

Writing IV



Titik Sudartinah, S.S.

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
LANGUAGES AND ARTS FACULTY
YOGYAKARTA STATE UNIVERSITY
2009**

Introduction

Writing IV is a compulsory course for fourth semester students of the English Education Department. Its main discussion is on how to write essays. To be an additional resource and activity book for Writing IV course is the aim of developing this module. It comprises several subtopics under the main discussion, writing essays, from the preparation to the writing activities.

This module consists of 7 units. Unit 1 introduces the definition of the term *essay*, its basic structure, and the steps to writing it. Unit 2 is the advancement of the materials discussed in Unit 1. It focuses on how to choose the appropriate topic of an essay as well as how to mindmap ideas to have a perfect topic that is not too general or too narrow. Unit 3 presents the reason and the importance of making an outline before really writing the essay. The next unit, Unit 4, discusses the techniques of writing the introductory, body, and concluding paragraphs. Unit 5, 6, and 7 discuss three kinds of essay – process, cause/effect, and comparison/contrast – and some writing techniques for each of the types.

This module is by no means comprehensive. It is meant to serve as a guideline for the scope of topics required in Writing IV. It is therefore recommended that instructors provide supplementary material for the use of the forms and expressions in the module.

Table of Contents

Introduction	ii
Unit 1 Introducing Essay	1
Unit 2 Choosing a Topic to Write	8
Unit 3 Outlining and Drafting	13
Unit 4 Writing Introductory, Body, and Concluding Paragraphs	23
Unit 5 Process Essay	35
Unit 6 Cause and Effect Essay	46
Unit 7 Comparison and Contrast Essay	54
References	63

UNIT 1

Introducing Essay

A. What is an Essay?

An essay is a piece of writing, usually short and in prose, on any one subject (Hornby, 1987: 291). It usually develops from an author's personal point of view. Essays are nonfictional but often subjective; it is a set of paragraphs about a specific subject. In other words, the essay must be well structured and presented in a way that the reader finds easy to follow and clear: it must look tidy and not present any obstacles to the reader. It must have a clear readable interesting style. But, above all, it must consist of the author's ideas about the topic.

Essay writing builds on many of the skills mastered in learning to write a paragraph. Once knowing how to write a paragraph, it is not much more difficult to write an essay; it is just longer. Like a paragraph, an essay makes and supports one main point. However, the subject of an essay is too complex to be developed in a few sentences. To support fully the main point of an essay, several paragraphs are needed.

B. The Structure of an Essay

An essay can have many purposes, but the basic structure is the same no matter what. A typical essay contains five paragraphs, but many other types of essays are longer or shorter, depending on their purpose. Although many essays do not conform to the five-paragraph formula, most follow some pattern of organization. It has a recognizable beginning, middle, and end.

An essay has three main parts: an *introduction*, a *body*, and a *conclusion*. Each part has its own special purpose. Briefly, the introduction provides some background information on the subject and states the main

point in a thesis statement. The body consists of several supporting paragraphs that develop the main idea. The essay ends with a conclusion that summarizes the main points.

Task 1

Read the following five-paragraph essay that a student wrote about the impact of John Lennon's music. Notice that the first line of each new paragraph is indented. After you have read the entire essay, label the parts on the lines provided.

Task 2

This text is difficult but the title gives a clue to the problem to be presented and solved in the text. Identify the structure of the text and extract the relevant information from the text in order to write your own short text on the topic "What makes it possible for koalas to digest eucalyptus leaves?".

C. Steps to Writing an Essay

Although it is not difficult, writing an essay can be frustrating for some people. To make it easier, there are some steps suggested to be followed by essay writers, especially for those who are beginners. The steps are:

1. Research

Begin the essay writing process by researching the topic. Utilize the internet, the academic databases, and the library. Take notes for any important information provided by the essays concerning with the topic.

2. Analysis

Start analyzing the arguments of the essays. Clearly define the claims, write out the reasons, and find out the evidence. Look for weaknesses of logic, and also strengths. Learning how to write an essay begins by learning how to analyze essays written by others.

3. Brainstorming

An essay will require the insight of the author, genuine essay-writing brilliance. Ask a dozen questions and answer them. Meditate with a pen and think until there are original insights to write about.

4. Thesis

Pick the best idea and pin it down in a clear assertion that it can written in an entire essay. The thesis is the main point, summed up in a concise sentence that lets the reader know where the author is going, and why. It's practically impossible to write a good essay without a clear thesis.

5. Outline

Sketch out the essay before straightway writing it out. Use one-line sentences to describe paragraphs, and bullet points to describe what each paragraph will contain. Play with the essay's order. Map out the structure of the argument, and make sure each paragraph is unified.

6. Introduction

Now sit down and write the essay. The introduction should grab the reader's attention, set up the issue, and lead in to the thesis. It is merely a buildup of the issue, a stage of bringing the reader into the essay's argument. The title and first paragraph are probably the most important elements in an essay. In the first paragraph the author either hooks the reader's interest or loses it. Readers make up their minds about whether or not to read an essay by glancing at the title alone.

7. Paragraphs

Each individual paragraph should be focused on a single idea that supports the thesis. Begin paragraphs with topic sentences, support assertions with evidence, and expound ideas in the clearest, most sensible way. Speak to the readers through the essay. In other words, instead of writing the essay, try *talking* the essay.

8. Conclusion

Gracefully exit the essay by making a quick wrap-up sentence, and then end on some memorable thought, perhaps a quotation, or an interesting twist of logic, or some call to action. Is there something expected to be done by the reader? Let him or her know exactly what.

9. Style

Format the essay according to the correct guidelines for citation. All borrowed ideas and quotations should be correctly cited in the body of the text, followed up with a Works Cited (references) page listing the details of the sources.

10. Language

Writing an essay is not completed yet until the author polished its language by correcting the grammar, making sentences flow, incorporating rhythm, emphasis, adjusting the formality, giving it a level-headed tone, and making other intuitive edits.

Task 3

Discuss with a partner the ten steps to writing an essay on the previous page. Brainstorm some ideas concerning on how to choose a good topic to be developed as an essay. Write the results of the discussion on the space provided.

