

WRITING APPLICATIONS

Contents

INTRODUCTION: The Writing Process	443
UNIT 1: The Verb and Its Subject	
A. Using Specific Nouns	449
B. Using Correct Verb Tenses	449
C. Using Pronouns in Place of Nouns	450
UNIT 2: Patterns of the Simple Sentence	
A. Using Vivid Action Verbs	451
B. Varying Sentence Patterns	451
C. Using Helping Verbs	452
UNIT 3: The Work of Modifiers	
A. Using Descriptive Adjectives	453
B. Using Precise Adverbs	453
C. Using Prepositions	454
UNIT 4: Building Better Sentences	
A. Writing Compound Sentences	455
B. Writing Complex Sentences	455
C. Using Appositives to Explain	456
UNIT 5: Understanding the Sentence Unit	
A. Avoiding Sentence Fragments	457
B. Stopping Run-on Sentences	457
C. Using Transitions in Sentences	458
UNIT 6: Using Verbs Correctly	
A. Choosing Irregular Verb Forms	459
B. Using Irregular Verbs	459
UNIT 7: Agreement of Subject and Verb	
A. Using Subject-Verb Agreement	461
B. Keeping Track of Your Subject	461
C. Using Verbs with Combined Subjects	462
UNIT 8: Choosing the Right Modifier	
A. Choosing Between Good and Well	463
B. Using Degrees of Comparison	463
C. Avoiding Double Negatives	464
Contents	441

UNIT 9: Using Pronouns Correctly

- A. Choosing the Correct Pronoun 465
- B. Using Possessive Pronouns 465
- C. Using the "self" Pronouns 466

UNIT 10: How to Use Capitals

- A. Capitalizing Geographical Names 467
- B. Capitalizing Dates and Special Events 467
- C. Capitalizing Titles of Artistic Works 468

UNIT 11: Learning to Use Commas

- A. Using Parallel Structure 469
- B. Using Commas After Introductory Words 469
- C. Using Commas with Interrupters 470

UNIT 12: Apostrophes and Quotation Marks

- A. Using Apostrophes 471
- B. Forming Contractions 471
- C. Using Quotation Marks 472

The Writing Process

In the first part of this textbook, you followed a step-by-step program, or process, to study grammar and usage. You were first given a bit of information in a frame; then you tried to apply it. If you did not get the correct answer the first time, you were given another opportunity to get the correct answer in another frame. You completed entire sections of this book using this process. When you write, you can also use a process that will give you additional opportunities to improve your writing. This process is called the **writing process**.¹ In this section of your textbook, you will be introduced to the six basic stages of the writing process. Once you have mastered these basic stages, you should be able to apply them in any writing task.

WHY STUDY THE WRITING PROCESS?

Knowing how to use this process will enable you to compose more quickly and accurately. Since an important part of the writing process is evaluating and revising, you always have several opportunities to analyze and improve your writing before you prepare the final version.

Following this introduction (pages 443-448), you will find writing applications that correspond to each of the units in the first part of this book. The applications are designed to give you practice in applying the principles of grammar and usage that you studied in the first part of this textbook. They will also enable you to practice the writing process and to improve your writing skills. In addition, you may find that they help you organize your thoughts and give you practice in analyzing information.

HOW TO USE THIS SECTION OF THE BOOK

After you read this section, refer to it to help you complete the writing applications. Use the basic models presented here whenever you need help composing. In this section, you will learn about and practice the six stages of the writing process. These six stages are (1) prewriting, (2) writing the first draft, (3) evaluating, (4) revising, (5) proofreading, and (6) writing the final version.

Prewriting

The prewriting stage enables you to formulate ideas before you write. During this thinking and planning stage, you determine most of the information you need to write your first draft. During this stage, you determine your purpose and audience; choose and limit your topic; establish your tone; and gather, classify, and arrange information.

¹ Adapted from pp 3-35 in *English Composition and Grammar*, Benchmark Edition, Fourth Course, by John E. Warriner. Copyright © 1988 by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.

SELECTING A PURPOSE

Before you begin writing, you should have in mind a clear purpose. Your purpose will guide your writing and help determine the content and language you use. There are four basic purposes for writing: to tell a story, to inform or explain, to describe, or to persuade. Writing to tell a story is called **narrative writing**. Writing to inform or explain is called **expository writing**. Writing to describe is called **descriptive writing**. Finally, writing that attempts to persuade or convince is called **persuasive writing**.

DETERMINING YOUR AUDIENCE

You will always write for an audience, but audiences may vary widely in age, background, and opinion. Like purpose, your audience will help guide your writing since you do not write the same way for all people. Determine carefully who your reading audience will be. Then decide whether they will need background information and whether your subject will interest them. Also, decide how simple or difficult the language you use should be.

