Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs when one steals or presents another’s work as his/her own. Pekin Community High School has zero tolerance for the act of plagiarism. Plagiarism is strictly prohibited at PCHS. Any copying of material that is not a student’s own work (from, but not restricted to, resources as the Internet, books, magazines, another student’s work, etc.) is an example of plagiarism.

This packet has been designed to promote writing development and to help eliminate acts of plagiarism.
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**Terminology**

**Introduction:** The first paragraph of an essay. The introduction is the *doorway* to an essay that invites the reader to enter. The introduction does three things: it grabs the reader’s attention (attention-getter), it orients the reader to the topic of an essay (context), and it states the idea(s) that will be explained or proven in an essay (thesis statement).

**Attention-Getter:** The first element of an introduction. The attention-getter **hooks** the readers’ attention and makes them want to read more. Strategies for getting attention include:
- Describing an initial reaction to the topic or text.
- Sharing a startling statistic.
- Telling a brief story or anecdote related to the thesis.
- Using a series of images or ideas to build up to the thesis.
- Giving a relevant quotation.
- Asking an interesting rhetorical question.  
  “*What is the definition of a true hero?*” not “*Do you know what a tragic hero is?*”

**Context:** An element of the introduction that works as a transition from the attention-getter to the thesis statement. Context gives the **background information** a reader should know about the topic of an essay. Strategies for establishing context include:
- Identifying a work of literature, its author(s), and/or major theme(s).
- Defining unfamiliar terms or ideas.
- Giving historical background information.

**Thesis Statement:** Usually the last sentence of an introduction that explains or proves the main idea of an essay. The thesis statement can contain two or three smaller sub-points which **forecast** the content of the body paragraphs.
Terminology (Cont.)

**Body**: The middle paragraphs of an essay that are **sandwiched** between the introduction and the conclusion. Body paragraphs explain (or prove) one sub-topic of an essay’s main idea. An essay should have a minimum of two body paragraphs.

**Topic Sentence (or claim)**: The sentence that states the main point of a body paragraph. A topic sentence is usually the first sentence of a body paragraph.
- In a **narrative** essay, a topic sentence will advance the plot or storyline.
- In an **expository** essay, a topic sentence will be factual.
- In a **literary analysis** essay, a claim will be both logical and factual.
- In a **persuasive** essay, a claim will work to convince the reader of an opinion using factual evidence.
- In an **argumentative** essay, a claim will work to convince the reader of an opinion by acknowledging and discrediting opposing viewpoints.

**Evidence**: The information given to support or illustrate an idea in a body paragraph or the reasoning given to prove a claim in a body paragraph. Types of evidence include:
- Quotations
- Paraphrased material
- Examples
- Analogies

**Elaboration**: The explanation that analyzes (**breaks down into pieces**) the evidence. Elaborating sentences should:
- **Explain** the evidence being given. Answer the question “How?”
- **Connect** the evidence to the topic sentence. Answer the question “Why?”
- Elaborating sentences can analyze, assess, clarify, comment upon, compare, contrast, demonstrate, describe, discuss, evaluate, examine, explain, explore, illustrate, interpret, justify, or reveal an insight into the evidence.

(See “Elaboration” in the table of contents for additional help.)

**Transition**: A word, phrase, clause, or sentence that moves the reader from one idea to another. A transition functions like a **bridge** between two different ideas.

**Concluding Sentence**: The **clincher** sentence that sums up or restates the main point of a body paragraph. A concluding sentence is often the last sentence of a paragraph.
Terminology (Cont.)

Conclusion: The last paragraph of an essay that explains why it all matters. It answers the question “So what?” A good conclusion revisits the thesis statement, synthesizes the main points of the essay, and extends beyond the essay.

**Thesis Statement:** Usually the first sentence of a conclusion that revisits the main idea of an essay but is phrased differently from the original thesis.

**Synthesis:** The element of a conclusion that brings together the points of an essay in a new and interesting way to make a generalization or to draw a conclusion.

**Extension:** A memorable thought or idea that extends beyond the essay and pushes the reader into the real world.

Do not start your conclusion with the phrase, “In conclusion.”
Format Hand-Written Essays

1. When writing your essay by hand, write in only blue or black ink on loose-leaf notebook paper.

2. Write only on the front side of the loose-leaf paper.

3. Use the right-hand and left-hand margins of the paper.

4. Double space by writing on every other line.

5. If a mistake is made, neatly cross out the mistake with one line. There is no need to scribble.

6. Cut off your pelf (fringe, the excess paper from your spiral notebook).

7. Since you cannot use *Italics*, **underline** the titles of all books.
Formatting Typed Essays

1. Double-space your essay. Everything from your endorsement (header) to your conclusion should be double spaced. There should not be any extra lines between your endorsement, title, and the paragraphs. (Page layout spacing set at 0/0)

2. Use Times New Roman font in size 12. Your entire paper, including your title, endorsement, and running header should be in size 12 font.

3. Set your margins to 1 inch on all four sides. Do this by going to Page Layout. Select Margins. Set Top, Bottom, Left, and Right to 1 inch.

4. Set Word to automatically add page numbers to your document. Do this by selecting Insert. From the Insert tab, select Header. Select Blank. Select Page Number, and click on Plain Number 3 so that the page number is justified right. Now, type your last name ahead of the page number. Highlight your last name and the page number to change the font to Times New Roman font size 12. This will now show up on all of your pages. Make sure to right justify your page numbers. Word will now add page numbers to all your pages.

5. Begin your paper with the proper endorsement. Your teacher may have you add information to your endorsement. Your endorsement should be left justified.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Basics</th>
<th>A Sample</th>
<th>How it should look for this class:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your Name</td>
<td>Joe Student</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s Name</td>
<td>Mrs. Black</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>Eng. 3A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>15 May 2014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Indent the first line of each paragraph. Do this by hitting the Tab key once.
The Writing Process

The following steps should be followed when writing any type of essay.*

1. **Brainstorming:** See “Creating a Research Question” in handbook.

2. **Gathering Evidence:** Reading and selecting evidence for the essay (from textbook, outside research, etc.). Begin compiling Works Cited/References page.

3. **Organizing (big ideas):** See sample graphic organizers. Generate a thesis statement which can be changed and adapted as you move through the writing process.

4. **Outlining:** See sample outlines.

5. **Drafting:** See sample essays. Format your essay (see “Formatting Typed Essays”). Revisit your Works Cited/References page; add new sources and delete unused sources (see “Citing Sources”). Begin writing your essay using your evidence.

