

EFFECTIVE ACADEMIC WRITING 1

THE PARAGRAPH

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OXFORD

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Introduction

Effective Academic Writing is a three-book series intended to usher students into the world of academic writing. The goal of the series is to provide students and their teachers with a practical and efficient approach to learning the skills, strategies, and knowledge that are necessary for succeeding in content coursework. A parallel goal is to provide opportunities for students to explore their opinions, discuss their ideas, and share their experiences through written communication. By guiding budding writers through the experience of composing various types of paragraphs and short papers, we hope to provide students with the tools and the confidence necessary for college success.

The Paragraph

Book 1 of *Effective Academic Writing, The Paragraph*, introduces students at the high-beginning to low-intermediate level to the academic paragraph. The first unit provides a review of sentence structure and an introduction to developing and formatting an academic paragraph. Each of the following five units then addresses a particular rhetorical mode and provides user-friendly guidance to mastering the form. The book also offers numerous opportunities for practicing relevant grammar points. All grammar presentations and practice are correlated to *Grammar Sense 1*.

Book 1 contains several features designed to support students in developing the skills that they need for college writing:

- Each unit contains an authentic text to provide ideas and context for the assignment.
- At strategic points in the unit, students read and analyze authentic student paragraphs to see how other students have written on the same or similar topics.
- Each unit contains concise and effective language presentations designed to develop students' understanding of rhetorical modes and to improve their grammatical accuracy.
- Each unit offers useful writing outlines so that students can structure their writing and internalize the practice.
- Each unit offers collaborative learning activities allowing students to work together and share ideas.
- At relevant points in the unit, editing exercises and editing checklists are provided so that students can refine their writing.
- Timed writing activities come at the close of each unit to prepare students for in-class writing.
- A series of learner-friendly appendices are provided at the back of the book to encourage student independence. A glossary of common grammar terms for student reference is included.

Unit Organization

Each unit introduces a theme and a writing task and then guides the writer through a five-part process of gathering ideas, organizing an outline, drafting, revising, and editing. As students write, they practice specific skills and put language knowledge to work to produce a paragraph that follows academic conventions. The rhetorical and language-related goals of the unit are identified on the opener page.

Part 1

Part 1 opens with an image to spark interest as students begin thinking about the topic. This is followed by a short authentic text. Students answer questions about the text that will help them connect the writer's ideas to their own knowledge and experience. They then move on to a freewriting activity, an unstructured writing task in which they can explore the topic without worrying about organization or grammar.

Part 2

In Part 2 students are introduced to a specific rhetorical mode. They begin by brainstorming ideas and vocabulary that they will use to write their paragraph. They then learn about rhetorical organizational features and read and analyze a student paragraph. Finally, students produce an outline for the paragraph they will write later in the unit.

Part 3

In Part 3 students develop the ideas from their outline and produce a first draft. This part opens with a second student paragraph for students to analyze. As they answer questions about the second student model, students review the organizational features learned in Part 2. They are then introduced to specific, level-appropriate language points that will help students shape and structure their writing. Students now write their first draft and, using a peer-review checklist, check each other's writing for organization and clarity of ideas.

Part 4

In Part 4 students edit their writing and produce a final draft. This part focuses on particular grammar trouble spots relevant to the theme and the rhetorical style presented in the unit. Following the concise language presentation, students complete practice exercises to help them develop their grammar skills and build confidence. Students then move on to editing their own writing, and produce a final draft.

Part 5

The final part of the unit is titled "Putting It All Together." This is the summary of the other parts of the unit. Through a series of skill exercises, students review the points covered in Parts 1–4. They are then given the opportunity to write a timed paragraph using a similar rhetorical focus, but on a different topic. Guidelines for using their time efficiently are suggested. This part also provides students with a comprehensive checklist to review what they have written. The unit closes with suggested tasks for future writing that can be used for more practice.

Unit 1

The Sentence and the Paragraph

Unit Goals

Rhetorical focus:

- paragraph organization
- formatting a paragraph
- unity and coherence in a paragraph

Language focus:

- simple sentence structure
- capitalization and end punctuation
- fragments and run-on sentences

Stimulating Ideas

**Exercise 1** Thinking about the topic

Discuss the pictures with a partner.

- Look at the people writing. What kind of writing is each person doing?
- Are they writing for others or for themselves?
- What other kinds of writing can you think of?
- What kind of writing do you usually do?

Rhetorical Focus**The Paragraph**

A paragraph is a group of sentences about a topic. In this book, you will learn how to organize and write the following kinds of paragraphs.

- In a **descriptive paragraph** the writer describes a person, a place, or a thing.
- In an **example paragraph** the writer explains a topic by giving examples.

- In a **process paragraph** the writer explains how to do something step by step.
- In an **opinion paragraph** the writer expresses his or her feelings, ideas, and opinions about a topic.
- In a **narrative paragraph** the writer tells a story.

Formatting a Paragraph

Margins

A paragraph must have a margin on the right and a margin on the left. This means that the paragraph begins 1 inch or 1 1/4 inches from the edge of the paper.

Spacing

A paragraph should be double-spaced.

Indenting

The first sentence of a paragraph must be indented. This means that it begins five spaces in from the left margin. Indenting shows the reader that a new paragraph is beginning. On a computer, you can indent with the Tab key.

Connected Sentences

The sentences in a paragraph should follow each other. It is not a paragraph if every sentence begins on a new line. A well-supported paragraph has at least 5 sentences and often more.

Title

A paragraph by itself usually has a title. This is one word or a group of words that tells what the topic is.

Exercise 2 Identifying the elements of a paragraph

Read the paragraph. Then label the formatting elements of the paragraph. Use the words in the box.

a. margin b. double spacing c. indent d. title

1. _____ → **Red**
2. _____ → I love the color red. No other color symbolizes so many different emotions and experiences. Life would be very boring without the color
3. _____ → red. Fires would not burn in the same way. The sunset would not be interesting, and blood would not be so surprisingly beautiful. Red is powerful when it appears in nature, and it is also powerful when it
4. _____ → appears in our emotions. Red is love. Red is anger. Red is beauty. I like to live life in a strong way, so I think I will always admire the color red.

In Part 2 you will ...

- learn about paragraph organization

Developing a Paragraph

Rhetorical Focus

Paragraph Organization

A typical paragraph has a **topic sentence**, **supporting sentences**, and a **concluding sentence**.

- The **topic sentence** introduces the topic and tells what the writer will say about the topic.
- The sentences that follow further explain and support the topic sentence. They are called **supporting sentences**.
- The **concluding sentence** often repeats the information in the topic sentence in a different way.

Exercise 1 Reading a student paragraph

Read the paragraph below and note the **topic sentence**, **supporting sentences**, and **concluding sentence**. What was it that scared the barefoot boy?

Barefoot Boy

I had a scary experience when I was a young boy. One evening while my parents were eating dinner, I was playing barefoot in the yard with my toys. Even now I still remember the perfume of the flowers and the moisture of the grass. While I was sitting on the grass and playing with a truck, I looked up at the sky, and my attention was distracted by the beauty of the stars. Then I felt something cold and smooth slide over my feet. I stayed perfectly still, but I looked down at my feet. Then I saw a snake slowly slithering over my toes. I felt terrible and afraid, so my heart beat very fast. After the snake moved away, I screamed to my parents for help, and they captured the snake and took it away. The experience frightened me, and I never went outside barefoot again.

topic sentence

supporting sentences

concluding sentence

Exercise 2 Analyzing the student paragraph

Examine the organization of the paragraph by answering the questions.

1. What is the topic sentence? Write it below.

2. How many supporting sentences are there? _____
3. In your opinion, do the supporting sentences explain the topic sentence? _____
4. Write the concluding sentence below.

5. Does the concluding sentence repeat the information in the topic sentence in a new way? _____

Rhetorical Focus

The Topic Sentence

The topic sentence is usually the first or second sentence in a paragraph. It introduces a new idea. It presents the topic and explains what the writer will say about the topic. This explanation is called the **controlling idea**.

Read the following topic sentences. In each one, the topic is *my friend*. The controlling ideas explain what the writer will say about the topic. These controlling ideas tell the reader what to expect in the supporting sentences.

topic

controlling idea

My friend is an honest person.

My friend is the funniest person I know.

My friend has a terribly dangerous job.

A topic sentence must not be a simple fact or a specific detail. The controlling idea must say something about the topic that can then be supported, developed, or demonstrated in the supporting sentences. The controlling idea must also not be too general, or the topic sentence will be unclear.

A surprise party is a kind of party. (too general)

There were 14 guests at my surprise birthday party. (too specific)

My classmates gave me an unforgettable surprise party for my 18th birthday.

The last topic sentence is effective because it introduces the topic and has a controlling idea that can be developed in the supporting sentences. The paragraph will probably tell the story of the party.

Exercise 3 Identifying topics and controlling ideas

In each topic sentence below, circle the topic and underline the controlling idea.

1. Hiking is the best way to explore nature closely.
2. My uncle had a frightening experience as a young man.
3. Text messaging has become popular among teenagers.
4. Effective time management requires four easy steps.
5. Every college student should take a computer course.

Exercise 4 Identifying effective topic sentences

In each sentence below, circle the topic and underline the controlling idea. If the sentence does not contain an effective controlling idea, write an X in the blank. For the effective topic sentences, write what you think the supporting sentences will be about.

1. My doctor is very kind to his patients.
The writer will give examples of ways in which his doctor is kind to patients.
2. Fried rice is easy to prepare if you follow some simple steps.

3. I am going to write about my country.

4. I had an adventure in the jungle last year.

5. Video games are not bad for children.

Exercise 5 Writing topic sentences

Use each word or phrase below to write a topic sentence with a controlling idea. Then share your sentences with a partner.

1. Pets
Pets are good companions for older people.
2. A first date

3. A terrible teacher

4. Tennis

Rhetorical Focus

Supporting Sentences

Supporting sentences add information about the topic and the controlling idea. Supporting sentences can include **definitions**, **explanations**, and **examples**. Read the topic sentence below. Then study the types of supporting sentences that might follow it.

topic

controlling idea

Young people are too dependent on computers.

Supporting definition

Dependency on computers means that young people cannot perform the normal tasks and functions of daily life without them.

Supporting explanation

In the old days, people memorized important information, but today's youth rely on their computers, cell phones, and PDA's to do assignments, record numbers, and save important information. As a result, they can find themselves unprepared in an emergency such as an electrical blackout. Once their batteries die, these people will not be able communicate.

Supporting example

For example, I do all my schoolwork on my computer. When my computer crashed last week, I lost my only draft of an essay that was due the next day. As a result, I got a bad grade.

Exercise 6 Identifying topic sentences and supporting sentences

For each set of sentences, write **TS** next to the topic sentence. Write **SS** next to the supporting sentences.

- SS a. Mosquitoes are attracted to heat.

SS b. Mosquitoes will fly several miles to find food.

SS c. Only the female mosquito bites.

TS d. Mosquitoes are interesting insects.
- ___ a. One of my hobbies is listening to international music.

___ b. I have a large collection of world music recordings.

___ c. My friends and I like to introduce each other to new international artists we discover.

___ d. I enjoy going to concerts by musicians from different countries.

3. ____ a. I like the way people decorate their homes and stores.
____ b. I enjoy going shopping in cold weather.
____ c. I enjoy the parties and celebrations of the winter holiday.
____ d. I really like the winter holidays.
4. ____ a. My new apartment has big closets.
____ b. My new apartment is perfect for my roommate and me.
____ c. My new apartment is close to school and work.
____ d. My new apartment is not too expensive for students.

Rhetorical Focus

The Concluding Sentence

The concluding, or final, sentence of a paragraph usually reminds the reader of the topic and controlling idea of the paragraph. The concluding sentence restates the main idea.

Topic sentence

I love the color red.

Concluding sentence

I like to live life in a strong way, so I think I will always admire the color red.

In addition to restating the main idea, the concluding sentence may:

- warn the reader.
If you do not follow these steps, you may not get the grade that you want.
- make a prediction.
The automotive industry will change, and soon everyone will be driving pollution-free cars.
- give an opinion about the topic.
Some people might disagree, but I think lamb is the best meat for grilling.

Sometimes writers signal the concluding sentence by using the phrase *In conclusion*.

In conclusion, learning a second language has many advantages.

Exercise 7 Identifying supporting sentences and concluding sentences

Read the topic sentences below. Write *SS* next to the three supporting sentences and write *CS* next to the concluding sentence.