UNIT 2

Choosing a Topic to Write

If the topic of an essay has not been given, the whole world lies before the writer. Sometimes that seems to make the task of starting even more intimidating. Actually, this means that the writer is free to choose a topic of interest, which will often make the essay a stronger one. There are some steps to choose a good topic to write published in <http://lklivingston.tripod.com/essay/topic.html>. They are:

1. Define the Purpose

The first thing an essay writer must do is think about the purpose of the essay. Is it to persuade people to believe something, to explain to people how to complete a particular task, to educate people about some person, place, thing or idea, or something else entirely? Whatever topic chosen must fit that purpose.

2. Brainstorm Subjects of Interest

Once the purpose of the essay has been determined, write down some subjects that are interesting. No matter what the purpose of the essay is, an endless number of topics will be suitable.

If there is any trouble concerning with the subjects, start by looking around. Is there anything in the surroundings that is interesting? That might make for a good topic. Don't evaluate the subjects yet; just write down anything that springs to mind.

3. Evaluate Each Potential Topic

If there are already a few topics that would be appropriate, consider each one individually. If the essay is to educate, the writer shall be particularly well-informed. If it is to persuade, the writer shall be at

least moderately passionate. Of course, the most important factor in choosing a topic is the number of ideas discovered within a certain topic. Even if none of the subjects seem particularly appealing, try just choosing one to work with. It may turn out to be a better topic than what is thought.

Before starting to write the essay, look one more time at the selected topic. Think about the type of paper to be produced. Should it be a general overview, or a specific analysis of the topic? If it should be an overview, then it is probable to move to the next step. If it should be a specific analysis, make sure the topic is fairly specific. If it is too general, choose a narrower subtopic to discuss.

For example, the topic "KENYA" is a general one. If the objective is to write an overview, this topic is suitable. If the objective is to write a specific analysis, this topic is too general. Narrow it to something like "Politics in Kenya" or "Kenya's Culture."

Task 1

Identify the topic of the following texts. Write it on the space below each text.

1. British cuisine has always been multicultural, a pot pourri of eclectic styles. In ancient times influenced by the Romans and in medieval times the French. When the Frankish Normans invaded, they brought with them the spices of the east: cinnamon, saffron, mace, nutmeg, pepper, ginger. Sugar came to England at that time, and was considered a spice – rare and expensive. Before the arrival of cane sugars, honey and fruit juices were the only sweeteners. The few Medieval cookery books that remain record dishes that use every spice in the larder, and chefs across Europe saw their task to be the almost alchemical transformation of raw ingredients into something entirely new (for centuries the English aristocracy ate French food) which they felt distinguished them from the peasants.
-

2. If e-mail is really as addictive as gambling, there must be a 12-step program somewhere to treat it. Sure enough, a Web search turns up an e-mail recovery program created back in 1997 by a pair of Florida State University administrators, Perry Crowell and Larry Conrad. It's pretty crude, Crowell admits, and because it was written before the explosion in users, traffic and e-mail viruses, it seems almost naïve. "If we were to update it today, we might very well declare defeat," says Crowell.

3. Most plants consist of a root, a stem, and leaves. The root holds the plant firmly in the ground and draws food from the soil. The stem bears leaves and flowers. The leaves take in food from the air. The flowers form fruit and seed. The seeds produce new plant.

4. Coinage is one of the least common processes of word-formation in English. Coinage refers to the invention of totally new terms (Yule, 2002: 64). The most typical sources are invented trade names for one company's product which become general terms (without initial capital letters) for any version of that product. Some examples of words formed through coinage are *aspirin*, *nylon*, *zipper*, *teflon*, and *xerox*. After their coinage, these words become everyday words in English.

5. Most people believe that language is learned by imitation. Children learn language from their language experiences. They copy and repeat aloud words that they hear. Through imitation, children learn how to pronounce sounds and words and they seem to enjoy imitating the sounds that they hear.

Task 2

Identify whether each of the following topics is suitable to be developed into essays. If it is too general, narrow it to a certain extent, and vice versa.

1. Batik as a world heritage
2. The reasons I chose English major
3. Some tips for improving English skills
4. Unemployment in Indonesia
5. International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

6. The important qualities of a good son or daughter
7. Women at work
8. What I want most in a friend
9. Reading for pleasure
10. The healthy diet

Task 3

Choose one of the topics in Task 2 and use it as the topic of your essay. Brainstorm some interesting ideas within the topic. Evaluate each of the ideas and cross out those that you think are not suitable. You might use a mindmap to help you identify the ideas. An example of a mindmap is provided on the next page.

How to Mindmap Ideas

1. Begin the diagram with a circle or a horizontal line or whatever shape in the middle of the page.
2. Inside the shape or on the line, write the topic.
3. From the center shape or line, draw three or four lines out into the page. Be sure to spread them out.
4. At the end of each of these lines, draw another circle or horizontal line or whatever drawn in the center of the page.
5. In each shape or on each line, write the main ideas about the topic, or the main points to be made.
6. From each of the main ideas, draw three or four lines out into the page.
7. At the end of each of these lines, draw another circle or horizontal line or whatever drawn in the center of the page.
8. In each shape or on each line, write the facts or information that support that main idea.

Examples of Mindmapping Ideas

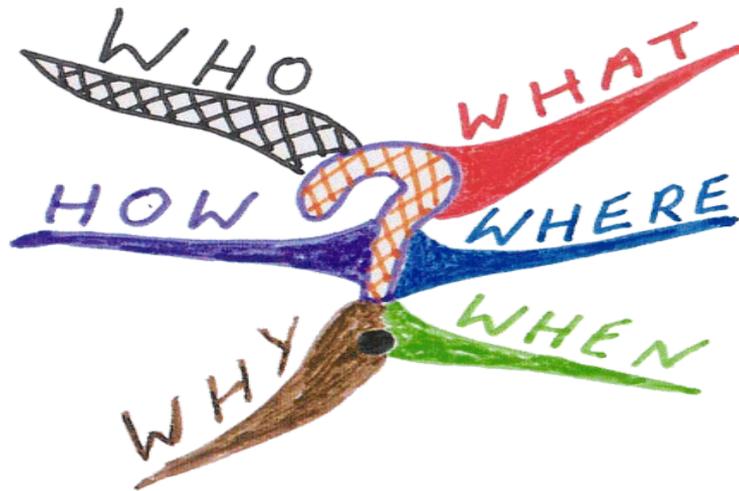


Figure 1. A mindmap of question



Figure 1. A mindmap of the life of Marie Curie

UNIT 3

Outlining and Drafting

Why Making an Outline

After a topic has been determined, it is the time to start the essay-writing process. Before really starting to write the content of the essay, an outline is needed. An outline is a general plan of what is going to be written. Making an outline is similar to drawing plans to build a house. Before one begins to build a house, it is best to draw up plans to make sure that a house is built in the way the owner wants. The same is true with writing an essay and making an outline.