CHOOSING AND LIMITING A SUBJECT

Before you write, choose a subject that is interesting to you and your audience and draws on your experiences. Then limit your subject so that you can write about it adequately in the time and space you have. To limit your subject, consider your purpose and the form of writing you have chosen. A broad, general subject that has been limited is called a **topic**.

ESTABLISHING TONE

Determining your feelings toward your topic will help you establish your tone. Decide what attitude you want to convey and how it will influence your writing. You create tone in your writing through the details you choose to include.

GATHERING INFORMATION

Gather information to include in your writing that is appropriate to your purpose. For example, if your purpose is to describe someone famous, you may want to gather facts about that person's life, appearance, and mannerisms. You can use several methods in gathering information. A few that are described here include brainstorming, clustering, asking the 5 W-How? questions, and asking point-of-view questions.

Brainstorming. In brainstorming, you gather information by writing down ideas that come freely to mind. First, write your topic at the top of a sheet of paper. Then, think about your topic, listing any ideas that you associate with your topic. Do not worry if some of the ideas seem silly or incomplete. You will be able to eliminate or expand these ideas later.

EXAMPLE Topic: Family picnic last summer

Ideas: Uncle Tim played banjo.

Uncle Tim, Aunt Mary, and cousin Lee made Irish

stew—delicious!

Ants crawled on blankets and on some of our sandwiches.

held at Patterson Park

played volleyball

rained towards evening

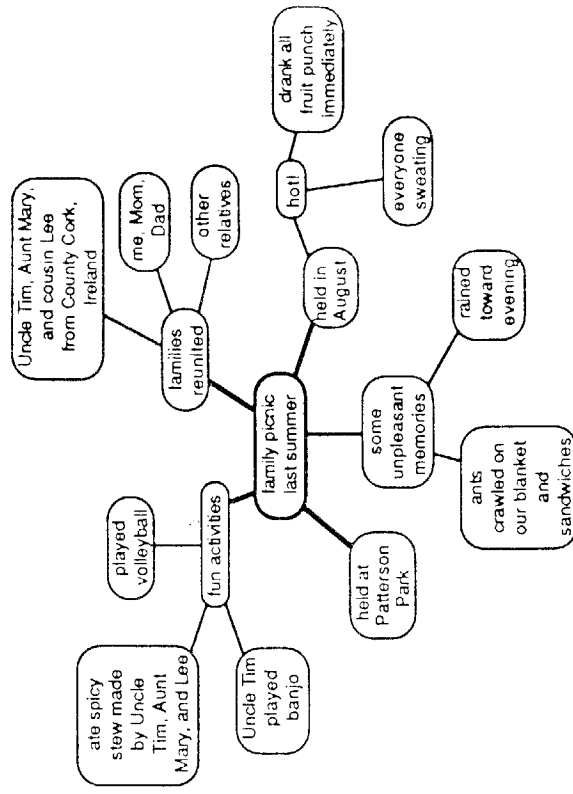
hot day in August—everyone sweating

so hot that we drank all our fruit punch right away

families reunited: Uncle Tim, Aunt Mary, and Lee came

all the way from County Cork, Ireland.

Clustering. Clustering is like brainstorming in that you write down ideas as they come to mind. In clustering, however, you arrange the ideas in groups, or clusters. To begin clustering ideas, write your topic in the center of your paper and circle it. Then begin thinking about ideas that relate to the topic. Write down and circle these ideas also. Draw lines to connect ideas to the topic.



Asking the 5 W-How? Questions. Another technique for gathering information is asking the 5 W-How? questions. The 5 W-How? questions are *Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?* Ask yourself these questions to find out specific details about your topic. You may not be able to use every question with every topic, but you will always be able to use at least several of the questions.

EXAMPLE*Topic: Family picnic last summer*

Who came? (Mom, Dad, I, and other relatives)
 What special things did we do? (ate spicy Irish stew, played volleyball, listened to Uncle Tim play banjo)
 When was the picnic? (last August)

Where was the picnic held? (Patterson Park)

Why was this picnic held? (to reunite families; Uncle Tim, Aunt Mary, and cousin Lee came all the way from County Cork, Ireland)

How did the picnic turn out? (fun, except ants crawled on our blanket and on some of our sandwiches; rained towards evening)
 How was the weather generally? (so hot that everyone was sweating until it rained)

Asking Point-of-View Questions. Still another technique that can be used to gather information is to look at a topic from three different points of view. To determine the point of view, ask three questions: (1) What is it? (2) How does it change or vary? (3) What are its relationships?