1. The best way to see San Francisco is by walking.
 - CS a. When you explore San Francisco by foot, you can experience all the city has to offer.
 - SS b. When you walk, you experience the different smells of the restaurants, the plants and sometimes the ocean.
 - SS c. You can stop and look in the windows of shops or sit on a bench for a short while and look at interesting people.
 - SS d. In a car or a bus, you cannot stop easily if you see something interesting because parking is difficult.

2. An egg taco takes only five minutes to make.
 - ___ a. Your delicious egg taco is ready to eat in just a few minutes.
 - ___ b. Heat a flour tortilla in a small amount of water.
 - ___ c. Scramble two eggs with a little salt and pepper.
 - ___ d. When the eggs are done, slide them into the warm tortilla and fold it over.

3. My paper is late because something happened to my computer.
 - ___ a. I was almost finished writing my paper, and I was checking it for errors.
 - ___ b. Suddenly, my computer screen went blank, and the power was gone.
 - ___ c. The accident made me lose many hours of work, so I could not turn in my essay on time.
 - ___ d. Later, I learned that a squirrel got on the power line and disrupted the electricity.

4. I enjoy the riverwalk in San Antonio.
 - ___ a. The riverwalk is lower than the streets of the city.
 - ___ b. You can walk down stairs to a canal with a stone path and plants on each side.
 - ___ c. There are many shops, restaurants and hotels along the path.
 - ___ d. The riverwalk is a pleasant place to spend an afternoon or evening in San Antonio.

Exercise 8 Examining concluding sentences

Circle the word that best describes each of the concluding sentences below.

- If you follow these steps, you will never lose your keys again.
a. prediction b. opinion c. warning
- Students who are not careful with credit cards can go into debt quickly.
a. prediction b. opinion c. warning
- Venice, Italy, is the most beautiful city in the world.
a. prediction b. opinion c. warning
- You will be able to produce a beautiful paper crane with only a little bit of practice.
a. prediction b. opinion c. warning
- There are many reasons why movie stars make poor politicians.
a. prediction b. opinion c. warning
- The desert is a beautiful but dangerous place to hike, so do your research and take time to prepare carefully.
a. prediction b. opinion c. warning

In Part 3 you will ...

- learn about unity and coherence in paragraphs.

Unity and Coherence

Good academic writers follow specific steps to make sure their writing is both clear and accurate. They gather, organize, and develop ideas. They write drafts, sometimes two or more. When they revise each draft, good writers look for unity, coherence, and grammatical problems.

Rhetorical Focus

Unity within a Paragraph

A paragraph must have unity. A paragraph has unity when all the sentences support a single idea.

- The paragraph must have one controlling idea in the topic sentence. Otherwise the paragraph loses focus.
- The supporting sentences must support or explain the controlling idea with examples, details, steps, or definitions. Otherwise, the paragraph will not be about one single idea.
- The concluding sentence should restate the idea in the topic sentence. Otherwise the main idea might not be clear.

Topic sentence

My friend Macarena is generous.

Supporting sentences

She often lets travelers stay in her home. She has hosted many students temporarily. She sends money to her family in Chile every month to help them with their bills. She always brings flowers or food to her friends when they are sick or have a need.

Concluding sentence

Macarena is one of the most generous people I know.

Note that all the sentences are about Macarena's generosity. A sentence about the way she looks or about her job will not support the unity of the paragraph unless it somehow relates to Macarena's generosity.

Exercise 1 Reading a student paragraph

Read the paragraph. Where did the pink sheep come from?

The Pink Sheep

Many years ago, a special gift came to me in an interesting way. When I was a small boy, I enjoyed playing in my garden. One day, I found a hole in the wall of my garden. It was near the ground, so I could not see through the hole, but I knew that behind the wall was my neighbor's garden. Who made that hole? I felt really interested, so I used rocks to make the hole wider. One day, when I was trying to break through the wall, I noticed a small hand appear from the hole. The hand was holding a rubber sheep. It was pink and it had wide eyes. I caught that rubber sheep. Then I pushed my favorite wooden truck through the hole to give to that child on the other side. Sometimes I bought toys with my lucky New Year money. A long time later, when I was old enough to go out, I went around the corner to find the child who gave me that special gift, but nobody was in that house. My neighbor said that a girl used to live there, and she was the same age as me. I never found her, but her gift has a special meaning for me.

Exercise 2 Analyzing a student paragraph for unity

Examine the organization of the paragraph by answering the questions below. Then compare your answers with a partner.

1. Circle the topic and underline the controlling idea.
2. After you read the controlling idea, what did you expect the supporting ideas to explain. Write your answer in your own words.

3. One sentence in the paragraph is off-topic and does not support the unity of the paragraph. Draw a line through it.
4. Why does this sentence hurt the unity of the paragraph? Write your explanation below.

Exercise 3 Recognizing unity in supporting sentences

Read the following topic sentences. Put a check (✓) next to each sentence below that supports the topic sentence.

1. I am an organized person.
 - a. My desk is always neat and tidy.
 - b. I have a system for organizing my papers, and I can always find what I need.
 - c. I feel uncomfortable when I am in a strange environment.
 - d. My friends always want me to help them put their closets in order.
2. Twenty questions is an easy game to play when you are traveling.
 - a. The person who is "it" must think of a person, place, or object.
 - b. Sometimes people travel by car, and sometimes by train or airplane.
 - c. It is very important to travel with people that you get along with.
 - d. The other players take turns asking questions that can only be answered with "yes" or "no."
3. Tea and coffee are very different from each other.
 - a. Coffee has more caffeine than tea does.
 - b. Coffee and tea both have caffeine.
 - c. People enjoy tea and coffee during social occasions.
 - d. Tea is much more common around the world than coffee is.
4. In my opinion, people spend too much money on cars.
 - a. Some drivers spend a fourth of their income for a car payment, which is unnecessary.
 - b. Cars do not increase in value, so they are not a great investment.
 - c. Car companies are always looking for ways to make vehicles safer on the road.
 - d. People who do not pay cash must also pay interest, so they lose even more money.
5. It is easy to get a sports injury.
 - a. Many people enjoy sports.
 - b. Runners often have problems with their ankles and knees.
 - c. Basketball players can break their fingers or get knocked over by another player.
 - d. Many people make the simple mistake of joining a gym, and then they never go there to exercise.

6. My city is famous because of its architecture.

- ___ a. We have ancient red-tiled buildings around the main square.
- ___ b. The restaurants near the beach serve great seafood.
- ___ c. It has expensive tree-lined boulevards with beautiful limestone buildings and monuments.
- ___ d. A famous university is located on the side of a mountain.

Exercise 4 **Editing for unity**

Read the paragraph below. Cross out the two sentences that are not about the controlling idea.

Life in a New Place

I am a Thai girl living in the U.S., and there are many adjustments that I must make. First of all, I must get used to a new kind of food. I am learning to eat a lot of hamburgers because they are not expensive and they are easy to buy. The people are different and I am learning to meet new foreign friends. For example, two of my new friends are from Pakistan. Pakistan is also an interesting country to visit. The weather requires another kind of adjustment. Some days, it is hot just as in my country, but on other days it is cold and this is very strange for me. I came to the U.S. to study and I enjoy my classes and my teachers. I am adjusting to the U.S. in many ways, but it is not a problem for me because I like to know about different places and people.

Exercise 5 **Developing unity**

Write two supporting sentences for each of the following topic sentences. Then exchange books with a partner and check your partner's sentences for unity.

1. Computers are useful in many ways.

2. There are certain characteristics that I always look for in a good restaurant.

3. When I want to look nice for a party, I follow a few simple steps.

4. There are activities in a park for family members of all ages.

5. There are many ways to show respect to older people.

6. When you are going camping, there are some things you should always take with you.

Rhetorical Focus

Coherence within a Paragraph

A paragraph must also have coherence. This means that the supporting details are organized so that information that goes together appears together.

Writers often use **time**, **space**, or **order of importance** to present the supporting information in a paragraph coherently. The following example is organized by space.

When you drive into the airport, you will see many signs for the different terminals. After you pass the signs, you will drive over a hill. The airport is on the other side of the hill. On your right, you will see the international terminal. This terminal is two stories tall. The front is all glass. On the left, you will see the domestic terminals...

Exercise 6 **Identifying patterns of coherence**

Read the paragraphs below. Then circle the word that best describes the way the paragraph is organized.

Paragraph 1

My favorite restaurant is in an old house. It is very convenient because it is in my neighborhood. We can drive, or if the evening is pleasant, we can walk. It has a nice atmosphere and friendly service. We know some of the waiters and waitresses so we enjoy talking to them because they ask us about our children. We especially like the decorations. The walls are soft yellow, and candles and fresh flowers are on the tables inside and outside. Finally, the food is excellent. The cook is the owner and he makes delicious dishes with fresh ingredients. We always enjoy our meals.

Time

Space

Order of importance

Paragraph 2

My favorite restaurant is in an old house. My husband and I enjoy eating there on summer evenings. We usually walk from our house so we can enjoy our neighbors' gardens and get a little bit of exercise. The afternoon sun shines through the trees but it is not too bright. We arrive at dusk, and if we are lucky, we can sit outside. The waiter brings a basket of warm bread and a cold drink. We have an appetizer or a salad while the sun goes down. Then the waiter lights the candles while we enjoy the main course. By the time we finish desert, it is night time. We walk home slowly, feeling full but happy in the moonlight.

Time

Space

Order of importance

Exercise 7 **Evaluating coherence within a paragraph**

Read the following paragraphs. Which one has better coherence? What is the pattern of organization?

Paragraph 1

Soccer brings the world together in many ways. During the World Cup, people from all over the world are tuned in. If they can not see it in person, they watch it on television. Many countries participate in the world cup. People learn about the teams from different countries, and they learn something about those countries. When people are watching the World Cup, they do not care if the game is on at four a.m. in their country. They will stay up to watch it. They learn about the flags from different countries because they will see the fans.

Paragraph 2

The best way to meet new friends is to take a class. First, all the people in a class have something in common. They all want to learn about the subject, so there is something to talk about. Second, everyone sees each other every time the class meets, so there are many opportunities to get to know others. Third, there are often activities and group projects so students can work together, and this is the best way to get to know people. By the end of the class, it is hard not to know your classmates.

In Part 4 you will ...

- learn about simple sentence structure.
- learn about end punctuation and capitalization.
- learn about fragments and run-on sentences.

Language Focus

Simple Sentence Structure

A sentence is a statement that expresses a complete idea. Sentences form the building blocks of written communication. They include affirmative statements, negative statements, and questions. A complete sentence must have a **subject** and a **verb**.

Subject

The subject tells who or what the sentence is about. Sometimes the subject is singular, and sometimes it is plural.

Fatima smiled. (*singular subject*)

Siblings fight. (*plural subject*)

Subjects can be more than one word.

Lois and Peter have eight children.

The hungry kittens ran to their mother.

Verb

The verb refers to an action or a state. It indicates tense or time. Two common tenses are present and past.

Jared **sings**. (*present tense*)

Ducks **walked** across the street. (*past tense*)

A sentence can have more than one verb.

My brother **studied** hard and **earned** a degree in economics.

Exercise 1 Identifying subjects and verbs

Underline the subject and circle the verb(s) in each sentence.

1. My mother raised seven children.
2. She cooked and cleaned all day long.
3. My father and his brother have a small business.
4. My three sisters live in Vietnam.
5. I help my aunt during the day and go to school in the evening.
6. My parents bought a new car.

Exercise 2 Writing simple sentences

Answer each question below in a complete sentence. When you finish, exchange books with your partner. Then underline the subject and circle the verb in each of your partner's sentences.

1. What sports do you enjoy?

I (enjoy) soccer and tennis.

2. Where do you live?

3. What do you like to do on the weekends?

4. Where do you study?

5. What kind of food do you like?

6. Who do you enjoy spending time with?

Language Focus

Punctuation and Capitalization

- The first word in a sentence is always capitalized.

The wedding lasts for several days.

- A complete sentence can end in a period.

A good speech begins with a joke.

- A question ends with a question mark.

Do you enjoy learning about the world?

- Occasionally, writers use an exclamation mark to give emphasis to a sentence.

I looked down and sliding across my bare foot was a giant green mamba!

Exercise 3 Identifying end punctuation

Read the paragraph. In each sentence, underline the subject and circle the verb(s). Then draw a box around each end punctuation.

Summer by the Sea

My favorite memory (is) about my family. It happened a long time ago before my brother got married and moved out. My parents had seven children. All seven of us piled in one car for a summer holiday by the beach. We traveled in that crowded car for two days! Finally we arrived at a small house near the beach. It had one big room with many beds and an other room for eating and cooking. The kids spent all day outside. We played together in the water. Sometimes, my mother made a picnic dinner. We sat on the sand to eat and watch the sun go down. One night we brought out blankets and slept by the water. I loved that time. We talked and looked at the stars until late at night. This wonderful summer holiday was the best time of my life.

