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WRITE RIGHT

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Introduction

The book *Write Right* attempts to give students a more active role in the learning of composition writing. This is achieved through two main steps. The first is by exposing students to a lot of models written on each mode of writing and the second is by giving students the chance to find out for themselves the important components of writing each of these specific modes. The book *Write Right* adopts an inductive approach to learning about the requirements of each type of writing. That is, instead of asking students to memorize rules and principles, the book offers students evidence from different samples of essays and asks them to find out for themselves the principles and rules of good writing. A lot of time and effort has been dedicated to collecting and from different sources the appropriate authentic models of each mode of writing.

The book *Write Right* is divided into two main parts. The first part concentrates on expository writing, which is believed to be essential to academics, and includes six units which focus on all forms of writing that are aimed to explain

and expound information. These include the *definition* essay, the *classification*, the *compare and contrast*, the *illustration*, the *analysis* and finally the *process* essay. Part two takes the learner into three other modes of writing which are no less important than the previous ones and these include the *narrative* essay, the *descriptive* essay and finally the *argumentative* one.

Each unit is structured in the following manner:

- First it starts off by a brief *introduction* to the type and function of the mode of writing under discussion. In this section some important elements of that mode of writing might also be discussed. This section ends by offering the learner a set of eye-opening questions that are intended to prepare them for the following section.
- In the next section, a couple of *authentic models* specifically chosen on the mode of writing under scrutiny are offered. In this way the learner will see for himself the important elements of each type of writing.

- The unit then takes the learner to the section on the *writing guidelines*. These are a set of advice on the techniques of writing that specific mode – much of which the learner would have discovered himself through the questions that preceded the models offered for reading.
- The unit then moves to present the learner with some *exercises* that offer more models accompanied by discussion questions on that specific mode of writing. The learner is required to analyze and discuss these models to check the extent to which the writers of these models have applied the techniques of writing that have been highlighted earlier on in the unit.
- The final stage is that of *application*. Here the learner has to put into practice what he has observed in the models and what he discovered and learnt from the writing guidelines.

All through the book, the learner is reminded of the importance of shaping his writing to suit his purpose,

audience and context. The writing process of generating, drafting and revising is highlighted throughout the book through the guidelines, advice, and application offered in each unit. This is carried out as part of a conviction that understanding the writing process is as important as learning about the workings of each mode of discourse. By learning about both, we believe that the learner will be able to add the skill of writing to his other skills.

Hala Dalbani
(January 2007)

Part I

The Expository Essay



Introduction to the Expository Essay

As an academic, most of the writing you do is probably expository. Exposition is the act of presenting, explaining, or expounding facts or ideas. You engage in expository writing when, for instance, you *define* what 'honesty' means, or when you *compare and contrast* 'Christianity' with 'Islam', or when you try to *illustrate* what 'neighbourliness' is, or when you explain the *causes* and/or *effects* of 'pollution' or 'inflation'. You will also be using exposition when you teach someone *a process* like when you show a friend how to operate a computer or when you try to *classify* the different kinds of essays.

In our readings too, most of the writing that we encounter in books, magazines, and newspapers is expository.

Exposition, therefore, can be used in a variety of contexts and is a part of much of the writing you will encounter. Thus, mastering the techniques of exposition will prepare you for most of your academic writing tasks.

Types of Expository Writing

Expository writing can be classified into several different types. Though all aim to present, explain, or expound ideas, there are significant differences among them.

1. Definition attempts to identify or define a specific term or concept. It attempts to explain a subject by answering the most basic question: What is this? When you want to explain what the term 'globalization' means or what 'pragmatism' or 'inflation' is, you are in actual fact defining the term.

2. Classification explains a subject by analyzing it and breaking it down into a system of categories, or classes. A writer starts here with a general class, and then proceeds to categorizing and listing some or all of its members and parts. Classifying 'books', for example, into categories such as 'reference books', 'course books', 'fiction', etc., is an example of classification. Similarly, grouping 'cars' into categories of 'Japanese cars', 'Korean cars', 'German cars' etc..., is another example of classification.

3. *Illustration* explains a subject by means of giving examples. Our daily conversations are full of phrases like 'for example' and 'for instance'. In illustration, we cite a particular term to clarify the nature of the class in which it is included. For instance, to explain the term 'flower', we might cite the example 'rose'.

4. *Comparison and contrast* explains a subject by showing how it is like or unlike something else that is comparable to it. When you want to decide, for instance, which university to go to, or whether to major in 'English' or in 'history', or whether to buy a house in the city or in the countryside, you compare and contrast. *Comparing* means thinking or writing about the similarities between two things or people; *contrasting* means thinking or writing about the differences.

5. *Cause analysis* explains why or how some event happened such as the reasons behind the low crime rate in Islamic countries. When the writer attempts to explain the main effects that result from a cause, he is using an *effect analysis* as, for example, when one studies the effect of the mass media on society.

6. *Process* explains how something is done. It generally lists and explains a series of actions that should be performed to lead to a desired result. The instructional manual for a computer is an example of exposition using process. Showing someone also how to cook a certain recipe, you are actually using the process form of explanation.

A piece of writing may approach a topic utilizing only one of these modes, or it may involve the use of more than one. For instance, an essay comparing and contrasting two teachers may also use identification and illustration to accomplish its purpose. Though most writing does involve an amalgam of the different genres of writing, the different writing modes can be best understood if studied in isolation. It is only after one gains a deep understanding of the different kinds of discourse in their pure form that one can make them work effectively together. In what follows, each mode of discourse shall be explored individually so as to acquaint the learner with the necessary tools to make the right choice of form of discourse that will best suit the context, audience and purpose of writing.

Unit One

The Definition Essay

Definition is a form of exposition; it is a form of writing that you can use to understand and explain an idea. When you write definitions, you attempt to show what a word means or what a thing is, and thus distinguish it from all other words and things.

Often, you might use part of an essay to explain a word that might be unfamiliar to your readers in order to clear up an ambiguity, or to set the terms for an argument. In a paper arguing for or against the 'censorship of obscenity', for example, it could be wise to begin by defining 'censorship' and 'obscenity'. Occasionally you might find that you need to devote an entire essay to defining a term such as the concept of 'faith' or 'democracy'. In this case, you need to strike a balance in the amount of details that you include in your essay. Your aim is to give sufficient information to explain but without oversimplifying. In this form of writing

you can make use of details, examples, anecdotes, comments, and other kinds of explanatory information to help your reader gain an understanding of the "what".

In what follows models of definition essays are given. As you read the selections, check if the following features are illustrated:

- Having a clear sense of purpose for the definition
- Identifying a general class into which the subject fits
- Comparing the subject to more familiar examples belonging to the same subject or class
- Giving the characteristics of the subject in specific detail
- Narrating events that clarify the subject further
- Organizing the information in a way that matches the intended purpose, audience and context

Model Essay 1

ENVY

Envy produces nothing but pain and misery; it is a viciously destructive trait. Envy is often confused with jealousy; yet, the two terms are quite different one from the other. Envy is wanting what does not by right belong to you whereas jealousy is resenting having something taken away that by right does belong to you. For instance, a wife who flies into a rage because her husband is having a love affair with another woman is experiencing jealousy, an emotion quite appropriate to the situation. On the other hand, a woman who wants her best friend's husband for herself is feeling envy, an inappropriate trait. Consider what *The American Heritage Dictionary* says about envy. The roots of this word are traced back to the Latin 'invidere', meaning "to look

upon with malice." Envy is seen as synonymous with begrudging and coveting, which all Christians and Jews are warned against in the Decalogue (The Ten Commandments). The person who wants to remain psychologically healthy should purge away all feelings of envy. At the root of envy are selfishness and pride. But what envious persons often fail to realize is that when they harbor strong feelings of envy, they are destroying only themselves. An ancient fable tells the story of an eagle who was envious of another eagle who could fly better. One day this envious eagle spied a sportsman with a bow and arrow and said to him, "I wish you would bring down that eagle up there." The sportsman replied agreeably that he would do so gladly if he had some feathers for his arrow. So the envious eagle quickly pulled out one feather from his wings and gave it to the hunter. The arrow was shot, but

it did not quite reach the rival bird because he was flying too high. The envious eagle then pulled out another feather, then another, and still another — until he had lost so many feathers that he himself could not fly. The archer took advantage of the situation, turned around, and killed the helpless bird. Here is the lesson from this fable: If you are envious of others, the one you will hurt the most by your envy is you. In shooting arrows of envy at others, you wound only yourself.

Model Essay 2

THE REAL MEANING OF HONESTY

I think it was my mother who taught me the meaning of honesty. Not because she actually was honest, but because she lied all the time. She felt that the easiest way out of any given situation was generally the best way out. And, for

her, that generally meant telling a "little white lie." As a young child I thought it was kind of cool. And, naturally, when I would come to her with a concern or question wondering what I should do, she generally advised me to lie.

"Mom, I told Theresa that I would go over to her house, but now I would rather go to Sue's house to play."

"Tell Theresa you're sick," she would advise. And generally I did. But I didn't seem blessed with her lack of conscience. On many painful occasions Theresa would find out that I really went to Sue's house without her. These occasions taught me that it is more painful to be caught in a lie than it is to tell the truth in the first place. I wondered how it was possible that my mother had never learned that lesson.

I started thinking of all the lies that I'd heard her tell. I remembered the time she told someone that her favorite restaurant had closed, because she didn't want to see them there anymore. Or the time she told Dad that she loved the lawn-mower he gave her for her birthday. Or when she claimed that our phone lines had been down when she was trying to explain why she hadn't been in touch with a friend of hers for weeks. And what bothered me even more were all the times she had incorporated me into her lies. Like the time she told my guidance counselor that I had to miss school for exploratory surgery, when she really needed me to baby-sit. And it even started to bother me when someone would call for her and she would ask me to tell them that she wasn't there.

So, I started my own personal fight against her dishonesty. When I answered

the phone and it was someone my mother didn't want to talk to, I said, "Louise, mom is here, but she doesn't want to talk to you." The first time I did it, I think she grounded me, but I refused to apologize. I told her that I had decided that it was wrong to lie. And the next time it happened I did the same thing. Finally, she approached me and said, "I agree that lying is not the best thing to do, but we need to find a way to be honest without being rude." She admitted that her methods weren't right, and I admitted that mine were a bit too extreme.

Over the past few years, the two of us have worked together to be honest- and yet kind. Honesty should mean more than not lying. It should mean speaking the truth in kindness. Though I started by trying to teach my mom the importance of honesty, I ended up gaining a deeper

understanding of the meaning of the term.

Each of the above models approached the mode of definition differently. Whereas the first used clarifying examples, etymological information, and even an illustrating fable to explain what the writer means by 'envy', the second, in its attempt to define 'honesty', relied mainly on narrating incidents.

By looking into the features that were highlighted before this exercise, you should have formed an idea of the workings of a definition essay. In what follows advice and guidelines are given to support your findings and guide you to the best way to put these findings into application when you attempt to write your own definition essay.

ADVICE

Your first step in arriving at a definition should be investigating and thinking about the word/concept you plan to define. Unless you devote some time to this first step, your definition is likely to be shallow and conventional. This

is the time to consult dictionaries, to use free-writing to explore your own ideas about a word, and to recall your reading and personal experiences that might give you some additional insights and thereby enrich your definition.

Dictionaries are a good place to start your search for a definition, but your search should not end with somebody else's ideas about what a word means. Use the information you find in dictionaries to stimulate your own thoughts. Your previous reading and your experiences can give you further insights into the word you are defining too. *Free-writing* can be an excellent way to explore those thoughts and to generate ideas about any topic.; when you free-write, you write down everything that comes into your head without stopping to worry about whether the ideas make sense or whether you are expressing them well. You simply concentrate on getting ideas down on paper because you can go back later to the same ideas to select, add, and revise.

While free-writing, you do not have to be concerned about whether or not you will be able to include in your essay all the information and ideas you gather. For now, your objective is simply to clarify your own ideas about the word

you will be defining. The more time and effort you devote to reflecting about this word and all its meanings, the richer and more interesting your essay will be.

WRITING GUIDELINES

In what follows is a reminder of the main points that one has to keep in mind whilst writing a definition essay.

State the purpose: We rarely define something just for the sake of definition; in most of our writing we have a purpose. Establishing a reason for the definition of a certain term or concept is, therefore, a priority. Not only should we have a purpose but this purpose must be of importance to our readers; otherwise they will not feel prompted to read on. Having a purpose also has an added advantage; it guides you through your writing and at the same time it helps your readers follow your train of thought with ease.

Establish a General Class: A good starting point before you begin to give extended details of the topic you intend to define is to put the topic into the class to which it belongs. This will help your reader 'place' the topic and move

smoothly towards a better understanding of it. A dictionary definition may be useful in establishing the general category.

Compare with Familiar Examples: Once you have placed the concept you are defining within a general class, you can now move on to explain it further. This can be established by showing how similar or how different your topic is from other familiar examples belonging to the same class. By comparing the unfamiliar with the familiar, the less familiar becomes more understandable to your readers. For instance, if you are defining what 'hate' is, you can compare it with 'love'.

Present Characteristics in Detail: The most crucial aspect of your definition is the amount of information and detail you give about the concept you are defining. Specific details give the audience concrete information about the topic being examined. Thus, the more abstract or less familiar the concept or object you are defining is, the more detail your definition needs.

Narrate Events: An interesting way to develop a definition essay is to narrate events or present anecdotes that help to

explain it. Telling a short story of the effects of jealousy on someone may serve as an excellent technique in helping the reader see exactly what jealousy really is and what it does.

Organize the Information: Once you have collected enough information on your topic including facts, characteristics, anecdotes, formal definitions etc ..., the next step is to try and organize this information in the most effective way. Your purpose and your audience's degree of familiarity with the topic should guide you as to the best way to structure your material. Information should be organized in such a way that readers would want to read on and can easily follow your train of thought. You may decide to proceed from the least difficult concept to the most difficult one or from the most acceptable idea to the most controversial one or from the most familiar concept to the least familiar one. You may also decide to begin with a short story that will illustrate your topic in action. Whichever mode of organization you choose, make sure that you choose the order that best suits your purpose, audience, and context.

Exercise

The following are two essays *defining* 'pride'. Read the two essays and compare them carefully, then try to answer the questions that follow.

WHAT IS PRIDE?

The *Grossest Webster Dictionary* defines "pride" as "arrogance, loftiness, conceit, self-respect, dignity, and valuing oneself." Pride is something that most people strive for. To have pride means have self-respect for yourself or something that means a great deal to you. Some people will do just about anything to get this pride. I guess you can say that pride is something you must have to live a satisfying life. Without pride, your life is meaningless. You have nothing that means anything to you or has any importance to you.

Pride can be expressed in many different ways, and there are many different kinds of pride. For instance, I have a great amount of pride in myself. I am proud of the way I have turned out and of all the things I have accomplished thus far in my life. I am also proud of the community where I live. Because of this pride, I do as much as I can to make it a better place. I feel that it is wrong for people to say that they dislike the city they live unless they do something to improve it. I have another sort of pride, which is pride in my family. I feel that my family is the best family in the world. We are a close family and get along with each other very well. Because of this family pride, I enjoy bringing friends to my home. Without family pride, I think one would begin to lose pride in many other things. I guess you can say that family pride is the basis for all pride.

Another kind of pride is pride for something that means a lot to you - for instance, pride in your school. I remember in high school how they had so much pride in their school that any other high school was simply not as good as their own. These are a few of the ways in which pride can be expressed.

Pride is so important that some people will do just about anything to get it. For instance, some people cheat, steal, lie, and exaggerate. A person who wanted to feel proud about his grades might cheat in an exam, but the only person he's hurting is himself. A person can also lie or exaggerate about anything that would make him look better in the eyes of his friends, or he might be too proud to admit it when he makes a mistake. By doing this, the person will soon be locked into a corner with nowhere to go. His lies would have

caught up with him at this time. This is why I say people will do just about anything to get pride.

Pride is something a person must achieve by himself. Real pride can't be based on cheating or lying. Pride helps people to feel good about themselves, their communities, their families, and their schools. Pride helps people to live happy and satisfying lives.

PRIDE: SIN OR STRENGTH?

Our Sunday school teachers may have told us that pride is a sin and goes before destruction; at the same time, our other teachers, our parents, and our coaches may have encouraged us to take pride in our work, in ourselves, or in our ability. "Pride" is used in a confusing variety of ways, sometimes condemned as the cause of mistakes and unhappiness

and sometimes praised as essential to success. What is pride? Is it something we should try to overcome or something we should try to develop? By examining the various ways in which "pride" is used, we can get a better understanding of its true nature. Pride seems to be something between an emotion and an opinion: it is a feeling of dignity and self-respect based on an opinion that something—a country, a family, a person—is good and worthwhile. When we use "pride" in a positive sense, we usually see it as a moderate emotion based on a justified opinion. For example, we probably wouldn't criticize someone who says, 'I am proud of my parents because they're honest and hard-working.'

There's nothing obnoxious or excessive about this expression of pride, and it's based on a reasonable opinion: we believe that one should be proud of

honest, hard-working parents. We also wouldn't criticize an excellent pianist who admitted that he felt proud after performing a piece well or a social worker who said that she was proud that she had spent her life helping people. We aren't offended by quiet assertions of pride when we think that the people have a right to be proud. Furthermore, we tend to believe that this kind of pride can do a lot of good by pushing people to make real efforts and do worthwhile things. The pianist, for example, might work very hard to improve partly because he enjoys the feeling of pride that he gets whenever he does well.

We do criticize pride, however, when it seems excessive and unjustified. For example, we don't like people who continually brag because their parents are rich; bragging is excessive, and

wealth is not, in itself, something to be proud of. When pride gets carried to this extreme, it can give people inflated images of themselves, make them overlook other people's accomplishments, and lead them to expect special treatment. A mediocre pianist who is so proud of his talents that he won't admit that anyone else can play better than he can is ridiculous, and a social worker who is so proud of her record that she expects other people to praise her all the time is obnoxious. This kind of pride can make people very unpleasant to be with--no one likes to listen to people who can only talk about themselves and how wonderful they are. Also, because this kind of pride isn't really justified, it can lead people into making mistakes: for example, the mediocre pianist might be so proud of himself that he tries to become a professional even though he doesn't

have enough talent to succeed.

It may be that pride is not, in itself, either good or bad. Every-thing depends on the amount of pride one feels, on the basis of one's pride, and on the way one expresses one's pride. It may be that our Sunday-school teachers warned us about pride not because pride is always bad but because it is always dangerous. Once pride begins to develop, it can grow very quickly and soon become excessive; and since pride can keep us from seeing our own faults, we may not even realize how proud we are until it is too late to change.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Compare the two introductory paragraphs. What does each author accomplish in this paragraph? Did each introductory paragraph catch your interest? Did each clearly identify the essay's scope and purpose?

2. Does each essay contain a thesis statement that sums up the author's definition of pride? If so, identify and evaluate this thesis statement.
3. Comment on each author's use of examples. What purpose do the examples in each essay serve? Did you find the examples interesting and helpful? Explain.
4. Both authors, in addition to defining pride, say that some kinds of pride are good while others are not. Comment on the criteria each author uses to distinguish between "good pride" and "bad pride." Do you find these criteria reasonable and insightful? Explain.
5. Comment on the organization of each essay. How are the paragraphs in each essay ordered? Do you find each essay's organization clear and logical?
6. On the whole, which essay offered a clearer and more interesting definition of pride? How could the *other* essay be improved?



Application

1. Choose a word from the list below and use a dictionary to discover as much as you can about the origins and histories of this word. Then free-write for about ten to fifteen minutes. As you free-write, draw upon the insights you have gained into this word through your reading and your experiences. Then look over your free-writing and see if it contains any ideas you might use in writing a definition essay.

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| a. Alienation | b. Education | c. Liberal |
| d. Maturity | e. Politeness | f. Insecurity |
| g. Love | | |

2. Develop a definition of a word chosen from the list below:

- | | | |
|------------|---------------|-------------|
| a. Freedom | b. Conscience | c. Sport |
| d. Virtue | e. Patriotism | f. Pacifism |
| g. War | | |

3. Develop a definition of one of the following concepts in the list below:
- a. The duty of the individual to himself
 - b. The duty of the individual to his society
 - c. Leisure: Fun or fulfillment?
 - d. How I define personal liberty
 - e. The role of a parent
4. With the help of an unabridged dictionary, write an extended definition (300-500 words) of one of the words listed below. Include an etymology of the word and examples to illustrate its meaning:
- a. Mediocre b. Monopoly c. Phlegmatic
 - d. Sophistry e. Xenophobia
5. In a short essay, define each of the following items by:
- (i) Placing it in a general category,
 - (ii) Indicating how it differs from others in its class
 - (iii) Extending the definition to further explain it.
- a. Nonchalance b. Reverence c. Desolation

Unit Two

The Classification Essay

Classification is the process of organizing elements in classes or categories on the basis of their similarities or differences. The classification system used in libraries, for instance, is a method that catalogs books by dividing them into a number of classes. This will help readers find books much easier. For example books on literature will be found in one section, books on languages will be found in another, and those on history will be placed in another and so on and so forth. In writing too, classification is used as a pattern of development to find order and unity in a group of a seemingly unrelated material. This is accomplished through a division of the subjects' components into categories; then a discussion and a clarification of each is given through various processes like definition and exemplification.

Classification serves a number of functions. First, it is a fundamental way of organizing knowledge. Through classification we organize things, ideas, and experiences.

For example, suppose you wanted to boost tourism by writing about your country's tourist attractions. One approach could be to classify various attractions, grouping similar ones together. Major classes could include historical sites, museums, and natural landscape. The category of historical sites could be further broken down into citadels, mosques and churches, and theatres. This sort of classification would enable you to manage what could be an extensive topic and also to build an impressive case for your audience.

Classification also serves at times the purpose of increasing our understanding of a subject or a complex idea because it places it in relation to a system and gives it a logical context. Moreover, classification could serve as a method for arriving at new knowledge.

Classification is a mode of writing that is used as a means to an end. That is, a writer classifies a certain idea or concept for the sake of explaining it; classification is not made for its own sake.

In what follows, models of classification essays are given. As you read these selections, check if the following features are illustrated in these essays:

- Having a clear sense of purpose
- Establishing a main category for classification
- Creating classes within the main category
- Illustrating each class adequately
- Having a conclusion that restates the purpose

Model Essay 1

TEACHERS I HAVE KNOWN

In my thirteen and a half years at school, I have, of course, known many teachers: I have made rather a hobby of studying my teachers because I hope one day to become a teacher myself. There are many kinds of teachers, but they can all be classified under one of two headings -good and bad. Fortunately for students there are many more teachers

under the first heading than under the second.

Actually, it does not mean much to say that teachers are good or bad - the same can be said of people in any profession. A better way of separating the teachers that really teach from those that just stand up in front of a class is to ask how they got to be teachers in the first place. Did they become teachers because they were really interested in their subject and in young people, or did they just drift into the profession through indifference or necessity?

I should like to dispose of the second category first. There is little need to say much about such teachers; every student has known a few of them. Hither they are indifferent toward their job, in which case the class is terribly boring, and the students fool around; or

they actively hate teaching. Then watch out! The best thing to do in a class like that is to keep quiet and do only as much work as necessary to avoid the teacher's notice.

The other teachers are much more interesting, and there are many more kinds of them. Some become teachers because of an intense interest in their subject. They may be great teachers or well-known researchers; particularly in college, they may be out-standing figures in their field. Some of them do not have the ghost of a notion how to put their subject across; they may not even try particularly, for students simply don't exist for them. All that matters is the subject. Even so, the student can get a lot out of such courses if he puts some effort into understanding them. Other teachers in this category do have a gift for

organizing and communicating their subject. Their classes are a constant challenge—the teacher is not likely to make the subject easy!—and a delight.

Another variety of teacher with a purpose is the kind who is interested in students. This teacher is not a scholar; the main motivation here is to help students. That is his mission in life. At the college level you probably find fewer of these teachers than in elementary or high school. I remember particularly my seventh-grade arithmetic teacher. It was a bad year for me; more than once I got into trouble with the school authorities. But this teacher was so decent to me that I became better, and I even learned some arithmetic. Mr. Jones may not have been a great mathematician, but he did me some good and taught me more than many other teachers I have had.

I should mention one other kind of interested teacher, a kind to be careful of. That is the teacher who wants to indoctrinate his students about something. He believes fanatically that all automobile engines should be limited to 60 horsepower, and he wants you to believe that, too. He is apt to spend lots of time preaching about this idee fixe, and that time will be largely wasted for you. But otherwise he may be a good teacher. Be tolerant of the bee in his bonnet, and remember that the teacher is human, too.

Model Essay 2

SHADES OF CHARACTER

Anyone who has spent time with or around children will notice that each one has a special personality all of their own. Children, like adults, have different

traits that make up their personalities. Experts have researched this phenomenon in detail and classified children into different categories. Some experts have named more than three categories, but Peter L. Manigone has chosen three that most experts agree with. These categories have been named flexible, fearful, and feisty. Children generally may have similar interests, but the way they interact and deal with these interests displays their personality type.

