字、遣词用句、行文格式、词汇表、练习答案以及引文标注等进行了进一步的润色和修改。

本书由余宝珠教授任主编，田德新副教授任第3版副主编。本次修订工作的参编人员（按姓氏笔画排列）分工如下：

王西玲 第一、三、十、十四章；

史燕燕 第七、八、十三章；

田德新 第九、十一、十二、十五章；

李杰 第二、四、五、六章。

我们希望通过此次修订，能够使广大读者对本教材更加满意，并殷切期望读者能一如既往地给我们及时提出宝贵意见。

编者

2004年6月

第2版前言

English Writing — From Paragraph to Essay English Writing — From Paragraph to Essay

《英语写作——段落·短文》(English Writing—From Paragraph to Essay)自1997年8月出版发行以来,受到了全国英语专业和非英语专业广大师生及社会各界人士的积极肯定和大力支持。许多院系将本书作为写作课的教材,且收效良好。

现根据实际使用情况和读者反馈信息,我们对原书进行了如下修订:

1. 删去了第1版部分章节中语言难度过大的例文和练习,取而代之的是语言难度适中、内容更加丰富的例文和练习;
2. 短文部分的每个章节增添了选自西安外国语学院英语系二年级学生的作文,一方面加大了例文的代表性,另一方面缩小了与读者的距离;
3. 书后增加了词汇表,可以为读者,特别是自学者带来很大方便;
4. 对各章节客观性写作练习提供了参考答案,以节省使用本书的广大教师许多宝贵的时间;
5. 本书的修订也将非英语专业的学生纳入使用对象的范围,以上四条中范文语言难度的调整、学生例文的增添以及书后附上词汇表和参考答案的做法都可实现这一目标。

我们希望通过这次修订能够为英语专业和非英语专业的英语写作教学提供一本更好的写作教材。同时,我们也殷切希望广大读者能一如既往地给我们提出建议和意见。

编者

1999年8月

第1版前言

English Writing — From Paragraph to Essay English Writing — From Paragraph to Essay

《英语写作——段落·短文》(English Writing—From Paragraph to Essay)与《英语写作——遣词·造句·组段》(English Writing—Words, Sentences and Paragraphs)、《英语写作——论说问题·论文撰写·文稿演示》(English Writing—Essary Questions, Thesis Writing and Paper Presentation)、《英语写作——信函·申请·证件》(English Writing—Letters, Applications and Certificates)为系列英语写作教程。本书适用于大学英语专业本科二年级学生,理工科大学英语高年级学生,中学英语教师,广大英语爱好者和自学者,其中包括参加 EPT, TOEFL 等测试的应考人员,赴英语国家学习人员以及各类涉外工作人员。

由于受到母语的影响,中国学生对英语写作往往是一筹莫展,常常套用中文的思维方式和表现手法。为了有效地帮助中国学生提高英语写作水平,本书遵循读写并重、培养英语思维方式的原理,从段落写作的基本要素到英语短文的写作,逐步深入、系统地分析讲解英语中不同的写作方法,既突出各种实用技巧的阐述,又不拘泥于抽象的理论知识,通过大量的例证和范文,使学习者对英语写作产生从感性认识到理性认识的飞跃。新颖的实例分析和精选的范文以及大量的练习是本书的特点,旨在培养学生的英语思维方式,进而提高对英语语言的感觉力和实际写作能力。

本书由余宝珠教授任主编,董述曾副教授任副主编。编写工作按参编人员的姓氏笔画排列分工如下:

王西玲 第一、三、十、十四章;

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刘颖勤 第二、四、五、六章;

曾 萍 第七、八、十三章;

董述曾 第十二、十五章。

在编写过程中，西安外国语学院外籍专家 Betty Coggin, Lori Fenneken 及 Alex Proudfoot 提供了宝贵意见，王丰明同志协助进行电脑编排，在此谨表示感谢。同时对所参阅的大量国内外书籍的作者致以深切的谢意。

限于水平及其他客观原因，本书难免有疏漏之处，敬请各位英语界前辈、同行和读者不吝赐教，予以指正。

编 者

1997 年 8 月

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Chapter One

The Writing Process

Just like speech, writing allows us to convey our ideas and opinions. However, compared with speech, writing gives us more freedom to express ourselves. It gives us more time to consider what we want to say, and it permits us to put on paper what we are afraid to say aloud. For instance, it is much easier and wiser to write a few lines on a sheet of paper telling one of your former teachers what you really think about his or her teaching style and grading practices than to speak it aloud.

Writing is necessary in almost every field, and it is particularly important in college study. When you enter a college, you may find that your writing ability is actually the most valuable working and thinking tool you have. As a college student, you are going to be increasingly dependent on writing for your study, and even for the rest of your whole life. Practically speaking, writing is the primary means by which your performance in college will be judged.