Language Focus

Fragments

Every sentence must have a subject and a verb and express a complete idea. A sentence that is missing a subject or a verb is incomplete. It is called a **fragment**.

Incorrect

I like Minneapolis. Is a clean city.
(subject is missing)

They successful. (verb is missing)

Correct

I like Minneapolis. **It** is a clean city.

They **are** successful.

Exercise 4 Identifying and correcting fragments

Decide whether each fragment below is missing a subject or a verb. Then rewrite it so that it is correct.

1. Some food very spicy.

Some food is very spicy.

2. Corn my favorite vegetable.

3. Is very bright in the afternoon.

4. Takes a nap for two or three hours.

5. Eats rice.

6. There flowers in the market.

Language Focus

Run-on Sentences

Two sentences that run together without correct punctuation between them are called **run-on sentences**. One way to correct a run-on sentence is to put a period between the sentences. Another way is to add a comma and a connecting word.

Incorrect

I received a letter it was from my sister.

(no punctuation between two sentences)

They laughed, I felt better.

(comma alone between two sentences)

Correct

I received a letter. It was from my sister.

(period added between the sentences)

They laughed, and I felt better.

(connecting word added)

Exercise 5 Identifying and correcting run-on sentences

Correct the following run-on sentences by rewriting them on the blanks below.

1. I am a full-time student. I live in a great apartment near campus.
I am a full-time student, and I live in a great apartment near campus.
2. There are mice living underneath my house they make a lot of noise at night.

3. I used to eat rice and vegetables for breakfast now I eat cereal and milk.

4. I do not drive. I ride the bus.

5. I am saving money for a bicycle I also want to buy a camera.

Exercise 6 Editing for fragments and run-on sentences

Correct the three fragments and two run-on errors in the following paragraph. Do not forget to use appropriate punctuation and capitalization.

My Hotel Job

My mother's cousin owned a hotel, and I worked there as a young man. I enjoyed this work very much. Met many interesting people. One time a family came to stay in the hotel. They a daughter, she was my age. We met often and talked about our lives. I invited her to my house to meet my family. She told us about her life in the United States. We shared our customs with her. Later my mother told me something unforgettable. She said, "I know that you are going to live in America." My mother a very smart woman, she was right. I came to America to search for my friend. I am still looking.

In Part 5 you will ...

- review the elements of a paragraph.
- review unity and coherence.
- review correcting fragments and run-on sentences.

PART 5**Putting It All Together****Exercise 1 Identifying the elements of a paragraph**

Read the paragraph. Then label the formatting elements of the paragraph. Use the words in the box.

a. margin b. double spacing c. indent d. title

1. _____ → **My Grandfather the Baker**
2. _____ → My grandfather has a lot of respect in our community. He is the owner of a bakery called "The Family Bread Factory." The bakery has
3. _____ → been his profession since he was young. He started working there at the age of 13. He learned many recipes. The most delicious and secret
4. _____ → bread made him famous. Nowadays he makes some bread only once in a while because his legs bother him, and he gets tired easily. Instead, he sits at a table, and the people of the town come to buy bread and to pay their respects. Everyone admires him very much because he is an honest and hardworking man.

Exercise 2 Identifying topic sentences and supporting sentences

For each set of sentences, write *TS* next to the topic sentence that states the topic and provides a controlling idea. Write *SS* next to the supporting sentences.

1. _____ a. The calendars are different.
_____ b. The weekend starts on Friday instead of Saturday.
_____ c. The time is different because my country does not follow Greenwich time.
_____ d. There are some very specific differences between my part of the world and the western countries.
2. _____ a. I was traveling to Los Angeles to visit my cousin.
_____ b. My plane was delayed, so I was stuck at the airport.
_____ c. I experienced a strange coincidence last year.
_____ d. I heard my math teacher from my old hometown calling my name.

3. ____ a. I like several things about my English class.
____ b. I am meeting many new friends from different countries.
____ c. Every day, I learn new words, and I keep them in a notebook.
____ d. Sometimes we play games and laugh during the class time.
4. ____ a. You can use the Internet to find a great deal of information, but if you do not have the right skills, you can waste a lot of time.
____ b. The Internet can be incredibly useful if you know how to use it.
____ c. There are opportunities to buy and sell products on the Internet, but you have to know the proper way to send money.
____ d. The Internet is a good place to find a job for people who know how to use search engines.

Exercise 3 **Evaluating concluding sentences**

Read the paragraphs below. Then read the concluding sentences that follow and decide which one works best. Copy the sentence you choose into the paragraph.

There They Are!

I feel happy whenever I am standing beside a train track because I am waiting for someone who is close to me. I was the youngest child in my family, so my older brothers and sisters left home before I did. However, they always returned for vacations and holidays. My mother and father and I were always at the train station to greet them. I enjoyed the smell of the train and the roaring noise it made as the big black engine pulled into the station. I would jump up and down trying to see while everyone crowded around the doors. "There they are!" my mother would cry. I would run to jump into the arms of my beloved brother or sister. _____

- a. In conclusion, I always had an enjoyable visit with my brothers and sisters.
b. In conclusion, my whole family likes train stations.
c. Now I am an adult, but I still feel joy when I go to the train station to meet someone I love.

A Wise Shopper

A consumer can save a lot of money by shopping wisely. This means he is always looking for sales and collecting coupons, but it also means the person is not a compulsive shopper. In other words, the wise consumer does his research and makes a plan so that he knows what he is looking for. He is not tempted by attractive products that are not necessary. Sometimes he goes home without purchasing anything. He might think he wasted his time but he knows he did not waste his money. _____

- In conclusion, a compulsive shopper can never be a wise shopper.
- In conclusion, a wise shopper also keeps a budget so that he knows how much he can spend.
- In conclusion, a wise shopper finds ways to save money on the price and to avoid buying what he does not need.

Exercise 4 Editing a paragraph

Read the paragraph below. Cross out the two sentences that do not support the topic sentence.

My Red Couch

I acquired a new couch in an interesting way. I was walking to the bus stop, and I saw a yard sale. The family was selling a beautiful but heavy red couch at a very good price. I really liked the couch, and I wanted to buy it. However, there was a problem. I did not have a truck, and my apartment was five blocks away. Suddenly, I saw my classmate across the street. She usually sat next to me in a computer class. I told her my problem, and she offered to help. Then I paid for the couch and my friend and I carried it down the street. When we got tired, we sat down to rest on the sidewalk. Finally, we brought it to my door, and

my neighbor helped carry it upstairs. I really like to buy old things because I live in an old building. It was a funny day for me, and I like to remember this day whenever I come home and see my beautiful red couch.

Exercise 5 Identifying subjects and verbs

Underline the subject and circle the verb(s) in each sentence.

1. My classmate drinks hot chocolate.
2. We lived in Lima.
3. Hong Kong has many interesting neighborhoods.
4. My brother eats rice and drinks milk at every meal.

Exercise 6 Practicing with end punctuation.

Add the correct end punctuation to the following sentences.

1. How do men and women meet each other_____
2. When I got home, there were candles and fresh flowers everywhere_____
3. He was late to his own birthday party_____
4. The guests danced Merengue and Salsa_____

Exercise 7 Identifying and correcting fragments

Decide whether each fragment below is missing a subject or a verb. Then rewrite it correctly.

1. Suddenly fell down.

2. Has a tropical climate.

3. I walking beside the lake with my best friend.

4. Was an important day for me.

Exercise 8 Identifying and correcting run-on sentences

Correct the following run-on sentences by rewriting them on the blanks below.

1. We watched a movie it was about a dinosaur that lost its mother.

2. We have a harvest moon festival every year in our city, there are parades and kiosks with noodle soup and other delicious food.

3. I had to stop going to school for a while, my father wanted me to help him with his business.

4. Rice pudding is delicious and easy to make it is great for parties, too.

Unit 2

Descriptive Paragraphs

Unit Goals

Rhetorical focus:

- descriptive organization

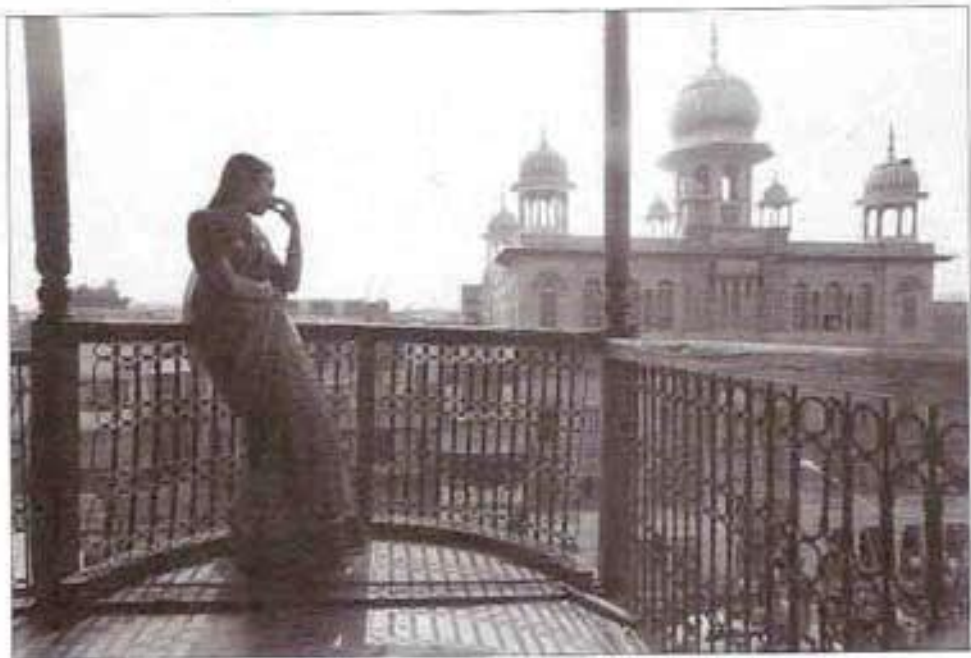
Language focus:

- using specific language
- using adjectives in descriptive writing
- using *be* to define and describe

PART 1

Stimulating Ideas

In a descriptive paragraph, the writer uses words that create an image and help the reader see, touch, feel, smell, or taste the topic that he or she is describing.



Exercise 1 **Thinking about the topic**

Discuss the picture with a partner.

- How is the woman dressed?
- Where is she?
- Have you ever seen someone dressed this way? If so, where?

Exercise 2 **Reading about the topic**

Prapulla is a young Indian bride. She and her husband, Shekar, are moving to New York, where he has a job with a U.S. company. Prapulla must decide how she will dress in her new country: in western pants and skirts, or in a sari, the traditional dress for Indian women. Why is the sari so special to Prapulla?

Sari of the Gods

En route to New York on the **jumbo**, Shekar had discreetly opened up the conversation about what she'd wear once they were in America. At the mention of skirts she had flared up so defiantly he had to leave the seat. For Prapulla, it was not convenience but **convention** that made the difference. She had always **prized** her saris, especially on the occasions when she wore her wedding sari with its blue, **hand-spun silk** and its silver **border** on which images of the gods had been **embroidered**.

She remembered the day she had shopped for the sari. It had been a week before her wedding. The entire family had gone to the silk **bazaar** and spent the day looking for the perfect one. They had at last found it in the only hand-spun sari shop in the market. The merchant had explained that the weaver who had knitted the gods into its border had died soon after, taking his **craft** with him. This was his last sari, his parting gift to some lucky bride.

Sharat Chandra, G. S. *Sari of the Gods*. Minneapolis: Coffee House Press, 1989.

en route: on the way

jumbo: a large airplane

convention: a traditional way of behaving or doing something

prized: considered something very valuable

hand-spun: woven by hand

silk: an expensive, soft, smooth fabric

border: the edge of something

embroidered: decorated by sewing with small stitches

bazaar: an open market with many shops and stalls

craft: ability or skill

Exercise 3 Understanding the text

Write *T* for true or *F* for false for each statement.

1. Prapulla went shopping for her wedding sari with her family.
2. Prapulla's wedding sari was made by hand.
3. Prapulla's wedding sari was white.
4. The man who wove Prapulla's wedding sari told her she was lucky.
5. The sari was the last one in the store.

Exercise 4 **Responding to the text**

Write your answers for each question in full sentences. Then discuss your answers with a partner.

1. Prapulla is going to live in New York with her new husband. How does her husband want her to dress? Why do you think so? _____

2. What do you think Prapulla will wear in New York? Why do you think so?

3. Why is Prapulla's wedding sari important to her? _____

Exercise 5 **Freewriting**

Write for ten minutes on the topic below. Express yourself as well as you can. Don't worry about mistakes.