There are at least two reasons why making an outline is helpful in writing an essay:

1. An outline will help make an essay more organized. A careful plan will help the body paragraphs stay focused on the ideas in the thesis statement.
2. An outline saves time for writers. Preparing an outline can take time, but when a writer has finished doing this, s/he will be able to write the rough draft of the essay more quickly than if there is no outline.

The Steps of Making an Outline

The purpose of an outline or diagram is to put ideas about the topic on paper, in a moderately organized format. The structure created may still change before the essay is complete. Decide whether to use the cut-and-dried structure of an outline or a more flowing structure. If one is decided and felt to be not appropriate, then a writer can easily switch to the other form.

In a formal outline, Roman numerals can be used to represent paragraphs. Capital letters can be used to represent supporting details for the paragraphs.

This is how to make an outline:

1. Begin the outline by writing the topic at the top of the page.
2. Next, write the Roman numerals I, II, and III, spread apart down the left side of the page.
3. Next to each Roman numeral, write the main ideas about the topic, or the main points to be made.
 - If the essay is to persuade, be sure to write the best arguments.
 - If it is to explain a process, write the steps that should be followed. Group these into categories: Beginning, Middle, and End.
 - If it is to inform, write the major categories into which the information can be divided.
4. Under each Roman numeral, write A, B, and C down the left side of the page.
5. Now there is the basic structure for the essay.

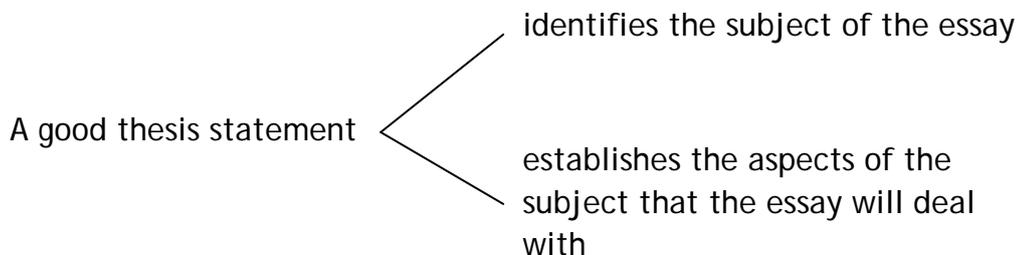
This is how the outline looks:

<u>Essay Outline</u>	
I.	Introduction Thesis: _____
II.	Body Paragraph #1- Topic Sentence: _____ A. supporting idea B. supporting idea
III.	Body Paragraph #2- Topic Sentence: _____ A. supporting idea B. supporting idea
IV.	Body Paragraph #3- Topic Sentence: _____ A. supporting idea B. supporting idea
V.	Conclusion

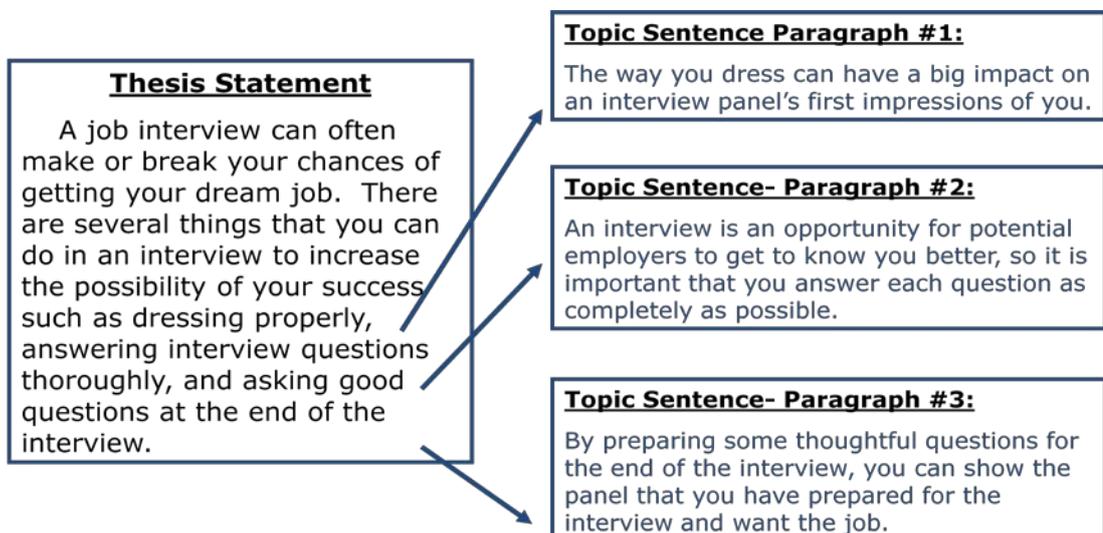
The Process of Making an Outline

To begin an outline, a writer needs to start with her/his thesis statement. The thesis statement will be the guide throughout the process of writing the essay. From the thesis statement, one can begin writing the topic sentences for the body paragraphs in the outline.

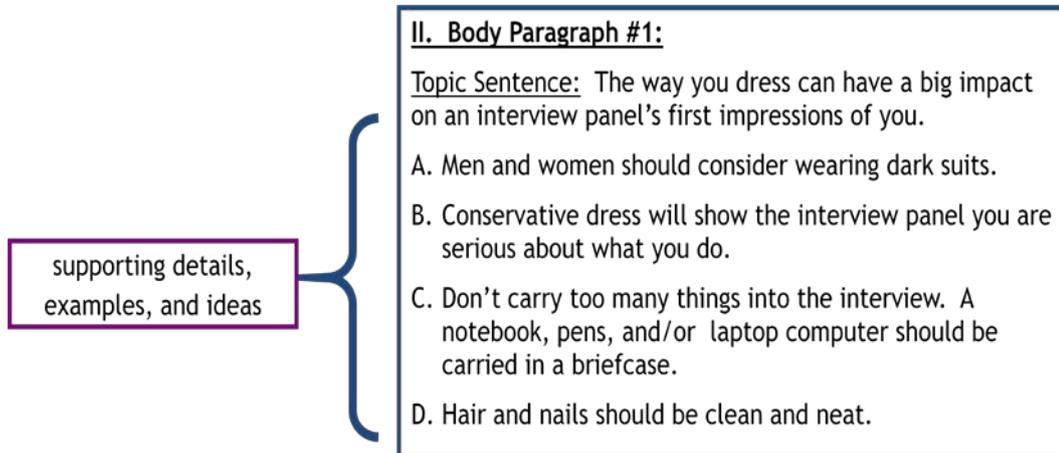
A thesis statement is often the last sentence of the introduction of an essay. It is similar to a topic sentence in several ways. Just as a topic sentence controls the information for a paragraph, a thesis statement controls the information for an entire essay.