Many students today feel deeply inadequate or discouraged or resentful when they talk about the subject of writing. They have some misconceptions or mistaken ideas about writing that lead them to underrate or misjudge badly their own talents for writing. For example, when a student gets stuck on an assignment, he or she might wrongly think that no other writer ever gets similarly stuck. And because of this mistaken idea, the student might feel suspicious of his or her writing ability and think that he is inept at writing. Actually, all writers occasionally get stuck in their writing, and the difference is that a successful writer sees the fact that getting stuck and unstuck is a normal, expected, and even predictable part of writing. Besides, self-confidence and perseverance can help a writer realize and exert his or her full potential in writing.

What Is Writing

Since you can see how advantageous, necessary, and important writing is,



we need to make clear what writing is. Writing is best thought of as a process of thinking on paper about a topic. Writing here particularly refers to the activity in the college classroom called “classroom writing.” This kind of essay writing usually puts demands on students such as limited subjects, a specified number of words, and sometimes even a certain form. Students have to meet the requirements of the assignment when they write.

What Is Writing Process

As you have learned that essay writing is a process, the immediate question you might ask is what “writing process” is. Writing process is a series of deliberate steps carried out in a particular order and leading to a specific result. When you begin to learn how to write well, you must first realize a simple but often overlooked fact. That is, when you write, you go through a process. The more aware you are of the steps you go through in this process and the better you are able to control them, the more easily and successfully you will write. If you are not aware of some of the basic steps in the writing process, or if you haven’t found the best order in which they are carried out, you will probably find writing much more frustrating than it needs to be.

Five Steps in Writing

Writing is no more mysterious than talking, but it can often be complex, depending on what you are writing about. Very often, the best way to handle complex writing is to break it down into steps, into a process. Generally speaking, “classroom writing” is thought of as a five-step process: generating ideas, organizing ideas, writing, revising, and editing. The first two steps can be regarded as the prewriting steps, and the last two as the rewriting steps. These steps often overlap and even run together, but for the sake of discussion we will treat each as separate and distinct.

The First Step: Generating Ideas

When given a writing assignment, many students like to say that they do not know what to write. They usually complain that they do not have anything to say about the topic. Some of them often spend more time in trying to find something

to say than they spend in writing. This is really a waste of time because they have already had many experiences to write about. The only problem is that they have not realized that their own experiences can actually be used as a source for the writing assignment. For instance, every day you go to places, watch television, read magazines and newspapers, and talk to people. And even when you stay at home, you may also do a great deal of thinking and so have many ideas. Therefore, you can write what you see, what you hear, what you feel, and what you think. In a word, you can write your own experiences and your own thoughts. Your experiences and thoughts provide you with the best material because they provide information on which you are an authority. And without any further researching or reading, you can write a fairly interesting paper.

Usually, when you are assigned a topic you may develop from your experiences or a subject based on your class readings and discussions, you must begin your work by listing all of your ideas on the specific writing assignment. This listing of ideas is sometimes called brainstorming. When you are brainstorming, in other words, generating the ideas, you just write down everything that comes to your mind about the subject. Do not worry about whether some of those ideas are related to the subject or not, just jot them down. For example, after reading an article on waste in government, you are asked to write an essay about your experiences with government incompetence. You can begin your work by making a list of incidents that demonstrate government inefficiency. When doing this, you only write down any experiences you have had with government ineptness. If you are assigned a paper in which you have to describe your favourite childhood spot as it was and as it now is, you need to make two lists: one with the details of the scene you recall and the other with the details of the scene as you see it today. Again, when you do this, you write down everything that comes to the mind about the favourite spot.

Generating ideas is not only the first but also the most important step in the writing process because it is the one that gives your writing substance, letting you have something to say and write.

The Second Step: Organizing Ideas

After writing down all the ideas on the assigned subject, you need to scan the list of ideas you have made in step one and decide what subject those ideas suggest. Find a word or a phrase to state this subject. For instance, after comparing



the two lists above in the second example, you may find that one good subject those details suggest is “the change of my favourite scene.” Having determined the subject, you are well on your way to writing an essay. Before you write, however, you should go through your list again and remove any ideas that are not related to your stated subject. It is often hard for students to omit good ideas. Maybe you can make it easier by saving those ideas on another list which might be used for a future assignment. Then try to arrange the remaining ideas on your list so that they can support the subject.

Organizing ideas is also a very important step in the writing process because it makes your paper have a purpose. In other words, this step lets you know what you really wish to say.

The Third Step: Writing

Writing means setting down your opinions on the topic in some coherent form. In this step, therefore, you can start to write. While writing, you use the material from your list that deals with the subject. Meanwhile, you may think of other ideas that are closely related to the subject and then add them to your list.

The chief purpose of writing is to convey your ideas to other people. Sometimes it is difficult to write exactly what you mean; therefore, do not feel discouraged if your ideas do not flow freely. It is quite normal for you to write hesitatingly — to start, pause, go to another paragraph, stop, and retrace your steps before going to the next paragraph; besides, you may also leave out sentences and discard paragraphs when necessary because that is exactly what successful writers do. So, if you find that your act of writing proceeds circlingly rather than proceeding in a straight line, you are working very much like a professional writer.