Prapulla has special memories and feelings about her wedding sari. On a separate piece of paper, write about a piece of clothing that is special to you.

- What does it look like?
- How did you get it?
- Why is it important to you?
- How does it make you feel?

In Part 2 you will ...

- learn about descriptive organization.
- brainstorm ideas and specific vocabulary to use in your writing.
- create an outline for your descriptive paragraph.

PART 2**Brainstorming and Outlining****WRITING TASK**

In this unit, you will write a descriptive paragraph about a special possession.

Exercise 1 Brainstorming ideas

- A. Review your freewriting exercise. Write the piece of clothing you freewrote about in the chart below. Then think of some other items you own that have a special meaning for you. Add them to the chart as well.

Jewelry	Photographs	Mechanical or electronic devices	Art or music	Clothing

- B. Circle two or three items that you might like to write about. Describe these items to a partner.

Exercise 2 Brainstorming vocabulary

- A. With a partner, think of words that you could use to describe items in the categories below. A few descriptive words have already been added to the chart.

Jewelry	Photographs	Mechanical or electronic devices	Art or music	Clothing
silver delicate round	faded serious happy	useful convenient practical	cheerful dramatic	colorful worn silk

- B. Select some descriptive words from the chart on page 33 and use them to write five sentences about the items you circled.**

My grandmother's gold watch is delicate.

Rhetorical Focus

Descriptive Organization

A descriptive paragraph describes a person, place, or thing so that the reader can picture it in his or her mind.

Topic Sentence

- The topic sentence in a descriptive paragraph introduces the item that the writer will describe.
- It may also include the writer's general feeling or opinion about the item.

Supporting Sentences

- The supporting sentences give some background information about the item.
- The supporting sentences also give descriptive details about the item. These details describe how the item looks, smells, feels, or tastes.
- The supporting sentences may also describe in more detail how the writer feels about the item.

Concluding Sentence

- The paragraph ends with a concluding sentence that restates the idea in the topic sentence using different words.

Exercise 3 **Reading a student paragraph**

Read the paragraph. What does the writer plan to do with the car?

The Long Life of my Grandfather's Car

I own a car that has special meaning for me because it belonged to my grandfather. When he was a young man, he saved money so he could buy a beautiful car to use on trips around the country. He finally bought a Cadillac convertible. It was white and blue with silver trim. There were white circles on the tires, and it had a powerful horn that made people jump out of his way. The seats were also white, but the dashboard was black. The steering wheel had a brown leather cover. The mats were gray and always clean. My grandfather took very good care of the car, and after he died my uncle gave it to me. I am very happy because it still has the original motor, and the body is intact. If it has problems, I will fix it myself. I plan to take very good care of my grandfather's car because someday I will use it to travel to all the states and cities that my grandfather visited when he was a young man.

Exercise 4 **Examining the student paragraph**

A. Respond to the paragraph by answering the questions below.

- Which of the following sentences best describes the main idea of the paragraph?
 - The writer's grandfather traveled around the country in the 1950's.
 - The writer likes Cadillac convertibles.
 - The writer has strong feelings about his grandfather's Cadillac convertible.
- Which of the following types of details did the author NOT include in the paragraph?
 - appearance
 - smell
 - sound
- According to the last sentence, why is the car important to the author?
 - It connects the writer to his grandfather.
 - The writer likes expensive cars.
 - The writer likes to work on cars and repair engines.

B. Examine the organization of the paragraph by answering the questions below. Then compare your answers with a partner.

- Underline the topic sentence in the paragraph.

-
3. What words or phrases does the author use to describe his feelings about the car?
-
-

4. Underline the concluding sentence twice.

Exercise 5 Completing an outline

Look back at the paragraph on page 35. Then fill in the missing information in the outline below.

Topic Sentence

Item the author describes: _____

The author's general feeling about the item: _____

Supporting Sentences

Background information about the item: _____

Descriptive details about the item: _____

Details about the author's feelings: _____

Concluding Sentence

Restated idea: _____

Exercise 6 **Writing an outline**

Review your brainstorming ideas and your freewriting exercise. Then use the chart below to write an outline for your paragraph about a special possession you own. Use the outline on page 36 as an example.

Topic Sentence

What are you going to describe? _____

What is your general feeling about the possession? _____

Supporting Sentences

Write some notes about the background or history of the possession. _____

What are some details you can use to describe the possession? _____

What are some details you can use to describe your feelings about the possession? _____

Concluding Sentence

Restate the idea in the topic sentence. _____

In Part 3 you will ...

- learn to use specific language in your writing.
- write a first draft of your descriptive paragraph.



Developing Your Ideas

Exercise 1 Reading a student paragraph

Read the paragraph. How does the “treasure” make the author feel?

My Special Treasure

My special treasure is a picture of my mother on her fifteenth birthday. This picture was always in my house when I was growing up. Years later, when I got married and moved to Montreal, my mother gave it to me so that I would always remember her. Now it sits on the table next to my bed. I look at it and imagine my mother's life on that day. I think she was excited because her eyes are shining with happiness. Her smile is shy as if she were thinking about a secret. She is standing next to a rose bush, and the roses are taller than she is. She is wearing a beautiful white lace dress and black shoes. Her hair is long and curly. She looks lovely in this peaceful place, and I feel calm when I gaze into her eyes at the end of my busy day. This picture of my mother is my most valuable possession.

Exercise 2 Examining the student paragraph

A. Respond to the paragraph by answering the questions below in full sentences.

1. What is the author's special treasure? _____

2. Why does the author like this possession? _____

3. Who gave it to the author? _____

4. What words does the author use to describe the possession? _____

B. Examine the organization of the paragraph by answering the questions below. Then compare your answers with a partner.

1. Underline the topic sentence. What will the writer describe? _____

2. Does the writer give details about how she got the picture in the first part, the middle part, or the last part of the paragraph? _____

3. Does the writer describe what the picture looks like in the first part, the middle part, or the last part of the paragraph? _____

4. Does the writer describe her thoughts and feelings about the picture in the first part, the middle part, or the last part of the paragraph? _____

5. Underline the concluding sentence twice. Does it restate the idea in the topic sentence? _____
6. How many sentences are there in the paragraph? _____

Language Focus

Using Specific Language

Using specific language in descriptive writing helps give the reader a clear mental image of what something looks, feels, sounds, or smells like. Read the following examples. Which set of sentences has a stronger effect?

General Sentences

He bought a vehicle.
We heard a noise.
Suddenly, I smelled food.

Sentences with Specific Language

He bought a 1965 Cadillac.
We heard the sound of breaking glass.
Suddenly, I smelled steak and onions.

In the first column, the words are general and could be used to describe a variety of vehicles, noises, or food. In the second column, the writer has replaced the general terms with more specific words for the topics being described. By doing this, the writer has made the topic specific and clearer for the reader.

Exercise 3 Identifying Specific Language

Read the following pairs of sentences. Put a check (✓) next to the sentence that is more specific.

- a. I like to wear my grandmother's jewelry.
 b. I like to wear my grandmother's pearl necklace.
- a. My best friend gave me a novel by Chang-Rae Lee for my birthday.
 b. My best friend gave me a book for my birthday.
- a. Someone lent her an umbrella.
 b. Her father lent her an umbrella.
- a. I inherited some furniture.
 b. I inherited my grandmother's chair.
- a. Steve has a new laptop.
 b. Steve has a new computer.
- a. Jordan received a toy.
 b. Jordan received a teddy bear.

Exercise 4 Adding specific details

Rewrite the following sentences. Replace the underlined words and phrases with words that are more specific.

- I bought a pair of shoes.
I bought a pair of running shoes.

- Maria found some jewelry in the basement.

- My mother gave me some money.

- I like my desk.

- My father enjoyed making things.

- My grandparents collected souvenirs.

- We always have vegetables with dinner.

Exercise 5 Editing a paragraph for specific language

- A. Read the following paragraph. Underline five words or phrases that could be more specific. Then for each underlined word or phrase, write one question below that you could ask the writer to help him or her be more specific.

My Lost Treasure Box

When I left my home town, my relative gave me a special box. She said I could use the box to keep my special treasures. The box was made of a special material, and it was painted a bright color. When I opened it, it played a pretty song. I kept this box on my dresser and I used it to store my things. Unfortunately, I lost my beautiful box when I moved to a different city, but I will always remember it and my relative who gave it to me.

1. What town did you come from?
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____
 5. _____
 6. _____
- B. Rewrite the paragraph on a separate piece of paper, changing the underlined words and phrases to make them more specific. When you finish, compare your paragraph with a partner's.

Exercise 6 Writing a first draft

Review your outline. Then write your first draft of a paragraph about a possession that is important to you.

Exercise 7 Peer editing a first draft

After you write your first draft, exchange it with a partner. Answer the questions on the checklist on page 42. You may also write comments or questions on your partner's draft. Then read your partner's comments on your draft, and revise it as necessary.

Editor's Checklist

Put a check (✓) as appropriate. Write answers in complete sentences in the lines provided.

1. Does the paragraph have a topic sentence? Can you identify the possession the writer will describe?
2. Does the writer provide background information about the possession? If so, write it here. _____

3. Does the paragraph have enough descriptive details to make the description clear to the reader?
4. Does the writer use specific words (instead of general terms) in the description? If there are words that could be more specific, write them here. _____

5. Does the paragraph have a concluding sentence that restates the idea in the topic sentence?

In Part 4 you will ...

- learn to use adjectives in descriptive writing.
- learn to use the verb *be* to describe and define.
- edit your first draft for mistakes.

Editing Your Writing

Now that you have written a first draft, it is time to edit. Editing involves making changes to your writing to improve it and correct mistakes.

Language Focus

Using Adjectives in Descriptive Writing

Adjectives are words that describe nouns. Writers use adjectives to give the reader a more complete picture of the people, places, and things they want to describe. Compare the following pairs of phrases. Notice how the adjectives help you visualize the object.

a bicycle → a **racing** bicycle.

a desk → a **large, metal** desk.

- An adjective can come before a noun. If the noun is singular, use *a/an* or *the* before the adjective.

I own **an antique** violin.

My mother gave me **a big** hug.

- Adjectives have only one form. Use the same adjective with singular and plural nouns.

a **lovely** bracelet

two **lovely** bracelets

- An adjective can come after *be*. When two adjectives come after *be*, separate them with *and*.

These shoes are **comfortable** .

My father's expression is **wise and serious** .

- Nouns can also function as adjectives. In the following examples, the first noun describes the second noun.

a **rose** garden

a **pocket** knife

- ▲ When a noun functions as an adjective, it is always singular.

two **kitchen** tables

two **kitchens** tables (INCORRECT)

Exercise 1 Identifying adjectives

Read the following sentences and underline the adjectives.

1. I take care of my sturdy, old bicycle.
2. I am fond of my house plant.
3. It has broad green leaves and delicate, white flowers.
4. I bought a straw hat at a music festival.
5. It was not expensive, but I liked it because it was practical and attractive.
6. I bought my mug at a small tourist shop at the Phoenix airport.

Exercise 2 Using adjectives

Change the following sentences by adding two or three adjectives to each one.

1. My umbrella is like a friend.

My big, black umbrella is like an old friend.

2. I love my bicycle.

3. No one understands why I still wear my jeans.

4. If I could only save one thing from a fire, it would be my chair.

5. The piano in my parents' house is located in the room.

6. My mother gave me her ring.

Language Focus

Using *be* to Describe and Define

Use the verb *be* to describe the subject of a sentence. You can use either a noun or an adjective after *be*.

- You can use *be* + adjective to describe conditions, physical characteristics, age, and personality.

Condition	Physical Characteristic	Age	Personality
He is ready.	I am strong.	My daughter is six.	Gabriela is gracious.

- You can use *be* + noun (or noun phrase) to identify or define something, or to describe occupations and relationships.

Identifying

It **is** a map.

Describing Occupations

He **is** a waiter.

Describing Relationships

We **are** classmates.

▲ In academic writing the contracted forms of the verb *be* are not acceptable. Use the full forms of the verb in both affirmative and negative sentences.

The marmoset **is** a small mammal.

They **are** not responsible for the research.

Be with Adjectives		
SUBJECT	BE	ADJECTIVE
I	am am not	healthy.
He She	is is not	athletic.
You We They	are are not	young.

Be with Nouns		
SUBJECT	BE	NOUN PHRASE
I	am am not	an honest person.
He She	is is not	a dancer.
You We They	are are not	brothers.

Exercise 3 Using *be* with adjectives

Finish the following sentences with a form of the verb *be* and one or more adjectives to describe people you know.