6. **Revising:** See “Revising” section of handbook. Adjust organization of essay, add more elaboration where necessary, etc.


8. **Turn in final copy!**

*However, please note that this process is meant to be flexible, adjusting to the needs of different types of writers.

Examples: Some student writers will spend a large amount of time in the outlining stage. Others will spend less time outlining and more time drafting. Still others will closely edit their essay while they draft, as opposed to spending a large amount of time editing at the end of the drafting period.
Brainstorming: Creating a Research Question

When you start researching, it is always better to have a research question (or two) in mind as opposed to just a topic.

- Example of a topic: Child abuse.
- Example of a research question: Should changes be made to the United States’ current laws against child abuse?

You will probably begin with a topic; below is a brainstorming web that can be used to transform a topic into multiple questions about the topic. Write down every question you can think of regarding a topic.

Once the web is filled with interesting questions, choose one to begin conducting your research. After you start researching, you may find that the question you chose does not interest you or give you enough information. In that case, you can go back to this page and pick a new question! Some of the questions below can be used for informative (I) essays while others would be great for persuasive (P) or argumentative (A) essays.

Topic: Child Abuse

- Are the current laws in the United States doing enough? (A)
- What can be done to further prevent child abuse? (P)
- Does child abuse occur more often in homes or other places (schools, churches)? (I)
- What are some of the worst child abuse cases in history? (I)
- When children are abused, are they more or less likely to become abusive parents? (A)
- Does child abuse increase in families below the poverty level? (I, P, or A)
- What constitutes child abuse? (I)
- Is parental drug use a form of child abuse? (A)
Turning a Research Question into a Thesis Statement

**Literary Analysis Example**

Research Question: Is Hamlet an example of a tragic hero?

Thesis Statement: Hamlet is an example of a tragic hero.

Thesis Statement with Forecasted Subtopics: Hamlet is an example of a tragic hero because he is born into a royal family, he experiences a reversal of fortune, and his fate is determined by forces outside of his control and by his own decisions.

**Persuasive Example**

Research Question: Should changes be made to the United States’ current laws against child abuse?

Thesis Statement: The United States should improve its current laws against child abuse.

Thesis Statement with Forecasted Subtopics: The United States should improve its current laws against child abuse because too many parents who are caught using drugs are not effectively punished, many parents are often able to coerce their children into lying about injuries, and some parents’ reputation in the community prevents them from being criminally investigated.
Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing
Source: Purdue Owl (http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/563/01/)

What are the differences among quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing?
These three ways of incorporating other writers' work into your own writing differ according to the closeness of your writing to the source writing. In general, unless the information is considered common knowledge, you should cite your sources.

Quotations must be identical to the original, using a narrow segment of the source. Quotations must match the source document word for word and must be attributed to the original author. Direct quotations should make up only about 10% of your paper and should always be followed by your own analysis of the information.

Paraphrasing involves condensing a passage from source material into your own words. Paraphrasing is more detailed than summarizing, but not as specific as directly quoting. A paraphrase must be attributed to the original source. (Paraphrasing can be tricky, so see the section below for more information.)

Summarizing involves putting the main idea(s) and main point(s) into your own words. Summaries are broad and condensed overviews of the source material. It is often necessary to attribute summarized ideas to the original source.

Why use quotations, paraphrases, and summaries?
Strong papers include a combination of direct quotes, paraphrased information, and summaries of particular ideas and concepts. Quotations, paraphrases, and summaries:

- Provide support for claims or add credibility to your writing
- Refer to work that leads up to the work you are now doing
- Give examples of several points of view on a subject
- Call attention to a position that you wish to agree or disagree with
- Highlight a particularly striking phrase, sentence, or passage by quoting the original
- Distance yourself from the original by quoting it in order to cue readers that the words are not your own
- Expand the breadth or depth of your writing

How to use quotations, paraphrases, and summaries
In general, follow these steps when incorporating outside sources into your writing:
- Read the entire text, noting the key points and main ideas. Use a highlighter, underline passages, use sticky notes, or create an outline.
- In your own words, summarize the single main idea.
- Paraphrase important supporting points that come up in the essay.
- Underline or highlight any words, phrases, or brief passages that you believe should be quoted directly.

Remember that quoting should be done sparingly; be sure that you have a good reason to include a direct quotation. Also, remember that a “good reason” is one you can both explain and tie to your thesis.
Paraphrasing/Summarizing: Writing It In Your Own Words

A paraphrase is...
- your own version of essential information and ideas expressed by someone else, presented in a new form.
- one legitimate way (when accompanied by accurate documentation) to borrow from a source.
- a more detailed restatement than a summary, which focuses concisely on a single main idea.

Steps to effective paraphrasing
1. Reread the original passage until you understand its full meaning.
2. Set the original aside, and write your paraphrase.
3. Check your rendition with the original to make sure that your version accurately expresses all the essential information in a new form.
4. Use quotation marks to identify any unique term or phraseology you have borrowed exactly from the source.
5. Record the source (including the page) so that you can credit it easily if you decide to incorporate the material into your paper.

Examples

Below is an original passage followed by a quotation, paraphrase, and summary taken from it. The last example shows how plagiarism of the sample passage might look.

The original passage: Students frequently overuse direct quotation in taking notes, and as a result they overuse quotations in the final [research] paper. Probably only about 10% of your final manuscript should appear as directly quoted matter. Therefore, you should strive to limit the amount of exact transcribing of source materials while taking notes. Lester, James D. Writing Research Papers. 2nd ed. (1976): 46-47.

An acceptable quotation: As James Lester suggests, “only about 10% of your final manuscript should appear as directly quoted matter” (46-7).

An acceptable paraphrase: In research papers students often quote excessively, failing to keep quoted material down to a desirable level. Since the problem usually originates during note taking, it is essential to minimize the material recorded verbatim (Lester 46-7).

An acceptable summary: Students should take just a few notes in direct quotation from sources to help minimize the amount of quoted material in a research paper (Lester 46-7).

A plagiarized version: Students often use too many direct quotations when they take notes, resulting in too many of them in the final research paper. In fact, probably only about 10% of the final copy should consist of directly quoted material. So it is important to limit the amount of source material copied while taking notes.
Citing Sources

Why cite sources?
Generally speaking, writers need to cite any sources that gave them information which they used to write an essay. Citing is important for two reasons:

- You need to give credit to the source that gave you information you used in your paper.
- Citations improve your ethos, or overall credibility and trustworthiness as a writer. When you cite sources, the reader of your paper knows that your essay is well-informed and solidly put together. Referencing sources adds strength and professionalism to your essay.
- Failure to cite sources correctly is a form of plagiarism and should be taken very seriously.