The topic sentence for each body paragraph should support the thesis statement. The topic sentences need to agree with the main idea or subpoints in the thesis statement; otherwise, the essay could be confusing. For example:



Under the topic sentence for each paragraph, there are some of the supporting details, examples, or ideas to be included in each paragraph. For example:



Example Outline

I. Introduction- Thesis Statement: A job interview can often make or break your chances of getting your dream job. There are several things that you can do in an interview to increase the possibility of your success such as, dressing properly, answering interview questions thoroughly, and asking good questions at the end of the interview.

II. Body Paragraph #1:
Topic Sentence: The way you dress can have a big impact on an interview panel’s first impressions of you.
 A. Men and women should consider wearing dark suits.
 B. Conservative dress will show the interview panel you are serious about what you do.
 C. Don’t carry too many things into the interview. A notebook, pens, and/or laptop computer should be carried in a briefcase.
 D. Hair and nails should be clean and neat.

III. Body Paragraph #2:
Topic Sentence: An interview is an opportunity

for potential employers to get to know you better, so it is important that you answer each question as completely as possible.

A. Ask interviewers to repeat questions you don’t understand.
 B. Take some time to think about the questions before you answer.
 C. A notebook to write down key words in interview questions is sometimes helpful.

IV. Body Paragraph #3:
Topic Sentence: By preparing some thoughtful questions for the end of the interview, you can show the panel that you have prepared for the interview and want the job.
 A. Research the job and/or company before you go to the interview.
 B. The interview is your opportunity to get to know your potential employer. Ask questions about company goals, mission, expectations of employees, etc.
 C. Don’t ask questions about benefits or salary during the interview. You should try to get this information before you apply for the job.

IV. Conclusion: Don’t underestimate the importance of a good interview.

Task 1

Look at the thesis statements below. If you think the thesis statement is good, write **G** next to the statement on the line. If you do **not** think the thesis statement is good, write a thesis statement that is more appropriate on the lines below. Be prepared to explain **why** you think certain thesis statements were acceptable or not acceptable.

1. ____ I'm going to tell you why I think owning a gun should be illegal in the United States.

New Thesis Statement? _____

2. ____ How to make my favorite Chinese dish.

New Thesis Statement? _____

3. ____ The current crisis in Israel has not only caused strife between Israelis and Palestinians, but also between other nations in the middle east.

New Thesis Statement? _____

4. ____ The cafeteria at this college is bad.

New Thesis Statement? _____

5. ____ Employers look for employees who can take initiative, manage their time, and make good decisions.

New Thesis Statement? _____

Task 2

Choose one of the topics in Unit 2 Task 2 that you consider as the most interesting one. Use it as the topic of the essay you are going to develop. Write the thesis statement on the space below.

Topic: _____

Thesis statement: _____

Task 3

Look at the essay below. Read it and pay careful attention to how it is organized. Complete the outline for the essay on the following pages.

Learning to Listen in English

As a newcomer to the United States, have you ever had a difficult time understanding normal spoken English on TV, at work, or in school? If you have, you are not alone. Many beginning students of English have a difficult time learning to listen in English. Listening can actually be one of the more difficult language skills to master, but there are a number of strategies that can help you comprehend spoken English better. These strategies could be broken down into pre-, while-, and post-listening strategies.

The process of preparing yourself to listen to a TV program or classroom lecture is sometimes just as important as the actual practice of listening. If you know that a lecture or TV program is going to be on a particular subject, you can practice the strategy of predicting. Predicting is when you try to guess what you will hear before you actually hear it. If you think about a subject before you listen and predict what is going to be said, you will understand more of the lecture or TV program as you listen. Try asking yourself these questions before listening: What is the topic? What do I already know about the topic? What do I need to know before I listen? What can I predict will be said?

An excellent while-listening strategy is the practice of making guesses about what you hear. Oftentimes, people do not need to understand or hear every word of a lecture, conversation, or TV show to understand the main idea of what is being said. Some ways

of making good guesses in listening is to first pay attention to the speakers' gestures and facial expressions. These things can often communicate more than the words people say. To practice this strategy, try listening to a video without sound. Pay careful attention to the speakers' gestures and facial expressions. As you watch, try guessing what the speakers are saying. When you are finished watching, rewind the tape to see if your guesses are correct. You will probably be surprised at how much you were able to understand just by guessing!

An important post-listening strategy that will help you become a better listener is evaluating. You need to check to see if you what you understood from the TV program, lecture, or conversation is correct. To do this, you can ask a classmate or co-worker to summarize what you just heard. By doing this, you will be able to determine whether or not you are making progress in your listening skills or if you need to adjust your goals and expectations.

Learning to comprehend normal spoken English can sometimes be a difficult and frustrating experience for many beginning English language learners. However, the strategies of predicting, guessing, and evaluating can help lessen some of the frustration. Try these strategies today and see if you notice an improvement in your listening skills.

Introduction

Thesis Statement: _____

II. Body Paragraph One

Topic Sentence: _____

Supporting Ideas or Examples:

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

E. _____

III. Body Paragraph Two

Topic Sentence: _____

Supporting Ideas/Examples:

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

E. _____

IV. Body Paragraph Three

Topic Sentence: _____

Supporting Ideas/Examples:

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

E. _____

V. Conclusion

Task 4

Now, think about the topic you have chosen for your essay. Use your thesis statement and the ideas from your brainstorming assignment to make an outline for your essay. Use the blank outline on the following page to make

your outline. Then, discuss it with your friend. Some questions to think about and discuss are listed below.

- ❑ Does every topic sentence in the outline support the thesis statement?
- ❑ Do the details in your paragraphs support the paragraphs' topic sentences?
- ❑ Are there enough details in the outline to help you write the essay?