- My teacher is creative.
- My classmates _____.
- My parents _____.
- My neighbors _____.
- My cousins and I _____.
- I _____.

Exercise 4 Using *be* with nouns

Finish each sentence below. Make sure there is a noun in your answer.

- There is an inhaler _____ for my asthma in my backpack.
- There is _____ on my desk.
- My father is _____.
- Someone who writes novels is _____.

5. There is _____ downtown.
6. Someone who designs houses is _____

Exercise 5 Editing a paragraph

Read the paragraph. Correct the mistakes with adjectives. There are five mistakes. For help review the rules on page 43.

I have a new digital camera, and I am very excited about using it because it has so many features useful. I do not need to spend a lot of time focusing it. It has automatic focus. People do not have to wait a long time for me to take their picture. In addition, its lens is powerful. I can photograph a person and scenery, and both are clear when I print the finals pictures. Another feature allows me to delete pictures blurry. I save a lot of money because I do not have to print ugly pictures. I am very excited about my new camera because it is convenient easy, and I can take interestings pictures with it. I expect to have a lot of fun with it.

Exercise 6 Editing your first draft and rewriting

Review your paragraph for mistakes. Use the checklist below. Then write a final draft.

Editor's Checklist

Put a check (✓) as appropriate.

1. Did you include adjectives in your sentences to give your reader a more complete picture?
2. Did you use adjectives after articles and before nouns?
3. Did you use the verb *be* before adjectives and nouns?
4. Did you capitalize the first letter of each sentence and put end punctuation at the end?

In Part 5 you will ...

- review the elements of a descriptive paragraph.
- review adjectives and the verb *be*.
- practice writing with a time limit.

PART 5

Putting It All Together

In this part of the unit, you will complete four exercises to improve your accuracy, write a timed paragraph to improve your fluency, and explore topics for future writing.

Exercise 1 Using specific language

Rewrite the following sentences. Replace the underlined words and phrases with words that are more specific.

1. I am reading a book.

2. In the photograph, the person is holding something.

3. Laura went to Europe for a while.

4. It is a picture of a monument.

5. The water flows through a forest.

6. Our room looked out over some scenery.

Exercise 2 Identifying adjectives

Read the following sentences. Underline the adjectives.

1. We planted a vegetable garden behind the house.
2. Friendly people are usually happy.
3. She has a different idea.
4. My favorite books are historical novels.
5. The class is upset about the math test.

Exercise 3 Using adjectives

Rewrite the following sentences and add two or three adjectives to each one.

1. My brother owned a car.

2. My friend has a sister.

3. The man was a teacher.

4. This object is actually a computer.

5. I have a plant and a cat.

6. There is a tree next to the house.

Exercise 4 Editing a paragraph

Read the paragraph. Correct the mistakes with adjectives. There are six mistakes.

My most valuable possession is a handmade Persian carpet. My parents gave it to me as wedding gift right before I married my husband. This carpet is made of wool and silk. It is rectangular in shape, and it has a gold fringe along the borders. The colors of my carpet are mostly dark red on a cream colored background, but there are also blue and browns designs woven into it. In the center of the carpet, a round medallion is decorated with exquisites lines and curves. The carpet is not thick soft, but it is lovely to look at. I keep it in my living room because it reminds me of my parents wonderful, and the country beautiful where it was made.



TIMED WRITING: 45 minutes

Write a descriptive paragraph about your favorite place to visit. Before you begin to write, review the following time management strategy.

Step 1 BRAINSTORMING: 5 minutes

Write down some interesting places you have visited. Then write down some specific details about each place. When you finish, choose the place you would like to write a descriptive paragraph about.

Step 2 OUTLINING: 5 minutes

Write an outline for your paragraph.

Topic Sentence

Topic: _____

General feeling about the topic: _____

Supporting Sentences

Background information: _____

Details that describe the topic: _____

Details that describe how you feel about the topic: _____

Concluding Sentence

Step 3 WRITING: 25 minutes

Use your brainstorming notes and outline to write your first draft on a separate piece of paper.

Step 4 EDITING: 10 minutes

When you have finished your first draft, check it for mistakes, using the checklist below.

Editor's Checklist

Put a check (✓) as appropriate.

- 1. Does the paragraph have a topic sentence that introduces the thing you will describe?
- 2. Did you include background information about the thing you are describing?
- 3. Did you include descriptive details about how the thing looks, smells, tastes, sounds, feels, etc?
- 4. Did you use specific words as part of your description?
- 5. Did you use adjectives as part of your description?
- 6. Are adjectives used correctly? (Refer to the rules on p. 43)
- 7. Does the paragraph have a concluding sentence that restates the idea in the topic sentence?

Topics for Future Writing

1. Write a descriptive paragraph on one of the following topics.
 - A person that you admire (outside of your family)
 - A favorite piece of art or music
 - Your favorite room in your home
 - A way to travel that interests you (by bicycle, train, hot air balloon)
2. Interview a friend, classmate, or relative about his or her views on one of the topics above. Take notes during the interview. Then write a descriptive paragraph on the topic, but from your friend's point of view.

Unit 3

Example Paragraphs

Unit Goals

Rhetorical Focus

- example organization
- using examples as supporting details

Language Focus:

- forming and using the simple present
- subject-verb agreement

PART 1

Stimulating Ideas

Writers use examples to help readers understand what they mean. A good example supports a more general idea with something specific. In this unit, you will write a paragraph that uses examples as supporting details.



Exercise 1 **Thinking about the topic**

Discuss the picture with a partner.

- Who is the little girl with?
- Who do you think she is talking to?
- Where do you think she might be going?
- What do you think her daily activities might be?
- Would you describe her life as "busy"? Why or why not?

Exercise 2 **Reading about the topic**

Three-year-old Olivia lives in busy New York City and has an imaginary friend. What is the main problem with this imaginary friend?

Bumping Into Mr. Ravioli

My daughter Olivia, who just turned three, has an **imaginary** friend whose name is Charlie Ravioli. Olivia is growing up in Manhattan, and so Charlie Ravioli has a lot of local **traits**: he lives in an apartment "on Madison and Lexington;" he **dines on** grilled chicken, fruit, and bottled water; and, having reached the age of seven and a half, he feels, or is thought, "old." But the most peculiarly local thing about Olivia's imaginary **playmate** is this: he is always too busy to play with her. She holds her toy cell phone up to her ear, and we hear her talk into it: "Ravioli? It's Olivia ... It's Olivia. Come and play? O.K. Call me. Bye." Then she **snaps** it shut, and shakes her head. "I always get his machine," she says. Or she will say, "I spoke to Ravioli today." "Did you have fun?" my wife and I ask. "No. He was busy working. On a television" (leaving it up in the air if he repairs electronic devices or has his own talk show).

Gopnik, A. "Bumping into Mr. Ravioli." *The New Yorker*. September 30, 2002.

imaginary: existing only in the imagination
traits: features, characteristics
dines on: eats

playmate: a child's companion in play or recreation
snap: close with a sharp sound

Exercise 3 Understanding the text

Write *T* for true or *F* for false for each statement.

- ___ 1. Olivia is three years old.
- ___ 2. Charlie Ravioli is a real person.
- ___ 3. Olivia often plays with Charlie Ravioli.
- ___ 4. Charlie Ravioli is very different from most New Yorkers.
- ___ 5. Olivia often talks to Charlie Ravioli in person.

Exercise 4 Responding to the text

Write your answers for each question in full sentences. Then discuss your answers with a partner.

1. Who is Olivia? _____

2. Who is Charlie Ravioli? _____

3. According to the author, is Charlie Ravioli a typical New Yorker? Why do you think so? _____

4. What does Charlie Ravioli eat and drink? Why do you think the author includes these details? _____

Exercise 5 **Freewriting**

Write for ten minutes on the topic below. Express yourself as well as you can. Don't worry about making mistakes.

The writer describes Charlie Ravioli as a busy person. How would you describe yourself? On a separate piece of paper, make a list of four or five adjectives that you would use to describe yourself. Then write about why each one describes you. You may choose from the list below or use other adjectives.

active	athletic	boring	busy
compassionate	confident	courageous	creative
difficult	flexible	fun	generous
hardworking	healthy	intelligent	organized
proud	shy	stubborn	

In Part 2 you will ...

- learn about example organization.
- brainstorm ideas and specific vocabulary to use in your writing.
- create an outline for your example paragraph.

PART 2**Brainstorming and Outlining****WRITING TASK**

In this unit, you will write an example paragraph that describes you and your life. You will use specific examples to support your ideas.

Exercise 1 Brainstorming ideas

- A. Review your freewriting exercise. Then choose one adjective from your freewriting exercise that you would like to write about. Use that adjective to complete the sentence below. This will be your topic sentence.

I am a/an _____ person.

- B. Complete questions 1 and 2 below with the same adjective. Then write your answers to the questions.

1. What experiences have you had that show you are a/an _____ person?

2. What activities do you often do that show you are a/an _____ person?

Exercise 2 Brainstorming vocabulary

- A. Read the following lists of adjectives. Add any new words you can think of to the chart. Use your dictionary for help.

Personality	cheerful, outgoing, optimistic, adventurous, _____
Feelings	peaceful, nervous, embarrassed, gloomy, excited, _____
Appearance	stocky, petite, graceful, handsome, _____
Characteristics	intelligent, creative, social, organized, athletic, _____

- B. Choose four words from the chart that you might use as examples in your paragraph. Write a practice sentence with each word you choose.**

1. *I am shy. For example, I feel nervous when I meet new people.* _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Rhetorical Focus

Example Organization

An example paragraph gives examples so that the reader clearly understands the writer's ideas about a topic.

Topic Sentence

- The first sentence introduces the topic.
- It also includes the controlling idea, or what the writer will say about the topic.

Supporting Sentences

- The middle sentences give examples that support the controlling idea.
- These examples give a clear picture of the writer's specific meaning.

Concluding Sentence

- The last sentence of the paragraph restates the topic and what the writer has said about it.

Exercise 3 Reading a student paragraph

Read the student paragraph. Why is the title "Like a Mule"? Who in the paragraph is like a mule?

Like a Mule

I am a stubborn person. My friends and relatives are sure about this because they have experience with me. For example, I do not take advice from other people. When I was looking for work, I had to make a choice between two jobs. My mother and my husband wanted me

to take a job in a childcare center, but I did not like it. I was stubborn, and I did not take their advice. I took a different job at a bookstore. Also, I do not change my mind easily. For example, when I bought my car, I wanted it in white. The car dealer had all the other colors, green, gold, blue, even red. I said no, and we went to a different dealer on the freeway about 50 miles away. They had the car in white. Now I am driving a white car. Also, I always defend my opinions. For example, I do not like the wife of my husband's friend. She is a mean person, and I told her what I thought of her, so we do not spend time together as couples. My life is not always easy, but I am proud to be a strong and stubborn woman.

Exercise 4 Analyzing the student paragraph

A. Respond to the paragraph by answering the questions below in full sentences.

1. What are the three main ways in which the author is stubborn? _____

2. Why does the author say her life is not easy? _____

B. Examine the organization of the paragraph by answering the questions below. Then compare answers with a partner.

1. Circle the topic and underline the controlling idea.
2. Read the second sentence. What do you expect the supporting details to describe? _____
3. How many examples does the author give? _____
4. Write one example that shows the author's stubbornness. _____

5. Do all the supporting sentences support the topic sentence? _____

6. Underline the concluding sentence twice. Does it restate the topic sentence?

7. What does the author add to the concluding sentence that is not in the topic sentence?

8. In your opinion, does the author like being stubborn? Explain your answer.

Exercise 5 Writing an outline

Review your brainstorming ideas and your freewriting exercise. Then use the form to write an outline for your example paragraph. You do not need to write in full sentences. Use only the words that are necessary for remembering the information you want to include in your paragraph.

Topic Sentence

I am a/an _____ person.

Supporting Sentences

Example 1: _____

Example 2: _____

Example 3: _____

Concluding Sentence

Restate the idea in the topic sentence. _____

In Part 3 you will ...

- learn more about using examples as supporting details.
- write a first draft of your example paragraph.

Developing Your Ideas

Exercise 1 **Reading a student paragraph**

Read this student paragraph. What is the game the author refers to in the title?