The Fourth Step: Revising

To revise is to make major changes in the work. Usually you revise your paper by reading it over and making changes so that it says what you wish it to say. As you read over the essay, you may make some changes in wording or sentence structure; you may also want to rearrange your ideas, add more details, or delete some details. In any case, the purpose of all your changes at this stage is to make your ideas clearer.

The Last Step: Editing

To edit is to make small changes in the manuscript — to find a better word, a stronger sentence, a more vivid and appropriate phrase. As you make these editing changes, you pay attention to the style of the paper instead of the substance of it. Also at this stage, you proofread your essay by correcting errors of grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc. .

So far, from the above discussion of the five steps, we can easily see that prewriting, including the first two steps — generating ideas and organizing ideas, refers to all the activities of thinking, exploration, and organizing that writers often do before committing pen to paper. Rewriting, including the last two steps — revising and editing, is the step of the composing process during which a writer rereads and reworks the material to make it better.

Writing always involves the above five steps. The more fully you control the various steps of the writing process, the more easily and successfully you will be able to write. As you learn and practice these steps in the following chapters, you will find that writing begins to be less of a chore and more of a pleasure.

Exercises

Directions: Answer the following questions on a separate piece of paper. Make your answers as specific and complete as possible.

1. What is writing ?
2. What is writing process ?
3. Name the five steps in the writing process and explain each as briefly and completely as possible.



Chapter Two

The Plane of Generality

Clarity

A very important feature of good writing is clarity, which means that the writer should try his best to make the idea intended to communicate concrete and specific. To achieve this goal, the author can provide his writing with exact and adequate details produced during brainstorming, enabling readers to depict the same picture the author plans to draw.

Example: Suppose a friend asks you why you often go to the Blue Moon Restaurant to have dinner.

You may answer in either of these two ways.

1. "It is the best restaurant around the city."
2. "Its food is tasty, fresh, and rich; its service is quick and satisfactory; besides, its prices are reasonable."

Which would give your friend a clearer picture of your reasoning ?

Your first statement contains the general term: best; your second statement contains the specific terms: tasty, fresh and rich food, quick and satisfactory service and reasonable prices. Although it is necessary to use both general and specific terms, specific terms, which are more informative and expressive, add clarity to writing.

General and Specific Terms

To use specific details effectively, you need to be able to identify what general and specific terms are.

General terms refer to a variety of or a group of things, persons, or events,

and specific terms refer to exact or individual things, persons, or events.

General Terms

colors
persons
events
trees

Specific Terms

blue, red, black
George Washington, Abraham Lincoln
the Second World War, the World Cup
elms, pines, oaks

The general term *tree* actually does not refer to any tree in particular, so it only presents you a somewhat hazy image. The specific term *elm*, however, depicts a much clearer picture, eliminating images of pines, oaks, or other trees. Specific terms, then, refer to particular things and help to make your writing vivid, interesting and believable.

Both general and specific terms are essential for clear writing. You may use general terms when you need one word that represents several different things. You may use specific terms when you wish to express exact ideas.

General and Specific Statements

Statements or sentences, like terms, may be either general or specific. Good writing possesses both kinds of statements. So you need to be able to tell the differences between the two and learn when to apply a general statement and when to apply a specific statement.

General Statement

He did well in the course.

Specific Statements

1. Bobby got an A in economics.
2. Paul received a B in American History.
3. Smith made a B in Freshman Composition.

As you can see, the general statement applies to the three specific statements. It contains general terms — *well*, *course*. These words do not stand for individual things; they stand for only groups or classes. The three specific statements contain specific terms — *Bobby*, *A*, *economics*; *Paul*, *B*, *American History*; *Smith*, *B*, *Freshman Composition*. You may use the general statement to describe each of the three specific statements.



So, a general statement is one that contains general terms and may be used to several different situations. A specific statement, on the other hand, has specific terms and may be applied to a single situation.

Planes of Generality

The Relativity of Terms:

The relativity of terms means that the words *general* and *specific* are relative terms. That is to say, you can not say that a word is always general or always specific. Rather, you must think about what the term is compared to. For instance, *scientist* is a specific term when compared to *professional*. But *scientist* becomes a general term when compared to *chemist*, and *chemist* is a general term as well when compared to *biochemist*.

The following situation further explains the relativity of terms. You look far into the distance and see that *something* is coming. In a few seconds, you realize that *someone* is approaching. And a minute later, you see that *a small child* is running down the road. Almost at once you conclude that the child is *a boy* and the boy is *your seven-year-old brother Tom*. Do you notice that each time you recognized the approaching object, you got more specific? Compared to *something*, *someone* is specific, but compared to *small child*, *someone* is a general term.

You may have a better understanding of the relativity of terms by picturing them as existing on planes of generality — an arrangement that begins with the most general term or concept and moves in sequence from general to specific, ending with the most specific. In other words, the terms or concepts are arranged like this:

- Plane 1: Most general term
- Plane 2: Second most general term
- Plane 3: Specific term
- Plane 4: More specific term
- Plane 5: Most specific term

In the example above, you saw how a coming object became clearer as it got closer. Arranged on planes of generality, it would look like this: