

Introduction

Writing for an assignment can be an extremely desperate, frustrating, and lonely experience. We often feel at a loss as to where to begin, what to include, and how to complete it. We feel exasperated about the form our writing should take and whether our results are comprehensible to readers. To compound our distress, we may feel reluctant to consult peers about our assignment because it must be original. These aspects of writing can give substantial stress to writers and even impede the creative process, but it need not be so. The aim of *Writing Together* is to provide learners with a strong foundation for understanding the individual components of paragraphs, the foundations of process writing, the standards of paragraph structure, as well as show students the benefits of interacting with others to make writing more reasonable if not pleasant.

In the **Getting Started** sections of this book, the writing topic and main feature of each unit are introduced to learners in the form of questions. Questions about the topic are aimed at helping students begin to think about their upcoming writing project in a casual, enjoyable, and unthreatening manner. In addition to jumpstarting thoughts about the unit's topic, this section introduces students to the unit's featured aspect of paragraph writing. Here, they view writing samples then answer questions which help them notice and identify key elements of paragraph writing. In other words, before they receive more structured training in paragraph writing, the **Getting Started** section eases students into the unit so they can start out comfortably and on their own terms.

Learners are obliged to grasp the concepts of paragraph structure if they are ever to master paragraph writing. However, before students actually write passages of decent quality, they must know the rules governing paragraph structure. The next section of each unit, **Writing Focus**, provides a brief explanation of the featured aspect of paragraph writing as well as a list of guidelines writers should follow. However, simply knowing the rules does not make someone a master of anything besides "knowing the rules." Since

writing is a combination of quantity and quality, learners must be able to recognize whether writing samples not only have all of the necessary components, but also judge the quality of the writing before they can create their own legitimate paragraphs. Consequently, activities in the next section of this book, **Guided Writing**, help students discern whether writing samples contain proper elements and whether they follow the guidelines for quality.

Since undisciplined processes often end in undisciplined results, it is important that students learn the controlled habits of process writing. The standards of process writing provide a guide for writers to reach their goal in a logical and efficient fashion. In the first stage of process writing, they plan what they will write about. In the second stage, they write drafts, improving contents each time. In the third stage, they proofread their writing and produce a final draft. The **Writing in Action** sections of this book, with its subsections **Pre-writing**, **Writing**, and then the following section, **Editing**, provide learners constant, habit-forming practice with these steps.

While the methods of process writing give learners a foundation in *how* to write, the conventions of paragraph structure offer a *form* for their writing. Without an established pattern to follow, new writers may feel helpless, not to mention create paragraphs that appear more like diary entries than disciplined writing. To give learners a good sense of form, the first half of this book is dedicated to paragraph structure. It introduces topic, supporting, detail, and concluding sentences and shows how students can improve these four features of structure. The second half of the book focuses on the concepts of writing *style* including unity, coherence, cohesion, and how learners can edit their writing more effectively.

Skills in process writing and paragraph structure help learners create decent passages, but writing can still be a very lonely process. Furthermore, without constant feedback from others it is easy for writers to get off track and to forget that they are writing for a specific audience. To solve these problems, this book gives learners ample opportunity to communicate during each stage of process writing. From brainstorming to editing, students are required to collaborate in generating ideas, planning their writing, creating drafts, and editing. In addition, each unit concludes with **Communicative**

Activity where students share their writing with a partner, a small group, or the entire class.

Writing for assignments can be a painful experience for students, but it truly does not have to be that way. Familiarity with the individual components of paragraphs gives new writers confidence. Process writing provides a path and a compass writers can use to navigate their way to completing an assignment. Paragraph structure serves as a logical, recognizable, and repeatable template students can use to construct their writing. Communicating with others helps writers focus on their message and stay true to their target audience throughout the writing process. Writing for an assignment is never easy, but **Writing Together** gives learners the skills and strategies they need to write successfully and perhaps even enjoyably.



The Apple of Your Eye



Getting Started

A Tell a partner about three people who've influenced you.

1. Describe them.
2. What is interesting about them?
3. In which ways have they influenced you?

B Read the paragraph and answer the questions with a partner.  DL 09  CD 09

My high school soccer coach, Ms. Turner, showed me how playing sports can help me become a better student. First, she taught me to concentrate on studying the same way I concentrate on sports. Also, she showed me how to keep going even though I am tired and want to take a rest. Finally, she taught me never to give up even when I think I will fail.

1. What is the topic of the paragraph?
2. What is the writer's main idea?
3. How does the writer show his or her main idea is true?