The first personality type is called flexible. This is the most common of the three types. About 40 percent of all children fall into the flexible or easy group. These children usually handle feelings of anger and disappointment by reacting mildly. This does not mean that they do not feel mad or disappointed, they just choose to react mildly. These

actions mean the flexible child is easy to take care of and be around. According to Mangione, they usually adapt to new situations and activities quickly, are toilet-trained easily, and are generally cheerful. Flexible children are subtle in their need for attention. Rather than yelling and demanding it, they will slowly and politely let their caregiver know about the need. If they do not get the attention right away, they seldom make a fuss. They patiently wait, but they still make it known that they need the attention. These children also are easygoing, so routines like feeding and napping are regular.

Flexible children may be referred to as good as gold because of their cheerful attitudes. Since these are well-behaved children, the caregiver needs to make sure the child is getting the attention they need. The caregiver should

check in with the flexible child from time to time. By checking in with the child regularly, the caregiver will be more knowledgeable about when the child needs attention and when they do not.

The next temperament is the fearful type. These are the more quiet and shy children. This makes up about 15 percent of children. They adapt slowly to new environments and take longer than flexible children when warming up to things. When presented with a new environment, fearful children often cling to something or someone familiar. Whether it be the main caregiver or a material object such as a blanket, the fearful child will cling to it until they feel comfortable with the new situation. This can result in a deep attachment of the child to a particular caregiver or object. Fearful children may also withdraw when pushed into a

new situation too quickly. They may also withdraw when other children are jumping into a new project or situation they are not comfortable with. These children may tend to play alone rather than with a group.

In dealing with fearful children, caregivers find they need more attention than flexible children. A good technique for helping these children is having a sequence of being with, talking to, stepping back, remaining available, and moving on. The caregiver can also help the fearful child by giving them extra soothing combined with an inch-by-inch fostering of independence and assertiveness. One of the most effective techniques is just taking it slow and helping the child become more comfortable with the surroundings.

The third temperament type is called feisty. About 10 percent of children fit into this category. A feisty child expresses their opinions in a very intense way. Whether they are happy or mad, everyone around them will know how they feel. These children remain active most of the time, and this causes them to be very aggressive. Feisty children often have the tendency to have a negative persistence and will go on and on nagging, whining and negotiating if there is something they particularly want. Unlike flexible children, feisty children are irregular in their napping and feeding times, but they do not adapt well to changes in their routines. They get used to things and won't give them up. Anything out of the ordinary could send them into some type of fit. If these children are not warned of a change, they may react very negatively. Feisty children also tend to be

very sensitive to their surrounding environment. As a result, they may have strong reactions to their surroundings.

When dealing with feisty children, the caregiver should know strategies that receive positive results when different situations arise. Mangione supports the redirection technique to calm feisty children. This method helps when the child is reacting very negatively to a situation. To properly implement the redirection technique begin by recognizing and empathizing with the feelings of the feisty child and placing firm limits on any unacceptable behavior. This response lets the child know that both his or her desire for the toy and feelings of anger when denied the toy are acceptable to the caregiver. At the same time, the caregiver should clearly communicate to the child that expressing anger through hurtful or

disruptive behavior is not acceptable. The child will probably need time to experience his or her emotions and settle down.

Caregivers should consider that these children generally do not have regular feeding and napping times. The caregiver should be flexible when working with these children, and try to conform more to the child. If there is going to be a change in a child's routine, the caregiver has an easier time with the child if the child has been warned of the change.

Generally speaking, children can be divided into three groups, but caregivers must not forget that each child is an individual. Children may have the traits of all three of the personality groups, but they are categorized into the one they are

most like. Whatever their temperament, children need to be treated according to their individual needs. When these needs are met appropriately the child will be happier, and those around the child will feel better also. Knowing the general personality types and how to react to them will help to make the caregiver's job much easier and aid in the relief of unnecessary stress.

There is a lot in common in the models of classification essays given above. By looking into the features that were highlighted prior to this exercise, you should have formed an idea of the workings of the classification essay. In what follows some guidelines are given to support your findings and guide you to the best way to put these findings into application when you endeavor to write your own classification essay.

WRITING GUIDELINES

In what follows is a summary of the main points that you need to keep in mind whilst writing a classification essay.

Make the Purpose Clear: As with the definition essay, having a reason behind your classification is crucial. Stating this purpose early on in your essay is equally important; it will help your readers follow your train of thought and enable them grasp the full meaning of your classification and examples without difficulty.

Establish the Main Category: Before you actually start listing the sub-categories of your classification, explain to your readers the main category of your classification. Thus, for instance, before starting to classify the different kinds of tourist attractions in Syria, state clearly that "Syria is the land where so many civilizations have flourished and vanished". This will point your readers towards the category of 'historical attractions'. Make sure that you do not leave it up to your reader to guess or to infer the general class or main category of your discussion. State it clearly.

Create Classes within the Main Category: Classification organizes and places elements into subcategories, but those classes are not always apparent to the writer. In the example on the historical attractions in Syria, the topic lends itself to classification fairly easily. But that is not always the case. You may find that in some other topics; you need to use your creativity, imagination and vision to find meaningful sub-categories. If that was not possible, then probably approaching the explanation of the concept through classification was not the right choice and you need to look for another mode of writing to develop your idea.

Once you have your subcategories identified, make sure that they fit into the same organizing principle. The organizing principle is how you sort the groups. Do not allow a different principle to pop up unexpectedly. For example, if your unifying principle for classifying different kinds of children is types of personality, don't get carried away and use another unifying principle, such as physical appearance. This would certainly imply having different categories.

Illustrate Each Class: Do not just identify sub-categories, but give detailed examples of each because that will convince your readers that a category really exists. Besides, try to give the same amount of examples on each of the different sub-categories. If you cannot find any examples of a certain class, then perhaps that class does not exist at all.

Draw a Conclusion: In the process of identifying classes and giving examples, writers may get carried away and forget about the main purpose behind their classification. Make sure that you do not lose sight of your ultimate purpose. Once you have examined your topic through classification, draw conclusions and state those conclusions clearly and explicitly. Do not just assume that your readers will infer those conclusions from your classes or will come to the same conclusion as yours.

Exercise

In what follows, two samples of classification essays are given. Read them carefully and then answer the questions that follow:

THE MAGAZINE INDUSTRY

'Sports Illustrated' was one of the earliest magazines to anticipate today's trend in magazines. Successful magazines today cater to specialized audience. You probably have seen a copy of 'Sports Illustrated' recently, but you may not have seen 'Heavy Duty Trucking', 'Bassmaster', or 'Inc.'. All these publications are ranked among the country's top 400 magazines. They give their readers information that the readers can't find anywhere else, and the number of people who read 'Heavy Duty Trucking', 'Bassmaster', and 'Inc.' might surprise you.

'Heavy Duty Trucking', which is more than sixty years old and collects more than \$5 million a year from subscribers and advertisers, is ranked third in the country among automotive magazines. Most of the magazine's 95,000 readers own trucks or truck-and-tractor combinations, and they want to know how to make their businesses more profitable.

More than 400,000 people read 'Bassmaster', first published in 1976. Articles tell readers how to find and catch largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass. 'Bassmaster' collects \$8.7 million a year.

The typical 'Inc.' reader is an entrepreneur with a small- to medium-size business. The magazine began publishing in 1979. More than half a million people read 'Inc.' every month,

and it averages 125 pages of advertising in each issue. Advertisers and subscribers spend \$44 million a year on 'Inc.'.

Magazines usually are divided into three types: (1) consumer publications; (2) trade, technical, and professional publications; and (3) company publications.

You probably are most familiar with consumer magazines, which are popularly marketed: 'Time', 'Vogue', 'Esquire', 'Businessmaster', and 'Inc.', for example. In the magazine business, "consumer" magazines are not just those that give buying advice. This term refers to all magazines sold by subscription or at newsstands, supermarkets, and bookstores. As a group, consumer magazines make the most money because they have the most readers and carry the

most advertising.

Trade, technical, and professional magazines are read by people in a particular industry to learn more about their business. 'Heavy Duty Trucking' is a trade magazine. So are the 'Columbia Journalism Review' (published by Columbia University) and 'American Medical News' (published by the American Medical Association). These magazines are issued by private companies for their subscribers (such as Heavy Duty Trucking), by universities or university-connected organizations for their subscribers (such as the Columbia Journalism Review), or by professional associations for their members (such as American Medical News). Most trade, technical, and professional magazines carry advertising directed at the professions they serve.

Company magazines are produced by businesses for their employees and stockholders. These magazines usually don't carry advertising. Their main purpose is to promote the company. Du Pont, for instance, publishes a company magazine called *Du Pont Context*.

THE TECHNOLOGY OF EATING

All the world is divided into three parts: finger-feeders, fork-feeders, and chopstick-feeders. Why people fall into these categories, however, is a mystery. "There is no comprehensive account of the ways of putting solid food into the mouth," according to Dr. Lynn White Jr., an emeritus history professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, and an expert on medieval technology.

The topic of the technology of eating is one that is rife with dispute over the

utensils used to eat food. It is also a subject loaded with chauvinism. Supporters of one implement may often regard others as uncivilized or even barbaric.

On Dr. White's tripartite globe, fork-feeders are most common in Europe and North America, chopstick-feeders in most of Eastern Asia, and finger-feeders in much of Africa, the Middle East, Indonesia, and the Indian subcontinent. That means that fork-feeders are currently outnumbered 2 to 1. Academics agree fork-users have historically been in the minority; humans have eaten with their fingers for most of the species' existence. As little as three centuries ago, most Western Europeans still used fingers, regarding the fork as decadent or worse. French historian Fernand Braudel tells of one medieval preacher in Germany who condemned the fork as a

"diabolical luxury: God would not have given us fingers if he had wished us to use such an instrument."

Forks and chopsticks became popular because they made it easier to handle hot food. Before this, people generally scooped up hot meals on flat bread. The major exception was China, where there is no evidence of flat bread being eaten. According to Dr. K. C. Chang, the chairman of Harvard University's anthropology department, Chinese cuisine was characterized by small portions, which did not require cutting by a knife and fork, eaten from bowls. "There was a need for morsels' to be carried from a bowl to the mouth, and chopsticks met that need," he said.

Some of the oldest Chinese chopsticks date to 1200 B.C., Dr. Chang said. Apparently, the fork appeared on Western

tables several hundred years later, but it was not readily accepted. Forks were used for many years in Europe and the Near East, but only as kitchen implements, says historian Rhea Tannahill in "Food in History" (Stein and Day, 1971).

Though the fork was first seen in society on the tables of the rich and well born, many a crowned head/ including Queen Elizabeth I of England and Louis XIV of France, ate with their fingers. Indeed, Mr. Braudel states that Louis XIV ate chicken stew with his fingers and forbade the Duke of Burgundy and his brothers to use forks in his presence. History has it that when Napoleon III of France, a fork man, met the Shah of Persia, a finger-feeder, the potentates sharply disagreed about the proper method of bridging the gap between plate and lip. As late as 1897,

Miss Tannahill writes, "sailors in the British Navy were forbidden the use of knives and forks, because they were regarded as impediments to discipline and manliness."

Dr. White acknowledged that fork-, finger-, and chopstick-feeders can be strong defenders of their eating implements. Though they cannot document it, some scholars believe finger-feeding may be undergoing an enthusiastic revival, in part because of a worldwide resurgence in ethnic pride after the collapse of Western imperialism, in part because the regions and social classes with some of the highest birthrates shun forks.

The exceptions are the Westernized segments of society in developing countries. Dr. Eqbal Ahmad, a social scientist from Pakistan, said upper-

income people in the subcontinent or in the Middle East may eat with their fingers most of the time, but often use forks on public occasions, particularly if Western guests are present.

Norge Winfred Jerome, a nutritional anthropologist at the University of Kansas, School of Medicine, said upper-income people in finger-feeding areas can become more European than the Europeans in their devotion to forks. She recalled taking Egyptian guests to a Kansas City grill and finding them unable to adopt the American custom of eating barbequed ribs with their fingers. For many such Westernized people, Dr. Jerome suggested, "The fork has become a status marker, because it establishes distance between the food and the eater that the fingers do not."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Compare the two introductory paragraphs of the above sample essays: 'The Magazine Industry' and 'The Technology of Eating'. What does each author accomplish in this paragraph? Did each introductory paragraph catch your interest? Did each clearly identify the essay's scope and purpose?
2. Does each essay contain a thesis statement that sums up the author's objective? If so, identify and evaluate this thesis statement.
3. Comment on each authors' main category. Did the writers of each of the essays create clear adequate classes within the main category? Explain.
4. Do you find the criteria for classification in both essays reasonable and insightful? Explain.
5. Comment on the organization of each essay. How are the paragraphs in each essay ordered? Do you find each essay's organization clear and logical?

6. On the whole, which essay offers a clearer and more interesting classification? Would you make any suggestions for improvements on any of these essays?

Application

1. Write an essay summarizing the potential dangers of classifying nations according to physical characteristics such as race, color... etc.
2. Write an essay about the different types of families. Consider nuclear families, extended families, and alternative families. In what respects are they the same? How are they different? Include a definition of family that would apply to this entire set.
3. Write an essay in which you explore the possible ways of dividing the students in a school. Don't limit yourself to the conventional ways of making this division. Which of these ways do you think might work best? Which are clearly discriminatory or unfair?

4. Think about the way food is categorized and arranged in a supermarket. Who benefits from the existence of these categories? How? What reasons might a store manager have for changing the way the food is categorized?
5. How were students in your school system classified? Do you think this system worked well? In what other ways could students be classified? Would these types of classifications work better? Would any of them be unfair?
6. "Regardless of whether they are fought to expand a territorial border, to recapture lost lands, or to exact revenge, all wars are barbaric."
7. Write an essay in which you classify one of the subjects listed below:
 - a. Professions, b. Politicians, c. Television serials



Unit Three

Compare and Contrast Essay

In the previous section on classification, you learned how to explain a particular issue or topic by breaking it down into classes or categories. The comparison and contrast essay is in many ways similar to the classification one. When you use *comparison*, you place members of the same general class side by side and examine them for their similarities; whereas when you use *contrast*, it is the differences that you focus on. Usually a writer does both comparison and contrast in the same essay because the things being explored are usually alike in some aspects and different in others. However, you find that the word *comparison* is often used to mean both comparing and contrasting.

Comparison is a serious tool for explanation that is carried out for many purposes. It is used in many kinds of writing such as scholarly, business, entertainment, etc. Comparison and contrast papers can serve a number of interesting, useful purposes. First, a writer may use comparison to explain a

certain subject, such as new government laws. This can be achieved by comparing the new laws with the old ones. A second use of comparison is to work back to a general opinion through the comparison of two or more particulars. For example, by comparing three recent soap operas, a reviewer could work toward the generalization that soap operas today are starting to deal with more serious themes. Similarly by comparing and contrasting two kinds of sports, one might also show that one is better because in practicing it one might be less prone to injuries.

Your purpose or the point you are trying to make determines the aspects of the comparison you will focus on. If, for instance, your purpose is to convince your reader that swimming is a safer sport than jogging, then your main focus will be to show that although both contribute to better bodily fitness, in the latter one is more liable to injury. You would not, however, want to compare both kinds of exercise in terms of the equipment or outfit needed for each type of sport. Such a point of comparison would not be relevant to your main theme.

Comparison and contrast writing is generally structured in one of three ways: Treat subject A first, covering all points, and then go on to subject B; make a point-by-point comparison and contrast, going back and forth between A and B on each point, or cover all points of subject A, then take subject B and compare it point by point with the points mentioned in A.

In what follows three models of comparison essays are presented. As you read them, note if the following features of comparison and contrast mode of writing are illustrated:

- Having a clear sense of purpose
- Including a discussion of the similarities
- Including a discussion of the differences
- Organizing and structuring the comparison appropriately

Model Essay 1

In the following essay 'My Childhood', the writer used the first method of organization (all of A, then all of B). He presented and treated fully one subject, which is the

'grandfather', then he presented and treated the second subject which is the 'mother'.

MY CHILDHOOD

My father died when I was a small child, and I was raised by my mother and my maternal grandfather, who was, as I now see, a very old-fashioned man. His home, where we lived until I came to college, was a very old-fashioned household. My mother loved her father, and I have no reason to think he did not love her, but they were so different that I was aware from the first of a conflict between them. Or, if it was not a direct conflict between them, it was a conflict between what they stood for. And both of them exerted a strong influence over me. Therefore, as I grow up, I think more and more about their contrasting personalities and try to detect in myself the traces of each of them.

My grandfather, whose name was Carruthers McKenzie, was of Scotch-Irish blood and belonged to the Presbyterian Church. He had a long, bony face, sunken cheeks, and a straggly beard. He was a man with an iron will if I ever saw one, and all of his way of life was one long discipline for himself and everybody about him. But it was a discipline chiefly for himself. He never spent a day in bed in his life until his last illness, and yet he was probably ill a good part of his life. After he died--and he died of a cancer of the stomach--the doctor told us that he could not understand how any man could keep on his feet so long without giving in to the pain.

There was discipline enough left over for my mother and me. We had morning prayers and evening prayers. I had to read the Bible an hour a day. My

grandfather was a prosperous man, but I never had a nickel to spend which I had not earned, and his rates of payment for my chores were not generous. From the time I was eight, I had to study three hours in the afternoon and at least two hours at night, except for weekends. My grandfather never uttered a word of praise to me except now and then the statement, "You have done your duty." As one could guess, my grandfather never told jokes, was scrupulous about all kinds of obligations, never touched an alcoholic beverage or even soft drinks, and wore sober black, winter and summer. My mother must have taken after her own mother, who was of South-German parentage and a Catholic by training. My mother's mother had given up her religion to marry my grandfather and had taken on his way of life, but she died very young. My mother was rather short in stature and had a rather full but

graceful figure, the kind they used to call "partridge-y."

She had round, pink cheeks and a complexion like a child's. She had blue eyes, very large. She loved to laugh and joke. My mother was a good mother, as the phrase goes, she loved me and she was careful of all my wants. But she also liked idleness. She would sit on the porch half the afternoon and look across the yard, just rocking in her chair and enjoying the sunshine. And she went to bridge parties and even took an occasional glass of wine or, as I imagine, a cocktail. She was made for a good time and noise and people, and when my grandfather was out of the house, she used to romp and play with me or take me on long walks in the country back of our place.

When I was eighteen and went off to

college, she got married. She married the kind of man you would expect her to pick. He is big and strong-looking, with a heavy, black mustache with a little gray in it. He smokes cigars and he likes fine whiskey. He has a Cadillac agency in the city, and he keeps a little plane out at the airport. He loves sports and a good time. My mother has married exactly the man for her, I think, and I am enough like my mother to think he is fine, too. But as I look back on my grandfather—he died three years ago, when I was seventeen—I have a great admiration for him and a sneaking affection.

Model Essay 2

The model sample 'Weeping and Laughter' illustrates an example of the second method of organization. This mode proceeds by a series of a point by point contrast on the different aspects of the items 'weeping' and 'laughter'.

WEEPING AND LAUGHTER

Let us compare the physiological processes involved in laughter and weeping. Laughter is triggered by the adrenal-sympathetic branch of the autonomic nervous system, weeping by the parasympathetic branch. The first, as we have seen, serves to energize the body, tensing it for action; the second has the opposite effect: it lowers blood pressure, neutralizes excesses of blood-sugar, facilitates the elimination of body-waste and generally tends towards quietude and catharsis-literally the 'purging' of tensions.

This physiological contrast is clearly reflected in the visible manifestations of laughter and weeping. The laugher's eyes sparkle, the corners are wrinkled, but brow and cheeks are taut and smooth, which lends the face an expression of radiance; the lips are parted, the

corners lifted. In weeping, the eyes are 'blinded by tears', they lose their focus and lustre; the features seem to crumble; even when weeping for joy or in aesthetic rapture, the transfigured face reflects a serene languidness. A similar contrast is noticeable in bodily postures and motions. In laughter the head is thrown back by a vigorous contraction of the muscles in the neck; the person who weeps lets 'the head droop' (into the hands, on the table or on somebody's shoulder). Laughter contracts the muscles and begets agitated movements; in weeping the muscles go flabby, the shoulders slump forward, the whole posture reflects a 'letting go'.

Model Essay 3

The third method of organization is illustrated in the following selection entitled 'Lincoln and His General'. First, one item of the comparison, General Grant, is given in full. Then General Lee is compared and contrasted, point by point, with Grant.

LINCOLN AND HIS GENERAL

Grant was, judged by modern standards, the greatest general of the Civil War. He was head and shoulders above any general on either side as an over-all strategist, as a master of what in later wars would be called global strategy. His Operation Crusher plan, the product of a mind which had received little formal instruction in the higher art of war, would have done credit to the most finished student of a series of modern staff and command schools. He was a brilliant theater strategist, as

evidenced by the Vicksburg campaign, which was a classic field and siege operation. He was a better than average tactician, although, like even the best generals of both sides, he did not appreciate the destruction that the increasing firepower of modern armies could visit on troops advancing across open spaces.

Lee is usually ranked as the greatest Civil War general, but this evaluation has been made without placing Lee and Grant in the perspective of military developments since the war. Lee was interested hardly at all in "global" strategy, and what few suggestions he did make to his government about operations in other theaters than his own indicate that he had little aptitude for grand planning. As a theater strategist, Lee often demonstrated more brilliance and apparent originality than

Grant, but his most audacious plans were as much the product of the Confederacy's inferior military position as of his own fine mind. In war, the weaker side has to improvise brilliantly. It must strike quickly, daringly, and include a dangerous element of risk in its plans. Had Lee been a Northern general with Northern resources behind him, he would have improvised less and seemed less bold. Had Grant been a Southern general, he would have fought as Lee did.

Fundamentally Grant was superior to Lee because in a modern total war he had a modern mind, and Lee did not. Lee looked to the past in war as the Confederacy did in spirit. The staffs of the two men illustrate their outlooks. It would not be accurate to say that Lee's general staff were glorified clerks, but the statement would not be too wide of the mark.

Certainly his staff was not, in the modern sense, a planning staff, which was why Lee was often a tired general. He performed labors that no general can do in a big modern army-work that should have fallen to his staff, but that Lee did because it was traditional for the commanding general to do it in older armies. Most of Lee's staff officers were lieutenant-colonels. Some of the men on Grant's general staff, as well as on the staffs of other Northern generals, were major and brigadier generals, officers who were capable of leading corps. Grant's staff was an organization of experts in the various phases of strategic planning. The modernity of Grant's mind was most apparent in his grasp of the concept that war was becoming total and that the destruction of the enemy's economic resources was as effective and legitimate a form of warfare as the

destruction of his armies. What was realism to Grant was barbarism to Lee. Lee thought of war in the old war as a conflict between armies and refused to view it for what it had become a struggle between societies. To him, economic war was needless cruelty to civilians. Lee was the last of the great old-fashioned generals, Grant the first of the great moderns.

There are a lot of common features in the models of comparison essays given above. By looking thoroughly into the points that were highlighted prior to this exercise, you should have formed an idea of the workings of the comparison essay. In what follows some guidelines are given to support your findings and guide you to the best way to put these findings into application when you attempt to write your own comparison essay.

WRITING GUIDELINES

Make the Purpose Clear: The most common weakness in a compare and contrast essay is an uncertain or insignificant purpose. It is essential that you decide precisely what your purpose will be before you embark on writing. If your purpose is simply "to show the similarities and differences between A and B," then there is no point in writing the essay, this will accomplish little. Why should the reader be interested in a list of similarities and differences that goes nowhere and proves nothing? This process might work in reverse. That is, the writer first observes certain similarities and differences between two topics, and these in turn bring about the idea that becomes the purpose or the thesis for the essay.

Thus a clear statement of the purpose of the comparison is essential. However, before revealing your purpose and before even embarking on the process of comparison and contrast, make your purpose clear to yourself first because that will make it easier for you to spell it out for your readers.

There are several methods of introducing your topic. You may not want to reveal your purpose in the opening paragraph; in that case you might choose to start with a direct comparison that will attract readers to your writing. However, do not go too far before revealing your purpose.

Having a clear sense of purpose will also make it easier for you to write a tentative thesis statement that reveals this purpose. Once you have a clear sense of your focus and purpose, it will be easier to select the aspects of comparison and contrast that will clarify the idea and leave out those that do not. Consequently, finding appropriate structure for the whole essay will become much easier.

Once you have established your purpose, start thinking about *the grounds* of your Comparison, i.e. the specific points of similarity and difference that you will discuss. It's probably best to begin by making a list of all the similarities and differences you can think of, reserving until later your decisions about which ones are significant enough to mention.

Discuss the Similarities: If in the first place there are no grounds for similarity, then the two subjects are incomparable. Therefore, in your writing, when you put side by side two things, ideas, or people, look for some common ground to unite them. This common ground will provide the background against which the contrasting will take place, without which your contrast will be pointless. The next step will be to think of specific examples to support the assertions you are making.

Discuss the Differences: The opposition created by the contrast between subjects provides significance, depth and strength to a topic. Pointing out the differences between members of a class can outline the essence of one or both, or explain a third subject or idea. When contrasting subjects, you should make every effort to get beyond the shallow and apparent differences to those that are subtle and meaningful.