My Game

I am an athletic guy. I like to watch sports on television, but I love playing sports even more. My favorite sport is soccer because it requires team work. I enjoy working with other players as a team. I am in two leagues. On both teams, I play forward because I am aggressive and can score goals. One of the leagues is just for fun, so I can mess around with my cousins and friends. The other league is more serious. I have to keep myself in good condition. There are regular practices and we work on special plays. Sometimes we travel to other cities in the state. I am also a student, so it is difficult to work around my school schedule. Basketball is another one of my sports. I often play at the park with my friends. Basketball is fun even though I am not so skillful. My friends and I joke while we play and have a good time. I also like swimming, but I do not swim in competitions. Mainly I swim to stay in shape for soccer. Playing sports is the thing that I enjoy most, and I especially like soccer because I feel happy when my team and I play well together.

Exercise 2 **Analyzing the student paragraph**

A. Respond to the paragraph by answering the questions below in full sentences.

1. What is the author's favorite sport? What do you learn about him as a player?

2. Why does the author like soccer? _____

3. What other sports does the author participate in? _____

4. What examples does the author give that show how the two soccer leagues are different? _____

5. Are you convinced that the author is athletic? Explain. _____

B. Examine the organization of the paragraph by answering the questions below. Then compare your answers with a partner.

1. Circle the topic and underline the controlling idea in the topic sentence.
2. Read the second sentence. What do you expect the supporting details to describe? _____

3. Write one example that shows the author is athletic. _____

4. Do all the details support the topic sentence? _____
5. Underline the concluding sentence. Does it restate the topic? _____
6. What does the author add to the concluding sentence that is not in the topic sentence? _____

Rhetorical Focus

Using Examples as Supporting Details

Effective examples have the following features:

- They are specific.
- They relate clearly to the controlling idea.
- They do not simply restate the topic sentence.

Read the following topic sentence:

topic

controlling idea

My mother is a good neighbor.

Now read the following supporting sentences. They both support the controlling idea by giving concrete, specific examples.

She always invites people from our neighborhood over for dinner.

Every year she hosts a back-to-school party for the children on our block.

Now read these sentences, which are not effective examples.

She enjoys gardening. (*not clearly related to the controlling idea*)

She is a wonderful person to live around. (*restates the controlling idea*)

An example often begins with the phrase *For example*, or *For instance*, followed by a comma.

He likes to stay in shape. **For example**, he runs six miles every day before work.

Sometimes writers use a semi colon to connect a general sentence with a specific example beginning with *for example*, or *for instance*.

Our teacher is entertaining; **for instance**, sometimes he uses puppets to teach grammar.

Exercise 3 **Identifying specific examples**

Read the following topic sentences. Then put a check next to the examples that support the topic sentence in the most specific way.

- To become a good writer, a student should write often.
 - a. For example, she should try to write every day because writing is important.
 - b. For example, she should keep a journal and write in it every evening before bed.
 - c. For example, she can find an email friend and write messages frequently.
- Living in the city is challenging in many ways.
 - a. City dwellers usually pay a lot of money to live in a small apartment.
 - b. It is difficult to live in a city because of the lifestyle in cities.
 - c. People who live in the city have to deal with pollution.

3. My sister is easy to tease.
- ___ a. For instance, many people like to joke with her.
 - ___ b. For instance, I often tell her that I am getting married, and she always believes me.
 - ___ c. For instance, she has a cheerful personality and she does not get angry when I make jokes about her boyfriends.
4. This school offers a lot of opportunities to students.
- ___ a. There are many clubs and organizations students can join.
 - ___ b. The school tries to help students.
 - ___ c. The school has a career counseling center that offers advice and workshops for students.
5. The world is becoming smaller.
- ___ a. For instance, it is easy to see that many things are changing in the world.
 - ___ b. For instance, new forms of communication make it easy for people from different countries to work together on projects.
 - ___ c. For instance, many Asian people can spend part of the year in the U.S. and part of the year in Asia because it is easy to travel back and forth.

Exercise 4 Making examples specific

Read the passages below. Underline the example. Then revise each example to make it more specific.

1. I have a very patient cat. For instance, she never gives up.
For instance, she can sit in front of a mouse hole for hours.
2. My doctor is a caring person. For example, he is very nice to patients.

3. The neighbors in my apartment building are noisy. For example, I can't sleep at night because they are making a lot of noise.

4. My friend has a great sense of humor. For example, she always makes me laugh.

5. My nephew is naughty. For instance, he is always getting into trouble.

6. My friend is very talented. For example, she can do many things.

Exercise 5 Writing specific examples

Write two examples as supporting details for each of the following topic sentences. Make sure the examples are specific.

1. My friend loves animals.

She always brings homeless animals to the pet shelter.

She takes care of several animals in her home.

2. I am a busy person.

3. There are many things to see in my city.

4. Cell phones are useful for many different situations.

5. My sister is beautiful.

6. My neighbors are generous.

Exercise 6 Writing a first draft

Review your outline. Then write the first draft of an example paragraph about yourself.

Exercise 7 Peer editing a first draft

After you write your first draft, exchange it with a partner. Answer the questions on the checklist on page 64. You may also write comments or questions on your partner's draft. Then read your partner's comments on your first draft, and revise it as necessary.

Editor's Checklist

Put a check (✓) as appropriate. Write answers in the lines provided.

1. Does the paragraph have a title? Write the title here. If there is no title, suggest a title. _____

2. Does the paragraph have a topic sentence that introduces the topic and has a controlling idea? If the topic sentence does not have a controlling idea, suggest a controlling idea.

3. Do the supporting details give examples that support the topic sentence? Write the examples here. _____

4. Are all the supporting examples relevant? Write down any that seem unrelated to the topic. _____

5. Does the concluding sentence restate the idea in the topic sentence?
6. Are you convinced that the main descriptive word that the writer uses as the controlling idea describes the writer well?

In Part 4 you will ...

- learn about the simple present tense.
- learn about subject-verb agreement.
- edit your first draft for mistakes.

Editing Your Writing

Now that you have written a first draft, it is time to edit. Editing involves making changes to your writing to improve it and correct mistakes.

Language Focus

Using the Simple Present

Use the simple present tense to express habits and routines.

I wake up at 6:00 every day.

Also use the simple present to write about general truths and scientific facts.

Babies are a great responsibility.

The earth revolves around the sun.

Forming the Simple Present

Follow these rules to form the simple present tense:

- When the subject is first person (*I, we*), second person (*you*), or third person plural (*they, the boys*), use the base form of the verb.
- When the subject of a sentence is a third person singular pronoun (*he, she, it*), a singular name (*Martha, Los Angeles*), or a singular noun (*my friend, the boy*), add *-s* or *-es* to the base form of the verb.
- To form negative statements, use *do/does + not +* the base form of the verb.

We **exercise** every day. He **works** in Manhattan. Elena **does not go** to school.

▲ Speakers often contract *do not* and *does not* to *don't* and *doesn't*. However, contractions are not appropriate for written academic English.

Affirmative Statements		
SUBJECT	BASE FORM OF VERB OR BASE FORM OF VERB + -S/-ES	
I	eat	healthy food.
You		
He She It	eats	
We	eat	
You		
They		

Negative Statements			
SUBJECT	DO/DOES + NOT	BASE FORM OF VERB	
I	do not	eat	healthy food.
You			
He She It	does not		
We	do not		
You			
They			

Exercise 1 Practicing with the simple present

Complete these sentences with information about people you know. Use a present tense verb other than the verb *be*.

1. My father reads a book every week.
2. My cousin _____
3. Most of my classmates _____
4. My best friend _____
5. The children in my neighborhood _____

Language Focus

Subject-Verb Agreement

A verb must agree in number with its subject. Consider the examples. In the first sentence, a plural verb form (*are*) follows a plural pronoun (*we*). However, in the second sentence, a singular form (*is*) follows the plural subject (*we*). This sentence is incorrect.

We **are** tired.

We **is** tired. (INCORRECT)

Use a plural verb following two or more nouns that are joined by *and*.

Mary and her sister **live** in Las Vegas.

Use a singular verb following a group noun when it talks about the group as a whole.

The class **goes** on a field trip every month.

Use a singular verb following a noun in expressions that refer to a single member of a group.

One of the students **owns** a restaurant.

The leader of the wolves always **eats** first.

Exercise 2 Practicing subject-verb agreement

Complete each sentence with the correct form of a present tense verb below.

cook/cooks	practice/practices	receive/receives
own/owns	do not work/does not work	

1. The team _____ at the stadium each morning.
2. One of my brothers _____ a brand new car.
3. Rachel and Julia _____ breakfast and dinner every day.
4. My sister and her boyfriend _____ on weekends.
5. Her fan club _____ at least 100 letters a week.

Exercise 3 Editing a paragraph

Read the paragraph. Correct the mistakes with present tense verbs. There are ten mistakes.

My Talented Sisters

My sisters are both talented people. Vanessa and Rita is musicians. Vanessa is a piano player and Rita play the guitar. They are students at The High School for the Performing Arts. Vanessa and some other girls in her class is guest performers at churches and other events nearly every weekend. This are good practice for them because they wants to play professionally one day. My other sister, Rita, is younger than Vanessa. She is not ready to perform yet, but she play the guitar very well. She usually perform at family parties. They works hard. Every day when they comes home, they are tired, but sometimes they play music for us at home. We feels lucky to have such talented people in our family.

Exercise 5 **Editing Your First Draft**

Review your paragraph for mistakes. Use the checklist below. Then write a final draft.

Editor's Checklist

Put a check (✓) as appropriate.

- 1. Did you check for subject-verb agreement?
- 2. Did you use present tense verbs correctly?
- 3. Did you check to make sure there are no contractions?
- 4. Did you capitalize the first letter of each sentence and put end punctuation at the end?

In Part 5 you will ...

- review the elements of an example paragraph.
- write a timed example paragraph.

Putting It All Together

In this part of the unit, you will complete five exercises to improve your accuracy, write a timed paragraph to improve your fluency, and then explore topics for future writing.

Exercise 1 Identifying examples as supporting details

Read the topic sentences and the examples that follow. Then put a check next to the examples that support the topic sentence.

- Computers have made students' lives easier.
 - a. They can ask questions of their instructors by e-mail.
 - b. They can edit their papers easily by deleting their errors and typing new words or sentences.
 - c. They can form study groups and discuss topics in the library.
 - d. They can research information on the Internet.
- Nabila is someone who is always ready to help.
 - a. For example, she enjoys going to parties.
 - b. For example, she is willing to lend her friends money if they ask for it.
 - c. For example, she takes time off to take care of a sick grandmother.
 - d. For example, she always asks if there is anything she can do for her friends.
- Shopping online is more convenient than shopping at a department store.
 - a. You can shop online at any time of the day.
 - b. You can compare prices at several stores when shopping online.
 - c. You cannot touch the fabric of the clothes you order.
 - d. Since you do not have to leave your house, you will save on gas and time.
- Reading is an important way to practice a new language.
 - a. For instance, reading improves vocabulary.
 - b. For instance, it is difficult to learn a new language.
 - c. For instance, reading helps people learn sentence patterns.
 - d. For instance, reading allows you to practice a new language.

5. The birth of my son helped me to become more patient.
- ___ a. I exercised more to stay healthy for my son.
 - ___ b. I had to sit still for hours holding him in my arms until he fell sleep.
 - ___ c. Sometimes I had to spend up to two hours trying to feed him.
 - ___ d. When he was older, I went to movies with him.

Exercise 2 Writing specific examples

Write two examples as supporting details for each of the following topic sentences.

1. College students have a stressful life.

2. There are many advantages to being organized.

3. My high school years were the best time of my life.

4. My experiences with computers have been frustrating.

5. Taking a vacation on the beach is a lot of fun.

Exercise 3 Using the simple present

Complete the following sentences with information that includes a simple present tense verb.

1. Writing a good paragraph _____
2. Careful drivers _____
3. A tourist _____
4. My hometown _____
5. A hero _____
6. My cell phone _____

Exercise 4 **Practicing subject verb agreement**

Complete each sentence with the correct form of a present tense verb below.

watches/watch	does not agree/do not agree	performs/perform
drives/drive	shares/share	studies/study

1. Harold and Ron _____ to work together at least twice a week.
2. My favorite band _____ at the state fair every year.
3. The president of the organization _____ with the committee's recommendation.
4. One of my sisters _____ too much television.
5. Canada and the United States _____ a border.
6. He _____ English and economics at the university.

Exercise 5 **Editing a paragraph**

Read the paragraph. Correct the mistakes with present tense verbs. There are eight mistakes.

Trust

The most important quality of a friend is honesty. An honest friend never lie about anything. She tell you, for example, if she disagree with you on an issue. When you ask for advice, she tells you the truth even when it is difficult. When you asks an honest friend's opinion about the clothes you are wearing to a party, she tells you if they are inappropriate. If you does something bad, she do not hesitate to give you sincere feedback. This honesty result in trust between you and your friend. In short, honesty are the most important characteristic that I look for in a friend.