How to cite sources:
This can be done in several ways:

- At the end of your essay: teachers will require you to have a Works Cited page at the end of your MLA style essay (if you’re writing in APA, it will be called a References page).
- Throughout your essay: this is known as in-text citation. Whenever you use a direct quotation or information about your topic that is not common knowledge, you will need to show the reader where that information came from with an in-text citation.

When to use an in-text citation:
Use an in-text citation if the content is either a direct quotation or a paraphrase that is NOT common knowledge. If something IS common knowledge on your topic and you are NOT using a direct quotation, you do not need to have an in-text citation.

What is the difference between “common knowledge” and what needs to be cited?

- Common knowledge is defined by what is commonly known about a topic by those who are researching and writing about it—not what is commonly known about a topic to every average Joe on the street.
- As a result, if you come across the same information in several independent sources, you can consider it common knowledge (and do not need to cite it within your essay).
- Well-known facts about a person or topic are typically common knowledge; for example, when researching a famous person, her birth date and place will most likely be common knowledge.
Citing Sources (Cont.)

What is the difference between “common knowledge” and what needs to be cited? (Cont.)

- If you find something in only one or two sources, it will need to be cited, as it is not common knowledge.
- This will include facts that are not commonly known and a writer’s theories, conclusions, and ideas that are unique to him/her.

Example of factual common knowledge:
- Edgar Allan Poe was born in Boston, Massachusetts on January 19th, 1809. (Every source about Poe would include this information).

Examples of fact that needs to be cited (is only found in one or two sources):
- Edgar Allan Poe used his adopted father’s business papers to write drafts of his poems.
- Edgar Allan Poe’s childhood hero, British writer Lord Byron, inspired him to become a writer.

Example of writer’s idea/theory (needs to be cited):
- Much of what we know about Edgar Allan Poe is actually inaccurate; this misinformation was spread around by one of his rivals in order to stain Poe’s reputation. (This author has a theory about Poe's reputation which may not be shared with others; therefore, it is not common knowledge and should be cited within the essay).

How should an MLA citation look?
There are two main ways to cite a source within your essay:

1. **Use a parenthetical citation (PC):** After your direct quotation or specific information is given, show which source it came from in parentheses.
   - **Example:** It is possible that much of what we know about Edgar Allan Poe is actually untrue, as some theorize that his main rival attempted to destroy Poe's reputation after his death (Ristovski 31).
     - “Ristovksi” is the last name of the author who provided this theory.
     - “31” is the page number where this information was found.

2. **Use a speaker tag:** Identify the writer's name or the article/book's title within your sentence.
   - **Example with author:** Ryan Ristovski writes that much of what we know about Edgar Allan Poe might actually be false, as his main rival attempted to destroy Poe's reputation after his death (31).
Elaboration

Elaboration is the way you make connections between ideas for the reader for further understanding. Even though the connections may be obvious to you, your essay is not for you, but for an audience that needs to understand your ideas without your being there to explain them! Therefore, being more specific, adding details, and explaining connections—or elaborating—is essential to a well-constructed essay. Below are some ways for you to add elaboration to your writing. Remember, not all of these strategies are appropriate for all essays.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connections to Self / Other Literature / World (when appropriate)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explanation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expanded (text to self)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expanded (text to text)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expanded (text to world)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explaining Cause and Effect (or “If…then…”)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explanation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expanded</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Making a Comparison or Contrast</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explanation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic (comparison)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expanded (comparison)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Elaboration (Cont.)
### Using Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Expanded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Giving further information to specify a concept or idea can help your reader understand your writing better and will help you elaborate.</td>
<td>Autism is a condition with which millions of people around the world are born.</td>
<td>Autism, <em>which is a condition that exists across a spectrum and limits a person’s ability to recognize and respond to normal social cues</em>, is a condition with which millions of people are born.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Using a Real Life Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Expanded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using an experience from your own life can be very powerful in an essay, as long as it isn’t done too frequently or relied on entirely to make points in your essay.</td>
<td>Bullies who say things about a girl’s body to lower her confidence can have a drastic effect on that girl’s self-image and self-esteem.</td>
<td>Bullies who say things about a girl’s body to lower her confidence can have a drastic effect on that girl’s self-image and self-esteem. As a woman, I understand how easy it is to lose confidence when even an unintentionally hurtful phrase is said and how hard it is to regain it when it’s lost.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Make a Figurative Comparison (Metaphor or Analogy)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Expanded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It can seem hokey, but an extended metaphor or comparison can help make your point even stronger.</td>
<td>Scout’s eventual understanding of the benefits of acting like a lady is an important part of her development as a character.</td>
<td><em>Much like a rose blossoming too late in spring still adds beauty to a garden,</em> Scout’s eventual understanding of the benefits of acting like a lady is an important part of her development as a character.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXPOSITORY WRITING

**DEFINITION:** A genre of essay that requires the writer to explore a concept or idea and present his or her conclusions in an unbiased fashion. It is an explanatory essay that enables the reader to understand new information. This genre includes cause/effect, informative, compare/contrast, defining a concept, and problem/solution.
Blank Graphic Organizer for Expository Body Paragraph

Main Idea:

Evidence:

Elaboration:

Transition:

Evidence:

Elaboration:

Evidence:

Elaboration:

Evidence:

Elaboration:
Main Idea: Physiological components of consuming caffeine.

Evidence: "Caffeine works its magic..."
Neal.

Elaboration: Large doses cause insomnia.

Elaboration: Caffeine has also been known to alleviate headaches.

Elaboration: Caffeine can increase alertness.

Elaboration: Moderate dosage is 200mg.

Elaboration: Hinders healthy sleep patterns.

Elaboration: Large doses cause insomnia.

Elaboration: Man in Great Britain study (Simon 3).

Elaboration: Night terrors are also common.

Elaboration: Evidence: Man in Great Britain study (Simon 3).
Sample Outline for Expository Essay

Why is Caffeine So Addictive?

Thesis: Because people are addicted to the physiological, neurological, and sociological effects of caffeine, most consumers cannot seem to avoid it.

I. Physiological
   A. Adenosine and sleep patterns [Evidence]
      1. Cause [Elaboration]
      2. Effect [Elaboration]
   B. Adenosine and night terrors [Evidence]
      1. Cause [Elaboration]
      2. Effect [Elaboration]

II. Neurological
   A.
   1.
   2.
   B.
   1.
   2.

III. Sociological
   A.
   1.
   2.
   B.
   1.
   2.
Sample Expository Essay

Why is Caffeine So Addictive?