Structure the Comparison: Comparison and contrast essays can be difficult to manage, thus making the right decision as to which method of organization to use is vital. There are a number of organizational patterns that can be used. In the

first method, you treat all points of subject A first and then all of those of subject B, making continuous reference to the points of comparison or contrast. This method is, in general, appropriate when the points to be compared are fairly broad and obvious. This method is often best when you are comparing two things that require extended, complex discussion—two poems, for example. It is also preferable when you want to create two contrasting moods. This approach does have its dangers, though. Comparison and contrast essays using this approach often appear as two separate essays hiding under one title. Besides, treating all of subject A first and then all of subject B you might be relying too much on your readers' memory and thus you run the risk of the reader's forgetting what was said about A. This problem is worse in longer essays. You can overcome this problem by referring your reader repeatedly to the first half of your paper, briefly reminding him of the points made earlier.

In the second method of organization, you move back and forth from A to B to A presenting a part of one item and then a part of the second in relation to the corresponding part

of the first item, until you have covered all relevant points. When many details are involved in your essay, this method is likely to be more useful than the first. Still this approach is not appropriate for all comparison and contrast essays. To move back and forth from A to B to A can be tedious for the reader. Readers sometimes feel pulled back and forth by this kind of comparison: they have only a few moments to focus on one thing before you start demanding that they contrast it with something else. And you may find yourself struggling to find new ways to say "on the other hand," "however," and "in contrast".

By the third method of organization, you present one item fully, and then, in presenting the second, refer, part by part, to the first item.

Which method of organization is, therefore, preferable for a comparison and contrast essay? The answer is that it depends on the subject you are discussing and on the kinds of comparisons and contrasts you wish to draw. *You may have to try different structures to determine which works best for your subject and purpose.* You may also wish to

work out variations on either pattern. You might find some way to combine the two approaches, or you might decide you will first discuss all differences and then discuss all similarities. Almost any method of organization can work if you keep in mind the need to make real comparisons and to help your readers see those comparisons.



Exercise

In each of the three sample essays given below, a different method of organization has been used. Read the following essays carefully and answer the discussion questions that follow.

ORGANIZATION CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

One quart of gas can make the difference between arriving safely at your destination and being stranded by the side of the road for hours; one point can make the difference between passing and failing a final exam. Often, success or failure can be determined by something that seems insignificant, something we may not even notice if all goes well. Last semester, I took two courses that were similar in many ways, but one course was an enjoyable and rewarding experience while the other was

a constant frustration that ultimately did not teach me very much. There was one crucial difference between contemporary American politics and introduction to sociology: organization.

At the beginning of the semester, the two courses seemed similar, and I was looking forward to both of them. The subject matter in both courses interested me, and I was intrigued by the books each professor assigned. Both professors had excellent qualifications; each had a PhD, each had been teaching for over ten years, and each had published articles in his field. Further, each professor was enthusiastic about the course and showed a good attitude toward students. The political science professor took some time to try to learn our names and then tried to get us all involved in an opening discussion on current politics; the sociology

professor helped us relax by telling some jokes and inviting us all to come see him at his office whenever we had questions or problems. I left campus the first day thinking that I had a great semester ahead of me.

Even on that first day, however, I should have seen that while one course had been carefully planned and organized, the other had not. The political science professor handed out a printed syllabus that outlined the course. Attendance counted; there would be a midterm and one paper to write, in addition to the final exam. During the semester, we would be expected to read current articles and write summaries of them. Our final grade would be based on the grades on all these assignments. The syllabus explained the topic for each lecture, when each assignment would be due, and what would be covered in each

test. The sociology professor, however, never made his requirements clear. On that first day, he was casual and even evasive when students asked questions about requirements, saying that we could "settle all that later." As the semester went on, it became clear that he had never really planned the course out. We never knew what was going to happen to us. We had a midterm that was announced one week in advance, and we had no idea what would be on it. When everyone did poorly on the test, he announced that he wouldn't count it after all; he was trying to be nice, but that meant that the course grade would be based entirely on the final exam. We never knew what the topic of the next lecture would be, and he was often vague about reading assignments: he would just tell us to "keep moving ahead in your textbooks." When the final exam came, all we knew was that it would be based on the

subjects discussed in class and on the material in two textbooks—that is a lot to cram for. We always felt lost and anxious.

In individual lectures, too, the difference in organization was striking. In political science, the professor knew exactly what he was going to say and wasted no time in saying it. He almost always stuck to the announced lecture topic; when he digressed, he let us know that he was digressing. He would number the points he covered and tell us which ones were most important. As a result, I had clear, organized notes, taken down in outline form. This made everything much easier when it was time to study for the test. The sociology professor gave lectures that were far from being organized. He would ramble on without direction, jumping from slum conditions to the time when he was a soldier in

Italy in World War II and back to sexual stereotyping. Some of the digressions were interesting, but I was often confused about the point of the lecture--if it had a point at all. After fifty minutes, my notes consisted of a full page of funny faces, scribbles, and geometric shapes.

In my political science course, the professor's careful organization helped me to learn the material and to feel prepared and confident; in my sociology course, I was so confused by disorganized lectures and so distracted by worrying about requirements that I learned very little. Not every teacher has to follow exactly the same pattern, and I realize that the highly organized structure of my political science course probably wouldn't be appropriate for some sorts of courses, such as seminars or discussion classes. I can see why

some professors want their courses to be more flexible.

Still, I think all teachers should at least have an idea of the direction of the course and should make their expectations clear to the students. The student will learn more if the professor is organized.

TWO PATIENTS

It is three o'clock in the afternoon and another eight-hour shift is beginning in the Intensive Care Unit. Tonight, I realize, will be at best a tentative success, as I plan to spend my time between two beds. Two patients, one nurse, and a multitude of problems. The physical and clinical assessments of these two women are vastly different, alike only in their complexity. But they share at least two things in common: each is supported by a large,

overwhelming piece of equipment, and each has lost her independence because of her illness.

In any Intensive Care Unit, it is very easy to overlook the patient and instead concentrate on his machines, numbers, and procedures. But even a short, superficial personal assessment tells me that both these women need more than an accurate, efficient nurse.

First, I turn to May. May has a chronic respiratory problem that has flared into such an acute phase that she has a tracheostomy (a surgical opening in her neck and trachea into which a plastic tube has been placed). This must be connected to a respirator (a machine providing artificial respirations) at all times to enable her to breathe. This is not the first time this has happened to May; but, unlike in previous

episodes, this time she has collapsed and succumbed completely to everything but death. She cannot speak because of her tracheostomy; nevertheless, she communicates forcefully. Her eyes are mirrors of emotion. They follow me around the unit, pleading, cajoling, and harassing me no matter where I am. She refuses to participate in any of her care and, instead, demands more than she knows I can give. When I am near her bed, her hands reach out and grab at my uniform and her fingers entwine around mine with desperate strength. I tell her that I must go to the patient in the next bed, and she becomes instantly agitated and even more insecure. She is, for much of the time, beyond my reach.

So, too, I find, is Kathy, but for completely opposite reasons. She is flat on her back in a special bed, with a very painful fracture. The nurse from

the previous shift tells me that she is refusing to drink fluids or cooperate in any way, and that she seems remote. One look into her eyes and I know why. Even though they are dulled by her pain medication, they still convey her disbelief and despair. And her resentment. Without a word, she shouts the unfairness of her situation and the nurses' seemingly impossible demands. Her hands are clenched and her body withdraws from my touch, just as her mind has temporarily withdrawn from reality.

As different and as difficult as each woman is to work with, it is clear that each is coping with her situation in the only way that she thinks is possible. Separated by only ten feet, they are miles apart in their defense mechanisms and psychological needs, but ever so close in their common need to deal with

their fear and frustration. And I have eight hours to travel the miles between them and attempt to reach each of them, if only in some small way.

TWO DADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

I've always envied people with only two parents. They never have to feel sorry for their real father because he is lonely, and they never have to feel they should care more about their stepfather because he is the one who has provided them with the necessities most of their lives. Since I have two fathers, I have known these feelings. I know what it's like trying to decide which father I should care about more so that I could tell my friends the next time they asked. It really should be a clear-cut decision. My two fathers are so different in everything that I should be able to look at these differences and decide.

A major difference between the two is how responsible they are. My stepfather has always had a steady job. He enjoys going to work each day and knowing that at the end of the week he'll get a paycheck. With this paycheck he pays bills, buys groceries, and makes sure we all have clothes to wear. On the other hand, my father doesn't particularly care for steady jobs. He is a singer and has worked three or four nights a week in nightclubs most of his life. With his money, he buys things like new guitars and amplifiers. His idea of providing for us, as Mom tells me, is to send ten dollars a month, which is to be divided three ways. He only does this, however, when he's out of state.

Discipline is another major difference between my two fathers. My stepfather, who can be very strict at times, believes that children should obey their

parents, do what they are told when they are told to do it, and respect their elders. My father, who was never disciplined himself, has quite different views. He has always encouraged my brothers and me to rebel against rules, to ask why we had to do certain things, and to resent being made to do things we thought were stupid. (Going to bed at ten was stupid.) My mother always told us that our father only did this to cause trouble, but I'm not so sure about that. Maybe he did, but then again maybe he thought going to bed at ten was stupid, too!

Education is another big issue my stepfather is concerned about. He believes, like many people, that to be able to succeed in life, one has to have a good education. He always told us that he didn't want us to turn out like he did, a truck driver who had to be away

from his family for weeks at a time. He used to punish me and my brothers for making C's on our report cards. His theory is that a C is average, and his kids are not average. I wouldn't place any money on that. My father believes that an education is good to have, but one doesn't have to have it to survive. He always says, "Look at me; I made it." I don't think, however, that I would call sleeping in the back of a station wagon "making it."

So here I have it. All their differences down on paper, and I can look at them objectively and decide which father to love more, but it isn't that easy. I love my father because he is just that, my natural father. I respect him; I am obligated to him, and I want to make him proud of me. Then there is my stepfather, whom I respect very much; whom I feel obligated to; whom I want to

make proud of me; and, most important of all, whom I have grown to love as much as any child could possibly love a parent. I guess I'll never really know which father I love more. I don't see why I should have to love either more. I think I'll just love both of them in almost equal amounts.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What is the purpose of each essay? Each essay points out similarities and differences between two people, but does either have a further purpose? If the essay does have a further purpose, where is it expressed?
2. What are the grounds of comparison in each essay - the specific points of similarity and difference discussed? In each essay, are the people discussed similar enough to make a comparison worthwhile? Does the author point out interesting, subtle differences?

3. Comment on the order in which each author has arranged his paragraphs. Drawing up a brief outline of each paper may help you to see the organizational patterns. How are the organizational patterns different? Could each pattern be effective in a comparison and contrast essay?
4. Compare the concluding paragraphs. Does each conclusion interpret and build on the specific similarities and differences the author has discussed?
5. On the whole, which essay do you find more interesting? Why?



Application

1. The retributivists believe that punishment for a crime is always necessary. The utilitarians, on the other hand, believe that punishment is only necessary if it benefits society. Which approach do you think is better? Explain why.

2. Today some people still defend single-sex schools. Some women prefer all-female schools and colleges because women have more opportunities to take on leadership roles and don't have to compete with men. Some men prefer to attend all-male schools because they can concentrate more on studies and less on the opposite sex. What do you think? Do you prefer co-education schools or single-sex schools?
3. Compare the educational system in your country with that of another country that you know of. Remember to discuss the similarities as well as the differences.
4. Write an essay in which you compare and contrast the values you earned from two or more influences: your family, school, religion, friends, books, or the media. How are these values different? Do you agree with the values of one group more than those of the others? Do you disagree with any of the values that you encountered?
5. Write an essay in which you compare and contrast the unequal roles of men and women at home and the

division of labour in the home among couples.

6. What is the status of women's right to vote in your country? How is the social status of these women similar to or different from the social status of women in other countries that you know of?
7. Report on your educational background? What were the positive and negative aspects of your education? What would you change if you could? Compare your educational experience with another student and then write about the similarities and differences between these experiences.
8. Compare two ways of losing weight or improving your body. Explain their similarities and differences. What criticisms have been given on each method? What type of person do you think each method would appeal to?
9. Compare and contrast 'arguing' with 'quarreling'. What type of reasoning is employed by each, what kind of mood characterizes each and what type of aims does each have?

10. Compare and contrast 'classroom discussion' and 'lecturing' as pedagogic tools.
11. Compare and contrast white-collar with blue-collar work /workers.
12. Compare and contrast fast-food chains with gourmet restaurants.
13. Compare and contrast persuasion with force as means of making someone change his mind.
14. Compare and contrast 'telephone conversations' with 'chatting online'. What method of organization might work well with this topic? Free-write, then draw an outline before you start writing your essay.

Unit Four

The Illustration Essay

Our use of illustration is instinctive. In everyday speech, our conversation is full of phrases like "for example" and "for instance". Giving examples at times is the most effective way of clarifying a topic. In such cases, an account of a particular event or the description of a person, an object, or a place helps readers understand the general idea. This use of an example to explain or define a certain subject is known as illustration. Illustration can also be used to add details to a general idea or to make a subject more interesting. In the following example the writer wanted to explain the meaning of the word "homesickness" and he chose to accomplish that through presenting a series of examples:

A child in a hospital bed, alone after visiting hours, begins to cry for her parents; a family moving into a new house is silent and depressed; a college freshman in his dorm room feels bad and has trouble concentrating. All these people are experiencing homesickness. Homesickness is a longing to be

back to some old, familiar thing you are leaving behind. It is that feeling of loss and loneliness you get when you see a family together and yours is two thousand miles from where you are. Or remembering that it's Mother's day and you won't be there to celebrate the occasion. It's a feeling of knowing where you are now and where you would like desperately to be – and that is home.

Illustration can also help support an opinion or win an argument. Suppose you were a journalist who wanted to communicate to your audience the fact that a certain economic policy was becoming ineffective. Merely stating your opinion would not be enough. But offering the reader examples of several incidents in which that specific policy failed would make your point of view more convincing. Illustration, then, is a way of providing evidence to support a general idea.

The choice of examples in illustrative writing depends on your purpose, audience, context, and subject. If you were writing a paper on the effects of the emancipation of women on the modern family, you might want to include several

anecdotes about how the lives of certain families have changed or you might want to concentrate on the life of one single family as your illustrative example. You would have to decide which approach would be more effective for your purpose.

Illustration at times may rely on narration and description. Readers are made to "see" events and objects. Facts and statistics can also be used to illustrate.

As you read the following samples, note if the following features of illustration essays are employed:

- Identifying the subject
- Selecting examples that clarify the main idea
- Narrating events
- Describing objects and places vividly
- Repeating the thesis
- Making transitions

Model Essay 1

THE MOST LITIGIOUS COUNTRY

"I've never lived in a country where people sue in court for such strangely personal reasons as they do here in the United States." This is a comment made by the British Consul General at a reception in Los Angeles. Indeed, the United States is the most litigious country in the world. Lawsuits based on what might strike a foreign observer as "strangely personal reasons" are part of our cultural sense of individuality and freedom. For instance, from 1979 to 1985 Mary Kling sued Los Angeles County after the USC Medical Center withdrew her admission to nursing school because she could not pass certain physical tests due to an ileostomy involving

the removal of part of her large and small intestines. After five years of court battles, an appeals court ruled in her favor, saying that she had been discriminated against. Another rather eccentric case involved a high school girl in New Jersey, who sued the school district because she was not allowed to play on the high school's football team. In a most extraordinary move, the Illinois estate of a man who committed suicide in jail sued the prison's architect for "breach of duty" because he did not make the jail "suicide proof." These examples illustrate how Americans consider it their constitutional privilege to go to court when they think their personal rights are in danger of being abridged.

Model Essay 2

NEIGHBOURLINESS

A good neighbour, as the term was understood in the days when as a little girl I lived on a farm in Southern Michigan, meant all that nowadays is combined in corner store, telephone, daily newspaper, and radio. But your neighbour was also your conscience. You had to behave yourself on account of what the neighbours would think.

A good neighbour knew everything there was to know about you--and liked you anyway. He'll never let you down--as long as you deserved his good opinion. Even when you failed in that, if you were in trouble he would come to your rescue. If one of the family was taken sick in the night, you ran over to the neighbour's to get someone to sit up until the

doctor arrived. Only instead of sending for the doctor, you went for him. Or one of the neighbours did.

The Bouldrys were that kind of neighbours. Lena Bouldry was a good farmer and a good provider. Mrs. Bouldry kept a hired girl and Lem had two men the year round. They even had a piano while the most the other neighbours boasted was an organ or a melodeon. Mrs. Bouldry changed her dress every afternoon (my mother did too, she said she thought more of herself when she did), and they kept the front yard mowed.

But the Covells were just the opposite—the most shiftless family the Lord ever let set foot on land. How they got along my father said he didn't know, unless it was by the grace of God. Covell himself was ten years younger than my father,

yet everybody called him "Old Covell." His face and hands were like sole leather and if his hair had ever been washed, it was only when he got caught in a rainstorm. Father said Old Covell would borrow the shirt off your back, then bring it around to have it mended; Mother said, well, one thing certain, he wouldn't bring it around to be washed.

Yet the time Mrs. Covell almost died with her last baby--and the baby did die -- Mrs. Bouldry took care of her; took care of the rest of the children too--four of them. She stayed right there in the Covell house, just going home to catch a little sleep now and then. She had to do that, for there wasn't so much as an extra sheet in the house, much less an extra bed. And Mrs. Bouldry wasn't afraid to use her hands even if she did keep a hired girl -- she did all the Covells' washing herself.

But even Old Covell, despite his shiftlessness, was a good neighbour in one way: he was a master hand at laying out the dead. Of course, he wasn't worth a cent to sit up with the sick, for if it was Summer he'd go outside to smoke his pipe and sleep; and if it was Winter he'd go into the kitchen and stick his feet in the oven to warm them and go to sleep there. But a dead man seemed to rouse some kind of pride and responsibility in him. There was no real undertaker nearer than ten miles, and often the roads were impassable. Folks sent for my mother when a child or woman died, but Old Covell handled all the men. Though he never wore a necktie himself, he kept on hand a supply of celluloid collars and little black bow ties for the dead. When he had a body to lay out, he'd call for the deceased's best pants and object strenuously if he found a hole in the socks. Next, he'd

polish the boots and put on a white shirt, and fasten one of his black ties to the collar button. All in all, he would do a masterly job.

Of course, nobody paid Old Covell for this. Nobody ever thought of paying for just being neighbourly. If anybody had offered to, they'd have been snubbed for fair. It was just the way everybody did in those half-forgotten times.

There is a lot in common in the models of illustration essays given above. By looking into the features that were highlighted prior to this exercise, you should have formed an idea about the workings of the illustration essay. In what follows some guidelines are given to support your findings and guide you to the best way to put these findings into application when you attempt to write your own illustration essay.

WRITING GUIDELINES

Identify the Subject: To make the illustrative essay meaningful, there ought to be a reason behind the illustration or the explanation given and the audience need to know what is being illustrated or explained and why. Just listing a series of examples or illustrations will confuse the reader unless they are grouped under a general idea. Thus you need to spell out clearly to your readers the purpose behind using such illustrations. This has to be done early on in your essay. Do not leave the reader confused and not knowing the purpose behind your list of examples. Place your thesis statement within the first paragraph and be sure it is clear enough for your audience.

Select Examples that Clarify the Main Idea: Since you are using examples as a tool to reinforce the main idea, dealing with as many aspects of the main point as possible through the use of examples will help strengthen and clarify the main issue. You need to ensure that each example contributes directly and clearly towards clarifying the main point. You need to be careful not to include any examples that will distract the reader from the central idea.

Narrate Events: Narrative examples can be a powerful tool in illustrating a point. They are economical yet effective. Suppose, for example, that you were writing an essay on the dangers of smoking. This essay will take on a greater force if provided with accounts or stories of real smokers' medical history.

Describe Details Vividly: Visual details and images can help put life into the point you are making. They are a powerful tool that can be used to transform an abstract idea to a concrete one. Make your reader see, hear, feel, taste and touch. This can make your illustration more colorful, exciting and reinforce the point you are trying to make.

Repeat the Thesis: In an essay where the reader is faced with a list of examples, there is always the danger that they might lose sight and forget about the main idea. Hence, repeating the main idea every now and then by rephrasing it in a way that suits the example given will help readers keep in mind the purpose behind the illustrative writing.

Make Transitions: When you are presenting a number of examples, there is always the risk of ending up with a

list of incoherent illustrations. A writer, therefore, has to establish links between examples and relate them to the main idea. Moreover, he has to ensure a smooth flow from one example to the next. You need to help your reader follow your train of thought. The reader must not feel at any moment that there is an abrupt move from one example to another. Use linking words like 'such as', 'in addition', 'moreover', 'however' etc ... or begin a new paragraph with a word or an idea from the previous paragraph.

Exercise

Study carefully the following sample of an illustration essay and check if the components of a successful illustrative writing are demonstrated in the sample below:

SHATTERED DREAM

"I have a dream" is a phrase heard by more than 200,000 Americans on August 28, 1963, and since then, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I have a dream" has resonated through millions of heads and thoughts in the world. Eyes search for the reality of his dream, ears search for the freedom bells ringing, hands search for a brother's hand, and mouths search for the songs of freedom. Martin Luther King, Jr. dreamed of a utopia where the colors of black and white would become so intertwined that shades of gray would appear. Martin Luther King, Jr. charged the American people to

go out and create a perfect place, and many people have tried, but as long as antiquated moral values remain, America will never fully wake up from the nightmare of racism and enter into the Dream of equality.

Of course, not all race relations today are a nightmare; Americans have risen above some of their petty prejudices and biases. During the sixties, black people were forced to ride in the back of busses, black people were forced to stay apart from white people, black people were forced to step out of the way of white people, and black people were commonly disrespected and thought of as inferior. Because of segregation, there were different schools, different water fountains, different restaurants, and different housing areas. A black man was not encouraged to elevate in society but instead had the words "you are inferior"

constantly beaten into him by the white man. Because of these practices, Civil Rights movements began to take place and people like Martin Luther King, Jr. began speaking out against the injustices toward black people. The Civil Rights movement accomplished several things: in today's society segregation is no longer in American law books, blacks are promised as much opportunity as a white man is given, and black men are not told by law specific things they can't do and places they can't live in. Black people can vote, run for political office, have a job other than being a servant or maid, and are looked upon as citizens of the United States. Black people have achieved freedom from government regulation.

However, even with this freedom, black men and women are still oppressed by

white people, which holds America back from realizing King's "dream." Law no longer segregates schools, but there are still separate schools. In Chattanooga, there are several schools that are primarily black, Howard High School and Eastside Elementary, while at other schools, such as McCallie one sees only a few black faces in a sea of white. Churches are the same way: Brainerd Presbyterian Church moved from Brainerd Road because they were not able to reach the black community, and so they gave their church building to Friendship Baptist, a predominantly black church. Housing areas are separated, not by law, but by practice: Martin Luther King Boulevard, Alton Park, 4th Street Courts, and the Harriet Tub's Housing Project are all considered "bad areas" of town because of the majority of black families. Black people have gained freedom by laws, but black people

continue to be oppressed by ingrown practices that keep Martin Luther King's dream from becoming a reality.

King dreamed that "one day [America] will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal", but even though some people try to give equality to all races, there are those who still try to make the blacks inferior. My grandmother has always been prejudiced, a fact she will not admit to, and she feels that the black people are the fault of the American nation. When a black family moved into a house next-door to her in East Lake, she moved as quickly as possible because she was sure that "the land value would soon go down." But Granny is a mild example compared to my neighbour who feels that "those black niggers ought to return to Africa where

they belong." My parents, even though they are not by any means as racist as my grandmother or my neighbour, feel the need to lock the doors of the automobile when passing through the "bad sections" of Chattanooga: I have heard my father say, "those people think they don't have to follow the law and can do whatever they want." One time, when a black man jay-walked across Brainerd Road so close that my father almost hit him, I heard my father say, "those damn niggers think they're invincible." Such views keep us from, as King puts it, letting "freedom ring from every village and hamlet."

These views are not only hurting black people, but are hurting the white people too. People are not told to be racist, but are taught to be racist. My grandmother was not told that she was supposed to be racist, but her parents taught her. Since her parents and

grandparents acted that way, she inherited their corrupt values, which were later passed on to me. When I was in fifth grade, a new black girl, Shandia, started at St. Nicholas Elementary School. She got a "full ride" through St. Nicholas because her family was on welfare, and at first I was a little jealous that her parents did not have to pay since my parents did. Finally, for no other reason than she was different from me, I started making fun of her and being a bully. I did not know that what I was doing was wrong because I thought that since my grandmother did it, it was what everyone else did, too. Finally my parents taught me that what I was doing was wrong and racist and I apologized to Shandia for being mean, but my grandmother's and parent's values remain in me sometimes today. When I drive down Martin Luther King Boulevard, even in the bright

daylight, I can't help but be fearful and lock the doors of my car. I even hear myself thinking racist things ever so often. Last week, I was downtown and was looking for a parking place; after ten minutes of driving around the block, I found a parallel-parking place open. I pulled up alongside the car in front of the space and put on my blinker. Just then, a woman came to a screeching halt behind me and barely missed my car by only a few centimeters. Later, when telling someone about the incident, I kept referring to the woman as "some black woman." I had to stop and think for a second. Why did her race matter? Why did I not just refer to her as some idiotic woman? When had black come to mean idiotic in my vocabulary? Another time, it was almost twelve midnight and I was at a gas station trying to pump gas into my car. When I was almost done, a black man pulled up behind me; I

could feel myself becoming very tense. After paying and coming back outside to get in my car, the man started walking toward me. I was truly terrified that I was about to be attacked, but instead of even coming close to me, he just needed to get a paper towel out of the window washer dispenser. I couldn't help but feel stupid: Why was I so scared of this man? I probably would not have felt the same sense of terror if it had been a white man. Even though I have tried very hard to curb my prejudices I have, the thoughts and feelings of my prehistoric ancestors have been passed down into my brain like an ugly spot that mars any of my achievements. I have not wanted to be racist, but I have unintentionally been taught; however much I try to scrub the dark soot out of my brain, the spot remains.

These spots remain on all of society as

long as these thoughts and feelings remain in people's minds. King dreamed that "one day [his] four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." But, as long as white people continue their ingrown practices, this will never happen: there are bad opinions of a black and white couple, there has never been a black president, there are very few black students and teachers at McCallie, and there is not a single black family in my neighbourhood. Yes, there is equality, but only between black and white Barbie dolls. King tells us to "let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee," but we fail to reach such a high expectation.



Application

1. Support each of the following statements with three appropriate examples:
 - a) The wedding ceremony has become a sham.
 - b) Newspapers focus on bad news.
 - c) Some people substitute love of a pet for love of human beings.
 - d) Old people can be fascinating.
2. Give a typical example of each of the following:
 - a) Government fraud
 - b) Words that come from people's names
(Example: *Machiavellian* comes from "Nicolo Mchiavelli")
 - c) A Utopian society
 - d) Discrimination
 - e) New slang expressions
3. Turn the following model into an essay developed by examples.

Some foods, long thought to be wholesome, contain unhealthy ingredients. For example, Carrots contain carotatoxin, a potent nerve poison. Avocados contain the chemicals *pressor amines*, which elevate the blood pressure. Milk contains *galactose*, a component of milk sugar that has caused cataracts in animals when given in large doses. Shrimp contains a significant amount of arsenic.

4. In a 500-word essay, develop one of the following statements by using examples. When necessary, introduce the example by a phrase like "for example":
- a) "It is impossible in our condition of society, not to be sometimes a snob." —William Makepeace Thackeray
 - b) "It is undesirable to believe a proposition when there is no ground whatever for supposing it true." —Bertrand Russell
 - c) "Resolve not to be poor: whatever you have, spend less. Poverty is a great enemy to human happiness; it certainly destroys liberty, and it makes some virtues impracticable and others

extremely difficult." —Samuel Johnson

d) "Property has its duties as well as its rights." —

Thomas Drummond



Unit Five

The Process Essay

One of the most practical ways to analyze something is to look at it as a process. In describing a process, we break something into a series of related steps. Writing about the series of steps that one has to follow to write an essay is a good example of this kind of process analysis. The steps are as follows: *First, you search for ideas through reading, brainstorming, freewriting, ...etc, then you focus on a main idea, and then you gather support, next you think about organization, and then you produce your first draft of the essay which is followed by a lot of writing and rewriting which eventually ends in the stage of editing.* Breaking an activity into the steps of a process is a useful way to analyze because we can see each part clearly and focus on one part at a time.

A process essay, therefore, involves writing about a series of step by step actions or explanations that will lead to an expected or planned outcome. Since its main objective is to

show how to do something or how something works, then one can conclude that this form of essay can be accomplished in three steps: first, present the essential steps in the process; second, explain the steps in detail; and third, present the steps in a logical order (usually chronological).

There are two types of process essays: those that instruct and those that explain or analyze. *Directional* process essays might explain the best way to lose weight or how to impress your teacher or boss. The purpose of this type of essay is to clarify the steps in the procedure so that the reader can recreate the steps and the results. An *informational* process essay explains or analyzes a process by telling us how something works, how something happened, or how something is or was done. For example, you could explain how the 1973 War between the Arabs and Israelis began or how the Americans lost the Vietnam War. The *informational* process essay has a purpose different from that of a *directional* process essay. The *directional* process essay demonstrates how to do something whereas the *informational* process essay analyzes a process. In the latter, the reader gains an understanding of the process; whereas in

the former he is expected to be able to recreate the process.

As you read the following models of process essays, try to determine whether the type of essay presented is *informational* or *directional* and note the features of process writing that it illustrates. The following points are meant to help you look closely into the components of a process essay. Thus check if the writer:

- Identifies the process and its significance
- Addresses and motivates the reader
- Lists what is needed
- Outlines the major steps sequentially and chronologically
- Explains the steps of the process
- Reviews why the process is important.
- Provides sufficient examples and advice
- Uses appropriate cohesive devices to link each step, stage and paragraph together
- Reminds the audience of the purpose of writing

Model Essay 1

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES MURDER TRIAL

In 1978 California adopted a death penalty law that requires execution or life imprisonment without the possibility of parole for first-degree murder committed under what are termed "special circumstances," such as murder for financial gain, multiple or torture murder, murder by a hidden bomb, murder of a police officer, or murder to avoid arrest.

The task of bringing a murder suspect to trial and seeing that justice prevails is long and complex. The entire process moves in three stages: The first stage consists of the arrest in order to set a court date. The second stage consists of the trial, which in itself moves in phases: First, a jury is chosen to listen to the testimony of the

prosecution and defense and to find the defendant either guilty or innocent, and if the defendant is found guilty, to decide whether to impose the death sentence or life imprisonment without parole. Second, the law requires that in determining punishment, jurors must make a judgment concerning aggravating or mitigating circumstances, being bound to impose the death sentence if aggravating circumstances outweigh mitigating ones. In presenting its case for mitigating circumstances, the defense can bring up anything, from the defendant's tragic childhood to mental illness or drug addiction. Last, the judge pronounces the sentence. Now, the final stage, the appeal, begins. Appeal of a death sentence to the California Supreme Court is automatic. If the California Supreme Court affirms the sentence, the defendant may appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. If that

route fails, the defendant may go the route of habeas corpus proceedings, where any issue not raised before can be brought up. The last appeal is to the governor, who may commute a death sentence.

Each of the three stages mentioned usually takes months and years to become final. It is no wonder that most murder trials go on for years, completely ignoring the U.S. Constitution's call for a fair and speedy trial.

Model Essay 2

OPAC AT THE LIBRARY

"OPAC? What is that?" maybe this is a question you have asked. People including me, have gone to the library to study many times, but they have never used OPAC (Online Public Access

Catalogue) to look for books in the library. Many people know of such a system but they do not know how to use it. In fact, you do not need to worry about it if you aren't good at operating a computer because it is easy to use. All I can say about OPAC in one word is that it is convenient.

You do not need anything to use OPAC; you just go to one of the monitors located on the first floor of the library and you can begin your search. First of all, if the monitor of the computer is blank, you can press any key, and the monitor turns to the main screen. Or you can press F2 to clear any old searches. At once, the monitor shows "Welcome to LOUIS" (Louisiana Online University Information System). It lists all the names of the libraries at the public colleges and universities in Louisiana. When you have done this, all

you need to do is type the three-letter code for the library you want. For example, you type "UNO" (for University of New Orleans). Then, the monitor shows "Welcome to LAFITTE," which is the name of OPAC at UNO. Now you can use five ways to look for the book you want. They are by author, title, subject, keyword, and call number.

If you know the name of the author, for instance, George P. Oslin, you can type "a=Oslin, George P.," being sure to put the last name first. Then, the monitor will show all the titles of the books which this author has written. You can choose a book by pressing the number which is associated with it, and get the following information: location, where the book is in the library; call number, the indexing number of the book; and status, whether the book is in the library or not.

If you know the title of the book, for instance, Clint, you can type "t=clint" directly. Then you can get the information about the book. If there are some books with the same title, the monitor will show all the names of the authors so you can tell which book is the one you are looking for. You use this same search procedure if you want to look for a book by subject, key word, or call number.

Even though all this is easy to use, you also need to know some commands. One useful command is "hel," which means help. Whenever you need to continue the process, you can type "hel." Then the monitor shows you what to do for the next step. "Lon" means long view. If you type "lon," you can get more details about the book you want. Other commands are "sta," which means to go back to the main menu and "oth," which means other

options. If you want to change the way you are looking for a book, you can type "oth." If you want to change libraries in the middle of a search, you can type "cho."

Compared with the old card catalog system, OPAC is really convenient for people who want to look for books in the library. To your surprise, all you need to do is to pay attention to the directions on the monitor. Once you use OPAC, you will be satisfied that it is convenient.

By looking carefully into the features that were highlighted before this exercise, you should have formed an idea of the workings of the process essay. In what follows advice and guidelines are given to support your findings and guide you to the best way to put these findings into application when you attempt to write your own process essay.

WRITING GUIDELINES

Address and Motivate the Reader: In this type of writing, unlike the previous modes described, the reader needs to follow certain steps that are outlined to learn about or complete a certain process, so it is perfectly logical for the writer to address his reader directly, e.g. "you might need to use the photocopying machine." This kind of statement in this genre of writing will certainly be more effective than "one might need to use the photocopying machine."

Before starting to address your readers, you need to think of their degree of interest. If the process you are describing is one that they are eager to hear about then there is no need to provide motivation. If, however, you are offering to outline the process on your own, or your approach is controversial, then you need to take time at the beginning to persuade the reader to read on, i.e. you need to make him appreciate the importance of what is being outlined and to feel the need to learn about your process. Once that is accomplished, then you can move on to the next step.

Identify your process: Whilst motivating your readers to read on, do not forget to spell out clearly the process

that you are planning to present. Do not just assume that the process is obvious from what you said in your introduction. Introducing the process to be explained could be achieved earlier on in the title of your essay; for instance, you can make the statement: "*How to Use a Photocopying Machine*" the title of an essay describing the process of using this machine.

List What Is Needed: Usually before you begin to describe a process, you need to inform your readers about the specific requirements of this process. Some processes require certain equipment, materials or prerequisites before the process can start. Often the materials necessary to perform a certain process must be listed. For example, for planting some houseplants you need particular kinds of soil, pots and plant seeds. In becoming a distant learner you need a computer, a headset and access to the Internet. Thus before you start describing a process, think about its requirements and list them clearly. A paragraph, usually located immediately after the introduction, can be dedicated to address these essential requirements. However, do not forget to define any unfamiliar terms or materials that may not be clear to the reader. In this way, you will be considering the needs of

your reader and will be presenting the information in the most useful way.

Outline the Major Steps: Mentioning or stating the major steps of a process briefly and concisely at the beginning of your essay before explaining each in detail will enable the reader to form an overview of the whole process and prepare him for the details of each step that are to follow. If, for instance, the essay is about 'how to be an employee', written with the purpose of helping people find a job in the most favorable work situation, then the writer could offer his readers an overview of all the options that they have. The first choice that they have to make is to choose between a routine or a challenging position. The second choice will be to decide whether to work for a large organization or for a small one. The third will be to decide whether to start at the bottom and work up or to get an assistant's position near the top straight away. The last choice that they have to make will be whether to become a specialist or a generalist.

Explain the Steps: Once you have listed the major steps of the process, you are free to explain each in as much detail as is needed. Make sure that you provide your readers with

sufficient information to lead them successfully through each stage of the process. Do not bore them with a lot of unnecessary details and at the same time do not assume that they are experts on the topic.

A good process essay leads the reader chronologically through each step in the most efficient and effective way possible. Therefore, you need to present your stages and steps in a chronological order. The exact order of your steps is very important. They must follow the actual order in which they would be performed, from beginning to end. Here time-specific transitional words like *after, as, at last, before, during, eventually, finally, first, last, later, meanwhile, next, now, second, since, soon, then, when, while etc...* can be used to indicate when you are moving from one step to the next, i.e., for establishing sequence. One has to be careful that a process essay should be more than a mere set of instructions. It should be smooth, not choppy. Besides, the writer has to anticipate any possible misunderstandings on the reader's part and, if necessary, tell the reader what not to do. He also has to provide reasons why certain steps are performed if these steps seem extreme or meaningless. One final piece of advice is to try and avoid using the

imperative second person point of view, such as 'turn on the machine, then put paper in the drawer ...'. In such a case, your writing will turn out to be more of an instructions manual than a well-developed process essay. Therefore, use either first or third person point of view.



Exercise

Read the following models of process essays and then answer the questions that follow:

LET THERE BE LIGHT

"Who turned out the lights!" is a common cry when the light bulb burns out. Rather than sitting in the dark, you can replace the bulb quickly and easily. By taking commonsense safety precautions, making the correct bulb selection, and having a little manual dexterity, you will have the job done in no time.

The first step is to remove the bulb. Unplug and turn off the lamp to avoid an electrical shock. If the lamp was in use, allow the bulb to cool off or use a protective cloth or glove to remove it. Otherwise, you may burn your fingers on

the hot bulb. Then, remove the bulb by grasping it gently but firmly and turning it counterclockwise until it comes out of the socket.

The second step is to select the correct wattage for the replacement bulb. Bulb wattage determines how much electricity the fixture will use and how much light the bulb will produce. Bulbs for household use are usually 25, 60, 75, or 100 watts. Low-wattage bulbs like 25s and 60s are used for soft light, and higher-wattage bulbs, 75s and 100s, are used for reading or high light-demand areas. Three-way bulbs, designed to produce low, medium, and high intensity light, are usually 150 watts but should only be used in lamps designed with a three-way switch. However, one should check the light fixture base plate to determine maximum bulb size or circuit load. Using bulbs too high in wattage

can overheat the fixture and create circuit overloads or fires.

The last step is to replace the bulb and turn on the fixture. Replace the bulb by grasping it firmly but gently and lining up the metal core of the bulb straight into the socket so that the threads match. Then with a clockwise motion screw the bulb until it is firmly seated. Finally, plug in the lamp and then switch on the light.

In conclusion, changing a light bulb is a simple but gratifying operation. By following simple steps and being aware of safety, you will have light in your life once again.

HOW TO WRITE A PERSONAL NARRATIVE ESSAY

There is very little mystery to writing the personal narrative essay. There is no proper topic for such an essay. An essay can be about a variety of personal experiences. You, the writer, have the right to say what you want about your personal experience. You can write about anything - the traumatic experience of being stuck in an elevator, the best holiday you ever had, the worst day of your life. No topic or subject is off-limits; therefore there are endless opportunities to write an essay about your personal point-of-view of what happened. Often the reason behind wanting to write a personal essay is unclear. Once the writing begins and the events are recorded and recounted, it becomes clear that the writer is searching to find the meaning, the

universal truth, the lesson learned from the experience. When writing, rewriting and good editing unite, a personal narrative essay becomes a beautiful thing. It shows how the past or a memory's significance affects the present or even the future.

We all have stories to tell. But facing a blank page is intimidating. Knowing where to begin becomes a real dilemma. A good place to start is with the word I. Write I was, I saw, I did, I went, I cried, I screamed, I took for granted. 'I' is an empowering word. Once you write it on the page it empowers you to tell your story. That's exactly what you are going to do next. Tell the story. Get it all out. Don't worry about how many times 'I' appears in the text. Don't worry how scattered and unfocused thoughts are. Write whatever your mind tells you to write. This style is often

called freewheeling writing or stream of consciousness. Once the story is all down on paper you will go back and begin to shape the essay into a form that says exactly what you want it to say about your experience. If you're discouraged over what you've written, back away from it. Let it rest. Take a walk. Do something that distracts your mind from writing the essay. Many writers find that even while doing something other than writing, their writing mind continues to work out what needs to be said and continues to uncover the multi-layered associations and voices of what they're writing about.

Personal narrative essays are essentially non-fiction stories, ones that are neatly arranged like a road map that takes the reader from point A to point B to point C. In life, and in our own personal experience, things aren't

so straightforward as A-B-C. Characters, facts, places, conversations and reporting what happened, where you went, what you saw and what you did isn't always so neatly pulled together. That is your job, as the writer, is to pull together all the elements so they bring the reader to the universal truth, the lesson learned or insight gained in your experience. How do you do this? Through re-writing and re-writing.

Each time you redo the story more will be revealed to you. You will get "in touch" with the universal truth. Every rewrite of the story will lead you to the aha! Once you get 'the aha!' the next rewrite will show dramatic improvement. You will be able to arrange events into a chronological sequence that best suits the aha! When you know 'the aha!' create events, think up examples to better illustrate the theme

of your essay. Use the senses when describing anything. For example, it was a stellar day. The air had a salty tang to it as it blew off the ocean. Little white caps broke not more than twenty feet out then rushed to meet the shore. Above me sea gulls screeched and circled in a cloudless blue sky. The sun was in its Spring zenith... The more descriptive language you use, the more you will place the reader right there in the experience with you. Colorful or hard-driving, languages are the tools of the essayist.

Essay writing forces you to shape your experience until it can be fully understood by others. Use every tool available in the writing craft. Construct dialogue, use metaphors but most importantly, use language with a wide breadth of sensory detail. If you find yourself getting lost, stop

writing. Start reading other essays. Every issue of *Reader's Digest* always has at least two. Read eight back issues of a magazine with personal narrative essays in their content. By osmosis, you'll get the feel of how essays are constructed. Go back and do the rework on yours. Include dialogue, include examples that best support or illustrate the aha! of the experience you're writing about. Beef up the description of a character. Give them succinct, meaningful dialogue that pushes the reader closer and closer to the aha! of your essay.

The next step is to get feedback on what you have written. If someone close to you or someone really intimate with the experience you've written about says, "Hey, that's not the way it happened," don't worry. Little white lies are serving to drive the aha! of the

experience into the mind of the reader. Your truth is embedded in your writing. To enable the reader to visualize or grasp the concept, little white lies are a necessity. Listen to the responses of readers, then go back to rewrite the portions that were unclear to the reader.

Next, have someone read the essay aloud to you or you read it aloud into a tape recorder.

Listen to the flow of words. Listen to where the reader stumbles. Listen where pauses fall. Listen to where the reader runs out of breath. These are all clues as to where more refining or tweaking need to be done. Go back and do it! You are close to sitting back in the chair and saying, "Yes! This is exactly what I wanted to say about what I experienced."

It is a beautiful feeling. Work to achieve it.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How did the writers of each of the above essays introduce their essays? Did they state what the process is? Did they state why it is important? Did each of them define the process? Did each state the purpose for explaining the process?
2. Did each list the equipment, ingredients, or supplies needed to perform the process?
3. Did each present an overview of the steps in the process?
4. Did each describe the steps in the process in detail using chronological order whenever necessary? Did they group steps into several main categories or not?

5. Did they conclude by reviewing the importance of the process described? Did they summarize the main steps in their concluding paragraph?



Application

1. Make a list of the steps you believe are important for improving some aspect of your life. Here are some possibilities:
a. neatness b. grades at university c. relationship with others
d. physical health e. looks
f. personality g. losing weight
2. Write an essay in which you guide a friend as to how to improve his reading/writing skills.
3. Write an essay in which you show a friend how to impress a teacher or a boss.
4. Write an essay describing your writing process.

5. Write a detailed set of instructions for playing a game that you are good at and the rules of which you know well.
6. Think about a time when you had to complete a complicated transaction that involved dealing with bureaucratic paperwork like getting a drivers' license. List the steps you went through, and then write an explanation of the process.
7. Write an essay in which you explain to a friend how to install a program in your computer.
8. Write an essay in which you teach your co-workers how to make a good presentation or a speech.
9. Write an essay in which you explain to a friend how to study for an exam.
10. Write an essay in which you explain to a friend how to apply to study at a university in the UK or the USA.

Unit Six

The Analysis Essay

To analyze is to look carefully at something in order to try and understand it. Literally, it means to break up something into its parts. Analysis is a common way of thinking. One kind of analysis that you frequently do is look for reasons for or consequences of something. In our own attempt to understand and control our world, we constantly ask questions. When we analyze causes, we ask the question 'why'. 'Why things happen?' 'What caused this?' For instance, why are my parents angry with me? Why did I get a low grade? Why did my jumper shrink? When we analyze the effects we ask the question 'What will happen?' 'What happens as a result?' 'What effect will follow?' Like what will the effects be if I did not go to university, or if I accept this job, or if I marry this person? If you think about one of these questions, you will probably come up with one or more reasons/effects to explain the situation. In this case, you have analyzed the situation, divided it into parts, and now should understand it better. In this approach to writing,

the writer supports the main idea with reasons or effects. Although it is doubtful that our questions can ever be answered with absolute certainty, our speculations about cause and effect give us some valuable insights into our lives and also some hope of controlling events. If we understand why something happened, we may be able to make it happen again or to prevent it from happening again; if we understand what the consequences of an action might be, we can make a wiser decision about whether or not to take that action.

Looking for causes and effects is a common method of organizing and discussing ideas. Like process, cause and effect writing involves the movement of events in time. But instead of focusing on their order, cause and effect explores the reasons behind the events and their consequences. For instance, your grades are slipping and you at first attribute this to the difficulty of the course. But a closer look may reveal other causes – personal problems, a demanding part-time job, and a boring teacher – all of which are affecting your grades. Cause-and-effect writing focuses either on finding causes or on describing effects and sometimes it deals with both.

As you read the following selections, note if the following features of the analysis essay are employed:

- The purpose is clearly stated
- Sufficient background information about the situation to be analyzed is given
- Main causes/effects are identified
- Each cause/effect is clearly and thoroughly explained
- Groups of causes/effects are organized into several main categories
- There is enough supporting details and explanation for each cause/effect
- The parts are related to one another and the reader is guided with topic sentences and transitions
- The conclusion is clearly stated

Model Essay 1

LIVING IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY

Living away from your country can be a really interesting and unforgettable

experience, but at the same time it has very important effects on one's life. The purpose of this essay is to discuss the three main effects that living in another country can produce in one's personal life.

The major effect, and also a very common one, is that once you start a regular life away from home, you miss everything. This fact doesn't mean that you are unhappy but that you are aware of being on your own. Missing your family and the attention they all paid to you is a very usual thing to do. Little details like sitting on a Sunday morning watching TV alone instead of helping your dad organizing his things or having a nice chat with your mom makes you realize how valuable your family really is. It is also completely acceptable to miss all the facilities you used to have back at home, like

your house, your car, your bed, and your bathroom. It's obvious then that you have started to appreciate everything you had back where you belong.

The second main effect would be learning how to accept another type of society and culture into your daily life. Since you are living in a place with different customs and traditions from yours, you have to be able to develop yourself in unknown conditions. This means making new friends, learning other points of view, accepting different opinions and values, and seizing every opportunity you have to go to new places. Therefore, you'll be able to achieve true knowledge. Suggesting to change your mind totally or to be square minded would be foolish; the best thing to do would be to stick to your most important values and, according to them, change

those that you believe could be improved.

The most significant effect of living away from home is the independent behavior that grows inside of you. Living on your own far from your family gives you a lot of experiences toward organizing your life. Since it is up to you and no one else to go to school, clean your room, wash your clothes, and organize your expenses, it is predictable that you will have a good and strong meaning of responsibility. Being independent and responsible will help you get through every goal you want to achieve.

Living far from home, even for a short period of time, can be really hard at the beginning. We have to remember that all changes are difficult, but they are necessary to go through to build

character. Most important of all, it helps us appreciate everything we have. Not realizing how lucky we are can be a really bad mistake because things don't last forever and we have to make the best out of them.

Model Essay 2

CAUSES OF ATTRITION AT HANDSWORTH COLLEGE

If this freshman class is like the freshman classes of the last five years, only about 450 of the nearly 600 students who entered Handsworth this term will graduate from the college four years from now. An article in last week's *Handsworth Record* said that almost one-fourth of the students in every freshman class leave Handsworth before they graduate. Why is the attrition rate at Handsworth so high? It could be that

Handsworth turned out to be different than these students had expected. Many students find the academic program here far too difficult and just can't keep up. Also, many students are disappointed by Handsworth's rather dull and limited social life. Finally, the high cost of attending college here may make many students think about leaving.

One of the major reasons why a person might leave Handsworth is the tough academic program. Before I came here, I talked to an admissions counselor who bragged about Handsworth's high academic standards. After being here two quarters, I can say that his bragging was justified. I have papers to write every week for English and usually over 100 pages to read each night for my history course alone. My chemistry class keeps me in the lab two afternoons a week and also requires me to read

and study every night. Many other students also find the academic program very challenging. My roommate was put on probation at the end of last quarter and will have to leave the college unless he can bring up his grades; he works past midnight every night but is still afraid that he won't be able to make it. An upperclassman who transferred to Handsworth from another college told me he is amazed by the academic requirements here. He said that he has done more work in two quarters at Handsworth than he did in two years at his former college. Academic pressure might be a major reason why some people leave Handsworth, but is not the only one.

Whenever you sit down to lunch in the student cafeteria on Friday, someone is bound to start complaining about how boring the weekend ahead looks. The

problem stems, in part, from the geographical location of the college. Handsworth is located in a small town with very few forms of entertainment for the college student: there are just two movie theaters, a few bowling alleys and pool halls. The closest large city is forty minutes away, which poses an inconvenience for people without cars. The social life on campus offers several possibilities - movies, parties, occasional plays, concerts - but many people are tired of the same activities week after week. Most of the students here are dissatisfied with the social life.