TOPIC: _____

I. INTRODUCTION:

Motivator : _____

Thesis : _____

II. BODY PARAGRAPH 1:

Opening Sentence: _____

Detail 1 : _____

Detail 2 : _____

Detail 3 : _____

III. BODY PARAGRAPH II:

Transition/Opening Sentence: _____

Detail 1 : _____

Detail 2 : _____

Detail 3 : _____

IV. BODY PARAGRAPH III:

Transition/Opening Sentence: _____

Detail 1 : _____
Detail 2 : _____
Detail 3 : _____

V. CONCLUSION:

Reconfirmed Thesis: _____

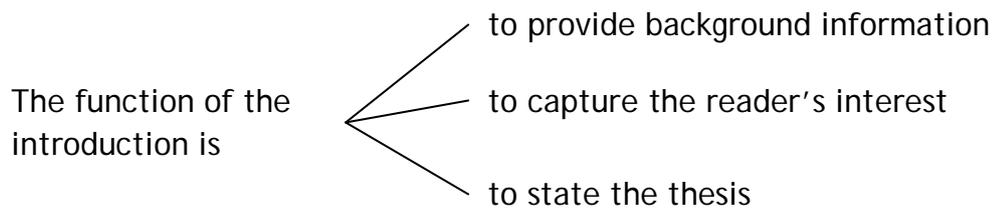
Clincher: _____

UNIT 4

Writing Introductory, Body, and Concluding Paragraphs

A. The Introduction

Most formal essays begin with an introductory paragraph. In some ways, the introduction is the most important paragraph of an essay. Because it is the first one that will be read, it must capture the attention of the audience and create a desire to read the rest of the essay. It should set the stage for what follows and give the reader an idea of what to expect.



While there are no set rules for writing an introduction and a writer is encouraged to be creative, there are several techniques that have proven successful. Many introductions use one or a combination of the following techniques to provide background information and capture the reader's interest.

1. Move from general to specific

This type of introduction opens with a general statement on the subject that establishes its importance and then leads the reader to the more specific thesis statement.

2. Use an anecdote

Another way to write an introduction is to relate an interesting story that will get the reader interested in the subject. Newspaper and magazine writers frequently use this technique for their articles.

3. Use a quotation

A quotation is an easy way to introduce the topic. A writer can quote an authority on the subject or use an interesting quotation from an article. S/he can also be more informal and use a proverb or favorite saying of a friend or relative.

4. Ask a question

Asking one or more questions at the beginning of an essay is a good way to engage the readers in the topic right away. They will want to read on in order to find the answers to the questions.

5. Present facts and statistics

Presenting some interesting facts or statistics on the subject establishes credibility.

Task 1

Analyzing Introductions

Read the following sample introductions. Then, in small groups, identify the technique or techniques used in each one. Remember that authors often use a combination of techniques to write an introduction.

Task 2

Look back at the sample introductions in Task 1 and underline the thesis statement in each one. Write the five thesis statements on the lines below.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Task 3

Writing an Introduction

Write the introduction for a five-paragraph essay on *the pressures of being a student*. Follow these steps:

1. Spend some time thinking about the angle of the subject that you plan to write about. For example, are you going to discuss the pressures of being a student in a foreign country or in your native country? Are you going to talk about the pressures of a high school student, college student, or graduate student? Other angles you might consider are the pressures of being a student and having a job or being a parent. Are you going to talk about economic, academic, social, or emotional pressures?
2. Decide what technique or techniques you want to use to introduce your subject. Would an anecdote be effective? What about a quote of some facts and statistics?
3. End the introduction with a thesis statement that identifies your subject and establishes the three points you plan to develop in your essay.

4. Read your introduction to the class. Listen to other students' introductions for comparison.

Write the introduction here.

B. The Body

The body of an essay consists of several paragraphs that develop and support the thesis. Each body paragraph develops one point from the thesis statement. These paragraphs all begin with a topic sentence that is supported with specific details, facts, and examples. The body paragraphs of an essay should be arranged in the order that was stated in the thesis statement.

Task 4

Analyzing Body Paragraphs

Look again at the essay *John Lennon: A Musician for All Time* in Unit 1.

Write the thesis statements here.

What is the topic of the first body paragraph?

Does the topic sentence of that paragraph state its main idea?

Does it develop the first point mentioned in the thesis statement?

Is it supported with specific details?

What is the topic of the second body paragraph?

Does the topic sentence of that paragraph state its main idea?

Does it develop the second point mentioned in the thesis statement?

Is it supported with specific details?

What is the topic of the third body paragraph?

Does the topic sentence of that paragraph state its main idea?

Does it develop the third point mentioned in the thesis statement?

Is it supported with specific details?

Task 5

Writing Body Paragraphs

Reread the introduction you wrote on *the pressures of being a student*. Based on your thesis statement, determine the topic and order of each of the three

body paragraphs. Write a topic sentence for each body paragraph on the lines provided below.

Topic sentence for first body paragraph:

Topic sentence for second body paragraph:

Topic sentence for third body paragraph:

On a separate piece of paper, write a first draft of the body paragraphs for the essay on *the pressures of being a student*. Follow the principles you learned for writing effective paragraphs. Use the topic sentences you just wrote for each of the three body paragraphs and support them with specific details.

Finding Three Points to Develop a Subject

It is sometimes difficult to think of three main points for the body paragraphs. However, there are a number of common ways to divide a general subject into three parts. For example, if the general subject is *the effects of computers*, there are several possible ways to divide it. One might think about *time* and describe the effects of computers in the past, present, and future. One might also consider *people* and write about the effects on children, adults, and the elderly. The following table provides additional suggestions for how to divide a broad subject.

Place	People
1. local, national, international 2. home, work, school 3. land, sea, air	1. students, workers, retired people 2. family, friends, co-workers 3. children, adults, the elderly
Time	Society
1. past, present, future 2. childhood, adulthood, old age	1. economic, political, social/ educational/religious 2. business, science, the arts

Task 6

For each of the following essay topics, think of three main points that you could develop into an essay.

1. The Benefits of Learning English

2. The Impact of Natural Disasters

3. The Role of the Media in Our Lives

4. The Changing Role of Women

5. The Causes of Illiteracy

C. The Conclusion

The final paragraph of an essay is the conclusion. The purpose of this last paragraph is to summarize, without using the same words, the main

points made in the essay. The concluding paragraph should also leave the reader agreeing, disagreeing, or at least thinking about the thesis.

Just as there are several ways to write an introduction, there are several common ways to write a conclusion.