Introduction

Americans love coffee. According to recent studies, caffeine is consumed by at least 90% of Americans. Caffeine is a psychoactive stimulant that targets the body’s central nervous system to make the brain feel more awake. Moreover, it is a key ingredient in many of our favorite foods and drinks, such as coffee, tea, soda, chocolate, and even America’s favorite cookie, the Oreo. Since Americans cannot seem to get enough of their sweet, sugary, syrupy treats, businesses like Coca-Cola and Hershey may never need to fear bankruptcy. What is it about caffeine, though, that makes it so addictive? Because people are addicted to the physiological, neurological, and sociological effects of caffeine, most consumers cannot seem to avoid it.

Body

It’s difficult to resist the temptation of a caffeinated beverage or mom’s homemade brownies, yet there are several physiological effects that result from drinking caffeine which many fail to consider. “Caffeine Nation,” an article by CBS reporter Rome Neal, states, “caffeine works its magic by blocking something called adenosine, a chemical the body releases to tell the brain it's tired” (Neal). Blocking adenosine often hinders healthy sleep patterns, keeping the caffeine crazed among us from getting a full night’s sleep. In extreme cases, large doses of caffeine can lead to insomnia, and possibly night terrors. In one study, scientists tracked a man from Great Britain who drank at least eight cups of coffee a day, consumed multiple chocolate bars between meals, and drank two cans of caffeinated soda with each meal.
They found that his night terrors were due to his overdosing on caffeine. *This man’s story is an example of just how easy it is to consume caffeine without recognizing the terrible health effects it can have.*

**Conclusion**

Caffeine’s nature makes it one of America’s most popular drugs, though it does not have the negative stigma of substances like alcohol or cocaine. It can prevent sleep, make us hyper and shaky, and impede optimal rates of metabolism, *yet we continue to purchase soda and chocolate because it makes us feel good.* It provides us with a surge of energy and makes our diet a little tastier, and in America, we are all about the taste. *Although caffeine can hinder many of the body’s natural functions, what an anomaly it would be if Americans ceased their morning ritual at the Starbucks’ drive-thru window.*
LITERARY ANALYSIS

**DEFINITION:** The purpose of analysis is to practice looking closely at small parts of a piece of literature to determine how they affect the whole. *Literary analysis* focuses on how plot, structure, character, setting, and other literary techniques are used by an author to create meaning. In a literary analysis essay, a writer uses evidence from within the text to convey a unique interpretation of that text.
Blank Graphic Organizer for Literary Analysis
Sample Graphic Organizer for Literary Analysis

Based on Dr. Seuss's *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*

**Thesis Statement:** Seuss uses symbolism to emphasize that even though the experiences of living can be very scary, people who are prepared can call upon the best in themselves to achieve their goals.

**Topic Sentence:** Real life can be scary.

**Evidence:** Dark windows quote (Seuss 20).

**Elaboration:** Unmarked streets symbolize unexpected occurrences.

**Elaboration:** Lighted windows represent what is familiar, and darkened windows symbolize unexpected situations.

**Topic Sentence:** People can succeed by using their talents and taking action.

**Evidence:** Scary roads quote (Seuss 33).

**Elaboration:** The road between “hither” and “yon” symbolizes a person’s journey through life.

**Evidence:** Brains, feet, and direction quote (Seuss 2).

**Elaboration:** Worrying about what lies ahead can keep people from taking action.

**Elaboration:** The reference to brains encourages people to think about the choices they make.

**Evidence:** Mountains quote (Seuss 44).

**Elaboration:** Feet symbolize the readiness to get moving.

**Elaboration:** The mountain symbolizes the obstacles that every person encounters in life.

**Elaboration:** The advice to get on your way reminds people to get started.
Sample Outline for Literary Analysis

Dr. Seuss’s Advice for Graduates

Thesis: Seuss uses symbolism to emphasize that even though the experiences of living can be very scary, people who are prepared can call upon the best in themselves to achieve their goals.

I. Scariness of real life
   A. Streets and windows [Evidence]
      1. Unexpected occurrences [Elaboration]
      2. Familiar and unexpected situations [Elaboration]
   B. Road [Evidence]
      1. Journey through life [Elaboration]
      2. Worrying about the future [Elaboration]

II. Achievement of goals
   A.
      1.
      2.
   B.
      1.
      2.
Sample Literary Analysis Essay

Introduction

Today's world is changing so rapidly that it is often hard to keep up. In such a world, graduation from middle school, high school, or college can be a time of uncertainty because the "rules" that dictate achievement in school are not always applicable in the real world. Sometimes one can forget or undervalue all the preparation for life that school has provided.

Beloved children's author Dr. Seuss has written a delightful story about how to face the challenge of change. In *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*, graduates of every age are encouraged to use what they have already learned as a foundation for embracing new experiences. Seuss uses symbolism to emphasize that even though the experiences of living can be very scary, people who are prepared can call upon the best in themselves to achieve their goals.

Body Paragraph

The first step into a new situation can be a very scary one. Dr. Seuss acknowledges that even the best planned lives will contain moments of uncertainty. He says, "You will come to a place where the streets are not marked. / Some windows are lighted. But mostly they're darked" (Seuss 20). Unmarked streets symbolize unexpected occurrences in life. Lighted windows represent familiar circumstances, such as the material covered in school. On the other hand, darkened windows suggest situations which are different from what has been studied, and that can make them frightening. For some people, worrying about their fears overpowers their desire to reach their goals. Seuss warns, "There are some [unknown challenges], down the road between hither and yon, / that can scare you so much you won't want to go on" (35). The road between “hither” (here) and “yon” (there) symbolizes life's journey. Because something scary
may lie ahead, some people worry so much that they give up. People have trouble making decisions when they are unsure of what the future holds. Fear of the unknown can prevent capable people from taking their first step into an uncertain future.