The high cost of attending Handsworth College is another source of complaints. It costs over \$7,000 a year to attend Handsworth, and next year the tuition may go even higher. When you add in the cost of books, supplies, and travel, you

begin to see just how expensive Handsworth really is. Almost everyone I know has to have some sort of financial aid, but many say that the financial aid office is unfair. I talked to one person on my hall who says that even though both his parents are retired, Handsworth gives him very little aid. The only reason he is able to attend Handsworth at all is that he was able to take out a student loan. Many people find the financial commitment here a major problem.

What can Handsworth do to cut down on attrition? If the professors want to keep their students here, they should consider requiring less work. No one wants to see Handsworth turn into an 'easy' college, but some sort of compromise should be possible. Students, faculty, and administrators should look for ways to improve the social life by

encouraging greater diversity in weekend activities. Finally, the administration should try to keep the tuition from going any higher and should also make sure that financial aid is distributed fairly. Handsworth College has a great deal to offer students, but it needs to look for ways to solve the problems that make so many students leave.

Model Essay 3

THE CHOCOLATE ADDICTION

How much chocolate do you eat? Millions of kids and even adults are addicted to chocolate. In fact, over 2 billion pounds are consumed annually in the U.S. That adds up to over 11 pounds per person. Indeed, the typical American chocolate consumer knows he isn't nibbling on chocolate bars for health and dietary reasons. It is the one

confection we literally hate to love, but it seems the wages of sin make it taste that much better.

If you're one of those who secretly knows that you are a chocolate addict and frequently go on chocolate binges, it's time you realize and read up on some of its effects on your body.

During the last several decades the scientific literature has pointed to chocolate for its alleged role in many body maladies. They have discovered that chocolate can cause migraines, acne, obesity, dental cavities, heartburn, rectal itching, and coronary problems. And a new study implicates two chemicals in chocolate - theobromine and caffeine - as villains in a disorder known as fibrocystic breast disease. This benign ailment is characterized by fibrous tissue and cyst fluid in the

breasts. Chocolate also contains methylxanthines which accelerate chemical activity involved in the body's cellular metabolism and can cause certain sensitive tissues to proliferate.

Chocolate also is loaded with another chemical, phenylethylamine, a compound related to amphetamine. This can lead to emotional problems such as feelings of anger, irritability and confusion, depression, hyperactivity, hallucinations, and even violent behavior. Dr. Marshall Mandell, in his book "5-Day Allergy Relief System", noted that milk chocolate caused impaired memory and deteriorated penmanship as well as mental confusion for a nine-year-old boy.

Frequent consumption of chocolate leads to addiction, and many people are allergic to chocolate and don't

realize the symptoms they have are caused by it. Psychiatrists have pointed out that people resort to chocolate binges when they are depressed.

Chocolate is very high in sugar and some sugar junkies need a fix every three to four hours. Most candy bars contain at least 45% sugar, and the rest is fat. A mere ounce of the stuff contains 151 calories. If you reach for a handful of almonds that aren't mired in the gooey confection, the calorie count is only 60. And a few slices of apples contain only 65 calories.

Getting kids to crave things like ice cream, cookies, candy, and chocolate is not only bad, IT'S EVIL. Nowadays they even manufacture millions of pounds of fruit covered with chocolate. And mothers complain immediately if schools quit serving chocolate milk because

their kids won't drink milk without chocolate. Well, I read recently of at least one institution that quit serving chocolate - our local prison - because the prisoners kept BREAKING OUT.

By looking into the features that were highlighted before this exercise, you should have formed an idea of the workings of the analysis essay. In what follows advice and guidelines are given to support your findings and guide you to the best way to put these findings into application when you attempt to write your own analysis essay.

WRITING GUIDELINES

State the Purpose: To make sense of a presentation of a series of components (causes/effects), readers must first understand what is being analyzed. Thus you need to state your purpose clearly, directly and in general terms early on in your essay. This will help the reader follow your train of thoughts more easily.

Use the introductory paragraph to make the limits of your

analysis clear. If you are writing about the causes of the October War, for example, will you discuss all the contributing causes or only the major ones? If you are discussing the probable effects of a new energy policy, will you discuss only the effects it will have in this country or also probable effects on the world oil market? Your thesis statement should set the limits of your discussion.

Besides, if you want your audience to be drawn to your analysis, you need to think carefully of an appealing way to introduce your topic. An interesting quote, a direct statement, or some attractive background information are all different ways of approaching this type of writing.

Present all of the Components: Before attempting to study each component (reason or effect) separately, it is advisable to approach your topic by a brief presentation of all of its components: reasons, effects or both.

Identify Each Component: The function of an analysis is to break down a subject into its major components and explain the role of each. Hence after listing all components together, present each in a logical, simple order treating

it separately. However, make clear to your reader how each component relates to the whole.

This kind of essay requires a writer who is both imaginative and alert. You must be imaginative enough to see causes or predict effects that less observant people might miss, but you must also be alert enough to require a great deal of evidence before you assert that X must have caused Y or that Y will certainly cause Z. Remember that we can never be absolutely sure about either causes or effects, and don't be hesitant to soften your statements by saying that X *may have* caused Y or that Y *will probably* cause Z. If your language is properly cautious, your speculations can be more courageous and more original.

Examine all Components: if an event or situation has more than one cause/effect, discuss all of them. If, for example, the economy of a country is failing then there may be several reasons/effects which you may need to consider. You certainly need to examine all of the components pertaining to a certain event or situation.

Structure your Components: In an analysis essay, there are a number of patterns that you can choose from to order your paragraphs. Here are a few possibilities:

- You can start from the immediate causes/effects and move to the ultimate ones.
- You can start from the more obvious causes/effects and move to the less obvious ones.
- You can start from the less important causes/effects and move to the more important ones.
- You can move from one type of cause or effect to another (for example, in a long essay on the causes of the Second World War, you might discuss first the economic causes, then the political ones)
- You can move from definite causes/effects to the probable or possible ones.
- You can move from necessary causes/effects to contributing ones.

Notice that most of these patterns are variations on the *order of importance*. As in most of your writing, you should try to build to a climax, thus ending your essay with the most surprising or provoking idea. A useful technique that

you may use here is to leave the most important cause/effect for last. This will leave a good impression on your reader. It will make your essay more interesting and will give it a strong conclusion. Besides, if you put the most important component (cause/effect) first, your reader might lose interest and see no point in continuing to read.

Support all Components: Give good examples to support each cause/effect that you present. For example, if one reason for your poor performance in the exam was family problems then you may need to give examples on this kind of problem like noisy atmosphere, lots of family arguments etc

Use Topic Sentences and Transitions: Identify sets of causes/effects and each individual cause/effect in topic sentences. This will help your reader follow your train of thought. Indicate shifts or continuation in thought with explicit transitional phrases or sentences.

Use Supporting Details and Explanations: Analysis cannot remain at the general level. It must get down to specifics and concrete details if readers are to gain real understanding of

the issue at hand. Make general statements clear by providing details and explanations. Use facts where appropriate and provide background information if you feel your audience may need it.

Relate the Parts to One Another: In your analysis, ensure that you relate the parts or the components to one another and to the whole. Help your reader see how the parts work together to form a whole.

State the Conclusion: In the process of writing, try not to lose sight of the main objective behind the analysis. Keep your main objective in mind and remember to state your findings clearly and explicitly. Paraphrase, or even restate exactly, the words of the thesis so readers will clearly associate the conclusion with the thesis.

Exercise

In what follows, two samples of cause/effect essays are given. Read them carefully and then answer the questions that follow:

THE DESIRED LOOK: NOTHING BUT BONES

It seems every little girl dreams of becoming a model. They want to be thin and pretty like the models they see on television and in magazines. Often the desire becomes an obsession and young girls see "thinness" as being a needed characteristic. For most girls, the teenage years are spent trying to acquire this look. Females are trying diets and are exercising like it is a competition to see who can lose the most weight the quickest. The obsession of many young girls over their appearance or weight has led to a growing number of people who have developed an eating

disorder to try to deal with their lack of self-esteem or other related problems.

Eating disorders are a serious health problem. Personal Counseling & Resources says that eating disorders "are characterized by a focus on body shape, weight, fat, food, and perfectionism and by feelings of powerlessness and low self-esteem." Three of the most common eating disorders are anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating or compulsive eating disorder. According to Anorexia Nervosa and Related Eating Disorders, a person with anorexia "refuses to maintain normal body weight for age and height" and "weighs 85 percent or less than what is expected for age and height." A person diagnosed with bulimia has several ways of getting rid of the calories such as binge eating, vomiting, laxative misuse,

exercising, or fasting. The person might have a normal weight for their age and height unless anorexia is present. The signs of a compulsive eater include eating meals frequently, rapidly, and secretly. This person might also snack and nibble all day long. The compulsive eater tends to have a history of diet failures and may be depressed or obese.

There are many reasons that can contribute to the cause of eating disorders. One of the main reasons seems to be the obsession over every little pound a person is wearing. Sometimes low self-esteem or depression from any number of causes can usher in the eating disorder. Other times compulsive exercising can help shed the pounds but leave the enthused unhealthy looking.

There are other possible causes to this widely known health problem. The media

bestows a great deal of beauty and thinness on television and magazines that are viewed by many people daily. Everyone has the desire to look like the actors and actresses do but, in reality, it just will not happen for most of us. Abuse, whether it be physical, emotional, or sexual, can also contribute to the development of an eating disorder. Such abuse to victims can leave them with a lack of trust and low self-esteem. An unfavorable relationship a person has with others is also a contributing factor to disordered eating habits. The world is so competitive that any mention from parents, siblings, peers, significant others, or co-workers about a person's weight or appearance can lead to the onset of an eating disorder.

There really is no single reason that a person acquires an eating disorder. Many factors are considered when making a diagnosis for a person with this

problem. Causes like the ones mentioned above play such an important role in eating disorders. Is it really so important that in order to look like the super models people are willing to give up food and starve themselves to death for a little satisfaction on the outside? The look of a person on the inside is what really matters.

A NATION OF WALKING ZOMBIES

When we operate a machine, we need to make sure that all of its parts are in good working order so that it will function efficiently. If we are careless, the machine will break down when we least expect it. The same can be said about the most complex of machines, the human body. When the body is sleep-deprived, it is like a car running on a half-empty gas tank. People usually don't know when their bodies will run

out of fuel—and the results can be disastrous. In fact, sleep deprivation has caused tragedy: It is the second leading cause of all car accidents in the United States. At least one-third of Americans, about 85 million people, sleep only six of the eight or nine hours that sleep specialists say is needed each night. According to James Maas, a sleep specialist, this situation has created "a nation of walking zombies." If people slept eight hours, they would be less drowsy, they would be more alert and productive at work, and they would have more creative and joyful lives. In addition, they would have fewer accidents, making the world a safer place for us all. We clearly need to sleep more and educate people about the three major causes of sleep deprivation: modern technology, insomnia, and sleep apnea.

In our society, sleep deprivation has developed along with advances in technology and our longer schedules. Before the invention of the light bulb, people woke when the sun rose and went to sleep when the sun set. Today the division between daytime and nighttime is less clear. Because people can work at night with the aid of artificial light, daytime is no longer the only time when people can be awake and productive. Many people lead sleepy lives because they work night shifts at places such as hospitals and factories. In the past two decades, the computer, the fax machine, and the cell phone have extended our schedules around the clock. In addition, our lives are filled with complex obligations both on the job and in the family, and sleep seems to be the first thing we sacrifice when we have too much to do. Although millions of years of biological evolution indicate

that nighttime is a time for rest, many of us simply ignore the rules of the natural sleep cycle.

In addition to technology, insomnia causes sleep deprivation. Insomnia is the psychological inability to fall or stay asleep. Insomnia can be divided into two categories: short-term insomnia, which is temporary and long-term insomnia, which is a chronic condition. People who suffer from stress due to a problem at home or pressure at work often develop short-term insomnia. People can also have short-term insomnia as a result of temporary environmental factors, such as living in a noisy environment, or from habits like drinking too much coffee and taking stimulants. On the other hand, some people develop long-term insomnia from a chronic condition, such as clinical depression.

The third major cause of sleep deprivation is a physical problem rather than a psychological one. Approximately 20 million Americans suffer from sleep apnea, which is the most common physical disorder that prevents people from getting a good night's rest. Sleep apnea creates an obstruction in the nose or throat that stops the sleeper from breathing for several seconds. The sleeper gasps for air to keep from choking and, therefore, rarely enjoys a deep sleep. Sleep apnea results in snoring--the most familiar symptom of this disorder. Only recently have scientists realized that snoring is not merely an individual's annoying sleep behavior, but a sign of his or her difficulty in breathing and an indication that medical attention is needed.

Most Americans regard sleeping as a

waste of time. This is the attitude that sleep specialists are trying to change. Many people are still unaware of the restorative power of sleep. Although not everything is known about sleep, doctors believe that it is essential for our physical and mental well-being. We need to reduce sleep deprivation, which is caused by 24-hour schedules, insomnia, and sleep apnea, because one person's sleepiness can result in the next person's tragedy.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Compare the two introductory paragraphs. What does each author accomplish in his introduction? Did each introductory paragraph catch your interest? Did each clearly identify the essay's scope and purpose?
2. List the causes/effects that each author cites. How does each author support his statements about the

causes/effects? Is the evidence each author offers relevant and sufficient? Does each author show a clear relationship between the possible causes discussed and the problem discussed?

3. Comment on the organization of each essay. How are the paragraphs ordered? Is this order logical and effective? Would you suggest any changes in organization?
4. Compare the concluding paragraphs. What does each author accomplish in his conclusion? Does either author claim more than he has proven?
5. On the whole, which essay did you find more interesting? Which offers a more convincing, probing analysis of the causes/effects given?



Application

1. Many have claimed that fashion, cosmetics, and advertising industries are promoting an impossible standard of beauty which few people can meet. What are some possible reasons for their promotion of an unrealistic standard of beauty? What are the effects on people and society?
2. Write an essay in which you present the causes and effects of water or air pollution.
3. Write an essay on the reasons and effects of unemployment in modern societies.
4. Write an essay on reasons and effects of wars on humanity.
5. Write an essay on the reasons and effects of an important event in the history of your country.
6. Write an essay on the reasons and effects of an important event in your life.



Part II

Other Common Types of Essays



Introduction to other Common Types of Essays

In the first section of this book, the focus was on learning about the *expository essay*; a mode of writing that is indispensable for academics. But besides learning about expository writing, there are other major forms of essay writing that you need to be familiarized with. Expository writing as should be clear by now is the act of explaining, and expounding facts or ideas. However, sometimes you may need to write to prove the validity of a certain assertion or claim and in that case you will be attempting what is known as *argumentative* writing. At other times you may need to write just to recount how an incident took place and in that form of writing you will be using *narration*. You may also feel that you need to describe a scene that affected you deeply or to describe an object that your audience is unfamiliar with and in that instance you will be writing a *descriptive essay*.

Although these three types of writing do not have much in common but still what brings them together in a single section is the fact that they are commonly used either on their own or within other forms of writing. Mastering those forms of writing, therefore, will not only contribute to your success in the world of academia but also in most professions.



The Narrative Essay



Unit One

The Narrative Essay

Our life is a continuous chain of events that we often communicate to others through narration. Narration is simply defined as the act of telling a story or recounting the details of what is happening or what has happened. The art of narration is not new to man; it is as ancient as man himself. However, before the invention of writing, narration of stories, experiences and events was oral. This ensured that human experiences were passed from one person to another and from one generation to another.

Narration touches almost every aspect of our lives; it is basic to all forms of human communication. We encounter it daily, in a joke, a telephone call, a friend's confession etc.... We also use it in most forms of writing. We may use it in any mode of writing: description, illustration, definition, comparison, etc.... In fact, we will be using narration in any form of writing where we give an account of events such as in history, in creative writing, in writing personal letters, in

journalism, in arguments where we recount incidents that lead to certain disputes etc...

Since narration is used so often, one might expect that it will come naturally to writers, but anyone who has read a narrative filled with a lot of disorganized, irrelevant and trivial details would know that this form of writing can be misapplied. A well written effective narrative is a one in which the events flow smoothly in a sequence where one action unfolds into the next.

ELEMENTS OF THE NARRATIVE

When writing a narrative, your first task after gathering the details that you need to include in your essay is to be selective. You cannot just mention every single event that occurred during the course of an incident. You need to *select the actions* that are really worth mentioning. For example, if you are describing an embarrassing moment when you fell down in front of your guests in the middle of a party, then you need to consider first the peak point of this incident. Therefore, before actually writing about this incident you need to *determine the climax* of this

event. Would it be the moment of embarrassment after you fell down and everybody burst out into laughter or would it be the moment when you tripped over just before you fell down?

The narrative would have to flow into this climactic moment, and all actions would have to lead up to it. You would have to eliminate all unessential and uninteresting information that might minimize the force of your story. For example, you might want to describe yourself chatting and entertaining your guests but you may not want to dwell on this point.

Another important element of successful narration is to pay special attention as to how to *order the actions* included. Although in most cases the events are described chronologically, i.e. in the order in which they occurred, but one might find that the narrative will be more effective if one starts with the crucial action and then flashes back to the actions that led up to it. For example, a journalist describing a fire in a big mall might start by describing the people escaping from the smoke and the fire and then present the

incidents that lead to the fire and caused its spread. A famous person writing his memoirs might start describing a great moment of achievement in his life and then go back to present the incidents that led to this success.

Before proceeding to present some models of narrative writing, it is important to highlight the components of a successful narrative. Successful narratives usually rely on two key elements: the *set of actions* and the *unity* of these actions. The actions constitute the content and this content is brought to life through the use of colorful verbs, descriptive details and sometimes through the use of dialogue. Unity is crucial and can be established first by selecting only those actions that are relevant to your purpose and next by organizing these actions in such a way that is easy to follow. Another important aspect of the narrative is the point of view, or the position from which the events are being narrated or seen. One type of point of view is the omniscient one where the narrator knows about everything even what is going on inside the minds of the participants. Another type of point of view is that of a writer with a limited point of view. Sometimes the writer himself might

be included in the narrative either as a witness or as a participant. The same essay would be quite different when narrated from different points of view. But whichever type of point of view is used, it should put all actions into a particular context. When unified, the actions create a whole that has a beginning, middle and end and that altogether expresses the main idea.

As you read the model narratives below, note if the following features of narration are illustrated:

- Choosing content that shows the purpose
- Organizing the actions in such a way to create suspense and a cohesive flow
- Expressing actions accurately through well-chosen, vivid verbs
- Giving extensive details for major elements and explaining briefly the less important elements
- Making verb tenses consistent with the chronology throughout
- Expressing the thoughts and feelings of the characters through their actions and dialogue

Model Essay 1

A TRIP I'LL NEVER FORGET

That Friday night in August was not unlike several other Friday nights that summer of 1965. I sat on the arm of the yellow overstuffed chair, leaning my elbows on the fresh white-painted windowsill. A twilight breeze came in with the passing of each car on the road. I heard my mother and father whispering in the dining room. Immediately my heart leapt and my fingertips tingled. I knew what it meant when my parents whispered in the dining room on Friday nights in August. It meant one thing: a trip to the shore the next day. Now I can see that they were probably discussing if they could afford it and where we would stay, but when I was ten I saw no reason as to why we couldn't go to Cape May every weekend. I leaned my head toward the dining

room to try and catch their words, but the whooshing of the cars outside blocked their already quiet voices. Soon curiosity got the best of me, and I slipped off the chair's arm and crept into the dining room. There I saw my mother and father, their heads bent together under the warm light of the Tiffany lamp. It is a picture I will never forget.

So we were off to the shore that Saturday in August. I don't recall that trip in particular, but I'm sure it was like all the other bumpy, sticky, unbearably long rides to Cape May that we had made before. We slouched in the wagon, all mopey and wilted, until we reached the drawbridge that led to the town. Then we came alive; we leaned our heads as far out the window as my mother would allow us, and we ogled at the passing signs for saltwater taffy and

rafts for rent. We then turned up that road that led right straight to the ocean. Cool salty breezes crossed my face and coated my lips. The anticipation always seemed more than I could bear.

We always stayed at older hotels and guest homes. They stood out so-white clapboard buildings on warm pebble lawns. They were always the same: pastel metal lawn chairs out back, cool sandy carpeting in shadowed hallways, a not-unwelcome smell of must and damp, fresh sea breezes drifting through sheer white curtains. Once in our room, we wasted no time shedding our shorts and wriggling into our swimsuits before tearing off to the beach.

I remember that Saturday. My father and I walked up to Charlie's to get everyone burgers for lunch. We walked quickly,

picking up our feet in short jerky motions to keep from burning them on the roasted sand. We waited in line at Charlie's, the sand gritty on the wood planks beneath our feet. The smells of grease and catsup and Noxema mingled around us. Then the walk back, just as quickly but a little more carefully--nothing is worse than a sandy burger. We ate hungrily, stuffing and gulping, but something seemed to be missing that Saturday. There weren't as many jokes, and my father was not as eager to toss us around in the breakers as he usually was, and he complained that his arm and shoulder ached--probably from surf fishing he said--and he scolded me for getting catsup on my swimsuit (he never scolded).

Later my mother asked us to forget about that weekend, that my father wasn't himself, that we shouldn't remember him

that way, that we should remember only the happier visits to the shore. But, of course, I have never been able to forget it, nor have I wanted to. My father's ways that weekend were just another part of the scene like Charlie's burgers, the lost beach ball, the collected shells. My mother wouldn't understand. She wanted us to keep forever a shiny bright image of my father, untainted and unblemished. But I knew that people were not that way, that flaws are essential and cannot be dissected from the whole just because one wished it. And I knew that my love was an unshakable thing quite able to pass the tests of imperfections and time.

We returned late Sunday afternoon. There was so much confusion that night: the ambulance arriving, the thumping of that machine, my mother's short shriek, my neighbor telling my little sister and me

to kneel by our beds and pray. I couldn't breathe; my chest felt closed and small. I kept shutting my eyes tightly and wishing that I could sleep through it all as my older sister was doing.

The first thing that struck me when I awoke the following morning was that it was sunny. Sunlight streamed through my white tie-backs. Why did I suppose it would be otherwise? Down in the kitchen, someone had brought doughnuts. That was odd; doughnuts were for special days like Sunday after church. Were we expected to eat them? Maybe I should just reach in the box and grab one, but then I might get one I don't like. Although I thought it was wrong and somehow bad, I looked through the dozen for the chocolate-covered one just as I always had. My grandmother set a cup of tea in front of me. I felt stunned, not

sadness or a sense of loss, just kind of stunned and confused. How was I supposed to act? What was I supposed to feel and do?

The morning went on. People from up the street brought flowers and cakes and meatloaves. I thought that was strange, to bring food. Someone had brought something made with miniature marshmallows, and we started giggling trying to figure out what it was. Even my mother giggled with us; it must have been a nice relieving surprise to find something so silly that Monday.

The next few days were a blurry series of people coming and going, arms bugging and patting, eyes moist and staring deep into mine. Old aunts would say, "Life goes on," and I soon came to realize they were right. As I sat in the quiet living room, I could hear my friends

playing in the park, and when five o'clock rolled around, we sat down to eat. I saw that by next week the lawn would have to be mowed and by next month the leaves would have to be raked. I thought of those waves in Cape May breaking and breaking over my father's footsteps in the sand and carrying them off to somewhere else.

And it occurred to me that all would not end when I died either. Children would still have parties, Christmas trees would still be put up, the snow would melt, the tulips bloom, and the ocean waves would keep pounding the jetty hour after hour.

Model Essay 2

FRUSTRATION AT THE AIRPORT

I had never been more anxious in my life. I had just spent the last three

endless hours trying to get to the airport so that I could travel home. Now, as I watched the bus driver set my luggage on the airport sidewalk, I realized that my frustration had only just begun.

This was my first visit to the international section of the airport, and nothing was familiar. I could not make sense of all the signs. Where was the ticket counter? Where should I take my luggage? I had no idea where the customs line was. I began to panic. What time was it? Where was my airplane? I had to find help because I could not be late!

I tried to ask a passing businessman for help, but all my words came out wrong. He just scowled and walked away. What had happened? I had been in this country for a whole semester, and I could not

even remember how to ask for directions. This was awful! Another bus arrived at the terminal, and the passengers came out carrying all sorts of luggage. Here was my chance! I could follow them to the right place, and I would not have to say a word to them.

I dragged my enormous suitcase behind me and followed the group. We finally got to the elevators. Oh, no!! They all fit in, but there was not enough room for me. I watched in despair as the elevator doors closed. I had no idea what to do next. I got on the elevator when it returned and gazed at all the buttons. Which one would it be? I pressed button 3. The elevator slowly climbed up to the third floor and jerked to a stop. A high squeaking noise announced the opening of the doors, and I looked around timidly.

Tears formed in my eyes as I saw the

deserted lobby and realized that I would miss my airplane. Just then an old airport employee shuffled around the corner. He saw that I was lost and asked if he could help. He gave me his handkerchief to dry my eyes as I related my predicament. He smiled kindly, took me by the hand, and led me down a long hallway. We walked up some stairs, turned a corner, and at last, there was customs! He led me past all the lines of people and pushed my luggage to the inspection counter.

