



From Paragraph to Essay

Get Your Message Across II

効果的な英文エッセイの書き方

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with a foreword by Hisatake Jimbo



NAN'UN-DO

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Preface

Welcome to (title of book). Mastering the art of writing strong, clear, interesting essays is an essential skill, yet many people find it a difficult process. This textbook provides straightforward explanations and effective practice, enabling EFL students to build solid and engaging essays, step by step. Let's face it, there is no completely effortless way to become a good writer even in one's mother tongue, let alone in a foreign language. It is possible, however, to demystify the act of essay-writing. As a result, your approach to creating an essay will be strategic, allowing you to focus on the important steps of this process. That is what this textbook will help you do.

The textbook is in two parts. Part 1, Units 1-5, consists of a review of the elements of good paragraph writing. Good paragraphs are the essential building blocks of good essays so a confirmation of the basic components of paragraph writing will prepare you for this vital next stage. Part 2, Units 6-15, focuses on the development of five-paragraph essays. You will learn key notions that drive the planning of various types of essays and acquire expressions that are very useful in laying out your ideas on paper in a coherent and articulate fashion. You will also observe sample essays and analyze how they "work". Finally, you will have opportunities to write your own essays on a range of topics. By the end of the textbook you will feel that essay-writing expertise is not as difficult as you may have first thought. Essay-writing is a skill, and, as with any skill, its mastery depends on knowing how to do it, but perhaps even more importantly, actually "doing" it.

So, without delay, your pen and paper (or your pc) await!

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はしがき

本書はパラグラフ作文に焦点を当てた *Get Your Message Across* の姉妹編である。

Part I (Unit 1～5) はパラグラフ作文の復習と深化が目的である。Unit 1 ではパラグラフの構成を復習している。主題文、支持文、結びの文を書く練習である。Unit 2 では適切な文体を選択する練習をする。形式ばった文体とくだけた文体の相違を学び、email を書く練習をする。Unit 3 では意見を明確に述べることを学ぶ。根拠に基づいて意見を主張する練習である。Unit 4 では問題解決の方法を学ぶ。問題を明確にし、適切な解決法を提示する練習である。Unit 5 では因果関係を示すパラグラフを分析し、まとめていく練習をする。

Part II (Unit 6～15) は5段落からなる小論文の作成を目的としている。Unit 6 では小論文の構成（序論、本論、結論）とアウトラインの作成法を学ぶ。Unit 7 ではアウトラインの作成をしてから、小論文を書く練習をする。Unit 8 では叙述（描写）文の特徴を分析する。Unit 9 では叙述（描写）文を書く練習をする。Unit 10 では説得文の特徴を分析する。Unit 11 と 12 では説得文を書く練習をする。Unit 12 では比較をする文の特徴を分析する。Unit 13 では比較をする文を書く練習をする。Unit 14 では分類をする文の特徴を分析する。Unit 15 では分類をする文を書く練習をする。

本書で小論文を書く練習をすれば、本格的な報告書や学術論文を完成させる土台が築かれることとなる。

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Part I

Unit 1 I Am Going to Write One Paragraph

Review: What's a paragraph?

Let's review:

A paragraph is a standard unit of writing in English. It is a set of sentences grouped together to describe one specific event or idea. Paragraphs can be short or long, but a typical paragraph is between five and 10 lines long. There are many different types of paragraphs depending on the writer's purpose. In the first part of this book, we will review some of the most common paragraph types.

The characteristics of a good paragraph:

A good paragraph has to be clear and cohesive, no matter what type it is.

Clear: The reader should be able to easily understand the main idea of the paragraph. It is, therefore, important to introduce this idea at the beginning.

Cohesive: All the sentences in the paragraph should be related to the main idea. For example, if the paragraph is about a trip you took recently, all the paragraph's sentences should in one way or another be connected to the topic of your trip. Sentences not connected to the main idea (called "irrelevant sentences") should be eliminated because they will distract or confuse the reader.

Look at the example paragraph below and identify the irrelevant sentence.

I had a fantastic trip to Europe in my junior year at college. I managed to save enough money from my part-time job to travel for more than two months. During this time I visited 10 countries and learned a lot about European culture and traditions, and even picked up a few words in various languages. It was also a growing experience for me. I became more mature emotionally and more independent, and made friends from pretty much all over the world. Obviously, European cuisine is an acquired taste, and I did miss my mother's cooking. It is an experience that I will cherish for life.

Structure of the paragraph:

A good paragraph has three essential elements:

- A. A topic sentence
- B. Supporting sentences
- C. A concluding sentence

STEP 1 | The Topic Sentence

The purpose of a topic sentence is to introduce the main idea of the paragraph. It should tell the reader what the paragraph is about. An effective topic sentence should be quite specific. A sentence such as “The sun is bright,” for example, is too general and does not give the reader a clear enough understanding of what the paragraph will be about.

Let’s say the main idea of your paragraph is the public transportation problems of America’s large cities. Some appropriate topic sentences would be:

1. In many cities in the United States public transportation is in a state of crisis.
2. The issue of public transportation is a dominant theme of policy debates in municipal governments throughout the United States.
3. There are several problems affecting public transportation networks in large urban centers across the United States.

The sentences below, on the other hand, would be either too general or too specific to make an effective topic sentence:

4. Most American cities have public transportation.
5. Public transportation includes subways, buses, and suburban trains.
6. In many cities, subway trains rarely run on schedule due to inefficient management.