Conclusion

Daunting as change may be, Seuss’s symbolism shows that people who overcome their fears of change can use their talents to accomplish mountain-sized goals. Investing time and talent in "life training” is wasted unless it can be applied to a strategy for living. Dr. Seuss reassures his loyal readers that they have what it takes to succeed in the world of grown-ups. Using childlike situations to symbolize grown-up reality encourages readers to trust in what they already know, embrace that which they are ready to explore, and face their futures with a sense of confidence.
PERSUASIVE WRITING

DEFINITION: The purpose of **persuasive writing** is to give an opinion and to influence the reader's way of thinking with supporting evidence. This is usually done through emotional appeals, logic with presentation of evidence, establishing credibility as an author, and using a strongly biased voice.
## Blank Graphic Organizer for Persuasive Essay

### Persuasive Graphic Organizer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic:</th>
<th>Purpose:</th>
<th>Audience:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

**Thesis Statement:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Claim/Counterclaim</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Elaboration</th>
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<tbody>
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</table>

**Emotional Appeal**

**Conclusion:**

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</table>
### Sample Graphic Organizer for Persuasive Essay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Topic:</strong> Riding a bike for any trip under five miles</th>
<th><strong>Purpose:</strong> To persuade people to use bicycles for shorter trips</th>
<th><strong>Audience:</strong> People who overuse cars and under-utilize bicycles for short trips</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Thesis Statement:**
You’ll save money and time by riding a bike; even in the winter months, people should use bikes for short trips instead of cars.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Counterclaim/Claim</strong></th>
<th><strong>Evidence</strong></th>
<th><strong>Elaboration</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| While some may argue that bicycling is an expensive hobby, riding a bike can actually be quite cost-effective. | - Current gas prices  
- Price of bike and accessories in comparison to cost of regular car maintenance | - Comparing the one-time cost of bike accessories to continued purchase of gas for a five mile commute (show math) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Although riding a bike lengthens the time required for a long commute, riding a bike over a short distance actually saves time.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Evidence</strong></th>
<th><strong>Elaboration</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| | - Time  
- Convenience  
- Multi-tasking | - Average time of a five mile commute vs. average speed of a biker on same commute  
- No worrying about parking, no filling up on gas, etc.  
- You can exercise and commute simultaneously. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>While winter roads might be dangerous, riding a bike in winter can be both safe and feasible.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Evidence</strong></th>
<th><strong>Elaboration</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- According to icebike.org survey, very few accidents are reported.</td>
<td>- Compared to summer accidents, winter apparel provides protection.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Emotional Appeal

- Many Americans are fearful of being overweight.  
- Carbon emissions are slowly killing our planet.  
- Riding a bike recalls happy childhood memories.

### Conclusion:
Associate biking with rediscovering childhood freedom.
Sample Outline for Persuasive Essay

Thesis: You’ll save money and time by riding a bike; even in the winter months, people should use bikes for short trips instead of cars.

I. Cost
   A. 
   1. 
   2. 

   B. 
   1. 
   2.

II. Time
   A. 
   1. 
   2. 

   B. 
   1. 
   2.

III. Safety in winter
   A. Accidents [Evidence]
      1. Summer [Elaboration]
      2. Winter [Elaboration]

   B. Injuries [Evidence]
      1. Summer: Exposed limbs subject to road rash [Elaboration]
      2. Winter: Protective apparel [Elaboration]
Sample Persuasive Essay

Introduction

According to most statistics, if you, the reader, are an American, you’re likely overweight. In these tough economic times, your weight and the weight of your wallet are probably inversely proportional to one another; the more you eat and spend on gas, the less likely you are to save money. And all that gas you’re pumping into your car is just killing our planet slowly. In order to prevent much future distress for you, me, and our neighbors on this planet, I offer a simple solution for both saving money and time: ride a bike. Any bike. That old junky mountain bike you’ve had in your garage for eight years? Yeah, that bike. Take it down off the garage wall, and pump that free air into the flat tires. The next time you start up that environment killer of a car, even in the winter, consider busting out your underused, undervalued, and underappreciated bike—for any trip under five miles. You’ll save money and time by riding a bike; even in the winter months, people should use bikes for short trips instead of cars.

Body Paragraph

There is no doubt that summer is the best time to begin this transformation of your body and wallet; however, I’m sure you’ll balk at the suggestion that your bike can—and should—be just as useful in January. Even on cold winter days, your first choice of transportation for short trips should still be your bicycle. You may ask: isn’t winter riding dangerous? Actually, a survey of winter bikers conducted through Icebike.org in 1999 suggests otherwise. When asked “What was your worst cycling accident?” only 4% of the 403 respondents cited
injuries that required medical attention. An astounding 50% experienced minor falls with no injury, and 21% experienced no falls at all (icebike.org). Apparently winter riding isn’t as dangerous as you’d think. Consider this: Even if you do fall, it won’t be as bad as it could be in the summer. In the summer, bare arms and legs are exposed to road rash on falls that otherwise wouldn’t occur in the winter; your layers will protect your skin from road rash. In many ways, winter riding may actually be safer than summer riding.

**Conclusion**

Even in the winter, there are no excuses for not making short trips on a bicycle. The money you spend on accessories (which will last years) that make biking a comfortable and reasonable form of transportation will be outweighed by the money you save on gas and maintenance expenses over the same time period, not to mention the decrease in your ecological footprint. Additionally, concerns about the commute being longer are nullified by the fact that you are, in essence, multi-tasking by simultaneously commuting and exercising, activities which we tend to view as mutually exclusive. Ultimately, the most important benefit to remember is your ensuing happiness once you recommit to your bike. **Remember how much fun you had as a kid riding your bike around the neighborhood?** That freedom is hanging there in your garage, waiting to be rediscovered, hoping that—one day soon—your feet will finally grace its pedals once more.
ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING

DEFINTION: An argumentative essay uses reasoning, logic, and evidence—not emotion—to take a definitive stand on a controversial or debatable issue. The essay explores two sides of a topic and proves why one side or position is the best.
Organizational Strategies for the Argumentative Essay

Difference between persuasive and argumentative writing.

Students are used to aggressively convincing a reader to take their side in persuasive writing. However, argumentative writing is much more balanced. It requires the development of both sides of an issue, offering several claims for one side while acknowledging that there are valid counterclaims from the opposition. Argumentative writing is about giving the reader another perspective to consider on a debatable topic and proving why that position is the superior choice.

Option #1: State your position at the beginning. List and explain the reasons for your choice. Acknowledge the other side’s arguments; then, disprove/refute those arguments.

This option is useful when your audience already has some knowledge of the issue. It allows you to be more assertive, thus making a stronger argument.

- Select the strongest evidence from your research and present your points—usually one point per body paragraph.
- Next, explain one or two of the opposing side’s points to show how readers might object to your argument. Then, show how these arguments are not reasonable, not logical, or not effective (refute them). Be sure to reassert your own viewpoint and why it is the best choice.

Option #2: Present both sides of the issue, then state your position and explain why that position is the better of the two.

This option is useful if you did not have an opinion on the issue prior to research, or your audience is not very familiar with your topic.