1. Summarize the main points

When this method is used, the writer simply restates the main points presented in the essay. Make sure that there is no repetition of the words exactly, however. It is essential that a writer figures out a new way to say them.

2. Ask a question

Writers often want to leave their readers realizing that there is a problem that needs to be solved or an issue that needs to be resolved. A question is a good way of getting the readers' attention and getting them thinking about what can be done.

3. Suggest a solution, offer a recommendation, or make a prediction

Depending on the topic of the essay, the conclusion might be a good place to suggest a solution to a problem discussed, or to make a recommendation or a prediction.

Some transition signals that introduce a summary or a conclusion:

therefore	consequently	Thus
to summarize	in brief	to conclude
in summary	last of all	finally
in conclusion	in short	

Note: remember to use comma after these signals.

Task 7

Analyzing Conclusions

Read the following sample conclusions. In small groups, identify the technique or techniques used in each one.

Task 8

Look through several newspapers and magazines for interesting articles. Cut out three examples each of introductory and concluding paragraphs and bring them to class. In small groups, discuss what makes each paragraph effective or ineffective as an introduction or a conclusion. What techniques did the writers use?

Task 9

Writing Conclusions

Reread the introduction and body paragraphs you wrote on *the pressures of being a student*. Write the conclusion to this essay on the lines below. Use some of the transition signals.

Task 10

UNIT 5

Process Essay

When the purpose of writing the essay is to inform the readers about how to do something or to describe the order of steps in a procedure, a process pattern of organization is used. For instance, when explaining procedures such as how to train a dog to do tricks, how to give a good haircut, or how to study for a math test, a writer is describing steps in a process. These steps are organized according to time order.

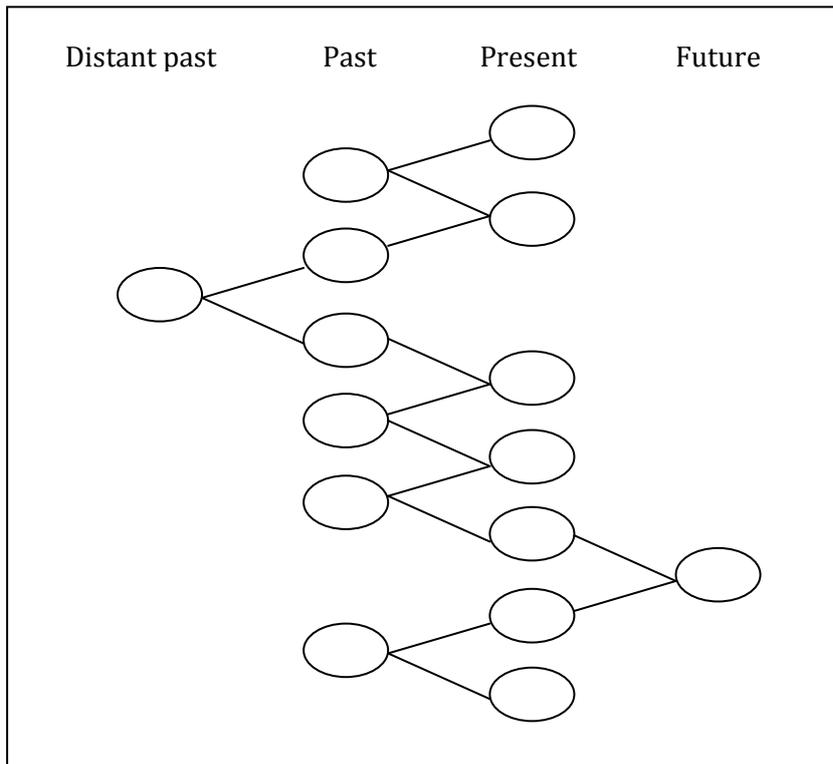
In academic writing, the process pattern of organization is especially important in scientific and technical fields. For example, it is used to describe biological processes such as cell division, chemical processes such as photosynthesis, and technical processes such as how a diesel engine works.

Some phrases and sentence patterns used to describe a process are:

first	the third step	as	soon afterward
the first step	after that	while	from then on
then	before	when	the last step
next	after	meanwhile	finally
the next step			

Task 1

Read the *Land Reform* text. Complete the time diagram below it to show how the text moves from one time period to another. Fill in the circles with paragraph numbers. Where there is more than one time mentioned in a paragraph, the same paragraph may be entered in several columns. Check your answers with one or two other students.



Task 2

Now look at the figure below. Choose one item in it as the topic of the essay. Then, develop it into three main points to be developed in the body paragraphs of the essay.

Write the topic and the three main points here.

Topic of the essay:

Topic sentence for the body paragraphs:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Task 3

Write a thesis statement for a process essay on each of the following topics.

Use a variety of sentence patterns.

1. How to Impress Your Teacher

2. How to Build a Tree House

3. How to Make a Pizza

4. The Best Way to Lose Weight

5. How to Make a Beautiful Flower Arrangement

Task 4

Writing a Process Paragraph

Read the following conversation between a student and a librarian.

Task 5

Study the following text and diagram, then:

- a. underline the topic sentence of paragraph 1
- b. complete the topic sentence of paragraph 2
- c. write a third paragraph beginning with this topic sentence: 'Bilharzia could be eradicated.'

Task 6

Analyzing a Process Essay

Read the following essay and answer the questions that follow.

Discuss the following questions with a partner.

1. What technique does the author use to introduce the topic?
2. What process is the author describing?
3. How does the author organize the information?
4. Make a list of the steps in the process.
5. What transition words did the author use to achieve coherence?
Underline them in the essay.
6. What audience do you think the author had in mind when he wrote this essay?

The guidelines below will help remembering what to do in each part of a process essay.

Basic Essay Plan: Process

Introduction

1. State what the process is and why it is important.
2. Define the process.
3. State the purpose for explaining the process.
4. List any equipment, ingredients, or supplies needed to perform the process.

Supporting Paragraphs

1. Describe the steps in the process, using time order.
2. If there are a lot of steps, group them into several main categories.

Conclusion

1. Review why the process is important.
2. Summarize the main steps in the process.

Task 7

Writing a Process Essay

In this activity, you will practice writing an essay that describes the steps in a process. Follow these steps:

a. Prewriting

Choose one of the following topics and make a list of the steps in the process on the space provided.

