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Course Overview

In the first semester, students will review the basics of grammar, refine writing, improve vocabulary, and delve into the world of American literature. Students apply the writing process to review paragraph writing and functional document writing such as business letters and resumes. Students also write longer descriptive and persuasive compositions and engage in several creative writing activities. They apply research skills to develop a persuasive speech. During the second semester, students read, analyze, and respond to various genres in American literature, including poetry, short stories, nonfiction, and the novel, *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton.



PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT-PREWRITING-PURPOSE-AUDIENCE

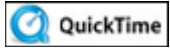
Unit Overview

Welcome! In this course you will be reviewing the basics of grammar, refining your writing, improving your vocabulary, and delving into the world of American Literature. In this lesson you will be learning about paragraph development.

A paragraph is a group of related sentences that develop a single idea about a topic.

Before a paragraph can be written, the writer must go through a series of prewriting tasks. The writer must determine the purpose for writing (*why?*). The purpose of writing is one of four basic reasons: to tell a story; to describe something; to explain something; or to persuade. Next the writer must determine the audience for the writing (*for whom?*). Writers must remember that the readers (audience) vary greatly- age, knowledge, background, interest, and opinion. Writers must consider all these variances before writing. The writer must also determine the subject of the writing (*what topic?*).

The subject of the writing can be personal experience or experiences of others. After selecting the subject, the writer must determine the content (*what to say?*) Once the writer has the subject, he/she must determine the language (*how to say it?*). The language will determine the tone (the attitude the writer has about the subject). The tone can be serious, humorous, personal, formal, etc. The writer must remember that tone must be consistent with the purpose and the subject.



Section A: Kinds of Writing (03:17)

CHOOSING YOUR SUBJECT

In choosing a subject, keep in mind the age, backgrounds, and interests of the audience.

Avoid subjects that are too complicated or difficult to explain.

LIMITING YOUR SUBJECT

A writer must limit the subject so that it can be developed thoroughly in a short writing. It must be limited enough so that the writer can include interesting details, etc.

In paragraphs, the writer has only a few sentences to develop his/her ideas; therefore, the topic must be narrow.

ANALYZING THE SUBJECT

* To analyze the subject, examine it by various components such as time periods, features, examples, uses, etc.

Example:

Too Broad: Sports in American High Schools- too many to consider

Too Broad: Sports in Ohio High Schools- still too many to consider

Too Broad: Sports in Your High School- includes too many types

Limited: Football at Your High School- one particular sport

GATHERING INFORMATION

Keeping in mind the purpose for writing, the writer must now begin to gather information. There are several means in which information can be gathered.

GATHERING INFORMATION TASKS

BRAINSTORMING	A technique in which you come up with as many ideas as possible on a subject
CLUSTERING	A technique in which you break down a subject into smaller parts- Place the subject in the middle and circle it. Write related ideas around the subject, circling them and drawing lines to the subject.
ASKING QUESTIONS	A technique in which the questions Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? are used to gather information.
DIRECT OBSERVATION	A technique in which the writer relies on the five senses-sight, touch, smell, hearing, tasting
INDIRECT OBSERVATION	A technique in which the writer examines the experiences of others by asking questions, watching, interviewing, etc.
IMAGINING	A technique in which the writer uses his imagination to generate ideas.

ORGANIZING THE INFORMATION

Paragraphs are organized around one main idea. The topic sentence states the main idea of the paragraph. A topic sentence usually comes at the beginning of the paragraph; however, it may be found anywhere. In some rare instances, a paragraph may not have a topic sentence.

All paragraphs must have unity, coherence, and emphasis. *Unity* of a paragraph means that every sentence relates to the main idea. Any idea not related to the main idea means a new paragraph should be formed.

Coherence of a paragraph means that the paragraph has been arranged so that the reader can follow the material and see how it relates to the main idea. Even though the subject will often dictate the arrangement of ideas, there are four ways a writer can choose to achieve coherence in a paragraph.

1. Chronological order- events are related in the order in which they occurred
2. Spatial order- describes an object's location in relation to another thus enabling the reader to form visual images; Ex. top to bottom or left to right
3. Order of importance- the most important to the least important
4. Logical order- related ideas are grouped together

No matter which arrangement a writer chooses, the ideas of the paragraph must be linked to the main idea. Many times this linking (connecting) of ideas is implemented by using *transitions and transitional phrases*.

The following chart gives some commonly used transitions and how they are effectively used.

TRANSITIONS

USE	COMMONLY USED
To compare facts or ideas	also, and, in addition, similarly, too
To contrast facts or ideas	although, but, however, instead, nevertheless, still, on the other hand, yet
To show cause/effect	as a result, because, since, consequently, therefore
To show time	after, at last, before, eventually finally, then, when, at once
To show a place	across, around, before, beyond, in, nearby, on, over, under, up

To show importance	First, last, then, to begin with, notwithstanding, for example
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EVALUATING A PARAGRAPH

Evaluating is an important part of the writing process because it provides an opportunity for the writer to make improvements and corrections.

Writers often evaluate writing as it is being done, but the most beneficial evaluation occurs after the writing is completed. It is a good idea to put the writing aside for a while and then return to it for evaluation.

The writer must judge the writing as it measures up to a set of established standards.

1. Does the writing tell a story, describe something, explain something or attempt to persuade the reader?
2. Is the writing appealing to the reader? Will it hold attention?
3. Does the writing have a main idea?
4. Is the main idea supported by details that help make audience understand the topic?
5. Are the ideas arranged properly?
6. Are transitions used to make connections between ideas?
7. Is the language appropriate for purpose and audience?
8. Are sentences varied in structure and length?

After the evaluation process is complete, revision is the next step in the writing process.

The revision techniques are as follows:

ADD: Details and information are added to make the writing more clear.

REMOVE: Details and information are taken out to eliminate repetition, etc.

MOVE: Details and information are rearranged to provide variety, clarity, etc.

SUBSTITUTE: Replace informal language, weak sentences, etc. with more effective language.

*Hint: To remember the techniques of revision, just remember the word **ARMS**.*



Now answer questions 1-24.