- One half to two-thirds of your paper explains the issue, shows the two opposing sides, and gives an assessment of each. You will need a good amount of body paragraphs to do this; the exact number will depend on how many points you have to discuss (and the length requirement of the paper). You could go through the issue point by point, discussing what one side believes for one paragraph, followed by what the other side believes in another paragraph, and so on, until you’ve discussed all the arguable points.
Organizational Strategies for the Argumentative Essay (Cont.)

- The remaining half or third of your paper will be the stating your position on the topic you just “argued.” You could accomplish this in one or several paragraphs, and it is, in effect, your conclusion. This strategy allows you to present both sides equally and then draw your conclusion after considering each side. When you state your position and explain your reasons, be sure not to repeat the same words that you used in previous paragraphs.
Strategies to Organize an Argumentative Essay
Consider your topic and choose the strategy that best serves it

All argumentative essays have PROS and CONS. The best way to strategize is to decide what the PRO and CON points are and then organize them in one of the following ways:

(Strategies found: http://www.buowl.boun.edu.tr/students/types)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Strategy #1</strong></th>
<th><strong>Strategy #2</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Argument</strong></td>
<td><strong>Counterargument</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRO Idea 1</td>
<td>CON Idea 1 and Refutation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRO Idea 2</td>
<td>CON Idea 2 and Refutation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRO Idea 3</td>
<td>CON Idea 3 and Refutation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Counterargument and rebuttals/refutations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Argument</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CON Idea 1 and Refutation</td>
<td>PRO Idea 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CON Idea 2 and Refutation</td>
<td>PRO Idea 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CON Idea 3 and Refutation</td>
<td>PRO Idea 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strategy #3:** Best used when the PRO and CON points directly oppose one another

**Counterargument and Argument (intertwined)**
CON idea 1
   Refutation/Pro Idea 1
CON idea 2
   Refutation/Pro Idea 2
CON idea 3
   Refutation/Pro Idea 3

OR

PRO idea 1
   CON 1 and Refutation
PRO idea 2
   CON 2 and Refutation
PRO idea 3
   CON 3 Refutation
Blank Graphic Organizer for Argumentative Essay

Thesis Statement:

Stance A:
  Claim 1:
  Claim 2:
  Claim 3:

Stance B (opposing):
  Counterclaim 1:
  Counterclaim 2:
  Counterclaim 3:

Rebuttal:
Sample Graphic Organizer for Argumentative Essay

**Thesis Statement:** Ultimately, Americans’ use of social media is disintegrating social customs, creating a lazier, more distracted society, and making it easier for sexual predators to prey on children.

**Stance A:** Social media sites are more harmful to our society than they are helpful.

- **Claim 1:** The overuse of social media is damaging relationships and eroding social customs.
- **Claim 2:** A copious amount of time is spent on social media sites, distracting Americans of all ages from more worthy activities like doing homework, spending time with family, or going outside.
- **Claim 3:** Social media sites make it easier for sexual predators to target children.

**Stance B (opposing):** Social media sites are very beneficial to our society.

- **Counterclaim 1:** On the other hand, social media can strengthen relationships and improve our ability to connect.
- **Counterclaim 2:** Proponents of social media say that many productive activities can now be done on social media sites, including work for school.
- **Counterclaim 3:** Some would argue that this problem is prevented because social media sites have safeguards to prevent underage kids from joining. Also, it’s the parents’ responsibility to monitor their young children’s Internet activity.

**Rebuttal:** We are increasingly more dependent on our electronic devices.

**Rebuttal:** Collaboration, if not done ethically, can lead to cheating.

**Rebuttal:** Users can lie about their age. No accountability.
Sample Outline for Argumentative Essay (Strategy #3)

Social Media’s Dangers to Society

Thesis: Ultimately, Americans’ use of social media is disintegrating social customs, creating a lazier, more distracted society, and making it easier for sexual predators to prey on children.

I. Disintegrating social customs

   A. Damaging relationships [Evidence]
      1. Tone [Elaboration]
      2. Misinterpretation [Elaboration]

   B. Building relationships [Evidence]
      1. Online dating [Elaboration]
      2. Dependency on devices [Elaboration]

II. Distracted society

   A.

      1.
      2.

   B.

      1.
      2.

III. Sexual predators

   A.

      1.
      2.

   B.

      1.
      2.
Sample Argumentative Essay

Introduction

Your grandmother’s birthday is tomorrow. Option one: handwrite a thoughtful note, write out the address on an envelope, remember to use a stamp, and mail your grandma her birthday card. Option two: get on Facebook, go to your grandma’s page, and write, “Happy birthday!” on her wall. Which seems more appealing? Which would she probably prefer? The answers to these questions shed light on how social media sites like Facebook and Twitter are changing the way people interact with one another. Many argue that these changes are for the better: We can now get in touch with friends and family in a matter of seconds, we can read our favorite stars’ Twitter feeds to find out what they had for breakfast, or we can post pictures of our latest adventures. Are these changes actually improving the way we live? Ultimately, Americans’ use of social media is disintegrating social customs, creating a lazier, more distracted society, and making it easier for sexual predators to prey on children.

Body (Claim)

Why is a handwritten card infinitely more appealing than a Facebook message? It takes time and thought. However, many messages are sent every day without these two important elements, and the result is a more socially inept America. Teenagers are asking each other out on Twitter. Arguments between friends and relatives are being hashed out on Facebook. According to a 2012 Pew Internet report, “15% of adult social network users had an experience on a social networking site that caused a relationship to end” (“Social Networking Sites”). How can this be? It is not hard to figure out. An important element of any face-to-face discussion is
tone, and this is precisely what is lost on social networking sites. “Sorry, my bad” can be interpreted as either sincere or sarcastic. On the Internet, tone is often misinterpreted, which leads to arguments. Most importantly, these social interaction skills can’t just be turned on and off when needed. Having conversations, reading facial expressions, making eye contact, and interpreting tone have to be practiced and refined through repetition. If everyone abandons face-to-face dialogue, America will become a society that interacts solely through machines.

Body (Counterclaim/Rebuttal)

On the other hand, some connections made through social media lead to happily-ever-afters. More and more romantic relationships begin online. Websites like eHarmony, match.com, Christian Mingle, and JDate allow individuals to connect with potential partners from the safety of their own homes. While these relationships don’t begin with face-to-face encounters, they can sometimes flourish into meaningful and lasting unions. Nevertheless, more and more people rely on their devices to connect with others. We risk losing the art of live conversation because we are “married” to our machines.