When I turned to thank him for all his help, he was gone. I will never know that wonderful man's name, but I will always remember his unexpected courtesy. He helped me when I needed it the most. I can only hope that one day I will be able to do the same for another traveler who is suffering through a terrible journey.

There is a lot in common in the models of narrative essays given above. By looking into the features that were highlighted prior to this exercise, you should have formed an idea of the workings of the narrative essay. In what follows some guidelines are given to support your findings and guide you to the best way to put these findings into application when you endeavor to write your own narrative.

WRITING GUIDELINES

Select Content that Demonstrates the Purpose: An effective narrative is a one whereby its purpose is not directly stated but gradually unfolds through the elements (actions and details) of the story. Making your actions speak for themselves to reveal the purpose will undoubtedly have a stronger impact on the reader. However, you need to establish a general purpose for your writing. This should guide your choice of all the details that you would want to include and the actions that you would like to expose. When the essay is not a narrative but is a one whereby the writer is using narration marginally to reinforce a certain point, in that case, the general purpose of writing will help decide

whether to make a direct statement of the main purpose or not. For example, in an argumentative essay in which a narrative is used to illustrate a point, you may want to state the reason for including the narrative. For instance, if you are writing an essay about the dangers of riding motorbikes, narrating a short story of a serious accident that resulted from speeding on a motorbike will no doubt strengthen your support but for reasons of clarification, you need to spell out to your audience the grounds for including the narrative of the motorbike accident within your argumentation. But if you are writing a short story, it might be more effective to imply your purpose. In either case; let your purpose determine your selection of content.

Order the Actions Cohesively: Recounting incidents in a straight forward chronological order is probably one of the most common types of narration. But sometimes the writer might consider making forward leaps in time or flashbacks. In that case, the writer has to rely on temporal signals to indicate shifts in time. Using linking words like "before", "after", "then," "meanwhile," "a few moments later," and so on are few examples of the cues that a writer might use. But

do not forget that in the end, it is the purpose, audience and context of your narrative that will determine how you recount your story.

Choose Vivid Verbs: Since the objective of writing narratives is mainly to relate actions, then to achieve this successfully you might need to rely on the use of *verbs* rather than on the use of adjectives or adverbs. *Verbs* convey actions but you need to consider carefully which verb expresses precisely and vividly the meaning intended. For example, supposing that in your narrative you wanted to use the verb 'look'. Before using it, think carefully of the meaning you intend to convey and the context, then consider your other options like the words 'gaze', 'stare', 'glance', 'peep' or 'glimpse'. Your choice will be determined by the fact that you need to capture the most suitable visual and connotative meaning of the verb. The dictionary and the thesaurus are quite helpful in this respect.

Give Extensive Details for Key Elements: In writing any narrative, every detail must contribute to the main idea. Thus, before you decide whether to include a certain detail;

you need to ask yourself whether this detail contributes to the main idea of the narrative or not. The question to be asked is: "Does the detail add anything to explain the main idea or is it just an extra piece of information?" Once you have decided to include a certain detail, then you need to consider how you would treat it. Should it be mentioned in brief or extensively? You have to keep in mind that a successful narrative is a one that chooses the most fitting details because one appropriate small detail might convey meaning better than tens of random irrelevant ones.

Make Verb Tenses Consistent with Chronology: The order of actions may be clear in the mind of the writer, but the reader needs to be guided to follow the chronological flow of incidents. This is usually achieved through the proper use of temporal signals and verb tenses. The writer must be careful in his choice of tenses. He must not use tenses that will take the reader back and forth in time for no good reason. Besides a writer has to be consistent in his use of verb tenses and must choose the appropriate shifts in verb tenses to express changes in time. This, of course, has to be accompanied by the proper use of temporal signals.

Portray Character Through Behavior and Dialogue: The actions and dialogue of characters in a narrative might be crucial elements in an event because they may help develop the story and the characters themselves. In your narrative, therefore, try to employ dialogue and description of behaviour to help you achieve a number of things: proceed with the actions of the narrative, develop character, and communicate the central purpose. Still, your careful choice of actions and spoken words will help you achieve one or all of these objectives.

Maintain suspense: A successful narrative is a one that holds the reader's attention throughout the story. For that reason avoid giving away too much information too soon. On the other hand, if you hold away too many incidents and try to be too mysterious, your readers might become confused and lose interest. Therefore you need to strike a balance between these two. So think carefully when you are deciding how much to reveal at each point in your essay and how soon.

Exercise

The following are two samples of narrative essays. Read them carefully then try to answer the questions that follow.

FLOWERS I'LL NEVER SEE

My brother and I were looking at the exhibitions at the annual Country Fair. At the very end of one of the rows of exhibitions was a small tent. In front of the tent was a long, thin table. On it was a box with a stencilled sign that read. "Flowers You Will Never See". My brother looked in, laughed, and as he ran away said it was the "old oak". I looked in and saw a model of coffin surrounded by flowers, and I knew it was time for me to get out of the area. But I'll never be known for my quickness, and before I could make any move, I felt this hand clasp me firmly on the

shoulder. I knew him without his having to introduce himself: a traveling preacher.

I was dragged into the tent and was asked by the man if I was going to Heaven or Hell. I wasn't any dummy, or so I thought. I quickly realized he would go beserk and scream at my hypocrisy or tell me to elaborate if I said I was going to heaven. And I couldn't imagine what would have happened if I admitted that I was a shoo-in for the hot rocks of Hell. Sitting down and thinking I was real smart, I told him I was going to purgatory. That was as neutral of an answer as I could muster. He sort of stared at me, not knowing exactly what to say, then reached down and picked up his Bible. Sliding it across the cardboard table that separated us he told me in a low voice to find the word

"purgatory" in the Bible. He kept on talking, and the more he talked, the faster his words came out.

There I was, sitting in a fold-up chair, leafing through the Bible for the meaning of purgatory. By this time, the man was getting really excited. He grabbed the Bible and told me again there was no such place as I had claimed. Well, I hadn't taken any classes in any seminaries, 'so I wasn't in any sort of shape to get into deep theological arguments with him. I knew I wasn't going to get anywhere if I insisted I knew what I was talking about. I realized that what I was saying was purely the doctrine of my church.

He had been sitting on the other side of the table staring across at me like a judge that was going to hand down the final verdict. Looking at him, I could

guess that the verdict was guilty. But guilty of what? Here I was, only a runny-nosed twelve-year-old and about to be condemned. The preacher picked up his chair, giving me a sweet smile that showed his gold fillings, moved over, and sat beside me.

Since he hadn't yet told me I was a completely hopeless case, I tried some plea bargaining. After mumbling and squeaking for a few minutes, I decided to stop when I got to the part about stealing my brother's multicolored marbles. Unlike the priest in confession, he would, I knew, use anything is said against me.

When he started talking to me, I must have mentally blocked out his words, because for the life of me I can't remember what he talked about. All I knew was that the sun was shining and my

brother was outside having a good time, and this man in his three-piece earth-toned suit with a wilted weed of a flower was telling me that the saviour was coming.

And of all the wonders this earth has ever seen, the saviour did arrive in that very tent. The flaps of the tent parted, and in he walked. Taking me by the hand, my father delivered me into freedom.

THE GREAT SURPRISE

I will never forget the time I surprised everyone, even myself. When I was a sophomore in college, I was a member of the debate team. My area of performance was oral interpretation, a category in which each contestant would memorize several short pieces of literature and deliver them with appropriate intonation and emotion in front of two or three

judges. The person who gave the best interpretation won. One time our team, which consisted of about ten people, decided to participate in a city-wide contest. Each person on the team prepared his or her specialty; I chose two poems and memorized them. Another girl on our team, Barbara, entered the same category, memorizing a part of a short story. Everyone on our team, including me and the coach, thought that Barbara had the best chance of winning first place. She impressed everyone as more experienced, more sophisticated, more capable than I. Everyone thought that placing second or third was the best I could hope for. I vividly remember the day of the contest, which was held at a university across town. When my scheduled time came, I went into the assigned room and delivered my poems in front of the judges. Even though I was nervous, I did my best. The

judges, of course, gave no hint about what they thought, so I left the room really worried. After all the contestants had finished, we went into a large auditorium to find out the results. Our team sat together, all of us nervous and excited.

When the judges announced the winners for oral interpretation, everyone on the team gasped. I had won first place and Barbara had not placed at all! In a daze, I went down to the stage, accepted the trophy, and went back to my seat. I felt excited and happy but also a little embarrassed because I didn't know what I was going to say to Barbara. In the car on the way back to the campus, everyone was quiet; nobody knew what to say. At one point, I turned to Barbara to say something, but she cut me off and looked out the window at the snowy street. We never talked about the incident.

Even though I was sorry for the awkwardness" between Barbara and me, I was proud of myself for winning. It gave me confidence in myself and motivated me to work harder. I also learned a valuable lesson from this incident. It taught me not to depend so much on other people's assessment of myself or others, that sometimes the people who seem unlikely to do something can and will do it. We can surprise everyone, even ourselves.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Comment on each author's choice of topic. Did each author do a good job of selecting and limiting the topic?
2. Describe the authors' apparent purposes in writing about these experiences. What ideas or impressions does each author want to communicate to the readers?

3. Comment on each author's use of detail. For example, you might focus on the details in some of the body paragraphs and try to see whether the details in these paragraphs are related to the authors' purposes. Do any of these paragraphs contain details that need to be omitted?
4. Describe the way each of the essays is organized. Are the paragraphs in each essay unified and well developed?
5. Did the authors of these essays rely on dialogue for developing their story and their characters? How effective was that?
6. Examine the introductory and concluding paragraphs of each essay. What does each author attempt to accomplish in these paragraphs? Do you consider these paragraphs effective and appropriate?
7. Comment on the use of verbs in each of the narratives. How successful were the writers in their choice? Point

out the temporal signals that have been used. How effective were they in guiding you to the chronology of the story. Check the use of tenses; has any of the writers confused you by jumping irrationally from one tense to another?

8. If the authors of these essays planned to revise their essays, what advice would you give them?



Application

1. List five or six of your experiences that might be used as topics for narrative essays. Remember that incidents from childhood often make good topics. Now go through your list and choose those experiences that seem most promising. Pick up one and decide what would be the point behind writing a narrative essay on this experience. Think about the central impression that you would want to create. Freewrite about the experience by jotting down all the details that you could recall. Then go through what you have written and underline details that would contribute to the central impression you would want

to create. Think about how you might best organize this essay, what sort of introduction and conclusion would be most effective. Decide whether you want your main idea or purpose to be implicit or explicit.

2. Have you ever experienced prejudice? Write about your experience or your thoughts about prejudice directed against race, religion, nationality, or gender.

3. Write a narrative essay about a time in your life when you felt powerless in a difficult situation. Use detailed descriptions to make your writing more interesting. Try to appeal to as many senses as possible in your descriptions.

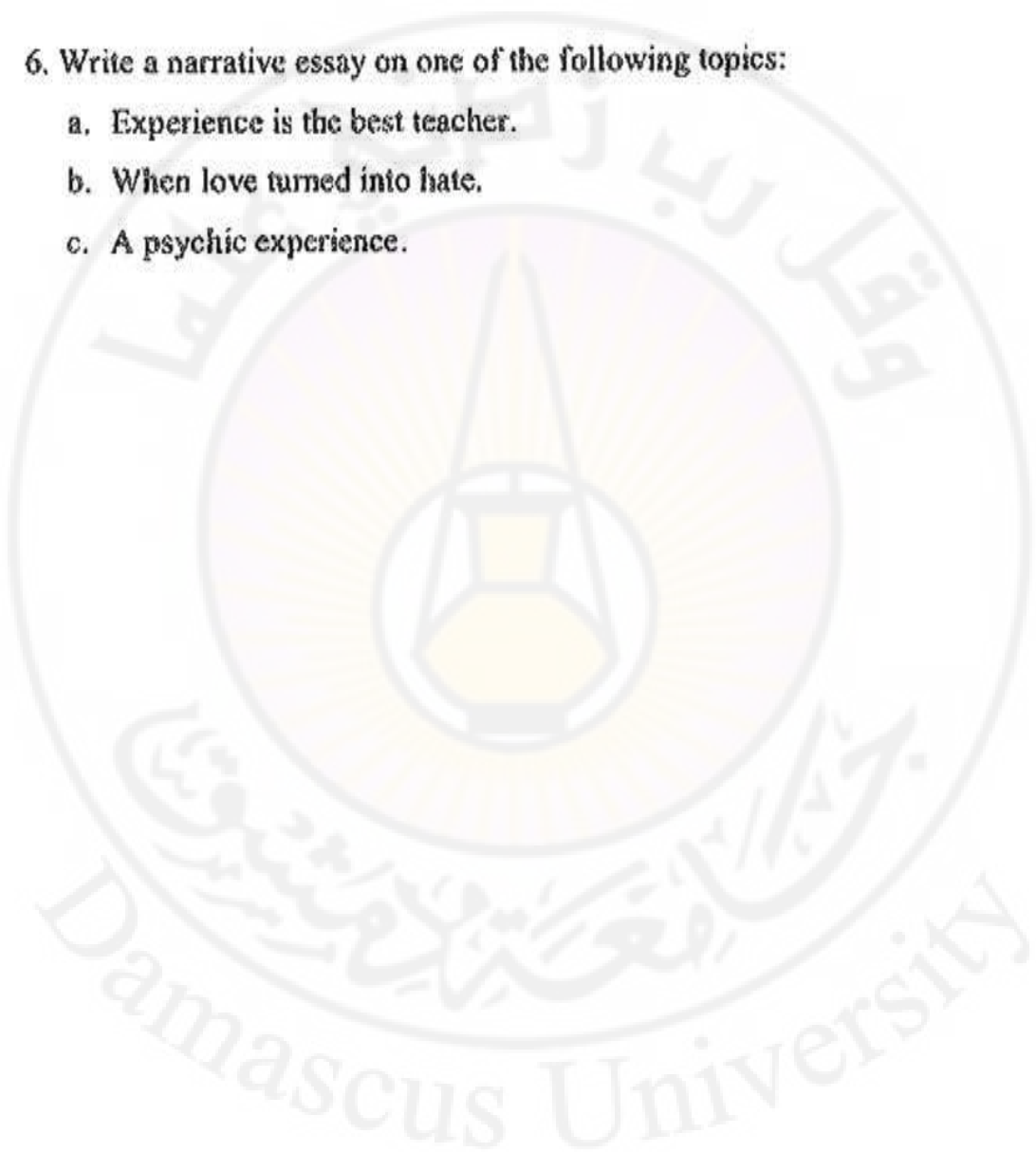
4. Write a formal personal narrative in which you introduce yourself to a future employer. You can choose a story about your past working experience or about your studies. Explain why you should be a good employee and why the company should hire you. Describe your energy, enthusiasm, and skills.

5. What kind of person are you ---- patient, easygoing, nervous, timid, imaginative, jealous? Choose the adjective most characteristic of you and narrate an incident that highlights it.

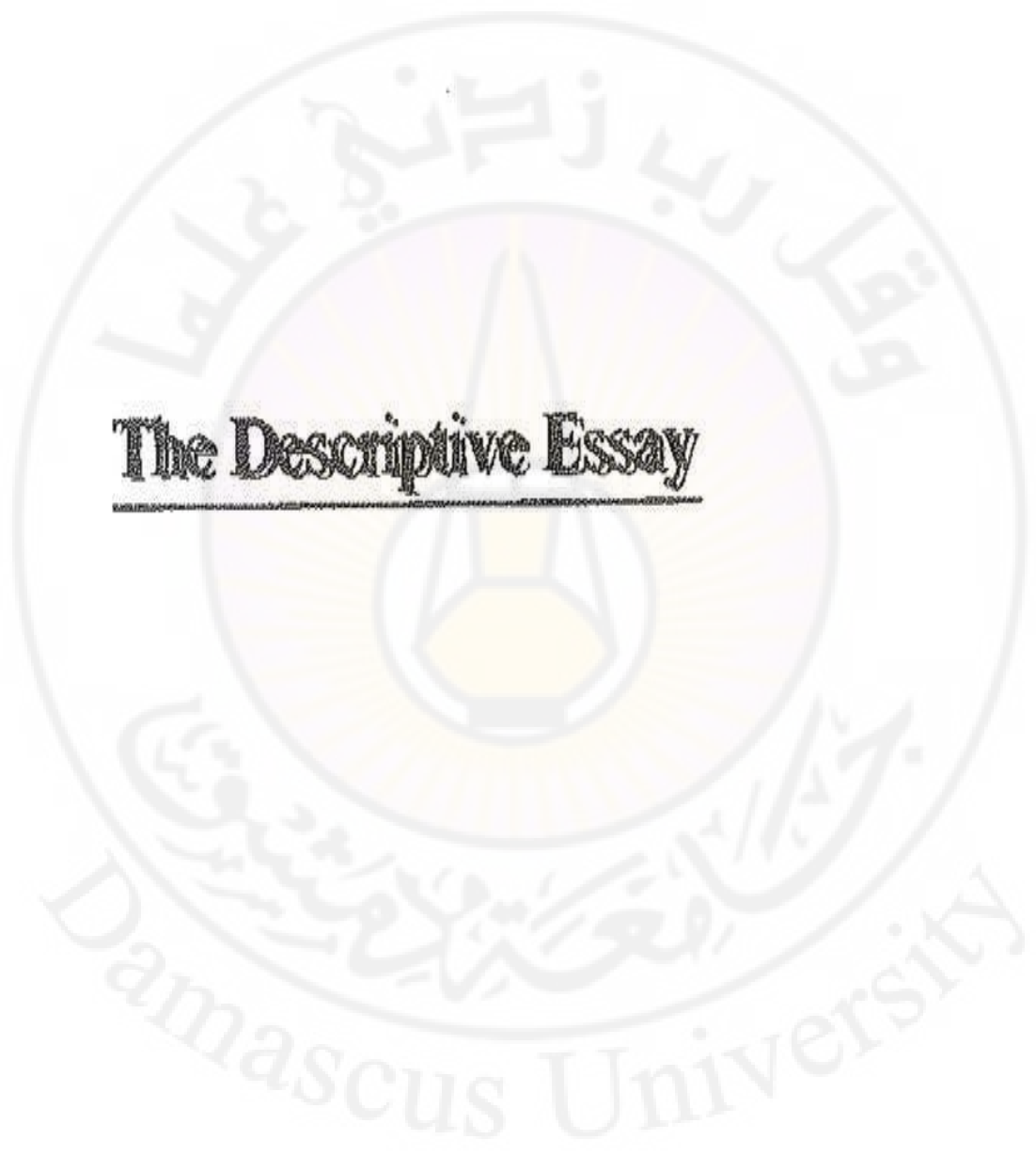
Pace the narration to focus on details that prove what kind of person you are.

6. Write a narrative essay on one of the following topics:

- a. Experience is the best teacher.
- b. When love turned into hate.
- c. A psychic experience.







The Descriptive Essay



Unit Two

The Descriptive Essay

A gifted photographer might be able to take a picture of your house. This picture will capture all the details that would convey an impression of your house. But a photograph, no matter how good, could never convey your home's atmosphere, significance and what it is like to live there as well as writing could. The difference lies in the interpretation and expression of a point of view. These are easiest to express by means of words. Descriptive writing, therefore, allows for the expression of insights and points of view that would help create a mental picture which is usually difficult or impossible to express in other kinds of communication.

Description, like other modes of writing, is essentially a means of communication with an audience. Through descriptive writing, you can communicate to your readers your thoughts and impressions about people, objects, and places. Through descriptive paragraphs, you can add to the

beauty and forcefulness of expository writing. For instance, *description* can be used to clarify a *definition*, to make a *comparison* clear, to show the boundaries between different categories in a *classification* and as a basic element of *process* and *cause-effect* essays where certain phenomena need to be described. Description can also be made use of in *narration* to create a setting and describe a character. It is sometimes employed in *argumentative* essays too.

Descriptive writing can be of two different types:

- (1) Objective or informative
- (2) Subjective or personal

Objective Descriptive Writing: This kind of writing is an exact factual representation of a place or an object. Its objective is mainly to provide information. This type of descriptive writing usually appears in technical writing, like for instance when one is describing the equipment and chemical substances that are used in certain chemical reactions.

Subjective Descriptive Writing: In this type of descriptive writing, the writer uses factual information too but the

objective here is to try and choose those details that will help evoke a certain mood or feeling or express a certain point of view. In this kind of writing the writer adds to his factual information some vivid imagery, metaphors and emotional language to serve his purpose.

A descriptive piece of writing need not be one type or the other. One can also find a lot of descriptive writing where the writer blends both the subjective and the objective viewpoints. However, the proportion of subjective to objective writing used all depends on the audience, purpose and point of view of the writer.

ELEMENTS OF DESCRIPTIVE WRITING

In descriptive as in any other mode of writing, there are certain important decisions that the writer has to make before writing. The first one concerns the *selection of the kind of details* that he wants to include. To be effective, a descriptive essay should make the reader see, hear, touch, smell and even taste. The problem is that most beginning writers tend to limit their description to visual details, thus limiting themselves and unintentionally leaving out

potentially useful tools in description. An experienced writer develops the skill of depicting details that others might not spot unless they are pointed out to them. For instance, a writer who is skillful at description would go beyond the visual detail of an antique jewelry and describe the cool, smooth touch of the precious stone as well.

Besides selecting individual details, a writer should also be concerned about how these details relate to one another. Thus, after depicting the details, the next step is to see what *relationships* exist between them. A random list of descriptive details will get the reader nowhere. The selected details should all be coherent and focused to create the desired *impression*. Therefore, you must include only those details that actually express your point of view and help achieve your purpose. For example, if you wanted to write a description of a nice, small and homely coffee shop where you usually sit quietly with one of your friends, you would probably not want to waste time describing the weather or the color of the sky. Instead, you would include details about the appearance, texture, smell, and feel of that cozy place. You would leave out all details that would divert the reader's

attention away from the topic and interfere with the *central impression* that you are trying to put across.

Besides choosing the important details that you want to include and considering their relationship to one another, there is another major decision that you need to make concerning the organization of these details. You need to consider how to organize the selected details in the most effective way to convey the *central impression* that you have in mind. You also need to present the description in a way that your readers could easily follow.

There are a number of ways that you might choose to organize your writing and again that all depends on your subject, purpose and audience. One approach could be to start with a general definition of the subject and then describe its most noticeable specific features, moving from detail to detail in order of importance. Another approach might be to take a spatial approach, describing details as they appear from one side to another or from far to near. You could also approach your topic by focusing on size as your principle of organization, moving from the smallest feature to the largest or the other way round.

The *impression* to be created in the reader's mind is thus formed from the details and their appropriate organization. If the mental picture of the impression to be made by the writer is clear from the onset, then revision can help him match the impression he has in mind with that his description has created. Most often the impression is not very clear at the beginning of the description and generally becomes clearer in the process of writing. Whichever the case, the most important thing is that your description should conform to your impression of the subject.

This unit offers examples of two categories of descriptive writing: the description of places and the description of objects. Within these examples, both objective and subjective descriptions can be found, as well as descriptions that mix the two.

Description of a Place

Descriptions of places are common. They appear in a variety of writing modes. You may have probably written several descriptions of places before. You may also know that the key to effective place descriptions is giving sensory details. That is not to rely only on the sight but also on the sounds, smells, and tactile impressions of a particular environment. This will create a more vivid picture of the place to be described. Presenting these details in colorful, evocative, indicative language recreates the environment as well as the feelings the writer has for it.

As in any type of writing, holding the readers' attention and interest is one of your first responsibilities as a writer. In a descriptive essay this means first observing details that your readers might miss without your help, next interpreting with insight all that you notice, then finding a method of organization that effectively brings out your ideas, and

finally finding the right words that will most accurately and vividly re-create your observations and impressions for your readers.

As you read the following models on description, note if the features of descriptive writing are illustrated:

- Orienting the reader to time, place, and purpose.
- Narrowing the description to those aspects that best convey the intended impression.
- Ordering the description into a pattern of images that is easy to follow.
- Considering the whole range of sensory details.
- Maintaining the point of view, purpose, and unified impression of the subject throughout the essay.

Model Essay 1

LUNCH AT THE FAMILY'S COFFEE SHOP

Eating lunch in the Family's Coffee Shop is a peaceful enjoyable experience for me. I sit down and relax, letting my

eyes take in everything around me. I glance across the room and notice that a clock hanging on the wall is off by four hours, which seems to give one the impression that time isn't important here. The bright orange booths against the wall have lamps dangling down in the middle of the tables, somehow seeming to make each booth a world of its own. Straight ahead of me are a man and a woman conversing easily over lunch. I gather that they are married because of their informal, casual manner toward each other. Neither one seems compelled to fill up every moment with chatter. The occasional silences seen comfortable, and they don't seem interested in trying to impress each other. To my left is a family with a six-month-old baby who is playing with a bag of crackers, experimenting with the sound and feel of cellophane while his parents smile at him and offer quiet

encouragement. To my right is a booth with three teenaged girls in it; as they whisper and giggle to each other, they munch on rinds, nibbling slowly so that they can stretch out their time in the air conditioning. Up in front of the room is the place to order food. A plump, middle-aged woman is humming to herself as she cleans up the grill area in between waiting on customers. Looking out the window, I can see the birches swaying slightly in the breeze as birds circle lazily in the cloudless sky. The jukebox in the middle of the room is quietly playing an old song. Looking up, I see a dark wood-stained ceiling with lights placed carefully throughout the room in diagonal rows. All is peaceful and quiet.