1. How to get a date with someone who doesn't like you
2. How to study for an exam
3. How to break up with your boyfriend or girlfriend
4. How to drive your teacher crazy
5. How to get fired from your job

List the steps here.

b. Planning

Organize your list according to time order in the space below. On a separate piece of paper, prepare an informal outline of the essay.

c. Drafting

On a separate piece of paper, write the first draft of your essay. Be sure to provide some background information about the process in the introduction and include a clear thesis statement or purpose. Describe

the steps in the supporting paragraphs and organize them according to time order. End with a conclusion that summarizes the steps and restate the purpose.

d. Personal revising

Put your essay away for at least one day. Be sure that all paragraphs are unified and coherent. Also, check to make sure you have adequately described each step in the process. Write or type a revised version of your essay.

e. Peer revising

Exchange your draft with a classmate. Use the following guide to help improve your partner's essay:

1. What are the strengths of the essay?
2. Did the introduction identify the process and state why it is important?
3. What weaknesses, if any, did you notice in the organization?
4. What suggestions can you offer to improve the organization?
5. Did the author include enough transitions to guide you from one step to the next?
6. Was each step in the process adequately explained?
7. Did the author include an effective conclusion? If not, how can it be improved?

Incorporate any suggestions your partner has made that you agree with.

f. Editing

Correct all the grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling errors before you copy it over or type it.

Task 8

The following recipe is an example of a process paragraph. The content of the recipe is correct, but there are seven editorial mistakes. Find the mistakes and correct them. Then copy the corrected paragraph on a separate piece of paper.

UNIT 6

Cause and Effect Essay

When the purpose of writing an essay is to analyze the causes (reasons) or effects (results) of a situation, the cause/effect pattern of organization is used. This pattern is used when answering questions such as “Why did you decide to major in English?” or “What effects will learning English have on your career?”.

In academic writing, the cause/effect pattern of organization is frequently needed. For example, in a psychology class, it might be needed to discuss the effects of hypnosis on patients with chronic pain or the reasons why hypnosis is recommended for some people. In a history class, the technological causes of the industrial revolution or the effects of the industrial revolution on family life in England might also be discussed. In other subjects, many essays can be written using the pattern of cause/effect.

There are some expressions that signal the relationship between cause and effect. Some of them are presented in the following.

Table 1. Some transition signals indicating a cause-effect relationship

as a result	since	because
due to	therefore	consequently
Thus	then	as a consequence
for this reason	So	and that is why

Task 1

Write a thesis statement for each of the following essay topics in the space provided. Use a variety of sentence patterns in Table 1.

1. The effects of unemployment

2. The causes of the depletion of the ozone layer

3. The reasons you decided to learn English

4. The effects of forest fires

5. The effects of culture shock

Task 2

Analyzing a Cause/Effect Essay

Read the essay and answer the questions that follow.

Answer the following questions with a partner:

1. What three main causes does the author suggest to explain the extinction of the dinosaurs?

2. How are the supporting paragraphs organized?

3. What techniques are used in the introduction and conclusion?

4. What transitions did the author use to achieve coherence? Underline them in the essay.

The guidelines below show what to be remembered when writing a cause or effect essay.

Basic Essay Plan: Cause/Effect

Introduction

1. Provide background information about the situation analyzed.
2. Describe the situation.
3. Identify its main causes or effects.

Supporting Paragraphs

1. Explain one cause or effect in each supporting paragraph.
2. If there are many causes or effect, group them into several main categories.
3. Organize the causes or effects, using time order or order of importance.

Conclusion

1. Summarize the main causes or effects.
2. Draw a conclusion or make a prediction.

Task 3

Writing an Essay of Causes

You are a reporter for a health magazine. Your assignment is to write an article on the topic of *the causes of heart disease*. You have just conducted an interview with a cardiologist, Dr. Harvey Snyder, and have written the following introduction:

Heart disease affects so many people that it has become a serious concern for medical science. The heart is a complex organ that is vulnerable to hereditary as well as environmental risks. Cardiologists think of these risk factors as major and minor causes.

Dr. Snyder has identified a number of risk factors associated with heart disease. He has grouped these risk factors into major and minor causes. Here are your notes from the interview:

1. On a separate piece of paper, write a draft of your two supporting paragraphs in which you discuss the major and minor causes of heart disease.
2. Exchange papers with a classmate. Discuss any suggestions that your partner has for revision and editing.
3. Write a conclusion for your article. Suggest ways to bear the risks of heart disease by adopting a healthful lifestyle and good personal habits.
4. Copy your entire article, including the introduction, body, and conclusion, onto another sheet of paper.

Task 4

Writing an Essay of Effects

In this activity you will practice writing an essay that analyzes the effects of a situation. Follow these steps:

- a. **Prewriting**
Choose one of the following topics and do a prewriting activity such as clustering, freewriting, or brainstorming to generate some ideas about its effects.
 1. The effects of divorce on family life
 2. The effects of a natural disaster such as an earthquake or hurricane
 3. The effects of climate on lifestyle
 4. The effects of a social, political, or economic problem in a country you are familiar with
 5. The effects that your peers have had on you
- b. **Planning**
Using the ideas generated in your prewriting, identify several major effects and prepare an informal outline of your essay.
- c. **Drafting**
On a separate piece of paper, write the first draft of your essay. Be sure to provide some background information about your topic in the introduction and include a clear thesis statement that states its main effects. Organize the body paragraphs according to order of importance, with the most important effect last. End with a conclusion that summarizes the main effects, draws a conclusion, or makes a prediction.
- d. **Personal revising**
Wait at least one day and then revise your essay. Be sure all your paragraphs are unified and coherent. Also, check to make sure that you

have provided enough support to fully describe each effect. Write or type a revised version of your essay.

e. Peer revising

Exchange drafts with a classmate for further suggestions for improvement. Read your partner's essay and think about its strengths and weaknesses. The following suggestions will help you:

1. Does the introduction provide enough background information to get you interested in the topic? If it does not, offer some suggestions on how to improve it.
2. Check for the effectiveness of the overall organization of the essay. Make sure that the paragraphs are arranged in a logical order. If they are not, help your partner rearrange them.
3. Evaluate the body paragraphs for support, coherence, and unity. If you notice any problems, suggest some specific ways to revise the paragraphs.
4. Review the conclusion and offer some suggestions for improvement if needed.

Incorporate any suggestions your partner has made that you agree with.

f. Editing

Correct all the grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling errors before you copy it over or type it.

Task 5

On Your Own

Choose one of the following general subjects and brainstorm a list of its causes or effects. Using the ideas generated from your list, write an essay of causes or effects.