Conclusion

Obviously, social media has many benefits. Professional social media sites allow businesspeople to collaborate and share projects more easily than ever. Distant relatives can see pictures of their grandchildren every day thanks to camera-happy mothers. High school friends who live on opposite sides of the country can reminisce about the good old days via Facebook chat. In many ways, these media sites keep us connected; however, they seem to do more harm than good. American citizens are losing the art of conversation, as family members are
spending more face time with their electronic devices than they are with each other. These sites create a less productive America by tempting us to waste time. And unfortunately, social media sites, such as Facebook, provide thousands of sexual predators the opportunity to masquerade as teenagers and prey on minors. America was once known for being a land of intense work ethic and integrity. If society is not careful, social media sites will destroy that reputation—one click at a time.
DEFINITION: Narrative Writing is storytelling. A narrative may be fiction containing a fabricated story line, or it may be non-fiction, based on events that really happened. We use narrative writing frequently in our daily lives whether it is documenting a special event (a first school dance) or chronicling a trip or vacation (Close-Up trip to D.C.).
Blank Graphic Organizer for Narrative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Introduction</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attention Getter:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Context:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Setting:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characters:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conflict:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis: (Realization/Lesson Learned)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Body Paragraphs: Describe the events in sequential order.</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Event:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sensory Details:</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Conclusion</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thesis:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesis:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorable Statement:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Graphic Organizer for Narrative

**Introduction**
Attention Getter:
What holidays are stereotypically about

Context:

**Setting:** Christmas Eve—Cold, snowy night

**Characters:** Grandpa, travelling to store for grandkids

**Conflict:** Wants to make Christmas good for grandkids but should not be travelling

**Thesis (Realization/Lesson Learned):** Being with family during holidays is more important than having fun or receiving gifts

**Body Paragraphs: Describe the events in sequential order.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Event:</th>
<th>Second Event:</th>
<th>Third Event:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grandpa’s Drive to Store</td>
<td>Grandpa’s Accident</td>
<td>Grandpa’s Hospital Stay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sensory Details:**

Driving is dangerous

Snow falling at a quick clip
Black ice hugging roads
Air bitter and chilling

Snow swirling and spinning
Sky coal black
Ground slick

**Conclusion**

**Thesis (Realization/Lesson learned):** Being with family during holidays is more important than having fun or receiving gifts

Synthesis: Grandpa’s drive in hazardous conditions, his accident, his hospital stay

Memorable Statement: Worst, yet best Christmas ever
Sample Outline for Narrative

A Holiday Realization

Thesis: For the first time in my life, I realized that the holidays are about being surrounded by family and not just doing fun things or getting great gifts.

I. Grandpa’s drive to the store
   A. The weather
      1. Snowing
      2. Black ice on roads
      3. Cold, brisk air
   B. The drive
      1. Swirling snow
      2. Roads slick and dangerous

II. Grandpa’s accident
    A.
       1. 
       2. 
    B.
       1. 
       2. 

III. Grandpa’s hospital stay
    A.
       1. 
       2. 
    B.
       1. 
       2.
Sample Narrative Essay

Introduction

A Holiday Realization

As a child, I had always believed that holidays were all about the gifts and parties that go along with them. Valentine’s Day meant candy and cards that read “I love you.” Easter was filled with baskets of pastel colored goodies and dyed hardboiled eggs put on display. Thanksgiving was comfort food in large amounts, and Christmas was gifts under the overly-decorated tree. It wasn’t until two years ago around the end of the year when winter snow covered a fine layer of ice already on the ground that my definition of holidays changed. It wasn’t until my grandpa, not always the most logical man, decided he had to drive to the store for one more holiday necessity that altered what holidays meant to me. It wasn’t until I celebrated a holiday in the hospital that I realized that the most important part of any holiday is the people, the family, you spend it with, not the things you do or the things you get.

Body Paragraph

As Grandpa left the house that December 24th at dusk, snow was falling at a quick clip and rapidly disguising the black ice hugging most of the roads. The air was bitter, chilling people through their coats, all the way to the bone. My grandpa had driven the fifteen miles into town because we were out of milk and he knew we kids needed our milk. He made it to the one-stop store and bought a gallon of milk just as the snow, falling even harder, began to swirl and
spin. By the time Grandpa was making the trek back home in his truck, the sky was dark, coal black, and the ground was deceptively slick. It was a good time to go home and stay home.

Conclusion

For the first time in my life, I realized that the holidays are about being surrounded by family and not just doing fun things or getting great gifts. It took my grandpa’s frightening accident on Christmas Eve and his subsequent lengthy hospital stay to make this clear to me. There in that hospital room, I discovered that I had everything that makes Christmas when my family stood by my side. That year was both the worst Christmas, yet best Christmas I have ever had.
Revising

The art of revising an essay involves reading, re-reading, re-thinking, evaluating choices and perhaps adding and/or subtracting ideas and/or re-organizing ideas.
(The term *revision* literally means “to see again.”)

Consider the following when revising.

**Adding and Subtracting Ideas:**

1. Have you included all the main points you had hoped to cover?
2. Will additional points strengthen your essay?
3. Are there points that are irrelevant and need to be deleted?
4. Are there points that are repetitive and need to be deleted?
5. Will any of these deletions weaken your essay?

**Organizing/Re-organizing Ideas:**

1. Does the order of your main points make sense?
2. Can you re-organize the order of your ideas to help your reader better understand the point you are making?
3. Do the transitional devices you have chosen best maintain coherence in your essay? (See page --- for a list of effective transitions.)
Editing

The process of editing involves a meticulous reading of your essay in which you look for errors in sentence structure, diction, grammar, spelling and punctuation – the basic “mechanics” of good writing. To catch all “errors,” you may wish to ask another person to help you proofread (as this person has not worked with your writing as extensively as you have.) You may also wish to read your paper backwards to allow you to concentrate on individual words rather than the ideas (which you have already worked on in the revision process.)

Sentence Structure:

- A complete sentence exists when a group of words has a subject and a predicate and expresses a complete thought. Unfortunately, however, two types of sentence structure errors sometimes persist in the writing of novice writers.

- The first kind of error is the writing of two or more sentences as though they were one sentence. The writer makes the mistake of using a comma or no punctuation at all between the sentences, creating a run-on sentence.

- The second type of error is the writing of part of a sentence, a fragment, as though it were a complete sentence able to stand by itself.

- It is easy to think of these two writing errors as opposites; the fragment is not complete while the run-on sentence is more than complete.

Run-on Sentences

A Run-on Sentence is a group of words that contains more than one complete thought contained within one sentence.