EXAMPLE *Topic: Family picnic last summer*

1. What is a family picnic? (In our family, it is a reunion of family members from around the world.)
2. How did our family picnic start? (Since it was so hot, we drank all our fruit punch right away.)
 How did the picnic progress? (played volleyball, listened to Uncle Tim play banjo, ate homemade Irish stew)
 How did the picnic end? (Towards evening, we sat around talking before leaving.)
3. What events were most pleasant? (eating spicy stew, playing volleyball, listening to Uncle Tim play banjo)
 What events were unpleasant? (rained later in afternoon, ants crawled on blanket and on some sandwiches)

CLASSIFYING INFORMATION

Once you have gathered your information, you need to classify, or sort, it into groups. Classifying helps you organize your information for writing. One of the simplest ways to classify information is to look for similarities and differences. Another way is to determine which ideas are more important than others. The more important ideas may become the main ideas of your paragraphs. The less important ideas will become supporting details.

EXAMPLE

Time and Place	Weather	Topic: Family picnic last summer	
		Pleasant Memories	Unpleasant Memories
August	Hot	Ate spicy stew	Rained later in day
Patterson Park	Everyone sweating	Played volleyball	Ants on sandwiches
	Rained later	Uncle Tim played banjo	Too hot
		Family reunited	

ARRANGING INFORMATION

The last step in the prewriting process is to arrange the ideas you have classified into a logical order or sequence. Usually your purpose will determine your order. For example, if you are writing a narrative paragraph, you will write your paragraph in chronological order. If you are writing a persuasive paragraph, you might write your argument first and follow it with supporting sentences that provide evidence. Sometimes, however, your purpose will not dictate an exact order. In these cases, you should present your information in any way that will be clear and interesting.

EXAMPLE *Topic: Family picnic last summer**Purpose: Narrative, to tell a story**Order: Chronological*

1. Family members reunited at park
2. Drank all fruit punch right away because so hot
3. Listened to Uncle Tim play banjo
4. Played volleyball
5. Rained, so took cover; sat around talking
6. Ate spicy Irish stew

Writing a First Draft

The next stage of the writing process is to write a first draft based on the information you prepared in the prewriting stage. In this stage, you put your ideas into sentences and paragraphs. Remember that this draft will not be your final one. Therefore, you should evaluate and revise your writing as many times as you need. Keep your prewriting notes in front of you as you write, and write freely.

Evaluating

Evaluating is the third stage of the writing process. In this stage, you review your first draft for content, organization, and style. You determine your weaknesses and decide what works and what does not. Use the following guidelines to help you evaluate your writing.

1. Do the ideas help to achieve a main purpose: to explain, to describe, to persuade, or to tell a story?
2. Is the topic limited enough?
3. Are the topic and details suitable and interesting for the audience?
4. Are enough details provided so that the topic can be easily understood? Are too many unnecessary details provided?
5. Does the order of the information make the main ideas clear?
6. Is the choice of words appropriate for the audience? Does the writing sound serious without sounding angry? Is the tone used light enough, or is it too light?
7. Are the words used specific and precise rather than vague?

Revising

Once you have evaluated your writing and have determined its weaknesses, you are ready to revise it. Revising your writing means making changes to it to improve it. Four basic techniques are used when revising: adding, cutting, replacing, and reordering. Note how this paragraph has been revised using these techniques.

EXAMPLE Our family ~~reunited~~^{picnic} was extra special this year because we were reunited with ~~relatives~~^{an uncle, an aunt, and a cousin} from Ireland. Unfortunately, that day was so hot that the ~~first thing we did was drink~~^{we had already drunk} our entire supply of fruit punch and had ~~nothing to drink with the stew~~^{Lefty in the drink for the day}. ~~Then~~^{we} sat around and talked and listened to ~~Uncle Tim play the banjo~~^{a fierce game of}. Later in the afternoon, we played volleyball. ~~When it began to rain towards evening~~^{again}. Although ~~trained later in the day~~^{we} gathered under a covered picnic area and talked for ours. ~~Uncle Tim, Aunt Mary, and my cousin Lee, from County Cork, Ireland, even made homemade Irish stew there~~^{a hot, spicy}, which ~~was~~^{was} delicious. ~~What a wonderful day that was!~~

Proofreading

In the proofreading stage of the writing process, you reread your revised draft one last time to find and correct errors. Proofreading means finding and correcting mistakes in grammar, usage, and mechanics (spelling, capitalization, and punctuation). Special standardized marks called revising and proofreading symbols are used in making the corrections. You will find a complete list of these marks on the inside of the back cover of this textbook.

Writing the Final Version

Writing the final version is the last step of the writing process. This step includes preparing a clean copy of your revised and proofread paper. Although your teacher will provide you with specific directions, you can use these general guidelines when completing any of the writing applications.

1. Write on lined 8 1/2 x 11-inch composition paper.
2. Write on only one side of each sheet.
3. Write in blue or black ink.
4. Leave top, bottom, and side margins of one inch.
5. Indent the first line of each paragraph.