TIMED WRITING: 45 minutes

Write an example paragraph on the topic below. Before you begin to write, review the following time management strategy.

Describe your ideal English teacher. What is his or her most important characteristic?

Step 1

BRAINSTORMING: 5 minutes

What characteristics must a good English teacher have? Write down as many of these characteristics you can in the box or on a separate piece of paper. Then choose one characteristic that is the most important to you, and write four specific examples for the characteristic.

Step 2 **OUTLINING: 5 minutes**

Write an outline for your paragraph.

Topic Sentence

Supporting Sentences

Example 1: _____

Example 2: _____

Example 3: _____

Example 4: _____

Concluding Sentence

Step 3 **WRITING: 25 minutes**

Use your brainstorming notes and outline to write your first draft on a separate piece of paper.

Step 4 EDITING: 10 minutes

When you have finished your first draft, check it for mistakes, using the checklist below. Make any changes necessary.

Editor's Checklist

Put a check (✓) as appropriate.

- 1. Does the topic sentence introduce the topic and contain a controlling idea?
- 2. Does the paragraph include specific examples to help the reader understand your point of view?
- 3. Do the examples support the topic and controlling idea?
- 4. Does the paragraph have a concluding sentence that restates the topic sentence?
- 5. Did you use present tense verbs correctly?
- 6. Do all the subjects and verbs agree?
- 7. Did you capitalize the first letter of each sentence and put end punctuation at the end?

Topics for Future Writing

1. Write an example paragraph on one of the following topics.
 - A good physician
 - Your favorite relative
 - A president/prime minister you would vote for
 - The worst waiter
2. Interview a friend, classmate, or relative about his or her views on one of the topics above. Take notes during the interview to use for your paragraph. Then write an example paragraph on one of the topics above, but from a friend's point view.

Unit 4

Process Paragraphs

Unit Goals

Rhetorical focus

- process organization

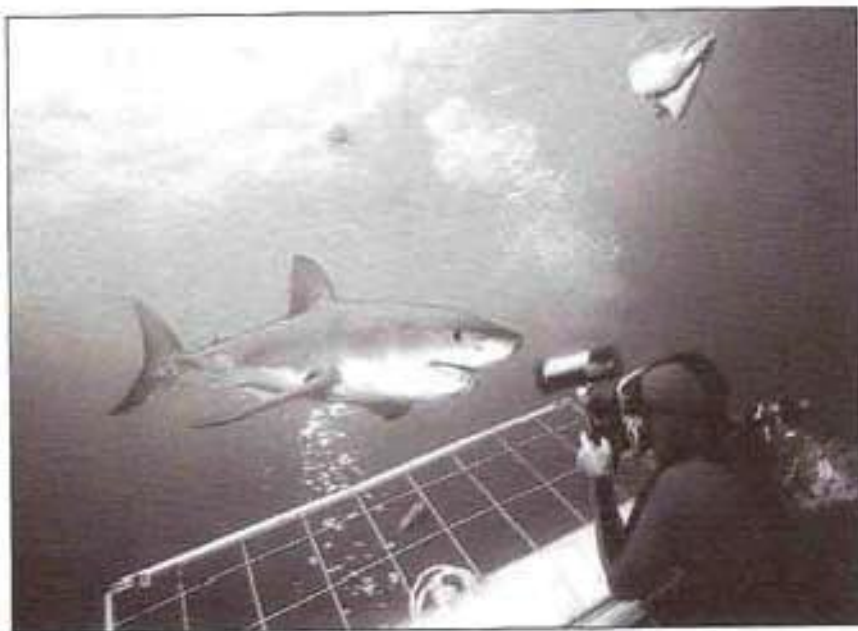
Language focus:

- using time order words in process paragraphs
- using imperatives
- modals of advice, necessity, and prohibition

PART 1

Stimulating Ideas

A process paragraph explains how to do something step by step. The reader should be able to follow the steps to get a desired result.



Exercise 1 **Thinking about the topic**

Discuss the picture with a partner.

- What do you see in the picture?
- What is the person doing? Why?
- What do you think the person should do next? Why?
- Have you ever been frightened by another creature? Explain why and what happened.

Exercise 2 **Reading about the topic**

Sharks sometimes attack swimmers or scuba divers in the ocean. What is the most important thing to do if a shark attacks you?

How to Fight Off a Shark

Most shark attacks occur near land, typically near or between **sandbars** where sharks feed. Attacks also happen in areas with steep **drop-offs**. Sharks gather in these areas because their natural **prey** is there. Almost any large shark, around six feet or longer in total length, is a danger to humans.

If a shark is coming toward you or attacks you, use anything you have in your possession to hit the shark's eyes or **gills**. These are the areas most sensitive to pain. Make quick, sharp, repeated **jabs** in these areas. Sharks are **predators** and will usually only follow through on an attack if they have the advantage, so making the shark unsure of its advantage in any way possible will increase your chances of survival. Contrary to popular opinion, the shark's nose is not the area to attack, unless you cannot reach the eyes or gills. Hitting the shark simply tells it that you are not **defenseless**.

If a shark shows itself to you, it might just be curious and may swim on and leave you alone. If you are under the surface and lucky enough to see an attacking shark then you do have a good chance of defending yourself if the shark is not too large.

sandbar: an underwater hill

drop-off: area of the ocean where the land falls away suddenly

prey: a person or animal that is hunted by another animal

gills: slits located in the sides of sharks that allow them to breathe

jab: a fast blow, usually done with the fist

predator: A person or animal that hunts other living creatures for food

defenseless: unable to protect oneself

Exercise 3 Understanding the text

Write *T* for true or *F* for false for each statement.

- 1. Sharks come close to land when they are hungry.
- 2. Sharks always attack people who are far away from the beach.
- 3. Most sharks will not attack humans.
- 4. If a shark attacks you, you should hit it in the nose.
- 5. If a shark sees you, it will probably attack you.

Exercise 4 **Responding to the text**

Write your answers for each question in full sentences. Then discuss your answers with a partner.

1. You are swimming and you see a shark coming toward you. What should you do? _____

2. What should you not do? _____

3. When you are choosing a place to swim or scuba dive, what sort of places should you stay away from? _____

Exercise 5 **Freewriting**

Write for ten minutes on the topic below. Express yourself as well as you can. Don't worry about making mistakes.

"How to Fight Off a Shark" explains the steps you should take to get out of a dangerous situation. Think of something that you know how to do that might be helpful to someone else. It does not have to be an emergency situation. It can be something simple such as packing a suitcase or changing the oil in a car. Consider the following questions as you write:

- What is the task?
- What will the result be?
- What do you need to do first? Second? Third?
- What should you avoid doing?

In Part 2 you will ...

- learn about process organization.
- brainstorm ideas and specific vocabulary to use in your writing.
- create an outline for your process paragraph.

PART 2**Brainstorming and Outlining****WRITING TASK**

In this unit, you will write a process paragraph about something you know how to do that might be helpful to someone else.

Exercise 1 Brainstorming ideas

Review your freewriting exercise. Then do the following.

- A. Think of some tasks and activities that you do often. Write them in the chart below. Then select one or two that are processes that require steps. Finally, put a check next to those activities that might be good topics for a process paragraph.

Time	Tasks and activities
Morning	
Afternoon	
Evening	
Weekends	

- B. Describe one of the tasks or activities in the chart to a partner.

Exercise 2 Brainstorming vocabulary

- A. Circle the words that you might like to use in your writing. Then add two or three words to each list.

Measure	a foot, a pound, a tablespoon, _____
Use	a knife, a hammer, a pencil, a pair of scissors, _____
Fill	a container, a bucket, a bottle, a bowl, _____
Insert	a screw, a wire, a hook, a tube, _____
Remove	dirt, shells, bones, twigs, the cap, the lid, _____

- B. On a separate piece of paper, use vocabulary from the chart to write five sentences about your process.

Rhetorical Focus**Process Organization**

A process paragraph describes the steps necessary to perform a process or task.

Topic Sentence

- The topic sentence introduces the process that the writer will explain.

Supporting Sentences

- The middle sentences describe a sequence of steps that give detailed information about the stages of the process.
- These sentences may also give background details that help define the process for the reader or explain why this process is useful or necessary.
- Supporting sentences may also include the tools needed for the task.

Concluding Sentence

- The paragraph ends with a concluding sentence that restates the topic sentence using different words.
- This sentence may also include a suggestion or warning to help the reader do the task more easily.

Exercise 3 **Reading a student paragraph**

Read the paragraph. What does the word “royalty” in the title refer to?

Royalty in your Garden

Roses are royalty among flowers. Many people say they are as difficult to maintain as kings and queens, but roses are actually quite easy to grow. All you need is a shovel and a few simple steps. In fact, growing roses can actually be fun. First, go to a nursery to purchase the rose plants. You will probably see many beautiful varieties, but it is best to choose only two or three rose bushes to start with. You should also purchase potting soil and rose food. After you bring your rose plants home, look for a sunny spot in your garden because roses love sunshine. Then dig a deep hole with a shovel and add a little potting soil and rose food. Next, transplant your roses from the pot to the garden. Cover the roots with more potting soil and then give your new roses a big drink of water. As long as they have sunshine and water, your roses will stay healthy all summer. When winter comes, your roses will lose their flowers and leaves and look dead. As a result, you might think about discarding them. Do not do that. Instead, this is the best time to prune them. Cut off the thin stems with garden shears so that the bush can become stronger the next spring. If you continue to take care of your roses in this simple way, they will produce beautiful flowers year after year.

Exercise 4 Analyzing the student paragraph

A. Respond to the paragraph by answering the questions below in full sentences.

1. Why are some people afraid to grow rose plants? _____

2. What do roses need to be healthy? _____

3. What happens to rose plants in the winter? _____

4. Do you feel confident that you could raise roses after reading this paragraph? Why or why not? _____

B. Examine the organization of the paragraph by answering the questions below. Then compare your answers with a partner.

1. Underline the topic sentence. Which of the following statements best describes the main idea of the paragraph? (Check one.)
 a. Roses are very special flowers.
 b. Growing roses is easy.
 c. Roses are difficult to grow.
2. Which of the following types of details does the writer include in the paragraph? (Check all that apply.)
 a. the tools that are necessary for growing roses
 b. warnings about what not to do when growing roses
 c. steps that gardeners should take when growing roses
 d. the result of the task
3. Underline the concluding sentence twice. Which statement below best describes the concluding sentence? (Check one.)
 a. It is a warning about what can go wrong when growing roses.
 b. It tells the expected result of the process.
 c. It is a summary of the main steps.

Exercise 5 Writing an outline

Review your brainstorming ideas and your freewriting exercise. Then use the chart below to write an outline for your process paragraph.

Topic Sentence

Supporting Sentences

Background information: _____

Step 1: _____

Step 2: _____

Step 3: _____

Step 4: _____

Step 5: _____

Concluding Sentence

In Part 3 you will ...

- learn to use time order words in a process paragraph.
- write a first draft of your process paragraph.

PART 3**Developing Your Ideas****Exercise 1 Reading a student paragraph**

Read the paragraph. What is the secret mentioned in the title?

The Secret to a Successful Vacation

Imagine that you are on vacation at the beach, and you open your suitcase to discover that you have forgotten your swimsuit! This and other disasters and inconveniences can be avoided if you follow certain steps when packing your suitcase. The first step is to review your travel plans and activities. Make a list and save it so that you can check your items before you leave. Next, gather the items you will need for your activities. Remove any item that is not necessary. Try to mix and match fewer pieces of clothing and shoes by choosing a color or colors that match. Third, you are ready to pack. Start with large items such as books or shoes. Stuff your shoes with extra socks to save space. Then place shoes in plastic bags and fit them into the corners of your suitcase. There should be plenty of room for the clothes. To avoid wrinkles, layer your clothes and roll them up. Put the rolls of clothing into the suitcase. Then put in the smaller items. Finally, before you close your suitcase, check your list. Make sure you have not forgotten your swimsuit! Many people like to swim while they are on vacation. It is worthwhile to take your time when you pack your suitcase because a well-packed suitcase is the secret to a good travel experience.

Exercise 2 Analyzing the student paragraph

A. Respond to the paragraph by answering the questions below in full sentences.

1. Why is it important to review travel plans? _____

2. What is the author's strategy for packing only a few pieces of clothing?

3. What items does the author suggest putting in the suitcase first? Why?

4. What is the last step in packing a suitcase?

B. Examine the organization of the paragraph by answering the questions below. Then compare your answers with a partner.

1. Re-read the first two sentences. Which one is the topic sentence? Write it here.

2. Does the author give background information about why the process is important or useful? If so, what is the background information?