1.1 Read the two paragraphs below and do the activities that follow each.

Paragraph 1

There are several reasons why many international surveys have ranked Vienna as the most comfortable city to live in. , it has an excellent transportation system that is reasonably priced and offers a comprehensive network of streetcars and commuter trains. The city is also home to many museums, art galleries, and historical palaces. , Vienna is very compact. It is possible to enjoy a performance in the famous Opera House downtown, then get into a car and be in the wonderful surrounding forests just 15 minutes later. So, considering all the benefits this city has to offer, it is not surprising that many people view it as the world’s best place to live.

1. What is the topic sentence of this paragraph?
2. List some of the reasons why Vienna is considered as a comfortable place to live.
3. Which reason would be the most important for you?
4. Look at the blank boxes. What “signal expressions” (connecting words or expressions) would be appropriate for each?

Paragraph 2

_____. It was my first time away from home, and I was very excited to plan my own schedule and decide all by myself what I was going to eat and where I was going to stay. I spent three weeks travelling by bus across Mexico, which allowed me to meet many interesting people. I made some really good friends, and I still keep in touch with them. I also learned a lot about local foods and customs, participated in wonderful festivals, and, in general, had a fantastic time. And, of course, the three weeks in Mexico helped me improve my Spanish tremendously. Most importantly, I became fascinated with Mexican culture, and when I came back home to Canada, I decided to switch my major to Mexican history.

1. From the list below, choose the most appropriate topic sentence for the paragraph.
 - a. My trip to Mexico 20 years ago was truly an unforgettable experience.
 - b. I love travelling to Mexico and other Latin American countries much more than to other parts of the world.
 - c. I went to Mexico during the winter vacation in my second year at college.
 - d. There were many aspects of Mexican society that I found unsettling, yet overall it was a nice trip.
2. Give three reasons in your own words why the writer enjoyed his or her trip to Mexico.
3. Why do you think the writer gives the most important reason at the end of the paragraph?

1.2 Read the following two paragraphs. Write a topic sentence of your own for each.

1. _____.

First of all, if we get too accustomed to using a credit card every time we go shopping, we can lose track of our budget and forget how much money we spend. Secondly, with a credit card, there is a tendency to buy too much. Research shows that people make more purchases when using a credit card than they do when they pay cash. Finally, many of us end up paying more for the same product or service because we cannot pay back the full amount on time and, as a result, have to pay interest. All things considered, credit-card users should be very careful when pulling this convenient but potentially risky piece of plastic out of their wallets.

2. _____.

We have known each other for over 25 years. He has helped me out on many occasions. Brian supported me when I had to make some tough career choices and shared my joy with me when I became a father for the first time. Of course, I always try to be there to support him as well. Even though we now live on opposite sides of the world, we still keep in touch regularly and try to encourage each other when one of us encounters some problems in life.

STEP 2 | Supporting Sentences

The purpose of a paragraph's supporting sentences is to provide details that support the topic sentence or expand on a paragraph's main idea. It is important to organize your supporting sentences so that the most important detail, reason, or example comes either at the beginning or at the end, but not in the middle. This makes the paragraph easier to read and its impact stronger.

2.1 Transition words

To clearly separate a paragraph's supporting sentences, good writers use appropriate transition words or phrases. The following words and phrases will help you indicate to the reader the flow of ideas in your paragraphs.

First / First of all	All things considered
Second / Secondly	Finally
Third / Thirdly	Most importantly
Next	Furthermore, also
Additionally	Lastly

2.2 Look again at paragraph 1 in section 1.2 above and list its transition words and phrases.

_____;

_____;

_____;

2.3 Write three supporting sentences of your own for each topic sentence below. Use the appropriate transition words and phrases to link the supporting ideas.

1. There are several reasons why jogging is good for you.

_____.

2. I have learned a great deal from my parents.

_____.

3. If you are searching for an interesting career, there are several reasons why you should think about becoming a reporter specializing in international news.

STEP 3 | The Concluding Sentence

The concluding sentence is, as its name implies, the last sentence in your paragraph. It gives your paragraph a logical conclusion and restates the main idea, making it easier for the reader to remember it. A concluding sentence is usually introduced by a “signal” word or expression such as “In conclusion,” “To sum up,” and so on.

There are several ways to write an effective concluding sentence.

1. **Restatement:** For example, in paragraph 1, section 1.1, the last sentence is very similar to the topic sentence. It restates and summarizes the main idea. For this type of concluding sentence, always make sure you don’t simply repeat your topic sentence word for word. Restate or summarize it in different words.

3.1 Write a “restatement” concluding sentence for the model paragraph below.

When I started attending a university in Tokyo, I experienced a major adjustment in my lifestyle. First of all, I was surprised how much independent studying was required. For my writing assignments, I had to do a lot of research in the library, collect all kinds of reference material, and organize all the information. It was quite a change from my high-school days when, in most cases, it was enough to simply follow my teachers’ instructions. Also, as I was now living on my own for the first time, I had to do all the household chores myself. Shopping, cooking, and cleaning my small apartment were surprisingly time-consuming. And because I had to spend a great deal of time riding trains, I had to get used to a long commute.

2. **Suggestion, advice, or opinion:** For example, in paragraph 1, section 1.2, in the concluding sentence, the writer suggests or advises that credit-card users be careful when using their “convenient pieces of plastic.”

3.2 Write a "suggestion, advice, or opinion" concluding sentence for the model paragraph below.

Language learning demands a significant investment of time and energy, but it does not have to be boring. Many students consider foreign language classes dull, especially when learners have to memorize long lists of new vocabulary or learn complicated grammatical structures. As a result, students lose their motivation and view language study as a chore rather than as a window onto a new and exciting world. Having the ability to interact in a foreign language improves students' career prospects, not to mention broadening their cultural and intellectual horizons. It is the responsibility of the teachers to help students appreciate the great potential of knowing a foreign language.