Writing Focus: Creating Supporting Sentences

Supporting sentences follow the topic sentence. They offer support to a paragraph's main idea and help explain why it is true with details and clear examples. There are usually at least three in a paragraph. Supporting sentences support the main idea much as legs support a chair.

Good supporting sentences follow these rules:

They must only contain information that **supports the main idea**.

They must contain **clear examples**.

They usually begin with **sequence expressions**.

Guided Writing

Topic Sentences or Supporting Sentences?

A Write *TS* next to topic sentence and *SS* next to supporting sentences.

1. SS I learned how to take care of myself by living alone in a small apartment.
2. _____ I had to manage my own living costs for the first time in my life.
3. _____ I got my first part-time job and earned my first paycheck.
4. _____ I feel that last year was when I changed from a teenager to an adult.
5. _____ I went on a trip without my parents for the first time.

Supporting the Main Idea

B If the supporting sentence is well-connected to the main idea, write an \bigcirc in the blank, if it is not, write an \times .

Topic sentence: Getting my driver's license was the hardest thing I have ever done.

1. \times My dream is to buy a sports car five years from now.
2. _____ I had to take a long and difficult paper test that I studied all night for.
3. _____ The driving test made me nervous and I thought I would have an accident.

4. _____ I drove for hours with three of my friends to go swimming in the sea.
5. _____ It cost much more than I planned because I failed the paper test twice.

Clear Examples

- C** If the supporting sentence contains clear examples, write an in the blank, if it does not, write an **X**.

Topic sentence: My uncle Thomas is the most exciting person in my family.

1. He has had various experiences during his long life.
2. _____ Thomas hiked through the Amazon forest when he was a student.
3. _____ My uncle often tells me stories about his life.
4. _____ He started skydiving when he was a high school student.
5. _____ He drives a very fast red European car.

Sequence Expressions

- D** Circle the sequence expressions you find in the following paragraphs.

1.

I hope to live in a big city after I graduate from college. there are lots of concerts and events in Tokyo or Osaka. Second, I can understand different points of view from many people. Third, I can enjoy shopping, eating, and movies every day of the week.

2.

Ramen is the best food for poor university students. First of all, it is usually cheaper than other types of food students like. Also, it's cheap but with noodles, vegetables, and meat, it is nutritious. Finally, students can buy instant ramen and eat it at home any time they like.

Consolidation

E Decide what is wrong with each supporting sentence and list one or more of the following reasons.

- Doesn't support the main idea
- Doesn't contain clear examples
- Doesn't begin with sequence expressions

Topic sentence: I'm not perfect, so I want to improve myself in
three ways.

1. I want to be much kinder to my family.

Reason(s): doesn't begin with sequence expression.

2. Next, improving myself is very important.

Reason(s): _____

3. Also, I want to enjoy.

Reason(s): _____

4. I really think I should study.

Reason(s): _____

5. No one in the world is perfect.

Reason(s): _____

Writing in Action

Pre-writing: Freewriting

Freewriting can help you start moving ideas from your brain to your paper.

- Write as much as you can for five or ten minutes.
- Write without stopping.
- Don't use an eraser or dictionary.
- Don't worry about spelling or grammar.

Think about the writing topic then write down everything that comes to your mind. It's OK if your paper is messy. Just write as much as you can.

- A** *On a separate sheet of paper, freewrite about people who have influenced you. Use the suggestions below for ideas.*

family	friends	teachers	actors	musicians	athletes
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- B** *Look at your freewriting, underline the good ideas and cross out ideas you don't want to use.*

Writing

- C** *Using ideas from your freewriting, create a topic sentence.*

- D** *Write three supporting sentences for your topic sentence.*

1.

2.

3.

Editing: Present Tense and Plural “s”

Remember these common grammar points:

Previous: capitalization, punctuation, verb tense and time expressions

Present tense “s”—use “s” with he, she, and it in the present tense.

Plural “s”—use “s” to show more than one.


A Proofread these sentences for the grammar points listed above.

1. Also, he teaches me how to get better scores on my tests.
2. my wonderful grandfather influenced me more than anyone else these days
3. in addition, she takes me to the museum three time last year
4. furthermore, my father take me to baseball game twice a month
5. although she is a famous singer, she spend a lot of time with poor people.

B Edit and revise your topic and supporting sentences for the following points and write them in paragraph form on a new sheet of paper.

Topic Sentence	Previous Grammar Points
Supporting Sentences	New Grammar Points
Well-connected to the main idea	Plural “s”
Contain clear examples	Present tense he, she, it “s”
Contain sequence words	

Communicative Activity: Read Aloud

-  Write your final draft on a new sheet of paper. Form groups of three or four students and read your paragraph aloud. Other students should ask you questions about your paragraph.