3. How many steps can you identify in the process?

4. What kinds of examples does the author provide to support the steps in the process?

5. Find one sentence that is unrelated to the topic and draw a line through it.

6. Underline the concluding sentence twice. Does it restate the topic sentence? Explain your answer.

Using Time Order Words in Process Paragraphs

Time order words tell the order of steps in a process. You can use *first* and *second* to indicate the first two steps in a process. Use *next*, *then*, *later*, or *after that* to add more steps. *Finally* marks the last step in the process.

First, make a list.

Second, select your clothes.

Next, place your shoes in the corners.

Then arrange your clothes in neat layers.

Later, add last minute items such as medications.

After that, roll the clothes to avoid wrinkles.

Finally, check your list for any forgotten items.

▲ *Then* is not followed by a comma.

Connectors link two clauses together. Connectors like *before* and *after* can also function as time order words when they link two steps in a process.

Before you close your suitcase, check your list.

Begin packing **after** you have eliminated all unnecessary items.

Exercise 3 Using time order words to identify the sequence of steps

Number the steps in the following process according to how they should be followed. Use the time order words to help you decide the correct order.

It is easy to have a good dinner party if you follow some easy steps.

- ___ a. Next, make a list of people that you would like to invite.
- ___ b. After your house is clean, go shopping for food, flowers and decorations.
- ___ c. Then make a funny or pretty invitation and email it to your friends.
- ___ d. Finally, turn on the music, and wait for the fun to begin.
- ___ e. Before the guests arrive, decorate the house, set the table, and take a shower.
- ___ f. After you have everything you need, plan a meal and make sure you can cook most of it before your guests arrive.
- ___ g. A few days before the party, start cleaning your house.
- ___ h. First, choose an appropriate date at least two weeks before the party.

Exercise 4 **Practicing with time order words**

Read the following paragraph. Fill in the blanks with appropriate time order words. Remember to use proper punctuation.

One big challenge that many people like is running in a marathon. A marathon is a race that is over 26 miles, so it is very hard to complete the race. If you want to run the entire course, you have to train diligently. _____₁ buy a good pair of comfortable running shoes. Then begin your running practice at least six months _____₂ you run in the race. Try to run three to six miles at least four times a week. You must also stretch before and after a run to avoid tight muscles. _____₃ your body is accustomed to longer runs, you can work on your strength by doing sprints, or short fast runs. _____₄ lengthen your runs to ten or 12 miles. Make sure you drink plenty of water when you go on longer runs because it is important for your muscles. When the day of the race is close, check your shoes. You might need a new pair. The night before you race, eat a lot of carbohydrates. They will give you energy for the big day. _____₅ on the day of the race, get up early and drink plenty of water. You should feel confident, strong, and ready to go.

Exercise 5 Writing the steps in a process

Read the following topic. With a partner, write some important steps in the process. Use appropriate time order words.

Topic: How to buy a used car

Step 1: _____

Step 2: _____

Step 3: _____

Step 4: _____

Exercise 6 Writing a first draft

Review your outline. Then write your first draft of a process paragraph about something you know how to do that might be helpful to someone else.

Exercise 7 Peer editing a first draft

After you write your first draft, exchange it with a partner. Answer the questions on the checklist on page 89. You may also write comments or questions on your partner's draft. Then read your partner's comments on your first draft and revise it as necessary.

Editor's Checklist

Put a check (✓) as appropriate. Write answers in complete sentences in the lines provided.

1. Does the paragraph have a topic sentence? Can you identify the process the writer will describe?
2. Does the writer provide background information about the process? If so, write it here. _____

3. Does the paragraph have time order words to help clarify the order of the steps in the process? If so, which time order words does the writer use? _____

4. Does the writer explain why this process is useful or necessary and include the tools needed? If not, write the information that is missing here. _____

5. Does the concluding sentence restate the main idea in the topic sentence or give a suggestion or warning?

In Part 4 you will ...

- learn about imperatives.
- learn to identify and use modals of advice, necessity, and prohibition.
- edit your first draft for mistakes.

Editing Your Writing

Now that you have written a first draft, it is time to edit. Editing involves making changes to your writing to improve it and correct mistakes.

Language Focus

Using Imperatives

Use imperative sentences to give instructions, directions, or to tell steps in a process.

- The verb in an imperative addresses the reader or listener directly.
- The imperative uses the base form of the verb.
- An imperative sentence does not require a subject, but the subject *you* is always implied.

Hold the fishing rod gently in your right hand.

Be quiet or you may disturb the fish.

For a negative imperative, use *do not*.

Do not let your finger get caught in the string.

Exercise 1 Identifying imperatives

Put a check next to the imperative sentences.

1. Buy a good quality tape.
2. It is important to start early in the morning to avoid the heat.
3. Get down on your hands and knees and crawl under the smoke.
4. Try not to get chili powder in your eyes.
5. You should ask a professional to dispose of the used motor oil.
6. With your left hand, grab the red handle and pull it.
7. Getting out of a traffic jam is not too difficult if you follow this procedure.

Exercise 2 Practicing with imperatives

Rewrite the following sentences as imperatives.

1. It is necessary to check the horse's back for sticks and insects before putting on the saddle blanket.

Check the horse's back for sticks and insects before putting on the saddle blanket.

2. It is a good idea to fill water bottles and put them in the freezer the night before.

3. You should dress in comfortable clothing and sneakers or sandals.

4. It is important to debug your hard drive periodically.

5. You need to replace the water in the tank every week or two.

6. You must not leave the fire unattended.

Language Focus

Modals of Advice, Necessity, and Prohibition

Should and *must* are modal verbs. You can use modals to express advice, necessity, and prohibition. Modal verbs come before the base form of the verb.

You **should eat** more vegetables. You **must arrive** by eight o'clock.

Advice

In a process paragraph, use the modal *should* to offer advice, tips, and suggestions for being more successful.

You **should** remove all jewelry before working with the clay.

Necessity

Use the modal *must* to explain rules and laws that affect a process or to explain something that is absolutely necessary.

You **must** wear protective headgear when you compete.

Use *do not have to* to say that something is not necessary.

You **do not have to** pay a fee to enter the museum.

Prohibition

In negative statements of prohibition, use *should* and *must* with *not* and the base form of the verb.

You **should not** open the oven while the cake is baking.

You **must not** drink alcohol.

Affirmative Statements with <i>Should</i> and <i>Must</i>		
SUBJECT	SHOULD/MUST	BASE FORM OF VERB
I	should must	come.
You		
He She It		
We		
You		
They		

Negative Statements with <i>Should</i> and <i>Must</i>		
SUBJECT	SHOULD/MUST + NOT	BASE FORM OF VERB
I	should not must not	come.
You		
He She It		
We		
You		
They		

Negative Statements with <i>Have to</i>			
SUBJECT	DO/DOES + NOT	HAVE TO	BASE FORM OF VERB
I	do not	have to	come.
You			
He She It	does not		
We	do not		
You			
They			

Exercise 3 Using modals of advice, necessity, and prohibition

Complete each sentence with *should* or *must*. Then explain your choice of modal.

1. You should start early in the morning to avoid the traffic.

This is advice, but it is not a necessity.

2. You _____ have a license to drive a car.
- _____

3. You _____ not bring guns into the airport.

4. You look tired. You _____ get a good night's sleep.

5. You _____ not leave a baby alone in a bathtub.

Exercise 4 **Practicing with modal verbs**

Use modal verbs to write one affirmative and one negative sentence about each topic.

1. Babysitting

You should ask about the child's bedtime.

You must not leave the child alone outside.

2. Changing a light bulb

3. Applying for a job

4. Taking a test

5. Driving in the rain

Exercise 5 **Editing a paragraph**

Read the paragraph and correct any mistakes with imperatives or with *should* or *must*. There are seven mistakes.

People who are serious about managing their time better should following this procedure. It will help you to have more control over your time. First, you need to figure out how you actually spend your time. You make a list of all the things you do daily. Writing down how much time you spend on each thing. Include activities like talking on

the telephone or buying a cup of coffee. Your list will be quite long. Then find the activities that you can eliminate from your daily routine. It may be hard to give up a trip to the coffee shop, but you can do it. You must go to work, so you cannot eliminate that item, but you will probably find other items that are not necessary. You should drop those unnecessary activities to make time for more important things. Next, prepare a schedule for yourself. Being realistic about the time of day you choose for certain activities. Make a schedule that you can follow. Do not try to do too much. If you follow these steps and manage your schedule carefully, you will have a happier, more organized life.

Exercise 6 **Editing your first draft**

Review your paragraph for mistakes. Use the checklist below. Then write a final draft.

Editor's Checklist

Put a check (✓) as appropriate.

- 1. Did you use imperatives to give instructions or directions?
- 2. Did you use *should* to give tips and advice?
- 3. Did you use *must* to explain rules or necessities?
- 4. Did you use *not* with a modal to express prohibitions?
- 5. Did you use *do not have to* to explain that something is not necessary?
- 6. Did you capitalize the first letter of each sentence and put end punctuation at the end?

In Part 5 you will ...

- review the elements of a process paragraph.
- practice writing with a time limit.

Putting It All Together

In this part of the unit, you will complete three exercises to improve your accuracy, write a timed paragraph to improve your fluency, and then explore topics for future writing.

Exercise 1 Using time order words

Read the following paragraph. Fill in the blanks with appropriate time order words from the box. Use each word once. Remember to use proper punctuation.

then	second	finally	first	next
------	--------	---------	-------	------

A bonsai is a small tree planted in a pot. It comes from the Japanese culture, but it is now a hobby of many people around the world. A bonsai is living art, and how it looks depends on your taste and skills. To create a bonsai, it is important to follow these steps. _____ choose a tree that suits your interest and the location where it will be kept. Some trees do better inside the house and some look healthier outside. The tree must be young and big enough to resemble a mature tree. The size of the tree could be between 10 to 100 centimeters, depending on your taste. _____ find a pot that is the right size for the tree. _____ cut two-thirds off the roots of the tree in order to stop its natural growth. _____ put the bonsai in the pot and add dirt fortified with minerals. _____ give the bonsai a natural shape with special clippers. Creating a bonsai requires some time and patience, but it is certainly worth the effort.

Exercise 2 Using imperatives

Rewrite the following sentences as imperatives.

1. You must buy a good fishing rod.

2. You should warn the patient before you give him an injection.

3. It is necessary to speak English with your classmates.

4. You need to type in your log-in ID and password.

5. You need to jog slowly at first.

Exercise 3 Using *should* and *must*

Complete each sentence with *should* or *must*. Then explain your choice of modal.

1. You _____ not begin eating until the hostess does. It is not very polite.

2. You _____ arrive on time, or the boat will leave without you. Do not forget!

3. We _____ not wait until the last minute to pack.

4. You _____ drink plenty of water when you exercise on a warm day.

5. In some states, you _____ be 18 years old to drive.



TIMED WRITING: 45 minutes

Write a process paragraph that explains the steps for choosing a special gift for someone you love. Before you begin to write, review the following time management strategy.

Step 1 BRAINSTORMING: 5 minutes

Think about someone that you have bought a special gift for. Write down the gift that you chose and how you decided to buy it. Try to think of three or four steps that describe the process. Think of reason(s) that each step is important and write down the reasons.

Step 2 OUTLINING: 5 minutes

Write an outline for your paragraph.

Topic Sentence

Supporting Sentences

Background information:

Step 1: _____

Step 2: _____

Step 3: _____

Step 4: _____

Concluding Sentence

Step 3 WRITING: 25 minutes

Use your brainstorming notes and outline to write your first draft on a separate piece of paper.

Step 4 EDITING: 10 minutes

When you have finished your first draft, check it for mistakes, using the checklist below.

Editor's Checklist

Put a check (✓) as appropriate.

- 1. Does the topic sentence tell what the task is?
- 2. Does the topic sentence contain a controlling idea?
- 3. Do the supporting sentences include a sequence of steps that give detailed information, background details, and the tools needed for the task?
- 4. Did you use time order words to separate the steps?
- 5. Did you use imperatives to give directions or instructions?
- 6. Did you use modals to express advice, necessity, and prohibitions?
- 7. Does the concluding sentence offer a suggestion or warning to help the reader do the task more easily?
- 8. Did you capitalize the first letter of each sentence and put end punctuation at the end?

Topics for Future Writing

1. Write a process paragraph on one of the following topics.
 - How to obtain a driver's license
 - How to find a house or apartment for rent
 - How to throw a surprise birthday party for a friend
 - How to play a video game
2. Interview a friend, classmate, or relative to learn how to do something. Take notes during the interview to use for your paragraph. Then write a process paragraph, explaining the steps to your reader.