Model Essay 2

THUNDERSTORMS AND HOUSES

The nights that were raining were some of the best. I used to love sitting in my dark room watching the thunderstorms move in. On windy nights I could look out my window and see my neighbour's huge oak tree whipping back and forth. When lightning would strike, I could see a huge silhouette of the tree in the sky. The wind would blow and make a whistling sound where the weather stripping had come loose. The thunder would make the windows rattle, and I always used to think that one of them would break. If I had my window cracked open, I could hear the rain falling on the street outside. Sometimes it would rain so hard that the downspout by my window would overflow because of all the oak leaves in it. After the storm had stopped, there would always be some

water that would continue to leak down on the front steps below. Then all I could hear was the sound of thunder way off in the distance until it became very still and the only sounds I could hear were those of the house breathing.

That was the house that my two brothers, four sisters, mother, father, and grandparents lived in. Now my mother and father are living in a new house. My grandparents are dead and my brothers and sisters and I are living away from home. Once a year we all come together during the summer and have a family reunion. This past summer after everyone had gone back, I stayed up and listened to a storm from the bedroom of my parents new home. I turned out the light and then sat back in bed.

The wind blew, but it was not as loud as it had been when it rushed through the

oak tree. When lightning struck, it was washed out by the street lights and the front-porch lights. The double-layer glass windows were very sturdy and never shook when thunder clapped. The screen on top of the gutters prevented blockage, so they were always clear for the rain to flow through. I could not tell when the rain stopped because the house is well built and keeps noise out. It does not breathe and make sounds like our old house.

I was talking to my neighbor with the oak tree not too long ago. He told me that the new owners of my old house had put on an addition and remodeled it. The paint they put on was an awful color, and the yard was always unkempt. I then realized that part of me was gone forever.

By looking into the features that were highlighted before this exercise, you should have formed an idea of the workings of an essay describing a place. In what follows advice and guidelines are given to support your findings and guide you to the best way to put these findings into application when you attempt to write your own descriptive essay of a place.

WRITING GUIDELINES

Orient the Reader: Although descriptive writing can be highly subjective and personal yet you still need to start off your reader with a statement of purpose. This statement can range from a very objective remark to a very poetic one. What is important here is to orient the reader and prepare him for what is to come before you take him on the tour of description.

Narrow the Description: Once the reader is introduced to the general purpose, you can move on to narrowing down your subject. Here you need to consider carefully what aspects of the place to be described are the key ones and are hence of interest to your reader. You also need to consider which aspects are most likely to express your purpose.

There may be different ways by which writers approach their description. Sometimes, the writer may find that it will be most effective if he describes something large by focusing on its smaller parts. But here the writer has to be careful to choose only those elements of the place to be described that will have the greatest impact. Writers may also choose to narrow their focus to a simple single element that might be enough to evoke the entire experience and convey the main impression. Suppose, for instance, that you wanted to describe the harbour early on a summer morning. You may choose to endlessly describe buildings, fishing boats, ripples of the sea, and many other details. Or you may choose to narrow your focus to a vivid description of the turquoise colour of the sea as it mingles with the colour of the sky.

Order the Description: Order is no less important in description than in other types of writing. Readers have to receive images in such a way that will enable them to form the intended picture in their mind's eye. Thus orienting the reader at the beginning of the essay helps him to form the framework of the picture and presenting the images in the

right order allows the reader to place those images within this framework.

Therefore once you have decided on the details that you would like to include in your description put them down in the most appropriate order. A logical pattern is usually the easiest to follow, however you may want to try out different patterns before you hit the one that works best for your purpose and your audience.

Consider the Range of Sensory Details: One advantage of this type of writing is its ability to appeal to the senses. In your endeavor to convey the intended impression, you can make use of all of the senses at your disposal; the senses of touch, sound, sight, smell, and taste. These will enable you to project the impression you have in mind and make your description come to life by making your readers see, hear, smell, feel, and taste. But of course, these different images and sensations must not come as a random list, they have got to be in harmony and unified in order to project a single integrated impression.

Maintain the Point of View, Purpose, and Unified Impression: Unless the purpose is clear to you, you will not succeed in conveying it to your reader. Thus, you have to begin with a clear indication of your purpose, make sure that it stays consistent throughout your essay and end in the same way too. Constantly reviewing your details to ensure that you are accomplishing your goal and presenting a unified harmonious impression is therefore crucial to descriptive writing.

Exercise

In what follows, two samples of place description essays are given. Read them carefully and then answer the questions that follow:

THE SUPERMARKET

Supermarkets are America's number one necessary evil. When you enter a supermarket, you are entering another world: a world of chaos, continuous motion, and mellow Musak by which to shop.

You are greeted by automatically opening doors, which seem to act as a vacuum, sucking you in past the wide-eyed, screaming child at the gumball machine, into the main shopping area. You are confronted by an array of shopping carts, each with its own squeak or loose wheel; the choice is yours. At first the

noise is enough to unnerve you - cash registers being pounded on by a fat woman, clacking away on the gum that she has probably been chewing for the past eight hours, and shopping bags being shaken open by grocery boys who shout conversations at each other across the aisles.

You reach into your pocket to get the shopping list of the day which is, by now, hauntingly echoing in you brain: 'milk, eggs, bread, pampers ... milk, eggs, bread, Pampers.' As you travel down the first aisle, you are surrounded by shelves of irresistible eatables which seem to scream out at you, 'buy me ... No, buy me' the mountains of shelves seem to act as a tunnel, with you, racing through, desperately grabbing any necessity you might sight. You are emptied out at the end of this tunnel, only to find yourself facing a bed of

meats: meats of every size and shape, weight and price. As you walk along the meat display, you notice some movement behind the opaque, mirror like, windows about the meats. As you strain your eyes like a cat into the night, you observe a scene much like one in a horror film. There, hanging from the ceiling, are skinned carcasses, of cows, lamb and chickens, just waiting to be cut, cleaned, inspected, packaged and priced. As the lifeless meat hangs there, like crucified objects, fat men in white coats and white hard hats - butchers, as they're more commonly referred to - are busily dismembering their kill for the feisty little shoppers. As you quickly dart past the meat display, the thought becoming a vegetarian does not seem so farfetched anymore.

You are traveling down the last aisle of this seemingly endless maze of overly

advertised products, when you hear a subtle, orchestrated version of 'the way we were'. You stop your partially filled shopping cart in respect to Barbra Streisand, but more importantly, for the splendor of that moment, only to realize that this faint, Lawrence Welk type of music has been filling the supermarket since you entered; only you were too busy concentrating on the business of completing your shopping list to notice it. Your moment of splendor is suddenly interrupted by the screaming of a young child - or monster as I like to think of them - whose disturbance is being caused simply because he got a giraffe-shaped lollipop rather than a seal-shaped one. you swiftly continue past this lovely child, restraining yourself from jamming his lollipop down his throat.

Your journey through the supermarket is nearly at a close, the only other

obstacle to overcome is exiting successfully with a few dollars remaining in your wallet. Your groceries have been checked through by the gum-chewing saleslady, and your bill has been paid. You wish the saleslady a pleasant day--whether you mean it or not is another matter --- and leave. As you exit through the automatically opening doors, you think back on your thirty-minute ordeal and wonder, "was it really all that bad?" after a brief pause, you emphatically say, "Yep".

ON THE BUS

The doors to the bus open with a hiss and a squeak. Inhaling exhaust fumes. I step up the three tall stairs and let the warm air bathe my frozen face. I take off my mitten to drop the coins with a clink into the collector. I mumble a hello to the driver, who

mumbles back. Like most bus drivers, she is dressed in navy blue from head to toe.

As usual, the "Whisperer"--a tiny woman dressed in a sweat outfit behind the driver--rocks back and forth and whispers softly to herself. I scan the seats. The bus is packed with passengers bundled in thick coats and hats, staring straight ahead, eyes slightly dazed and tired. A few boys near the back doors talk and laugh loudly, earning them a pursed-lip look from a blue-haired woman across the aisle.

Aha! Two seats from the driver, across from the whispering woman, I spy the only open seat! A scowling gray-haired man in a dark wool coat sits in the seat next to it. I scramble to the seat. I smile smugly to myself as I watch the searching eyes of the passengers who

followed me on the bus. They grab onto a steel pole and brace themselves.

But wait the last passenger to get on is an old woman with a back so crooked she is almost bent over double. She can barely raise her head to search for a seat. I pull myself up and say, "Here, take my seat." Her twinkling blue eyes meet mine as she says, "Now, here's a girl who was brought up right." She sits down with a sigh.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Discuss the authors' apparent purposes in their choice of the place described in each of the essays. What ideas or impressions does each author want to communicate to the readers? Do the authors make their purpose explicit?
2. Contrast the opening paragraphs of these essays. How are they similar? How are they different? Are they both effective ways to begin description essays?

3. Comment on each authors' use of detail. What sorts of details does each author include? How are these details related to the authors' purposes?
4. In each essay, pick the paragraph that seems most striking to you. Why do you consider these paragraphs especially good? Comment on the techniques the authors use to develop these paragraphs.
5. Describe the way each essay is organized. Does each plan of organization seem appropriate to the authors' purposes? Pay particular attention to introductory and concluding paragraphs.
6. Comment on the organization of each of the essays. Does the author follow the same plan of organization throughout? What transitional devices does each writer use to help us follow the essay?
7. Which essay seems to move at a faster rate? Why do you think the writer chose this kind of movement?

8. Pay close attention to the words each author uses. Underline words or phrases that strike you as vague. How could these words or phrases be made more precise?
9. Contrast the closing paragraphs of these essays. Is each conclusion appropriate to the authors' purpose?
10. On the whole which essay did you find stronger and or interesting? Why?



Application

1. In one sentence, state the dominant impression you might use to describe the following items:
 - a. Your bedroom.
 - b. Your favourite restaurant.
 - c. Your car.
 - d. Your best friend.
 - e. The woman or man of your dreams.
 - f. Any scene in your neighbourhood.

Now guided by the central impression, choose one of the topics above and write a descriptive essay.

2. Describe a place of either striking beauty or repulsive ugliness.
3. Write a descriptive essay on a place that has special meaning for you. Describe it and its influence on you.
4. Imagine that you left your native country to start life in a new country. Write a letter back home describing your new surroundings and how they have affected you.
5. You are now sitting in a room. Look at your extreme left, then turn your eyes slowly from left to right. What do you see? Describe what you see in order, nothing more nothing less. What impression, what mood if any, seems dominant as you read your essay? With this in mind revise what you have written.
6. Think of your home town, the place you live on, or some familiar spot. Imagine that you are approaching it. What do you see, item by item, and in what order?

What feelings and ideas suggest themselves as you imagine approaching the scene? Write a paragraph or two of description, with the objects and your feelings in mind.

7. In the eleventh grade I was introduced to the infamous and dreaded Miss Abdel Nour.

- She was then in her late forties and not glamorous.
- She had an unpleasant voice.
- She would stare piercingly at the class room from her desk.
- She marked our English essays with a red pencil and returned them to us bleeding from many wounds.
- She always referred to us as, 'Now, class ...' and demanded, it seemed, the impossible.
- In the eleventh grade I hated her, but today I revere her as the best teacher I have ever had.

Description of an Object

Objects can be described for a variety of purposes, audiences and contexts. The principles that one has to keep in mind while describing a place equally apply when one wants to describe an object. The writer in both has to be careful in selecting and ordering the details appealing to the five senses to create a unified impression. However, there are some differences, for example, an object that is being described has to be differentiated from other objects that are close by and that look alike. Some objects also may be described in terms of their function or performance.

Descriptions of objects are common in many types of writing. We encounter this kind of writing in many of our college text books. In science textbooks we come across descriptions of stones, trees, volcanoes, and similar phenomena. In any manual, whether it is for a new car or for a computer, you find an extended description of the object. Advertisements sometimes explain the format, features, and other specifications of certain objects.

Descriptive writing of objects may also be subjective where the writer wants to evoke a certain sensation, emotion, or memory. For example, a writer describing the sight, smell, and first sip of a hot cup of coffee on a cold January morning would be describing an object from a subjective, reminiscent point of view. Fiction writers usually emphasize the symbolic importance of objects with detailed descriptions of them.

Therefore, objects can be described for a variety of purposes, audiences, and contexts.

As you read the selection given below, note if the following features of descriptive writing are illustrated:

- Establishing a context for the description
- Narrowing the description to those details that best convey the intended impression
- Ordering the description in a way that is easy to follow
- Providing meaningful details of different types
- Showing how the parts of the object fit together
- Showing how the object works

Model Essay

MY WALLET

My old leather wallet was a gift from my mother. When it was new, it was a lovely shade of rose, but years of hard use have left it a grayish, pink color. Nevertheless, old and cracked as it is, my wallet still faithfully serves to hold many of the items I need everyday. A place to keep money in, of course, the primary function of a wallet, and mine has special sections for coins, paper bills, my dollar checkbook, and even a place for my two cash cards. Over the years, thousands of dollars and millions of yens have gone in-and out-of my wallet, but I can find only a few old receipts in a language I cannot read folded in among the paper notes to prove this fact.

While money comes and goes from my

wallet, it also contains several things which I never remove: two driver's licenses, one for Japan and one for the U.S. the alien registration card which allows me to stay in Japan, and identification cards for Temple University and the American Club. In this complicated modern world, without these little cards, I would have no Identity, and no right to claim a place in society.

Along with money and identification cards, my wallet also holds an odd collection of other items which defy categorization: calling cards, two U.S. stamps, notes from my husband and children, Tokyo phone numbers on bits of paper, a five cruzlero bill from San Paulo days, and old grocery lists. These things must have been important to me at one time, otherwise they would not have been put in my wallet, but now I can

only wonder why I carry them around with me every day, everywhere I go. Perhaps, just as the identification cards are a public declaration of who I am, this half-forgotten minutiae of daily living serves in a personal way to remind me of the identities I have: as wife- mother- teacher-student-American-resident-in-Japan. Perhaps the primary purpose of a wallet is to hold money, but it may be that money is the least important of the items we find there.

By looking into the features that were highlighted before this exercise, you should have formed an idea of the workings of an object description essay. In what follows advice and guidelines are given to support your findings and guide you to the best way to put these findings into application when you attempt to write your own descriptive essay of an object.

WRITING GUIDELINES

Establish a Context: In a description of an object, unlike the description of a place, the writer's focus is usually on a

single entity which has to be placed within a larger context of description. Its significance has to be highlighted too. Whatever you are describing whether a hair pin or a whole city, you need to explain why you are doing so. Are you writing to inform, prove a point, evoke a memory, instruct etc ... Whichever your aim, your readers will be better equipped to grasp your meaning if they know why you are describing that specific object and why they should be reading it. The length and type of introduction you make will vary according to the object being described and your purpose, but your introduction certainly has to come early on in your writing and the object being described should be placed in its larger context.

Narrow the Description: Similar to the description of a place, the description of an object should be selective in its choice of the details to be described. Thus, as a writer you should be careful and choose and highlight only those details that are important to convey the intended impression.

Order the Description: There are a number of different ways that you may choose to approach your description of the details. Ask yourself how you should begin. Should you

focus on the object's most noticeable feature or on the least noticeable one? Should you first describe what it does and then explain how it is made or should you approach it the other way round? You may start your concrete description by dividing the object into several parts and then provide descriptive details for each. Another way could be to approach your description by starting with the most familiar feature of the object and then moving to the less familiar ones, like describing the object on the outside first, then going to the details inside. Whichever approach you use, choose the order that is easiest for the reader to follow. The important thing is that once you start a certain approach, stick to it.

Provide Meaningful Details: Again to help your readers visualize the object, provide all kinds of details that will fulfill your purpose and help your readers perceive the object. Consider a variety of sensory details as well as technical ones, but remember to use only those that are necessary to make the object more vivid for your readers.

Show How the Parts Fit Together: The description must not be an aimless list of the single parts. You need to interrelate

the parts to show how they fit together. Describe the position of each part in relation to other parts so that your reader can see the whole object not just fragments.

Show How the Object Works: If you choose to describe an object that has a practical use, then you need to let your reader know how it functions. The kind of information that you give all depends upon what you are describing and the purpose of the description.

Exercise

In what follows, a sample of an object description is given. Read it carefully and then answer the questions that follow:

AEROSOLS

Spray cans are popular because they are easy and fun to use, and because they seem a modern, advanced way of packing things. A boring product like an oven cleaner is more exciting and attractive in an aerosol than in, say, a stick, and gives the feeling that it will involve less work. Sometimes this feeling is justified, sometimes not. Before you buy your next aerosol you might care to weigh up the pros and cons.

An aerosol can is a fairly simple device. It is just a domed can with a spring - loaded valve in the top. Reaching down from this to the bottom of

the can is a 'dip tube'. The bottom of the can contains liquid, the top gas, so the tube ensures that liquid comes out of the valve. Turn the can upside down and the gas and liquid change place, so you must always hold an aerosol can upright ---- and to get the last drop of a nearly empty can, absolutely vertical. On the other hand, to clean the nozzle of a can of spray paint or oven cleaner before the liquid dries and clogs the hole, turn the can upside down and give it a short puff of pure gas.

The can contains the product and a propellant, which is a substance that is a gas in normal conditions but can be turned into a liquid by compressing it. In most aerosols the product and liquid propellant are mixed together and the space above this contains propellant which had turned back to gas. An 'empty' can is still full of propellant in gas

form which is why empty cans can still be dangerous.

Aerosols are marked with a warning: do not puncture or incinerate even when empty. Do not store below 50 degrees centigrade. This warning is to be taken seriously. Even an empty aerosol is still full of propellant and it might be inflammable, explosive butane. The danger temperature is easily reached on a sunlit window-sill or on top of a radiator or heater. Many accidents happen each year to people who ignore these warnings. Avoid dropping aerosols; a dent increases the pressure inside and a damaged valve can leak.

The propellants are generally thought not to be harmful to health, but many products are. Prolonged breathing of fly killer or silicon waterproofing spray will do you no good. As a general rule,

avoid using any aerosol sprays in a confined, unventilated space unless you leave the spot immediately afterwards.

Never smoke while using an aerosol. The propellant may be butane and it might catch fire. The refill cans of pure butane for lighter are particularly dangerous. Make sure the bottom faces the right way when spraying; hair lacquer or paint in the eyes is extremely painful.

Environmentalists are concerned that the increasing amount of fluorocarbons in the atmosphere is changing its nature, allowing in more ultra-violet rays and increasing the incidence of skin cancer-though this is by no means proven. You may not think that this concerns you personally but it certainly will in one way; more and more aerosols will have inflammable hydrocarbon propellants.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Discuss the authors' apparent purpose in his choice of the object to be described. What ideas or impressions does the author want to communicate to the reader? Does the author make his purpose explicit?
2. Is the introductory paragraph effective to begin a description essay?
3. Comment on the authors' use of detail. What sorts of details does the author include? How are these details related to the authors' purposes?
4. Describe the way the essay is organized. Does the plan of organization seem appropriate to the authors' purposes? Pay particular attention to the introductory and concluding paragraphs.
5. Comment on the organization of the essay. Does the author follow the same plan of organization throughout? What transitional devices does the writer use to help us follow the essay?



Application

1. Describe any object of either striking beauty or repulsive ugliness.
2. Describe a microwave oven to someone who has never seen one.
3. Describe your cell phone.
4. Describe a piece of important machinery of your choice.
5. Describe the Water Wheels of Hama to a friend who has never seen them.

The Argumentative Essay



Unit Three

The Argumentative Essay

ARGUMENT AND PERSUASION

All of us have had moments in our lives when we felt that we had to disagree with someone like a parent, a teacher, a friend etc... about a certain emotional or personal issue. "It's not fair that I have to do all the house chores!" or "It was not me who was talking in class" or "I don't like the way you treat me!". However, in the rhetorical sense, an argument is never about personal issues or feelings. The kind of argument that we use in writing does not attempt to approach and resolve an issue through appealing to emotions but through wise reasoning using logic and evidence to establish the truth of a claim. From a defensive standpoint, then, it is useful to learn the appropriate techniques that are used to argue and persuade. From a more positive standpoint, it is also helpful to know how to write argumentatively and persuasively because throughout your academic and career life, you will need to formulate

opinions, defend issues, prove points, and persuade others. Moreover, through learning about the proper way of argumentation you will be learning how to convince without being contrary and how to persuade without being harsh or rude.

Notice that in argumentation you do not have to completely prove your point; you only have to convince readers that your argument or position has value or is more reasonable, accurate and complete than other opposing arguments. This is achieved by making careful assertions and supporting them with the best evidence you can find, i.e. by giving reasons, making inductions, drawing conclusions, and applying them to the issue under discussion. Without this you do not have an argument, you only have an essay about an unsubstantiated opinion.

All argument aims to persuade, but not all persuasion is argument. Argument, the appeal to reason, is one means of persuasion, but not the only means. Other means of persuasion include appeals to emotion, to morality, and to self-interest. In arguing for the abolishing of capital punishment (the death penalty), you appeal to your

audience's emotions by telling how cruel such a measure is. You could appeal to their morality by pointing out how wrong and immoral killing is. The main focus of this section is mainly to explore how to use pure reason to persuade.

Since the purpose of argumentation is to help readers change their opinions or behaviour, keeping the readers all the time in mind is crucial. We need to look for evidence that our readers will accept as appropriate and adequate; we need to consider and answer to all the objections that we anticipate our readers are likely to make; and we need to keep a friendly and respectful tone so that our readers do not feel hurt or offended. However, to believe that your argumentation is going to persuade every single reader is farfetched. There will always be the skeptical reader or the narrow-minded one who is not prepared to think about your ideas seriously. Still, you can hope to persuade some readers who are more open to ideas that are different from their own. Remember, too, that the readers you most want to reach are those who disagree with you; they are, after all, the ones whose opinions you want to change. Therefore, you

have to be careful not to insult them by ignoring their point of view or implying that their position is insignificant.

One final key point that you need to keep in mind is that most arguments on major issues of our day (nuclear disarmament, capital punishment, abortion etc...) are not about disagreements over facts. In reality, they involve disputes about *interpretations* of facts. At times, you find that if you look at facts one way you will agree with them and if you look at them from another perspective you will disagree. Take for example the issue of capital punishment. If you look at it from a humanitarian perspective, you may feel that it is cruel and should be abolished, but if you look at it from the perspective of the murderous event that has taken place, you may feel that this criminal need to be punished. Thus the argument sometimes depends on people's interpretation of facts.

In what follows some models of argumentative writing are given. However, before you start looking into these models, it is important to bear in mind that an argument can be divided into three main sections: the *claim* which is to be proved; the *data* or *evidence*, used to support the claim; and

the *reasoning process*, which uses data and logic to prove the claim. The methods of reasoning may be of two different types depending on the nature of your claim and the kinds of evidence you have. There are two basic reasoning methods: *deductive* and *inductive*.

Deductive reasoning begins with a general truth and then leads the reader logically to a specific conclusion. For example,

"All English language courses that help improve your proficiency in English are good courses".

"The essay course helps improve your reading and writing skills."

"Therefore the essay course is a good course".

Deductive reasoning requires that your audience agree automatically with your first premise. They can then be irresistibly led through a logical system to your conclusion.

Inductive reasoning takes the opposite approach, moving from a few particulars to a general truth. For example,

"The essay course helps improve your reading and writing skills."

"The grammar course helps raise your awareness of the structure of English language sentences"

"The translation course helps you identify the differences between English and Arabic texts."

"Therefore, language courses are excellent courses for improving your language proficiency."

Inductive reasoning is less rigid and "air-tight" than deductive reasoning. The conclusions reached by means of inductive reasoning are not exclusive and could possibly be replaced by other conclusions. For example, instead of drawing a conclusion about the benefit of the language courses, you might draw a conclusion about the different skills gained from the different courses.

In what follows, two different models of argumentative essays are given. As you read the selections, note if the following features of argumentative writing are illustrated:

- Opening the essay by establishing a common ground with the reader
- Stating the proposition clearly
- Utilizing an appropriate method of reasoning

- Using concrete evidence to support each argument
- Using rhetorical techniques to liven up the argument
- Organizing the arguments in the best order for the audience to follow
- Adopting the attitude that will be well received by the audience
- Writing a clear conclusion

Model Essay 1

The following is a sample of an argumentative essay in which the writer has employed *deductive reasoning*.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHEMICAL COMPANIES

All of us would agree that corporations, like private individuals, should be responsible for their mistakes. A case in point concerns the chemical companies that manufactured Agent Orange, a chemical defoliant that Americans used in the

Vietnam War. Its purpose was to clear the jungle, but it also had another effect. Agent Orange destroyed the lives of many of the soldiers who were exposed to it. Fifteen years after the war, veterans and their families are still paying medical bills for treatment because they ere exposed to Agent Orange. Of course time was short and national security was at stake, so the chemical companies had to work quickly. As a result, in-depth studies could not be carried out. Even so, the chemical companies that made Agent Orange and certified it 'safe' should be held responsible for their mistakes.