1. Water or air pollution
2. Unemployment
3. War
4. An important historical event in your country

Task 6

UNIT 7

Comparison and Contrast Essay

Very often in writing, ideas, people, or things are compared to look for their similarities or contrasted to look for their differences. It is important that the things being compared or contrasted belong to the same general class. For example, it is illogical to compare or contrast a house and a dog. Instead, the comparison or contrast of a Japanese house and a North American house is preferable.

In academic writing, comparison and contrast are often used to support a point of persuade the reader. For example, in a political science class, there might be a comparison and contrast of two leaders to show which one was more successful at bringing about economic reforms. In a literature class, students might compare and contrast two short stories to show which one is better. In an engineering class, there might be a comparison and contrast of two methods of combustion to show which one is more efficient.

Some language expressions that are used to indicate a comparison and contrast are presented in the following table.

Table 2. Transition signals indicating a comparison and contrast

<u>Signals indicating a comparison</u>		
in the same way that	similarly	compared to
Both	is similar to	is like
have in common	just as	likewise
<u>Signals indicating a contrast</u>		
however	nevertheless	unlike
Although	on the other hand	whereas
even though	in spite of	while
But	on the contrary	is different from
Yet	still	differs from
in contrast	conversely	

Task 1

Examining Comparisons and Contrasts

Look at the following two classified ads for pets for sale. Find several similarities and differences between the two apartments. Write two sentences of comparison and two sentences of contrast. Use a variety of sentence patterns.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

Now do the same for the next set of classified ads.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

Task 2

Writing a Comparison Paragraph

Methods of Organization for Comparison and Contrast

There are two basic patterns for writing a comparison/contrast essay: the **block method** and the **point-by-point method**.

In the block method, all similarities are described in the first body paragraph and then all the differences in the second body paragraph.

In the point-by-point method, several important points to be compared and contrasted are identified. In the first body paragraph, the two things according to the first point are compared and contrasted. In the second body paragraph, the two things according to the second point are compared and contrasted, and so on.

Most students find the block method easier to master.

Task 3

Analyzing Essays of Comparison and Contrast

Read the following essay and answer the questions. The purpose of the essay is to explain why a student chose to attend Greenwell University rather than State University.

Answer the following questions with a partner.

1. What method did the author of this essay use?
2. What is the thesis statement?
3. What is the topic sentence of the first body paragraph?
4. What similarities between the two schools does the author mention?
5. What is the topic sentence of the second body paragraph?
6. What differences between the two schools does the author mention?

Basic Essay Plans: Comparison/Contrast

The guidelines below will help remembering what to do in each part of a comparison/contrast essay using the block method and point-by-point method.

Block Method

Introduction

1. Provide background information about the topic.
2. Identify the two things being compared and contrasted.
3. State the purpose for making the comparison and/or contrast.

Supporting Paragraphs

1. In the first paragraph(s), discuss the similarities.
2. In the next paragraph(s), discuss the differences.

Conclusion

1. Restate the purpose for comparison and/or contrast in different words.
2. Summarize the main similarities and differences.
3. Draw a conclusion.

Point-by-point Method

Introduction

1. Provide background information about the topic.
2. Identify the two things being compared and contrasted.
3. State the purpose for making the comparison and/or contrast.
4. Identify the points to be compared and contrasted.

Supporting Paragraphs

1. In the first paragraph, compare and/or contrast the two things according to the first point.
2. In the second paragraph, compare and/or contrast the two things according to the second point.
3. In the third and subsequent paragraph, do the same thing.

Conclusion

1. Restate the purpose for comparison and/or contrast in different words.
2. Summarize the main similarities and differences.
3. Draw a conclusion.

Task 4

Writing an Essay of Comparison and Contrast: Block Method

In this activity, you will practice writing an essay of comparison and contrast. Follow these steps:

a. Prewriting

Choose one of the following topics and brainstorm a list of similarities and differences.

1. Compare and contrast yourself and another member of your family.
2. Compare and contrast some aspect of your culture, such as eating habits, education, government, economy, religion, or social life, with the same aspect of another culture.
3. Compare and contrast two works of art on the same subject but in different media, such as a poem and a photograph, or a painting and a song.
4. Compare and contrast two people you have worked with, such as two coworkers at a job, two students in a group, or two bosses you have had.

b. Planning

Organize your list by grouping the similarities in one group and the differences in another group. Then prepare an informal outline for your essay. Be sure that you have identified a purpose for making your comparison. For example, are you comparing two restaurants so that you can recommend one of them to a friend? Are you comparing your native language and English to show why English is easy or difficult for you to learn? How you develop your essay will depend on your purpose.

c. Drafting

On a separate piece of paper, write the first draft of your essay. Be sure to provide some background information in the introduction and include a clear thesis statement that states your purpose for comparison. Organize the body paragraphs so that all the similarities are in one paragraph and all the differences are in another paragraph. End with a conclusion that restates your purpose for the comparison and that summarizes the main similarities and differences.

d. Personal revising

Put your essay away for at least one day. Be sure that you're your paragraphs are unified and coherent. Also, check to make sure you have provided enough support to explain fully the similarities and differences. Write or type a revised version of your essay.

e. Peer revising

Exchange drafts with a classmate for suggestions on how to improve your essay. Use the following questions as a guide:

1. Did the introduction identify the two items being compared?
2. Is the purpose of the comparison clearly stated?
3. Did the introduction make you want to read the rest of the essay? Why or why not?
4. Did the author adequately develop the points of comparison in a unified paragraph? If not, offer suggestions for strengthening the paragraph.
5. Did the author adequately develop the points of contrast in another unified paragraph? If not, offer suggestions for strengthening the paragraph.
6. Did the author include an effective conclusion?

Incorporate any suggestions your partner has made that you agree with.

f. Editing

Correct all the grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling errors before you copy it over or type it.

References

- Blanchard, Karen & Christine Root. 1997. *Ready to Write More*. New York: Longman.
- Hamp-Lyons, Liz & Ben Heasley. 1993. *Study Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hedge, Tricia. 1989. *Writing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hornby, A.S. 1987. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Livingston, Kathy. *Guide to Writing a Basic Essay*. <<http://klivingston.tripod.com/essay/topic.html>>. Accessed on October 20, 2009.
- Oshima, Alice and Ann Hogue. 1997. *Introduction to Academic Writing*. New York: Longman.
- Slade, Carole. 1997. *Form and Style*. Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Co.