How to Correct a Run-On Sentence

To correct a run-on sentence,

1. Separate the two thoughts with a period and a capital letter to begin the second thought.

2. Join the two thoughts with a comma and a coordinating conjunction. (And, Or, For, Nor, Yet, But, So)

3. Join the two thoughts with a subordinating conjunction. (Subordinating conjunctions show time, cause or reason, purpose or result and condition)

4. Join the two thoughts with a semi-colon.
Editing (Cont.)

How to Correct a Run-on Sentence (Cont.)

Sample Run-on Sentence (comma splice): The choice of a good camera is difficult, there are many good cameras on the market.

Possible Corrections:

1. Separate the two thoughts with a period and a capital letter:
   Sample: The choice of a good camera is difficult. There are many good cameras on the market.

2. Join the two thoughts with a comma and a coordinating conjunction:
   Sample: The choice of a good camera is difficult, for there are many good cameras on the market.

3. Join the two thoughts with a subordinating conjunction:
   Sample: The choice of a good camera is difficult because there are many good ones on the market.

4. Join the two thoughts with a semi-colon:
   Sample: The choice of a good camera is difficult; there are many good ones on the market.

Sentence Fragments: A sentence fragment is a group of words that does not express a complete thought.

How to Correct a Sentence Fragment: Some sentence fragments are phrase fragments. A phrase is a group of words that does not contain both a subject and a predicate and therefore cannot stand on its own.
(Remember that all complete sentences must have a subject/predicate.)

To correct a phrase fragment,

1. Connect the phrase to an existing sentence.

2. Add the missing element or elements and create a new sentence. If missing a subject, add a subject. If missing a predicate, add a predicate. Sometimes the fragment is void of both subject and predicate and, therefore, needs be to re-written to express a complete thought.
Editing (Cont.)

Sample Fragment One: On the school steps I saw Allison. Waiting for her mother to pick her up.

1. Connect the phrase to an existing sentence.
   Sample: On the school steps I saw Allison, waiting for her mother to pick her up.

2. Add the missing element and create a new sentence.
   Sample: On the school steps I saw Allison. She was waiting for her mother to pick her up. (Subject (“She”) was added)

Sample Fragment Two: My parents finally gave me permission. To go with Bill to the game at West Point.

1. Connect the phrase to an existing sentence.
   Sample: My parents finally gave me permission to go with Bill to the game at West Point.

2. Add the missing elements and create a new sentence.
   My parents finally gave me permission. They said I could go with Bill to the game at West Point. (Both subject (“They”) and predicate (“said”) were added.)

Other sentence fragments are clause (dependent clause) fragments. A clause does contain a subject and a predicate, but because the clause is dependent, meaning it cannot stand on its own, it becomes a fragment when it is incorrectly separated from the sentence to which it belongs. A dependent clause does not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone. (An independent clause is a complete sentence.)

To correct a clause fragment:

1. Connect the clause to an existing sentence.

2. Add the missing elements and create a new sentence.

Sample Fragment: Construction work on the express highway will not begin until fall. Because traffic is heaviest in the summer.

1. Connect the clause to an existing sentence.
   Sample: Construction work on the express highway will not begin until fall because traffic is heaviest in the summer.

2. Add the missing elements and create a new sentence.
   Sample: Construction work on the express highway will not begin until fall. This plan was chosen because traffic is heaviest in the summer. (Both subject (“plan”) and predicate (“was chosen”) were added.)
Editing (Cont.)

Diction:

1. Have you chosen precise words which create pictures in your reader’s mind?
2. Have you considered the denotative and connotative meanings of words?
3. Are there any word choices which could be altered to make your writing more interesting or lively?

Grammar:

1. Are there problems with subject-verb agreement?
2. Are there problems with pronoun usage or pronoun-antecedent agreement?
3. Are all adjectives and adverbs correctly used?
4. See the list below.

Spelling:

1. Are there words that spell checker might overlook, such as they’re and their or you’re and your?
2. Does the spelling of each word, such as affect or effect, reflect the intended meaning?
3. See the list below.

Punctuation:

1. Do all sentences end with an appropriate punctuation mark?
2. Are commas semicolons and colons used effectively?
3. Are quotation marks used correctly?
4. Do special punctuation marks, such as dashes and ellipses, fit with the writing?
5. See list below.

Mechanics:

See list below.
Substandard Usage

have for of

have in place of of in such phrases as could of, should of, might of, must of, etc.

seen for saw

seen in place of saw in phrases such as I saw the game.

gonna for going to

gonna for going to as in We were going to do it later.

have went for have gone

past tense went for past participle gone as in They have gone already.

cause, cuz for because

cause or cuz instead of the word because

he (she, it, they) done

past participle done instead of past tense did or without a helping verb
Examples: He did the job or He had done the job yesterday.

we (they) was

using we (they) was instead of we (they) were

hisself, theirself, theirselves, themselfs

None of these are words. Use himself or themselves.

double negatives

This occurs when a second negative is added to a sentence which already has a negative word in it. Examples: She did not have any money instead of She did not have no money. There was hardly a ticket left rather than There wasn’t hardly a ticket left.

ain’t

an incorrect contraction; use am not, is not, are not, have not, has not
Frequently Confused Words

a use before a consonant sound; a cat, a house
an use before a vowel sound; an owl, an hour

are verb used with plural subjects; Where are the letters?
our possessive form of we; Our plan did not work.

hear verb that is a synonym of listen; The teacher could not hear me.
here use to indicate position, place, or time; Here lies Harold Brown.
it’s contraction of it is; It’s over there.
its possessive form of pronoun it; The animal shook its head.

know verb used to mean understand or be aware of as true; I know you.
no negative response; I voted no. No one will go.
now at the present time; Now is the time to begin the work.

lose verb that is a synonym of misplace; Did you lose your keys again?
loose synonym of not tight; The child’s shoestrings are loose.

there adverb indicating position or place; The car is over there.
their possessive form of they; I see their new house.
they’re contraction of they are; They’re not coming tonight.

through preposition meaning in one side and out the other; around; I walked through the park.
Adverb meaning finished or done; I am through with my homework.

threw past tense of verb meaning to hurl; The pitcher threw the ball over the catcher’s head.

thru substandard usage for through

to used for direction; He went to the store.
used as a preposition before a noun/pronoun; She gave it to him.
used before a verb form to make an infinitive; He wanted to go.

too synonym for also or means very or extremely; She went, too. It’s too hot.
two number; The child wanted two desserts.

whose possessive of pronoun who; Whose coat is lying on the floor?
who’s contraction for who is; Who’s responsible for the mistake?

your possessive form of you; This is your book.
you’re contraction of you are; You’re not listening