One of the major producers of Agent Orange says that all the companies did adequate testing and found no harmful side effects. Shortly after the war, veterans exposed to Agent Orange began complaining of unusual side effects. Independent laboratories did extensive

testing and found that dioxin, the major contaminant in Agent Orange, is one of the most toxic products known. It seems odd that researchers with companies that developed Agent Orange did not get the same results that private researchers did.

The chemical companies also ignored eyewitness accounts of what happened when Agent Orange was used. The chemical was used by the army to defoliate the jungle in suspected enemy areas. Within a few hours after spraying, leaves fell off trees, making it easier for our soldiers to spot the enemy. Not only did the foliage die, but so did all the animals; birds that were flying one minute were dead on the ground the next. The men who flew the planes that carried the chemical developed rashes over their bodies; they reported a shortness of breath and a burning sensation in their

throat and lungs. In villages downward of the spraying sites, dogs ran around foaming at the mouth and later died. Soldiers who were sprayed developed rashes, skin problems and headaches. Weeks later some lost their eyesight and still later others developed cancer.

For a long time no one made the connection between the spraying and the soldiers' symptoms. But eventually scientists did establish a link. The chemical companies, however, tried to block publication of the results and denied responsibility for what had happened. In addition, the companies continued to produce pesticides that contained trace amounts of dioxin and were using them in the United States for crop control. Only recently have the chemical companies stopped the production of pesticides that contained dioxin.

After fifteen years, the nightmare hasn't ended. Veterans who were exposed to very small amounts of dioxin are developing the same symptoms; they just took longer to emerge. Besides lung and liver cancer, they now have to deal with a wide variety of birth defects in their children. Even now the chemical companies deny any responsibility to these victims.

If these chemical companies made mistakes, they should pay for them. Despite the extenuating circumstance, the chemical companies said that Agent Orange was safe. As a result of this certification, thousands of our troops, to say nothing of Vietnamese peasants, were exposed to a deadly chemical. If the courts forced the chemical companies to compensate victims, it would set a precedent. In the future they would know

that they will be held responsible for the products they develop.

The writer here introduces the background of the issue and sets the premises for the argument. The writer begins with a major premise that he considers self-evident, then states his thesis. His evidence is convincing and reasonable although he does not provide statistics or detailed accounts of studies done on dioxin. Nonetheless the writer makes a strong case that chemical companies should be held responsible for their products. He does establish that the chemical companies made errors with regard to dioxin, even though his case would have been stronger had he discussed specific companies, specific victims, or specific lawsuits.

The following is a sample of an argumentative essay in which the author has employed *inductive reasoning*

Model Essay 2

GOOD NEIGHBOURS

"Why our neighbourhood?"

"But this is a very fussy area."

"Are they ... Well, you know, safe?"

These remarks are typical of the responses that the association for retarded citizens (ARC) receives when it approaches a community for permission to locate a group home. Are these questions valid? Do residents of a community where a group home is to be located have cause for concern?

Perhaps the most widespread fear that community members voice is for the safety of their children. Residents have the misconception that mentally handicapped people are violent and uncontrollable. On the contrary, the majority of retarded people exhibit

characteristic cheerfulness and friendliness. Only a small percentage have violent episodes, and with mediation, these outbursts can be virtually eliminated.

To be admitted to a group home, a patient's psychological and physical records must be reviewed. Patients with a history of destructive activities are not accepted. A minimal amount of self sufficiency is also necessary because of the life style of a group home. Supervisors live at the home with the residents, but their purpose is to stimulate and counsel, not to control or wait on the residents.

Group homes were originally set up as an alternative to large institutions. In states where the program has received support, there have been benefits for both the retarded citizens and the

community. Many mentally handicapped residents of group homes have been successfully placed in low-skill employment. Living in the community enables them to go to jobs independently and achieve self-respect that stifled in an institution. Many residents recognized their progress and take pride in their achievements.

There has been many instances where retarded citizens who moved onto an area showed their gratitude. One striking example occurred this Halloween. Residents of a group home decided on their own to have a Halloween party for neighbourhood children. They realized that because of a rash of poisonings, many children would not be allowed to go trick-or-treating. Hesitantly parents permitted their children to attend, and by the end of the evening many people had changed their minds about the group

home. The innocence and openness of their children had helped them change their opinions.

The success of a group home depends on the attitude of the community in which it is located. Where the community and the group home establish dialogue, no serious problems develop. In fact, both groups have benefited. However, this effective program will be discontinued unless the necessary support is forthcoming. The group home is an innovative concept that deserves funding and community support. An ARC slogan sums up this idea nicely: "being retarded never stopped anyone from being a Good Neighbour".

The argument in this model proceeds inductively. The evidence in the body of the essay should lead the audience to the conclusion that group homes deserve public support. Because the writer feels that his audience shares the

prejudice of communities that oppose group housing, he saves his thesis statement until the end of his essay. Of course, his thesis is implied throughout the essay. By leading his readers through an inductive process, he hopes to overcome resistance and gain support for his position. Notice also that the writer saves his most convincing evidence – the example of the Halloween party – for last. He hopes that by presenting this evidence in this order he will prepare his readers for his conclusion. He could have presented more examples of successful group homes and he could have acknowledged the soundness of some of his opponents' claims. But even so, his argument is well-structured and convincing.

OBSTRUCTIONS TO ARGUMENT: FALLACIES

Fallacies are faulty arguments that are not logical. Because they look like sensible claims, fallacious arguments can be very convincing. Sometimes a writer is so anxious to prove a point that he or she may employ *fallacious*, or unsound, reasoning without being aware that he is doing so. Thus, fallacies sometimes creep into our arguments without us realizing it. Every one of us, at some point, in trying to

prove a claim has used ambiguous language or has relied upon unsubstantiated assumptions. On the other hand, dishonest people intentionally use these techniques to give unsound arguments the appearance of validity. We see this when politicians present unsound assertions or statements as if they were true or attack a person instead of an issue. When detected, fallacies can backfire and turn your audience against you. You should not only avoid fallacies in your own writing, but also watch out for them in the speech and writing of others. Here are some common fallacies that you should be aware of.

AD HOMINEM

One type of fallacious argument is called the *ad hominem* — or 'attacks against the person' — it is a kind of fallacy that places the focus on the person arguing an issue rather than on the issue itself. By attacking the very person of the opponent, you turn attention away from the facts of the case. This kind of argument demeans the validity of an opponent's argument by bringing up negative, largely irrelevant facts about him or her. For example, a writer might argue that a certain political candidate should not be elected because of his bad table manners. Other examples,

"Mrs. Robinson thinks that women should have equal pay. What do you expect from someone who is a housewife?"

"I don't know how we can listen to this person's comments about censorship. She has admitted owning the very books we are trying to ban."

This kind of argument plays on people's prejudices and often succeeds in persuading some people, but it does not serve as a valid foundation for argument. When emotions run high or an issue is extremely controversial, this tactic can be quite persuasive. But although you may influence some readers, others will be aware of this fallacy and shift their support to your opposition.

AD POPULUM

AD POPULUM means 'argument to the crowd'. By using this fallacy, a writer attempts to argue that something is good because it is popular or it is bad because it's unpopular. For example, 'This book sold over two million copies, so it must be good' or 'That book sold only two thousand copies, so it must be bad'. Such *appeals to the*

masses are irrelevant to discussions of whether something is good or bad.

EQUIVOCATION

This is the fallacy of using the same word with different meanings. Equivocation occurs when you shift the meaning of a key word within your argument. By changing the meaning of a key term, you can make it seem that your conclusion follows from your premise. Notice in the following example how the judgment seems more sound than it really is.

“Even scientists recognize a power beyond nature, for they speak of ‘natural law’, and if there is a law, there must be a power to make the law, such a power beyond nature is called God; therefore scientists believe in God.”

In this statement, the term “law” is used equivocally, that is, it has two meanings. In the sense in which scientists use it when they speak of ‘natural law’, it means the acknowledgment of regularity in natural process – the law of gravity, for example. But the second meaning of the word

'law' is the command given by a superior authority. Since the whole argument is based on the word 'law', the argument does not make sense as an argument if the word shifts its meaning. It may be true that a number of scientists do believe in God, but that does not make this a good argument.

In your writing, be sure that you do not shift the meaning of a term from one statement to another. If you think that you have shifted the meaning of a term, reread your paper keeping the single meaning you intend in mind. This technique will help you see if and where you have been guilty of equivocation.

THE EITHER/OR FALLACY

This fallacy assumes that there are just two sides to a question when actually there are more. It actually reduces an assertion into a simple "right or wrong" or "black or white" formula. Most questions simply do not have one right or wrong answer. Often many alternatives exist. You commit the either/or fallacy when you present a complex situation as if there were just two alternative explanations,

interpretations or solutions. You might write a paper inquiring into the performance of a footballer. If you ask, "Did the footballer play well or did he play badly?" you admit only two possibilities, excluding all others. Perhaps he played an ordinary game, or played superbly at times and badly at others. You can avoid this fallacy by acknowledging the complexity of an issue. Don't fall into the trap of misrepresenting issues by limiting options.

Of course in some situations, you can draw convincing conclusions from some either/or argument. To be valid, an either/or statement must cover all possible alternatives. The premise "Either Nadia went to class or she didn't" is valid. There are no other possibilities. If, however, you say "Either Nadia went to class or she stayed home," you commit the either/or fallacy, because there could be many other places where she could have gone to. To prove your premise wrong, all someone has to do is point out that Nadia went to the library, to the movies, to the store etc....

HASTY GENERALIZATIONS

In a court of law, a judge cautions jury members not to jump to false conclusions. They must base their decision

only on the evidence placed before them, and they must be sure beyond any reasonable doubt that a defendant is guilty. Of course everyone jumps to conclusions at one time or another. You might assume that a young man and a young woman walking down the street together are having an affair. Actually they could be friends, cousins, or strangers who have just met. Hasty generalizations often occur when one draws conclusions from inadequate evidence. Sometimes only one or two examples do lead to a valid conclusion: just one case of the flu convinces most people that the disease is unbearable. At other times though, you must examine more evidence to arrive at and support a conclusion.

When you write, you may not have the time or space to provide an exhaustive list of examples. One is constantly in danger of basing conclusions on too little evidence. If you say that because the two Fords you bought were defective, all Fords are defective, anyone could challenge you by pointing out that two examples do not call for such a conclusion. Furthermore, your two cars may represent only one model and not the entire line. You must always think

about how many facts you need to support an argument. Hasty generalizations are usually extremely vulnerable and easy to refute.

POST HOC, ERGO PROPTER HOC

Post hoc, ergo propter hoc is a Latin expression meaning "after this, therefore because of this." If one event follows another closely in time, it does not mean that the first one caused the second. When you say that you got a low mark in the exam because you wrote with a new pen, you are guilty of using this kind of fallacy. Therefore, you need to make sure that you establish the true causes of the events that you discuss.

BEGGING THE QUESTION

This fallacy occurs when you state an argument assertion as if it were true. By doing so, you let your readers assume that something has been proved when in actual fact it hasn't. Simple cases of begging the question don't fool many people. For example, statements like "Children, act the way they do because they are young", or "Thieves should be punished because they break the law", are restating an issue without proving it; they simply end where they begin.

IGNORING THE QUESTION

One of the commonest forms of ignoring the question is to shift from the question to the character or personality of the opponent. For instance, a husband criticizes his wife, and she replies: 'Well, you aren't so perfect yourself!' She has ignored the question and has begun to discuss his shortcomings.

RED HERRING

In this kind of fallacy, the writer changes the subject in order to distract his audience from an issue. For example, "Well, what if James Jackson was arrested for drunk driving? Everyone takes a drink now and then." The issue is not about drinking, it is about driving while drunk.

Many people call on this tactic when they can find no evidence or when they feel pushed into a corner. By switching the topic, they attempt to change direction and begin the argument on safer ground.

As you become exposed to good argumentative writing, you will notice that it is rarely a simple combination of assertions, facts, and precise logic. Truly professional

writers are careful to provide variety and interest to what they are trying to prove. They employ a range of techniques designed to break down reader resistance and lead readers to approval.

WRITING GUIDELINES

Begin on Common Ground: Rather than alienating your reader by starting off showing all opposition, start off by stating a view that most people would agree with. Establishing common ground with your reader will win their attention and make them more receptive to your views even those which conflict with theirs. Avoid beginning your argument with an opposing radical view or an 'expert' assertion that will distance your readers.

Clearly State the Proposition: Define your topic clearly and precisely early on in your essay. Establish the limits of your argument so that your readers cannot refute your ideas by asking questions that are not relevant to the issues you really want to discuss.

Use a Suitable Method of Reasoning: There are two main kinds of arguments. *Deductive arguments* are almost perfect.

They start with a basic logical assertion and through the examples and the support they give, they make the readers accept the final conclusion. The advantage of this method is that once the reader accepts the basic premise, sound logic will make him accept the final conclusion. But this form of reasoning is not possible in all kinds of arguments, besides it has the tendency of alienating readers. If, for example, you begin your essay with a daring proposition that "school exams must be abolished", here you run the risk of antagonizing your readers who might not even want to read on. However using *inductive reasoning* for this topic might do the trick. You might start by giving examples of countries that have abolished school exams and have benefited a lot from this decision; in this case, your audience might be more likely to accept your proposition. Readers might agree with the individual examples before realizing the major argument that you are proposing. This method of reasoning brings the reader gradually towards accepting the proposition made. It starts off with some specific truths and works its way to several possible conclusions.

Therefore, you need to consider carefully the method of reasoning that best suits your topic. Often beginning

on common ground will lead directly to inductive reasoning, i.e. you begin with points on which you and your readers agree on and move from there to giving examples and presenting support until you convince them of your claim. If you have an accepted general truth that you can begin with without sounding rigid and inflexible, deductive reasoning will almost surely win readers over. If, on the other hand, you want to build your own conclusion from observations, use the inductive method.

Finally, whichever type of reasoning you use, do not forget to acknowledge your opposition. You need to list some of the opposing arguments and show that they are not valid. But you also have to accept the fact that you may not always be able to refute all the opposing arguments. If you find that your opponent has some good point, concede.

Use Concrete Evidence: When you state your beliefs about a fact or make judgments that go beyond personal preference, you are making statements that need to be supported so that they can be convincing. For instance the abolishing of school exams proposition would be difficult to

reject if supported with specific examples of its actual success in other countries. An assertion becomes an argument when it is supported by evidence and logic.

Use Rhetorical Techniques: A good argument is not just pure argument. In most cases it is dressed up with rhetorical techniques that make the reading more interesting. Narrating incidents, making comparisons, describing sensory images, and using analogies and metaphors all contribute to explaining and proving the points made. They also help in making the case more convincing and making the argument more interesting to read.

Present Points in the Best Order: Once you have decided on the kinds of support that you want to use, the next step is to decide on the most effective way to structure your points. Consider the type of audience you are addressing so that you can present your arguments in the easiest way possible generating the least resistance and the most acceptance. Ask yourself the following questions: Which order is easiest for my readers to follow? Which order will generate the least resistance and the most acceptance?

Adopt a Tone That Will Be Well Received: Different writers employ different tones in their arguments but that depends on the writer himself, his audience and the subject. Some arguments carry an authoritative and trustworthy tone, others reproach and scold, others mock and ridicule, others flatter, praise and complement. As the writer is involved in writing and thinking of the substance, he might not concentrate on the tone that he is using but in the editing stage he needs to consider revising the tone carefully and changing it to suit his specific purpose, audience and context. This can be achieved through revising and changing the words, the images, even the points of the argument so that he arrives at the tone that will work best.

Make a Clear Conclusion: The conclusion has an important function to fulfill; it should function as a reminder of the nature of your claim and your main reason for constructing the argument. The reader must not finish reading having any doubts about your proposition. In your conclusion, therefore, make a clear and explicit statement of the fullest development of your assertion.

Exercise

In what follows, samples of argumentative essays are given. Read them carefully and then answer the questions that follow:

THE SCHOOL UNIFORM

Individualism is a fundamental value in the United States. All Americans believe in the right to express their opinion without fear of punishment. This value, however, is coming under fire in an unlikely place - the public school classroom. The issue is school uniforms. Should public school students be allowed to make individual decisions about clothing, or should all students be required to wear a uniform? School uniforms are the better choice for three reasons.

First, wearing school uniforms will help

make students' lives simpler. They would no longer have to decide what to wear every morning, sometimes trying on outfit after outfit in an effort to choose. Uniforms would not only save time but also would eliminate the stress often associated with this chore.

Second, school uniforms influence students to act responsibly in groups and as individuals. Uniforms give students the message that school is a special place for learning. In addition, uniforms create a feeling of unity among students. For example, when students do something as a group, such as attend meetings in the auditorium or eat lunch in the cafeteria, the fact that they all wear the same uniform would create a sense of community. Even more important, statistics show the positive effects that school uniforms have on violence and truancy. According to a recent

survey in Hillsborough County, Florida, incidents of school violence dropped by 50% attendance and test scores improved, and student suspensions declined approximately 30% after school uniforms were introduced.

Finally, school uniforms would help make all the students feel equal. Peoples' standards of living differ greatly, and some people are well-off while others are not. People sometimes forget that school is a place to get an education, not to promote a fashion-show. Implementing mandatory school uniforms would make all the students look the same regardless of their financial status. School uniforms would promote pride and help to raise the self-esteem of students who cannot afford to wear stylish clothing.

Opponents of mandatory uniforms say that

students who wear school uniforms cannot stress their individuality. This point has some merit on the surface. However, as stated previously, school is a place to learn not to flaunt wealth and fashion. Society must decide if individual expression through clothing is more valuable than improved educational performance. It is important to remember that school uniforms would be worn only during school hours. Students can express their individuality in the way they dress outside of the classroom.

In conclusion, there are many well-documented benefits to implementing mandatory school uniforms for students. Studies show that students learn better and act more responsibly when they wear uniforms. Public schools should require uniforms in order to benefit both the students and society as a whole.

LIFE OR DEATH?

How would you feel if a loved one were killed? Would you want retribution, or would sending the killer to prison be enough? This question has been asked many times, but people are not in agreement about the ultimate punishment. We all know that it is wrong to take a human life, but if our government does the killing, is it still a crime? Some people say that the government does not have the right to end someone's life, but the following reasons will show why capital punishment should be preserved.

The first reason for allowing the death penalty is for the sake of punishment itself. Most people agree that criminals who commit serious crimes should be separated from society. The punishment ought to depend on the degree of the crime. Capital punishment, the most severe form of punishment, ends

criminals' lives. It seems reasonable that this severe punishment be reserved for those who commit the most serious crimes.

The second reason to preserve capital punishment is financial. The government does not have to spend a lot of money on criminals. Next to capital punishment, the most severe punishment is a life sentence in prison, where the government has to take care of criminals until they die naturally. These criminals do not work, but they receive free housing and food. It is unfair to use tax dollars for such a purpose.

The last reason for continuing the use of the death penalty is based on the purpose of government. If the government has legitimate power to make, judge, and carry out the laws, it should also have the power to decide if criminals should

die. Capital punishment is like any other sentence. If one believes that the government has the right to charge a fine or put criminals into jail, then the government must also have the same power to decide the fate of a prisoner's life.

The opponents of capital punishment might say that nobody has the right to decide who should die, including the government. However, when the government sends soldiers into war, in some way, it is deciding those soldiers' fate; some will live and some will be killed. As long as the government has a right to send its citizens to a battlefield, it has a right to put criminals to death.

There are many good reasons to preserve capital punishment. Certainly not every criminal should be put to death. Capital

punishment ought to be viewed as the harshest form of punishment. If no punishment can reform a murderer, then capital punishment is the best thing that can be done for that person and for society.

WHY WOMEN SHOULD NOT HAVE AN ABORTION

Many women in the entire world have abortions. Women believe there are many reasons to abort such as fear of having or raising a child, rape, or not having enough money. But whatever the situation, there is never an acceptable reason to get an abortion. Some important reasons why women should not abort have to do with human values, religious values, and values of conscience.

The first reason why women should not have an abortion is related to basic

human values. Women need to think about their unborn babies who are not responsible for this situation. These unborn babies should have the privilege to live and grow into a normal person. Women need to be more humanitarian and less egoistic with these babies. On the other hand, the baby doesn't know how or why he is here. It is not necessary to kill a life; there are many other solutions to resolve this problem short of abortion.

The second reason why women should not abort has to do with religious values. In almost all religions, a woman is not permitted to have an abortion. If they do, their religions will punish them. In some religions, for example, a woman cannot take communion after having an abortion, and before taking communion again, she must do many things as a form of penitence. In whatever religion,

abortion is punished and for this reason, women should not abort.

Finally, the third and most important reason why women should not abort is that related to her conscience. When a woman has an abortion, she will always think about the baby she might have had. She will always think about the future that could have happened with her baby which will always remind her that she killed it. Because she has had an abortion, she will never have a good life, and her conscience will remind her of what she had done. Because a woman who has an abortion can't forget about what she has done, these thoughts will always be with her, and the results can be calamitous.

There are many reasons why women should not have an abortion. The truth is that women need to think about the

consequences that can occur before having sexual relations. I think that the effects of an abortion can be very sad for everyone involved, both for the woman who has the abortion and for the family who lives with her.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Examine the introductory paragraph of each essay. What techniques does each author use? What does each introductory paragraph accomplish?
2. The author of each essay argues for a case. What evidence does each author provide to support his argument? Which author provides more convincing evidence?
3. Do any of the above argumentative essays contain any logical fallacies?
4. Comment on the tones of these essays, i.e. the authors' apparent attitudes toward their subject, their readers, and

themselves. Which author's tone is more appropriate and persuasive? Why?

5. Describe the intended audience for these essays. Which readers would the authors be most eager to persuade? How might these readers respond to these essays?

► **Application 1**

1. Should we allow scientists to use cloning to try to develop cures for specific diseases such as Alzheimer's disease? Write an article to your local newspaper that states your position on this subject.
2. Should parents be allowed to choose the genetic traits, such as gender, eye colour, or future IQ, of their unborn child? How about personality traits, talents, or resistance to certain diseases? Write an essay that discusses how you feel about creating the "perfect baby". What are the advantages and disadvantages?

3. Should immigrants assimilate and adopt the culture and customs of their new country, or should they keep the traditions of the country they left? Which aspects of their former culture should they keep? Food? Clothing? Music and entertainment? Attitudes toward marriage? Religion? Language? Write an essay explaining your views on assimilation.
4. Should school teachers ever use physical discipline on children or teenagers? How can young people develop self-discipline?
5. There has been a lot of controversy concerning current issues involving privacy; the use of satellite tracking devices in cars and cell phones, the use of closed circuit television monitoring systems on public streets, the use of computer programs that track consumer habits, the security measures taken at airports and on public transportation, the new methods of identification that are being developed etc Write an essay explaining your views on this issue.

6. Genetically engineered food is one of the breakthroughs of genetic engineering. Discuss.
7. There should be strict laws that ban illegal downloading and file sharing. Discuss.
8. Many people favour the death penalty. Do you believe in capital punishment? Why or why not.
9. Recently, a well-known female singer was fired from a production because the company said she was too fat to fit into her costume. Some years ago, a news reporter was fired for not being sufficiently attractive. Do employers have the right to demand that their employees fit a stereotyped notion of attractiveness if the employees are, in all other respects, good at their jobs? Is it different for different occupations? If so, give examples.
10. In a research carried out at the University of Texas at Austin, it was found out that on student evaluations of teaching, attractive professors consistently get higher scores by a significant margin than their less attractive

colleagues. These findings raise serious questions about the use of student evaluations as a valid measure of teaching quality. If students do indeed discriminate based on attractiveness, should they eliminate teaching evaluations or, at least, give them less importance?

► Application 2

All the following statements contain logical fallacies; some may contain more than one. Identify these fallacies and explain why each statement is illogical.

1. Last year I took two education courses, History and Methods of Education and Teaching Music in the Elementary School. Both courses were boring, and neither one prepared me for the challenges I encountered when I did my practice teaching. Education courses just don't *teach* you anything really useful about the art of teaching.

2. The tax cuts being debated in Congress should be passed.
A Poll recently proved that most citizens favor tax cuts.
3. Just as soldiers never question their officers' orders, so students should never question their teachers' advice.
4. We need to have a longer spring vacation because a longer spring vacation is very necessary.
5. In 1978, the faculty voted to establish a new foreign language requirement. In 1979, we had the smallest freshman class we have had in five years. We must abolish the foreign language requirement before it scares off still more prospective students.
6. Our prisons are a national disgrace. Prisoners suffer because of inadequate rehabilitation programs and poor recreation facilities. This is a serious problem, for many of our citizens are hurt and embittered by these shocking conditions. In New Jersey alone, over two million people were arrested for drunkenness last year.

7. Last year, a proposal to give academic credit for participation in university club sports was voted down by the faculty. The professor who led the opposition to this proposal is short and ugly.
8. Language is very important because it makes communication possible. Without language, we would not be able to communicate with other people.
9. Writing is a skill, just as driving a car is a skill. To learn to drive well, all you have to do is memorize a few simple rules.



Further Reading

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